

I have said that the Mehtar has to consult the feelings of these Adamzadas. On all important occasions, beside those who may happen to be in Chitral at the time, the principal Adamzadas throughout the country, and perhaps also the governors of the various districts (except the distant districts of Yasin) are summoned to Chitral, and the Mehtar holds a general council of state. Such councils are held when an invasion takes place, or when it is proposed to attack some neighbouring country, or when questions of foreign policy arise, such as whether the state should ally itself with the British Government or with Afghanistan. On occasions like these, all the chief men in the country would be asked down to Chitral, and the matter discussed in durbar. I was particularly struck by the openness with which the affairs of the country are discussed. While we make a great mystery of our policy, and conduct our business by confidential correspondence, the members of one department of Government not letting even the members of another department know what is taking place, in Chitral the affairs of state are discussed openly in durbar, and it is only very confidential matters that the Mehtar talks over separately with a few of his most trusted advisers. So little indeed do the Chitralis resort to secrecy, that several times I have known the Mehtar, when a letter has been brought him, and his own clerk was not present, hand it over to my native assistant, and ask him to read the contents to him.

Out of the general assembly the Mehtar naturally, and as it were involuntarily, selects certain men whom he trusts and consults more than the rest. If they live at a distance from Chitral, he will summon them oftener, and keep them longer. If they live at Chitral, he will have them repeatedly by his side. An informal cabinet council thus exists, and these men might be called "his Majesty's advisers." It is possible to trace in the council of Chitral, as in councils of men of every kind, the progressive and the stationary parties; the men who wish