

LR

Conspiracy

in

Kashmir

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"A map taken from "New York Times" dated July 5, 1953, depicting the United States plan of further partition of the Jammu and Kashmir State and the creation of "Independent" State in the Valley of Kashmir".

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INTRODUCTION

The significance of Pakistan-United States military alliance in relation to India and Asia has been correctly posed by the Prime Minister of India in his address to Parliament on December 23, 1953. Mr. Nehru pointed out that such a development would upset the existing balance of power in Asia, reverse the process of liberation and freedom of Asian people, bring cold war to the borders of India and lessen the chance of peace.

The reactions of Islamic countries in Western Asia and of other South-East Asian countries show that, almost without exception, the strategic and military penetration of the United States into Pakistan has been viewed with grave concern, because of the far-reaching consequences that flow from it. There have been wide-spread protests in Pakistan also. For the people of Kashmir, it is a matter of life and death. We cannot afford to see our motherland become the victim of the unholy alliance between the hysterical United States militarism and the reactionary and selfish ruling circles of Pakistan.

Foreign intervention in Kashmir is an old story. The brazen and blatant form it is assuming now has sinister implications for our national movement. How deep the roots of this conspiracy are becomes clear if we retrospectively consider the events in Kashmir early in August 1953. When Sheikh Abdullah was dismissed last year, some people did not feel convinced that he was a partner in the game to make an "Independent" Kashmir a foreign base under the cover of a United Nations Trusteeship. It, therefore, becomes necessary to examine the objectives and techniques of foreign intervention in the State during the last seven years. It is also the moral obligation of the people to expose the betrayal of national interests by erstwhile leaders. Through vigilance, unity and sacrifice we can thwart the evil designs of the Pak-U.S. military alliance in the same manner as the conspiracy for foreign-sponsored "Independent" Kashmir was defeated last year. Our purpose here is to deal with the background of the events that led to the fall of Sheikh Abdullah.

I. The Background

The greatest misfortune of Kashmir, thwarting the material and cultural development of its people, has been its geographical and strategic situation, which has afflicted it with many foreign invasions. In more settled times the country has been a centre of many foreign intrigues, which have prevented a healthy evolution of her political and economic life. It is no purpose of this study to give a historical review of the nature and consequences of these incursions from outside and intrigues within the country itself. We are only concerned with more recent events which have raised many questions in the minds of people throughout the world.

From 1931, Sheikh Abdullah led the national movement in the State for the political and economic freedom of the people. From 1934 onwards, he freed himself, and the political organization that he represented, from certain influences of the British Political Department at New Delhi which sought to restrict and pervert the purposes of the democratic movement in the Princely States closely associated with the national democratic movements in India. Under his leadership, the National Conference was organized in 1939, which established great traditions of struggle for the democratic rights of the people of the Jammu and Kashmir State. The adoption of the "New Kashmir" Programme in 1944, the "Quit Kashmir" struggle in 1946-47, the resistance to tribal and Pakistani invasions in 1947-48 are glorious land-marks in the national history of Kashmir.

For his leadership in all these achievements, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was lionized as the "Sher-e-Kashmir". Millions of people in the State and in the rest of India looked towards him for guidance and inspiration. The present leadership of the National Conference and the rank and file of the national organization reposed every trust and confidence in him.

The basis of Sheikh Abdullah's popularity was his democratic stand, his anti-imperialist pronouncements and courageous leadership in challenging the feudal autocracy. In this he correctly symbolized the aspirations of the down-trodden people of Kashmir. But after he assumed office in 1947, he gradually forgot his links with the people and leaned more and more towards bureaucratic and dictatorial tendencies. His contacts with foreigners upset his balance and, forgetting

his anti-imperialist traditions, he began to play to the tune of the United States diplomatic and strategic designs in Kashmir. Thus, the Sheikh's defection from democratic ideals came after he acquired power, which he was unable to use for the benefit of the people. They lost faith in him and he turned the clock back by mobilising popular fervour through appeal to communal and religious sentiments. He, thus, fell amongst the political adventurers who created in him the illusion of an "Independent" Kashmir backed by American military and economic aid.

Sheikh Abdullah's fundamental departure from the great traditions and principles of the National Conference led to the parting of ways from his colleagues and co-workers. This has given rise to a number of questions which the present study seeks to answer. How did Sheikh Abdullah betray the trust reposed in him by the people? Did foreign influences work on him and what was their *modus operandi*? Were the Sheikh's eyes fixed on an "Independent Kashmir" from the beginning and what were the implications of such a policy? What tactics did the Sheikh adopt to attain his ends? What happened politically from April to August, 1953, which led to his great deviation from the path he had chosen for more than two decades?

In answering these questions, we have presented a good deal of authentic and factual evidence. It is obvious that Governments possess much more reliable evidence from numerous other sources of information about the policies of foreign powers and the political and other activities of the foreigners. But, unfortunately, this has not been available to us. There are well-known diplomatic usages and practices which preclude the revelation of such information to the public, especially when it pertains to friendly States. In spite of this handicap, we have tried to present an objective picture of the recent developments in Kashmir. The objective has not been to malign the erstwhile leaders or the foreign powers, but to warn the people against the dangers confronting the country.

Many techniques have been adopted by the Anglo-American Power bloc to keep Kashmir under its direct control or indirect influence for its strategic designs or diplomatic policies. One after another, these have been foiled by the democratic forces in India and Kashmir. The extremist elements in the Anglo-American bloc have been exerting every pressure, internal and external, to bring the whole

of the South-East Asia, particularly India and Pakistan, into alignment with their foreign policy and military preparations. The strategic position of Kashmir in this international alignment of forces is of vital importance. India's foreign policy of non-alignment with power-blocs, while maintaining friendly relations with all countries, is intensely disliked by the cold war strategists. The dispute about Kashmir is by no means influenced by considerations of the people's right of national self-determination or the domestic progress of the Kashmiris. These are only propaganda devices, used from time to time to camouflage their ulterior designs. No doubt, they will always say about the Kashmir dispute that their sole interest is "the sincere hope that the problem of Kashmir's status will be solved on a basis mutually acceptable to the two countries directly concerned, India and Pakistan". Sometimes they might even mention the wishes of the Kashmiri people to be the determining factor.

However, the following pages will show the different techniques adopted by them to bring Kashmir under their direct control or indirect influence. These techniques, unfolded from time to time, have been :

1. To establish an "Independent" Jammu and Kashmir State under the aegis of the Maharaja, in treaty relations with both India and Pakistan, perhaps guaranteed by the British Commonwealth ;
2. To partition the State on communal lines by letting the marauding frontier tribes and Pakistan forces to conquer and occupy the State, especially the Valley of Kashmir, the northern area of Gilgit and the western areas of Poonch and Mirpur in Jammu ;
3. To exert pressure through the intervention of the United Nations with a view to partitioning the State as proposed by Sir Owen Dixon, the U.N. Mediator, including also U.N. Trusteeship over the whole of the State or parts of it, such as the Kashmir Valley, for a period of five to ten years ;
4. To precipitate an internal crisis in the State by encouraging communal elements in both the Kashmir and the Jammu Provinces of the State with a view to partitioning the State on communal or strategic lines ;

5. To precipitate an internal crisis by encouraging a movement for "Independence" of the whole State or important parts thereof, such as the Valley of Kashmir, and merge the residual areas with India and Pakistan ;
6. To arrange a demilitarization of the State and a subsequent plebiscite for the State as a whole under a Plebiscite Administrator representing the United Nations.

Our purpose is to show the collaboration of Sheikh Abdullah and some of his followers with the designs for an "Independent" Kashmir carved out with foreign aid and advice. We shall also show how foreign agents have been working within the State for the same end.

II. The Genesis of "Independent" Kashmir

The idea of "Independent" Kashmir is essentially of foreign origin. When, according to the Treaty of Amritsar (1846), the State of Jammu and Kashmir was established under Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu, the idea of the British Government in India was to give it an "independent" status so as to maintain it as a buffer State till the newly-acquired Province of the Punjab was completely subjugated and till Afghanistan was brought within the British sphere of influence. It was on the borders of the Jammu and Kashmir State that the three Empires of Great Britain, Russia and China met and hence the historic-strategic position of the State. Although Maharaja Gulab Singh and his successors acted completely in conformity with the British policy in Central Asia as "Independent" feudatories of the British Crown, the gradual development of the policy of Paramountcy reduced the State to a status of complete dependency of the British. In the early years of Maharaja Pratap Singh's reign, an attempt was made to depose him, ostensibly on the charge that he was conspiring with Czarist Russia against the British Government. The real purpose, of course, was to secure direct control over the affairs of the State. When, however, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta exposed the British intrigue and when there was an outcry even in the British Parliament itself, the British authorities resorted to indirect control and maintained a firm grip on the frontier areas.

From 1889, the Resident in Kashmir and the Political Agent in Gilgit were the *de facto* policy-makers in the State. By 1895, the

extreme northern territories of Chitral, Hunza and Nagar were brought completely under British control. In 1935, Gilgit was taken under direct British control, technically on a lease for sixty years from the Maharaja. Thus even in the period of feudal autocracy under the Paramountcy of the British Crown, the fate of an "Independent" status needs no comment.

A new bid for "Independent" status was made by the Maharaja in 1946-47. According to the British Cabinet Mission's Proposals of May 1946, British Paramountcy over Princely States would lapse and the latter would acquire sovereign Independent status with freedom to decide their relations with the contemplated Union of India. Under the Indian Independence Act, 1947, which established the separate Dominions of India and Pakistan, this status was conferred on the Princely States. Although faced with the more sensible choice of acceding to India or Pakistan, many Princes, under the old foreign influence, made a bid for "Independence". The Maharaja of Kashmir, in close collaboration with the Nawab of Bhopal and with the formal blessings of even Mr. Jinnah, worked for an "Independent" State of Jammu and Kashmir, having treaty relations with both the Dominions. The instruments of this policy were Mr. R. C. Kak, the former Kashmiri Prime Minister of the State, Col. Webb, the British Resident in the State, Major-Gen. Scott, the Military Adviser to the Maharaja and Mr. Powell, the Inspector General of Police--all well-known for their reign of terror during the "Quit Kashmir" movement.

How seriously the Maharaja was thinking of "Independent Kashmir", is clear from the following extract from his letter to Lord Mountbatten, the then Governor General of India, written on October 26, 1947 :

"As Your Excellency is aware, the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not acceded to either the Dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically, my State is contiguous to both the Dominions. It has vital economic and cultural links with both of them. Besides, my State has a common boundary with the Soviet Republic and China. In their external relations the Dominions of India and Pakistan cannot ignore this fact. I wanted to take time to decide to which I should accede, whether it is not in the best interests of both the Dominions and my State to stand independent, of course, with friendly and cordial relations with both."

It is now known that these plans of "Independence" were inspired by foreign influences, and some of the Princes, such as those of Hyderabad, Kashmir, Travancore and Bhopal, tried their best for their fulfilment. However, wiser counsels generally prevailed in both Britain and India. The schemes of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharaja of Kashmir failed before the cold realities of the situation.

The stress of events, however, was so great and the partition of India unleashed destructive forces with such rapidity that the British Government had little opportunity of finding a successful result of its Kashmir plans through intrigue and diplomacy. The Maharaja-British *entente* was therefore a dead letter. Moreover, the popular reaction to "independence" was so hostile that the imperialist tactics had to be changed. The area of operation of the foreign intrigues shifted to the North-West Frontier Province and the West Punjab.

Ever since August 15, 1947, noted British agents in the North West Frontier Province and the tribal areas, such as Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan and Khurshid Anwar, were active in mobilising armed hordes in preparation for an armed conquest of Kashmir through a *blitzkrieg* invasion. The unprecedented popular demonstrations which were witnessed in Kashmir during this period and which forced the Maharaja to release the National Conference leaders upset the apple cart of the British designs in Kashmir. Henceforth the British abandoned the idea of dominating this strategic area directly through an independent State under the Maharaja's nominal rule. They lent support to the annexation of Kashmir by Pakistan, involving a partition of the Jammu and Kashmir State on communal or strategic basis.

During the period of suspense and uncertainty, between August 15, 1947 and October 26, 1947 the National Conference as a whole was determined and striving to establish Kashmir's close democratic association with India, through a formal act of accession to India, which was being frustrated by the Maharaja's policy and tactics.

Sheikh Abdullah was very equivocal during this period, though the compulsion of events drove him to seek the help of India. The idea of "independence" had taken its roots in his mind, though at that time he could not survive without accession to India.

This is suggested by his own repetition, in the course of his speeches from May to July 1953, of his statement made earlier in 1947: "We must first gain our internal freedom from the autocratic rule and then alone can we decide whether we should accede to India or Pakistan or *adopt any other course*".

In critical times Sheikh Abdullah has been observed to show a good deal of confusion in his thoughts and actions. It would not be correct to infer that at that stage he had any clear-cut conception of "independence" or of the tactics for achieving the same. He was, therefore, riding a number of horses at the same time, viz. (a) accession to India, (b) accession to Pakistan, (c) partnership with Maharaja's "Independent" Kashmir, or (d) some other alternative without the Maharaja's autoeracy.

The Maharaja's "independence" plans and Sheikh Abdullah's confusion and hesitation vanished under the overwhelming pressure of democratic forces in India and Kashmir and the treacherous invasion of the State from Pakistan.

III. Invasion of Kashmir

Sinister foreign influences were at work even before the partition of India and they attempted to swallow Kashmir through the direct action of tribesmen from the North-West Frontier Province, aided by regular army personnel and equipment from Pakistan. The British Governors of the N. W. Frontier Province and the Punjab, Sir George Cunningham and Sir Francis Mudie respectively, may well have been unaware of the significance of the political changes at home and in India, but they certainly were not ignorant of the vast mobilization, training and equipment and movement of Pathan tribesmen and regular Pakistan personnel for the invasion of Kashmir. Much light is thrown on these dark events by the letter of Sir George Cunningham to General Sir Rob Lokhart, the then British Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, written a few days before the invasion. Some extracts from this were published in the Press Note issued by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on August 4, 1948:

"The letter was a private communication from Sir George Cunningham to Sir Rob Lokhart. It is quite possible that in these anxious days, when the fate of Kashmir hung in the balance, this fact was not remembered.

"In this letter it was stated that Sir George Cunningham gave a warning of tribal infiltration into Kashmir and that the members of the North-Western Frontier Government were actively helping in this.

"The information contained in this letter was the first authoritative intimation of the impending trouble in Kashmir... Almost immediately afterwards came the news of the actual invasion of the Kashmir Valley.

"While in retrospect one might regret that the letter was not preserved .."

It is not the purpose of this study to examine the connivance and the support of the foreign powers in the invasion of Kashmir by tribesmen and Pakistanis. The tone and contents of the dispatches of foreign correspondents in the foreign press clearly indicate how the invaders were boosted as "liberators" in the British and the American Press. The writings of Douglas Brown in the London *Daily Telegraph* and of Margaret Parton in the *New York Herald-Tribune* need no comment. The columns of *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express* and other British papers during these days throw enough light on the foreign attitude. Even such a responsible paper as the London *Times* described and eulogized the role of the British Commandant of the Gilgit Scouts, Major Brown, in the seizure of Gilgit. In all these tendentious reports by foreign correspondents about the tribal-cum-Pakistan invasion of Kashmir, the actual briefing was done by the British civil and military officers in Pakistan.

It is now well-known that a certain American agent, Russel Haight, took prominent part in the Pakistan operations. This 26-year old, ex-army sergeant, national of Denver, Colorado, (U.S.A.) was working with an engineering team on the frontier of Afghanistan when the tribal raids started. He rushed to Kashmir and organized tribesmen and rebels in Poonch and Kotli areas. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General in the "Azad" Kashmir army and he directed many of its operations. Referring to his terrorist activities, Sir B. N. Rau, India's delegate to the United Nations, observed in the Security Council in February 1950 :

"India, I am told, can, if she chooses, be tough and ask for damages from the United States for losses sustained as a result of Haight's activities not merely because of loss of life inflicted by him, but for the entire cost of military operations necessitated by his organization of 'Azad' forces."

The people of Kashmir rallied with great determination behind the National Conference in fighting the invaders. The work of the Indian Army and the Air Force in driving the invaders out of the Valley of Kashmir will always remain enshrined in the hearts of the freedom-loving Kashmiris. Thus, the second technique of the imperialist forces to keep Kashmir under their indirect control through Pakistan and to utilize it for their strategic and diplomatic objectives was frustrated.

IV. United Nations

According to Allan Campbell-Johnson (*Mission with Mountbatten* pp. 251-52) the prolonged and heated discussions between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan at the end of 1947 "convinced Mountbatten, who tried every means he knew of reconciling the divergent views, that the deadlock was so complete and the political pressure, both internal and external so intense, that only the introduction of third party with international authority acting in an agreed capacity could break it". He adds: "At this point, therefore, Mountbatten injected the suggestion that the United Nations Organization might be called upon to fill the third party role".

Accordingly, the Government of India referred the Kashmir problem to the Security Council on December 31, 1947. India did not wish to extend the area of conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir but earnestly sought to appeal to the ideals and purposes of the U. N. O. against Pakistan's aggression so that the latter might not help or participate in the invasion of her territories in the Jammu and Kashmir State. But, instead of judging the issue on its own merits, the great powers sought to get a foot-hold in the strategic part of the Indian Sub-Continent under the plea of holding an impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations. They demanded a "neutral administration" in place of the lawful and democratic Government of the Jammu and Kashmir State. The American delegate, Mr. Warren Austin, did not hesitate in saying bluntly that the "neutral administration" would be under foreign control.

A United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was appointed to investigate into and mediate upon the issues involved. The Commission tried to place itself in a dominant

position in relation to the whole situation in the State. Starting its work in July 1948, it made military, political and economic surveys of the State and got a large group of foreign military observers appointed and posted in the State. As a result of protracted negotiations between the Commission and the representatives of India and Pakistan, the resolution of August 13, 1948 became the basis of the agreement for cease-fire, truce and plebiscite. Accordingly, cease-fire was ordered to take effect from January 1, 1949. This was followed by the supplementary agreement of January 5, 1949. The only practical result of the United Nations intervention through the UNCIP was the cease-fire from January 1, 1949 and the subsequent demarcation of the cease-fire line. In view of the different assurances given by the Commission to the parties about certain clauses of the Truce and Plebiscite Agreements and their varying interpretation of other clauses, no further progress was made by it.

On March 22, 1949, Admiral of the Fleet, Chester W. Nimitz, the former United States Chief of the Naval Operations, was nominated as the Plebiscite Administrator for the Jammu and Kashmir State. Earlier the name of General Eisenhower was also suggested for the post of the Plebiscite Administrator, but he said that he was busy in Europe as the Supreme Atlantic Commander. The selection of a top-ranking war leader of the United States as the Plebiscite Administrator in Kashmir clearly suggests the strategic significance of the State in the eyes of the Pentagon and the State Department. Just as a big lie becomes truth in modern politics, these political Generals and Admirals alone can conduct a "fair and impartial" plebiscite!

A Military Adviser to the Commission was also appointed who was aided by a group of 37 Military Observers, whose main function was to supervise the cease-fire line. Lt. General Maurice Delvoie, the first Military Adviser, was involved in a serious breach of his neutral position when, on 26th September 1949, he took charge of seven packages, which had been deposited with the Lloyds Bank, Srinagar, by Sirdar Effendi and his wife, and took them to Pakistan. Effendi had been declared an enemy agent in March 1948 for collaborating with Pakistan and his property had been confiscated. This was well-known to General Delvoie who was lodged at Effendi's house through the courtesy of the Jammu and Kashmir

Government. General Delvoie admitted that he had been carrying letters for his friend, Effendi, and had moved away his goods and valuable by plane and road. Similar unlawful activities of the other U.N. Observers will be described separately.

The Commission did not make any further headway towards a Truce Agreement. Under pressure from the United States, the Commission was induced to suggest a solution of the dispute through arbitration, and this proposal was first made known to the British and the American Governments before it was presented to the Indian Government. Early in September 1949, President Truman and Premier Attlee in synchronized action made use of interventionary pressure in favour of arbitration by writing personal letters to Prime Ministers Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan. The British and the American press, particularly the latter, became vehement in supporting the course of arbitration even before the Commission had made such a proposal. In the course of further discussions at the Security Council in December 1949, General McNaughton of Canada presented further proposals, suggesting the appointment of a United Nations Representative to supervise the demilitarization programme, and a resolution to the same effect was adopted on March 14, 1950. According to the British Representative, Sir Terence Shone, the U.N. Representative could make "any suggestions which, in his opinion, are likely to contribute to the expeditious solution of the dispute".

Sir Owen Dixon, the Australian Judge, came as the first U.N. Representative. He agreed that tribal and Pakistani invasion involved a breach of international law. He also correctly concluded that a solution of the problem must be found by the parties themselves. But his scheme of demilitarization equated the status of India and Pakistan in Kashmir and his suggestion for the substitution of the lawful Government of the State and the introduction of United Nations Officers in local administration meant a gross violation of the internal sovereignty of the State and of the legal responsibility of India in regard to the security of, and law and order in, the State. His alternatives to an over-all plebiscite, involving a further partition of the State and partial plebiscite in the Valley of Kashmir, sowed the seeds of disruption within the State. These also included the provision for a United Nations administration in the limited plebiscite area, i.e., probably the Valley of Kashmir. Sir Owen emphasised the need for partition as a wise and permanent principle of settlement.

During 1951-52, the Security Council left the matter in the hands of the new U. N. Representative, Dr. Frank Graham. One draft resolution on demilitarization and plebiscite visualized that armed forces might be provided by the member States of the U.N. Dr. Graham suggested a draft agreement on demilitarization on September 7, 1951, embodied in his twelve-points, which were based on the two UNCIP Resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949. There was no scope for agreement as the substantial content of the U. N. resolutions was the same inspite of changes in the form. No wonder, Pakistan passively agreed to all these different forms of the same techniques of foreign intervention in Kashmir to which India and Kashmir were fundamentally opposed.

Further discussions took place in Paris (November-December 1951). There were new formulations of the demilitarization proposals as presented by General Devers, the Military Adviser to Dr. Graham, but no agreement could be reached. When Dr. Graham addressed the Security Council in Paris on his new resolution on January 17, 1952, the Soviet Delegate, Mr. Jacob Malik, intervened for the first time in the cumbersome proceedings and observed :

“These plans stand for United States and British interference on the internal affairs of Kashmir, for prolonging the dispute between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir question, for converting Kashmir into trust territory of the United States and Great Britain on the pretext of rendering Kashmir help through the United Nations. Finally, these plans as regards Kashmir aim to achieve the bringing of American-British troops into the territory of Kashmir and to convert the latter into an American-British colony and military strategic strongpoint.”

The famous intervention of the Soviet delegate induced the Anglo-American Powers to pursue the Kashmir question outside the Security Council and another joint Anglo-American resolution to this effect was passed in November 1952. Dr. Graham visited India again in February 1952 and held two conferences with Indian and Pakistani representatives at Geneva in August-September 1952 and January 1953. Discussions proved fruitless and no agreement was arrived at on the basic differences.

How does the man in the street in Kashmir regard the role of the United Nations in regard to the Kashmir dispute? The small

group of idealists who believed that the United Nations would develop into an agency of world peace are completely disillusioned. Most people feel convinced that the United Nations have become completely submerged in power-politics. It is well-understood that the Anglo-American powers, who have a majority in the world organization, have been handling the Kashmir case from the same point of view. The Kashmir dispute is handy to them to exert pressure on India so as to bring her round towards their strategic and diplomatic policies. Pakistan has more or less fallen in with these policies, and hence the general attitude of the United Nations about Kashmir is inclined towards Pakistan. It is a cold war pressure on the common man as well as the leadership of the National Organization in Kashmir, who all want to live peaceful lives in conditions of security, without the Democles Sword of the United Nations intervention hanging over them. The prolongation of the Kashmir dispute has meant a war of nerves on all sides and even such a leader as Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah became a victim of it. There is a great irony in the trend of events which made Sheikh Abdullah advocate "Independent" Kashmir on the basis of the partition scheme of Sir Owen Dixon. It remains also to be examined which influences worked on the Sheikh towards this plan which was fraught with disastrous consequences for the country.

V. Sheikh Abdullah's "Independent" Kashmir

Simultaneously with the external pressure, the interested foreign powers started the process of softening the weaker sections of national leadership in India and Kashmir, Pakistan being already under their influence. Our concern is with Kashmir alone. They sought to win over a section of the National Conference leadership through various devices and the great tragedy lies in Sheikh Abdullah's succumbing to their nefarious plans.

Sheikh Abdullah had developed certain traits in his personality and a kind of self-hypnosis which considerably influenced his political outlook. This made him more and more inclined towards a kind of local dictatorship. That partly explains his autocratic attitude towards his colleagues in the National Organization and the administration. The prospects of "Independent" Kashmir appeared most alluring to him in the context of such mental fixations.

In the complex and intricate situation that developed as a result of the United Nations intervention in Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah recognized four parties to the dispute, viz: Foreign Powers, i.e. United Nations, Pakistan, India and himself. With the help of India he frustrated the designs of Pakistan. He sought to balance India *vis a vis* himself with Pakistan and the United Nations. Thus developed the idea of "Independent" Kashmir, having friendly relations with both India and Pakistan, besides the international guarantee and economic aid from the United Nations or the United States of America. He sounded certain Soviet diplomats in 1948 at New York but found that they were not interested in the internal affairs of Kashmir. He thus gradually veered more and more towards the Western powers. The idea of Commonwealth guarantee of "Independent" Kashmir was broached, but it did not appeal to him, as it was neither acceptable to India nor to Pakistan, nor did it ensure adequate material aid. A study of facts reveals that the Sheikh became more and more inclined towards the United States of America. Hence he developed a new faith for a solution of the Kashmir problem in the intervention of the United Nations, i.e., the United States of America.

While dealing with the United Nations crowd, Sheikh Abdullah got the opportunity of contacting various persons who were interested in "Independent" Kashmir. He first broached the problem most tactfully, suggesting that someone with proper credentials must formally initiate the proposal in order to secure the agreement of the parties concerned. In a letter to Prince Ekrem of Geneva, about whom we shall hear more later, he stated that the solution of "Independent" Kashmir was first discussed in 1948, but no agreement could be reached. The military situation was very fluid in 1948, no one had a clear idea of what further developments would take place.

In May 1949, Sheikh Abdullah let the cat out of the bag. He made a public statement to certain British correspondents, particularly to G. Ward Price of the Rothermere chain of papers and to Michael Davidson of the *Sunday Observer* and the *Scotsman*. According to these reports, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"Accession to either side cannot bring peace. We want to live in friendship with both the Dominions. Perhaps a middle path between them with economic co-operation with each will be the only way of doing it. However, an independent Kashmir must be guaranteed not only by India and Pakistan but also by Great Britain, the United States and other members of the United Nations."

Sheikh Abdullah further suggested to Davidson that Poonch and Gilgit might choose to join Pakistan, implying that Jammu and Ladakh would go to India. This would leave only the Kashmir Valley as an "Independent" State. Davidson concludes :

"But for Kashmir, whose whole economy depends on free access for visitors from the entire sub-continent and a free flow into the "rich" markets of the world for Kashmiri luxury goods, perhaps some form of neutrality between the two Dominions was the only solution. Certainly Abdullah's suggestion would seem to offer a logical simplification of the problem and one involving neither Karachi nor Delhi in any surrender of principle".

Although Davidson's interview was prominently featured in the international press, Sheikh Abdullah did not find any encouragement to his ideas in India or Pakistan. He, therefore, thought it premature and inopportune to pursue the alternative at that stage and backed out of his suggestion. He had not found any international recognition as the person who could deliver the goods in Kashmir. In a contradictory statement, he suggested that he was only "thinking aloud" in an abstract and academic way when he discussed the "Independence" idea with Davidson. He added : "Independence may be and is a charming idea. But is it practical? Has it got necessary sanctions and guarantees, and can a small country like Kashmir with its limited resources maintain it? Or, *are all the countries concerned in a proper political temper at the present moment, ready to give their willing and sincere assent to it, or by only a formal declaration of independence, shall we not be making Kashmir a victim of some unscrupulous and powerful country? That will be a gruesome betrayal of the cause we have stood for* all these years and, therefore, these and other considerations make the alternative of independence not only theoretical and academic, but also meaningless. In that sense and spirit, I have a number of times before discussed this question with several journalists. It is in this context that these views should be read and understood."

It is clear from the above that Sheikh Abdullah was only marking time. It was only "at the present moment" when "all the countries concerned" were not prepared to accept his alternative that the arguments against "Independent" Kashmir were valid! When he launched a campaign for his dream in 1953, he forgot that it was "a gruesome betrayal of the cause we have stood for". In 1953, were all the parties concerned prepared for this solution? Presumably

Pakistan and Foreign Powers concerned were, though India was not. But she could be blackmailed through Pakistan and international pressure to accept the solution. This will be discussed at a later stage. In any case it was a "gruesome betrayal of the cause" he represented, the cause of Kashmir and its people.

During his visit to the United States in December 1949 in connection with the Security Council meeting regarding the UNCIP Report, Sheikh Abdullah established contact with many foreign circles, including Mr. Bebler, leader of the Yugoslav delegation and with the Saudi Arabian delegation. The idea of "Independent" Kashmir was discussed and an attempt was made to arrange a private conference between Sheikh Abdullah and the head of the "Azad" Kashmir Government, Sirdar Mohammad Ibrahim. Nothing tangible came out of these pourparlers except that Sheikh Abdullah established many international contacts.

VI. Dixon Plan

On his return from Lake Success, Sheikh Abdullah assiduously cultivated the support of foreign powers through various contacts in Kashmir. He received the greatest encouragement from Mr. Loy Henderson, the then United States Ambassador to India (and now in Iran). Mr. and Mrs. Henderson paid many visits to Kashmir in 1950-51 and they cultivated the friendship of many pro-Pakistan individuals. Mrs. Henderson stayed behind for longer periods in Kashmir to continue the process of internal softening-up. Most of the discussions the Hendersons had were informal and they gave every encouragement to the idea of "Independent" Kashmir, besides selling America to influential Kashmiris within Sheikh Abdullah's circle. As a matter of fact, the informality and diplomatic indiscretions of the Hendersons surprised many shrewd observers who concluded that something was in the offing. The American Press began to show more interest in and great friendship towards Sheikh Abdullah's regime.

Sheikh Abdullah became so friendly with the Henderson that he accompanied Mrs. Henderson in her visit to Amar Nath in August 1950. Mr. Loy Henderson paid a sum of Rs. 5,000/- to the Sheikh for flood relief activity. These earlier contacts of the Hendersons with Sheikh Abdullah and his circle as well as with important Pakistani agents in Kashmir suggested to shrewd observers that events were

likely to shape themselves in a new direction. American intervention in Kashmir, though crude and undiplomatic in many ways, has never been so direct as to antagonise India directly. A certain amount of subtlety, involved in the indirect techniques, was displayed by some of their functionaries.

However, Kashmir was still a predominantly Commonwealth affair, and it was no wonder that the Australian Judge, Sir Owen Dixon, was appointed as the United Nations Mediator. In the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand were becoming closely linked to the United States in a Defence arrangement. Sir Owen Dixon did not show any particular appreciation of the Kashmir Government, Sheikh Abdullah or the Kashmiri people. According to the plan that Dixon submitted to the Security Council, he demanded a complete supersession of the National Conference Government in Kashmir. Having failed to secure an agreement on the basis of the UNCIP resolutions, Dixon suggested various alternatives, involving plebiscite by "sections and areas" or partition of the undisputed areas of the State between India and Pakistan without plebiscite, but "holding a partial plebiscite in a limited area including or consisting of the Valley of Kashmir". In the limited plebiscite area, that is the Valley of Kashmir, the administration would be carried on by United Nations Officers under the Plebiscite Administrator, who could "exclude troops of every description" or require parties to provide them.

India was fundamentally opposed to the United Nations Administrators or troops being planted in the Kashmir Valley after the supersession of the legitimate Government. So far as this aspect of the Dixon Plan is concerned, Sheikh Abdullah vehemently opposed it as it involved the supersession of his own authority. It appears that India would have accepted the partial plebiscite scheme if the authority of Sheikh Abdullah's Government were continued. But Pakistan and the Foreign Powers through the United Nations were opposed to the continuation of his authority. Sheikh Abdullah told his colleagues in private that the Dixon Plan was an "ideal" solution for the dispute provided that the authority of his Government were recognised. This would enable the establishment of an "Independent" Valley of Kashmir. This was the mental climate of Sheikh Abdullah during 1950. During the crisis of May-August 1953, Sheikh Abdullah openly advocated the Dixon Plan, minus, of course, the supersession of his authority for which he had forged

firmer legal sanctions through the establishment of the Constituent Assembly in the State. He had, furthermore, established such international contacts which would enable him to dispense with even partial plebiscite altogether.

VII. Commonwealth Mediation

The Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference was held in London in January 1951. To begin with, Liaquat Ali Khan applied pressure tactics to include a discussion of the Kashmir dispute in the agenda of the Conference. However, the matter was discussed informally at a number of private conferences. At that time, Anglo-American collaboration in international policies was much greater than it is today. The Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Robert Menzies, took a prominent part in these private confabulations. It is most interesting to note that although a good deal of verbiage was used for restoring friendship and amity between India and Pakistan, the main interest in Kashmir of these statesmen was strategic. In spite of the well-known views of Prime Minister Nehru against foisting any variety of foreign troops on India's strategic frontiers, the proposal that United Nations forces or Commonwealth troops should substitute Indian and Pakistani troops in Kashmir with a view to holding a "fair and impartial" plebiscite, was most seriously advocated. Of course, Liaquat Ali Khan accepted all such proposals, while Nehru rejected them.

But what is not generally known is that the Dixon Plan of partition or partial plebiscite in the Valley of Kashmir was also broached. As a concession to India, it was suggested that the Valley of Kashmir alone or even the State as a whole might be declared as an "Independent Sovereign" State under the condominium of India and Pakistan, the two countries jointly controlling the Defence, Foreign Relations and Communications in the State. When, however, Prime Minister Nehru, as a concession to the Commonwealth solicitude for stability in the strategic area and in recognition of the actualities and facts in the State, suggested that the cease-fire line might be frozen for ever, with suitable adjustments, as the frontier between India and Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan rejected the proposal.

At that time, the Labour Party Government was in office in the United Kingdom. The Tory shadow Cabinet made an open bid

for "Independent" Kashmir and, through various contacts, sought to enlist the support of Sheikh Abdullah. In their letters to the *Times*, one Mr. B. Zutshi, Sir Hugh Garret and Sir Godfrey Davis (formerly Chief Judge of Sind Chief Court) suggested the establishment of a "technically independent" State in Kashmir. With encouragement from influential Tory circles, Sir Godfrey Davis read a paper entitled "Kashmir—a Sovereign State" at a joint meeting of the East India Association and the Overseas League on January 9, 1951, timing it with the deliberations of the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference.

Accepting the position that the conditions for a free and impartial plebiscite cannot be obtained, Davis suggested that Kashmir should be declared a sovereign State with the agreement and encouragement of India and Pakistan. "This should not apply, in her own interests, to foreign relations and defence, which should be the final responsibility of India and Pakistan, under the aegis of the United Nations, bound each in treaty to Kashmir and to each other". Davis further suggested that the Jammu and Kashmir State should constitute the boundaries of the pre-partition State and that the present Government of Sheikh Abdullah should be regarded as the nucleus of a new provisional Government. Sir Godfrey concluded: "Perhaps it may be Kashmir's destiny to lead the sub-continent along the path of unity and co-operation." These words are almost taken from Sheikh Abdullah's mouth as he talked privately in the same strain of the destiny of Kashmir as an "independent" State.

VIII. Constituent Assembly

With the failure of mediation by Sir Owen Dixon and the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, the foreign interventionary pressure towards a solution of the Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the Anglo-American policy, shifted to the United States. This was symbolized by the appointment of Dr. Frank Graham as the United Nations Representative on April 30, 1951. At the Security Council meetings in February 1951, the original draft Anglo-American resolution proposed that foreign troops from the members of the United Nations should be sent to Kashmir and, similarly, the administration of the State by the Jammu and Kashmir Government should be brought under the United Nations supervision. This crude form of intervention was not accepted by India.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdullah was busy with his own plans. His representative status had been questioned by Dixon. In spite of the guarantees enjoyed by the Jammu and Kashmir Government under the Indian Constitution, the shadow of Maharaja and his Regent, Yuvraj Karan Singhji, was still there in the background. Hence the convening of the Constituent Assembly was conceived of by the Sheikh for purposes other than those stated in the resolution of the General Council of the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference of October 27, 1950, which *inter alia* stated that the "territorial integrity of the State must remain inviolate and that in determining their future, the unity and organic homogeneity of the people should not be broken into artificial compartments". Taking the initiative in its own hands, the General Council declared that the Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise would have the purpose of "determining the future shape and affiliations of the State of Jammu and Kashmir."

In his opening address to the Constituent Assembly on November 5, 1951, Sheikh Abdullah adopted a line which was not strictly consistent with the resolution of the General Council. Discussing the future status of the State, he dealt at length with the three alternatives of affiliation with India or Pakistan and Independence. He dismissed the "Independence" solution as it could not be guaranteed, but the alluring idea of an "Eastern Switzerland" had already taken deep root in him. While he attacked the specific suggestion of sending Commonwealth troops into Kashmir, he did not treat in the same manner the draft Anglo-American resolution of February 1951, which provided for the entry of the troops of the United Nations member States in Kashmir. As a retrospective survey of Sheikh Abdullah's general attitude and behaviour suggests, he was not averse to the United Nations intervention in Kashmir, if "Independent" Kashmir under his leadership could be guaranteed. A correspondent of the *New York Times*, Michael James, later on Karachi correspondent of the same paper, who had an opportunity of meeting him at this time for three hours, observed :

"Hints have been made that once the Constituent Assembly begins to function there is a possibility of creating an opposition to accession to India and the creation of what may be a popular complete independence movement."

Reliable evidence suggests that Mr. Loy Henderson was the first foreign accredited representative to suggest the line of action personally to Sheikh Abdullah. The "Independent" State of Kashmir might be under the United Nations Trusteeship or surveillance for a few years. It would have close economic ties with both India and Pakistan. As a matter of fact, the Americans previously refused to send relief and economic aid to Kashmir on the plea that it happened to be a "disputed area". This was to exert pressure on Sheikh Abdullah to make him resile from his position in relation to India. A responsible representative of the Ford Foundation assured him in a private meeting that once the position of the State was stabilized internationally on the basis of "Independence", American aid would come in abundance to exploit the "resources of this beautiful country". On the basis of a tripartite guarantee, the State could revive and expand tourist traffic, attract hesitant foreign capital for the development of its rich natural resources and thus become a real Switzerland of the East.

Accordingly, the concrete actions of the Constituent Assembly, consisted of, besides the agrarian reforms, the abolition of the hereditary rule of the Maharaja, the institution of the elected headship and the introduction of a separate flag and emblem for the State. Such measures, no doubt, are very laudable in a democratic set-up, but when connected with the tactics of Sheikh Abdullah, they acquire a different significance.

IX. Foreign Press and Sheikh Abdullah

When Dr. Graham came to Kashmir as the United Nations Mediator, he was accompanied by predominantly American personal staff, including his Military Adviser, General Jacob Devers, a former Chief of the U. S. Army Field Forces. The attitude of the British and the American press manifested a definite change towards Sheikh Abdullah even though he was formerly the target of their bitter denunciations. Important papers like the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *London Times*, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Telegraph* (London) began to show a friendly interest in Sheikh Abdullah and an appreciation for his achievements. A few examples will explain the changed attitude.

Denis Warner wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* (August 29, 1951) :

"With the passage of time, the achievements of Sheikh Abdullah's self-appointed provisional Government and the effects of these

achievements on the people of Kashmir are factors which cannot be ignored or undone. In three and a half years his regime has freed the country from the despotic rule of the Maharaja and won over thousands of peasants by land reform."

Another correspondent, a sober American, wrote in the *Washington Post* (October 28, '51):

"Ask any rural citizen of Kashmir whether he favours India or Pakistan and his likely answer will be— 'I favour Sheikh Sahib'. Muslims have a three to one majority in Kashmir but it happens from a survey of the rural opinions that if a plebiscite was taken today Sheikh Abdullah and his pro-Indian party would win.

"Sheikh Abdullah is variously described as a dominating, ruthless politician and a benevolent national leader. Whichever he is, he has the Kashmir country-folk behind him."

The Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote from Srinagar (October 18, 1952):

"The visitor cannot fail to notice Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's hold on the people—even on those who want to accede to Pakistan..... The Sheikh's hold is not new: he has been known in his country for the last twenty years as the champion of the poor and for his persistent fight against autocratic rule, a fight which took him to jail eight times. His integrity is never questioned. The police force is sparse and people freely criticise the Government. The Sheikh himself freely mixes with the crowds."

This change in the attitude of the foreign press does not represent wisdom and friendliness suddenly dawning on these newspapers. Sheikh Abdullah's plans eminently fitted with partition and other schemes for Kashmir of the interested powers. That is why foreign Ambassadors, diplomats, educationists and their local agents began to win him over.

X. Foreign Influences within Kashmir

Many foreign influences have been at work within the State as auxiliaries of foreign powers pursuing their policies in subtle as well as in crude ways. It is well-known to all those familiar with the internal life of Kashmir that before independence in 1947, the British Residency, the British officers directly in the employ of the State Government, the permanent European residents in Kashmir, the political elements in foreign Christian Missions and educational institutions and foreign intelligence agents masquerading

as tourists, have been some of the most important influences on developments in Kashmir. Upto the end of the World War II, these influences have been predominantly British.

American interest in the State became pronounced during the concluding stages of the War. Kashmir was chosen as one of the best places for the recreation of American troops in South-East Asia and considerable United States Army and Air Force personnel visited the State. In August 1946, Volknar Wentzel was deputed by the National Geographical Society of America to make a photographic survey of the State and his descriptions in the *National Geographical Magazine* gave a comprehensive idea of his explorations in the State, especially on the Northern and Eastern Frontier areas adjoining the Soviet Union, Chinese Turkistan and Tibet. He was followed by Nichol Smith and Major Tutell, officers of the United States Office of Strategic Services. Both of them conducted explorations on the Kashmir-Tibet border. In his book "Golden Doorway to Tibet", Nichol Smith writes :

"I had been nursing a pet idea. During World War II, I had often flown in a C-47 over the mountains of Eastern Tibet and had thought grimly that below us was not one level spot for a landing in all these thousands of square miles. Was the Lake Pagong area equally unfit as a landing place ? That was what I wanted to know." (p. 234.)

Smith could not visit the Lake Pagong area, which lies partly in Tibet and partly in Ladakh. So Tutell went there alone. He writes in the same book (p. 248) :

"Loren's observations convinced him that its northern section had a minimum width of two miles for a distance of at least twenty miles and that its depth was considerable, even close in shore.

"Loren took from his pocket the rough notes which he had jotted down. He showed that there was ample room for a runway several miles long to be constructed at this end of the lake. In fact, he insisted, there was room for several runways here. The mountains to the North-West were low enough to be flown over easily by any aircraft after its take off.

"We looked at each other in silence".

Col. Nichol Smith had served under General Donovan during World War II, who was a high up in the United States strategic and Intelligence Service and closely linked up with the Federal Bureau

of Investigations. Donovan himself visited the State in 1950 and stayed here as a state guest for a couple of weeks. A complete strategic survey of the State has thus been made, especially with the help of the United Nations observers, whose activities we shall discuss later.

Reliable evidence suggests that many foreign intelligence agents have been visiting the State under different disguises as anthropologists, missionaries, photographers and what not in order to survey the frontier regions of the State. It is generally believed by their high ups at strategic headquarters that Soviet and Chinese air bases, defence works and atom bomb centres lie on the other side. They thus consider that Kashmir and its frontier districts are strategically ideally situated for establishing offensive bases on this side. Most of these intelligence surveys have, therefore, two-fold objectives :

- (a) to survey, and assess what is happening on the other side ; and
- (b) to survey and assess the strategic value of the State territories.

The assignments of these foreign agents generally preclude them from dabbling in internal politics as there are other agencies specially fitted for that purpose. Would it be fair to blame Sheikh Abdullah for the existence or functioning of the foreign strategic intelligence agencies in Kashmir ? They have been operating there for long, but the gradual deflection of the Sheikh from nationalist and anti-imperialist stand towards a pro-American line gave the foreign influences to operate freely in the state and spread their poisonous tentacles in every possible way. Ultimately he came so much under these foreign influences which he fostered that he acted in a manner fraught with disastrous consequences for the people.

XI. Foreign Residents

When the Residency in Kashmir was wound up on the eve of transfer of power in August 1947, many British residents stayed behind. To begin with, in conformity with the line of the Residency, they were opposed to both Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference. The Srinagar Club was their common rendezvous where they would gossip and discuss local politics. They were generally reported to be Pro-Pakistani and through their servants they gave a coherent propaganda line to the spate of rumours and local gossip that

came into the club. Some of the toady Indian and Kashmiri officers and pensioners gave vent to their feelings against their country and its new rulers at this place. In 1947-48, the most prominent local resident group consisted of Lt. Col. and Mrs. O.B.R. Dicky, the Secretary of the Club, Dr. Phil Edmonds, Dr. H.G. Berkowitz, Rev. Murphy, and Mr. D.E. Davis. They maintained contact with local malcontents, and were the principal source of information to their friends abroad as well as to foreign visitors to Kashmir. Many adverse reports in foreign press had their source at this infectious centre.

From 1951 it has been observed that the club and local European residents, having a British tradition behind them, have shown greater restraint and commonsense than they were accustomed to. They began to call on Sheikh Abdullah and cultivate his goodwill. They have not, however, generally given up their pro-Pakistani attitude and propaganda. It appears correct to say that most of the agents amongst the club group now left behind are second string people. In the July-August 1953 crisis the attitude of many of the local residents was against the present Government. They generally appear to have learnt a lesson after the expulsion of Miss Edna Bellefontaine. Only the Dalgate and Drugjan areas seem to be even now contaminated by the influence of one Miss Stavrides, who was formerly connected with the Residency here but is now engaged in business. She is of Greek origin and maintained close contact with Hitler Germany before the last war.

XII. Foreign Visitors

Kashmir is a tourist country and in the concluding years of the war the number of European tourists rose to about 2,5000 every year. They are a very good source of income to Kashmiris and add to the gaiety and comforts of the country. Thus they are most welcome. But, unfortunately, some of them have been observed to be dabbling in politics. They establish local contacts and somehow manage to meet the disgruntled and unscrupulous elements. Not only do they collect information from these unhealthy sources, but also encourage pro-Pakistani activities and ideas. In their conversations with the local people they try to give the impression that Kashmir in association with India could not resist the combined pressure from Pakistan, backed by Western Powers, particularly the United States of America. Many of them have been observed to have done indiscriminate propaganda against the dangers of Communism to the people in Kashmir from the Chinese and Russians.

Some of these foreign visitors have called on Sheikh Abdullah and attempted to influence his opinion in the same direction. The activities of Miss A.L. Stansbury, Major Bailey, Mr. Milton Clark, Mr. Gerald Hanley, Mr. B. W. Curtis, Mr. J. M. Steadman, Miss Mirriam Young, and Mrs. E. Hogan, who maintained close contact with Sheikh Abdullah, aroused great suspicion in the minds of ordinary people.

Incidentally, most of these visitors have been Americans. Out of about seven thousand European visitors who came since 1947, about 5500 were Americans, while formerly they used to be British. There have been no visitors from the Soviet Union, China and other countries associated with their bloc. All these things put together clearly suggest what sort of foreign influences have been at work here. It has also been observed that most of these American "visitors" have been on some sort of political mission or assignment.

XIII. The Kazaks

The epic story of the Kazak trek from Chinese Turkistan to Kashmir *via* Ladakh is one of the greatest stories of human suffering, endurance and faith. It is alleged that out of thousands of these innocent nomadic bands led by some of the most fanatical feudal lords of Central Asia who escaped Russian and Chinese persecution only 280 survived to reach their asylum in Kashmir. Actually the story of Communist persecution has been denied by many of the Kazaks and Chinese Turks. Their being uprooted from their homes is the nefarious work of American agents like Consul General Paxton at Urumchi and Vice-Consul Dreeson (now at the American Embassy in Kabul). They are the best experts on Central Asian terrain. The United States strategy is to train them and others as parachutists for future contingencies in Soviet and Chinese Turkistan. From a humanitarian point of view every decent person will sympathise with them. But, unfortunately, unscrupulous political agents, disguising themselves as anthropologists, missionaries and educationists, have exploited their miseries for their nefarious political ends.

Between January 1950 and October 1951, nearly 300 of these unfortunate Kazak and Uigar sufferers arrived in Srinagar. Their important leaders were Mohd. Amin Bogra, formerly Deputy Governor of Sinkiang, Maulvi Qasim Daimulla, Secretary of Chinese Turkistan Nationals, Munawar Khwaja, Brigadier Dalel Khan, Isa Yousuf

Effendi Alaptkin and Ali Beg. Many of these leaders were very rich people who brought wealth from Central Asia and were closely associated with Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek. The poorer lot were lodged at the Central Asian Serai at Safa-Kadal and the richer ones found quarters in the better parts of the City. Haji Isa Yosuf Alaptkin, formerly Secretary General of the Sinkiank Government, established high level foreign contacts and made political reports to foreign diplomats. He also wrote anti-Soviet and anti-Chinese articles in the *Turkistan*, a journal published in Geneva.

The Serai Safakadai became a place for international relief activity, which at the same time camouflaged political activities of foreign agents. The Kazaks became a sort of exhibition of alleged Chinese and Soviet brutality. Relief came to the Kazaks from Free China Relief Association through China Bank of New York. The National Council of Churches of the U. S. A. sent relief through Danald E. Rugh, the Director of Relief of the National Christian Council in India. The National Christian Council Relief Committee spent nearly Rs. 175,000 on the relief and resettlement of the Kazaks between October 1, 1952 and April 30, 1953. Dr. Phil Edmonds of the C.M.S. School in Kashmir has been receiving about Rs. 5,000 per month for relief activities. How all this money has actually been spent, God alone knows. The educational and cultural welfare of the Kazaks was looked after by Milton Clark of the Middle East Institute of the U.S.A., of whom we shall hear more later.

Donald E. Rugh is closely associated with the American Embassy and Miss Evelyn W. Hersey, Social Welfare Attache of the U.S. Embassy, is so close to him that they even share their communications. At first it was decided to settle the Kazaks in Kashmir in agricultural and commercial pursuits, but in view of the political background of their leaders, it was decided to rehabilitate them in Turkey. The liaison with the U.S. Embassy in Turkey was maintained through Miss June Stoll, also of the Church World Service of the U.S.A.

Dr. Edmonds and Milton Clark established close contact with Sheikh Abdullah and the former enjoyed all patronage that the Sheikh could bestow in the State, particularly in the Education Department and the University. At first they appealed to Sheikh Abdullah's humanitarian instincts to take interest in the Kazaks and it is well-known that he not only visited Serai Safakadal but on a number of

occasions met Isa Yousuf Alaptkin, Dalel Khan, Ali Beg and others. A certain place in Rajbag became the centre of many of these meetings. Sheikh Abdullah was gradually made to swallow the bait about the politics of the Kazaks and there was a tacit understanding that when the "Independent" Kashmir plans materialized in due course, Sheikh Abdullah would take active steps for the rehabilitation of the Kazaks in Kashmir. Through this association with the Kazaks, their leaders and the American agencies in charge of their relief and rehabilitation, Sheikh Abdullah brought himself into close association with the United States policy in Central Asia. This was recognized in Sheikh Abdullah's own circle as well as the circles close to the American Embassy. At any rate that was the impression left on the minds of the public in general. In view of its repercussions on the Indian public opinion and the restraint exercised by his colleagues, Sheikh Abdullah could not do for the Kazaks what Rugh and Hersey wanted him to do. They, therefore, expressed a "great deal of sympathy" for the ex-Prime Minister for his helplessness. They expressed their regret that "*Kashmir seems closed at the present moment for further plans.*"

Edmonds and Clark made it a point to arrange the exhibition of the Kazaks at Serai Safakadal to all distinguished foreign visitors to Kashmir. The members of the United Nations Observer Group in Kashmir also maintained close contact with the Kazaks. During his short visit to Kashmir, Mr. Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic leader in the United States, also paid a visit to Serai Safakadal and expressed his sympathy with the Kazaks. He had discussions with Isa Yusuf Effendi Alaptkin and posed for a photograph with a Kazak group including Isa Alaptkin. Edmonds and Milton Clark were, of course, the chief conductors of Stevenson's pilgrimage to the Kazak sanctuary at Serai Safakadal. It is necessary that some light should be thrown on the activities of these two gentlemen.

XIV. Dr. Phil Edmonds

Dr. Phillip Martin Edmonds and his wife Mrs. Joan Isabel Edmonds have been in Kashmir for more than six years now, with only a brief period of six months' absence on leave to Australia during 1950-51. Edmonds was deputed to Kashmir by the London Mission as the Principal of the C.M.S. School at Sheikh Bagh, Srinagar. His normal functions are those of a Christian missionary and an educationist, but he has utilized his position in these capacities for

various political purposes, for which he appears to be well-trained, probably due to his work with the British Intelligence Corps before his present spiritual assignment.

To begin with, Edmonds made his presence felt by expressing pro-Pakistan views to his teachers, students and other contacts, and he even hoisted the Pakistani flag on August 14-15, 1947. During the national upsurge in Kashmir following the tribal-cum-Pakistani invasion, he remained in the background, but organized a sort of psychological warfare against Kashmir's association with India through his contacts amongst the missionaries, the European residents in Kashmir, the staff of the Mission School and various pro-Pakistan individuals and groups. He came into greater prominence in 1950 through his association with the United Nations Military Observer Group, particularly General Nimoo and the Australian group of members. He arranged an introduction to Sir Owen Dixon, the fellow Australian who was the United Nations Mediator in Kashmir. He maintained close contact with Dixon and had long conferences with him behind close doors. It is reasonably believed that many of the views of Dixon about the local situation were inspired by the information supplied by Edmonds.

His connection with Dixon brought him close to Sheikh Abdullah, who privately supported a modified Dixon formula which might enable the establishment of "Independent" Kashmir under his own authority. Since 1950, Sheikh Abdullah maintained close contact with Edmonds and boosted his position in the University of Kashmir and various other extra-departmental activities of the Ministry of Education. In view of the undesirable attitude and activities of Edmonds, it was believed in 1951 that he would not be allowed to return to Kashmir after the expiry of his leave. But Sheikh Abdullah always intervened with the authorities on his behalf and he returned earlier than expected. Some of the important advisers of Sheikh Abdullah, such as Mr. and Mrs. B. P. L. Bedi, Mr. M. A. Ashai, the former Registrar of the University, and a few senior officers of the Education Department, maintained close contact with him. This whole group was either advocating "Independent" Kashmir or otherwise giving a pro-Pakistani orientation to the Sheikh's outlook and policies. Mr. Ashai was almost in day-to-day contact with Edmonds and sometimes they were together till late in the night. The most important contact of Edmonds with the U. N. Observer Group, after General Nimoo, was one Major Scott, whose wife was employed by

Edmonds as his Secretary. Edmonds, Mrs. Scott and Mr. Ashui were frequently observed together till late hours preparing documents, which it is believed went across to Pakistan through the Observers. After the transfer of Major Scott, Lt. Col. Murphy came to Srinagar as the Military Administrative Officer of the Observer group, and Mrs. Murphy succeeded Mrs. Scott as Edmond's Secretary. During General Nimoo's time, a Newzealander observer, Major Maurice Brown, took photographs of all the strategic frontiers of the State and Edmonds provided introductions to missionaries at Leh, Kargil, Bandipore and other adjoining places.

A good deal of the typing of Edmonds has been done with a green-ribboned typewriter, which the United Nations Observers brought as a gift for him from Pakistan.

Reference has already been made to Edmonds' contacts with the Kazak leaders, Isa Alaptkin, Dalel Khan, Amin Bogra, Ali Beg and others, in the course of his relief work for them on behalf of the Church World Service of America. It is not known how Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 5,000 per month received by Edmonds are disbursed by him. But a good part of it has gone to politically undesirable persons. It is for Mr. Rugh and Miss Hersey, the Social Welfare Attache of the American Embassy, and other Church World Service Representative to account for the disposal of these funds. Edmonds work with the Kazaks brought him into close contact with Milton Clark and many other Americans working for the United States policy in Central Asia, Edmonds and Clark not only looked after the "relief" and "cultural" side of the Kazak Welfare activities of the United States Embassy and the World Church Service of America but also settled the personal and group disputes of the Kazaks and gave them an integrated political line. Besides Rugh and Miss Hersey, Edmonds maintained close contact with Mr. Richard Leach, the First Secretary of the American Embassy and Mr. and Mrs. Adams, also of the American Embassy. Hersey, Leach, Mr. and Mrs. Adams and Rugh paid a number of visits to Kashmir particularly in the summer of 1953. Mrs. Adams even made arrangements for her stay in Kashmir through Dr. Edmonds. The houseboat "Claremont" became the nerve centre of all these intrigues.

In a joint communication to Edmonds in the middle of July 1953, Rugh and Hersey complained about the confused and difficult

situation in Kashmir, and asked for his advice and an assessment of the situation. In August 1953, Rugh was in Turkey for a while and sent a cryptic message to Edmonds saying: "Mission successful". In Turkey, Rugh has close links with the Church World Service counterpart there and also the United States Embassy. It is obvious what Rugh's mission there was, besides the resettlement of the Kazaks.

When Adlai Stevenson came to Kashmir, Milton Clark stole a march over Edmonds in respect of this contact. However, Edmonds also met Stevenson and while Sheikh Abdullah was having discussions with the American leader, Edmonds also was called in for tea.

This brief description of this Christian missionary and educationist shows that his activities had a much wider range than entailed by his normal functions. His pro-Pakistani contacts and propaganda need no comment. But substantial amounts of money, milk, clothes, food and other supplies coming from relief agencies have also gone into politically partisan channels. Foreign tourists, journalists, diplomats, missionaries and others have been misinformed about the Kashmir situation. Information has been sent across the cease-fire line and elsewhere against the interests of the State. What is most sinister, the mind of Sheikh Abdullah has been diverted to purposes involving a "gruesome betrayal" of the national cause. The contacts and activities of Edmonds with the United Nations Observers, Dixon and Stevenson, the Kazaks, Milton Clark and Donald Rugh, Hersey, Adams, and Leach, Ashai Bedis, the M.R.A. crowd and host of others having a hostile political outlook towards Kashmir, played a significant part in subversing the mind of our erstwhile national leader, S. M. Abdullah, which was fraught with disastrous consequences for the State.

XV. Milton Clark

Milton J. Clark arrived in Srinagar rather late *i.e.* 14th of August 1952. He stayed in Kashmir for nearly a year and during this period became an important link in the chain of foreign agents working in Kashmir. In many ways he was more suave and subtler than Edmonds, and his techniques of work were more upto date. He sent most of his reports and messages through tape recorders and made a comprehensive social and political survey

of the State, with special reference to the frontier area, linking the State with Central Asia and Tibet.

He was apparently an anthropologist writing a doctoral dissertation on the Kazaks as a Harvard University research scholar, with additional fellowship aid from the Middle East Institute of the U.S.A. Soon after his arrival, he established close contact with the Kazak leaders, especially his neighbour at Rajbagh, Isa Yusuf Alaptkin. He organized his activities at the Serai Safakadal where he started giving lessons to the Kazaks and their boys. Besides Edmonds and Rugh, other persons who worked in association with him were Mr. S. P. Moon and Mr. G. C. Raobrentz, whose political antecedents and connections are of a shadowy nature. Clark helped the Kazaks in forming their organization, preparing their statements and documents. For more confidential discussions he took the Kazak leaders out of town to Shalimar and Harwan. He also took the Kazaks for filming to the mountain resort of Sonamarg and at that time gave the impression that Sheikh Abdullah also would be in the show.

He met Sheikh Abdullah very frequently along with his charming wife and discussed with him Central Asian politics and American foreign policy, besides the Kazak affairs. In the United States, he had important political contacts with persons connected with the Republican Party's Far Eastern lobby. He sent reports to the Scripps-Howard papers through Mrs. F. Burnham of New York, who was a leading contact for anti-Soviet articles, some of which made references to India and Kashmir. He also maintained contact with Mr. Joseph E. Harrison, Overseas News Editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who sought information about the present situation in Chinese Central Asia.

When Adlai Stevenson was in Kashmir, Milton Clark came close to him and they together visited the Kazaks at the Serai Safakadal. Clark received complimentary letters from his friends for his "newly formed acquaintance from Illionois" and for his "success with Adlai". In his contacts with a number of American Fullbright scholars in various parts of Asia and with some Kazak students in New York, Clark expressed his wish for seeing some one bring light and understanding in India and Asia about American policy. He also maintained friendly contacts with the whole crowd

of American diplomats whose names have been mentioned in connection with Edmond's activities.

XVI. Missionaries

There is a chain of foreign Christian Missions in the Jammu and Kashmir Provinces and the Ladakh District. Most of the missions are maintained by the British Church Mission Society and the others by the Americans, including the Moravian Mission in Ladakh, but they now operate under a united organisation. Many of these missions have done good educational and medical work and the Biscoe schools are well-known everywhere. But they have never been free from open and underground political activity and a number of foreign intelligence agents have carried on their activities under the disguise of Church work. During the days of British rule, there was perhaps some justification for the clergymen's political activities from the imperial point of view. Some of these politically-inclined missionaries have not changed their mentality and they not only participate in the cold war but also take interest in local politics. They generally follow the line of policy of their respective governments, though some of them may do otherwise. Such is the case of Edmonds, an Australian working for the British Church Mission, who has completely identified himself with American agents and their policies.

There is a chain of missions in the Jammu Province at Jammu, Batote, Kishtwar and Bhadrawah. These towns and centres are vitally connected with the foreign strategic plans in relation to the Jammu Province as revealed in the Dixon proposals, particularly with reference to river Chenab. These missions are maintained by American Churches and receive frequent visitors from Bible Societies and other such organizations. It has been observed that some of them have been foreign intelligence agents with up to date equipment for recording speeches, photographing, filming and so on. During the Praja Parishad agitation, Miss Stansbury, to whom reference has been made previously, was seen maintaining close liaison with some of these agents in the guise of missionaries. The intensification of the missionary activity in the Jammu Province is a new development during the recent years.

In Kashmir, the political group amongst the missionaries during recent years has consisted of Mr. Edmonds, Rev. Murphy,

Rev. Mclaughlin Thomas, Rev. Huttinga Nicholson, Father Shanks, Miss Harison, Mr. & Mrs. Mazzoni, Miss Walmsley, Miss Drew, Miss. Ashby and Rev. Anthony Spurr. Dr. Edmonds has acted as the leader of the group and given them the political line. They have generally indulged in Pro-Pakistan propagandas and some of them innocently believed in the suggestion of Edmonds that with the help of Britain and the U.S.A. Kashmir was bound to go to Pakistan ultimately. The British group has generally tried to be more cautious and discreet, though they have been prevailed upon to believe in the danger of Communism in Kashmir from China and the Soviet Union. The sufferings of the Kazaks have been brought to the focus as the result of Communist persecution. The activities of these missionaries have been carried on at (besides Srinagar Anantnag, Baramulla and Sopore) the strategic centres of Bandipore, Sangku, Kargil and Leh in Ladakh. The distribution of relief supplies such as milk, food, clothes, medical aid and even cash has been utilized for political ends.

Annual conferences of the churches are held in summer, mostly at the Sheikh Bagh Mission School premises where religious speeches are made and discussions held. Generally some prominent church leaders from India or Pakistan addresses these gatherings. Though the speeches are mainly religious, attacks on Communism in general and Communist countries in particular are highlighted. The exaggerated versions of the dangers to India, Pakistan and Kashmir from such quarters also come within the scope of these religious conferences, especially in informal discussions.

The Church World Service of the United States of America, to which reference has been made in connection with the activities of Donald Rugs. Missions with the definite obligation, under food, etc. through these that the conditions and procedures the Indo-American Agreement, Government of India will of relief distribution, as prescribed by the about these plans be observed and Government officials informed to Govern- and activities. However, no such information is sent ment officials in Kashmir. On the other hand, the recent statem. of Dr. Katju, India's Home Minister, in Parliament about the activities of foreign missionaries became a topic of anti-Indian propaganda by the missionaries.

XVII. United Nations Observers Group

The United Nations Observer Group in Kashmir was introduced into the State in 1949 following the cease-fire agreement. According to the present Chief Military Observer, Maj.-General B. L. de Ridder, the Observers are in Kashmir "for the sole purpose of assisting the military authorities of India and Pakistan in implementing the cease-fire agreement of January 1, 1949." Ridder adds: "The function of the Observers is to investigate complaints by either party alleging violations of the agreement and to establish facts. They have no political functions and they are under instructions not to engage in any political activities."

It remains to be examined whether the Observers confine their activities to their legitimate functions and act according to their public instructions. This brief account will show that their instructions are more honoured in breach than in observance as they have some other secret instructions to carry out.

We have already referred to the type of activity indulged in by General Delvoie. It has been observed that many other Observers have taken part in illegal activities such as import and export of goods from and to Pakistan by air and road across the cease-fire line. Goods have been even bought from Army Canteens at concession rates and sold in the market to a selected few on both sides of the cease-fire line. There is definite proof that letters, small parcels and messages have been carried both ways. The diplomatic immunity enjoyed by the Observer group has thus been grossly abused. Even if a certain amount of indulgence is granted for participation in such activities of a non-political type, there have been definite political contacts behind many such activities. Evidence has come to light which suggests that both Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg maintained contacts with political elements in Pakistan and 'Azad' Kashmir through some of these Observers. This link across the border was maintained at very informal level and letters were exchanged in the name of other persons.

The Observer group has its headquarters at Srinagar on the Indian side and at Rawalpindi on the Pakistan side of the cease-fire line. We are informed only about their activities on the Indian side. They have been seen taking photographs and making surveys of all frontier regions, strategic points and utility services

within the State. They spend most of their time away from the cease-fire line in the city of Srinagar and other towns. They go about making contacts with civilians, particularly with those who are working for Pakistan. The merchants from whom they buy their goods and probably carry on illegal trade across the cease-fire line, are generally of Pro-Pakistan complexion.

They have established close contacts with Dr. Edmunds and his group described above, through whom they are able to meet foreign correspondents, tourists, diplomats and such other people, with the result that most of the reports about Kashmir in foreign circles are contaminated at the source. Their undue interest in the Kazaks, the Kazak leaders and people otherwise connected with them is bound to rouse the suspicions of even the most simple-minded people.

Most of the Observers come from the Powers who have shown an adverse attitude towards India at the Security Council. Of the 50 Observers in Kashmir on September 1, 1953, 24 were from the U.S.A., 7 from Australia, 6 from Canada, 3 from Belgium, 2 from Sweden, 3 from New Zealand, 2 from Denmark, 2 from Chile and 1 from Uruguay. It is clear that the United States and her Anzus and Atlantic allies are the predominant source of these Observers. They are generally officers of high status from the strategic services. The rank of 50 Observers, excluding the General in charge, is given below :—

Colonels	4
Lt. Colonels	13
Majors	20
Captains	4
Commandants (Belgian)	2
Lieutenants	1
Sergeants	4
Lt-Commodore	1
Commodore	1

This shows how a well-trained and experienced group of fairly senior officers apparently looks after the cease-fire line but actually performs other activities. The Observer group is provided with air transport facilities through the U.S. Air Force planes which can be seen at Srinagar and Rawalpindi aerodromes. The planes are equipped with

strong wireless transmission sets at their headquarters, through which they keep their principals well informed about everything. Road transport has been placed at their disposal by the military authorities of India and Pakistan in their respective territories.

The liaison of General Nimoo, Major and Mrs. Scott, Lt. Col. and Mrs. Murphy and Major Brown with the Edmunds group has already been described. When the activities of the Observers were intensified in March 1951, Col. Ceily was kept in charge of the intelligence work. He employed a number of local informers through whom contacts were established with pro-Pakistani individuals and money distributed liberally for the services rendered. It would be cumbersome to mention the names of the Observers who went into the interior of the city and established contacts with traders, hawkers, *hanjis*, *behras* (waiters), Kazak leaders like Ali Beg and Isa Alaptkin and a number of pro-Pakistan intellectuals. In 1951-52, Lt. Col. Mollersward, an elderly Swedish Observer, was noticed attending meetings, receptions and social functions in civilian clothes. People who came into contact with him assessed him to be the cleverest in the intelligence section in the Group. Col. Macdonald (Australia) was observed exhorting certain people to intensify agitation and other activities in favour of the Security Council's resolution on Kashmir especially with regard to the withdrawal of Indian forces and the induction into office of the U.N. Plebiscite Administrator for an immediate plebiscite. The American tourist, Miss A.L. Stansbury was seen guiding many Observers through the city and introducing them to her contacts. Miss Edna Bellefontaine also was seen in contact with them doing the same type of work. During 1952-53, all the intelligence work was directed by Lt. Col. Ives of Canada. Although the U.N. Observer group as a whole can be correctly viewed as a foreign military intelligence team in Kashmir concerned mainly with strategic and tactical information, especially about the Indian Army in Kashmir, their work in civil and political intelligence has also been considerable.

One U.N. Observer, M/Sgt. John E. Denn of the U.S. Army Infantry, was seen contacting the workers of the Raj Bagh Silk Factory and exhorting them to look to the United Nations for a solution of the Kashmir question. He told the workers that the slogan of separation from India raised by Sheikh Abdullah "would ensure their economic betterment." He further suggested that they should

start a campaign for free plebiscite and, in case this did not materialize, they should "directly raise the Independence slogan." He added : "In the event of Kashmir remaining independent, they (the United Nations and the U.S.A.) would render both military and financial aid to them (Kashmiris) so that their economic condition would improve." Concluding his exhortations, Denn stressed that they should stick to the two slogans raised by Sheikh Abdullah, i.e., "free plebiscite or independence."

We have given instances of direct intervention by a large number of these Military Observers in the internal affairs of the State and the nature of influence they have sought to exercise for the settlement of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the policies of the United Nations or the United States foreign policy. It is not known how far they maintained direct contact with Sheikh Abdullah, but it is definite that, through the Kazak leaders, the Edmonds circle, foreign visitors and journalists, pro-Pakistan individuals and the diplomats on holiday in Kashmir, they maintained close liaison with the former Prime Minister. Their role and activities after the change of Government on August 9, 1953, have been fully described in the Indian Press and there is not the least doubt that they openly interfered in the internal affairs of the State in August last.

XVIII. Diplomats

It is rather difficult to write about the influence exercised by foreign diplomats on the internal developments in Kashmir and the change brought about in the attitude and policy of Sheikh Abdullah from the principles and ideals of the National Conference towards "Independent" Kashmir. It is the legitimate function and activity of diplomats to sell their countries and policies in the countries to which they are accredited. It is also understood that a certain amount of intelligence work is done for an assessment of the social, political and military conditions in the country concerned. It is expected from most diplomatic missions in India that they generally confine their activities to such legitimate purposes.

During the last six years, diplomats from many countries have visited Kashmir, partly for holiday and partly for a study of the conditions in Kashmir, which is one of the most important international problems on the agenda of the United Nations. Along with diplomats came foreign correspondents and

sometimes press delegations. In Kashmir, they have been provided with all facilities to enjoy themselves and to study the situation freely for themselves. The difficulty, however, has been that they were invariably contacted by the foreign agents mentioned above who gave them a tendentious and distorted picture of the conditions here. They are naturally influenced by the accounts given by what appear to be "neutral and impartial" foreigners doing religious, educational and humanitarian work.

Sheikh Abdullah also cultivated their friendship. Till the beginning of 1952, he did not openly advocate "Independent" Kashmir or denounce the association of the State with India. He took a different line by complaining that foreigners looked on the problem of Kashmir from a narrow perspective as a dispute between India and Pakistan. He often asked: What about the people of Kashmir themselves? If they were let alone, they would do a lot towards the development of the country. This line generally impressed the visitors and the interested powers caught the hint. Did not "Independent" Kashmir solution save the face of both India and Pakistan and at the same time suit their strategic and diplomatic policies towards Central Asia? There were others with global-strategic plans of building bases from Morocco to Indo-China against the Communist world. Kashmir eminently suited their defence plans for the Middle East, Central Asia and even South-East Asia. In private conversation, Sheikh Abdullah often talked of power politics and expressed the view that Kashmir could not only balance India and Pakistan, but also the great power blocs, and, even within the Western camp "Independent" Kashmir could act as a counterpoise between British and American policies towards the Middle East and Central Asia.

Diplomats from the United States of America particularly cultivated the friendship of Sheikh Abdullah. We have mentioned the softening-up process started by Mr. and Mrs. Loy Henderson. Their contacts, demeanour and private talks left no doubt in the minds of people that the State Department was seriously interested in the "Independent" Kashmir plan. The plan had not received any encouragement from the overwhelming majority of the National Conference leadership in Kashmir nor from the Governmental circles in India. Even Pakistan's ambitions were not appeased by such a solution. This is clear from the resolutions of the Security Council and the private discussions with the United Nations representatives.

However, Loy Henderson had caught Sheikh Abdullah in the American net.

Mr. Chester Bowles dissuaded himself from adopting the familiar tactics of Henderson. He visited Kashmir a number of times and met Sheikh Abdullah. During his visit in September 1952, he wrote an extremely nice personal letter to the Sheikh expressing a desire to meet him. When they finally parted, a sort of family meeting took place at which gifts were exchanged. We do not know of any other Chief Minister in India receiving such recognition from an American Ambassador, who was highly respected in New Delhi. It was a definite indication to Sheikh Abdullah that he had the United States' support in his plans. Such issues, were discussed and decided upon informally and cannot, therefore, be proved in terms of formal documentary evidence. The general impression left on the public opinion in Kashmir, in circles both friendly as well as hostile to the "Independent" Kashmir idea, was that Sheikh Abdullah had sold his plan to the Americans.

This *entente cordiale* was symbolized by the scholarships and fellowships granted by the United States Government and other institutions to Kashmiri officials and students. It was openly complained by Sheikh Abdullah and his friends that, but for the intervening channel of the Government of India, much more could be done by such bodies as the Ford Foundation for the development of Kashmir. India's financial help in connection with the Five Year Plan and the Community Development Projects was never utilized. An attempt was made to win over the intellectual circles by dangling before them the bait of establishing an International University for the whole of South-East Asia in Kashmir. Besides educational and training facilities, help was promised in the form of special free gifts of books, medicines and relief supplies to the State amounting to millions of dollars. Some officers in the confidence of Sheikh Abdullah openly talked about vast possibilities of material and cultural development of Kashmir with dollar aid.

During 1952-53, a large number of American correspondents came to Kashmir to pursue the matter to its logical conclusion. Miss Margaret L. Weil of *International News Service and Baltimore Sun* had close connections with the U. S. Embassy at New Delhi. She had to be rebuked while taking photographs of strategic areas in the State. She talked to many people about the advantages of "Independent"

Kashmir. The reactions of more important American papers such as the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Life and Time*, and so on, as stated by their special correspondents who visited Kashmir during this period, were the same.

We have already stated how close American diplomats, such as Leach, Adams and Hersey, were to Sheikh Abdullah, both through direct contact as well as through the Edmonds circle. During the days of public controversy about "Independent" Kashmir from May to August 1953, they paid frequent visits to Kashmir. They held many private discussions with Sheikh Abdullah. Mr. Leach was personally present on the platform with Sheikh Abdullah at the Martyr's day meeting on 13th July 1953, where the latter made an important policy statement suggesting by implication the alternative of "Independent" Kashmir. Mr. and Mrs. Adams, also of the American Embassy, were present along with their children. In private talks with persons close to Sheikh Abdullah, Richard Leach asked about the financial and economic implications of "Independent" Kashmir. He expressed the surprise that they had not so far examined the practical aspects of the solution which they might have to face in a short time.

It was generally believed that Sheikh Abdullah would throw the bombshell in the middle of August 1953. The visit of Mr. George Allen, the American Ambassador to India, to Kashmir was scheduled to take place at the end of July or early in August, but somehow he was well-advised not to undertake such a trip. The activities of Mr. Leach in July and August, particularly on the day when Sheikh Abdullah was arrested, left people wondering whether these were within the legitimate sphere of diplomatic behaviour towards a friendly country. Under these circumstances, the statement of Mr. Allen, denying American intervention and stating "that the sole interest of the United States in Kashmir is the sincere hope that the problem of its status will be solved on a basis mutually acceptable to the two countries directly concerned", has no validity.

XIX. Moral Rearmament Invades Kashmir

Before we correlate the role of various foreign influences with Sheikh Abdullah's policies during 1952-53, we must refer to the sinister activities of the Moral Re-Armament crowd, who visited Kashmir

in April-May, 1953. A cynic observed that Mr. Frank Buchman and his followers in the Moral Re-Armament appeared to him like Johnny Walker and other Scottish brewers preaching temperance. Behind the facade of moral principles, with the merits of which we are not in the least concerned eitherway, and which seduced good many gullible, naive and innocent persons into the fold, there were definite political objectives. We shall state everything in the words of some of the 160 persons who visited Kashmir in mid-April 1953 and stayed here for nearly a month.

In addition to the innocents, this crowd included retired Generals, Admirals, business magnates, ex-Communists, rich and idle old spinsters and an active group of intelligence agents of foreign powers. Dr. Frank Buchman had a "guidance" that they must visit India, Kashmir and Pakistan in order to change the perspective of the national future of these countries. The hungry millions of these Asiatic backwoods must be given an idea which answers social and economic problems and satisfies the longings of human heart. Buchman constantly drew attention of his followers towards an article by Sulzberger in the *New York Times* at the end of 1952, in which the author outlined the "ideological political situation along Russia's southern border." The vast area between Turkey and Saigon was completely undefended, chiefly because of the strife between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and the conflicts in Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan and other countries of the Middle East. A sub-continental system of defence was needed in India. Buchman quoted Col. Mirza, the Pakistan Secretary for Defence, as saying: "Give me a solution to the Kashmir dispute and I'll be the first to call staff talks for joint defence with India."

According to Peter Howard, the intellectual leader of the group, Kashmir was an "ideological boil" of the Indian sub-continent and they must burst it open through their moral rearmament crusading. The clear objective of the Moral Re-Armament people was to win India and Pakistan to the Anglo-American policies in the Middle East and Asia. They found that there were many elements in India and Pakistan who would encourage them. We are not concerned with that. In Kashmir, they made a concerted effort to win over Sheikh Abdullah to their cause. Sheikh Abdullah was much too sophisticated a person in religious and ideological matters than the Moral Re-Armament crowd, but it suited him to express his appreciation of the Moral Re-Armament.

Dr. Buchman carried a number of messages of good-will for Sheikh Abdullah from the United States and Pakistan. The Governor-General, the Prime Minister, high civil and military officials and important politicians in Pakistan expressed their blessings for Buchman's mission to Kashmir. Buchman conveyed to Sheikh Abdullah that, with the change in Government in Pakistan, there was no ill-will towards him personally and that they would be even willing to accept an "Independent" Kashmir solution. Buchman knew well that the new leadership in Pakistan as well as Sheikh Abdullah were favourably inclined towards the United States policies in Middle East and Central Asia. He hoped that on the basis of an "Independent" Kashmir the whole balance of opinion in Asia, including India, would be reorientated towards the United States policy.

Buchman had told his friends, as reported by Dick Hadden and Peter Hopecraft, that besides a holiday, he had to attend to "a few other things as well" on which Hopecraft comments: "I think I know what he means". Buchman met Sheikh Abdullah a number of times and privately discussed the scheme of "Independent" Kashmir with him. Sheikh Abdullah and his whole family attended the Moral Re-Armament shows and the Sheikh's son, Farouq Abdullah, was especially cultivated by the crowd. The idea of Buchman was to cultivate Farouq at the M. R. A. headquarters in Caux sur Montroux in Switzerland. Merriam Young and Ruth Mary Young were the permanent representatives of the M. R. A. in Kashmir. They kept Caux informed about all developments in the State. Farouq was invited to attend the M. R. A. Assembly in Caux in July-August 1953. He would be brought into contact with Pakistani representatives and things could be talked over there. Earlier the M. R. A. in London had contacted Mr. G. M. Shah, son-in-law of Sheikh Abdullah, and he was taken to Caux for moral rearmament, for the purpose of which he came strongly endowed on his return to Kashmir.

After meeting Sheikh Abdullah, Peter Howard observed: "The Sheikh is riding several horses at the same time. But we may save his neck. He is really interested." But it was Frank Buchman himself who in an "effective and intimate" interview cleared the mind of Sheikh and convinced him that Washington and Karachi would agree to an "Independent" Kashmir.

It is important to note that the M. R. A. group maintained close contact with Washington and sent regular reports of their

activities. Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd maintained contact with Peter Howard, Dr. Paul Campbell and Duncan Corcoran. Admiral Byrd informed them that he had kept Senator Wiley, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Alexander Smith, Chairman of the Senate Labour and Welfare Committee, Mr. Cordell Hull, the former Secretary of State, Mr. Joseph Martin, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President Nixon, informed about the role of the M. R. A., particularly of Dr. Buchman, in filling the gap in America's "ideological strategy" against Communism.

Mr. Jack Roots was politically the most active person amongst the American group. He stated privately that full reports of the tour to date were going *at their request* to Senators Wiley and Alexander Smith and that both of them felt that the role of M. R. A. group might be the "missing factor" in the United States policies abroad.

The M. R. A. group subsequently went to Karachi. They foolishly tried to play the same antics with Prime Minister Nehru, when he later was there in connection with talks with Prime Minister Mahammed Ali. They were, however, disappointed that Nehru did not change his attitude towards the Kashmir question and foreign policy in general in spite of the superior wisdom of the M.R.As. and their solicitude in sending cables from Caux that prayers were held for a success of the Karachi Conference between the two Prime Ministers. However, they seem to have left a good impression on a number of persons of high status in Army, Air Force, Navy, administration, Government business, press, labour organisation and students in Pakistan.

In India also they tried to pollute people high up in defence forces and administration. The manner in which they sought to fraternise with the Indian Army in Kashmir caused serious misgivings in more cautious and intelligent political circles. They sent very adverse propagandist reports against the Indian Army in Kashmir to their friends abroad. One important fact that emerged from conversations with them was that considerable numbers of Pakistani defence personnel of army, navy and air force were under training in the United States.

Ideologically they succeeded with Sheikh Abdullah in so far as he was impressed with the wealth, military power, political influence

in Pakistan, and the strategic plans in Central Asia and Middle East of the United States of America. There were other more powerful influences, including that of self-preservation in terms of "Independent" Kashmir, at work on him. Thus Sheikh Abdullah became consciously an instrument of the United States policy in Asia.

XX. Other influences towards Independent Kashmir

PRINCE MEHMET EKREM. In September 1951, Sheikh Abdullah was approached by certain foreign circles through Prince Mehmet Ekrem from Geneva, Switzerland, for a peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute "by declaring Kashmir in its pre-division boundaries, *an independent free State*, recognized and guaranteed as such by India and Karachi and the United Nations". Ekrem suggested that Kashmir should become the "Switzerland of Asia" as a neutral buffer State. Ekrem further informed Sheikh Abdullah that he had earlier discussed the plan with Mr. Ghulam Abbas of "Azad" Kashmir in Karachi, who had "greatly welcomed the idea", though he was doubtful if India and Pakistan would accept it. Ekrem added: "I believe Karachi would be in a mood to accept this suggestion of mine provided Delhi accepts it also."

Prince Ekrem realistically asked: "who is going to bell the cat"? Mentioning that many people in Islamic countries were interested in the idea, he suggested that the "first source of its public appearance will be probably Egypt, a neutral country". In conclusion, Prince Ekrem proposed a coalition Government with Ghulam Abbas for the interim period of, say, five years and also "choosing an outsider to head the State" during the transitional period.

In his reply, Sheikh Abdullah expressed his appreciation of such a solution but pointed out the practical difficulties towards its realization. He wrote: "There is no doubt that apparently such a solution would seem to put an end to the present state of uncertainty which has been aggravated by the strange handling of the problem by the Security Council." To this first approach of Ekrem, Sheikh Abdullah gave a vague and, on the whole, a rather negative reply. His main point was whether the two neighbours (India and Pakistan) and the United Nations were prepared to guarantee an independent status of the State. Sheikh Abdullah observed: "Since the issue is so vital and far-reaching in its implications, an academic interest in alternative proposals will not be enough".

In his second letter in February 1952, Prince Ekrem further elaborated on the advantages of a need for an independent Kashmir. He threw a cryptic hint that Mr. Nazimuddin and Sir Zaffrullah Khan, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan respectively, being essentially men of peace and compromise, would react favourably to the proposal. "I think the real central figure is your goodself at present". But Sheikh Abdullah insisted that the "question of an independent status for the State of Jammu and Kashmir must remain hypothetical till such time as it is not *tried as an alternative solution by the parties concerned in the dispute*". As no initiative had been taken by either party, Sheikh Abdullah refused to comment on the merits of the proposal, except suggesting by implication that, besides India and Pakistan developing goodwill for each other, they must do so towards the State as well.

In a further communication in September 1952, Prince Ekrem informed Sheikh Abdullah that he had discussed the issue with Sir Zaffarullah Khan, while the latter was in Geneva in connection with the conference with Dr. Graham on Kashmir and had corresponded on the subject with Mr. Nazimuddin. He felt confident that if the subject were broached "properly" and by some neutral power, Pakistan would accept the creation of an independent Kashmir in its pre-partition of India boundaries—and is prepared to guarantee its independence and territorial integrity if the same guarantee is given by the major neighbouring powers of Kashmir", including India. He further suggested that the initiative, as an "honest broker", might be taken by Mr. John Foster Dulles, if the Presidential Election was won by Eisenhower, and gave the impression as if he had already contacted Dulles on the subject. Ekrem, however, left the onus of winning over the support of Pandit Nehru on Sheikh Abdullah himself.

Sheikh Abdullah was not yet prepared to talk things over to Panditji directly. He suggested mediation by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and, therefore, asked Ekrem to secure his release through the influence of his friends at Karachi. Ekrem wrote a very sentimental letter about Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and promised to pursue the delicate matters of "independent" Kashmir and of the release of Badshah Khan for mediating the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan. In a further communication on 19th November, 1952, Ekrem informed Sheikh Abdullah that he had sent word to Mr. Nazimuddin through his son. The Pakistan High Commissioner in

London, Mr. M. A. H. Inspahani, was urgently sent by the Pakistan Prime Minister to meet Prince Ekrem in Geneva and through him the suggestions of Sheikh Abdullah were communicated to the Pakistan Premier.

Afterwards, the negotiations were pursued at a much higher diplomatic level. In the United States, Eisenhower was duly elected the President and John Foster Dulles became the Secretary of State. Prince Ekrem and his friends further discussed the topic with Dulles, and, as we shall see later on, according to the *New York Times*, Dulles suggested a modified plan of "Independent" Kashmir to both Delhi and Karachi. At Karachi, a pro-American Government came into existence under Prime Minister Mohammad Ali after the dismissal of Mr. Nazimuddin in April 1953, and the ground was prepared for a formal initiative in the matter.

SIR MIRZA ISMAIL. In January 1953, when Sheikh Abdullah attended the Hyderabad session of the Indian National Congress, he was invited by Sir Mirza Ismail, a former Prime Minister of Mysore, Hyderabad and Jaipur, to a private discussion at Bangalore. Sir Mirza had reasons to know the mind of Mr. Nazimuddin and Sir Zaffrullah Khan on the subject during his visit to Pakistan earlier. Some of his close relations were high officials in Pakistan and were very influential with the civil and military services there. They also maintained close contact with the Governor General, Mr. Ghulam Mohammad. During his visits to London and Washington earlier, Sir Mirza Ismail had discussed the Kashmir problem with important political circles. The general impression he gave to Sheikh Abdullah was that the only solution of the Kashmir dispute was a partition of the State, Jammu and Ladakh going straight away to India, Poonch and other occupied areas of Pakistan going to her and the Kashmir Valley becoming an Independent State, guaranteed by India, Pakistan and the United Nations. He informed Sheikh Abdullah that very influential circles in Pakistan, especially the Prime Minister, Mr. Nazimuddin, were agreeable to the suggestion, which was also acceptable to the United Nations *via* Great Britain and the U. S. A.

The views of Sir Mirza Ismail on the subject of "Independent" Kashmir have now been expressed in public. Some portions of his autobiography, "My Public Life", were serialized by the *Times of*

India. In the instalment appearing on 22nd November, 1953, Sir Mirza writes :

“Kashmir has been the chief stumbling-block to peace and understanding between India and Pakistan. The ideal solution of such a dispute is one which does not completely satisfy or dissatisfy either party. If the settlement is to last, and create no sense of injustice, neither party should feel that it has lost everything. A decision by plebiscite would have that fatal result. It would not solve the problem, but make it more acute.

“The fact has to be realized that partition is inevitable. Indeed, it already exists. Let Pakistan, therefore, retain that portion of Kashmir which it now holds, with the addition of Poonch, which is a predominantly Muslim area and geographically forms part of Pakistan. Let India retain Jammu and Ladakh.

“The Valley proper, the real bone of contention, should go to neither ; it might be formed (subject to minor adjustments of boundaries) into a compact autonomous State, self-governing in its internal affairs, but having no responsibility for a foreign policy or defence, as it would have no direct relations with any foreign power outside the sub-continent.

“Such a solution would be fair to all parties, India, Pakistan and Kashmir and would leave no rancour. The Valley might be given to the right of appeal to the United Nations in case of trouble from either India or Pakistan. This settlement would involve some sacrifice on the part of all, but how worthwhile it would be. Few problems are capable of a swift, heroic solution, but this, I maintain, is such a problem.”

XXI. Visit to Paris

Sheikh Abdullah went to Paris in the winter of 1951-52 for discussions with the Security Council. In Paris and other European capitals he established high level contacts with Western Powers and pleaded for his cause. His whole attitude towards the United Nations, particularly the United States of America, underwent a complete change. On his return, he told the press at Bombay that the attitude of the Security Council towards the Kashmir case was more conciliatory and that every member thought that a solution would be reached by mediation. He blatantly contradicted the

statement of a leading colleague of the National Conference, also made at Bombay a few days earlier, that the Security Council had made a mess of the Kashmir issue and as such it should be withdrawn from the United Nations.

On his return to the State, he made a broadcast from Jammu on February 20, 1952 in which he said : "The people whom I met in Paris and London included the representatives of press, the representatives of different countries in the United Nations and the members of the British Parliament. Whatever they had come to know or read through newspapers about Kashmir's progress had greatly impressed them".

Speaking in the same spirit, he told the Constituent Assembly on March 25, 1952 :

"The approach of various countries to the study of the Kashmir question has undergone a notable change. They have now begun to study this question in a realistic manner and the veil of misrepresentation which so far concealed the basic issues involved in this question has begun to lift".

Referring to independence as an alternative solution for Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah observed :

"Suppose for the sake of argument that the people do not ratify this accession, the position that will follow would not be that as a matter of course Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. No, that would not happen. That cannot happen legally or constitutionally. What would happen in such an eventuality would be that the State would regain the status which it enjoyed immediately preceding the accession. Let us be clear about it".

This is the background of the speech Sheikh Abdullah made at Ranbirsinghpura early in April 1952. He had already started talking in terms of the philanthropy of the United States and her ability to "safeguard the principles of democracy". Apparently, the trend of discussions with Indian officers about the scheme of integrating the finances of the State with the Indian Union was the provocation for making a speech in which the relationship with India was being repudiated. He blamed the communal forces in India for weakening the relations of the State with India, thereby placing the accession on shaky foundations. Thus Sheikh Abdullah

had taken a definite plunge towards separation from India. He only mentioned the communal forces in India, but did not say a word about the overwhelming strength of the secular and democratic forces as revealed at the recently-held general elections throughout India. This technique was designed to provoke the communal forces in India and Jammu and to win over the communal forces in the Kashmir province, where the popular hold of the Sheikh was declining. The food muddle in Kashmir during 1951-52 winter was a great scandal and the communal twist in Sheikh Abdullah's speeches was a demagogic device to divert the attention of the people from the basic economic problems, especially the food problem, which his Government had failed to solve. The idea of "Independent" Kashmir, organized on bureaucratic lines, with the help of foreign aid, was uppermost in the Sheikh's mind.

Sheikh Abdullah's separatist moves and veiled utterances against Kashmir's association with India were partly meant for galvanizing the Kashmiri masses on communal lines and partly for foreign consumption. There was, therefore, an immediate response from international circles abroad.

The *Times* (weekly edition) of May 8, 1952 observed in an editorial :

"If Delhi and Kashmir have tended to assume in the past that Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference party were pliable instruments dedicated to strengthening the ties between Kashmir and India, the time has come to revise this assumption. The Sheikh has made it clear that he is as much opposed to domination by India as to subjugation by Pakistan. He claims sovereign authority without limitation by the Constitution of the Indian Union. He knows that he may have to accept protection from outside, but he insists that the Kashmir people have the right to rule themselves. This stand has a strong appeal to Kashmiris on both sides of the cease-fire line: and if this movement of purely Kashmiri nationalism were to gain ground, it might well oblige India, Pakistan and the United Nations to modify their views about what ought to be done next."

The *Manchester Guardian* wrote on June 26, 1952 :

"Clearly Sheikh Abdullah has raised more or less by accident some constitutional problems which may be hard to deal with. Kashmir's accession may be disruptive to the Indian Union rather than strengthen it. Does not this show again that the only happy solution in Kashmir would be partition...."

The *New York Times* published the following despatch from New Delhi on April 12, 1952 :

“Indians are disquieted by the firm assertions of sovereignty for the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Premier of India—held part of this Northern territory.... Sheikh Abdullah's provocative statements appear to be timed to coincide with the report of Dr. Graham Sheikh Abdullah, Indian supported premier of about four-fifths of the State's area . . . recently told his Constituent Assembly that this local legislative body was ‘one hundred per cent. sovereign’ and that ‘no parliament, be it that of India or any other country, has any authorization here.’”

On April 23, 1952, the *Scotsman* published a long despatch by O M. Green about the changed attitude towards India of Sheikh Abdullah. Concluding his story, Green observes :

“These speeches (made by Sheikh Abdullah) leave no doubt as to where Sheikh Abdullah stands politically. And then the idealist in him appeared. ‘We in Kashmir’, he said, ‘want to function as a bridge between India and Pakistan and bring them together by cementing the forces of love. If there is this love, I am convinced, India and Pakistan can again be reunited and become one country. No man will be prouder if this dream becomes a reality.’”

The *Times*, London, published, on April 26, 1952, under the headlines “Sheikh Abdullah's hint of Independence”, the following despatch from its Srinagar correspondent :

“Sheikh Abdullah said to-day (April 25, 1952) in a most anti-Indian speech he has yet made, that the existence of Kashmir did not depend on Indian money or trade or defence forces and he did not expect any strings to be attached to the Indian aid. Threats and taunts would not intimidate him into servile submission.”

The *Economist* wrote on May 10, 1952 :

“The argument (of separating Jammu and Ladakh from the Valley) has cleared the air, and perhaps prepared a return to Sir Owen Dixon's suggestion that a plebiscite should be held regionwise: this would narrow the problem down to the Kashmir Valley—the real bone of contention. It could then be treated as the special case which it is.”

XXII. Communal Precipitation

During the summer of 1952, Sheikh Abdullah started a series of speeches in Kashmir on the lines of the Ranbirsinghpura speech.

He established close contact with pro-Pakistani elements in the Valley and asked them to think in terms of alternatives to the present relationship with India. On the basis of this new approach, he began to mobilize the support of the Kashmiri "Muslim solidarity" group, which consisted mostly of middle class, professional and business circles. He wanted to circumvent the National Conference organization, the majority of his Cabinet colleagues and the majority of the Constituent Assembly, which were opposed to any departure from the fundamental stand of the National Conference. It was in this atmosphere of distrust that the Delhi-Agreement was signed in July 1952. Prime Minister Nehru paid a personal visit to Kashmir in August 1952 and made it clear to Sheikh Abdullah that he must take a definite stand on the issues. India was determined to respect the wishes of the Kashmiris, guarantee their autonomy and render all possible economic aid. He asked Sheikh Abdullah not to harp on the illusory prospects of "Independent" Kashmir backed by foreign aid, but to devote all national energies towards the economic amelioration of the masses and the improvement of the administration.

This momentarily checked Sheikh Abdullah from giving vent to irresponsible utterances and he concentrated his efforts on implementing the Delhi Agreement in so far as it related to the abolition of the hereditary Dogra dynasty, the election of a Head of the State styled as the *Sadar-i-Riyasat*, and the introduction of separate flags and emblems for the State. The communal elements in India and the Jammu Province, consisting of the Hindu Mahasabha, Ram Rajya Parishad, Jana Sangh and Praja Parishad, raised their ugly head at this moment and started the mischievous slogan of total merger with India. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who led the movement for the total merger of the State with India, suggested that Jammu and Ladakh should be detached from the State and merged completely with India, while the Kashmir Province may decide its fate as best as it liked. This was in reality the old foreign-sponsored argument for the partition of the State and the establishment of "Independent" Kashmir. During winter months of 1952-53, when the Praja Parishad movement in Jammu and the Jana Sangh-Mahasabha movement in India were at their peak, Sheikh Abdullah entered into a lengthy correspondence with Dr. Mukerjee. There is a great irony in the tragic events that followed in so far as, politically, the objectives of Dr. Mookerjee and Sheikh Abdullah

had a meeting ground, which was also the same as advocated by the foreign powers. The foreign press reaction to Sheikh Abdullah's speeches following his main speech at Ranbirsinghpura makes the point clear and proves conclusively how, ultimately for different reasons and through different tactics, the policy of foreign powers, Hindu communalism in India, which Sheikh Abdullah was condemning, and Muslim communalism in Kashmir, which he was trying to appease, found a meeting ground.

XXIII. Delhi Agreement

The significance of the Delhi Agreement of July 1952 is to be gauged not only in terms of internal stabilization that it would ensure, but also in the context of the defeat to various techniques and moves of foreign intervention in Kashmir. It thwarted the designs of interested foreign powers and internal disruptionists to keep Kashmir away from India. The desperation and anger of the American press is an interesting commentary on the subject. The *New York Herald Tribune* observed on July 25, 1952 :

“Obviously this action will throw a new and serious obstacle in the stubborn efforts of the United Nations to set up conditions in Kashmir which would permit an equitable plebiscite among the people.”

The *New York Times* wrote on July 26, 1952 :

“Dr. Frank Graham, acting as mediator on behalf of the United Nations, has suggested raising the discussions of the Indo-Pak impasse from the delegate to the Cabinet level.

“At just this time Prime Minister Nehru declared to the Indian Parliament: Kashmir's accession to India is complete in law and in fact—it is a part of India. This is hardly the way to prepare the ground for the plebiscite that Prime Minister Nehru himself first suggested.”

Sheikh Abdullah took practical advantage of the Delhi Agreement in having an elected Head of the State. All powers of the Maharaja had been previously transferred by him to Yuvraj Karan Singh as the Regent. Now the same powers were vested in Shri Karan Singh as the elected Sadar-i-Riyasat, who was left only with the explicit authority to appoint the Prime Minister and the implied authority to dismiss him. However, Sheikh Abdullah thought that he had constitutionally secured absolute authority

for himself as the Prime Minister. This was what he wanted to get out of the Delhi Agreement.

He deliberately delayed the implementation of the Delhi Agreement in so far as it signified closer association with India. He was marking time and steadfastly pursuing a separatist policy. He continued to sell his "Independent" Kashmir line to the American press. This is conveyed by the impressions of Gordon Graham of the *Christian Science Monitor* (December 19, 1952) :

"But for all Sheikh Abdullah's friendship for India his first loyalty is to Kashmir. Both he and his people have strongly the impression that Kashmir is not a state adrift looking for a nation to which it can anchor itself, but rather is itself a nation in the process of self-discovery. With Soviet Russia and Communist Tibet towering to the North, Sheikh Abdullah sees Kashmir's future as a matter of alignment rather than accession, and of the largest measure of independence compatible with safety

His dream, perhaps, is that one day Kashmir may be the Switzerland of the East, not only in the physical resemblance which is already so strong, but also in a neutrality guaranteed by all the nations surrounding it. Even in matters such as the levy of customs and frontier formalities, Kashmir today resembles an independent country. Its people refer to it as 'our country' not as 'our State'."

XXIV. Praja Parishad and Autonomy for Jammu

People fundamentally opposed to the purposes and practices of the Praja Parishad in Jammu were greatly amazed at the Sheikh's handling of the problem. During the winter months of 1952-53, while the whole of the Jammu Province was set ablaze by the Praja Parishad agitation, Sheikh Abdullah sat fiddling and playing cricket in his lawns. Although he knew it well that the Jammu problem was not essentially a problem of law and order, he treated it as such and, through his frequent irresponsible utterances, very much embarrassed even the proper functioning of law and order authorities. He completely neglected the human and psychological aspects of the Jammu people, whose acute economic distress, a problem common with the people of Kashmir but of which the latter seemed to be unaware, was exploited by the Praja Parishad and Sangh leadership for their own nefarious designs. Under some evil influences, Sheikh Abdullah gave the impression that he was hostile to the language and cultural aspirations of the Dogras.

Sheikh Abdullah thought that he could deal with the Jammu problem politically, and, in a rather provocative way, he preferred to show his magnanimity towards the Dogri people by saying that if they so chose, they could have their autonomy, including the rights of complete merger with India and secession from Kashmir proper. It followed logically that the Kashmir Valley and certain areas from the Jammu Province would have the right of self-determination, including that of secession from the Union of India. This was a sophisticated way of arguing for "Independent" Kashmir, with the onus of separation thrown on the Jammu people. The Prime Minister of India understood the game when he remarked about the Praja Parishad agitation at the Hyderabad Congress in January, 1953. "It was a mean and wicked movement, which, if allowed to succeed, would only break up the Jammu and Kashmir State and do incalculable harm to India's case for Kashmir before the United Nations."

It now becomes clear why Sheikh Abdullah lent a tacit support to the Praja Parishad movement and entered into lengthy correspondence with Dr. Mookerjee. He wanted a precipitation of the problem so that India would be fed up with the whole thing, and as a second best alternative, agree to Sheikh Abdullah's conception of "Independent" Kashmir, which would be sponsored by the foreign powers in the United Nations Organization.

On the eve of the meeting of the Basic Principles Committee of the Constituent Assembly early in 1953, Sheikh Abdullah entrusted a few of his officers with the task of preparing a scheme of autonomy for Jammu. The specific instructions he gave them made it clear that his mind was working in a definite and dangerous direction. He gave instructions for the demarcation of the State into communal areas, so that the undisputed Hindu-majority areas might have the opportunity of merging completely with India or of enjoying an autonomy of their own choice, leaving the Muslim majority areas the right of shaping their own destiny, including that of revoking the accession to India in case the Hindu-majority areas chose to merge with India. The Sheikh visualized the merger of Gilgit and Poonch with Pakistan, of Hindu-majority areas of Jammu and Ladakh with India, leaving the Kashmir Valley and certain areas from the Jammu Province as an independent entity. This was to fit in with his broader scheme of "Independent" Kashmir, being guaranteed and aided by India, Pakistan and the United Nations.

XXV. Adlai Stevenson

Sheikh Abdullah left Jammu for the seasonal move to Srinagar towards the close of April 1953. People were expecting some trouble with the opening of the Banihal Cart Road to traffic in March. The cryptic remark that "the line" had changed was whispered in political circles in Kashmir. A new organization, called the Political Conference, had just emerged in Kashmir with the blessings of Mirza Afzal Beg, the colleague and adviser of Sheikh Abdullah in political matters. The M. R. A. group had already started its operations in Kashmir. Mr. Dulles had just announced his tour of the East and he was scheduled to visit both India and Pakistan and it was widely publicised that he carried with him a new plan for Kashmir.

Mr. Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic leader of the U. S. A., had announced the plans for world tour soon after his defeat in the Presidential elections in 1952. He had shown keen interest in Indo-Pakistan affairs, especially the problem of Kashmir. It appears from a report by Alex Smith in the *Chicago Tribune* of February 26, 1953, that Mr. Mohammed Ali, the then Pakistan Ambassador to the U.S.A., visited Chicago "to ask former Governor, Stevenson, what facilities Pakistan could place at his disposal on his world tour." Incidentally, Mr. Mohammed Ali also met that great champion of freedom, Col. Robert R. McCormick, the Editor and Publisher of the *Chicago Tribune* and invited him to Pakistan. Mr. Ali spoke on the dispute about Kashmir and blamed India's canal water policy for food shortage in Pakistan. "Our people would rather fight than starve", he said and connected the water supply problem with the Kashmir issue. While Mr. Mohammed Ali was being groomed for the Premiership of Pakistan, he was in close contact with the State Department about the Middle East Defence Pact and the Pakistan-United States military alliance.

About such issues in foreign affairs as the MEDO, alignment of Pakistan, Indo-Pakistan relations, Kashmir and so on, it is well-known that the American administration and the State Department follow a bi-partisan policy. The broad purposes of Mr. Dulles and Mr. Stevenson are the same, though their emphasis and techniques may be different. Pakistan has responded readily and favourably to the American plans for Middle East Defence, with the implied understanding that Kashmir will be included in the plan, either directly as a part of Pakistan or indirectly as an "Independent" State. American

foreign policy is vitally interested in including Kashmir in her global strategy to encircle the Communist countries. The strategic situation of Kashmir makes her fit in with plans in relation to the Middle East, Central Asia and Tibet. It would be tedious to quote American public opinion as expressed by her leading papers and statesmen about these policies. We have already given some idea about the activities of various foreign agencies in Kashmir.

Mr. Stevenson arrived in Srinagar on May 1, 1953 on a four-day "fact-finding" mission and met Sheikh Abdullah three times for about seven hours. He had private discussions with Milton Clark and Edmonds and paid a friendly visit to the Kazaks in their company. Asked about his discussions with Sheikh Abdullah, he expressed views in conformity with the Sheikh's ideas. He observed that "an imposed and impetuous solution on Kashmir is no solution for it is the Kashmiris whose interests should come paramount." He added: "Given goodwill and time an agreed solution acceptable to Kashmiris or at least in which they willingly acquiesce should not be beyond human ingenuity. The two neighbouring countries interested in its welfare should help Kashmir in finding an equitable solution."

His cryptic remark that "Kashmir issue will automatically cease if you take into account the wishes of the local inhabitants", left no doubt in the minds of the people that he was agreeing with Sheikh Abdullah's "Independence" solution. According to the New Delhi correspondent of the *New York Times*, (May 14, 1953): "asked about the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, Mr. Stevenson suggested a first step towards a solution would be direct consultation between Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohammed Ali."

Stevenson's visit to Pakistan and "Azad" Kashmir was given great importance in Pakistan political circles and press and his remarks were considered "a significant pointer." The *Pakistan Times* (May 22, 1953) observed that the "visit of Mr. Stevenson, although he opposed the present U.S. Government in the last elections, is also being assessed in the same way especially after his meetings with Azad Kashmir leaders. It appeared he was very keen about the Kashmir issue and during his two-hour discussions with the Azad Kashmir leaders he considered about half a dozen ways to solve the dispute". The *Pakistan Times* added that "he gave some impression of the likely U.S. policy on Kashmir when he said that the Premier

of both India and Pakistan should talk out this matter across the table." Stevenson's main emphasis was on alternative solution to be thrashed out directly between India and Pakistan, especially that suiting the "local inhabitants" as represented by Sheikh Abdullah.

Subsequently, the well-informed British paper *Manchester Guardian* (August 17, 1953) observed that Mr. Stevenson "seems to have listened to the suggestion that the best status for Kashmir would be independence from both Pakistan and India." The *Guardian* report adds: "He mentioned this on returning to Delhi and this perhaps led some people in India to be afraid that Sheikh Abdullah might be planning to enter into his own relations with Washington."

In a subsequent formal contradiction conveyed through the United States Embassy in New Delhi and published by the *Times of India* of September 13, 1953, Mr. Stevenson only recalled that Sheikh Abdullah made a "casual suggestion that an independent status might be an alternative solution" to the Kashmir problem.

XXVI. Crusade for Independent Kashmir

In the middle of May 1953, Sheikh Abdullah took the initiative in his own hands and launched a campaign for repudiating Kashmir's relations with India and for preparing ground for his new stand. The Working Committee of the National Conference met in Srinagar from 18th May, 1953 and held continuous discussions for four days about the relationship of the State with India on the basis of the Delhi Agreement. Sheikh Abdullah openly declared the relationship with India to be a transitional one and suggested that a constitution for the State could be only framed and its external affiliations defined when the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan was settled. Great external pressure was exerted on India to settle the Kashmir problem. At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference (June, 1953), Mr. Mohammad Ali was to raise the issue informally and have direct negotiations with Prime Minister Nehru. Mr. John Foster Dulles, accompanied by Mr. Harold Stassen, arrived in New Delhi on May 20 and held talks with Prime Minister Nehru for three successive days. Sheikh Abdullah thought that the time had come for a final settlement according to his wishes.

In a brief statement from Karachi on May 25, Mr. Dulles said :—

“We have discussed the problem of Kashmir with the Premiers of India and Pakistan and we are glad that they would be discussing this problem in the near future.”

An idea of the talks of Dulles with Prime Minister Nehru and Mohammed Ali was suggested by the report in the Delhi weekly, *Message* on May 29, according to which the direct negotiations between the two Prime Ministers would centre round the Dulles plan for Kashmir. The point to start with would be whether the State can any longer maintain its present unity or revive the pre-invasion unity or “should it be treated by both countries as a State already partitioned”. The paper added :

“If the latter be the case, why should not the fact of partition be properly admitted, internationally legalized and properly adjusted, for which purpose the State should be divided into three zones : the first zone to consist of Jammu and Ladakh, which should be more closely and completely merged with India. The second zone consisting of Gilgit in the north and the “Azad” territory on the borders of West Punjab, should be constitutionally given to Pakistan.

“The third zone, which is the most important zone and the most valuable part of the whole State, namely, the Valley, should be either internationalized for a certain period under a U.N. Administrator in preparation for the plebiscite, or alternatively, if India or Pakistan does not agree to this open U.N. influence, then a semi-independent Government for the Valley should be established under the joint control of Sheikh Abdullah and Ghulam Abbas, whose neutrality should be guaranteed for a period of, say, 10 years by both India and Pakistan Governments, pending its final choice to either merge with one or two of the neighbouring States, or to remain a sort of an internationalized zone between the two.”

Prime Minister Nehru, accompanied by the Home Minister, Dr. Katju, paid a brief visit to Kashmir to discuss the situation arising out of the Sheikh's *volte face*. On the 23rd and 24th of May they tried to convince Sheikh Abdullah about the dangerous implications of this policy, especially the confusion that he was spreading among the people by his equivocation. As Panditji was leaving shortly for London to attend the Coronation and the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, he left things in the hands of Sheikh Abdullah

and his colleagues with the request that they should not precipitate a crisis which might mean a serious retrogression from the progress the country had made during the previous years.

From the discussions of the Working Committee it became clear that Sheikh Abdullah, in spite of a good deal of confusion in his own mind, was making a deliberate attempt in the following directions :

- (a) To back out of his previous commitments and to side-track the majority of his colleagues in the National Conference Organisation, the Government and the Constituent Assembly.
- (b) In the name of a direct appeal to the people, to win over the disgruntled and hostile elements, especially from the Kashmiri middle class and from professional and business groups. For this purpose he raised communal issues and, through demagogic devices, disturbed the communal harmony in the State.
- (c) To make a direct appeal to the United Nations for finding a solution of the Kashmir dispute on the basis of a modified Dixon plan, under which the "Independence" of Kashmir, from both India and Pakistan, would be assured and Sheikh Abdullah's personal authority recognized. It has already been shown that, through his foreign contacts, Sheikh Abdullah had secured a sort of assurance from the vocal powers at the United Nations.
- (d) To secure the acquiescence of Pakistan towards the "Independent" Kashmir plan on the assumption that this would break the present relations of the State with India and ensure a peaceful transition towards closer association with Pakistan. That was the line that Mr. Beg advocated with pro-Pakistan elements.

Thus Sheikh Abdullah was not only double-crossing everybody but also rehabilitating the confidence of the people in himself through appeal to communal sentiments with a view to establishing his own dictatorship in "Independent Kashmir", which could surely exist, if at all, with the support of foreign powers. He, however, did not allow a correct version of his speeches from July to early August to

be presented to everybody. Generally there were three versions. In the first place, there was the actual speech meant for local consumption. Secondly, there was an authorised version issued for the *Khidmat*, the official organ of the National Conference, meant for a wider consumption. Thirdly, there was the version released to the Indian Press.

We give below some examples of the type of speeches made by Sheikh Abdullah during the period. These are the authorised versions published in the *Khidmat*. *The actual speeches were generally much more bitter in tone and poisonous in content, though wayward, confused and monotonous in their length.*

Addressing a large congregation of Muslims in the Jama Masjid on the occasion of Jumut-ul-Vida (12th June, 1953), Sheikh Abdullah said :

“The real basis of the panic created in the political atmosphere is our own weakness. The air is thick with rumours. Selfish people want that disruption be set in among the masses. For this purpose they have entered the rank and file of the National Conference and, therefore, weakness has set in in this party which had assumed the responsibility of bettering the lot of the people of this State.

“If we study the history of the rise and fall of various political parties, we will find that they suffered a fall when they misused the power that came into their hands. Therefore, when the workers of our party used the political power for their own selfish ends, the result was that the public got disgruntled with them and they were losing their confidence.”

This illustrates how through demagoguery he was trying to condemn the National Conference, which did not accept his new line.

Sheikh Abdullah assured the audience that the settlement of the future of Kashmir cannot be such as would not be acceptable to the people of Kashmir. He said :

“The question shall not be settled in closed rooms, but whatever be the settlement shall be according to the will of the people. But what is needed at present is that the masses should place their full confidence in their leadership (*i.e.* Sheikh Abdullah.) Some people, in order to create disruption among their ranks, were spreading false rumours. Sometimes it was said that there was a difference of opinion among their party ; but he assured them in that sacred house that the discussions going on among the members of the Working Committee showed that there was no difference on

fundamental principles. (What a truthful report of the Working Committee proceedings). Until an honourable settlement between *India and Pakistan was arrived at, Kashmiris could not lead a life of peace and prosperity.*"

Addressing a meeting of the National Conference workers in Mujahid Manzil on 22nd June, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"I am sorry to learn that some people are spreading a false rumour that there is a difference among the Cabinet members over their recent decision to effect certain arrests in the city. The fact is that this decision was a unanimous one. It was, however, the work of one of my Cabinet colleagues, who is responsible for maintaining law and order, to have this decision implemented. We have complete confidence in him.

"Again, I would reiterate that the question of the future of this State is to be decided by the people living here. Any decision which is not in accordance with the will of the people cannot be forced upon us.

"It is the viewpoint of Pakistan that only Muslims have a right to live there. Therefore we have a fundamental difference with them. At the same time we have to see to what extent secularism, as claimed by India, is being practised there.

"Here I think it necessary to mention the fact that when in 1947 I was released from Jail, I pointed out that so long as the fire of communalism raging in East and West Punjab did not subside and complete peace was not established there, so long it was not possible for us to decide to which Dominion Kashmiris should accede. We made this request to India and one of my colleagues (Mr. Sadiq) was sent to Pakistan with the same message. India accepted our position, but Pakistan invaded our country. We must not forget that at this critical juncture we sought help from India, but before Indian forces could enter our State, we had to sign an instrument of accession to India. *But India gave us this assurance that when normalcy returned to the State and Kashmiri people ratified this accession, then and then alone it would be final, otherwise not. We should keep this point in view always.*"

(He was repudiating both India and Pakistan and impliedly arguing for Independence.)

Addressing the National Conference Workers at Mujahid Manzil on July 12, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"It is necessary to take notice of the fact that the relationship between India and Kashmir does not stand now as its foundations are shaken by the Praja Parishad. The blame for this goes to those people who

strongly opposed this association of India and Kashmir and started an agitation against us in Jammu and in India.

“Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru observed that these people are cutting off the same branch of the tree on which they are themselves perched. But we have to find out the reasons for all that is being done. The late Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee was right in having remarked that so long as the external discord between Pakistan and India exists, till then the internal tension here will not end.

“It is a fact that Hindus and Sikhs do apprehend the results of the meeting of the two Prime Ministers. They think if the Ministers agree to making over the State to Pakistan, they will in that case meet the doom. On the other hand, Muslims feel that if Kashmir merges with India, then their interests are in jeopardy. *It is but natural that so long as there is tug-of-war going on between India and Pakistan, the inhabitants of the State will show divided loyalty. As is clear, in the State there are people of two shades of thought. Both are drawn apart. We are stuck in the middle. With a view to overcoming this tension, we evolved a middle path and that is the present form of accession.* Unfortunately an agitation was started in Jammu sponsored from outside. This resulted in the widening of the gulf.

“It is doubtless stated by both India and Pakistan that they will accept the verdict of the people of Kashmir which they will give after a plebiscite is held. Both agree with it and outwardly press this idea that the issue should be decided by a plebiscite. But if the verdict of the people is to be accepted, then why are the means to this end not adopted. We believe that only that decision can be practicable which is in keeping with the dignity and the best interests of the people of the State and which has the support of both India and Pakistan. *So such a solution to the problem should be discovered as is acceptable to both the countries.*

“So long as the proposed meeting of Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan is concerned, I think it is the overall demand of the country that decisive and final steps should be taken in this connection. At this time what we press hard is that the external differences regarding Kashmir be removed and after that is done the internal differences can go off. We once again declare that Kashmir question should be solved in such a manner as will be in the best interests of India, Pakistan and 40 lakh people of the State. Pandit Nehru has well remarked that Kashmir is not a sort of property to be divided between two persons. We will keep you informed from time to time and whatever will be the decision that will be arrived at with your consent and goodwill. So far as the Delhi Agreement is concerned, we have accepted it verbatim but what is required is the atmosphere conducive

to it. But we don't know where we stand at present and we are not in a position to say what we should do immediately."

Sheikh Abdullah added :

"It is being given out in the press and also through other agencies that the rift has set in our party. Sometimes it is being said that only four members in the Working Committee favour Sheikh Abdullah and the rest fifteen of them are against him. Actually nothing like this has happened and these rumours and yarns are spun by the interested persons who are out to gain their ends by sowing discord in the rank and file of the National Conference."

On the Martyr's day (13th July 1953) at Khanyar, Sheikh Abdullah made a two-hour speech at which many foreigners, including Mr. Richard Leach, First Secretary of the American Embassy in New Delhi and other American diplomats were present. Amongst other things, repetitive and confusing, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"In my opinion the secret of Kashmir's welfare lies in some mutual agreement arrived at by Pakistan and India. Ideological differences apart, one will have to admit that Kashmir's position demands not the unilateral goodwill but the bilateral *i.e.* of both India and Pakistan alike. So we have to see what decision should be taken which is honourable so far as the interests of Kashmiris are concerned and is at the same time acceptable to both the countries. Naturally, that decision is to be taken by the 40 lakh people of Kashmir, who will do what they think best in their interests. We do not want that this State should be made an *appendage of India or Pakistan*. *No power on earth should stand in the way of Kashmiris in taking this decision. And it should never happen that Kashmiris are led by the nose and dragged towards a direction they do not like. It should be for Kashmiris to go wherever they choose to.*

"The basic fact is that we did not lay down our lives for making Kashmir an appendage of either India or Pakistan but only for the interests of the people of the Jammu and Kashmir State. The martyrs left behind this message for us : 'We have done our duty and now it is for the nation to do its duty'. Joining India or Pakistan does not form that duty but actually that duty is that Kashmiris should not lose sight of the goal of achieving our independence. We shall choose only that path which will take us to freedom, honour and prosperity and are able to safeguard our future. It is this path that your leaders are in search of."

Addressing a large audience of villagers at Ganderbal on July 31, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"That the Kashmiri people were faced with numerous anxieties both

not, of course, without foundation and until the question of the future of the State is finally decided, these anxieties and troubles would continue. But if we tried to understand the problem and its implications, the pains consequent upon these may to a great extent be reduced.

“For some days past this anxiety has been increased because some friends have been spreading certain ideas. I do not know whether these are their real ideas or whether it is the press only which exaggerates them. But the way in which they give expression to their thoughts makes the general public believe that there is a difference of opinion among the National Conference leaders. But so far as I am aware, there is no difference of opinion among them on basic principles, namely that it is the masses of this place whose decision shall prevail.

“... Both India and Pakistan were claiming that the State of Jammu and Kashmir belonged to them. Both are our neighbours and are situated round our frontiers. It is but natural that the secret of our betterment and happiness lies in winning the goodwill of both. Otherwise our position will become like that of a people besieged in a fort. It will not be to the good of the people of Kashmir that either India or Pakistan or both remain unfriendly. And the worst sufferers from the effects of bad relations between India and Pakistan will be the Kashmiris first and Kashmiris last.

“... Until this external anxiety did not cease, the internal anxiety of Kashmir will not come to an end and the internal problems facing the people among which are the refugee question, lack of capital, and the problem of communication cannot be solved. It is impossible for the Government to continue facing these problems for long. It is therefore important that an agreement be arrived at which will be honourable and acceptable to all.

“... Unfortunately we got no time in 1947 to consider which course would be profitable and helpful for us. Pakistan tried to annex our State by force of arms and to meet this attack we had to beg India for aid. But it could not be given so long as Kashmir did not enter into some sort of constitutional relationship with India. But keeping in view the circumstances under which the Instrument of Accession was signed, the Indian Government thought it advisable that this accession be ratified by the people after the establishment of normal conditions in the State, because they rightly gave preference to the union of hearts over that of bodies.

“But unfortunately even after six years, normal conditions have not been established in the State and the dispute over Kashmir continues between India and Pakistan.

“The National Conference supported the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India on two basic grounds, namely, prevalence of secular democracy and the assurance given to the National Conference leaders by the leaders of India that apart from three subjects (foreign affairs, defence and communications) the State would have complete autonomy in internal matters.

“...After some time the Indian Government expressed a wish that the position *vis-a-vis* the States be defined following the signing of the Instrument of Accession. And thus after due deliberation was produced an agreement commonly known as the “Delhi Agreement”. But the ink on this agreement had not dried up when a combined front was raised both inside and outside the State against us. Some parties raised the slogan of a complete merger with India and applying of the Constitution of India in full to the State. Inside the State an agitation for the same purpose was launched by the Praja Parishad in Jammu and Ladakh. And if the people of the State consider this agitation against these assurances and guarantees which from the bedrock of accession, they are not to be blamed.

“...So far as the question of accession was concerned, it was the Muslims of the State who had to decide it. The Hindus had already given their verdict, because in a theocratic State of Pakistan there was no place for them.

“We had been assuring the Muslim masses of the State so far that they need have no fears if the State acceded to India because the terms on which we had acceded were the result of the joint deliberations between the Congress and the Muslim League before the partition of India that it was only three subjects of defence, foreign affairs and communications that we had handed over to India. In all other subjects we were completely autonomous.

“But it is apparent from the events of the past year that some influential parties and papers in India have changed their viewpoint and they are not prepared to extend the same guarantees which were given to us by the Government of India in 1947. Under these circumstances, to say that the majority of India was at our back does not seem to be correct, because no person or party has upto this day opposed the aims and objects of the agitation started by the Praja Parishad : at the most it has been said that it was premature.

“.....We have to see whether all the classes of population have been benefited by this constitutional relationship or not. My colleagues and myself had assured the Kashmiri Muslims that by our accession to India our rights and privileges would not only be safeguarded but India would extend its generous treatment towards them. But how the rights of the Kashmiri Muslims have been “safeguarded” during the last six years is clear from the representation given to them

in the Posts and Telegraphs Department and the Defence forces. It is a fact that instead of their representation having increased, it has been appreciably reduced. How can I convince them about the good intentions of Indians when an educated Kashmiri Muslim youth sees his non-Muslim brethren on good jobs in India. As such he is entitled to ask me why for him the doors of service in India were closed.

“But when I hint at the prevalence of communal forces in India, some of my unwise friends deduce from it that the only way open to us is Pakistan. But it is wrong, because we cannot prefer one form of communalism over another.

“I solemnly assure the audience that I and my party are in search of a solution in which the secret of your happiness and welfare lay hidden.”. (*i.e.* Independent Kashmir.)

Addressing a meeting of the National Conference Workers in the Mujahid Manzil Hall on 7th August 1953, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said :

“The problems facing our country are such that to solve them it is necessary that we keep a cool head rather than come under the influence of emotions. It is because of this that I have so far limited the expression of my opinions and suggestions to the meetings of workers only and have desisted from addressing public meetings on this subject. But unfortunately the disruptive elements have been deliberately spreading false rumours and thus creating panic among people. I have, therefore, thought it necessary to convey my view point to the general public and in my speech to be delivered on the coming Id, I shall throw enough light on these problems. I would, therefore, ask you to be patient and to listen to the speech with your full attention.”

Sheikh Abdullah again reiterated that the basic object of the National movement in Kashmir was to free the country of slavery and its bad effects and when this movement began, the question of accession to India or Pakistan did not exist at all, He added :

“There is only one way of ending the troubles of the State and that is that India, Pakistan and Kashmir should find out a solution which would be honourable to all the three as well as capable of being implemented.”

Discussing the question of the future of the State, Sheikh Abdullah said that apparently India, Pakistan and the United Nations had accepted the principle of the State's peoples' right to decide their future, but when the question of its implementation came up, “we were being told

that we had only to decide whether the State was to be merged with India or with Pakistan."

"But we say", Sheikh Abdullah added, "this is not the right course. If we have the freedom to decide about our future, we must be free to adopt any path which we might choose. *It may be that the majority of the people might like to accede to India or to Pakistan. It is also possible that a majority of the people of the State might be in favour of having friendly relations with both. If the decision is to be taken according to the will of the people only, then no obstacle should be placed in their choosing the path of their liking.* Of course, it is necessary that everybody, be he a Hindu or a Muslim or a Sikh or a Buddhist, should be free to express his opinion without any pressure or fear. *We have been telling the United Nations, times out of number, that this dispute, which is really our dispute, should be solved according to our will.*"

XXVII. The Differences

It is clear from the above speeches of Sheikh Abdullah that he was determined on breaking the Indo-Kashmir relations and on finding out a "solution" of the Kashmir problem centring round his personal dictatorship, which he described as reflecting the "wishes of the Kashmiris". He was deliberately putting aside the principles and policies of the majority of his colleagues in the National Conference, the Constituent Assembly and the Cabinet. His new line was made to synchronize with the various foreign moves for a "solution" of the Kashmir problem. We shall not deal with the more vituperative and communal twist given to the controversy by Mirza Afzal Beg, who sided with Sheikh Abdullah. We shall refer to the principles and policies of the National Conference, forthrightly put before the people by Sheikh Abdullah's colleagues, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and Kh. Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, which were flagrantly disregarded by Sheikh Abdullah.

Addressing a huge gathering of peasants at a convention at Badgam on 20th July, 1953, Kh. Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, President of the Constituent Assembly, said :

"The achievement of 'New Kashmir' ideal of the National Conference cannot be possible when Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. Kashmir's betterment lies in its association with India on the present basis. The maintenance of defence, communications and foreign affairs will be the responsibility of India and in other matters Kashmir should remain autonomous. The idea of an 'Independent' Kashmir is childish. The geographic position of Kashmir is such

as to render it open to external dangers and convert it into a cockpit of international intrigue. The people of Kashmir should, therefore, remain on the alert and not be misled by the imperialist machinations. Should Kashmir happen to be part of Pakistan, the 'New Kashmir' ideal of the National Conference will have no scope to fructify and this association would be synonymous with the political suicide of Kashmir. The state of affairs in Pakistan at present e.g., the pressure brought upon various national and progressive parties there, the gagging of the public opinion and the most undesirable treatment meted out to a patriot of the stature of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and similar other matters, should be sufficient to open the eyes of Kashmiris."

Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, the then Deputy Prime Minister, tried his best to avoid public controversy and through all possible means attempted to dissuade Sheikh Abdullah from following a suicidal path. At last, he was forced to come out into the open and reaffirm his adherence to the basic principles of the National Conference. Addressing a public meeting at Shopyan on 28th July, 1953, Bakhshi Sahab said :

"It has always been the policy of the National Conference to carry forward Gandhiji's message of truth and brotherhood. We shall, as usual, stand by our principles and will never make a departure from them."

Bakhshi Sahab added :

"There is no room for communalism in Kashmir. We will translate the 'New Kashmir' programme into reality while following the path of secularism."

Referring to Indo-Kashmir relationship, he said :

"The Indo-Kashmir relationship is based on the Instrument of Accession and the Delhi Agreement. We are opposed to the merger of Kashmir with India and we will always oppose this move tooth and nail. We will safeguard the freedom earned by the people of Kashmir at any cost. We shall not let any power on earth rob us of this freedom."

Addressing a public meeting at Kulgam on July 30, 1953, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad said :

"Any slogan or threat, from whatever quarter it may emanate, that seeks to disturb Kashmir's relationship with India and thus lead us astray into any other affiliation is bound to land us in economic bankruptcy and political servitude.

"At this critical juncture there exist certain forces that are busy creating disruption within our ranks. They are trying to cast doubts

on the present external affiliation of Jammu and Kashmir State. I should like to make it clear that the first task that faces any patriot, whether within or outside the National Conference, is to maintain unity and integrity of the State. This unity has to be fostered on the voluntary association of various peoples and constituent units of the State based on love and respect for one another. The State has affiliated itself as a single entity with India. This affiliation is based on the Instrument of Accession and the Delhi Agreement which was ratified by the Indian Parliament and the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir State. According to these we have secured a special status for the State so that we have complete autonomy to manage our internal affairs.

“It is true that voices have been raised against this agreement within and without the State but I have no doubt that the agreement has the ungrudging support of an overwhelming majority of the Indian people. We in the National Conference stand by this arrangement and none of us has ever conceived of deviating from this position. Our decision to accede to India was not taken under the stress of any emotion or false sentiment. *The ideals of our movement, its secular character, its economic and social programme, its anti-feudal and anti-imperialist traditions were the compelling factors, which guided us to cast our lot with India in fulfilment of our long-cherished dream of emancipating the broad masses of the Jammu and Kashmir State.*

“Further dismemberment of the State, either on grounds of communalism or convenience and isolation of a small unit from the rest of the State, will open the way for foreign intervention, conflict and economic and political disaster. The need of the hour is that all of us must think clearly and must not allow ourselves to get confused by alluring slogans or sentimental appeals.

“We have voluntarily associated ourselves as part of India and she has very generously grasped our hand of friendship and has helped us and continues to help us in our hour of need. Since we took this decision, nothing has happened to alter our faith in its correctness. We know that in this decision a large majority of the people have stood, and continue to stand, by us and I have no doubt that the people will defend this decision against any attacks that may emanate from any quarter within or outside the State.”

XXVIII. Conspiracy in Kashmir

A solution of the Kashmir problem on the basis of a further partition of the Jammu and Kashmir State, including the establishment of an “Independent” Kashmir Valley under Sheikh Abdullah, was thus openly advocated by him and some of his colleagues, in spite of opposition from the overwhelming majority of the National

Conference Organization, the State Constituent Assembly and even his Cabinet colleagues. It is reliably learnt that at the Nehru-Mohammed Ali talks in Karachi in July, 1953, the Pakistan Prime Minister gave a clear hint of his acceptance of such a solution. However, the main support for this solution came from foreign quarters as was obvious from the foreign press comments made at that time.

Robert Trumbull, the Delhi correspondent of the *New York Times*, set the line for the international press in the despatch which appeared in his paper on July 5, 1953. A map of the State, showing the proposed division into three zones, also appeared in the same paper. According to this scheme, the north western zone was to go to Pakistan, most of Jammu and Ladakh to India, while the Valley of Kashmir was to be an "Independent" State. Trumbull also revealed that Mr. John Foster Dulles, the United States Secretary of State, favoured a solution of this nature. At that time a Kashmir delegation was in New Delhi discussing the various aspects of the Kashmir problem. Trumbull tried his best to contact them to find out their reactions to his despatch. He told an officer of the State Government on July 7 that the scheme covered by him in his despatch had the blessings of Mr. Dulles, who had broached the subject at Delhi and Karachi.

In an editorial on July 6, the *New York Times* wrote .

"In a despatch to this newspaper Robert Trumbull reports from New Delhi that it is understood that India and Pakistan are about to reach an agreement on the troublesome issue of the disposition of Kashmir. The plan, as reported, would abandon the idea of a plebiscite to determine whether Kashmir should adhere to India or Pakistan. The State of Jammu and Kashmir would actually be partitioned. Eastern Jammu, where there is the largest concentration of Hindus would go to India, along with Ladakh which borders on Tibet. Western Kashmir, the area now called Azad, free Kashmir, would go to Pakistan. The Vale of Kashmir, the richest and the most desirable part of the State, would be set up as an independent entity under the protection of both India and Pakistan.

On July 12 also the *New York Times* commented favourably on the proposed partition of the State and the establishment of an independent State in the Valley of Kashmir. That Sheikh Abdullah

had swallowed the bait of "Independence" is clear from Trumbull's despatch of July 5 :

"Sheikh Abdullah is said to lean towards independent status as this would solve many of his problems, both political and financial, and thereby strengthen his formal support which now appears to be falling off."

This is clearly "connivance and support" of foreign powers in Sheikh Abdullah's move for "Independent" Valley of Kashmir, involving the dismemberment of the State. During the last month of his office, Sheikh Abdullah maintained very close liaison with foreign diplomats, journalists and other political agents. He spent long hours in discussions with Mr. Richard S. Leach, the First Secretary of the U. S. Embassy in New Delhi. Leach met the Sheikh on July 14, and many other occasions. Reference has already been made to Leach's advocacy of 'Independent' Kashmir privately in circles closely associated with Sheikh Abdullah. His mysterious movements in the State early in August on the eve of Sheikh Abdullah's dismissal and arrest caused great misgivings about the conduct, not only of this diplomat, but also of his species in general. Mrs. Adams, the wife of another United States diplomat met Sheikh Abdullah on July 22, and others of the same tribe included Miss Flower, Miss Eich, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Brown of "Life and Time", Dr. and Mrs. Berg, Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Baldwin and the Californian group of professors and students. Joe Brown made two trips from Srinagar to Karachi and on the eve of his last trip he was entertained to lunch by Sheikh Abdullah at Drapahama Shooting Lodge where some of Sheikh's close associates alone were present. It is certain that he sent messages to Karachi through Joe Brown as Nehru-Ali talks were being held there at that time. We need not mention the meetings with internal agents such as Dr. Edmonds, Mrs. Hellen Steveredes, Sgt. John Denn and Mrs. Hogan. .

Sheikh Abdullah's meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin on August 5 caused great suspicion in the minds of people who knew something about the Baldwins. Mr. Baldwin is a big insurance tycoon in the U.S.A. and a close friend of Mr. Allen, the U. S. Ambassador to India, who introduced the Baldwins to Sheikh Abdullah. The fraternization of Sheikh Abdullah with these foreigners, the trend of his speeches, the foreign press reactions to the line of the *New York Times*, the moves of Mr. Dulles and Mr. Stevenson, the activities of various foreign agencies in Kashmir

and the optimistic statements of the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammed Ali, that solution of the Kashmir issue was in sight, are all significant pointers to a synchronized attempt at a dismemberment of the State. Only the United Nations was silent, but its domination by the Anglo-American power bloc clearly suggests that its ultimate objective in the strategic area of the Jammu and Kashmir State is the same, though the techniques of intervention have been different.

XXIX. Chester Bowles' Confession

In his book, *Ambassador Reports*, Mr. Chester Bowles formerly the United States Ambassador to India, gives a clear indication of the United States policy towards the Kashmir question. This most friendly American Ambassador to India has frankly confessed that a further partition of the State, including a plebiscite in the Valley of Kashmir, is the best solution of the difficult Kashmir problem. He has also admitted the "indiscretions" of the American military personnel in Kashmir. We quote him at length and leave it to the readers to form their own conclusions: "I have always felt that with a little more flexibility on the part of the Security Council, and particularly on the part of the United States and the United Kingdom, an agreement might have been reached in the winter of 1952. *At that time there was considerable indication that if the Azad-Kashmir area, then occupied by Pakistan troops, were given outright to Pakistan, and the Jammu and Ladakh areas, which are comprised almost wholly of Hindus and Buddhists, given outright to India, it might have been possible to agree on a plebiscite confined to the valley of Kashmir itself.* Various legal advisers, however, rigidly held that the negotiators could not stray from the narrow "terms of reference" for a plebiscite of the whole State, laid down by the Security Council, and this eliminated any hope that a new approach to an agreement might be explored.

"As the stalemate dragged on, sentiment in Kashmir for independence from both Pakistan and India seemed to develop, although it is hard to tell how strong this actually was. After an involved series of political manoeuvres, this came to a head in the summer of 1953, after I had left India. Sheikh Abdullah, the Kashmir leader who had earlier taken the lead in the defence of the State against the tribal raiders, and who since the 1930's had been the popular hero of the long Kashmir struggle for freedom, was deposed as Prime

Minister on the ground that he was "plotting" for an independent Kashmir.

"Out of this tangled history of the events in Kashmir, some lessons, both for us and the Indians, emerge very clearly. *When I was in Kashmir in the fall of 1952, some two-thirds of the officers on the cease-fire line were Americans, and not all of them handled themselves with discretion. The last negotiator appointed by the United Nations was a distinguished American, Frank Graham, and the administrator who was selected by the United Nations to take charge of the plebiscite, if and when it was conducted, was still another American, Admiral Chester Nimitz.*"

"Despite the high calibre of these men, and all the goodwill in the world, the U.N. effort to achieve a Kashmir settlement inevitably took on the character of an American operation. In a situation where passions run high, we have not only failed to achieve a settlement, but have inevitably come in for sharp criticism."

(*Times of India*, February 5, 1954)
