

**A REPORT ON THE**  
**Kashmir Problem**

(An Appeal for Re-thinking on the  
India-Kashmir-Pakistan Relationship)

**T. N. ZUTSI**

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**With an Introduction**

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**T. N. Zutshi,  
c/o Raja Mahendrapratap,  
Rajpur, Dehradun.**

**Price : Rs. 1.50**

**Printed at  
Puri Printers,  
Karol Bagh, New Delhi-5.**

## INTRODUCTION

The signatories to this Report on the Kashmir Problem, have asked me to write an introduction to it. I do so most gladly.

First of all it appears necessary to tell the readers something about the two signatories to the Report.

Shri Tapeswar Nath Zutshi was a student of the Banaras Hindu University during the last days of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent fight for India's Independence. He passed the B.Sc. examination from that University in 1947. The same year he went to the U.S.A. for further studies. He got the B.A. degree in Psychology and B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Kansas, U.S.A. He came back to India in 1955. He again left India in 1957 for Europe as a Gandhian missionary with the intention of propagating the Gandhian way of non-violent resistance to evil among the war-worn people of Europe. He worked specially in Austria and Germany and started the well-known non-violent Satyagrah against the famous Berlin Wall in 1962. The movement won many admirers in Europe especially in Germany and created quite a stir among the people of Europe. He returned to India in 1964. He has since been trying to organise Non-violent Resisters to all evil, whom he calls 'Non-violent Revolutionaries' in this country. He began this effort with a thirty day fast at Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi, Rajghat, New Delhi, some months after his return from Europe.

Shri E.P. Menon is a young man, who during his student life, was greatly impressed by the writings of such men as Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx, Bertrand Russel and Henry George. He joined the Bhoodan Movement under Acharya Vinoba Bhave in 1954 and was one year with Vinobaji in the latter's Padayatra through various parts of the country. After that he worked in the Sarva Seva Sangh secretariat for about seven years. In 1961 at the call of Bertrand Russel 'to act or perish in the effort to establish world peace' he became a missionary of non-violent direct action against

the nuclear bombs and arms race. This assumed the shape of a Peace March from Delhi to Moscow, Washington, Hiroshima and back to Delhi which took nearly two and a half years. Since his return to India in 1964 he has been organising Shanti Sena under the Sarva Seva Sangh.

Shri T.N. Zutshi, during his fourteen years stay in Europe and America, was often asked questions about India and her various problems including the problem of Kashmir and Indo-Pak relations. Mr. Zutshi belongs to a Kashmiri Pandit family. Naturally, he has been anxious personally to go to Kashmir and make a first-hand study of various aspects of the problem of that State. With this end in view he met me and several other friends in Delhi.

It was thought advisable that he should have at least one other friend and collaborator with him in this mission of study. Shri E.P. Menon's name was suggested. Shri Menon gladly agreed to accompany Shri Zutshi.

It must be added that neither Shri T.N. Zutshi nor Shri E.P. Menon had ever been to Kashmir before. They have undoubtedly, tried their best to make as impartial a study of the situation as possible.

I may not try to recapitulate what has been said in the pages of the Report. The Report must speak for itself and so it does. I can only say that this Report throws light on several aspects of the Kashmir problem, of the views of various political parties and groups there and of the Kashmiri people in general, of their opinions on India's relationship with them and of their desires and aspirations for the future, as probably no other publication so far.

The Kashmir problem has evidently arisen out of the partition of the country, concurrently with the attainment of independence, into two separate sovereign States, India and Pakistan. Naturally, the Report touches upon the issue of the partition of the country, at several places. It must be admitted that the partition of the country itself was due at least as much to our own weaknesses and shortcomings as to foreign machinations. This too must be admitted that those weaknesses and shortcomings in our national character which led to the partition of the country, at that critical juncture, have, to some extent at least, increased after independence rather than decrease.

The Kashmiri people on the whole are a simple, hospitable and good-natured people. Hindus and Muslims, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, men of all castes and creeds have lived there for long centuries in the most cordial and friendly of relationships. Their beautiful handicrafts like those of shawls, other woollen fabrics, wood-carving, leather work, Silk and papermache have always earned a name for delicate and exquisite workmanship both in India and outside. The boundary of the State of Jammu and Kashmir as pointed out in the Report, touches the boundary of five sovereign States at present including Afghanistan, Soviet Union and People's China. The economy and prosperity of the State has always depended upon free trade relationships with all these countries along the border. Naturally, the Kashmiri people have always been a peace-loving people.

What I have said above led to some hesitation in the minds of the Maharaja as well as the people of Jammu and Kashmir as to which of the two newly formed sovereign States, India or Pakistan they should accede to.

Yet, it must be remembered that both the Maharaja and the leaders of the Kashmiri people, Hindu as well as Muslim were all through those critical days against the very idea of the partition of the country. Nowhere in India was the Muslim League's two-nation theory more ridiculed and opposed than in Jammu and Kashmir, both by the Hindus and by the Muslims. Without meaning any disrespect to Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, let me remind the reader that nowhere in India did Mr. Jinnah meet with that stubborn opposition to his two-nation theory which he had to face in Kashmir.

I may be allowed to mention here a small but significant incident. When Mr. Jinnah visited Srinagar in 1944, three years before partition, he was given a cold shoulder both by the Maharaja's Government and by the people at large. The bungalow in which Mr. Jinnah was put up had a Hindu cook. Mr. Jinnah saw the list of servants and requested the Government to provide him with a Muslim cook in place of the Hindu one. His request was summarily rejected, because 'the servants could not be changed.' Similar other things happened which may not be mentioned here, and yet which made it abundantly clear that neither the Maharaja nor his Govern-

ment nor his people, Hindu or Muslim, had any love for Mr. Jinnah's two-nation theory and the partition of the country which followed as a result of that theory.

As the problem of Kashmir is inextricably mixed up with the name of Sheikh Abdullah, several of the statements recorded in this Report, naturally deal with Sheikh Abdullah's personality also. I know that there is a considerable section of public opinion in this country which feels rather strongly against some of Sheikh Abdullah's alleged doings and utterances. Evidently no man is infallible, much less any statesman or politician. In the present painful situation which has arisen in connection with Kashmir State, Sheikh Abdullah is not without his share of responsibility. Yet, both in Equity and in Law, it is a well-known maxim that even the greatest offender has the right that all that can possibly be said in his favour should be fully considered by those who may have to pass judgment upon him. I, therefore, make no apology for mentioning here some facts about Sheikh Abdullah which are within my personal knowledge.

First of all, we must keep in mind that if there was one strongman in Jammu and Kashmir at that time to whom all the opposition to Mr. Jinnah and his two-nation theory was due, it was Sheikh Abdullah, the then accredited leader of the Kashmiri people. I do not think it would be far from truth to say that in no individual in the country did Mr. Jinnah meet with a greater and a stauncher opponent of his two-nation theory than in Sheikh Abdullah.

Yet, the country was partitioned. Communal riots flared up in both India and Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Hindus, men, women and children, were uprooted from their homes in Pakistan and sent over to India. Similarly, hundreds of thousands of innocent Muslims, men, women and children, were uprooted from their homes in India and sent over to Pakistan. The Report also points out that while the State of Jammu and Kashmir was sandwiched between India and Pakistan, with the exception of some border areas which caught the infection from India or from Pakistan, the rest of Kashmir and especially the Kashmir Valley remained absolutely free from those shameful communal disturbances in those horrible days. Now let us see how the partition affected Kashmir itself.

In the city of Amritsar, there is a *sarai* or traveller's inn then called *Kashmirian di Sarai* i.e. the Inn of the Kashmiris. Representati-



ves and agents of the merchants as well as of the artisans of Kashmir used to visit this Sarai several times during the year, stay there for some time, exhibit their beautiful goods and secure customers both wholesale and retail. Amritsar was their biggest exchange market in the world. They used to come mostly on horses and camels via Pathankot and go back to their homes by the same route. These representatives of the Kashmiri artisans and merchants were mainly Muslims.

Soon after the partition on account of the communal frenzy and consequent butchery which broke out on both sides of the border, the Inn of the Kashmiris could no longer remain what it had been for centuries. No more was the life and property of any Muslim quite safe in that unfortunate city. It is said that even horses or camels laden with goods were some time looted and killed on the Pathankot road. It meant a great loss to large numbers of Muslim artisans and their sympathisers in the Valley of Kashmir. Goods began to accumulate.

It was under these circumstances that the Maharaja was compelled to enter into a standstill agreement with Pakistan with regard to Transport, Communication etc. It was this standstill agreement of which Pakistan took advantage in pushing the tribals into Kashmir and trying to annex Kashmir through a coup which did not quite succeed.

I well remember how in those days of communal orgy on either side Sheikh Abdullah several times approached Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with the earnest request that anyhow the road between Kashmir and Amritsar should be made safe for Kashmiri Muslims and that their Inn in the city of Amritsar should be protected. But in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's sympathy with Sheikh Abdullah's desire and Jawaharlal's own agony in the matter, it was beyond Jawaharlal's power to fulfil the just desire of Sheikh Abdullah. All this had its natural repercussion on the Kashmiri people and on the Kashmir problem.

While these difficulties of Kashmiri Muslims in and on the road to Amritsar naturally turned the minds of some of them towards Pakistan and a group began to grow in favour of accession to Pakistan, as a natural reaction to the same some Kashmiri Hindus specially

in the Jammu area, also began to develop a sort of Hindu communal outlook which too had been foreign to the Kashmiri people during centuries past.

The situation became more and more tentalizing for Sheikh Abdullah than whom there was no greater lover of India and its ideal of secularism at the time. The possibility of a division of Jammu and Kashmir into two States, one predominantly Hindu and the other predominantly Muslim, was also there. Naturally, Sheikh Abdullah thought that one way out of the difficulty could be a more or less autonomous Kashmir, friendly both to India and Pakistan and with its autonomy guaranteed by both. On the other hand, this very way of thinking in Sheikh Abdullah began to arouse more and more suspicions in the minds of some Hindu leaders as also in the minds of some members of the Government of India who unfortunately could not fully realise the then difficulties of the Kashmiri people.

Gradually, reactionary and communal elements in India had their way. On 9th August 1953 Sheikh Abdullah was arrested while he was still the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. He was released on 8th January, 1958 and again arrested on 29th April 1958. This time, as mentioned in the Report, a case was started against him on the charge of waging war against India with the help of Pakistan. It cost crores to the Indian Ex-chequer. The case failed. Sheikh Abdullah was again released on 8th April 1964 and again arrested on 8th May 1965. The Kashmir situation went on growing from bad to worse. The repeated incarcerations and the prosecution of Sheikh Abdullah irritated the Kashmiri Muslims as nothing else could have done.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, after all that can be said, did appreciate Sheikh Abdullah's efforts and believed in his friendship towards India and in his faith in secularism. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru by this time appears to have seen clearly that no lasting settlement of the Kashmir problem was possible without the help and co-operation of Sheikh Abdullah. The Sheikh was released again. This time he was invited to Delhi and kept as a guest of Pandit Nehru. In the meantime the Plebiscite Front had gained followers in Kashmir. I received a telephonic call from Sheikh Abdullah whom I had known sufficiently well for long years. I was invited to meet him at the residence of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

I went there and had a long enough talk with Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Mohammed Afzal Beg. During part of that time Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru also joined us in the talk. During the talk I found that practically everything was settled about the future of Kashmir between Sheikh Abdullah and Pt. Nehru. It was a solution according to which the demand of the Plebiscite Front people could also be satisfied, although indirectly, and at the same time the State of Jammu and Kashmir could have remained with India. I do suppose that no solution could have been better. For a part of the proposal, the consent of the Pakistan Government was necessary. Sheikh Abdullah was sent to Pakistan to get the consent of President Ayub Khan. Foreign imperialist interests tried to influence the Pakistan Government against giving such a consent. But mistrust of each other had already arisen between Pakistan and those foreign interests. This distrust developed greater proportions later. President Ayub Khan did give his consent to the part of the understanding which concerned him. At this Sheikh Abdullah rather too hastily and unwisely broadcast to the world that practically everything had been settled about Kashmir and the Heads of India and Pakistan Governments had only to meet formally to finalize their agreement about Kashmir. The news upset the same Western Imperialist interests. Kashmir was one of their most important pawns on the world's political chess-board. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru died before Sheikh Abdullah could return to Delhi, under very suspicious circumstances.

On 13th February 1965, as mentioned in the Report, Sheikh Abdullah went out of India for performing Haj and for visiting a few countries like U.A.R., U.K. and Algeria. Sheikh Abdullah, as said in the Report, visited Algeria. Premier ChouEn-lai of People's China also visited Algeria at the same time and called on Sheikh Abdullah. They both met in the presence of some Algerian authorities and some others. At this there was a row in India. Nobody said as to what ChouEn-lai and Abdullah had talked to each other, yet the suspicion arose and it was rumoured around that they had both talked something against India.

About that very time a World Muslim Conference was going to be held in Mecca. Some representatives of Pakistan were to attend the Conference. Some people in India thought that the representatives of Pakistan and Sheikh Abdullah might carry on anti-

Indian propaganda at the World Muslim Conference. The Government of India was persuaded to send an Indian Muslim Delegation of its own to that Conference in order to counteract any anti-India propaganda that the representative of Pakistan and Sheikh Abdullah might carry on at the Conference.

Three prominent Indian Muslim Leaders were members of the Delegation. On their return to India I had heart to heart talks with two of them. They both told me how the representatives of various Muslim countries in the World looked at them with suspicion as representatives of the non-Muslim Government of India and how they found themselves helpless in influencing the proceedings of the conference. They also told me how the representatives of Pakistan wanted to move some resolution at the Conference appreciative of Pakistan's policies and not friendly to India. The Indian representatives found themselves helpless in the matter. It was Sheikh Abdullah who used his talent for creating in the minds of the delegates assembled at the Conference an appreciation of the secular ideal of Government enshrined in the Constitution of India as against the theocratic ideal followed in Pakistan. It was Sheikh Abdullah's influence at the Conference which kept the Conference back from passing any resolution in any way anti-India.

At this the Indian representatives felt grateful to Sheikh Abdullah and requested him to come to India as early as possible, meet representatives of the Government of India and try to remove the suspicions that had arisen in India about his talk with Chou En-lai. The Sheikh agreed.

It was thus, that Sheikh Abdullah wrote to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri that he (Sheikh Abdullah) wished to come to Delhi and have a heart to heart talk with the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the President of India in order to remove any misunderstanding that may have arisen in connection with his meeting Premier Chou En-lai in Algeria. Sheikh Abdullah claimed that there was absolutely nothing anti-Indian in his talks with the Chinese Premier. He wanted to remove the misunderstanding if any.

The Sheikh left for India. His plane was to arrive at the Palam Airport on a fine morning. Just the previous day, rumour went round in Delhi that the Sheikh would be arrested at the Airport just before landing. The rumour did upset some friends who

knew something about the Sheikh's intentions. A prominent Muslim Congress M.P., whose name I am omitting immediately saw Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri in the afternoon previous to Sheikh's arrival. The Congress M.P. spoke to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri about the rumour and wanted to know the fact. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, in the plainest possible language, assured him that the Sheikh would not be arrested at the Airport, that he would be a Government guest in Delhi and would be given full opportunity of talking to Shastriji, to the Home Minister and to the President of India as he had desired in order to remove any misunderstanding that might have risen in connection with his talks with Premier Chou En-lai. The M.P. came back to his house fully assured in that connection.

At about nine in the night some police officer saw the same M.P. and told him that warrant for the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah at the airport has been signed. The M.P. refused to believe it and told the officer of the talk he had with the Prime Minister only a few hours earlier.

Early in the morning the news went round that the Sheikh had been arrested on the Airport at about 4.00 A.M. The same Congress M.P. again saw Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri sometime in the morning and asked him as to how it had happened. According to the M.P. with whom I had personally a talk in this connection told me that Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri appeared very much depressed and even apologetic on that occasion and explained to his M.P. friend how a majority of the members of the cabinet had insisted upon the Sheikh's arrest in the interest of law and order, how the responsibility of the cabinet was after all a joint responsibility and how the Prime Minister himself had become helpless in the matter.

This was the Sheikh's last arrest. He is still in detention at Kodai-Kanal (Madras) about a few thousand miles away from his home.

I have said so much about Sheikh Abdullah in this introduction because somehow, as I had already said, his personality is mixed up with the Kashmir problem.

On practically all other aspects of this problem, this report throws much light and gives valuable information to the reader. I heartily congratulate the writers of this report on the labour they

have undertaken and recommend it to all those who feel interested in the problem. I also fully endorse the suggestions made at the end of the report for the solution of the problem. The sooner we are able to carry out these suggestions the better for us, for the Kashmiri people, for Indo-Pak relations and for peace and prosperity, at least in this corner of the world.

40, Hanuman Lane,  
New Delhi-1,  
15-12-1966.

Sundarlal

# A Report on the Kashmir Problem

We, the signatories to this Report, left Delhi for Kashmir on the 1st of August, 1966, reaching Srinagar on 3rd. We were there together upto the 12th. After that E.P. Menon had to come back to Delhi on account of previous engagements. T. N. Zutshi continued to stay on till the 23rd of August and returned to Delhi on the 25th.

The present report is a result of our joint investigation in this connection.

During our stay in Kashmir we met leaders and people of various political parties and almost all walks of life in that State. We held talks with lawyers, journalists, students, representatives of political parties—Congress, P.S.P., Jan Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha and the Plebiscite Front, businessmen, printers and publishers, hotel keepers, tongawallas and boatmen.

In the beginning we had some difficulty in making people talk to us freely and heart to heart. It required some patience to make them communicative. A prominent leader, who is also a Muslim divine, said to us :—  
“Many people representing different organizations in India came to Kashmir on different occasions to study our problems and report to the government and the people in India. They all appeared to want to do something for the Kashmiri people, but nothing has happened so far. Therefore, if you approach the same people again, they may not like to narrate their woes any more. ...After

Sheikh Abdullah's arrest on May 8th, 1965, some Sarvodaya workers, including.....and also some ladies, came to Kashmir to study the situation. Many of the public workers of Kashmir who introduced these Sarvodaya workers to the village people in Kashmir were later arrested and tortured by the police. Even village women who gave statements were later arrested and tortured by the local police.....”

Yet we feel satisfied to say that, through patience and perseverance, we were able to make the people with whom we talked open their hearts to us.

We give below a few extracts from some important statements that we recorded during our stay in Kashmir. We cannot vouchsafe for the truth or accuracy of every statement made to us nor do we agree with every view expressed. Yet we believe that these statements give us a fair idea of the views, the feelings and of the working of the minds of the Kashmiri people in general. We are omitting names on account of the conditions prevailing there at the present moment.

## 1

An elderly Kashmiri Pandit, an old freedom fighter who has served long terms of imprisonment, a life-long worker for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, who maintains a broad outlook on all international issues and whose house is a rendezvous of people of all schools of thought and of all ranks of life in Kashmir, stated to us as under :—

“The survival of humanity rests upon the establishment of a world law and a world authority.... Kashmir has an ancient historical background. It enjoyed independent existence throughout centuries. It had a distinct



culture and a social life of its own. It had trade relations with all neighbouring countries. Kashmir's economy depends upon both India and Pakistan. The only route to the plains which remains open all the year round lies through Pakistan. The route to India through Banihal is closed during the winter and even in other months of the year traffic is disrupted whenever it rains for some days consecutively. The economy of Kashmir can thrive only if both the routes, the one to India and the other to Pakistan, remain open throughout as it was before the partition of the country. In fact, it would be best for Kashmir's economy if the routes to China and Russia are also kept open for trade, as it had been throughout the history of Kashmir before partition..... How can the people forget their past? The people feel deep sentimental attachment to their distinct culture and past history. Therefore, a more or less independent Kashmir can be the only fair solution under the present circumstances.....Sheikh Abdullah would prefer death to joining Pakistan.....The people have been feeling a sense of frustration and suppression. Partly on account of this and partly on account of their religious affinity many of them may show preference for Pakistan. But in reality they won't opt for Pakistan because they know the troubles they may have to face there.....At every important place a peace committee should be established which will take up the problem of Kashmir and educate the people. The people must tell their leaders that they want to live in peace with all. It is the leaders who are doing more harm to the country in this matter... We must strive for an amicable and just settlement, to the satisfaction of all concerned, of all outstanding problems between India and Pakistan, including the problem of

Kashmir which has remained unsolved for the last 18 years.”

## 2

The Muslim editor of a local daily spoke to us as under :—

“It is the State Government and not the Central Government which suppresses the people. Repression in Kashmir is not so much due to the Centre as to our State Government. There are three groups of opinion in Kashmir. One of them would like to remain with India under the original terms of accession in which only Defence, External Affairs and Communications were transferred to the Centre and all other subjects were to remain under the jurisdiction of the Maharaja or of the people of the State. The second group would like to go to Pakistan. The third group would like an independent Kashmir, friendly to both India and Pakistan. But everyone would like to end the present state of affairs.....When Nandaji visited Kashmir several thousand Home Guards, in plain clothes, constituted his audience. It was a sort of a paid audience.....The people of Kashmir are not getting the privileges which Indians enjoy in other parts of the country. Let us take the Press Act. So many papers are banned in Kashmir. My own paper was banned several times. There are so many restrictions imposed on us.....So much of money has been pouring into Kashmir from Delhi. But very little of it has reached the people. Corruption is rampant. We need a clean administration first.....Sheikh Abdullah is the most highly respected person in Kashmir. Whatever he says, people will follow him. If plebiscite is taken, most people would vote as the Sheikh

asks them to vote. I am sure he will not go with Pakistan..... Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masoodi did wonderfully good work during the Indo-Pak War. He could control the people from creating any disturbance. But just after the war our Government wanted him to be silenced because he was supposed to belong to the Plebiscite Front. Fresh disturbances were created by instigating rowdy elements and the blame was wrongly put on Maulana Masoodi. He was arrested in October, 1965, and is still behind the bars..... As a result of the non-violent Satyagraha subsequent to the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, all schools and colleges in the State were closed for six months, October 1965 to March 1966..... The people will prefer President's Rule to the present regime..... We need some solution of the present crisis whatever it be. The sword of uncertainty hanging over the heads of the Kashmiri people is too sharp to endure. Any moment a plane roars in the sky and automatically a sense of fear vibrates in the minds of the people. People are fed up with this perpetual tension.”

### 3

The Muslim divine to whom we have referred above Stated as follows:—

“Most people in Kashmir are against the Government of India and its activities. This increasing feeling against the Government of India is mainly due to the continued detention of Sheikh Adbullah without trial. It is also due to the repression by the Police and the corrupt practices of the State officials..... According to many of us not even the name of democracy exists in Kashmir. It is a police state.... The Sarvodaya

mission had visited Baramula and other places where the local people were tortured later. Those running the Government here do not want any settlement of the problem because it may be dangerous to their own existence. The State Government does not give any opportunity of trade etc. to members of the opposition parties. .... Corruption in Congress works like this. Those who do not contribute money to the party are penalized by cancelling of their licences etc, if they are businessmen. .... Pir Dustagir, a Muslim religious Shrine, had a managing committee of its own. The Government broke up the old committee and constituted a new one in which except two all other members are Government men. People were against Nanda but they held Shastriji in high esteem ...Sheikh Adbullah still enjoys the confidence of the the people.....”

## 4

We thought of meeting the students of the University and of having a free talk with them on the situation in their State. The Jammu and Kashmir University is situated in beautiful surroundings away from the busy life of the city. One morning we walked into the University cafeteria. We approached a table and asked a group of student, sitting around and chatting, “Shall we join you at the table?” “Of course, do take your seats,” one of them replied. They were courteous. We introduced ourselves. After a few minutes of general talk we switched on to the political situation in Kashmir. “It is the Engineering College that is much concerned with these things, not so the rest of the University”, said one of them. “We have heard about the Engineering College, we would like to go there too,” replied one of us. “Then come along. We are students of that College,” said one of them. A

stroll in that huge campus under tall, shady Chunar trees planted centuries ago by the Moghals, a delicious lunch in the students mess and a heart to heart talk with the students took us nearly two hours.

“Look at those tents,” with these words one of them pointed towards a group of tents in a corner of the campus. He continued, “That is the..... Police camp. They are permanently camping in our college campus. They are keeping guard over us lest we take out demonstrations and create trouble for the Government. How long can we tolerate such thing? If this is the way the State and Central Governments behave towards us, they are hardly better than the British.”

In this Engineering College education is reported to be much cheaper than in other similar colleges in India. “We want to keep good relations with both the neighbouring countries, India and Pakistan,” said one of them. He continued. “The Central and State Governments are equally responsible for the repression on political workers in the State. Whatever Sheikh Abdullah says, we are prepared to follow. .... and ..... (names omitted) are both corrupt and puppets in the hands of the Centre..... There are twelve student leaders in prison just now. Our assemblies and meetings are prohibited. We are under a terrible pressure. Moreover, we are not given sufficient opportunity in jobs, etc. No Kashmiri Muslim students are given jobs in other parts of India.”

Another student said, “About the hair (Mue Sharif or the Prophet’s hair) theft incident in the Hazratbal Shrine Shastriji had repeatedly promised that the guilty would be brought to book. But nothing

happened nor did anyone bother to fulfil that promise later.”

“Lots of villagers were tortured by the .....Police during the disturbances when the War between India and Pakistan was in progress,” said another student. He continued, “Anyone who talks about self-determination is suspected as an agent of Pakistan. This way things cannot go on for long. Whatever it may be, the problem must find solution as early as possible.”

## 5

Another important centre that we visited was the High Court. There we had talks with several lawyers of various schools of thought. “India comes to the people of Kashmir as a *seth* with pockets full of money,” said a budding lawyer criticising the Indian Government’s attitude towards Kashmir. “People cannot be bought like this.....” continued the.....

“There are over 5000 Muslims in the Jan Sangh in Kashmir,” claimed the Jan Sangh Secretary. When we wanted him to introduce us to some of them, he said that he had no time for it.

## 6

Meeting a relative of Sheikh Abdullah was another valuable experience. He held the view that an independent Kashmir was the only solution. “In war such things as military or police excesses do happen, no one can avoid them,” said he. He continued, “.....But the people are too much fed up with the quarrel between the two neighbouring countries, India and Pakistan..... If the Government of India wants us to continue like that, under pressure and pain, let them declare so openly.

No use of pretending to help the people of Kashmir while the bulk of the money goes to the pockets of those politicians who are running the show. Here is just one glaring example," said he and from his drawing room pointed to a gigantic seven storied structure rising upto the skies, "It belongs to the Bakhshi Brothers ....."

## 7

We spent another evening with three young leaders of the Plebiscite Front who were just out of prison on parole. One of them said, "Even though our firm stand is for a free plebiscite in Kashmir, whatever stand Sheikh Saheb takes we shall follow him. Without him no settlement of the problem is possible. The masses also will follow him. Even though, if given free choice of opting for India or Pakistan, without the benefit of Sheikh Saheb's advice, many may prefer Pakistan. That is because they are ignorant and illiterate. But intelligent people can bring them to reason and to the right way."

After this they began to talk to us about the basic unity between the two great communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, living in Kashmir. One of them said, "There are even common shrines for both Hindus and Muslims, When Muslims go there, they do not eat meat that day. Similarly Hindus too pay great regard for Muslim culture and traditions. But as years passed by, due to quarrels between politicians and deliberate suppression by the Government, animosity and friction began to develop..... Surnames like 'Bhatt' and 'Pandit' are common to both Hindus and Muslims. One could easily notice great harmony existing between the two communities in courts, offices and all other fields of life....."

## 8

A young vakil told us that, “we want to keep this land open to people from all parts of the world. Then alone can our economy thrive.....Now a days most of the house-boats are lying idle for want of work. Tourist activity and industries depending upon it have very much come down.”

## 9

“There will be hartal in the city tomorrow. Therefore, tell me what vegetables you would like to take tomorrow, so that I may buy the same today,” our hotel manager enquired of us on the evening of the 8th of August.

“Why hartal tomorrow ?” We asked.

“It is the Sheikh Abdullah day. Every year the people of Kashmir observe it. You know he was first arrested on the 9th of August, 1953. It is a very important day for us to mourn and pray for his health and for peace in Kashmir,” was the reply.

The next day we went to the Lall Chowk and found most of the shops open. “What about the reported hartal?” we asked of the lawyer friends who were with us.

They replied, “Some Kashmiri Pandits, Sikhs and Marwaries are keeping their shops open. But just you get into the interior of the city, there it is complete hartal. Moreover, the police used force this morning in getting shops opened in this part of Srinagar which is a fashionable part of the city and visited most by tourists and outsiders. The police even broke open the locks, of some shops and compelled the shopkeepers to keep the same open.”



To witness the whole thing for ourselves we got into a tonga and drove into the interior of the city. To our great surprise we saw not a single shop open there. But heavy police patrol was in evidence in every lane and street. Almost all streets had a deserted appearance.

The All India Radio and some Indian newspapers reported about the hartal in Srinagar the next day and said that only a few shops were closed. This was incorrect.

## 10

One evening we were invited to dinner at the house of a prominent Kashmiri Pandit. Many other Kashmiri Pandits were there. We had a heart to heart talk with them. One of them gave us the History of Kashmir and said, "There were no aboriginies in the Kashmir Valley. The Aryans came to the plains of India through the Hindu Kush and Afghanistan. At that time the Kashmir Valley was filled with water. Kashyap Muni, with a band of Aryans, first came here from the plains of India. He drained water from the Valley and settled down with his group. Therefore, Kashmir is named after Kashyap Muni. Later another group of Aryans came here from the plains. These two groups used different calenders. One used the lunar calender and the other used the combined Lunar and Solar calender. These two groups among the Kashmiri Pandits are still known by their different calenders. The former are known Chandra Masi and the latter as Malmasi...."

The gentlemen further continued, "We were against the partition of India. That partition was the root cause of all subsequent troubles....Since time immemorial all

the people of Kashmir have lived a life of unity and perfect communal harmony. Only since 1947 some elements started disrupting this harmony.”

They also complained to us :—“While in earlier days after partition as well as under the Prime Minister-ship of Sheikh Abdullah no discrimination was made against any community by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, laterly the Government of Kashmir has begun to discriminate against the Hindus and especially against the Kashmiri Pandits in matters of education, Government Jobs, etc. Possibly they do so to please the Muslim population of Kashmir amongst whom they are gradually losing their popularity. This new trend has created communal disharmony and dissatisfaction where none existed before, even for centuries under the rule of the Maharajas.”

## 11

A very intelligent congress worker, who is also one of the leaders of the youth movement in that State, said to us, among other things, “Hindus and Muslims have lived here in peace and friendliness for ages. Although Hindus and Muslims may criticise each other on some occasions, they live together, sit together, talk together and even dine together in the friendliest way. There is a large number of shrines in Kashmir to which both Hindus and Muslims go, and when they offer their prayers in the morning you cannot distinguish between the Hindu prayer and the Muslim prayer....There have been a number of saints whom both the Hindus and the Muslims revere and to whose tombs or *dargahs* both resort for blessings.”

He also talked to us about socialism and said, "Our socialistic outlook and action has also been a prominent feature of our life. During Sheikh Abdullah's Prime Ministership Kashmir was one of the first States in the subcontinent to implement the well known socialist principle, 'land to the tiller.' It was done without paying any compensation to the former absentee landlords ... There can be no doubt that Sheikh Abdullah was an honest and incorruptible leader of the people...." He admitted that there had been serious complaints of misbehaviour by the.....Police. He said that socialism and secularism went together and that they had a greater chance of realizing their socialist goals with India than with Pakistan.

## 12

One evening after dinner we ran into a casual conversation with our Muslim hotel keeper, a relative of his, from some village and the cook. The three simple hearted people presented a sad picture of life in the rural areas. They also, like many others in Kashmir, asserted that there existed basic unity among all sections and communities in Kashmir.

The cook said, "By all means the old rule of the Maharaja was much better, for there was no problem of unemployment and we could get good wages."

We asked, "We hear Sheikh Abdullah has done much for the people and later.....(name omitted) too. What do you say about them?"

The cook replied, "Yes, of course, Sheikh Saheb is our most beloved leader because we know he has been the only selfless leader of the Kashmiri people. His sincerity is unquestionable. He will always do good to the

people. But.....(name omitted) was selfish and corrupt. At the same time he did many good things for the people for instance he established new schools and hospitals and constructed roads. He dealt very familiarly with the people and did not hesitate to go any where and inquire about the people's welfare."

After this the cook raised his voice and said, "In spite of all these things we were against.....because on the whole he looted the people and the country. ...Most of the money that he brought from India was not reaching the needy people for the betterment of their lives, fifteen annas out of every rupee went to the pockets of... Panchayat Sarpanch and his kith and kin and then to the pockets of other officers. The poor people in India pay for it, we know, but we don't get the benefit of it. Our children are supposed to get scholarship for education, but so far they have never received any such thing. (Pointing to a building at a distance, he said) Look at that hotel in the middle of the lake. The proprietor of that hotel was formerly a shikara runner (boatsman). He was a pauper but today he owns several house-boats and also that hotel. He was a panchayat sarpanch and he got his share of the loot from..... Medicines used to be stored up in his custody for free distribution to the needy, but he used to sell those medicines to the people. Thus he made a good fortune. This type of stories you will hear everywhere."

We asked, "What do you say about the present Government? Would you like to be with India or Pakistan?"

The man from the village replied, "It is not very material for us. Whoever rules us we are not bothered. We want opportunities for work, wages, education for

our children and a life like that of human beings. ... In our lives we never had any feeling that the Hindus and the Muslims are enemies of each other. Only after independence was achieved from the British all these troubles started.”

At this the cook intervened and said, “The present Government of Kashmir is also not at all satisfactory. First of all..... is not at all popular among the people. He sits in his airtight compartment away from the people and their problems. He does not meet people frequently as Bakshi used to do. As far as corruption is concerned he has not yet come to limelight but we feel he too may not escape what is an all India disease. But why should we blame Kashmir alone for corruption? Our small ministers have learnt it from their *bara sahebs* in India.”

### 13

One morning we went to see two highly educated, prominent political workers who had recently come out of jail after nearly 4 to 5 years of imprisonment. We give below some extracts from their talk which lasted over a couple of hours. One of them said:—

“There are about 215 detenus at present in Kashmir, 770 political workers are on parole. They can be re-arrested any time. They are prohibited from taking part in any political or public activity. Cases are going on against nearly 2500 political workers.”

The man continued :—

“Sheikh Abdullah went for Haj and for a visit to U.A.R. and U.K. on 13th February 1965. On the 7th of March, while Sheikh Sahib was still out of India, about 400 top political workers were arrested through-

out Kashmir..... On 8th May, 1965 Sheikh Abdullah was arrested on his return to India at the Delhi airport. According to Muslim faith Haj can be taken to be completed only when the pilgrim comes back to his home. Sheikh Sahib was thus unable to complete his Haj. It was unfair on the part of the Government of India not to allow Sheikh Sahib even to complete his Haj. He could have been easily arrested after he had once reached his home..... There were spontaneous demonstrations in Kashmir on the 8th, 9th and 10th of May in protest against the Sheikh Sahib's arrest. The authorities tried to break up the peaceful demonstrations. The demonstrators were fired at. 28 people were killed and hundreds were arrested..... From 5th June organized non-violent Satyagrah began, to protest against Sheikh Sahib's arrest. Batches of five Satyagrahis each went in an absolutely peaceful manner to the centre of the city, Lall Chowk, twice a week and got themselves arrested. The Satyagraha was conducted on absolutely Gandhian lines. The Satyagrahis raised these slogans :— 'Sher-e-Kashmir ko chhor do! Yeh Kashmir hamara hai! Iska faisla ham karenge!', The satyagrahis were promptly arrested. This form of satyagraha lasted till 9th August 1965. A total number of 135 satyagrahis were arrested during this period. Besides, a number of onlookers were also arrested for showing their sympathy with the satyagrahis. The number of such sympathisers arrested must have reached hundreds. The satyagrah was deliberately suspended by the organizers and especially by Maulana Masoodi because just at that time some Pakistani infiltrators entered Kashmir and the organisers of the satyagrah did not want to embarrass the Government of India at that critical moment..... After the Indo-Pak war the satya-

grah, which was actually in protest against the Sheikh's arrest, was restarted mainly by the students. This student satyagraha began from 29th September 1965 and lasted till 20th October. Hundreds of students were arrested during that period. Many students and their leaders are still in jail. Since then the Police has been stationed on the campus of the University. From October 1965 to March 1966 the J. & K. University and all colleges and schools remained closed in Srinagar as well as in the entire Valley."

The man further said :— "On May 10th 1965, two days after the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, Maulana Masoodi gave a speech in the Jama Masjid. There were about 30,000 people. Maulana Masoodi exhorted them to remain peaceful and non-violent. After the speech the audience dispersed peacefully. Maulana Masoodi then came out of the Masjid. He was going in a jeep with a few others. The jeep was stopped and surrounded by some C.R.P. men. They overturned the jeep and began to beat the inmates with their rifle butts. Four of Maulana Masoodi's teeth were broken. The drivers and others were badly injured. Mr. Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra also got some of his ribs broken. At this moment Mohammad Sultan, S.P, who belonged to the local police, happened to come to the place. He recognized Maulana Masoodi and others and rescued them. The news about the beating of Maulana Masoodi on May 10th 1965 spread rapidly throughout the Kashmir Valley. He is one of the most widely respected men in the State. Rumour spread that the Maulana had died. This naturally excited people. Khizar Butt of village Tulumula, Gandarbhal and some others came out in a peaceful mourning procession. Khizar Butt was arrested and, while in custody, was beaten to death."

He continued :— “After 1953 police from some outside States was also brought into Kashmir. At present following police forces are stationed in Kashmir : the Central Reserve Police of the Government of India, the Punjab Police, the Bihar Police, the Provincial Armed Constabulary of Uttar Pradesh and the Rajasthan Police. The strength of police from outside States in Kashmir is supposed to be about 10,000. This is over and above the local Kashmir Police, the Home Guards and the State and Central C.I.D. whose number is also considerable.”

He further continued : “Since 1947 Rule 50 of the Public Security Rules, which corresponds to D.I.R. in India, is applied throughout Kashmir. All meetings and processions are banned without special previous permission, under Section 144. Anyone who breaks Section 144 is given long imprisonment.....From March 1965 to October 1965 there was again practically a wave of terror in the Kashmir Valley. The police arrested men and women in the villages, took them to the police station, beat them up and then released them. The police went to the houses of villagers, often at night, and looted their property. They even dragged women from their houses and ill treated them..... There are Interrogation Centres in Kashmir. To these Centres arrested people are taken and subjected to various forms of torture, possibly in order to get confessions out of them... On 10th May, 1965 ten newspapers of Kashmir were banned by the Government. Later the ban was lifted from ‘Hamdard.’ At present hardly any opposition newspaper is allowed to be published in Kashmir.”

Talking of the Congress organisation and its influence in Kashmir he said :— “Congress Party member-



ship is required before anyone can get an agricultural loan or other similar facility. Lists are made of those who apply for loans. Before an application for a loan is considered, three people's endorsement upon the application is necessary (1) the Patwari, (2) the Numberdar or the village Headman, and (3) a Congress worker. The Congress worker gives his endorsement only to those who have become members of Congress... Congress workers get State garrage cars and jeeps for party work..... On May 8th, 1965 after the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah there was hartal. Congress workers joined the police in forcibly breaking open shops which had been closed by the owners. Some of them also took part in the looting of such shops."

#### 14

One evening we were invited to tea by a daughter of Sheikh Abdullah at Sheikh Abdulla's house in the suburbs of Srinagar. We had an interesting one-hour chat. On our enquiry about Sheikh Sahib's health she told us that Sheikh Sahib was not keeping good health. He had developed pain in his knees. The climate of Kodai-Kanal did not suit him, as it was damp. She had recently returned from Kodai-Kanal after meeting her father.

#### 15

Another evening we had a talk with a youngman who had a diploma in Electrical Engineering and is now employed in some local firm. He had lost his father in an air crash some years ago. His mother also died some years back. He has no brother. And his only sister, who is married, lives in Azad Kashmir. The youngman felt lonely because he had no member of his family

or near relative whom he could easily meet. He had not seen his sister for 18 years. He told us that there was a large number of such cases in which dear ones, brothers and sisters, fathers and sons, had been separated by the cease fire line. He said that the Government of India did not allow such people on this side of the line to go to the other side and meet their dear ones and similarly the Azad Kashmir Government or the Pakistan Government would not allow persons on that side to come and meet their dear ones on this side. The youngman gave us a number of instances which appeared heart-rending. According to him there were cases in which people on death bed expressed their last wish to meet some of their dear ones on the other side of the line, but none of the two Governments was prepared to relent the severity of their rules. The persons died without their last wish being fulfilled.

The youngman gave us his own estimates of some Kashmir leaders According to him:—

“Sheikh Abdullah can in no sense be called communal minded. While Sheikh Abdullah was the Prime Minister of Kashmir it was a crime in Kashmir to listen to the Pakistan Radio. People found indulging in pro-Pakistan propaganda were severely punished. Sheikh Abdullah was very honest in money matters and did not amass wealth as some people after him did. Yet some people planned to overthrow Sheikh Abdullah. Bakshi Sahib did lot of constructive work and help the people in many ways. Business was good in his time. However, he suppressed his opponents with a strong hand. After ten years of rule over Kashmir he was Kamarajed by Nehru. Later Bakshi Saheb felt that he had made a mistake in agreeing to resign from Prime Ministership. He manipulated that

a weak man, named Shamsuddin may succeed him as Prime Minister. Shamsuddin had to resign after a few months on account of the Hazratbal Hair theft incident. Then came Sadiq in power. Many like Karra who advocated an independent Kashmir, were in Jail during the Sheikh's rule, as well as during the rule of Bakshi and continue to be in Jail now. Maulana Masoodi is a very simple, good-hearted, peace-loving and honest man. He was in Jail in Bakshi's regime and is in jail even now. Mirza Mohd. Afzal Beg organized the Plebiscite Front about ten years back. He is in jail now. Sheikh Saheb at first refused to join the Front and spoke against it. It was after his last release from prison that he joined the Plebiscite Front."

## 16

After E. P. Menon's return to Delhi T. N. Zutshi together with some local friends visited a few important places outside Srinagar, such as, Sopore, Ananthnag and Mattan. At Sopore we met some important workers of the Plebiscite Front. They were all educated and prominent in the locality. They had all been in jail and had come out recently. They showed us lists of voters for the coming general elections prepared in Kashmir. They took pains to point out to us how the names, parentage, etc., of voters who were known as persons who may not vote for the ruling party candidates were generally wrongly entered. In some cases the name of the voter himself was wrongly spelt, in other cases there was some mistake in the parentage entry and so on. The gentlemen asserted that this had been done to disqualify a large number of voters who might go against the ruling party.

Similar lists of voters were also shown to us later in Srinagar by Shri Shabbir Ahmed Masoodi, advocate, son of Maulana Masoodi. He told us that he and his friends had been trying to get such lists corrected, but were finding the task difficult on account of the indifference of the officials concerned.

The friends in Sopore also told us :- “Repression has been going on in Kashmir. All political life is suppressed. No public meetings are allowed without special permission. Hundreds of political workers are either in jail or on parole and cases are going on against thousands of others.”

### 17

In Sopore there is also an office of the National Conference of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. We went to that office. We talked to the workers present in the office. They told us that the ‘Peace Brigade’ organised by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had been converted by the present regime into ‘Home Guards’ and added, “The Home Guards beat our workers....We were not allowed to hold our own public meeting even on the 15th of August to celebrate India’s Independence Day this year....Free elections in this State are impossible unless Section 144 is removed....We are not allowed even to get our own posters printed and pasted publicly on the walls....We would prefer to have President’s Rule before and during the elections.”

### 18

The next day we went to Anantnag which is about 30 miles South of Srinagar. We met a Muslim advocate, who is a prominent member of the Plebiscite Front. He

said us :- “The workers of the Plebiscite Front have been prosecuted throughout Kashmir. In March 1965 and May 1965 hundreds of our workers were arrested. They were tortured in police custody. They were made to sit in the latrines in the posture of a ‘murgha’ (cock) for hours together....Is this the image of India which Gandhiji wanted to be presented to the world?”

## 19

From Anantnag we went to Mattan which is one of the most important Hindu sacred places in Kashmir. The word Mattan is said to be the current form of Martand.

I (T.N. Zutshi) although a Kashmiri Pandit by birth had never been to Kashmir before. At Mattan I met a Hindu priest who happened to be our family priest. He showed to me in his books the writings and the signatures of my father and grand father when they had visited Kashmir, father in 1912 and grand father in 1886. My grand father had recorded his visit in Persian and father in Urdu. I also recorded a brief account of my visit to Mattan in Hindi on 21st August 1966. The same book of my family Purohit has also records and signatures of members of the Nehru family which I had the occasion to see. At Mattan we were shown the ruins of an old temple which is said to have been built by the Pandavas. We had to climb up-hill for half-an-hour in order to reach those ruins. The ruins are a massive structure of stone, the walls being several feet thick. The pillars remind one of Greek architecture. While coming down again we chose a path by the side of a canal. The scenery of the valley in front of us was very beautiful. In the green fields there were rows and clustures of tall, slim *Safeda* trees. We

talked about the history of Kashmir as the Sun was setting in front of us in the Valley. Our Purohit's brother told us that there had been aboriginal people in Kashmir before the Aryans under Kashyap Muni migrated to that place from the plains of India and settled there. The aboriginies were called 'pishach' by the Aryans. They were later absorbed by the Aryans through intermarriage. He spoke to us of the events which led to the mass conversion of Hindus to Islam. According to him the Kashmir Valley was ruled by several successive kings who came from India or Afghanistan or Tibet. A certain Tibetan king requested the Hindus of Kashmir to take him into the Hindu fold. The Hindu Pandits, prominent among whom were high Dar families, declined to do so. On this the Tibetan king went to a Muslim Fakir and requested him to admit him into the fold of Islam. The Muslim Fakir agreed. It was later through this Tibetan convert to Islam that large numbers of the Hindus of Kashmir became converts to Islam.

We passed the night in the house of our Brahman priest. It was a small house of mud and bricks, very similar to mud houses in adjoining Afghanistan.

## 20

An elderly Sikh gentleman, 80 years old, who has spent his life in Kashmir Medical Service and risen to the highest position in that service and who has travelled in many countries of the world, when talking to us of India's present position in Kashmir, pointedly said:—"We are in Kashmir just as the Americans are in Vietnam!"

## 21

An elderly Muslim gentleman who has been a life

long freedom fighter and an opponent of the Muslim League's two nation theory and of the division of the country into India and Pakistan' stated to us as under:—

“Unfortunately for us all, on the eve of independence, the country was divided into India and Pakistan. Congress and Muslim League both agreed to the division. Every Princely State in India was given the option of acceding either to India or to Pakistan or of declaring itself independent. Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir did not accede either to India or to Pakistan at the time. Thus, in terms of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 Kashmir became an Independent State on the 15th of August 1947. ...

“Communal frenzy assumed horrible proportions both in India and Pakistan. Thousands were butchered on either side of the new International Line and hundreds of thousands were compelled to leave their hearths and homes and seek shelter on other side of the line. The State of Jammu and Kashmir had common boundary with both Pakistan and India. Naturally, the events in both these newly formed States could not but have their repercussions on the State of Jammu and Kashmir, specially in the border areas of that State. Parts of the State like Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Riasi, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad were affected by this outside communal virus. The refugees of both communities from India and Pakistan began to flow into these border areas of the State. In some of these parts innocent people of the State had to suffer the same type of death and desolation as were devastating India and Pakistan. Fortunately, the whole Valley of Kashmir as such remained throughout that period absolutely free from all types of communa.

disturbances, in spite of some such border areas having been affected.

“The coming in of raiders, mainly tribals, had also begun as early as August 1947 and assumed those dangerous proportions towards the end of October 1947 which compelled the Kashmir Government to request military help from India against the raiders.

“In the meantime, long before Independence, a ‘Quit Kashmir Movement’ had been started in the State of Jammu and Kashmir against the Maharaja and his Government. That movement was very much like the ‘Quit India Movement’ of Mahatma Gandhi against the British. Evidently, the people of Kashmir like the people of many other similar States in India wanted to end the autocratic rule of the Maharaja and establish some sort of a people’s Government in its place. Sheikh Abdullah was the principal leader of this Freedom Movement in Kashmir. In 1946 the Maharaja’s Government sentenced him to nine years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rupees fifteen hundred.

“But when communal frenzy which was absolutely a new thing for the Kashmiri people broke out in parts of the State and when the coming in of the raiders from Pakistan began to increase, the Maharaja found himself in a fix. He ordered the release of Sheikh Abdullah who was set free in the last week of September 1947, nearly a month before the attack of the tribals was officially recognised as an invasion of the State.

“Under the conditions then prevailing, the Maharaja had been hesitating as to which side to accede to, India or Pakistan, or to remain independent. Lord Mountbatten had advised him to accede to Pakistan.



**Mahatma Gandhi** had, on the other hand, advised the Maharaja to ascertain the wish of his people and act according to it in this matter. In the meantime, the Maharaja entered into a standstill agreement with Pakistan allowing the latter to operate Post and Telegraph and Railway in the State. The Maharaja had requested the Government of India also to enter into a similar stand still agreement with the State, but the Government of India could not make up its mind on the point.

“Early in November 1947 Sheikh Abdullah after his release was put by the Maharaja in charge of a newly formed provisional Government of Jammu and Kashmir under the suzerain authority of the Maharaja. Sheikh Abdullah, soon after his release, requested both India and Pakistan to allow the State of Jammu and Kashmir sometime for consideration before the State and its people could be in a position to decide which side to accede to.

“The raid by the tribals assumed dangerous proportions as already referred to above. The Maharaja fled from Srinagar to Jammu..... The raiders were proceeding towards Srinagar in large numbers. The whole of Kashmir then stood up against the raiders under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah. Operational headquarters were formed but the people were lacking in modern military equipment and training. Sheikh Abdullah approached the Government of India for help against the Pakistani tribal invasion. The Government of India showed its inability to give help to the Kashmir State against the raiders as Kashmir was not yet a part of India. The Government said that it could help only after Kashmir acceded to India. The Maharaja applied

for accession and accession was 'provisionally' accepted by the Government of India on 26th October, 1947. Till then hundreds of Kashmiris had sacrificed their lives in trying to defend the State from the raiders.... While accepting the accession the Government of India had in clear words assured the Kashmiri people that the accession was 'provisional' and that the people of Kashmir would be given opportunity of expressing their free opinion on the question of accession after the return of normal conditions in the state. This pledge given to the Kashmiri people was supported by Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and other Indian leaders. Pledges, promises and assurances were repeatedly made in this behalf."

The gentleman continued :—"As Pakistan was openly helping the raiders and the question had become international between two sovereign States, the Government of India took the case to the United Nations. Gradually a ceasefire was arranged and took shape on 1st January, 1949.... The U.N. observers came to Kashmir and they are still there on both sides of the cease-fire line with their numbers ever increasing."

He continued:—"As the Maharaja did not accede on the 15th of August, 1947 and the later accession was accepted 'provisionally', the State of Jammu and Kashmir was given a special status in the Indian constitution by the Constituent Assembly of India. According to this status two things are clear, first that the State continued to enjoy a sort of internal autonomy and secondly that the accession was 'provisional', subject to the will of the people to be ascertained through a plebiscite after normal conditions had been restored....

Extremists on the Pakistan side continued their propaganda against India and against the accession. Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues made that Pakistani propaganda ineffective by introducing a number of fresh reforms in the State, such as the abolition of the hereditaryship of the ruler or the Maharaja, the abolition of jagirdaris without compensation, a ceiling on land holdings, no one to own more than 23 acres of land, a Debt Cancellation Act by which ceiling was imposed on the total interest realizable, declaration of *begar* or forced labour as illegal and so on. At the same time all communal elements and movements, whether Hindu or Muslim, were discouraged by Sheikh Abdullah. As a natural reaction, while the Pakistani anti-India propaganda gave new impetus to communal forces on this side, the new social reforms instituted by Sheikh Abdullah and his Government set against him all vested, anti-socialist interests both in the state and in the rest of India. These vested interests and Hindu communalists in Jammu and Kashmir joined hands with their counterparts in India, and a movement was launched with the objective of finishing the special status of Jammu and Kashmir within the Indian Union and of ending the new reforms which led the State towards socialism. It is to be regretted that when Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues were fighting the Muslim communalists from Pakistan and their counterparts in Kashmir, they were getting full support from the Indian National Congress and the Indian Government, but when the Hindu communalists of Kashmir and their counterparts in India launched a movement for the abolition of the special status of Kashmir, raising such slogans as—‘one President, one Prime Minister, one Flag and one Constitution’, many leaders of the Indian

National Congress and even some members of the then Government of India supported that movement. This naturally annoyed and antagonized the majority of the people in the State, both Hindu and Muslim, and they began to ask—"what after Nehru?"

He further continued :—"At this stage Dr. Shyama Parshad Mukerjee, the President of the All India Jan Sangh, proceeded towards the State. The permit system had already been introduced by the Government of India for entry into Kashmir. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee openly declared that he would enter Kashmir without any such permit. He reached the Ravi Bridge which is the border between Kashmir and the Punjab. It was the duty of the Government in India to prevent him from entering the State without proper documents. Instead of this, the then Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur, took Dr. Mukherjee in a jeep and entered the State on the Kashmir side of the river.

It so chanced that Maulana Masoodi was, just at that time, coming to Delhi. He met Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee on that side of the bridge and tried to persuade him not to go any further into Kashmir, but to return with Maulana Masoodi to Delhi. It is said that once Dr. Mukherjee agreed to return but some communal leaders dissuaded him from doing so. It was after this that Dr. Mukherjee was arrested by the I.G. Police of Kashmir and taken to Srinagar in custody. In Srinagar he was kept in a bungalow between Nishat Gardens and the Shalimar Gardens. Dr. Mukherjee was a heart patient. He died in the Government Hospital. Some people in India accused Sheikh Abdullah of the murder of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. Sheikh Abdullah was innocent in the matter. The Kashmir

Government suggested to the Government of India to hold a thorough enquiry into the whole affair. But it was not done. At that time Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was the Home Minister and Shyamlal Saraf was the minister for Jails and Health in Kashmir.”

He further stated:—“Some weeks after this Sheikh Abdullah was arrested in Gulmarg at 2.00 a.m., on the 9th of August 1953 by some officers of the Indian Army and the Kashmir Police. A large number of people were arrested all over the State. Sheikh Abdullah's arrest sparked off protest demonstrations all over the State which continued for months together. To suppress this mass upsurge Indian army had to be called in. Tanks were brought into important towns. The military began to parade the streets. Hundreds of people were shot and killed to suppress the mass upsurge..... The new Government which was formed in the dead of night, even before the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, was called in Kashmir ‘a puppet Government’..... Sheikh Abdullah was released on 8th January, 1958, after more than four years of incarceration, and again arrested on 29th April the same year. He was this time prosecuted along with some others on a charge of waging war against Kashmir and India with the help of Pakistan. The Government spent crores of rupees on that case. Ablest lawyers conducted the case on behalf of the Government. The present Law Minister, Shri G. S. Pathak was the Chief prosecuting Advocate. The charge was not proved and the case ended on 8th April, 1964. It had lasted about 6 years..... Sheikh Abdullah was released and called to Delhi. He was there a guest of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and was soon after sent to Pakistan for bringing about agreement between India and Pakistan on the question of Kashmir,

“When Gandhiji visited Kashmir in August, 1947, he advised that the people of Kashmir, the Maharaja and the Governments of India and Pakistan should all four sit together and decide the future of Kashmir. We find it recorded in Tendulkar’s, ‘Mahatma’, Vol. 8, page 79 that according to Mahatma Gandhi.

‘British paramountcy would terminate on the 15th. The real paramountcy would then commence. He referred to the paramountcy of Kashmiris. They had one language, one culture and, so far as he (Mahatma-Gandhi) could see, they were one people. He (Mahatma-Gandhi) added that without going into the intricacies of Law, which he had no right to dilate upon, common-sense dictated that the will of the Kashmiris should decide the fate of Jammu and Kashmir. The sooner it was done the better. How the will of the people would be determined was a fair question. He hoped that the question would be decided between the two Dominions, the Maharaja and the Kashmiris. If the four could come to a joint decision, then much trouble would be saved.’

“Unfortunately Pandit Nehru died on May 27, 1964 at the time when Sheikh Abdullah, after having visited Rawalpindi, reached Muzaffarabad and was having talks with the leaders of Azad Kashmir. He immediately returned to Delhi.....Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India and the question of Kashmir was being handled by Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda, the Home Minister, who was regarded as not sympathetic to the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Instead of continuing the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Government of India reversed the process of reconciliation started by Pt. Nehru after eleven years of sad experiences. The title Sadar-e-Reyasat was changed into that of Governor

the Prime Minister now began to be called Chief Minister, the Constitution of Kashmir was suspended, the special Flag of Kashmir was removed and the National Conference was now changed into National Congress as a part of the Indian National Congress."

He continued :—"Sheikh Abdullah went to Haj and for a visit to U.A.R., U.K. and some other countries on 13th February, 1965. On 7th March, 1965 when Sheikh Abdullah was in U. A. R. and was about to leave for London, public leaders and workers in Kashmir numbering more than a thousand were arrested. Since then arrests and detention of political workers are continuing. After U.A.R., U.K and France, Sheikh Abdullah flew to Algeria. During this period Prime Minister Chou En-lai of China visited Algeria. Chou En-lai called on Sheikh Abdullah. The meeting lasted hardly 15 minutes in the presence of several other persons including some Algerian leaders. Yet it appears the Government of India did not like their meeting. From there Sheikh Abdullah went again to U.A.R. and thence to Mecca to perform his Haj. At that very time an international Muslim Conference was being held in Mecca to which the Government of India also sent a delegation of its own."

He continued:—"When Sheikh Abdullah and his party were performing their Haj, the Government of India cancelled their further passports. At this Sheikh Abdullah wrote to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri asking reason for the cancellation. He received no reply. On this he handed over a letter addressed to the Prime Minister of India, to the Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia and another letter to the President of India requesting personal interviews with both for offering any explanation that may be required. Yet on his

return to India on 8th may at about 4.00 A.M. he was arrested on the air port along with Mr. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg and both were taken to Ooti in Madras. From there Afzal Beg was sent to Srinagar and Sheikh Abdullah was taken to Kodai Kanal. Begum Sheikh Abdullah's entry into Kashmir was banned."

He continued:—"On the arrest of Shiekh Abdullah there were angry yet peaceful demonstrations all over the State. Hundreds were arrested and many were killed or wounded... Maulana Masoodi, Khwaja G.M. Karra and Khwaja Mubarak Shah started a non-violent Satyagrah movement to protest against these atrocities and to demand the release of Sheikh Abdullah and others. In this movement twice a week batches of 5 to 10 satyagrahis, purely on Gandhian lines, courted arrest in Lal Chowk, the business centre of Srinagar, by raising slogans such as ... 'Sher-e-Kashmir ko chhor do, yeh kashmir hamara hai, iska faisla ham karenge.' This lasted from 5th June to 9th August 1965. On the 9th of August, 1965 the Pakistani infiltrators entered the Kashmir Valley and the leaders of the satyagrah movement immediately suspended their satyagrah to avoid causing any embarrassment to the Government of India at that critical moment. It was a good gesture by Maulana Masoodi and his colleagues. But the Government of India, instead of appreciating this gesture, got Maulana Masoodi also arrested."

He further said:—"Pakistan attacked Kashmir. The war continued through August and September. Thousands of Kashmiris, and according to some more than a lakh belonging to Rajouri and Poonch area were forcibly pushed into the Pakistan side."

He continued:—"On so many occasions during this period has firing taken place in Kashmir on innocent



and unarmed people. Cases have also been reported of molestation and abduction of women and so on. Yet not a single judicial enquiry has been conducted into any such incident. The people feel that Justice is denied to them. Every here and there there is the police, the Home Guards and the Military to curb all public movements. Most of the big and important officers in the State are from outside the State. A large number of peaceful public workers and some of the best brains of the state who could control the people at any critical juncture are rotting and ruining their health in prison. This is hardly the way to win the hearts of a people.”

## 22

After our return to Delhi and before this report could be sent to press, we received a statement from Sufi Nazir Ahmad, a prominent Muslim mystic divine of Kashmir and an ardent believer in Hindu-Muslim unity and communal harmony in this sub-continent. We are giving below some extracts from his statement.

Sufi Nazir Ahmad says:—“No one even partially acquainted with the Jammu and Kashmir problem, can ever believe that Sheikh Abdullah and others of his view urged accession to the Indian Union, permanent or provisional, in order to hand over a part of the State to Pakistan and to convert the rest—the real State of Jammu and Kashmir into a Hindu majority province by driving out large numbers of Muslims from that part. Yet this is what has been continuously happening since the day Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. A comparison between the census figures of the ratio of Muslim and non-Muslim population of the State before 1947 and after, would be enough to remove whatever doubts some

people may have regarding the veracity of the above statement. I would like to say a word here only about the District and the province of Jammu. The percentage of Muslim population in the Jammu District before 1947 was 56 and in the entire province of Jammu it was as high as 66. There are however, hardly 20% Muslims today in Jammu District. As for the province of Jammu as a whole, it is difficult to give an exact figure unless the number of Muslims killed or driven out during the last year's upheaval is known. The fact is that an organised group has been at work since 1947 with a well thought out programme of driving the Muslims out of the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir or at least from a major part of it. The Indo-Pak conflict and the occupation of a part of the State by Pakistan has greatly strengthened this group. Even the Central Government appears incapable of taking any step to stop their nefarious activities and establish permanent peace in the State. Being satisfied with their success in Jammu province these people have now turned to Kashmir proper and have selected the District of Doda for their activities. Recently, during my short stay in Jammu, while returning from Kashmir, I was told that they are busy these days in getting signatures of the people of Doda on a memorandum which declares that the inclusion of the District of Doda in Kashmir proper is contrary to the secular spirit of the Constitution of India. This claim is being made, notwithstanding the fact that Doda is a part of Kashmir proper both linguistically and culturally and has, at least up till now, an absolute Muslim majority. It is, of course, contiguous the Jammu province. .... These people have also been carrying on constant propaganda against Sheikh Abdullah, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and now G. M. Sadiq and Mir Kasim, saying that they are all Pakistanis at heart, be-

cause, according to these people, they shield pro-Pakistan Muslims.

“In the face of this conspiracy to drive out all Muslims from Jammu and Kashmir,... it is natural that the Muslim population should look towards Pakistan as their one hope. The question arises as to who is responsible for creating this pro-Pakistan sentiment in the Muslim population of the State. At least one clear answer to this question is that the group which has made it difficult for Muslims to live in this State is responsible for it. Had the policy of the Jammu and Kashmir Government been directed since 1947 towards ensuring safety of Muslim lives and property as well as of the majority status of the Muslims of the State, the political realities, not only pertaining to Indo-Kashmir relations but also to the situation prevailing in India and Pakistan in this connection would have been entirely different, and the impact of this harmony and friendliness would have been of quite a different nature on the political situation in the entire Free East. Instead of merely contradicting and maligning each other in the forums of the Free East and the U.N.O., India and Pakistan would have in that case, emerged as a third force with enough moral weight to unite the entire Free East around themselves.

“The cure of this socio—political disease does not lie in prolonging the debate whether the State of Jammu and Kashmir should go to Pakistan or remain with India. The cure lies in assuring the Jammu and Kashmir Muslims that their lives, property and political and economic status are as safe in Kashmir as of the Indian and Pakistani majorities in their respective countries. To achieve this end, the two parts of the State should be allowed to reunite immediately with

complete internal autonomy and the joint responsibility of India and Pakistan for the State's external defence and security. This joint responsibility for the defence of the State is sure to avert the transfer of population which may well ensue in the wake of a free plebiscite or of the division of the State. Granting of complete independence to the entire State or to a part of it may also create Vietnam like conditions in the State, or even worse, since the boundary of Jammu and Kashmir touches the boundaries of five countries viz., People's China, Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. If at any time any of these outside influences become active in this area, it may become the biggest arena of international rivalry in the world, for other distant countries may also try to reap harvest out of such rivalries. The above plan may, however, not only avert such an eventuality but is also sure to create a desirable impact on Indo-Pak relations. Above all, the people of the State will begin to think that they are being treated as free human beings.

“The average Indian or Pakistani is interested in this region mainly on account of its scenic beauty when it is in bloom. But during the last 18 years the average Indian or Pakistani has hardly been able to enjoy this scenic beauty on account of the pervading internal conditions. But if the above plan is implemented, every Indian and every Pakistani will be ensured of such an opportunity, because the Kashmiris are extremely peace-loving and hospitable. Both these qualities of the Kashmiri people are, however, in serious danger of being eroded, on account of the extremely unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the Valley today.

“I would like to make two more suggestions for

replacing the present atmosphere of mutual ruination by an atmosphere of mutual confidence and good-will between India and Kashmir as well as between India and Pakistan.

“It has been a common practice during the last 18 years both in India and Pakistan to declare almost entire populations of particular villages or towns, in the vicinity of the boundary line between the two countries, as Pakistanis or Indians and then to force them with the help of Police or Military to go away to the other side of the boundary line and to acquire afresh the rights of citizenship on that side. This has happened to hundreds of thousands of innocent people, men, women and children. Life has been made a hell for such people, often wandering homelessly here and there under this law of the jungle. Anyone who is aware of the position of minorities in such areas of India and Pakistan will corroborate my statement. The only effective solution for this lamentable problem lies in the appointment of an independent joint tribunal of India and Pakistan consisting of eminent lawyers and such other persons as may be trusted by both sides to take an impartial view of things. Such a tribunal should have the final and exclusive right of deciding such issues of citizenship on either side.

“Since the communal riots that flare up in both the countries every now and then are also an offshoot of the same mentality which is responsible for the above difficulties, the investigation of such riots should also be entrusted to this joint tribunal. The procedure before such a joint tribunal should be so framed that the tribunal may be able to arrive at quick decisions, because the well known maxim, justice delayed is justice denied, is nowhere so true as in such cases.

“My second suggestion for a real and abiding solution of the communal problem in both India and Pakistan and for the establishment of genuine friendship between the two great neighbouring countries, is that the history of India and specially of the so called Muslim Period of Indian history, should be rewritten. I give only one example of our present historical fallacies. It is generally thought that the spread of Islam in this country was due mainly to the political power of the Muslim rulers of India. But, the fact is that the spread of Islam in the country was mainly due to the Muslim Saints and Faqirs and even Muslim traders and divines who had begun to come to India centuries before the coming of Muslim invaders from outside. Not only that, if we carefully study the history of India the establishment of Muslim rule in the country, on the whole, impeded and even hindered the spread of Islam rather than help it. To a large extent it was also the caste system and the complexity of religious creeds and rituals on one side and the simple belief in one formless universal God of all and the brotherhood of man without distinction of race, caste or creed on the other that helped the spread of Islam in the country. The history of the last 18 years after independence has shown how deep-rooted this caste system is in the Hindu Society even in this age of democracy. The religious tolerance of the majority of the Muslim Kings was also one of the factors which contributed to the continuance of Muslim rule in the country for eight long centuries in spite of the fact that Muslims were never a majority community. I do not deny that some Muslim rulers like similar rulers in most other countries might have and did exploit religion for unholy purposes. Yet I am absolutely confident that if the history of India generally—

and of the so called Muslim period especially is rewritten with a clearer and correcter perspective, it can greatly help not only in bettering relations between the two great communities in both the countries and in the establishment of genuine friendly relations between India and Pakistan but also in the ultimate reunification of the two independent States in some form or other, which is the crying need of the future of this great sub-continent.

“It is said that Gandhiji once declared that he saw some light emanating from Kashmir. I do humbly submit that the above suggestions may prove that light in the interest of the real peace, prosperity, progress and continued independence of our sub-continent which may yet give light to Asia and to the world.”

### 23

At this stage, after some hesitation, the signatories to this report deem it their duty to refer to one other fact in connection with the conditions in Kashmir. It was alleged that after the 7th of March 1965, consequent on the arrest of a large number of political workers when Sheikh Abdullah was out of India and also after 8th May 1965, consequent on the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah at Delhi, some men of the..... Police entered some villages at night, dragged men and women out of their beds, abused and beat them up, broke windows and doors and looted property, etc., in order to terrorize the people. This complaint reached the ears of some top Sarvodaya leaders in India. These leaders sent a small delegation consisting of two highly placed ladies of unimpeachable integrity to Kashmir to visit some of these villages and meet women folk there

personally, in order to find out fact and report to the Sarvodaya leaders who had deputed them for the purpose. The two ladies went to Kashmir, in July 1965, visited a good number of villages, made personal enquiries from a large number of women in those villages and submitted the report of their day-to-day investigation to the Sarvodaya leaders. We refrain from giving any extracts from their report which makes an extremely painful reading.

While closing their long report proper the ladies say :—

“In conclusion we feel that the whole episode seems a period of insanity with the object of terrorising and victimising the people as a whole, particularly through their women. It also seems that there was a blackout in the press about the same or that things were reported distortedly.

“.....

“Our sorrow and shame can be imagined when in several places the women told us that India was responsible for all this.”

After both of the ladies had signed this report, one of the two who also the leader of the group has in a separate note said :—

“We had been sent to Kashmir for a specific purpose of enquiring into the molestation of women. We have submitted our findings as impartially as it is humanly possible..... I strongly feel that Sheikh Saheb must be released at the earliest and sent to Pakistan for exploring the possibility of Vinobaji’s idea of Confederation..... It is very well to feel and say that the people are against settlement with Pakistan for a just solution of Kashmir. But let us remember that we cannot deny



the responsibility of projecting this view to the people because it suited us. Let us now project the safer version of the issue and create atmosphere favourable for the same. I am afraid time is running out on us quicker than we realise. It is a question of the security, the peace and the prosperity of the four hundred million of our people and not only of the Government and the politicians. It is my humble prayer that the present opportunity may not be allowed to slip out of our hands.”

Copies of the above report were given to the then Prime Minister of India, the then Home Minister, the Vice President and a few other prominent persons in the Government and outside. The matter rested and still rests there.

The Kashmiri people had built some hopes on the visit of the Sarvodaya ladies. But when nothing came out of it they were sorely disappointed.

As we have already said, we cannot vouchsafe for the correctness or accuracy of every statement made to us. We had neither time and resources nor the power to verify every statement made. Yet we do say, with full sense of responsibility, that the majority of those who talked to us or made statement before us, did it in an atmosphere of frankness. Our talks were heart to heart talks. We are confident, that in spite of some inaccuracy or exaggeration here or there, the statements reproduced in this report give us on the whole fair idea of conditions prevailing in Kashmir today and of the working of the people's minds there. The statements speak for themselves and no repeating or summarising is necessary for us.

The only question which remains is as to what should be done to solve the Kashmir problem finally. We know there are people in the country who refuse to admit that there is any Kashmir problem at all. But the world thinks otherwise and facts speak the same way, and no problem can be solved by ignoring it. The present painful and uncertain situation cannot last long.

We think it our duty to suggest the following steps to solve the Kashmir issue. Surely, we have to win the hearts of the Kashmiri people and keep them as true friend of India and of the Indian people. For this it is necessary to cease harping on the so called finality of the present position. Let us even now try to act in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi's advice given in 1947 and already quoted above, that the question of Kashmir should be finally decided between the four viz., India, Pakistan, the Maharaja and the people of Kashmir jointly. Mahatma Gandhi also said that British paramountcy had ended with the attainment of India's independence and the real paramountcy that is the paramountcy of the people of Kashmir had taken its place.

Five days after Kashmir's accession to India, in a telegram dated Oct. 31, 1947, to Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Kashmir's accession to India was accepted by us at the request of Maharaja's Government and the most numerous representative popular organisation in the State which is predominantly Muslim. Even then it was accepted on the condition that as soon as the invader has been driven from Kashmir soil, and law and order restored, the people of Kashmir would decide the question of accession. It is open to them to accede to either Dominion then." He proceeded to say, "Our assurance that we shall withdraw our troops from

Kashmir as soon as peace and order are restored and leave the decision about the future of the State to the people of the State is not merely a pledge to your Government but also to the people of Kashmir and to the world.”

Broadcasting to the nation on November 2, 1947, Pandit Nerhu said inter alia:—“we have declared that the fate of Kashmir has ultimately to be decided by the people. That pledge we have given, and the Maharaja had supported it, not only to the people of Kashmir but to the world. We will not, and cannot back out of it.”

Again in a telegram dated November 8, 1947, addressed to Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, Pandit Nehru in reply to the Pakistan’s proposal for a settlement said:—

“.....It is essential in order to restore good relations between the two Dominions that there should be acceptance of the principle that where the ruler of a State dose not belong to the community to which the majority of his subjects belong, and where the State has not acceded to that Dominion whose majority community as the same as the states the question whether the State should finally accede to one or the other of the two Dominions should be ascertained by a reference to the will of the people.”

Then came the reference of the Kashmir issue to the United Nations by India. At the U. N. too our position in this respect remained unaltered. We give only one quotation.

Mr. N. Gopaldaswami Ayangar presented the Indian case to the Security Council. Addressing the Security Council on January 15, 1948 he said, “In accepting the accession we refused to take advantage of the immediate

peril in which the State found itself and informed the Ruler that the accession should be finally settled by a plebiscite as soon as peace has been restored. We have subsequently made it clear that we are agreeable to the plebiscite being conducted if necessary under international auspices." He also added, "The question of the future status of Kashmir vis-a-vis her neighbours and the world at large, and a further question, namely, whether she should withdraw from her accession to India and either accede to Pakistan or remain independent, with a right to claim admission as a member of the United Nations—all this we have recognised to be a matter for unfettered decision by the people of Kashmir after normal life is restored to them."

A number of such quotations can be given from the speeches of India's representatives at the United Nations as well as of responsible members of the Government of India during this period.

From our experience in Kashmir, we are also convinced that a very large number of people there both Hindu and Muslim, appreciate the secular ideal of Government embodied in the Indian Constitution more than the theocratic or semi-theocratic ideal of Government on the other side of the border. We are convinced that the majority of the people there, both Hindu and Muslim feel friendly towards India and at the same time wish to remain on friendly terms with the people of other countries bordering on Kashmir, in the interest of their own peace, progress and prosperity. We do submit that it is not fair to compare Kashmir with any other inland State of India like U. P. or Kerala. Kashmir, as repeatedly pointed out in this report, is a border State which has common boundary with several sovereign

countries, viz, India Pakistan, Afghanistan, Soviet Union, and People's China. As such it has a special position of its own to which naturally attach special duties and special responsibilities. Lastly we feel that we may still keep the beautiful valley of Kashmir, which has been rightly called 'Paradise on Earth' with us, only if we move wisely and try to win the hearts of the people, a task in which we must admit we have not succeeded so far.

We must admit and our Report testifies to it that there is distrust and dislike of some of our activities in the minds of Kashmiri people at present. Yet, from what we have heard and seen with our own eyes, we are convinced that beneath this discord there is also a great reservoir of goodwill and affection in the minds of the people there for India and the Indian people as a whole. We should both realize that our differences are self-made and unsubstantial that there is much in common between us and that we should co-operate and collaborate with each other for our common good. We are also convinced that we can well depend upon a similar reservoir of goodwill and affection between the people of India and the people of Pakistan.

We may be permitted to quote here two passages from the utterances of Sheikh Abdullah of the days of better relationship between the people of India and the people of Kashmir. In a speech on 24. 5. 1950 at Teetwal Sheikh Abdullah said:—"The ties binding Kashmir to India were not merely legalistic but were born out of *free will of the Kashmiris* who found in India a true image of their own ideals and aspirations. This bond of unity between India and Kashmir, this kinship of heart

and soul, this ever-growing and ever-strengthening link between the two great people, can never be broken.”

As late as in February 1965, before starting for his Haj, addressing a mixed audience of Hindus and Muslims in New Delhi, Sheikh Abdullah said:—

“What do we seek? We desire that this human problem be resolved peacefully and with understanding. As human beings how are we different from you? We are yours and you are ours. How can Kashmir live if India goes down?

“I am aware that if India is harmed I will not be spared. Therefore, I would sacrifice my life for India, if need be.

“.....We might have differences among ourselves but after all India is the homeland of us all. If, God forbid! India ceases to be India and goes down, how can others be saved?

“We have to look at all problems from that angle. The people of Kashmir have been suffering tremendously. They are torn in torments and agony. Nevertheless, they fully realise that if India goes down nothing of Kashmir might remain.

“So let us think of some way out of this tragic embroilment. Our objective should be that the forces of concord and amity between India and Pakistan be really released and made to come into play.

“We do not want India to be thrown against the wall. How can we urge a solution which instead of giving strength to India would weaken it or bring about disruption instead of peace,

“What then is the way out? Provided there is the will on either side and each is determined to free itself from the shackles of the past and from the negative present, it is easy for us to sit together as brothers and discuss and find what is the best way out of this tangle.”

We, therefore, deem it our duty to put the following suggestions before our countrymen;—

1. All political leaders and workers of Kashmir who are at present in prison or in detention, including Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and Maulana Masoodi, should be released without delay. They should then be given full opportunity of mixing with their people and of guiding public opinion in the State.

2. Full civil liberties should be restored in the State including freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom of press.

3. After the above has been done, representatives of the Governments of both India and Pakistan and the leaders of various political parties in Jammu and Kashmir, including Azad Kashmir, representing all shades of opinion, should meet together and thrash out a solution of this most agonizing problem acceptable to all concerned.

This we are sure will be in keeping with the advice of Mahatma Gandhi which we have already quoted in this report.

We do submit with all earnestness that without any such solution, satisfactory to all concerned, no political device, no elections held under any conditions, can either be fair or be able to heal the wounds which probably with the best of intention we have inflicted on each other and on ourselves.

We believe this is an absolutely practical way of solving the entire problem.

It must also be remembered that the administration of Jammu and Kashmir today involves a terrible economic drain on the poor Indian tax-payer, amounting to hundreds of crores every year in the form of military and police expenditure as well as so called trade and other subsidies intended to win the allegiance of the people against things which appeared nearer home to them.

The present position is also pregnant with serious complications, both national and international, which can forebode no good for the independence and integrity as well as for the peace, progress and prosperity of our dear motheland.

We should like to end this report with another significant and important quotation from a speech of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. On August 1952, referring to the Kashmir problem in a speech before the Parliament of India, Mr. Nehru said, *inter alia*:—

“It is an international problem. It would be an international problem anyhow if it concerned any other country besides India and it does. It became further an international problem because a large number of other countries also took interest and gave advice. .... So while the accession was complete in law and in fact, the other fact which has nothing to do with the law also remains, viz, our pledge to the people of Kashmir—if you like, to the people of the world—that this matter can be reaffirmed or cancelled or cut out by the people of Kashmir if they so wish. We do not want to win people against their will and with the help of armed forces, and if the people of Jammu and Kashmir State so wish



it, to part company from us, they can go thier way and we shall go our way. We want no forced marriages, no forced unions. ....

“It is inevitable that we should do so if you bear in mind the past history of four or five years, the assurances we had given and the fact that Kashmir has become an international issue, apart from being a national one. So we have to treat it on a somewhat separate footing. .... So, we accept this basic proposition that this question is going to be decided finally by the goodwill and pleasure of the people of Kashmir, not, I say, by the goodwill and pleasure of even this Parliament if it so choses, not because this Parliament may not have the strength to decide it—I do not deny that—but because this Parliament has not only laid down in this particular matter that a certain policy will be persued in regard to Jammu and Kashmir State, but it has been our policy. ....

“Therefore, we must be clear in our minds that this question in regard to the future of Jammu and Kashmir State can ultimately, only be decided by the people of Jammu and Kashmir State. Having come to that conclusion then let us fashion our other policies accordingly, then let us not find fault with something here and there because it does not fit in with our wishes.....

“But whether it is a pain or a torment, if the people of Kashmir want to go out, let them go because we will not keep them against their will, however painful it may be to us. That is the policy that India will persue and because India will persue that policy people will not leave her, people will cleave to her and come to her. Because the strongest bonds that bind will not be the bonds, of your armies or even of your Constitution to which so much reference has been made, but bonds

which are stronger than the Constitution and laws and armies—bonds that bind through love and affection and understanding of various peoples.....

“The way out may not be completely logical; it may not be completely reasonable from the point of view of this law or that constitution, but if it is effective then it is a good way out, whether it offends against some legalistic agreement, or logical agreements or not...”

These are very important and wise words. They even sound prophetic. Surely, any step that we take in this connection must be in the spirit of these words of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

Even if, in the meantime, Pakistan or any other country has done anything which appears a wrong thing to us e.g. joining in particular group or a particular military bloc in the world and so on, it cannot free us from fulfilling the pledge which we have solemnly and repeatedly given, in the words of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru himself, ‘to the people of Kashmir and to the world. Surely, the people of Kashmir cannot be made to suffer for any wrong done by Pakistan or by any other country in the world.

We hope and pray that both our people and our Government may realise the gravity of the present situation and adopt such measures of peace and reconciliation before it is too late. We also believe, that it will be a great step towards the establishment of lasting peace in this sub-continent and ultimately towards the realisation of that dream of some sort of a Confederation between India and Pakistan which men like Acharya Vinoba Bhave and many others are dreaming and which may, to the utmost degree possible, minimize the evils born out of the unfortunate partition of our dearly beloved country.

