

1947-1997
THE
KASHMIR
DISPUTE
AT FIFTY

CHARTING PATHS TO PEACE

REPORT ON THE VISIT OF AN
INDEPENDENT STUDY TEAM
TO INDIA AND PAKISTAN

SPONSORED BY THE

KASHMIR
STUDY GROUP

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	1
MAP OF JAMMU & KASHMIR: ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS & POPULATION	3
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	4
FINDINGS	6
I. INDIA	6
I.1. Basic Indian position on Kashmir	6
I.2. Indian estimate of Pakistan's capabilities	8
I.3. Gujral Doctrine and India's normalization initiative	9
I.4. Trade with Pakistan	11
I.5. Siachen Glacier issue	12
I.6. Other confidence-building and related measures	12
I.7. Prospects for normalization	13
I.8. Status of Kashmiri Muslim separatist militancy	16
I.9. The All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference/APHC	17
I.10. 1996 Assembly elections and the National Conference government	18
I.11. Human rights violations	20
I.12. Role of Indian media and Parliament	21
I.13. Economic and environmental grievances	22
I.14. Autonomy committees	23
I.15. Kashmir autonomy issue	24
I.16. Kashmiri Pandits and Panun Kashmir	27
I.17. Role of international community	29
I.18. Role of the United States	30
FINDINGS	32
II. PAKISTAN	32
II.1. Basic Pakistani position on Kashmir	32
II.2. Pakistan's normalization initiative	34
II.3. Trade with India	36
II.4. Siachen Glacier issue	37
II.5. Other confidence-building measures	38
II.6. Role of Pakistan Army	40
II.7. Role of Pakistani media, Parliament, and public opinion	42
II.8. Prospects for normalization	44
II.9. Role of international community	46
II.10. Role of the United States	47

RECOMMENDATIONS	49
III.1. Continuation of normalization initiative	49
III.2. Strengthening and institutionalization of dialogue	50
III.3. Restoration of normal civil life	50
III.4. Inclusion of peoples' representatives in talks	52
III.5. Broadening of representation in talks	52
III.6. Reduction in security forces	53
III.7. Monitoring of cross-border activity	53
III.8. Strengthening of peacekeeping on the Line of Control	54
III.9. Monitoring of compliance with human rights covenants	55
III.10. Initiation of domestic-level talks with Kashmiri leaders.....	55
III.11. Commitment to eschew violence	56
III.12. Role of the international community	56
CONCLUSION	57
LIST OF RESPONDENTS	58
MEMBERSHIP OF THE KASHMIR STUDY GROUP	71

FOREWORD

In the spring of 1997, the Kashmir Study Group appointed a five-member Study Team to visit India and Pakistan to engage in an extensive series of talks about the Kashmir dispute with leading individuals in several urban centers and from many walks of life—government, politics, military, diplomacy, scholarship, journalism, business, and nongovernmental organizations. Three members of the Team (Ambassador Howard B. Schaffer, who served as Team Leader, Dr. Joseph E. Schwartzberg, and Dr. Robert G. Wirsing) visited India, and four members (Dr. Ainslie T. Embree, who served as Team Leader, Dr. Charles H. Kennedy, Schwartzberg and Wirsing) visited Pakistan. With some variation in individual Team members' travel itineraries, the visit to India extended from March 24 to April 26, and the visit to Pakistan from May 1 to 18. The Study Team held approximately 118 meetings (78 in India, 40 in Pakistan), involving approximately 182 individuals (106 in India, 76 in Pakistan), during this period. It visited a total of 11 separate locations, 7 in India (New Delhi, Srinagar, Jammu, Calcutta, Chennai/Madras, Mumbai/Bombay, and Pune), and 4 in Pakistan (Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Lahore, Karachi, and Gilgit).

All of the members of the Study Team, whether as academics, diplomats, or both, were veteran specialists on South Asia. Two of them had written fairly extensively on the Kashmir dispute and all were at least familiar with its broad outlines. This report presents their principal findings and recommendations in regard to the Kashmir dispute and, more generally, India-Pakistan relations.

The Study Team's objective was to acquire a sampling of opinion and attitudes in the two countries in regard both to the current status of the Kashmir dispute and preferred measures for its future resolution. Time and other constraints obviously limited the size of the sampling; by no means was the Team able to contact and interview every individual with an important past or present role in the Kashmir dispute. The Team was not on a "fact-finding mission," as such, but rather was seeking points of view. It makes no claim that its sampling was rigorously scientific or that there were not important dissimilarities in the composition of respondent groups in the two countries. Members of the Team relied very heavily on their prior experience in the region, including extensive interviewing on the subject of Kashmir, to prevent avoidable distortions in their assessments.

The names and positions of the Team's formal respondents in both countries are listed at the end of this report. None of them is identified by name in the report's narrative. While this may interfere to some extent with the reader's ability to evaluate fully the context and "weight" of particular comments, the Team trusts that that price was amply compensated for by the far greater candor which the promise of anonymity helped to ensure. The Team is enormously grateful to all of the respondents not only for their frankness in the discussions, but at least as much for the extraordinary courtesy, patience and hospitality which they uniformly displayed. It is the Team's earnest hope that they will find in the report at least some grounds for thinking that the confidence they reposed in the Team's impartiality and fairness was not entirely misplaced.

The Team was well aware that it went about its task in the midst of dramatic developments in India-Pakistan relations. The meeting of the two countries' foreign secretaries in Islamabad in late June 1997 ended with a joint statement containing the announcement that the two governments had agreed upon the formation of eight "working groups" to meet for discussions on the major issues between them. Kashmir was to be the focus of one of them. This was the first time since the Simla Agreement in 1972 that India and Pakistan had formally agreed upon Kashmir's inclusion on the agenda for talks between them. The Team naturally welcomes these developments and hopes that this report can make at least a modest contribution to their continued success.

The report was prepared jointly by the five members of the Study Team and formally represents the consensus of these five members only. It has been reviewed by several other members of the Kashmir Study Group, a full listing of which appears at the end of the report, and bears the imprint of amendments suggested by them. However, neither they nor the members of the Kashmir Study Group as a whole are responsible for the contents of the report and they should not be presumed to have endorsed every finding or recommendation in it. Neither does the report represent the views of the organizations with which any of the members of the Kashmir Study Group are affiliated.

The Team appreciated the cooperative attitude of the governments of India and Pakistan toward its visits, and has sought to keep them abreast of its activities and findings.

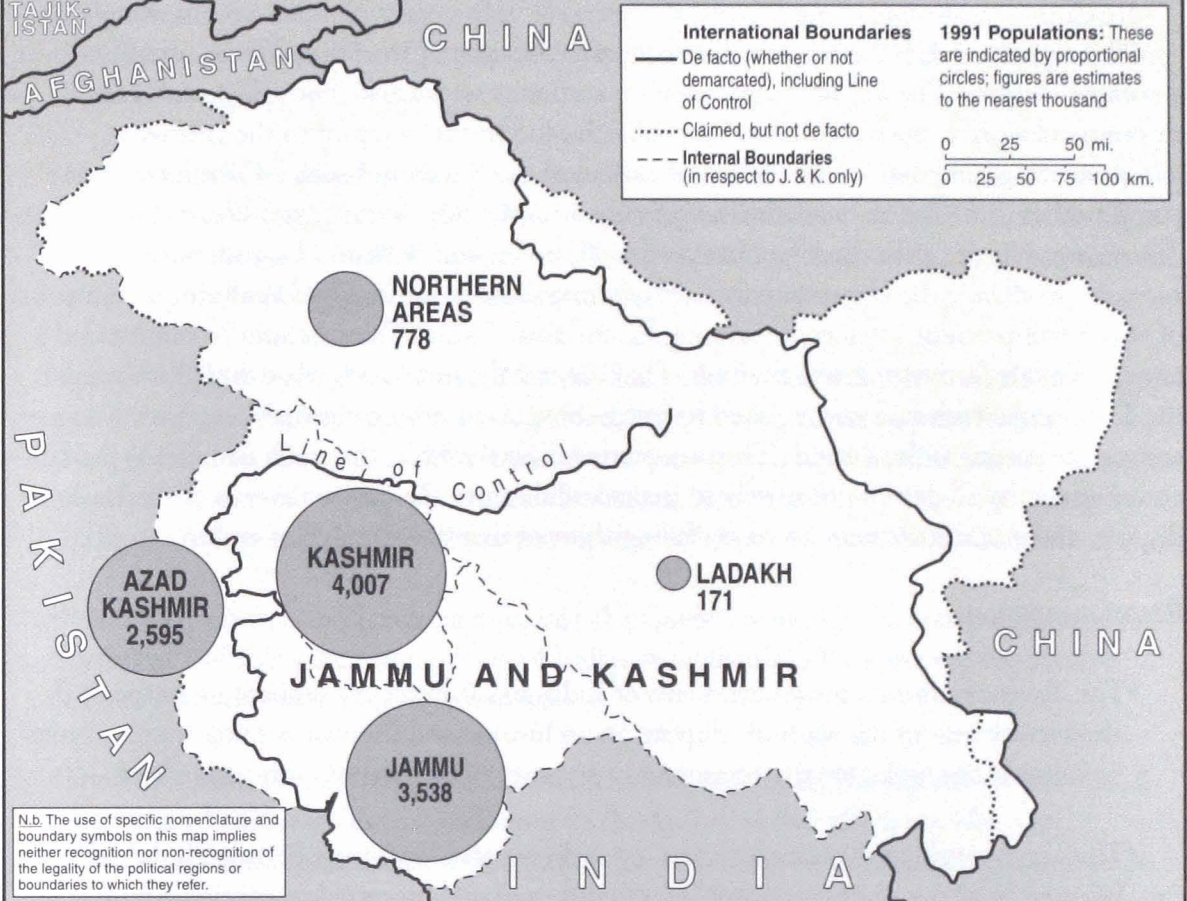
The report is divided into two main sections, the first containing the Study Team's **findings** in India and Pakistan, the second containing its **recommendations**. These two sections are preceded by a brief **summary** of the recommendations.

Complimentary copies of this report are being sent to many individuals, in South Asia and elsewhere, who have been concerned with the Kashmir dispute in recent years. Additional copies of this report may be obtained at cost (U.S. \$5.00) on application to the Kashmir Study Group, 1875 Palmer Avenue, Larchmont, N.Y. 10538. Comments on the report will be most welcome and may also be directed to the Kashmir Study Group.

Finally, the Team wishes to express its collective and deepfelt gratitude to Mr. M. Farooq Kathwari, whose lifelong concern for Kashmir gave inspiration to the founding of the Kashmir Study Group in 1996, for his generous support of its members' travel to South Asia, for his constant encouragement of them during the writing of this report, and, above all, for the complete freedom he granted them to arrive at their own conclusions.

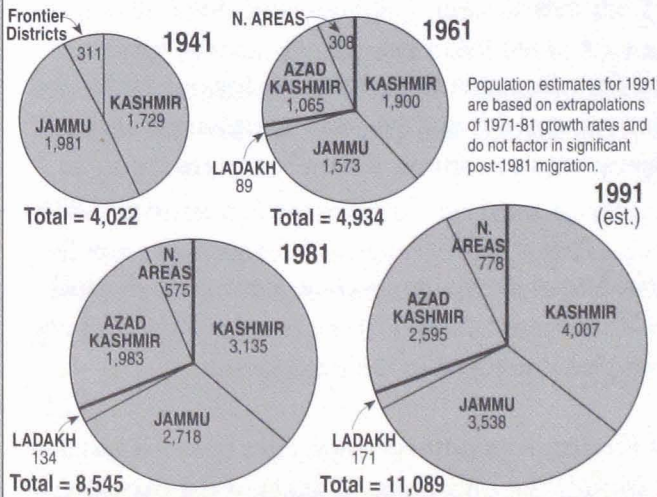
September 1997
New York City

JAMMU AND KASHMIR: ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND POPULATION

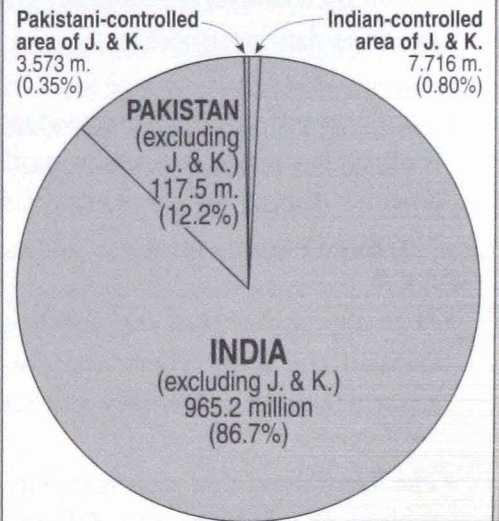


GROWTH OF POPULATION, 1941-1991

Populations are noted in thousands; circle scale same as on map above.



POPULATION OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR IN RELATION TO THAT OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report presents a summary statement of the Study Team's twelve recommendations. The full Recommendations section is set forth below, pp.52-60. These recommendations express the Team's best collective judgment in regard to the creative compromises required of all the concerned parties to the Kashmir dispute. Their focus is on compromises that need to be made immediately or in the near future. They do not present the Team's own blueprint for the long-term future of Jammu and Kashmir. Instead, they urge measures to change the circumstances currently prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir, continuation of which will preclude intelligent planning for the area's future. The measures recommended emerge directly from the Team's findings. They are, for the most part, what thoughtful people the Team spoke with said was required to bring about conditions congenial to serious dialogue among the parties to the dispute. They are premised on the belief that such conditions include commitment by all parties not merely to the peaceful but to the **just** settlement of the Kashmir dispute, and that a settlement on terms falling short of that will simply not endure.

Recommendations:

- The Team commends the governments of India and Pakistan for embarking in the 50th anniversary year of the Kashmir dispute on an historic and promising initiative to normalize bilateral ties and strongly recommends that they press forward with their effort.
- The Team considers it imperative that the dialogue now underway between India and Pakistan be given as soon as possible a strengthened and protected institutional framework. This means, for the present, arrangement of frequent, scheduled, and publicity-free meetings of their official representatives in circumstances insulated from the likely stresses and strains of their relationship.
- The Team believes that progress toward the restoration of normal civil life in Jammu and Kashmir is a vital initial step towards an eventual fair and honorable settlement of the Kashmir dispute. **All** parties to the dispute need to commit themselves unreservedly to this objective.
- At an appropriate time early in the unfolding of normalization talks between India and Pakistan, the Team believes that the political representatives of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir should be formally and meaningfully included in the negotiations.
- The Team urges that representation of Kashmiris in normalization talks between India and Pakistan should be broadly defined to include not only representatives of the two governments already established in the area—that in Srinagar as well as that in Muzaffarabad—but also representatives of all other major political, regional, ethnic, and religious groups.

- A confidence-building measure to which the Team attaches particular importance would be a **significant** reduction in the number of security forces that India maintains on **internal** security duties in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the transfer of these duties to the state's own regular police forces.
- The Team believes that Pakistan, for its part, should simultaneously undertake a convincing confidence-building measure of its own by agreeing to station on its side of the Line of Control an adequately staffed regional or other international body with a fresh mandate for observing and reporting all cross-border activity.
- A logical follow-on to the last recommendation, in the Team's judgment, would be for India and Pakistan to explore together various modalities for strengthening peacekeeping on the Line of Control. One such option would be to constitute a Joint Border Security Group to supplement or even, eventually, replace the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) as principal peacekeeper on the Line of Control.
- It is equally crucial, the Team believes, that the Government of India take public steps to formalize and strengthen monitoring of India's compliance in Kashmir with applicable United Nations human rights covenants.
- The Team believes that India should initiate formal and unconditional talks with a broadened slate of Kashmiri leaders, including the leadership of the All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference. India's willingness to take this action is essential for progress to be made towards the restoration of normal civil life in Kashmir. In addition, this action would be an important confidence-building measure.
- A parallel confidence-building measure that the Team considers equally important to the successful restoration of normal civil life in Kashmir would be a clear commitment given by all of the armed militant and counter-militant Kashmiri groups of their willingness to eschew violence and to participate constructively in the process of political dialogue.
- The international community, the Team believes, can play a helpful role by emphasizing to all those concerned the importance of implementing measures to restore normal civil life and by pointing out to them the high costs of failing to do so.

FINDINGS

This section of the report presents the Study Team's collective assessment of current perceptions in India and Pakistan of the Kashmir dispute. Presented first are the Team's findings in India, including Jammu and Kashmir, followed by its findings in Pakistan.

I. INDIA

I.1. Basic Indian position on Kashmir.

The government of India's official and abbreviated position on the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as publicly and frequently expressed in the present decade by its highest leadership, contains three basic postulates:

- (1) The state of Jammu and Kashmir is now and has been since its accession to India on 26 October 1947 an integral part of the Indian Union. Nothing agreed to by India in the UN Security Council resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949, or in any subsequent instrument, alters this status or in any way modifies Indian sovereignty over the state.
- (2) The only component of the Kashmir issue legally admissible in talks between India and Pakistan over the future status of the state pertains to the need for Pakistan to "vacate" territories illegally occupied. The future status of the state is otherwise an exclusively domestic matter to be resolved, as Indians typically put it, "within the four corners of the Indian Constitution."
- (3) Talks between India and Pakistan in regard to the future status of the state should be held within a strictly bilateral framework and in conformity with the Simla Agreement of July 1972.

Notwithstanding the chauvinistic and bellicose rhetoric that crops up occasionally in India on commemorative occasions when speakers (not excluding recent prime ministers) unashamedly lay claim to the whole of pre-Independence Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian government has made it clear on numerous occasions and over a lengthy period of time that it is, as a practical matter, willing to settle with Pakistan for the territorial status quo in Jammu and Kashmir—that is, for retention by both sides of territories currently held and for acceptance of the Line of Control (LOC) dividing these territories as the permanent international border. This position was implicit in the Simla Agreement and is generally endorsed nowadays by all but extreme right-inclined Indian commentators. The Kashmir Study Group (KSG) Team, while encountering wide divergences of opinion in India in regard to the desirability of this informal position, uncovered no signs that the present generation of leaders felt pressured to budge significantly from it.

Although almost all the Indians to whom the Team spoke seemed to recognize the seriousness of the Kashmir problem, to many of those visited in Calcutta, Chennai (Madras), and Mumbai (Bombay) the problem appeared to be less salient than it did to the Team's respondents in New Delhi and, needless to say, in Jammu and Kashmir itself. A Mumbai journalist went so far as to say that the Kashmir issue would not even rank among the top ten public concerns in Maharashtra. In all locations, however, it was widely acknowledged that the problem had not been resolved by the 1996 elections in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the resultant installation of a new government headed by Farooq Abdullah. Nor would it be fully resolved once the Pakistanis stopped backing the insurgents, though that in their view would go a long way toward bringing peace to the troubled state. Many acknowledged that the Government of India needed to do more than it had yet done to win the hearts and minds of the Kashmiri people and dispel their powerful sense of alienation from the rest of India.

Few of the Team's interlocutors, however, saw any great urgency in making that effort. The general view was that the worst was over. Separatism in Kashmir had been contained and would eventually be crushed. A patient waiting game in Kashmir would result in the Kashmiri equivalent of the "Punjab solution." Time, most seemed to believe, was on the government's side.

There was nearly unanimous agreement among the Team's Indian respondents that the Kashmir Valley (or Vale) and other parts of the state now under Indian control must remain within India. Any other arrangement or any process (a plebiscite, for instance) that might lead to India's losing the area to Pakistan or to an independent Kashmir state or to diminishment of India's sovereignty over its people in any way was simply not acceptable. The reasons given by the Team's Indian interlocutors for this implacable position were the same familiar ones Indians have voiced for fifty years. They ranged from insistence that inclusion of a state with a Muslim majority within India served to confirm the country's secular character while refuting Pakistan's two-nation ideology to expression of fear that "another partition" would lead to the slaughter and flight of India's Muslim minority.

It should be emphasized that this view related to the areas on the Indian side of the LOC. Indian interest in what happens to the Pakistan-held territories once part of the princely state is quite limited. Those interviewed by the Team were seemingly quite content with the territorial status quo. Judging from what the Team heard, were Pakistan prepared to convert the LOC into an international boundary, the government of the day in New Delhi could probably sell the deal to the Indian public without much difficulty. In any event, no one on the Indian side who met with the Team was interested in fighting a war to reclaim those parts of the pre-1947 state that Pakistan has held for a half century. Some of the Team's Indian respondents were prepared to agree to minor modification in the LOC to make it more rational. While few went quite so far as one soldier-turned-intellectual, who stated categorically that even for India to concede a paltry 500 meters of Kashmir to Pakistan was flatly impossible, most, however, agreed that **major** territorial adjustments, considering the fundamental shift in "ground realities" in the years since

Partition, were out of the question, and even limited adjustments would be acceptable only if the two sides were seen to have come out roughly equal in the exchange of territory and in the benefits thereby derived.

Human rights advocates among the respondents, drawn largely from the left side of the Indian political spectrum and/or from secular humanist elements of the population, did take positions strongly critical of the Indian government. While they were inclined to make major concessions to the Kashmiri separatists, they were, as a rule, averse to violent militancy. In the main, moreover, they were not much inclined to take a particularly conciliatory stance in regard to Pakistan, though there was much divergence of opinion in this regard. They appeared to the Team, and none of them sought to alter this impression, to represent a very modest segment of opinion among the Indian elite classes.

In sum, the Team uncovered little dissent in India from the government's announced position on Kashmir. On the contrary, it found fairly numerous signs of growing confidence in India that, provided the government exercises prudence and patience, the Kashmir dispute will sooner or later be settled essentially on India's terms and that there were no urgent grounds for compromise of them.

I.2. Indian estimate of Pakistan's capabilities.

As some of the Team's Indian interlocutors readily stated, their uncompromising stance on the basic territorial question had been bolstered by the perception that India was in a powerful position to ward off any challenge to its control of Kashmir from Pakistan or elsewhere. Common to most of those interviewed, in fact, was the perception that the principal foreign backer of the Kashmiri cause, Pakistan, was a nation in social, economic, and political tatters. Some invoked the now fashionable concept of "failed state" to describe Pakistan's current or probable future condition. Incapable any longer of maintaining any semblance of military parity with India, and equally unable to secure firm and reliable backing of its Kashmir policy from any powerful members of the international community, including its traditional allies China, Iran and the United States, Pakistan was in no position to challenge India's possession of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus, although those interviewed by the Team in India usually did not put it this way, India's longtime goal of minimizing outside "interference" in South Asia had been largely achieved, and the natural preeminence that its size, population, and resources gave it in the region could not be disputed in Kashmir or anywhere else.

Their awareness of Pakistan's parlous economic state clearly contributed to this feeling of confidence and sense of superiority on the part of Indians interviewed by the Team. Referring to a decision in spring 1997 of then External Affairs Minister Inder Kumar Gujral to relax visa requirements for Pakistanis wishing to visit India, several respondents boasted that the visitors would be impressed by India's wide lead over Pakistan in the economic sphere and would

recognize the futility of picking a fight with it. Indians who follow Pakistan developments more closely were also well aware that for the first time influential voices across the border were seriously arguing that, given its economic plight, Pakistan could no longer afford to pursue the hostile policies toward India it had followed for so long. They welcomed this development and regarded it as further evidence that time was on India's side and that India need not make any significant concessions on Kashmir or other bilateral issues.

The critical, often condescending attitude many of our interlocutors had toward Pakistan's social and political difficulties contributed to this triumphalist mood. They often cited Pakistan's sectarian and separatist disorders, urban violence, and drug problems as further evidence of its drastic deterioration. Although Indian professions of disdain for Pakistan's political system grew a bit awkward when the Congress Party, in late March 1997, withdrew support from the United Front (UF) government in New Delhi, the Team's Indian respondents often referred to what seemed to them an unstable, confusing, and even dangerous division of power in Islamabad. They cited, among its other drawbacks, its limiting effect on the Pakistan government's ability to make binding decisions on difficult policy issues. Referring specifically to Kashmir, some maintained that it was unclear who was calling the Government of Pakistan's shots there: Was it the president, the prime minister, the army, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), or perhaps even rogue elements within the ISI? And, if Pakistani representatives were to make forthcoming gestures on Kashmir under these circumstances, who could be sure that they spoke for other key players within the Pakistan civilian and military establishment?

Neither Pakistan's imminent collapse nor its sudden acquiescence to Indian terms on Kashmir was predicted by any of the Indians met by the Team. Prevalent among them, however, were the beliefs that Pakistan had lost the strategic advantages granted it by the Cold War; that its reputation in some quarters as a breeding ground for Islamic fundamentalist and anti-Western inclined terrorists lent force to Indian allegations of Pakistan's sinister role in Kashmir; that it was now under heavy US (and other foreign) pressure to accommodate India on Kashmir; that it was confronted nowadays with popular alienation among Kashmiri Muslims—those in Pakistan-controlled Azad (Free) Jammu and Kashmir as well as those in the Indian-controlled sector—that rivaled that felt against India; and that its overall position on Kashmir, both internal and external, was steadily weakening and should not, therefore, command serious Indian attention. Put more succinctly by a highly-regarded New Delhi intellectual, what this all meant was that “Pakistan's ability to do damage to India is very limited.”

1.3. Gujral Doctrine and India's normalization initiative.

These two widely shared Indian views, first that India should not and need not budge from its traditional position on Kashmir, and second that India's rival over Kashmir is a nation presently under severe duress, have helped to generate fairly strong interest in India recently in the cautious extension of the so-called Gujral Doctrine to Pakistan. Framed during the short-

lived UF government of H. D. Deve Gowda (April 1996 to April 1997) by then External Affairs Minister (since April 1997 Prime Minister) Gujral, this Doctrine encourages India to “go more than halfway” in dealing with its smaller neighbors without expectation of immediate reciprocity. Landmark water-sharing accords seeming to embody these terms were signed under Deve Gowda with two of the region’s weaker members, Nepal and Bangladesh. Upon Benazir Bhutto’s replacement as Prime Minister of Pakistan by Nawaz Sharif in early February 1997, Gujral, faced with a costly stalemate in India’s relations with its powerful Pakistani rival, proposed to renew the foreign secretary-level talks between them that had been broken off abruptly in January 1994 over the propriety of Kashmir’s inclusion on the agenda. His efforts, which were counted in India as an extension of India’s regional “good neighbor” policy, succeeded in bringing Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad together in New Delhi with his since-retired Indian counterpart, Salman Haider, at the end of March 1997; but before this initial round was concluded the government’s Congress parliamentary ally had pulled the rug out from under Deve Gowda’s patchwork UF coalition and the talks ended on March 31, not surprisingly in some confusion.

Gujral’s elevation to the prime ministership in early April assured the survival of the initiative towards Pakistan into the new government, albeit under political circumstances—including Gujral’s selection for the office, more by default than by any demonstrated strength in his own power base—that precluded much confidence about its ultimate success. In any event, talks between the two governments were quickly resumed: Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan met with Gujral, who retained the External Affairs portfolio for himself, at a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) foreign ministers in New Delhi in the second week of April; and in early May the two prime ministers themselves met in a glare of publicity at the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit at Male, capital of the Maldives. Their meeting ended with the promise to resume foreign secretary-level talks at the end of June and, perhaps of equal importance, with an agreement to constitute a number of joint “working groups” to consider all outstanding issues between them. Just how Kashmir was to be dealt with, if at all, by these working groups was not clarified. Neither side predicted a quick fix for Kashmir; but there was no question that the public political atmosphere of India-Pakistan relations, even if only momentarily, had taken a dramatic turn for the better.

Support for Gujral’s initiative towards Pakistan was voiced very frequently by the KSG Team’s Indian interlocutors. With some notable exceptions, however, they understood it to have as its objective not the resolution of the Kashmir issue, which they almost uniformly considered quite beyond reach in the near term, but the **sequestering** of that issue from the cluster of issues falling under the rubric of normalization and its quick dispatch to the “back burner” of India-Pakistan relations—a position it had occupied, or so Indians tend to claim, from 1972 until the outbreak of the uprising in 1989.

I.4. Trade with Pakistan.

New Delhi's "normalization sans Kashmir" initiative officially includes a number of relatively minor and presumed "confidence-building measures," such as the easing of visa requirements, release of fishermen captured in contested coastal waters, and the promotion of cultural exchanges. Its centerpiece, however, is economic—the promise of movement towards GATT-mandated, tariff-free trade between the two countries. The Team's Indian respondents observed very often that the steady expansion of cooperative trading mechanisms between India and Pakistan would very likely result in expanded recognition on both sides of the border of their Kashmir-transcending common interests and common problems. That would eventually lead, according to this logic, to a softening of time-hardened positions on Kashmir **and** heightened possibility for arms reductions—developments that promised a significant "peace-dividend" down the road for the hard-pressed economies of both. In the meantime, as one respondent put it, "Pakistan is under duress.... It will have to enter into trade and commerce with India in order to lift the siege."

Representatives of Indian commercial organizations who spoke to the KSG Team tended toward bullishness on the potential scope for India-Pakistan trade. Legal trade between India and Pakistan, they pointed out, was extremely small—in 1994 amounting to \$64 million, or only one-eighth that between Bangladesh and India. Illegal (or "unauthorized") trade, on the other hand, was, relatively speaking, substantial—at present, by their estimate, falling in the vicinity of \$500 million. The loss to Pakistan implicit in this, they observed, was substantial: Pakistani businessmen were having to pay more for the Indian goods they imported via third-party go-betweens, and of course the Pakistan government collected less revenue. There was, they said, "tremendous" potential for two-way India-Pakistan trade: Pakistani manufacturing firms need have no fear that Indian goods would flood the Pakistani marketplace. Among potential Pakistani exports with marketing potential in India they listed: handicrafts, light engineering goods, leatherwear, cotton goods, raw materials for chemicals, sporting goods, dried fruits, and natural gas. They conceded that there was a significant element of noncomplementarity of the two economies; but this, they said, was easily exaggerated and, in any event, the similarities in their economies only went to demonstrate the need for joint ventures between them.

It should be noted that the seeming enthusiasm of these commercial representatives stood in marked contrast to the observations on India-Pakistan trade potential which the Team encountered in some non-commercial quarters. Pakistanis are the only ones, according to one professional Pakistan-watcher, who would benefit from increased trade with India. India, he pointed out, was by far the principal beneficiary of the indirect or illegal trade now going on between India and Pakistan. Estimating this trade currently at about \$1.2 billion, he said that India exported \$1 billion worth while importing only \$200 million worth. Conversion to legal trade, he said, was bound to alter the balance in Pakistan's favor.

I.5. Siachen Glacier issue.

Perhaps equally high on India's normalization wish-list is settlement of its conflict with Pakistan over possession of the Siachen Glacier, which, until fighting broke out between Indian and Pakistani forces in April 1984, was a little known and rarely visited tract of about 1,000 square miles in a remote and largely uninhabited stretch of the Karakoram Mountain Range. To the prompt solution of this 13-year old dispute most of the Team's respondents in India gave strong support. Indeed, very few seemed to dissent from the observation of a very senior civil servant, now retired, that continued fighting over Siachen was "sheer insanity." Conspicuous among the Team's Indian respondents, however, was the insistence that the Siachen's obvious geographic proximity to the troubled Kashmir Valley not be construed to imply its political inseparability from the larger dispute. Like every other category of normalization, the Siachen dispute, regardless of its location, had to be **delinked** from the quagmire in its own neighborhood to achieve the lofty objective of regional cooperation.

Of all the issues where a change in the status quo might be acceptable to Indians, Siachen struck the Team as being among the most promising. There seemed to be considerable interest in moving toward a settlement and ending what many conceded was a wasteful and costly struggle. Siachen does not have the same intractable and symbolic character as is true of many other aspects of the Kashmir issue, and, although the Team did not sense any great degree of urgency among its Indian respondents to find a way out they did appear likely to be receptive to a compromise solution if this could be attractively packaged.

I.6. Other confidence-building and related measures.

In discussing other possible changes in the Kashmir status quo, the Team found some receptivity to such familiar concepts (familiar, that is, to seekers of a Kashmir settlement) as the opening of border crossings along the LOC and the restoration of the old Jhelum River route to Kashmir-Pakistan trade. But the Team was struck by the timidity with which these proposals were greeted. For the most part, the Team's Indian interlocutors welcomed them only as part of an overall settlement. They were rarely seen as useful "confidence-building measures" that might be implemented to ease the situation and create an environment in which a settlement might be more easily reached. Typically, respondents found that such steps as more open or porous borders could have damaging consequences for the security of Indian Kashmir. Under unsettled circumstances, it was asserted, the crossings could be used by Pakistan to pass arms and infiltrators into Indian territory. (The arguments that it already does so elsewhere, that the "official" border crossings would be checkable, and that the openings could have a useful symbolic effect got little positive response.) Opening the borders and trade across them as part of a settlement or in the wake of a settlement was another matter. This would usefully symbolize that the LOC had been accepted as an international frontier.

More generally, the Indian respondents seemed diffident toward proposals for various kinds of special political relationships between the two Kashmiris absent a settlement that irrevocably nailed down the Indian portion within the Indian Union. Once that happened, such arrangements (for example, a joint consultative mechanism) would not be seen as objectionable if that was what the people of the two territories wanted. Before then, however, such arrangements could complicate an already complex and sensitive situation within Indian Kashmir and even be dangerous. Some respondents foresaw an eventual situation in which Indian Kashmir and Azad Kashmir (if not the Northern Territories) each enjoyed considerable autonomy from New Delhi and Islamabad respectively. In this connection, they tended to find more similarity than actually exists between the problems the Government of India faces on its side of the LOC and those the Government of Pakistan has encountered across the line. Aside, of course, from specialists who know better, the Team found that Indians among the respondents often ignored the fact that the people in Azad Kashmir were closely related ethnically (as well as in religion) to their neighbors in Pakistan. Whatever the cause for this tendency to equate the two different problems, it is probably the case that autonomy for Indian Kashmir would be easier for many Indians to swallow if it were accompanied by a similar arrangement for Azad Kashmir.

I.7. Prospects for normalization.

From many Indian hardliners, a reply to the KSG Team's question—Does normalization of relations with Pakistan really matter to India?—was an unqualified no. From the perspective of this vocal and seemingly influential minority, the most that Pakistan deserves is India's neglect of it; more proper would be its swift punishment for the many wrongs committed against India. The more common and moderate view in India, however, is that India's troubles with Pakistan emanate from Pakistan's insecure elite classes, that the "average Pakistani" feels no deep animosity for India, and that, with the opening of contacts between Indians and Pakistanis, the prevailing suspicions would fairly rapidly be replaced, or at least minimized, as functional relationships generate a working understanding of one another and at least modest levels of trust. For this fairly large group, which includes a number of highly-regarded, both left- and right-minded professional public affairs strategists and analysts, Pakistanis show definite signs of shifting orientations, specifically of having acquired a more mature and realistic outlook on the region, one that Indian policymakers could and should turn to India's (and ultimately to Pakistan's) advantage.

Illustrative of this viewpoint were the observations of a prominent liberal strategist at a New Delhi think tank, who, while acknowledging that there was currently a "complete policy deadlock in Pakistan" and that the process of talking with India would therefore be extremely slow, insisted nevertheless that skepticism expressed by Pakistani officials over the prospects of negotiating with India was very largely for public consumption. The fact is, the Indian commentator observed, that Pakistan's leadership had now accepted Chinese advice about normalizing relations with India, tendered in late 1996 during a visit to Islamabad by Chinese President Jiang Zemin, and could be expected to move steadily, albeit cautiously, in that direction.

In much the same vein were the remarks on Pakistani media of a well known professional analyst in New Delhi. "The Pakistani press," he said, "is the finest I've ever seen." It had "excellent news coverage" and was "hardhitting." It remained wedded, he acknowledged, to the archaic view that India was bent upon Pakistan's undoing and that Indian arms acquisitions programs were directed against Pakistan. In spite of this Indo-centric obsession, however, there was an increasing "recognition [in the Pakistani press] that along the path of national development India has chosen a different path ...," one that prizes openness, he said, and the development of human resources. Pakistanis now see, he argued, that normalization can be on a basis other than Kashmir. They see value in cooperation rather than competition.

This commentator conceded that a wholesale shift to this new perception of affairs would be very difficult for Pakistanis to make. Nevertheless, he insisted, a subtle shift was already underway in the public media. Its significance, he said, was all the greater since up until a year or so ago this sentiment, which was now appearing with some regularity in editorials and op-ed pieces in the English-medium press (the only trustworthy and **relevant** press, he pointed out, in so far as Pakistan's leaders were concerned) did not appear in the Pakistani press **at all**.

Nawaz Sharif, according to this same observer, was not merely peddling fine words; he was sincere. He recognized the urgency of Pakistan's economic crisis. His words implied a willingness to have Kashmir moved to the "back burner." The Pakistan military, said this observer, "will not change its [anti-Indian] posture in public," but "if they do not actively **impede** normalization [that will mean] they are also going along with it." The upshot of all this, he concluded, was that Pakistanis appear willing to give regional cooperation a try.

How eager were the Team's Indian respondents to give cooperation with **Pakistan** a try? Here there was wide disagreement. A small but well-informed, vocal and possibly growing group of respondents argued that of the two neighbors India, being the bigger, more powerful, and more stable party to the dispute, was in the better position to accelerate the process. Pakistan's policymaking machinery was paralyzed, and for it the risks of failure were greater. This group gave a maximalist interpretation to the Gujral Doctrine, seeing it as the opening wedge to a new and more stable South Asian political order. A number of these respondents urged the thinning of Indian security forces in Kashmir. One of the best known and respected argued that India's policy initiatives thus far towards Pakistan had been entirely too limited. What was needed was not the lifting of visa restrictions against Pakistan, but a robust and broadly conceived set of initiatives. In the nuclear weapons area, he suggested, the government had a number of attractive options: It could move, for instance, to declare South Asia a Nuclear Free Zone, opt for a "no-first-strike" agreement with Pakistan, or unilaterally suspend missile production. These measures, he said, were in fact more important to the region than Kashmir. Then, too, he asked, why doesn't New Delhi invite Pakistan's membership into the new Indian Ocean Rim organization?

The mainstream of Indian opinion, the Team found, considers measures like these far too radical. It dissents from the principle that because India is bigger and more powerful it should be the first to offer concessions. It is more comfortable with a minimalist interpretation of the Gujral Doctrine, one that envisions progress on the Pakistan front in small and relatively risk-free increments, focused on issues where substantial agreement already exists or is easy to gain. "Expand areas of agreement," said one professional Pakistan-watcher, "so that areas of disagreement seem smaller." Then, he said, things will gradually fall into place. If Siachen proves too difficult, he observed, then set it aside. If academic exchanges can be arranged, or media exchanges, or scientific exchanges, then do that.

There was little disagreement among the Team's respondents in their comments on the prospects of **successful** talks between India and Pakistan. Virtually without exception, they predicted a long and arduous journey. Typical was the comment of one, a strategist with an unusually accommodative approach to Pakistan, that, when it came to Kashmir the two official national positions were irreconcilable and the two governments were not likely to negotiate them successfully. An equally common observation was that the government of India itself, whatever might be its leaders' personal inclinations, was faced with domestic political divisions at home that were far too acute to allow for meaningful talks with Pakistan. As noted above, optimism survived in regard to talks only so long as Pakistan's acquiescence to the sequestering of the Kashmir issue from the overall process of normalization was accepted as a governing principle of these talks.

Underlying these reflections on normalization and adding to the difficulty in making progress in improving India-Pakistan relations in general, and in the situation in Kashmir in particular, was what the Team sensed to be a widespread Indian feeling, only occasionally expressed, that the normalization of bilateral political, economic, and cultural ties, while welcome, was really not especially important or advantageous for India. Indians, most of the Team's respondents among them, applaud the Gujral Doctrine and the opening of a serious dialogue with Pakistan—provided it does not call into doubt India's position on Kashmir and does not go beyond putting the issue on a very slow "back burner." But the Team also found that Indians question whether India would gain enough by normalization to warrant making any real concessions or taking any significant risks. In any event, the status quo is not uncomfortable for them. This attitude could in part reflect a lack of imagination. With a history of bilateral relations ranging from poor to disastrous over the past half century, Indians may find it difficult to think of what a really normal relationship could mean, let alone what specific advantages could accrue to India were it to be achieved. A strong effort by the Indian government and others to highlight the benefits of normalcy could, however, have a very salutary effect in correcting this situation.

Despite these discouraging elements, the Team's soundings suggested that more thoughtful Indians could be persuaded to accept some changes in the present state of affairs in Kashmir

provided they were convinced that these did not threaten basic Indian interests there, defined, as noted, as the secure retention of the Indian-held portion of the state in the Indian Union.

1.8. Status of Kashmiri Muslim separatist militancy.

In its discussions during visits to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, in particular to the Valley, the Team was struck by the powerful sense of alienation with India expressed by many of the Team's Kashmiri Muslim interlocutors. This feeling was conveyed to the Team not only by those caught up in the political struggle, but also, and in the Team's view very significantly, by the well-to-do businessmen representative of the Valley's "establishment." These people, who in earlier years had not necessarily been happy with the India connection but had been content to live with it, had now become embittered antagonists of India. They had been particularly infuriated by the harsh, degrading treatment they alleged the security forces had meted out to them. "We are not dealt with like human beings," was a frequent refrain.

As noted above, people elsewhere in India seem to recognize this sense of alienation, though they may not be aware of how deep and widespread it has become. The wounds inflicted over the years of the insurgency will not heal easily. One journalist, a non-Muslim with deep roots in the Valley, argued that the scarring experience children had suffered might lead to their permanent alienation and pave the way for a further violent outbreak against Indian rule in the years ahead.

The Kashmiris' alienation from India does not, however, translate automatically into greater attraction for Pakistan. Far from it. Many the Team interviewed were disillusioned with the Pakistan government. They maintained that Islamabad had pursued its own agenda in Kashmir without regard for the interests of the Kashmiris themselves. It was Kashmir that had had to suffer, not Pakistan.

Repeatedly expressed by Indians who met with the KSG Team, including most of those sympathetic to the separatists, was the conviction that both the political and military branches of the Kashmiri Muslim separatist movement, in seeking to sustain the movement for self-determination, were facing an increasingly uphill struggle. Popular support for the separatists, it was widely agreed, had clearly declined in the state of Jammu and Kashmir itself; in all other states the Indian media largely ignored the Kashmiris' grievances (or at least avoided the seamier side of the matter); Pakistani interest in the Kashmiri cause seemed gradually to be fading; and the rest of the world seemed mainly indifferent. The military capability of the separatists remained feeble. Relatively few in number, lightly armed and their hideouts diminishing in number as Indian intelligence finally came into its own, the separatists' armed cadres were hounded from all sides by Indian security forces and no longer had freedom of movement over large parts of the Valley. Sandwiched between India and Pakistan, and severely divided amongst themselves, the

Kashmiri Muslims of the Valley of Kashmir, the Team was frequently told, were tired of violence (and frightened of it as well); and they had few if any safety valves left to them.

I.9. The All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference/APHC.

By their more hostile critics among the Team's Indian respondents, the political leaders of the heterogeneous All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference/APHC were described, at best, as corrupt and self-serving, at worst, as little better than terrorists. But even their sympathizers, when asked to characterize the leadership, displayed considerable ambivalence on the subject. A human rights activist, for instance, cast People's League leader Shabir Shah and Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front/JKLF chief Yasin Malik as uncorrupted, dedicated, earnest, and willing to take courageous positions; but he questioned either's ability to run a government. Syed Ahmad Shah Geelani, head of the Jama'at-i-Islami Party, and Abdul Ghani Lone, Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference, he conceded, were both politically experienced and capable, but neither enjoyed much popularity. The youthful APHC convenor Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, he said, was "maturing" politically; but it was still in doubt whether he possessed the makings of a statesman. The APHC had failed entirely, he said, to expand its appeal to the state's non-Muslim minorities. It was basically a Kashmiri Muslim movement—the recent effort to attract Hindus by opening an APHC branch in Jammu was simply window-dressing. According to another respondent, a journalist with strong pro-militant leanings, the JKLF, the most popular of the militant organizations, ironically had among the weakest and worst leaders. Most of the APHC leadership, said this journalist, came from humble socio-economic backgrounds and simply did not know how to "wheel and deal." Many of the Team's informants described the Hurriyat leadership as "confused" and the APHC itself as having failed to produce political consensus in the seven years since its founding. The APHC leaders and other dissident politicians who spoke with the Team, while dismissing autonomy within India out of hand and expressing nothing but scorn for Farooq Abdullah, identified neither a clear set of objectives nor a coherent political strategy for achieving them now that a new civilian government was in power in the state.

Mitigating these more or less harsh judgments, of course, is the fact that the Hurriyat leadership has to operate under politically highly disadvantageous circumstances. As a Kashmiri politician with pro-government leanings put it, some of the APHC leaders are "caught in a web..., [they are] frightened..., [and] have no options." They became involved with Pakistani military intelligence or with other foreign agencies over the course of the uprising, and now do not know how to extricate themselves. Some of them, this respondent added, may want to get out of this web honorably, provided concessions are made to them. Another respondent, a Kashmiri intellectual, suggested that the movement for Kashmiri self-determination had effectively been hijacked by the Pakistanis, and that the militant organizations armed by the Pakistanis had gradually crowded out the political leadership of the movement.

APHC leaders themselves go to some pains to point out that the disarray of their organization—in particular its seeming lack of an active political program—should not be blamed on them. As one of them observed, with hostile Indian security forces camped in practically every nook and cranny of the Valley the Hurriyat could not possibly advance a purely political program. It was necessity, not choice, he asserted, that dictated the organization's reliance on the essentially "negative" program encapsulated in the standing threat—"There will be no peace."

APHC leaders are adamant that they be included in any India-Pakistan talks over Kashmir—that such talks, in other words, become trilateral arrangements in recognition of the Kashmiri militants' claim that the people of Kashmir are a separate and legitimate party to the dispute. As one APHC leader argued, the Kashmir dispute was, after all, a problem of 13 million people; it was clearly **not** an India-Pakistan territorial dispute. These two countries, he said, had made international commitments to self-determination, and this must not be ignored. He insisted that all Hurriyat leaders agreed that self-determination was an **absolute** requirement and that all **three** parties to the disputes should solve the problem in a dignified manner. "If India is not ready to give self-determination," he concluded vehemently, "then we will not surrender to the occupying forces! No matter what!"

Asked by the Team how it was to be determined—in a multiethnic and acutely factionalized state—just who among the Kashmiris was their rightful representative in any such talks, another APHC leader responded that this could be discovered via an internationally supervised referendum. The APHC, he said, consists of those who disagree with India, who think that Kashmir's future is yet to be determined. The APHC, he said, "has made it clear that we are prepared to proceed with openness and realism... that a dialogue should be initiated..." The National Conference party of Farooq Abdullah, he asserted, has "no constituency in the Valley."

Taking a different tack, at least one well-informed observer of the political scene questioned the stated determination of the dissident political leadership to go on professing a hard line. He pointed out that others who had seemed uncompromising in taking similar positions had eventually joined the political mainstream. He argued that as the self-determination cause became even more hopeless than it now was and the threat to their personal security from the remaining irreconcilable insurgents diminished, some of them too would be brought around.

Disagreeing, a human rights advocate among the Team's respondents offered the opinion that, at bottom, the Government had no choice but to work with the APHC leaders. It was all that remained in the state, he said, from which to form a governing class.

1.10. 1996 Assembly elections and the National Conference government.

A quite opposite opinion is held by those who consider the 1996 Assembly elections in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which led to Farooq Abdullah's installation as leader of the state's

first “popularly” chosen government in almost a decade, to have been a milestone on the way to a political solution of the problem. Those so inclined among the Team’s respondents generally applauded the elections, holding them to have been essentially free and fair, and expressing disappointment only with the government’s tardiness in holding them. Characteristic of this group was the comment of an Establishment intellectual in New Delhi, who insisted that what the elections most emphatically represented was a popular demand for a return to normalcy. With this vote, this respondent said, the Kashmiri Muslims had expressed their recognition that the state’s separation from India was unattainable.

The more common assessment encountered among Indians interviewed by the Team, however, was that the Assembly elections had accomplished little if anything. Many regarded the balloting as seriously flawed, some to the point where they considered it to have been actually harmful. The more extreme view among those in this category, including practically all of the APHC leadership, was that the elections had been completely rigged and that the government thus “elected” had no claim whatsoever to rule. The Kashmiri quest for self-determination could simply not be carried out through the APHC’s collaboration with Indian-sponsored political institutions. Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, said one Kashmiri political figure commenting in this vein, was simply an agent of the Government of India. “He is a killer,” he said, “a quisling.” Talking to him was impossible. Farooq, he asserted, “is not a balanced man.”

But even more sober assessments encountered by the KSG Team painted a none-too-cheerful picture. The spokesman for a human rights group observed, for example, that the manner in which the elections were conducted itself undermined the legitimacy in the public mind of the elected officials, who were inevitably seen to be “clients” or “puppets” of the Indian Government. In this way, Farooq Abdullah’s credibility was destroyed even before he began to govern. Naturally, said this respondent, people in droves would seek favors from the new power brokers; but this would only divide Kashmiri society yet further, since it made likely that some elements would consider the others traitors.

Whatever their assessment, few if any of the Team’s Indian interlocutors claimed that the 1996 assembly election represented a vote “for India.” Yet at the same time, many who took a dim view of the election still argued that it was better to have an elected government in the state, even a relatively weak one, than the rule from New Delhi that for so long preceded it. In this view, the installation of Farooq’s government was an important first step in restoring normalcy to the politics and administration of the state.

Some with intimate knowledge of the workings of the new National Conference government since the election took a more reserved view. Asked to reflect back upon the previous six months of Farooq Abdullah’s rule, a popular Kashmiri political figure with links to the government stated that the overall situation in the Valley had not improved. The pro-India or “renegade” militants, this respondent observed, together with the regular security forces continued to abuse their

authority; the state administration was paralyzed, unable to start work projects; killings, averaging daily between 5 and 10, were going up instead of down; there were still numerous custodial deaths, allegedly the result of so-called "encounters"; there were virtually no doctors in the villages; and bridges hadn't been repaired. The situation, this respondent claimed, "is so bad" that Kashmiris, especially rural villagers, "can't lead a normal life." Kashmiris did vote for normalcy, this respondent admitted, but they weren't getting it.

I.11. Human rights violations.

In discussing human rights infractions by security forces in Kashmir, Indian authorities put the best face on a difficult situation. They acknowledged that some violations continued, but said that the culprits were being dealt with. In any event, they argued, the primary blame rests with the insurgents, who commit outrages and provoke the security forces to take countermeasures. Others interviewed by the Team also often cited the insurgents (and their alleged Pakistani manipulators) as the prime offenders. But to varying extents they were clearly uncomfortable and embarrassed with the human rights record of the security forces. It was apparent to the Team that these individuals would welcome an improvement in this performance and a greater degree of openness in dealing generally with the human rights issue, including more access for outside observers. But here, as elsewhere, they would need to be persuaded that such beneficial steps could be taken without undue risk to the security of the state.

Those among the Team's interlocutors who follow human rights closely took a much more sharply critical view of the performance of the security forces and the government. Queried directly about the human rights situation in Kashmir following six months of the Farooq Abdullah government, a respected human rights activist, for instance, commented that extrajudicial killings had clearly declined in number, but that this resulted in part from the more sophisticated targeting of hardcore militants. Owing to international pressures, he said, the number of detention centers in the Valley had come down dramatically from 120 in 1995 to merely 17 at the present. However, he stated emphatically, torture continues "in a **big way**." All categories of the security forces (the Rashtriya Rifles, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, and even the regular army) persisted in the routine practice of it. Its frequency was not coming down, he said; it is "absolutely universal." Elsewhere in India, he noted, there was at least some accountability; but not in Kashmir.

The Government of India, according to this same respondent, had made a number of concessions recently to the International Committee of the Red Cross in regard to Kashmiri detainees incarcerated both within and outside of the state. This, he said, revealed the government's greater confidence about the situation in Kashmir, which had prompted it to loosen things up a bit to improve India's international position. On the whole, however, the human rights situation in Kashmir, he said, remained dismal. Most international human rights groups had minimal access, if any, to the Valley; and Indian human rights groups, those few who dared risk the government's dis-

pleasure by involving themselves with Kashmir, were often politically divided over intervening and were thus fairly ineffective. The government was cleverly shielding itself from international human rights criticism, he added, by funding a number of ostensibly “nongovernmental” organizations to propagate the government’s line on Kashmir abroad.

I.12. Role of Indian media and Parliament.

A common theme among Indians critical of the government’s Kashmir policies is that the Indian media, with some notable exceptions, have for all practical purposes observed a blackout on honest reporting about Kashmir: There simply wasn’t any free discussion of Kashmir going on in India. Many journalists are corrupt and easily bought off, said one respondent, and there was a pervasive anti-Muslim communal bias to steer others away from Kashmir. The media, said a human rights activist, avoid the torture issue. In fact, he claimed, “since the 1950s no individual on the street in India has been told the truth about Kashmir.” No one in parliament, he said, was willing to speak out on Kashmir. A few, he said, were willing to act privately but not publicly. This “conspiracy of silence,” he maintained, had paralyzed the government’s Kashmir policy. Its staggering problem now was: How to change course in a democratic society, where government was caught in a trap of its own making?

The inadequacy of media coverage of the Kashmir issue was said by the Team’s respondents to be even more evident in such peripheral metropolises as Calcutta, Chennai (Madras), and Mumbai (Bombay) than was the case in New Delhi. According to them, this was largely to be explained by the already noted lack of saliency of the Kashmir problem among the public in those cities and their respective hinterlands. Several journalists interviewed made the point that their readers were too preoccupied with their state’s relations with the regime in New Delhi to devote much attention to the relationship between New Delhi and the—to them—remote region of Kashmir. This, they said, was even more true for readers of the vernacular press than of English-language media. To a large extent, when such readers did focus their attention on Jammu and Kashmir it was largely with a view to the ways in which new political arrangements in that state might help establish precedents for altered—and hopefully better—relationships between their own state and the Union government.

A professional analyst and defender of the government’s Kashmir policy among the Team’s respondents argued to the contrary that, while it was true that the Indian press exhibited little passion about Kashmir, this was evidence of “a certain degree of maturity [on the issue].... [The press] does not push [the issue] under the carpet.... There is a consensus [on Kashmir] that these are **domestic** problems.” The Indian press, he said, had an aversion to third party interference in Kashmir. It was convinced, he said, that the Government of India would ultimately be able to resolve the problem, and that this resolution was likely to come about not as a result of any special concessions to the Kashmiris but via reform of center-state relations nationwide.

1.13. Economic and environmental grievances.

An often expressed view in India is that the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been “pampered” with subsidies by the central government and that the Kashmiri people, whatever may be the truth of their political grievances, enjoy a standard of living—even in the midst of separatist violence—higher than that of most other Indians. The KSG Team encountered this point of view from time to time, even among Kashmiris, but by far the more common observation in this connection was that the state had mainly suffered from its dependence on New Delhi and that it would flourish economically if it were given independence.

The list of economic and environmental grievances produced for the Team by its Kashmiri respondents was lengthy. Included among the complaints were:

- (1) that growth of the local Kashmiri economy, including even its vaunted tourism potential, had been deliberately discouraged, in large part due to the government’s overriding security preoccupations in the state;
- (2) that there was very little Indian, and no foreign, investment in the state;
- (3) that there were no major job-creating public works programs—and only a handful of small, public-sector industries—in the state;
- (4) that whatever public money had been spent in the state had largely gone to the benefit of a relatively small number of government-favored Kashmiri families;
- (5) that very little had been done to improve the communications, power, and transport infrastructure in the state; and that power generated in and needed by the state had largely been diverted to other regions or from Kashmir to Jammu;
- (6) that the state held a huge surplus of educated unemployed, with few prospects for satisfying careers within the state and even fewer opportunities elsewhere in India; and
- (7) that, “because of the ruthless exploitation of its land, water, and forest resources,” the spectacular aesthetic wealth of the state was in very serious jeopardy.

State government officials told the Team that restoration of the state’s badly damaged administrative apparatus and resumption of economic development were among their first priorities. But businessmen and others scored Farooq Abdullah for having failed to do anything to relieve Kashmir’s economic and environmental woes either during his present administration or when he was the state’s chief minister in the 1980s. While many of the Team’s Kashmiri respondents conceded that the central government’s much-publicized plan to construct the state’s first railway line, connecting Pathankot via Jammu and Udhampur to Srinagar and finally to Baramullah,

would be a great boon to the state's economy and help to overcome the Kashmiris' sense of isolation, virtually all of them considered it a paper plan only, unlikely ever to be accomplished. Said one ruefully: "Twenty-five years from now there will still be no railway to Srinagar."

I.14. Autonomy committees.

In October 1996, soon after formation of the newly-elected National Conference government, the state's Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah announced formation of two state-level committees—one, the Committee for Greater Autonomy, charged with looking at the autonomy question from the broad "external" perspective of center-state relations, the other, the Committee on Regional Autonomy, responsible for examining the problem of autonomy as it pertains to the "internal" ethno-religious mosaic of the state's three regions—Ladakh, Jammu, and Kashmir. Dr. Karan Singh, parliamentarian, sometime diplomat, and son of Kashmir's last Dogra Hindu maharaja, was appointed head of the former; and the Jammu-based author, politician, and human rights advocate Dr. Balraj Puri, who had chaired a similar panel set up by Farooq in 1986 (one that never got off the ground), was appointed to head the latter. The committees appeared to be operating on a fairly relaxed timetable, an impression that gained ground with Karan Singh's resignation in early August 1997 from the committee he was chairing. The Government of India was expected to deal authoritatively with the linked issues under consideration only when the committee reports were submitted, if then.

Kashmiri Muslim critics of these committees among the Team's informants mainly dismissed them as "eyewash," "purposeless," or, even worse, as having been "done to crush our movement, to divert from our struggle"—in other words, as a step in the wrong direction. Other critics, at least in principle not disposed against their formation, declared them to be undemocratically constituted, representative neither of the state's political parties nor of its various ethnic and religious communities, and, especially in the case of Dr. Karan Singh, whose son had already been inducted into Farooq's cabinet, inappropriately chaired. Given the Indian government's past record in eroding the autonomy the state had originally enjoyed, a number of respondents wondered how it could be trusted to honor an agreement? And how could Karan Singh, who had been the constitutional head of state when much of the erosion took place, be expected to come up with a satisfactory formula? What real meaning, they asked, could autonomy have when the state government was so heavily dependent on New Delhi for financial assistance?

Some of the most telling criticism, like that of a leading human rights advocate, was that these committees were **irrelevant**—that they were "going nowhere," in other words, because the Government of India, whatever it might say in public, had no earnest desire that either of them should accomplish anything. Practically everyone who commented on them, including a number who were favorably disposed to them, complained that their deliberations were being conducted—unwisely—in secret. And virtually all conceded that, given the strength of Hindu nationalism in India's current political context, they were operating against enormous political odds.

I.15. Kashmir autonomy issue.

In the meantime, the Team's Indian interlocutors differed sharply about the future shape of the Kashmir-India relationship. Controversy in regard to the autonomy issue, in particular, raged not only among government-supporters, but also between them and their pro-Kashmiri antagonists. Advocates of hardline policies on Kashmir among the respondents generally discounted the desirability of autonomy for Kashmir. Often invoking the presumed mortal danger to India's huge Muslim minority that was likely to follow any sign that India was losing ground in Kashmir, they argued against any meaningful reinforcement of the state's special standing in the Indian Constitution. Very few of them, however, took the position identified with the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), namely that Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, granting special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, should be rescinded. Typical of such hardline views, roughly paraphrased, were the following:

[A professional strategist] As the recent elections in Jammu and Kashmir show, most of the people of that state want inclusion in India. Restoration nationwide of a truer federalism would meet the state's requirement for autonomy. The truth is, it is better that autonomy **not** be Kashmir-specific. One can't go far to meet the Kashmiri Muslims' demand for autonomy without treading upon the aspirations of the non-Muslim peoples of Jammu and Ladakh, who feel they are the victims of discrimination. Ideally, of course, India should be moving towards **extensive** autonomy, and not only for Kashmir, that would confine the central government to defense, communications, and foreign policy. But this must be postponed to an undefined distant future. It is simply too early now to consider it. The situation is politically too volatile. The BJP is opposed to any such move. At the same time, however, the formal scrapping of Article 370 would be disastrous.

[A professional analyst] India can make no concessions that go beyond settling for the Line of Control as the permanent international border. That is the bottom line for India. It is out of the question to go back to the Act of Accession to fashion a model of center-state relations for Kashmir. There is no point talking about such old arrangements. Modifications made in the 1950s to Article 370, specifically those which integrated Kashmir more firmly into the Indian Union, in most cases cannot be altered. In any event, they cannot be altered exclusive of other states. There is no political consensus in India to make any such alteration for Kashmir alone.

Distinguishing most softliners among pro-government inclined personalities who met with the Team was their preference for governmental decentralization and devolution of powers—of their support, that is, for the creation of a more federal structure that would provide for a greater degree of autonomy from New Delhi for all of the Indian states, not just Kashmir—as the best way to address the Kashmir problem. At least a few of those claiming to favor this approach probably did so as a way of delaying and watering down whatever is finally offered to Kashmir.

Characteristic of this soft-line (but pro-government) perspective were the remarks of a research associate at one of New Delhi's think tanks, who observed that the logic of Indian politics was changing—and, in so far as Kashmir was concerned, in a positive direction. Specifically, there was a trend towards stronger federalism and decentralization, as well as towards coalition governments. Kashmir, this respondent suggested, should be the model for a new Indian federalism. Closely akin to this proposal was the suggestion of a human rights activist that, while the Kashmir issue couldn't be solved within the framework of the Indian Constitution, it **could** be solved, he insisted, within the **Union** of India. This meant, he said, that the Union of India needed redefinition. One "can't sell a special package for Kashmir [in India]," he explained, one must resolve Kashmir via strengthened federalism, confederalism, and devolution of powers.

The KSG Team also heard numerous and diverse voices on the other side of the autonomy issue, with some individuals (and by far the majority of Kashmiri Muslim respondents) invoking the traditional demand for implementation of the UN Security Council-authorized plebiscite to determine the state's final accession to either Pakistan or India, others preferring complete independence, and still others seemingly willing to experiment with one species or another of political autonomy. Common to practically all Kashmiris on this (anti-government) side of the ledger, however, was the view that political autonomy as **conventionally** understood and practiced in India was simply insufficient for Kashmir. It had been attempted once before, in the form of Article 370, they observed, with notably poor results. How could anyone be confident that a future Indian government, one led by the BJP, for instance, would honor a "strengthened" Article 370 any better than its predecessors had honored the original? At a minimum, some argued, there would have to be some iron-clad Indian constitutional guarantee against a future re-erosion of the state government's power.

The view that the Kashmir dispute might best be resolved within some broader context of Indian constitutional reform found substantial support among respondents in Calcutta, Mumbai (Bombay) and, especially, Chennai (Madras), many of whom would like to see India evolve into a more truly federal polity. But, with or without such constitutional reform, numerous respondents in those three cities viewed the idea of greater autonomy for Kashmir sympathetically in that such an arrangement might establish a precedent for expanding the degree of autonomy for Indian states in general. Several more radical views were also put forward. A Mumbai newspaper editor envisaged an autonomous region comprising both the Indian- and Pakistani-held regions of the state which, after twenty years or so under the joint supervision of the United Nations and SAARC, might then exercise the option of choosing independence. And two other interlocutors, one each in Calcutta and Chennai, stated that, while preferring that Jammu and Kashmir remain with India, they would be willing to countenance an independent Kashmir if the dissidents could not be won over. On the other hand, a Mumbai journalist who was himself sympathetic to the idea of autonomy for Kashmir, stated that many of his readers would support the alleged view of the state's ruling Shiv Sena and Bharatiya Janata Party coalition that the problem of Kashmir might be settled simply by having Kashmiris favoring union with Pakistan "evacuate the state."

A number of APHC leaders conceded to the Team that, when it came to a final settlement of Kashmir, the Kashmiris would have to keep an open mind. They fully recognized, they said, that talks on self-determination for the state of Jammu and Kashmir would have to involve not only Kashmiri Muslims but the state's Dogra Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and other minority groups.

But much more common to this group of leaders and their allies, at least when speaking with the Team, was a statement of position on the autonomy question that appeared to leave very little room for compromise. Quoted or closely paraphrased below is a sampling of their observations:

Talks with India within the four corners of the Indian Constitution will **never** be acceptable. We Kashmiris are willing to talk; but not under this condition. We will continue the struggle indefinitely. We must not mortgage our future.

No Indian prime minister will ever agree to self-determination for Kashmiris. We have faith in our ability to use force!

There is no solution [to Kashmir] within the Constitution of India. Article 370 is absolutely unacceptable to Kashmiris. This does not mean that we are opposed to negotiations.... It means, as said in the APHC constitution, [that settlement cannot be] within the Indian Constitution. Kashmiris don't want to be part of India. An absolute majority of them share this view.

The APHC accepts accommodation, but **not** within the Constitution of India, [rather] consistent with the aspirations of the people of Kashmir.... The Constitution of India is not acceptable to the people of Kashmir. It is constitutional slavery.... The Constitution of India is not revealed scripture.... What we actually stand for... [is] a permanent settlement of Jammu and Kashmir... [based] on principle and for a cause.... The reality is that a Kashmiri majority, a substantial majority, is not prepared to reconcile to any arrangement that may have any semblance of linkage to the Indian Union.... [The Indians] want to punish us before they leave us.... They want to break us.

Among the Team's Indian respondents were many who had obviously not thought the matter of autonomy through and had only hazy suggestions as to what autonomy might comprise were it to be enacted. Some preferred to wait until the autonomy committees had completed their work. There did appear to be considerable sympathy for assuring that if the Kashmir Valley and other Muslim-majority areas were given greater autonomy than they now enjoy, then the non-Muslim majority regions in Jammu and Ladakh should be allowed to opt out of the arrangement. The Puri committee is presumably considering this issue. In any event, the autonomy issue was not likely to become a matter of general and informed interest in India (except, of course, in Kashmir) until concrete proposals are put forward and partisan battle lines drawn.

In the meantime, with a few exceptions, few seemed to give the concept of a more autonomous Kashmir much urgency.

The question of greater autonomy for Kashmir is complicated by a widespread lack of confidence in the state's chief minister, Farooq Abdullah. An advocate of greater autonomy, Farooq Abdullah is not generally regarded in India as a leader who could be trusted to govern an autonomous Kashmir in a way consistent with Indian interests there. For his detractors, this is not a question of Farooq's loyalty to India, but rather one of his political competence and leadership skills. His ability to bring Kashmiri dissidents into the political mainstream on the basis of greater autonomy and, more generally, to utilize such a revised constitutional relationship to relieve the strong sense of alienation many Kashmiris now feel toward India is also seriously doubted. At the same time, those who considered themselves familiar with the political situation in the state of Jammu and Kashmir recognized that—at least until some of the more popular dissident leaders in Kashmir should be willing to accept the state's indissoluble link with India, if then—Farooq Abdullah was the only Kashmiri politician to whom New Delhi can turn to head an elected government.

Some of the Team's respondents argued that, while greater autonomy for Kashmir might draw at least some Kashmiris into greater acceptance of their links with India, it would gain little, if any, support from Pakistan. They make an important point. The Government of Pakistan dismisses out of hand as fraudulent the 1996 elections in the state. Over the years Pakistan governments have consistently denounced Indian-negotiated arrangements in Kashmir that stop short of self-determination, and they have castigated as puppets of New Delhi Kashmiri leaders who agreed to them. It is understandable, therefore, that there is little expectation in India that Pakistan would be prepared to change its tune and regard greater autonomy within India as a welcome measure that could make the life of their co-religionists across the LOC easier and perhaps help pave the way for a final settlement of the Kashmir issue.

I.16. Kashmiri Pandits and Panun Kashmir.

Before 1947, the Valley of Kashmir's small and highly educated minority of Hindu Brahmins, called Pandits, was patronized by the British colonial authorities and dominated the princely state's administration as well as important sectors of both its rural and urban economic life. With independence, and the increasing importance of democratic majorities, came change. The change, inevitable from the Kashmiri Muslim majority's point of view, unfair from the perspective of the Pandit minority itself, gradually displaced the Pandits from their privileged position and led, well before the outbreak of the separatist uprising in 1989, to their steadily increasing migration out of the Valley. The mass exodus from the Valley of those who still remained in 1989—according to the Pandits about 5% of the state's total population and numbering between 250,000 and 300,000, but more likely only around 135,000 or fewer if we extrapolate to 1989 the growth rate from 1971, when, according to the census, Brahmins in

Kashmir proper numbered only 115,000, to 1981, when they numbered 124,000—virtually cleansed it of all but a tiny handful of Pandits numbering a few thousand. The bulk of those who fled live today in camps scattered about the state's Jammu division and in the outskirts of Delhi. The cultural, political and economic role they played in the state before independence, the extent of harmony that prevailed between them and the Muslim majority both before and since independence, the causes of their recent exodus from the Valley, and the best way to remedy their present predicament are all matters that are heavily debated whenever and wherever Kashmiris of different religious backgrounds meet. Although a small community, the Pandit minority's prospects in the state, which is home to a considerable number of other ethnic, religious and sectarian minorities, is unquestionably one measure that needs to be taken of the Kashmiri Muslim majority's appreciation of self-determination.

Most Kashmiri Pandits among the Team's respondents, and in particular those representing the community's recently displaced members, described themselves, not the Kashmiri Muslims, as the true bearers of the Kashmiri cultural tradition (or *kashmiriyat*). The Kashmiri Muslims, they argued bitterly and in terms that did not augur well for their eventual reabsorption into Kashmiri society, had been culturally traduced and eventually captured politically by a puritanical and fiercely intolerant Islamic fundamentalism. Kashmiri civil society today, said one, an academic, was characterized by "Jama'at-led Sunni Muslim hegemonism" in all economic, social and political fields. Farooq Abdullah, notwithstanding his surface secularism, like his father, Sheikh Abdullah, was a willing agent of Kashmir's complete transformation into a Sunni Muslim-dominant state. Gradually marginalized in the state by discriminatory policies of Muslim-preference in regard to education, employment, and land ownership implemented over three or four decades by the Kashmiri Muslim leadership, the Pandits, he said, were forced to watch while they were made into a whipping post for every Kashmiri Muslim politician in search of electoral support. Housed now in refugee camps and studiously ignored by their own national government as well as by international human rights groups, in both cases because they fit only awkwardly, if at all, the conventional image of a minority faced with systematic state persecution and terrorism, the Pandits had, it was said, been made over into "animals in a zoo."

Urging that forcefully relocated members of the Pandit community be designated "internally displaced persons" and thus be allowed to demand rights not due simple migrants, the Team's Pandit respondents also presented a vigorous defense for setting aside a spacious homeland on the right bank of the Jhelum River in the Valley of Kashmir (about 22% of the Valley, according to them) where they might dwell with constitutional guarantees of their future security. Calling this territory Panun ("our own") Kashmir, they insisted that it, in contrast with the part of the Valley in the hands of the Muslim majority, would stand apart as a secular and multicomunity democracy.

While a few Pandits interviewed by the Team displayed sympathy for the Kashmiri Muslim cause, recognizing the merit in Muslim grievances and showing some willingness to

work together constructively to redress past wrongs, the majority view seemed to favor projects—restoration of the Pandits' former privileged position in the Valley or territorial separatism—whose realization appeared extremely improbable under practically any conceivable circumstances. The Pandits' demands are extreme, but so are their circumstances. The former, in the Team's view, do require some moderating; but that appears most unlikely until and unless serious attention is given to the amelioration of the latter.

I.17. Role of international community.

Almost without exception, Kashmiri Muslim political leaders who met with the KSG Team urged upon the international community a more active and direct role for it in the effort to resolve the Kashmir dispute. India and Pakistan, commented one APHC leader, had already fought three wars. All of them, he pointed out, had been followed by bilateral negotiations, none of which had produced lasting agreement over Kashmir. The 1972 bilateral talks between India and Pakistan at Simla are thus, for these leaders, an entirely inappropriate model. Kashmir, as they see it, has to be given higher priority on the international agenda. There have to be international guarantees. Otherwise, observed one, there was no hope. India was an expansionist power and would not compromise if left to its own devices.

With almost equal uniformity, pro-government personalities among the Team's respondents (and whether from the right or left of the political spectrum) expressed grave doubts over international involvement in the Kashmir dispute. Characteristic of their thinking were the remarks of a professional analyst in New Delhi, who argued that Kashmir had to be solved within the South Asian region, via both India-Pakistan and India-Kashmir discussions. International involvement, he remarked, always brought along its own agenda, its own ulterior motives. The UN resolutions of 1948 and 1949, he said, were irrelevant. Pakistan had no choice but to make an adjustment to the region's India-favoring power asymmetry.

Pressed to expand upon his view of an appropriate international role in Kashmir, another respondent, an individual with lengthy official exposure to Kashmir and with a reputation for hardline opinions on it, offered the following (roughly paraphrased) interestingly qualified observations:

- (1) In so far as Kashmir is concerned, no one in India would trust **any** of the great powers to play a positive role.
- (2) Small power engagement in Kashmir, however, would be acceptable, provided attention were paid to Indian sensitivities. Norway, for example, might be an appropriate choice for international involvement; Malaysia, on the other hand, since it is primarily Muslim, would not be.

- (3) The United Nations could play absolutely no useful role in regard to Kashmir. If it were present, then there would be no way to escape the millstone of the 1948-1949 UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.
- (4) Talks on Kashmir, at least in the initial phases, must be strictly bilateral, one-on-one, between India and Pakistan. Power asymmetry between India and Pakistan is not the problem; rigid attitudes are the problem.
- (5) However, some kind of international “facilitators” could be engaged to work out the **details** of a settlement at a secondary phase in the discussions. This phase would come only **after** decisions had been taken about how to tackle the basic issues. **India and Pakistan had to work out the agenda in broad terms first.**
- (6) There would be no objection to holding the talks on Kashmir in another country—**but they couldn't begin there.** Any such provision had to come as a natural outgrowth of the process of negotiation.

I.18. Role of the United States.

A like pattern of responses was elicited when the Team asked specifically about a potential role in regard to Kashmir for the United States. Kashmiri Muslim political leaders expectedly called for a more direct and vigorous American involvement. They expressed appreciation for the formal US position on Kashmir—that is, for its support of the propositions that Kashmir was and remains disputed territory, that the political aspirations of the people of Kashmir must be taken into account in any settlement, and that in reaching toward a settlement all three parties should be involved. They applauded US support for the protection of human rights in Kashmir. They expressed regret that the US Government, in declaring them out of date, had chosen to discredit the UN resolutions on Kashmir of 1948 and 1949. And, while approving the US Government's general position that the state of Jammu and Kashmir's political management was best looked after by Kashmiris, they questioned its support for the 1996 Assembly elections. In Farooq Abdullah, said one, “we smell a rat.”

Equally expected were the strong reservations about a US role expressed by pro-government personalities among the Team's respondents. There is a lack of trust in the United States among both Indians and Pakistanis, said an Establishment intellectual in New Delhi. The United States is not seen by either side as neutral. In fact, he pointed out, US options in regard to Kashmir have narrowed significantly. His views on this topic differed little from those of a more liberal-minded intellectual in New Delhi, who reminded the Team that the US focus on Kashmir was not appreciated in India. Indians wondered, he said, why the United States continued to back the Pakistani position on Kashmir. This was not a positive position for the United States to take.

Asked what the US government could usefully do, then, in regard to Kashmir, his reply was that it should simply “disengage.” The United States, he suggested, should, like China, just keep quiet about Kashmir.

FINDINGS

II. PAKISTAN

II.1. Basic Pakistani position on Kashmir.

Historically, the Government of Pakistan has taken an official position on the state of Jammu and Kashmir wholly contrary to that of India. It has modified this position occasionally as its conflict with India evolved; but there has been little **public** deviation from the following four core postulates:

- (1) The state of Jammu and Kashmir is now and has been since the end of British rule over undivided India disputed territory. The state's accession to India in October 1947 was provisional. This understanding is formally acknowledged in the UN Security Council resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949, to which both Pakistan and India agreed and which remain fully in force today, and it cannot be unilaterally discarded by either party.
- (2) Talks between India and Pakistan over the future status of the state should be focused upon securing the right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people via conduct of a free, fair, and internationally supervised plebiscite, as agreed in the aforementioned UN Security Council resolutions.
- (3) The plebiscite should offer the people of Kashmir the choice of permanent accession of the entire state to either Pakistan or India.
- (4) Talks between India and Pakistan in regard to the future status of the state should be held in conformity both with the Simla Agreement of July 1972 and the aforementioned UN Security Council resolutions. An international mediatory role in these talks should not be ruled out.

Defense of the government's formal position by members of the Pakistani ruling classes has never been uniformly vigorous; but, at least until recently, deviation from it was typically expressed in hushed tones and in private. It was still being described as virtually sacrosanct by a few of the Kashmir Study Group (KSG) Team's Pakistani interlocutors, especially by those of the older, Partition-era generation. Striking, however, was the nearly universal tendency of the Team's respondents, including some at the highest levels of government, to allow for serious revision—in some instances the wholesale discard—of the official line regarding Kashmir.

One of the milder, but most widely-shared, revisionist views, one that had the support of respondents representative of virtually every point on the ideological compass, pertained to the

plebiscite. A unitary plebiscite embracing all regions of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as had been envisioned in the original UN Security Council resolutions, now struck practically everyone as impractical. The Team sensed that higher government officials, in particular, considered it essentially a dead issue. In its place many of the Team's respondents, including some influential persons known for their extremely conservative opinions on the Kashmir question, expressed approval for regional or even district-wise plebiscites that would allow Kashmiri Muslim sentiment in the Valley to be separately registered and, potentially, justify partition of the state along ethno-religious lines. This would amount to resurrecting something akin to the "regional plebiscites" proposal, never formally accepted by Pakistan, made by UN mediator Sir Owen Dixon in 1950. This proposition is probably less revisionist than appears on the surface, however, since the Government of Pakistan, according to comments made to the Team by an official of the Foreign Office, had itself already moved quietly in that direction. On 18 January 1994, he said, Islamabad had presented the Government of India with an unofficial "non-paper"—one of two such documents conveyed to Indian leaders at the time detailing proposed Pakistani terms for resuming talks with India—dealing with modalities for holding a plebiscite. One of its paragraphs, he said, expressed Pakistan's willingness to consider new and innovative methods to ascertain the will of the people. This meant, he observed, that the method of measuring the popular will was negotiable.

Unquestionably radical, however, was the suggestion, made by a number of very senior—both retired and active—members of Pakistan's bureaucratic and political "establishment" (albeit by a minority of the Team's respondents), that the whole idea of plebiscite might well be jettisoned and, instead, that the Line of Control (LOC) be endorsed as the permanent international boundary between Pakistan and India. This proposal has the status of conventional wisdom on the Indian side, of course; but in the contemporary Pakistani political milieu, it bordered on heresy.

Admittedly, the Team's respondents displayed varying degrees of firmness and enthusiasm for the LOC option. A prominent leader of an opposition political party put it most bluntly: If Punjab and Bengal could be divided at Partition, he asked, risking a potentially contentious analogy, why couldn't Kashmir be divided at the LOC? Why should a small fraction of the region's population, he added, hold a billion hostage? A key member of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League party offered the tantalizing speculation that perhaps "down the road"—and provided India met other conditions—he could even see the LOC as a permanent border between India and Pakistan. A retired and highly respected army general, on the other hand, took a more equivocal position: Pakistan could not get the whole of Kashmir, he conceded, but the Valley had to be granted self-determination. "Maybe," he said, "Pakistan can have the Valley. But one must be realistic." Getting the Valley would be "very difficult." At the same time, the Valley's retention by India on India's present terms, he observed, was out of the question. Some kind of autonomy for Kashmir would be possible, however. The Valley could aspire to **maximum** autonomy in some sort of loose federation. Kashmir as a whole should have a "special status."

A very senior serving diplomat among the Team's Pakistani interlocutors indicated that even Pakistan's traditional interpretation of the plebiscite—that it should offer the people of Kashmir the two-sided choice of permanent accession of the state to either Pakistan or India—was up for reconsideration. The third option of independence, he averred, was being given serious attention in Pakistan **at the highest level**. More characteristic of the Team's Pakistani respondents in reference to this particular point, however, was a comment by a senior member of the legal profession that Pakistanis generally viewed the independence option for Jammu and Kashmir as the worst possible outcome since it would open the state to continued external interference, thus leaving the matter of Kashmir essentially unsettled. Others argued that the Kashmiris, by putting forward the option of independence, inevitably created doubts in the minds of Pakistanis, whose support they desperately required. Some commented that the US government's position on this option was deceptive, since its only motive was to relieve Washington of having to pressure India to implement the Security Council resolutions of 1948 and 1949.

Ethnic Kashmiris among the Team's respondents as well as representatives of Pakistan's conservative religious parties sharply dissented from the turn toward compromise of Pakistan's traditional position on Kashmir. They complained bitterly about the paucity of aid that came to the Kashmiri cause from Pakistan, and some noted especially their inability to acquire anti-aircraft weapons and other heavy arms that would raise significantly the price India was paying for its counter-insurgency operations. Any deviation from Pakistan's traditional position meant, for them, the likely betrayal of the Kashmiri movement for self-determination.

All things considered, however, the Team's Pakistani interlocutors as a group evinced surprising willingness to rethink Pakistan's longstanding official position on Jammu and Kashmir and, where necessary, to shed or at least recraft those aspects of it that seemed most unproductive. The words of a very senior politician of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, albeit less guarded than most, perhaps captured the essence of this spirit best. While pointing out his very strong reservations about the desirability of Kashmiris remaining within the Indian Union, he stated emphatically that he was "prepared to reconsider the whole situation [in Kashmir].... There can be a via media,... a new way of looking at a problem [that could] accommodate both India and Pakistan." Kashmir needed to be rethought. "We are prepared," he said, "to do **anything** to facilitate movement towards settlement.... Let us forget 1947, 1948. Let us be reasonable."

II.2. Pakistan's normalization initiative.

With few exceptions, the KSG Team's Pakistani respondents welcomed the initiatives toward normalization of India-Pakistan relations taken by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the months following his sweeping reelection victory in February 1997. They acknowledged that there was very widespread popular support among Pakistanis for reducing tensions in the region; and to accomplish that there was simply no alternative to serious and substantive dialogue with Indians at the highest level of government. Nawaz Sharif's moderation and pragmatism—his "suitability"

for dialogue, in other words—was often cited; so, too, was his earnestness and determination to succeed at it. Nawaz Sharif was, without any doubt, very keen to move ahead on Kashmir and normalization, observed a senior journalist. He might even be willing to delink settlement of the Siachen Glacier dispute from Kashmir. The Prime Minister, he said, takes a pragmatic “two baskets” approach to policy on India—one for the possible, one for the not possible. He isn’t rigid.

A retired member of the foreign affairs bureaucracy, one with close and regular contact with senior-most officials in the government, conceded that normalization did not occupy first place on the Prime Minister’s policy agenda. For Nawaz Sharif, he said, reviving the economy was first and political accountability second, with normalization falling somewhere behind them along with other major policy objectives. Nevertheless, he assured the Team that Nawaz Sharif’s private view of India-Pakistan relations was positive and that he was strongly determined to achieve a breakthrough with India. The Prime Minister had already had seven meetings with senior Indian leaders in his first term of office, pointed out a government spokesman, and there had been unofficial back channel contacts with the Indians also. Kashmir had been discussed in these meetings. Dialogue with India over Kashmir, he emphasized, was serious Pakistani policy.

Driving this policy, in the judgment of many of the Team’s Pakistani informants, was an array of “compulsions”—the economy chief-most among them—that had converged in recent years to create an unprecedented crisis for Pakistan’s leadership. Pakistan’s alarming economic problems had obviously placed the country under great strain. But, as a retired and liberal-minded army general observed, this was not the end of Pakistan’s difficulties as it had also to contend with the facts that the Prime Minister’s massive electoral mandate could no more than paper over the frailty and latent instability of Pakistan’s democratic institutions, that the country’s deeply-rooted social malaise was now surfacing with disturbing frequency in widespread sectarian violence, and that Pakistan had no meaningful foreign support anywhere. Kashmir, he said, was the “main source of conflict [between Pakistan and India, and was] seriously impacting every aspect of Pakistani lives.” Pakistan, he said, was “making a tremendous sacrifice” owing to Kashmir, and it was not only a question of territory. His comments mirrored the sentiments of many interviewed by the Team that India had outplayed Pakistan diplomatically and that Pakistan was now largely isolated on the question of Kashmir, lacked the military capability of obtaining Kashmir by force, and had very few, if any, levers left with which to exert strong pressure on India to alter the status quo in favor of either the Kashmiri separatists or of Pakistan itself.

Heard by the Team in Pakistan with comparable frequency, however, was the sentiment that normalization of relations with India, no matter what compulsions Pakistan faced, would not translate into Pakistan’s abandonment of its claim to Kashmir. Pakistan is “not prepared to yield an inch....,” declared a retired member of Pakistan’s foreign affairs bureaucracy, a sentiment echoed by many of the Team’s respondents. “Pakistan, for the sake of peace, doesn’t have to yield an inch on its Kashmir position,” he insisted, and will not acquiesce to India’s occupation of Kashmir; but it will not go to war. “We are not so down and out that we have to surrender.... We are not under that kind of compulsion.”

Breaking with most of the Team's other respondents in Pakistan, a maverick intellectual well wired to the foreign affairs bureaucracy went even further, declaring flatly that there had been, in fact, no substantive "on-the-ground" change at all in Pakistan's policy towards India. Pakistan, he argued, was under no compulsion to open up with India. The talk of a special Gujral-Sharif equation was nonsense, a myth. Even the so-called economic compulsion, he insisted, was largely mythical, and due in no small measure to the oversized military budget. "The military," he said, "is the most corrupt institution in the country." Normalization of relations with India was desired by Pakistanis, he conceded. "We do want peaceful borders." But the present so-called peace initiatives of the government were, in his judgment, "99% posturing." No thought or careful planning had been given to their ramifications. The government's actions, he said, amounted to little more than an effort to score points over India for foreign consumption.

Views diverging sharply from the positions represented above were rare. As in India, they tended to come from more secular-minded and left-leaning individuals. These respondents were sharply critical of the important role of the military and the intelligence services in shaping Pakistani policy or, in regard to the intelligence services, of their presumed actions, independent—or even in defiance—of official policy. They also saw India as less of a threat than did most other respondents. The Team's sense was that such radical opinions were held by an even smaller minority in Pakistan than in India and were espoused by individuals who collectively carried little political weight.

II.3. Trade with India.

When the subject of expanding trade with India came up in the KSG Team's discussions in Pakistan about normalization, the idea in general was almost universally applauded. However, when it came to the terms that would govern expansion, the seeming consensus rapidly evaporated. Liberal intellectuals among the respondents were among the most enthusiastic backers of trade with India. Echoing sentiments often heard on the other side of the border, one of them urged, for instance, that Kashmir should be put on the back burner for some years. In that period, trade with India should be encouraged, along with travel and cross-border cultural exchanges. As contacts developed between the two rivals, mutual fears would decline. And then Kashmir could be dealt with. Ideological conservatives, for their part, were just as insistent that Kashmir's priority among Pakistan's objectives not be sacrificed on the anvil of trade. Said one influential respondent: There can be no trade or normalization with India until Kashmir is solved; it is "impossible."

The most common view, however, was that trade should indeed be promoted with India, but slowly, and that it should be looked upon neither as a cure for India-Pakistan hostility nor as a substitute for a Kashmir policy. It was essential, according to most who commented on this issue, that steps be taken at the same time as trade was opened to protect vulnerable sectors of Pakistani commerce and industry. The Pakistani business community, it was said, was split down

the middle on this issue between traders and industrialists, with smaller industrialists in particular understandably concerned that Pakistan's unrestricted opening up to more heavily subsidized, more lightly taxed, and more cheaply produced Indian products would spell grief for themselves. But opposition to trade expansion with India was actually more complicated than that. As a businessman explained it, Pakistan's garment manufacturers, for instance, while enthusiastic about lifting restrictions on the import from India of cotton fabric and yarn, were far from eager to encourage lifting the ban on the import of Indian finished cotton garments. By the same token, whereas Pakistan's textile manufacturers were eager to gain access to India's cheaper raw cotton, their lobbying on this point naturally got a cold reception from Pakistan's own cotton producers, who happened to be powerful in parliament. The fact was that the Pakistani business community, having suffered for 50 years through 22 different governments, each with its own economic policies, was weak and not generally competitive economically. As a result, the Team was told, some Pakistani businessmen were inevitably tempted to exploit the Kashmir issue in order to guard their industry's flanks. Having "grown up in a hothouse of government patronage and corruption," commented a senior journalist, businessmen are inevitably apprehensive about major change in government policy, but nevertheless "realize the benefits of normalizing relations with India."

In sum, while sentiment was strong that Pakistan's economic relationship with India ought to improve, so too was the feeling that the improvement should be worked out step-by-step and with the long-term health of the Pakistani business community uppermost in mind. Trade, it was felt, was no panacea for Kashmir and would scarcely touch the deeper antagonism between India and Pakistan rooted in Partition. While expanded trade with India was seen as a good idea, it should not be expected to drive the engine of normalization.

II.4. Siachen Glacier issue.

A spokesman for the Government of Pakistan assured the Team that Pakistan was keen to settle the Siachen dispute with India and emphasized that it would be wrong for Pakistan to use it as an opportunity to "bleed" Indian armed forces. Nevertheless, respondents commenting on the Siachen issue clearly perceived it to be one of the few Kashmir-related issues in which Pakistan held the upper hand. Typical were the remarks of a retired general turned political analyst. "Indians," he said, "are under terrific logistical pressure [at Siachen] to maintain their forces." India's costs are "much, much higher" than Pakistan's. The Indian press, he said, had reported that Siachen was costing India Rs 6 crores (roughly U.S. \$1.7 million) **per day**.

Consistent with that judgment was the commonly expressed view that a reasonable agreement over Siachen that would satisfy the interests of both sides, would not be especially difficult to achieve. Fighting over Siachen, as a retired army general observed, was "pointless." Moreover, as he and other Pakistani respondents saw it, Pakistani negotiators had already displayed their willingness to strike a fair bargain over Siachen in 1989 and again in 1993, only to

see the agreements fall victim to a loss of political will in New Delhi. The Government of India, it seemed to them, sought agreement over Siachen only when under duress. At the moment, said one, Siachen “is a weakness in India’s position, so the Indians want to talk about it.”

Pointedly mentioned by several respondents, however, was that Pakistan’s consent to a renewed effort to negotiate Siachen would not be cheaply bought. Settlement of Siachen now, said the general-turned-analyst quoted above, would be a **major** concession by Pakistan requiring a **major** quid pro quo. India’s lifting of visa restrictions on Pakistani travelers, he commented, or its encouragement of cultural exchanges with Pakistan were, in comparison with Siachen, but minor issues.

In sum, what united most Pakistani respondents commenting on Siachen was the conviction that the Government of Pakistan would be well advised to move towards negotiations with India **provided** such move was a carefully conceived element in a larger strategic package—a package that, in one way or another, linked Siachen to Indian concessions on the larger root or core problem of Kashmir. Pakistan was “willing to **include** Siachen among four or five Kashmir-related problems,” observed a retired army general, “but **not** to delink it.” The piecemeal approach favored by India, in other words, which envisioned treating Siachen essentially on its own as a confidence-building measure (CBM), received, for the most part, little support in Pakistan, where the favored approach was more holistic. As a senior journalist expressed it, Pakistanis were averse to delinking Kashmir from the normalization process, for that would consign Kashmir to a political limbo, which was just what the Indians wanted.

II.5. Other confidence-building measures.

In fact, although some Pakistani respondents listed renewed negotiations over Siachen as a potentially fruitful confidence-building measure, by far the most commonly identified—and insisted upon—such measures involved concessions by India relating directly to the situation in the Indian-controlled parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Left-inclined and peace-oriented individuals, relatively few in number among the Team’s respondents, included corresponding concessions required of Pakistan—suspension both of the shipment of arms and of the despatch of infiltrators across the border into Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir, for instance—among their suggestions for CBMs. And, though he was alone in making the suggestion, a very senior government official surprisingly suggested that India’s ending of its presumed terrorist activities in Pakistan was the most important CBM that India could possibly implement. But a composite list of the more-or-less India- and Kashmir-focused CBMs most often proposed would include the following:

- (1) India’s acknowledgment that Kashmir is disputed territory.
- (2) Reduction in size of Indian security forces in Kashmir.

- (3) Release of detained Kashmiri militants.
- (4) Termination of Indian security forces' "cordon and search" operations in Kashmir.
- (5) Enforcement of stricter curbs on human rights abuses.
- (6) Greater transparency in regard to Kashmir via expanded media coverage or increased monitoring by international human rights groups of India's compliance with human rights standards.
- (7) Opening of talks with leaders of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC).
- (8) Initiation of joint Indo-Pakistani patrolling of the LOC.

The first of these—acknowledgment by India that Kashmir is disputed territory—is the most generic and also one of the most emphatically endorsed CBMs. Not much could be achieved without it, said many of the Team's Pakistani interlocutors, and nothing else would more clearly communicate India's readiness for serious negotiations. What stands out about the other recommended measures, however, was the modesty (or realism) of the expectations that appeared to underlie most of them. In the first place, many of the respondents described them as **face-saving** gestures—in other words, as measures that would allow Pakistan to ease itself down from the often hardline public positions taken on Kashmir in past years. Secondly, in urging India to implement the above CBMs, most respondents, including those occupying sensitive government posts, chose remarkably moderate language. The Indians, said a senior government official, should "at least symbolically reduce forces" in Kashmir. Even a 10% improvement in the situation in Kashmir might do, said a prominent member of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League party. India, he said, must give some assurance about troop withdrawals, even partial withdrawals. Alternatively, he suggested, international human rights groups, like Amnesty International, could be authorized access to the Valley. What was essential, he emphasized, was "some degree of restraint on India" in Kashmir. After all, observed a senior member of the foreign affairs bureaucracy, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, in accepting the principle of **simultaneity** in negotiations with India (in other words, that other issues entailed in normalization might be dealt with alongside those relating to Kashmir) had himself already made a major concession that deserved a reciprocal gesture from the Indian side. The gesture, cautioned a leading journalist, had to be convincing. Indian withdrawal of forces from Kashmir, for instance, couldn't just be a token. That wouldn't work. To strengthen Nawaz Sharif's hands in Pakistan, he said, India has to **give**.

When asked whether bolder experiments in India-Pakistan reciprocity, such as opening the LOC to more liberal—if not free—transit by Kashmiris, should be added to the list of CBMs, the characteristic reply of the Pakistani respondents, like that of a leading Azad Kashmiri political

figure, was extremely skeptical. The free transit option, he commented, was “a very, very remote possibility.” In sum, while few respondents deviated from the expectation that India would have to make concessions on Kashmir, most made it clear that they did not expect India, in making them, to “give away the store.”

II.6. Role of Pakistan army.

Conceded by virtually all of the KSG Team’s Pakistani respondents commenting on the issue, irrespective of their background, was that the Pakistan army had and could be expected to retain a commanding role in forming and implementing Pakistan’s Kashmir policy. The following comments, quoted or closely paraphrased, were representative:

[Senior member of legal profession] The army has “areas of ‘special concern’ to it”—Afghanistan, for instance, which is handled by the armed forces and Inter Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI). Since Kashmir is also heavily a security matter, so in regard to it too “no decision can be taken without the army’s going along with it.... No political leader can take the risk of annoying them.”

[Senior journalist] “Any civilian government in Pakistan would have to seek approval [for its Kashmir policy] of the army.”

[Peace movement activist] Pakistan’s political leadership is hostage to the military; the ISI commands greater information than anyone else and thus dominates decision-making. One **must** understand the military’s role to understand Kashmir and its solution.

[Senior diplomat] In addition to nuclear weapons, Afghanistan, and relations with the United States, the army GHQ takes a leading role in framing policy on Kashmir. Initial drafts of policy positions are, of course, formulated and then discussed in the Foreign Office. But, on relations with India, the army continues to exercise considerable influence on policy. It is well equipped to do so. In terms of resources, budget, and capabilities, between the India Cell of the army’s ISI and the South Asia Division of the Foreign Office, there is **no** comparison. **Especially** in regard to the current initiative on Kashmir, the Prime Minister **must** have the blessings of the army. The army and the ISI clearly dominate policy on Kashmir.

Was the army likely going to obstruct the Prime Minister’s initiative towards normalization? The answers to this question varied considerably, even though, more often than not, the army was portrayed in an unfavorable light. Strongest criticism came from an activist in the country’s peace movement. With the ISI’s help, he said, foreign Islamist support was being extended to militant Kashmiris, forcing India to respond militarily. A few militants have had a vast impact in the Valley, he argued, increasing the repression. The permanent hold on the Government of Pakistan by the army, he insisted, was the most significant factor perpetuating the Kashmir conflict.

More moderate were the views of a retired senior diplomat, who conceded that the military certainly was resisting change. But if Nawaz Sharif maintained a good working relationship with the Chief of Army Staff, General Jehangir Karamat, then the situation was hopeful. The political opposition was in total disarray and presented no immediate obstacle. For the Prime Minister, he said, it was the army that he must pacify.

Perhaps the most insightful and nuanced comments were those of a senior journalist, with extensive military contacts, whose views are cited here at some length:

The current army chief [General Jehangir Karamat] differs from his predecessors. He thinks “we’ve gone too far in Kashmir; we need to pull back a bit....” However, he insists that Pakistan’s Kashmir policy must be a product of discussions that include the army and the ISI. There should be no movement to settle Siachen, for instance, until and unless the agreement is the product of a careful, systematic review of state policy.

The rank and file of the army favor retaining the status quo in Kashmir. Up to the rank of major, they are mainly unqualified hardliners. Colonels and above, on the other hand, betray a seeming divergence of views: Some are unabashed hawks, while others favor dialogue with India. But even seeming moderates will usually qualify their remarks heavily. Thus, in large part the army is “a bastion of conservatism.” The COAS himself is not inflexible on the issue of Kashmir. As far as Siachen is concerned, for instance, General Karamat would have no problem concurring with a settlement so long as it were part of a larger strategy. The army does recognize that Pakistan is on a “weak wicket”—that the economy is in shambles. This does influence its judgment.

The army doesn’t want to be attacked by the press as being too secular or too soft on Kashmir. General Karamat wants, above all, that the army remain strong. He wants to avoid an attack on the defense budget.

The best measure for India to take to win the army’s concurrence with normalization would be to pull some troops out of Kashmir.

Should one expect the Pakistan army/ISI, for its part, to suspend covert operations in Kashmir in order to encourage settlement? No, said the journalist quoted just above, the ISI won’t stop. Its leaders want the leverage this supplies. Only in case of a full settlement of Kashmir, he suggested, would the ISI relent. Essentially concurring with this observation, an intellectual with close ties to the foreign affairs bureaucracy said that the Pakistan army had already lowered the threshold of the military’s involvement. Nevertheless, it would keep the insurgency in Kashmir going. It had to, he insisted; it couldn’t just turn it off. The insurgency provided too good a resource for that. The army, he said, would maintain it, but at a lower level.

II.7. Role of Pakistani media, Parliament, and public opinion.

Many of the Team's Pakistani respondents expressed views on the role of the media in shaping popular and elite opinion in regard to normalization in general and Kashmir in particular. Few of these views were positive. The press, said a retired and very senior diplomat, has played a "terrible" role in regard to Kashmir, one consisting in large part of inflaming public opinion. An intellectual active in the peace movement stated that the government was not getting much support for its initiative from the press, which was still generally hawkish. The Urdu-medium press was the worst, he suggested, but there was in fact little support for normalization even in the English-medium press. "Most of the press," commented a senior journalist, "suspects Nawaz Sharif of kowtowing to India." Allowing that the print media do provide some leadership, if only in English and to a tiny elite, another prominent journalist with many years in editorial posts observed that in Urdu-medium journalism **no one** promoted liberal, democratic views. Orthodoxy, he said, was already so successful (profitable, in other words) that there was no interest in redesigning it. The Kashmir issue, a respondent from the journalist community stated flatly, was **never** openly discussed in Pakistan.

With respect to the Parliament's contribution to raising public consciousness about normalization and Kashmir, the ex-diplomat cited in the preceding paragraph stated that while there were a handful of parliamentarians sympathetic to the Prime Minister's normalization initiative, overall the normalization lobby was weak. Echoing him, a retired general commented that, with the exception of a few individuals, there was little awareness among Pakistan's political leadership of the gravity of Pakistan's current situation. What had to be more generally realized, this respondent suggested with unusual candor, was that, in many respects, Pakistan simply could not match India. Pakistanis did not understand, he observed, what their country had to do as a small nation. And those who **did** understand, he noted, were reluctant to speak out.

On the public's own view of Kashmir and normalization, there was some divergence of opinion. Some respondents felt that public opinion in regard to India and the Kashmir conflict was so deformed by years of propaganda and the suppression of facts that it now formed a huge obstacle to normalization. Capturing this sentiment was the comment of a peace activist that Pakistanis today were simply unable to analyze Kashmir objectively: Propaganda against India—that it wanted to reabsorb Pakistan—had fostered deep insecurity. Pertinent facts—as in regard to Pakistan's less-than-innocent role at the time of Kashmir's accession or the buildup to the 1965 war—had been systematically hidden, he said, from public view. Reinforcing this observation, a serving diplomat reflected that the younger generations in both India and Pakistan, far from having been emancipated from the deeply-entrenched hostility and distrust of their elders, had instead been weaned on vicious media and schoolbook propaganda that had produced mutually opposed and mainly negative stereotypes. Even educated young Pakistani professionals, he said, tended towards dogmatism on the subject of India.

At odds with that point of view was the opinion, expressed by numerous respondents, that the principal trend in Pakistani public opinion in connection with Kashmir, far from being blind hostility for India, was sharply declining interest in Kashmir. Truth is, observed a prominent journalist, that the Pakistani media aren't covering Kashmir very much because the people aren't much interested. Many Pakistanis, commented a respected member of the legal profession, were starting to feel that their **own** future was in jeopardy. The conventional emphasis on Kashmir's liberation was "not as resolute as it used to be." Pakistani interest in Kashmir has diminished, claimed a prominent journalist. At Kashmir-related events, one saw only small audiences, he said. Television coverage was modest. "There is almost no public support for the Kashmir cause," he asserted, "**anywhere** in Pakistan." What support for it existed was to be found only in small pockets in a few urban centers such as Lahore. Pakistani youth as a class, he said, were not interested. Kashmir, he claimed, had not been a key issue in either the 1990 or 1993 elections; nor had it figured much in the 1997 elections. Pakistanis, he declared, were amenable to change over Kashmir. Agreeing with that sentiment, a prominent opposition political leader observed: There is not as large a body of Pakistanis thinking emotively about Kashmir today as there was twenty years ago. There was awareness now of its cost to the economy, he said, and that there was need for bold India-Pakistan initiatives.

The existence of significant regional variations in public outlook on Kashmir was claimed by several respondents. Among Sindhis, stated a senior journalist, echoing others, Kashmir was probably not an issue. At the popular level, he suggested, it probably wasn't much of an issue either in Baluchistan or the North West Frontier Province. Even in the southern Punjab, he added, there was little interest in Kashmir. It was only in northeastern Punjab, especially urban Punjab (and most especially Lahore) where substantial consciousness about Kashmir existed. Lahore was the media center of Pakistan. Residing there were many ethnic Kashmiris. It was a religiously conservative city—and the powerful media organs in Lahore were in the hands of religious and political conservatives. That, he said, was what had kept the Kashmir issue alive.

An Azad Kashmir political figure offered the ironic observation that even in Azad Kashmir support for the **Indian** Kashmiri cause was far from unqualified. Many Azad Kashmiris, he claimed, favored keeping a fairly low profile in the current difficulties across the Line of Control. The rightwing Jama'at-i-Islami forces and some youths, he said, did put stress on Azad Kashmir's unity with the Valley. But generally, he insisted, the people of Azad Kashmir were not very enthusiastic about assisting Kashmiris in the Valley if that meant risking themselves.

In the Northern Areas, a Shi'a-majority and multiethnic territory that Pakistan officially considers **not** to be a part of Azad Kashmir (and, thus, conceivably lying outside the boundary of the "disputed" state of Jammu and Kashmir), the Team found few signs that its inhabitants identified to any significant degree with any portion of Kashmir proper or felt any deep concern over the Kashmir dispute. On the contrary, respondents from this vast and lightly-populated region focused their observations on the area's future relationship to Pakistan and the forms that

relationship might best take. Their primary political concern seemed to be not Kashmir, but the aspirations for power and position of leaders of the area's various sectarian groups.

Did public opinion really matter when it came to Kashmir? "Not at all," said a journalist, expressing the viewpoint of several respondents. "There is no civil society in Pakistan," he stated, "no organized action." The government was free of virtually all constraints from the nongovernmental sector. It consulted only the businessmen, because they could shut down the shops. But it didn't listen to journalists, students, or academics. The educated community, he observed, is "completely out of opinion-making processes." Commenting in the same vein, a serving diplomat said that so long as the Prime Minister had the army's backing, he could do virtually anything in regard to Kashmir. The army, he said, would have struck a bargain with the government protecting its stake in return for allowing some concessions on Kashmir. Public opinion, along with the rightist political parties, was containable by the army.

II.8. Prospects for normalization.

None of the Team's Pakistani respondents anticipated swift or steady sailing in the direction of normalizing relations with India. Similarly, none expected the Kashmir conflict to be removed from the agenda of India-Pakistan relations in the near future. Virtually without demurrals, respondents expressed varying degrees of pessimism in regard to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's present initiative. Several considered Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral as a "wolf in sheep's clothing"—a good public relations man, perhaps, and a man who gave the appearance of being conciliatory; but one, nevertheless, whose response to Nawaz Sharif in the end would be—as a very senior, now retired, diplomat put it—mainly diversionary, affecting atmospherics only, while in fact taking an unyielding stance on the core issue of Kashmir. When all was said and done, he said, India would not negotiate the future of Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of terms required by Pakistan. "No government of Pakistan," he said, "can compromise the Kashmiri right of self-determination." Gujral, said another respondent, a member of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) party, was too much a hostage to the "overall Indian psyche" on Kashmir to preside over its solution. Said another, a professional analyst: The Government of India wants only to buy time, time to crush the militants and to assure preservation of the status quo. For Gujral too, he said, no matter what he may say, "Kashmir is a non-issue."

A number of respondents assigned responsibility for the bleak prospects solely to India. Among them were a few who deemed a sort of cultural depravity to be the principal culprit. "India as a nation," said one right-wing journalist, "is so narrow-minded that, even if Pakistan offered [to compromise on Kashmir], they will never accept it.... They are **made** narrow-minded." "We do not trust the Indians," said a Kashmiri political activist; "there is **no** Indian leader who can be trusted."

More common, however, was the judgment that domestic political conditions in India were a large obstacle to reconciliation. As a senior member of the government put it, Prime Minister Gujral was one thing, the Indian “establishment” another. It was more rigid, more entrenched. Gujral, he estimated, had probably no more than a year to rule, probably less. The Congress, representing the Nehruvian tradition, would take about that long to repolish its electoral image. Whereas the non-Congress government welcomed change in India-Pakistan relations, a Congress government, still burdened with a Nehruvian concept of India’s potential world role, likely would not. Unfortunately, he said, the potential for compromise, symbolized by Gujral, was receding in India under the weight of Hindu nationalism. Somewhat more sympathetic was the view of a retired diplomat, who, while asserting that Gujral’s public comments were often very negative, recognized that he was, after all, “under tremendous political pressure.... He **has** to show he isn’t soft.”

Nearly as common, however, were comments assigning responsibility for the seeming impasse not only to India but also to Pakistan’s own domestic political circumstances. Pakistan, observed a prominent member of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League, also had limited space in which to maneuver. True, he conceded, the government had a strong mandate from the people; but Punjab province, he pointed out, was the most crucial province to the Prime Minister and he could face serious problems if he were seen by most Punjabis as surrendering to India. Pakistani public opinion, he insisted, was **strongly** supportive of the government’s **existing** Kashmir policy; and there were strong pro-Kashmiri lobbies in Pakistan—in the business community, the legal profession, the civil service, and military. Nawaz Sharif had the political advantage at the moment, he said, but it was limited. Kashmir, he pointed out, was not **so** urgent in voters’ minds; but it was an issue that could cost one dearly politically, and pave the way for the return of Benazir Bhutto. “The Kashmir issue,” suggested another prominent PML leader, “is far bigger than Nawaz Sharif.” **No** government, commented a senior political figure from Azad Kashmir, whether Indian or Pakistani, except one secure in power for five or six years could take a bold position on Kashmir. While meaningful dialogue on Kashmir was possible, he said, he was not optimistic that a settlement would emerge from the present bilateral discussions.

Running through many of the respondents’ comments was an ambivalence of outlook. On the one hand there was a strong current of pessimism, as in the view of an intellectual, one of the best informed and most thoughtful respondents, who said that he did “not foresee a Kashmir solution at all. We should plan for a future in which everything remains frozen.... India will not yield an inch.” Pakistan, he said, must live with the status quo. But this same individual, mirroring the sentiments of many others, made it clear in the rest of his comments that he did not rule out the possibility of productive change. Similarly, a serving and widely-experienced diplomat, while stating that he didn’t “see Indians agreeing to **any** discussion on Kashmir” in the present round of talks, conceded that the commitment to the establishment in early May 1997 of multiple joint commissions by the two countries’ foreign ministers at the summit

meeting in the Republic of Maldives of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was itself a major step forward.

The Team's soundings in Pakistan suggested that the opportunity for a major shift in Pakistan's Kashmir policy, while clearly at hand, was both heavily conditioned by expectations of a similar shift in India's policy and likely to be fairly short-lived. From the Pakistani political perspective, the "safest" policy toward Kashmir and India unquestionably remained maintenance of the status quo. Any significant policy alteration would be quickly detected and subjected to resistance. Strongest opposition would most likely come from the Lahore-based press, which is among the staunchest supporters of the Nawaz Sharif government—a source of support that the government cannot ignore. The government's mandate to rule was far more fragile than either the size of the vote for it or its command of seats in the National Assembly would imply. Perceptive individuals among the Team's respondents were confident that the Prime Minister's mandate would gradually weaken, and when it did, they said, it would grow increasingly imprudent for the government to expend scarce political capital on a project as risky as Kashmir. The unyielding opponents of any alteration of policy, though they are today a dwindling minority, and Nawaz Sharif's numerous political opponents would find common ground to exploit this perceived weakness.

II.9. Role of international community.

There was little dissent among the Team's Pakistani respondents from the view that the international community could and should play a far more prominent role in regard to Kashmir than was presently the case. The importance to Pakistan of the international community's continued support for the UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to Kashmir dating from 1948 and 1949 was frequently underlined. These resolutions, they said, legitimated Pakistan's contention that Kashmir was disputed territory. If you unhinged Kashmir from them, pointed out an intellectual active in conservative political circles, there was **nothing** left for Pakistan.

Another common theme was the need for the international community to increase its pressure on India, especially in regard to its adherence to international human rights standards. Noting that thus far international pressure had been insufficient to have a measurable impact on the behavior in Kashmir of India's security forces, an intellectual among the respondents, one who interacted routinely with the country's foreign affairs bureaucracy, observed that the international community should give a sympathetic hearing to the Kashmir problem. Kashmir, he said, deserved to be somewhere on the international agenda. It could be resurrected, he suggested, by the UN Security Council or, if not, then by some other UN agency. If not the United Nations, he said, then why not an agency of the European Community, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, or the US Congress?

An ethnic Kashmiri journalist among the Team's respondents complained bitterly that the threat that had arisen in the last year of deleting Kashmir from the UN Security Council agenda was part of a global effort to "freeze" the Kashmir issue. This threat, he argued, coincided with what he described as the "farical" election in Kashmir, which even the international media had declared to be essentially a military operation. The talks now underway between India and Pakistan were simply a "political frill." The truth was, he said, that most international powers were indifferent to Kashmir.

II.10. Role of the United States.

Most respondents argued that the United States, like the rest of the international community, both could and should play a far more prominent role in regard to Kashmir than it presently did. Indeed, many held that US pressure, more than anything, was needed to crack Indian resistance to compromise. Several respondents commented that, to produce results, US pressure should be held to a minimum. Some respondents observed that because the United States was widely distrusted in the region, it could, in fact, do little about Kashmir. An academic noted that anti-American feelings were expressed by large majorities of Pakistanis in opinion polls. A senior government official suggested that China was perhaps the one outside country that might be able to intercede effectively. In general, however, criticism of the Government of the United States by the Team's Pakistani interlocutors was muted and tended to center on America's failure to apply pressure on India, either to fulfill the terms of the Security Council resolutions pertaining to a plebiscite or to ameliorate human rights abuses in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

More than a few respondents complained that, to the extent that the Government of the United States was already intervening in regard to Kashmir, it tended to be on the side of India. On the issue of the Security Council resolutions, for instance, its position impacted very negatively on Pakistan. Anxiety was frequently voiced that US pressure, in so far as Kashmir was concerned, would ultimately be applied mainly to Pakistan to edge closer to the Indian position on Kashmir. One respondent said this already risked driving the Prime Minister to stray too far from the basic national consensus on Kashmir. Another complained that most American writers on Kashmir, including at least one member of the KSG Team, in their conspicuous distaste for a UN-sanctioned plebiscite, displayed a perhaps unconscious pro-Indian tilt.

One of the most thoughtful respondents commenting in this vein offered the provocative observation that the Kashmir Study Group itself, were it to act in tune with the established US government pattern, very likely "is going to try to whittle down the difference" between Pakistan's aspirations and what the US government considered the "ground realities" of the regional situation. "The United States," this respondent commented, "is not going to impose its *diktat* on India." On the contrary, Pakistan, being far more plastic and amenable to suggestion, was the more likely object of pressure. The US government, this respondent continued, in fact wanted Kashmiri resistance crushed in order to eliminate an "awkward" circumstance from its

regional relations. Realistically speaking, this respondent concluded, the US government had no choice but to apply pressure on Pakistan to relent from its traditional position on Kashmir.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Findings section of this report revealed how widely divergent are the perceptions of the several parties to the Kashmir dispute in respect to the origin and nature of that dispute as well as in respect to the means of resolving it. That section also revealed the depth of emotion with which the dispute is viewed. It follows, therefore, that the path to a just, viable, and enduring peace will be both long and arduous and that progress along this path will require creative compromises by all the concerned parties.

This Recommendations section of the report expresses the Team's best collective judgment in regard to such compromises. Its focus is on compromises that need to be made immediately or in the near future. It does not present the Team's own blueprint for the long-term future of Jammu and Kashmir. Instead, it urges measures to change the circumstances currently prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir, continuation of which will preclude intelligent planning for the area's future. The measures recommended emerge directly from the Team's findings; they are for the most part what thoughtful people the Team spoke with said was required to bring about conditions congenial to serious dialogue among the parties to the dispute. They are premised on the belief that such conditions include commitment by all parties not merely to the peaceful but to the just settlement of the Kashmir dispute, and that a settlement on terms falling short of that will simply not endure.

Following are the Team's specific recommendations.

III.1. Continuation of normalization initiative.

The Team commends the governments of India and Pakistan for embarking in the 50th anniversary year of the Kashmir dispute on an historic and promising initiative to normalize bilateral ties and strongly recommends that they press forward with their effort.

This recommendation is premised on the Team's recognition that the various peoples of Jammu and Kashmir state cannot independently determine their fate and that a "solution" to the Kashmir problem has to be found, to an important extent, in improved India-Pakistan relations. The task ahead is to so alter the relationship between these two states so that the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir can live their lives under more secure conditions while at the same time pressing their claims to dignity and self-determination.

The Team recognizes also the formidable barriers that both governments face as they take steps towards complete normalization, and it recognizes too the obligation laid upon the world community to honor the virtue of patience as the two governments strive to surmount these barriers. At the same time, however, the Team is persuaded that the extraordinary statesmanship, political courage, perseverance and resourcefulness that these two governments must now

summon in order to succeed in this mammoth task of reconciliation are matched in every respect by the degree to which social, economic, ecological, cultural, and political conditions will be enhanced for all who dwell in the region of South Asia once this goal is achieved.

III.2. Strengthening and institutionalization of dialogue.

The Team considers it imperative that the dialogue now underway between India and Pakistan be given as soon as possible a strengthened and protected institutional framework. This means, for the present, arrangement of frequent, scheduled, and publicity-free meetings of their official representatives in circumstances insulated from the likely stresses and strains of their relationship.

A major step in this direction has been taken, of course, in the decision by the governments of India and Pakistan in June 1997 to establish a “mechanism,” including working groups, to address outstanding issues of concern to both sides—including Jammu and Kashmir—in an integrated manner.

Over the longer term, however, the objective of overcoming the frailty of the South Asian region’s conflict-mediating and conflict-resolving institutions might best be achieved by creating a permanent regional framework along the lines of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Helsinki model), to be charged with developing rules, techniques, and organizational formats for peacekeeping in the South Asian region as well as for conduct of routine discussions over such political and security problems as are represented by the Kashmir dispute. This framework would considerably supplement and reinforce—and, at some point, desirably be expanded and formally linked to—the existing South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

III.3. Restoration of normal civil life.

The Team believes that progress towards the restoration of normal civil life in Jammu and Kashmir is a vital initial step towards an eventual fair and honorable settlement of the Kashmir dispute. *All* parties to the dispute need to commit themselves unreservedly to this objective.

Progress towards the restoration of normal civil life involves, first and foremost, a commitment to the substantial “demilitarization” of the civilian-inhabited areas of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, in other words, to the imposition of significant curbs on and, if possible, termination of the whole array of insurgent and counter-insurgent “military” activity. Demilitarization, as the Team envisions it, must be defined broadly enough to include the use of draconian measures by Indian security forces to combat insurgency, the infiltration of insurgent forces from across the border, activities by insurgent and counter-insurgent groups against unarmed civilian

populations, and other forms of armed internecine strife. The legitimate security needs of both India and Pakistan must, however, be taken into account. Therefore, demilitarization may well need to be phased in over time. What is essential, however, is that it embody the sincere determination of all parties to the dispute to substitute peaceful forms of political contestation in place of violent and coercive ones.

The Team does not believe that the Kashmir talks themselves can realistically be used to negotiate “compliance” with such a commitment. They could, however, arrange for the creation of mechanisms whereby each party to the talks could register with the others what steps it has taken in this regard. The Indians, for instance, could note that they have reduced their forces by a certain amount, or that they have improved the human rights situation by taking such-and-such steps. Such disclosures, there or elsewhere, would go far in persuading doubters in Pakistan (and Kashmir) that the discussions over Kashmir were more than the sterile and ultimately futile exchanges of the past. They should also encourage the Pakistanis to carry on with other aspects of the normalization talks since they could rightly claim to their public that at least some substantive movement was taking place on the “core” issue of Kashmir.

Proceeding in this way would undoubtedly involve some risk to all parties. In particular, by asking the Kashmiri separatists to set aside for some time their aspirations either for independence or for accession to Pakistan, these aspirations—and perhaps those who hold them—might become permanently sidelined. Admittedly, this is not a risk against which there can be any iron-clad guarantee. The Team considers these aspirations, no matter how understandable or justifiable they may be, to be largely unrealizable under present circumstances and, hence, not really in greater jeopardy from postponement than they already are from outright repression.

While it was not a requirement of the Team’s study mission either to craft or to propose particular institutional or territorial models for application to Kashmir, it is the Team’s judgment that **over the longer term** the complexities of the Kashmir conflict may require—and almost certainly would benefit from—innovative, even what may now seem radical, experiments in the region’s management of its ethnic and religious minorities. Among such experiments, autonomist schemes for devolving maximum political authority to state or sub-state regimes should certainly be closely examined. Nor would the Team rule out from consideration designs of “co-sovereignty,” confederalism, or other power-sharing arrangements as have sometimes been proposed for Kashmir. It should be understood, in any event, that the Team’s seeming short-term embrace of the political status quo and willingness to set aside temporarily the more far-reaching demands of the separatists is an embrace, in fact, of the essential requirements for the restoration of normal civil life and citizen security. Without this, no matter how earnest the advocates of separatist solutions may be, the present intolerable situation in Kashmir will never be transcended.

III.4. Inclusion of peoples' representatives in talks.

At an appropriate time early in the unfolding of normalization talks between India and Pakistan, the Team believes that the political representatives of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir should be formally and meaningfully included in the negotiations.

The Team is convinced that the process of normalization will not and **should not** proceed very far without some agreement having been reached among all principal parties to the Kashmir dispute—the Government of India, the Government of Pakistan, and the political representatives of the peoples of both the Indian- and the Pakistani-controlled areas of Jammu and Kashmir—in regard to the restoration of normal civil life in the insurgency-troubled state. All of these parties bear some responsibility for the abnormal conditions currently prevailing in the region. All must cooperate to improve them.

Omission of the representatives of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir from such negotiations risks the probable disassociation of at least some of them from any agreements that might eventually be reached and, thus, would place in jeopardy the popular legitimacy and long-term durability of these agreements. Moreover, decent respect for the principle of self-determination of peoples clearly demands that the principle not be casually dismissed or so distorted by exercise of some political sleight of hand as to permit relegation of the Kashmir dispute once again—its myriad burning issues essentially untouched—to the regional back burner.

III.5. Broadening of representation in talks.

The Team urges that representation of Kashmiris in normalization talks between India and Pakistan should be broadly defined to include not only representatives of the two governments already established in the area—that in Srinagar as well as that in Muzaffarabad—but also representatives of all other major political, regional, ethnic, and religious groups.

Confronted by its own conviction that the “political representatives of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir” must be included in talks focused on the restoration of civil life in Kashmir, the Team has had to define what it means by that. Meant to be included among such groups, to avoid any misunderstanding, are representatives both of the Kashmiri Muslim-dominated All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference and those of the now largely refugee population of Kashmiri Hindu Pandits. Considering all of the other elements also deserving of representation, this will be an exceedingly diverse assemblage, no doubt, and it will require unusually resourceful institution crafting to manage it effectively. But no other measure, in the Team's judgment, would better ensure the confidence of the Kashmiri people in the ongoing normalization process **and their willingness to abide by its outcome.**

Determination of appropriate mechanisms both for the fair selection of such representatives and then for joining them to the bilateral India-Pakistan discussions are matters, the Team believes, for the parties themselves to work out.

III.6. Reduction in security forces.

A confidence-building measure to which the Team attaches particular importance would be a significant reduction in the number of security forces that India maintains on internal security duties in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the transfer of these duties to the state's own regular police forces.

It goes without saying that headway towards achieving the objectives set forth in the five recommendations above could not possibly be made without major concessions over Kashmir—or at least a clear indication of willingness to consider them—by the Government of India. The Team is of the view, therefore, that the Government of India should seriously examine and then act to implement so-called “confidence-building measures” in regard to Kashmir that have been identified by Pakistani and Kashmiri respondents earlier in this report. The most frequently cited of such measures was reduction in the number of security forces in the Valley. As a number of respondents made clear, a “token” force reduction would have little, if any, effect. A massive and unilateral reduction, on the other hand, cannot realistically be expected. What is needed, then, is a phased reduction scaled to symbolize the Government of India's sincerity of intent, with successive force reductions to be undertaken in response to diminutions in insurgent activity and infiltrations across the Line of Control (LOC). The Team believes that India's transfer of internal security duties to irregular forces, such as to the so-called pro-India militants, would in this context be entirely counterproductive.

III.7. Monitoring of cross-border activity.

The Team believes that Pakistan, for its part, should simultaneously undertake a convincing confidence-building measure of its own by agreeing to station on its side of the Line of Control an adequately staffed regional or other international body with a fresh mandate for observing and reporting all cross-border activity.

The process of normalization, and, in particular, the reaching of any bilateral agreements with India in regard to Kashmir, cannot be expected to progress far without the Government of Pakistan's adopting confidence-building measures of its own. That government must make explicit, in other words, the strength of its commitment to help in creating a regional environment congenial to serious and sustained dialogue with India. One possibility for doing so would be public and strongly expressed verbal disapproval of any and all acts of indiscriminate violence, whosoever may be responsible for them, committed in Indian-controlled areas of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. But the most material and convincing gesture that the Government of

Pakistan can make is in relation to covert cross-border interference. Pending establishment of an appropriate bilateral (India-Pakistan) peacekeeping mechanism, as proposed in section III.8 below, the Team believes that the Government of Pakistan should invite the setting up for this purpose of an interim **international** body—under the auspices, perhaps, of the Commonwealth, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), or possibly even of SAARC. Objectionable cross-border activities, in the Team's view, must not only be subject to observation and reporting, but also should be both renounced and denounced by Pakistan if, in fact, they do occur.

In making this recommendation, the Team lays claim to no authoritative knowledge that covert cross-border activities are currently underway or are being advocated. Indeed, creation of such a body must be understood neither to imply nor to relieve the related responsibility of **any** party to this dispute. Neither should the existence of the proposed body suggest that hostile cross-border actions were necessarily confined to the sector of the India-Pakistan border constituted by the LOC. Its sole and entirely constructive purpose would be to facilitate the process of normalization and, specifically, to enable the parties to the Kashmir dispute to enter agreements pointing to the restoration of normal civil life in Jammu and Kashmir.

While the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the peacekeeping organization already in existence in Kashmir, is certainly technically qualified to carry out the monitoring function described here and might conceivably have its mandate converted to that purpose, the political difficulties involved in such a step, in the Team's judgment, might prove to be insuperable. India's unfavorable view of UNMOGIP's mission has been demonstrated; but some mechanism might be found to alter that view.

III.8. Strengthening of peacekeeping on the Line of Control.

A logical follow-on to the last recommendation, in the Team's judgment, would be for India and Pakistan to explore together various modalities for strengthening peacekeeping on the Line of Control. One such option would be to constitute a Joint Border Security Group to supplement or even eventually replace the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) as principal peacekeeper on the Line of Control.

Already given some consideration in the context of the India-Pakistan negotiations over the Siachen Glacier, a joint peacekeeping arrangement on the LOC would formalize security cooperation between India and Pakistan while at the same time providing a mechanism for reducing and perhaps eliminating the grounds for the frequent military clashes between them on the LOC. Introduction of a Joint Border Security Group would also give explicit, institutional acknowledgement to the incontestable fact that the situation in the Indian-controlled sector of Jammu and Kashmir is in some part **interstate** in origin and therefore requires **interstate** cooperation for its amelioration.

Regrettably, UNMOGIP itself has been weakened over the years and is now unable to serve the purposes noted above. Upgrading of its capabilities, in light of political attitudes in the region, presently seems improbable. A formalized peacekeeping apparatus of some kind is obviously required in the region, however, and UNMOGIP should not be discarded until a durable agreement is reached on a viable successor.

Assuming a Joint Border Security Group is established and demonstrates its efficacy, consideration should be given to gradually expanded demilitarization of sections of the Line of Control to a width of up to ten kilometers on either side of the line. Such demilitarized sections—which would be subject to the same type of inspection as the sections that are not demilitarized—would go far toward eliminating the all-too-frequent trans-border exchanges of fire that presently occur along the Line of Control.

III.9. Monitoring of compliance with human rights covenants.

It is equally crucial, the Team believes, that the Government of India take public steps to formalize and strengthen monitoring of India's compliance in Kashmir with applicable United Nations human rights covenants.

There are several ways by which the Government of India can protect human rights in Kashmir. One is aggressive and unfettered involvement of the government's own monitoring agencies—the Indian Human Rights Commission and the newly-formed Human Rights Commission of Jammu and Kashmir state. Much more likely to generate widespread confidence in the fairness and fullness of monitoring procedures, however, would be official encouragement for increased monitoring in Kashmir by India's own independent human rights organizations, including, for instance, the highly respected People's Union for Civil Liberties and the South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre. The Team is of the view, however, that free and unfettered access to Kashmir by **international** humanitarian agencies and human rights monitors would even better assure India's credibility. Ideally, to strengthen the practice of local human rights monitoring over the long term, such agencies should be formed from within the region, perhaps under the auspices of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and should include members from all the states in the region. Also desirable, however, would be India's prompt removal of all barriers to monitoring by such established international organizations as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International, and Asia Watch.

III.10. Initiation of domestic-level talks with Kashmiri leaders.

The Team believes that India should initiate formal and unconditional domestic-level talks with a broadened slate of Kashmiri leaders, including the leadership of the All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference. India's willingness to take this action is essential for

progress to be made towards the restoration of normal civil life in Kashmir. In addition, this action would be an important confidence-building measure.

These talks, which would be separate from and preparatory to trilateral discussions within the normalization framework (as recommended in Section III.4, above), can be variously structured. They must certainly not exclude representatives of the present National Conference-led state government. They should have as their initial objective winning the support of the state's political leaders, whether in or out of power, to the project for restoring normal civil life to Kashmir.

III.11. Commitment to eschew violence.

A parallel confidence-building measure that the Team considers equally important to the successful restoration of normal civil life in Kashmir would be a clear commitment given by all of the armed militant and counter-militant Kashmiri groups of their willingness to eschew violence and to participate constructively in the process of political dialogue.

An unambiguous declaration by all these groups of their willingness to suspend all military activity and observe a complete ceasefire pending the outcome of talks with India is one obvious and very likely essential such commitment.

III.12. Role of the international community.

The international community, the Team believes, can play a helpful role by emphasizing to all those concerned the importance of implementing measures to restore normal civil life and by pointing out to them the high costs of failing to do so.

Major and direct involvement by agencies within the international community at the present preliminary stage of negotiations over normalization between India and Pakistan, unless sought by **both** India and Pakistan, would more than likely be counterproductive. Assuming these negotiations proceed along their present positive trajectory, however, a substantial and relatively near-term supporting role for the international community, or at least for particular state-level or regional agencies within it (as proposed in section III.7), can be envisioned. Should it happen that these negotiations falter or break down entirely—not at all a remote possibility in view of the history of India-Pakistan relations—then reexamination and reconfiguring of the role of concerned actors within the international community would certainly be required.

For the moment the Team believes that the primary focus of the international community—including here interested governments as well as nongovernmental and intergovernmental entities—should be upon communicating forcefully and frequently to the governments of India and Pakistan the urgency of their undertaking and the willingness of the international community to assist in facilitating its success.

CONCLUSION

The Kashmir dispute has now bedeviled relations between India and Pakistan for half a century and is, the Team is convinced, the principal obstacle to normalization of relations between those two states and to broader cooperation in South Asia. Two costly wars have been fought between India and Pakistan for control of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir and a third war between them, relating primarily to the separation of what is now Bangladesh from Pakistan, soon spread to Kashmir as well. Within the Indian-held portion of Kashmir, a grim civil struggle has been raging for the better part of a decade. And the possibility of its escalation into a fourth international war cannot be discounted.

There can be little doubt that, virtually since the moment of their independence, the high costs of military preparedness borne by India and Pakistan, to no small extent because of the Kashmir dispute, have acted to the detriment of most of the people of the subcontinent, roughly two-fifths of whom still live below the poverty line. Thus, one can see that 99% of the combined populations of India and Pakistan (see frontispiece) are, in effect, held hostage to the struggle to extend or preserve Indian or Pakistani control over the remaining 1% who happen to inhabit the area constituted by Jammu and Kashmir. It is not merely the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir who suffer from the struggle, but also, in varying degrees, the entire South Asian region. At the moment of independence, South Asia led the countries of Southeast Asia in respect to most indices of development. Today, those countries of Southeast Asia that have been spared the scourge of war lead India and Pakistan by substantial margins. These observations are not merely the carping of critical outside observers, but were conveyed to the Team repeatedly by its Indian and Pakistani informants as well.

Yet, despite the widespread recognition of the dangers and costs engendered by continued conflict over Kashmir, the maddening complexities of that dispute have prevented its resolution to date. Nevertheless, a good, though still modest and tentative, beginning has been made by the governments of India and Pakistan to normalize relations between the two states. The Study Team sent to South Asia by the Kashmir Study Group warmly applauds that initiative and urges its continuation and expansion. It has put forward in this report a number of recommendations that, in its view, will further this process. These recommendations, intentionally modest in scope, are aimed primarily at the restoration in Kashmir of a normally working civil society, marked by conditions of peace and respect for fundamental human rights. These are the essential prerequisites for carrying on a sustained dialogue in which not only the two national governments, but also the voices of all significant segments of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir can be heard. The Team is convinced that, with mutual forbearance, a spirit of accommodation, and a willingness to compromise, the parties to the dispute can work out for themselves a peace settlement that is at once honorable and just.

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

KASHMIR STUDY GROUP

I. TEAM VISIT TO INDIA, March 24 - April 26, 1997

Note: In the few cases where individuals were met with twice **and** in separate cities, their names are listed more than once. Roundtable or seminar-style meetings are so designated and indented.

New Delhi

MADHUKAR GUPTA, Joint Secretary, Department of Jammu and Kashmir Affairs,
Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

JASWANT SINGH, Deputy Leader (Lok Sabha), Bharatiya Janata Party, and past
Minister of Finance, Government of India

MUCHKUND DUBEY, President, Council for Social Development; member,
Initiative for National Renewal and Empowerment of the People/INREP;
Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and
past Foreign Secretary, Government of India

ABID HUSSAIN, Vice President, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, and past ambassador
to the United States

RAVI NAIR, Executive Director, South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre

Roundtable: PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry/PHDCCI

O. P. VAISH, Vice President, PHDCCI

SHABNAM PAREEK, Joint Secretary, PHDCCI

H. S. TANDON, Secretary General, PHDCCI

KANWAR PREM LAL

VINEET VIRMANI, Managing Director, S. P. Virmani & Son Ltd.

Roundtable: All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference/APHC

MIRWAIZ OMAR FAROOQ, Chairman, APHC

SYED AHMAD SHAH GEELANI, Head, Jamaat-i-Islami Party, and member,
Executive Council, APHC

YASIN MALIK, Head, Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front/JKLF, and member,
Executive Council, APHC

ABDUL GHANI BHATT, Professor; Head, Muslim Conference; and member,
Executive Council, APHC

G. N. SHAHEEN, Secretary General, Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar
Association, and Convenor, Kashmir Committee of Jurists

FIRDOUS ASIME, Bureau Chief, Kashmir Awareness Bureau

SHAKEEL BHAKHSHI

TAPAN BOSE, Director, Committee for Initiative on Kashmir

RITA MANCHANDA, correspondent, *Financial Times*, and member,
Committee for Initiative on Kashmir

ARVIND R. DEO, Editor-in-chief, Public Opinion Trends (POT) Analyses and
News Service

SUSHANT SAREEN, Editor, Public Opinion Trends (POT) Analyses and News Service

DR. K. WARIKOO, Secretary General, Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation,
and Associate Professor, School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University

FRANK WISNER, Ambassador to India, United States Embassy

ALAN EASTHAM, Counselor for Political Affairs, United States Embassy

MICHAEL F. PODRATSKY, Counselor for Political Affairs, United States Embassy

DR. AJIT BHATTACHARJEA, Director, Press Institute of India

DR. NAVNITA CHADHA BEHERA, Assistant Research Professor,
Centre for Policy Research

BHABANI SEN GUPTA, Director, Centre for Studies in Global Change

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN, President, The Islamic Centre

Roundtable: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies/IPCS

DR. GIRI DESHINGKAR, Director, IPCS

P. R. CHARI, Senior Associate, IPCS

MIRA SINHA BHATTACHARJEA, Senior Associate, IPCS

AIR COMMODORE JASJIT SINGH (retd), Director, Institute for Defense
Studies and Analyses

SHABNAM LONE, advocate, Supreme Court of India and High Court of
Jammu and Kashmir

MAHBOOBA SAYEED, leader of legislative party, Indian National Congress,
Jammu and Kashmir Assembly

GEORGE VERGHESE, Senior Associate, Centre for Policy Research

PRAKASH SINGH, past Director General, Border Security Force

LEA TERHUNE, freelance journalist

Roundtable: Kashmiri Samiti and Panun Kashmir

CHAMAN LAL GADOO, President, Kashmiri Samiti, and Co-Chairman,
Joint Human Rights Committee for Minorities in Kashmir

RAMESH HANDOO, Chairman, Panun Kashmir

DR. SHAKTI BHAN (KHANNA), M.D., member, Panun Kashmir Foundation

VIJAY KHAR, General Secretary, Kashmiri Samiti

M. L. RAINA, Professor

RAMESH RAZDAN

VIJAY KAUL

KAMAL HAK

DR. NOOR AHMAD BABA, Head, Department of Political Science,
University of Kashmir

DR. AMITABH MATTOO, Professor, School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University

O. P. SHAH, Chairman, Centre for Peace and Progress, and Editor, *Parlance*

Srinagar

ABDUL GHANI BHATT, Professor; Head, Muslim Conference; and member,
Executive Council, All Parties Hurriyet (Freedom) Conference/APHC

YASIN MALIK, Head, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front/JKLF, and member,
Executive Council, All Parties Hurriyet (Freedom) Conference/APHC

ABDUL GHANI LONE, Head, Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference, and
member, Executive Council, All Parties Hurriyet (Freedom) Conference/APHC

SHABIR SHAH, Head, Peoples League, and member, Executive Council,
All Parties Hurriyet (Freedom) Conference/APHC

Roundtable: Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry/KCCI

MUZAFAR KHAN, President, KCCI

G. M. DUG, past President, KCCI

LATIF A. BHAT, Secretary General, KCCI

GULAM RUSULL KHAN, past President, KCCI

DHIRENDRA KUMAR, commander, Border Security Force

NUR-UL HASAN, human rights activist

SURINDER SINGH OBEROI, correspondent, Agence France-Presse
International News Agency

NAZIR AHMAD RONGA, President, Kashmir Bar Association

AKHTAR MOHI-UD-DIN, cultural historian, playwright

DR. M. Y. QUADRI, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir

DR. DOST MUHAMMAD, Chairman, Department of Economics,
University of Kashmir

DR. SIKUNDER FAROOQ, Professor, Department of Botany, University of Kashmir

DR. RAIS AKHTAR, Professor, Department of Geography, University of Kashmir

GHULAM HAIDER WANI, historian, writer

ASIYAH ANDRABI, Head, Dukhtaran-i-Millat (Daughters of the Faith)

DR. MOHAMMAD SHAFI, medical doctor

ENGINEER ALTAF HUSSAIN BABA, President, All J & K Diploma
Engineers Association

GHULAM MOHIUDDIN LONE, past commander, Al-Barq

IMRAN RAHI, past deputy commander, Hizbul Mujahideen

MAJOR PURUSHOTTAM, Public Relations Officer/Defense, Indian Army

GEORGE JOSEPH, resident correspondent, TV International

AASHA KHOSA, resident correspondent, *The Indian Express*

FAROOQ RENZU, Deputy Director of Information, Kashmir Division,
Government of Jammu and Kashmir

DR. SHEIKH IQBAL, cultural historian

O. N. KAUL, Information Advisor, Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH, Chief Minister, Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Roundtable: Cabinet members (Farooq Abdullah Government)

P. L. HANDOO, Minister of Law

MOHAMMAD SHAFI, Minister of Finance

A. A. VAKIL, Minister of Revenue

A. R. RATTOO, Minister of Agriculture

ASHOK JAITLEY, Chief Secretary, Government of Jammu and Kashmir

ARUN JOSHI, Resident Editor, *The Hindustan Times*

VED BHASIN, Editor, *The Kashmir Times*

Calcutta

ASOK MITRA, past Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Government of India

JAYANTA KUMAR ROY, Centenary Professor of International Relations,
University of Calcutta

RAVINDRA KUMAR, Managing Editor, *The Statesman*

DR. ARUN KUMAR BANERJI, Professor, Department of International Relations,
Jadavpur University

DR. PURUSOTTAM BHATTACHARYA, Professor, Department of International
Relations, Jadavpur University

DR. GAUTAM BASU, Chairman, Department of International Relations,
Jadavpur University

RANNADIR SAMMADAR, Senior Fellow, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, and member, National Council, Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy

SHIKHA MUKERJEE, political correspondent, *The Times of India*

BARUN DE, Director, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies

Chennai (Madras)

MALINI PARTHASARATHY, political correspondent, *The Hindu*

N. RAM, Editor, *Frontline*

M. K. NARAYAN, past Director General, Intelligence Bureau, Government of India

B. RAMAN, past Additional Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, and past member, Research and Analysis Wing, Government of India

CHO RAMASWAMY, Editor, *Tughlaq*

M. S. S. PANDIAN, Director, Madras Institute of Development Studies

Mumbai (Bombay)

ROGER ALEXANDER, Assistant Editor, *The Metropolis on Saturday*

SAROSH BANA, Executive Editor, *Blitz*

TEESTA SEPALVAD, Co-editor, *Communalism Combat*

RAGHUNANDAN DHAR, correspondent, *The Hindustan Times*

KUMAR KELKAR, Executive Editor, *The Maharashtra Times*

DINA VAKIL, Resident Editor, *The Times of India*

Pune

ARUN WAKHLU, management consultant, and Director, Pragati Learning System

II. TEAM VISIT TO PAKISTAN, May 1-18, 1997

Islamabad/Rawalpindi

Roundtable: Islamabad Council of World Affairs/ICWA

AGHA SHAHI, past Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan,
and Chairman, ICWA

ABDUL SATTAR, past Foreign Secretary, Government of Pakistan

AYUB BAKHSH AWAN, past Director of Intelligence and past Secretary,
Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Pakistan

SARDAR MUHAMMED IBRAHIM KHAN, President, Azad Jammu and Kashmir

Roundtable: Institute of Regional Studies/IRS

LIEUTENANT GENERAL NISHAT AHMAD (retd), President, IRS

DR. SAMINA AHMAD, Research Associate, IRS

BRIGADIER BASHIR AHMAD (retd), Senior Fellow, IRS

DR. MAQSUD NURI, Research Associate, IRS

KHALID MAHMOOD, Research Associate, IRS, and past Editor, *The Nation*

GHANI JAFFAR, Research Associate, IRS

SARDAR ABDUL QAYYUM KHAN, leader of opposition, Azad Jammu and
Kashmir Assembly, and past President, Azad Jammu and Kashmir

SARDAR KHALID IBRAHIM KHAN, Member Legislative Assembly, Azad Jammu
and Kashmir, and President, Jammu Kashmir Peoples Party

SARDAR TAHIR AZIZ, member of Leadership Council, Jammu Kashmir Peoples Party

GHULAM SARWAR CHEEMA, Colonel (retd); Member National Assembly
(Pakistan Muslim League); Chairman, Defence Committee of the National
Assembly; and past Minister of Defence, Government of Pakistan

BARRISTER SULTAN MAHMUD, Prime Minister, Azad Jammu and Kashmir

GOHAR AYUB KHAN, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan

NIAZ A. NAIK, past Foreign Secretary, Government of Pakistan, and
Secretary General, Pakistan Security and Development Association

AHSAN IQBAL, Member National Assembly (Pakistan Muslim League)

MAJOR GENERAL JAMSHED MALIK (ret'd), Additional Secretary,
Ministry of Defence, Government of Pakistan

MAJOR GENERAL SALIM ULLAH, Director General, Inter Services Public Relations
Directorate, Pakistan Army

MUSHAHID HUSSAIN SAYED, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Information and
Culture, Government of Pakistan

Roundtable: Institute of Kashmir Affairs/IKA

SHEIKH TAJAMMAL ISLAM, Director, IKA

MIR ABDUL AZIZ, Editor, *Times of Kashmir* and *Insaf*, and President,
Jammu and Kashmir Human Rights Forum

SHUJAAT ABBAS, Chief, Hizb-ul Momineen (Party of Believers)

TARIQ JAN, member, Kashmir Watch Group, Institute of Policy Studies

MOHAMMAD ASHRAF SARAF, Professor

NAZIR AHMAD SHAWL, Professor, and Chief Editor, *Kashmir Mirror*

ABDUL WADOOD, Professor, and Editor (English), Editing Cell,
Allama Iqbal Open University

Roundtable: Committee for Peace and Cooperation/CPC

DR. INAYATULLAH KHAN, Chairman, CPC

DR. PERVAIZ HOODBHOY, Professor, Department of Physics,
Quaid-i-Azam University

DR. NAYYAR AZAM, Professor, Department of Physics, Quaid-i-Azam University, and past President, Pakistan-India Forum for Peace and Democracy

FALKIA SADIQ

KHADIM HUSSAIN

DR. IJAZ SHAFI GILANI, Chairman, Pakistan Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Pakistan)

LIEUTENANT GENERAL TALAT MASOOD (retd), past Director General, Pakistan Ordnance Factory, and business consultant

MOHAMMAD ZIAUDDIN, Bureau Chief, *Dawn*

KHALID SALEEM, Additional Secretary (India), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan

SARDAR ATTIQ AHMED KHAN, Chief Organizer, All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, and Member Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly

Roundtable: All Parties Hurriyet Conference/APHC (Rawalpindi section)

MIR TAHIR MASOOD, Vice President, Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (Jammu and Kashmir), and member, Executive Council, APHC (Rawalpindi section)

SYED YOUSUF NASEEM, advocate; General Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference; and member, Executive Council, APHC (Rawalpindi section)

GHULAM MOHAMMAD SAFI, General Secretary, APHC (Rawalpindi section)

ALTAH HUSSEIN QADRI, member, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front/JKLF, and member, Executive Council, APHC (Rawalpindi section)

MUSHTAQ AHMAD WANI, advocate; Vice President, Muslim Conference, Jammu and Kashmir; and member, Executive Council, APHC (Rawalpindi section)

Roundtable: Kashmir Watch Group, Institute of Policy Studies/IPS

DR. TAHIR AMIN, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, and Director, Kashmir Watch Group, IPS

KHALID RAHMAN, Executive Director, IPS

NASEEM ANWAR BEG, member, Kashmir Watch Group, IPS, and past official, UNESCO (Paris)

DR. SAMIULLAH M. KORESHI, member, Kashmir Watch Group, IPS; past High Commissioner to Nigeria; and past ambassador to Lebanon/Cyprus, Egypt, Yugoslavia/Albania, and Indonesia

RAJA EHSAN AZIZ, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University

DAN MOSSINA, First Secretary (Political), United States Embassy

STEPHEN CRAIG BRADLEY, Second Secretary (Political), United States Embassy

SYEDA ABIDA HUSSAIN, Minister for Food and Women Development, Government of Pakistan

SAFDAR MAHMOOD, Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan

Lahore

I. A. REHMAN, Director, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

Roundtable: Civil Services Academy/CSA

DR. SAEED SHAFQAT, Chief Instructor, Pakistan Studies, CSA

SHAHID MALIK, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Chief Instructor, CSA (on deputation); past Acting High Commissioner to India; past Deputy Chief of Mission, United States of America

SAJJAD NASEER, Chairman, Department of Political Science, Punjab University

PERVEZ HANIF, Director, Hanif Group, and Chairman, Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association/PRGMEA

S. BABER ALI, President, Packages Ltd.

Roundtable: Kashmir Study Centre/KSC

BRIGADIER M. SHAFI KHAN (ret'd), Director, KSC

TARIQ MAJID

NILOFER MEHDI

BRIGADIER ASADULLAH KHAN (ret'd)

K. M. AZAM, past senior economic adviser, United Nations

MUHAMMAD YOUSUF SHAH, Senior Executive Vice President UBL (ret'd)

RASHIDA YOUSUF

MAJOR SAYYED NAWAZ (ret'd)

DR. SYED NASIM HASAN SHAH, Chief Justice (ret'd), Supreme Court of Pakistan

NAJIM SETHI, Editor, *Friday Times*

KHALED AHMED, Executive Editor, *Friday Times*

SENATOR AITZAZ AHSAN, leader of opposition (People's Party of Pakistan), Senate

Roundtable: Kashmir Action Committee Pakistan/KACP

LT COLONEL ALI MUHAMMAD MIR (ret'd), General Secretary, KACP

SHEIKH WAHIDUDDIN, President, The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), and Chairman, Sheikh Wahiduddin Industries Ltd.

MAJID NIZAMI, Chairman and Chief Editor, *The Nation* and *Nawa-i-Waqt*

Karachi

GHAZI SALAUDDIN, Editorial Director, *Jang* Group of Newspapers, and past Assistant Editor, *Dawn*

BRIGADIER A. R. SIDDIQI (ret'd), Editor-in-Chief, *Defence Journal*

Gilgit (Northern Areas)

GULFARZ AHMAD KHAN, Accounts Office, Pakistan Military Accounts

SOFIA SHAKIL, Programme Manager, Aga Khan Rural Support Programme

MIR GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN, Mir of Hunza

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