
Beginning of the Indo-Pakistan Disputes: British Secretly supporting Indian Government

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The year 1947 was important for the people of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent as their struggle for independence bore fruit of success. But at the same time the year is remembered for the loss of precious lives on both sides. Pakistan suffered more due to several reasons. Those are not subject of discussion in here. This paper only focuses on government of Pakistan's attempt in the early years of independence to acquire the help of British and Commonwealth the countries in resolving the issue of communal disturbances in India. The violence had in inflicted the Punjab most. The Pakistani government hoped that as both India and Pakistan were member of the Commonwealth, discussions on the issue would lead to positive results and lives would be saved through government of India's positive response. But sadly the British, displayed more concern about not offending India and did not respond to Pakistan's request for a mediatory role by the commonwealth. The paper discusses in detail the British diplomacy working behind the scenes in favour of Indian Government.

Communal disturbances in the Punjab after the Partition of India, in 1947 overshadowed everything else; at least some half a million innocent people were massacred and more than twelve million citizens had to leave their homes.¹ The Punjab was the worst affected area. These raids and numbers were so frequent there that it was 'difficult to keep track of them all.'² The conditions in East Punjab were far worse than in the West Punjab because the Sikh community was better armed and well organized. In Amritsar alone and its vicinity the Sikhs had formed armed bands of considerable strength which were carrying out raids on Muslim majority villages. They were well organized and often included mounted men. Although there were also Muslim bands organized for the same purpose in the Lahore district, these were fewer in number, smaller in size and less organized.³ *The London Times* special correspondent in the Punjab reported that 'the Sikhs are clearing Eastern Punjab of Muslims, butchering hundreds daily, forcing thousands to flee west-ward, burning Muslim villages and homesteads'. In his view, the violence was organized from the highest levels of Sikh leadership and it was done systematically, sector by sector.

Secret reports of the intelligence agencies verified the Muslim allegations that Sikh bands, or "Jathas", were often led by former soldiers and attacked scientifically. 'A first wave, armed with firearms, fires to bring Muslims off their roofs. A second wave, armed with firearms, fires to bring Muslims off their roofs. A second wave lobbs grenades over the walls. A third wave goes in with Kirpans⁴ and spears and the serious killing begins. A last wave consists of older men, often army pensioners, who specialize in arson.'⁵ The slaughter in East Punjab was described by many experienced Army officers, British and Indians, as 'a thousand times more horrible' than anything they had seen during the Second World War. According to 'best neutral sources' no fewer than 10,000 Muslims lost their lives in the Amritsar district alone during the month of August 1947.⁶ The Sikhs displayed the same brutality in the Jullundur district also.⁷ The situation in the Sikh

states was not very different. According to Gyan Chand, a Congress worker living in Patiala, the Muslims in the state 'died like goats and sheeps. In a note to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Health Minister in Nehru's Cabinet, Gyan Chand, also reported cases of 'rape, abduction and processions of naked Muslim women and other atrocities again on them.⁸ About 250,000 Muslims were massacred in Patiala, and some 50,000 in Nabha. The states of Alwar, Bharatpur, Jind and Faridkot were likewise cleared of all Muslims.⁹

The center of Indian Government, Delhi, had also been deeply affected by the communal disturbances; it was on the verge of total chaos. According to Ismay's memoirs, 'Muslims were being systematically hunted down and had been butchered ... Arson and looting were widespread ... The Muslim police ... had butchered ... Arson and looting was widespread ... The Muslim police ... had deserted or been disarmed by the Hindu administration and many of the Hindu police were afraid to do their duty'.¹⁰ 'In Delhi, the predominantly Muslim localities were put to flames... some 15,000 Muslims were massacred. About 150,000 Muslims left Delhi following the riots and according to some assessments, the Muslim population in Delhi was reduced in a short period of time.¹¹ In the words of Pandit Nehru; these events, taken as a whole, showed a picture of all Muslims, irrespective of their position or standing 'being hunted down and killed whenever possible'.¹² However, according to Maulana Azad, Nehru's complaint that Muslims were being killed 'like cats and dogs' was 'light-heartedly' dismissed by Sardar Patel, who was responsible for the administration of Delhi, as well as for the East Punjab, as Home Minister.¹³

The killings, arson and looting continued¹⁴ according to the press and unofficial reports from Delhi; this was happening in broad daylight and the government seemed to be powerless in the face of armed mobs, mainly Sikhs,¹⁵ which either meant that the Indian Government did not really wish to exercise its authority

over the forces of disorder, or was afraid of dealing with the Sikhs. It was generally agreed that they were the physical users of force against the defenceless people.¹⁶ No effective measures were taken by the Indian Government to rectify this situation. Even if the sincerity of the Indian Government was not doubted, it was evident that their policy of 'half measures' and appeasement of the Sikhs on religious grounds was 'worse than useless'.¹⁷ There were also reports of murders, arson and looting while the Indian Police Service and troops were either 'standing by or actively assisting'¹⁸ the murderers or looters. In Delhi, roads leading to the Airport were also blocked. Some British officials, who left Delhi on September 8, informed Grafftey-Smith, that about 2,000 Muslims were crowded in Palam Aerodrome, Delhi, guarded by a British battalion and awaiting evacuation. The Indian National Airways had ceased its service from Delhi to Karachi, allegedly because of threats to the life of its Director if he continued facilitating the 'escape of Muslims'.¹⁹ Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, had proposed a massive air movement by BOAC but Indian officials were reported to be 'consistently obstructive' about the proposal. Trains and train-guards could also not be provided by the Indian Government for the Muslims who wished to leave Delhi.²⁰ Many incidents of attacks on passengers waiting for trains at Delhi Railway station were reported.²¹ According to the British High Commissioner in India, Sir Terence Shone, the situation in Delhi was said to be almost out of control. Delhi was declared a 'dangerously disturbed area'.²²

The Government of Pakistan felt profoundly concerned for the safety of the Muslims in India. They were convinced that the Government of India was not doing their utmost to improve the situation. After the independence, some regrettable incidents of communal violence had happened in Pakistan too. But Jinnah ordered not to arrest the trouble-makers but to shoot them at sight. This policy had largely succeeded in keeping the situation under control.²³ The government was required to control these riots, but it was lenient in its views: "where stern and ruthless

action was called for, speeches and appeals were being made by the Indian Government, which were clearly not affecting those who were determined to achieve their objectives by destroying the Muslims.'

Considering that the Government of India was 'either unwilling or powerless to restore order', the Government of Pakistan decided to place the issue of communal disorders in India before the Commonwealth countries. Pakistan stated that 'India, as a member of the British Commonwealth, had failed in her primary duty of protecting the life, property and honour of one section of its citizens — the Muslims. In a message to Attlee, Liaquat urged the UK, along with other members of the Commonwealth, that they consider effective ways and means of saving the most grave situation in India, which presented a serious threat not only to the peace of the subcontinent but also to the peace of the whole world'. Liaquat expressed the fear that if concrete action was not taken to stop the orgies of death and destruction... the consequence would be most disastrous and beyond our imagination.²⁴

Pakistan's request for a mediatory role by the members of the Commonwealth was not surprising for the British Government. The British Prime Minister believed that the gravity of the situation was enough to justify such an appeal. But he was reluctant to transmit Liaquat's message to other members of the Commonwealth. In this reply, the British Prime Minister, Attlee further stated that nothing could prevent violence spreading over still wider areas except 'continued contact, frank discussion and co-operation between the two governments'. Attlee further stated that he could think of 'no step, outside India, 'which would not accentuate rather than diminish friction between the two Dominions, and so endanger further the prospects of speedy pacification.²⁵

The Government of Pakistan, which was interested in an immediate action to stop the violence in India, was very disappointed

at the British reply. Liaquat felt that Attlee was under the impression that there was insufficient contact and discussion between the Government of India and Pakistan. In his reply to Attlee, Liaquat informed him that his government had been in continuous contact with the Government of India on the issue but the promises made and assurances given by the Indian Government had not been translated into real action. Liaquat wrote: 'At no stage have they shown any real desire to remove the basic cause, namely, organized Sikh aggression assisted by a large body of militant Hindus and supported directly or indirectly by the administration'. He considered the withdrawal of the ban on carrying Kirpans by the Government of India 'tragic' and reminded Attlee that the Sikhs had used their Kirpans to commit murders. The failure of the Indian Government to protect the Muslims in India presented a serious threat to the peace in Liaquat's view; and he felt that Pakistan was justified in asking for a consideration of this question by the Commonwealth. He suggested that in spite of possible adverse reaction from India, a conference of the Commonwealth countries should immediately be convened to consider the question in all its aspects.²⁶

Meanwhile, the tensions between the various communities in India continued.²⁷ Gandhi speaking of Delhi disturbances placed the first blame on the Hindus and Sikhs. In contrast, Nehru in a press conference said that all communities had 'misbehaved' during the disturbances. He also said that he found in some 'foreign reports' that the blame for the disturbances had been laid on the Sikhs. In his view that was not fair to the Sikhs 'who had undoubtedly misbehaved as others had misbehaved'.²⁸

Sir Zafrullah Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, whose own home had been attacked during the disturbances,²⁹ stated in New York that unless the Government of India took steps to end the slaughter of Muslims, a formal complaint by Pakistan could be filed in the UNO. Zafrullah asserted that the Indian Government had done nothing to control the communal disturbances except

making 'appeals to reasons, but the inflamed non-Muslim sections of the Indian population cannot be expected to react to these appeals'.³⁰

The British did not like the idea of an appeal by Pakistan to the UNO. The Secretary of State for the Commonwealth Relations, Philip Noel-Bakers, informed the United Kingdom High Commissioner (UKHC) in Pakistan that the British Government could hardly sponsor any idea of mediation between the two Dominions by countries outside the British Empire, especially at the instance of only one party - Pakistan. Noel-Baker asked Grafftey-Smith to convey a hint to Jinnah that Pakistan's appeal to the UNO might result in more harm than good to Pakistan's interests. A counter-challenge from India, which seemed inevitable in the British view, was bound to further embitter the relations between the two countries.³¹

Grafftey-Smith took the view that if Pakistan's request for the Commonwealth's mediation was not successful, Pakistan would certainly make an appeal to the UNO. He therefore proposed that Liaquat's letter requesting a Commonwealth conference immediately be transmitted to all countries. He hoped that despite Britain's other preoccupations, a Conference would be organized to consider the Indo-Pakistan tensions on a family basis.³² There was some force in this argument. If the issue was placed before the Commonwealth, Pakistan would probably not consider it necessary to raise the subject in the UNO also. While considering Pakistan's request to summon a conference, Attlee told the Cabinet that it would be impossible for Britain to refuse to communicate Pakistan's request to the Dominion governments, but, at the same time it would be undesirable for the British to encourage the Commonwealth governments to accept the proposal for a conference'.³³ The Cabinet endorsed Attlee's proposal.³⁴ Accordingly Liaquat's request for the conference was transmitted to the Governments of India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The British High Commissioners in the old Dominions

were further instructed to tell the government confidentially that the British Government were not exacting that they would accept the proposal and that in the British view the conference could serve no useful purpose. The British view, the government were informed, was taken in spite of the possibility that a failure of the Commonwealth countries to respond to Pakistan's request might result in an appeal to the UNO. The British High Commissioners were also advised to say that the British would see some advantage if other Commonwealth governments did not reply with 'special haste' to Pakistan's message.³⁵ The Government of Pakistan was informed that Britain had transmitted her request to the Commonwealth countries. Attlee, however, told Liaquat Ali Khan that he was not convinced that any 'helpful result' could follow from a Commonwealth meeting.³⁶

Not surprisingly, the Government of Pakistan's appeal to the Commonwealth was greatly deplored in India. Shone, specially regretted that the British decision to accede to Pakistan's request to communicate their message to other Dominions was taken without asking for the possible effect on the Government of India. He feared that the British decision would affect adversely the Indian attitude towards the Commonwealth. They would feel that they had been 'put in the dock' because the message contained 'charges' against them by their neighbours whom they regarded as 'culpable'.³⁷ Lord Ismay, Adviser to the Indian Governor-General, Lord Mountbatten, asked Shone to add in his telegram to London that a further result of 'this unfortunate business might be that India would leave the Commonwealth: 'Why, they may say, should we belong to a club that treats us in this way? Both Shone and Ismay believed that if Jinnah's object was to get India out of the Commonwealth, the British object should be to 'thwart' him. In order to stop the Indian Government from taking such an extreme step, they proposed that Attlee should send the old Dominions an urgent message that any conference that might be called to consider the situation in the sub-continent would do more harm than good.³⁸

Noel-Baker in his reply informed Shone that it was fully realized in London that Pakistan's appeal to the Commonwealth would be bitterly resented by India, and that the British had therefore 'dropped a hint' to the four old Dominions to the effect that the British would see 'some advantage if their governments delayed their replies'. In view of this clear discouragement the Secretary of State believed that it was highly unlikely that the Commonwealth governments would accept the proposal for a conference. He thus saw no need to send the further telegram proposed by Shone and Ismay. He informed Shone that the only reason for transmitting Pakistan's message was that the British Government had felt that 'having once tried to dissuade Jinnah (Liaquat?) and failed, they could not any longer hold up his messages which indeed, he could have dispatched himself direct but for the purely accidental difficulty of ciphering messages to the Dominions'.³⁹ The British Government deplored the reactions in India but did not regard it as being so serious as Shone and Ismay had suggested. Noel-Baker believed that Pakistan's indictment of the Government of India was not a public one. It was just an appeal for a talk behind closed doors. He also reminded Shone that if the Commonwealth governments did not respond to Pakistan's proposal, there was the danger that Jinnah would make an appeal to the UNO. As a gesture of goodwill towards India, Noel-Baker asked Shone to inform Nehru, on behalf of the British Government, that they would be ready to transmit to the Dominions any observations from the Government of India if they so desired. Shone was further directed to point out to Nehru that Britain had been 'most reluctant to circulate the Pakistan Government's message but they felt that they had no option'.⁴⁰ When the message was delivered to Nehru, he agreed to request Britain to transmit the Indian observations to the old Dominions on Pakistan's appeal. In his message to Attlee, Nehru opposed a special conference to deal with the situation, which he pointed out was 'not one of war' but of a 'communal strife' between India and Pakistan. Nehru stated that the problem was of such a nature that

outside intervention', however well meant, could provide an effective solution. Moreover, 'the communal situation in Eastern Punjab and Delhi though difficult in parts, had improved to some extent. 'Our major anxiety' the message continued, is for the safety of the non-Muslim evacuees from Pakistan who have not yet been able to move into safety of our borders'.⁴¹

While the political implications of Pakistan's appeal were under consideration between the Indian and British Governments, the conditions in Northern Areas of the Punjab, including the Punjab Sikh states, stated that 'between September 18 and 22, six refugee trains (carrying Muslims) from Delhi to Lahore were attacked'. The Government of India thought that the situation was so serious that they decided to suspend, temporarily, all refugee trains. The Government of Pakistan agreed that until conditions became safer, all movement of the refugee convoys into the East Punjab be stopped. The military authorities in the Punjab were convinced that 'nearly all these train attacks were organized within the Punjab states'. Most of the attacks occurred in Amritsar where 'huge non-Muslim mob killed over 1,000 Muslim refugees. Casualties of course included women and children as well as men'.⁴² The most disturbing feature of these train incidents was that some Hindu and Sikh members of the Indian Railway Staff were reported to be assisting the attackers. In a meeting of the Emergency Committee, a Sikh minister of the Eastern Punjab Cabinet stated that he had received secret information that, on occasions, trains had been delayed on pretexts because attackers were not ready. Nehru had also seen eyewitness accounts which showed that the behaviour of the railway officials had in some cases been 'scandalous'. The Emergency Committee was also informed in the same meeting that about 1,500 Muslim refugees had died owing to exposure or exhaustion.⁴³ On occasions, even the supply of water to the Muslim passengers was refused by Hindu railway personnel which resulted in many deaths from thirst.⁴⁴

Such events, when reported by refugees and other to Pakistan's officials, strengthened the view in Pakistan that the Government of India was unable to protect the Muslims. Jinnah, in a meeting with Grafftey-Smith on September 23, again raised the question of a Commonwealth Conference. He stated that Pakistan had asked for the Conference with a view to finding an amicable solution for the problem; Pakistan had no intention of referring the problem to the UNO at the moment; Zafrullah's statement in New York was not an official announcement of Pakistan's policy. Jinnah preferred to keep the matters on the 'family-footing' and not to call in 'outsiders' to mediate between two members of the Commonwealth. But he made it clear that if all other attempts to protect Muslim lives had so far failed, Pakistan, as a member of the UNO, reserved her right to appeal to that tribunal. Jinnah proposed that a team of Commonwealth representative visit India and Pakistan for a joint discussion. Reporting this meeting to London, Grafftey-Smith described the appeal as reasonable and said he would deprecate a refusal by Britain to consider it; if the British were interested in stopping the violence, some new element must be introduced into situation.⁴⁵

Shone informed London that he felt certain that India would not accept Commonwealth observers. He expressed the fear that any pressure on the Government of India to accept them, would create a ticklish situation and the observers would soon find themselves subject to attacks by India or Pakistan, if not by both.⁴⁶

The British Government seemed interested in helping to stop the killings so long as it did not affect their relations with India. Noel-Baker directed Grafftey-Smith to speak informally to Liaquat Ali Khan and draw his attention to Nehru's proposal for Indian observers as an alternative to the Commonwealth observers.⁴⁷ Nehru had earlier suggested to Noel-Baker that the Government of India and Pakistan themselves nominate their representatives to investigate communal disorders. Those representatives, Nehru had proposed, preferably High Court Judges, should not be

Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs.⁴⁸ Commenting on Nehru's proposal, Graffey-Smith pointed out that in view of the communal tension it seemed impossible that such representatives would be able to produce an objective and fair appreciation of events. In his view the behaviour of the Indian High Court Judges on the Boundary Commissions, which had operated in far more favourable conditions, forbade any optimism.⁴⁹ He also reported that the attitude of the Sikhs towards Muslims had not changed and they continued to kill the Muslims rather than let them out into West Punjab. In view of this grave situation, he believed that the Commonwealth consultation had become inevitable 'sooner rather than later'.⁵⁰

The failure of the Indian Government to bring the situation under control forced Liaquat to draw British attention, again, to the necessity of holding a Commonwealth Conference immediately. In a message to Attlee, he stated that although some useful results had been achieved through direct consultation with India⁵¹ the real problem had not been tackled. Emphasizing the need for a Commonwealth Conference, Liaquat Ali Khan once again expressed that hope that it would be able to devise ways and means of averting a situation which was likely to develop into a grave threat to the peace of the world.⁵²

In the meantime, a report from the special correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* in Karachi broke the news to the world that Pakistan was seriously contemplating appealing to the Commonwealth for as immediate 'diplomatic and if necessary military help' in saving the lives of Muslim refugees from India. The report also mentioned the possibility of Pakistan's bringing the matter before the UNO.⁵³

The British Government realized that the "continuance of attacks on refugee convoys" and 'the violent attitude of the Sikhs' were causing both Pakistan and India 'intense anxiety'.⁵⁴ They 'noted with appreciation' the Government of Pakistan's wish to

keep the matter 'on family-footing'. However, Grafftey-Smith was directed to inform Liaquat in a verbal message from Attlee that his communication of September 18 was not being circulated to other Commonwealth countries and that the leakage to the press had made the consultation difficult.⁵⁵ Noel-Baker believed that the publicity about Pakistan's appeal to the Commonwealth had not 'sweetened the atmosphere'.⁵⁶ He was undoubtedly thinking of Indian reaction to the appeal. Grafftey-Smith was also advised to explain to Liaquat that Britain felt that 'the assistance of the Commonwealth governments would be most likely to be obtained if sought on joint initiative of Indian and Pakistan Governments'.⁵⁷ In plain words, the British Government was not prepared to include Pakistan's appeal in a Commonwealth discussion except on terms of a joint initiative by India and Pakistan. Grafftey-Smith felt reluctant to deliver this disappointing message and pointed out to Noel-Baker that a possible consequence of withholding Commonwealth mediation would be that Pakistan would raise the latter at the UNO.⁵⁸ Grafftey-Smith was again instructed to deliver the message to Liaquat. Noel-Baker stated that it did not imply refusal of Liaquat's appeal and that the British were only suggesting that any possible assistance from the Commonwealth would be more readily forthcoming in response to a joint request from both India and Pakistan. The Pakistan Government should regard the message 'as friendly advice regarding the most effective method of approach' and not as a 'discouraging reply'.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office in London was studying the implications of Pakistan's possible appeal to the UNO. The study concluded that it seemed most unlikely that the UNO would be able to bring about any early solution. The Assembly, in their view, might simply deplore the troubles, calling on both sides to settle them. The Assembly might also add a recommendation that observers should proceed to the scene. The selection of observers might cause difficulty and would take time. The Foreign Office believed that the dispute would give the Soviet Government 'direct means of interference' and 'endless opportunities for

making mischief, in the affairs of the sub-continent. In the light of these considerations, Noel-Baker advised Grafftey-Smith to impress on Pakistan that if the matter were taken to the UNO it would only result in "fruitless embarrassment and difficulty for the Pakistan Government¹ as well as for others'.⁶⁰

Realizing that some new element was needed in order to stop the violence in the sub-continent, the British decided to approach India with the suggestion to set up a fact-finding commission. The commission, they proposed, might be composed of representatives of India and Pakistan. The British intended to put their proposal to Pakistan after Nehru's agreement to proceed on these lines.⁶¹ Shone was asked to sound out Nehru with a view, if possible, to India's proposing to Pakistan that the two countries should approach other Commonwealth governments jointly.⁶²

Grafftey-Smith was also informed of this proposal. He considered that the British proposal was far less than the situation required and 'very far' from what the Government of Pakistan had hoped for in the way of 'a family discussion'. However, he believed that Pakistan would not reject the proposal.⁶³

When it was placed before Nehru, he doubted whether a commission could do useful work by enquiring into the dispute and said that India and Pakistan should themselves settle their differences without intervention from outside. The British High Commissioner pointed out that if no step was taken by the Commonwealth Pakistan might appeal to the UNO. Nehru stated that India would be ready to meet such an appeal. He was not prepared to accept the proposal of a Commonwealth commission in order to avoid an appeal by Pakistan in the UNO.⁶⁴ India was ready to answer any charges brought against her there.⁶⁵ The Indian Government bitterly resented Pakistan's appeal to the Commonwealth 'behind their backs',⁶⁶ and opposed the idea of a Commonwealth conference. Shone's reading of the situation was

that any Commonwealth conference would result in 'India's leaving the Commonwealth'.⁶⁷

Pakistan had made the appeal, over a month before, in the hope that the other members of the Commonwealth family might be able to find some means in a friendly conference to reduce the tension. Liaquat was informed that Britain was not prepared to forward Pakistan's request for a conference unless India also joined Pakistan in the request. When Liaquat placed the proposal of a joint request before Nehru in a meeting at Delhi in early October, it became clear that there was no prospect of India's agreeing to that proposal. This reaction was not unexpected by Liaquat. But during an interview with Grafftey-Smith, 'Liaquat did not disguise his disappointment at the cool reception given by the Commonwealth to Pakistan's appeal. Grafftey-Smith reported that the response had been a 'cold-douche to Pakistan's hopes of fraternal assistance'.⁶⁸

In the meantime, certain areas, particularly Eastern Punjab, were reported to be continuously disturbed. A "very senior British military officer from Ambala, a sub-area of the East Punjab, told the British Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan 'that words were just not bad enough for the Sikhs, who he said, had indulged in a frightful massacre over the whole area. No Muslim life was safe.'⁶⁹ A minister of the U.P. Government, India summed up the situation in the Western part of that province as being under 'negative control' by which he meant the police and Army were the masters of the situation. According to Shone's information, the same description was applicable to most of the others areas affected by the riots.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, the Hindu and Sikh refugees, who had abandoned their property in West Pakistan, were demanding that the Indian Government should send wealthy Muslims living in India to Pakistan and distribute their property among the Hindu and Sikh refugees. The demand had the support of Indian Home Minister, Sardar Patel, Tara Singh was also giving his full support to the demand. When the demand

was placed before Liaquat by some Indian ministers, he stated that he was ready to consider the demand if the Indian Government declared itself unable to protect the Muslim minority. He reminded the ministers that at the time of the partition, the boundaries of India and Pakistan were not drawn up with single-community status in mind. Each Dominion was expected to contain and protect minorities.⁷¹ The demand showed that the Muslims in India had been subject to great strain and that there was no love lost between Muslims and non-Muslims.

During the second half of October, the military and political events in Kashmir over-shadowed everything else, because a large numbers of Muslim refugees had started to arrive in Pakistan from Kashmir. They alleged that the Muslim villages along the border had been ransacked and burnt. The stories of massacre of Muslims in Kashmir by Dogras resulted in the incursion of Muslim tribesmen into the state. The developments in Kashmir not only increased the tensions between India and Pakistan but also affected the communities.⁷² The lives of the Muslim refugees passing through Eastern Punjab became more vulnerable to the Sikh attacks.

While considering the question whether any further action was needed by Britain on Pakistan's appeal, Noel-Baker, partly due to the new situation in Kashmir and mainly because of Indian unwillingness to accept any Commonwealth intervention, advised the British Government to leave things as they were. He was particularly anxious that Britain avoid the role of an arbitrator between the two countries on that matter.⁷³ The Cabinet Committee agreed to send no further communication to Pakistan on their appeal, unless it was renewed.⁷⁴ The four old Dominions were also informed of the British decision to let the matter rest and advised not to send any formal reply to the Government of Pakistan.⁷⁵

The chilly response to Pakistan's appeal strengthened the conviction in Pakistan that Britain and the Commonwealth

countries were not interested in the fate of millions of Muslims in the subcontinent. Grafftey-Smith reported the common assumption in Pakistan of 'a pro-Nehru and anti-Jinnah bias in the 10, Downing Street'.⁷⁶ Jinnah in a meeting with Grafftey-Smith also spoke of the lack of response to his appeal for a Commonwealth discussion. He suggested that if it had been possible to discuss the tension between India and Pakistan, the tragedy of Kashmir might never have occurred. Grafftey-Smith tried to convince Jinnah that there was no lack of goodwill towards Pakistan in governmental circles in Britain. He also denied the assumption that London was biased in favour of India. He told Jinnah that the British Government respected the independence of every other Dominion. They were anxious to avoid any improper intervention in the domestic affairs of others. However, Jinnah was not in the least impressed by these observations. He stated more than once during his conversation with the British High Commissioner that membership of the Commonwealth should mean the right of any Dominion to claim the sympathetic interest in its troubles of other members of the family. 'What, he asked, 'does the Commonwealth mean if not an association of closer bonds than those existing between completely independent foreign countries'? In others words, Jinnah raised the question what was the value of the Commonwealth membership if no friendly gesture to help members in distress was possible?⁷⁷

At the end of this episode, there was little doubt that whatever Pakistan's expectations of an early and practical solution of the communal problem by Britain and the Commonwealth, they had been greatly disappointed.

Notes and References

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 - 4 Kirpan, a religious emblem of the Sikhs.
 - 5 *The Times*, 25 August 1947.
 - 6 *The Times*, 27 August 1947.
 - 7 Letter (Henceforth Ltr.) to Brigadier Eastern Command from Jemadar District Jullundur, Punjab, 22 September 1947, quoted in Sir Francis Toker, *While Memory Serves*, (London 1967) p.433.
 - 8 Note was sent to Nehru by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, quoted in Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50*, Vol. I (Ahmadabad, 1971), pp.50-51.
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 - 13 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, pp.214,215-17, see also Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah*, p.224.

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 - 22 Ibid.
 - 23 For details of some other steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to overcome the disturbances and a general review, Muhammad. Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan*, pp.255-75.
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 - 34 Cabinet Conclusions, 76 (46) 10,20 September 1947, CAB 128/10, PRO.
 - 35 Out tel., CRO to UKHCs in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa, 20 September 1947, PREM 8/584.
 - 36 Tel., P.M. to P.M., 20 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 37 UKHC (I), to S. of S. for C.R., 21 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 38 Shone to Noel-Baker, 21 September 1947, *ibid.*

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- 39 Tel., Noel-Baker to Shone, 22 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 40 Noel-Baker to Shone, 23 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 41 Nehru to Aulec, 23 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 42 Summary and Appreciation of situation from period September 18th to September 26th, 1947, Tel., UKHC (I) to C.R.0./133.
 - 43 Meeting of the Emergency Committee, 29 September 1947, Shone was given this information by 'Secret Military Sources'. Mountbatten and Gen. Lockhart were present at the meeting. T.cl., Shone to C.R.O., 1 October 1947, L/WS/1/1035.
 - 44 Tel., Smith to Noel-Baker, 23 September 1947, Prem 8/584.
 - 45 *Ibid.*
 - 46 Tel., Shone to Noel-Baker, 26 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 47 Tel., Noel-Baker to Smith, 28 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 48 Minister of State's Minute to P.M., 17/47 undated, *ibid.*
 - 49 Tel., Smith to Noel-Baker, 28 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 50 Tel., Smith to Noel-Baker, 28 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 51 A conference of Indo-Pakistan representatives was held in Lahore on 14 September and another on 19 September at Delhi to discuss some of the disputes between the two countries.

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- 52 Message, Liaquat to Attlee, 28 September 1947, the Government of Pakistan External Affairs & C.R. Dept. to C.R.O., *ibid.*
 - 53 *Daily Telegraph*, 27 September 1947, sent to Smith by Noel-Baker on 1 October 1947, LAVS/1/1035.
 - 54 Noel-Baker to Attlee, 20/47, 29 September 1947, PREM 8/584.
 - 55 Tel., Noel-Baker to Smith, 29 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 56 Minute by Noel-Baker to Attlee, 29 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 57 Tel., Noel-Baker to Smith, 29 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 58 Tel, Smith to Noel-Baker, 30 September 1947, *ibid.*
 - 59 Tel., Noel-Baker to Smith, 2 October 1947, LAVS/1/1035.
 - 60 Tel., Secretary of State (Henceforth SOS). for C. R. to UKHC (P), 1 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 61 Foreign Office Note to the C.R.O., 30 September 1947, F.O. 371/63570.
 - 62 Out telegram to UKHC (I), 30 September 1947, PREM 8/584.
 - 63 Tel., Smith of Noel-Baker, 2 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 64 Tel., Shone to Noel-Baker, 1 October, *ibid.*
 - 65 Tel, Shone to Noel-Baker, 4 October 1947, L/WS/1/1036.

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- 66 Tel., shone to Noel-Baker, 6 October 1947, PREM 8/584.
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 - 68 Tel., Smith to Noel-Baker, 13 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 69 Note prepared by Shallock, 15 October 1947, D.O./133.
 - 70 Summary and appreciation of situation for period 11 to 18 October 1947, Tel., UKHC (I), 20 October 1947, L/WS/1/1036.
 - 71 Liaquats interview with Smith, Tel. UKHC (P) to S. of S. for C.R., 13 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 72 Communal situation in West Punjab, Report by UKHC (P), Tel. 30 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 73 Memorandum by Noel-Baker, C.A. (47) 8, 26 October 1947, PREM 8/584.
 - 74 Minute 3, C.A. (47) 3rd meeting, 31 October 1947, *ibid.*
 - 75 Out Tel, C.R.O. to UKHCs in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and S. Africa, *ibid.*
 - 76 Smith to C.R.O., November 1947, L/WS/1/1136.
 - 77 Smith to C.R.O., 31 December 1947, *ibid.*