educated minorty, the Parsis. They have made themselves felt wherever they have gone : no special protection could possibly give them this position which they acquired by their own attainments. I am quite clear therefore that the Kashmiri Pandits must revise their present policy and must in future develop political and other contacts with the advanced groups in the country. They should give up their narrow communal outlook and think of their own welfare in terms of the welfare of Kashmir as a whole, that is to say of the great majority of the people of Kashmir. I would advise them not to seek any special protection or weightage or reservation of places in the State service, no special electorates or the like. I understand that the Muslims of Kashmir are offering them the same safeguards as the Muslims might get in British India. This will not make very much difference. They will get far more through goodwill and cooperation with the other communities.

In Egypt many years ago the British Government sought to divide the nationalist ranks by offering special protection to the Christian Copts. But the Copts were wise and they refused this and preferred to side with the nationalist movement and to rely on their Muslim colleagues of this movement. The result has been that they have played an important part in Egypt and have got far more than they would otherwise have done by bargaining or by siding with British imperialism.

I realise fully that the adoption of this policy will be difficult after the Kashmiri Pandits experience of the past few years. Nevertheless, this is the only right policy. I feel also that the time is ripe for this as many of the Muslim leaders in Kashmir are desirous of winning the cooperation of the Hindus.

For the present I am presuming to advise the Hindus regardless of what the reaction of the Muslims might be. It is quite possible that the communal elements amongst the Muslims both in Kashmir and in British India might continue to do mischief. We shall have to face plenty of trouble from all manner of quarters but if we act correctly and far-sightedly we are bound to succeed.

I am convinced in my own mind that Kashmir has a bright future. It has great possibilities of industrial development

and there is no reason why we should not put an end to the tremendous poverty of her people by developing its resources. But we must look a little ahead for that and not lose ourselves in the petty squabbles of today. And before we can really go ahead we shall have to make big changes politically and otherwise. Let us all work for these and keep the ultimate goal before us. At present, as you know Kashmir is almost under the direct rule of the British Government in India,

Kashmir is very dear to me and I only wish that I could be of greater service to the old country. But I often think of it and my warm wishes go out to those who work for freedom and the betterment of the masses there. In this work, I earnestly trust that the Kashmiri Pandits will take a rightful and prominent share.

I have written at some length. I shall be glad if you will keep me informed of developments in Kashmir. Some time back (on June 18) I sent a letter to you and Mr. S. M. Abdullah in reply to joint letter from you two. I do not know if this reached you.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Chondhpora.
Srinagar Kashmir
July 15, 1936

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Anand Bhawan
Allahabad

My dear Panditji,

Many thanks for your letter of the 8th July, the contents of which have relieved me of great distressing thoughts. Not that what you have written in your long letter I did not already believe myself. But the politics of this State in general and that of my own community in particular some times perplexed me so much that I would feel despondent about my aspirations

and hopes. Naturally also at times human weakness would overcome me and I would begin to doubt my ways and methods. Overwhelmed by the grief born of constant opposition of the majority of Kashmiri Pandits and the narrow mindedness of certain Mohammedan leaders I would feel supportless and darkness would envelop me. You can therefore imagine the magnitude of my happiness when on reading your letter every word in it resounded the echo in my heart.

The truth is that broadly speaking the politics of the Muslims in this State is the politics of independence, of fight against the shackles of an irresponsible and autocratic form of Government, of amelioration of the sad plight of poorest classes living in the land, of struggle against vested interests, against ignorance, against age-old social system in society that the so called 'great have created in their own interests to put the vast majority of the people under subjection. My only sorrow is that all this is being done at present in the name of Islam and the masses are told that they suffer because they are Mussalmans. This, besides making the outlook of the masses exetrmely communal produces the baneful effect of expliotation of Muslims by their clever and selfish co-religionists.

The politics of Kashmiri Pandits, on the other hand, is the politics of educated unemployment and as one of their chief occupation has been Government service in the past, and as there are absolutely no other avenues of employment in the state, Kashmiri Pandits take up cudgels against everybody who tells them that other communities also should get fair share in the Government services. Not that the whole community lives on Government services. I think not more than two thousand Kashmiri Pandits are so employed but the vocal and influential section among Kashmiri Pandits is comprised of these Government servants. They as well as all those who do not, even after the bitter experience of the past few years, reconcile themselves to the changed circumstances and still look upon Government service as their only source of employment, uphold the worst type of communalism. They have cut adrift the whole community from taking any part in the national movement.

We have gradually reached a stage where we stand in the position of aliens in our own mother country and look upon all that is going on around us with indifference and even with hostility. As an example I may tell you that it does not perturb us what the land revenue or the customs duty on goods imported or exported are. We would even help the Government directly and indirectly to suppress any agitation that might be started for reducing the land revenue assessments though a good portion of the land is in our possession and thousands of our brethren in the villages are cultivators. But if out of half a dozen appointments in an office we do not get some the whole community would be made to believe that doomsday was near. Much of this might be due to the reaction produced by the activity of communal Muslim leaders. But that all this is there nobody can deny. Such being the case Kashmiri Pandits feel that the only solution is to keep Muslims suppressed in order that if they are not politically conscious we can monopolise the Government services.

Speaking frankly, I hate this politics. I am fully conscious of the difficulties of my own community, of our numerical strength, of our weakness in not being able to apply ourselves to other occupations all atonce, of the degrading unemployment of our educated young men and of the sufferings of those who fell victim to Muslim communal fanaticism. But I am confident that the remedy is not the suppression of the masses but the advancement of our country as a whole.

Like yourself, I believe Kashmir has very bright future and time will come when the potential wealth with which Nature has endowed the Valley will be utilised for the benefit of its inhabitants by a sympathetic responsible Government. If Kashmiri Pandits are wise enough to remain in the forefront of this struggle for independence, as their education and intelligence entitles them but where unfortunately they are not at present, they will not only be compensated for their lost clerkships but they will profit very greatly. In the beginning of the Kashmir movement I worked among Pandits as President of the Sanatan Dharm Youngmen's Association. They fully appreciated my work and as a mark of recognition of my

services elected me as their representative to sit on the Grievances Enquiry Commission and the Constitutional Reforms Conference which the Government formed soon after the Muslim rising in 1931. But with the publication of the report of that Commission my views shocked Kashmiri Pandits; for I agreed to redressing all the legitimate grievances of the Muslims and to giving them a fair share in Government services. This was the beginning of their disillusionment as well as mine. Slowly but surely, I found my way into the politics of the masses and to tell you the truth, but for this communal outlook I find myself in my element now when I work among Muslims as by temperament and nature I love independence and have the greatest desire to work for the downtrodden to whatever faith or creed they belong. Even after knowing about the untold atrocities that were perpetrated by the unruly Muslim hooligans at Vicharnag, Maharajganj and Mirpur, I do not want to join hands, as most Kashmiri Pandits would like me to do, with the British Imperialism or even the irresponsible Hindu Raj to crush the rising spirit of independence among the masses in this country. Goodness alone knows how dearly I have to pay for this. But I do not complain, I do not murmur, because I derive a pleasure and satisfaction in doing this that the greatest riches on earth would not give.

What pains me most is the narrow-mindedness of certain Muslim leaders who, while talking about independence, responsible government and the like, would not hesitate to kick up a row on such petty matters as a very small portion of land or an appointment of non-Muslim clerk or peon in this office or that. In season and out of season, these amiable gentlemen would abuse the whole Pandit community for faults done by individuals and excite the masses in the name of religion. It appears these fellows would not tolerate the presence of any non-Muslim religious places or non-Muslim employees in the Government service and yet want a Government on the pattern of a full fledged democracy in the world. When such preachers go into the mufassil to preach their gospel of "freedom" it naturally terrifies the insignificant Hindu population there. Why this galls me more than Hindu communalism is that this kind of

nonsense renders the association of a non-Muslim with the cause of Muslim masses more difficult.

I believe all this is due to the existence of communal organisations and communal electorate here. We have not a single non-communal or national organisation in Kashmir. Muslims and Hindus live in such water-tight compartments that they posses no knowledge of each other's point of view. But in fairness to them I must tell you that there are a few Pandit youngmen like myself who hate the present Pandit politics and there are Muslim leaders whose outlook is nationalistic. In order to organise these elements in both the communities we have now started a Youth League with the object of fighting by all legitimate means for the realisation of responsible government and to work for the economic, social and cultural upliftment of the people. The members of the League are expected to have full faith in the equality of all people living in the State and in there being no distinction between young men or young women on the basis of religious beliefs they profess. I expect we can have energetic and sincere workers from both the communities to work as members of this League.

Knowing fully well what preoccupations you have and how much busy you must be now a days I feel sorry to trouble you like this with such long letters. But as both of us are interested in Kashmir politics and the independence movement here as an integral part of that bigger struggle for the emancipation of India, I take this liberty of keeping you fully informed of the developments in this country. I also hope that you will allow me to publish this correspondence when and if I feel necessity of doing so.

We were disappointed to get your reply in the nagative to the joint letter from Mr. S. M. Abdullah and myself inviting you to this land. We did, however, broadcast your message of greetings to the people of Kashmir as desired.

Thanking you again for your letter and with all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz.

Anand Bhavan,
Allahabad,
August 9, 1936.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
Chondhpora
SRINAGAR (Kashmir)

My dear Prem Nathji,

Your letter of the 15th July came here during my absence in Sind. I returned a few days ago after a long tour.

I appreciate your difficulties. To a greater or lesser extent we have to face similar difficulties everywhere. But we must stick to principles and try to look at the real problem. Any other course would be short-sighted and wanting in intellectual integrity. It would also be doomed to ultimate failure.

I am glad to learnt that a "Youth League" has been started. I hope this will keep the long view before it and work for the full freedom of all people in the State—men as well as women. It is folly to imagine that a handful of middle class people will prosper for long if the whole foundation of the State rests on poverty-stricken masses.

You are at liberty to publish our correspondence if you so desire it.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave,
New Delhi-16.
June 29, 1962.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

Possibly you know that after a long absence of nearly fifteen years from Kashmir I visited the Valley early this month for three weeks with the purpose of studying the political, ecomic and social developments during the past years. I travelled a good deal and met hundreds of public workers and a larger number of common men and women in Srinagar, in important

towns and in a few villages in the countryside. I contacted prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders and politicians of different parties and diverse shades of opinion to hear their views on current topics and the problems with which the State is confronted. I interviewed the Cabinet Ministers and other National Conference leaders to have long talks with them. I took opportunity to exchange ideas with traders and shopkeepers on the condition of business in the country. These studies and discussions have brought me to certain happy and not-so-happy conclusions which I want to place before you for your consideration.

There can bo no gainsaying the fact that Kashmir has registered progress in various directions after the termination of Dogra rule. First and foremost, it is gratifying to see that literacy is rapidly spreading to the remotest corners of the Valley. The countryside is dotted with primary schools for boys and girls. I found even the illiterate parents anxious to get their children educated. Many middle and high schools have been started mostly in spacious, newly constructed buildings within an easy reach of the surrounding villages where boys and girls desirous of learning can conveniently study free of any charge. It is a pleasant sight to see flocks of students dressed in uniforms and beaming with joy going to schools in the morning throughout the Valley.

From the early times in Kashmir history women have waged a heroic struggle to maintain their freedom and resisted the imposition of purdah. It is delightful to find that the Muslim women of the Valley are walking in the footsetps of their forbears and have refused to be influenced by extraneous forces. Whether in the bazars of the city and towns or on the fields in the villages I saw most women, both illiterate and educated, walking and talking vigorously and uninhibited as they do nowhere in this subcontinent.

Many new metalled and kucha roads in addition to the old ones are criss-crossing the entire State. There is no town and hardly any big village which is not connected with the capital by road. A transport system has been established which carries thousands of passengers everyday from one part of the State to the other. What is more, the transport is

cheap, efficient and regular. This would have been inconceiveable in pre-1947 days.

I found business brisker than ever before. Hundreds of new concerns have cropped up. New markets to accommodate business houses have been built on modern lines. Shops in Srinagar and muffasil towns are full of consumer and luxury goods which is an indication of the prosperity that the people enjoy.

Never before had I seen such swarms of trourists going through the streets of Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg and other health resorts as I witnessed this time. In the evenings especially I watched the markets with customers making purchases.

There is some improvement in the insaintary conditions of the older parts of Srinagar and other big towns like Baramulla and Anant Nag. Though the filth and squalor continue to stink, roads have been widened at places and attention is paid to imporve the unhygienic surroundings. The new colonies and some of the public buildings that have been constructed are pleasing and impressive. Much more no doubt remains to be done in this direction but the progress already achieved cannot be ignored or minimised.

How far the land and other reforms effected legally and administratively by the Government have benefitted the peasantry was difficult to assess. There was no unanimity on this point among the people I met. There was considerable divergence in the opinions of the peasants themselves in all parts of the Valley. But considering all matters relevent to this subject and comparing the peasant economy under the Dogra rule with the condition obtaining today, I do not think it would be wrong to judge that there has been a rise in the standard of living and peasants now are better fed and better clothed than previously. They are no longer harassed and only expected to pay rents and taxes to the Government and *rasum* to the State officials. The Government owns a responsibility towards them which it tries to discharge as best it can.

About industrialisation of Kashmir I have to say that it is yet in its infancy. The facts and figures obtainable from official and non-official sources did not convince me that the

plants raised in the public sector have yielded any profit; indeed, some people contest that they are a drain on the public exchequer. But many small scale industries established privately with Government subsidy by local entrepreneurs are successfully run and give employment to hundreds of landless peasants in the *muffasil* and workers in the city.

Although critics frequently assert with cogent reasoning that much more could have been accomplished with the huge finances made available by the Union Government, there is little doubt that Kashmir has, economically speaking, made an advance since 1947 when the big political change occurred in the State administration.

But, despite this change for the better, I found people generally unhappy and restless. I heard virtually every one I met complaining of unprecedented corruption in the administration from top to bottom. Some honourable exceptions are no doubt reported but they are said to be rare and only stressed to prove the rule. It was obviously very difficult for me within the short time at my disposal, to ascertain the veracity of the charge but when I mentioned it to some of the Ministers they did not seriously refute it: even Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed reluctantly admitted that the corruption had increased in certain spheres adding that in an expanding economy when huge sums had to be spent on public works it could not be helped. He stoutly denied that high ranking officers, particularly police officers, were corrupt. But I have been assured by men whose impartiality and honesty I have no reason to doubt, that under the Maharaja's rule there was much less corruption among officials than it exists at present.

A more serious grievance is about the suppression of free public opinion either through the Press or on the platform. Having been a working journalist for over thirtyfive years of which more than twenty were lived in the Valley, I can state without fear of contradiction that the Srinagar Press has deteriorated since 1947. Under the Dogra rule at least a few journals had acquired independence and courage to critically examine the doings of the administration and freely comment on the policies of the Government. Such journals have become

non-existent under the present regime. Nor can anybody dare pass remarks, however justified, from a public platform criticising the actions of certain dignitaries especially the Prime Minister of Kashmir. Baskhi Ghulam Mohammed pointed out to me that there were no special laws on the Statute Book which forbade freedom of expression ; he could not, he added, create bold and honest journalists or independent critics of the Government. That may be partly correct ; but the congenial atmosphere for the growth of free expression of opinions which was present to a considerable extent in per-1947 days has disappeared. Through violence and use of strong arm by riff raff supporters of the regime that healthy atmosphere has been by degrees smothered making it impossible for intelligent, self-respecting and free-thinking people to ventilate their inner feelings. This is very lamentable to say the least. For, lack of genuine public opinion harms the people no less than it does the Government. In the absence of an independent Press and critical public opinion the officials and non-officials have to depend for news on wild rumours and wilder commentaries on the doings of the authorities. Hardly a day passes in the Valley when a rumour or two concerning vital public interests are not spread and believed by the people to be true, at any rate, until fresh rumours replace them.

As a result of the suppression, people generally feel frustrated and demoralised. Because of the enslavement and more or less tyrannical foreign rule for centuries, the Kashmiris had been compelled to imbibe certain hateful vices of which simulation and lying were the most reprehensible. Fortunately, the revolution of 1931 in the State had effected a healthy social change and the Kashmiri had begun to recover his moral self. As one closely associated with both the communities I had happily witnessed from 1931 to 1947 our compatriots raising their heads and trying to gradually stand erect and manfully face a bully and a tyrant. It was heart-rending to observe that the wholesome process has come to an end and people have indiscernibly gone back to the old unbecoming methods of saving their skin. I believe this is the greatest loss that the Kashmiris have suffered in the new era.

During my long absence, I had heard contradictory reports about the attitude of the State Muslims towards the accession dispute and I wanted to arrive at the truth by personal enquiries in the Valley. It is no exaggeration to say that, by and large, the Kashmir Muslims are pro-Pakistan. This statement might annoy you but it would not be honest to conceal it. Why, in spite of the undoubted economic and social progress under the fostering care of the Indian Government, they are pro-Pakistan needs a thorough investigation.

Kashmir Muslims realise that India has been generous to them and they were never so well off economically in the past as they are today; they also know that their representation in State services has speedily been pushed up despite the vehement protests of the non-Muslims. Though the ultra-communalist elements never tire of impressing upon them that under Pakistan they would have been much better, the politically mature sections are fully aware of the anti-democratic tendencies in Pakistan and the mess that has been made of Azad Kashmir with the concurrence of the Pakistan authorities. It is well-known in the Valley that hundreds of Kashmiris, staunch supporters of Pakistan a few years ago, pine to return to the Valley in order to escape the poverty and lawlessness in the so-called Azad Kashmir. Nevertheless, I found paradoxically enough, most Kashmiris in the Valley still yearing for the day when the State or at least the Valley accedes to Pakistan. I consider it to be a consequence of desperation.

Normally, the issue of accession carries little interest for the ignorant peasants in the interior of the Valley who form majority of the population ; they cannot give any coherent views on the subject. The politically conscious Muslims talk passionately about it and make no attempt to hide their opinion when talking to one in whom they can safely confide.

It was, however, significant to come across many sincere and thoughtful Muslims in Srinagar and other towns with no party affiliations, who stated emphatically that the accession issue would have been forgotten by now in view of the growing prosperity of the country if, firstly the Union Government had

kept a vigilant eye on the ways of expenditure of the enormous sums that were given to the State and had created an incorruptible set-up to make the best use of the money. Secondly, they bewailed the ubridled power which the present Kashmir Government enjoyed and wielded despotically to deal with people especially the opponents of the regime. Thirdly, they insisted that the civil liberties of the people should have been respected much more in Kashmir than in the rest of India ; when the human and political rights of people are ruthlessly violated by legal and illegal means, the fair critics add, the Kashmir Muslim looks towards Pakistan as a remedy for the cure of his ills or to heal his wounds.

The Muslims alone are not frustrated and sullen; it was surprising to learn that the Pandit community is also resentful and every individual member of the community I met accused Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed for his partiality, unfairness and, worse still, for spreading communal virus. It is notable that not a few among the Pandits ruefully recalled the days of Sheikh Abdullah's regime when, they said, better justice was administered and the policy of non-interference in departmental work was pursued. One constantly talked-of complaint of the disgruntled Pandits is, as of yore, that they do not get ample share in State services and other profit-giving works in the gift of the Government. When I mentioned this to Bakshi Sahib he gave me a copy of a statement containing facts and figures to prove that the Pandits are getting much more than their numbers entitle them to have. This, I believe, is not far from the truth. It can be assaverated that Pandits were never so well represented, so far as State services are concerned, as they are today. The National Conference Government has been liberal to them.

Attempting to understand the real mind of the Pandits, I observed that what they in fact dislike is the speedy growth of Muslim representation in the State services; the Pandits fail to realize that this is inevitable in the changed national and international circumstances. I have been one of those non-Muslims who always believed since the first outbreak of political disturbances in 1931, that for the smooth, peaceful and

healthy development of State politics a larger number of Muslims should be recruited in the services. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that this end is being progressively achieved though the methods often employed are not above reproach.

The genuine grievance of the Kahsmiri Pandits is occasioned, in my opinion, by the absence of rule of law in different spheres of administration. This grievance, however, is not confined to Pandits and is commonly vioced by all classes and sections of the people in the Valley and, I presume, in all parts of the State. The share that is alloted to the Pandits in the services and, indeed, in any branch of public works, does not go by merit but by jobbery. The undeserved supporters of the ruling party come first and unqualified kinsmen or friends of the influential National Conference leaders come next. The man or woman with merit is elbowed out. This causes much heart-burning.

One problem worrying the poorer classes of the people and disconcerting to the Government is the ever-rising prices of the essential commodities of life. Kashmir was famed for the abundance and cheapness of fruits, vegetables, milk and even food grains. Those days are past let us hope not for ever. Thanks to the special subsidy granted by the Centre to put down the price of rice, the Kashmiris can still have their staple diet at a reasonable price. But other necessities of life are available at higher prices than we get them in Delhi. Fresh milk is a rare commodity ; imagine the Kashmiris forced to consume tinned dry stuff in place of cows fragrant milk.

It would appear that certain laws, rules and regulations in Kashmir are made for breach and not for observance. Scores of cases were brought to my notice when individuals were peremptorily deprived of their rights at the behests of the men in power,

Bakshi Sahib is reported to be the worst sinner in this respect, He is the final authority and he frequently behaves as if he is a law unto himself. There is an expression often used by the Kashmiris; "Bakshi Sahib Ki Mehrbani" which means that if laws and rules do not help in the achievement of one's

purpose a word from Bakshi Sahib can. The intensity of ill-feeling caused can be guessed when it is known that there is no level at which Bakshi Sahib does not interfere. Appointment of even lowest paid officials and admission into colleges and technical institutes are made under his direction and with his approval.

Because of the frustration, demoralisation and resentment stated above, the people as a whole did not appear to me to be happy. I found most of them restless. In these circumstances the Pakistan propaganda and the debates in the Security Council carry sufficient weight and make the Kashmiris uncertain about their future.

Although on the whole the people continue to live in friendship and maintain the traditional communal harmony and concord especially in the countryside, I was sorry to note that in certain sections of educated Hindus and Muslims in the city and towns aggressive communalism is raising its vicious head to the dismay of the advocates of secularism and the builders of democratic set-up.

On the fundamental issues facing the country I found the members of the State Government divided. The decisions of the Cabinet do not carry the unanimous support of all. The choking atmosphere in the Valley is intensely disliked by some while others are complacent about the state of affairs as it exists. For one reason or another every Minister is ill at ease in his seat of power.

It is unsurprising that many people should look increasingly towards Sheikh Abdullah for deliverance. Long incarceration would have in any case earned him some of the old popularity. But the short comings of the present Government have compelled the people to remember him with respect. He is no longer unpopular even among some sections of the Hindus and the Sikhs. People seem to have almost forgotten his faults and foibles and the blunders he committed during the days of power. To the Muslims he has again become a symbol of national independence.

In my talks with hundreds of politically conscious workers, I have formed an impression that if an understanding is arrived at with Sheikh Abdullah much of the tension in the Valley

will abate, the accession issue will cease to have the significance and importance it has at present.

I do not know how far Sheikh Abdullah is prepared to adapt himself to the changed conditions. But knowing him, as I do, I believe he is often pre-eminently reasonable and quite receptive to sane advice; only he should not be rubbed on the wrong side by those who approach him for an honourable settlement.

Some known and reliable supporters of Sheikh Abdullah who are regarded as his close confidents told me that for some time he had been reconsidering his position and that if a sympathetic approach is made to him by a friendly person there is good reason to believe that he will be prepared to enter into an understanding with the Union Government which may be honourable to all concerned. Let me hasten to add that my informants are, as I am, strongly of the view that ultimately the future of Kashmir shall have to be forged by the people themselves. We do not at all propose to surrender the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris but we believe it shall have to be exercised in a different setting without creating any ill will or disturbing the peace of the subcontinent. We believe the freely expressed will of the people alone can bring an abiding solution of the Kashmir problem. To this, I think, no democrat will have any objection. Making this principle as a firm basis of an understanding it is not impossible to utilise the services of Sheikh Abdullah for building of a democratic social structure in Kashmir.

In this connectian I was agreeably surprised to note that if an understanding with Sheikh Abdullah becomes possible even such fanatic pro-Pakistan elements as led by Mr. Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Kara, President Kashmir Political Conference, may be amenable to reason and contribute their assistance to the solution of the Kashmir problem acceptable to India.

In my talks with Mr. G. M. Sadiq, Education Minister, it was suggested to me by him that I should meet Sheikh Abdullah and try to arrive at such an agreement. Mr. Sadiq recalled the days when both of us successfully persuaded Sheikh Abdullah to convert the Muslim Conference into the National

Conference. One other member of the Cabinet too supported this move. Though I have not met Sheikh Sahib for a pretty long time and have had various differences with him while he was in office, I was prepared to undertake the mission. Bakshi Sahib was, however, reluctant to grant me the required permission to meet Sheikh Abdullah and the idea had to be dropped, at any rate for the time being.

It is my considered view that so long as Sheikh Abdullah is behind the bars political conditions in Kashmir cannot return to normal, the Pakistan slogan will continue to have an appeal and the element of instability in life cannot be eliminated.

Summarising my findings finally I might say that the situation in Kashmir is fraught with grave consequences but is not beyond the power of wise statesmanship to control it.

Since you are making another trip to Srinagar during the next few days I thought of sending you this brief report for your perusal and consideration.

If you need it I can make personally or in writing a fuller report of what I saw in the Valley during the days of my visit.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Pahalgam (Kashmir)
July 6, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz,
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Shri Bazaz,

I have received your letter of the 29th June giving your impressions of a visit to Kashmir. I have read your long letter with interest.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
July 18, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 6th instant and am glad to learn that you read my long letter containing impressions of my Kashmir tour with interest. I do not know whether you have had leisure to consider the points raised by me and if you contemplate taking any action to remove the genuine grievances of the Kashmir people; but as I deem it essential for the building of a democratic structure in the State that the measures are adopted to end frustration and demoralisation which have, in my opinion, overwhelmed the people, I take once again the liberty of addressing a letter to you.

That the Kashmir Government is earnest in its endeavours to improve the wretched condition of the poverty-stricken and backward classes and to reconstruct the economic and social life of the people on the whole, only those can doubt whose minds are closed. I confess my views have undergone a change in certain respects after my recent visit to the Valley. No impartial critic can deny that in its efforts the Government has already achieved an appreciable success. At the same time, however, it cannot escape the eye of a keen observer that in implementing the plans of development the Government is not receiving full co-operation of the people and therefore the results are not commensurate with the endeavours made or the money spent on the welfare projects.

I do not hesitate to admit that it is easy to blame the authorities, as is being commonly done in Kashmir, for their sins of omission and commission; it is easier still to find fault with everything that the Government does. But no fair-minded person can help feeling that the Kashmir Government is functioning under serious handicaps mostly psychological in nature, and its policies and actions can justly be judged only by keeping this fact constantly in view.

Wherever I went in the Valley I found that despite the seeming tranquillity people are passing through a period of nerve-raking tension and vague uncertainty which appears to have become interminable with the result that normalcy in the real sense does not return and no smooth working is possible in different spheres of social life; there is little likelihood of national institutions being fostered and grown in the country so long as the present conditions last.

The main cause of vexation alike for the Government and the people is the unresolved accession issue. On the surface it seems to be a past story as some of the ruling party men publicly assert and want the world to believe, but I discovered to my dismay during the course of my close study that there is hardly a person in the State at any rate among the politically conscious sections, who is not perturbed by its existence. Despite what wishful thinkers may say the State politics is dominated by this question and there is no aspect of life in Kashmir which is not affected by it. It would be courting self-deception to conceal this fact and dangerous to run away from it.

I do not want to dwell at length upon the many-sided evil which the prolongation of the accession issue produces; it will make this letter too long. Suffice it to say that the mutual suspicions which are a marked characteristic of life in Kashmir are an unwholesome outcome of the issue. If the Hindus distrust the Muslims and vice versa, it is because of it; if the Kashmiris consider themselves as something different from the Indians the reason is the unsolved accession dispute; and if the Government is compelled to curtail civil liberties and resort to repressive methods in dealing with the opponents the reason is to be sought nowhere else but in the dispute. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's insistence on maintaining the separate identity of Kashmir despite his undoubted desire for national integration may be easily traced to it. As a matter of fact, the accession dispute is proving a bane of progress in the State.

It is therefore difficult to believe that there can be any real advance in Kashmir until somehow or other the accession dispute is ended or otherwise dealt with.

Unfortunately it is becoming increasingly clear that the Security Council has failed to produce any formula acceptable to India and Pakistan which could settle the issue. Nor does is appear to be feasible that direct negotiations or talks between the two countries can bring forth any better result because both the parties have adopted positions mutually exclusive with no common ground on which to base an agreement.

Pondering over this situation while in Kashmir, I arrived at the conclusion that the issue can be disposed of, if at all, by the Kashmiris themselves. My discussions and studies in the Valley have confirmed me in this finding. I have already told you that the Kashmiris realise that they are making steady progress economically. But they feel sore primarily on account of the loss of fundamental rights and civil liberties and the prevalence of hooligan element in public life. The suffocating political atmosphere in the country is making them desperate. If this by-no-means-an-unfounded grievance could be redressed I think it would not be long before normalcy could be restored and people made happy and co-operative in their attitude.

Now I must frankly State that the Kashmir Government is in no mood to accede to the wishes of the people in this respect ; at least some of the more powerful members in the State Cabinet believe that doing so would afford latitude to the hostile elements to indulge in subversive activities thereby endangering the security of the State and stability of the country. This policy has therefore been tenaciously pursued for the past fifteen years and the day does not seem near when it may be changed. It is not realized that through the enforcement of this policy the Government is progressively alienating the sympathies of the people and generating tremendous ill-will against India though outwardly it may appear that there is general satisfaction and nothing to worry about.

Every Indian patriot ardently desires the accession issue to be shelved and forgotten, especially by the Kashmiris. The State people can be expected to forget it only when they are satisfied with the doings of the present regime and are reasonably happy. So far as the economic and social life of the

Kashmiris is concerned I have no doubt they are grateful to India for the little progress they have made ; they hope to be more prosperous in the near future ; but political persecution and suppression of free opinion coupled with harassment by goonda elements is, besides making them sullen and resentful, neutralising the good effects of the benevolent deeds of the Union Government. Whenever a talk of economic welfare plans follows political polemics even many sensible Kashmiris would stridently deny that there has been any improvement in the wretched condition of the masses. The wounds inflicted by the repressive policy remind the Kashmirs that their future is yet unsettled and they begin hopefully to look towards Pakistan. Thus the purpose of the policy of suppression is defeated and instead of putting unfriendly elements under check and control, the Government is only strengthening hostility and subversion in the State. Far from being forgotten, the accession issue remains fresh in the minds of the people creating tension, uncertainty and unhappiness.

Thus by adopting and doggedly pursuing this policy we are caught in a vicious circle.

As is well-known Kashmir has produced intellectual stalwarts is bygone days. One of our great aspirations has been to resurrect cultural atmosphere enabling local artists to freely indulge in acts of creativity. But frightened people cannot be mentally alert or intellectually fertile. It is not surprising that since 1947 the Kashmiris have contributed almost nothing to any branch of literature which may be considered original or outstanding. Kashmiri has been graciously recognised as one of the national languages in the Indian Constitution but has the extra-ordinary grant of the honoured place improved its literary importance in any way ? Kashmir, the ancient seat of learning, is still passing through the deep shadows of medieval darkness when despots enchaining the souls of the people snapped their links with the cultural past.

The main objective of the national struggle in Kashmir has been the establishment of a democratic setup through which people can expect social justice and cultural development which was denied to them for centuries. We are little interes-

ted in the issue of affiliation of our homeland to this or that country. History has thrust the accession dispute on us against our will and we intensely desire to get rid of it as early as we can.

I fully understand that the problem is ticklish and the situation in the Valley extremely delicate. It is easy to sermonise and gratuitously offer advice to the Government which is functioning under obvious handicaps. But if we are determined that Kashmir should march hand in hand with the rest of the country in building a democratic society, the vicious circle shall have to be broken ; courage has to be taken in both hands to face the grave situation and remedy it.

For fifteen years a certain definitive policy has been unswervingly pursued in the hope that the accession issue if not solved will go to the background, normalcy will return and civil liberties of the people restored. More than a score arbitrary laws (Enemy Agents Act, Security Act, Preventive Detention Act etc.), Rules and Notifications peculiar to Kashmir and operating nowhere else in India, have been in force during this period arming the executive with unlimited powers to indiscriminately torture people and make them loyal to India. As has happened at all times and in all places governed by such draconian measures, innocent people have suffered along with the suspects, the former in a much larger number. Fifteen years is quite a long period to give a trial to a government policy. It is significant that not a single repressive enactment professedly promulgated to meet a national emergency has been withdrawn or amended to soften its rigours. In fact, fresh rules and orders are added every year to the old ones to fortify the policy. Only the other day (on July 5) a notification was issued declaring that the "Kashmir Government servants who are reasonably suspected to be engaged in subversive activities or associated with those engaged in subversive activities will be compulsorily retired from Government service." The Notification seeks to protect the security of the State. Nevertheless, it is an eloquent testimony that the repressive policy has failed to enlist the willing loyalty of the educated classes and the co-operation of the people. If any one

thinks that the time for liberalisation of the policy will come when Pakistan is out of the way, permit me to point out that in that case we shall have to wait till the Greek Calends.

I submit that it is time this barren policy is abandoned and the alternative of a liberal policy is given a trial. Let the Union Government be as generous and large hearted politically as it has been in the economic fields. I have no doubt in my mind that the change will produce better results. How this can be done is another matter and if you desire me to submit suggestions and proposals for the purpose I can surely do so.

Whilst on the subject of civil liberties, I would like to reiterate my suggestion about an understanding with Sheikh Abdullah. If it is true that he has been reconsidering the political situation in the State and there is a possibility of an agreement with him which may be honourable for all concerned and in no way anti-democratic, the opportunity should not be lost. In any case, there is no harm in permitting some suitable person to make an approach and find out the truth. If Sheikh Sahib remains irreconcileable and impervious to reason, which I hope he will not be, the matter will rest where it is. But I have sufficient and substantial reasons to believe that in the changed circumstances, he will not fail his people and will willingly offer his talents and labours for building a free democratic order in his homeland.

Restoration of civil liberties and free expression of opinion is, no doubt, of primary importance in gaining voluntary support of the people, but I think other matters of lesser importance, lesser only by comparison, cannot be overlooked. In conducting the affairs of the State at all levels, Rule of Law should have supremacy without which even the elementary stages of democratic life are not possible to establish. Not only should the members of the Government, dignitaries of the ruling party and high officials of the State without exception be compelled to strictly follow the laws, rules and regulations in force, but the strong arm methods employed by unruly elements among the supporters of the National Conference with the connivance of their bosses should also be ruthlessly put down.

There is a general belief that elections in the State are rigged and the supervision of the Indian Election Commissioner has made no difference. When I was in Srinagar the means adopted by the ruling party to win a bye-election had assumed the proportions of a scandal. This impression needs to be removed.

With the mollification of the State people in general and all important elements in Kashmir politics in particular, I think the accession issue will cease to overwhelm the common mind and may be considered to have been virtually disposed of.

Indubitably, interested quarters will not give up their stand; nor can we shut up all mouths; some will continue to raise the known slogans. But when the preponderant majority of Kashmiris is happy and satisfied with nothing important to complain about they will not be receptive to false cries, and appeals to keep the accession issue alive will fall on deaf ears.

While discussing the question of denial of civil liberties with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed at his residence in Srinagar, he vehemently held that in no case would he tolerate any one in the State who supported accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. For such people, he added, there would be no liberty, they would be crushed. I rejoined politely that no democrat could relish this attitude of the head of the government. Rather than threaten any individual with the forfeiture of his liberty, the better course would be to create such conditions in the State that pro-Pakistan elements will find little response to their subversive slogans and people will voluntarily refuse to hear them. Bakshi Sahib rediculed this view and contemptuously retorted that it was an utopian aim impossible to attain. Nevertheless, I believe that after the failure of the repressive policy this course alone is indicated by wise statesmanship and I implore you to give it a trial.

In Kashmir, as outside the State, I met many honest and intelligent people shaking their heads in utter disbelief that the State Muslims would ever convictionally support India even after the reorientation of the Government policy on liberal

lines. It is commonly held by the sceptics that the Muslims, guided by religious consideration, will under any circumstance desire Kashmir to accede to Pakistan. There is sufficient force is this argument and I do not want to underrate it. But depending on a past experience, I can confidently say that if proper measures are adopted for the achievement of the noble aim of influencing Muslim opinion in the right direction it is not impossible to do so.

Thirty years ago, we launched upon a similar adventure in Kashmir in July 1932 when we decided to secularise the State politics which had then come heavily under communal influences.

No one excepting Sheikh Abdullah and myself, guessed the Muslim Conference could be converted into a non-communal organisation. Do you remember tha letter which both of us sent to you jointly in June 1936 informing you about our intentions and the difficulties we faced in pushing through our plans. You were the first distinguished public man to lend your robust support to the move and bless it. Ironically, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed declared the idea as impractical and opposed it as harmful for the State Muslims when in June 1938 the proposal came up for discussion before the working committee of the Muslim Conference. Of course he is now the staunch standard-bearer of Nationalism and cannot brook communalism, much less Muslim Communalism, in the State.

Seven years patient and persistent labour ultimately bore fruit and on 10th June 1939 the Muslim Conference yielded to the call of Democracy when 173 delegates participating in the deliberations of the special session of the Conference voted the conversion of the organisation into a national body; barely 3 votes were recorded against the proposal.

I daresay we are confronted with a similar situation today. Relying on the experience gained by this unprecedented historical event let the Government of India shed the distrust of Kashmir Muslims and try to win them by liberalism when repression has proved unavailing and futile if not destructive and ruinous.

It would be the unique triumph of Democracy when communalists are given fullest freedom to peacefully propagate their views but they find themselves completely ineffective. With fullest freedom of expression restored, we shall have laid securely and well the foundations of Democracy in Kashmir. My proposals, it will be seen, are directed towards the fulfilment of that objective.

I have mentioned the other grievances of the people in the Valley in my last letter and I need not lay any stress on them here; for, though important in themselves, they lose weight in comparison with the grave issue of the fundamental rights. Besides, I think they are mostly born of the unsettled dispute about accession.

With the liberalisation of the Government policy as envisaged above, I am very hopeful that the Kashmiris will offer unstinted co-operation for the implementation of the big economic projects and the money granted by the Centre will be most usefully spent. What is more, the shrivelled soul of the people will be liberated and enormous intellectual and spiritual forces released for the promotion of cultural renaissance which is our greatest need.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Anand Bhavan
Allahabad
July 26, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Prem Nathji,

I have your letter of July 18 which I have read with interest and care. It is a little difficult for me to send you a full answer as it would mean writing out at considerable length.

But I can assure you that I am very largely in agreement with you about civil liberties and freedom of expression. I

may, however, point out to you that even in the most advanced countries in the world where a State is in peril, such as in war time, freedom of expression is limited. In the United States of America in many ways, even now, freedom of activity and expression is limited insofar as Communists are concerned. In fact, in a democracy there is grave danger of such limitations. In India at present there is a strong demand for action to be taken against communalists and communal organisations, also against the DMK in the South. I have resisted it but I realise that occasions may arise when some such action may have to be taken. Much depends on the growth of liberal ideas in the country and the general atmosphere that prevails. Repeatedly we have seen liberal ideas being suppressed because they were considered dangerous for the state ; but my inclination is towards giving the largest measure of freedom.

You wrote to me about the accession of the State being not complete. I do not quite understand this. It is complete. It is true, however, that a measure of autonomy is given to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in regard to a few matters unlike the other States. This does not limit the accession in any way. It is the result of historical circumstances. As a matter of fact, during the last few years, much advance has been made in this matter. The Supreme Court, Elections, the Auditor General etc. function in the State as in other States. The whole trend, therefore, is to bring the Jammu and Kashmir State nearer to the rest of India. What remains are relatively unimportant matters and gradually they are lessening.

While accession is complete, it is true that Pakistan is there to create trouble which it continues to do in a variety of ways. There is hardly a day when intruders from Pakistan do not indulge in some bomb outrage or other. The speeches delivered from Pakistan go on referring to jehad and war. All this does create a certain abnormal atmosphere.

The real problem of Kashmir is whether it continues as a secular state as the rest of India or not. This affects the whole of India because secularism in India also has not got such firm foundation as I would like it to have. Anything happening

in Kashmir will undoubtedly affect the rest of India with its vast Muslim population.

I hope you do not mind my sending your letters to me to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 4, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

I have to thank you for your letter of 26th July and am glad to learn that you are very largely in agreement with me about civil liberties and freedom of expression. I should have felt happier if you would have given some indication as to how the fundamental rights of the Kashmiris of which they have been mostly deprived for the past fifteen years, can be restored. In this respect you have maintained a studious silence which is rather disheartening though I can well appreciate your reluctance to enter into any controversy on the subject. But, as I have been at pains to explain, the real integration of Kashmir with India depends on the restoration of these rights. I earnestly expected you will kindly consider my suggestions regarding a change in the administrative policy of Kashmir to make it liberal and tolerant of dissent.

However, by stressing that "the real problem in Kashmir is whether it continues as secular state" you have put the vexing issue in its proper perspective. This question faces every lover of freedom in the Valley. Communalism is the antithesis of democracy and, therefore, it has to be fought and destroyed root and branch in whatever shape or form it presents itself. I have held this view for more than thirty-five years in the past. During the early thirties soon after the freedom struggle was born in Kashmir our sky remained for a period overcast

with dark clouds of communalism which vitiated public life and caused mutual distrust, bitterness and turmoil. Happily, however, we successfully resisted the evil forces and with the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference the State politics was formally secularised. I say "formally" because even after establishment of the popular non-communal organisation, the task of making the people understand the high ideal of secularism and how closely it is related to democracy and freedom was yet to be accomplished; the real secularisation which comes by a thorough knowledge of the nature of human values remained to be achieved. Unfortunately this aim has eluded our grasp even to this day. Your reminder is therefore apt and timely.

There is a substantial volume of goodwill for India in all classes of the Kashmiris including the Muslims. The Kashmiris recognise that they benefited by the several badly needed and long felt reforms which were speedily introduced in teeth of stiff opposition from the reactionaries by the present Government with the willing approval of the Union Government. Not only are the Kashmiris grateful for the tremendous efforts that are being made to reconstruct their economy by investment of huge sums and the special attention that is given to the State; they also do not fail to note how heroically the Indian Government is holding the fort of democracy when liberal institutions have been engulfed by the rising tide of militarism in many Asian countries, particularly those nearer home. That India has freely adopted a democratic constitution more than a decade ago and is now quietly bending her energies to make it a success endears her to the Kashmir people. Like in other places outside Kashmir, many young men and women in the Valley have been influenced. by the inspiring ideals and liberating ideas expounded in your writings. Such people notwithstanding the foolish deeds of the National Conference leaders, still retain faith in your sense of justice and statesmanship.

Believing that the most important problem confronting us in Kashmir is whether the State will continue to remain secular we may enquire if proper steps are being taken to

make the people secular-minded. I am sure you will be the last person to say that Kashmir can remain secular without the people having any faith in the principle of secularism. Yet the fact is that the National Conference leaders are more anxious to preserve the form of the secular state and care little to improve its content. Indeed their doings have made people less secular-oriented than they were in pre-1947 days. From what I observed during the course of my extensive tour in the Valley I painfully observed that Muslims were in fact losing the little faith in secularism which they had previously imbibed. They are ridiculing the idea and identifying it with the repression, persecution and hooliganism. There is sufficient justification in saying that secularism in Kashmir today is superficial; it has no solid basis to stand upon. Under the least pressure from any side it is bound to crumble bringing disaster in its train.

The unwise handling of the political situation since 1947 is, in my opinion, mainly responsible for undermining the foundations of secularism in Kashmir. Nowhere have the sympathies of the ruled been won by the rulers through the employment of harsh measures. You know better that History, past and present, is replete with instances that minds and hearts of men have never changed through coercion. What is going on in Pakistan is a fresh lesson. Suppression by marshall law for four long and gruelling years has in no way improved the thinking of the people in that country as the army men expected and claimed; it has only induced the Pakistanis to adhere more closely to their old frequently denounced political beliefs. No wonder a similar process is taking place in Kashmir. The repressive policy is destroying our cherished dreams and demolishing the high hopes we have raised for years of building a secular state there.

The policy was bad both in its conception and execution from the start. Having preyed upon thousands of the Kashmiris for six years it claimed in 1953 as its victim some of its sponsors like Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and others. No freedom lover could ever have supported this policy. But I might concede that in the beginning when the subcontinent

was partitioned and holocausts were witnessed in both parts, freedom had to be limited and extra-ordinary powers pressed into service to maintain law and order. But such emergency measures should always be of temporary nature to be withdrawn at the earliest opportunity; they cannot and should not be borne on the Statute Book permanently. Fifteen years have gone by and it is repeatedly announced that normalcy has returned to the State, yet not one of the numerous harsh laws or regulations is abrogated or amended. In fact, fresh arbitrary powers are being assumed by the Kashmir authorities to deal with the suspected opponents of the regime.

You have referred to the communalists and the DMK in your letter and reminded me that "in India at present there is a strong demand for action to be taken against communalists and communal organisations also against DMK in the South." You add that you have resisted the demand so far but you realise "that occasions may arise when some such action may have to be taken." Unfortunately it is true that "liberal ideas have been suppressed because they were considered dangerous for the State" and it is a great consolation that despite undesireable activities of communalists and separatists your "inclination is towards giving the largest measure of freedom."

Among the newly liberated nations of Afro-Asia region it is great good fortune of India that she has been able to grant and jealously guard the fundamental rights of her people and build a democratic structure. The structure is not perfect and has several defects but India excels her neighbours in having successfully held aloft the banner of Parliamentary democracy even when one after another many Asian countries failed to protect constitutional government. India stands like a beacon-light in a stormy occean at night. I dislike communalism and have no sympathy with the separatist tendencies of DMK but I detest views being smothered merely because they are unpalatable. Of course when a party or a person launches upon a violent campaign to practise ideas it is a different matter. Nevertheless it will be an evil day indeed when you will be compelled to adopt measures for the curtailment of liberties of groups or parties whose ideas are considered harmful. Sinister

and flagitious ideas have to be vanquished not by rod but by nobler ideas and large hearted treatment. I am firmly of the opinion that instead of suppressing bodies whatever their aims it is advisable to find out why they are able to attract large or small sections of people towards them. If the genuine grievances of the misguided populace are redressed the slogans of mischief-mongers are rendered ineffective and their appeals bring forth little response. It is not fully realised how your liberal attitude towards your opponents is making the Kashmiris respect India and its political philosophy.

I have re-read my previous letter to you and see that nowhere in it have I stated that the accession of the State is incomplete. Where I referred indirectly to the accession was when I said that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's insistence on maintaining the separate identity of Kashmir despite his undoubted desire for national integration may be easily traced to it (the accession issue). I appreciated Bakshi Sahib's insistence and reluctance to get the Article 370 (granting special status to Kashmir) in the Indian Constitution deleted because any prudent person in his position would do the same. The main reason for Sheikh Abdullah's political somersault in 1953 was, I believe, that he failed to cope with the rising pro-Pakistan Muslim opinion. As long as the pull of accession continues to exist in the Valley, no Muslim leader with desire for popularity can afford to support total absorption of Kashmir in India.

There is an impression in Kashmir that for whatever the National Conference leaders do, it carries your seal of approval. It is a common complaint that whenever you pay a visit to the Valley you publicly lend your fullest support to the Government and the National Conference. You never utter a word to mollify the victimised sections however genuine their grievances may be I heard honest and sincere people going to the length of asserting that you are deliberately conniving at the hooliganism for which certain National Conference elements have earned notoriety. I know this is an entirely mistaken belief. But no argument to disabuse their minds of it carries weight with the victims. Apart from being unfair to you, it is damaging to the fair name of India and is causing dissipation of the goodwill

referred to above. What the Kashmiris repeatedly ask is why cannot India afford to give us even as much freedom of expression and civil liberties as are enjoyed by the people in the rest of the country ; why cannot the general elections be held in Kashmir as freely as in other States ? I must candidly admit that there is no satisfactory answer to this question.

I fully realise and so do many sensible public workers belonging to several opposition parties in Kashmir that it is not feasible to effect a total change in the present set-up nor is it advisable to overhaul the administration all at once. Sudden and complete reversal of the policy will be accompanied by grave risks which may defeat the very purpose for which the changes are sought to be made. But it is essential that a start should be made in gradually liberalising the policy by abrogating or amending the laws which have abridged the liberty of the individual or armed the executive with wide powers. Moreover, the malpractices mentioned in my previous letters should be totally stopped. What is more, the people should know that the old coercive methods are being replaced by a new enlightened policy which will assume vaster proportions as the people display their capacity for using the liberties properly. But in any case there should be a basic and qualitative change in the approach of the Government in regard to the fundamental rights of the people.

I have no doubt that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and most of his colleagues in the Government and the National Conference sincerely hold that the path chosen by them will ultimately lead Kashmir to democracy ; but I am equally certain that their policy is helping none but those who are bent upon destroying secularism in the State and thereby ending all chances of building democracy. The communalists thrive on the discontent of the people ; they take the fullest advantage of the widespread resentment and frustration to further their nefarious plans.

In my discussions with several members of the Kashmir Cabinet I found that some of them realize that the present approach has failed to produce good results and they appeared to me to be inclined to reconsider the matter in the light of the

experience gained by them during the past 15 years. But the majority of the members are deadset against any change. It would appear that those who start, for any reason, resorting to marshal's baton for maintaining political authority soon become fond of it and end by feeling helpless in its absence. It is dismaying to note that the leaders of the National Conference cannot realize that by pursuing the wrong policy they are fast losing the credit they had earned through the good work done in the economic, educational and social fields.

The members of the Kashmir Government, it is painful to observe, are caught in a web woven by themselves. For the establishment of secularism and advancement of democracy they have to be disentangled. Who but you can liberate them by wise guidance and friendly advice when they have become incapable of seeing the light.

I know Kashmir is not yet out of woods. I do not deny that mischievous, unpatriotic and anti-democratic elements exist in the country which are on the lookout for an opportunity to subvert the State and create chaos, disorder and anarchy. I am also aware of the fact, as pointed out by you, that even in advanced countries when state is in peril, as in war time, freedom of expression is limited. Technically, Kashmir is in a state of cease-fire and hostilities have not fully ended yet. Nevertheless, I think there are other important considerations which should weigh with us when dealing with the Kashmir issue.

To make Kashmir's accession to India everlasting it is essential that the Kashmiris should feel convinced that economically as well as politically they will enjoy every freedom by remaining a part of the great Indian Nation at any rate to the extent as provided in the Constitution for the rest of India. As far as economy is concerned let me reiterate at the risk of being repititious, that they are convinced that their future is bright and they can reasonably expect increasing prosperity in the future through this association. But about politics they hold quite the contrary views with the result that even goodwill mentioned above is being slowly frittered away. This is very regrettable to say the least and should be a cause for deep concern.

Much ground has been lost during the last few years by remaining complacent and reposing almost fatalistic trust in the seeming tranquillity in the Valley which I daresay is dangerously deceptive. It is already very late to do the right thing. No doubt risks are involved in making a new approach. But since the policy incessantly pursued till now has failed to achieve the desired objective, wisdom consists in giving a chance to the only other alternative we have. When all is said and done it is delightful to find that the heart of Kashmir is still sound. But the sands are running out and before long when India wakes up as it must someday in the near future if not today, it may be too late. No liberalisation of policy may be able to repair the damage that would have been done to the friendly relations between India and Kashmir till then. So I beseech you that some measures may be adopted to rectify the situation here and now. If secularism fails in Kashmir it will not only prove ruinous to the cause of Democracy in that State, the future of secularism in India will also be imperilled as you have rightly remarked.

The goodwill for India and the faith in your sense of justice are more powerful forces to keep alight a bit of secular spirit in Kashmir today than the might of the Indian armies, the fear of the Kashmir Government and the lathis of the National Conference ruffians. Let us not waste these two valuable assets.

I see no objection in your sending my letters to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, if you so desire it.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Prime Ministers House
NEW DELHI
August 7, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz,
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Shri Bazaz,

I have your letter of August 4. I am afraid it is difficult to write at length to you in regard to the various points you

have raised. I agree with you that much can be done in Kashmir to improve the situation. I think gradually something has been done. It is true that political liberty does not exist there in the same measure as in the rest of India. At the same time, there is much more of it than there used to be.

At the present moment, there are continuous threats from the Pakistan side of war of some kind or other.

As you have no objection to it, I am sending your letters to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 18, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

From today's newspapers I learn that a five-man delegation of the Jammu Praja Parishad led by Shri Premnath Dogra has submitted a memorandum to President Radhakrishnan urging that the constitutional clause giving Kashmir a special status be removed and that the State law defining the rights of a permanent Kashmir citizen abrogated.

It is reported that the delegation has already interviewed some of the Central Cabinet ministers and is soon meeting you to press these demands. I am sure that no hasty action will be taken in the matter. I, however, thought I might bring certain important points to your notice in this connection.

Whatever the sins of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, it must be said in fairness to him that he is making supreme efforts to keep Kashmir with India. It can be done through force but the wiser course would be to do so with free will of the State people. Not much effort has to be made to secure the support of the Hindus for the purpose, but it is not easy to have the

goodwill of Muslims. Despite the repressive policy which he has been pursuing all these years and with which I am in total disagreement, I think Bakshi Sahib is sincerely anxious to make the Kashmir Muslims appreciate that integration with India is more beneficial to them than accession to Pakistan. For this endeavour he deserves praise of the patriotic Hindus and not brickbats as are time and again hurled at him.

There is no doubt that the Article in the Constitution granting special status to Kashmir as well as the State law defining citizenship are helping the leaders of the National Conference to wean away the Muslims from pro-Pakistan inclinations. If, therefore, the demands of the Jammu Hindus are granted it will weaken the Kashmir Government and possibly bring about its downfall under enraged public opinion with unpredictable consequences for the State politics. The demands of Jammu Hindus are not unreasonable but dealing with delicate situation as we have in Kashmir it is prudent to bide time. Impatience is bound to defeat its own purpose.

As you pointed out in your letter of the 26th July 1962, the accession of Kashmir is complete. The Article 370 does not in any way hamper the supervisory work of the Union Government. But it does help the Kashmir leaders to satisfy the national yearning of the local Muslims for autonomy. With a more favourable situation in future when public opinion becomes dependable it might be possible to do away with this distinction but under the present circumstances I think it would not be advisable to consider the ultra-nationalistic demands of the Praja Parishad however logical they might appear theoretically.

Considering the incessant hostile propaganda from outside and the heavy pressure from inside, the Kashmir Government is doing a heroic job ; let its difficulties not be augmented by adopting measures which are by no means urgent.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Prime Minister's House
New Delhi
21st August, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Prem Nathji,

I have your letter of August 18th. It is true that I had a small deputation the other day led by Shri Prem Nath Dogra. I explained to him that what he said was not advisable. As a matter of fact much has been done in spite of Article in the Constitution which is supposed to give a special status to Kashmir and gradually what little remains will also go. The question is more a sentimental one than anything else. Sentiment is sometimes important, but we have to weigh both sides and I think that no change should be made in this matter at present.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
August 25, 1963

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

It was an agreeable surprise to learn that you have accepted the resignation of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and some one else is to succeed him as the Prime Minister of Kashmir. I feel that the step you have taken is fraught with far reaching consequences for good or evil of the country depending on the way the opportunity it affords is utilised by those who will be put at the helm of affairs in the Kashmir State.

In the letters which I wrote to you last year after my visit to the Valley, I had tried to impress upon you that though

Kashmir people were grateful to India for the generous financial aid which was given for their economic and social welfare, they were unhappy because freedom of opinion was almost crushed there and coercive methods were employed to suppress any disagreement on vital issues with the rulers. Besides there was widespread corruption at all levels in the administration. I had pleaded for a liberalisation of the policy and adoption of some means to mollify the people.

After going through my report you agreed with me by saying that "much can be done in Kashmir to improve the situation". I imagine the time has arrived when effect can be given to your noble intentions.

It would be unfair to deny that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed has done some good work in the past years. He has established one of the finest transport systems in the State ; cottage industries have received a fillip under his fostering care ; and the tourist industry has enormously developed since he became the Prime Minister. But somehow Bakshi Sahib has come to believe that anyone who disagrees with him is not a patriot and that law and order in Kashmir cannot be maintained without freely using the marshal's baton. With this approach Bakshi Sahib has been successful only in alienating the sympathies of the people and making Muslims hostile to India.

The failure of the recent talks between the representatives of India and Pakistan has shown that there is no meeting ground on which the Kashmir problem could be settled. It is hardly likely that mediation of a third party which U.S.A. and U.K. are sponsoring can lead to any better results. India is therefore left to her own resources to end the problem. Our urgent task is to wean away the Muslims from Pro-Pakistan inclinations. May I humbly suggest that this is not an impossible undertaking provided we are determined to meet the situation with courage and liberal statesmanship.

The removal of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed from the premiership, I believe should open a new chapter in State politics. We should endeavour to win the hearts of the Kashmir Muslims which are still bereft of any warmth for India. It is

not an utopian dream that I am suggesting. Knowing as I do the Kashmir people, particularly the Muslims, it is within the realm of possibility to enlist the support of thoughtful and patriotic among them. With a change for the better in the policy so far pursued, I believe, they will be prepared to throw in their lot with India. I am especially optimistic about it in view of the developments in Pakistan and the bitter experiences made by the Kashmiris in Azad Kashmir. But the whole affair needs to be handled sagaciously.

If no change in Kashmir policy towards liberalisation is visualised after the acceptance of Bakshi Sahib's resignation then I think it is a move fraught with grave risk; for, of all the important political figures in the State today perhaps he alone is fit to rule with an iron hand and handle the situation under existing circumstances. By his removal from the premiership the conditions are apt to deteriorate.

I, however, believe that your decision is significant. It cannot be meaningless. You are no less anxious to see Kashmir politics normalised and the State people made happy and contented within the Indian Republic than any of the critics of your policy. I therefore congratulate you on this bold and wise step. It has not come a day too early after the failure of the Indo-Pakistan negotiations over Kashmir.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

APPENDIX C

Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
February 29, 1964

Shri G.M. Sadiq
Prime Minister
Jammu

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

In freeing themselves from the vicious hold of a despotic regime our people have achieved a splendid success. By stepping into the shoes of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, however, you have assumed a grave responsibility and worn a crown of thorns. No doubt your friends and all well wishers of Kashmiris feel gratified at the turn events have finally taken but you shall have to justify by your deeds within a reasonable period of time that you deserve the trust reposed in you.

As the head of the State Government you have to solve innumerable problems but it is well to remember that the most intractable of them all is the unfriendly attitude of the State Muslims towards India. It is futile to overlook the fact that the preponderant majority of the Muslims is unhappy over the

unsettled accession dispute. Sooner or later this issue has to be ended according to the wishes of the State people. By merely repeating parrot-like that it has been already settled it does not cease to exist. Whatever the reasons, it must be candidly admitted that the Kashmir Muslims are at heart with Pakistan and desire to see the Valley forming a part of that country. The numberless difficulties that beset us today in different walks of life mostly stem from this main problem. It should therefore be your first concern to wean away the Muslims from the pro-Pakistan leanings not by coercion or application of harsh measures as has been ignominiously done by your predecessors during the past seventeen years but through democratic methods, humane behaviour and liberal treatment of those who disagree with your frequently professed pro-India views and unconcealed but honest criticism of Pakistan.

If no steps are taken to arrest the current thinking of the Valley Muslims, Kashmir is one day bound to fall like a ripe fruit in the lap of Pakistan. The only remedy, as far as I can see, is ideological conversion of the Muslims through sweet reasonableness and establishment of clean administration. It is, I am afraid, already late—perhaps too late—to successfully try this but I cannot conceive of any other alternative which can effectively meet the situation and consolidate the integration of Kashmir with India.

In this connection I would refer you to the talk we had about Sheikh Abdullah in June 1962. It is time that preparatory steps are taken to effect his release and win him over to your side for the building of social democracy in Kashmir.

Despite the shortsighted policy of the Indian Government which has been stubbornly pursued since 1947 and the unhappy events which have consequently been witnessed throughout this period, I fondly believe that our compatriots in the Valley can be persuaded to appreciate the blessings that a secular political setup can confer on them. In my opinion it is not impossible to keep Kashmir as integral part of India with the free will of the State people provided the problem is tackled in the right spirit and proper means are adopted to achieve this end.

I have comprehensively dealt with this matter in my booklet "Kashmir Problem Reconsidered" and need not dilate on it here any further. But I would like to stress that the future of your Government will almost entire depend on how you will deal with this problem. If you succeed in converting the Muslims and in making them sincere supporters of the Indian Republic you will have worked a miracle and gone down in history as a unique leader of the people, a great patriot and a true democrat. But if you refuse to accept the existence of this problem or communist-like think that people will be compelled sooner or later to forget it, whatever may be your achievements in other fields you will not only go the way your predecessors have gone before you, it will also deal one more blow at Kashmir Democracy.

In the herculean task that you have undertaken to perform good intentions are not enough. Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed did not fail for want of these. But before they were in office for long they abandoned the democratic principles which they professed and held sacred previously. It is notorious that political leaders break the pledges and trample upon the assurances they solemnly give while in opposition. I trust you will not take this infamous course.

Never before has anyone in Kashmir accepted such onerous responsibilities which require extra-ordinary physical vigour and mental alertness; never before were the virtues like tolerance for others' views, generosity towards opponents and respect for human personality needed as they are today. For the accomplishment of the formidable task you must have cooperation from all sides. Unfortunately, situated as you are, you have enlisted more enemies than friends. It should be your endeavour to allay the fears, unfounded or real, of the opponents and thus multiply the number of your friends. A powerful leader speedily gathers multitudes of sycophants and time-servers round himself. You know how such self-seekers contributed to the downfall of your predecessors. I hope you will always avoid to meet them or encourage them in any way.

You will have been flooded with congratulatory letters on your elevation to the much coveted position from those

who like you and those who do not like you, But I shall take time to watch further developments before I congratulate you for the honour that has been done to you. Frankly, I have misgivings about the role you will be able to play in clearing the augean stables and establishing democracy and in bringing much needed peace to the harassed people of Kashmir. The time for congratulations will, therefore, come when there are indications that Kashmir has found the right direction under your leadership and some day we can expect it to reach its destined goal of social democracy.

Meanwhile, I send you my good wishes and sincere assurances that I shall feel happy if I can be of any assistance to you in this noble adventure.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Prime Minister
Jammu & Kashmir
March 7, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I thank you sincerely for your letter of February 29 which I went through with interest.

I entirely agree with you that problems awaiting solution are intricate and difficult. People expect much from us and, as you rightly say, we shall have to justify by deeds the trust reposed in us.

I can assure you on my own behalf and on behalf of my colleagues that in whatever we do we will be guided by considerations of people's good and the country's integrity.

We have no doubt that in these endeavours we can look forward to active cooperation and blessings from friends like you.

Thanking you again and with warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
April 1st, 1964

TELEGRAM—ORDINARY

Mr. Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq,
Prime Minister,
JAMMU.

Sheikh's release another feather in your cap

Prem Nath Bazaz

Prime Minister,
Jammu &Kashmir
April 3, 1964.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you very much for your telegram of April 1, 1964.

The other day I noticed your letter in the *Times of India*. I am indeed grateful for the keen interest you have evinced in regard to the developments in Jammu and Kashmir.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 7, 1964

Mr. G. M. Sadiq
Prime Minister
Srinagar, Kashmir

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I have already told you why I consider it inadvisable at present to convert the National Conference into a branch of the Indian National Congress or to make a move for the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution.

From Press reports I now learn that you contemplate amending the Ranbir Penal Code providing for deterrent punishment to individuals as well as political parties advocating secession of any territory from India. I have not been able to comprehend the implications of the proposal. Does it mean that anyone who says that the accession dispute is yet unsettled and the future affiliation of the State remains to be determined by the free vote of the people, will come within the mischief of the law after the amendment is passed and incorporated in the Code? If the reply be in the affirmative I am afraid your Government will land itself into great trouble and might unhappily be forced by degrees to adopt the same repressive and anti-people measures as its predecessors had done for 17 years.

Since you came to power I have taken it for granted that your first and foremost task will be to enlist the support of the State people, particularly the Muslims, for the solution of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan. With that aim in view it is important that we try to understand and respect the feelings of our countrymen in vital matters of national significance. We have not only to create an impression that Kashmiris are free to shape their own future freely under the new dispensation but also actually to provide such freedom in ample measure. It is only then that the Kashmiris will begin to see secularism in a new and proper light and realise how necessary it is to build social democracy on the basis of secularism in their homeland.

In writing the current series of pamphlets I am guided by the thought that one day sooner than later we will be able to awaken the rational self of our people and they will fully appreciate our stand and support us when the time of final reckoning arrives.

It seems to me that either I was mistaken in taking things for granted or your faith in the Kashmiris adopting the right course when afforded chance to do so has been shaken and you have despondently decided to compel the unwilling people to accept the present accession under harsh provision of the law. I feel rather alarmed at this because it is bound to destroy the good work that you have done and lead the State to restlessness; worse still, it will make the task easy for the enemies of democracy who can achieve their nefarious end long before the most optimistic among them can expect to do.

I am not inclined to be a nationalist; I consider nationalism like communalism to be a malady of human mind. But in the contemporary world this disease is so widespread that no practical politician can afford to ignore its influence and power.

In one of my previous letters I have told you that in my opinion the interests of Kashmir Nationalism and Indian Nationalism are not in every respect identical, at any rate for the present. Just now I do not want to enter into a discussion over this statement at length. But I must say that a person in your position devoted to democratic ideals has to exercise extreme caution in dealing with these two nationalisms; you have to maintain balance between them.

I may be wrong, but I have an impression that at times you and your colleagues are over zealous to appease the Indian nationalist sentiments at the cost of offending the Kashmir nationalist sentiment. This is not wise and will undoubtedly prove extremely harmful to the cause that all of us ardently desire to see triumphant.

For India it should be enough that you and your party stand steadfastly for Kashmir's accession to India and brook no compromise on it. While working to make this a reality, India should afford your Government widest latitude to mollify

the sullen and discontented Kashmiris; otherwise there will be little hope for the State remaining with India permanently.

I can never believe that Kashmir will be integrated with India by some trick, intimidation or draconian law. There is no alternative to enlisting the voluntary support of the State people to set the seal of permanency on the temporary instrument of accession.

Instead of adopting ill-conceived measures to appease the Indians I think it would be better that you impress upon them that they should realize the precarious position of your party and Government and cease to be exacting in secondary important matters when on the basic issue of accession you are clear, unequivocal and firm.

By having publicly stated that you will soon replace National Conference by a branch of the Indian National Congress and that you contemplate recommending the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution you may have earned a little praise of the Hindus but you have surely yielded some ground to your opponents. If you now amend the Ranbir Penal Code virtually banning discussion on accession dispute, or the future of Kashmir, you will succeed only in creating enormous difficulties for yourself; you will alienate the sympathies of the people and force them to rally round those self-seekers who are astute enough to exploit the wounded pride and sentiments of our people.

It would be foolish to labour under the false hope that once a law has been enacted people will obey it or that they will be afraid of it. Emotionally moved communities—yes Kashmiris too—can suffer hardships if at calmer moments we find them reluctant to do so.

I would therefore earnestly request you to consider this aspect of your policy and revise it before irreparable harm has been done.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Prime Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
August 13,1964

Shri P.N. Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you very much for your letter of August 7, 1964.

I should be in Delhi next week and we can meet some time and have a talk about various matters.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
15th June, 1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Kashmir State
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

My study of the latest developments in Kashmir force me to arrive at the conclusion that, as I indicated in my last booklet *The Shape of Things in Kashmir*, the policy of liberalisation and democratisation has come to an end. Whatever the reasons, you are gradually adopting the course followed by your predecessors. This is very disconcerting indeed. My dreams about the future of Kashmir under your guidance are proving illusory and I feel deeply grieved at it.

I tried to contact you on telephone on two different dates when you were here but could not be successful. I wanted to meet you and have a talk. On both occasions Mr. S.K. Raina

told me that he will convey my request to you and ring back after getting your reply. He never did and I wonder if you were told anything about it at all.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
June 21,1965

Shri P.N. Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I have your letter of June 15, 1965. I am sorry we could not meet when I was in Delhi last. My stay was very brief and most of the time I was busy with meetings of the Chief Ministers and the Congress Working Committee.

Your impression that the policy of democratisation followed by us has been abandoned is not justified. There has been absolutely no change in our basic stand on this and other issues and we do not impose any restriction on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation. You will no doubt appreciate that we are facing a situation which is threatening the very basis of a democratic system of Government founded on secular ideals. It is a threat posed by combined reactionary forces and is aimed at dismembering the State. As firm believers in democracy and secularism we cannot countenance such threats and have got to deal with them appropriately.

I hope to be able to meet you when I visit Delhi next so that we can have an exchange of ideas on various matters.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
28th June 1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Kashmir State
Srinagar Kashmir

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I have your letter of the 21st June and am rather astonished to read it. I did not expect that, to justify deviation from the straight path, you would use the hackneyed argument of those men who, in modern democratic age, rule without the consent of the governed and, trying to defend their indefensible position, lay the entire blame for restlessness at the door of the small band of evil-intentioned disrupters.

Your letter has recalled to my mind the occasions when Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in the heyday of their power justified their atrocities and misdeeds on almost similar grounds. While ruthlessly crushing democracy they appeared solicitous about the unity of the State and welfare of the people. Yet you and I know how false were their claims.

You say that "there has been absolutely no change in your basic stand on democratisation and other issues" and that "you do not impose any restrictions on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation." This categorical statement can hardly prove reassuring when I know that the assertion is not borne out by facts and recent developments in Kashmir. Imprisonment of hundreds of political workers without trial under the provisions of infamous laws mostly for holding views not in agreement with your own, arbitrary suspension of journals not supporting your policy and ban on holding of public meetings in the Valley do not corroborate your statement. Add to this the high-handedness of the police force, local and imported, and the picture becomes quite bleak. Excesses are excesses and do not gain sanctity because they are perpetrated under men claiming to be liberal. I will not touch upon other matters of less importance—less only by comparison

—such as unabated corruption in the ranks of ruling party and government services. Such problems sink into insignificance in view of the fundamental issues I have raised here.

It is true that you are "facing a situation which is threatening the very basis of a democratic system of Government founded on secular ideals"; but that is not a recent development. Ever since the fateful day when Kashmir acceded to India the State rulers had to grapple with perplexing events and encounter tremendous difficulties in maintaining law and order. Most of these difficulties were born of the arrogant and undemocratic attitude adopted by the men in power and wrong policies persistently pursued by them. I think you fully realized this and were determined to start with a clean slate and reorientate the entire administrative set-up to effectively handle the situation with the willing support of the people. Manifestly you have failed in this noble adventure.

You say that "the threat posed by the combined reactionary forces is aimed at dismembering the State and as believers in democracy and secularism," "you cannot countenance such threats and have got to deal with them appropriately." Did it ever occur to you that some of the illconceived measures adopted by your Government have afforded the opportunity to the disarrayed reactionaries to consolidate their forces, get strengthened and pose the threat of which you now complain.

The biggest problem of the present-day Kashmir, as I can see, is the reconciliation of local Nationalism with Indian Nationalism. That leader alone has the chance to survive opposition onslaughts and lead the State people to the goal of democracy as a part of Indian Nation who can, during the transition period, wisely strike a balance between the demands and emotions of the Indians and the aspirations, urges and sentiments of the Kashmiris. Only thoughtless people can believe that the aims, inclinations, passions and desires of the two peoples are indentical in every respect today; such a notion is misleading and harmful. It is unfair to accuse Kashmir patriots of parochialism or narrow mindedness when they display communal tendencies as long as Indian Nationalism, despite its tall

presumptuous claims, itself remains based on religious beliefs and Hindu mythology.

In making these observations I am not saying anything new. Last year some correspondence passed between us on this subject and I vividly recollect the long discussions I had with you at 5 Prithvi Raj Road a year ago soon after you came to power. You invariably gave me the impression that you will never act in a manner as would offend either Kashmir Nationalism or Indian Nationalism. Indeed, you assured me that you will not be a party to the further impairment of autonomy enjoyed by the State people under Indian Constitution nor to the replacement of the National Conference by the National Congress—the two aims that had been set by Indian reactionaries for achievement. Yet when last autumn Indian Nationalism launched upon an aggressive campaign to demolish the autonomy of the State without the consent of the Kashmiris you faltered and acted according to its bidding. How I wish you had taken a firm stand advocating the righteous cause of Kashmir Nationalism. I have no doubt in my mind that such firmness would have raised your moral stature in the State and outside. What is more, it would have brought such a solution of Kashmir nearer as you and I devoutly desire to find. It is possible that the influential Indian reactionaries would have contrived to deprive you and your confidents of power and installed a group of their choice instead. But that would have only enhanced your moral excellence and made you a more effective instrument for ending the Kashmir imbroglio at a not-too-distant future. Your surrender before Indian reaction has not added to your prestige nor has it in any way fulfilled the objective of Kashmir's emotional integration with India. It has only produced widespread disaffection against your Government which has been easily exploited by the fanatics, demagogues and enemies of democracy.

Surrounded by yesmen and careerists, rulers live in a world of their own far removed from reality, in which they confidently believe that every measure they adopt is justified by circumstances. Being a man endowed with a robust sense of self-criticisms you, I had thought, would be able frequently to break

through the vicious circle round you and have a look at the stark reality beyond, but evidently I was mistaken.

For many months after you took over the administration in Kashmir, the people held you in high esteem. I have been witness to this wide sentiment as late as in October last year when I paid a short visit to the Valley. My enquiries led me to the finding that though your party was not popular, you and some of your colleagues were respected as men of integrity; the idea of prejudging you was discounted in sober and intellectual circles; hopes were entertained in your sense of statesmanship and honesty of purpose; you were to be judged on the merit of your work. Even your opponents talked about you with reserve and restraint.

It was heartening to see that the reactionary and illiberal elements were unsure of their stance, not knowing what political programme they could formulate after civil liberties and democratic rights had been fully guaranteed to the people by your Government. "Accession to Pakistan" slogan though still fraught with dangerous potentialities, was gradually losing its appeal and attraction.

It pains me to have to say that today things are quite different. It is not what the sworn enemies of secularism and democracy proclaim that disturbs me; it is what impartial observers and critics whose honesty is unimpeachable say, that matters. And it is widely believed by them that the line which separated you from your predecessors has become indistinct. Simply by assaverating with vehemence that "there has been no basic change" in your stand and you "do not impose any restrictions on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation" cannot carry conviction when facts loudly speak otherwise or point to other direction. There might be a difference of degree but qualitatively considered there is little change now in the present regime and those that have preceded it.

As you fully know, after a thorough study of the political and economic developments in India and Pakistan during the past eighteen years, I have come to believe that the destiny of Kashmir will be fulfilled by its continuing to remain as part of

India. But I detest the idea of bringing about this alliance through use of force or against the will of the Kashmiris. Apart from being exceptionable on moral principles, use of force defeats its own purpose. The days are gone when a class or a community could be compelled to change its views through coercion; conversion by reasoning and persuasion is the only road to victory. Unlike the Indian nationalists and most of your loyal followers, I hold that but for the blunders made by your predecessors and now also by you, the voluntary integration would be possible, the pre-requisite 'being inexhaustible patience. uncommon forbearance, keen farsightedness and, above all, genuine regard for secularism and democracy on the part of Indian and Kashmiri leaders.

In you I recognised a leader gifted with the qualities needed to meet the situation. That is what made me so enthusiastic about State politics last year when circumstances brought you to power. Despite your aberrations, the hope that you will not disappoint the Kashmir democrats lingers on, possibly because I fail to see any other towering personality among the Kashmiri Muslims capable enough to accomplish the historic task. I wonder if you will be able to retrieve the position lost by you during the past few months. But I can think of no other way out of the impasse than by pointing out to you what causes have led Kashmir to the verge of present peril ; for it is never too late to do the right thing.

I have come to believe that until the cultural level of our compatriots is raised through dissemination of education and knowledge it is not possible to establish social democracy in our homeland. The real task therefore is to awaken the dormant rational faculties of the people to enable them to think for themselves. You will be interested to learn that I have finally decided to devote the rest of my life for the achievement of this end ; active party politics I leave to men and women more energetic and stout hearted than myself.

During the closing days of last year I prepared a plan for the cultural work and sent it to you for opinion. You found it interesting and asked Syed Mir Qasim to consider how far you and I could work it out. Two months later on 12th

February Qasim Sahib apologized for delay in sending me a reply and added that the note was being studied carefully. Nothing further was heard in the matter either from you or him.

Nevertheless, I am earnest to implement the plan as best as I can. I intend to make a trip to the Valley next month. There are a few hurdless in the way which I want to be removed before I can settle down and start the work. In this I ardently wish that friends like yourself will lend me their helping hand.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

(I did not get any reply to this letter. But a few days after posting it Sadiq Sahib and I happened to fly by the same plane on 13th July from New Delhi to Srinagar. Commenting on the letter he told me that it was "an exercise in intellectualism" but that he was impressed by it and had therefore circulated it among his colleagues and advised them to note my observations-*Bazaz.*)

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI—16
13th August, 1965

Mr. G. M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I returned from Srinagar yesterday. Before departure I tried to contact you many a time for several days but was not successful.

However, I had been keeping in touch with the developments created by the infiltration of armed men from across the cease-fire line as well as the reactions in different quarters including the ruling party and the opposition.

I was glad to note that this time your Government has been able to keep the psycho-political aspect of the development in view and, despite pressures, has turned down the demands that would further alienate Muslim public opinion. I hope the balance will be maintained till the day this invasion from Pakistan is completely crushed.

I am thinking of meeting important people here to advise them that until there is a sane and rational approach to Kashmir State affairs and sincere co-operation with your liberal policy, the problem may never be solved.

If you intend to come here early we could have a talk on matters that are uppermost in my mind.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
August 17, 1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you for your letter of August 13, 1965.

I am sorry we could not have another meeting before your departure for Delhi. I did receive your messages but owing to extreme preoccupation with the recent developments I could not have the pleasure of meeting you again.

As you have seen, Pakistan has cast away its mask and is again seeking to cow down the people of the State by naked force. We are determined to resist this onslaught with all our strength and I have no doubt that whatever the odds we shall succeed. In this test I and my colleagues look forward to your valuable advice and active cooperation.

I shall have the pleasure of meeting you when I visit Delhi next.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
September 17,1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

Many thanks for your letters of the 8th and 9th September.

The situation has certainly changed drastically and the fear persists that it may develop into a global war if the Chinese decide to fish in the troubled waters. Let us hope that the sane advice given by Russia and U.S.A. will produce a salutary effect on the Chinese mind, and they will desist from involving the world in a big conflagration.

As it is, I think the war will be a prolonged affair and since the aims of India and Pakistan are diametrically opposed, early end of the hostilities is nowhere in sight. If the supplies to Pakistan are replenished by certain small powers the war may drag on for months, even years.

But there is a greater possibility that international pressure will be brought to bear upon the two warring nations to come to terms and have a lasting settlement between them. If this bears fruit I can envisage a twofold outcome.

Pakistan will be made to realise that it was improper on its part to despatch armed infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir. She may even be mildly censured by the U.N. Security Council for her action.

Nevertheless, taking into account the prevailing trend in world opinion it would seem that India will not come out quite triumphant : she may not be able to avoid holding of a referendum under U.N. auspices in one form or the other to ascertain the will of the State people. The three-point plan of F.M. Ayub is a propaganda hit meant to hoodwink the world, particularly the Afro-Asian nations ; it cannot be acceptable to this country but I cannot see how, in view of the strong world opinion, India can continue to maintain its rigid attitude

towards the Kashmir issue ; she may be compelled to soften and make at least some allowances.

If you remember the line of reasoning in the pamphlets I wrote since you came to power, I could see this coming even before the hostilities broke out last month.

I therefore feel very unhappy that despite my best efforts to impress upon you the grave necessity of educating our people to face the inevitable test, I have failed to sufficiently enthuse you and your colleagues in this direction. You no doubt always agreed with me that India cannot retain Kashmir without the will of the Kashmiris but the task of educating people was never considered as urgent and important as other parts of your political activity.

Consequently we have let more than nineteen months pass by without taking up this most essential work demanding our immediate attention.

In saying this I do not overlook the activities in the form of gatherings and seminars conducted by leaders of your Party. I read about them in the *Khidmat* and also get reports from friends. I note with pleasure that lately efforts are being made to awaken womenfolk in the Valley. Valuable as this propaganda work is in some respects, it is not helpful to meet the situation with which we are confronted and the gravity it will increasingly assume. For that we need *education* not mere propaganda. We have to ground people on the philosophy of humanism and convince them why religious approach is unsuited for the achievement of freedom and democracy ; we have to explode the two-nation theory with substantial and cogent arguments shattering the foundations on which it stands. We do not need parrots to cry pleasant slogans or deliver hackneyed statements which have been repeated a thousand times in the past. We need a number of intelligent youg men and women possessing critical faculty who can think independently for themselves and present national problems dispassionately and objectively so as to carry conviction with others who disagree with us at present.

I believe that despite Ayub's three months limit a new cease-fire agreement if and when it is signed, will give us a sufficient breathing space of some years to prepare the people for the historic task. Let us not waste any more precious time and let not grass grow under our feet ; let us bend our energy fully to the first task first.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz.

Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
Sept. 27, 1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Eclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Many thanks for your letter of Sept. 17, 1965.

There are bound to be various pressures from interested foreign quarters for re-opening the Kashmir question. We shall have to be wary of all such attempts and ensure that the old game does not succeed. It is heartening to find the whole country speak with one voice against foreign machinations and in support of the firm stand taken by the Central Government.

As the debate in Parliament yesterday showed, lot of rethinking would have to be done about various aspects of our foreign policy. Our country has come to a stage where it should be possible for us to tell the world that friendship and co-operation cannot be a one way traffic but has to be based on reciprocity and mutual response. Too long have we allowed an impression to go round that we are always willing to yield to pressure from big powers. I have no doubt that in its present mood the country will be able to make a number of important decisions having a bearing on our future growth.

I agree that there is need for educating people in Kashmir about our approach to problems and with regard to our funda-

mental policies. We are trying to do our bit in this connection and I have no doubt that you and other friends will help us in this task.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

APPENDIX D

Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and others Holding Different Views

(a) Between Abdul Aziz and Prem Nath Bazaz

P/929, Banni
Rawalpindi (Pakistan)
6th December, 1962

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I have read with interest your lengthy series of articles recently published in the *Radical Humanist* (*R.H.*), Calcutta, your statement on the Sino-Indian border trouble in the *Thought*, Delhi, and your letter to the Editor, *Thought*, published in its issue of 1st December, 1962.

In nutshell, you suggest that India should liberalise her Kashmir policy so that Kashmir can be retained by India "with the free will of the people".

From whatever you wrote in the past, it was clear that "free will" only meant a plebiscite under the UN or any other impartial agency but now you seem to have forgotten that altogether. There was a day when in Kashmir you and all of us fought for independence of Jammu and Kashmir State. This continued till the formation of India and Pakistan as free countries. After that you issued posters "on behalf of the working committee of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference and the Kashmir Socialist Party" that the best course for Kashmir people would be the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan and a

referendum as a means to that end. Then after your release from jail in 1950 you wrote the book *Azad Kashmir* and denounced independent Kashmir as impracticable but after some years you again started writing for the independence of the whole State or at least the Valley of Kashmir. But after 15 years of all your writings, statements, books and pamphlets favouring a free plebiscite you agree to Kashmir remaining with India.

Although we have not met after 1947 we are friends and sympathisers of each other. There is a Persian proverb which means that a true friend is one who is like a mirror to you i.e. who reveals to you your good as well as bad points. To say the least about your present stand, it is the stand of a tired man, a defeatist. You have gone the way which others went earlier. It pains me to write like this to you whom I have held in the highest esteem for the last 16 years.

What, by the way, should be the position of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference, a member of whose working committee you are supposed to be, in this matter ? You will remember that when Mr. Yatu was exiled to Pakistan in 1951 and he, in a Press conference, said that his party stood for an overall plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir, you wrote to him that it was cowardice on his part to say so because in actual fact our party stood for a regional plebiscite. Or, do you think you have ceased to be a member of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference since long ?

Let me, however, assure you that I have great respect for you as a writer and a friend, but for politics you seem to have left your friends in midway. At least I could not expect this from a man whom once upon a time I thought to be "Kashmir's Man of Tomorrow".

When the *Radical Humanist* last time suggested a similar action in Kashmir you objected to it in the "Forum" of the journal, but now you also have advanced the same theory that what cannot be cured must be endured.

Trusting that this will find you in the best of your health.

Yours very sincerely,
Mir Abdul Aziz

F/8, Hauz Khas enclave
New Delhi-16
December 13, 1962

Mir Abdul Aziz
Editor "Insaf"
P. O. Banni
RAWALPINDI (Pakistan)

My dear Mir Sahib,

After a long time I have your letter of the 6th December 1962.

The articles on Kashmir published in the *Radical Humanist* were written not only to give expression to my reconsidered views on the problem confronting us but also to stimulate thinking and provoke criticism. Therefore, your candid comments have not ruffled me as you seem to apprehend. Indeed, I am glad you said what you wanted to say.

The gravemen of your charge against me is that after having supported for 15 years in my writings and statements, a free plebiscite in Kashmir and the State's accession to Pakistan, I have now suggested the formation of Kashmir as a part of India. This is partly correct but mainly wrong and I think you have not given the consideration to the articles that they deserve.

The developments in India and Pakistan during the past fifteen years have no doubt forced me to revise my ideas about several matters pertaining to Kashmir but there has been absolutely no change so far as the basic issue is concerned. I continue to hold steadfastly that the future of Kashmir should be freely decided by the people of Kashmir. While bemoaning my present stand you have evidently overlooked some unambiguous statements in the articles. I quote one of these:

> Let me hasten to add that my informants are, as I am, strongly of the view that ultimately the future of Kashmir shall have to be forged by the people themselves. We do not at all propose to surrender the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris but we believe it shall have to be exercised in a different setting without creating ill-will or disturbing the peace of the sub-continent. We believe the freely expressed will of the people alone can bring the abiding solution of the Kashmir problem.

Nothing could be more clear and unequivocal than this delineation of the ideal which had brought both of us close to each other and for which we have been fighting and continue

to fight till this day. What seems to have annoyed and irritated you to the extent of ignoring such statements is the appreciative references I made to the good work that has been done in Kashmir by the Indian Government. As an honest man I could not help doing so. For, economically and socially, I found Kashmiris today better off than they were ever during the past century and more. I could not believe it nor rely for it on official reports until I made personal studies in different parts of the Valley. The tour proved an eye-opener and I arrived at certain far-reaching conclusions. Among others, I learnt that the main reason for the Kashmiri Muslims to remain docile despite political repression and their undoubted pro-Pakistan leanings is this increasing and unprecedented economic progress.

The solution of an independent Kashmir is still, in my opinion, preferable to absorption of the State by India or Pakistan. But in politics I owe allegiance solely to the fundamental right of self-determination. Other things are minor and subsidiary to it; these can undergo changes according to the exigencies and demands of time.

For me there never was anything sacrosanct in the idea that Kashmir should become a part of Pakistan. It was a means for the achievement of an ideal. In 1947 when the subcontinent was partitioned on religious basis such accession appeared to be natural and inevitable. But the subsequent developments cast serious doubts on this line of thinking. Gradually I began to realise that Kashmir democracy will fare better by association with India than with Pakistan if that is the alternative the State has to willy nilly accept. What fate awaits democracy in Pakistan after a decade or so I cannot foresee. But it is obvious that under the present dispensation democrats and democratic institutions have to languish in that country. How can fighters for Kashmir's freedom aspire to attaint their goal if Kashmir accedes to Pakistan, I cannot comprehend ? Suhrawardy was eminently right when he declared the other day that Pakistanis must establish democracy in their own land first if they want Kashmir to come to them. You too have been stressing this point time and again in your journal.

I do not uphold for a moment that India is a perfect democracy but it certainly is not a military dictatorship. Even after the imposition of harsh laws enacted to deal with the present emergency caused by the Chinese aggression, the Indians can give expression to their feelings and views much more freely than the people can think of in Pakistan.

This, however, does not imply that if we are allowed to make our choice of acceding either to Pakistan or India — and despite the intercession of the British and the Americans it is highly unlikely we will be—and the people decide to join Pakistan, I will block such a process. I shall welcome any democratic decision of my compatriots because I have always held that freedom of expression is the most sacred human right and the only reliable weapon through which man can fulfil his destiny. In no case can I advocate that Kashmiris, and for that matter people anywhere, should be compelled to live under a regime which they detest merely because their choice will not be to the liking of their self-appointed protectors.

At present India is involved in a life and death struggle with China. Superficially looked at, it is a mere border dispute but in reality it is much more than that ; it is a gigantic tussle between two ideologies for supremacy; it is a war between democracy and totalitarianism between freedom and slavery ; in fact, it is the struggle of human civilisation for survival.

Pakistan seems to think that because India is not prepared to come to an understanding with her over Kashmir therefore she should adopt an attitude which would pave way for the destruction of India even though it might also end in her own annihilation. This is not a praiseworthy policy to say the least and I feel extremely unhappy over its adoption.

I do not underrate the justifiable anger of the Pakistanis over India's persistent refusal to come to an understanding. But the wise course for Pakistan in her own interests if not for anything else, would have been to recognise the danger of Red invasion and sympathise with India in its trouble. That would have created a fund of goodwill for her in this country and smoothened the task of the growing section of Indians who

sincerely wish to have friendly relations with Pakistan. By becoming extremely unfriendly at the present time, Pakistan has only weakened the hands of those farsighted Indians who endeavour for a democratic solution of the Kashmir issue honourable to both the countries. And thus the chances of a settlement have been foolishly marred. It is the game of the extremists in India that Pakistan is playing. Like their counterparts on your side bigots here would prefer to see Indian democracy trampled under foot by the Chinese communists rather than that it befriended the Pakistanis.

I wish we could calmly discuss these important issues personally but it is a pity that a meeting is not possible now or in the near future. I would, however, request you to view all matters in these days of stress and strain from a broad perspective; let no immediate gains befog our intellect.

In spite of the long years of suffering, I may assure you, I am neither tired nor have I become a defeatist. It is true every Kashmiri today feels more or less frustrated and it would not be surprising if I share the nation-wide bafflement. But as an individual I am not prepared to accept your accusation. I see no sense in clinging to exploded theories and disproved notions. We are living in dynamic times when we should be vigilant so that we are not thrown into the back waters of history by remaining attached to hackneyed ideas and by refusing to move with the forces of progress.

For many past months I have been seriously thinking of returning to Kashmir in order to resettle there and build a cultural movement for the regeneration of the people as envisaged in the last instalment of the article in the R. H. I do not know if I shall succeed in this endeavour because there are many hurdles in the way.

I hope your wife and children are doing well. With love to them all.

Your sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

P/929, Banni
Rawalpindi

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you for your letter of 13th December, 1962, which I received a week ago. I could not write to you because I was on a short visit to Muzaffarabad.

If the Indian Government have done any good work in Kashmir, they deserve all the credit for that. I may, however, inform you that in Azad Kashmir which was neglected by the Dogras, immense progress has been made in the fields of education, public works, village aid and all that. That is not to be disputed either.

I do not disagree with you when you say that India and Pakistan should join hands to save the sub-continent from Red aggression. As a Kashmiri how can I tolerate that 14,000 square miles of J & K State territory have been usurped by China. But at the same time every Kashmiri must fight against the intransigence of the Indian leadership in Kashmir and that is what you seem to have given up for good. In your lengthy article in the R. H. there is not even indirect reference to the Chinese menace. Obviously that article has been written by you before the latest Sino-Indian situation. To change your ideas and ideals this way or that because Pakistan Government did this or Indian Government does that is meaningless. Suppose, God forbid, there is a military dictatorship in India, will you start then working against India's retention of Kashmir and advocate that Kashmiris should join some other country ?

As regards your plans to go to Kashmir and settle there, it is yet another proof of your being prepared to compromise with your ideals. I do not know what difficulties you may be facing there. But it is certain that in the existing conditions of Kashmir, the Prem Nath Bazaz of 1946-47 and onwards, who fought for the rights of Kashmiris cannot function as he did

before. If you do that, they will put you into prison again, but if you give up active politics they may tolerate you and I am sure they can tolerate anybody who is ready to give an assurance of "good behaviour".

By the way, friends here have, during the last years, been reading with concern and criticism all what you wrote about the fellow whom once you condemned as the Hitler of Kashmir. If he comes to power again, what is the guarantee that he would not behave in the same manner again ?

It is encouraging to note that you still prefer an independent Kashmir to one that is part of India or Pakistan. But in your article in the R. H. there is no mention of independent Kashmir at all. It, I am afraid, is an after thought on your part.

I, however, feel that if better sense prevails on both sides, Kashmir Valley may be made autonomous. This would be an amicable and honourable solution for the three parties, India, Pakistan and Kashmiris. In that case, Kashmir, which was the reason of discord for the past 15 years between India and Pakistan, may prove to be the bond of friendship between the two.

During the last 14 years in this country, I have faced worst sort of persecution, economic and financial distress and victimization, but I never gave up hope. You are a man of sterling qualities and I pray to God Almighty that your frustration would end and you would start working for your people as before.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Mir Abdul Aziz

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
January 31, 1963

Mir Abdul Aziz
Editor Insaf
Banni, Rawalpindi (Pakistan)

My dear Mir Sahib,

Pardon me for the unusual delay in sending a reply to your letter without date which I received more than a month ago. I was busy with the preparation of *Indian Pharmaceutical Guide* and the Special Number of *Eastern Pharmacist* which left little time to attend to my personal correspondence.

There is no new point in your letter which has not been already dealt with by me before. It is no use repeating the same arguments in another form. But I would like to state one or two things which will help to clarify my position in regard to the Kashmir problem in particular and to politics in general.

If I have been able to understand correctly you have tenaciously adhered to the beliefs and ideologies which all of us held fifteen years ago when we were forcibly dispersed and made to part physically from one another. That gives you a satisfaction which is born of consistency. Unfortunately, I am deprived of that kind of happiness. With every new experience in life my views and beliefs have undergone some change. I have been constructing and reconstructing my ideologies. As soon as I get disillusioned about a cherished notion I do not hesitate to dislodge it from my mind. I have no use for the consistency which is applauded in the circles of thoughtless multitudes. I believe that the man who refuses to alter or amend his views in the light of new facts and fresh experiences ceases to play his proper role and retards human progress. To me change is the pith of life and the only way to reach the destiny in an evolutionary society. If therefore you judge me by the tests that we had laid down and the beliefs which we held in pre 1947 days you are sure to get disappointed.

When I told you in my last letter that in politics I owe allegiance solely to the principle that the future of the enslaved

peoples should be decided through the free exercise of their right of self determination, I was not sure that I gave you the whole truth. The fact is that my faith in this principle is not unshaken after what has taken place in most of the Afro-Asian countries which were liberated from foreign imperialism during the past years. It is foolish to think, as we did at one time, that any and every people can choose rightly and in their own interests if allowed to do so freely. Ignorant, gullible and inexperienced can be hypnotised by self-seeking leaders and easily made to vote their own execution. It is a mockery to talk of the sacred right of self-determination for those who cannot discriminate between good and evil and who can be led like sheep once their confidence has been cleverly gained. Usually it is the unscrupulous power-hunter who is successful in getting the ear of the backward people.

Look anywhere at the world of the newly liberated Afro-Asian nations and you will find how miserable the people are. It is only the ruling cliques which are happy and enjoy life at the heavy cost paid by the followers. Everything considerd, I wonder if the liberated people are better off in any way today than they were under the imperialist rule. For me it has become meaningless to say that people should have the right of self-determination because *in any circumstance* they can choose freely and always in the furtherance of their happiness and freedom. It is a joke to talk of their independent judgement. Those who aspire to capture power in the backward people harp on the right of self-determination; honest, selfless and moral men should refuse to play the game.

The hollowness of self-determination principle had come to light when Hitler, riding on the crest of popularity, captured power with the majority vote of the mesmerized Germans only to mercilessly suppress them. It has now been underlined by the developments in the newly emancipated countries of Africo-Asian continents. Those leaders who attained power in the name of democracy are ridiculing it and building police states to hold people in subjugation.

Was then I hypocritically stressing the importance of the principle of self-determination in my last letter ? No. Though

I no longer repose that firm faith in it which I had fifteen years ago, I continue to cling to it because I have not been able to find an alternative. If we altogether discard this principle we are immediately faced with a vacuum in politics. The theory of divine right of kings to rule has been exploded; we cannot admit the infallibility of any person or band of people, however wise; we, therefore, fall back on, and have to accept, the principle of self-determination of the people until a better alternative is forthcoming. Meanwhile, we should neither lose sight of its defects and defeciencies nor forget that our primary task is to raise the cultural level of the people enabling them to discriminate between right and wrong.

You have pinned your hopes on independent Kashmir as the best solution of the problem. You seem to think that our compatriots will fare better under such a setup than they would if the State accedes either to India or Pakistan. Although I too have expressed my preference for such a settlement over absorption in India or Pakistan, I entertain no such hope. I can guess a harder time for the poor Kashmiris particularly those imbued with love of progress, if Kashmir becomes independent. Whatever castles you may build through your fertile imagination in the Kashmir Valley with autonomous status, the fact, as I was able to ascertain during the course of my recent tour, is that the known gang of fascists will be placed in the saddle by the same people through the exercise of the right of self-determination, whom they trampled underfoot from 1947-1953 and even earlier. In independent Kashmir the rulers will not be controlled by the supervisory power of a central authority as at present. The people will be entirely helpless with no one to whom they can appeal. Had we not already known the would-be rulers of independent Kashmir perhaps there would be some sense or even justification in taking the risk. But you, more than any one else, have had the bitter experience of such rule; then how unwise it is to fervently ask, directly or indirectly, again for the same. Demand for independent Kashmir shows in what a desperate condition we are; it in no way furnishes proof of our prudence. We are making virtue of a necessity.

Now all this sounds depressing and pessimistic. But it is not really so. To learn by experience and become aware of the snares and pitfalls on the path towards the goal which one wants to reach is to achieve strength for resuming the journey. If we continue to live in an unreal world as we have done long enough, we may find at the end of our earthly existence, that, believing otherwise all along, we have registered no progress. That will be a terrible disappointment at the time of death. I am trying to escape it.

Your sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

(*b*) *Between Sridhar Kaul and Prem Nath Bazaz*

Rainawari,
Srinagar, Kashmir
March 10, 1963.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16

My dear Perm Nathji,

Many thanks for your booklet "Kashmir Problem Reconsidered" which I received some days back. While I substantially endorse your suggestions for the improvement of the present situation in Kashmir, I take leave to make the following observations :

(1) Do we want Kashmir's accession to India to remain in tact and even to abrogate the provisions in the Indian Constitution conferring a special status on Kashmir or do we want to leave it to the majority vote in Kashmir to decide the future of the country through a plebiscite ? We have to be clear in our minds on the point.

(2) That the people of Kashmir will make rapid progress in all directions—as they have already done economically—under India's fostering care and its progressive, secular, democratic Constitution goes without saying. Conditions prevailing in

Pakistan and Azad Kashmir make it equally evident that the hands of the clock will be put back indefinitely if circumstances drive Kashmir into the arms of Pakistan. The masses being politically raw and immature cannot be expected to exercise their judgement correctly and in case of the latter eventuality appalling consequences must ensue as far as the Hindu minority in Kashmir and the Muslim minority in India are concerned, even though the holocaust of the partition days is not re-enacted.

(3) The Muslim masses—and I am afraid, even the intelligentsia—are bound to cast their vote in favour of Pakistan in case the matter is decided through a plebiscite. Apart from the fact that religion occupies the first place in a Muslim's scheme of values, cultural and religious affinity will inevitably be the decisive factor for them in determining their choice and the rosiest visions of political and economic progress accompanied with the fullest religious and cultural freedom under India will be powerless to lure them away from the duty and devotion they owe to their religion according to their own lights. Why do not the people of Azad Kashmir express a desire to be integrated with those of Indian Kashmir to share the progress and prosperity the latter enjoy and why do they in preference elect to live under the despotic dictatorship under which Pakistan is groaning ? And why do the Muslim masses of Kashmir, oblivious of the enormous benefits they enjoy under India, crave to be made over to Pakistan with all the grave privations that such a change will bring in its train ?

(4) Whatever orthodox secularists may say, it is a stark, solid fact that India was partitioned on the basis of the two-nation theory. And even Kashmir is not immune to the virus of communal consciousness. If the ruler of Kashmir had been a Muslim, the 1931 agitation, I believe, would never have been launched. If the Muslim Conference was converted into the National Conference, it was as an act of expediency on the part of the members influenced by your irresistible advocacy and not as a result of their real conversion to the nationalist creed. The fact that you had to resign from the Conference after it wore the nationalist mask is a sufficient proof of this.

(5) Even in this second half of the 20th century mankind is divided by impregnable walls of religion and nationality. Even Russia and China though swearing by internationalism fail to rise above national chauvinism. The day when man will meet man purely as man and not under labels of religion and nationality is yet far distant. The millennium has not yet dawned.

(6) The Kashmiri Pandits as a community are disgruntled perhaps because the services, contracts, admissions to colleges, industrial loans and such things are, according to them, distributed on a communal basis which reduces the loudly proclaimed secular character of the state to a ridiculous farce. The very fact that Bakshi Sahib in his talks with you justified the present state of affairs in respect of the services by referring to the more than due share enjoyed by the Pandits *i. e.* the share to which they would be entitled by their proportion in the population is a positive proof of the fact that communal proportion in the population is the guiding principle in the distribution of the loaves and fishesof office. That, I think, is a travesty of secularism which should regard all citizens as Kashmiris and not as Hindus and Muslims, for all political and administrative purposes. I do not challenge the statement made by Bakshi Sahib in this connection.

(7) In the best interests of the people of Kashmir—both Muslims and Hindus—Kashmir should, in my view, continue to be an integral part of India and all our endeavours should, therefore, be directed towards this end. If Pakistan were not there to fan the flame of religious sentiment in the hearts of the Muslims of Kashmir they would, I think, live contented with their lot as citizens of India, happy in the prosperity and affluence which association with India guarantees for them. And Pakistan will never cry a halt to its sinister propaganda and its determined efforts to foment trouble in Kashmir until India arrives at a final settlement with it over the accession issue ; and until this happens, the present atmosphere of doubt, uncertainty and suspense will persist. The frustration, discontent and unhappiness which overshadow the State at present are directly traceable to this atmosphere. All the ills enumerated by you are inherent in the present situation and inseparable from it and no change of administrative personnel is likely to prove an effective remedy. Let the Indo-Pakistan dispute be finally resolved and the Muslims, knowing that road to Pakistan is closed to them for good, will settle down to an undisturbed peaceful life as the five crores of Muslims do in India. Then all the ugly things you complain of will vanish like mist before the morning sun. Then—and not till then—will be the time to take up in right earnest your great programme of raising the cultural level of the people.

(8) It is gratifying to note that in the booklet India does come in for a word of appreciation from your pen, a refreshing contrast to the position taken up by you in *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* where you tar India with a thick brush and, in effect, represent Pakistan as milk-white lamb in comparison. That is my impression and I hope you will excuse me to give expression to it.

(9) You seem to suggest that it is India which puts curbs on the civil liberties of the people, but I think that in the mutual relationship of India and Kashmir it is the tail that wags the dog and not the reverse. But this phenomenon, as also the grievances of the Kashmir Pandits and all other symptoms of malaise are, as said above, inherent in the instability of the present situation.

Thanking you again,

Yours affectionately,
Sridhar Kaul

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16
March 19, 1963

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 10 instant and am glad to note that you have critically gone through my pamphlet on Kashmir.

As you will not have failed to observe, though I continue to believe in the principle of self-determination my views on the accession dispute have undergone a change and today I have little hesitation in agreeing with you that "in the best interests of the people, both Muslims and Hindus, the State should continue to be an integral part of India". But I have no doubt in my mind that this affiliation can prove beneficial only if it is effected with the voluntary support of the Kashmir people. If the large majority of the Kashmiris is opposed to the accession on whatever grounds, it is sooner or later bound to end in disaster. Our main concern, therefore, should be to find out the ways and means of enlisting such support of the State people, especially of Kashmiri Muslims, No doubt it is a hard and arduous task, a steep ascent but the path has to be traversed. I do not think it is impossible to achieve this end provided we are convinced of its importance and have the patience to labour for it.

You think that but for the sinister propaganda of Pakistan the Kashmiri Muslims would "live contented with their lot as citizens of India". I dismiss the implication that with the disappearance of Pakistan support Kashmir Muslims will become dispirited and can then be cowed down. You are incapable of cherishing any such base motive. But I found many non-Muslims holding this view which to me appears erroneous and born of wishful thinking. I have no desire to underestimate the influence that Pakistan propaganda exercises on the minds of Kashmiri Muslims but my study of the situation in the Valley has led me to believe that there are other reasons too for the Muslims, particularly the politically-conscious among them, to harbour hostility against India and desire to be with Pakistan. Suppression of free thought and unprecedented political persecution are driving the Muslims straight into the lap of Pakistan. India has done nothing during the past 16 years to set the matters right in this behalf; indeed, New Delhi has directly encouraged the acts of Kashmir Government meant to abridge the civil liberties of the people.

Throughout History subject nations have had sympathisers from outside for their cause. India too had several nations on her side during the days of freedom struggle. Interestingly

enough, Hitler's Germany and Tojo's Japan were two of them. Even among the Englishmen there were liberals and groups to uphold the Indian claim for liberty. Diehard Tories disliked this outside support for Indians but freedom lovers everywhere appreciated it. Like Germany and Japan in case of India, Pakistan is not unselfish and her method of support is not free from blame. Nevertheless, I see no justification for its downright denunciation. The best way of rendering Pakistan's sinister propaganda ineffective is to make the Kashmir people really contented and happy.

Despite my acute disappointment at the political developments in Pakistan and the dismal failure of democratic trends in that country, I refuse to accept the aspersion that the Muslims are more religion-ridden or fanatical than the Hindus. I can easily imagine a parallel case where Hindus, similarly placed as Muslims are in Kashmir, would feel equally agitated and excited by the religious shibboleths of Hindu leaders. Some inkling of such behaviour we had in Hyderabed and Junagarh when the freedom of the Hindu majorities was jeopardised in the two states by the machinations of the Muslim rulers with or without the connivance of Pakistan. It is difficult for me to agree with your statement that if the ruler of Kashmir would have been a Muslim, the 1931 agitation would never have been launched. Unless you hold that the Muslims in other lands are qualitatively different from those of the Indian Muslims there are histories of Turkey, Egypt and Iran to challenge your assertion. Under a Muslim nawab we can imagine the 1931 agitation taking different form—perhaps a healthier one--but nevertheless it would have been a struggle of enslaved people for their liberation from the domination of a despot. This is on the assumption that the Muslim rule would have been as tyrannical as the Dogra Raj. I have had the extraordinary good luck of coming in close contact with both politically-conscious Hindus and Muslims during the major part of my active life. Shedding the prejudices to which I am heir as one born in a high caste Hindu family, I daresay that communal virus has equally infected the lives of Hindus and Muslims all over the subcontinent. The more closely and

dispassionately I have studied the behaviour of Hindus and Muslims as individuals or members of their respective communities, the more convinced I have felt that little difference exists between them so far as influence of religion and nationality on their everyday life is concerned.

Your conclusion that "until India arrives at a final settlement with Pakistan over the accession issue the present atmosphere of doubt, uncertainty and suspense will persist" is alas true. Unfortunately this stark reality is too often forgotten by the men in power no less than by the people at large in India and Kashmir. Until the Chinese invasion from the North, Nehru and his colleagues frequently pretended that there was no Kashmir problem.

You have not indicated what the nature of settlement can be under the circumstances where both parties have to be appeased. If rightly or wrongly plebiscite is ruled out as an instrument of settlement and the continuation of the present position considered to be the most desirable solution, the only course left is that Pakistan should be made to accept the cease-fire line (probably with minor adjustments) as the international boundary. Frankly speaking, it is beyond my comprehension how any intelligent man can believe that this is possible. Apart from the fact that Muslim opinion in the Valley justifies the persistence of Pakistan in demanding Kashmir's accession with or without plebiscite, I believe that no Government in that country—not even a dictatorial one—has the ghost of a chance to survive if somehow it can be successfully persuaded to withdraw the claim. I do not blame the successive Pakistan Governments for raising storm over Kashmir. My changed view about accession has in no way made me to deny the justifiability of Pakistan's case over the Valley. Pakistanis understandably feel wronged and become almost wild when it is suggested to them to leave Kashmir alone. Any Hindu Government would have behaved similarly in like conditions. We should not forget what happened in Goa and how the Congress Government annexed it.

Having rejected the plebiscite and decided to retain the Valley, India leaves no common ground between herself and

Pakistan on which to base an amicable settlement. I am afraid the current negotiations for ending the dispute are thus doomed to fail. And this will inevitably open another chapter of bitterness and acrimony, of mutual accusations and vituperations. There can be no abatement in Pakistan propaganda of which you complain so vehemently; it may only be expected to be more virulent in future. We have, therefore, to seek some other way of stabilising Kashmir politics and bringing sanity to the situation with which we are confronted. It is to the achievement of this aim that I have directed my attention in the pamphlet.

In saying that only after the final settlement is arrived at with Pakistan "will be the time to take up in right earnest your great programme of raising the cultural level of the people" you are, I feel, putting the cart before the horse. Raising the cultural level of the people is needed to awaken their critical faculty, to make them fit to understand the pros and cons of the accession issue and to understand the blessings that will be conferred on them by Kashmir becoming an integral part of the Indian Republic. If the Kashmiris remain on the present low cultural level guided only by religious prejudices and led by chauvinistic ideals, the accession dispute can never be settled. Inciting speeches of fanatics from across the border will have strong appeal and the Valley will remain a festering sore in the body politic of India. The importance and urgency of the task I have set is thus quite obvious; it cannot brook any delay.

A seemingly valid doubt about the plan is that it will take decades to implement it because thinking and behaviour of a people cannot be improved in days or years; it takes ages. That is a counsal of despair. By waiting for 16 long years to have a settlement of the accession dispute we have already wasted much precious time. Had we had the wisdom to start on this path right from 1947 some progress could have been registered by now. But today we are no nearer the goal of Kashmir's integration with India and, what is more depressing, there are no signs that India is ready to discard the policy which has brought us into this blind alley.

With profound respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Rainawari,
Srinagar, Kashmir
March 26, 1963

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
Gash Agur
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of March 19. I take up my pen to touch upon some of the points raised in it; not for the fun of indulging in polemics but only to give a more lucid expression to my views on these than perhaps I have been able to do in my last letter.

To enlist the whole-hearted support of the Kashmiri Muslims for the accession is patently the ideal solution of the accession problem. But if we believe that the removal of Kashmir's present-day aches and the acquiscence of its people in a reformed, purified and blameless regime under the aegis of India will seal the mouth of Pakistan, we shall be reckoning without the host. And even though the people at large may be happy and contented under India, the ceaseless diatribes of Pakistan will continue to agitate and perturb the majority of the Muslims while a section of them will never be reconciled to Kashmir's association with India. Hence a fool-proof solution can be possible only when India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir are agreed over one. It goes without saying that even if the Muslims of Kashmir have all that they desire in association with India, in a plebiscite their vote will go overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan.

It is not in order to benefit the Kashmir Muslims that Pakistan is crying itself hoarse. It does so in pursuit of its own interests and the Kashmir Muslims, too, knowing full well that they will be worse off under Pakistan, choose out of a sense of duty to their religion, to sacrifice their personal interests to have the emotional satisfaction of being the citizens of an Islamic state and of being contributors to its increased power and extent. Apart from the loss of civic and political rights — so conspicuously absent in Pakistan — which they will inevitably suffer on transfer to that State, the affluence they have experienced under India will vanish like a dream. Even a fraction of the colossal sum that India has so far spent on the development of Kashmir, if earmarked by Pakistan for a similar purpose, would entail a tremendous strain on its economy which it could hardly afford to bear. Granting that the suppression of civil liberties, to whatever extent existing in Kashmir, is driving the Muslims to desperation, can they expect a greater measure of freedom in Pakistan which is under the heels of an undisguised dictatorship and bids fair to remain so indefinitely in future? Here in Kashmir they are as a community ruling the roost while the non-Muslims in Pakistan are virtually living on sufference. For, we have to remember that Kashmir is, for all practical purpose, an independent state as far as the internal administration of the State is concerned which means that the Kashmir Muslims can have everything their own way while India has to foot enormous bills for defence and development of the State. What the right-minded among the Muslims desire is that jobbery, corruption and suppression of civil liberties should cease and this objective can be effectively achieved only when a settlement is arrived at with Pakistan and the bogey of Pakistan sabotage which serves as a smoke-screen to the aberrations of persons at the helm is laid to rest once for all.

I never meant that the Kashmir Muslims should be cowed down into submission by military force, as have been the people of Tibet by China and of Hungary by Russia, the nations of the world finding themselves pathetically helpless to rescue these unfortunate peoples from the military might of the two colossi. I meant that the Muslims of Kashmir enjoying, as they do, an unprecedented economic prosperity and the fullest religious and cultural freedom and being virtually the masters of the State under India's shadow sovereignty, would be content with their present status, even as 5 crores of Muslims even with their extra-territorial loyalties are, in India, if Pakistan did not keep up its barrage of fiery appeals to their religious sentiment.

Personally I think it was wrong on Pandit Nehru's part to take over Kashmir without the people's formal sanction behind that act. I have it on good authority that all his cabinet colleagues, chief among them Sardar Patel, were bitterly opposed to such a course and only gave way when he crowned his forceful

arguments with an emotional outburst. And he was impelled to this course because of his personal regard for and faith in Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. He believed that Sheikh Abdullah *was* Kashmir and that Kashmir really spoke through him. That only was his justification for accepting Kashmir's accession. He was confident that with Sheikh Sahib on his side he would sweep the polls in a plebiscite.

The universe revolves around the self—be it the individual, the social, the national, the religious, the humanitarian or the ideological self. The degree of emphasis on these various selves and their permutations and combinations differs with different peoples. Turkey was prostrate at the end of the First World War and might have been parcelled out among the European nations, if Kemal Ata Turk had not saved it by abolisling the tottering caliphate and modernising the country. The Sultan was given short shrift, because otherwise the country would have been dismembered and the power of Islam in Europe would have received its finishing blow. Egypt, Iraq, and Syria fall under the same category in respect of the upheavals that have been witnessed in these countries. They stand for Pan-Arbism, designed to promote the solidarity of Muslim power in the Middle East and not far removed from the establishment of a new type of panislamism which Pakistan tried to bring into being not so very long ago. That they will direct their combined strength against Israel is not a distant possibility. A person like the Nizam who cannot afford to contribute to the defence of India which has given him all his fabulous wealth, but who can give away millions for the propagation of Islam in England would, if Destiny had placed him on the throne of Kashmir, have received unstinted homage not only from the Muslims of Kashmir but have also been universally acclaimed throughout the Islamic world. However, as this is mere speculation and has no bearing on the present situation, let us agree to differ.

You quote Hyderabad and Junagarh as instances of the objectionable behaviour of the Hindu leaders "when the freedom of Hindu majorities was jeopardised in the two states". Surely you do not mean to imply that the Hindu leaders should

have played the role of mere spectators while the freedom of the people concerned was being made a marketable commodity in the interests of their rulers and Pakistan. In the case of Kashmir, India, as you know, would not accept even a standstill agreement at the request of the ruler and only accepted the accession provisionally when the leader of the greatest political organisation in the State supported the ruler's request and this accession was subject to confirmation by the will of the people to be ascertained later on.

I am sorry I cannot accept your view that in the matter of intolerance the Hindu is as great a sinner as the Muslim. It was Hindu India that received with open arms the Parsis driven out of their native land by Islamic persecution. We have to remember that the semetic faiths are an absolute antithesis of Arya Dharmas (Hinduism and Buddhism) in the matter of tolerance. Latterly of course a degree of intolerance has crept into the thinking of a section of the Hindus but this is mostly a reaction of the aggressive communalism of the Muslims. A discussion on this point in detail is unpleasant business but I would remind you in passing of the unprovoked havoc wrought a few years back on Mirzai Muslims in the Islamic state of Pakistan merely for their unorthodox interpretation of certain doctrines of Islam. About 40 lakhs of Hindus have been compelled to leave their hearth and home in East Pakistan under the most distressing conditions. Have we witnessed a similar exodus of Muslims from India ?

Turning to the vital issue that confronts India, Kashmir and Pakistan, the only practicable way out of the morass, is, as you rightly say, the acceptance by both parties of the present cease-fire line with minor adjustments as the boundary between Azad Kashmir and Indian Kashmir. Obviously neither side can abandon its position to the extent demanded by its adversary without incurring grave risks and the possible consequences of a plebiscite to which, in the abstract, I have no objection, are apt to give one the creeps. If eventually Kashmir must go to Pakistan, our Muslim brethren will have—speaking relatively—exchanged prosperity for penury and freedom for chains. They will find, too late, that they have exchanged king log for king stork.

As to your programme who can there be that will not accord it whole-hearted welcome? That programme is as indispensable to the health of the national soul as fresh air is to that of the physical organism and it will never cease to be a vital need however much we advance. Even countries with a high cultural standard have organs designed to foster and promote cultural development to ever higher levels. For, the vistas of cultural development are as infinite as space and we can never have enough of enlightenment. Your programme, therefore is as much a need of today as of tomorrow and of the distant future. If then I said that the execution of the programme should wait until a settlement of the accession issue was reached, it was for two reasons. First, in their present sullen mood and mental distraction, the people would perhaps not be inclined to listen and the seed would fall on barren soil. Secondly, if the land goes over to Pakistan, now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it may not be tolerated at all. In this context I am reminded of the famous dictum of caliph Omar when he ordered the burning of the library at Alexandria. When the keepers of the library protested that the books in the library said the same thing as the Quran, he retorted: "In that case they are useless and if they say things contrary to the teachings of the Quran, they cannot be allowed to exist". For an Islamic state like Pakistan all such porgrammes are already there in the Quran and no man-made programme having a bearing on ethical values can have the ghost of a chance to survive there.

Although it delights me immensely to be in contact with you through correspondence, I am positively averse to our contacts developing controversies which in the context of the Kashmir problem, can have only an academic value. The thing to be discussed was your booklet and the clouds of controversy have obscured it from view for a time. I have no hesitation to admit that it is an opportune and valuable contribution to the improvement of the present internal situation in Kashmir. With your accustomed forthrightness you have laid the finger on the sore spots and ordinarily one should expect this to facilitate a cure. If this cure does become an accomplished fact, the

people will undoubtedly be relieved of their oppressive tension in respect of the administration, but that is not going to impress Pakistan whose only objective is to grab Kashmir, whatever privations that act may bring to the people of the land.

Yours as ever,
Sridhar Kaul

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
April 16, 1963

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo,
Rainawari,
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 26th ultimo which I read with deep interest. As long as controversies enable us to clarify our views on subjects under discussion, I do not see any harm in continuing them; indeed, friendly controversies make sensible people understand each other better; only they should be cautious not to allow bitterness enter into arguments nor should they impute motives to each other for holding opinions. I think there is not the remotest possibility of this happening in our case because, despite differences on diverse matters, we have never misunderstood each other in the past.

Your views, otherwise so lucid, are not clear to me in one important respect. You want Kashmir to remain as part of India and are against its accession to Pakistant. You believe that if a plebiscite is held the vote of Muslims in any case will go overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan. You think that the diatribes of Pakistan against India will never cease "even though the people (of Kashmir) at large may be happy and contented under India". Yet, strangely enough, you have been insisting that a solution of the Kashmir problem "can be possible only when India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir are agreed over one". For me this is confusing.

As I have frequently stated, I believe Pakistan's claim over Kashmir is not unjustified. Pakistanis have a legitimate

grievance that though the subcontinent was divided on religious grounds they were deprived, through a strategem, of Kashmir which is predominantly populated by Muslims. Had India been able to wean away the Muslim population of the Valley from pro-Pakistan leanings during the past sixteen years a settlement with Pakistan for maintaining the status quo and making the cease-fire line as the international boundary could be within the realm of possibility today. For reasons which I have tried to explain in the pamphlet, India failed to seize the opportunity; indeed, through certain misconceived policies conditions have been created in the State making Muslims sullen and bitter instead of contented and happy as they should have been after the expenditure of enormous sums on the economic development of the country. Pakistan is fully aware of the Indian failure and I cannot understand what cajolery can persuade her to come to a settlement in which she is denied the possession of the State, at any rate of those regions where Muslims are in the majority. It would be naive to think that Pakistan can ever put her seal of approval to a settlement which deprives her of the Valley. If India is determined to keep the Valley it is futile to make attempts to end the dispute through a settlement with Pakistan. Nothing—not even Anglo-American pressure—can induce her to give up this attitude.

You entertain little doubt about the religious attachment of Kashmiri Muslims to Pakistan and you know how fanatically Pakistan is bent upon having Kashmir by hook or by crook; yet you pin your hope on a settlement through India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir and, amazingly, you want this settlement to be according to your wishes. How you can visualise its possibility escapes my comprehension. If we cannot subject ourselves to the test of a plebiscite to determine the future of Kashmir, common sense would advise that we should leave Pakistan altogether out of the picture.

If the Kashmir Muslims persist to have faith in Pakistan and cannot be made to see the good they can have by remaining with India the only method to maintain the status quo is rule by coercion, suppression and denial of all civil liberties.

The people shall have to be cowed down as I think they are to a considerable extent at present. When I pointed out this to you in my last letter you, not unexpectedly, retorted that you could never think of suppression but only wanted that "the Muslims of Kashmir enjoying as they do an unprecedented economic prosperty and the fullest religious and cultural freedom and being virtually the masters of the State under India's shadowy suzerainty, would be content with their present status even as 5 crores of Muslims, even with their extra territorial loyalties, are in India". Now this omnibus statement, besides being based on wishful thinking, contains a contradiction and takes certain situations for granted.

The Kashmir Muslims are no doubt better off today than they were ever before but economic prosperity, social, cultural and religious freedom and even political power have no substance if they are not accompanied by freedom of thought and unrestricted expression of ideas. There is a lurking fear in the minds of the common people which is not groundless that this pampering of the Muslims by India is occasioned by the existence of the accession dispute. If per chance the issue is settled, India allowed to retain the State permanently and Pakistan compelled to be silent the Kashmir scene will entirely change, the artificial structure will disappear and the Muslims will descend to the position of a subject race. Your statement about the Indian Muslims is not borne out by facts. You admit they entertain extra-territorial loyalty which in itself is a sufficient proof of their discontent. And if you think they are in any way happy under the present dispensation you are, I am afraid, sadly out of touch with the realities of the situation and mostly indulging in wishful thinking.

I need not tire you with voluminous evidence which I possess regarding the helpless and pitiable circumstances to which the Indian Muslims have been reduced since independence; but it would surely interest you to learn what a staunch nationalist Muslim whose sincerity and loyalty to India is beyond reproach, has to say on this subject. Imploring the Indian industrialists to recruit Muslims in their undertakings Mr. Badr-ud-din Tayabji, Vice-Chancellor Aligarh

University, recently observed : "After partition so far as the forty odd million Muslims left in India are concerned the position has become much worse than previously. As years pass by the number of Muslims left over in Government employment from pre-partition days lessens due to retirement or other reasons. This is becoming more marked because their retirements are not being matched by any corresponding intake of fresh Muslim recruits". (*Statesman*, 12-4-1963). Mr Tayabji has touched only the problem of Muslim employment but to any unbiassed student of current affairs the condition of the Muslims in other spares would appear no better.

If Kashmiri Muslims read their future under India's "shadowy" suzerainty, as you choose to call it, after the settlement of the accession dispute in the present status of the Muslims living in the rest of India who can blame them for doing so?

Now, despite all this, I am as earnest as you are that Kashmir should continue to remain with India and I have different reasons for desiring so. The developments and happenings in Pakistan after the partition have deeply disappointed me and I have become very pessimistic about the future of democracy in that country. But what is good for Pakistan is the concern of the Pakistanis. I shall mind my own business. Among other things I believe that Kashmir's accession to India will prove conducive to the welfare of the subcontinent and help in constructing a democratic setup in the State. Nevertheless, about one thing I am quite clear in my mind. If we fail to convince the Kashmiri Muslims that their cherished ideals can be attained only if they decide to throw in their lot with India and if they continue to insist on acceding to Pakistan they should be allowed to do so; it is dangerous to retain them in the present position by physical force against their will. After all, Kashmir is only an insignificant part of the wide world. However ardent patriots we might be, we owe something to humanity and cannot therefore shut our eyes to the fact that the unsettled problem of Kashmir is proving a running sore poisoning the good neighbourly relations of India and Pakistan and harming the progress of humanity

at large. In any case it is bad to be a myopic lover of one's homeland; it is particularly so in this case.

But as I have repeatedly stated there is no cause to lose hope in our endeavours to make the Kashmir Muslims realize that the dreams they have cherished for several decades to free their country from medieval despotism and religious obscurantism can be fulfilled by living in the co-operative commonwealth of the Indian Republic. By voluntarily deciding to remain with India the Kashmir Muslims can not only democratise their own social system but will also be instrumental in ameliorating the forlorn lot of the four hundred million of the Muslims living in the 15 Indian States. Only faith in our Muslim compatriots, a sympathetic study of Islam and a liberal view of Islamic History can help us in achieving this objective.

It is my deep regret that I profoudly and fundamentally disagree with you on the findings regarding the philosophy and history of Islam. I belong to that class of students who believe that Islam has played a great historic role in disseminating knowledge among the ignorant and in civilising the culturally backward people of various parts of the world. "One must not obey the law of religion without reflecting and knowing its truth. Theology should be subject to investigation and based upon rationalistic foundations and logical conclusions", such is the teaching of the Muslim philosophers. Like other revolutionary movements, Islam fell on bad days and Muslim divines advocated obscurantism making Islam a vehicle of tyranny and oppression. Unhappily it is true that the Indian Muslims have mostly followed the path shown by such preachers, for Islam reached our land when it had shed its revolutionary character and given up its progressive role. But that will not and does not detract from the greatness of Islam for the laudable work it did for the good of humanity.

Enemies of progress and enlightenment have spread calumnies to defame and discredit the great leaders of Islam, especially the Prophet and the caliphs but most of the allegations have been challenged and disproved. One such is that about Omar to which you have referred in your letter. In his famous

book *The Decline and Fall of Roman Empire* the celeberated and impartial historian, Edward Gibbon, has questioned the statement attributed to Omar originally by Abulpharagius and subsequently repeated parrot-like by other historians. Through impartial enquiry Gibbon has shown that Abulpharagius who was a stranger in Egypt wrote his book in Media after almost six hundred years while two other Christian annalists, one of them the patriarch Etychius who amply described the conquest of Alexandria, did not even mention the alleged vandalism. This is remarkable since both of them belonged to Egypt and lived much earlier than Abulpharagius.

Gibbon aptly reminds us that "the rigid sentence of Omar is repugnant to the sound and orthodox precept of the Mohhammedan casuists for they expressly declare that 'the religious books of the Jews and Christians, which are acquired by the right of war should never be committed to the flames and that the works of profane science, historians or poets, physicians or philosophers may be lawfully applied to the use of the faithful' ".

It is the considered opinion of Gibbon that much of the treasure house of learning at Alexandria was consumed by the "mischievous bigotry of the Christians, who studied to destroy the monuments of idolatry". Unhappily, the average educated Indian draws his knowledge of Muslim History from sources which are inimical to the faith of Islam and refuses to learn from where truth can be had very easily.

Be that as it may, I hold that it is the responsibility of the Kashmiris like you and me who sincerely believe that for the good of both Muslims and Hindus the Valley should permanently become a part of India, to influence public opinion and bring it round in favour of India. In my pamphlet on Kashmir, I have outlined a programme of work for the attainment of this aim. I am very happy that you think my suggestions can facilitate a cure of the sores from which the society suffers in Kashmir. I am in no way worried about Pakistan. With all my fundamental difference with you on the approach to the problem as stated above, I am in full agreement with you that nothing is going to impress Pakistan not even the

complete satisfaction of the State Muslims in every sphere of life. As you say, "Pakistan's only objective is to grab Kashmir whatever privations the act may bring to the people of the land". It is for this reason that I propose to leave Pakistan alone and suggest bending our energies to get the administration streamlined and the civil liberties fully restored to the people. I have full faith in the discriminative capabilities of the Kashmiris. I believe they can be made to understand what is good and what is bad for them. You seem to doubt this and forget that if this faith is lost we have no case in Kashmir. In accepting that the Kashmiris will ever remain attached to Pakistan we are virtually owning defeat and spiritually handing over Kashmir to Pakistan, the very thing that we are at pains to avoid.

I trust you are keeping good health and I have not put you to an avoidable strain by tempting you to enter into this lengthy correspondence. During the past months I had been expecting you to come to Delhi and give me the pleasure of rewarding talks as last year. But it seems circumstances prevented you from making the trip; and it is too late now.

With profound respects and warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Rainawari
Srinagar
April 25, 1963

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8 Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of April 16.

The University Grants Commission has appointed me a member of the committee they have set up to examine the question of providing facilities for higher education for the people of border areas. The first meeting of the committee is going to be held on 4th May and I have been asked to attend it. We shall, therefore; have a chance to discuss things in

person and I content myself here with just a brief reference to some of the points raised in your letter on which, it seems, I have not been able to make myself quite clear.

First of all let me assure you that for me to misunderstand your motives is altogether outside the realm of possibility and this, I presume, is equally true in the reverse direction. That acrimony should ever mar the sweet sincerity of our discussions is inconceivable.

I believe we are agreed on essentials as outlined hereunder:

(1) We both hold that in the best interests of Kashmir and Kashmiris, our land should remain a part of India.

(2) Pakistan can never be expected to abandon its claim to Kashmir. Short of being made the master of the Valley, it will accept no solution, however equitable it may be or however beneficial to the people of the land.

(3) A clean administration which respects the fundamental rights of the people and in no way hinders them in the exercise of civil liberties is a sine-qua-non of every welfare state in all circumstances and still more so—if that expression be permissible in the context of the present situation—in case of Kashmir.

(4) No decision should be forced down the throat of the Kashmiri Muslims; Kashmir's accession to India should be sealed as final by their free choice.

(5) It is true that no organized attempt has been made to win over the people to the side of India or to wean them away from their pro-Pakistan leanings.

(6) India has no chance of success in a plebiscite.

We, however, disagree in one important particular: You believe that if the administration is cleaned up and civil liberties are allowed a free-play, the Muslims may reconcile themselves to Indian citizenship, but I differ. I think, on the contrary, that as long as Pakistan does not shut its mouth the Mislims of Kashmir will continue to be restive and restless.

When I say that a fool-proof solution could be possible only if India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir were agreed over one, I mean that this would be the ideal which

evidently is unattainable. How I wish that a plebiscite had been held simultaneously with the partition of the country and the dispute settled once for all in the light of the result.

Yes, India was divided on the basis of the two-nation theory—Pandit Nehru's disavowal notwithstanding—but this principle was not carried to its logical conclusion. It was the U.P. Muslims who were the principal architect of Pakistan, but they carry on comfortably in India and the minority problem which Pakistan was intended to solve remains as baffling as it was in the pre-partition days. I am told that Mr. Jinnah had suggested an exchange of populations but had been answered with an incredulous smile by Gandhiji.

The other points raised in your letter can be discussed when we meet.

That the present talks between India and Pakistan will prove abortive and that India will not part with any substantial portion of the territory it holds is fairly certain. Your proposal that Pakistan should be kept out of the picture and all energies bent to remove all doubts, fears and causes of bitterness from the minds of the Muslims is in these circumstances, sound practical politics and I endorse it whole-heartedly.

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

Rainawari
Srinagar
August 3, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
E/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for the two booklets "Sheikh Abdullah, Kashmir Democracy and Indo-Pak Relations" and "Natural Environment, Political Vicissitudes and People in Kashmir". I must also take the opportunity to thank you for an earlier publication in the series "A Last Chance for India in Kashmir". The last named work is a strong plea for support to the Sadiq Government. The content of this booklet is unexceptionable and must have an irresistible appeal for everybody who believes

that Kashmir's accession to India is the key to her future progress and prosperity and that in the interest of her welfare it must be maintained and preserved at any cost. The second-named work is an objective survey of the bounties with which Nature has endowed Kashmir, a succinct review of her chequered history, a record of her cultural achievements and an appraisal of the character of her people. A laudable feature of historical review and the assessment of the human material is that there has been no mincing of matters in their presentation.

As for the first-named work, there is nothing in its factual survey of developments since the release of Sheikh Abdullah which will not be readily accepted by close observers of the Kashmir situation and its proposals will undoubtedly strike a responsive chord in the hearts of all well-wishers of Kashmir. Your comment on Sheikh Abdullah's thesis of the establishment of amity between India and Pakistan being the precondition of ending the Kashmir dispute is sound in the abstract as I think, but apparently overlooks the fact that the dispute cannot be said to have ended until Pakistan is satisfied and that the people, which means the Muslims, in their present mood will make short shrift of any leader who holds up before them "communal harmony, social democracy and abiding peace" as the immediate objective. Moreover, there is little hope for Sheikh Abdullah and other Muslim leaders accepting that counsel of perfection and thereby putting their leadership in jeopardy, particularly when there is a rival leader who unequivocally proclaims that the only alternatives before the people are accession to India or accession to Pakistan and that a third course is inconceivable which in plain words means that Kashmir in his view must become a part of Pakistan. We have to remember in this connection that Maulana Farooq, the avowed protagonist of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, commands as great a following as the Sheikh and the moment the latter takes up the constructive programme suggested by you which in effect means acceptance of status quo and accession to India, there is bound to be a landslide in favour of the Maulana. The crux of the whole matter is that the Muslims here are motivated in their choice by pure religious sentiment and not by political or economic considerations and since the relic episode the Muslim mass mind has been poisoned through and through with fanatical intolerance and inveterate hatred of the Hindu minority which is regarded as the only hurdle in the way of the appropriation of Kashmir by Pakistan. Till lately the one complaint that these people could have against India was the suppression of civil liberties and corruption in the administration. Now that civil liberties have been restored and a clean administrative set-up at the top established, that complaint no longer exists. But will this wholesome change reconcile the Kashmiri Muslim to the Indian accession? The answer is emphatically "No".

I am told you are coming up here shortly and I am looking forward to the pleasure of meeting you.

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
August 26, 64

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I am sorry for this delay in acknowledging your letter of the 3rd August.

The suggestions I have been making in the booklets may be a counsel of perfection in some respect, but I think there can be no better practical politics conducive to the peace and happiness of Kashmir and its people.

Regarding your observations on the fanatical outlook of the Muslims I may refer you to my fifth pamphlet just out dealing with the Kashmiri Pandit politics, a copy of which I am posting to you separately.

If we could exercise the demon of communalism from the Pandit community, I have no doubt that it would produce healthy and desirable effect on the minds of the Muslims.

I shall feel happy to have your comments on the new booklet. With respect and regards.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

Rainawari
Srinagar
September 26, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of 26th August, 1964 followed some days later by the booklet "Thoughts on the Future of Kashmiri Pandits"

The main thesis of the booklet is surely unexceptionable, but certain observations which have gone into building it up are, to my mind, open to question.

The conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference in bringing about which epochal event you played an important role was, I think, dictated in the last analysis, by what the Muslim leaders conceived to be the interests of the Muslim community. In plain words these interests lay in the substitution of Muslim rule for the Hindu monarchy. They secularized the label of the Muslim Conference in order to use the Indian National Congress as a catspaw for ousting the Maharaja. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah revealed in confidence this purpose of his alliance with the Congress to Jinnah during his stay at Srinagar and the latter made a clean breast of it in a public speech which he delivered at Jama Masjid soon afterwards.

It was the Indian National Congress which financed the National Conference and lent it ustinted moral and material support in its campaign launched to supplant the Maharaja. The Muslim League kept sulkily aloof throughout that campaign. The National Conference appeared in its true colours from the very day of its birth and that was why even you had to part company with it. And when it stepped into the seat

of power it lost no time to square accounts with the Kashmiri Pandits. Their economic roots were cut with utter ruthlessness and while the doors of the services and other avenues of economic life were hermetically sealed against them in the land of their birth, steps were taken to debar them from obtaining employment in India also.

The National Conference opted for accession to India, firstly because it had grown in the lap of the Indian National Congresss and could not conceivably have grafted itself onto the unresponsive, even unfriendly, stem of Pakistan ; secondly, because its leaders knew that they would find short shrift in the absolutism of that land and, thirdly, because they could foresee that accession to Pakistan would mean the dominance of the Punjab Muslims over the native population with all the concomitant evils unseparable from such relationship and, fourthly, because, as a part of Pakistan, Kashmir would be driven into economic doldrums. The development witnessed by Kashmir under India's fostering care—and this despite misappropriations and defalcations here—would have been unimaginable if this land had been made over to Pakistan. As it is, I don't think the Muslims of Kashmir have any reason to be disgruntled over their present lot. All the talk of secularism notwithstanding, the Government is essentially a Muslim Government and a Kashmiri Muslim Government at that ; they enjoy all the previleges of a ruling community and have a measure of prosperity they cannot dream of in Pakistan. All that India is doing in the exercise of its nebulous overlordship is that it defends the State against external danger and spends enormous sums to finance its development in all departments of national life.

When the Muslim leaders were still unsure of their future, they found it profitable to reject Pakistan's claim outright but when they found their feet, they had no qualms in disowning India. The fact is that they do not really want the merger of the State with Pakistan ; what they ardently desire is to make Kashmir an autonomous State with themselves at its head. This is not a new development. Not long after the National Conference came into power, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah declared

in a meeting at Rainawari in which I was present that the only solution of the Kashmir problem was that the State should be recognized as independent by both India and Pakistan and this is the goal he has in view today.

You seem to suggest that the Kashmiri Pandits were the accomplices of Bakshi Gulam Mohammed in his campaign of suppression and repression against pro-Pakistan elements. You forget that Kashmiri Pandits were themselves the victims of merciless persecution and unabashed discrimination and, if anything, it was they who needed the support and sympathy of the majority community. The Kashmiri Pandits did bring sad tale of their woes and sufferings to the ears of the Indian leaders, but to no effect.

You refer to the existence of harmonious relations between the Muslims and Pandits of Kashmir in olden times. Life is a dynamic process and everything in the world is subject to ceaseless change. The Kashmiri Muslim of today is not a carbon copy of his forefathers, even as the Chinese of today are an antithesis of their ancestors of only a few hundred years ago. Not to recount what happened during the tribal raids, I will refer you to a recent incident revealing the present-day mentality of the Kashmiri Muslim. To fraternize with their Muslim compatriots, the Kashmiri Pandits completely identified themselves with the agitation of the Muslims for the recovery of the Hazratbal relic and even took out big processions in support of the same. But when the agitation was over posters appeared in all parts of the city expressing Muslim appreciation of the Pandit's co-operation in the agitation, but advising them in all seriousness to vacate the land in the interests of their own safety. This, the posters said, was a timely warning, for the kafir and the momin could in no case live together. But when all this is said and done, your exhortation to the Kashmiri Pandits is undeniably sage and sound. I wish, however, that the Muslims of India were simultaneously persuaded to exert themselves to convert the Kashmiri Muslims to a pro-India stand.

With best wishes and sincere regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
3rd October, 1964

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari,
Srinagar (Kashmir)

Me dear Masterjee,

I have to thank you for your long letter of the 26th ultimo commenting on my booklet about the future of Kashmiri Pandits.

It is obvious that we are looking at Kashmir politics from two different angles and no wonder we arrive at different conclusions.

You are free to cherish your views but what surprises me is that a learned person like you should hold the entire community of Muslims responsible for the deeds or misdeeds of an individual or a group of individuals.

If Abdullah made a foolish statement in the past or a few mischief-mongers issued an anti-Pandit poster last year, you seem to be sure that this is the considered opinion of the Muslims. How you come to such conclusion passes my comprehension. I beg to point out that this kind of reasoning is hardly fair.

I never said that Kashmiri Pandits were not the victims of the misrule ; indeed, I have stated that they suffered equally and in certain respects more than the Muslims. What pained me was that they connived at the policy of suppression as long as it affected only Muslims. The Pandit representation to the Indian leaders never included a word about the miserable condition of the Muslims and the people in general ; they only bemoaned their own sad lot.

I have written two more bookets the last ones in the series. One of these "Our Task in Kashmir" you will get within a few days ; the second one entitled" The Dialogue Between Mirwaiz Farooq and Sheikh Abdullah" will follow after a week.

I would like to hear your comments on both because it helps me a lot to reconsider my own views.