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Imperialist Aggression In Kashmir



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Origin of Kashmir Problem

SINCE August 15, 1947, Kashmir events have unfolded the aggressive designs of the Anglo-American Imperialist Bloc.

The way to implement these designs on the Indian soil was cleared by the Mountbatten Award devised by British imperialism and accepted by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League.

The Mountbatten Award partitioned India on a religious basis into the Indian Union and Pakistan and placed the 600 odd native feudal States into a position of independence from either of the two Dominions. In thus dismembering India, the aim of the British imperialists was to be able to play one against another and aggravate religious-communal hostilities in order to maintain their domination over the whole sub-continent and keep under their direct control areas of military-strategic importance, particularly the Northern Region of Kashmir where the borders of the Soviet Union and China meet.

The Kashmir crisis is a direct result of this plan, the essence of which is the preparation for a war against the Soviet Union whose border begins where Kashmir's ends.

On August 12, 1947, the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, still then under the direct control of the British Viceroy, informed the Pakistan Government that "the Jammu and Kashmir Government would welcome stand-still agreements with Pakistan on all matters on which there exist agreements, at the present moment with the outgoing British Indian Government."

On the 16th August, the Pakistan Government formally accepted the

offer and accordingly a stand-still agreement was concluded, the question of formal accession, however, remained still open.

This action of the Maharaja indicates that at the very outset the intention of the British imperialists was to place the whole of Kashmir and Jammu within the orbit of Pakistan because they were afraid of the advanced anti-imperialist movement in India which might lead to the secession of the Indian Union from the British Empire. They had no doubt that Pakistan would remain within the British Empire.

At that time, the Conservative Press in Britain made it plain that if Kashmir could not remain "independent", the "natural" thing for her was to accede to Pakistan.

The ruling circles of India, headed by Nehru, representing the capitalists and landlords, wanted to grab the rich territories of Kashmir for purposes of exploitation. They therefore attempted to upset the imperialist designs, within the framework of the Mountbatten Plan, by winning over the Maharaja to their side, by promising him that his tyrannical rule will continue in Kashmir, by betraying the democratic movement in Kashmir.

To this end they made Sheikh Abdulla enter a heinous compromise with the tyrannical Maharaja, and on the basis of this compromise got him released from jail. They then persuaded the Maharaja to accede to the Indian Union and used Sheikh Abdulla to give a democratic garb to this accession, to screen its treacherous character.

Seeing that the Indian bourgeois Government was upsetting their carefully laid plans, and finding that the moves of the Indian Gov-

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ernment could not be counteracted within the framework of the Mountbatten Plan, imperialism brought about the invasion to gain their own ends.

On October 22, 1947, 2,000 warriors composed of tribesmen with the aid of the Pakistan Army invaded the territory from the West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

The British hand behind the invasion can be easily seen.

In the West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, wherefrom the invasion was organised, there were British Governors, Mudie and Cunningham respectively. Cunningham was subsequently replaced by A. Dundas.

Almost all the key men in the Pakistan Army and the Civil Service were British officers.

Two British officers, Brigadier Scott and Mr. Powel, were very active at the time of the invasion on the border of Kashmir, in the Pakistan area between Rawalpindi and Sialkot, just where the invaders were mobilised for the attack. (*People's Age*, Vol. VI, No. 19).

Brigadier Scott was the Commanding Officer of the Dogra Army of the Maharaja of Kashmir in the year 1946. Mr. Powel was the Inspector-General of Police in the State of Kashmir and Jammu in the same period.

Both of them played notorious parts in suppressing the great uprising of 1946, led by the National Conference of Kashmir and Jammu.

Brigadier Scott, just on the eve of leaving Kashmir in August 1947, visited Poonch on the pretext of examining its defence. It must be remembered that Poonch was the first to fall into the hands of the invaders.

The complicity of British officers in this invasion was practically confirmed by Sir A. Dundas, the Governor of the NWFP, in his state-

ment to the 'U.N. Commission on India and Pakistan', recorded in the Paris report of the Commission. This report contains the following passage:—

"...The movement of tribesmen into Kashmir had in fact to be canalised through his province in order to avoid the serious risk of outright war within the territory of Pakistan. Further, he said that tribesmen obtained petrol from local sources in Pakistan and made use of railways and local motor transport." (Paris Report of UNCIP, Page 22).

This account makes it plain that the Afridis, Mahsuds and Mahmunds who invaded Kashmir were under the command of British officers and with arms and equipments from Pakistan. It has now been admitted by the Government of Pakistan that Pakistan troops equipped with up-to-date arms accompanied the tribesmen and did the fighting.

In order to understand the true character of the invasion, one must recall the traditional British policy pursued for about two centuries in respect of the Frontier tribesmen from whom were recruited raiders for Kashmir.

In order to subjugate these tribesmen, British planes systematically bombed their territories year after year and simultaneously a number of chieftains were enslaved by offering them pensions from the Indian exchequer. On the eve of India's partition these chieftains organised a pro-Pakistan movement among the tribesmen.

It is these chieftains who organised raiders on behalf of British military officers and led them for the establishment of "Azad, Kashmir". It is the same chieftains who have now led the revolt against Pakistan and have set up an "Azad Pathanistan" in the mountainous area between the NWFP and Af-

ghanistan.

These episodes glaringly reveal how the ignorance and backwardness of the tribesmen are exploited by imperialist Powers in the interest of maintaining their domination over colonial people.

The invasion of Kashmir by frontier tribesmen falls within the category of such imperialist machinations.

Simultaneously with the invasion of Kashmir by Frontier tribesmen and Pakistan troops, communal religious sentiments of the people of the Northern areas of Kashmir were fully exploited to incite them for an uprising. On October 31, British officers organised an uprising in

Gilgit. On November 2 (1947), the feudal principalities of the Northern area were combined into a separate kingdom named 'Azad Kashmir'.

Thus, while the struggle in Central Kashmir was yet undecided, British Army officers with the help of the Pakistan Government had already put into execution their basic plan—namely, the control of the strategically important Northern districts, on the borders of the Soviet Union and China.

Such is the origin of the Kashmir problem. It had its origin in the aggressive designs of British imperialists with whom the Government of Pakistan collaborated from the very beginning.

British Military Intervention

ON September 29, 1947, Sheikh Abdulla, the leader of the Kashmir National Conference, was released from prison at the pressure of the people. Within a month of his release, the imperialist-sponsored invasion began.

On the eve of the invasion, the Maharaja of Kashmir was persuaded by the Nehru Government to accede to the Indian Union and a Cabinet was formed with Sheikh Abdulla at its head.

By October 26, the invaders were at the outskirts of Srinagar, the capital of the State. The Maharaja with his 10,000 troops fled to Jammu. The bankruptcy of the feudal rule was laid bare before the people.

Defence of Srinagar was taken up by the People's Guard organised by the National Conference.

The first detachments of the Popular Guard were formed on October 26. At once they marched out of the city to meet the enemy. Skirmishes took place in the vicinity of the airfield. According to the description of an eye-witness,

"The invaders, however, were too busy looting to attack the capital immediately; and time worked for Kashmir." (*New Times*, No. 40, 1948).

The first battalion of the Indian troops was landed on the Srinagar airfield on the morning of October 27. The Indian troops and the Kashmir People's Guard together drove the invaders back from the capital. Within a short while they recaptured Baramulla.

From then, the war continued for 14 months between the Indian troops and the Kashmir Popular Guard on the one side and the Pakistan troops and the tribal raiders on the other side.

The war was the result of direct military intervention of British imperialism in the national affairs of the Kashmiri people, and for 14 months the war dragged on because British intervention continued to operate in various guises and forms.

The raiders equipped with arms supplied by the Pakistan Army remained firmly installed in the Northern region comprised by Gilgit, Nagar, Hunza, Chitral, Dir and Swat. They could not be dislodged from this area because the ruling circles in Britain and America wanted the Pakistani forces to remain there, and the reactionary ruling circles in the Indian Union refused to arm the People's Guard of Kashmir.

Describing why the offensive of the Indian troops had slowed down, a correspondent of the *New Times* (No. 40, 1948) pointed out:—

"Actually it was being held back as a matter of deliberate policy. The development of the offensive would be bound to lead the troops across the Pakistan border, in as much as the invaders made it their habit to retire across this border when pursued. This, the Indian rulers feared, might enable the interested Powers in the United Nations to represent India, instead of Pakistan, as the 'aggressor'."

"Unquestionably, too, there were instances of hidden sabotage on the part of the High Command, which was controlled by British officers and by Indians who were open British placemen. And, finally, it was to the interest of the Indian reactionaries that Kashmir remains occupied by Indian troops. In these conditions, Sheikh Abdullah's Government could be compelled to act in the interests of the Indian reactionaries, rather than Kashmir, and the Indian reactionaries could control

the democratic movement headed by the National Conference."

From the above account it is clear that the underlying cause of the war in Kashmir consists in the fact that the Anglo-American imperialists aimed at converting Kashmir into a link in the chain of military bases with which they are making frantic efforts to surround the Soviet Union. They are specially interested in the strategic Northern districts of Gilgit, Chitral and the neighbouring areas.

Nehru could not, of course, pursue the invaders in this region and at the same time keep India within the British Commonwealth which is nothing but a war bloc of the imperialist war-mongers. He placed the issue before the U.N. Security Council in December 1947, and thereby invited direct American intervention.

The *People's Age* warned the people against this peril in January 1948, in the following words:—

"Nothing can be more suicidal than reference to the Security Council of the UNO. The policies of the UNO today are dominated by Anglo-American Power-politics, though the Soviet Union and the democratic countries are waging a heroic struggle in the interests of the freedom of nations. The call to the UNO is thus a call to imperialist intervention—a call to American imperialism to intervene in Kashmir." (*People's Age*, Vol. VI, No. 28)

and making the Northern area a secure military base temporarily in formal possession of Pakistan but for the use of Anglo-American imperialist Powers.

U. S. Manoeuvres Partition

AS soon as the Kashmir issue was placed before the Security Council, American imperialists pounced on it and began to manoeuvre for partitioning Kashmir

At the very outset, the American and British representatives in the Security Council proposed to set up a Commission with wider jurisdiction than Kashmir and it was named U.N. Commission for India and Pakistan instead of U.N. Commission for Kashmir. Pakistan aided this procedure by indicating its intention to bring such other issues as Junagadh and Hyderabad before the Commission if such a necessity arose.

The Security Council accepted the contention of Pakistan and set up a Commission with wider terms of reference which could justify intervention on every issue concerning disputes between India and Pakistan in order to put pressure upon both for the partition of Kashmir to which both were opposed, as both wanted the whole of Kashmir. The other purpose was to put India and Pakistan on equal footing without recognising Pakistan as the aggressor—which was India's complaint.

After getting this measure passed and thus securing the initial advantage for American intervention, the Anglo-American delegates proposed that a five-member commission be set up for the purpose. The Soviet delegation opposed this proposal and moved that a Commission of the whole Security Council responsible to the latter be sent to Kashmir to study the problem on the spot. The Soviet proposal was stubbornly opposed by the Anglo-American bloc who got it defeated in the Security Council because the imperialists were afraid that its acceptance would weaken the chance of American intervention and intrigues because in the Security Council there is a strong contingent of delegates from the Soviet Union and People's Democracies who might shipwreck the American plan.

The Indian delegation accepted the Anglo-American proposal and thereby sealed the fate of Kashmir

at the initial stage. A five-member Commission was set up packed with members belonging to the Anglo-American bloc with the sole exception of the member from Czechoslovakia.

The UNCIP (United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan), in the first stage of its negotiations worked for an immediate cease-fire and laid down the conditions for it in its resolution dated August 13, 1948. In this resolution it was stipulated that the Pakistan forces were to be withdrawn from the area they had occupied and the withdrawal of the Pathan raiders effected. In the rest of the area the disposition of the Indian and State forces were to be determined in consultation between the Commission and the Indian Government.

The snag in the August 13 proposal of UNCIP was this—that it did not mention anything about the "Azad Kashmir Forces". This was the first step to give recognition to the "Azad Kashmir Government" comprising the northern areas on the borders of the Soviet Union and China.

On the basis of the Commission's August 13 resolution, cease fire was effected on January 1, 1948, after 14 months of warfare.

The sinister motive behind the August 13th resolution of UNCIP became clearer when on January 5, the Commission adopted another resolution which further strengthened the position of the "Azad Kashmir Forces" as a recognised "political element". The resolution of January 5, inter alia, states:—

"All civil and military authorities within the State and the principal political elements within the State will be required to cooperate with the plebiscite administrator in the preparation for

and the holding of the plebiscite." This resolution plainly legalises the existence of the Azad Kashmir Government as a "principal political element" and the Azad Kashmir Fouz as one of the "military authorities" within the State.

In order to understand the hypothetical nature of the Commission's manoeuvres one must recall that after the August 13th resolution was presented to the Government of India, Nehru raised the point about the Azad Kashmir Force. The Commission in its reply dated August 25 stated that the question might be examined when the resolution of August 13, 1948 was implemented.

The January 5th resolution of the Commission reduced the August 25 letter to a scrap of paper and the Azad Kashmir Fouz remained installed in power in the Northern area with the connivance of UNCIP.

The manoeuvres of the UNCIP have produced the results intended. As Dr. Chyle, the Czechoslovak member of the Commission, has pointed out in his minority report, "The 'Azad forces' meanwhile grew by the spring of 1949 into 32 disciplined and fully armed battalions which, according to an evaluation by the military adviser of the Commission, represent a 'formidable force'."

What a formidable force it is can be gauged from the following admission of Sardar Ibrahim Khan, President of the Azad Kashmir Government:—

"During the nine months that have elapsed since the cease fire in Kashmir, the Azad Kashmir Government has reorganised their forces and now they are a hundred times better than what they were when they had first risen in arms against Dogra Rule." (*Pakistan Times*, Oct. 11, 1949).

Besides, under the cover of UNCIP negotiations for truce

Gilgit and Skardu under the control of British officials.

The net result of American intervention in Kashmir affairs has been militarisation of the Northern area as a separate State possessed by reactionary classes enjoying the patronage of the American war-mongers. Truly speaking, it is an Anglo-American military outpost nicknamed "Azad Kashmir."

Having achieved this, the UNCIP has withdrawn from the scene by making a recommendation for the arbitration of the Kashmir dispute by Admiral Nimitz. The meaning of this arbitration proposal becomes clear when one follows the development that led to the report of the Commission in December 1949.

The Commission convened a meeting to be held on August 22, 1949, with the representatives of the Governments of the Indian Union and Pakistan. This meeting was dramatically cancelled on the ground that the Pakistan Government refused to discuss the question of the Azad Forces while the Government of India wanted this issue to be included in the agenda.

On August 31 came Truman's letter to Nehru and on September 1 Attlee's letter. Both the letters pressed upon Nehru to accept arbitration. Dr. Chyle, the Czechoslovak member of the Commission, has revealed that "the secret arbitration offer of the Commission was, before being presented to the Governments of India and Pakistan, placed at the disposal of the Governments of the USA and the United Kingdom, and President Truman and the British Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, in a synchronised action, made use of it for a public interventionary pressure."

This interventionary pressure was further strengthened by the pro-im-

perialist Press campaign. For example, the *Manchester Guardian*, in its issue dated September 7, editorially commented as follows:

"If it is to be considered as beyond question that Kashmir is a part of India, why did Nehru accept the resolution of the United Nations Commission of August 1948 and January 1949; Nehru might have advanced his present thesis before his Government accepted the resolution but he can hardly do so now.

This comment is more revealing than the letters of Truman and Attlee. It reveals that the motive behind the arbitration proposal is partition of Kashmir, or in other words, legal and constitutional sanction to the militarised Northern zone.

An Indian nationalist journalist has expressed the significance of arbitration in the following words:

"The way is being laid for an award in Kashmir similar to Radcliffe Award. The Kashmir Commission tired of failures but still obstinate, has now proposed arbitration by Admiral Nimitz, on all disputed points. Appeals have come forth in support of this proposal from President Truman and Premier Attlee, thus exposing finally open Anglo-American interest in the Kashmir dispute." (*Nation*, Sept. 4, 1949).

The same journalist pointed out that Truman's pressure was accompanied by the offer to get India elected to the Security Council provided she settled her quarrel with Pakistan. The journalist further says—"It is significant that President Truman's letter to Pandit Nehru was delivered by the American Ambassador on the very day General Cariappa was decorated with the American award "Legion of Merit", degree of Chief Commander.

Dr. Chyle's minority report is a historic document which has unmasked the Commission so tho-

roughly that even the Security Council could not straightway accept the recommendations of the Commission for arbitration. A new round of manoeuvres became necessary.

Dr. Chyle, the Czechoslovak member of the Commission, declared:

"The course of discussion on the offer of arbitration of the truce agreement—to which the Commission was not even authorised on the basis of its terms of reference—made it clear, indeed, that the Commission was not free from outside influences, although it was to act only according to the mandate of the Security Council in the interest of the U.N. as a whole.

"The intervention by President Truman and the British Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, was only made possible on the basis of precise and timely information emanating from the Commission itself. The Kashmir dispute, however, is an affair of the whole forum of the U.N. and in its solution all preliminary conditions and guarantees of its just settlement must be observed.

"If every one of the member states of the U.N. took a similar course of action to that of the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom in their interventions with absolute disregard of the competence of the appropriate organs of the U.N., each and every mediatory action would be made impossible and the U.N. would be seriously undermined."

It is thus amply clear, from undisputed facts, that the Anglo-American authorities have recognised in the Kashmir problem a special interest, that their special interest lies in the Northern zone bordering on the Soviet Union and People's Democratic China,

that this northern zone has been militarised with the surreptitious connivance of the Commission dominated by Anglo-American interests, that these interests are undermining the principles of U.N. and making interventionary pressure on India to accept American arbitration.

What is the conclusion that follows from these facts? Only one conclusion follows—that Anglo-American imperialists aim at the conversion of the Northern area as an American colony and a military base against our great neighbours the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China on whose borders the aforementioned territory is situated.

A look at the map will convince anybody of the strategic importance of the areas comprised by the principalities of Gilgit, Swat, Dir, Hunza and Nagar, with a tribal population of about 1½ million, more than one-third of the State of Kashmir and Jammu.

That is exactly the reason which explains why the Anglo-American bloc in UNO was opposed to the Soviet proposal for a Commission of the whole Security Council responsible to itself, why the Commission, omitted any reference to the Azad Kashmir Fouz in its August 13 (1948) resolution, why it dramatically cancelled the joint meeting of August 22, 1949, as soon as the question of the Azad Kashmir Fouz came up, why Truman exerted his interventionary pressure for arbitration and above all how within a few months after the cease fire, the 'Azad Force' in the northern area could grow into a formidable force of 32 fully armed battalions,

right under the nose of a U.N. Commission.

It is not for any affection for Islam that the American authorities are giving protection to the Azad Force, they are only manoeuvring to establish their own hold over the people of the Northern region. If they are appeasing Pakistan it is because:

First, the area in question is on the border of Pakistan, the direct communication link of this area is with Pakistan. Therefore, the Government of Pakistan must be kept contented and a willing partner if this area is to be used as a military base in a war against the Soviet Union and China.

Secondly, the tribal and semi-tribal people who inhabit this area are Muslim by religion; cooperation of these people in a war against the Soviet Union cannot be secured except by exploiting their religious prejudices by means of Islamic demagoguery, it is a job which can be entrusted to the Government of Pakistan.

Thirdly, unity of these people with the people of Central Kashmir who have a glorious tradition of democratic struggles will be a menace to the anti-democratic war preparations.

Moreover, the Government of Pakistan is being utilised to put pressure upon the Kashmir National Conference for surrendering the strategic Northern area to the American imperialists. They are simultaneously manoeuvring to come to terms with the Indian Government.

Their aim is to make all the three parties—Government of Pakistan, Indian Government and Kashmir National Conference—to come to terms and surrender the strategic areas to them.

that he is unwilling to sacrifice any part of Kashmir but that he is be-

ing forced to make compromises for a 'peaceful solution' of the Kashmir problem as if the alternative is—either war with Pakistan or compromise with the U.N. Security Council.

Incontestable facts give a totally different picture of the whole affair:

It is a fact that before the raiders from Pakistan began the invasion of Kashmir, the majority of the people of Kashmir were against Pakistan, against the Muslim League and loyal supporters of the Kashmir National Conference led by Sheikh Abdulla. If the people were armed and all powers were given to the National Conference, the raiders could not have made any headway. The demand of the Kashmir National Conference was for the arming of the Popular Guards but Nehru was uncompromising on this issue, he preferred to send troops but not arms to the people.

It is a fact that the vast majority of the people of Kashmir Valley are hostile to the Maharaja and the raiders from Pakistan fully utilised this sentiment by anti-Maharaja demagoguery. Leaders of the Kashmir National Conference demanded again and again that the Maharaja be overthrown and a democratic government be set up. Nehru was uncompromising on this issue and forced the National Conference to accept offices under the Maharaja and stop all agitation against princely rule.

It is a fact that in the U.N. Security Council, the Soviet delegate and the delegate of People's Democracies twice intervened. On the first occasion they demanded that a Commission of the whole Security Council instead of a five-member commission with Anglo-American majority be sent to study the situation in Kashmir.

On the second occasion (Decem-

ber, 1949) they demanded that both the Governments be heard by the Security Council instead of empowering the Canadian member to negotiate with them and a new commission of the whole Security Council be set up. On both the occasions Nehru's representatives accepted the offer of the Anglo-American bloc and thereby facilitated its wirepulling.

Kashmir could not be defended without arming the people of Kashmir, without overthrowing feudal despotism and without transferring land to the tillers, by abolishing landlordism without compensation. But the leadership of the Indian National Congress opposed, at every step, such a democratic transformation of Kashmir.

In a Press conference in Delhi held on September 29, 1948, Sheikh Abdulla is reported to have said that 'neither was his stand against the 'ruling Powers' of the Maharaja getting adequate backing nor was his bold and progressive economic programme in the State receiving full approval.' (*Nation*, October 2, 1948).

Commenting on the reactionary attitude of the Indian National Congress, a representative of the *Nation* writes:—

"This is most serious... This means, if anything, that in the opinion of Sheikh Abdulla, India will lose the plebiscite in Kashmir if she does not concentrate on the political and economic war. It means that all our sacrifices, the many precious heroic lives lost in Kashmir, the huge money spent, the great hardship borne by our people, the high principles we have endlessly cherished and championed will come to naught only because of our softness for

a Maharaja and all that he stands for, for our refusal to back Abdulla in his socio-economic programme." (*Nation*, October 2, 1948).

The Patel-Nehru Government made the promise that the raiders would be driven out from the whole of Kashmir, but they had also given the pledge to the Maharaja and the landlords of Kashmir that their powers, privileges and interests would be protected. As a result the Government of Sheikh Abdulla was forced to make compromises with the feudal order and lose the sympathy and support of the people.

It follows that during the 14 months of war in Kashmir, Nehru failed to drive out the raiders from the Northern area because he refused to accept the democratic demands of the Kashmiri people and during the last 12 months of the cease fire, he refused to support the democratic solution offered by the representatives of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. It is his hostility to the democratic camp which has transferred the full initiative to Anglo-American imperialists with whom Nehru faithfully collaborates.

How concretely General McNaughton will solve the problem of the Azad Force it is difficult to predict; it is quite possible that he

will make both accept an arbitration or some sort of Anglo-American trusteeship over the Northern area. Whatever may be the concrete form of the solution, Anglo-American imperialists will take what they want, until the peoples of India, Pakistan and Kashmir solve the problem in the people's way in the national interest.

The path that Nehru has chosen is not the peaceful path, but the path chalked out by the most rapacious warmongers, the Anglo-American imperialists, and its success will only strengthen the camp of war against the camp of peace.

At present the Anglo-American authorities are putting pressure upon the Indian Government to remain satisfied with a part of Kashmir and surrender the Northern area either to Pakistan or directly to America in the interest of the "common cause" against the democratic forces of South East Asia, against "Communism" as it is called.

Truman's call for this common cause is an alluring appeal to Nehru on account of its "larger world context" than the interest of the Kashmiri people who want to overthrow Princedom.

Nehru, the cosmopolitan, will rather choose to sacrifice half of Kashmir to the American monopolists than the throne of the Dogra Prince because the former course corresponds to the interests of the class he represents but the latter is opposed to his interests, because he is a collaborator of Anglo-American imperialist Powers.

Pakistan Govt. Aids Imperialists' Aggression

THE Government of Pakistan and their representatives at home and abroad are shouting hoarse that their fight is for the abolition of

Princedom in Kashmir and that they stand for a plebiscite to determine the future of the State. This is sheer hypocrisy to deceive the Mus-

lim masses of Pakistan.

In the year 1946, when the exploited people of Kashmir rose in revolt against the Maharaja under the leadership of the Kashmir National Conference, the Muslim Conference in Kashmir, following the lead of Jinnah cooperated with the Dogra ruler and his Prime Minister Kak who drowned the revolution in blood.

The hypocrisy contained in the anti-Monarchy demagoguery of the spokesmen of the Government of Pakistan becomes clear from the facts that on August 15, 1947, the Government of Pakistan entered into a stand-still agreement with the Maharaja whose representatives often committed themselves to the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan, that the Government of Pakistan gave full support to the Nizam of Hyderabad until his resistance to joining Indian Union had broken down, that the traditional policy of the All-India Muslim League has always been to support the ruling Princes of the native States, that in Baluchistan and other States that joined Pakistan, the feudal Rulers are still in power, and that even in the Northern region of Kashmir occupied by the Azad Forces local chieftains have not been overthrown.

The Pakistan Government's demagoguery about a plebiscite for Kashmir is as much a bluff as their anti-Maharaja demagoguery. Until the Azad Forces were installed in the Northern region with the help of British military officers, the Government of Pakistan, the Muslim League and the Kashmir Muslim Conference were all opposed to a plebiscite, not only for Kashmir but for anywhere in India for the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim differences.

As late as on October 31, 1947, that is, nine days after the invasion

of Kashmir had begun, Sheikh Abdulla had said—

"The course of action adopted by the invaders is aimed at coercing us, which cannot be accepted since it is dishonourable. This we must and will resist to the last man and to the last ounce of our energy. I, therefore, request Mr. Jinnah to accept the democratic principle of the sovereignty of people of our State including as it does 78 per cent Muslims, whose free and unhampered choice must count in the matter of final accession. I request him to use his influence and power to withdraw the invaders. I am ready to come to Karachi to meet him should he so desire."—(*Hindustan Times*, 12-12-47)

There was no response from the Government of Pakistan or any of its spokesmen.

Throughout the war in Kashmir upto the arrival of the UNCIP, representatives of the Pakistan Government denied any link between the Pakistan Government or its army with the raiders in Kashmir. It is significant that the admission about the Pakistan troops fighting in Kashmir was made only after some parleys with the members of the UNCIP.

The Government of Pakistan is guilty of aiding the Anglo-American imperialist Powers to set up a war base between the borders of Pakistan and Tadzhikistan, to establish a militarist regime in the region comprised of Mirpur, Poonch, half of Uri, half of Ladakh and Gilgit in order to make the people of this region cannon-fodder in the war against the Tadzhiks of the Soviet Union. This is the area called

"Azad Kashmir" since the cease-fire.

The Muslim League leaders of Pakistan are concealing from the masses the inhuman atrocities that are being committed on the people inhabiting the Azad Kashmir area. It is significant to note that the Muslim Conference in this area has been renamed National Conference because the people, despite all demagogues of the Muslim Conference leaders, have not lost their respect for the democratic traditions of the National Conference of Kashmir and Jammu.

Sometime back there was a report from Gilgit that the people there were starving due to acute food crisis. A big demonstration took place against Mushtaq Gurmani when he went to the place sometime in the middle of this year. The demonstration was ruthlessly suppressed and many leaders were arrested and imprisoned.

According to reliable reports,

Sheikh Abdulla Govt. Yields To Pressure

THE National Conference of Kashmir and Jammu had always been at the head of the people's struggles against British rule, feudal landlords and the Maharaja. The mass struggles led by the National Conference was always a part of India's common struggle for national liberation.

The great uprising led by the National Conference in 1946 with the slogan "Quit Kashmir" was ruthlessly suppressed by the Maharaja with whom the leaders of the Indian National Congress made compromises. Even on August 15, 1947, they did not demand the release of Sheikh Abdulla, the leader

many peasant demonstrations took place in the Azad Kashmir area in the first half of 1949 for abolition of landlordism. These demonstrations were ruthlessly suppressed.

Such atrocities are being committed on the masses by the so-called Azad Kashmir Government because this Government is nothing but a puppet in the hands of Anglo-American imperialist Powers, who have commissioned them to build up a war base in this area against the Soviet Union, the friendly neighbour of India and Pakistan, the leader of the anti-imperialist camp and the Socialist State of workers and peasants.

The hallow of "Azad Kashmir" raised by the leaders of Pakistan Muslim League is already losing its glamour among the people of the Azad Kashmir area, the people there have sympathy for the Soviet people and hatred for the local feudal lords; this state of affairs is a stumbling block to the execution of the American plan.

of the Kashmir National Conference

The Nehru Government persuaded the Maharaja to release Sheikh Abdulla only on September 29, 1947, when they found that the Maharaja had not the capacity to rouse the people to fight Pakistan, when the question of Kashmir joining one of the Dominions became acute.

Immediately after his release Sheikh Abdulla declared on behalf of the National Conference that the question of Kashmir's entry into either of the Dominions could be decided freely by the people themselves only when there is a truly popular Government in Kashmir.

On the eve of the invasion of

Kashmir, the National Conference headed by Abdulla was installed in power but it was forced to compromise with Princedom under pressure from the Government of India headed by Nehru. Brought in to power on the strength of the popular movement, Abdulla surrendered to pressure and the feudal Princedom was saved. This resulted in the growing isolation of the National Conference leadership from the toiling people who felt that the 'Quit Kashmir' movement had been betrayed by the very leaders who had led it.

The Government of the National Conference introduced a number of agrarian reforms that were hailed by the people as progressive measures. Most important of these reforms are: (1) Abolition of the non-hereditary type of jagirdari system (2) Legislation for the election of village officials in place of hereditary namdars and zilledars (3) Regulation of Produce rent to 1/4th of the produce.

The raiders from Pakistan had to face popular resistance from even the Muslim masses in Central Kashmir despite their religious demagoguery, because these progressive reforms roused the enthusiasm of the people.

New Kashmir Programme Sacrificed

But the reactionaries in India soon restrained the Government of Sheikh Abdulla and the popular programme of the National Conference could not be put into practice. Sheikh Abdulla and his colleagues once again surrendered to the pressure of the Nehru Government and refrained from the complete abolition of all forms of landlordism and transfer of land to the tillers.

Addressing the annual session of the National Conference of September 24, 1949, Sheikh Abdulla said—"In 1944 we adopted New Kashmir as our national program-

me. It was based on the recognition of social reforms, economic equality and political freedom as the essential pre-requisites of a truly democratic society."

But he had withheld the truth from the session and did not tell the delegates why the programme of New Kashmir was not being implemented and who was preventing him. He did not even disclose that amount of truth which he had let out on September 29, 1948, at a Delhi Press conference about the obstruction of the Indian Government.

The reality is that Sheikh Abdulla's Government is not implementing the New Kashmir programme beyond some petty reforms.

The following passage reproduced from a report submitted by two responsible workers who investigated the conditions of the working class in Kashmir, will show how Abdulla Government is violating the programme of New Kashmir in the interest of the reactionaries:—

"There are about ten thousand vegetable growers in the city. Most of them are organised in their union called 'Maliyar Association'... These people grow vegetable on the lands which mostly belong to landlords. In the month of March (1949) landlords began to eject them from their lands as usual. These people formed volunteer bands in every halqa in order to resist the landlords and agitated for the confiscation of all lands. Moreover these people demanded from the Government that the anti-ejection ordinance should be applied to this class as well. It should be noted that the anti-ejection ordinance has not been applied to them. They are an exception. Many clashes took place between landlords and Maliyars. Police intervened on behalf of the landlords. There were fights even with the police."

The report adds that 700 criminal cases were instituted against the Maliyars.

A correspondent of *New Times*, who had visited Kashmir twice after the invasion began, writes:—

"How the mood of the city's population had changed since November! Where were the enthusiasm and fighting spirit that had carried away both town-folk and peasants? It had given way to disillusionment and despondency. The peasants, disappointed in their hope that the abolition of the jagirdar holdings would be followed by the abolition of landed proprietorship generally, grumbled and complained they could not understand what had come over Sheikh Abdulla. The workers and handicraftsmen demanded jobs. The intellectuals, who had been counting on the abolition of the monarchy and the

establishment of a democratic republic, were openly dissatisfied." (*New Times*, No. 40, 1948).

From his personal experience of life in Kashmir, the correspondent correctly remarked that "the movement of the Kashmir people, led by the National Conference, which brought about the change of Government in October 1947, was a progressive and democratic mass movement." Then he correctly observed:

"The people of Kashmir face two enemies: the forces of intervention who have invaded their territory, and the Indian reactionaries, who are out to restore the rule of the Maharaja. The Kashmir patriots have still to join with the peoples of all India in a common struggle against reaction, religious chauvinism and feudal slavery, for genuine democracy." (*Ibid*).

Tasks For Democratic Forces In Kashmir, India & Pakistan

ON the burning issue relating to the Kashmir problem, correct lead was given by the *People's Age* from January 1948.

In its issue dated January 11, 1948, it was emphatically pointed out that:

"The game of Pakistan reactionaries and of the imperialist warmongers can be easily defeated if the peasant masses of Kashmir are assured that feudal autocracy and jagirdari will be liquidated, land will be given to the tillers and the complete right of self-determination granted to the various nationalities that compose Kashmir.

"Kashmir can be saved only by winning over the peasants and ending feudal autocracy. The reaction-

ary policy of the Pakistan Government can be defeated by defeating the policy of appeasement of the Maharaja pursued by the Indian Union Government and by really liberating the peasants."

In *People's Age*, dated 24, 1948, it was clearly pointed out that

"Imperialism, the Indian Government and the leadership of the Kashmir National Conference, each is fighting for its own interests within the framework of a compromise, the push and pull exercised by each against the other is restrained by their common interest to save the reactionary class alliance against the rising tide of agrarian revolution.

"The Kashmir problem has not, therefore, been solved even to this day. The raiders are still operating

with the assistance from Pakistan, the UNO Commission is preparing for another betrayal and the bankruptcy of Congress policies is being revealed to the utmost."

It then gave the slogans:—

"No partition of Kashmir; No surrender of Gilgit; Down with Feudal Autocracy; Arms to the People and Land to the Tiller."

The same line was again emphasised in *People's Age* dated January 16, 1948. It said:—

"The task before the Communist and progressive democrats in the State is to build an independent working class movement, to initiate the struggle of the peasants against jagirdari, for the confiscation of the landed estates and the distribution of the land to the tiller."

"It is this independent force of the working-class and the toiling peasantry which will have to come forward to lead the people of Kashmir, independently of Sheikh Abdulla and the leadership of the National Conference, in their struggle against imperialism and their bourgeois collaborators from India and Pakistan, in the struggle for the people's democratic revolution in Kashmir and Jammu."

"The compromise in Kashmir is paving the way for an unholy united front of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois leaderships of India and Pakistan with the Anglo-American imperialists. The working class and the democratic forces of India and Pakistan must join hands to support the people of Kashmir and Jammu in their valiant struggle against this evil alliance."

It is by pursuing the above line that the toiling people of Kashmir are preparing for the defeat of the plan of the Anglo-American imperialist war-mongers. *People's Age*, dated October 24, 1948, pointed

out:—

"The fighting traditions of 1946 are still fresh in the memories of the workers, poor peasants and the unemployed artisans. They are fighting back not only the invaders, but also the jagirdars, blackmarketeers and sahu-kars. Militant struggle, fight against eviction and resistance to landlords' oppression are growing stronger in the villages. A new upsurge of militant mass actions against the feudal social order is bursting out from every corner of Kashmir Valley and Jammu."

Independent organisation of the working class into the Central Mazdur Union has become a tremendous step forward towards strengthening the forces of Peace, Democracy and Freedom.

The May Day rally of 20,000 under the Red Flag and the growing strike struggles in 1949 show the tremendous sweep of the forces of Peace, Democracy and Freedom. These forces must be organised and led forward to realise Freedom, Land and Bread for the people.

The aggressive forces of the imperialist warmongers have already suffered a number of defeats. The raiders could not grab the whole of Kashmir and were forced to evacuate Central regions. In the occupied area called Azad Kashmir, people's fighting forces are steadily growing. The startling exposure of American intervention by the Czechoslovak member of the U.N. Commission has thrown the reactionary camp into confusion and forced the imperialists to refrain for the time being from imposing an arbitrator. The international peace forces headed by the Soviet Union are resisting the Anglo-American plan in the UN Security Council at every step. The Soviet delegation took the lead by demanding

that the old five-member Commission be chucked out and a new Commission of all members of the Security Council be sent to Kashmir. People of this subcontinent hailed this proposal, because they know that if one member of the old Commission could throw the entire reactionary camp into tremendous confusion several members of the democratic camp in the Security Council together can put insurmountable obstacle to the American plan.

Several conclusions emerge from the events in Kashmir and Jammu:

- The toiling people of the State can defeat imperialist aggression and achieve Freedom, Democracy and Peace only in unity with the international anti-imperialist camp headed by the Soviet Union, by refusing to be used as cannon fodder in a war against them and by resisting all pressures of the imperialist warmongers to set up any war base in any part of the State.

- All progressive forces in the State of Kashmir and Jammu must unite and rally behind its independent working-class movement to end monarchy and establish a genuine democratic Government free from the interference of Anglo-American, Indian and Pakistani reactionaries.

- Unity of the toiling people of Kashmir and Jammu with the Indian people's struggle for real independence and democracy is an essential condition for the freedom of Kashmir and this unity can be achieved only on the basis of the selfless support of the Indian masses for the freedom of Kashmir, for allowing the people of Kashmir to decide freely for themselves their future relations with their neighbours. The voluntary union of toilers which must come one day and for which all revolutionaries

must work, can be achieved only of Kashmir. Different national elements on the basis of the unfettered right of self-determination of the people inside the State of Kashmir and Jammu must have equal rights in a People's Democratic State.

All progressive elements in Kashmir must work steadfastly for unity and solidarity with the toilers of India and Pakistan, and realise that without such a common front, the freedom and independence of Kashmir cannot be achieved. They must build firm ties with the workers' and peasants' movements in India and Pakistan, teach the Kashmir masses that the masses of India and Pakistan are their allies in the common struggle and thus hold fast to the bond of international solidarity and friendship.

- The toiling people of India, Pakistan and Kashmir must demand a really free plebiscite in the State to determine which of the territories to join, Indian Union or Pakistan. Such a plebiscite is essentially dependent upon the disbandment and disarming of the so-called Azad Forces, withdrawal of the Indian troops and full democratic conditions under the supervision of a Commission composed of all members of the UN Security Council.

- If these conditions are not fulfilled but a plebiscite is imposed upon the people without expelling the aggressors and under the supervision of the aggressive imperialist powers- the duty of the progressive and democratic forces in India, Pakistan and the State of Kashmir and Jammu shall be to expose the plebiscite and solely concentrate on mass struggles for the realisation of Freedom, Democracy and Peace, for the end of Monarchy, for a People's Democratic State and friendly relations with the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and other neighbouring States.