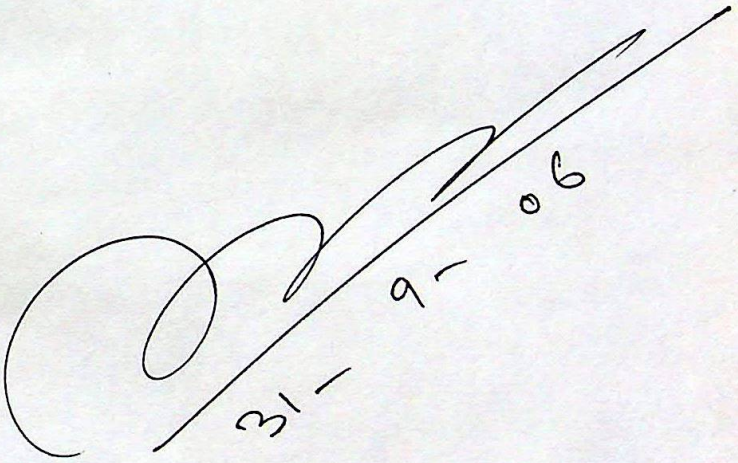
RAIDERS IN KASHMIR

Ex. Maj. Gen. AKBAR KHAN D.S.O.



REBUS PUBLISHING HOUSE
SRINAGAR—KASHMIR

Printed by :
Arya Offset Press
Daya Basti,
Delhi-110035

RAIDERS IN KASHMIR

And call not dead those who are killed in the way of God. Nay, they are living, only ye perceive not.

—The Holy Quran

PREFACE

Nehru called us *raiders*. He did so in a derogatory sense. But what he did not know was that raiding is, nowadays, an accepted and very highly developed branch of the art of war. Aircraft, commandos, guerillas, motorised infantry, tank cum artillery groups, submarines, and even gentlemen of the cloak and dagger tradition are all increasingly used for hit and run tactics to achieve the objects of war.

So we can, I think, without indignity, retain the name *raiders*—particularly so when the fighting technique of the Frontier tribesman does, in the military sense, make him indeed a very competent and daring type of raider.

Besides, as raiders, we may perhaps also qualify for sitting in that distinguished gallery of personalities like Chingiz Khan, Timur Lang, Mahmud of Ghazni and even Alexander, whom some historians called raiders.

This book, being only a personal account and not a detailed history of the Kashmir war, is limited in scope with regard to the area, the period and the events that it covers. Even so, the reader will, I hope, get a bird's eye view of the war and the problem as a whole.

Chapter eighteen, "How to Liberate Kashmir now", covers the period after the cease-fire, and reflections on the future course. The last chapter is added to give a historical sketch of the Tribesmen.

My grateful appreciation is offered to those who have helped me in a number of ways and to those from whom I have quoted here.

AKBAR KHAN

To that indomitable spirit which forever makes man rise for freedom and justice

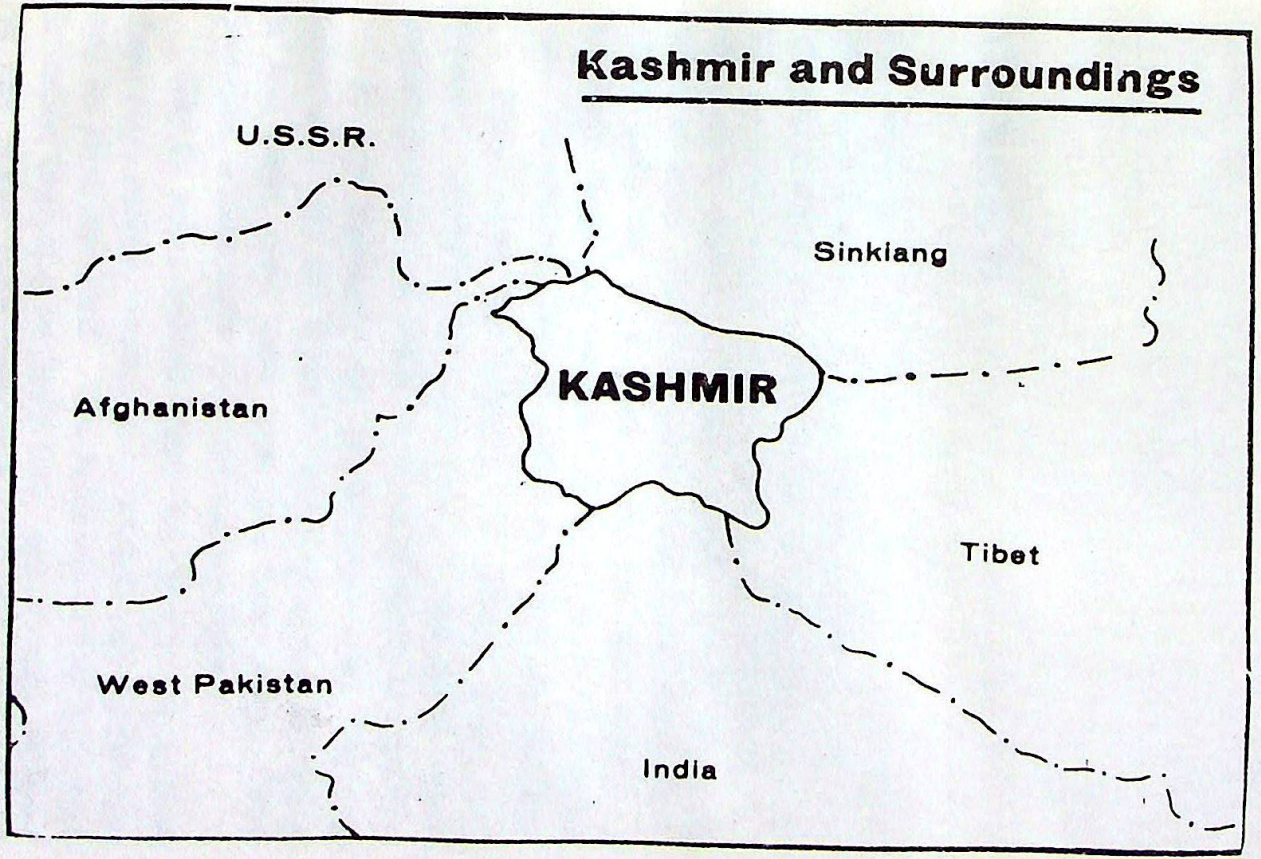
ILLUSTRATIONS

Maps

Sketches

CONTENTS

CONTENTS



I

THE RAIDERS

For centuries in the bazaars of Peshawar city the art of story-telling has been practised, and there I have listened many times, spellbound, to masters of the art. Yet coming to this story I find I am not much of a story-teller myself. I don't rightly know how and where to start. So I will begin where I saw them first—when from out of a deep mist, in the valley of Kashmir, began to emerge figures that looked larger than life-size and moved effortlessly like the panther.

These were the raiders. In silence they crept forward, carefully but with ease, in the dark, across broken ground and fields, to close in upon the enemy.

It was midnight on 29 October 1947. Having penetrated into the State at lightning speed, 115 miles in five days, they were now just four miles from Srinagar, within sight of its twinkling lights.

Thirty miles behind them was Baramula, sacked three days earlier, where out of 14,000 only 3,000 were said to have survived. The Maharajah had fled from Srinagar, reporting to India that "wild forces, let loose on the State, were marching on with the aim of capturing Srinagar as a first step to overrunning the

whole State". At Delhi, V.P. Menon, advising military aid for Kashmir and remembering eight centuries of invasion from the north and the seventeen incursions of Mahmud of Ghazni, had thought, 'Srinagar today, Delhi tomorrow.'

Thus, Indian troops had been flown in the next day and, assisted by fighter aircraft and artillery, they had immediately advanced to meet the raiders, but had been thrown back in confusion and their commander Colonel Rai killed. Now, near Srinagar at the fourth milestone, across the raider's path lay a road-block guarded by machine-gun fire sweeping the front—and supported by artillery fire from further behind.

As the raiders moved forward they started encountering more and more of the perennial water that surrounds Srinagar—water from river, lake and rains all contributing. They found themselves converging on the main road because of this water and ultimately it looked as if the only way left to deal with the obstacle was to go for it straight down the road.

II

THE REASON WHY

What had brought the tribesmen into Kashmir? It was the deep concern they had felt and shared with all other Muslims about the future of the State.

Less than four months earlier, on 15 August 1947, the sub-continent of India had achieved independence and two new States, Pakistan and India, had come into existence as autonomous dominions within the British Commonwealth. Although on that day the British Government had relinquished all authority in the sub-continent, the two new governments still could not immediately exercise their powers in full over the whole area, because within the 400 million people and 1,777,438 square miles of old India, there had existed some 568 odd Princely States some of which had not yet declared their accession to either dominion.

These Princely States had been given the right to decide for themselves which of the two dominions they would join. Since they could not remain independent, it had been generally expected that they would make their decisions by the date of partition or soon afterwards. Most of them in fact did so—and

some that remained, were geographically so enclosed within the area of one or the other dominion that their accession to the relevant dominion was considered only a matter of form. Among those still remaining undecided, the most important was Kashmir—the second largest of the Princely States, and one whose geographical location was of significance to the whole sub-continent as not only was it contiguous with Pakistan and India but on its north just a thin strip of Afghanistan separated it from the Soviet Union. It also had a common border with China.

Since the British declaration about the fourthcoming partition, we had assumed that Kashmir would naturally join Pakistan. In fact the very concept of Pakistan had included it as an integral part, the letter K in the name Pakistan standing for Kashmir. The sub-continent was to be divided on the basis of a Muslim majority area for Pakistan and a non-Muslim majority area for India. Kashmir had to be in Pakistan because three/fourths of its four million inhabitants were Muslims, and its territory of 84,500 square miles had no effective road, river or rail links, nor direct economic ties, with India.

The assumption, therefore, had been that the people of Kashmir would, without hesitation, wish to join Pakistan. But their non-Muslim Ruler, the Maharajah, in whose hands the decision lay, had shown no sign of making an early decision. Thus, some weeks after the British declaration, and a few days before actual partition, while the Quaid-e-Azam, the Founder and Governor-General designate of Pakistan, was still in Delhi, a large delegation had arrived at his house one afternoon to convey to him its

apprehensions about the future of Kashmir. I had gone there along with other members of the Armed Forces Partition Sub-Committee. That the Maharajah, a non-Muslim, wished to avoid accession to Pakistan had been obvious, but now the fear was that his hands were likely to be strengthened also by Sh kh Abdullah, a Muslim leader of Kashmir, hero of the Indian National Freedom Movement, who had previously opposed the conception of Pakistan. The Quaid-e-Azam had, however, assured the delegation that he felt confident that the opinion of two persons alone could not distort the future of the whole State. Firstly, he explained, the idea of Pakistan had swept over Kashmir as it had over the rest of India and thus in spite of Sheikh Abdullah, the Kashmiri Muslims would want to join Pakistan—and secondly, Kashmir had geographically no choice but to join us.

The first shock to this conviction had come a few days later in the Radcliffe Award which defined the actual line of demarcation between India and Pakistan. To our surprise, a strip of Muslim majority area contiguous to Pakistan had been included on the Indian side at a point where the only road link between Kashmir and India could be developed. Until then all important contacts of Kashmir with the outside world had been by two major roads running through the proposed Pakistan territory. But now the possibility was provided for a hitherto insignificant fair-weather track, from Jammu to Kathua, to be developed into a road going to India.

Thus, at least one difficulty in the way of Kashmir's accession to India was removed and the

Maharajah may well have begun his negotiations in that direction. So far as accession to Pakistan was concerned, there had in fact never been any real difficulty. As far back as July, Lord Mountbatten, still Governor-General of undivided India, had assured him that in case of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan no objections would be raised by India. Neither did any particular difficulty exist inside Kashmir itself as all the political leaders of the two major parties, the Muslim Conference as well as the National Conference, were safely behind bars. But still the Maharajah continued to remain undecided. All he could bring himself to do was to sign a stand-still agreement with Pakistan. And thereafter he just sat on the fence. It was not, however, a fence but a volcano that he sat upon. His attitude created the gravest suspicions and uneasiness. The ugly troubles that had erupted over the rest of the sub-continent, could not fail to arise in his State as well.

For several decades the Indian National Congress, leading the freedom struggle, had advocated the goal of a free India that would be undivided and which would be ruled by a democratic majority. When the Muslim leaders, believing that majority rule would always consists of non-Muslims, keeping the Muslims in subjugation as a minority, had raised the demand for Pakistan, a separate homeland for the Muslims, it had aroused bitter feelings all over the sub-continent. For the past year or so, the frenzy had resulted in communal riots of an unprecedented magnitude. When ultimately partition had come, fear had led millions of people suddenly to start shifting from one dominion to the other—and in the process law and order had

broken down, and there had been untold massacres. These unfortunate occurrences had not yet ended, and there was hardly a corner of the sub-continent which had not been affected. In such an atmosphere how could the land of Kashmir remain unaffected?

There the non-Muslim minority lived in fear of the Muslims—and the Muslim majority, being totally unarmed, lived in fear of the Maharajah, his troops and the armed non-Muslims. That so far no bloodshed had occurred is a tribute to the patience of the people but how long could this last? When the Ruler kept the issue of accession indefinitely in suspence and when, unlike the Rulers of other States, he made no move even to give some constitutional powers to his own people, or even to make a gesture by releasing the political leaders—something was bound to happen. And it did.

III

REVOLT

In the beginning of September 1947, two weeks after partition, I had gone for a few days to Murree, the hill station near the Kashmir border. Although most of the summer visitors had gone, the place was still full because many refugees from Kashmir had arrived. The general talk in the place was about the trouble that was said to have started in the State. Stories were circulating that not only armed civilians but State troops also were committing atrocities against the Muslims and it looked as if another terrible tragedy was about to be enacted.

Making all allowance for the usual exaggerations in the prevailing atmosphere of bitterness, this much was already inescapable that the first shots had been fired and that trouble was afoot in Kashmir. Who was to blame or who was not to blame was no longer the real issue but still it did seem that India could have prevented matters form going this far. Perhaps I felt so because I had always held the Indian leaders like Gandhi and Nehru in high esteem. I had believed them to be above communal passions and naked ambitions. Their previous opposition to

the demand for Pakistan had been understandable. But now that the division of India had become a fact, it was reasonable to expect that, for the greater good of all, they would wish Pakistan to stand on its feet as quickly as possible and to this end, they would advise the Maharajah squarely that Kashmir's future must be in Pakistan.

But this had not happened, and we at least would not be able to leave the matter where it was. Not only could we not ignore the safety and wishes of our brethren in Kashmir, but our own safety and welfare also demanded that the State should not go over to India.

One glance at the map was enough to show that Pakistan's military security would be seriously jeopardised if Indian troops came to be stationed along Kashmir's western border. Once India got the chance, she could establish such stations anywhere within a few miles of the 180 miles long vital road and rail route between Lahore and Pindi. In the event of war, these stations would be a dangerous threat to our most important civil and military lines of communication. If we were to protect this route properly, it would take a major portion of our army to do so and we would thereby dangerously weaken our front at Lahore. If we were to concentrate our strength at the front, we would give India the chance to cut off Lahore, Sialkot, Gujrat and even Jhelum from our military base at Pindi. The possession of Kashmir would also enable India, if she wished, to take the war directly to Hazara and Murree—more than 200 miles behind the front. This ofcourse could happen only in the event of war—but in peacetime too the

situation could be just as unacceptable because we would remain permanently exposed to a threat of such magnitude that our independence would never be a reality. Surely that was not the type of Pakistan we had wanted.

From the economic point of view the position was equally clear. Our agricultural economy was dependent particularly upon the rivers coming out of Kashmir. The Mangla Headworks were actually in Kashmir and the Marala Headworks were within a mile or so of the border. What then would be our position if Kashmir was to be in Indian hands? Similarly, the economy of Kashmir itself was inevitably linked with Pakistan because her only trade route, which remained open throughout the year and which carried almost her entire trade, was the road coming into Pakistan at Kohala and Muzaffarabad. The major portion of Kashmir's timber, her main source of income, went by the River Jhelum to Pakistan.

Thus, it seemed that Kashmir's accession to Pakistan was not simply a matter of desirability but of absolute necessity for our separate existence. Finally, our claim was justified by our knowledge and belief that the overwhelming majority of Kashmiris wanted to join Pakistan. But neither our claims, nor the wishes of the Kashmiris would avail anything if the Muslims of Kashmir were now forced out of the State, and those left there browbeaten into acceding to India.

Such were the thoughts in my mind when one day someone introduced me to Sardar Ibrahim who was later to become the first President of Azad Kashmir Government. As yet he was not prominent enough

to be known in Pakistan. Most of the recognised leaders of the pro-Pakistan Muslim Conference were still in jail in Kashmir. Ibrahim, like many others passionately stirred, had come across the border in search of help for his people. He thought that the time for peaceful negotiations was gone because every protest was being met with repressions and, therefore, in certain areas the people were virtually in a state of revolt. But if they were to protect themselves, and to prevent the Maharajah from handing them over to India, they needed weapons. Five hundred rifles, according to him, were all that they needed to start with if they were to liberate themselves. This, however, was obviously too modest an estimate, though even this number, at the moment, appeared beyond reach.

The big question really was whether our Government could be moved to take an active hand in the affair. We were soon to find that a move in this direction had already started.

A few days later Mian Iftikharuddin, then a leader in the Muslim League (the ruling political party), arrived at Murree from Lahore and he said that he had been deputed to go to Srinagar to contact the Kashmiri Leaders and to assess the chances of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. He also said that if the people of Ksahmir were not likely to have the chance of freely exercising their choice—the Muslim League may have to take some action to help the Kashmiri Muslims and to prevent the State's accession to India. He did not seem particularly optimistic about the outcome of his mission, but thought that his visit would at least clear their doubts about the necessity of taking action. He would be

away for about a week and, in case the situation was not promising, he had to take back with him to Lahore a plan of action. He asked me to prepare a plan for him.

The object to be achieved by the contemplated action was clear, namely to get Kashmir's accession to Pakistan but as far as the resources were concerned and what support the League could give to the action, the position was entirely vague. All he could tell me was that some money could be spent, though he did not know how much. Further, he said that any action by us was to be of an unofficial nature, and no Pakistani troops or officers were to take an active part in it. With this inadequate data in my possession, I spent the next day or so in consultation with Sardar Ibrahim and others and then returned to Pindi where I wrote out a plan.

The only weapons we could possibly get hold of would be rifles and with regard to these the question was not how many we needed or desired but how many we could obtain. At that time I was Director of Weapons and Equipment at G.H.Q. (the Pakistan Army General Headquarters) and, therefore, I knew the general situation with regard to weapons in possession of the Army. A large part of our share of the reserve stocks of weapons and ammunition was still lying in India. Even if these stocks were in Pakistan there would be no possibility of giving any for Kashmir unless the Government ordered the Commander-in-Chief to do so. Since he was not to be taken into confidence, some other way had to be found to get hold of some rifles. Fortunately, I discovered that a previous Government sanction existed in G.H.Q. for

the issue of 4,000 military rifles to the Punjab Police. The police did not appear to be in urgent need of them since they were not pressing for them. I, therefore, decided to base my proposal on a minimum of 4000 rifles assuming that the police could be ordered to receive these rifles from the Army and make them available for Kashmir. Further weapons, Frontier made or from abroad, could be obtained depending on the money available. I also found that some stocks of old ammunition, condemned as unfit for military use, were lying in an ordnance depot. This condemned stock was waiting to be transported to Karachi to be thrown into the sea. Colonel Azam Khanzada of the Ordnance Corps promised to divert this secretly for use in Kashmir. As far as the Army was concerned this ammunition would be shown as thrown into the sea.

It was desirable that some trained personnel should be available for the organisation and co-ordination of the whole effort. No army officers could be taken for this, but we had in Pakistan some of the senior ex-army officers of the I.N.A. (Indian National Army) who might be willing to take on some of the responsibility.

The authorities needed a lot of assistance from the Army in the shape of plans, advice, weapons, ammunition, communications and vlounteers. They did not ask for it because the whole thing had to be kept secret from the Commander-in-Chief and other senior officers who were British. There were, however, also senior Pakistani officers in the Army who could have been taken into confidence—and these were in a position to help a great deal. As it was, at this stage I

alone was asked for assistance—and I was junior to at least twenty other Pakistani officers. In the days to come, as I had to keep things secret from everyone, it was to result not only in the loss of their help but also of their good will. And from some there was to come the most damaging intrigue and opposition.

Ultimately, I wrote out a plan under the title of "Armed Revolt inside Kashmir". As open interference or aggression by Pakistan was obviously undesirable, it was proposed that our efforts should be concentrated upon strengthening the Kashmiris themselves internally—and at the same time taking steps to prevent the arrival of armed civilians or military assistance from India into Kashmir. The Maharajah's Army was said to be about 9,000 strong of which the 2,000 or so Muslims could be expected to remain comparatively passive or even to desert if all went well. The remaining 7,000 were believed to be widely scattered and could be overcome by the Kashmiri people little by little. But it would be essential to ensure that the Maharajah was not reinforced from India, and, therefore, the routes by which such reinforcements could come would have to be blocked.

One of these routes was the road from Kathua to Jammu, an unmetalled fair weather track passing through broken country where a determined band of guerillas could at least prevent the passage of armed civilians. Organised movement of troops in strength would, however, be a different matter. But there was as yet no likelihood of troops arriving from India. In another month or so the area would probably be very muddy due to rains, and then in December the

snows in the Banihal pass would block the entrance to the valley. Though it would be beyond their means to close this route altogether, the people could at least gain some time by making the effort.

The second route was by air. Troops could be landed at Srinagar. Fortunately the landing ground was some distance from the town and away from the immediate protection of the troops there. A couple of hundred armed men might, with good sniping, seriously discourage the landing of transport aircraft. Obviously, however, at present it was entirely academic to talk about blocking these routes, but if the revolt was ultimately to seek a decision in the Srinagar Valley itself, this would be an important factor for success.

Thus, out of the 4,000 rifles that were to be issued, 1,000 were proposed for the Kathua road and 200 for the Srinagar landing ground tasks, whereas the balance of 2,800 were to be distributed over the rest of the area adjacent to Pakistan's border.

I gave a dozen copies of this tentative plan to Mian Iftikhar on his return from Srinagar. A few days later I was called to Lahore for a conference with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. On arrival there I had first to attend a preliminary conference at the Provincial Government Secretariate in the office of Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, who was then a Minister in the Punjab Government. It seemed that the problem had already received a good deal of consideration and another plan had been evolved in outline. The conference lacked the businesslike precision that we are used to in the Army but it was to some extent compensated by the enthusi-

astic willingness and deep interest of every one around. My own presence at this conference was probably unexpected though it was welcomed, because of my personal friendship with those present. I saw copies of my proposed plan in the hands of some but I doubt if the paper had been read. That did not matter very much because Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan already had a plan in mind.

His plan was based on the employment of officers and other ranks of the former I.N.A. under the command of Mr. Zaman Kiani. These were to operate from across the Punjab border—whereas north of Rawalpindi, the sector was to be under command of Mr. Khurshid Anwar a commander of the Muslim League National Guards. The operations were to take place in two sectors, under the overall command of Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan.

Connecting this plan up with my ideas, I emphasized the importance of the Kathua road and th Srinagar landing ground. The possibility of getting 4,000 rifles was welcomed and I was asked to meet the Prime Minister at the Government House at 6 p.m. in the evening.

The conference with the Prime Minister was attended, among others, by the Finance Minister (Mr. Ghulam Mohd., later Governor General), Mian Iftikharuddin, Zaman Kiani, Khurshid Anwar, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan and myself. I expected that here the actual course of action would be discussed in detail as certain essential decisions needed to be taken. I was, however, to find this conference even more informal than the morning one. Again the

enthusiasm was there but there was no serious discussion of the problems involved. It may be that such discussions had already taken place before my appearance on the scene. In my presence, the allotment of funds received much attention and some points here and there were lightly touched upon. The operational details and their pros and cons were not discussed. The Prime Minister questioned me regarding what help I could render and I promised to do what I had already written in the paper as well as anything else which they might require.

In the atmosphere of cheerfulness and confidence that prevailed, it did not seem right for me to strike too serious a note by drawing attention to even such elementary matters as the need for ammunition and the means of communication for exercising control. The unpleasant truth, as I now see it, was that there was complete ignorance about the business of anything in the nature of military operations.

Upon coming out of the conference room, Khurshid Anwar took me aside and told me that he was not going to accept any orders from Shaukat Hayat Khan. I did my best to persuade him to realise that without complete co-operation there would be chaos and therefore he must play the game fairly. He was not convinced. I was just wondering what to do about this when Shaukat Hayat Khan also came and told me that he had absolutely no confidence in Khurshid Anwar. In view of this mutual lack of confidence, I suggested that he should immediately see the Prime Minister and get someone else in place of Khurshid Anwar. But he said Khurshid Anwar

was the choice of the authorities concerned and nothing could be done about it at this stage.

Thus, from the start there existed the serious danger that the whole scheme would lack effective central control, and this was a very disturbing thought. But at that time it was not difficult to persuade myself into thinking that all would be well in the end. We had just achieved independence from the British after a hundred years or so—and we had just achieved a new homeland, the State of Pakistan. Within less than a month of this, news of the uprising of Kashmiri Muslims came and spread through the country like wild fire. People responded with enthusiasm everywhere and they felt the smell of blood in their noses. It did not seem that, in pursuit of the common object before us, minor personal differences would not be levelled out in due course.

IV

TRIBAL ATTACK

After the Prime Minister's conference I returned to Pindi. The first shots had already been fired and the movement soon began to gather weight.

At this stage I had no responsibility in connection with Kashmir but I had promised to give whatever assistance I could personally render. At G.H.Q., I took Brigadier Sher Khan also into confidence. He was Director Intelligence and with his help I was able to keep myself informed through information coming in from military sources.

Lieutenant Colonel Masud (later Brigadier Tommy Masud) of the Cavalry, offered to help with collecting and storing the condemned ammunition. This he used to issue to Zaman Kiani and Khurshid Anwar when they called for it. Help from the Pakistan Air Force through Air Commodore Janjua and others also started coming in, in the shape of winter clothing, ammunition and some weapons. Khwaja Abdul Rahim, Commissioner Rawalpindi, was another enthusiast who was busy collecting funds, rations, weapons and even volunteers for Kashmir. At his

house I met Shaukat Hayat Khan and others when they came to Pindi.

Arrangements for the issue of the 4,000 rifles through the police were completed. I was to find later that all of these rifles did not reach the people for whom they were meant. It was said that instead of the military rifles the Punjab police authorities substituted and issued Frontier-made rifles. These were of a very inferior quality and were soon to break down. These rifles, made in the Tribal areas, are an exact replica of the military rifles in appearance but their barrels have a very short life, and the rest of the wood and metal work is also weak. The Tribesmen themselves rarely use them when fighting against troops. Their value can be judged from the fact that these rifles were sold for about one hundred rupees each in those days whereas the tribesmen paid as much as a thousand rupees for a military rifle. In consequence, the fighting ability of the people using these rifles was greatly reduced. As we had no arrangements for carrying out repairs, a rifle once damaged had to be abandoned.

The Prime Minister also promised to obtain some light machine guns (Brens) from a war dump in Italy or somewhere abroad. A considerable sum of money was spent but when the expected 250 Brens arrived it turned out that they were Italian Sten guns and not Brens. This was a total loss as there was no scope for the use of short range Stens (maximum range about 200 yards).

Meanwhile, India had begun to show an open partisan interest in Kashmir. She had started accusing Pakistan of violating the standstill agreement by

applying economic pressure on the State to secure its accession. An economic blocade was said to have been imposed and essential supplies of kerosine, petrol, foodstuffs and salt were alleged to have been cut off. Communications were said to have been tampered with and the railway service between Sialkot and Jammu had been suspended.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister had replied to the effect that because of the uncertain state of affairs in Kashmir, drivers of lorries had refused to go beyond Pindi and that because the transport services on this route had been private, non-governmental agencies, there was not much Pakistan could do about it. According to India, however, we had not allowed matters to rest merely with imposition of the blocade but had also organised raids all along the border and had allowed armed bands to infiltrate into Kashmir.

Much of this was soon contradicted by statements of Sheikh Abdullah, the then pro-India Muslim Leader of Kashmir. Explaining the situation in a press statement in Delhi on October 21, as reported by the Associated Press of India he had said, "The happenings in certain States such as Patiala, Bharatpur and elsewhere, had naturally caused apprehensions in the minds of the Muslims in Kashmir, who form the majority of the population. They were afraid that the State's accession to India portended danger to them". He added, "the present troubles in Poonch were because of the unwise policy adopted by the State. The people of Poonch who suffered under their local Ruler, and again under the Kashmir Ruler who was the Overlord of Poonch, had started a people's

movement for the redress of their grievances. It was not communal. The Kashmir State sent troops there and there was panic in Poonch. But most of the adult population of Poonch are ex-servicemen of the Indian Army who have close connections with the people in Jhelum and Pindi (in Pakistan). They evacuated their women and children, crossed the frontier, and returned with arms supplied to them by willing people. The present position is that the Kashmir State forces have been forced to withdraw in certain areas."

Thus upto the third week of October, the activities in Kashmir had clearly been in the nature of a purely internal revolt which had made slow but steady progress—and which was resulting in more and more areas going out of the Maharajah's control.

As even Sheikh Abdullah was putting the blame on the Maharajah, it seems that the latter could not bring himself to acceed to India, and he was unable to find any real excuse for inviting Indian assistance. But then, suddenly at this stage, the whole situation was radically altered by the entry of Frontier tribesmen into Kashmir on the 23rd of October. This event was of such significance that it led to the accession of the State to India within four days.

I cannot say exactly when it was decided that an attack by tribesmen should be carried out in the manner that it was. I had, however, been hearing that Khurshid Anwar was gathering a lashkar of tribesmen. At the time of the Tribal attack, India also received information from our side as apparently, according to "Mission with Mountbatten", the Commander-in-Chief India received a telegram on

20 October from G.H.Q. Pakistan Army, stating that some 5,000 tribesmen had attacked and captured Muzaffarabad and Domel.

A large scale open attack by the Frontier tribesmen was bound to bring forth Indian reinforcements via the two routes previously discussed, namely overland by the Kathua road and by air at the Srinagar landing ground. I hurriedly contacted people to check if the necessary men, for whom rifles had been issued, were in their proper places. I discovered that they were not. The thousand men on the Kathua road were not there because their country made rifles having broken down they had returned home—and the two hundred rifles meant for the Srinagar landing ground had not been given, by Khurshid Anwar, to the people concerned. Hurriedly, with the help of Khwaja Rahim, went a fresh hundred ex-servicemen volunteers from Pindi across the Jhelum river and the mountains under command of Latif Afghani a Muslim League National Guard Officer. But it was too late then. They got there ultimately, after suffering thirty casualties, but they were then not in a position to prevent landings as Indian troops had already taken up defence of the landing ground.

The Tribal attack, leaving aside its wider implications for the present, was a great success so far as it went. In fact it was more of a success than I, as a soldier, would have thought possible. It is true that their task was facilitated by the desertion of the Muslim troops at Muzaffarabad, and by the partial demoralisation of the Dogra troops who do not appear to have put up as much resistance as might have been expected. Nevertheless, it in no way

diminishes the credit due to the tactics and fighting qualities of the tribesmen.

They had apparently come in a convoy of civilian lorries, and their only weapons had been their own rifles. They were probably about two thousand strong to start with, though I cannot state any figure with certainty. It seems that generally speaking, only a quarter of them were engaged in fighting at any particular time. Their method of operation was to move forward by lorries until they came up against opposition. Then they dismounted and carried out an attack. It seems that the State troops were terrified of them and never fought a last ditch battle, but instead, as soon as they suffered some casualties they fell back to another position—there to be followed and attacked again by the tribesmen—and so on.

With the tribal attack, the smouldering embers of indecision burst into flames. In Delhi, on the third day of the attack, the Indian Service Chiefs were ordered, in expectation of the Maharajah's appeal for help, to prepare plans for sending troops to Kashmir, and that afternoon three staff officers went to Srinagar by air. Next morning when the tribesmen captured Baramula, 35 miles from Srinagar, the Maharajah decided that he was going to have no more nonsense —but it was not to the front that he went—he packed up and fled from his Capital. Reaching Jammu in the evening, with 200 miles safely behind him, he was still so shaken and despondent that before going to sleep he instructed his A.D.C. that if in the morning Mr. V. P. Menon did not return from India with help, it would mean that everything was lost and in that

case the A.D.C. was to shoot him (the Maharajah) in his sleep!

The Maharajah, however, was not destined to be shot, because at that moment a hundred aircraft in India were getting ready to fly troops over to Kashmir the next day.

Meanwhile, excitement swept over the whole subcontinent. Even in far off Hyderabad Deccan, another Princely State that had not yet acceded to India, at 3 a.m., the same night, a crowd of some twenty to thirty thousand Muslims surrounded the houses of the delegates who were about to leave for Delhi in connection with the State's accession. In Pakistan, all attention was held by the spectacular advance of the tribesmen, and no one yet knew that the Maharajah had actually signed the necessary documents and at last acceded to India.

V

INDIAN INTERVENTION

On the morning of 27 October 1947, all over Pakistan people who were listening to the news heard of Kashmir's accession and of India's military intervention. It was sad news because it threatened a further worsening of Indo-Pakistan relations. It meant more trouble and already there had been enough trouble—millions of refugees had suffered in transit; our military stores had been withheld by India; and Junagadh, another Princely State, had been occupied by India after its accession to Pakistan. Many had hoped that there would be no more of this, and that at least about Kashmir good sense would prevail in India, and that the revolt would only bring about a realisation of the urgent need for a just settlement of the State's future.

Obviously, the people of Kashmir could not surrender their rights by the mere signing of a paper by an unrepresentative Ruler against whom they had already risen in revolt. Equally obviously, the people of Pakistan could not abandon their feelings on the issue and their duty to their brothers in Kashmir. Therefore, many felt that India's entry into Kashmir was bringing us almost to the brink of war.

At first light that morning, India had despatched by air the first batch of 330 troops to Srinagar. At that moment, the tribesmen were at Baramula and had not moved forward yet. For the rest of the day, while more Indian troops were arriving every hour at Srinagar, the tribal laskhar, probably unaware of the new situation, continued to remain inactive at Baramula.

Elsewhere the news was spreading fast, whipping up resentment and strengthening the determination to resist. By the evening the first Provisional Government of Azad Kashmir (Free Kashmir) came into existence, with Sardar Ibrahim as President. From this moment, Kashmir became symbolically divided in two. And the new Government was immediately faced by the fact that from now onwards, the fight would have to be against the regular Indian army, and therefore a long one.

In Pakistan, the same evening, the Prime Minister held an unofficial conference at Lahore to consider the situation arising out of Kashmir's accession and India's military intervention. At this conference, among others were also present Colonel Iskander Mirza (then Defence Secretary, later to be Governor-General), Chaudhri Mohd Ali (then Secretary General, later to be Prime Minister), Abdul Qayum Khan, Chief Ministr of the Frontier Province and Nawab Mamdot, Chief Ministr of the Punjab. Brigadier Sher Khan and I, were also invited.

At this conference I proposed that an attempt should be made to liquidate Jammu in order to block

the only road along which India could send reinforcements into the valley and the rest of Kashmir. I did not suggest that troops should be used for this purpose or that the Government should get involved in this. I suggested only that tribesmen may be allowed to make the attempt. I thought that three lashkars of a thousand each should be used. The tribesmen were available and I offered to go with them.

With Indian military intervention, Jammu had at once become a focal point of the greatest importance. India had no other land route going into the State except that passing through Jammu. All reinforcements, coming by land, would concentrate there. From there they would move north into the valley and thereby prolong operations in that area. From there also, they would move west along the road to Naushehra and thereby seriously threaten the liberation progress in the central areas of Rajauri and Poonch etc., where at present the liberation forces were virtually masters of the situation. Further, if relations between India and Pakistan took a dangerous turn, the base at Jammu, sitting right on top of Sialkot, would become a serious threat to our own security.

Blocking Jammu, I felt, would be like nipping an evil in the bud, while leaving it open would be letting the Azad operations become like emptying, with a cup, a tank into which a running stream was pouring. Although there might be no prospect of the tribesmen capturing Jammu, their action might well scare the Maharajah enough to run away from there as he had run from Sr nagar. In any case, with him or without, a large number of others would certainly run for the

safety across the border and in doing so they would block the route for a while. Or at least, once in the hills to the west of Jammu, the tribesmen would for a time prevent the movement of troops towards the central areas.

The proposal was however, with the exception of Abdul Qayum Khan and Nawab Mamdot, opposed by everyone else—and it had to be abandoned. It was felt that this would provoke India to attack Pakistan and such a risk could not be taken.

No one of course wanted an Indo-Pakistan war but many reasons did exist in support of the feeling that India was in no position to start such a war. Already the tribesmen had penetrated 80 miles into the State, already they had gone through Pakistan territory, already India believed, though wrongly, that tribesmen had also besieged Mirpur, Poonch, Kotli, Jhangar, Naushehra and Bhimbar—and, therefore, India already had enough excuse for extending the war to Pakistan. That she had not done so was simply because of the fact that she was militarily not strong enough to take such a risk. Her army was undergoing reorganisation, she had enough worries inside the country, and she was particularly apprehensive about provoking the tribal flood into East Punjab where the population was in panic due to such exaggerated reports as those referring to Baramula where out of 14,000 non-Muslims only 3,000 were said to have survived.

At the conference that night, however, the feelings on the other side were far weightier. No one could

then have foreseen that only a few weeks later, though too late and futile by then, the tribesmen would be operating against Jammu in full cry from the same places, and it would not bring war. And again, that in a few months time several thousand Pakistani troops would clash with the Indians in Kashmir and it would still bring no Indo-Pakistan war.

It is interesting to note, as we came to know some years later, that on that same night the Quaid-e-Azam himself also ordered an attack upon Jammu. Referring to this order and its fate, Allan Campbell mentions in "Mission with Mountbatten" that the order had reached General Gracey, the acting Commander-in-Chief in the temporary absence of General Messervy, through the Military Secretary to the Governor of West Punjab and that Gracey had replied that he was not prepared to issue any such instruction without approval of the Supreme Commander (Field Marshal Auchinleck in Delhi). The words of Allan Campbell are possibly somewhat misleading. More likely, General Gracey had persuaded the Quaid-e-Azam to withdraw his orders after giving him his reasons which might have been, for instance, that the Pakistan army was still being reorganised, that a neutral Boundary Force under another General still existed in the Punjab, and that the British Government would most probably withdraw all British officers from the army in case of a war between the two Dominions.

What matters today is the outcome. Jammu was left alone. But though we left Jammu alone, it was not to leave us alone because through this open door

were to pass, in the days to come, Indian troops both northwards and westwards without interference. For the present, non-interference with Jammu allowed India to concentrate her undivided attention upon Srinagar where she proceeded to send the maximum number of troops that her aircraft could carry.

It has since been argued that an attack on Jammu would have been a pure gamble—gambling with the very existence of Pakistan itself. With this I cannot agree. It certainly was a risk, but a calculated risk and not a gamble. A military gamble is that which means either winning or losing completely. If you win, you win perhaps more than you had a right to expect, but if you lose, you lose so completely that you are finished. This alone can be called a pure gamble, and this should never be undertaken by soldiers unless the situation is so desperate that loss is a certainty in any case. In such a case the choice lies only between surrender and a gamble. On the other hand, a calculated risk is that where, if one wins it means a gain perhaps larger than one deserves—but if one loses, everything is not totally lost and one can still recover to fight another day. It is the calculated risk by which Great commanders have overcome stronger enemies.

Looked at like this, it is easy to see that attacking Jammu involved no gamble. If we had failed to capture it, there were still many advantages to gain. The fact of the attack, and the threat of the possibility of its repetition, would have tied up large forces in Jammu—thereby preventing them from moving north to the Srinagar valley and from moving west to

Naushehra. This would have saved us much headache afterwards. On the other hand, if this attack had led to Indo-Pakistan war, there was no question of the utter loss of Pakistan. After all the Indian army was only double our strength, and history is full of examples of people successfully withstanding much larger odds than that. In any case the whole of the Indian army could not have been thrown against us as it had a potentially hostile army in Hyderabad State also to worry about. Had they gone for East Pakistan, they would not only have had to surrender Kashmir but would also have exposed East Punjab against which, they feared, we could open the flood gates to 200,000 armed tribesmen and this was a paralysing thought.

Further, India had already committed aggression against Junagadh after it had legally acceded to Pakistan and therefore similar action by us in Kashmir was not going to bring U.N. or the World on the side of India. Thus, in these circumstances, to say that an attack on Jammu would have been a gamble is an argument not justified by cold reasoning.

My suggestion about the formation of a liberation committee, to coordinate and direct our effort in Kashmir, was accepted and the conference ended at 2 a.m. I was asked to come and see the Prime Minister again next morning.

In the morning I was informed that I was to be the military member of the Liberation Committee. To enable me to attend to this work, I was to be relieved of my duties in G.H.Q. and was to be appointed as Military Adviser to the Prime Minister. I was to stay in Pinid and my work, in connection with Kashmir, was to be kept secret from the British officers and

G.H.Q. Army officers or other ranks were still not to participate in the fighting.

Among the other members of the Liberation Committee were also Sardar Ibrahim, Khwaja Rahim, a finance officer (Mr Ghulam Mohd) and Major Yusaf of the Political Department who was to deal with the tribesmen.

Upon my seeking a clarification of our military object, the Prime Minister said that all he wanted was to keep the fight going for three months which would be enough time to achieve our political object by negotiations and other means.

The main worry at the back of my mind was the question of ammunition. As we were leaving Jammu open, the Indian army would soon form a base there with regular supply dumps and so forth. Our men would, from then onwards, have to fight against regular troops having a very generous supply available to them. Troops carried 100 rounds per man with 100 more in brigade reserve and a further 100 in divisional reserve all the time. Behind all this would be India's ammunition producing factories.

If against this we were to maintain ten thousand men including the tribesmen and if these were to be strictly limited to only 100 rounds per man for a whole month, even then we would need 3,000,000 rounds in three months. At that moment we had only about a fifth of one million rounds collected at Pindi and of this, half had already been demanded for the tribesmen now advancing towards Srinagar.

That afternoon, on the 28th, I rushed back to Pindi to ensure that the tribesmen received their ammunition in time.

VI

TO SRINAGAR

Next morning, on 29 October 1947, I and Ali Akhtar Mirza, Press correspondent, left for Srinagar to see what the situation was like.

We crossed the Kashmir border at Kohala a little before sunset. We would not have been allowed entry earlier as vehicles were not permitted on the road during daylight because Indian aircraft were on the scene. At this hour people were beginning to stir. Even so, there was not as yet much activity. For 20 miles we drove in silence, along the river Jhelum on our left. On our right were only the rapidly darkening scrubby hills. On the road there was no one in sight, and in the far off village huts there was no light, no sound. There was no sign of war.

And then at Muzaffarabad suddenly the scene changed as if by the lifting of a curtain. Tribesmen were on their way to Srinagar. The spectacle before us was like a page out of old history. Memory flashed back many, many centuries. This, one felt, is what it might have been like when our forefathers had poured in through the mountain passes of the Frontier.

Here again were rugged mountains, and here were descendants of the same men probably looking much the same, clothed much the same and plunging forward into the unknown in much the same manner. Only then it had probably been in caravans, on foot, and horse—while now it was a convoy, but it was not a convoy either because no one had organised it and no one was in command. It was just that so many people had converged at Muzaffarabad, inside the Kashmir border, because of the one single road along which they must proceed to Srinagar, the State Capital.

This was two days after Kashmir had acceded to India. Six days earlier, Frontier tribesmen had begun their attack on Kashmir at this point. On the 26th, the fourth day of the attack, the Maharajah, the ruler of the State had fled from the capital. Next day India had intervened, and her troops had begun to arrive at Srinagar by air.

Now more Pathans were going in to help the freedom struggle. The lorries were full to the brim, carrying forty, fifty and some as many as seventy. Men were packed inside, lying on the roofs, sitting on the engines and hanging on to the mudguards. They were men of all ages from grey beards to teenagers. Few were well-dressed—many had torn clothes, and some were even without shoes. But they were good to look at—handsome and awe-inspiring.

Their weapons were a varied assortment—British, French, German and Frontier made rifles —long and short barrelled pistols and even shot guns. Some had no fire arms at all, they were going to take

them from the enemy. For the present they carried only daggers.

Their transport was equally heterogeneous—ranging from road worthy buses to anything on four wheels capable of crawling. One ancient car with no roof, no lights, and doubtful brakes was carrying a banner and eight or nine men. This was the headquarters of the Swat Army. Movement was very slow. Overloaded old engines were labouring hard. They would take a long time to reach destination. Some would not reach at all. But that did not matter —these men had come to fight, in their blood ran the memory of centuries of invasions and adventure—they would get there somehow. They were in high spirits. Above the rumble and din could be heard a chorus of war songs and an occasional drum beat. The air was charged with enthusiasm. Ahead lay glory.

We, however, could not afford to go at their pace. We had to push on and so, after some difficulty, we managed to pass the convoy and then we had the open road. At Uri, 50 miles from Muzaffarabad, we found the bridge down. It had been destroyed by the retreating State troops pursued by the tribesmen after their attack on Muzaffarabad some days earlier. The locals had, however, turned out in large numbers, worked feverishly throughout the night and built a mile long diversion cut into the hill-side—thus enabling the tribesmen to pass and catch up with their quarry.

Thirty more miles of winding road, and now 80 miles from Muzaffarabad, we were at last out of the

mountains—at the g : of the Kashmir Valley, at Baramula. This use to be a town of orchards, schools, road and river transport stations, shops and restaurants—in short a bright and cheerful looking place. But now it looked as if an earthquake had shaken it. Shops were empty, doors and windows were gone—brick, stone and paper littered the ground. First the retreating State troops had blown up buildings to block the road, then the attacking tribesmen had swept through like a hurricane, and finally the Indian Air Force had followed up with bombs and rockets. Fires were still burning here and there. We stopped to have a look, and found that off the main street the town was not damaged much and that many of the local people were still there.

The tribesmen had reached here on the 26th. Until then Kashmir had not acceded to India and Indian troops had not been flown in. The State troops, thoroughly demoralised, had retreated in disorder. Only 35 more miles remained of level road and virtually no resistance. The tribesmen had a barely two hour journey left—and before them lay Srinagar, trembling, seemingly at their mercy. But the tribesmen had not moved forward that day, nor the next day. When at last they had advanced on the 28th, they had encountered the Indian troops that a hundred aircraft had been bringing in since the previous day. Although these had been successfully overcome ten miles outside Baramula, a whole day had been lost in doing so. Thus it was not till the evening of the 29th, that the tribesmen had moved forward to Srinagar itself. And now they were just a few hours ahead of us.

But why had two crucial days been wasted at Baramula? It is more than probable that if these two days had not been lost, the story of Kashmir would be an entirely different one. There was no authentic answer to be found. It is unlikely that the tribesmen themselves had wanted the delay; sending back their wounded could not have taken that much time; waiting for more men could hardly have been the cause as they knew that speed would be more valuable; and Baramula itself could not have held that much attraction for them when the biggest prize of all, Srinagar, was so near at hand. All the same there may have been some good reason, one cannot say, or it may have been what the locals at Baramula said, that Khurshid Anwar, who was in command, had waited for Kashmiri Leaders whom he had sent for in order to confer with regarding his own position in the future Government of Kashmir. Whatever the reason, there was no time to find out for certain as it was near midnight, and the front had yet to be reached.

Out of Baramula, there was no traffic on the road. Now and then men could be seen running about stealthily in the deserted villages. Mostly they were locals collecting loot. But there was no sign of any fighting yet, no indication of where the front was and no one to give us any information. For all we knew the fighting could be somewhere up in the hills—and the road itself could be in enemy hands, there was no means of telling. So now we had to go slow, without lights.

Ten miles or so, and there were some tribesmen sleeping around a fire. Another five miles, and some

dark figures could be seen along the road. Another half an hour, and away in the distance the lights of Srinagar became visible. Then at last there was the sound of firing. We were close to the front now. Soon we passed some wounded men being carried back. Another half a mile, and shells were landing on the road. But the firing was dying down. Apparently an attack had just ended. This was exactly at the 4th milestone, and on the edge of Srinagar suburbs.

At the fourth milestone the enemy had set up a road-block. Upon discovering the existence of this check, the tribesmen had, in their initial approach, crept forward and around crefully using only the broken ground off the road. The enemy's wild shooting in the dark had done them no damage so far and they had continued to close in silently. But in the last few hundred yards the situation had changed. The tribesmen may or may not have known that much of the outer perimeter of Srinagar is often under water –rain, marsh, lake, river and paddy fields all contributing. It seems that the nearer they had got to the enemy post the more they had found themselves converging on to the road because of this water. Ultimately, it must have looked as if the only way to deal with the post was to go for it straight down the narrow road—and this is apparently what they had done. I feel that experienced tribesmen, like Mahsuds and Wazirs, would never have done this. It may be that this particular group, mostly Mohmands, had not the necessary experience, or it may also have been that their recent successes had made them overconfident, resulting in their ignoring well established rules of caution. So they had assaulted down the

road, and had met the full blast of enemy fire—rifles, brens, machine-guns and mortars. Consequently, the attack had failed. And now that the night was almost finished, nothing more could be done for the present.

We had just arrived to see the end of this action. It seemed that the setback had caused no particular concern. It was taken merely as one incident. The feeling was that a way into Srinagar would surely be found. Little could anyone have guessed then that this moment and this spot would historically remain the peak of the struggle because never again would we come within sight of anything so likely to be decisive.

It was 4 a.m. and time to look for shelter. Finding a clump of chinar trees some distance back, we parked under it and tried to rest. But there was not much time left for sleep. Soon dawn crept over the horizon unveiling an inspiring picture of nature's beauty. It was cold, crisp and clear. Snow peaks glistened in the distance, birds twittered among the trees, flights of wild duck and geese flew past in formation, line after line, their colourful wings flashing when caught by the suns' rays. The ground was still covered in mist—and all was silent except for the gurgle of water in a stream nearby. As the sun rose, it lit up brown fields and golden chinars under a perfectly blue sky. It looked so peaceful that it was hard to believe there was a war on. The events of a few hours ago seemed to belong somewhere else.

But peace did not last long. An Indian fighter aircraft came roaring across. It flew over the area and then went for all the clumps of trees, dropping

a bomb here and firing a burst of machine-guns there. It was followed by another, and then another—and so it was going to be the whole day. No one fired back at them. They had complete freedom of the skies, and they flew very low, sometimes even below tree top level.

After an icy cold wash and a hearty breakfast I set out to see how the town was defended. Nothing was happening. Since the arrival of enemy aircraft on the scene, all action had to be in the hours of darkness. Now only a few individuals were moving about. To such movement there was no obstruction, except the aircraft which were easy to dodge. In open country one can often see an aircraft long before it can see one, and one only has to keep still for a little while to escape observation. Even if one is noticed, a single individual is hardly ever a worth-while target. But if one is unfortunate enough to be picked up for attack, there is usually still enough time to take shelter. Modern aircraft are equipped to fire only straight in front, and so a pilot who wants to fire has to fly straight at one and in a downward direction. To do this, he has first to gain enough height and distance for which he has to circle round, and that gives the man on the ground enough time to shift unobserved.

Thus I was able to walk around safely for a few hours—and with a pair of binoculars and a map I was able to get some idea of how the ground lay. From our side the approaches to Srinagar were all covered with water. Although this water had shrunk a good deal since the summer, there was still enough of it to restrict movement either to the main road or

a few paths and bunds. These were likely to come under fire from enemy posts. As the previous night had shown, attacking along these, without supporting fire, was no use. The position of Srinagar as a whole, however, still seemed weak. The State troops, we knew, were demoralised and the population, though passive, was hostile to them. The Indian troops, at this stage, could hardly have been three battalions while the outer perimeter of the town was many miles long and irregular. The posts, therefore, were few and far apart, scattered and incapable of supporting each other. Thus, on this day there was still in fact no really effective defence. The town was still in the grip of terror. Inspite of the aircraft and the troops, the tribesmen were still able to roam around the perimeter, and the landing ground, freely and unconcerned.

It seemed to me that if the tribesmen could once infiltrate into the town, it would be impossible to eject them. Panic would result in blocking streets and roads and obstructing counter moves by troops. The State troops had already almost given up, and the Indians would be more concerned with protecting the airfield, their only route to India. But how was an entry to be made?

One possible way appeared to be to go across the water at night in boats or on foot—and this is what the tribesmen were now looking for. This, however, needed local help. And as the locals on the outskirts had disappeared, it seemed that finding boats and guides may take a long time—one could not tell how long. Meanwhile, every day lost would result in more Indian troops arriving by air. It did

not seem a very promising plan, but it was the only one that could be tried for the time being—though depending o it alone would be leaving too much to chance.

So it brought me back again to considering the main road itself, the site of the previous night's attack. The defence position here did not appear to be particularly strong. There was nothing to indicate the existence of anything like concrete pillars, bunkers, ditches or heavy obstacles. It looked more like a barbed wire obstruction covered by fire. It was good enough to stop unprotected men and lorries, but quite likely it would not stand up to anything heavier. A single armoured car might be able to break through it. That seemed to be the answer, I thought a couple of armoured cars could make sure of the job—and they could reach here from Pakistan within twenty-four hours. The thing to do, therefore, was to rush back and get the armoured cars.

So at sunset, when the aircraft disappeared and the road was safe again, we started back. Rain, mud and traffic made the journey unbearably slow, but there was a pleasant thought to keep company with—armoured cars would get there before the Indians became too strong. To get the armoured cars, however, some objections would have to be answered. It could be argued that India would call this intervention by Pakistan but did that really matter? India herself was intervening. She was already calling us aggressors and she had squarely accused us of bringing the tribesmen in across 200 miles of Pakistan—would a couple of armoured cars make that accusation any worse?

It could be argued that it would precipitate a general war between India and Pakistan. I did not think it would. Neither side could afford it. In Kashmir, we were irrevocably committed, but neither side could wish to enlarge the conflict. The Governments of the two Dominions, barely three months old, were not yet fully settled in their saddles—the old army was not yet fully divided—a neutral boundary force, under a British General, was still in existence —and there was a common British Supreme Commander who still carried some weight. Millions of refugees were still in the process of transfer between the two countries—incidents were occuring daily—accusations against troops and the two Governments were ordinary news of the day—what difference would another incident make? More shouting, more complaining, more cursing—that is all. Thus, the matter of the armoured cars seemed to me a hopeful proposition. But that is what I thought. Fate had designed otherwise.

On return to Pindi, I was immediately able to find Colonel Masud, who volunteered to take not two but a whole squadron of his unit armoured cars. His men, he said, would go in plain clothes without official permission and at their own risk. This was indeed a thrilling response to the needs of the occasion, and all seemed well. While they were getting ready I held a consultation with Brigadier Sher Khan, Lt. Colonel Arbab and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the last being a Central Government Minister at Pindi. Brigadier Sher Khan and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan stoutly opposed the idea. This, they thought, would certainly bring about war; the Government would

never forgive it; in any case its chances of success were very little, and I was to remember that the front was not under my command. So the proposal was abandoned.

Thus armoured cars did not go to the assistance of the tribesmen and the tribesmen were not destined to find some other way of entering Srinagar.

VII

TRIBAL WITHDRAWAL

For another four days the atmosphere in Pindi still continued to be full of great expectations. News of the tribal successes was still spreading and, with each hour, assuming legendary proportions. The fall of Srinagar was taken to be a certainty and the happy news was awaited breathlessly.

Then one morning news came that the Indians were coming out of Srinagar and the tribesmen were falling back without offering resistance. This news had come from the Frontier Chief Minister, Qayum Khan, who was in contact with Khurshid Anwar. The Chief Minister had rushed to Abbottabad where he was joined by others and they were to meet the tribal leaders.

Later that evening I received a phone call from Abbottabad to say that they would be reaching Pindi at midnight and would come to see me at my house. When Abdul Qayum Khan and Nawab Mamdot, accompanied by Colonel A.S.B. Shah, Secretary for Frontier Regions, arrived they said that the tribesmen had fallen back 65 miles and all efforts to persuade them to go back to the front had failed and would I take over responsibility from now onwards?

I suggested that they might ring up the Prime Minister and ask for advice. They had already done so and the answer was that the Pakistan Government would not intervene—nor were any Government servants to be openly involved, and yet the show was to go on at all costs.

But what was there that I could do? Even if I were willing to help I was only a staff officer, having no troops to throw into the battle or guns to rush forward. They had seen other people too and made no headway. They had seen the senior Pakistani commanders at Pindi, Abbotabad, Naushehra and Peshawar, but had got no help. But the matter could not be left just there. I offered the only thing I could, and that was to go to the front myself to see if anything could be done there. They promised to give me a station-wagon for transport and a captured wireless set. Captain Taskinuddin agreed to go with me as staff officer and I took two volunteer signallers to operate the wireless set. By next morning I was ready to proceed.

The withdrawal of the tribesmen had not been a step by step falling back, but a breaking away and a total disappearance. A spectacular advance coming to such an abrupt end was most bewildering. The people of the valley who had, for many generations, lived under the heel of an alien Ruler, had not thought it likely that release would ever come. Then suddenly, one day, the Maharajah's mighty structure had begun to collapse. And now equally suddenly they were deserted and left again at the mercy of the same opressor.

The Maharajah, entrenched behind his legal rights and his army, had contemptuously expected nothing worse than a disturbance on his borders. Then the blow had fallen so heavy that on the fourth day he had fled from his Capital. And now, barely a week after believing everything lost forever, he was master again of that which he wanted most, the valley.

Soldiers of exprience, in India and Pakistan, considered to be authorities on the capabilities and limitations of the tribesmen, had foreseen only some ambushes and looting incidents. Then, there had come a penetration of 120 miles at lightning speed, a staggering blow to expert opinions. And now when they had hardly readjusted their minds, came this flight and total disappearance. What were they to think now? On the Indian side at least they appear either not to have noticed the disappearance or had taken it as some ruse, because they did not rush forward to occupy the vacuum.

Although the Indians claim that they fought a twelve hour battle at the outskirts of Srinagar on the 7th of November, the tribesmen had in fact withdrawn two days earlier except for a few snipers left behind. The Indians further claim that on that day the tribesmen left 500 dead on the field. Those who are at all familiar with tribesmen of the North West Frontier will know exactly what to think of this fable. This could, perhaps, have happened to the Derveshes of the African Sahara with their habit of fighting in mass—or to the Rajputs of old days who preferred to die in a blaze of glory. But this could not happen to the Frontier tribesmen who fight as individuals and as guerillas—and who in Kashmir insisted upon carrying

every dead body back 400 miles to their own homes. To some, on our side, the news of the withdrawal was bewildering precisely because of the fact that there had been no serious figting and no serious casualties.

To understand the withdrawal one has to understand the tribesmen, their methods and the conditions existing at the time. These tribesmen are well worth knowing, not only because of what they did, or failed to do, in Kashmir but because of their importance in the context of Indo-Pakistan relations and also perhaps in the event of anything happening in Central Asia. On pre-partition calculations, covering only some parts of the Frontier, about 200,000 of them were armed—a fairly formidable number—but the largeness of this number apart, their importance lies in where they are and who they are.

They occupy that strategic belt of land which, according to Sir Olaf Caroe 'has perhaps seen more invasions in the course of history than any other country in Asia or indeed the World'—'where the sun and wind have an uplifting keenness—and where the endless ranges of rugged rocks possess the power of inspiring'. (The Pathans, by Olaf Caroe).

Some of these tribes have been in these parts since as far back as any record can be found in history. They were probably there in the times of Darius and Xerxes (510-480 B.C.) and are mentioned in Herodotus as the bravest people in these parts. In later centuries they formed the spearhead of the Muslim penetration and conquest of India, first as soldiers of fortune and later as administrators and kings.

In all this time, their own homelands in the mountains, through which a passage was effected now

and then only by force, never became subject to any external power, Pathan Kings included. Thus, here in this belt, in spite of lying across the path of countless invaders including Alexander, Chingiz Khan and Timur Lang, a tribal form of society has persisted—individualistic and ever ready to fight for its independence.

These are the men that are still considered among the best fighters of the world—men whom their British opponents have called the world's most ruthless umpires because they never let any tactical mistakes by the enemy go unpunished. It is from these that some went to Kashmir. Why was it then, that such men had failed?

The causes of their failure had begun soon after Muzaffarabad. These men have an elaborate system of holding lengthy councils of war for each action where all the pros and cons are seriously considered and whereafter, if not every man, then at least every group, individually understands and accepts the alloted task. This is how they had arranged their brilliant attack at Muzaffarabad, the first target. But after that, contrary to their practice, they simply appear to have been carried forward in a rush which worked well enough up to Baramula, and might have even worked at Srinagar had they reached there before the arrival of Indian troops. At Baramula, however, when Srinagar itself lay within easy reach, they had been held back for two days and their best opportunity thus lost. And then from Baramula onwards the task had begun to assume a character somewhat unsuited to their qualities and methods.

In their own country, the tribesmen fought as snipers and raiders. There they could go on endlessly harassing troops by their deadly sniping. They could pursue and cut off rear-guards. They were masters in the art of ambushing troops and transport. They could also attack isolated posts. But there were two things they usually did not do. They did not like to attack troops in defensive positions—and they did not like to sit in defensive positions to be attacked by troops.

This was natural enough because in both these instances troops had superiority of organisation, discipline and heavy weapons. Attacking entrenched troops or defending a particular place against an organised attack by troops, both involve prolonged and heavy fighting. The army can undertake these because its administrative organisation is designed to replenish ammunition, evacuate casualties and supply rations during the course of the fighting. Further, because of good means of inter-communication like the wireless, field telephones, signalling flags and messengers, the army command can control and direct its troops over any length of time and distance. And troops also have the advantage of possessing heavy weapons like machine-guns, brens, mortars, artillery and aircraft.

Thus, while it suits regular troops to get the tribesmen into battles of this kind, this is something which the tribesman tries to avoid like poison. Instead, he looks for those conditions where he can exercise his own peculiar superiority. To begin with, since he is not tied by any central organisation, he

fights where and when he likes, and he is free to disappear immediately from the scene when he wants to. The troops cannot do this because they are tied by complicated higher orders and plans. Thus, the superiority of the tribesman lies in his freedom and mobility. He is able to appear at the most unexpected times and places—and this unpredictability makes him a constant menace.

Further, he has only a rifle and a knife to carry, and because he is physically tougher, he can move very much longer and faster than any troops. Therefore, he roams around and patiently watches until he finds a suitable target and then pounces upon it with lightning speed. One Mahsud tribesman aptly described to me their tactics as being like that of the hawk. The hawk flies high in the sky, out of danger, he flies round and round until he sees his prey and then he swoops down on it for one mighty strike and when he has got his prey, he does not wait around, he flies off at once to some far off quiet place where he can enjoy what he has got. The tribesman is indeed very similar—he must have mobility, he must have the freedom to choose his own time and target, and he must have security to return to. This is why he is not willing to accept long drawn out actions which tie him down. And clearly, the task that awaited him around Srinagar was just such an action, now that regular Indian troops were arriving.

In his fight against troops, he also has to protect himself from artillery and aircraft. This he does by fighting only in broken and hilly country which provide cover. Another point that he gains by sticking to the hills is that there the army cannot use its motor

vehicles, and the troops have to move on foot which places them at a disadvantage so far as speed and endurance are concerned. Thus, in this respect too the action around Srinagar had begun to appear unattractive to the tribesmen because from Baramula onwards the country is open plain on both sides of the road.

Taking into consideration this difficulty of the plains after Baramula, their task might have been made easier had another lashkar been sent to the other side of Srinagar—or this might have been done by Azad volunteers. A suggestion to this effect had in fact been made on 27 October, which had been ignored perhaps due to over confidence. On the 27th it was somewhat late to do so, but even a partial attempt would have helped. Had the Indians seen any signs of a threat upon their rear, they would not have been willing to risk leaving the town to advance against the main lashkar. More likely they would have scattered themselves over a still larger area to guard Srinagar from all sides.

On the night of the 27th, the idea of dealing with Jammu had also been abandoned—and Delhi had been left free to focus its entire effort at Srinagar. Two days later, on the night of the 29th, the tribesmen had been held up at the fourth milestone on the outskirts of Srinagar—and this was the last occasion when they might have been helped with armoured cars or something heavy. But this had not been done. And thereafter, they had been left alone with a task not quite within their capacity.

Although every hour more Indian troops were arriving at Srinagar, the tribesmen still continued

their probing efforts for another four or five days. But they must have begun to see the awkwardness of their situation. Soon the Indians would be able to sally forth, and no arrangements had been made for any defensive position behind, to which the tribesmen could withdraw. Even if they could do such a thing themselves, there could be no possibility of doing so in the valley. A defence across the road could be no use because the country was open plain, unsuitable for tribesmen, and further unless the defence stretched across the whole width of the valley (perhaps twenty miles), it could easily be by-passed.

On the other hand, if they left the road free and went to the hills on the side, they would allow the Indians to cut them off which no tribesman ever permits. Thus, as soon as it became clear that there was no chance of entering Srinagar, there was no point in staying on anywhere in the valley which could possibly become a death trap without any compensating advantage. And as is the practice of the tribesmen, if they have to go, they have to go fast. One moment they were there and the next moment they were gone.

Back at Baramula, out of the plains of the valley, they had paused for a while. There they could have stopped, had certain minimum conditions been present. And if they had stopped, in all likelihood, the Indians would not have been able to dislodge them—not for a long time, perhaps never. But the minimum conditions were not there.

In their own country, the tribesmen dealt with an advancing column by sniping its head and flanks. More often they did not attack it in strength but worked more like bees, leaving their stings and flying

off again. Although they would not succeed in stopping a really strong column, they often succeeded in inflicting heavy casualties and imposing great delay. If the advancing column was weak, they sometimes succeeded in bringing it to a standstill or even forcing it to retreat. They did this by keeping up their sniping, harassing and raiding activities for days and days until the column got worn down or cut off from its supplies and reinforcements. In their own country they could do this because there they were able, all the time, to scatter away into the hills where their own people provided them with shelter, food, ammunition and medical care for the wounded.

These conditions did not exist in Kashmir. Here the tribesmen were in foreign country where the people of the valley were not yet up in arms, and did not have the means, nor the habit, to provide such assistance. In consequence, for all their needs the tribesmen were dependent on the road, from which they could not stray very far, and the protection of which was essential to them.

Thus, what they really needed at this stage was one secure defence position across the road, as a sort of base, behind which they could fall and from which they would be able to strike outwards again. This was not a task for which they themselves were suited by temperament or practice. Putting up road blocks and sitting in trenches was, quite rightly, a job for someone else. A body of ex-servicemen under a good leader might have been able to provide the necessary road stop. But this had not been arranged nor even thought of.

So in their retreat, the tribesmen found no place where they could safely leave their busses on the road, and where they could move off in to the hills to descend upon an advancing Indian column. And if they could not move off into the hills to fight, there was no point in sitting in their busses and waiting. They did not mean to leave Kashmir, but they could do their waiting more comfortably elsewhere.

They felt themselves let down by Pakistan. They had, of their own free will, agreed to come and fight in Kashmir but only against the State Army. In this they had done more than was expected of them. But no one had arranged with them to fight also against the regular Indian Army with artillery, tanks and aircraft.

Even so, they had not hesitated for a moment in carrying on the fight against the new arrivals as well and they had immediately achieved further successes too. But they had naturally expected that, in the changed circumstances, the Pakistan Army would be coming up to support them. And soon they had been shocked to find that no troops, no artillery and no aircraft were coming up to help them. Indeed, not even the most elementary requirement of something like a secure base behind them was being provided for them.

Thus, by the night of 5 November, the major portion of the lashkar had withdrawn to Uri, 65 miles from Srinagar and 30 miles behind Baramula. And there the position being still no different, by next

day small parties had begun to withdraw out of Kashmir.

This was the situation when on the evening of 7 November 1947 I left Pindi for the front.

VIII

DESPERATE EFFORTS

Thirty miles beyond Muzaffarabad, I pulled up in front of a barrier across the road. "Who is there?", someone shouted from the darkness. From the bombed ruins of the Chinari dak bungalow, silhouetted against the sky, half a dozen men stepped into the road. They were members of the Swat army.

Unlike the men from the tribal areas, these were well dressed and soft spoken. Captain Rashid, the deputy commander, said that they were three hundred and had just arrived from the interior after helping in liquidating the State post at Bagh. Standing there, I also recognised the ancient car, with a banner, that I had seen a few days earlier on my trip to Srinagar. So it was to this group that the car belonged.

Rashid was not fully aware of the debacle near Srinager. Explaining the situation to him, I asked if he would be willing to go forward where he could be of help. He was willing, and promised that if allowed by their Commander he would take the men forward it need be. He would wait for a message from me.

Proceeding towards Uri, I thought it was very fortunate that these men were available. No one had told me about them. Perhaps no one knew they had been there. Rashid had seemed quite enthusiastic and this was somewhat different from the sort of impression I had been given of the situation in this area.

Reaching Uri around midnight I began searching for Khurshid Anwar, commander of the Lashkar. The place was enveloped in a kind of dead silence. There was no barrier on the road and nobody to challenge one. All the buildings near the road were gutted or bombed. Some lorries were parked here and there. Their drivers had no useful information to give. The tribesmen were there, they said, but about Khurshid Anwar they did not know. So with nothing else to go by, I began a search of the huts, along the hill sides, one by one.

Half an hour later, I came across Major Aslam (later Brigadier) who was here as a volunteer unknown to me. Like myself he too had no one under command, but he had some information. Earlier that day, or possibly the night before, an Indian Brigade had reached Baramula—and thus, between them and the tribesmen at Uri there was now a distance of some 30 miles.

This stretch of territory between Baramula and Uri, as I saw it, was ideal ground for the tribesmen to operate in. It was completely mountainous, with a single narrow road going through it. This road, which the Indians would have to use for their passage, was closed in on both sides—on one side by the deep and rapid river Jhelum, uncrossable except by

the one foot bridge existing half way between Baramula and Uri—and on the other side by steep and high mountains covered with trees and shrub. The road was not a straight one, but winding and twisting every two or three hundred yards, with a culvert every half a mile or so, and a main bridge every two or there miles.

To make this road safe for the passage of troops, guns and vehicles, the Indians would have to keep the tribesmen away from it out of shooting and raiding distance. And this was not the type of ground where such safety could be achieved by the usual method of establishing army pickets on dominating points on both sides of the road. These mountains were not bare enough, and the road not straight enough for that method of protection.

Here, with a road so winding and the hills so wooded, the tribesmen could be kept out only by a physical occupation of all the hills on both sides. To do this, in the presence of tribesmen already here, the Indians would need, I thought, a huge force which was not there yet. So far as their one brigade was concerned, two or three hundred Mahsuds, if provided with commissariat arrangements, could keep it halted where it was for many many weeks. Yet the tribesmen had not stopped to do so.

Neither had a single one of the numerous culverts or bridges been destroyed for delaying action. Nor was there anyone on the road to offer any resistance. Only one small group of volunteers, formerly of the I.N.A. (Indian National Army), remained on the road—some miles away from the enemy, acting as a watching post.

Obviously the first thing to do was to destroy a bridge somewhere, in order to put a stop between Uri and the Indians. Some demolition materials and a few men were needed for this. While these were being collected, I sent a message to Rashid of the Swat Army to bring his men forward so that next morning they would be able to take up a defensive position, and then I would meet the tribal leaders. The Swatis, though as warlike and stout-hearted as any, were nevertheless, as I knew, in the present generation without any first hand experience of fighting against regular troops. And therefore, they could not be expected to do what the Mahsuds and Afridis could do—but they would, I thought, do well enough in a defensive role.

Some time later we were ready to move. There were no demolition tools or dynamite and such things. But some petrol in cans and a few picks had been found. A dozen volunteers had come, and fortunately among them was also a sapper, a pensioner Naik (Corporal) wearing his 1914-18 pair of breeches.

Taking one lorry, we set out together towards Baramula, all eyes glued to the road some distance ahead so that we should not run unawares into some enemy post. This caution, however, soon became unnecessary. A vehicle came rushing down the road from the enemy side—and it turned out to be an Indian army truck driven by a Mahsud tribesman who apparently finding himself left behind alone, had lain in ambush and then, snatching a truck after silencing the driver with a dagger, had driven boldly through the enemy. According to him the enemy were not on

the move, and this meant we would have enough time to destroy a bridge.

Finding a suitable bridge, some distance from Baramula, the men set to work upon it—and by day-break there was at last a large enough gap in it to prevent the passage of vehicles. But the nullah was not deep enough, and its banks not steep enough, to prevent a diversion. So the few men had to be left at the site, to be able to snipe at the enemy when they came. I hoped that these men would gain a few hours for us, perhaps the whole day if they were determined enough—but of course that was doubtful in the existing circumstances when withdrawal was in the air, and men at the front feared, with some justification, that others might depart and leave them in the lurch.

On the way back, I selected a good area for a defensive position which I thought the Swatis would like when they came. Here, I felt, they could hold up the Indians for several days. The message had gone by telephone as the old telephone line along the road still existed. The distance was only 40 miles, so I expected Rashid to be arriving any minute now. This, however, was not to be. Rashid did not come. Instead, a message came to say that the Commander of the Swatis, who had gone to Swat, had not yet returned. A man, however, had been despatched to Swat to get his permission. Swat, unfortunately, was 300 miles away—so that was that.

Back at Uri, it was now time to meet the tribesmen and their leaders. Colonel A.S.B. Shah, Secretary Frontier regions, who had promised to introduce me, had not arrived. So with him or without, they had to

be faced. Being a Pathan myself, I did not expect any particular difficulty—and I was also familiar with their fighting methods, because ten years earlier, as an Officer in the British Indian Army, I had been involved in fighting against them for two years in the tribal territory. But here I did not know any of them, and they did not know me. So it was as total strangers that we had to meet and they soon had me cornered with a volley of questions.

Who was I?
I told them.
Had the Pakistan Government sent me?
No.
Were any troops coming to help?
No.
Had I brought any weapons or ammunition?
No.
Did Pakistan want Kashmir or not?
Yes.

Then why could it not send artillery and aircraft to the front as India had done? And why was the Army not there, after all it was being paid for the job. I tried to explain the legal position, but it was no good. Then why had I gone there, only to advise them?

No, I said, I had not gone there to advise them. Like them I was only a volunteer. I spoke about what the issue of Kashmir meant to us as Muslims and Pakistanis. Then I spoke about what we Pathans were, what we had come to do, what was expected of us and what our own honour demanded. I was getting fairly excited with my own speech until I noticed that I was not cutting much ice. Though many heads were politely nodding in assent, they had

heard all this before. Now it seemed somewhat late in the day, and not without reason.

After all, what I was asking them to do was to start again a fight which they had just stopped. And I was asking them to do so without bringing into the situation the least bit of addition of any sort, nor even the promise of any. That I was the sort of fellow they could get along with, they might have begun to feel—but that was all, and could not be enough. I was not a representative of the Government, nor of the Army, nor even of a political party or a tribe. And I had no weapons, stores or money.

However, the matter could not be left there. As a soldier, knowing army methods, I felt sure that in those hills guns and aircraft did not make much difference and that even a smaller number of tribesmen could, with their own rifles alone, stop the Indian troops.

I told them so, and this at last began to interest them a bit. Tactics they liked discussing and they were beginning to feel that I knew something.

Among those at Uri, there were many Mahsuds from Waziristan and Afridis from Tirah, excellent fighting men but not at present in the mood to stay on. Of the rest, many were Pathans from the settled districts of Peshawar and Mardan—and among these, I was pleasantly surprised to find my elder brother too. Many of these men, however, were equipped only with shot guns, pistols and other similar inadequate weapons—but as they were willing to cooperate, I gave them the task of guarding the camp and posting men on the hills to fire at the aircraft. They could of course do no damage to the aircraft, but I thought

this would arouse the fighting spirit, and the pilots would at least see that they were being resisted.

This did some good. The idea of having a task to do, after many hours of lethargy, immediately created a stir in the camp. When the next aircraft came over, a few of us took it on from the centre of the camp and many others began to stand up and shoot back. Half an hour later, while our discussions were still going on, three aircraft came over and they were fought back stoutly even though they wounded some men and battered the place thoroughly including the hut I had selected as headquarters.

I thought this little interlude was all for the better. The atmosphere was becoming more warlike. The urgency of the situation was obvious and I was pressing for a final decision by the tribesmen. Khurshid Anwar had already gone—and they had to make up their minds. At midday the leaders asked for more time to confer with their men alone. For the present, to my delight, one Mahsud Leader, Khone Khan, with his nineteen men, volunteered to accompany me to attend to the urgent task of strengthening our party at the broken bridge.

So off we went towards Baramula again. At 2 p.m. coming within view of the bridge, we could see that an Indian armoured car had halted on the other side, but some infantry had crossed over and were coming forward along the hill-side. Our sapper and his men were still there—and Khone Khan's party was here just in time to help.

This was the first time I was seeing the tribesmen in action at close quarters. To see them would have delighted the heart of any infantryman. What we try

for years to instill into our troops, was like second nature with these men. Their eye for ground, their immediate dispersal, their speed and concealment were as per text book.

Even though within seconds an aircraft came straffing, and shells began to land around, the tribesmen were already far and away. Seeing a foot bridge across the river on our left, half of them rushed over to the other side and ran up along the river, screened by the boulders. This was a good move because the Indians were all on this side and the tribesmen would be able to get at them from a flank. In a few minutes their volley of sniping began—and it came upon the forward Indians all at once from three sides, the front and both flanks. They must naturally have thought the opposition to be many times larger than the actual number—and they moved no further.

I thought they would halt there for a long time, because the presence of the tribesmen would make them very cautious—at sunset they would probably withdraw behind the bridge for fear of being ambushed, and then next morning they would first send out patrols and later proceed to make a proper plan of attack in accordance with the usual army procedure. With any luck this would give us a whole twenty-four hours, and by then we should have our defensive position ready.

So I went back to Uri to see how the tribal confabulations were going on. It was still a see-saw affair, one moment they were willing and the next moment they were not. The main contention still was that they were unhappy about the absence of a secure base. They felt that troops should hold one decent

position across the road, and then they would happily go all over the country to hunt the Indians. This requirement I was unfortunately not in a position to fulfil—and so although discussions still went on they were becoming less and less fruitful.

At sunset, the Indians were still near the broken bridge, perhaps some 75 to 80 miles from the Pakistn border, but our few volunteers as well as Khone Khan and his men withdrew as soon as it was dark, because they did not want to remain alone. And so, there was no one left in f ont of the enemy.

At Uri, at this time, the one thought that was uppermost in everyone's mind was that of complete withdrawal from Kashmir. It now looked inevitable and everyone was restless. By the end of the first hour after sunset, most of the people had got into their transports and departed—and the rest were getting ready to go. I still continued to hope that ultimately perhaps a hundred odd men might stay on.

A hundred mixed individuals, armed only with rifles, and under no discipline and no tribal ties, could not be considered any kind of a match for the Indian column of regular troops, probably more than a thousand strong, preceded by armoured cars and supported by artillery and aircraft. Yet I would have been happy enough with a hundred men because the physical conditions were favourable for delaying tactics, and if we only could gain time help was bound to arrive in due course.

But this hope too was not to be fulfilled. The withdrawal coutinued, and with it all hope was going too. Uri was rapidly becoming a deserted town of

broken huts and pye dogs.

There had probably been more than a thousand people at Uri. Some had held out hopes of cooperating. Some had made promises. Some had even got into their lorries and started towards the enemy, but then changed their minds and turned back. Now they were all pulling out. Only a few showed some last minute concern and curiosity—

Wasn't it time for me to go too?

Did I mean to stay on after they left?

What would be the good of that?

But this was all. They did not want to wait any longer. The tempo of the homeward rush was increasing. They had to hurry. So they went.

At 9. p.m. the tail lights of the last departing vehicle disappeared in the distance. Taking stock of what was left, I discovered that in the rush my Staff Officer, Captain Taskinuddin and the wireless set had also gone. Barring about a dozen people, nothing remained. The volunteers, the tribesmen, and other Pathans, had all gone. And so had Rashid's three hundred Swatis form Chinari earlier in the evening.

My mission had ended in complete failure. Twenty-four hours of desperate efforts lay in the dust.

But I did not think I could go back yet. I had already, as it were, burnt my boats behind me by adopting the name of General Tariq. I had no pretensions to that great name but I felt it would provide an inspiration, as well as conceal my identity.

Tariq, twelve centuries earlier, upon landing on the coast of Spain had burnt his boats—and when told

that it was unwise to have abandoned their only means of going back to their own country had replied, in the words of Iqbal هر ملک ملک ماست که ملک خدائے ماست "every country is our country because it is our God's Country."

IX

U R I

It was nearly midnight. Three hours ago the last of the tribesmen had gone. The high hills surrounding Uri gave the impression that we were sitting at the bottom of a huge cup. It was dark, cold and lonely.

Only a dozen or so had stayed back—Major Aslam and two pensioner ex-servicemen, a former I.N.A. Subedar, Latif Afghani a political worker, two drivers, a cook and two or three other civilians including my brother. Our weapons were a dozen rifles and a captured bren-gun. This was the smallest and most inadequate force I ever had to command—and yet here fate confronted me with a task that a thousand men had just abandoned.

I reckoned that by this time the tribesmen and volunteers must have crossed the border and be out of Kashmir. As the local people of this area had not yet risen to organise themselves, there was no resistance left anywhere along this stretch of 75 miles of road. If the Indians became aware of this, they could move forward in their trucks and reach the Pakistan border within three hours. If they did not move immediately, they would do so next morning when their aircraft would report that nothing opposed them.

The departure of the tribesmen had created a dangerous vacuum. Anywhere else in Kashmir it may not have mattered so much—but here it involved the most important major road passing through the largest territory on the Azad side—with no one present within reach to take the place of the tribesmen. This area had been gained in the spectacular rush of the tribesmen, and now its sudden loss could be so shattering to the morale that it might actually endanger the liberation movement in other areas as well. This was a prospect too dreadful to contemplate.

Onbviously this front must be reformed with the greatest possible speed but how, that was the question. Men would come here from the adjoining areas and from Pakistan but that would take some days—while here it may be only a matter of a few hours before the Indians moved to occupy the vacuum. This we would have to prevent.

The task that I decided upon for ourselves was that we would destroy a few bridges—that would delay the enemy. Also, we would act in a manner that would give the impression that the tribesmen were still there—that would slow them down still further. And in the time thus gained, we would contact the local people and begin to raise volunteers.

So I split the group in two and sent one party back a few miles to form a base, while four of us remained at Uri. The enemy had not yet moved forward even though the door had been wide open for the past six hours. We waited in silence. For the present there was nothing we could do except wait for the enemy. Time dragged on, nothing stirred and three more hours passed.

Then at 4 a.m., in the distance behind us, the lights of a vehicle became visible. Someone was apparently coming towards us—a welcome sight after a whole night of seeing people going away from us. It turned out to be a jeep carrying four soldiers (Afridis), Sepoy Khial Akbar and three others, who had deserted their unit to come and fight in Kashmir. To my surpise, they were unarmed as they had deserted on a sudden impulse and taken no weapons with them. They were, however, a very determined foursome. All along the way they had seen others leaving, who had advised them to turn back as the war was over, but they had not changed their minds. They had asked people for the loan of four rifles and they had been refused, but still they had kept coming. When I explained the situation to them and told them they could go back if they wished, they were quite firm—they wanted to stay with us.

In another hour it would be dawn. Enemy troops and aircraft would soon be getting busy—so to let them know that the front was still there, I sent these four men forward, with the bren, to open fire on the head of the Indian column. The Indians opened up with their guns, but they were shooting up the countryside for nothing. There was no one there to shoot. We were all well away and out of danger.

Another hour passed and the Indians, still very cautious, showed no signs of hurrying. They were content with long-distance shooting—and as for every half a dozen rounds that we fired they fired probably six thousand, there was no harm in it—we were gaining time. Many hours passed like this. Their aircraft went on reconnoitering the whole area, bombing and

strafing various points, quite blind to the fact that there was nothing there to attack. While they were thus busy, our few men were working feverishly upon destroying a bridge near Uri. And by the afternoon we at last had the shelter of a broken bridge.

When the Indians came to it, they were received with a volley of fire and there they stopped. They retaliated in the usual manner but they moved no further. It was getting dark, and in the darkness, they felt, they had to be careful. By nightfall silence fell over the whole area once again and it suited us, because we had gone without sleep for more than forty-eight hours.

At the crack of dawn, next morning, we again opened fire on the enemy and then drew out of range. And then, while they were blasting the place for hours before attacking it, we were again somewhere else—some busy upon another bridge—and some crossing and re-crossing innumerable nullahs, scrambling up and down precipices, climbing this hill and that, to fire at the enemy from many different places to give the impression that there were people still all over the place.

This worked, and worked as well as I could hope for. We were succeeding in creating the impression that the front was still very much there—and consequently the Indians continued to be cautious. Although their forward elements had already reached Uri, their main body took yet another day to reach there.

And from there onwards, we did not let them go far from the road. On the road itself, they found they had to take each bridge after long and heavy

preparation. And so we went on from bridge to bridge. But destroying bridges was a lengthy and tiresome affair in the absence of tools and dynamite. Moving up and down the hills, to keep up an appearance of strength, was even more exhausting. Time, however, had to be gained and every hour counted.

The first day gained had appeared to us as sheer good luck. The second, we had fought for and we had inflicted some casualties too. At the end of the third, I thought we had achieved sometihng. Surely by now someone should be coming to our assistance, I felt, and inevitably at night faces turned hopefully towards the road behind us, but no one came. So the same procedure had to be repeated. Each day we brought down one bridge and each day the Indians moved that far and no further.

On the sixth day, we finally stopped at Chakoti, 15 miles from Uri. Here we had destroyed a long bridge across a very deep nullah—and the sheer precipice on both sides allowed no possibility of building a diversion for vehicles. If the Indians wanted to go beyond here they would have to rebuild the bridge itself. When their first patrol came to it, it received everything we had. Abandoning a truck and two bodies, they withdrew. More came and then followed the usual shelling, firing and air attacks until sunset. Next morning, unlike other days, they found our post still there—and so the only alternative they had was to stage an infantry attack through the wooded high mountain on our right—and this they did not proceed to do.

It is quite possible that from Uri the Indians had not meant to come in this direction. They might

have been more interested in going south to Poonch where some relief was needed. Even so it is unlikely that they would not have snatched the chance of re-occupying this more important territory up to Muzaffarabad, had they found no opposition in their way.

Six days of exposure, and suffering no damage, had made me almost believe that among the stones and boulders of Kashmir we just could not be hit. And this may have proved true except for one incident the following day. Bringing three others with me in the station-wagon, we got caught on the only stretch of one mile of straight road in this area. I saw the aircraft coming straight at us. Many times previously there had been time enough to stop and take shelter. But now we were in the open. In front and behind there was no culvert to hide under. To stop and run back 200 yards round the nearest spur was not possible. The aircraft was already beginning to dip its nose. The bomb, I knew, would come with the second dive, but for the burst of 20 mm guns, there were only a few seconds to go.

For a moment it looked like the end. Is this the pay off, I wondered. Anyhow, there was no point in giving him an easy target. If the vehicle could only plunge forward fast enough it might just make the pilot shoot overhead. So this I tried to do, and almost did, but not quite—bullets came through the roof and fatally wounded one man.

In those seven days we had made contact with the people of this area and they had raised seventy-five volunteers, now almost ready to join us. The Azad Government also had been collecting weapons and volunteers—and assistance was on its way. From

the adjoining areas of Bagh and Poonch messages had also come with the promise of help, but of course for the present they were busy with their own problems.

Two days later, when the Indians still appeared to be threatening Chakoti, at last some three hundred and fifty Pakistani volunteers arrived. They were mostly ex-servicemen, armed with rifles and promising to look at. The danger, at last, appeared to be at an end. But it was not to be so.

These new arrivals, though mostly ex-servicemen, showed a heart breaking reluctance to get within hitting range of the enemy. During the following days, one task after another entrusted to them was abandoned after they were fired at—and several times the old handful were again left alone on the hills. Using them on far off hills, out of the danger zone, to create an impression of activity and strength, worked up to a point. But even there, if a shell or two landed near them, or an aircraft came over them, they dispersed in panic.

I sent a hundred of them to the other side of the river, where they would be safe, and where they could come up opposite the tail end of the enemy—where from across the river they would be able to shoot up unguaraded enemy vehicles. They reached the selected point safely and undetected. There, protected by the river and hidden among the boulders, they spent a whole afternoon looking at a convoy of enemy supply lorries passing within 300 yards of them on the narrow road, unguarded by pickets. An excellent chance—but they did not take it, for fear of enemy retaliatory fire. Not a single shot was fired—and

ninety-two of the hundred deserted.

By now 200 Swatis had also come back but, though entirely dependable, they too were as yet not sufficiently familiar with fighting against a regular army. Once I used them to block the road and other routes along which the deserters were leaving. This only led to the deserters escaping over the hills, and in the process taking away the rifles as well.

More volunteers, however, kept coming, and the flow was becoming like a regular stream. But for some reason or other they did not like what they found here. Some had one look and went away. Some found one trek across the hills enough. Some stayed a night or two and were then to be seen no more. There was nothing I could do about this. I did not want to discourage others from coming—because their presence on the scene, however brief, was serving some useful purpose. They were giving the enemy an impression of great numbers and brisk activity. Very likely their arrival, being in lorries along the road, was being accurately reported to the Indians by their spies. But on the return journey the deserters were escaping over the hills, not usually seen. Thus, in the eyes of the enemy, we were probably increasing our numbers very rapidly. That was something. On our side, however, the only impression they left behind was that the tactics of some were 'hit and run', of some 'see and run' and of some just 'run'.

The ex-servicemen were, for a while, something of a puzzle. What they had probably needed was a different kind of handling. Their past training had made them dependent upon a proper system of supplies, communications and medical aid etc.—none

of which existed here. Here they had no pay and there was no other form of obligation to keep them to their tasks. There were no officers to command them and there was no punishment or other means of enforcing discipline. Some among them, had assumed command as section, platoon or company commanders—but this was entirely superficial as in fact they exercised no real authority. Had their own local men of influence, who had collected them, accompanied them here they might have behaved differently. But this had not happened. It was no wonder, therefore, that they disintegrated upon coming face to face with the first signs of real danger. Some of them argued that it was sheer murder—and those that insisted upon carrying on were, in their eyes, mad men.

Meanwhile, however, a new element was slowly emerging out of the mass that came and went. Here and there individuals appeared, who were serious minded, who understood the situation, and these began to form the core of the resistance along with the locals who were showing, from the start, signs of greater dependability. The people of this district had little military experience, and this was the first time they were receiving a handful of weapons—naturally, therefore, they were to take some time before becoming fighting fit—but their own liberation had an urgent concrete meaning for them. Though only seventy-five now, they were to become, in a few weeks time, the First Muzaffarabad Battalion under Lieutenant Qudratullah (from the former State Army).

By now the tribesmen had also begun negotiations for coming back. They were apologetic and wanted a chance to make good. They were, of course, very much needed but, for the sake of effective control, I allowed only 300 Mahsuds to come to start with. Their leader, Gulab Khan, a man of character and courage, unmistakably looked the type one could depend upon.

Around a camp fire that night, we had a lenghty conference. I knew the Mahsuds to be the least controllable of all the tribesmen but they were the most aggressive—and that is what was needed here. They still wondered why Pakistan did not come to fight in Kashmir but, like practical men, having said what was in their minds, they were willing to get down to their own share of the work.

Next day I sent them out into the hills. Avoiding the Indian posts, they were to go beyond the 15 miles that lay between Chakoti and Uri. They were to make for the road that goes south from Uri to Poonch. Along this road, I knew, the Indians would be sending assistance to the besieged garrison of Poonch, and there at a point selected off the map they were to be ambushed. The tribesmen got there and on the second day a convoy drove into the ambush. Thirty-six lorries were burnt and many Indians were killed. And the tribesmen came back over the hills with large quantities of weapons, ammunition, military clothing and other stores including wireless sets, field telephones and half a dozen 3" mortars.

Suddenly the countryside stirred with enthusiasm. 'Chase the infidels', was the sort of general feeling and we began to advance. Sniping at them

from the front and by-passing them on the flanks was enough for the Indian forward elements. They abandoned their positions and we followed up until once again we reached the perimeter of Uri.

It was now the end of November. Three weeks earlier this front had virtually collapsed and the Indians had advanced to Chakoti and Poonch. Now they were cut off from Poonch, pushed back from Chakoti, and the front reformed around them at Uri.

But the front was in fact not yet a front. Going up the road from Chakoti to Uri, a day or so later, I met not a single person, enemy or friend. Somewhere half-way, we had one post about a mile away from the road on a hill top, held by a few men. The tribesmen and the locals were probably somewhere far off—so few that in the vastness of these mountains one could not see a sign of them.

Even so we had so completely dominated the whole area that the Indians had not merely withdrawn into Uri, they had destroyed the bridge behind them too. The procedure had been reversed—it was now their turn to hide behind bridges.

It was in a fairly contented frame of mind that I walked back to Chakoti that night. Now all that remained to do was to help the local people to arm and train themselves. For this they would need some weeks—and during that time the tribesmen would have to be around, acting aggressively, to ensure that the Indians did not again attempt to advance.

So, I called for more tribesmen, and upon their arrival I allotted them seperate responsibilities. The Afridis, among whose leaders I found two of my old

class fellows, I thought were the least in need of direct control—so I despatched them to Poonch to help in the siege there and also to keep the Uri—Poonch road closed. The Mahmands, who had been involved in the action at the fourth milestone near Srinagar, needed a little time to get themselves together. The Mahsuds were ready for action, and so with these I proceeded again to Uri.

Our destination was village Gohalan about a mile or so west of Uri. From the main road, the journey across a 7,000 ft. range of hills, with two or three feet of snow, took two days. The enemy was already aware of our assembly. Early next morning three aircraft attacked us. I and many others were caught inside the flimsy huts. Our roof fell in and the thin walls were riddled with bullets, but no one was hurt. The shape of the ground helped us. On the steep slopes, the bombs landed either above or below, causing no damage. Two more attacks followed but, strangely, the tribesmen, who had earlier made an issue of the one sided presence of the Indian aircraft, now treated them with indifference. Though not a single person was hurt, Delhi radio announced that night that three hundred of us had been killed at Gohalan.

In the afternoon, the tirbesmen moved forward to take up positions opposite the north, west and south sides of the Uri perimeter. Another party went forward with intention to go right round in order to block the Srinagar road behind them. I kept one group in readiness to rush the camp itself if an opportunity arose. By 12 noon next day they would be ready to begin a sniping attack. Raids would

follow according to the situation. For 12 noon, the zero hour, I had arranged a surprise for the enemy. We had brought up twenty army volunteers, with six 3" mortars and 250 shells, who would bombard the centre of the camp where all the enemy vehicles were parked. This would also announce the beginning to the tribesmen.

I located the mortars in a safe place from where they would shoot up their target at the range of 2500 yards. A thousand yards in front of them. I settled myself on another ridge from where the whole camp was visible. The mortars were to open on a signal from me.

The morning hours passed quietly except for the aircraft flying around and an occasional artillery shell landing here and there harmlessly. At noon I gave the signal and breathlessly waited for the big bombardment, the first the Indians would have from us. But I waited in vain. Nothing happened. As I was to learn hours later, the men handling the mortars had also played the old trick. Fearing enemy retaliatory fire, they had deserted at the last moment and left the mortars behind.

The tribesmen also waited expectantly for the bombardment. They could not make out why it had not started. After some time they went ahead on their own. For two days they pressed the camp hard by sniping, and they also ambushed some Indian patrols, but their ammunition finished before any real chance presented itself for breaking into the camp. At Gohalan also there were no rations left and so on the third day, when a heavy snowfall began, I withdrew the tribesmen to the road.

The panic and general strain produced in the Indian camp had been such that, according to an intercepted wireless message, the Indian Brigade Commander had reported to Srinagar that his position had become untenable. And apparently he had received permission to withdraw from Uri, but just then all had finished on our side.

My estimate was that we had inflicted about 250 casualties. The enemy admitted, as General Messervy was told by Commander-in-Chief India that their casualties were one hundred, their biggest loss so far. Against us, they put forth fantastic claims altogether amounting to seven or eight hundred killed. In fact the tribesmen had lost only eleven men.

The affair at Gohalan thus came to an end. It was the middle of December and it had started snowing in earnest over the whole area. I felt confident now that for the duration of the winter months all would be well on this front.

X

AZAD PLANS

From Uri I was called to G.H.Q. Azad. There, a few days later, I met Sardar Ibrahim and his provisional cabinet. I was now also a member of the newly formed Liberation Committee. At this stage the Committee had to assess the situation somewhat from a distance. An early assessment was necessary to formulate some general policy.

To start with, the uprising in Kashmir had been activated only by the need for self defence and the desire for democratic freedom. It had never meant to strike at the integrity of the State. Then the Indian intervention had changed, with one stroke, the whole character of the struggle. It had been like the closing of the door to all those hopes that the people had entertained. Had India sent in her army as a neutral force merely to restore peace, leaving the political status of Kashmir strictly untouched, it might have had a different effect. In that case even Pakistan might have had to join hands in restoring order—and the people of the State themselves might well have seen no further reason for continuing the protest, knowing that the joint forces of India and Pakistan

would, on the one hand, protect them from the tyranny of the Maharajah, and on the other ensure the possibility of an impartial ascertainment of their wishes.

But it had not happened this way, and what the Indian action actually amounted to was, 'we have brought in our army of occupation, the Maharajah must continue to rule you, and the State now belongs to India'. Even though this blunt and clear import was meant to be somewhat sugar-coated by the promise that after all was quiet and peaceful, a plebiscite would be held—such a promise could not have taken in even the most simple minded.

The immediate result, therefore, had been that the struggle had changed from a protest and a demand to a desperate effort by individuals and areas, wherever possible, to detach themselves for good from the old State. And thus the disintegration had begun.

In the far north, the entire areas of Gilgit, Hunza, Bunji and Astor etc., comprising approximately 17,500 square miles, had detached themselves. At midnight on 31 October, four days after accession, the Governor's residence had been surrounded by the Gilgit scouts, and the next morning he had been placed under arrest—and a provisional government formed.

In other far-flung areas, the effect had been similar. Even in Buddhist Ladakh signs of uneasiness had appeared. And from the northern area of Skardu, Capital of Baltistan, peaceful until then, small bodies of rebels had moved towards the mountain passes of Zozila and Burzil to threaten the Srinagar valley.

In the western area at Bagh, the State garrison had been liquidated. Further south, forming the centre of the liberation movement, activity had been the most intense. This was the area which had contributed some 80,000 soldiers to the British Indian Army during the World War—and now here had arisen the largest force for the liberation. Here also more tribesmen had joined them—Toris from the Kurram, a lashkar from Dir, Zadrans and even Tajiks from Afghanistan and Ghilzais perhaps forming the largest part. Here the Diris had fought a most gallant action when they had charged an Indian unit with the sword and practically wiped it out. Thus, most of the State posts in this area had been liquidated—Mendhar, Kotli and Rajauri were now all in Azad hands.

Meanwhile, more Indian troops had continued to arrive in Kashmir. At Srinagar the force had increased from a brigade to a division. From Jammu another brigade had started moving westwards along the road to Naushehra and Mirpur. And it was obvious that India would go on increasing her strength—and this increasing threat would have to be met.

Our task, therefore, was to coordinate the efforts of the scattered Azad elements as soon as possible. It was not contemplated that we could throw India out of Kashmir. All we had to do was to make sure that India did not crush the movment. As a first step in this direction, enough resources would have to be gathered to sustain the struggle for a period of three months, to start with, by which time, it was felt, the problem would become internationally

recognised and the United Nations might intervene.

But to maintain the struggle for three months brought up the probelm of ammunition. Already more than ten thousand Indian troops had come into the State. It was expected that they would increase up to thirty or fourty thousand very soon. To prevent them from crushing the liberation movement, there would have to be about ten thousand armed men on our side. There was no shortage of men, but there was shortage of rifles and, therefore, the figure of ten thousand would be about the maximum that could ever be achieved including everybody.

If each man spent only one hundred rounds of ammunition per month, it would amount to three million rounds for the three months. While at the moment all that existed in sight was about a fifth of one million.

Thus, at our level, in planning the future operations there was no choice but to confine action to sniping and ambushes, etc. And this inevitable restriction was to continue throughout the struggle.

In connection with ammunition, the tribesmen came in for heavy accusations. The complaint was that they took most of their ammunition back out of Kashmir. There was of course truth in this, but we had no means of stopping it—and the allegation was in fact not as bad as it looked on the face of it. The tribesmen had no pay or any source of income other than the sale of what they captured from the enemy, or the ammunition that they got here. At least some portion of it was certainly used against the enemy—and with this they achieved results which were satisfactory

enough. My impression was that for the same quantity of ammunition, given to tribesmen and regular soldiers, the tribesmen got equal if not better results even allowing for what they sold.

If regular soldiers inflicted one casualty per hundred rounds expended, it would normally be considered a good average. Indeed in the past two world wars, for most armies, the average expenditure for one casualty inflicted was not one but several hundred rounds. The tribesman on the other hand, usually fired from such close range and with such care that he often inflicted one casualty for only a small portion of a hundred rounds. If then, he saved the rest for himself we were in fact losing nothing thereby.

Some months later I was able to confirm my impression from actual facts. 500 tribesmen and 500 regulars used approximately the same quantity of ammunition over a period of three months—and the casualties inflicted were about equal.

Next to ammunition there was one other important limitation which also had to be accepted. Perforce the Azad operations would have to be of a somewhat disjointed nature. It was not possible to have, or to enforce, any specific overall strategy. To pursue any specific plan would involve the movement of resources and men for strategic purposes. But no such thing could be done because there was no central reserve of arms, ammunition or food to divert to a particular front—and nor could the men be shifted from one place to another, they were defending their own homes in their own areas and were

feeding themselves locally. Thus, everywhere the strength and the local situation varied from day to day—and there was no possibility of weakening one place to strengthen another, such as would normally be necessary in pursuit of some general plan.

The only mobile element that could theoretically be so used was the tribesmen—but they could be so used only for a short duration, because they could be put into a particular area to start with, but thereafter they were their own masters and they often infiltrated far and away into other areas wherever they found suitable targets.

In general, therefore, we would have to be content simply with maintenance of the struggle. And the maintenance itself would require a great deal of organising. And this organising would have to be done mostly by the Liberation Committee and by G.H.Q. Azad.

XI

THE WINTER MONTHS

On 4 December 1947, I was called to another conference with the Prime Minister at Pindi. This took place at the Circuit House. By now the Commander-in-Chief, General Messervy, appeared to have been taken into confidence. He did not attend the conference but was present in an adjoining room from where he sent me a chit through Colonel Iskander Mirza. When I met him outside, he laughingly referred to a previous occasion when I had irritated him somewhat.

That had been sometime in September, after trouble had started in Kashmir, when the General, addressing a meeting of G.H.Q. officers, had warned us against hostilities with India. He had said that, in his opinion, in case of war India would over-run Pakistan in ten days. This I had resented particularly as it was made while two officers of the Indian Army were also present. I had sent him a note of protest pointing out that it was unfortunate that he had said so in the presence of Indian Officers who might be wrongly encouraged by such a statement. References to numerical and material strength alone could be

misleading as these were not the only factors that counted in war—there were the spirit and will of a people also to contend with and this was why, I had pointed out, that I believed that if the Indians stepped on to the soil of Pakistan we would fight them back even if we only had sticks to do it with.

After reading my note he had sent for me and told me that perhaps he ought not to have accepted the post of Commander-in-Chief Pakistan, and that in fact he had declined it, but had later accepted it for six months only on the insistence of the Quaid-e-Azam. He was sorry to have said what he had in the presence of Indian Officers but he still did not think anything could be done with sticks alone.

Now he paid me compliments and said, "well, you will not have to do it with sticks alone any longer, I am going to help". He allotted me one million rounds of ammunition which would keep us going for another month—and also permitted me to take twelve volunteer officers from the army for a period of three weeks.

In another three weeks, towards the end of December, India coming to the conclusion that she could not end the liberation movement by force took the matter to the United Nations.

She did not go to the United Nations with a request to intervene for the purpose of impartially ascertaining the wishes of the Kashmiri people. All she asked the U.N. to do was to complete for her what she herself could not do. First she had wanted Pakistan to refrain from helping the 'raiders'. Then she had tried to throw the 'raiders' out. And now

she wanted U.N. to do both these things. In the words of an official Indian paper, India decided 'to refer the Kashmir dispute to the Security Council in the legitimate hope that the U.N. would bring the weight of world public opinion to bear upon Pakistan and prevail upon it to discontinue its aggression in Kashmir' (P. 36—Kashmir Factual Survey 1956).

What seems to have interested India more was that Pakistan should be punished by a world court for a legal trespass rather than that the real problem, the impartial ascertainment of the people's wishes, should be tackled. The answer, of course, was what the British delegate, opening the discussion on the proposals of 27 January 1948, said before the Security Council. He had declared, "In my conception, the best way to stop the fighting is to assure those who are engaged in it that a fair settlement will be arrived at under which their rights will be asserted—in other words, only when the combatants know what the future holds for them, will they agree to stop". (S/P. V. 236 Jan. 28, 1948—p. 283).

Thus the Security Council did not come rushing to India's aid—and so the struggle had to go on as before—but now the major scene of operations became the area westwards from Jammu. There they advanced in strength, and they were resisted as much as possible by the Azads and the tribesmen. Fairly heavy fighting took place at various points, an Indian Brigadier was killed and considerable quantities of military stores were taken including even some armoured cars—but the Indians retained their possession of the road—and gradually a sort of stalemate came into existence. Soon it became clear that it

was not in the winter months that any decision would be reached. It was the coming spring that we had to get ready for.

So the Liberation Committee and G.H.Q. Azad proceeded with their efforts to collect resources and to organise the various sectors. For what ultimately happened in the coming days the major portion of the credit must, of course, go to the various Azad sectors where many burdens often had to be carried unaided—but some share must go to the Liberation Committee and G.H.Q. Azad who were the chief organisers. Without these two bodies, the public contribution from Pakistan and Azad Kashmir might not have been so well channelled. Even so, circumscribed and limited as they were, they were not quite what their names implied.

The Liberation Committee gradually became a sort of high level political liaison committee which was not quite what it had been meant for. It got more and more involved with matters of procedure, administration and politics. Justice Din Mohammad, the President of the Committee, was a retired judge and inevitably the meetings assumed more and more the appearance of a court in session. Ordinary reports and statements sometimes became like allegations—and these, in the absence of cross examination, tended to be accepted. As a result, instead of pushing the war effort forward, people became more concerned with defending themselves. Acts of initiative, resource and orginality, instead of receiving encouragement, began to look somewhat irresponsible. The President, an honest and legal minded person, was described by one of the committee members in these

words, "He tries to sit like a constitutional judge upon an affair that is utterly irregular".

Upon G.H.Q. Azad the burden of responsibility for the war effort, fell more directly. But there again, dealing with conflicting authorities and having inadequate staff, records and communications etc., its efforts, though sincere, were not always fruitful.

Above G.H.Q. Azad, there was the Defence Minister, a very respectable retired officer of the Kashmir State Army, who was not satisfied with the haphazard set up that he saw. He carried with him a much underlined copy of the British Field Service Regulations and he could not see why the headquarters were not organised in separate branches like General Staff, Adjutant General and Quarter Master General etc. With an ad hoc collection of a few individuals, with no one of a higher rank than that of a major who had served only as a welfare officer during the war—it was unfortunately not possible to set up anything elaborate.

Then below G.H.Q. Azad, there was springing up, all over the place, a mushroom growth of commanders and leaders who had all to be accepted or at least humoured as they were all volunteers.

Around Poonch two rival commanders had set up headquarters, both submitting reports to G.H.Q. Azad—one signing himself as Captain and the other as Major. Then they promoted themselves to Major and Colonel. Then to Colonel and Brigadier—and so on, until both of them became Field Marshals. It was perhaps because of this that the Defence Minister, seeing no other title left, came to adopt the

German rank of Captain General.

Sandwiched thus between a Captain General above and a couple of Field Marshals below, G.H.Q. Azad had to steer its course with considerable skill—and it not only did this well enough, it also found time to spare for the consideration of new ways and means of winning the war—for which suggestions were always pouring in. Of these one air attack plan in particular had attracted much attention.

After much preliminary correspondence, promising a highly secret and infallible plan, a former Air Force warrant officer at last sent in his scheme, a complete file, typed and with blue prints. It turned out, however, not merely to concern Kashmir—it was a plan for a glider borne invasion and conquest of the whole of India. For all one knows it may have been a feasible plan, had it only been possible to obtain the two thousand gliders required for its implementation!

More immediately promising was another suggestion brought forth by a refugee from India. He was sure he knew how to build long range rockets. He had studied, he said, the German ideas and he had some further invention of his own to add. All he wanted was the facilities of a workshop and he would demonstrate what he could do. Calling him mad and so forth did not succeed in deterring him. So at last he was given the facilities that he wanted, and he set to work, but all he produced, at the end of six weeks, was a twentyfeet long bullet shaped solid piece of wood painted green, with a white crescent and star at the base!

In this period, activity flared up around Poonch. This town had been insolated since the middle of November 1947. Inside the town Brigadier Pritam Singh of the Indian Army was in command. His troops and the large civilian population were dependent entirely upon supplies from outside. The Uri-Poonch road had been closed by us since November, and the only other land route was a mule track coming from the valley over the Gulmarg hills, but due to heavy snows this too was no longer open. How much had reached Poonch by this route, before it was closed, I do not know but it must have been very little. With all land routes thus closed, the Indians became dependent entirely upon air. The few Dakotas landing there could in any case bring the barest minimum of vital necessities but now as we brought the landing ground under fire, this method of maintenance was also stopped—and within a few days the position inside Poonch became extremely precarious. But then an extraordinary thing happened —Colonel Sadiq Khan, the sector commander, received orders that we were to cease-fire temporarily against Poonch. This was apparently done to allow the evacuation of sick and wounded—in fact, however, right within view of our men, the Indians used the opportunity to reinforce themselves and also to occupy the hills around to make future air landings safe.

The winter months passed peacefully enough but the situation did not remain static everywhere. On the home front, corruption had begun to raise its head. Stores and rations despatched from Rawalpindi were often not reaching the front at all. Clothing, blankets and other things generously contributed by

the people from all over Pakistan were being sold openly in the Pindi markets. Officials and leaders, persuaded with difficulty to visit the Azad territory for urgent administrative problems, busied themselves with arranging private deals in timber and other sources of income.

My seniors had also not been sitting idle. First there was only the holding back of assistance which they were of-course under no obligation to give. Then there was active opposition to officers who had volunteered for service in Kashmir. And this was followed by a campaign against me personally of which I had not been aware at all because of the reason that my whole time and attention had been focussed on the problems at the front. I had a minor shock when one day I found myself deprived of three months command pay on the ground 'that I had been absent from service'. I took no action on this thinking that it was a petty matter which could be settled later. But this was not all. On my next visit to Pindi I discovered that the Selection Board, consisting of our Generals had decided that I should be passed over for promotion by two officers junior to me. This time I had to take notice. This decision was so outlandishly unfair that within twentyfour hours of my protest it was reversed. But this too was not the the end. At that time I had no conception of the depth of the intrigue and opposition that had arisen against me in a few brief weeks.

I did, however, realise that at the front I was not receiving the kind of cooperation that was necessary. At the Lahore conference with the Prime Minister the task given to me had been to carry on the struggle

for a period of three months. And as these three months had passed, my obligation was over and I felt this was the right time to return to the army.

There was no imminent danger on any part of the front. The Uri sector was under heavy snow—and the situation everywhere else was more or less static. Our claim to Kashmir had received a great measure of support from world opinion, and the decision seemed to rest with the U.N.

So, about the middle of February 1948, I asked to be relieved. Some days later, at another conference, the Prime Minister agreed. The Government was contemplating handing over the task to the Army —and meanwhile my duties with the Liberation Committee were to be taken over by Brigadier Sher Khan.

XII

INDIAN SUMMER OFFENSIVE

By the middle of April 1948, it seemed that a serious Indian offensive was to be expected in Kashmir. For some weeks past more troops had been arriving in the valley. Intercepted messages, news from our informers and the tone of Indian propaganda, all indicated big events.

The Security Council had asked both India and Pakistan to refrain from aggravating the situation any further while the question of Kashmir was under consideration. But this had not satisfied the Indian leaders. Their first declarations had been to the effect that India wanted only to stop the revolt and thereafter to hold a fair plebiscite even if that might ultimately result in Kashmir going over to Pakistan. Now, however, they were driven, not by the necessity for a fair plebiscite, nor even by the wish that Pakistan should be punished for a legal trespass, but by the naked desire for the final possession of Kashmir for larger reasons.

Pandit Nehru put it thus, before the Constituent Assembly some time later, "we were of-course vitally interested in the decision that the State would take

(regarding accession). Kashmir, because of her geographical position, with her frontiers with Pakistan, the Soviet Union, China and Afghanistan, is intimately connected with the security and international contacts of India". (J.L. Nehru; Independence and After, p. 60).

In the words of Mr. Gopal we see even more clearly that it was not the interests of the four million Kashmiris that was propelling India, but her own dreams of a role on the political map of Central Asia. Mr. Gopal says, 'India without Kashmir would cease to occupy a pivotal position on the political map of Central Asia. Strategically Kashmir is vital to the security of India; it has been so ever since the dawn of history. Its northern provinces give us direct gate-ways to the North West Province of Pakistan and Northern Punjab. It is India's only window to the Central Asian Republics of the U.S.S.R. in the North, China on the East and Afghanistan on the West'. (Caravan, New Delhi Feb. 1950, page 67).

It was with thoughts such as these that India had begun her preparations for an offensive. And the situation was becoming so threatening that it could no longer be ignored.

Thus, on 20 April the Pakistan Army Commander-in-Chief, General Gracey, reported to the Pakistan Government in these words—'an easy victory of the Indian Army, particularly in the Muzaffarabad area, is almost certain to arouse the anger of tribesmen against Pakistan for its failure to render them more direct assistance and might well cause them to turn against Pakistan'. He recommended that, 'if Pakistan is not to face a ther serious

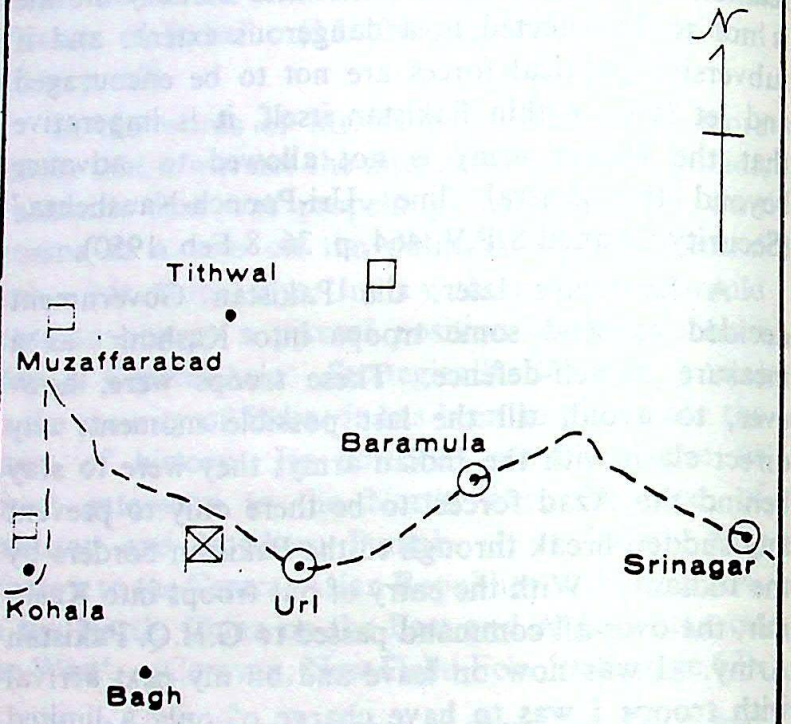
refugee problem with about two and a half million people uprooted from their homes; if India is not to be allowed to sit on the door steps of Pakistan to the rear on the flank, if the civilian and military morale is not to be affected to a dangerous extent; and if subversive political forces are not to be encouraged and let loose within Pakistan itself, it is imperative that the Indian army is not allowed to advance beyond the general line Uri-Poonch-Naushehra.' (Security Council S/P.V. 464, p. 36, 8 Feb. 1950).

A few days later, the Pakistan Government decided to send some troops into Kashmir as a measure of self-defence. These troops were, however, to avoid, till the last possible moment, any direct clash with the Indian army; they were to stay behind the Azad forces, to be there only to prevent any sudden break through to the Pakistan borders by the Indians. With the entry of our troops into Kashmir, the over-all command passed to G.H.Q. Pakistan Army. I was now on leave and on my next arrival with troops I was to have charge of only a limited sector.

At the end of April, I was with my brigade at Kohat on the N.W.F.P., from where we were ordered up to Pindi, and from there, on 10 May, the Divisional Commander sent parts of my brigade to take up certain locations already selected by him. (As shown in the sketch on Page 102).

The new concentrations of Indian troops were based on Srinagar; and the positions of their troops and various headquarters showed that the main push was to come along the road from Baramula and Uri towards Muzaffarabad, in my sector.

Our initial dispositions



On this main axis along the road, facing Uri, on 11 May, the force on our side consisted of one

regular battalion, some Frontier scouts, some tribesmen and some Azad units. The Scouts were less than a hundred, the tribesmen were unpredictable as usual, and the Azads in this area were not yet really fighting fit. The last, though in name organised into battalions, were in fact only loose bodies of volunteers equipped with nothing more than rifles. They had no pay, no uniforms, no regular scale of rations and not even a proper system of supplying these rations such as they were. In this area they were mostly civilians with little previous military experience.

Further north, beyond Tithwal in the Krishanganga valley, physically separated by the mountains but forming part of the same sector, we had one rifle company of regulars and some Azads.

This meant that of the regular troops, the one battalion opposite Uri and the one company beyond Tithwal were the only ones in the actual fighting area. I had another three companies located further back—one each at Muzaffarabad, Kohala and Bagh—but these were for local defence only, and were not to be moved forward. Out of the third battalion of the brigade, one company was located at Murree (outside Kashmir) and the remainder opposite Poonch, outside my control. The Brigade Headquarters and I were ordered to remain at Murree.

The task laid down for the forward troops was, in general terms, that they were to prevent any sudden break-through. It was not specified that any particular places were to be defended at all costs while others could be given up if hard pressed, and so forth. There was no promise of any further addition to their

strengths, and they were to do the best they could with what existed.

As matters stood, it seemed to me that our strength opposite Uri was not sufficient to meet any serious push. But we could not increase our strength and, therefore, it became necessary to find some way of reducing the strength of the enemy's blow that was going to fall upon the inadequate force in this area. This, I thought, we might be able to do if we could use our tribesmen and Azads to harass the enemy flanks when they moved forward, thereby diverting some of their force away from the road. This, however, meant that we would have to keep our men in the far off high mountains on our right flank, where we would be able to supply them only if we could have a road on the right flank, from Kohala to Bagh.

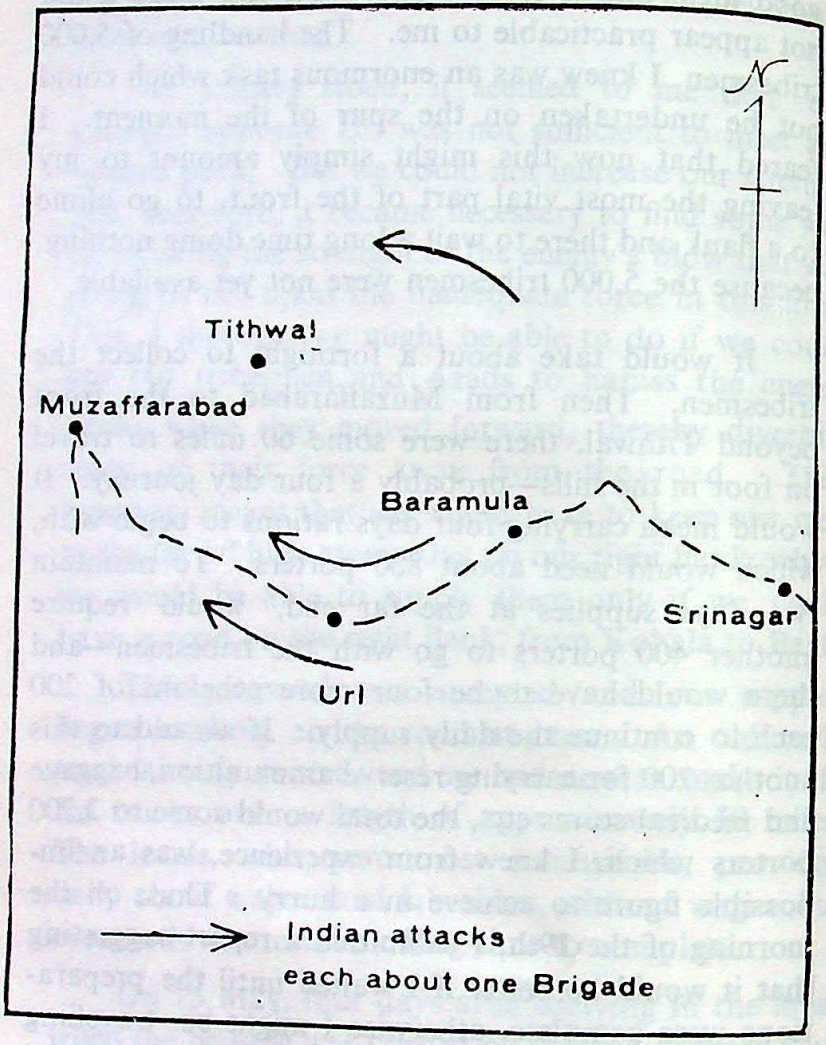
This proposal was accepted and our sappers began working on the road at once. An old mule track already existed, and we had now to make it fit for trucks over a length of approximately 50 miles. The locals, who were most enthusiastic, provided daily about a thousand labourers, without wages, but even so it was to take a long time to complete.

On 15 May, four days after arriving in the area, when the brigade was busy at its tasks, and three days before the offensive started, I received a new instruction to the effect that I was to leave the brigade to someone else, and to proceed via Tithwal to where the northern party was. There, 5,000 tribesmen were to follow me and we were to carry out a deep raid towards Srinagar, which would divert the Indians northwards and prevent them from carrying out the offensive towards Muzaffarabad. It was indeed a

good idea, had it come earlier. At this stage it did not appear practicable to me. The handling of 5,000 tribesmen, I knew was an enormous task which could not be undertaken on the spur of the moment. I feared that now this might simply amount to my leaving the most vital part of the front, to go alone to a flank and there to wait a long time doing nothing, because the 5,000 tribesmen were not yet available.

It would take about a fortnight to collect the tribesmen. Then from Muzaffarabad to the front beyond Tithwal, there were some 60 miles to travel on foot in the hills—probably a four day journey. It would mean carrying four days rations to begin with, which would need about 800 porters. To maintain two days supplies at the far end, would require another 400 porters to go with the tribesmen—and there would have to be four more echelons of 200 each to continue the daily supply. If we add to this another 200 for carrying reserve ammunition, baggage and medical stores etc., the total would come to 2,200 porters which, I knew from experience, was an impossible figure to achieve in a hurry. Thus, on the morning of the 19th, I submitted a report suggesting that it would be better if I waited until the preparations were complete, otherwise I might be travelling alone in the wilderness just at the time when the Indians might be advancing from Uri.

Scarcely an hour had passed since signing that report, when news came that the Indian advance had begun the previous night. During the rest of the day messages kept pouring in, and by the evening the picture that emerged was as in the sketch on next page



We were apparently facing three attacks—one on each side of the river Jhelum at Uri, and one in the north towards Tithwal.

It seemed that our forward elements were losing ground, but they were doing so gradually and in good order—taking up further positions each time. At some places, we were said to be inflicting heavy casualties, and at other places the situation was vague.

It was clear that so far as the northern area of Tithwal was concerned we had neither the troops, nor the time, to do anything immediately which could influence the outcome of what was happening there—and so it had to be left to its own fate for the moment.

The front along the main road was the important one—and here the battalion, if forced back, could ultimately make a stand at Chakoti which was quite a good position—but I thought it would take a few days before it was pushed that far back. On the other side of the river, however, we had only some weak parties with no defensive position behind them. We could not afford to be pushed too far back there, because it would jeopardise the position of the battalion on the main road. Therefore, to this area I despatched my only spare company from Murree. There it was to contact the enemy and delay them as much as possible.

A few hour later, at 5 a.m. on the 20th, the news was not so good. Apparently we were falling back everywhere—and very rapidly.

By midday the news became quite alarming. A message from the battalion commander said that the Indians had come up to somewhere between Uri and Chakoti. The Azads having taken the first shocks, were said to have withdrawn and scattered away—thus leaving only the regulars thinly spread over a large area.

This was serious and so I obtained permission to move to the front myself. Before leaving, I asked for another battalion in place of the one that had been taken away from the brigade. This was agreed to, and another battalion was promised for the next day.

That evening I left Murree accompanied by two staff officers and Mr. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Editor Pakistan Times. We reached Muzaffarabad about 7 p.m. and the scene from there onwards, looked somewhat familiar—once again panic had gripped the area, civilians were deserting even Muzaffarabad—and all along the road to Chakoti, there were large bodies of refugees fleeing with their goats, sheep and other belongings.

At one place I stopped two platoons of the Frontier Scouts who were also on their way out. They were paid government servants, subject to Military Law, and so I ordered them to go back to the front but they refused to do so. This was an extraordinary situation. Here were these well trained men, who in the days of the British had been famous for their fighting qualities. Now they were so blatantly refusing to do their duty—and their demoralisation was not justified either as they had suffered practically no casualties. Something was wrong somewhere and it could not be allowed to pass. Luckily there were some tribesmen around the place and at the point of their loaded rifles, I got the scouts to lay down their arms. Then placing their two officers under arrest, I took them forward along with me while the men, deprived of their lorries, were told to wait till further orders.

A little further up I also stopped a jeep in which a medical officer was leaving the area without permission. Getting him out of the jeep I ordered him to walk back the 15 miles to his unit, carrying his own bedding and followed by a soldier with a fixed bayonet.

At Chakoti, the Battalion Commander and others appeared to be still in good spirits, but there was a general impression that the situation was not very hopeful. Chakoti was the place where we had made the stand in November and I knew its potentialities as a good defensive position. Now it would have to be defended at all costs. We would go over the ground in daylight next morning.

Turning back some distance, I took my party up a hill-side and settled in a ditch which I thought offered protection from the air. At first light the place was sprayed with machine-gun bullets by an attacking aircraft. Why this ditch, of all places in Kashmir, had to be attacked, I wondered. The answer lay just below. We were above a supply point. More aircraft followed. A lorry was destroyed and a part of the dump set on fire.

At Saran, some distance further forward, on a hut roof lay a figure covered in a white sheet. It was a visiting forest officer. Seeing a low flying aircraft coming at him, he rose, and with the sheet in his hands, stood poised for a moment, metador fashion, as if about to ward off a charging bull. He changed his style, however, and jumped off the roof just in time. But his jeep was set on fire.

Round the bend, some three hundred yards away another two figures appeared. Their surreptitious movements were somewhat out of place. They were in uniform, two of our scouts, deserters trying to run away. In rage I shouted to a staff officer to run and stop them. An aircraft got there before him. A bomb caught them in the open.

Enemy aircraft were over the area continuously, Nothing was spared—trucks, huts, even single individuals, soldiers or civilians. Finding the first gap, I set out for Chakoti again. In a depression just off the road I noticed some men in uniform. To my horror I found that it was the company I had sent from Murree, 36 hours earlier, to cross the river and delay the enemy on the other side. They had apparently crossed the river on arrival, but on hearing from the villagers that the enemy had already arrived, the company commander had brought his men back to the safety of the road. They had not themselves seen the enemy—and, the enemy, of course, was not there yet. Scanning the far side through my field glasses I could see no sign anywhere. So back they had to go across the river at once—but I had to wait two hours to see them reach the first hill.

Reaching Chakoti, the defensive positions were selected and work started upon them. Now it was time to consider where to put the new battalion which was due to arrive that night. For this I had to take the general situation into consideration.

My brigade intelligence officer had brought from G.H.Q. Azad whatever information was available about the enemy. This consisted of copies of a large number of messages received from the forward areas over the previous four weeks or so—and from these he was able to make a fairly accurate statement of the Indian strength as well as the names of their units. It appeared that the enemy against us, on both sides of the river, consisted of two brigades supported by considerable artillery. They also had some

light tanks at Uri, and of course they were well supported by the Indian Air Force.

The Indian force in this area, so far as we could tell, consisted of eleven battalions plus two infantry companies, some Kashmir Militia, two batteries of Field artillery, two batteries of Mountain artillery, one battery anti-tank guns and one squadron of light tanks. The infantry strength of this force was equal to that of a division, but as there were only two brigade headquarters in existence, the force was divided into two oversized brigades. Assuming that two or three battalions would be left behind for the security of Uri camp and their rear areas, it still left eight or nine battalions to advance upon us.

Against this, upon arrival of the new battalion, my strength would be two battalions, one other rifle company and one platoon of machine guns. Adding the scouts to this would make the total about two and a half battalions. I knew some of the tribesmen and the Azads would be coming back but for the present they were not there. The comparative position, therefore, appeared to be as follows:-

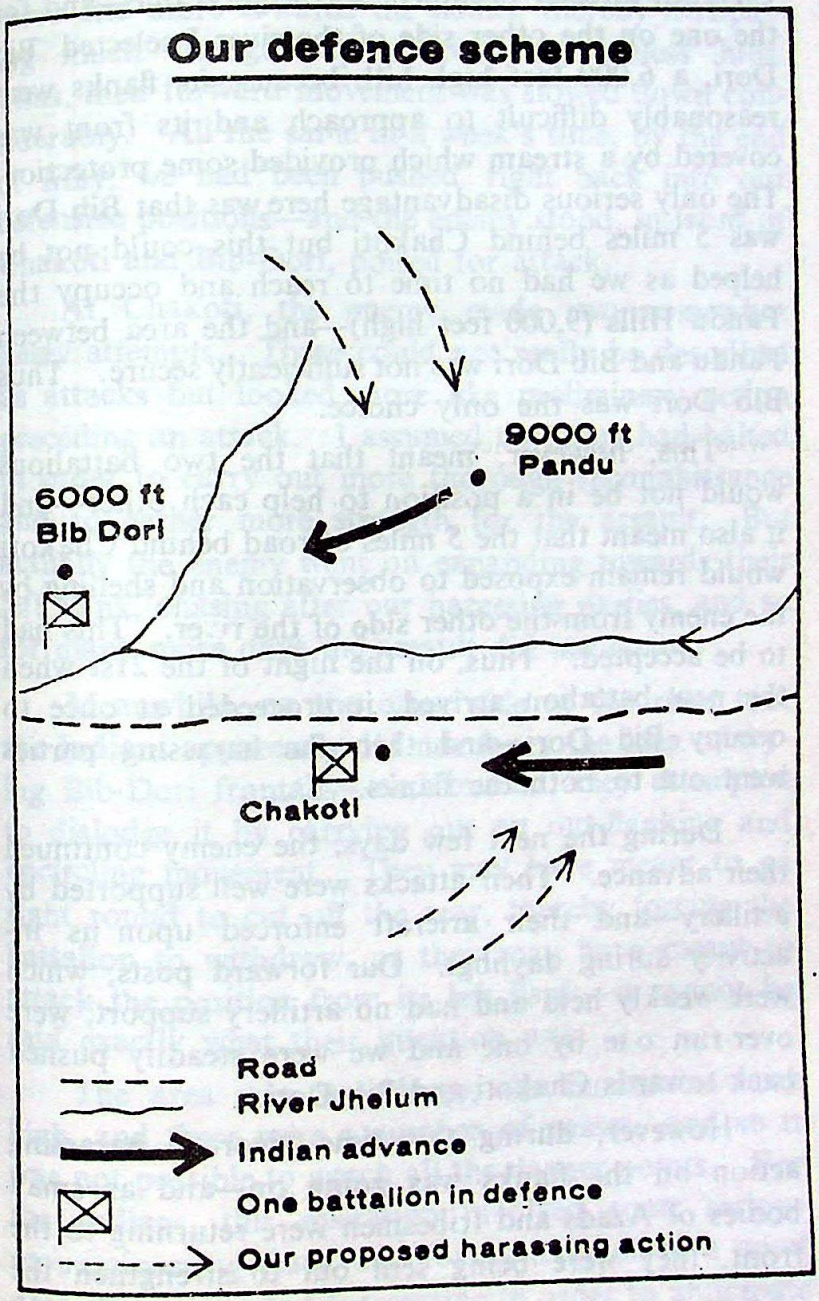
	Enemy	Ours
Infantry in rear areas	2 or 3 battalions	Less than one battalion
Infantry in battle area	8 or 9 battalions	2-1/2 battations.
Machine-guns	12	4
Artillery	24	Nil
Anti-tank guns	12	Nil
Armoured vehicles	9	Nil
Air support	Indian Air Force.	Nil

This disparity in our strength was so great that it led me to the inevitable conclusion that I must not allow the Indians to enter into a straight trial of stength with my small force. If I took up a purely defensive position, however good that position may be, sooner or later it would be overcome by sheer weight of numbers and weapons.

So the more promising thing for us to do was to try to draw the Indians away into the mountains on the flanks, and to get them scattered, so that they should not be able to concentrate sufficiently for an effective break-through. As they were always apprehensive of the tribesmen, they would easily incline to expanding towards the flanks in order to ensure the safety of their main force. At this stage, however, there were actually no tribesmen in the area, but they would be coming again, and meanwhile some regular troops would have to act as tribesmen. Perhaps the Indians would not know the difference for a few days. As the Bagh road also would not be ready for sometime, we would have to be content for the present with small raiding parties changing places at short intervals.

In pursuit of this general policy I decided to take up one good defensive position on each side of the river, each to be held by one battalion—while the remaining half battalion would provide the troops for the harassing tasks on the flanks. I expected that from the two defensive positions we would be able to deliver one serious blow to the enemy, which might halt them for a while—and then, if the Azads and tribesmen were back by that time, we would fall more effectively upon the enemy flanks (as illustrated

in the sketch below).



With regard to the actual locations of the two battalions, for the one on the road the position at Chakoti, already occupied, was a good one—and for the one on the other side of the river I selected Bib Dori, a 6,000 feet high hill, because its flanks were reasonably difficult to approach and its front was covered by a stream which provided some protection. The only serious disadvantage here was that Bib Dori was 5 miles behind Chakoti but this could not be helped as we had no time to reach and occupy the Pandu Hills (9,000 feet high)—and the area between Pandu and Bib Dori was not sufficiently secure. Thus Bib Dori was the only choice.

This, however, meant that the two battalions would not be in a position to help each other—and it also meant that the 5 miles of road behind Chakoti would remain exposed to observation and shelling by the enemy from the other side of the river. This had to be accepted. Thus, on the night of the 21st when the new battalion arrived, it proceeded at once to occupy Bid Dori—and then the harassing parties went out to both the flanks.

During the next few days, the enemy continued their advance. Their attacks were well supported by artillery—and their aricraft enforced upon us inactivity during daylihgt. Our forward posts, which were weakly held and had no artillery support, were over-run one by one and we were steadily pushed back towards Chakoti and Bib Dori.

However, during this time vigorous harassing action on the flanks was going on—and as small bodies of Azads and tribesmen were returning to the front, they were being sent out to strengthen the

harassing parties. The plan of drawing the enemy outwards was succeeding and they started spreading more and more towards the flanks, thereby dissipating much strength upon occupying useless hills. Thus, their forward movement was slowed down considerably. All the same in a week's time, by the end of May, we had been pushed right back into our defensive positions—and the enemy stood, in front of Chakoti and Bib-Dori, poised for attack.

At Chakoti, the enemy made two somewhat hasty attempts. These could not really be described as attacks but looked more like preliminary action preceding an attack. I assumed that they had halted in order to carry out more thorough reconnaissance and to gather more strength for the assault. But actually the enemy went on expanding towards their left flank, chasing after our harassing parties, and so for many more days the assault did not come.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the river too, the Indians apparently did not fancy the idea of trying Bib-Dori frontally—and instead, they attempted to dislodge it by carrying out an out-flanking and encircling movement. They may have meant to go right round to cut off the rear, thereby forcing the battalion to withdraw, or they may have meant to attack the position from its left flank—it cannot be said exactly what their intention was.

The area was very large, the mountains very high, and there were a number of passes—and so it was not possible to watch all the danger points. For the Indians, this operation involved some serious mountaineering feats, and for us it involved a good deal of guessing and forecasting in order to anticipate

their moves. There were only a few small detachments of Azads left to do this with, and these had to be launched, often many hours in advance of enemy moves to forestall them at likely danger points. Luck, however, was with us and we got to the right places every time until, after several days of moves and counter-moves, both sides came to a stand still.

In the middle of this game I had sent forward a lashkar, made up of the remaining tribesmen, to cut off some forward Indians from their main body. The lashkar, finding itself rather isolated and sandwiched between the Indian positions, did not carry out it task—but its movements had an unexpected effect. The Indians apparently thought we were moving forward to attack them at Pandu. They said so in a wireless message which we picked up. This strange message indicated that instead of attacking us they were now worrying about their own defence. This was an apprehension that we could exploit.

To deepen their fears we opened fire, for the first time, with our two newly arrived mountain guns, upon the hill in front of Pandu at midnight—and this was followed up by the tribesmen who crept up and carried out an excellent raid. The enemy reactions were immediate—verey lights, parachute flares, shells and machine guns were let off in all directions, wildly and in great panic. I came to the conclusion that now at least against Bib-Dori there would be nothing to worry about for the time being.

Though the Indians on both sides of the river had come to a halt opposite our defence positions, the situation was still tense. By now perhaps five

hundred casualties had been inflicted on them, but their strength was still such that it remained a constant threat. Day and night vigilance continued and our harassing parties worked with increasing intensity, drawing the Indians to the flanks. In this way many more days passed, and we waited for a major assault, but it never came.

Meanwhile, however, in the north the enemy had advanced towards Tithwal with a brigade of four battalions to which our small party of one rifle company had not been able to offer much resistance. Thereafter that area had been formed into another sector under Brigadier Haji Iftikhar Ahmad and had ceased to be under my control. In the overall reorganisation of the front that followed, my brigade was allotted a further reinforcement of one battalion and a section of two Field guns which arrived about the middle of June.

By the end of June, after suffering perhaps another five or six hundred casualties, the Indian offensive, which had started six weeks earlier with such fanfares, had come to a complete standstill. The serious blow, that we had expected so long, had not been delivered. The enemy had not attacked us in our selected positions where it would have meant really heavy casualties for them. Thus, in the past four weeks, they had made no progress on the main axis of their offensive. While they had never crossed over into our area either at the front or on the flanks, we had carried out raids directly into their front, ambushed them within their defences and harassed their flanks and rear up to a depth of 8 to 9 miles.

Thus, the original Indian force, which had advanced on both sides of the river and arrived at Chakoti and Bib-Dori with five battalions still in hand for further attacks, was now scattered up and down the hills chasing after ghosts over an area of some 80 square miles.

It might be of interest to consider at this stage why the Indian offensive came to a halt as it did. It was not as if we had routed them—there had been no heavy fighting, their casualties and material loss had been small, and their strength had remained unaltered. Yet they had come to abandon their objective.

To begin with, the Indian strength had been gathered over a long period which shows that they had made their plans in advance. The direction and magnitude of their attack along the main road and toward Tithwal, shows that they intended to caputre Muzaffarabad and to end the war. Their publicity was directed towards the same end. They never claimed that the operation had been undertaken to forestall any attack by us, or to improve their own defensive positions. In fact, if their object had been only to go as far as Chakoti, it would have been meaningless as this would not have been worth all the trouble and risk. Thus, Muzaffarabad was, in fact, their target, and to end the war was their object.

In planning the operation, they must naturally have considered all possible factors including our apparent strength, our potential strength and even the possibility of a general war with Pakistan. Of the presence of Pakistan troops they had already declared

full knowledge. Obviously they must have considered that they could win and therefore they launched the operation at a time and place of their own choosing. Then, within six weeks, they abandoned their object—and we know that this happened without the intervention of any outside force, moral or physical, by U.N. or any other power. It would be safe to assume that this abandonment was not due to any sudden feelings of goodwill or change of heart on the part of Indian leaders. Therefore, one must inevitably conclude that they gave up their object, because they realised that it could not be achieved.

What actually passed through the minds of the Indian leaders and commanders, we cannot know but we can at least speculate. For the first few days they advanced without much difficulty, and they must have been greatly encouraged by the ease with which opposition in front of them melted away. Then they came up against two defensive positions at Chakoti and Bib-Dori, and these they never seriously attacked. Their air reconnaissance reports and the strength of our firing must have it shown them that these positions were held only by one battalion in each case. They knew we had no artillery, aircraft or tanks. However, when they came to Chakoti, it was clear to them that the single battalion was holding a compact defensive position. The position was so compact that no portion of it could be isolated, it had to be attacked as a whole. That would mean attack by a full brigade, working on the generally accepted convention that the attackers have to be three times the strength of the defenders. Attack on our left flank

was ruled out by the river. A frontal attack was very seriously discouraged by the deep nullah in front of Chakoti. That only left our right flank, but this involved going through forest and also the step by step capture of several high hills as a preliminary to the attack on the real position itself.

This would take several days, and the Indians probably appreciated, rightly, that they would seriously expose themselves to sniping, ambushes and raids by tribesmen in this area. To safeguard against this threat, it would be necessary to make large detachments. A hundred tribesmen could compel them to employ a couple of battalions on this task alone. They had got the extra battalions, but this was not the only task to be done as a preliminary. The actual attack would have to be supported by a strong artillery bombardment. To do this, all their guns would have to be brought forward along the road. These again would be exposed to attacks by tribesmen from the flanks, and once again more infantry would have to be deployed to protect them. There was no knowing how many tribesmen we had, and the process of making detachments might turn out to be endless. This in itself must have seemed a deterring factor—but assuming that they could make all these arrangements, the assault on Chakoti would still mean very heavy casualties—and what would it achieve?

After Chakoti, we might again be holding another position two or three miles further back and the whole process would have to be carried out all over again. And thus it would go on. With each

advance the Indians would have a longer flank to protect, and the tribesmen would draw and scatter their forces endlessly. A few battalions of our regular troops in compact positions, with Azads and tribesmen floating around on the flanks, could go on playing this game until a major portion of the Indian army would be needed if they were to force their way through to Muzaffarabad.

But such a large force could probably not be used here. The one narrow road, the mountains and the problem of maintenance put a definite limit to the amount of force that the Indians could safely deploy here. And even if such a force could be brought up, it would be enough only for a specific situation. That specific situation may not remain the same as we would be able to upset the balance again by adding a little more to our strength from the Pakistan Army.

Thus the Indians probably concluded that unless the Pakistan Army itself was kept out of it somewhere else, there was no prospect of reaching Muzaffarabad on this particular occasion. It was, therefore, not worth all the expenditure of blood and material to assault a few positions like Chakoti.

On our side, we gained the knowledge that in certain physical conditions, a small number of disciplined troops, properly combined with the Azads and tribesmen, could stop a much larger force provided we had some compact positions, around which the tribesmen could operate offensively.

There is another question, of greater significance, which arises out of this—and that is, why did the

Indians, after their failure here, not seek a military decision in the plains of Pakistan? It may be that they thought they would put themselves in the wrong before the world, even though we had, according to them, given them enough cause and justification for extending the war. Or it may be this as well as the fear that our Army, combined with the tribesmen, would prove too much for them to swallow even in the plains of Pakistan.

How big a part the tribesmen played on India's mental horizon may be guessed from the opinion of Mr. V.P. Menon of India, He says—"Personally when I recommended to the Government of India the acceptance of the accession by the Maharajah of Kashmir, I had in mind one consideration and one consideration alone, viz: that the invasion of Kashmir by the raiders was a grave threat to the integrity of India. Ever since the time of Mahmud Ghazni, that is to say, for nearly eight centuries, with but a brief interval during the Mughal epoch, India had been subjected to periodical invasions from the North West. Mahmud Ghazni had led no less than seventeen of these incursions in person. And within less than ten weeks of the establishment of the new State of Pakistan, its very first act was to let loose a tribal invasion through the North West. Srinagar today, Delhi tomorrow. A nation that forgets its history or its geography does so at its peril." (p.413, Integration of Indian States V.P. Menon).

Whatever the reasons may have been, the fact is that war did not come—and had India wanted it, now was a good opportunity as they could draw most

of our troops into a part of Kashmir which was farthest away from the Punjab.

My impression at the time was that, if our actions then did not lead to war, no other action in Kashmir would do so because an Indo-Pakistan war appeared a far too uncertain proposition for both sides.

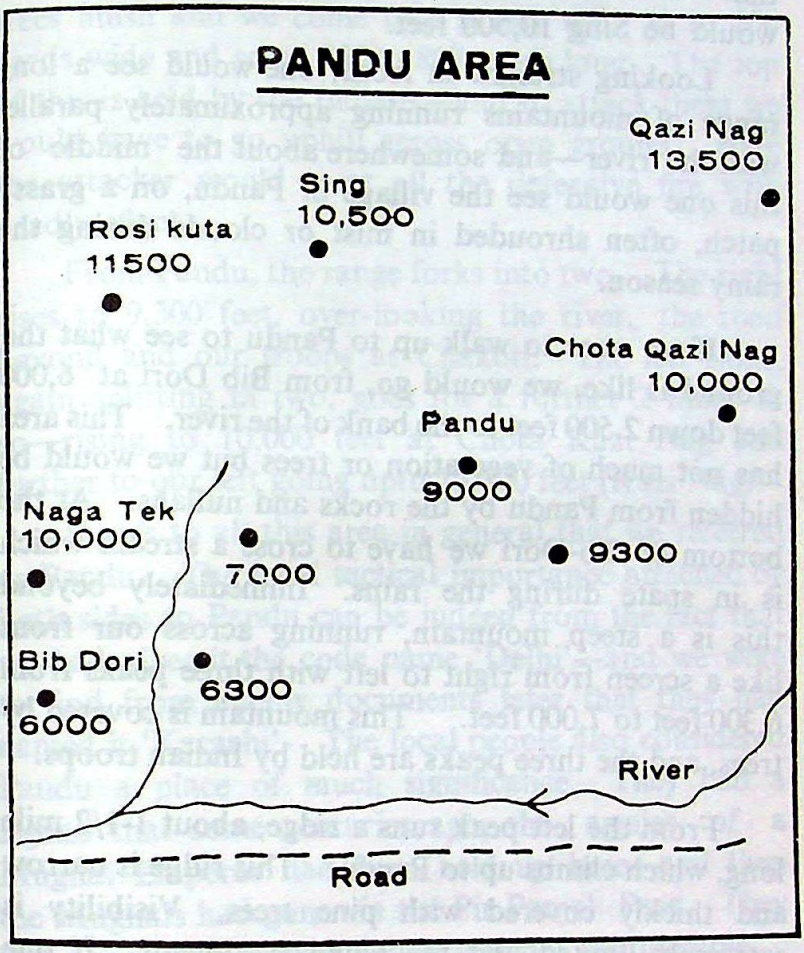
XIII

CAPTURE OF PANDU

The Indian offensive had been brought to a halt but fighting on the Uri front had not finished yet. Skirmishes, raids, shelling and air attacks were still the daily routine—and both sides were suffering casualties. If this was to be our way of life for some more weeks or months—obviously some improvement in our defence was essential. For the past three weeks one section of mountain guns on a slope of the Pandu hill, on the other side of the river, had completely overlooked and dominated our position at Chakoti and the 5 miles of road behind it. Even movement at night had become unsafe.

About the particular section of guns across the river nothing had been done so far, because they could not be effectively dealt with in isolation. They would finish only if we captured Pandu, and that is what our men wanted to do, but that would be a fairly big task—beyond our means and even beyond our role which was strictly defensive. Now, however, the Divisional Commander had given permission.

Pandu is the name of a village, and of the mountain upon which the village is located at the height of 9,000 feet. The mountain is in fact more of a range, stretching over a large area.



If one stood on top of Bib-Dori looking towards the enemy, facing Pandu, one would see on the right the river Jhelum about 3,000 feet below. Across the river one would see the main road cut into the side of the hills. Beyond the road, the hills climb steeply to about 7,000-8,000 feet.

On the left of Bib-Dori, could be seen Nanga Tek, 10,000 feet high towering over Bib-Dori. Beyond

that would be Rosi Kuta, 11,500 feet slightly in front would be Sing 10,500 feet.

Looking straight in front, one would see a long range of mountains running approximately parallel with the river—and somewhere about the middle of this one would see the village of Pandu, on a grassy patch, often shrouded in mist or clouds during the rainy season.

If we were to walk up to Pandu to see what the ground is like, we would go, from Bib Dori at 6,000 feet down 2,500 feet to the bank of the river. This area has not much of vegetation or trees but we would be hidden from Pandu by the rocks and nullahs. At the bottom of Bib-Dori we have to cross a stream which is in spate during the rains. Immediately beyond this is a steep mountain, running across our front like a screen from right to left with three peaks from 6,300 feet to 7,000 feet. This mountain is covered by trees, and the three peaks are held by Indian troops.

From the left peak runs a ridge, about 1-1/2 mile long, which climbs up to Pandu. This ridge is narrow and thickly covered with pine trees. Visibility is extremely limited and the going is difficult. If one were advancing, upon Pandu, along this ridge, the fighting would be very heavy as each little position could be attacked only frontally and uphill, with all the advantages on the side of the defender. We find the Indians holding a position in the middle of this ridge.

Further towards Pandu, the ridge is joined by a number of spurs from the right and left all thickly wooded, steep and narrow. Upon these too the

Indians have some posts. Just short of Pandu, the trees finish and we come to a grassy top, 50 to 200 yards wide and some 700 to 800 yards long. The top of this is held by the Indians—and to attack them we would have to go uphill across open ground. Here the attacker would meet all the defensive fire with deadly effect.

From Pandu, the range forks into two. The right rises to 9,300 feet, over-looking the river, the road beyond and our troops at Chakoti. The left ridge, again splitting in two, goes for a further 2 miles or so—rising to 10,000 feet at Chota Kazi Nag and further to our left going upto 13,500 feet (Kazi Nag).

It was to all this area in general that we referred as Pandu. The local tactical importance attached by both sides to Pandu can be judged from the fact that we had given it the code name 'Delhi'—and we were to find from enemy documents later that they had named it 'Karachi'. The local people also considered Pandu a place of much significance. They had a legend that some centuries ago, the armies of a Mughal Emperor had been held up here—and then the Mughals had gone via the Pir Panjal Pass. They had a superstition that Pandu was not conquerable.

The overall strength of the enemy in the area was greater than ours. Therefore, our only chance of success lay in attacking some point that would be vital enough, and yet where the enemy would not be able to bring his whole strength into action. Pandu village offered such a prospect. It was undoubtedly the key point. Here was located the enemy head-quarters, the brain, the mind that controlled the area. And the lay-out around it was defective.

Our own defence positions at Chakoti and Bib Dori had both been compact Battalion positions—so compact that each would have had to be attacked by a brigade of three battalions working on the principle that the attacker has to be about three times the strength of the defender. On the enemy side there were no such compact battalion positions anywhere. Instead, they had scattered themselves in small packets all over the place. To a large extent this scattering had been forced upon them by our wide-spread harassing activities, but to a certain extent it was also due to their faulty tactics. They held their localities in one or two company strengths—often too far apart to be able to help each other.

Pandu village itself appeared to be held only by a half battalion. And if this was to be the point of our attack, all we needed, theoretically speaking, was one and a half battalion for the assault. As it happened, one and a half battalion was all I could raise for the operation. As a part of this would have to stay in reserve, only one battalion would be left, meaning a two to one superiority only. But this, combined with the Azads and tribesmen, would be enough.

The real problem was how we were to reach the target without getting involved with other enemy troops enroute. Between us and Pandu there was the 7,000 feet high screen of hills held by two Indian companies. Further to the left were another two companies on Sing—and there were also smaller localities guarding the nearer approaches to Pandu. If we attacked any of these places it would take all

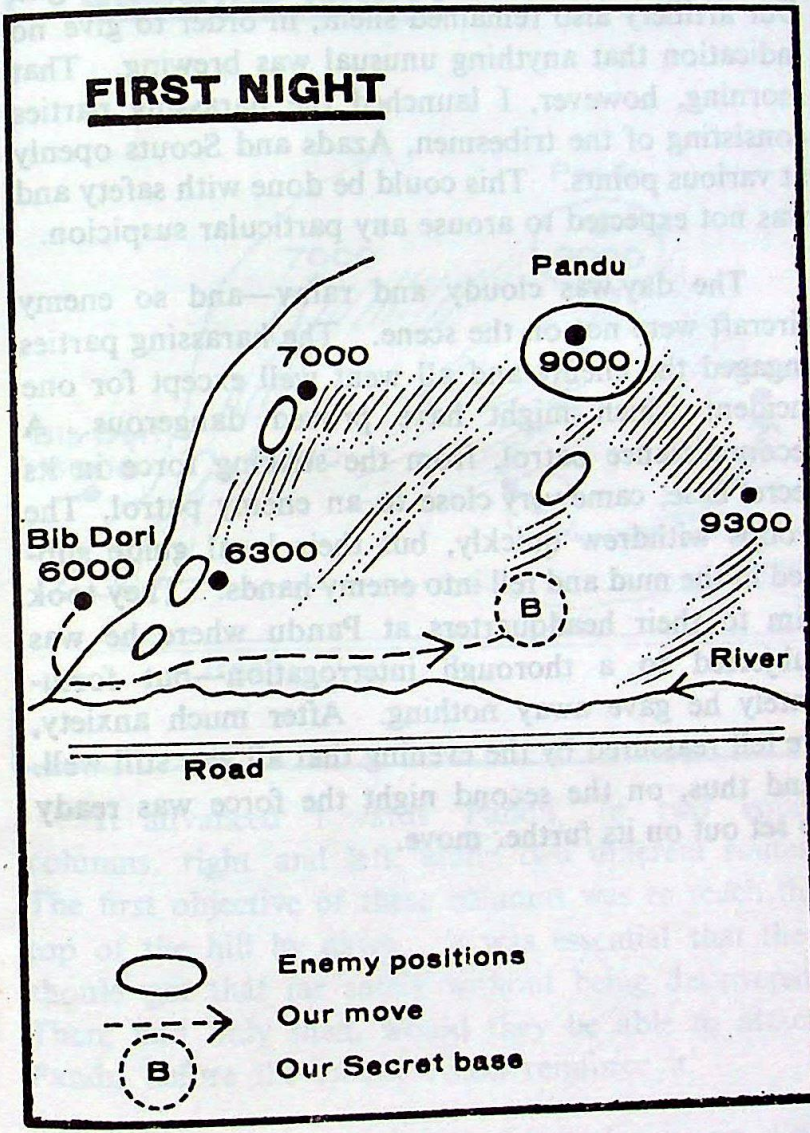
our strength to caputure one of them, and our position would be in no way improved. If, however, we could somehow reach and capture Pandu itself, all the forward troops would be forced to withdraw and some might even fall into our hands free of cost. Clearly Pandu was the key to the whole position, and the obvious target. Thus, our preliminary task became to find ruotes that would take our men upto the vicinity of Pandu without fighting enroute.

Our reconnaissance showed that this could be done. The operation would, however, involve a move to cross the enemy front secretly at night, to travel a considerable distance in between his positions, to climb about 6,000 feet in the hours of darkness, and then to rest somewhere before delivering the attack. All this could not be done in one night. Two nights would be required for the move. And that meant that for two nights and one day we would have to be inside the enemy area, behind his front line, and we would have to remain completely concealed. This would be taking a grave risk for thirty-six hours, because if discovered it would result in our being cut off and probably captured. This risk I accepted because without it there was no chance of success.

Preparations for the attack took a few days. Supplies and ammunition had to be carried forward. The sappers put up a wire rope across the river Jhelum. Along this rope, a single basket carried, at a time, two men or 300 lbs of stores. Beyond the dump, porters were required. These were collected and altogether 2,000 used in the operation. Artillery was moved up within range of the target. There were

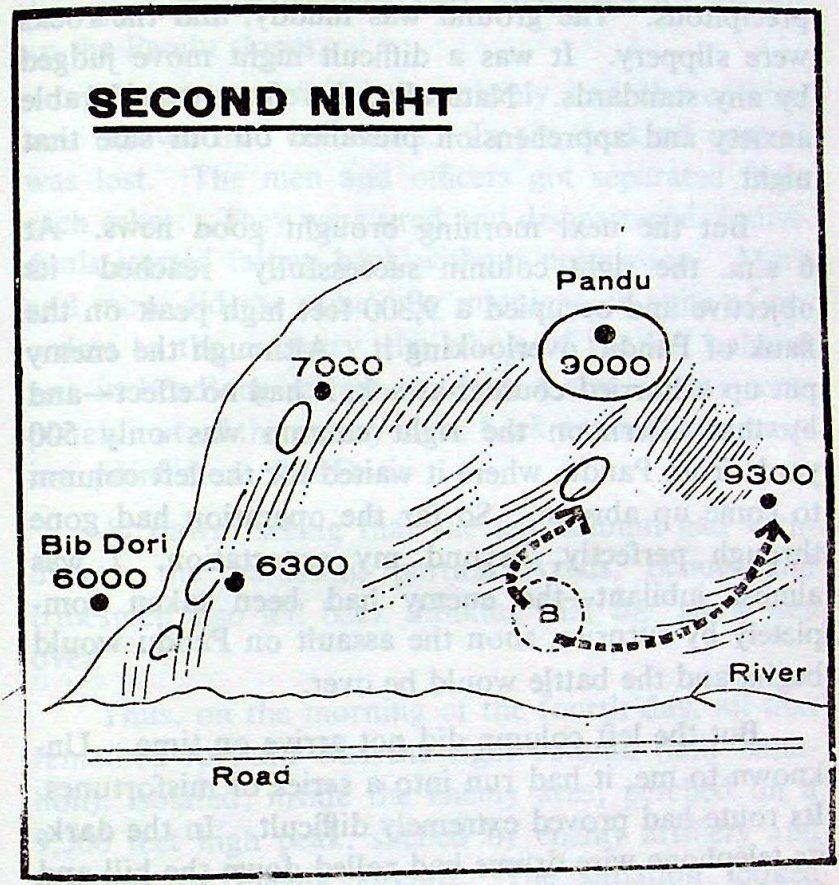
900 shells available—a very small quantity compared to what the enemy had, who were to fire 3000 at us in one day alone. Three hundred Mahsud tribesmen were available. They were divided into three lashkars of a hundred each. The first two were to have harassing tasks, while the third, named L.3, was to have the special task of pursuit if we succeeded in dislodging the enemy. Finally, a wooden bridge had to be put up across the stream in front of Bib-Dori. This was done on the last night. By 17 July we were ready.

After sunset, next day, our striking force, one battalion, crossed the stream, and penetrated secretly into the enemy area. The rain which hampered movement, also helped to cover up unavoidable noises. As the men went forward, they kept laying out a telephone wire and thus remained in touch with me at Brigade Headquarters. Wireless sets were taken forward, but were kept silent, to be used only in emergency. A few hours later they reached their secret base, about a mile or so behind the front. No incident occurred.



Next day, the second day of the operation, the striking force had to remain hidden in its base until nightfall. Its further movement was to begin at night. Our artillery also remained silent, in order to give no indication that anything unusual was brewing. That morning, however, I launched the harassing parties consisting of the tribesmen, Azads and Scouts openly at various points. This could be done with safety and was not expected to arouse any particular suspicion.

The day was cloudy and rainy—and so enemy aircraft were not on the scene. The harassing parties engaged the enemy and all went well except for one incident which might have proved dangerous. A reconnaissance patrol, from the striking force in its secret base, came very close to an enemy patrol. The troops withdrew quickly, but their local guide slipped in the mud and fell into enemy hands. They took him to their headquarters at Pandu where he was subjected to a thorough interrogation—but fortunately he gave away nothing. After much anxiety, we felt reassured by the evening that all was still well. And thus, on the second night the force was ready to set out on its further move.



It advanced towards Pandu, in two equal columns, right and left, along two different routes. The first objective of these columns was to reach the top of the hill by dawn. It was essential that they should get that far safely without being discovered. Then, and only then, would they be able to attack Pandu before the enemy could reinforce it.

The journey of the two columns lay across difficult ground. Each had to climb more than 5,000 feet in the night. The night was pitch dark, and there were no tracks to follow. The ridges were sharp and

precipitous. The ground was muddy, and the rocks were slippery. It was a difficult night move judged by any standards. Naturally, therefore, considerable anxiety and apprehension prevailed on our side that night.

But the next morning brought good news. At 6 a.m. the right column successfully reached its objective and occupied a 9,300 feet high peak on the flank of Pandu, overlooking it. Although the enemy put up a hurried counter-attack, it had no effect—and by that afternoon the right column was only 500 yards from Pandu, where it waited for the left column to come up abreast. So far the operation had gone through perfectly, beyond my expectation. I was almost jubilant—the enemy had been taken completely by surprise, soon the assault on Pandu would begin, and the battle would be over.

But the left column did not arrive on time. Unknown to me, it had run into a series of misfortunes. Its route had proved extremely difficult. In the dark, its telephone wire drums had rolled down the hill and it had lost communication with me after midnight. Then running into an unexpected enemy pokcet, and getting involved in a dog fight in the dark, it had suffered thirty casualties. By dawn it still had a long way to to go before reaching the top, but its movement being no longer secret it was being heavily shelled. However, it had continued its painful progress until a party of retreating Indians had unexpectedly run into its middle—and further disorganised it. And thus it had been delayed by several hours. It was not until evening that at last it formed up for the attack. But then, it was a much discouraged and

disorganised left column that attempted an assault up the Pandu slopes.

The attempt failed completely and the column was thrown into confusion. In the dark all control was lost. The men and officers got separated from each other. They were tired and disheartened. Individuals started falling back without permission. More and more did the same. By midnight, in spite of my orders to the contrary, the whole of the left column was in headlong retreat—and by 4 a.m. it was completely out of the enemy area, back again at the starting point near Bib-Dori.

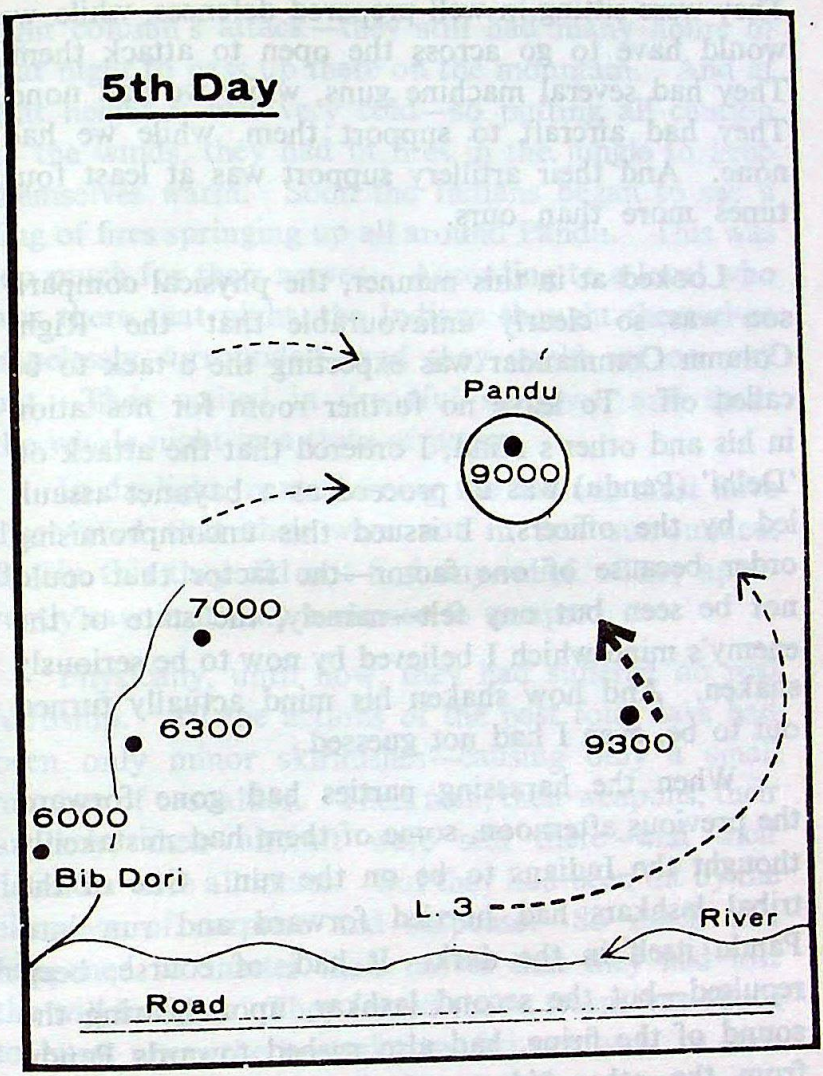
At dawn, seeing that the left column had withdrawn, the harassing parties, Azads, Scouts and tribesmen also fell back thinking that the show was over.

Thus, on the morning of the fourth day, all that remained forward was the right column (half battalion), isolated, inside the enemy area, perched on a 9,300 feet high peak, shelled by enemy artillery and bombed by enemy aircraft. The situation looked grim.

But, I thought, it could not be as bad as it looked at first sight. There were two points still in our favour. Firstly, the right column, though isolated, was still holding its ground. If it could be reinforced, it could still proceed with the attack. However, that would take another twentyfour hours—and till then it would have to remain alone. I ordered the reserve half battalion to move forward that night, to join the right column on the 9,300 feet peak, for a final assault on Pandu the next day.

Secondly, there was the enemy's mind to consider. I felt, the enemy must have had a severe shock suddenly to find our men in the middle of his area, in a totally unexpected manner. About the withdrawal of our men he could not yet have an accurate knowledge. On the other hand our harassing activities all around him must have confused him a great deal. And more serious, the right column was still there, so near him, looming large over him. As yet, he could not know its actual strength—he could only know its threatening presence. Thus he would wait in suspense for our next step. And if that step was delayed, his suspense would grow worse still. This was in our favour. All we needed for the present was to allow him no peace of mind. Therefore, I sent the harassing parties back again to their original tasks to keep the enemy in a cloud of confusion till the next day.

Next morning, the fifth day, the reinforcements joined the right column—and in a few hours the attack on Pandu could be expected to proceed. But now considerable doubt and hesitation became noticeable among the officers and men. There was of course some justification for this—because now at Pandu we did not have the local superiority that had been expected. The purpose in the surprise move had been that while the enemy garrison at Pandu would remain half a battalion, we ourselves would bring up one battalion against it—in other words, we would have a two to one physical superiority at this key point at the crucial moment of attack. This is what our men had expected—but now it was not so.



As the two forces now stood opposite each other, some 500 yards apart, on the 9,000 feet high mountain—the comparison of strengths was obviously unfavourable for us. The Indians from two of the forward positions, having withdrawn, had joined those at Pandu—thus making their strength here more than ours. And they had heavy additional advantages.

They were sitting in well prepared defences, while we would have to go across the open to attack them. They had several machine guns, while we had none. They had aircraft to support them, while we had none. And their artillery support was at least four times more than ours.

Looked at in this manner, the physical comparison was so clearly unfavourable that the Right Column Commandar was expecting the attack to be called off. To leave no further room for hesitation in his and other's mind, I ordered that the attack on 'Delhi' (Pandu) was to proceed as a bayonet assault led by the officers. I issued this uncompromising order because of one factor—the factor that could not be seen but ony felt—namely, the state of the enemy's mind which I believed by now to be seriously shaken. And how shaken his mind actually turned out to be, even I had not guessed.

When the harassing parties had gone forward the previous afternoon, some of them had mistakenly thought the Indians to be on the run. One of the tribal lashkars had hurried forward and run into Pandu itself in the dark. It had, of course, been repulsed—but the second lashkar, upon hearing the sound of the firing, had also rushed towards Pandu from the other side—again resulting in a clash. Something of this nature had gone on for most of the evening—and although they were only minor skirmishes, the Indians had apparently taken them as serious attacks.

Ultimately when our men had decided that there was nothing to do except wait till next day for the

right column's attack—they still had many hours of that night to pass up there on the mountain. And at that height it was very cold—so putting all caution to the winds, they had lit fires in the jungle to keep themselves warm. Soon the Indians began to see a ring of fires springing up all around Pandu. This was too much for their nerves. According to a local who was there that night, the Indians thought themselves hopelessly surrounded—and they could see no way out. They waited in dreadful suspense, and spent the whole night in a state of jitters.

In daylight, next morning the Indians must have discovered that they were not in fact surrounded. But in this they did not find any relief. They apparently saw in it only a chance to escape.

Physically, until now, they had suffered no real hardship. All the actions of the past four days had been only minor skirmishes—causing only a small number of casualties. Their men, their weapons, their artillery, their aircraft were still there—and their defences were all intact. But they had been hit by the elements of surprise and suspense. So much had happened to shatter their nerves that they had lost the will to fight. They feared that a storm was about to burst upon them—and they did not want to wait for it. They could see that a way of escape was still open and they wanted to take it. And so their artillery put up a long and heavy programme of shelling, under the cover of which they abandoned Pandu—and the thick jungle helped to hide their movement. Thus when the right column advanced to the assault, it arrived to find that the Indians had already fled.

But this was not to be the end. Upon hearing

that the Indians had given up, I sent the third lashkar out in pursuit across the enemy line of retreat. The other tribesmen in the vicinity of Pandu also joined in the chase. The Indians had fled in confusion down the slopes, into the thick jungle. And there the tribesmen fell upon them like a pack of wolves. The fate that they might have escaped by staying on in their defences, was now to be met on the run. For twenty-four hours the tribesmen hunted, them, mostly with the dagger. How many officers and men the Indians lost here, I cannot say, but probably more than three hundred. When the tribesmen returnd, most of them were dressed in Indians uniforms—and they brought back loads of weapons, ammunition and other equipment.

About 130 rifles were captured with ammunition. About half a million rounds of ammunition were found in boxes. Two large and fourteen 2" mortars, one machine gun and about a thousand mortar and artillery shells along with a large ration dump were taken over.

With the fall of Pandu, the key point, the rest of the defence collapsed like a house of cards. As soon as we switched our guns on to the remaining two companies on Sing (10,500 feet) they too abandoned the hill and the chase was taken up by the scouts and Azads in the area. Now a general advance began and, twelve hours later, when the troops were just 200 yards from Chota Kazi Nag (10,000 feet) the last and highest peak of this range dominating the Indian line of communications between Baramula and Uri, G.H.Q. orders came that we were to halt and proceed no further.

We had advanced 6 miles as the crow flies, and 90 square miles had passed into our hands. But the story of Pandu will not be complete without mention of one brave man, Subedar Kala Khan, who lies buried there under the deep green turf. During the previous month his daring raids and harassing missions had turned the scales in our favour—and at Pandu he was killed in the assault.

In life his name had already become a legend—and after death his 'spirit' still haunts the area, often appearing in human form, dressed as he was on his last day. Many an unsuspecting newcomer to the hill, not knowing that Kala Khan is dead, has been welcomed by this spirit and given accurate details of how Pandu was won.

Here perhaps a word about the usefulness of the tribesmen would not be out of place. An opinion has often been expressed that from the military point of view the value of the tribesmen, in Kashmir, was insignificant, or indeed that they were a liability. With this I entirely disagree.

On the contrary, in terrain like that of Kashmir, our troops, Azads and tribesmen, when used properly together, proved a surprisingly good combination. The troops provided a stable point around which the Azads, with their greater mobility and knowledge of the ground, formed a widespread screen both protective and as eyes and ears of the commander. From this the tribesmen with their raids, ambushes and threatening unpredictability, dominated an area so large as to be out of all proportion to their numbers—and in addition, they were there for deeper aggressive

action such as troops could not normally be expected to undertake.

With the tribesmen, in the beginning there had been many unfortunate incidents, first because there had been no leaders and later, when army officers were on the scene, because we did not know how to handle them. Perhaps not unnaturally, we had started with expecting the Azads and the tribesmen to behave somewhat like regular troops. This of course could not be.

Towards the end, here and there a few were definitely beginning to handle them properly. We did not get a chance to pool our knowledge and develop a technique—but had the war gone on, this would certainly have been done. One cannot say what might have happened in another few months had the tribesmen and Azads, in full cooperation, begun to be launched on a large scale from the long string of stable points provided by our troops, against the frontage of no less than 200 miles of hills, valleys and woods that no one could have hoped to close effectively.

XIV

INDIAN AIR FORCE

Throughout the war, one factor that favoured the enemy was the use of his air force. As we had no aircraft and no anti-aircraft guns either for a long time, the Indian air force was able to fly over the whole area as it liked, and no place in Kashmir was safe. Our transport could only move by night, and even our other activities were mostly restricted to the hours of darkness. At Chinari, about the beginning of July 1948, I received the first two anti-aircraft guns, 40 m.m. Bofors. These guns fired only two pound shells and had a very short range. Due to their bulkiness they could be located only near the main road—and the main road, in this area, was at the height of about 3,000 feet. The hills on both sides of the road rose steeply to heights ranging from 7,000 to 10,000 feet and limited the field of vision. Thus, the guns generally saw the aircraft coming within range only for a few brief moments. The result was that we never managed to shoot one down with these guns. To keep our morale high, and to maintain a good fighting spirit, it was necessary to hit back effectively and so I resorted to laying traps for the aircraft. It is one of these actions that I shall describe here.

The idea was to create the impression of a forthcoming attack which would force the enemy to send aircraft over certain areas, where our machine guns, placed on high points, were to catch them. So, to start with, I located one medium gun (artillery) in the most forward position under the Chakoti ridge. The medium gun, which fired a 90 pound shell, was the heaviest gun in use on either side. From Chakoti the Uri camp came just within its maximum range. So for no shell had ever landed there, and the Indians did not suspect that we could do it. Therefore, in Uri camp their tents and transport always stood in the open. I had saved about eighty shells for this task, and that could be expected to do heavy damage. The bombardment was to appear as the preliminary to an attack. Then certain other fire and movement activities by our troops were to create the impression of a ground attack about to come. I expected that as soon as this happened, the Indians would immediately call for air assistance. We knew the course along which such aircraft usually came—and here, on the highest points at about 9,000 feet, twelve machine guns and sixteen brens were to receive them. A special warning system was to alert these weapons, and everyone else in the bridge was also to hit back if the aircraft came within range of their weapons.

To direct the bombardment, an artillery officer was located on the 9,300 feet high peak, on the Pandu hill, from where he could see the Uri camp. With everyone thus set, we waited for a cloudless and clear moment so that aircraft would not be discouraged by bad weather. About midday, the sky was absolutely clear and the bombardment started. The blow fell

on the Uri camp so unexpectedly that it caused much consternation. This was followed up with the other activities and the enemy signals started buzzing. We did not have to wait long—within an hour or so an aircraft came over but it flew mostly over the old gun position at Chinari where the trap did not exist. Thus, by nightfall nothing was gained. But at night the enemy probably wondered what all the noise had been about so next morning they sent over a flight of three aircraft together, and they came to attack Pandu, their favourite point for such punishments. Our men got early warning, the trap was still there, and the whole brigade was alert, waiting for them.

As the aircraft came over, they circled and dived, one after another, at Pandu. The first aircraft was hit by the machine guns, it swerved and went crashing down to earth just beyond Chakoti. The second aircraft was following very close behind and smoke began to come out of it too. As the two aircraft were going downwards, one of the pilots bailed out by parachute. After that I could not see them myself—it looked as if both had crashed and that the second pilot had gone down with his machine. My impression was that it was the first pilot who had bailed out, but our forward troops told a different story. They said that only the first aircraft had been hit and its pilot had gone down with it—but the second pilot, seeing this, and being a Sikh, had reacted too quickly and jumped out himself before realising that it was the other man who should have done so. This may have been a made up story but it certainly became the more popular version.

XV

RELIEF OF POONCH

After the failure of the summer offensive towards Muzaffarabad, India began preparations for another offensive—this time from Jammu, westwards and north, for the relief of Poonch. With this I had no personal concern but I mention it briefly here to complete the picture upto the cease-fire.

From Jammu runs westwards an unmetalled road, to Naushehra and beyond, more or less parallel with the Pakistan border lying a few miles to the south. When along this road an Indian brigade had advanced in November 47, the Azad forces had not been able to check it and so it had reached Naushehra and joined the State force garrison there. From there, the Indians had attempted to capture Mirpur, a town due west of Naushehra and near the Mangla head-works where the upper Jhelum Canal begins. This attempt had failed and the Indians had been halted around Naushehra. About the same time, some distance further north west at Kotli the rebels had over-powered the State force garrison and captured the town. And from then onwards till August 1948 the situation in this area had remained more or less the same—the Indians being confined to Naushehra and the road behind it, while the area on both sides of the road being in Azad hands.

Further north from here lies Poonch, the seat of the Ruler of the Poonch Jagir. Poonch Jagir with a population of about 382,000 Punjabi-speaking Muslims and about 39,000 non-Muslims had provided the major portion of a large number of Kashmiri soldiers (said to be about 80,000) for the British Indian Army during the last World War. The people of this area, though unarmed, had risen and cleared the Maharajah's troops from their area within the first few weeks of the revolt—but they had not succeeded in liquidating the Poonch town itself.

Into this town, the State troops and a large number of non-Muslims had retired and entrenched themselves. Soon after accession, the Indians had reinforced the town—and thereafter that road had remained closed, and the Indians had been forced to supply Poonch by air alone.

In May 48, when the Indians had launched their summer offensive from Uri they had probably intended to relieve Poonch after achieving their main object. But their offensive had failed, and we had kept the Uri-Poonch road closed all the time. Thus, when by the end of July, after Pandu, a sort of status quo came into existence in this area, Poonch still remained surrounded and isolated.

In August 1948, the United Nations cease-fire proposals at last took shape and a scheme was presented to the two Governments on the 13th. Though a fortnight later this was declared to be unacceptable in its existing form, new suggestions and amendments continued—and it was clear that sooner or later cease-fire would come.

It is probable that India was, at this time, particularly worried about the position of Poonch. If at the time of cease-fire, Poonch remained in Azad area, cut off from the rest of Indian occupied Kashmir, it would remain like a hostage in Azad hands. It would be a pressure point in Azad hands, capable of being used as a threat in case there was any undue delay or insincerity about holding the plebiscite. An early plebiscite was what we wanted—and we were sure of the outcome. But an early plebiscite was not what India wanted. She needed more time for winning over the people, and so the longer the delay, the better from her point of view. But obviously it would be unwise to leave Poonch as a hostage with us during this time. And thus, though both India and Pakistan had promised not to aggravate the situation any further, India proceeded to prepare for the relief of Poonch before the coming cease-fire.

Of what followed after this I have no first hand knowledge, so I will mention only the news as it appeared in the press at the time. The area where silence had prevailed for some months became the scene of brisk activity—and on 24 August 1948, there was the first news of enemy build up observed at several points in the Naushehra sector. A month later, on 24 September, there were reports about India reinforcing Rajauri, north of Naushehra, and some clashes took place there. On 10 October, strong enemy forces attacked north east of Rajauri where they were repulsed. Two days later, further clashes occurred at the same place. On 19 October, severe fighting broke out at Rajauri, and the enemy was reported to be about one brigade strong. On the

same day, fighting was reported north west of Naushehra where more reinforcements were said to be arriving.

On 26 October, the Indian garrison at Poonch also became active. Four days later, Sardar Ibrahim, the Azad Kashmir President, appealed to the people of Pakistan for help in these words, "The heroic struggle has gone on against heavy odds but there is every possibility of this struggle breaking down if the people of Pakistan fail to send a steady supply of food, clothing and other necessary articles to keep the Azad soldiers alive at the front".

On 2 November, the press reports mentioned Indian attempts to advance at several points in the sector. On 4 November, Azad road-blocks held up enemy progress on Rajauri—Chingas road. Also there was fighting around Preassa and Kuthgali. On 5 November more fighting north of Rajauri. 8 November, Indians appeared north west of Rajauri. 11 November, Indian tanks were on the scene. On the 13th there were fresh attacks. On the 15th there were more reinforcements arriving. On the 18th there were headlines in the press, "India mounting up offensive in Kashmir"—"Jammu reinforced by at least three brigades and two artillery regiments". Altogether, three divisions were said to be operating in the Riasi-Poonch area with headquarters at Naushehra. It was further said that India had started a major offensive from Rajauri towards Kotli and Mendhar.

On 20 November there was fierce fighting in Mendhar valley—and the Poonch garrison was said

to be attempting a break out. This indicated the climax—and within a day or two of this Poonch was relieved. Thus, the Indians linked up Naushehra with Poonch—and we lost the whole area east of that line, including Mendhar Tehsil, the granary of Kashmir. A few days later, 28,000 refugees reached (Jhelum in Pakistan) and more were to follow.

This was the biggest loss we suffered in the war and it happened, because we did not reinforce the area, nor was there any planning to organise any serious resistance with the existing resources.

The Indian offensive had taken a long time to build up. The Government knew about it. G.H.Q. Pakistan Army knew about it and the public knew about it. Brigadier Azam Khan (later Lt. General) who was in command in this sector had been sending detailed reports to higher authorities, but he received neither troops nor instructions upon what to do.

To meet a forthcoming danger of this kind, a very careful appreciation of the situation was necessary. It was essential to forecast enemy intentions and likely moves. An appreciation of this kind is a normal and cardinal part of military procedure—and every military decision is invariably preceded by such an appreciation of the situation. Only thus could it have been assessed what strength would be sufficient to meet the danger or what area or areas were to be given up without serious fighting. Such a decision would not normally be left to an army commander to make—it would be a decision of the Government.

It was not as if we had been taken by surprise. The Indians had always wanted to relieve Poonch and they had already made several attempts. When the cease-fire proposals started in August 1948, logically it became still more clear that India would not want to leave Poonch on our side of the line at the time of cease-fire. Then their preparations for the offensive took so long—and the distance over which this offensive had to go, over 100 miles, gave us all the ime we could possibly want to meet what was coming.

The only reason later mentioned was that we did not have troops to spare. Yet a fortnight later, after a shocked public had expressed its surprise in the press, we managed to collect together a force of 25,000 men consisting of Azads, tribesmen and regulars. This force also had probably fifty guns of the Pakistan artillery. It would be difficult to deny that only a portion of this force, if brought up earlier, could have prevented the link up. After much planning and preparation the force was ready and we were in a position to cut in the middle the long line of communications stretching from Jammu to Poonch. The very existence of the large Indian force beyond Naushehra was threatened.

Then one morning, in the first week of December, a bombardment began and 5000 shells were fired but there was no attack. Had an attack here gone through, it could have cut off the Indians from their base in Jammu. The only reason ever mentioned for not doing so has been that such action would not have ended the war—and a mere heavy loss inflicted upon the Indian Army might have forced India to declare

war on Pakistan. If this was the real reason, one may ask is it likely that the possibility of this danger had not occurred to our higher authorities in the planning stage or during the two weeks of preparation? How could the realisation suddenly have come to them after the bombardment had started?

Thus the threat of being cut off was gone, but the Indians were still exposed to other dangers. Beyond Naushehra, for 100 miles, they offered an exposed flank which in the days to come, meant ideal opportunities for the tribesmen and Azads, to raid ambush and scupper Indian convoys and posts. Indeed this would be like a running sore in the body and the Indian Army would have had to face the prospect of being bled white. But from this fate too they were saved by the cease-fire at the end of December 1948.

XVI

CEASE-FIRE

At midnight on 31 December 1948, both sides ordered cease-fire and the war came to end. The coming of cease-fire had not been unexpected or sudden. In fact for quite some months, it had been clear that there would have to be a cease-fire and the problem would have to be settled by other means. The Azad people had never expected that they could throw India out of Kashmir by force—all they had wanted was to have the right and claim for a fair plebiscite recognised. This right now stood accepted—and therefore the coming of cease-fire was good in principle. To some of us, however, it was the line along which the cease-fire took place that appeared unsatisfactory,—because as it stood now, it left with India virtually everything that she wanted.

There was no other territory, hill or point of importance which India needed to ensure the permanent security of the valley, Ladakh and Jammu. For her communications with Kashmir, India already had the Kahuta road, and another road, further away from the Pakistan border, was under construction. Thus there was no pressure point or compelling factor in our possession with which we could discourage India from delaying or refusing to hold the

plebiscite. No such factor existed in the provisions of the cease-fire agreement either. There was no time limit fixed. The U.N. had only exercised their good offices to bring about mutual agreement. It had never made the Kashmir problem its own responsibility, and there was no provision or promise of any pressure or sanctions to enforce the holding of the plebiscite. Thus all the temptation was there for India if she wanted to leave things as they were and we had to depend entirely upon the goodwill of India to honour the spirit of the cease-fire agreement. But since we believed that the people of Kashmir would vote for Pakistan, it meant that by holding a plebiscite India would literally hand over Kashmir to us on the plate. Was that logical to expect after the bitter fight India had put up for the possession of the State?

Yet some such thing could be expected to happen if some day a spirit of give and take arose between the two countries. But even this appeared unlikely because give and take means giving something and taking something—and there was nothing more for India to take. All that there was to take, such as Junagadh and Hyderabad, she had already taken. So all that the cease-fire appeared to mean was that we had hitched our wagon to a hope—a hope either for some extraordinary luck on our part or some extraordinary generosity on the part of India.

It was on these lines that some time later I tried bringing to the Prime Minister's notice the serious weakness of the position into which we had placed ourselves. Had he consulted me or anyone else who was actually engaged in fighting at the front, he

would certainly have been better advised. I had, ofcourse, no right to be so consulted, but having been one of the few engaged in the struggle right from the beginning, my knowledge of the local geography and general situation could have been better utilised.

We all knew that ceas-fire had to come—but its acceptance a month earlier would have left Poonch in our hands as a hostage. Or after the relief of Poonch—non-agreement to cease-fire for another month or two would again have enabled us to counter balance the Indian advantage. For instance, we certainly could have inflicted servere punishment upon the Indian lines of communications from Naushehra northwards—and we were certainly in a position to advance easily a few miles from Pandu over the hills towards Baramula—thereby making the whole road from Chakoti to Baramula insecure and constantly keeping the State's electric supply under threat.

However, now the time for such action was gone and we could not again break the cease-fire, but the longer we waited the stronger India would become, and so the only course left open for us was to help the people of occupied Kashmir internally with weapons, money and propaganda so that in due course they would be enabled to rise and fight for themselves. And this assistance we could start immediately.

Three months later, the Prime Minister called me for an interview which lasted two hours. He informed me that he had arranged to obtain some weapons and that our assistance to Kashmir would be starting in six months time. However, every future meeting with him was to take me further away from him. I

had nothing personal at stake in Kashmir but I believed that with the passage of time the problem would not become easier but more difficult. While he appeared to be under the impression that we would gain by waiting.

Thus that period of six months was never to end a simple step like sending help to the people of occupied Kashmir was never to be taken, and I was ultimately to land in prison.

XVII

JAIL

In the deserted suburbs of what looked like a dead town, distant and asleep, one cold night in March 1951, at 11 p.m., the massive doors of a jail groaned, creaked, and opened slowly to swallow in a motor convoy that was bringing me.

Seventeen hours had been taken by that convoy speeding across much length and breadth of territory, which I had not been permitted to see, so that neither the route nor the destination should be known to me or anyone else interested in following us.

Seventeen hours ago I had been a Major General, a holder of the Distinguished Service Order, awarded for gallantry and leadership in the field in World War II, Chief of the General Staff of the Pakistan Army, and in the eyes of many the mysterious 'General Tariq' credited with acquiring for Pakistan much of the territory of Azad Kashmir at personal risk that some had been there to see themselves.

That morning, while I had been sleeping peacefully, a hundred men had surrounded my house and successfully overpowered my one unarmed watchman!

Then Major General Hayauddin had knocked on my bedroom window and said that he had to see me about something most urgent. I had gone atonce, without even putting on my shoes, through the study door, to meet him. But as I had emerged, men with bayonets and sten guns had rushed at me from three sides—the front and both flanks.

I had been rushed at before, during the war, by the Japanese in fighting—but never by 20 to 1 and not when I was unarmed. I had had only a split second to think and I had let them come on. I think it had been the complete failure of this melodrama to impress me at all that had stopped the men midstride. No bayonet or sten gun had reached my body—and the few hands that had been laid on me had been quickly withdrawn.

A mere telephone call would have sufficed to tell me that I was to be under arrest. But instead all troops had been alerted and these men had apparently expected to be gunned down by some sort of a desperado.

The choreographer of this comic strip had been General Ayub Khan, the Army C in C, who apparently had feared that I had about two divisions, at my call, to support me. How and why he had nurtured such an apprehension one cannot say. These divisions could not be in the army, as all of these were under his own command and he was himself in touch with all the commanders. Under me there were no troops at all. And a private army of that magnitude, some thirty thousand odd men, could not be hiding in my house or arround it.

I had walked with the men to the police car waiting outside the gate, and from behind a bush had come out a superintendent of police. At the gate the Deputy Inspector General of Police, who had served with me in Kashmir, had met me with apologies. And then, from further behind, had reappeared Major General Hayauddin, who over the shoulders of others had handed to me an order from the Governor General which I was required to read, sign and return. This order had said that with effect from receiving it, I was dismissed from service under Section 13 of the Indian Army Act.

I had written on this paper, that the order was illegal because I was not subject to the Indian Army Act—and that under the Army Act, to which I was subject, the Governor General did not have the powers to dismiss an officer. This indeed was the correct legal position. I had further added that my arrest by the civil police, while I was in the army, was also illegal. With these remarks I had returned the paper to him, and then our long journey for the unknown destination had begun.

The date of the arrest had been timed to coincide with the eve of the first general elections in the Punjab which were to take place the following day, on 10 March. A day later nothing would have been gained. A week earlier, much of the impact would have got lost.

It had not really been thought that there was any danger from me, otherwise either action would have been taken atonce or I would have been put under some restraint. But such had not been the case.

The Prime Minister, already in possession of all the information, had proceeded on his electioneering tour —and it was at Sargodha railway station that he had after a calculated consideration issued instructions to the Police chief and the Army C in C. This was well before the first of March, and nothing had followed till the 9th.

At my house there had been a meeting on 23 February 1951 which had decided, after a seven hour session, that nothing was to be done by us. To my thinking that decision had finished the matter. The Government knew this completely and correctly, as both the future approver Lt Colonel Siddique Raja and Brigadier (later Lt General) Habibullah Khan had provided it with all the information. I did not for a moment expect that the Government would have nothing to say, but I was willing to face it and take the consequences. The cause which had prompted me demanded the acceptance of such risk.

The night before the arrest, the future would be approver, who had already reported to the Government, had come to inform me that according to rumours some action was about to be taken against me. To this, according to him, I had replied that I would accept all responsibility. And I had exactly meant what I had said. I had, however, expected that action against me would be according to law—namely, first the allegations and then the requirement of an explanation from me. Thereafter, if necessary, house arrest, an enquiry, a charge sheet, and then a court martial. If so, I had intended to hide nothing. Some part of the cause that I had sponsored might get served, by a full exposure of the facts. That is why I had not attempted to destroy

any evidence at all. All papers, letters and documents were left intact. And even on that last night, inspite of having received two warnings, I still had slept peacefully.

What I did not know was that action against me was not going to be according to any law at all.

The arrest had been followed, for the last seventeen hours, by the greatest propaganda blast, in the four year life of the new State, let loose with trumpets and fanfare at the public, with repeated broadcasts and banner head lines in the press, to inform them of how they had been saved from a terrible catastrophe. That by the timely unearthing of a conspiracy to overthrow the Government by force, and by immediate action against the plotters—the Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, had been saved from murder; dictatorship had been nipped in the bud, and greatest of all, Pakistan had been saved from a bloody civil war and disintegration.

I was described as driven solely by personal ambition, without any cause whatsoever, to have threatened the law and constitution of the country.

The people were once again promised that a solution of the Kashmir problem lay just round the bend, a matter of a few weeks more. The same news bulletin also announced a rise in the pay of the armed forces. Thanks—giving prayers were organized for the miraculous deliverence. And, with eight charges, most of them carrying the death penalty, our fate was as good as sealed, and the suggestion was made in a part of the press that the plotters should be shot immediately—to make this an exemplary deterrence for all times.

Thus, when at 11.15 p.m. the great massive doors creaked and closed behind me—no one had any doubt left that personal ambitions, conspiracies and dictatorships were wiped off the clean land of Pakistan.

But, by a strange irony of fate, unconnected with me and my fellows in trouble, the closing of those massive doors marked not an end—an end to further attempts—but another beginning, the starting in motion of a relentless heavy chain that was to drag down and break each one of those lofty expectations of that night.

Within a few months the Prime Minister was to be murdered by an assassin's bullet in broad daylingt in a public meeting. Personal ambitions, ever disclaimed but always present, were to sprout out like mushrooms. Conspiracies were to abound. A government, a constitution and a conspirator President were to be overthrown. Dictatorship was to rule the country. Civil war and blood shed were to be flung at the land, and half of Pakistan was to be lost irretrievably while the cause of Kashmir was not to move even an inch forward towards a solution.

But, all this lay in the womb of the future. That night I walked onwards, under escort, to my cell, where I was locked up, and left alone.

For three months I and the others remained virtually in solitary confinement in different places. We were allowed no newspapers, no letters, no interviews with relations, no consultation with lawyers, not even a charge sheet

My proposal before the last meeting in my house on 23 February had intended that action in Kashmir

would need to be preceded by the coming into existence of a government in Pakistan that would back us. The proposed declaration for the Governor General, written in my hand, still exists in the records of the Pindi Conspiracy case. Among the main features of this declaration were dismissal of the old government, formation of a civil care-taker government, date for general elections on adult franchise, a constituent assembly for framing a constitution, impartiality in elections to be ensured by using the neutral machinery of the army, and an advisory military council consisting of all the generals. But, as stated before, we had not agreed to proceed with this. The prosecution, however, made out the case that we had agreed to go ahead because without such agreement a conspiracy could not come into existence. Out of all this, eight charges were prepared each carrying the death penalty.

Then followed a secret trial inside Hyderabad jail. During the trial 285 witnesses were examined for the prosecution. The defence had no witnesses. The prosecution proceeded under the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Special Act, creation of a twisted mind, an Act which one of the Judges on the Tribunal was pleased to call in Court as the most inhuman law he had ever seen. This Act deprived us of the right of appeal. It further made provisions of the Indian Army Act applicable to me with retrospective effect though retrospective application of laws was in violation of the United Nations Charter of Human Rights which had been accepted by us.

This Act twisted the fundamentals of the evi-

dence law also by making police statements and diaries admissible in evidence. The F.I.R. (First Information Report) was thus admitted without producing the man concerned for cross examination. The result that this led to is probably unique in the history of law and trials.

The F.I.R. consisting of several pages composed in excellent English with phraseology, literary style and references to Latin American intrigues, clearly betrayed the hand of an educated and well informed foreigner. This was alleged to have been the first hand original report of a Pakistani sub-Inspector of Police whose undeveloped handwriting, innumerable elementary spelling errors and erasures showed his failure even to copy correctly what someone else had written. When my defence counsel Mr. Suhrawardy (later Prime Minister of Pakistan) pointed this out to the court, it clinched the matter. At first Mr. A. K. Brohi, the prosecution council promised, month after month, that the man would be brought to give evidence, but towards the end he stated in court that the man had absconded and could not be traced anywhere. This was completely contradicted a few days later when another prosecution witness Colonel Sultan who, probably unknown to Mr. Brohi that Sultan was a brother of the Sub-Inspector, deposed that the Sub-Inspector was still very much in service, present in Pindi and available. Even so he was never brought to court because he could never have been the author of that masterpiece.

While two approvers gave evidence after the grant of pardon by a magistrate in the normal

fashion—the Act had so diabolically provided that 45 others gave evidence, with impunity, admitting that they were members of the conspiracy. The Tribunal was barred from trying them inspite of their self incriminating statements.

The trial took 18 months, and the sentences awarded ranged from 14 years transportation down to 4 years rigorous imprisonment. The proceedings of the trial ran into nearly 3,000 pages and the judgment was another 1,000 pages or more. We were not allowed to take copies or notes, nor were we allowed to know whether there was truth in the statement that one of the Judges had written a dissenting judgement. The whole of the record still remains unreleased.

At the end of May 1954, the Governor General Mr. Ghulam Mohammad dismissed the Cabinet and dissolved the Assembly. With regard to the dismissed Assembly the Sind Chief Court declared the dissolution invalid. From this difficulty the Governor-General was partially saved by the Federal Court, but in the process of all this, questions had arisen with regard to the validity of some of the laws previously passed. It, thus, came about that in April 1955, the Lahore High Court released us on a habeas corpus petition.

The Government re-arrested us within a few hours but again three weeks later the Bench under Justice M.R. Kayani ordered our release on bail. The case, however, was not yet finished and we therefore instituted proceedings questioning validity of the new Government itself, of which General

Ayub Khan was also a member as Defence Minister. Thereafter, I met President Iskandar Mirza and he informed me that the whole Cabinet was agreeable to end the matter—but that General Ayub Khan alone insisted on our going back to jail. And Ayub Khan's main reason apparently was, that he feared I would shoot him if I came out. I met him in the room of the Wali of Swat and assured him that I had no intention of shooting him!

When the new Constituent Assembly met in October 1955, the Government met with considerable opposition when it tried to validate the Pindi Conspiracy Special Act. The validation was ultimately agreed to but only on the condition that none of the accused would be returned to prison. According to Mr. Keith Callard, in his book 'Pakistan', (1957.) 'One reason for the popularity of the conspirators was a widespread belief that the primary aim of the plot was the military conquest of Kashmir'. He goes on to say, 'conclusive evidence for this theory has not been made public.'

Much was said then, and has been said since then, that many people would have been killed and so forth if we had gone into action then. This is entirely untrue. The prosecution's own witnesses in the conspiracy case trial, the approvers, testified in answer to specific court questions that no one was going to be shot, and that indeed no one was going to be even arrested. To the amazement of the Tribunal President Justice Sir Abdul Rehman, the replies he had got were that I had ordered that guns were to be kept unloaded—and that no one was worthy of being

arrested. It was after this that the court had dropped the murder charges against us.

As a by-product of the case, the cross examination of the prosecution witnesses by Mr. Suhrawardy brought on record the most complete and authentic collection of material about the Kashmir struggle 1947/48, as also about the admirable part played therein by most of the military accused in the case. The statement of prosecution witness Brigadier Gul Mawaz referring to the theft of all the rations enroute, and his seeing me sleeping on the ground in my great coat, offering him the last cup of tea, had brought tears to the eyes of every one present in the court and there had been a most embarrassing lull in the proceedings. Two Major Generals, prosecution witneses, had been stripped of their pretentions thoroughly, and the statement of one denuded of all relevancy, left with the residue of naked jealousy, had turned the Tribunal President's face red with anger with the witness concerned. It had further become established that I had had no connection whatsoever, direct or even remotely indirect, with any foreign power or individual. Equally, within the country itself there had neither been sought nor received any money by us. The temper and attitude of the prosecution witnesses had gradually gone on changing inspite of all the briefings to the contrary--so much so that one witness a Sub Inspector of Police, turning hostile in court, had stood up and demanded loudly that he should be recorded as having said that 'The Government consisted of thieves'. Inevitably also, theft, corruption and incompetence of the Government had come on record with reference to specific instances.

It was probably because of these that according to the late Mr. Manzoor Qadir (assisting Mr. Suhrawardy, later Ayub Khan's Foreign Minister and Chief Justice at Lahore) Mr. A.K. Brohi had said to him that had the trial been held in open court the public would have stoned the prosecution. I never verified this with Mr. Brohi. But there is this much to be said that when after our release on bail the Government tried to put us back in prison.Mr. Brohi offered to defend me. I was both surprised and touched by the offer.

I was curious about why he had offered to do so when up to the last moment he had demanded the death penalty for me. He had only said that he had not known me before. I did not doubt the sincerity of his offer. I remembered then also another incident when immediately after our conviction Mr. A.K. Brohi had specially asked us to let him arrange a dinner for all of us in jail. I had been willing—but the others had rejected the invitation—taking it as an affront. To say the least, it was odd for a chief prosecution counsel to want to stand a dinner for the criminals just convicted by his efforts. The offer of defending us was at least a silent acknowledgement that the accused had had something worthy in them.

From the Judges side too, the attitude had subtly changed with time. Eight weeks after the opening of the trial, when I had been called into the Judges Chamber for something, I had been surprised when all three of them had stood up, given me a seat, coffee and cigarettes. Later, one of them had guided me to take up law. And the son of the Tribunal's President

had told me that his father before dying had sent for and read a certain book because he had said that I had been reading it, and he had wanted to know why?

All this is a curious sort of connection between the accused charged with the gravest of offences, the tribunal consisting of the most experienced judges, and the chief prosecution counsel who had painstakingly built the case and obtained conviction. Perhaps unrecognised by any of us, there had been a linking thread, greater than ourselves, the liberation of Kashmir and the strengthening of Pakistan.

XVIII

HOW TO LIBERATE KASHMIR NOW?

The right of the Kashmiris to settle their own future by a plebiscite is already accepted by the U.N. and the world. There is need for the occupied Kashmir people to assert their own demand internally. They are already doing so. But their efforts have to be morally and materially supported from outside.

There is no shortage of passionate sympathisers in all corners of the world including the large number of Kashmiri nationals in England, the Middle East and Africa. Kashmiris can mobilise this for themselves. Such help can reach inside through numerous channels--and in due course, as in other similar cases, their right and the justice of their cause is bound to prevail.

The long stalemate of the past 25 years has been caused to a great extent by the fear of many Pakistanis that the plebiscite cannot be brought about without war and that in such war we shall be the losers. Both these apprehensions are entirely unjustified. Firstly, there need not be a war because we need not commit aggression or even threaten to do so. The affairs of

1965 and 1971 were cases of extreme lack of political and strategic understanding of what was required to be done, as well as of utter incompetence at the highest level. Secondly, if India should, without reason, commit aggression there is no justification in assuming that the whole world will stand by and do nothing to help us. Nor indeed are we as weak as we may appear to be. On the contrary, an examination of our comparative overall potentialities will clearly show that it is India that will stand to lose more than we do.

A proper understanding of what needs to be done, whether in war or peace, is possible only with reference to a particular time and the general situation then existing.

At one time as in 1947-48 armed help and military intervention by Pakistan, on behalf of Kashmir, were essential. Later, when the door for such assistance was closed by the cease-fire line, and the promised plebiscite was evaded by India the need arose for political arousing of the people in support of their accepted demand. At this stage moral and material aid from Pakistan was needed. This, if undertaken in the early fifties, could have gone across the cease-fire line secretly in small quantities and been maintained over a long period. But no freedom movement had been aroused and supported. Therefore to get the UN to intervene once again, an Indo-Pakistan threat to peace became the right course to adopt.

Then with the passage of a long time, alomst 25 years, a stage has come that the freedom movement, now in the hands of a new generation, is firmly established. It is capable now of directing itself into such

forms as it finds desirable and practicable with the examples and methods used by freedom movements, in many other countries, before it to benefit from. But its most appealing course that will get it every form of support will be when it is not connected with the idea of military intervention by Pakistan. In this way its growth will certainly be more regular and more lasting. No freedom movement can expect to have no repression by the existing authorities but the Kashmiris are in the unique position that their goal is already accepted by the U.N. and the whole world.

Further, the resources of the Muslim world are today vastly greater than they were a few years ago—and they are within reach of the Kashmir freedom movement. However, they have to be sought by Kashmiri nationals themselves. The Kashmiris outside the occupied territory are free to get these and to use these both outside and inside the occupied territory untill the situation is brought to a stage when India is made to fulfil its promise or the world is made to intervene.

Meanwhile to return to the past, the long shadow of Kashmir, after the cease-fire, was to fall heavily not only over many individuals but over the whole country as well It has not been easy for many to see how it has affected and distorted our policies and actions in matters not apparently connected with it.

Some months after the cease-fire I wrote a paper under the title of 'What Next in Kashmir'. The paper is in the Pindi Conspiracy Case documents. The purpose of this paper was to show that since in the cease-fire agreement nothing existed to compel

India to hold a plebiscite, she would in fact not do so, and meanwhile delay and time would favour India, not us. The reason that was being advanced in the higher circles was that we needed time to increase our military strength before we could settle the problem of Kashmir. But it was clear to the simplest of minds that in the same time India could strengthen herself may times more. Basically what was wrong with this philosophy was the idea that anything done in Kashmir would inevitably bring war, and that our strength was to be measured simply by material and numerical comparisons alone, without taking into account the numerous other factors which existed then, as they always do in such situations. I sent the paper to the Prime Minister and, ultimately, I was sent for and had a two hour discussion with the Prime Minister at Pindi. I came back feeling that he had understood and appreciated the point.

However, many months passed and nothing happened. Meanwhile with regard to improving our military potential no steps were taken in the only direction that was immediately open to us, namely, the raising of something like a People's militia, giving military training to the youth and the development of indigenous weapons. For weapons, earlier, I had been able to persuade the Prime Minister to allocate a grant of rupees ten lacs in order to encourage the production of small arms in local workshops in the cities. To my pleasant surprise, within two weeks only, people had brought forth local made sten guns and even 303 cartridges. The initial tests, in the weapons development branch, through which I had put these, had shown unquestionable prospects of

successful production. But six weeks later, in my absence, this whole scheme had been stopped, apparently upon the advice of Qurban Ali Khan, I.G. Police, on the plea that such local production would create a dangerous law and order situation for Pakistan.

About a year later, I wrote another paper under the title of 'Keep the Pot Boiling in Abdullah's Kashmir' (This too is in the Conspiracy Case records). In this I suggested that as we could no longer violate the cease-fire in the presence of UN observers, the right and necessary course of action for us was to help the people of occupied Kashmir to strengthen and accelerate their own internal freedom movement against the Indian occupation. On this too, no action was taken and those in authority seemed satisfied with merely repeating their requests to the U.N. in the matter.

But again it was clear to any thinking person that the United Nations would not be able to do anything if the situation remained as it was. In the cease-fire agreement, U.N. had not promised any action if India did not hold a plebiscite. And apart from that there was in fact nothing there for the U.N. to do. India was quite happy to leave things as they were as she had got all she wanted. Pakistan was not threatening India in any way—and by not helping the internal freedom movement in Kashmir there was no threat to peace anywhere. Hence there was no justification for the U.N. to interfere.

My views on these matters were by now quite well known. There had been no reason to hide them.

And the proper thing for me to do was to leave the army. I did in fact twice express such a desire but was told I would be a traitor if I did so in the situation as it then was. However, what actually discouraged me from resigning was that outside the army there would be even less possible to do for the cause of Kashmir. The Quaid-e-Azam had already died. The Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, had been keen and sympathetic all along but the advisers around him were the advocates of caution and delay. There was no true parliament, or shadow opposition government, to which I could take the problem. In the absence of a constitution, there were no general elections in sight either, where, as in democratic countries, people are able to bring up such differences of opinion upon public platforms.

In December 1950, I was promoted Major General and also appointed Chief of the General Staff at G.H.Q. Pindi. General Ayub Khan was then Deputy C in C and was about to take over as C in C in a few weeks time. I mentioned to him frankly that neither my promotion, nor appointment as Chief of the General Staff, were proper in view of my known differences of opinion, with the Government, on Kashmir. He said that he himself had asked for me and I should accept the appointment. There appeared to be nothing that I could do though I was convinced upon two points—one, that every month's delay meant a further nail hammered into the coffin of Kashmir—and two, that neither General Ayub Khan nor the then Government intended to do anything to prevent it.

What was going on at this time was that the Western Powers needed a circle of air bases to cover the interior of the Soviet Union and China. In the West, such bases could be in U.K. or Western Europe. In the Far East Japan, Formosa and the Phillipines could do. But one more area in the middle had not yet been found. Turkey and Iran, having an exposed border with Russia, would not be secure enough. Afghanistan was probably neither willing nor safe. Egypt (at that time under King Farook) was too far. That left only the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent where both range and security were possible. India had refused to be involved in the East-West Power tussle. And in Pakistan, the public in general was not expecting any commitments with foreign powers.

Here, the ground for such commitments had to be prepared. I was not a party to these delibrations but the discussions did manage to spread around to the lower levels as well. It was from Brigadier Habibullah (later Lt. General) that I heard the expression that 'Pakistan was like a beautiful woman who should sell herself to the highest bidder'. And ultimately, our relationship with the U.S. was not very far removed from some such description. The more acceptable reason that gradually evolved was that we needed strength to liberate Kashmir, and for our defence against India. But twelve years of borrowings, grants, accumulations and hoardings of arms and ammunition did not enable Ayub Khan, in 1965, to fight beyond seventeen days.

A few months after my release from jail, in 1956, I

wrote a 30 page pamphlet called "How to solve the Kashmir problem". 5,000 copies of this were printed. This became the subject of a heated debate in the Indian Parliament and received head-lines in some of the Indian Press. The gist of this was that mere repetition of appeals to the U.N. and the Security Council could not possibly bring the U.N. into the question as, in fact, there existed no security problem. We would have to help the people of occupied Kashmir to rise for their own freedom—and if in so helping them, the Indian Government accused Pakistan of interference so much the better as this would tend to threaten the existing international peace and only then would there be reason for the United Nations again to take notice of the problem. If the worst happened and India committed aggression against Pakistan, the World would be forced to intervene agains her. In any case the entire Indian Army would not be enough to subdue half of West Pakistan alone.

President Iskandar Mirza found himself interested and asked what we would need for such internal action. He was surprised when I explained that only 500 men at a time inside Kashmir would be enough. The terrain inside Kashmir was ideally suited for guerrilla and sabotage action—with one major road a few hundred miles long, bending every few furlongs passing through wooded hills and valleys over innumerable bridges and culverts. This road, and the single electric supply line, with telephone and telegraph lines running alongside, could not possibly be protected all the time everywhere. Along this life-

line also lay exposed most of the road and river transport which carried the entire Kashmir trade.

My emphasis was on the use of lesser and lesser numbers so that a pair of men would have at least a clear mile to themselves to operate in. Thus, they would be almost impossible to detect and they would have no difficulty in going across the cease-fire line which was open in so many places to such an extent that unauthorized traffic of men and animals was constantly going on across it regularly.

They would have to be preferably locals or at least in local clothes, armed only with some dynamite for blowing up bridges, and pliers for wire cutting. For their own protection each could have a kinfe or a small local made pistol. They would not need to fight against troops or ploice. Their target would be unguarded bridges, isolated wires and unprotected transport.

There would have to be a second batch of 500 to keep replacing these—and a third batch of 500 under training. Their technique would have to include patience, prolonged activity, persistence and secrecy. They would need 12 to 18 months operating in an unspectacular manner and only then would the occupied Kashmir people themselves feel truly encouraged to rise en masse. The whole project would cost about rupees 60 lacs (six million).

When the President asked where the money could come from, I referred him to the Chairman P.I.D.C. The latter immediately confirmed on the telephone that some people were willing to finance

the scheme. For the actual conduct of the project I suggested that it should be under the Army.

The President had one other question to ask me and that was how Lahore was to be defended against the Indian armour in case India decided upon aggression. I explained to him that Lahore being in the middle of entirely flat country the proper defence was to have around the town a large and elaborate system of very deep anti-tank trenches. That for the price of one tank regiment of about 54 tanks, we could buy 5 regiments of anti tank guns each regiment with about 60 to 65 guns. These plus a few anti-aircraft guns were what Lahore should have. Further, that inside this area we should have no more than a brigade of regulars assisted by a large civilian militia raised by the town itself. That whatever armour or other forces our army could spare would be more wisely deployed, well away from Lahore, as a mobile striking force.

The next time I met the President three months later, he told me that he had consulted the famous German Tank Corps General Guderian and he too had advised that the answer for Lahore was ditches and anti-tank guns. So the President said that having satisfied himself about the security of Lahore he had advised General Ayub Khan to proceed with that scheme for occupied Kashmir. Ayub Khan had, however, asked for time to proceed to Italy to procure weapons for the purpose. What weapons he wanted to procure from Italy I do not know. Nor do I know whether the task was actually ever begun. It did, however, happen that in those very days some

small explosions took place in occupied Kashmir and, connecting these with my pamphlet, India promptly accused me personally of conducting these activities.

Only once, at a certain reception, the new Prime Minister, Malik Feroze Khan Noon, in an aside, whispered in my ear, 'Akbar you will be pleased to know that we have started it'. Not knowing of anything else about which he would want to whisper in my ear, I hopefully imagined that he was referring to the subject of action in Kashmir. He further went on to say that he had deputed, for the task, Mian Anwar Ali D.I.G., C.I.D! I have often wondered since then what Malik Sahib had really meant. If it really was Kashmir that he had referred to and if it was Anwar Ali that he had chosen for the task, then it all goes to show how extremely little the task had been understood.

Because of the unsolved problem of Kashmir we have been forced to spend the major portion of our national earnings on defence requirements. But quite apart from military expenditure, I thought that in 1948 and 1949 we spent abut 12 crores per annum on the deficit budget of the Azad Government and on allowances to all sorts of others in the tribal areas and elsewhere in order to keep them in readiness for supporting us in Kashmir. If this expenditure has remained still at the figure of 12 crores yearly then by now we must have spent something in the neighbourhood of 300 crores. As against this, it is worth remembering that at the cost of less than one crore on an internal uprising in occupied Kashmir, the

problem could have been finished many many years ago.

Further, at the cost of about 10 crores, primary schools could have been provided for the whole of West Pakistan. And added to this, perhaps at the cost of only 5 crores or so, a national volunteer effort, by teachers and some 50,000 students working during a portion of their vacations, could by now have spread adult literacy to all corners of Pakistan. Another crore or so might have sufficed for the development of reasonably dependable indigenous small arms—ranging from pistols, rifles, shotguns and stens to hand bombs—and why not even larger guns, if they could be produced here in this very country in the days of Babar (the first Mughal Emperor) four centuries ago.

The establishment of basic steel and machine industry need hardly be mentioned. But if the balance of the 300 crores was not to be spent on heavy industry, it would have sufficed to give our young men proper military training for six months, with food, clothes and pay included, to a number which by now would have totalled 5 million. In case one cannot visualize what 5 millions look like, it means that if they stood shoulder to shoulder they would extend for 1400 miles, in other words, in Pakistan, all the way up from the sea to Lahore, through Kashmir and upto Gilgit.

Need one wonder what would have been more useful to Pakistan today—5 million trained men, even if only armed with crude indigenous weapons, or the golden beggar's bowl that we have constantly to keep holding before others.

By not taking just the one right step for the liberation of Kashmir, our leaders let themselves be dominated by fear. Fear made them sell our precious freedom for money, comforts and weapons. It led to borrowings beyond our capacity ever to pay back. It led to the rise of ruthless industrial exploiters in the country. It led to the closure of trade and normal goings and comings between Pakistan and India, to the loss of the ordinary people on both sides. It brought foreign agents and interference into the entire fabric of our national life. Every decision, every change of government, every political, economic or social issue in the country became a ground for foreign intrigue and manipulations.

To pacify the doubts of the public occasionally, every leader that came proclaimed that our borrowings, our alliances and our heavy military expenditure were meant for the immient liberation of Kashmir and for defence against India. All this was said repeatedly inspite of the clear and publicly stated stipulations of the foreign powers that these arms and alliances would not be allowed for use against India.

All this started from an initial failure to face our responsibility fully, with courage, with regard to Kashmir. No people can be free who do not face up squarely to the dangers that are inherent in being free. From the very start fear dominated the minds of our leaders.

The Quaid-e-Azam's own example was forgotten. On the night of 27 October 1947, less than three months after the achievement of his life's task, he had the courage to order an attack on Jammu even if it

meant risking the very existence of Pakistan. He had the genius to see the one vital key point and he alone had the courage of the man that can lead a free nation. After him, came doubt and apprehensions. The death of Liaquat Ali Khan closed even the chapter of unity.

Thereafter, wrong decisions, flowed wholly or partly from real or imagined fear. It was the fear of India that led to our subservience to foreign masters. It was the fear of our own people that initially prevented us from developing and making our own indigenous weapons and training our own young men for war. Perhaps we feared even adult literacy. It was the fear of democratic change and the loss of power that led to not making a constitution at all. It was because of fear that during the 1947-48 Kashmir war not even a single one of our leaders entered Kashmir to visit the troops or to see the situation at the front. On the opposite side Nehru, Abdullah, as well as their Ministers and Generals were regularly visitng the front. On our side no one crossed the border. Not even at night. Not even in the dark. Not a single Minister, not a single Secretary, nor even the Prime Minister's most trusted adviser came to have a look.

After the coming of the Chinese pressure upon India's border, India gave up its neutrality and embarked openly upon the path of militarisation, while on our side Ayub Khan further complicated the situation in Pakistan by conferring upon us the leadership of General Yahya Khan about whose role in our history no elaboration is needed. 'He drowned his sorrows

in a shallow cup—and sold his reputation for a song'. Ayub and Yahya were at least 'creative' in the military field! If Ayub could give Pakistan the world's first Field Marshal without ever being in the field, Yahya could top it by giving India the world's second one! In this sub-continent at least, there were to be no Ludendorfs throwing a Field Marshal's baton at the feet of a Hitler because it had not been won on the battlefield.

To come again to the present, as stated at the beginning of this chapter Kashmiris have to proceed with their own freedom movement, but the question that bothers many Pakistanis is whether this will not bring war to us and whether we can face such a war. The answer is that we can avoid committing aggression but, like everybody else in the world, we cannot avoid war. This is not because of Kashmir but because of our very existence. Whether we walk upright, as man must, or we act as juveniles seeking shelter under the skirts of one great power or another war will overtake us anyhow.

General Fuller, considered the most eminent writer of this century on war says, 'whether war is a necessary factor in the evolution of mankind may be disputed, but a fact which cannot be questioned is that, from the earliest records of man to the present age, war has been his dominant preoccupation. There has never been a period in human history altogether free from war, and seldom one of more than a generation which has not witnessed a major conflict: great wars flow and ebb almost as regularly as the tides'.

Today we live in a state of 'wardom'—a condition in which war dominates all other human activities. We must, therefore, understand war if we are to be able to regulate our other affairs.

Looking back at the last three conflicts that we have had since 1947, if we are satisfied with their conduct then there is nothing further to be learnt. But if we are not so satisfied we cannot fail to see that they did not achieve the objects that they were meant for. Opportunities were lost where the right action could have taken us nearer to the goal. Objectives for military actions were selected which even if reached could not have resulted in any benefit. Military expenditure was not only out of all proportion to our income but also to the requirements of the task. Vast sectors of national strength were neither mobilised nor used, and half the country was lost, with Kashmir still in bondage. There is still no sign of stability or feeling of security. The reason for all these is not to be found in the fact of war itself but in the way it has been conducted in Pakistan and in the basic ignorance of the art of war.

The art of war certainly does not consist in entering into an arms race with one's neighbours—and in seeking to have equality or superiority in weapons, industry and manpower. If that were so, there would be either no end to the process or war would be reduced to a comparison of ledgers on the two sides and thereafter one would either score a victory or accept defeat. But this is not so. Very often small nations have had to face upto vastly superior forces because they had to.

A distinction has to be made between preparedness for war and the conduct of war. Preparedness has to bear direct relation to one's budget which often means having a smaller compact well-armed force and a larger trained reserve, plans for the utilisation of the entire nation's support in all manner of ways, and achieving expertise in any special types of military action that a particular nation might have the means for at its disposal—such as, in our case, the large numbers of armed tribesmen who in their own areas are expert generally for defence and, outside, against India are excellent long range raiders.

The conduct of war, on the other hand, consists of taking up the situation as it is and taking the best possible course to deal with it. One learns to do this only after understanding war and a comprehensive study of history.

Wars may be considered generally as falling in two categories; those with limited and those with unlimited political aims—and so far as Pakistan is concerned, or indeed most other nations too, it is the first category, with limited aims, that concerns us.

Indeed with the coming into existence of nuclear power war seems to have been almost entirely pushed into the first category. The Hydrogen bomb of 1954 had a thousand times greater explosive force than the first atomic bomb of 1945 and therefore the H bomb has done more than anything else to make plain the nonsense of total war. Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor speaking on strategic bombing delcared his belief that 'total war as we have known in the past 40 years is a thing of the past'. Marshal of the RAF

Lord Tedder emphasised the same point by saying, 'A contest using the atomic weapon would be no duel, but rather mutual suicide'.

Since those statements of 1954-55 much more has been established about the intractability of the effects of using nuclear weapons. In the late sixties when the Russians had completed their preparations for nuclear war against China, they had claimed that Russia would destroy China in two weeks, by paralysing the main centres of Chinese resistance and control, preceded by destruction of the Chinese nuclear capability. The Chinese considered the likelihood of nuclear war as correct and began preparation for their defence. The rest of the world did not at first seem concerned about such a conflict between the two giants. But soon, by 1969, American scientists were to discover from the study of prevailing winds that in the event of such a conflict more than 50% of the nuclear fall-out would drop on the United States—a devastating prospect. Thus, as in the case of gas and bacteriological warfare for which both sides had been ready all the time in World War II but neither side had resorted to it, so it was now clear that nuclear war had also gone into the realm of the uncontrollable.

Meanwhile the Chinese defence policy and preparations are of relevant interest to us. Chairman Mao ordered the preparation of underground shelters —and by 1971 these were complete. An elaborate honeycomb system under which each small region is made self sufficient in supply and defence has been prepared.

The Order said 'make full preparations—

a people's war inevitably meets with many difficulties but it ultimately triumphs. Guerilla forces can defeat regular armies, we will let them come in deep because it is only after letting the enemy in that the people can take part in the war in various ways. We will let them become bogged down and then destroy them one by one'.

The manuals of the Chinese Army and of the Civil —defence forces (the whole Chinese public) backed those words by stressing close combat—the bayonet, the knife, and hand grenade, the axe, the pick. The people's army is trained constantly in night fighting, in guerilla tactics, in mountain, jungle and forest combat. It is accustomed to walking to the battle site and living off the countryside.

According to Harrison Salisbury writing on a likely Soviet-Chinese war, the Chinese have been trained to seek shelter in hills, caves and dugouts until the enemy actually appears within 200 meters. Then they will give combat at a range at which neither nuclear weapons, supersonic aircraft, nor high-speed armoured vehicles are of value.

Since the advent of the hydrogen bomb and subsequent development of nuclear weapons, a number of non nuclear conflicts have already occured all over the world, confirming the forecast of military thinkers, including Sir Basil Liddell—Hart, that the development of nuclear weapons would lead to the use of more guerilla type of warfare. A combination of conventional methods, with guerilla tactics and subversion has been used with increasing success in South East-Asia, Algeria, Cyprus and Cuba etc. Nuclear

deterrence has opened the door for greater variety, subtlety and originality in the waging of war by non nuclear methods and consequently for greater scope for the use of intelligent strategy.

Though the means of attack and defence have changed out of all recognition, the forms of attack and defence remain constant. War is more complex, there are more pieces to play with, but the game is still played on the same old board, for inspite of aircraft decision is still gained on the surface of the earth.

Man is still in command of the game. Man's intelligence and genius, therefore, are still a supreme factor.

Harold Lamb, writing about the life of the great Carthaginian General, Hannibal (200 B.C.) says, 'There is a warning to the modern world as well, in Hannibal's life. It is that warfare need not be a vast conflict of technological skills and accumulation of weapons of destruction. Regardless of its mechanisms, war remains an equation of human beings and their minds. It has never ceased to be an art, in which a supreme artist may appear out of a pass of the Alps to prevail over money—and man—and weapons-power. No amount of stock piling of things can offset a superiority in minds'.

Genius cannot be produced to order, but a superiority in minds can be acquired by a deeper study and understanding of war, so that if war cannot be prevented, defeat can almost certainly be avoided—and, the opportunity can be turned to our advantage because India's apparent strength is in fact much reduced by her many weaknesses inside.

For us such a war, after aggression by India, can be not merely the contending of armies but the struggle of an entire people—where grand stretegy, or the utilization of all means towards the end, will predominate—and where such a concentration of all our means will be possible. Because, for us, on account of the presence of basic unity, recial homogeneity and oneness of faith, if we are militarily pressed further and further back towards the west, it will be like the pressing of a spring which will become stronger and ultimately recoil with greater force.

In the remotest of our villages, the humblest of our people, possess a self-confidence, and ready willingness to march forward into India—a spirit the equivalent of which cannot be found on the other side. It takes many generations to create such a spirit. In addition, our Frontier tribesmen, no less than 300,000 armed men who have for centuries found India an attractive hunting ground, can still be unleashed against the enemy borders.

In India, in the absence of homogeneity, a penetration in any direction can result in separation of differing units geographically as well as morally because there is no basic unity among the Shudras, Brahmins, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims who will follow their own different interests. At present, and for a long time to come, India is in the same position as she was centuries ago, exposed to disintegration in emergencies. India does not, and cannot, resemble other large countries like China, and the USA where nationhood oxists. The Indian masses are ridden by the caste system, superstition, religious intolerance, racial

animosities, poverty, mal-nutrition, physical debility —and the habit of submission and servility. The fear of the past still haunts them, because many terrible invasions have penetrated through her from this side, and we have ruled them for eight centuries—matters which cannot be wiped off the memory of the masses overnight.

With regard to the myth of Indian superiority in weapons, we have only to look at the case of Vietnam to see how much superiority is really needed against a determined people. In area and population the North and South were about equal (both less than our Punjab) —but with regard to material resources, whatever the North had including help from communist powers, the South, with U.S. support, was overwhelmingly superior particularly in Air power. And yet in the end the North has completely overrun the south.

U.S. Air strength used in Vietnam has been of fantastic proportions—compared to which the Indian Airforce (1050 combat Aircraft in 1972) is like a drop in the ocean. Against practically no counter air action the US Airforce in Vietnam had by May 1972, dropped 3 times more bombs than they had on Japan and Germany together in World War II, causing ten million bomb craters. Half the pine forests, and more than half the mangrove forests were destroyed. U.S. air strikes by B.52 stratofortresses, invisible at 30,000 ft. dropping vast patterns of 500 pounders falling faster than sound, against which the North did not even have a warning system, were called 'Whispering death' by them. Even with all this US super Air power, dropping every two weeks more bombs on the North than were dropped on Britain in the whole of World War II.

did not succeed in stopping the offensive of the North who kept on advancing in the intervals between air strikes and fighting at close quarters where superior weapons were ineffective.

The case of North Vietnam is worth fixing permanently in the mind. The difference between the two sides lay in the national spirit and the tactics.

North Vietnam by 1972 was already left with virtually no factories, no industry, technology and even food. Military transportation was reduced to the use of peasants as porters and the use of bicycles. Almost nothing further was left there to be blown up. And 4000 to 5000 tons of bombs per day continued to be dropped on them. Against this onslaught the North Vietnamese became an all time virtuosi of entrenchment. The average soldier became able to dig, in average soil, 20 feet deep inside of one hour. It thus took 73 tons, or almost 300 bombs (500 pound each) to kill one man.

The human spirit is almost indomitable when it is put to the task. And the human mind is almost incalculable in its reach, initiative and resourcefulness. That is why very often the smaller side succeeds in mustering into service a large number of counter balancing factors. Slaughter, devastation and bombardments of obliteration, as resorted to by so many generals, show up to be as clumsy as they are generally unremunerative. 'Generalship demands audacity and imagination and not merely weight of metal and superiority of numbers'. (Fuller).

Napoleon about whom more than 250,000 books have been written said, 'The art of war consists in

bringing to bear with an inferior army a superiority of force at the point at which one attacks or is attacked'.

In his 23 odd years of career in which he had fought no less than sixty battles, all of which have become classics, Napoleon never once had an overall euality in material and man power with his opponents.

With coalition after coalition raised against him by the British because 'Neither George III nor his government wanted peace' (Vincent Cronin), the wars that were thrust upon Napoleon resulted in ten years of almost unbroken victory for him on the the field of battle.

As a strategist he has never been excelled. As a tactician, it is said of him that he possessed a wonderful eye; he considered the fate of a battle to depend on a single moment, a single thought when the least manoeuver is decisive and gives victory, like the one drop of water which makes the vessel run over. 'The topography of a country seemed to be modelled in relief in his head and he seemed to extract men, horses and guns from the very bowels of the earth' (Caulaincourt).

Napoleon's warfare was limitless in variation and flexibility—and there was always the 'ever present', continuous process of a careful balancing of means and results (economy of force)—the tailoring of all available military and political power to the requirements of the politico military aim; the breaking of the enemy's will to resist.

Master of concealment of his strength and intentions, he had the infinite capacity of genius for taking pains for exact calculations, thorough planning,

thinking moths in advance, basing his calculations on the worst possible situation, and always having an alternative plan.

He considered the loss of time irreparable, and saved hours and days by careful selection of routes and objectives, he relied on speed to arrive suddenly upon a dazed enemy—thus, this feature becoming one that most unsettled the majority of his opponents.

His capacity for work was phenomenal. He took not only the initiative in thought but also attended personally to the detail of every business. According to Octave Aubry, 'Napoleon possessed the greatest personality of all time, superior to all other men of action by virtue of the range and clarity of his intelligence, his speed of decision, his unswerving determination, his acute sense of reality allied to the imagination, on which great minds thrive'. 'He carried with him into battle cool and impassible courage; never was a mind so deeply medidative, more fertile in rapid and sudden illumination'. (General Foy).

The weight of arms and forces against him were overwhelming, consisting of the resources of the British Empire, the command of all the seas, mobilization of all the monarchies in Europe in their struggle to remain in power and the insatiable hunger of the merchants of London to have monopoly of the entire European market.

The struggle against France was to the death; a struggle in which the generalship of Napoleon was

pitted against coalition after coalition. In this, his first asset was unity of command, his second was his insistence upon glory, and not terror, as the driving force of war which suited the spirit of France, and his third was his genius as a general.

'He so completely uprooted the last vestiges of the medieval conception of commonwealth that ever since his day, the nations have groped after his dream of unification'. (Fuller).

'He left great and lasting testimonies to his genius in the codes of laws and national identities which survive to this day'. 'When an achievement lasts so long, and bears such fruit, it provides its own justification'. (Octav Aubry). 'Napoleon will always be regarded as a soldier of genius and the creater of modern Europe'. (David Chandler).

Thus it would be no exaggeration to say that the mind itself is one of the supreme weapons of war. The mind of a people is seen in what it stands for. The mind of a commander manifests itself in a variety of qualities that lead to extraordinary results. And in such cases victories are achieved by intelligible means that can be studied and understood.

Khalid-bin-Walid, in the spring of A.D. 636, had a total strength of 24,000 only when Heracleous sent against him a new army of more than 50,000 with superior equipment and training. Khalid became neither despondent that he had no chance, nor boastful that he would defend every inch of the sacred land. He was in fact a commander in the true sense, a master of tactics. For the lack of his numbers

he wanted to make up with the superiority of more favourable ground. Thus, he hesitated not a moment and fell back immediately, surrendering Damascus, but drawing the enemy after him until he concentrated his own forces South East of the Yarmuk Valley where ultimately he succeeded in cutting the enemy's communications. The result was not a mere defeat but total annihilation of the enemy. History has recorded the battle as decisive.

It was with only 7000 men (agreed by all historians) that Tariq bin Ziyad landed on the coast of Spain at Gibralter in A.D. 711. His strength in the field was insignificant. And what was the potential behind him? Willingness of the North African Governor Musa, yes. But sanction of the Caliph at Damascus, according to some Western writers, had been given grudgingly and for only limited forces to be risked across the seas. But whatever the potential, and whether his burning of the boats is only a legend or not, the fact is that he did not even wait for Musa and the main body to arrive. Speed may have appeared to him the dominating factor in the situation. He hesitated only long enough to fortify the Rock as his base and proceeded westwards along the coast to the valley of the wadi Bekka, (Salado) to meet King Roderic.

Enroute, no one claims that Tariq could have received more than a further 5,000 as reinforcements. Therefore his strength, at maximum, could have been only 12,000. Against him, Roderic's force is said to have been 100,000. Even allowing that some of Roderic's feudal chiefs, because of previous grievan-

ces left the field, the Royal army itself, better equiped and disciplined, was still probably five times more than that of Tariq's. The result, according to both Muslim and western historians, was the total routing of Roderic's army on July 19, and the death of Roderic by drowning.

At Arbela, in 331 B.C., when Alexander decisively crushed Darius, neither his force in the field nor the likelihood of any potential help could possibly have stood any comparison with the Persians. Nor were the Persians, inspite of their lack of homogeneity inferior in training, weapons or courage. And yet the Greek victory was so overwhelming and the Persian casualties so heavy, with 90,000 killed, that some description of the battle is necessary if one is at all to see how such a result could have been brought about.

The Persian force, as drawn up on the battlefield, was over 300,000 infantry and above 40,000 cavalry. In addition it had elephants, and 200 scythe bearing chariots, those terrifying machines that indiscriminately killed and chopped off arms, legs and heads. By levelling the whole ground and removing all obstacles in front, a vast area had been made ready for the chariots in particular and the battle in general.

Against this, Alexander had only 40,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry. For such a handful, the vast Persian array could prove an impregnable wall. But this was not Alexander's way of thinking. What happened, may briefly be stated as follows (with apologies to historians for extreme over-simplification).

After 4 days of rest for his army, then a move to within 3 miles of the Persians, a thorough ascertainment of the enemy dispositions and a ride to survey the entire battle-ground, Alexander deployed in a concentrated formation directly opposite the Persian centre where Darius was. Alexander's formation has since been called a grand hollow square with flying columns at an angle to his wings able to face and fight in all directions.

For reasons of unpredictability he had rejected the idea of a night attack. Instead, he had planned for a decisive blow which needed daylight. Now begining his advance, he started not for the centre directly but at an angle towards the Persian left. Seeing this, Darius marched parallel with him and sent his cavalry in to attack. Several actions and counter actions followed, but Alexander continued his oblique move until he appeared to be going off the edge of the ground that had been specially levelled. Darius, fearing that his chariots would soon become useless, launched them at Alexander to throw him into disorder, but for these Alexander had prepared a shower of arrows and javelins. However when the Persians, with increased strength, rode round his right to stop him, Alexander saw the moment arrive for which he had specially planned. Now placing himself at the head of his cavalry, he wheeled around and charged into the gap in the Persian centre that had been left by the move of their own cavalry, and thus came right on to the key point, Darius himself.

The result has already been stated earlier. Alexander had rightly judged his enemy's reactions,

and it is to Alexander's foresight that historians have credited the victory.

In 216 B.C., in the classic battle of Canae, Hannibal of Carthage faced the Romans, on Roman ground, superior to him both in numbers and potential. Against the Roman 85,000 infantry and 9,700 cavalry, Hannibal had 35,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, It was his superior tactical deployment that brought him victory. His crescent formation, when attacked in the centre, kept giving way before the Roman legions until all were inside and then the ends of the crescent closed behind them. In the words of Polybius, 'The Roman army was swallowed up as if by an earthquake'. The Roman losses were over 50,000 killed and 5,000 prisoners at the cost of less than 6,000 Carthaginians killed and wounded. Of Hannibal it has been said that he was a master of warfare more understanding than Alexander and more effective than Napoleon.

When after 4 years of World War I, in 1919 Turkey lay defeated, with Allied armies occupying Constantinople and the Sultan a mere puppet—Mustafa Kemal revolted. He had only a few regulars and some bands of tribesmen but no transport or artillery. It was only after two years of toil, long retreats and many setbacks at the hands of the Greeks that he was ultimately able, with 80,000 troops, to cut the Greek army in two which broke away in panic. This at last was Kemal's long awaited chance to pursue and destroy the enemy—but now he found between himself and the Greeks, standing the British forces strongly entrenched.

He could not possibly fight the British and he could not let go the one opportunity that would crown his life's work. The step that Kemal now took was unique—such as not, within my knowledge, ever taken before or after him. It was a finely calculated risk. Judging that Britain was tired of the war —he advanced upon the British but with arms visibly reversed. The British troops were bewildered. What were they to do—open fire upon virtually unarmed men? This was a moment of international tension. One shot by either side may have sealed the fate of Turkey. But no one fired. The Turks reached the British barbed wire and began to clamber through it. The British stood up for the charge. But Kemal had judged rightly. At last orders came for stand fast. Armistice followed—and the new Turkey was born.

From all this, we should by now be able to see that war is something more than a comparison of ledgers—and that military preparedness is not an arms race or a continuous expansion of numbers.

Very often the apparent advantages of large armies are more than lost in the increased encumbrances, the larger variations of the operations under the conflicting conduct of different commanders and the greater risk of shortage of provisions and transport etc.

On the other hand the smaller army has greater chances of maintaining mobility—and mobility is considered, by most military thinkers, to be the predominant factor in war. It is the rapidity of move-

ment, ease of manoeuvre and efficient supply that a good commander must seek to achieve.

Medieaval historians had credited Chingiz Khan's extraordinary successes to overwhelming numbers. But fuller knowledge has entirely contradicted this assertion. The empire of the Mongols—the greatest land power that the world has known, which made the empires of Rome and Alexander look insignificant in comparison—was won by quality rather than quantity, by the excellence of their cavalry, by the amazing speed of their moves, by a mobility which is surpassed only now by airborne forces, and by the strategical ability of Chingiz Khan that is matched in history only by that of Napoleon.

The size and type of armed forces of a nation must naturally arise out of its general strategy—and the strategy of a particular nation is to a large extent the outcome of its geographical conditions and its history.

I would, therefore, conclude that with reference to Kashmir, it is our mistaken view of numerical and material comparisons that has so far encouraged Indian intransigence.

No real justification exists for the fear that the struggle of Kashmir to win its freedom will bring war upon us. However, if war does come it will probably be a limited one—but whether it is a limited one or a long one to the bitter end, we, in fact, most certainly do not compare unfavourably with India.

It is highly unlikely that India is in a position to overrun Pakistan, much less to hold it. Her own irremediable internal disunity exposes her to greater dangers in the event of external pressure. War is likely to make us more united—but not India.

It is not my purpose to preach war at all. But it is only by a proper understanding of our relative positions that peace is more likely to be maintained. It does not seem to me that war between India and Pakistan is inevitable or desireable. There can be no doubt that both sides have far more to gain from peace. Both can respect each other's political and territorial integrity but this will come only after a fair plebiscite in Kashmir and a just settlement of the other outstanding disputes.

On our side, it is a principle that we are upholding, namely, the right of self determination. It is because of this principle that the majority of other nations stand by us.

The right of self determination, applied to Kashmir, means that there must be a fair plebiscite in Kashmir. This fair plebiscite is not a matter of a kind promise made by India, it is a matter of a right that the people of Kashmir have won through their struggle, and this right stands recognised by the United Nations.

XIX

THE TRIBESMEN

In concluding this book, some reflection upon the tribesmen would appear to be indicated. Whether they should or should not have gone to Kashmir, is not for me to discuss—but having gone there they have provided us with evidence of their potentialities. That there were regrettable incidents, we must admit, but we know now that they could have been avoided. And having gone there, they shouldered a burden which perhaps would not have been lifted by any one else. For us, the tribesmen were and still are an important factor in the strength of Pakistan.

To appreciate how important this factor might be, we need only take a passing glance at a few of the events in the long and turbulent history of the North West Frontier and its people.

Lying between the Indus and the Durand line, a comparatively small territory containing no particular wealth but forming a barrier across the historic routes between Central Asia and the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, the Frontier belt has probably been the scene of more invasions than any other part of

the world. Today its people bear the imprint of a thousand years of Islam, of many other civilizations, of older tribal traditions, of the rugged rocks among which they live, of the winds of Central Asia that blow across, and of the clatter of arms heard through the centuries.

Somewhere in the dim past, perhaps four thousand years ago, the Aryans from around the upper waters of the Amur, or the Oxus, must have passed through here on their way to India where they displaced and pushed southwards the Dravidians.

Centuries later, in the inscriptions of Darius of Persia, Gandhara, or the Peshawar valley, is mentioned as a satrapy—and Herodotus shows that soldiers from here formed part of Xerxes' army (480 B.C.) wearing cloaks of skin and armed with the bow and dagger—the dagger that is still the weapon of many tribesmen.

In 327 B.C., after overcoming the Persian Empire, Alexander took twelve months to cut his way through the Frontier before crossing the Indus. According to the great Greek historian Herodotus the people of this area were the most warlike in these parts, and they may have formed part of the Persian array at the battle of Gaugemela (331 B.C.). In Herodotus' time the Afridis were apparently then in much the same area as they are now.

Then followed two centuries of the Mauryas, from India, and Buddhism—followed by a century of Graeco—Bactrians, until they gave way to the invasions of the Sakas (beginning about 97 B.C.), coming from Central Asia. With them came the beginnings

of the present Pushtu language, it being considered a compound of a Saka dialect and an older Iranian dialect with borrowings from the Indo-Aryan group.

The Sakas were followed by another horde from beyond the Oxus, the Kushans, Mazdean fire worshippers who later adopted Buddhism (under Kanishka), made Peshawar their capital, opened the trade routes, as far as the Roman Empire, and in whose times flowered the famous arts of Gandhara.

Further invasions continued, Kushans were followed by the Sassanians, and they in turn by the Ephthalites or White Huns, in the fifth century A.D., who added yet another layer to the composition of the Frontier people, and who brought with them the title of Khan which is still in use today.

In 1,000 A.D., came Mahmud of Ghazni, and Islam was universally embraced. With Mahmud started the tide of Pathan infiltration into all parts of India, by Muslim arms.

Chingiz Khan in 1221, and Timur Lang in 1380, swept past the flanks of Waziristan. And about 1450, in the Lodhi period, Pathans began to settle in larger numbers in India, where for three centuries they were to play a prominent role as soldiers, administrators and kings. But in their own homelands on the Frontier, conditions were to remain forever turbulent.

Though the Frontier was to remain part of the Indian Empire, and Peshawar was to be the seat of a Governor from Delhi, the Imperial control was

seldom if ever to be effective far from the Attock-Khyber route—and the tribal areas were still to be the scene of many expeditions, punitive operations and retaliatory uprisings.

In 1520 Babur, on his way to India, spent several years campaigning on the Frontier to make his base secure before proceeding further. And some fifty years later, in 1586-87, his grandson, the Mughal Emperor Akbar, came from Delhi to conduct two major campaigns both of which failed—the first against the Yusafzais in Swat and Buner where 8,000 men and Raja Birbar lost their lives, the second in the Khyber where the Mughals were repulsed by Afridis, Mohmands and Khalils.

In 1620, after Emperor Jehangir's Governor of Kabul, Mohabat Khan, had treacherously put to death 300 Orakzais after inviting them to a feast, the Mughal Commander Ghairat Khan advanced on Tirah where he was killed and his army defeated by Orakzais and Afridis.

Seven years later, in 1627, Emperor Shah Jehan's Governor, Muzaffar Khan, who had slain Ihdad, was in turn attacked by the Afridis and Orakzais under the leadership of Ihdad's widow. Muzaffar Khan fled, and among other things, his ladies also fell into the hands of the tribesmen.

Forty-five years later, in 1672, Emperor Aurangzeb's Governor at Peshawar, Mohammad Amin, led an expedition into the Khyber to punish the tribesmen for retaliating against the Mughal soldiers who had insulted a woman of the Safi tribe. Safis, Mohmands,

and Afridis ultimately wiped out his force. Amin and four others were the sole survivors. Everything else was lost—troops, treasure, elephants and the ladies of the nobles including Mohammad Amin's own wife, mother, sister and daughters.

Two years later, the Mughals suffered further disasters—at Naushehra where the fort was attacked and captured by Khushal Khan Khattak and Aimal Khan Afridi, and in the Khapakh pass where they clashed with the Mohmands.

Another fifty years later, in 1823, in the middle of that eight year period when the Durranis were chasing one another across Peshawar, Kabul and Qandahar—and utter confusion reigned on the Frontier, Ranjit Singh crossed the Indus and won the battle of Naushehra (in N.W.F.P. near Attock) after a long and bitter fight, with his French trained army against the hurriedly collected Yusafzai tribesmen unassisted by Azam Khan the Durrani ruler of Peshawar. Though the Sikhs ravaged the Peshawar valley and destroyed much in the city, they established no stable foothold. In 1837, Hari Singh the Sikh Governor of Peshawar was killed in action. And in 1846, the British reached Peshawar.

In the period of British rule, from 1849 to 1947, they established roads, schools, other institutions and a well organised administration. Even so, it was not a period of peace.

From 1857 to 1881, in 24 years, the British conducted no less than 23 military expeditions against the tribesmen. At Ambela, in 1863, on the borders

of Buner, where Akbar's army had failed, a British force of 6,000 was pinned down on the summit of the pass for six weeks fighting for its life. Though a compromise was arrived at by which the British got their first objective, it was to take yet another thirty years before Swat and Buner were entered.

Between 1891 and 1895, another three expeditions followed, into the Kurram and Malakand. And in 1897-98, operations on a scale larger than ever before followed in Tirah, Bajaur, Swat, Buner and the Mohmand territory.

So far as Waziristan is concerned, there is no record of anyone ever having subjugated it. Probably the British alone penetrated the territory and established forts inside it but even they did not succeed in imposing any taxation.

Large scale operations in Waziristan took place after World War I, stretching from 1919 to 1921. And in these, once again, as before, the tribesmen proved themselves an adequate match for all comers. In the 5 days fighting at the Ahnai Tangi the Mahsuds showed great skill both with the new fire-arms and the traditional swords in hand to hand fighting. The British lost over 2,000 in killed, wounded and missing including 43 officers killed. The tribal losses may have been twice that much—but once again the tribesmen retained their liberty.

In 1935, in the Mohmand territory, and in 1937-1940 again in Waziristan, further operations followed. Thus upto only seven years before the birth of Pakistan some warlike activity continued on the Frontier at

one place or another. And why this was so, has been universally ascribed to the value the tribesmen place upon their liberty and their willingness always to fight for it.

Such are these people who today constitute one factor in our strength; and it was from among them that some went to Kashmir in 1947-48. There, against regular troops, with modern equipment, artillery and aircraft, in strange territory some hundreds of miles away from their homes, with no weapons other than their own rifles and daggers, perhaps no other men would have fought as well as these men did.

There many of them lost their lives, and many more returned home wounded. Their names have not been inscribed on any monument but they have made an appearance in the first chapter of Pakistan's history.. And in the tribal areas,. their widows and relations, as ever before in the long, long centuries past, proudly continue to honour and cherish the memory of their dead.

—:o:—