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Am I Wrong?

A large number of intelligent nationalists, especially young ardent patriots including pledged admirers of mine, if I may ~~xx~~ use such an expression, are puzzled at my proposal that the Indo-Pakistan travail should be ended by a caessarian operation, that is by taking the question of Kashmir governance out of the Pakistan issue surgically, and solving it so that neither India nor Pakistan can gain anything out of it but only the people of Kashmir may obtain their human right to rule themselves as well as they can -- as ever so many less worthy peoples in the present day world have been allowed to do. Indeed I may admit to a feeling that an overwhelming number of intelligent men and women and boys and girls in India are grieved and puzzled at my unpatriotic suggestion that we should give up our political claims over Kashmir.

Emotion and wisdom combined
~~xxx~~ *Patriotism is not just emotion. It is*
Still I feel certain I am right, not only because of Sheik Abdullah or of the people of Kashmir, but because I see India and Pakistan cannot go on as they are going on now without utterly ruining themselves soon, both of them. Take Kashmir out as a live baby and both India and Pakistan can be saved as they deserve to be -- as the civilized and peace loving peoples of the world want them to be.

The forensic arguments based on Pakistan's aggression, the Maharaja's telegraphic accession and Mountbatten's acceptance thereof on behalf of India and Sheik Abdullah's complicity in the arrangement are all correct. Krishna Menon's brilliant marathonic performance, in the United Nations, Chagla's more recent and no less brilliant performance before the same tribunal are flawless performances. I believe I too issued a public statement at that time pressing the same points and claiming Kashmir for India. Yet, I feel today that it is not wise to rely on these points and claim Kashmir as our property, and attack Abdullah with the argument of consistency and seek to force him into silence and submission. We may succeed in doing that, but we shall not solve the Pakistan issue by that means. The threats of re-incarceration aimed at him by the Home Minister and Mr. Chagla have fortunately missed fire. The Prime Minister may be ill but he preserves his balance and has evidently refused to take any such foolish step and degrade India.

We must try and think a bit fundamentally in the present crisis. Are we to yield to the fanaticism^{at emotions} of our anti-Pakistan groups? Is there any hope for India or for Pakistan if we go on hating each other, suspecting each other, borrowing and building up armaments against each other -- building our two houses^{both of us} on the

sands of foreign aid against a future Kurukshetra? We shall
x surely ruin ourselves for ever if we go on doing this and
prove ourselves ^{to have been} ~~as~~ the greatest fools in history. America and
Russia have seen the folly of their armament race. Our cold war
and our armament race based on crushing taxes and blackmailed
gifts and loans from foreign governments are not less ruinous
to us than the Western Cold war has been found to be by the
two blocks therein involved. They do not borrow but waste their
own resources. We have not only to crush our industrious people
with intolerable taxes, and make the lives of all our poor people
miserable by deceptive indirect taxation, but also load our
future generations with heavy interest charges for foreign debts
and mortgage all our future visions of prosperity to clear off
old debts. We shall be making all hopes of prosperity in the
future / a mere mirage if we continue this arms race based on an
ancient grudge and the fears and suspicions flowing from it.

To fight on two fronts, Pakistan and China, was considered
folly. But when Pakistan has begun a gesture of ~~uniting~~ uniting
with China and making a joint front, the folly of keeping two
enemies going is trebled in magnitude. Pakistan is not going
to settle down with China. It just threatens to do it in order to

facilitate its programme of keeping its Western friends in suspense and thereby keeping them in reasonable order. All the same, it would be an impossible adventure for us to go on running an arms race on borrowed resources and crushing taxation for the purpose of defending ourselves against Pakistan and China combined.

We know that if Kashmir is out of the way, there is not much room for quarrelling between Pakistan and India -- not any matters which cannot be solved by routine conferences of officials without any passions being roused or even any ministers taking part.

Aggressor/ certainly Pakistan was and if the United Nations had so adjudged and outlawed Pakistan in 1948 or 1949, the course of history would have been different. But today the plain and the only question is does not the good of India and of the sub-continent as a whole, and indeed of Asia as a whole, as against the dark forces of Communism lie in Indo-Pakistan reconciliation? If one feels sure on this point, one must keep out all other emotions and the hobgoblin of consistency *from confusing our firm conclusion* and solve the travail by letting Sheik Abdulla fight a straight election against such Kashmiri leaders as hold a view different from his and obtain a verdict from the people of Kashmir on the wide basis of adult

suffrage and let Sheik Abdullah win as he is bound to. Pakistan can then have no grievance, or at least it cannot pretend to any reasonable grievance such as could be tolerated and encouraged by the West or even by Communist nations. The cause of peace will triumph and then all borrowing will be for real development and not for suicide. Once we see a basic point clearly and come to a conclusion thereon, we should build further policy on that basis and not confuse ourselves with re-kindled passions or doubts.

I have tried to explain the reason behind my stand. I beg of people, friends as well as people holding on to the skirts of the ruling Congress party, to give to what I have sought to make clear here, some calm thought. I hope ministers will desist from intimidating Sheik Abdullah who has just come out of an unprecedented undertrial period of detention and whose nerves must be under severe tension. He is Sher-e-Kashmir, and will not be easily intimidated. But let us not even try. If the thesis of Indo-Pakistan reconciliation is correct, and if developing a two-front immediacy against ourselves is sheer folly, what I have suggested is the only solution. May wisdom prevail over fanaticism and prejudice.