

To Be or Not To Be: Kashmir Problem And Its Two Architects - Jawaharlal Nehru And Sheikh Abdullah

Little would Jawaharlal Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah know that Kashmir Problem continues to remain unsolved, in fact it has gathered the myth of one of the great unsolved political problems of the last 100 years of the human history. Nehru and Abdullah created the Kashmir Problem but they strongly believed at the time of its creation that it was solvable. Now time has imparted a hallow and mystique to it.

In the beginning was Jawaharlal Nehru, a Kashmiri Pandit, who greatly loved the land of his ancestors for its beauty, history, and the tug of roots it provided to him. By early 30's having become one of the high echelon leaders of Congress, he was in a position to impact the disposition of Kashmir, in the scheme of allocation of the 565 Princely States between the two new nations of India and Pakistan. The vested interest of Nehru was to play an important part in the development of the Kashmir Problem.

Nehru was born in an aristocratic family, so wealthy that they would send some special clothing to France for cleaning. After school and college education in England, he returned to India trained as a lawyer. His seven years of stay in England, at an impressionable age, had a lasting impact on him. His thought process, as well as dreaming, happened in English. Little did his countrymen know that their great leader was quite a bit an Englishman in his thinking and lifestyle. The pursuit of a legal career could not hold Nehru's imagination; so after a short flirtation with it, he jumped into the ongoing movement for the independence of India from its 200 years slavery of Great Britain, under the compelling and enigmatic leadership of Gandhi.

Nehru was a student of history and was attracted to science; he had grown up to become an intellectual. These attributes held poorly against the Indian ethos of religion and mythology; Nehru was an agnostic and never visited temples on his own, except when political situation left no choice. He would complain that his countrymen did not respect facts, that is, facts did not much influence their thinking. Also, he was an idealist. This intellectualism and idealism combination got him into a lot of problems with his fellow political leaders, who operated with conventional wisdom. But he went on to burn his life at the altar of India, first for its independence, then for laying its foundation as a democratic nation. Little do many of his countrymen now remember or know that he was the chief architect of modern India.

Sheikh Abdullah was born in a family of shawl-weavers in Kashmir, in a cultural climate of Sufi humanitarianism; his grandparents were Kashmiri Pandits. His family having discerned in him early on a personality possessed of mental keenness, spared him of the family business, and launched him into an academic pursuit. He went to Government College Lahore and Aligarh Muslim University to obtain a B.A. and an MSc. in Chemistry, respectively. These were considerable achievements for a Kashmiri those days, particularly for a Kashmiri Muslim. He returned to Kashmir in 1930 at the age of 25 and was hired as a teacher in a school. He tried to get a better job, commensurate with his education, but was thwarted in his attempts by the ongoing discrimination against Muslims under the Dogra reign. Unable to accept his and Muslims' condition as a fait accompli, he launched a civil disobedience movement for a constitutional and responsible government, which looked after all its constituents and not only after selected ones, which included generationally poor landless peasants. Only born leaders can defy circumstances and risks on their lives to confront authorities, that too which have absolute power, like Maharaja Hari Singh had.

Abdullah's party that launched the revolution against Maharaja Hari Singh came to be called Muslim Conference, which was instituted in 1932. Abdullah's towering physical personality (6' 1"), his mellifluous and fiery oratory, his

revolutionary ideas, quickly turned him into a leader of stature, unlike anyone seen in Kashmiri history. His main fight was for the poor landless peasants, who were mostly Muslims, working on Dogra owned lands, and for uniformity of the laws of the land for all the people, and for the responsibility of the government for the welfare of its people. His renown spread all over India. While Kashmir was going through its revolution against Maharaja, India was already on that path over a much longer time against Britain. Abdullah learnt a lot from the latter. He felt strongly attracted to Congress because of its secular and idealistic policies. He stated that ,”....people of Kashmir may attain their freedom in the larger freedom of India.” He also believed his working class movement was above any communalism. He exhorted, “We must end communalism by ceasing to think in terms of Muslims and non-Muslims.” With the advice of some people in Congress, but with the displeasure of Muslim League, in 1939 he changed the name of Muslim Conference to National Conference. When Congress launched Quit India movement, Abdullah launched Quit Kashmir movement.

Abdullah met Nehru in mid-1930's in Lahore and was immediately attracted to him on account of his idealism, keenness of mind, honorable demeanor, and personal magnetism. Nehru's being a Kashmiri was another factor of his hero worship for him. Together with Gandhi, Nehru provided quite a pull for Abdullah to throw Kashmir's lot with Congress, rather than with Muslim League. Besides the pull of the great personalities, he believed that Pakistan's strongest attraction for Kashmir to join it was that it was a Muslim state but he wanted secularism, which Congress was strongly advocating for India. Also, Pakistan would be protecting feudalism and landlordism, fighting which was the *raison d'être* of his revolution against the Dogra rule in Kashmir.

Nehru's attraction for Abdullah lay in the kind of revolution he was spearheading in Kashmir for the benefit of the peasants and the common people, against the supreme power of a monarch. It was similar to what he was doing for India, only at a larger scale. Abdullah was only 27 when he ignored the risks to his personal life, inherent in such an undertaking. Furthermore, Nehru learnt about Abdullah's hero worship even in the remotest villages of Kashmir. He realized that his sobriquet Sher-i-Kashmir (Lion-Of-Kashmir) was apt. This was the kind of stuff

that appealed to Nehru's heart and mind. They became personal friends.

Ever since the enunciation of the Two Nation Theory by Mohammed Jinnah, also known as Lahore Resolution, in 1940, which proclaimed that India was not a unitary nation, but consisted of two nations, one comprising Muslims and the other Hindus, Nehru had been anxiously watching Abdullah's revolution in Kashmir. This was because the heterogeneous composition of the state: Hindu king ruling a predominantly Muslim state, had the huge potential of creating problems at the partition of India. He knew his friend Abdullah was secular but he also knew the Muslim League, and the future Pakistan, would not like to lose Kashmir from its fold. Nehru's mind worked ahead of many other Indian political leaders in the uncertainty that was inherent in the situation of Kashmir.

In 1946 when Abdullah was arrested by Ram Chander Kak, Kashmir's Prime Minister, Nehru went to Srinagar to give him legal as well as moral support. He stated, "There can be no peace in Kashmir unless Sheikh Abdullah is released." Since Maharaja wanted to incarcerate Abdullah no matter what, he was. But to send a message to Maharaja, Nehru appointed Abdullah President of All-India States' Peoples' Conference, a body dealing with the people's affairs of the Indian states.

On June 3, 1947, Mountbatten announced that Britain had decided to divide India into two nations, India and Pakistan. A few of the 565 Princely States, which occupied about a quarter of India, posed a problem in their being awarded to one or the other new nation, in that they had a heterogeneous composition: their kings and the majority of the people living in them were of different religious orientations. They were Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir. In Junagadh and Hyderabad the kings were Muslims but the people were Hindus. India argued strongly that it must be the people's choice that must decide which nation, India or Pakistan, they must join and based on that made a considerable effort for them to join it. But at the time of the partition of India into India and Pakistan, in August, 1947, the alignment of these states was still uncertain. Kashmir was the third largest Princely State, after Hyderabad and Mysore.

Obviously, Nehru had to maintain a uniform principal in fighting for the Princely States that had heterogeneous compositions. In Kashmir, unlike Junagadh and Hyderabad, the king was a Hindu but the people were Muslims. Prima fascia, it should have gone to Pakistan but what made the situation exceptional was the role of Kashmiri people's supreme leader Sheikh Abdullah. He was staunchly for India and had clear-cut reasons for rejecting Pakistan.

After the June 3, 1947 declaration of Britain to partition India, Jammu and Kashmir Government and those connected with it were thrown into a flurry of activities and all eyes were glued to it. Maharaja Hari Singh deliberately withheld his choice to join either India or Pakistan. This caused a great anxiety in Nehru, who knew a delay in Kashmir's choice would embolden Pakistan to lay claim on it. He wanted Maharaja to release Abdullah immediately so that the latter could tell the world that Kashmiris wanted to be with India and not with Pakistan. He wanted to go to Kashmir to help his case but Kashmir government did not allow him to do that. Frustrated, he asked Mountbatten to go to Kashmir to persuade Maharaja to release Abdullah and also gave him a 28 paragraph brief on Kashmir, written by him, to be given to Maharaja. In the brief Nehru pointed out that Abdullah was the preeminent leader of Kashmir, who was backed by National Conference for Kashmir's accession to India. So, freeing him from jail now would settle the matter of accession to India easily and that the alternative of Maharaja's joining Pakistan would bring him a lot of problems.

Mountbatten went to Kashmir to meet Maharaja between June 18 and June 23, 1947. He told him to take a decision to join either India or Pakistan immediately, but Maharaja remained non-committal. But asked Mountbatten his opinion on Kashmir becoming independent. Mountbatten replied that he though Britain would not support it. He gave Patel's message to Maharaja that even if he opted for Pakistan, India would honor it. He also told him to have a Standstill Agreement with both India and Pakistan in the interim. Pursuing hard for Maharaja to make a commitment to join either of the two nations, but Maharaja's evasiveness pushed Mountbatten to the last day of his visit. The last day, June 23,

1947, came without any meeting taking place, as Maharaja pretended to have had an attack of colic. If Maharaja had not pretended to have colic and committed Kashmir, to either India or Pakistan, Kashmir Problem would not have existed.

On July 5, 1947 Indian government created two new departments called States Depts., one each for the new nations of India and Pakistan, which were to be born shortly, to facilitate the absorption of 566 Princely States between them. Patel was head of the India States Dept. So, getting Kashmir into Indian fold was his task. But as we have come to know, he was not for Kashmir's accession to India, as he did not have a lot of confidence in Abdullah and Kashmiri Muslims in this matter. He did not even respond to Maharaja's request for a Standstill Agreement. But history has shown that he was right. Because of Patel's coolness to the integration of Kashmir with India, invaluable time was lost in Maharaja's procrastination to accede to India and freeing Abdullah from the jail. Here was a study in contrast: Nehru thinking Kashmir was an asset to India and doing everything necessary to acquire it, Patel considering Kashmir a liability and therefore giving a short shrift to it. (Patel was considered having the necessary ingredients to influence Maharaja). Nehru wrote a letter to Patel on Sept. 27, 1947 (after India's independence, when Nehru was the Prime Minister) telling him his office had received information that Pakistan was making preparations to invade Kashmir. Pushed by his boss, Patel made Maharaja to free Abdullah two days after he received the letter. But nothing more happened from the Indian side for the next three weeks, when Pakistan attacked Kashmir on October 22, 1947. After release from the jail, Abdullah issued a statement, "I never believed in the Pakistan slogan....Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is my best friend and I hold Gandhiji in real reverence." He went to Delhi and stayed with his friend, Nehru. If Patel had acted with passion and persuaded Maharaja to accede to India before Pakistan's attack, there would have been no Kashmir Problem.

Seeing Maharaja's vacillation and India's indifference to Kashmir, Pakistan attacked Kashmir on Oct. 22, 1947, with a camouflage of tribesmen, giving birth to Kashmir Problem. If Maharaja had signed the Instrument Of Accession before the attack, there would have been no Kashmir Problem. Once having been caught red handed with its hand in the cookie jar, Pakistan without any feeling of guilt or

embarrassment, proclaimed that Kashmir belonged to it, by virtue of its believing that Kashmiris (96% of whom that time were Muslims) wanted to join Pakistan rather than India. But the irony is that when Pakistan attacked Kashmir, they had believed Kashmiris would lend them support and make the takeover of Kashmir easy, which did not happen,, because they preferred India.

Pakistan's attack on Kashmir forced India to act, as Maharaja signed the Instrument Of Accession, and sent an SOS to Mountbatten to send Indian military help to thwart the invaders, as they were just a few miles away from his palace. Mountbatten strongly recommended the new Indian government to help Kashmir. Nehru considered the request coolly and thought that if the help were not provided, there would be a bloodbath in Kashmir, that would unleash mayhem all over India. Also, he thought he had to honor his friend Abdullah's request (who agreed with Maharaja's request for the Indian military help) to save the honor of his people. In Nehru's eyes Pakistan's attack on Kashmir was a barbaric violation of its sovereignty, which India must help Kashmir with, but there was no intention in it for India to stay on there. So, in spite of Maharaja's signing the Instrument Of Accession, Nehru believed that after the Pakistan's attack was vacated, it was for the people of Kashmir to decide which of the two nations they wanted to accede to. It was a very flawed thinking on part of Nehru, as he had the Instrument Of Accession and Abdullah in his pocket; he did not need anything more. The idea of holding a plebiscite after Pakistan was repulsed beyond the Kashmir border was preposterous, as at that point Kashmiri Muslims did not want to be with Pakistan; they wholly supported their leader Abdullah on this. Nehru's blunder was encouraged by Mountbatten, who independently thought of the plebiscite, and it was not opposed by Patel or any other cabinet member. What was he thinking when he came with the idea? Obviously, he was thinking of Junagadh and Hyderabad. He wanted to be consistent with the position India had taken on them, in that people's wishes had to be taken into consideration when dealing with the Princely States with a heterogeneous composition, when their kings and people had different religious orientations. But where was the doubt about Kashmiri Muslims' preference in accession? The proviso attached to the Instrument of Accession, referring to holding a plebiscite after the vacation of Pakistani attack and restoration of law and order in Kashmir, has created huge problems for India. Here was Nehru, keen on getting Kashmir in India's fold, but

blundering terribly at the point of realizing his cherished goal.

Within twenty four hours of the signing of the Instrument Of Accession by Maharaja on Oct. 26, 1947, India launched Operation JAK, mobilizing an emergency force, comprising several hundred planes, and sending it to Kashmir. It thwarted Pakistani forces, when they were at the brink of entering Srinagar. On Oct. 30, 1947 Maharaja appointed Abdullah as the Head Of Emergency Administration. After first denying complicity in the Kashmir attack, claiming it was purely a tribal invasion to stem the ongoing mistreatment of Muslims in Kashmir, Pakistan, later, when positive proofs of its masterminding of and participating in the attack were presented, confessed to its evil deed. The first meeting between India and Pakistan on the war was held on Nov.1, 1947, at Lahore. India offered the plebiscite, but shocking as it is to believe it today, Jinnah rejected it. Mountbatten's suggestion to have the plebiscite under U.N. was also rejected. Pakistan had made attempts to bring Abdullah to its side before the war. In Mid-Sept., 1947 it sent people to contact National Conference. In Oct. Abdullah sent Sadiq twice to meet the Pakistani Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan. The message from Abdullah was clear, that Pakistan should not force Kashmir to join it. Abdullah made the following statement on Oct. 31, 1947 "I ...request Mr. Jinnah to accept the democratic principle of the sovereignty of our State, including as it does 78 per cent Muslims, whose free and unhampered choice must count in the matter of final accession." In other words, Abdullah was telling Pakistan that Kashmiri people had decided to throw their lot with India.

As the war continued in Kashmir, stories of the large-scale killing of non-Muslims and selling of Kashmiri girls reached Delhi, triggering intense reaction from many members of the Indian cabinet. They asked for an all out military punch to oust Pakistani and tribal attackers from Kashmir. But the military command, which still comprised of Britons at the top, after due deliberation, concluded that it was not feasible to do so. The reasons for that are not clear. It is said that Mountbatten had a role to influence military's decision, as he thought that all out war between the two recently formed nations would unleash a large scale bloodbath, which would destabilize the entire subcontinent, which was against the British interest. Mountbatten counseled Nehru that India must take the case

to U.N., an inexperienced organization at that point, which had been formed only in 1945. For Nehru, inclined to be a pacifist and an internationalist, it was a good idea. So, India went to U.N. with the problem of the unresolved Kashmir war, with an offer, unbelievably, of a plebiscite. Pakistan neither wanted to go to U.N. nor did it want to have a plebiscite. Going to U.N., as we understand now, was the second major blunder Nehru committed about Kashmir. It is said that Patel, who was said to have been a lot more practical person than Nehru was, went along with the decision to go to U.N.

Just before Mountbatten left India for good, on April 21, 1948, he made one last attempt to resolve the Kashmir Problem: he proposed a partition of Kashmir, which Nehru accepted but Pakistan rejected.

Abdullah became the Prime minister of Kashmir on March 3, 1948; a crowning milestone in the life of a revolutionary, who set himself to overthrow its monarchy 16 years earlier. But being a revolutionary and being a Prime Minister are two different things. The difference is from being in a state of passion to a state in which one looks at things coolly. Abdullah's disenchantment with India began. It is not well understood what exactly caused it but it is thought he saw the signs of communalism developing in India, and his friend Nehru losing his backbone to fight it. Gandhi's assassination is said to have confirmed Abdullah's worst fears. As Abdullah's heart was cooling toward India, he tried to resolve the problem he was going to put Kashmir into. Since he did not want to be a part of Pakistan, because of its backward approach to the role of religion in the governance of a state, treatment of the poor peasants, and the evil attack it launched on Kashmir, that left only independence of Kashmir to resolve the problem. But nobody knew better than him how difficult it was to have that. He had many times in the past considered it and then rejected it due to the practical reasons. He had publicly stated that an Eastern Switzerland could not be created due to its being geopolitically unfeasible.

But Abdullah, in spite of his understanding that an independent Kashmir was impractical, could not let go of his dream. He was in a "to be or not to be"

Hamletian state of mind. His meeting of some foreigners: Mrs. Loy Henderson, wife of U.S. Ambassador to India, some CIA agents, Sir Owen Dixon (U.N. Rep.), and Adlai Stevenson (two time U.S. presidential candidate) was interpreted by Indian intelligence to be his exploration of Kashmir's independence. On July 13, 1953 he said, "Kashmir should have sympathy of both India and Pakistan..." His statements and behavior with his colleagues and talks with Indian leaders, lead to his arrest, removal from his office, and jail on August 9, 1953. This was very hard for his friend Nehru, who had to authorize it. He had written to his sister Vijaylaxmi Pandit, sometime earlier, in context of Abdullah's behavior, "The most difficult thing in life is what to do with one's friends."

In August, 1953, after Abdullah's removal from Kashmir Prime Ministership and his jailing, Nehru met Pakistan's Prime Minister Mohammad Ali in Delhi and once again proposed a plebiscite to settle the Kashmir Problem, but with only one condition that Admiral Nimitz, the U.S. envoy to U.N., not be made the chief Plebiscite Administrator. This is because Nehru did not trust super powers like U.S. in this matter; instead, he proposed that someone from a smaller country be put in that position. But Pakistan, always diffident of winning a plebiscite, up to that time, made Nimitz's appointment a condition for the plebiscite. This was the last time when Nehru proposed a plebiscite to Pakistan. After Kashmir Assembly, on February 15, 1954, under the leadership of Bakshi, voted Kashmir's accession to India, Nehru believed that no plebiscite was needed, as the people had spoken.

So started the bizarre twist in the life of Kashmir's most ardent supporter of alliance with India. He was intoxicated by his dream of an independent Kashmir, whose emperor he would be. Practical difficulties of doing that, which had visited his mind several times, were swept aside by the intensity of his fantasy. He went on to spend some 13 years in Indian prisons. Did he have remorse for his actions, nobody knows? People like Abdullah, people of intense passion, never doubt their passion. His friend Nehru, who had to authorize the first two segments of his sentence, amounting to about 10 years, may not have been fully convinced about Abdullah's illegal activities, but he had no way of refuting the evidence his colleagues had collected against him. But as Kashmir Conspiracy case launched against Abdullah and others by the government was not brought to the court for

several years, Nehru's conscience was bothered for the continued incarceration of his friend. (While the Kashmir Conspiracy case was later withdrawn for want of strong legal weight, nobody has any doubt that Abdullah's political misbehavior demanded his removal from his office). Abdullah was released on April 8, 1964. Right after his release from the prison he was the guest of honor at his friend's residence. It is incredible how a person who was punished by 10 years of jail for his illegal activities by the government, could right after his release be the guest of honor at the home of the head of the government. It shows the unusually idealistic nature of Nehru. In his mind, in spite of Abdullah's mistakes, he was still a good man and good for the solution of the Kashmir Problem, and sent him to see Pakistan's President Yahaya Khan, with a proposal of launching a confederation of India, Pakistan, and Kashmir (an idea developed by Abdullah). Nehru obviously believed Pakistan had a role to play in the solution of the Kashmir Problem. Yahaya Khan rejected the proposal out of hand. Nehru died on May 27, 1964 and Abdullah publically cried for him.

Abdullah was rearrested on May 5, 1965, after Nehru's death, for communicating with China and Pakistan on Kashmir's independence, while he was abroad attending a conference. He spent another two and a half years in prison, being freed on December 8, 1967. Throughout his time in prison, starting in 1953, and out of it, before he regained his political office, he acted as the leader-in-exile for the Kashmiri Muslims who were disillusioned with India and were either seeking to accede to Pakistan or become an independent nation. He resurrected the bogey of plebiscite to his full advantage. It was his hidden as well as an open weapon against India. He was a staunch ally of India until he got the political power of Prime Ministership; after that his loyalty to India slowly eroded. Throughout his years of revolt against Maharaja and until sometime after he became the Prime Minister, he had no doubt that there was no necessity of a plebiscite, as he and his people were fully for the accession to India. After he was released from jail on September 29, 1947, he went to Delhi and met Nehru. Coming to know that Nehru was thinking of requiring holding a plebiscite a condition of Kashmir's accession to India, he told him that it was absolutely unnecessary.

Abdullah was made of steel, which was provided by his powerful ego, passionate

nature, and religious zeal. Martyrdom appealed to him; but he did not care for principles or consistency. He knew his place was secure in the folklore of Kashmir and its history. In 1975 he reached a closely negotiated settlement with Indira Gandhi and became the Chief Minister Of Kashmir for the next seven years, dying on September 8, 1982, while in that position. During this period he renounced the dreams of independence and therefore of plebiscite. But by his unleashing of the genie of plebiscite, and playing with it for a decade and a half, he corrupted the psychology of Kashmiri Muslims' faith in India forever.

Nehru's idealistic streak made him commit blunders about Kashmir. In the beginning he thought that the requirement of plebiscite in Kashmir was necessary, even though Abdullah had assured him that there was no need for it, so that he could show Pakistan and the rest of the world that India was not usurping Kashmir but on the contrary Kashmiris were acceding to India in full volition and without fear. He would have seen to it that such a plebiscite was conducted but with Pakistan's attack on Kashmir the conditions for such a process taking place had changed, making its feasibility impossible. With one third of Kashmir under Pakistan how could a plebiscite be held? Even if it were held, Pakistan would not accept its expected results of favoring India, on the ground that the intimidation of Indian army toward the people made the result intrinsically biased. When U.N. Resolution 47, on April 47, 1948, required Pakistan to withdraw its military from Kashmir for the plebiscite to take place, it did not comply. Nehru's idea of continuing to offer plebiscite to Pakistan even beyond this point was that he wanted to be transparent, and he had nothing to be worried about, as he knew the results would favor India. But since there were practical difficulties of holding a plebiscite, he should have withdrawn the plebiscite card. By keeping it in circulation as long as he did, he created a psychology of uncertainty among Kashmiri Muslims, as they saw their leader Abdullah's bond with India loosen. Similar idealistic thinking on part of Nehru took him to U.N., after Indian military high command, in 1947, decided against an all-out attack on Pakistan. Nehru could have waited a little longer and let the British generals heading the Indian military that time leave India, and then have his way. By internationalizing the problem, he gave Pakistan and Kashmiri Muslims a card to play, even though it was blank.

Nehru's continued faith in Abdullah, even after he was jailed for 10 years for exploring the independence of Kashmir, was another practical error he committed. Abdullah, he should have known by then, was not fully loyal to India, as he had another agenda for Kashmir in his mind.

Holding a plebiscite in Kashmir, since it was first offered by Mountbatten and Nehru, in the Instrument Of Accession, that was signed by Maharaja Hari Singh, on Oct. 26, 1947, has remained a mirage. For more than a decade and a half Pakistan rejected it, because it feared its verdict. Later when Abdullah started dreaming of independence, Pakistan thought that it would favor it. Whatever double-minded thinking Kashmiri Muslims might have had about Pakistan in 70's through 90's, it is over by now. People have been turned off by Pakistan's weakness as a government and a society. Elections in Kashmir have repeatedly been in favor of politicians leaning toward India. The British poll last year, conducted by Royal Institute Of International Affairs and Kings College indicated that only 2% Kashmiri Muslims would like to accede to Pakistan. Since Musharaff's presidency of Pakistan, it has withdrawn plebiscite as a requirement to solve the Kashmir Problem. Its raison d'être for having Kashmir now is that it belongs to Pakistan because of its Muslim majority.

Here were two persons, Nehru and Abdullah, both passionate and willful leaders, both intensely loving Kashmir. But one was an intellectual, an idealist; the other was a dreamer, soft on principles, opportunistic. The bad decisions of both of them on Kashmir have woven a fabric studded with pain, strife, distrust, bad dreams, and uncertainty, which continues to make the life of Kashmiris, both Muslims and Hindus, who live inside Kashmir and outside it, stained with sorrow.

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