

1

Impasse at the United Nations

Before the 1947 partition of India, few Americans knew or cared about the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Tucked away in the high western Himalayas, Kashmir, as it was commonly called, was an amalgam of territories widely varied in language, culture, religion, ethnicity, and economic development. Its disparate regions had been cobbled together by the dynastic ambitions of the state's rulers abetted by British imperial design. In the first half of the nineteenth century, these maharajas, Hindus of the Dogra ethnic group based in the Jammu area of the state, had with British backing created one of the largest states in Britain's Indian empire. Situated along India's border with China, touching Afghanistan, and close to the Central Asian regions of Czarist Russia and, later, the Soviet Union, it was also one of the most strategically placed.

What little American interest there was in Kashmir before rival Indian and Pakistani claims brought the state to international attention in late 1947 was confined to occasional private visitors. A handful of traders came to the state to purchase carpets, papier mâché, and other handicrafts for export to the U.S. market. American missionary activity was limited; the state was the preserve of mainly British church groups. A few American tourists interested in exotic places and wealthy enough to get to them visited the state. During World War II, U.S. servicemen operating in the China-Burma-India theater went to Kashmir on leave to lounge on houseboats and get away from the heat and dust of the Indian plains. Some of these boats still carry names, like the Mae West, that recall that era. But none of this limited exposure made

any serious, lasting impact. As the British prepared to wind up their sub-continental raj and leave in its place the independent dominions of India and Pakistan, ignorance of Kashmir remained profound among U.S. officials and the American public.

The United States kept careful watch as the British negotiated with the contending Indian political parties—the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League—about the form India would take when it became independent. American diplomats stayed in frequent contact with British officials and Indian political leaders. The United States fully supported British efforts to bring about a peaceful transfer of power on the basis of a federally united India rather than its partition into two separate states, as the Muslim League called for in its demand for a sovereign Pakistan comprising areas where Muslims were a majority. As these efforts failed and partition became increasingly likely, Washington strongly opposed any further breakup of the country and instructed American officials to be careful to avoid doing anything that might suggest otherwise.¹ This opposition to the balkanization of the subcontinent, which remained U.S. policy after India and Pakistan became independent in August 1947, led Washington to resist calls for support from advocates of a separate status for Kashmir and other areas unhappy with their lot within the Indian Union.

As they prepared to quit India, the British gave the rulers of the 565 Indian princely states the right to decide whether they wished to accede to India or to Pakistan. They encouraged these rulers to make their choice on the basis of the religious composition of their people and the contiguity of their states to India or Pakistan. With the lapse of British “paramouncy” over them, the princely states could theoretically remain outside both dominions. But the British strongly urged the rulers to avoid that option and told them they could not look to the crown for protection and support if they went it alone.

This formulation for the end of empire put Hari Singh, the autocratic maharaja of Kashmir, in a position that was unique, tempting, and fateful. A Hindu, he ruled a state with a large Muslim majority. His domains bordered both India and future Pakistan. Moreover, the most popular political party in the state, the secular National Conference led by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, was aligned with the Indian Congress Party and favored accession to India. Despite the machinations of Congress leaders urging him to accede

to India and senior Muslim League figures calling for Kashmir to become part of Islamic Pakistan, the maharaja avoided making a choice. He had still not done so when the British raj ended.

Kashmir remained independent for more than two tumultuous months. The political situation in the state became increasingly unstable. Unrest among demobilized Muslim soldiers of the old British Indian Army angered by the maharaja's discriminatory, anti-Muslim policies soon turned into an armed uprising. With sympathetic help from across the Pakistan border, the rebellion spread to large areas in the heavily Muslim-majority districts in the southwestern part of the state. In the Jammu area in the southeast, where Hindus and Sikhs formed a majority, many Muslims were killed or forced to flee. The Kashmir Valley alone remained fairly quiet, though it was wracked by intrigue as contending Kashmiri, Indian, and Pakistani politicians and their agents sought to influence developments. Among them was Abdullah, whom the maharaja let free from his detention for political agitation against the state government.

Hari Singh's hand was forced in late October when a large contingent of tribal fighters from the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan invaded Kashmiri territory. Pakistani and Indian interpretations of what happened differ sharply. The Pakistanis maintain that reports of atrocities committed against Muslims in the state impelled the tribesmen to come to their rescue. The Indians claim that Pakistani authorities instigated the invasion and gave it material support.

As the tribesmen swept aside state forces and advanced toward Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital, the maharaja sent an urgent appeal for help to the Indian government. The sequence of events from the time the maharaja asked for this assistance to the airlifting of Indian troops to Srinagar airport three days later has been a subject of continuing debate.² What is most important and beyond dispute is that the Indian government told Hari Singh it could protect the state only if Kashmir became part of India. With the tribals already in control of the northwestern part of the Kashmir Valley and heading for Srinagar against limited opposition, the maharaja signed the accession document. In formally accepting it on behalf of the government of India, Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy of the British India Empire and, since the transfer of power, the first governor general of independent

India, famously declared: “[I]t is my Government’s wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invader the question of the State’s accession should be settled by reference to the people.”

In the two months following the maharaja’s accession to India, senior Indian and Pakistani leaders conferred, shot off angry cables, and issued statements denouncing one another’s actions and proposals. Britain became involved through a series of messages Prime Minister Clement Attlee exchanged with Jawaharlal Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan, his Indian and Pakistani counterparts. The British were understandably concerned about the possibility of all-out war between the two newest members of the commonwealth and believed they had an important stake in heading it off. The U.S. government followed the situation closely but played no role.

When these negotiations failed to make progress, reports reached Washington that India was considering referring the issue to the United Nations. Although the United States preferred that the Indians and Pakistanis resolve the problem by direct negotiations and was at best lukewarm to internationalizing the issue, it eventually decided to support the idea of a resolution requesting the United Nations to supervise a referendum in Kashmir if the draft of such a resolution was introduced by India or Pakistan and supported by Britain.³ Concern that the problem might be dumped on the United States if the United Nations did not intervene helped prompt Washington to adopt this approach.⁴ But U.S. policymakers worried that Indian recourse to the United Nations without a prearranged plan in place might lead to unnecessary complications and crystallize a pattern of India-Pakistan hostility.⁵ Events would prove this concern amply justified.

On New Year’s Day 1948, India requested the UN Security Council to ask the Pakistan government to prevent Pakistani civil and military personnel from participating in the invasion of Kashmiri territory or helping the intruders. The Indians made this request under Article 35 of Chapter 6 of the UN Charter, which calls on the council to recommend “appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment” for the pacific settlement of disputes. They did not cite Chapter 7, which deals with acts of aggression.

When the Kashmir dispute landed on the UN's doorstep, the world organization had only recently entered its third year. With only fifty-seven member states, it was much smaller and less diverse than it is today. The United States, which had been the driving force in establishing the organization in 1945, led the Western bloc, by far its largest group. The Communist bloc headed by the Soviet Union was much smaller. There were only a handful of Asian and African members. The great wave of third world countries whose membership dramatically changed the United Nations' composition and center of gravity in coming decades was just beginning. Independent India had inherited the seat of the British India Empire and was thus considered a founding member.⁶ Pakistan was voted in soon after partition.

Although developments in the two years after the United Nations was formed had underscored its limited effectiveness in resolving or managing the growing confrontation between the Western and Communist blocs, Washington believed that the Kashmir issue, which was not then connected with the gathering cold war, was the kind of dispute that the United Nations could handle well. It seemed tailor-made for the fledgling organization's role as a crisis manager and problem solver. As the British historian Alastair Lamb has written, the dispute was seen in many quarters as a crucial experiment in the use of international mediation to settle quarrels between nations.⁷

In dealing with Kashmir at the United Nations and elsewhere, American diplomats worked closely with their British colleagues. Washington recognized that as the former imperial power and leader of the commonwealth, Britain was much more familiar than it was with South Asia. The British had close ties to Indian and Pakistani leaders, with whom they had negotiated the transfer of power just a few months earlier. The command positions that senior British officers continued to hold in the Indian and Pakistani armed forces strengthened London's awareness of South Asian military and political developments and its capacity to influence them.

This American deference pleased the British. Following a meeting with a U.S. embassy colleague in New Delhi as the Kashmir issue reached the United Nations, a British diplomat cabled London: "This is the first occasion on which we have been consulted formally by the American embassy and it may well provide a useful precedent."⁸ At a higher level, Lord Inverchapel, the British ambassador in Washington, adopted an almost condescending tone

toward American policymakers in informing the Commonwealth Office of his consultations with them: “We have been maintaining daily contact with the State Department on [Kashmir] and since they themselves admitted that they were short of background information have shown them freely material which you have prepared and kept them informed of your thoughts. In this way we have I think been able to help them in the briefing of the U.S. delegation at New York and to exercise some influence over the formulation of their policy.”⁹

Washington’s willingness to follow the British lead was exemplified on the eve of India’s introduction of the Kashmir issue at the United Nations when the State Department, at London’s request, sent a message to the Indian government urging it not to take provocative action. The department sent a similar message—which the British had *not* requested—to the Pakistanis.¹⁰ When Howard Donovan, the U.S. chargé d’affaires, called on Nehru to convey American concern, the prime minister assured him that the Indian government had no intention of taking any steps against the government of Pakistan that would cause the situation to deteriorate further.¹¹ In Karachi, Chargé d’Affaires Charles W. Lewis Jr. received similar assurances from the Pakistanis.¹²

But at this early stage, the British apparently saw consultation as a one-way street. At a session of senior American officials dealing with South Asia held in Washington in late December, Henry Grady, the ambassador to India, told his colleagues: “The British have been friendly, but have made no attempt [in India] to consult with us on common problems or to ask our advice.” In Ambassador Grady’s view, the British were not happy with the strong position the United States enjoyed in India.¹³

Washington, the U.S. mission to the United Nations, and the American embassies in New Delhi and Karachi became deeply involved in the Kashmir issue once the Indians lodged their complaint. The point man for American efforts was Warren R. Austin, a former Republican senator from Vermont whom President Truman had named U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations in 1946. Guidance the State Department sent Austin a week before the Security Council began discussing Kashmir pre-saged the solution the United Nations would try to implement in this first phase of its efforts to resolve the dispute: “[T]he only solution acceptable

to all parties concerned in the Kashmir problem will eventually be a determination, probably by plebiscite, of the wishes of the inhabitants of Jammu and Kashmir . . . , taking into account the possibility that some form of partition may be proposed. . . .”

The department told Ambassador Austin that although an effective solution required joint India-Pakistan action and cooperation, that should not preclude the Security Council’s establishing machinery for observation and conciliation. The British should be assured that Washington wanted them to take the lead at the United Nations “insofar as it is reconcilable with the U.S. position.” But the United States might sometimes have to get out in front when the “peculiar position Britain occupies vis-à-vis India and Pakistan” made it advisable for London to take a less prominent role.¹⁴

Some Indian commentators maintain that in dealing with the Kashmir issue, the Attlee government, and especially Philip Noel-Baker, its secretary of state for commonwealth relations, were consistently pro-Pakistan. In this view, London saw Pakistan as an important piece in its strategic calculations for South, Southeast, and East Asia following the windup of the raj.¹⁵

There is no convincing evidence, however, that Washington’s willingness to defer to the British at this early stage was influenced by a shared partiality for Pakistan or an interest in the strategic role the Pakistanis could play in promoting Western objectives in South Asia and beyond. These factors would figure five years later, when Washington developed an alliance relationship with Karachi. They did not in 1947–48, a period in which the United States consistently rejected out of hand Pakistan’s interest in developing such close ties. The Pakistanis, for their part, cited alleged Soviet activities in Kashmir to bolster their case with Americans. The governor general of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, warned Ambassador Paul Alling in March 1948 that Soviet agents were operating in Gilgit in the Pakistan-occupied northern part of the state.¹⁶

The limits to American willingness to accept British tutelage on Kashmir became evident when Noel-Baker and Lord Ismay, his principal adviser, hurried to the United States a few weeks after the issue reached the Security Council in a bid to influence the position Washington would take there. The British officials urged Robert Lovett, the American under secretary of state, to accept their proposal that the council itself work out a plan for stopping the fighting that would place Kashmir under UN control pending

the holding of a plebiscite. The plan would include UN appointment of a neutral commander for all Indian and Pakistani troops in Kashmir and the division of the state into zones of military occupation, the Pakistanis in the north, the Indians in the south, and a mixed force of Indians and Pakistanis plus 1,000 international troops in the Valley. Noel-Baker and Ismay thought the end result might be “some kind of partition between Muslim and Hindu majority areas.” They looked to the United States to take the lead in promoting this approach.

Lovett was cool to the British proposal, which he surely knew would have been unacceptable to the Indians had it been introduced at the United Nations. He claimed that the United States was too preoccupied with its commitments in Western Europe to play the role the British wished to assign it. Moreover, Lovett said, American involvement might prompt Soviet attention and make a solution more difficult. He also recalled that recent U.S. experience with the Indians and Pakistanis in the Security Council had not been promising. The British, in the U.S. view, “were perhaps setting their sights too high as to what could be done in a short time in the Council.”¹⁷ The British ruefully recognized that they had struck out.¹⁸ In a subsequent message to Austin, the State Department again asserted that it wished to cooperate with the British but avoid taking the lead at the Security Council.¹⁹

Noel-Baker’s setback in his discussion with Lovett did not deter him from further efforts to persuade the United States to support the proposals favorable to Pakistan that he promoted once the Security Council debate began. These included a draft resolution calling for a virtual UN mandate for Kashmir for an indefinite period, to be administered by an interim government superseding the existing pro-India state regime. The State Department correctly judged that the Indians would strongly oppose the proposal and questioned the advisability of the United Nations assuming the broad responsibilities of Kashmir’s civil and military administration. But it wanted to avoid introducing a competing draft and instead called for efforts to develop a more widely supported resolution.²⁰

Concerns about the implications of the British draft for other ongoing international disputes also prompted Washington to oppose it. The draft, American officials at the United Nations pointed out to their British colleagues, “recommend[ed] the use of foreign troops from one party to a dispute [Pakistan] in the territory of another party to the dispute [India].” In the

U.S. view, it was “difficult to deny the legal validity of Kashmir’s accession to India.” The UN-based Americans were willing to go along with the use of Pakistani troops, which they thought desirable, only if it was the result of an agreement between the governments of India, Pakistan, and Kashmir. Neither New Delhi nor Srinagar would have consented to such an arrangement.²¹

This virtual acceptance of the validity of the accession by American officials at the United Nations was not set in concrete, however. It was later superseded by a more authoritative State Department finding that backed away from that conclusion.

Formal Security Council debate on Kashmir began on January 15, 1948, when Indian representative Gopaldaswami Ayyangar spelled out New Delhi’s position. He was followed by the Pakistan foreign minister, Sir Mohammed Zafrulla Khan. Both diplomats claimed that their country was the aggrieved party. For Ayyangar, the tribal invasion and Pakistan’s participation in it were the cause of the conflict. The immediate task before the council, he insisted, was the raiders’ expulsion and an end to the fighting. Zafrulla put Kashmir into the broader context of India-Pakistan and Hindu-Muslim relations. He bitterly accused India of seeking to destroy the Pakistan state and of carrying out an extensive campaign of genocide against the Muslims of South Asia. The almost totally conflicting approaches the two representatives took made it clear that the council would face great difficulties as it sought to resolve the conflict.²²

Overcoming its initial reluctance to play a leading role, the United States cosponsored with the United Kingdom and others all of the resolutions the council adopted over the next three months as it tried with scant success to bridge India-Pakistan differences. The first of these resolutions was a modest measure passed on January 20, only five days after the debate began, that established a commission to look into the situation firsthand and to use “mediatory influence” to “smooth away difficulties.” This led to the formation of the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP). Another, more comprehensive resolution, adopted in April 1948, dealt with three key, interrelated issues: how to end the fighting, bring about the withdrawal of outside armed forces from Kashmir, and conduct the free and fair plebiscite both sides claimed they wanted. With strong backing from its

American member, UNCIP later refined and expanded the provisions of this resolution in two landmark resolutions of its own. Adopted on August 13, 1948, and January 5, 1949, these UNCIP resolutions became the basis for all subsequent efforts to resolve the Kashmir problem through the United Nations. They are examined later in this chapter.

Like generations of American diplomats who dealt with Kashmir, Austin became increasingly frustrated. He criticized the form and scope of the Security Council's resolutions. They were unrealistic and ineffective because they depended on India and Pakistan cooperating with the council and failed to give it authority to impose sanctions if they would not, as seemed to him more and more likely. The two governments' negative attitudes got under his skin. He resented their having refused to accept council proposals after they had engaged the "very expensive machinery of the United Nations" and taken "the time of distinguished men from around the world." For Austin, these unbending Indian and Pakistani positions were out of line with the UN Charter and morally wrong.²³

Reporting from the U.S. embassies in New Delhi and Karachi suggested that American diplomats there were as frustrated as their colleagues in Washington and New York. But like these U.S.-based officials, they continued to believe at this early stage of deliberations that the Kashmir issue could most effectively be handled at the United Nations. At times the embassies' reporting, analyses, and policy recommendations tended to favor their host countries' positions. This was particularly the case when Charles Lewis was chargé at Embassy Karachi.* At one point, the department felt it necessary to rap Ambassador Grady's knuckles when he accepted an Indian position that Washington had instructed him to oppose.²⁴ But as a whole, the two embassies' fidelity to State Department instructions and their objectivity in reporting and assessing the situation on the ground compared favorably with the way they conducted themselves in the 1950s and 1960s.

In a formal sense, the Kashmir dispute at this stage involved only two parties—India and Pakistan. The plebiscite the Indian government had promised and the United Nations had embraced offered the people of the disputed

*This is diplomatic shorthand for the United States Embassy in Pakistan. Similar shorthand is used in diplomatic language for American embassies elsewhere.

state one of two choices. Not included was what later would be called “the third option”—independence.

The possibility of a separate Kashmir was brought to Austin’s attention only a couple of weeks after the debate began. Its unlikely source was Sheikh Abdullah, the articulate and personally impressive Kashmir Valley Muslim leader who had by then become head of the provisional administration that ruled the Indian-held part of the state.

The Indians had made Abdullah a member of their UN delegation, no doubt in the expectation that he would be an effective spokesman for India’s cause. They could not have calculated that he would undercut their position by calling for Kashmir’s independence in a private conversation with Austin. Apparently caught by surprise, the ambassador gave Abdullah no encouragement.²⁵ Nor could he have, knowing that Washington was firmly opposed to any further splintering of the subcontinent. In the U.S. view, such divisions would jeopardize and complicate South Asia’s political and economic transition and create conditions of instability ultimately adverse to broad American interests in the area. This opposition to independence was not categorical, however. The State Department declared two months later in a message designed to guide the embassies in New Delhi and Karachi that if independence appeared to be a basis for an India-Pakistan settlement on Kashmir, the United States would probably not oppose the idea, although it would not take the initiative in promoting it.²⁶

In later years, Abdullah was not consistent in his stated preference for the kind of relationship Kashmir should have with India. Whether in power or in opposition, his only constant theme was a demand for something less than the full integration of the state into the Indian Union. How much less ran the gamut from independence to limited autonomy.

The first direct American experience with Abdullah’s inconsistent and often ambiguous approach came soon after his session with Austin. Meeting in New Delhi with Ambassador Grady, the sheikh retreated from the line he had taken in New York, telling Grady he wanted Kashmir to be independent as far as internal affairs were concerned. India and Pakistan should jointly administer the state’s defense, foreign affairs, and communications. In a comment that must have pleased Washington, and was no doubt designed to do so, Abdullah said that a joint India-Pakistan defense arrangement for Kashmir would ensure the state’s security against aggression “from the north.”²⁷

While the Security Council deliberated, fighting continued in the state. Indian forces advanced westward toward Kashmir's border with Pakistan, but large tracts of land in the western and southwestern areas of Jammu Province remained under Pakistan's control and were administered by what the Pakistanis called the "Azad [Free] Government of Jammu and Kashmir." The Pakistanis also held Gilgit and other areas in the northern part of the state that had broken away from Kashmir government control when the maharaja acceded to India. These mountainous tracts were never occupied by independent India's armed forces. Virtually all Hindus and Sikhs who had lived before 1947 in the parts of Kashmir that fell under Pakistani control were expelled or killed.

India completely controlled the Kashmir Valley both militarily and, through Sheikh Abdullah, politically. All significant opposition on the ground to Abdullah's provisional state administration had ended. Anti-Abdullah political leaders had crossed to the Pakistan side or were in jail. Organizations other than the sheikh's National Conference no longer functioned. Unlike Indian-held areas in the southeastern portions of the state, where the Muslim population had been decimated, the Valley remained remarkably free of communal violence. Only a relatively small number of Muslims left the Valley for Azad Kashmir or Pakistan proper.

Private U.S. citizens were involved in the Kashmir conflict at least twice. The Indians reportedly employed three American pilots to fly troops to Srinagar by commercial aircraft in October-November 1947 soon after the maharaja's accession.²⁸ A much more romantic tale is the compelling story of Russell K. Haight Jr., an American adventurer who served for two months as a brigadier general in the forces of Azad Kashmir.

Haight's story is as fascinating as it is improbable. A slim, blond, twenty-five-year-old ex-G.I. from Brooklyn, he had been a U.S. Army Air Force sergeant during World War II and saw combat in France. After the war he found his way to Afghanistan, where an American construction company employed him as a surveyor. Injured in a fall from a cliff, he decided to return to the United States. On his way home, he had a chance encounter in Rawalpindi with officials from Azad Kashmir. Learning of his military background (if only as a noncom), they offered him a captain's commission in the Azad Kashmir military forces. According to one contemporary account, Haight

thought it a pity to miss a war and signed up. With no knowledge of either Urdu or Pushtu, but completely self-assured, he was put in charge of an Azad Kashmir unit on the Poonch front in southwestern Kashmir. When he caustically criticized the “Boy Scout tactics” of some of the other Azad Kashmir officers, he was promoted from captain to brigadier general, presumably because he was expected to do better.

According to a story Robert Trumbull wrote for the *New York Times* in January 1948, Haight learned how to handle unruly tribesmen—who were interested mainly in loot—by playing upon their vanities and tribal rivalries. But he decided to quit when he could not obtain either the supplies or the cooperation necessary for the tasks he was assigned. His departure was hastened when he got into a fight with some tribal warriors in a transit camp for Azad Kashmir rebels across the Pakistan border. Soon afterward, his romantic adventures as a mid-twentieth-century freebooter ended with his hurried departure from Karachi for America.

Haight’s observations about the Azad Kashmir forces excited some interest, especially because of widespread speculation then current that the Pakistani military was involved in the Kashmir conflict. He told Trumbull that the Pakistani authorities provided the insurgents with plentiful supplies of gasoline, scarce and strictly rationed in Pakistan. Pakistan Army personnel operated the Azad Kashmir radio station, passed out matériel from army stocks, and organized and managed Azad military encampments in Pakistan. Although Haight was sympathetic to its cause, he characterized the Azad Kashmir provisional government as a Pakistani puppet and deeply implicated senior Pakistani government officials. Not surprisingly, reports of his activities in Kashmir prompted a Communist Party newspaper in India to denounce the young brigadier general as an American spy and won him some notoriety among other Indians suspicious of U.S. intentions in Kashmir.²⁹

The five members of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan did not reach South Asia until early July 1948. Reflecting the composition of the United Nations at the time, they were drawn from Argentina (chosen by Pakistan), Czechoslovakia (picked by India), Colombia and Belgium (selected by the Security Council), and an initially reluctant United States (named by the president of the Security Council when the four original members could not agree on a fifth representative). The American delegate

was Jerome Klahr Huddle, a career diplomat then serving as ambassador to Burma. Although Washington had insisted that UNCIP leave promptly for South Asia after the Security Council established it in February, it took its time before nominating Huddle, probably because it had problems finding a suitable candidate and was preoccupied by more pressing concerns.³⁰ Czechoslovakia was represented by Dr. Josef Korbel, whose book, *Danger in Kashmir*, often cited in these pages, remains one of the best accounts of the first phase of the effort to resolve the conflict. Korbel, the father of Madeleine Albright, secretary of state in the Clinton administration, later immigrated to the United States and became an American citizen.³¹

With its arrival in South Asia, UNCIP became the focus of international diplomatic efforts to resolve the Kashmir problem. At their first stop, in Karachi, the commissioners were stunned to learn from Foreign Minister Zafrulla Khan that three brigades of regular Pakistan Army troops had been in Kashmir since May. This shock could have been avoided. Reliable word of a substantial Pakistani military presence in Kashmir had been appearing for two months in American and British diplomatic messages, but the commissioners had not been informed. Zafrulla claimed that an Indian spring offensive in the western part of the state required Pakistan to reinforce the line Azad forces held there.³² A few days later the commissioners conferred in New Delhi with Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, the Indian secretary general for foreign and commonwealth relations. Bajpai did not spring any further surprises. But like Zafrulla, he reiterated the unyielding positions his colleagues had taken at the United Nations. The commissioners recognized that they would face hard negotiations.

For the next five weeks the UNCIP members shuttled between New Delhi and Karachi as they tried to draft a cease-fire proposal acceptable to both India and Pakistan. They also visited both the Indian- and Pakistani-held parts of Kashmir. Ambassador Huddle, who played a leading role in the commission's efforts, wisely resisted a bid to make him its permanent chairman. He recognized that his selection would inevitably lead to unwanted charges that the United States was dominating UNCIP's work. The ambassador kept in close touch with Washington through U.S. embassy facilities, sending the State Department appraisals and recommendations and receiving "advice" but not "instructions" about policies he should advocate. This distinction was apparently necessary because Huddle, like his four colleagues, was technically

not a representative of his government. His status did not influence the way he carried out his assignment, however. Washington provided Huddle with a small military and civilian support staff, an advantage other UNCIP members did not enjoy.³³

Despite the disdain the Indian and Pakistan governments had for UNCIP's efforts and their unwillingness to accept compromises on major points of disagreement, the commission successfully hammered out a fresh resolution on August 13, as noted. This called on India and Pakistan to agree to a cease-fire, which was to take effect within four days of the two governments' accepting its terms. Pakistan was to pull back its armed forces from the state and "use its best endeavors" to secure the withdrawal from Kashmiri territory of tribesmen and other Pakistani nationals. Local authorities under UNCIP surveillance would administer the areas within the state that Pakistan had held. Once the commission certified that the irregulars had departed and the Pakistani Army was being withdrawn, India would draw down the bulk of its forces. Pending a final settlement, India was to station on its side of the newly drawn cease-fire only the minimal force needed to help local authorities maintain law and order. India and Pakistan were to consult with UNCIP to decide on "fair and equitable" conditions for the plebiscite. Unlike the Security Council's April 21 resolution, UNCIP's did not recommend the installation of a broadly based state government in place of Sheikh Abdullah's pro-India regime, probably because the commission recognized that such an arrangement was no longer feasible, if it ever had been.³⁴ The Indians accepted the resolution subject to clarifications of a few points, most of them later resolved to their satisfaction. The Pakistanis were more difficult and hedged their acceptance with so many conditions that their position seemed to Korbelt "tantamount to rejection."³⁵

After further consultations with Indian and Pakistani officials and visits to both sides of Kashmir, UNCIP adopted another key resolution on January 5, 1949. This outlined a plebiscite process to begin with the UN secretary general's nominating a plebiscite administrator with sweeping powers.³⁶ Both India and Pakistan accepted the resolution with only a few reservations. Its adoption completed the basic structure for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute through UN mediatory efforts.

Just a few days earlier, the Indians and Pakistanis had agreed to a cease-fire in place. This took effect on New Year's Day 1949, exactly one year after

India brought the Kashmir issue to the Security Council.³⁷ Washington hailed the cease-fire and the resolution as “a demonstration to the world of how progress can be achieved in the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.”³⁸ The two achievements had very different outcomes. Despite the many troubles that continued to plague India-Pakistan relations, the cease-fire worked reasonably well for more than sixteen years before collapsing when another conflict broke out between the two countries over Kashmir in August 1965. By contrast, the January 5 resolution was never implemented and the plebiscite it called for never held.

When the commissioners returned to South Asia in early 1949 to negotiate the implementation of their resolutions with India and Pakistan, they could not resolve differences between the two governments on five key issues: disarming and disbanding the Azad Kashmir armed forces; withdrawal of Pakistani forces; the scope and timing of the withdrawal of the bulk of the Indian army; which local authorities would govern Azad Kashmir in the period before the plebiscite; and control of the remote, sparsely settled areas in the north and northwestern parts of Kashmir held by Pakistan. UNCIP’s only success was in establishing a small, multinational force—the United Nations Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan, UNMOGIP—to patrol the four-hundred-mile-long cease-fire line that snaked across the state. At UN request, the United States provided the force’s largest contingent. UNMOGIP carried out its monitoring responsibilities until the third India-Pakistan war in 1971. When, following the war, India and Pakistan signed an agreement replacing the cease-fire line with a new Line of Control drawn close to it, the Indians took the position that the mandate of the group had lapsed. Since then they have restricted the activities of UN observers on their side. UNMOGIP continues to operate on the Pakistan side but in light of the Indian position no longer plays a significant role.

Another seemingly favorable development was UN Secretary General Trygve Lie’s nomination of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz as plebiscite administrator in March 1949. Nimitz had commanded American naval forces in the Pacific during World War II and was an internationally recognized figure. In a strong statement of support for the Nimitz nomination, Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared that the United States felt honored that India and Pakistan had agreed to repose their confidence in him.³⁹ The secretary’s accolade proved premature. For the next five years the admiral

cooled his heels in the United States and never got to South Asia to assume his responsibilities.

As UNCIP failed to make any significant progress in implementing its resolutions, American policymakers pinned the primary blame for the impasse on India. They became increasingly troubled by what they considered New Delhi's stonewalling of the commission's proposals and its outspoken expressions of animosity toward Washington's policy on Kashmir, which it alleged was tilted in favor of Pakistan. While the United States did not give the Pakistanis high marks for cooperation with UNCIP, it found their diplomacy less of a problem.⁴⁰

This growing U.S.-India confrontation over Kashmir took place against a background of rising foreign policy differences between the two countries on a broad range of international issues. By 1949 the United States had made the containment of Communist designs for world domination the central tenet of its foreign policy. India rejected this cold war approach in favor of a policy of nonalignment, which Nehru devised, promoted, and personally implemented. Its concerns focused on what it regarded as the continuing menace of the colonialism and racism from which it had recently escaped. The mutual dissatisfaction that each country felt with the other's approach to Kashmir contributed to this downslide in their bilateral relations. By contrast, the United States had no similar foreign policy problems with Pakistan. Although Karachi also followed a nonaligned policy in 1949, this was more a matter of necessity than choice. The Pakistanis had not been shy in expressing their interest in joining the Western bloc if it would have them.

Two separate conversations Ambassador Loy Henderson had in New Delhi with Bajpai and Nehru in July and August 1949 illustrate the gap in the two countries' positions on Kashmir. Henderson, a top-ranking career diplomat who had succeeded Henry Grady as U.S. ambassador to India in November 1948, was a confirmed cold warrior. He had little use for Indian nonalignment and saw no reason to conceal his disdain. A strong personal dislike between Henderson and Nehru contributed to the difficult relations that quickly developed between them.

According to Henderson, Bajpai told him that Nehru and other senior Indian officials were disturbed that Washington thought the Indian government was using subterfuge and evasion to avoid a Kashmir plebiscite.

Bajpai said that he hoped that if the United States had such impressions, it would be candid in bringing them to India's attention.⁴¹ The ambassador was characteristically forthright in his reply. He told Bajpai that U.S. officials' doubts about Indian intentions had been fueled by New Delhi's unwillingness to adopt the kind of conciliatory attitude that could help promote a prompt holding of the plebiscite. It was well known, he said, that in certain Indian official circles (which he did not identify), partition of Kashmir was preferred to a plebiscite. And because India held the most desirable portions of Kashmir, a postponement of the plebiscite would hurt Pakistan more than it would India. The State Department used more diplomatic wording in the message it asked Henderson to pass to the Indians a week later, but it told the ambassador that it was gratified by his prompt and forceful reply to Bajpai.⁴²

Nehru waded into these troubled waters soon afterward. In an intemperate outburst, the prime minister informed Henderson that "he was tired of receiving moralistic advice from the United States. India did not need advice from the United States or any other country as to its foreign and internal policies. His own record and that of Indian foreign relations was one of integrity and honesty, which did not warrant admonitions. He did not care to receive lectures from other countries. So far as Kashmir was concerned he would not give an inch. He would hold his ground even if Kashmir, India, and the whole world would go to pieces." Although Nehru eventually calmed down, his message was a candid statement of how strongly he felt about the future of Kashmir and how inflexible India was likely to remain toward international efforts to resolve the issue in ways it found unacceptable.⁴³

By the time Henderson had these two troubling conversations, Washington had reluctantly concluded that further UNCIP efforts would be useless. The only way to bring about a truce agreement, it now believed, was arbitration by a third party, with Indian and Pakistani consent. Henderson agreed and recommended that President Truman send a personal message to Nehru calling on India to accept arbitration should UNCIP request it. The White House accepted his advice. When UNCIP soon afterward confessed that it had failed and called for arbitration by Admiral Nimitz, the president sent identical messages to Nehru and Pakistan prime minister

Liaquat supporting the arbitration approach. British prime minister Attlee wrote similar letters to the two leaders the same day.⁴⁴

The White House messages represented the first but not the last time an American president personally and openly involved himself in efforts to resolve the Kashmir issue. Explaining his unprecedented action to Nehru and Liaquat, Truman stressed the importance of an early Kashmir settlement to the peace and progress of Asia. Senior American officials told the press that U.S. interest in halting the spread of Communism in Asia had prompted the president's intercession.⁴⁵

Nehru publicly expressed surprise and irritation with the proposal even before he wrote to Truman turning it down. He told the president he was not opposed to arbitration in principle but objected to the authority the proposal gave to the arbitrator to determine the points on which arbitration should take place. Liaquat accepted the proposal in a message that stressed his trust in Americans, an obvious play for Washington's sympathy that contrasted sharply with Nehru's reply.⁴⁶ His response reflected what was long to be Pakistan's basic approach to the Kashmir issue: encourage outside, especially American, intervention in the dispute to balance the advantage India enjoyed as the stronger, status quo power.

Truman did not repeat his appeal to Nehru when the prime minister visited the White House in October 1949. The two leaders agreed that the Kashmir issue should be settled by peaceful means. But their discussion of the problem was anodyne in content and noncontroversial in tone, and they made no effort to come to grips with the basic issues that stood in the way of a settlement.

Nehru's subsequent exchange with Secretary Acheson was much more pointed. The prime minister's official biographer, S. Gopal, has written that Nehru hotly defended India's position and criticized America's "equivocal attitude." Although Nehru's exposition seems by Acheson's own account to have been mostly a heated and angry repetition of familiar Indian arguments, his bottom line was new and important. According to Acheson, Nehru declared that if the people of Kashmir wished to question the state's accession to India—which he doubted—"the preferable way to ascertain their will would be through a constituent assembly of the natural leaders of the people elected to meet and discuss the future." This might lead to a Kashmir-wide decision or to division of the state. If Acheson recorded

Nehru's words correctly, they seem to represent a repudiation of India's plebiscite pledge. They also foreshadowed the later Indian argument that the ratification by the Kashmir Constituent Assembly in 1954 of the state's accession to India fulfilled India's commitment to self-determination for the Kashmiri people.⁴⁷

While Nehru was visiting the United States, UNCIP members hammered out the commission's final report to the Security Council. Largely reflecting U.S. positions, the report called for appointment of a single individual as UN representative and consultation by the council with India and Pakistan to determine his terms of reference, including his authority to arbitrate on issues of demilitarization.⁴⁸

Although the Indians were unwilling to accept arbitration, they were prepared to deal with a representative chosen by the Security Council. The first of these was General A. G. L. McNaughton of Canada, then council president. McNaughton's efforts spanned only a few weeks in December 1949 and were limited to negotiations with the Indian and Pakistani UN delegations. U.S. representatives in New York played an important role in helping him frame proposals designed to break the demilitarization impasse. India quickly rejected these proposals on what by then had become familiar grounds. These included the charge that they equated India with Pakistan. Pakistan accepted the proposals subject to minor changes in wording.⁴⁹ U.S. policymakers considered India's rejection the worst example yet of its intransigence.

McNaughton was followed early in 1950 by the prominent Australian jurist Sir Owen Dixon. Dixon was well known and respected in Washington, where he had served as Australia's ambassador during World War II. But his task was a thankless one, especially since he was instructed to negotiate demilitarization on the basis of the McNaughton proposals that India had already turned down. His difficulties were worsened by the outbreak of communal clashes in India and Pakistan that brought the two countries to the brink of war. The crisis completely overshadowed the Kashmir issue in the weeks following Dixon's appointment. The agreement the Indian and Pakistani prime ministers eventually reached to resolve it made no mention of Kashmir.

Dixon kept the United States informed about his progress but apparently received no advice from American diplomats about how he could best proceed. When he found that India would not accept any of his demilitarization

formulas, he concluded that it was simply not possible to conduct a free and fair plebiscite covering the entire state. He then turned to other possibilities. The one he preferred was to limit the plebiscite to the Valley and to divide the other parts of the state between India and Pakistan according to the ethnic and communal character of their inhabitants. This proposal, still referred to as the Dixon Plan, continues to enjoy some support in Kashmir and elsewhere. But Indian unwillingness to agree to the plan or any of the other plebiscite proposals Dixon designed eventually doomed his mission.⁵⁰

After McNaughton's efforts had failed and before Dixon undertook his, the State Department prepared for the first time an authoritative memorandum spelling out the main points in Washington's approach to the Kashmir issue. Drafted by two assistant secretaries, George C. McGhee, who was responsible for South Asia policy, and John D. Hickerson, who supervised the department bureau that dealt with international organizations, it was a remarkably candid and comprehensive document that is an important benchmark in the long U.S. effort to deal with the problem. For the balance of the Truman administration, the memorandum, which was approved by Secretary Acheson, remained the basic U.S. assessment of the Kashmir issue and how Washington should handle it.⁵¹

McGhee and Hickerson held that a resolution of the Kashmir issue was essential to South Asian peace and security and considered Indian intransigence primarily responsible for delaying a settlement.⁵² They cited chapter and verse to support this conclusion. Assessing India's case, they quoted from a memorandum, prepared by the Office of the Legal Adviser of the State Department, in coming to the judgment that the maharaja's signing the instrument of accession did not settle the accession issue.⁵³

McGhee and Hickerson found that India appeared determined to avoid an overall plebiscite despite its previous commitment. The United States would support any settlement acceptable to India and Pakistan, either an all-Kashmir plebiscite following which all of the state would go to one of the two claimants or a plebiscite that led to the partition of the state between them. McGhee and Hickerson rejected a partition of the Valley itself as infeasible.

The two officials also concluded that a settlement involving an independent Kashmir state would be unviable and dangerous and should be resisted. Their recommendations for ways to persuade India to modify its

position included continued pressure by Britain and other commonwealth countries, statements by other Security Council members in council debate, friendly but firm and frank expressions of U.S. views on appropriate occasions, and some concession to “Indian aversion to an over-all plebiscite.”

In a subsequent message to its London embassy, the State Department reaffirmed that Washington believed that Britain should take responsibility for promoting a settlement. The United States wanted that country to assume the leading role in consultations with Security Council members to work out a solution along the lines of the McGhee-Hickerson memo.⁵⁴

The failure of the Dixon mission seems to have sharpened even further Ambassador Henderson’s already deep suspicions of Indian motives and good faith. He concluded that growing resentment in India about the allegedly pro-Pakistan attitude of the United States on Kashmir—which he reported had been quietly stimulated by Nehru himself—made it desirable to have Britain and other commonwealth countries take the lead in working out a solution, as the McGhee-Hickerson memorandum had stipulated. No one in India had criticized Australia about the Dixon report, Henderson complained, but if Dixon had been an American citizen, the Indian press would have castigated the United States for playing great-power politics in Kashmir. Washington appears to have heeded the ambassador’s advice. For the rest of 1950 it showed scant interest in taking part in another major international initiative on Kashmir.⁵⁵

During this lull, Henderson became the first American ambassador to visit Kashmir. He found the military officers of the UN monitoring group and other foreigners in Kashmir almost unanimous in holding that the people of the Valley would prefer Pakistan to India if they had the opportunity to vote freely. Most thought that a majority would prefer independence if offered that option.

Henderson met twice with Sheikh Abdullah. By then the prime minister of the state, Abdullah promoted the independence option just as he had in his New York meeting with Warren Austin two years earlier. He claimed that the overwhelming majority of Kashmiris desired independence. Even the leaders of Azad Kashmir would be willing to cooperate with his National Conference party if there was a reasonable chance that such cooperation would result in independence, he said, and dismissed Dixon’s partial plebiscite plan as impractical.⁵⁶

Soon after his discussions with Henderson, Sheikh Abdullah had the National Conference pass a resolution calling for elections in Indian-controlled Kashmir to choose members of a constituent assembly who would determine the future shape and affiliation of the state. This body was expected to confirm the state's accession to India, thus providing the Indians with an argument of at least some plausibility that they had fulfilled their pledge to let the people of Kashmir determine their own political future. The United States and Britain drafted a Security Council resolution that called on India to reassure the council that such unilateral action would not prejudice the settlement of the problem, in accordance with past Security Council resolutions and the previous agreement of the concerned parties. But caught up in the far greater crisis of the Korean War, the council took no action on the resolution. The issue would return to haunt negotiations on Kashmir later in the decade and beyond.

A meeting of the commonwealth heads of government in London in January 1951 ushered in a fourth year of Kashmir diplomacy.⁵⁷ American hopes that progress could be made in informal discussions there were quickly dashed. The British told Washington that Nehru was to blame. This latest setback, which further eroded Pakistan's faith in multilateral diplomacy, led a politically weakened Liaquat Ali Khan to declare that his government would not participate in the defense of the Middle East or Asia until the Kashmir issue was resolved. Liaquat's decision was important to Washington, which looked to Pakistan to contribute to the American-led UN military effort in Korea, then at a critical point following Communist Chinese intervention. Concern about the Korean conflict and other dangerous confrontations with China, and the greater importance these developments gave to maintaining peace elsewhere in Asia, also helped prompt the United States and Britain to cosponsor another Security Council resolution on ways to resolve the plebiscite issue. The Indians quickly rejected it.⁵⁸

Washington then decided to promote the selection of another special negotiator. Disregarding Ambassador Henderson's warning that Indian attitudes made it unwise to involve an American citizen in Kashmir efforts, it suggested senior UN official Ralph Bunche for the position.⁵⁹ When Pakistan vetoed Bunche, Washington turned to Dr. Frank P. Graham, a former U.S. senator and president of the University of North Carolina.⁶⁰ Graham was well known to Secretary Acheson for his success as an intermediary in

negotiations between the Dutch and Indonesians. He took up his mission in September 1951, when India and Pakistan were preoccupied with another serious confrontation that had brought them to the brink of war—not an auspicious beginning. Although against the odds he developed good relations with Nehru and other senior Indian officials, Graham ultimately failed to win agreement between India and Pakistan on the disarmament issue.

Washington had been understandably pessimistic about Graham's prospects and had discussed alternative approaches with the British should he fail. These included establishing a temporary UN trusteeship or an India-Pakistan condominium over all or part of the state, both highly unrealistic ideas. More sensible were proposals to establish a joint India-Pakistan or UN authority to promote Kashmir's economic development, particularly through the use of water resources, and to set up a joint India-Pakistan water commission to resolve broader differences relating to water rights in Kashmir and neighboring Punjab. The idea of a joint commission had recently been suggested by David Lilienthal, a former chairman of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. Lilienthal's concept led a decade later to the World Bank-sponsored India-Pakistan Indus Waters Treaty. But it was only when they began their peace process in 2004 that India and Pakistan agreed to explore ways to develop other forms of economic cooperation between the two sides of Kashmir.⁶¹

Washington also considered asking the Security Council to request the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on the legality of Maharaja Hari Singh's signing the instrument of accession. A State Department memorandum argued that a court finding that the accession was invalid would "knock out" one of India's principal arguments supporting its occupation of Kashmir. The memo noted that the British Foreign Office and the department's legal adviser had tentatively concluded that the court would make this judgment but warned that an approach to the court had serious disadvantages. All initiatives on Kashmir would have to be suspended while it took its time coming to a decision. Moreover, the court might judge in India's favor. In the end, nothing came of the idea.⁶²

While Washington and London pondered next steps, Sheikh Abdullah's government held elections in September and October 1950 for a state constituent assembly. These resulted in total victory for Abdullah's National Conference, which won all seventy-five seats. Since the state government

disqualified all opposition and independent candidates or pressured them to withdraw, no actual balloting took place.⁶³ The election caused dismay in Washington, which feared that the Indians would use the assembly to wriggle out of their commitment to a plebiscite, as Nehru had suggested in his conversation with Acheson. This concern proved justified. In February 1954 the state constituent assembly unanimously ratified Kashmir's accession to India. It followed up this action in November 1956, when it adopted a state constitution that declared: "The State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India." Before either of these steps was taken, Abdullah had been overthrown and jailed.⁶⁴

The Truman administration transferred Loy Henderson to Iran in mid-1951, no doubt to the ambassador's satisfaction. He was succeeded by Chester Bowles. Unlike Henderson, Bowles was determined to win Nehru's friendship and confidence. A highly successful advertising agency executive who had gone on to become wartime head of the Office of Price Administration and then governor of Connecticut, Bowles, more than any other senior official in the Truman administration, was convinced that India was important to broad U.S. interests extending well beyond South Asia.

Bowles tried hard to persuade Washington to judge the Kashmir issue in ways more sympathetic to India. He quickly drew conclusions about the problem that differed sharply from Henderson's. His interpretation of Nehru's position on Kashmir was far more positive. In an early message, he said he was convinced that the prime minister wanted a prompt settlement and was willing to explore ways to reach one either through the Security Council or in direct negotiations with Pakistan. Nehru, Bowles maintained, was confident that India would win a plebiscite in Kashmir because of Abdullah's consolidation of power, his popularity, and his ability to control the electorate.⁶⁵ The ambassador also reported that his fellow New Delhi-based chiefs of mission and locally assigned American reporters unanimously agreed that the Kashmiris would vote for accession to India.⁶⁶

Bowles's controversial assessments and policy proposals on a broad range of issues often brought him into sharp confrontation with Washington policymakers, who regarded him as too pro-Indian. His conflict with them over Kashmir policy was especially contentious. Aside from faulting Bowles for trying with little basis to make India look good on the issue, Washington was

troubled by his efforts to promote the partition–partial plebiscite plan Sir Owen Dixon had unsuccessfully proposed in 1950. Bowles quickly found that the idea enjoyed no support in Washington. Skeptical State Department officials suspected that the Indians were using it as a delaying tactic or a further pretext for obstructing a settlement. They also feared that encouragement given to the partition plan would undercut efforts to move forward with demilitarization and other aspects of the UNCIP resolutions.⁶⁷

The State Department eventually became fed up with Bowles's relentless advocacy of the revived Dixon Plan and his freewheeling discussions about it with G. S. Bajpai and other Indians. In an unusually tough message, it instructed him "to avoid in conversations with [Indian] officials initiating any new substantive discussions of the Kashmir case, unless instructed by the Department. If the issue is raised, suggest you confine your remarks to stating your willingness to transmit Indian government views to the Department."⁶⁸ In a long follow-up letter, Assistant Secretary Hickerson pointedly recalled for Bowles that when Dixon floated his idea, India quickly made clear it was not prepared to accept conditions for a plebiscite in the Valley that in Dixon's opinion were the very minimum needed to ensure a free and fair vote. Hickerson believed that the Indians were being disingenuous in raising it again with Bowles. He said that Washington would continue to support Graham's efforts to work out a settlement based on the UNCIP resolutions but strongly opposed, as did Graham, a broadening of his mandate to include the partition–partial plebiscite approach.⁶⁹

Despite this forceful rejoinder, Bowles continued to advocate the Dixon Plan until he completed his New Delhi assignment in March 1953. American policymakers and Graham himself remained unmoved. In Washington's view, the Dixon approach would be feasible only if India itself took the initiative in formally proposing it. The Indians were never prepared to do so.

Bowles's attitude toward Graham's efforts reflected his concern that Washington would regard New Delhi's position on Kashmir as an obstacle to the sharp, positive change in U.S. policy toward India that he ardently sought. Worried that continued failure to reach a settlement could damage bilateral relations, the ambassador argued that the United States should recognize that "we alone cannot solve every problem and [hence] restrict our role . . . to that of a friend to both countries which refuses to take sides but is anxious to help if at all possible." We should "pray for Graham's success,

but, if he fails, keep our patience, refrain from moral judgments, and adopt a position in the Security Council which . . . will be best calculated to advance a settlement between India and Pakistan, without aligning the United States with one side or the other.⁷⁰

Interestingly, Bowles himself briefly played a direct role in the negotiations on troop levels. En route from Washington to New Delhi, he met in Karachi with Pakistan prime minister Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin at the suggestion of Avra Warren, the career diplomat who had become American ambassador there. Nazimuddin disclosed to Bowles and Warren the substantial concessions Pakistan was prepared to make on its military presence in Kashmir provided the Indians agreed to the installation of a plebiscite administrator. The Pakistanis asked Bowles to sound out Nehru informally on their offer. With Washington's permission, Bowles then undertook what nowadays would be termed an exercise in shuttle diplomacy. Despite an emotional appeal from Bowles, Nehru rejected the Pakistani offer. Bowles was very disappointed but quickly sought to explain away the prime minister's rebuff.

A prominent Democrat, Bowles left his ambassadorship following Republican Dwight Eisenhower's victory in the 1952 presidential election. His departure signaled the end of any serious attempt to develop stronger and more confident U.S.-Indian relations, at least for the next four years. Graham gave up his effort at about the same time, when it became clear to him that the unbridgeable gap between the Indian and Pakistani positions on demilitarization and other provisions of the UNCIP resolutions ruled out any prospect for success. His exit—to which New Delhi and Karachi both agreed—brought to an ignominious conclusion the five-year effort to resolve the Kashmir problem through UN intervention.⁷¹