

**The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin)  
to the [US] Secretary of State<sup>1</sup>**

501.BC/1-2848 Telegram

SECRET

NEW YORK,

January 28, 1948-10 p.m.

105. Following is an account of conversations this morning with various individuals as indicated on the Kashmir case.

Abdullah, my first caller, initiated our conversation by giving me brief account of discussions between India and Pakistan representatives with President of Council over past few days. He said these discussions had broken down because of Pakistan insistence on two points which were unacceptable to India, namely, the provision of an interim administration and armed forces to maintain law and order. He said that he came to seek advice and guidance; his whole attitude and approach being obviously to seek US support for Indian viewpoint. He said GOI was committed to a fair and impartial plebiscite to determine whether Kashmir would go to Pakistan or India and so far as he was concerned he would certainly abide by the decision. He indicated he did not see that fairness and impartiality would require interim administration which would set aside sovereignty of the Maharajah. Kashmir was a sovereign state. In acceding to India it had merely delegated to GOI powers over foreign relations, defense and communications. Only question before SC was to put end to fighting inspired by Pakistan. Kashmiri Government would then be in [the] position to carry out fair and impartial plebiscite.

Abdullah was unable or unwilling to see that fairness and impartiality in [the] eyes of world would not be possible with one of [the] parties in control of administration. He was likewise unable or unwilling to see that there was no question of SC imposing against sovereign will of Maharajah a government on Kashmir in contrast with free exercise of sovereign will of Maharaja in establishing an interim administration which would command respect of [the] entire world for its fairness and impartiality.

Abdullah pressed for my ideas of what kind of interim administration there might be. I made clear to him I was not advising him nor expressing a US position. A possibility, however, would be a balanced administration including representatives of two major parties in Kashmir together with three man commission already provided for.

In this way UN would hold a balance and fairness and impartiality would be assured. On [the] other hand[,] a UN commission charged with responsibility for fair and impartial plebiscite but without any administrative control could readily be a sham.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*. Volume V, part 1. Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1975, 291-294.

Abdullah hedged in reply to our question whether his forces were able to maintain law and order in [the] event raiders were withdrawn on one side and Indian army withdrawn on other. The clear implication of his remarks on this question indicated the feeling that Indian army should stay, in effect that he had no other effective forces to rely on.

Abdullah replied with considerable heat to a question regarding possibility of Pakistan troops sharing in military administration of [the] country during plebiscite period. He said he would fight to his dying breath to prevent entry of any Pakistan troops into Kashmir.

It is possible that [the] principal purpose of Abdullah's visit was to make clear to US that there is a third alternative, namely, independence. He seemed overly anxious to get this point across, and made quite a long and impassioned statement on subject. He said in effect that whether Kashmir went to Pakistan or India[,] the other dominion would always be against solution. Kashmir would thus be a bone of contention. It is a rich country. He did not want his people torn by dissension between Pakistan and India. It would be much better if Kashmir were independent and could seek American and British aid for development of [the] country.

I, of course, gave Abdullah no encouragement on this line and I am confident when he left he understood very well where we stand on this whole matter. Ibrahim accompanied, by Tameer came in immediately after Abdullah's departure. Ibrahim represented himself not only as head of Moslem Conference Party but also as President of Free Kashmir Government. He claimed authority over two-thirds of area and stated that all of [the] Moslems in [the] state (more than three million) supported him. Abdullah has no backing at present except among the non-Moslems. Territory claimed by Ibrahim to be under his control includes all of northern Gilgit area, the provinces on western border to and including Mirapur; his capital was at Tarrarkhad in Poonch. He claimed an army of one hundred thousand.

Ibrahim's idea of an impartial administration to prepare for and supervise a plebiscite would be one in which neither India nor Pakistan, Moslems or non-Moslems, would participate. On other hand, he had considered possibility of a joint administration with a neutral as Prime Minister. His concept of a neutral would be possibly a Swiss, possibly an American, certainly not any representative of a "colonial" power. He emphasized Indian reluctance to agree to an impartial administration and withdrawal of Indian army was based on a certainty that if these two objectives were accomplished the plebiscite would unquestionably be in favor of accession to Pakistan. Personally he is in favor of accession to Pakistan; however, in unlikely event that plebiscite should go [the] other way he would accept [the] verdict.

Ibrahim seemed wholly disposed in contrast with Abdullah's attitude, to submit wholly to any decision by SC.

In [the] course of our conversation and in response to our question[,] Ibrahim emphatically said Kashmir could not remain independent; it could not stand on its own feet. This led him and Tameer to considerable discussion of [the] fact that Kashmir in north borders on Russia through caravan routes, in a "no-man's land"

at extreme eastern and of Afghan boundary. Sadig, Abdullah's deputy is a Communist. Abdullah, they implied strongly, is next door to one. Zafrullah Khan followed Ibrahim. He gave us report on consultations with President of Council, bringing out clearly two fundamental points of difference, namely Indian objection to combined Pakistan and Indian forces and Indian objection to interim impartial administration. He had pointed out in consultations that no impairment of Maharajah's sovereignty was involved. In [the] first place[,] interim administration would be temporary and for a specific purpose. In [the] second place[,] the Indian objection to [a] neutral outsider as Prime Minister did not hold water since present Prime Minister is an outsider. Ayyangar himself who was Prime Minister of Kashmir for some eight or nine years was an outsider and there have been other illustrations. I asked Zafrullah if there were neither Pakistan nor Indian forces in the country whether the Moslem form claimed by Ibrahim would be able to police the country. He replied quite honestly that this would not do because it would not give security to non-Moslems in country. Zafrullah said he saw no signs of Indians moving from their first position. Pakistan[,] on other hand is between two fires, their northern border on one side and India on other. Therefore[,] they urgently desire a settlement. They are prepared to request SC to recommend terms of settlement. They are prepared to request SC to recommend terms of settlement. In response to our question[,] he said he thought there was still room for further consultations with objective of seeing if both parties would not request Council to recommend terms. As in case of Ibrahim and in contrast with Indian position, Zafrullah seemed disposed to go very much further in accepting UN jurisdiction. Before leaving he said our conversation had confirmed him in his intention at SC meeting this afternoon to press in this direction. Noel-Baker followed Zafrullah and stated [it was] his feeling Indians [are] now taking [an] even more stubborn position [as] perhaps a bargaining device. He cited various statements of Nehru both public and in confidential correspondence to show [a] formerly liberal Indian attitude regarding conditions [of] plebiscite and concluded that we should have to bring even more pressure on Indians in SC debate. There was some discussion re desirability [of] introduction [of] formal resolution [at] this stage during which I emphasized that powers of Council re terms [of] settlement were necessarily restricted unless, one, both parties requested SC recommend terms; or, two, Council made finding of threat to international peace under Article 37, Paragraph 2 of Charter. I also informed Noel-Baker re suggestions on Pakistan draft telephoned earlier by Rusk. Noel-Baker stated his colleagues [were] very favorably impressed by Ibrahim.

AUSTIN