

## INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

GSA-25  
India: The War

25A Nizamuddin West  
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Dear Dick:

The civil war between India and Pakistan began 10 days ago this morning when Indian troops crossed the border into Pakistan Punjab. Or, if you will, the war began on 5 August when the Indians detected the large scale infiltration into Kashmir by regular and irregular forces raised, trained, equipped, and dispatched by Pakistan. This was certainly the beginning of the present chain of cause and effect. But all this goes back farther than that, to Jinnah's fatal impatience and Pakistan's attempted conquest of Kashmir in 1947-48, to the Partition of the subcontinent in August 1947, Britain's gift of poisoned chocolates to the peoples of India and Pakistan, to the Cain and Abel relationship of Jinnah and Gandhi from 1920 until Partition, and to the pride and inept diplomacy of both governments from Partition until now.

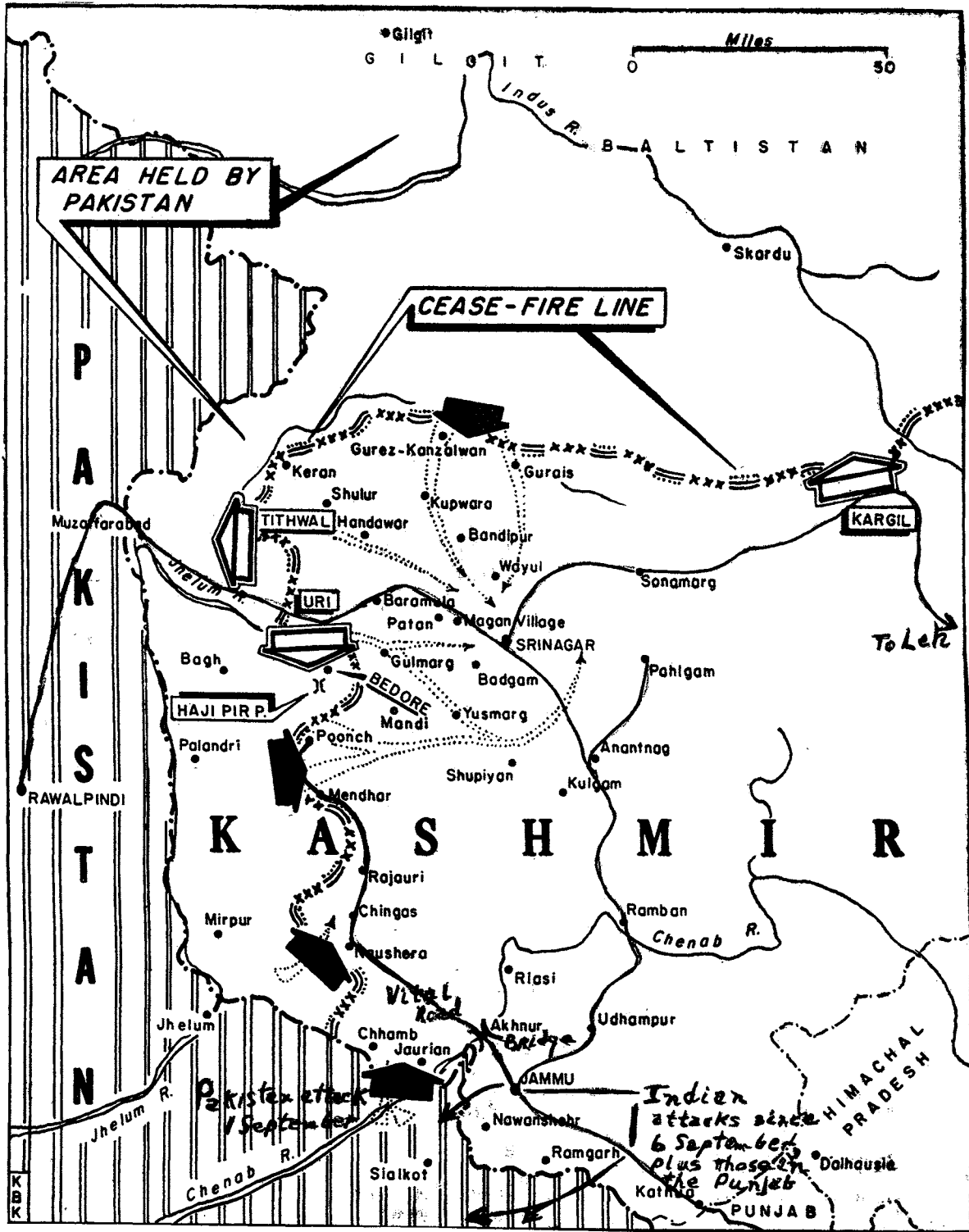
This is a civil war because it's brother against brother. Indian families, most often Muslims, have brothers, fathers and in-laws fighting for Pakistan. "Yes, my brother-in-law trained that outfit," said one officer about the Pakistani paratroops that have been dropped for sabotage in the Indian Punjab. As surely as the split between the Confederacy and the Union split the ranks of West Point graduates in 1860, so Partition split the Indian Army into Indians and Pakistanis. Indian families of all religions have friends in Pakistan. "So-and-so was a school chum of mine," one Indian will say of a Pakistani whose name is in the news, and another will say, "We were in the Army together in the War." "I wish I knew the name of the Brigadier of the Pak First Armored Division," said a woman after the news announced that he had been killed, "I think he was a friend of ours." But this is war, nothing like friendship must stop it. And the tension between the two countries has existed or has been growing for so long, that for many persons I've met the war was "inevitable". "It's been coming a long time," they say. "Now let's have it out once and for all."

The immediate progression of events began on 5 August when a Gujar herdsman in Kashmir came upon a big encampment of armed strangers in the area of Gulmarg, a resort 20-odd miles west of Srinagar. This group was one of five that were converging on Srinagar with the apparent intent of capturing it and the Vale of Kashmir for Pakistan. (Recent events in Kashmir will be the subject of another newsletter). The police and the Indian Army began operations

against the infiltrators that are still going on. President Ayub of Pakistan has denied knowledge of the infiltrators or that his government sent them to Kashmir. The report of General Nimmo, chief of the United Nations Observer Group in Kashmir, takes a contrary view, indicating that the infiltrators were trained and dispatched by Pakistan. The Indian Government decided that the most effective way to combat the infiltrators would be to take the areas just across the Cease Fire Line from which their operations were being mounted. About 24 August Indians crossed the Cease Fire Line near Tithwal. The principal staging point for the infiltrators and the beginning of the main infiltration route into Kashmir was in a mountainous area of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (which the Pakistanis call Azad - or free - Kashmir) where the Cease Fire Line bulges eastwards between the towns of Uri and Poonch. On 26 August Indian forces also moved across the Cease Fire Line to straighten out the Uri-Poonch bulge. (see map). By 30 August the main objective of this attack had been achieved and the Army claimed that this infiltration route was closed - and several days ago, troops moving northward from Poonch linked up with southward-moving formations, completing the operation.

The Pakistanis responded to India's retaliatory action on the first of September by mounting a large-scale attack, evidently with a regiment of 70 American Patton tanks, in the Chambh area. (see map). The apparent goals of this attack were to neutralize the Indian gains in the bulge by cutting the road from Jammu to Poonch by taking a vital bridge at Akhnur. Had this attack succeeded, all Indian military forces between Akhnur and Poonch would have to have been supplied by air and would thus have become very vulnerable to Pakistani attack. Two things about this attack are important. First its military significance, the attempted cutting off of a major sector of India's front and the threatening of the city of Jammu itself and India's entire road link with Kashmir, and, second, that when making the attack the Pakistanis crossed the international boundary between Pakistan and India into Jammu as well as crossing the Cease Fire Line. (It is nearly impossible to verify that the Pakistanis did cross the international boundary at this time, but in all likelihood they did, and later they certainly did). Public reaction in India to the crossing of the international boundary was immediately strong. The Times of India said it created a "near-war situation". Prime Minister Shastri was quoted as saying, "It is a regular attack and we shall certainly meet it." Some observers, however, believed that because the attack was made within the state of Jammu and Kashmir both sides would try to limit the conflict, treating it (and expecting the rest of the world to treat it) as a continuation of the long hassle over the possession of Jammu and Kashmir.

Attempting to repel this attack, particularly the tanks, the Indian Air Force came into action. Many Indians greeted this as the sign that war had come, because during the recent affair in Kutch neither side had used aircraft. Common opinion then was that both sides had refrained from doing so to prevent the development of a



Courtesy of LINK

The heavy black arrows indicate main points of intrusion by the infiltrators and the dotted lines show their routes in Kashmir. White arrows show the Indian attacks against infiltrator staging points.

major conflict. Thereafter, hints of what might happen came rapidly. The Defence Minister, Chavan, and the Prime Minister were reported to have told Parliament on 2 September that Pakistan's armored attack across the international boundary had "escalated the conflict rapidly" so that India would have to take an "overall view of defense". The Prime Minister reportedly told a meeting of opposition leaders that "The whole strategy of defense against Pakistan will be considered in a much wider context." Several days later he said, "If Pakistan wants to compel us by use of force to discuss the main question of Kashmir, I say it is just out of the question." He also said that Pakistani tactics (attack and then sue for peace) had become intolerable, that India could not accept the situation, and that, "We have to bring this matter to an end." The Prime Minister reiterated, according to press reports, that India was reconsidering its strategy in the light of the Pakistan attacks.

Looking back to the Kutch affair, one should have been able to predict what would happen. In Kutch, what should have been a minor flurry between border patrols grew into a small conflict that brought the armies of India and Pakistan face to face across the Punjab and Rajasthan frontiers. The Indian army disliked the idea of fighting in Kutch, where it claimed to be at a tactical disadvantage, and, reliable observers believe, the senior generals thought such a border dispute insufficient cause for a war. Instead, if a counter-attack had to be made, the Army wanted to strike from Rajasthan in the rear of the Pakistan forces in Kutch, or to march directly on Lahore -- a thought voiced to me later by several Army officers. The Army didn't march but the Government's over-reaction in the affair limited its room for maneuver in future confrontations with Pakistan. Ultimately, the matter died down with an agreement to discuss the issue or to refer it to a tribunal. The Pakistani attack in the Chambh area of Jammu posed a similar problem. The Indians had to meet the attack head-on, fighting at a disadvantage, or they had to defend themselves by attacking Pakistan at places advantageous to them.

On 5 September a Pakistani aircraft fired two rockets at an Indian Air Force base near Amritsar and there were two other sorties by Pak planes in the area, according to the Indian Government. Later the Indians claimed that the Paks had been massing their forces for an attack across the Punjab frontier on India. This may have been true, or perhaps the Paks were massing defensively against a possible Indian attack. In any case, the Indians decided to move, and on the morning of 6 September their Army marched into Pakistan. I heard the news on the radio about noon in a government office in Srinagar. Although I should have known it was coming, it was hard to believe.

So now it is war, although neither side has formally declared it to be. What began in politics ended in war, and now each side is fighting the war to gain its own political ends.

Pakistan began the fight by sending infiltrators to Kashmir in order to capture the Vale of Kashmir outright or to reopen the Kashmir issue to the influence of world opinion, the Indians having nearly closed the issue last January with steps to integrate Kashmir into India. President Ayub's version of events, given in a broadcast over Pakistan Radio on 1 September, is that failing to suppress the spontaneous revolt of the 'freedom fighters' in Kashmir, India attacked Azad Kashmir by crossing the Cease Fire Line (in the bulge and northwards). As a result, he said, Pakistan was "under threat of war in Kashmir forced on us by India". Pakistan, he said, would honor its pledge to help the people of Kashmir achieve their right of self-determination. This policy was repeated by a Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman who said, according to Reuter, that Pakistan's suggestion to U Thant for ending the conflict were: a cease fire followed by the withdrawal of all Pakistani and Indian troops from Jammu and Kashmir; the placing of an Afro-Asian police force in Kashmir pending a plebescite; and a plebescite in Kashmir within three months from the cease fire. Pakistan, in short, is trying to get what it has always claimed should be its own -- Kashmir. Moreover, evidence indicates that Pakistan is pleased by whatever embarrassment it can cause India internationally and whatever dislocation of Indian life and economy its needling results in. This is a game the Chinese began in 1960, played hard in 1962, and which now seems to be a joint effort -- a giant game of keep-away with India in the middle.

The Indians are trying to prevent the achievement of Pakistan's aims, a basically defensive position. It is doubtful if at this moment Shastri could negotiate on Kashmir and remain in office. Kashmir belongs to India, say the Indians (and legally without question it does), and although they would have let the Kashmir issue drift along had not the infiltrators come, now the common sentiment seems to be among the public and in the government that the issue should be definitely settled and the way India wants it settled. Precisely what this means won't be clear until long after the fighting stops because there are strong lobbies for strengthening and for loosening the ties binding Kashmir to India within the more general view that Kashmir must somehow remain Indian. And India is protecting its territory from armed attack, for the infiltration of Kashmir, where the war began, was no less than that.

But what began at first for Pakistan and then for India as a limited military-cum-political campaign now seems to loom to both nations as a fight for survival. Pakistan is fighting for national survival, perhaps not geographically speaking -- for Prime Minister Shastri has said, and I believe he means it, that India has no territorial designs on Pakistan--but psychologically speaking.

Since its creation at Partition, Pakistan has seen itself largely in the mirror of India's existence, the Adam from which it sprang. What Pakistan has been, has achieved, has done, has been in relation to India. Pakistan's *raison d'etre*, to Pakistanis, has seemed to be as a counter poise to India, almost as if the country had no separate existence. Pakistanis have had to prove to themselves (and to the world and to India, which frequently treated them with insulting paternalism) that they have a right to exist. And their attempts to prove that they have such a right and must live in an Islamic State because they are Muslims, have been troubled by their failure to define and to create an Islamic State. Not yet having proved themselves to themselves, a defeat, particularly a defeat by India, which they rejected when creating themselves, could have a profound effect on the people of Pakistan. It could amount to a national trauma, inhibiting normal development in Pakistan for many years. And a military defeat could just possibly wreck the State itself. With the Central Government so weakened (and the Central Government is in West Pakistan where the fighting has so far been confined), the Bengalis in East Pakistan might break away from the federal union. And the Central Government might also forfeit its influence over the component parts of West Pakistan, Sind, Baluchistan, Punjab and the former Northwest Frontier Province. And to President Ayub personally and to his government, a defeat would mean political eclipse or worse, something no leader and no government enjoys contemplating.

India's stakes in this war are no less high. India began fighting to save Kashmir, now it is fighting to prove, even save, its manhood and to write a final chapter to 1000 years of history. Heralded into the world with trumpets in 1947, India became very influential on the international scene, and at home its economic development progressed well. But by 1960 progress was slower at home and influence was waning abroad, trends that have continued. In October 1962, India sustained a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Chinese armies. In the spring of this year, climaxing what Indians consider years of needling and harassment by Pakistan, the Indians met the Pakistanis face to face in Kutch. And in the opinion of the general public, the Indian Army was defeated and the Government backed down. Indians began to doubt themselves and their government. The mood was one of depression and frustration with a hint of sullenness. Then came the slightly disguised attack on the Vale of Kashmir followed by the armored thrust (using American-aid tanks, doubling the insult) in the Jammu area. India had to fight. There was, I think, no alternative. Any other action would have been treated by the Pakistanis and by the general public in India as cowardice, with incalculable results for the future of democratic government in India. India had to prove its manhood.

And India for a thousand years or more has played host to conquerors. Arab, Afghan, Pathan, Mogul, and Briton have come to India, ruled, and gone away. Only since 1947 has India been independent, and in these years there has been (for the Indians) the nagging presence of Pakistan, a neighbor foreign nation that has had an immense effect on Indian foreign and domestic policy despite its smaller size. For years India has twitched when others pulled the strings. Now India would cut those strings, put a period after those years. If India defeats Pakistan in this war, militarily and politically, it will have done this -- in its own eyes at least and to some degree in the estimation of others. Then perhaps India can begin to write a history of its own.

Yet there is something bigger than the aims of either nation: the future of both on the sub-continent they inhabit. Either India or Pakistan must be pre-eminent on the sub-continent, or they must arrive at some tolerance and cooperation. In recent years Pakistan has seemed somehow to dominate India. This has proved unhealthy for all concerned, and now India is asserting its predominance. But India must be careful. Under the effect of a severe military defeat (perhaps as a result of even a mild defeat) Pakistan as a State, even as a concept, might disintegrate. This would be a disaster for India as well because it could neither conquer nor control such anarchy. How to win a war without winning it is a conundrum I haven't solved, but someone must. One possibility that has been suggested is for India to gain a strategically superior position (say by taking Gujranwala and thus cutting most of Pakistan's North-South communications) and then declare a unilateral cease fire. India could thereupon ask the United Nations to guarantee the cease fire, and could even offer to withdraw its troops if the U.N. could guarantee that Pakistan would not invade India. The Indian Government must realize the situation and the stakes. President Ayub and his Government must know that India understands the situation and will try to save him and Pakistan. Then he must behave accordingly. President Radhakrishnan has already paved the way for such an approach by publicly deploring the war and saying that more unites Indians and Pakistanis than divides them.

But, seen from another angle, can either side afford to quit before it has defeated the other in battle or at least holds a military advantage or until it has achieved the political aims for which it is fighting? I don't see how. And because the political aims of the two countries are incompatible there seems no way out of the impasse except for one side to win and the other to acknowledge itself the loser -- something neither nation (each trying to ensure its territorial or political or psychological survival) dares do. So the war will go on and no one can do more than fear the harm it will do.

Thus far the war on the ground and in the air seems to have been going extraordinarily well for India. It is difficult to believe either side because figures seem to be stretched by exaggeration or prevarication, and because the Government's fetish of super-secrecy denies announcement of all but generalities, but the Indian Army has invaded Pakistan in four or five places and Pakistan's armor has not been able to throw it out. The military sources of my correspondent friends say that the Indian Army is moving slowly ahead and that it is pursuing its major aim, to destroy Pakistan's armed forces, not to conquer territory. Most military observers, however, believe that the mechanized war of tanks and planes cannot go on much longer than three weeks or a month before the petrol and oil runs out or the machinery grinds to a halt for lack of spare parts and maintenance. That is, of course, if the war is fought hard. But neither country may have committed most of its armor and the respective air forces have not been brought fully into action. Opinion here is undecided whether both sides are avoiding 'all-out' war or whether each side is holding reserves for a major push. Prime Minister Shastri and his government are telling the public that it will be a long, grim struggle and indeed it may, particularly if the machines break down and it becomes a foot-soldier's war.

The war on the front in West Pakistan is the simplest of India's problems. More difficult to solve and more dangerous will be the long-run economic consequences of the war, and, in the short run, the great danger is of communal upheaval. The effect on the food situation, on the Government's financial position, and on capital development and planning can so far only be guessed at with dismay. The tendency to shelve other important problems during the war and its aftermath is equally evident and unpredictable. The sole bright spot is the hope that the Government, if it is victorious, will come out of the war with a new determination to accomplish the tasks it has let slide for so long.

The imminent danger is communal upheaval. Any spark could touch off this powder keg, but three are the most likely. Trouble might be started directly in India by Pakistani agents or by the paratroops that have been dropped far behind Indian lines in the Punjab. In the Punjab this danger is much less than in Rajasthan or the United Provinces, should paratroops be dropped there, because there are few Muslims living in the Punjab; they left or were killed in 1947. Trouble also could be started by the vigilantes that have made their appearance in Delhi (and probably in other cities). Some of these groups are composed of thugs and some of over-patriotic citizens who have taken it upon themselves to enforce the semi-blackout and semi-curfew or who, inspired by the Government's reward of 500 rupees to anyone catching an enemy agent, march an ordinary citizen, suddenly and illogically suspect, to the police station and proudly hold him up as a Pakistani agent.



Needless to say this rarely turns out to be so, as Delhi authorities have admitted. But someday someone may get mad that his friend has been mishandled or Muslims, who are the most frequently harassed, will react to this suspicion and ill-treatment and the fat may go into the fire. The civil defense authorities, the police, and the civil administration have come out strongly against all such activities and for the present they seem to be on the decline. Should the war at the front begin to go badly for India, however, they would probably increase rapidly.

Rumor in India is dangerous. It is a fuse that can set a city in flames. But some of the stories that have circulated here about the capture of 'Pakistani agents' have a delightful touch of fantasy. An Indian Army major was thought suspicious and taken by a crowd to the police because his shoes were dusty. He must have walked far, the people said. This story came from Nehru's daughter, presently Minister of Information and Broadcasting. The most common rumor-story is of a man dressed as a woman. The Muslim burqa does make a complete disguise and the newspapers have reported that paratroops have been equipped with burqas, saris, wigs, and falsies. Two such stories are especially imaginative. In one a woman in a burqa late at night went to a taxi stand in the Diplomatic Enclave and asked to be driven to Palam, the city's international airport. The driver was loathe to go and so the woman offered him 300 rupees to take her -- the fare would normally be less than five rupees. The driver, ever alert, thought this suspicious, drove the woman to the police station where, lo and behold, the woman was found to be a man and a Pakistani agent. Our cook told me the second story and said the events took place in a bazar a few hundred yards from our house. This time four women in burqas were in the bazar and one asked a young child the way to Parliament House. The child said he didn't know and watched the woman as she wandered off. The woman sought a wall and squared away at it in unfeminine fashion with hem of burqa lifted. Strange, thought the child, and so four more Pakistani agents were caught.

Another potential source of trouble will be the tension and frustration of a long war, long perhaps not in months but longer than expectations. The common reaction to the invasion of Pakistan was one of jubilation. Individuals said, we'll march in and settle this thing and that will be that -- an utterance often accompanied by a dusting of the hands. But should victory or cease fire not come quickly the mistrust of Muslims that lies deep in most Hindus (even in those one would expect to know better) might rise to the surface, resulting in oppression and retaliation. And should the Indian Army sustain defeats or reverses, the danger of a communal outbreak would be even greater. So far this has not happened. One reason, offered by several high officials of the Government, is that the Hindu communalists are also the super patriots and they realize that to start communal trouble now would not be in the national interest.

This is setting the wolves to guard the sheep, as one correspondent here has said, but so far it has worked. I'm not all that sure of the discipline of the lower ranks of organizations like the Jan Sangh and the much more dangerous Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), who might decide that a little terrorism among the Muslims might be the most nationalistic thing to do.

The spark surest to bring about a communal explosion would be an influx into India, especially into Calcutta, of Hindu refugees from East Pakistan. Everyone knows this and every sensible person dreads it. The Indian Government is handling the situation very carefully. The Defense Minister has said that India has no quarrel with East Pakistan and All India Radio has broadcast items about students in Dacca parading in the streets shouting Hindus and Muslims are brothers. So far India has not responded to air raids on towns and bridges in Assam and on airfields near Calcutta by planes based in East Pakistan. But the Prime Minister has warned that the country will not stand for endless provocation. What happens in this area is largely the responsibility of Pakistan. Its military position in the East is much weaker than India's. An attack on India would not be feasible in military terms unless it were in conjunction with a Chinese attack on the Northeast Frontier or unless made to draw the Chinese into the war -- an explanation that has been put forward for the air strikes on Assam and the Calcutta region. But hostilities with India might give an excuse and a cover for oppression of local Hindus, word of which would spread and which would probably have its effect in India. Pakistan need not be so indirect in its maneuvers. Harassment and intimidation of Hindus in East Pakistan could easily produce an exodus -- it did in the winter of 1964 -- with the same result.

India in the grip of communal frenzy would serve Pakistan well. India's claim to be a secular state where Muslims have equal rights and status with other citizens might, in the eyes of the world, be shaken or invalidated. Communal upheaval and the consequent civil disorder and disruption of food supply and utilities could interfere with the delivery of supplies to the military and it might even draw troops away from the front to preserve internal order. India is, of course, not entirely helpless in this matter. If the Central Government stiffens the backs of the governments in the states and lets it be known that no violence will be tolerated no matter how many Hindus have to be shot, upheaval might be avoided. Whether Pakistan will play its 'communal card' depends upon its own attitude toward the struggle with India. If Ayub or powerful elements in the Pakistan Government really do have a fight-to-the-death attitude, an 'Armageddon philosophy', as some here call it, then it might go to any lengths to win or to drag India down with it to extinction. Can any nation with so powerful a weapon be expected not to try to use it? In the past for all its protestations of solicitude for the fate of Indian Muslims and its claim to be their protector, Pakistan has not behaved

as if it had their interests at heart. Indeed, it can be reasonably argued that the creation of Pakistan itself was the severest blow that Muslims in India have ever sustained. But in the great reality of the present situation perhaps Ayub will decide that the communal bomb, like the atom bomb, is too horrible to be used. Yet if the sub-continent avoids these flames this time, I might be persuaded to believe in miracles.

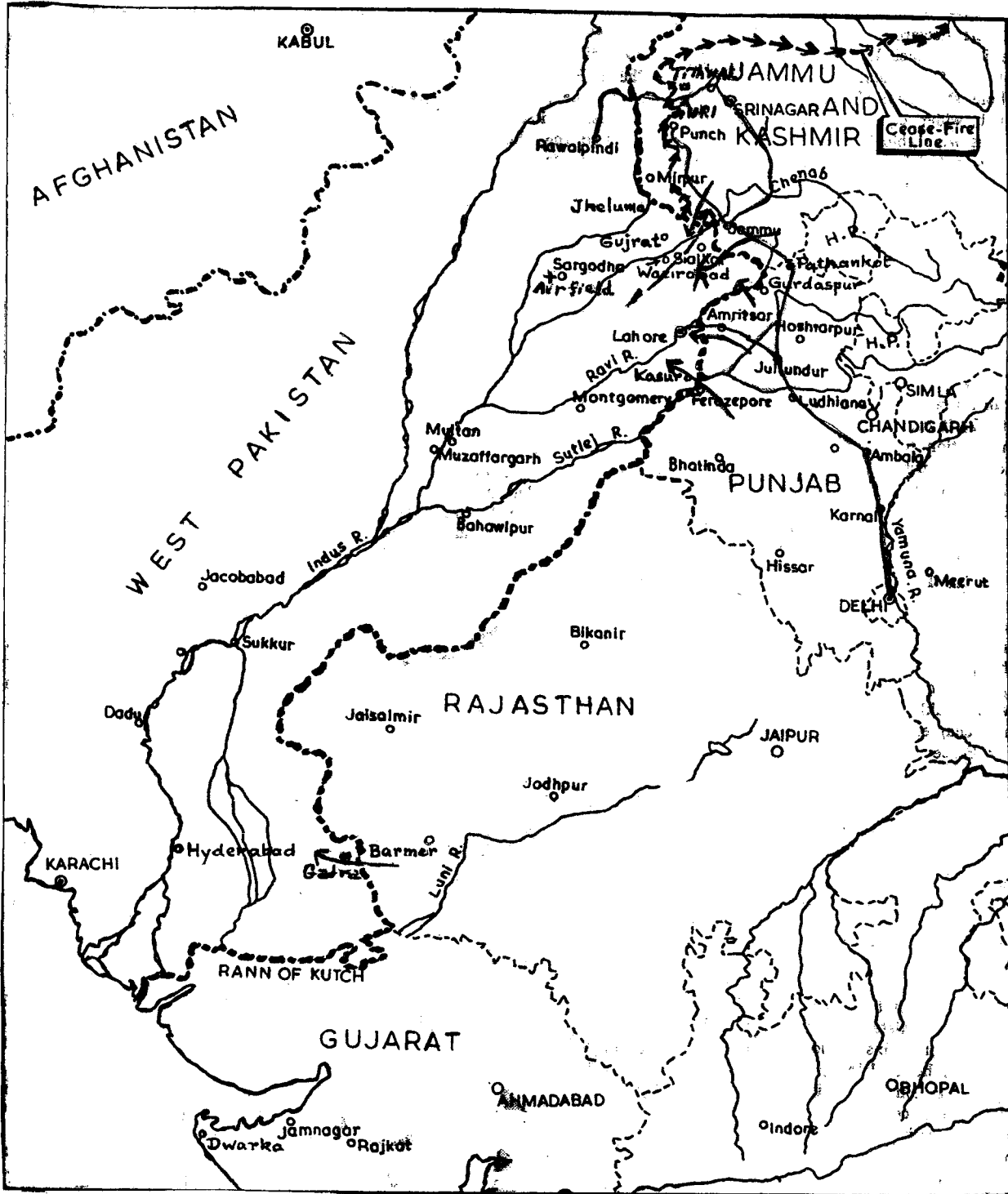
As the war continues, Indian nationalism grows. The people are in good heart because they are winning and the old terms of reference are disappearing, particularly in regard to Kashmir. Editorials and signed columns in the Delhi press almost daily say that the Cease Fire Line in Kashmir is no more. They demand that India keep the areas it has captured across this line, and the editor of the local edition of the Indian Express has written: "We must extend our physical control over as much of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as possible -- territory that is legally Indian and which, therefore, can be justifiably retained even after the cessation of hostilities." Several days ago a meeting of Delhi citizens at which one Central Government Minister, two Members of Parliament, and two vice-presidents of the New Delhi Municipal Committee were present passed a resolution that India should not accept a cease fire until it had retaken all of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. And two days ago The Hindustan Times reported that both opposition and Congress Members of Parliament had demanded almost the same thing, that India not accept a cease fire until Pakistan had withdrawn all its military forces from Azad Kashmir. Such sentiments are not surprising and they may limit Prime Minister Shastri's position on Kashmir when a final solution of the problem is sought.

The war, to Delhi citizens, is somewhat unreal. Although the papers have printed photos of President Radhakrishnan and Vice-President Husain visiting wounded soldiers, although the radio gives war news (generally repetitious) all day long, although slit trenches have been dug in many parts of the city (by paid coolies, rarely by the citizenry), although there have been air raid warnings and one plane has been shot down near here, and although there is a semi-blackout and most persons are off the streets by eight o'clock in the evening, the city has no feeling of immediacy. The mood is expectant but calm. By day life goes on as usual, and at night a bright moon has softened the ugly new buildings and given the older, tree-shaded streets the look of a country town. Yet danger has not gone away. Fate is playing a waiting game.

Yours sincerely,



Granville S. Austin



Courtesy of LINK

The hand-drawn arrows indicate the six main points of Indian attack since 6 September. The two principal fronts are those immediately east and south of Lahore and one southeast of Sialkot.