

THE WASHINGTON DECLARATION
AND RETREAT FROM KARGIL

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By Professor Khurshid Ahmad

Every day and every moment in the life of a Muslim is a time of self assessment in which he examines his words and deeds to ascertain what brings him closer to virtue, justice and the cherished reward of the Hereafter and what takes him away from there. For the people of Pakistan, particularly the month August is the most appropriate for this purpose as it was in this month fifty years ago that God Almighty delivered this nation from the 200 years of slavery of an alien power and gave it a free and independent state. The people of Pakistan got a golden opportunity in the second half of the 20th century to establish, in the light of the eternal principles and universal message of Islam, a society which would be just, healthy and obedient to Allah and materially prosperous and strong so as to be a blessing and bounty for them and a model for others.

The situation in which we are about to welcome this year's independence anniversary is not only disturbing and troublesome but has the foreboding that unless the nation stands up to face the call of time it might lose the very freedom that had opened for it the way to a new life and its enormous possibilities. No doubt, many a sensitive and difficult moments have come during these 52 years but after conquering the peaks of Kargil, the climb down and humiliation of the Washington Declaration and retreat of the Mujahideen has created a complex situation which has made the old wounds to bleed again and has endangered the very existence of the country and freedom of its people. Every Pakistani has the right to ask today whether Pakistan's future is to be settled in Washington and Delhi, or the nation, reposing its trust in the Almighty, has the resolve and the will to make its own decision. The imprudence, shamelessness and careless ease with which the historical success in Kargil has been turned into a diplomatic, political and military defeat, has raised serious questions not only about the capability of the leadership but also its patriotism, which cannot be overlooked. Now, the danger we are facing is not only external but internal as well.

After an absolutely impartial analysis of the situation based on facts, we feel it is our duty to express, with profound grief, our well-considered view that the present leaders have brought the country to a point where our existence and freedom will remain endangered unless we get rid of them quickly. This leadership is now a security risk for the country. It has not risen to the occasion, nor has it been able to employ the true national potential and strategic opportunities for the nation's advantage and has, instead, submitted to the blackmailing and bluffs of India, U.S. and the Western nations and surrendered without giving a fight. Its lack of vision and cowardice altered the Indian military defeat into that country's tactical and political victory. This leadership accepted unconditional dictation from Washington and bartered the sacrifices of the Mujahideen and the blood of the martyrs. It has brought defeat and humiliation to the nation quite similar to the country's split in 1971. The role played by Yahiya Khan and his gang in 1971, has been repeated by

the Prime Minister and his advisors in 1999. They did not learn from the history; rather they lost chance of the century. India, the real aggressor and tyrant is pretending innocent before the world, while the Mujahideen struggling for their freedom have been branded as infiltrators and intruders in their own homeland and forced to accept a humiliating retreat. To top it all, the ruling clique has the audacity and the cheek to portray this miserable defeat and ignominy as a "diplomatic success" and as "saving the region from war".

The game being played by the official spokesmen and drum-beating writers can neither conceal the bitter facts, nor is it possible to pull the wool over the eyes of 140 million people of Pakistan. The nation is left with only one option: change the leadership.

The present rulers have lost credibility and legitimacy and can no more be trusted. Being a party to the Washington Declaration and having come back empty-handed from the Kargil heights, is not just a onetime retreat from some battle front, but it also amounts to total failure of the vision of this leadership and its policies on foreign affairs, defence, economy and ideology and military strategy. More than that it shows that the leadership is not only bankrupt with regard to its understanding, wisdom and capability, but is also indicative of its disloyalty and treachery. Its real crime is that it attempted to save its rule at the expense of the future of Kashmir and Pakistan. It must be remembered that Pakistan and Kashmir make one indivisible entity and the interest of one cannot be separated from that of the other.

Both conceptually and factually, the leadership has accepted a position that has nullified all our efforts and sacrifices remembered. In actual practice it would mean that issues will now be settled as dictated by India. That will make Pakistan a vassal state within the U.S. World Order and a satellite of India. If after just one year of having acquired nuclear status; the leaders are pushing Pakistan to such a humiliating position, they certainly lose the right to lead and represent it. Now it is possible to live with freedom and self-respect only if we get rid of this leadership and hand over the rein of power to those who have firm faith in Allah and know the value of freedom, are aware of the aspirations of the Millat and its objectives and are a model of honesty and integrity. We need a leadership that stands with firm resolve to deliver this nation from the ideological, economic, cultural and political subservience of the West and from the Indian designs of regional hegemony. We stand at a decisive turning point and have no other choice, but to get rid of the present leadership.

No doubt, the nation is grieved and violently upset. Yet what we have said above is neither based on moody sentiments nor on any party or group prejudice. We have stated our views after an objective and impartial analysis and after having deeply examined the merits and demerits of the government's policies and actions.

The text of Washington Declaration is brief but its meaning and implications are horrible. It is the outcome of an agreement with President Clinton by an unnerved Prime Minister who was

overwhelmed by fear. He took no note of the nation's principled stand on the issue and ignored the fact that he had not received any mandate and authority from the nation or the Parliament or even of his hand-picked cabinet. More than anything, the principal party of the Kashmir conflict.. The resistance movement and its political and military leadership... Was neither consulted nor taken into confidence at any stage. Naturally, therefore, the nation as a whole and the Kashmiri leadership... Political (All Pakistan Hurriyat Conference) and military (United Jihad Council), have totally rejected the declaration. So, neither the Declaration carries any weight, nor does Government of Nawaz Sharif enjoy anymore legitimacy, whatsoever it had so far.

An analysis of the Declaration shows that the Nawaz government has committed four major blunders:

1. The Kashmir issue, which basically relates to right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and their political and military struggle against India for the realization of that right, has, through this contemptible effort, been turned into Pakistan-India conflict. It has been India's desire and attempt all along that the question of self-determination and the related UN resolutions be set aside and the issue be looked upon as something bilateral between Pakistan and India. In spite of the tall claims of the so-called "internationalization" of the issue, the major crime of the government is that first through "Lahore Declaration" and now through "Washington Declaration", Kashmir has been made an issue between the governments of the two countries, and is firmly shackled to a framework of bilateral talks.
2. A unilateral pledge has been made to vacate Kargil, thereby damaging the Kashmir cause in three ways, namely:
 - a. The Jihad movement has been bartered without authority for some imaginary and non-existent gains.
 - b. Pakistan's involvement was implicitly admitted and the U.S. was given a pledge that Pakistan could recall the Mujahideen. Thereby covering the impression that it was not a mass movement carried out by the people of Jammu and Kashmir themselves, but the handiwork of Pakistan-backed infiltrators, which the government could wind up anytime, at will.
 - c. India's allegation that Pakistan is intruding into its territory which was all along being denied by the government, the army and the nation, has now been accepted by the Prime Minister in his eagerness to project himself as a champion of peace, thereby disgracing him and the nation before the world.
3. It was agreed as a principle that the sanctity of the LoC in Kashmir shall be respected, whereas the fact is that this Line was forcefully thrust upon us by the circumstances of the recent past. It was never accepted by the people of Pakistan

and Kashmir even as an agreeable boundary, what to say of considering it "sacred" and inviolable. Even in the Tashkent Declaration and the Simla Agreement, it was named "Cease fire line" and "Line of Control", respectively, clearly indicating that it was a temporary arrangement.

4. The Washington Declaration neither refers to the UN resolutions, nor in any reservation about the Line of Control recorded in it from Pakistan's side. Blind and faithfully its respect and sanctity have been simply agreed to, thereby paving the way for the diabolical plan of dividing Kashmir along this line.
5. Retreat from Kargil has been accepted without getting any pledge from India and the U.S. about the settlement of Kashmir issue in the framework of UN resolutions, and the pulling back of the Indian army, and assurances regarding Indian forces, its Border Security force, police and counter-insurgency, and a clear time-table for all these actions. On the other hand Pakistan has on its part pledged to take practical steps to ensure that India gets control over the area within two weeks. It is more than evident that it is not an agreement between the heads of two sovereign countries but between one who dictates and the other who just complies. Ironically, India is not a party to the agreement and it can always say "no" to any understanding between the two of them. What the U.S. has promised for all this, is that when Mr. Nawaz Sharif fulfills his promises and compels Mujahideen to leave Kargil offering it on a plate to India, then armed conflict in the area will cease, and Mr. Clinton will take "personal interest" to see that Pakistan-India talks resume in the spirit of Lahore Declaration. Pakistan has simply failed to get quid pro quo from any quarter. No assurance has been given that Kashmir issue will be solved. There is no mention of UN resolutions. Not a finger is raised over Indian atrocities and its illegal occupation. There is no mention of the freedom movement and right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people. All cards have been laid on the table merely for the sake of fresh dialogue, knowing well what happened to the talks of 1962-63 (Bhutto-Swarn Singh), and how parleys have been sabotaged for 27 years after the Simla Agreement. The American President only promised "personal interest", and we put everything at stake.

"Qaumeey frokhtand wa che arzan frokhtand"

No matter what Mr. Nawaz Sharif and his companions may say and wish others to believe, the truth is that the Pakistan leadership has faced worst defeat of its history in Washington and the whole nation and Kashmir Jihad Movement have been humiliated and disgraced. Some idea of it can be had by looking at the comments of prominent analysts appearing in the newspapers in the U.S., Britain and India.

The American weekly magazine "Newsweek" has narrated and pasteurized the "heroic deed" of Mr. Nawaz Sharif in these words:

"Rebuffed by his allies in China, Nawaz cut short a late June visit to Beijing and began looking elsewhere for backers. He begged for a meeting with Bill Clinton on July 4, just before the U.S. President headed for an Independence Day holiday. Nawaz was in such a hurry to see Clinton that he commandeered a regular Pakistan International Airways flight to New York and diverted it to Washington. "He came here and found a President who was very clear that there was not going to be any reward for what they had done," says a senior U.S. administration official. "What he got was, here's what you need to do." Clinton's demand: pull the invaders out of Indian Territory.

"Nawaz promised to withdraw. The Americans didn't offer Nawaz much in return for his peace deal. They told him that he must not only withdraw the intruders but also resume diplomatic talks begun by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's historic New Delhi-to-Lahore bus ride in March. In return, Clinton vaguely promised to visit Pakistan if the withdrawal goes ahead and Islamabad signs the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. But he offered no mediation, rebuffing Pakistan's effort to counterbalance India's military strength by internationalizing the search for a solution. Privately, State Department officials say Clinton doesn't want to get any more involved in the Kashmir mess." **(Newsweek July 19, 1999, p.16-17)**

Time magazine's analysis is also worth reading as it says that the Joint Statement was a slap on Sharif's wrist:

"In the end, though, Sharif emerged a loser. Not only did he fail to get U.S. support, but he and Clinton issued a joint statement that amounted to a slap on Sharif's wrist. They announced that the Line of Control - the de facto border between India and Pakistan in Kashmir since 1972 - would be respected, further stating that "concrete steps will be taken for the restoration of the Line of Control." In other words, Sharif promised Clinton to give India back its territory." "Sharif's promises in Washington were exactly what India has been demanding: that the occupying forces go back to Pakistan, after which the fighting can stop. His efforts to get international mediation for the Kashmir problem - which India steadfastly refuses - went nowhere. "He created the mess for himself", says a senior U.S. official. "He has no good choices. He will have to find a way to manage the domestic consequences."

(Time, July 19, 1999, p.30)

Washington Post in its editorial wrote that India is in no mood of letting Kashmiris taste self-determination:

"Pakistan is smarting under the double lash of Indian military victory and American pressure to withdraw, the Sharif government is in trouble. India is enjoying a period of being widely thought to have the merits on its side in the mountain fighting and is in no more to offer the people of Kashmir a taste of self-determination."

(International Herald Tribune, July 16, 1999)

Economist, London wrote:

"It was a humiliation for Pakistan's government. No one doubts that, not even, it seems, Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister. What was, back in May, claimed to be a victory, when Pakistan-backed guerrillas invaded Indian Kashmir, is now seen to be an ill-thought-out adventure..... But retired officers say that many soldiers are likely to have been dismayed at how a battlefield victory was turned into a diplomatic loss. Why, pundits are asking, did Pakistan support the incursion a few kilometers into Indian Kashmir at Kargil if the forces deployed did not have the means to sustain the engagement?" **(The London Economist, July 17, 1999, p.65)**

The whole international press is showing the Nawaz government the mirror to look into and face facts. How a success achieved by the Mujahideen, which provided an opportunity to liberate Kashmir and through this rare chance make Pakistan invincible against India in the aftermath of nuclearization, was transformed into defeat under the external pressures and imaginary dangers. The question is how all this happened? This needs be deeply looked into.

When it was realized by India and the Western powers, particularly by America and its protégé G-8 that the resistance movement of Kashmir has entered into a new phase due to the successes in Kargil and that it would not be easy for India to nullify it, aggressive efforts were undertaken on several fronts so that Pakistan government could be overawed and forced to withdraw from all the fronts even without an engagement. The foremost among these was to create a cleavage between the government and the military so that internal dissensions could arise along with the external onslaught. With that end in view, India and the world media adopted a variety of tactics so as to develop an atmosphere of fear and despondency.

The other front that of psychological war, was also opened with dexterity. It aimed at frightening Mr. Nawaz Sharif himself of the hazard of adverse reaction of the military and of Islamic forces, particularly the Mujahideen fighting on the battle front. Stories of capture by "Pakistani Taliban" and "Islamic fundamentalists" were floated from every nook and corner. Nawaz Sharif was reassured of Western support provided he was prepared to retrace his steps.

Precisely at this juncture Ms Benazir came out in the open and in an article published by "International Herald Tribune" she openly declared that her former policy on Kashmir was wrong and that it was adopted under pressure from the Army. She mentioned about her meeting with

the former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and vowed for putting off the Kashmir problem and for giving priority to the so-called confidence building measures through trade and culture. She also proposed the opening of the LoC for free movement of goods and people and thus winds up the Kashmir issue by towing the typical Indian and American line on the subject. By writing this article, Benazir had in fact vied with Nawaz Sharif in offering her services so that she may be supported and enabled to close this chapter once for all.

At the same time India deployed its entire military might on Kargil front. Fresh army reinforcement comprising 30,000 soldiers and officers was rushed to Kashmir, air force was activated, heavy artillery, particularly Bofor guns were moved to various positions and war hysteria was developed throughout the country. It was for the first time in the history of India that every military maneuver was shown on the T.V. Dead bodies of the soldiers were depicted in order to arouse popular sentiment. War funds were established. Radio and T.V. were used for motivating people for mobilization. While this drama was at its peak, Indian Prime Minister dispatched his special emissary to Geneva on 15th June, 1999 with a letter addressed to President Clinton saying that India was going to cross the LoC and launch an all out attack on Pakistani forces. President Clinton presented the Indian intent at the meeting of the G-8 countries as a real threat in the light of the aforesaid letter and simultaneously deputed General Anthony Zinni to Islamabad for frightening and threatening Pakistan in every conceivable manner. It was this crucial moment when Mian Nawaz Sharif lost his nerves and started beseeching for peace and friendship.

Here we need to analyze the mind of Mian Nawaz Sharif. He has all along been double-minded and confused. It is not in his nature to go deep into a matter and make an objective analysis of all its aspects before formulating an opinion. If he thinks he can derive any political benefit through a certain action in Kashmir, he will go for it but he will run away for survival as soon as the risks involved in it appear before him. Since long he has been nourishing an obsession for a short-cut solution to the Kashmir problem and friendship with India. During his earlier premiership he talked about the 'third option' while on a sojourn in Tehran, but when severely criticized for it, he denied the statement although it is established that he did say it. During the current tenure of office too he has been repeatedly talking about a new solution. At times he speaks about flexibility and there is a hint for a settlement outside the ambit of U.N. resolutions. At another time there is the talk getting over with the Kashmir problem within a year. These are but the manifestations of the perplexity of his mind. That is why his response to vital problems has often been casual and impulsive, and he does not hesitate in adopting a contradictory stance. Whoever has had the chance to work with him, got this impression. Even now it is evident that he has been striving for friendship with India on the one hand, while exerting pressure in Kashmir on the other, without giving a serious thought to the consequences of his ambivalence. He tried to take the credit of the occupation of Kargil by Mujahideen for his political ends and visited the LoC for the first time to buck them up. But when America served a warning to him, he resorted in his nervousness to second track and third track diplomacy. Mr. Naik visited India not once but thrice and this led India

and America to infer that Nawaz Sharif could be overawed easily. The diplomatic offensive and worldwide propaganda campaign of India has been at work since the very beginning of the crisis with a well thought out plan. In contrast Pakistan's diplomats were in deep slumber and the media remained oblivious of its responsibility to awaken the nation and mobilize it to counter the enemy. The people were never taken into confidence at any stage. There was no debate in the Parliament on this issue. Even the Cabinet was not consulted. It was after a gap of 54 days that a meeting of the Cabinet was called to consider the budget. During these two months, which were crucial for the nation, no Cabinet meeting was held even once. During the last two and a half years, the Prime Minister has spoken in the Parliament for only 18 minutes. There is neither any effective political forum nor any mechanism for consultation with experts, for analysis and advice before taking a decision. The Prime Minister has some self-conceited advisers and the whole system is functioning as in a monarchy. Keeping all these aspects in view, America and India put up the specter of a fourth war that could develop into a nuclear one also, and our Prime Minister just gave in. In politics or in war, courage and valor are vital. If the leadership loses courage, no decisive action can be taken. It appears that the scare of war, created by India and America shattered the nerves of our Prime Minister and that led to his dash to America, his wheedling of Clifton and his acquiescing to a withdrawal from Kargil. The avowed reasons for the withdrawal are all flimsy and unreal. These are:

First - India is going to war and this fourth war will be horrible and may develop into an atomic war.

Second - Since Pakistan is far behind India in its capability for conventional warfare, particularly in respect of air force and navy, and also because its stockpile of war ammunition and spare parts may not last for more than two or three weeks, the balance of war may go against Pakistan.

Third - Wars do not solve the problems. They are best resolved through negotiations only and, therefore, the door for negotiations must be opened somehow.

Fourth - America should be involved somehow as it is only in this way that we can get rid of the threat of war as well as the Kashmir problem.

In our view all these arguments are baseless and misleading. In no way was India in a position to attack Pakistan. Half of its army was engaged in Kashmir. The condition now obtaining in Jammu and Kashmir is different from that existing in 1965. Anti-India movement pervades throughout the state of Jammu and Kashmir and India is faced with rebellion at various places which may flare up in the event of a war and assume the shape of a mass uprising. Further, India is also entangled in local uprisings in Assam and Punjab. Its army was not at all in a position to fight on different fronts. On Kargil front it was losing heavily. Even Indian press, magazines and world media carried the

evidence that out of about 150 hill tops in Kargil, Daras, Batalik and Mishko sectors of which 31 bear strategic importance, India could hardly capture 10 percent of them even after having tried its best for two months before July 4. Even out of these some were re-captured by the Mujahideen. Most of the Indian war machinery is of Russian origin which is now becoming outdated and India had realized that these would not be effective against Pakistan. If we go in depth to assess the thinking of political elements in India, the consensus was, barring a few that irrespective of the duration of the war an attack beyond LoC should be avoided. The world opinion also favored this strategy. Then, most importantly Pakistan's atomic capability was a real deterrent. Therefore, there existed no possibility of an attack on Pakistan from India in the presence of all these factors. India, in concert with America, was simply bluffing Pakistan and created a situation to frighten and outwit Pakistan's leadership. Our political big shots surrendered when it was time to stand up in defiance.

The second premise is also baseless. According to our information the military command had clarified that the 1965 situation does not exist then, and that they were attacked, they were in a position to counter it and prolong it relentlessly for several weeks. China had also assured its full support at least in regard to the supply of ammunition and spare parts. Despite all this, General Zaini's threat was given a greater importance and a historic victory was converted into surrender at our own hands.

So far as negotiations are concerned, none can deny their importance, but they should be meaningful and productive, and it is matter of historical record that India has never been prone to it. When Liaquat-Nehru negotiations were going on, Liaquat Ali Khan had written in clear terms that talks without a specified time table were useless and that in case matters were not settled within the specified period of time, the course to arbitration/mediation would have to be taken. But India withdrew from the negotiations unilaterally. When India-China war ensued in 1962 and there arose a unique opportunity for Pakistan to occupy Kashmir, Ayub Khan allowed that opportunity to pass and instead preferred to rely upon the assurances of America and the Great Britain for solving the problem. Then followed the Swaran Singh-Bhutto negotiations, but those too proved futile and abortive. The documents about the negotiations that have been published recently reveal that India backed out of the negotiations when Pakistan pressed for a specified time table.

The present situation is even more tenuous. After the Washington Agreement, it is not only India but also America which is demanding that Pakistan must stop supporting the Jehadi movements in Kashmir because talks cannot even be started unless this is done. India's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister have both declared in clear terms, twice during the last five days, that since it has been proved that "subversive activities" in the whole of Kashmir were being carried out at Pakistan's instance, no negotiations would be possible unless LoC is fully respected and the whole

of the Jehadi movement is wound up. AFP has reported from Delhi on July 21 in unequivocal terms that:

"Hopes of talks between India and Pakistan will remain buried on the Kashmir battlefield as long as Islamabad continues to support Muslim insurgency in the disputed territory. India has set three conditions for a resumption of dialogue: the complete withdrawal of Pakistan based forces from Indian Kashmir; a re-affirmation of the 'sanctity' of the disputed Kashmir border; and an end to Pakistani sponsorship of cross-border terrorism."

Indian leadership has imposed further conditions, namely restoration of confidence and verification of all the promises and claims of Pakistani leadership. The U.S. Foreign Secretary, who would be meeting the Indian Foreign Minister in Singapore, has said it in clear words that all the subversive activities in Kashmir must cease. The undernoted words of Albright are worth pondering over:

"Acts of terrorism must stop immediately because such actions make the Kashmir conflict more, not less difficult to resolve. We condemn attacks against civilians and obviously those who perpetrate them and those who give assistance to the perpetrators." **(AFP - July 20, 1999, The News International, London, 21 July, 99)**

Clinton-Vajpai telephone talk concentrated on this topic. International analysts are openly saying that there is not even a remote possibility for substantive negotiations. Indian elections have complicated this situation further. BJP wants to encase the ostensible political and military success during elections. If it wins the elections by securing a clear majority, its attitude will harden further. However, if a weak coalition government comes into being, it would not be able to take any major decisions. If the Congress comes to power, no meaningful negotiations can be expected with it. Under the circumstances the recourse to a solution through negotiation cannot be justified on reason, history and facts. Only those negotiations succeed that are made from a position of strength. Negotiations from a weak posture never succeed and only provide a forum to accord permanence to a defeat. Pakistan's present leadership has skidded from an open highway into a deep mire and has no visible means at its disposal to get out of it.

The fourth component concerns reliance on America. We are not sanguine about it. During the long spell of the last 45 years of "friendship" America has never been sincere to Pakistan's real interests. Be it 1962, 1965 or 1971, every time Pakistan has been let down by America. The services rendered by Pakistan during the course of Afghan war were rewarded by President Bush by imposing economic sanctions on it, although he was known to be a close friend of General Ziaul Haq with deep personal relations to the extent of 'ferry-ride chats'. America takes no time in changing its stance. It is its historical record. If anybody has any doubts, he may study Henry Kissinger's recent memoirs "Years of Renewal". He has reproduced in it a letter from the former

Prime Minister of Cambodia, Mr. Sirik Matek, addressed to the American Ambassador. Its reading should be a warning to those who rely on America's friendship and wish to place the destiny of their country in the hands of America and have their basic issues resolved by it. He had in his letter declined the American offer to save his life and had preferred to die in his own country. He wrote:

"Dear Excellency and Friend:

I thank you very sincerely for your letter and for your offer to transport me towards freedom. I cannot, alas, leave in such a cowardly fashion. As you know, and in particular for your great country, I never believed for a moment that you would have this sentiment of abandoning a people which has chosen liberty. You have refused us your protection, and we can do nothing about it. You leave, and my wish is that you and your country will find happiness under this sky. But, mark it well, that if I shall die here on the spot and in my country I love, it is no matter, because we are all born and must die. I have only committed this mistake of believing in you (the Americans)".

(Monthly (Commentary, May 1999, p.56)

After writing that letter Sirik Matek met the same fate as what happened with Cambodia and Viet Nam. He was put to death by Khemer Rouge. Thus American friendship became a source of warning for others for all time to come.

This is the result of reliance on America. But Nawaz Sharif and his advisers are jubilant that Clinton has promised to take "personal interest" in connection with Kashmir and this is not a mean achievement for them. His Minister for Information is stating with pride that Clinton talked to Nawaz Sharif for 3 hours. This in itself was, in his view, an unprecedented honor for any one from the Third World irrespective of what he gained or lost. It appears as if he was interested in, having himself photographed with Clinton. Since a photo session could not be had on July 4, it was arranged exclusively for this purpose at a special request the next day. How low they stooped in doing all this, can be gauged from the report dispatched by Shaheen Sehbai, the representative of the daily "Dawn" in Washington and published in Dawn, Karachi on July 13.

It is not just a matter of lack of faith in American 'friendship'. What we apprehend is that this kind of friendship and "personal interest" may bring into play something more. After studying the various comments and analyses published on the subject elsewhere, we apprehend that America shall hardly exert any pressure on Kashmir to bear India. If it does, it would be more towards the implementation of its own plans and interests so that CTBT is signed and nuclear capability is either nullified, or retrained and acceptance of a 'solution' of Kashmir question is obtained that may yield no benefit to Pakistan, leaving Kashmir truncated forever and providing to America itself a foothold on a part of its territory. The proposals that are being loudly talked about aim at partitioning Kashmir by perpetuating the LoC as a permanent border or some other arrangement whereby some portion may remain with Pakistan, some may be appropriated to India and the rest

may be awarded a semi-autonomous status. Thus during the process of this unjust apportionment, some permanent role shall be assigned to America directly or through the U.N. It is feared that both the parties viz. those making merry at the Washington Declaration and the repenting Mohtrama for her erstwhile Kashmir policy, may become the principal actors of this play. So this is going to be the next step after the Washington Declaration, and the nation needs to be alert and ready to counter these dangers. Shaheen Sehbai has described in clear words the intentions of the American policy makers in this regard in his report from Washington dated July 13 and these are echoed in most of the American, British, and European and even in Indian newspapers and magazines viz:

"Now no more Kargil can take place and this is the long-term implications of the Washington Accord. Everyone, including China and Europe has endorsed the LoC almost as the international border and this is what Pakistan is now going to get, if ever a solution of Kashmir was to be enforced in the sub-continent."

Indian magazine India Today writes this very thing in its own way:

"If the government follows its present track, the Pakistan adventure in Kargil can become that country's crowning blunder. The measured Indian response and the international support for the sanctity of the LoC could well aid in bolstering India's 50-years old ground strategy in Kashmir: formal division of the state with the LoC as the permanent border."

Mian Nawaz Sharif and his government shall have to accept the responsibility of this shameful failure and shall have to pay for it. Benazir Bhutto behaving like a chameleon has proved that PPP followed no clear policy on Kashmir. She is interested only in advancing the American agenda. Now the nation has to decide whether Pakistan and Kashmir are not two different entities. Those who are saying that the integrity of Pakistan cannot be put at stake for the sake of Kashmir, are either just unaware of Pakistan's original concept or are willfully committing an act of treason. Quaid-e-Azam had declared Kashmir to be the jugular artery of Pakistan. If this vital artery is cut off, how can Pakistan survive! If, God forbid, there is an insurgency or internal subversion in Pakistan, will these people say that Pakistan cannot be put at stake for the sake of Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar or Quetta? Pakistan's destiny and its future are linked with Kashmir. If, Allah forbid, Kashmir is separated from Pakistan through some conspiracy, it would not only strike against the very concept of Pakistan but would also make it impossible for the rest of Pakistan to survive or to progress further. These are not only ideological but ground realities as well and, if they are ignored, disaster shall follow.

The present government of Mian Nawaz Sharif during its reign of two and a half years, and particularly by signing the Lahore Declaration and the Washington Declaration and by withdrawing from Kargil, has distorted the Kashmir issue and has stabbed the Jihad movement in the back. It

has rendered even our nuclear deterrent ineffective and has very adversely affected our defence capability and morale of the fighting forces. The message it has conveyed to the freedom movement in Occupied Kashmir is disastrous and has dismayed the Kashmiri Muslims with Pakistan. Although they may not tilt in favour of India, their enthusiasm for Pakistan as their cherished goal would certainly be dampened. Pakistan's economy has weakened due to the policies of this government and our dependence on the external world has increased. Poverty and unemployment have risen and distribution of wealth has become more unjust and uneven. Law and order situation has become rather serious throughout the country, especially in Sind and Punjab. Regional, linguistic and sectarian antagonism is now rampant. On top of it, all the institutions of the country stand paralyzed and are practically inoperative. It is almost a one-man government and personal allegiance has become the basis of statecraft. The Constitution, the Shariah and national traditions, all stand torn asunder. The Prime Minister considers himself as synonymous with Pakistan and in his view the remedy of all ills lies in his hands being strengthened and his powers being enhanced. He is not answerable to anybody. No formal high-powered autonomous institution now survives. He is presenting the scenario as if he himself is everything, the plan, the planner and the executioner all in one. This is the main trouble due to which the country is fast advancing towards autocracy. Mr Peter Pofam, the representative of the daily Independent, London, in his report dated July 18, 1999 depicts this style of governance in the following words:

"Every Saturday Mr. Sharif plays cricket at Lawrence Gardens in Lahore. This is the way he plays: he neither bowls nor fields, only bats. It is said that he normally scores about 50. The bowlers deal him a succession of long-hops and half-volleys. When he skies the ball, fielders trip over their laces, get blinded by the sun, collapse from heatstroke - anything to avoid a catch. It is a ritual worthy of a modern Islamic monarch, and Mr. Sharif is well on his way to acquiring absolute power in Pakistan. But although the illusion is perfect and beautifully maintained, one feels that it could disappear at any moment, almost without warning."

Surely, this situation cannot be tolerated. It is a risk not only for democracy but for the very existence of Pakistan. Both the government and the opposition have failed in their duty. Now the only way left for survival and security is that the people rise and save their country from the rulers whose sole interest is to plunder it and amass wealth for themselves or to work for foreign agenda for the sake of their own power and pelf. Those who came with the claim that they are "made in Pakistan" proved as fake as the ones imported from Oxford and Washington! A new leadership should now emerge to handle the present situation. Need of the hour is that all those elements whose life and death is linked with Pakistan and who are the real custodians of this God-given state - although they themselves are neglecting it - should now come to forefront. It is not the responsibility of any one group or party; rather it is the responsibility of the whole nation and particularly of the middle class of our society. They have to work not only with zeal but with tact as

well. The objective is not the removal of some individuals from positions of authority but to entrust these positions to a team of dedicated, trustworthy and competent persons to formulate appropriate national policy, keeping in view the real interests and aspirations of the people and to bring together the whole nation for achieving the ultimate goal for which Pakistan was created. The spirit, the manner and the style in which all Muslims were motivated by Pakistan Movement for a lofty objective, are required now to save Pakistan from the clutches of selfish leadership and to entrust it to those servants of Pakistan who possess resolve and grit for sacrificing their lives, their belongings and their capabilities for it, those who are fully aware of the risks involved and who can effectively guard the freedom, the ideology and the national pride and self-respect. The nation has had enough of those who change with the time. Now we need to bring forward a team that has the resolve to turn the tide of the times. We say it with conviction that there are personalities among the Muslim Millat of Pakistan that can steer clear the ship of the nation out of the present storm. Jihad is not confined to military operation only. It means the struggle that is waged to mould the whole of the life according to Islamic principles and to establish the will of Allah in every walk of life by availing of all means and resources provided by Allah will Allah's kalimah becomes supreme and dominant.

PROF KHURSHID AHMED