Memorandum by J. Henniker[[1]](#footnote-1), recording a meeting between the UK High Commissioner for Pakistan, the Minister of Finance of Pakistan and the British Foreign Secretary, dated 14 June 1948

Confidential

S[outh] E[ast] Asia Department

The High Commissioner for Pakistan accompanied by the Pakistan Minister for Finance called to see the Secretary of State today. He mentioned the following subjects:

1. Kashmir.

He stressed that the Hill States on the North West frontier of Kashmir, such as Gilgit, wanted to adhere to Pakistan. If India tried to fight for her, there could be trouble. Russia has been showing an interest in this, and the trouble was that there was a natural attraction to Russia because the Soviet Government had since 1917 improved conditions very greatly in the neighbouring Chinese and Northern provinces of the Soviet Union, which were now economically prosperous, while the Hill States were still extremely backward.

They went on to say that they hoped that there would be a fair plebiscite in Kashmir and that H. M. G. would do all they could to achieve this end.

1. Hyderabad.

They expressed grave concern about the situation in Hyderabad. Pakistan had no desire for Hyderabad to adhere to her, because she had no means of defending her. The Indians knew this very well, but they were creating a very dangerous situation by the pressure they were putting on Hyderabad. The feeling in Pakistan was that Lord Mountbatten had been deceived by the Indians over the question of Hyderabad and that the Indians were deriving encouragement from this. They pleaded that we should do all we could to see that the situation was handled with moderation. If it were carefully handled they thought that the Minom would be ready to come to some reasonable agreement.

1. Afghanistan

They were confident that Pakistan’s differences with Afghanistan would be settled very shortly.

Finally, in great confidence, the Pakistan High Commissioner told the Secretary of State that he had been present at a meeting of Moslem representatives in London. He had urged on them that H.S.G. was their friend and that they should so regard us and stop irritating us.

Before leaving the High Commissioner said that he hoped that H. M. G. would not take Pakistan’s membership of the Commonwealth for granted.

The Secretary of State replied that we, of course took nothing for granted. We should naturally like both India and Pakistan to remain in the Commonwealth. We would do our best to be fair to both of them. He also pointed out that he was not directly responsible for the matters they had raised.

He would, however, keep in touch with the Prime Minister and with the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

The Secretary of State was particularly disturbed about the situation in Hyderabad, which seemed to him fraught with many dangerous possibilities, and he would like a note from the Department on it with a view to having a discussion with the Prime Minister and Mr. Noel Baker.

Sgd. J. P. E. C. HENNIKER

14th June 1948

[TNA, FO 800/470]

Keywords: post-war Asia, post-war order

1. Henniker-Major, Sir John; 8th Baron Henniker (1916 - 2004) - British diplomat. Assistant Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary (1946 - 1948), Head of Personnel Department, Foreign Office (1953 - 1960). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)