

captain in the British Special Forces, his name is David Owen, no relation to the so-called mediator. At least for what I know. Two years ago David Owen suddenly converted to Islam and he became . . . Sheik Dawud.

EIR: What is he doing now: Is he in the army?

A: As far as we know, he has offered some of his very good services to the Bosnian Army. We don't know where he is right now, but for sure he has been operating there. Apparently, some of the officials of the Bosnian Army didn't believe him; but I think he has found his way to go there. Honest, competent military people, both Croatian and Bosnian, are in the best situation to identify these provocations. For the politicians it's more difficult.

EIR: The solution to this would be, basically, for the best people in Croatia and Bosnia to get together and denounce this manipulation.

A: That's right.

EIR: Do you see any possibility of this?

A: There are some clues that we might do it; Haris Silajdzic, the prime minister of Bosnia, has stated recently—I don't know exactly when—that the problem is that these so-called Muslim brothers, allegedly mujahideen, who have come to fight for Bosnian freedom, and have been warmly welcomed, did not play their role in that regard, but on the contrary.

He made the remarks when he was asked: What about these mujaheddin? He said: The problem is that we were not cautious enough. People came and we have accepted any kind of help. But it appears that all of a sudden, they didn't do what they have committed to.

As far as the Croatian side is concerned—I think the military would be much closer to this conclusion than the government. They know better; these idiots in the government, they don't know anything.

EIR: Do you think the military could do something about this?

A: I think that there is some kind of a positive mood within the military to solve this problem in a proper manner. Meaning that there are some generals who are very, very disappointed with developments; they would like very much to see a shift in policy. How strong they are, that has to be discussed with them. . . . There is a push to establish peace between Bosnians and Croatians. But there is one war that is visible and another war behind the scenes. Every time anything positive happens to reduce the Bosnia-Croatia hostilities, then it always follows that there is a massacre. Something happens, somewhere. And then there are the British, to film it, to show it to the world. Every time! If they are not there someone else is there—like a Canadian battalion. And then they simply call the British battalion to help them. And the artificial war between the victims continues. . . .

Pakistan-India talks hold a ray of hope

by Ramtanu Maitra

The outcome of the recently concluded seventh round of talks at the foreign secretary level between India and Pakistan, held in Islamabad Jan. 1-3 to normalize bilateral relations, has turned into an enigma. While some senior Pakistani leaders, almost all Pakistani media, and the western press were quick to dismiss it as a failure, what has emerged in subsequent days suggests otherwise. Although the talks did not achieve a breakthrough in any of the disputes that plague the two countries' relations, there is reason to believe that the talks will continue, and therein hides a ray of hope.

There is, perhaps, no definite measuring stick to evaluate such talks, which bring to the fore more than four decades of hostilities and built-in suspicions, fostered further by three wars over the possession of Kashmir. At the same time, it is almost amusing to watch the swiftness with which some labeled the talks irrelevant, the responsibility for which lies squarely on Pakistan Foreign Secretary M. Shahryar Khan, who is second in the ministry after Foreign Minister Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali. The day the Indian delegation left the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, he told newsmen that the next round of talks was dependent on an improvement in the situation in Kashmir to Pakistan's satisfaction.

Subsequently, the former prime minister of Pakistan and leader of the opposition, Nawaz Sharif, who has been accused of channeling funds to the Kashmiri militants involved in violence in the Indian-held part of the Kashmir Valley during his reign, called for cutting off any further talks with India. While visiting Uzbekistan, Pakistan Foreign Minister Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali said that unless the Kashmir dispute is solved peacefully on the terms of international law and the U.N. resolution, "there is always a danger of a fourth war in South Asia." He warned, "This time around, the concern of the world, the concern of South Asian countries is that if a war takes place in South Asia, it might become a nuclear war."

The contradictions

From such bluster one could easily interpret the talks as a failure. However, on Jan. 6, Pakistan President and a senior member of the ruling Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP) Farooq Leghari said in Karachi that the Islamabad talks set in motion the process of a "peaceful" resolution of the Kashmir dispute and that the bilateral talks must continue in order to find "a just and right solution to this issue."

President Leghari's statement came three days after Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan had put "conditionalities" on the next round of talks. However, the Indian delegation, upon its return to Delhi, made clear that they were as much surprised by Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan's statement as the subsequent campaign to denounce the talks as a failure. Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit told Indian newsmen that he did not get this impression from the Pakistani side. On the contrary, when Dixit had suggested a four-month time frame for the next meeting, it was Shahryar Khan who was categorical that the momentum generated by the talks must be kept up.

The political gamesmanship exhibited by the Pakistani foreign secretary and foreign minister indicates that there is a concerted effort, mostly carried out by Washington and Moscow, of late, to convince all that India and Pakistan are incapable of resolving their disputes and are headed toward a nuclear war. Nawaz Sharif, on the other hand, is busy trying to extract some political mileage by espousing the most rabid anti-India statements.

Why the gamesmanship?

The seventh round of talks assumed a great deal of significance because of the unending violence in the Kashmir Valley, which is part of the Indian-held part of Jammu and Kashmir, and the growing internationalization of the Kashmir issue by the Clinton administration. There were indications earlier that Washington, and even the U.N., had offered to mediate privately on Kashmir. But China's categorical statement that the Kashmir issue must be resolved bilaterally by India and Pakistan, and the agreement to hold the seventh round of talks, perhaps, made Washington change its mind.

However, it would be naive to believe that Washington has given up its objectives on Kashmir. Its concern is centered around two objectives. First, the threat of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan has been drummed up, with support from the Pakistani foreign minister, to generate worldwide opinion to force both India and Pakistan to give up their nuclear weapons programs and sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a highly biased document that favors the nuclear weapons states, before 1995 when it expires. Signing the NPT, besides abandoning nuclear weapons for defensive use, means that both countries would have to kowtow to a regime which will seriously impede any attempt to develop nuclear power for commercial use.

The second objective of Washington, which is often stated off the record, is to make Kashmir an independent nation. While Washington believes that neither India nor Pakistan can keep Kashmir within its territory because of the growing support among the Kashmiris for an independent nation, China believes that the purpose of making Kashmir an independent nation is to get a foothold in the subcontinent from which anti-China activities could be run through Tibet and Xingjiang. Recent activities of Washington in the newly

formed Central Asian republics suggest that it is increasingly meddling in the region.

The nuclear threat

Assertions that a nuclear war is about to break out between India and Pakistan is a relatively new campaign. On July 28, 1993, CIA head James Woolsey, in testimony before a congressional committee, had warned that the arms race between India and Pakistan poses perhaps the most probable prospect for future use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Other CIA reports have also been cited to indicate that the two countries were preparing for a nuclear war, and *New York Times* scribbler Seymour Hersh has said that the two nations were on the verge of a nuclear war. President Clinton, during his speech at the U.N., said that as the world marvels "at this era's promise of new peace, we must also recognize that serious threats remain. Bloody ethnic, religious, and civil wars rage, from Angola to the Caucasus to Kashmir." This is the first time that any U.S. President had mentioned the dispute in Kashmir as a "bloody ethnic, religious, and civil war."

While Washington's pressure on India and Pakistan over Kashmir centers around the threat of nuclear war and violations of human rights, there are clear indications that the State Department is busy giving it a different shape. Once it is "established" that India and Pakistan, livid with hatred toward each other and ready to usher in a nuclear conflagration, are incapable of resolving the Kashmir issue since both claim ownership, the next step is to fortify those forces which support the cause of an independent Kashmir. The third way is the only way, has become the watchword of the State Department.

Many seminars on the Kashmir dispute are now sponsored by U.S. think-tanks, and coordination between "independent Kashmir" support groups from London and Washington has recently been put in place. Also, Robin Raphel, assistant secretary of state for South Asia and a "friend of Bill" from the London days, challenged the legitimacy of Kashmir's accession to India. By announcing—off the record, of course—that the United States never recognized India's claim over Kashmir (either a slip or a deliberate lie), Raphel is trying to open up the instrument which governed the annexation of princely states following the departure of the British. The law had allowed all princely states to exercise their right to join either India or Pakistan, or remain independent.

While Raphel's game quickly became transparent in India, in Pakistan the statement was welcomed as pro-Pakistan. But recent criticism of Azed Kashmir, the Pakistan-held part of Kashmir, by the New York-based Asia Watch human rights group, might have opened up a few eyes. It is also certain that Beijing's reactions, sent through a military delegation, have not gone unnoticed in Islamabad. It is in this context that the statements of Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali and Shahryar Khan pose problems.