



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDO-CANADIANS

(A Registered Not-for-Profit Organization)

Dr. Robert Oliphant
Member of Parliament
1670 Bayview Avenue, Suite 310
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 3C2

September 28, 2018

Subject: Jammu and Kashmir facts and sensitivities that deserve attention

Honorable MP Dr. Oliphant:

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you our concerns, on behalf of the Indo-Canadians, with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India. These concerns arose with regard to the statement that described visiting Pakistani leader Masood Khan as the “President of Azad Jammu & Kashmir”. In fact, the term “Azad Kashmir” refers to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. There exists no country called ‘Azad Jammu & Kashmir’. To appreciate the delicate nature of the situation, one has to understand the break-up of India and formation of a new Islamic country called Pakistan, some 70 years ago. Subsequently there was a forceful take over of part of Kashmir, called ‘occupied Kashmir’) referred as Azad Kashmir by their Muslim militants and Govt. of Pakistan, from the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. In fact, India and Pakistan have fought 3 wars over the issue. So, a reference to ‘Azad Kashmir’, and support to a disputed area gives legitimacy to a rogue government that is at the epicenter of terrorism around the world.

In this context, it would be important to consider the facts and the suffering of Indian Hindus, also referred as Kashmiri Pandits. To date, 28 years after the forced exodus of aboriginal Kashmiri Pandits, there has been a continuing failure on the part of international community, including Canada, to formally engage with the ongoing tragedy. They have been denied full political freedom by realignment of Hindu dominated constituencies with the adjoining Muslim majority areas to dilute Hindu representation in the State Legislative Assembly which stands at just one as of today. For 28 years now, Hindus have not been able to return to their Homeland Kashmir due to continued cross border Islamic terrorism sponsored by the Rogue nation. The Norwegian Refugee Council in their 2004 Annual Report (released in Geneva on 7th April 2005) states:

“In India, attacks and threats by separatist militants continued to hamper the return of India’s largest group of displaced, between 250,000 and 350,000 Kashmiri Hindu Pandits who have been leaving the Kashmir Valley for Jammu and New Delhi since 1989 due to separatist militancy. Violence rose in the run-up to national elections in April and May 2004. The Pandits who remained in the valley were once again targeted and many reportedly had to flee Kashmir.”



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The UN report on the Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir (14 June 2018) has expressed concerns about Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and asked for action as follows:

- *Fully respect international human rights law obligations in Pakistan-Administered Kashmir;*
- *End the misuse of anti-terror legislation to persecute those engaging in peaceful political and civil activities and expressions of dissent, and amend the Anti-Terrorism Act to bring it in line with international human rights standards, including by incorporating human rights safeguards;*
- *Federal and local authorities should amend sections of the Interim Constitution of Azad Jammu Kashmir and other relevant legislation that limit the rights to freedoms of expression and opinion, and peaceful assembly and association;*
- *Immediately release from prison or house arrest any political activists, journalists and other civil society actors who have been convicted for peacefully expressing their opinions;*
- *Federal and local authorities should amend the constitutions of Pakistan -occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan to end the criminalization of the Ahmadiyya Muslims and to allow to them to freely and safely exercise their freedom of religion or belief;*
- *Abolish blasphemy provisions in Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan to facilitate the enjoyment of freedom of religion and belief by all people;*

The above indicates the gravity and sensitivity of the situation in Pakistan occupied Kashmir that deserves serious consideration.

For the outlined reasons, it would be appropriate to:

- have complete background information for which the Indo-Canadian community would be a great and helpful resource.
- to avoid controversies given the national and religious sensitivities in far off places, especially when it comes from a member of parliament of the governing party. In fact, it can be in contrast to the stated government policy of 'United India'.
- avoid faux pas that unfortunately have been obvious from our government hurting relations with a friendly country like India. For example, Prime Minister stated that he has 4 Sikh ministers in his cabinet more than India (as if Sikhs represented the most Indo-Canadians). He did not think about what the rest of the Indo-Canadians felt about it (Hindus have no representation). The Sikhs, in fact, represent <2% of population in India. The fracas surrounding PM's visit to India earlier this year is a typical case in point.
- be consistent with the stated position of the government concerning international



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relations.

- avoid using an ambiguous language on international matters that conceals the truth or is evasive/non-committal on international matters.
- rejecting divisive vote-based politics with both national and international ramifications.

As Indo-Canadians, we consider it appropriate to bring these important international matters of concern to your attention. As Canadians, we should be in the forefront by providing exemplary leadership to the international community. But to achieve this goal, we must do what we cherish our Canadian values of a just society for the larger good of the humanity. We would be pleased to assist in such matters that require community input.

The National Alliance of Indo-Canadians is in the forefront of enhancing friendship between Canada and India through business, culture and people-to-people contact.

While thanking you for the efforts, we are,

Sincerely yours,

Azad K. Kaushik

Surinder Sharma

Bibhu Mohanty

Vidya Bhushan Dhar



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Dr. Robert Oliphant
Member of Parliament
1670 Bayview Avenue, Suite 310
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September 28, 2018

Subject: Follow up to our meeting concerning Jammu and Kashmir facts and sensitivities

Honorable MP Dr. Oliphant:

We appreciate the opportunity to have discussed with you our concerns, on behalf of the Indo-Canadians, with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, an integral part of India. In this context, we should point out that multiculturalism, rather than enhancing cultural understanding, is being misused to promote radicalism in the Canadian society that segregates people and does more harm than good. As a follow up to J&K situation, we would like to bring to your attention: CRA suspends, fines major Islamic charity over concerns it may have 'provided resources' to armed militants <https://globalnews.ca/news/4490892/cra-suspends-fines-major-islamic-charity-over-concerns-it-may-have-provided-resources-to-armed-militants/>. This is a typical example of the practice of multi-culturalism in the Canadian society.

During the meeting you raised issue of Sikhs and Hindu intolerance. Again, unethical misuse of multiculturalism is exemplified by passage of private motion on Sikh genocide in Ontario that best reflects the divisive politics. The facts concerning this matter can be accessed at: <http://www.sikhrriots1984facts.com/hello-world/>

With regard to your comments on Indian PM Narendra modi, Gujarat violence and Hindu intolerance, we would point out that these are more of innuendo and nuance with ulterior motives as the Supreme Court of India had examined the issue microscopically and exonerated PM Modi, the popular leader of India. Hence the matter is without substance and not worthy of further discussion. How Hindus could be intolerant who taught non-violence to the world? We would be pleased to assist in such matters, through continued dialogue, that require community input.

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While thanking you for the efforts, we are,

Sincerely yours,

Azad K. Kaushik
President

Copy: Surinder Sharma, Bibhu Mohanty, Vidya Bhushan Dhar