

**Volume 2**

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**The Independence of Bangladesh - II**

**Lead: As the date for Indian independence drew closer the Muslim minority began to plan for a separate state.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: In the months following World War II, it became obvious that Britain would have to give up control of India. It was equally clear that it would have to be partitioned. Factional violence between Hindus and Muslims was growing particularly as the possibility of the British departure**

**became ever more real. In the 1946, the representative of London known as the viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten conceived the plan of division. The largest section of the sub-continent was to be the nation of India. Pakistan, divided into East and West regions on either side of India would be an Islamic state.**

**As the date for partition drew near those who believed themselves to be a threatened minority began to move toward the boundaries, Muslims fleeing east and west into the proposed territory of Pakistan, Hindu refugees moving toward Indian territory. This migration of thousands people was the cause of much bloodshed and hardship. Up-rooted from their homes**

**subjected to near chaos, the refugees became the victims of often senseless violence on the part of both Muslim and Hindu communities.**

**From the beginning, the links between East and West Pakistan were precarious. They were primarily held together by their fear of being dominated by India. In East Pakistan, those who spoke Bengali were in the majority but they were ruled by members of the army and civil service from West Pakistan and who spoke Urdu, the language common in the west. The Bengalis' other major grievance was that crops grown in East Pakistan, jute and tea which were the chief export crops of the country as a whole and its principal source of**

**foreign money were sold and the proceeds used to develop West Pakistan. The situation was ripe for trouble. Next time: Pakistan comes apart.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

### **Resources**

**Wilcox, Wayne Ayres. *The Emergence of Bangladesh: Problems and Opportunities for a Redefined American Policy in South Asia*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, 1973.**

**Wright, Denis. *Bangladesh: Origins and Indian Ocean Relations, 1971-1975*. London, UK: Oriental University Press, 1988.**

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