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The Conflict Over Kashmir Part I

Lead: Just to the north of India and Pakistan and claimed by both is Kashmir. It has been and continues to be a source of ethnic and religious conflict resulting in three wars during the twentieth century.

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

Content: Kashmir is a beautiful region of southern Asia including sections of the Himalayan and Karakoram Mountain ranges. The Indus River, which is vital to the survival of the population, runs

through the most populated areas. Kashmir is almost 86,000 square miles, roughly the size of Minnesota. It is bordered on the west by Pakistan, on the north and east by China. India lies to the south. The name Kashmir is legendary and said to be derived from an ascetic named Kashyapa who reclaimed the land from a vast lake. The land was then called Kashyapamar and was later known as Kashmir.

In 1947 India and Pakistan became independent countries when the British left following centuries of colonial rule. The rulers of the princely states, the Kashmir region, were offered a choice by the United Nations – to join India, to join

Pakistan or remain independent. Riots broke out in Kashmir because much of the population, predominantly Muslim, wanted to join Pakistan, a Muslim nation.

The reigning Maharaja of the region, Haru Singh, a Hindu, hoped to maintain the independence of Kashmir for as long as he could, but tribesmen from Pakistan invaded the area. The Maharaja fled to New Delhi and determined there to make Kashmir part of India, a predominantly Hindu nation. The president of India sent 100,000 troops to Kashmir to fight the Pakistani invaders. On January 1, 1949, a United Nations ceasefire took effect and the region was divided between

the two countries.

Next Time: Double claims, double trouble.

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

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