

## Hearings on Religious Freedom in India and Pakistan: Professor Emeritus Ainslie Embree Oral Testimony

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PROFESSOR EMBREE: I'll just make a very brief statement.

We've heard two presentations that exemplify very well why there's no likelihood soon to be peace in Kashmir, two very different interpretations. I have one general criticism of both. They blame all the unhappy things that have happened in Kashmir to the religion of the perpetrators. Well, in the West, we are familiar with an equation of religious belief with behavior, and I wrote recently to a Hindu friend who had attacked me by saying we are familiar with anti-Semitism in the West, which is based on this idea that all behavior can be explained in terms of a person's religious beliefs.

I don't think that the things that the Indian Army has done in Kashmir are due to the fact that they are Hindus. They are due to the fact that they are an army, an army of occupation, and I would argue that religion cannot explain it.

As far as the condition of the Hindu Pundits, which is as it's said, there are other factors. I don't think religion is the major reason why they were driven out. They were driven out because they were regarded as an oppressive minority that for generations had occupied all the positions of power in the government, education, all the institutions, and I think that's why they were driven out.

I've talked with many people, and of course now, the religion is identified, but I do think that it's a false reading of the situation to see either the oppression of the Muslims by the Indian Army as Hindu-inspired or the leaving of the Pundits as an expression of religious hatred. I really think this is something that one has to look at very carefully.

Thank you.