

**THE IMPERIAL WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES  
THE PUNJAB (1939-1945)**

**A  
THESIS**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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IN  
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## **CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that the work included in the thesis entitled "**THE IMPERIAL WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES: THE PUNJAB (1939-1945)**" submitted to the **Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**, for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, was carried out by **Mr. Rakesh Sharma** at the **Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar**, under my supervision. This is an original work and has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree/diploma at this or any other University/Institute. This thesis is fit to be considered for the award of degree of Ph.D.

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **THE COMING OF THE IMPERIAL WAR**

The study deals with the Imperial War and its results especially in connection with the Punjab of 1939-1945. War is a complex phenomenon rooted in the precepts and policies of a regime. It requires analysis as it influences all facets of life. The War impacted economy, agriculture, irrigation, trade, commerce, industry, education as well as the political scenario of the Punjab in particular and India in general. It is pertinent to mention that the World War II was a crucial phase in the history of both imperialism and the evolution of science and technology. Its results were manifold and multilayered. As this War signaled the collapse of imperialism and disintegration of the political and socio-economic systems sustaining it, the War inaugurated at the same time a new world order based on new ideas, institutions and modern science and technology. The collapse of imperialism encouraged struggle for freedom in the colonies leading to freedom of several of them. Curiously, however, the War set in motion contradictory trends working in opposite directions: while the people in the colonies initially came in support of their masters to face the global crisis and the latter initiated liberal reforms for socio-economic reconstruction, there the nationalist leadership in the colonies considered it as an opportune time to step up their struggle for independence. Paradoxically, both of them were successful, to an extent, in achieving their ends. However, the process gave birth to complex developments and trends that were often influenced by the factors and forces operating across the globe. The War time policies provided opportunities to the major political and economic powers of the world to adjust their position in the changing world scenario and fashion the tools for their future operations. Hence, new players emerged on the international scene and a new power structure and equation came into being. The emergence of the United State of America as a global power and its rise in the East was perhaps the most conspicuous and represented of the trend. In the process, imperialism appeared in the new garb of neo-colonialism and international diplomacy refined newer tools in the strategic alliances as well as trade agreements that started with the Allied co-operation during the World War II. By the time the World War II came to an end, it demonstrated the most destructive powers of science; but in the course of meeting the

exigencies of the War and alleviating humanity from its sufferings, no one was left in doubt about the great potentials of science as a means of human welfare and development. In most of the countries, it was a period of economic boom and prosperity that fuelled their rise on the international scene after the Imperial War.<sup>1</sup>

## I

Since India, particularly, the Punjab on the basis of their share in the India Army was part of the British Empire, it got thickly involved in the War. The felt its impact in full measure. However, experiences were quite different from those of the developed countries. Here, the War accelerated the process of erosion of colonial power and her transition from colonialism to democracy. It acted as a catalyst for state initiative for material reconstruction, indicating a basic shift in the colonial policy. However, the process was not as simple as it appeared at the first glance. The fierce conflict the Imperial War ignited between imperialism and nationalism released great forces of change with immense results. Meanwhile, the internal economy passed through a period of upheavals as it was exposed to the Western capitalist market forces; and when the British authorities and business interests started withdrawing from India, new players entered the scene. All this had deep and long-term implications for the development of science and technology as well as the state policy governing them in India, particularly in the Punjab.<sup>2</sup>

A cursory glance at the developments in India, particularly in the sensitive border province of the Punjab presented a puzzling scenario from the political view point. The popular memory in the Punjab did not conjure a picture of scientific achievement, material rejuvenation and of economic prosperity as in the case of the West. No scientific breakthrough was recorded here; no technical innovation worthy of note took place; and the socio-scientific movement that gathered strength around the time here, had different goals and priorities than those in the West. For India, especially the Punjab, it was really

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<sup>1</sup> For the global developments, see J.D. Bernal, *Science in History*, Vols. 4, Pelican 1969 (First Published in 1945); Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History*, Harmondsworth, 1964; and William R. Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World*, OUP, New York, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> For preliminary sources of information on India, See, Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi, 1987.

a turbulent time full of political upheavals, communal riots and human miseries perpetrated by a horrific famine and other natural calamities. Yet, it was a period of unprecedented official initiative for organizing science that led to the establishment of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the first all-India body to manage and promote the various sectors of science. It was also the period of hectic scientific technical exchanges and industrial collaborations with other countries. It is worth mentioning that the World War II or the Imperial War for India was the period when the Indian resources, especially of the Punjab were likely to be most freely used in the interest of the British Empire and its Allies. From this point of view, it is worth while to follow the development and transformation in India, a classic colony, to find out how England exploited Indian economy in her imperial interest in the conditions of War; and no War could illustrate the better than the World War II. Several problems cropping up during the War in India had their roots in the past. The British connection with the Punjab in particular and India in general started through trade much before political control brought her under complete subjugation as the colony. Though the imperial control from London was never to end absolutely, the consolidation of the British authority in India gradually minimized its needs. Nevertheless, extraordinary situations warranted its activation occasionally-conditions of the War being one of them. No wonder, the imperial control over India and also the Punjab from London was the most overbearing in the 1940s as the period presented the greatest crisis for the British Empire. The collaboration model represented by the Unionists began tottering under the contingencies of the War. Any study of the official initiatives and policy measures here during the period has to be looked at not from only the angle of India as a colony alone but also from that of the British Empire, imperialism and capitalism. Thus, imperialism and colonialism on the one and nationalism as well as indigenous response on the other constitute the most dominating backdrop for the present study-a vantage point from which to look at the developments. A glance at history may, therefore, present a vivid opinion of the goings-on. Since the most decisive clash between imperialism and nationalism, culminating in the end of the British rule took place around the World War II. Moreover, examination of the colonial attitude towards Indian economy as well as science and technology through the expansion and consolidation of the British rule in India may explain several issues of

the period and provide them an appropriate prospective.<sup>3</sup> Under the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) efforts were to promote material progress of Punjab as a source of prosperity for the British Empire.<sup>4</sup> But the aggressive policy of the Arch-Imperialist soon brought the British Raj in the violent conflict with the nationalist forces which burst forth in 1905 into the *Swadeshi* movement calling for promoting everything indigenous. Although the movement failed, it was, nevertheless, the greatest nationalist showdown after the upsurge of 1857. With its focus on industry, trade as well as on science and technology the *Swadeshi* was significant as much in its success as in its failure. It saw the ungracious exit of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, but the happening of the period set imperialism and nationalism in motion as rival forces to clash for the half-a-century.<sup>5</sup> Thus, with the onset of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientific elements and new economic policy entered the imperial perception.<sup>6</sup> Administrative measures undertaken by Lord Curzon largely shaped the future course of development of agriculture, trade, commerce and industry as well as science in the context of further consolidation and progress of the British possessions in India. Whereas these administrative measures and organizational setup provided the *Raj* an effective tool of control, the *Swadeshi* gave Indians a vision for self help, certain goals to achieve and imparted them training to fight against the foreign rule. An intriguing aspect of these parallel developments was the presence of strong scientific elements in both of them.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The earliest studies dealing with Science and Empire also refer to India. Charles William Forman, *Science for Empire: 1895-1940*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1941; Michael Worboys, *Science and British Colonial Imperialism*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sussex, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> For the developments in India, see Deepak Kumar, *Science and the Raj*, OUP, New Delhi, 1997; Daniel Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940*, New York, 1988; See also, David Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, "The Swadeshi Movement in the Punjab (1904-08)", *The Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, Vol. XXVI, No. 51, April 1992, pp. 129-33.

<sup>6</sup> R.M. McLeod, 'Scientific Advice for British India: Imperial Perceptions and Administrative Goals, 1893-1923', *Modern Asian Studies*, IX, 3, 1975, pp. 343-384.

<sup>7</sup> For details on the *Swadeshi*, See Sumit Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement in Bengal*, New Delhi, 1973.

## II

After Lord Curzon, as the imperial authority abated with the rise and growth of nationalism and struggle for liberation, colonial emphasis shifted to articulation of administrative control over technical services and scientific organizations which were to, in the future, leave some deep impact on the industry and agriculture.<sup>8</sup> With the prospects of the permanence of British rule in India and its provinces dwindling, the British *Raj* began to lose interest in long term scientific projects of the magnitude of the service, and adhocism dictated most of the government measures. The period before 1905 had seen the expansion and consolidation of the British power and impact in every walk of life including agriculture, industry, trade, commerce, science and technology.<sup>9</sup> The period between 1905 and 1939, particularly after the World War I, was one of intense administrative maneuvering compromises with short-term goal and frequent changes in the government policy to counter the political changes. All along, Lord Curzon's tools and techniques were variously used by the successive regimes through legislative measure as 1919-1935, and organizational reforms. However, the nationalist leadership held to heart their own talisman-*Swadeshi* (indigenous) and *Swaraj* (self-rule)-that continued to inspire and guide them until they won freedom.<sup>10</sup> It was the continuous dialogue between these two parallel trends that determined the nature and fate of several issues concerning the development of science on which the evolution of agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, elite, middle class and over and above education in the province of Punjab and also in other parts of country.<sup>11</sup> This dialogue obviously came to an end during the World War II when the colonial authorities succumbed to the local needs, demands and also international pressure. Finally, the British agreed to accommodate the indigenous interests on the official agenda in a big way. Another very significant issue worth-mentioning is the rise of socialism and decolonization. These two

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<sup>8</sup> Jagdish N. Sinha, '*Science and the Indian National Congress*', Deepak Kumar, (ed.), *Science and Empire*, OUP, New Delhi, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Deepak Kumar, *Science and the Raj*, 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Jagdish, N. Sinha, *Science Policy of the British in India during the Second World War*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Delhi, 1994, Chapter I.

<sup>11</sup> Jagdish, N. Sinha, '*Science and the Congress*', Deepak Kumar (ed.) *Science and Empire*, 1991.

are the other angles of inquiry, as socialism gave a great momentum against colonialism setting of the process of decolonization that was boldly catalyzed by the World War II in the Punjab in particular. Impact of the Russian Revolution was felt soon after 1917 as revolutionary factions sprang in the various parts of the country. In 1925, the Communist Party of India was formed. By 1930, the indigenous view started visualizing the country reconstruction using some of the socialist tools like planning and industrialization. Soon, the national leadership advocated socialism as a panacea of country's problems and pleaded for all-round national reconstruction.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, several noted and prominent scientists, such as M.N. Saha and industrialists thought on the same lines. This resulted in a mutual collaboration among the scientists, the nationalist leadership and the industrialist at the National Planning Committee. It had been constituted in 1938, by the Indian National Congress. It was to plan for country's reconstruction under a national government. Some of the results of socialism and the socialist experiments in the USSR ought to be at once taken note of. First, opposition of socialism to all forms of inequality and exploitation and, thus, to capitalism and imperialism; second, the encouragement and inspiration it provided to the freedom movements all over the world; and, third, its world view of progress based on modern science and technology as well as modern industries. Since a perceptible understanding of these realities was a pervasive truth in India even before the World War II began.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, by the time the Imperial War broke out, the British Empire and imperialism were on the defensive. The process of decolonization had started. Canada and Australia had already achieved dominion status. On the Indian sub-continent, in 1937, Burma ceded from India where the struggle from freedom had entered its last phase. The constant growing pressure from the Axis Powers in both the East and West; further territorial losses during the War were shown to compel the governments in London and New Delhi to consider rethinking India's problems, especially keeping in mind the

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<sup>12</sup> Jagdish N. Sinha 'Origin of India's National Science Policy: M.I. Sarkar to M.K. Gandhi, 1875-1935', *Indian Journal of History of Science (IJHS)*, XXVII, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> Jagdish N. Sinha, 'Technology for National Reconstruction: The National Planning Committee, 1938-1949', Roy MacLeod and Deepak Kumar, eds., *Technology and the Raj: Western Technology and Technical Transfer to India, 1700-1947*, New Delhi, 1995.

geography of the border policy.<sup>14</sup> All this has to be seen and viewed in the background of development the world over, especially in the former colonies. The War was not only the greatest War of the human civilization but also a major turning point in its evolution as it brought into being a new world order that increasingly sustained itself by relying on collective wisdom, democracy and modern science. It has no longer the brute might and violence but the mutual understandings and cooperation of nations that appeared to hold out the better prospects for human existence and evolution.<sup>15</sup>

During the World War II, reconstruction was another significant cause that influenced the development of science. With Britain's declaration of the War against Germany, India became a party to it; she was thus subjected to its requirements, demands and strains. In the process, she was exposed to the happenings beyond her borders and to the myriad of global forces that accelerated the pace of her freedom struggle. The early exigencies of the War led to a number of War supply and preparatory measures, stimulating industrial activities and the training of technical personnel in India. But as the War expanded and prolonged, the situation became worse. It demanded long term measures. Responding to the situation, the colonial government launched a massive program of all-round reconstruction based on modern lines.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, the process of transition and globalization, set in motion in the 1940s in India and all over the world, requires to be addressed to follow why the happenings in India took place the way they did. For India, it was not merely a period of transition from colonialism to democracy but also one of an unprecedented exposure to the global forces of change. This offered the Punjab happy and rich prospects for interaction with the world beyond the colonial and imperial confines. Yet for a country still under subjugation and tied to the Allied cooperation, the situation was really puzzling and not certain. Whilst Germany and Japan were highly admired in India for their development and

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<sup>14</sup> Jagdish, N. Sinha, *Science Policy of British in India during the Second World War*, Chapter I.

<sup>15</sup> G. Barraclough, *Introduction to Contemporary History*, 1975; Also see, J.D. Bernal and M. Conforth, *Science for Peace and Socialism*, London, 1949; J.D. Bernal, 'Science in the Service of Society,' *Marxist Quarterly*, Vol. I, 1954.

<sup>16</sup> For preliminary information, see Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, New York, 1987.

ingenuity, they were officially kept at bay as the enemies of the Empire. In reality, the study of developments in various walks of the life of the province of Punjab in relation to the World War II has been a relatively slow affair even in the developed countries closely involved in the War, like Britain and the United States of America. The Cold War has been one of the main reasons behind it. The rivalry between the superpowers contributing to the power bloc politics and armament in the post-War year has generally held back nations from revealing their War time activities, particularly in the fields of armament, technology and science.<sup>17</sup> The recent revelations about War crimes had stirred strong nationalist sentiments several countries embittering their international relations. Information regarding secret scientific plans and missions, experiments in chemical warfare and field trials of military medicines were pregnant with disturbing implications arising out of racial, religious and nationalistic discriminations. These were likely to cause problems and embarrassment. It was bound to deter authorities from declassifying records in the near future, and in several cases oblige them not to ever do so at all. As such, the Imperial War was destined to remain a most secret War of history. All these issues have obstructed research here also, where, like many other regions of the developing world, the subject is yet to open up sufficiently for historical investigation. On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World War II, nearly one and half decade ago, a spate of literature on it was produced. However, India's share and contribution were negligible. India, especially the undivided Punjab had had additional problem despite the fact that the Western science had eclipsed the indigenous knowledge and skill. Here, it could not draw the attention of historians at provincial as well as national level at once because it was yet to address the local problems meaningfully. As a consequence, political and economic problems stole the limelight for decades after liberation. Thanks to the freedom struggle and the World War II, serious paucity of sources has also come in the way of much focused research on the subject. Many of the records that could possibly have added to our information in vital regions are not opened till day. There are others which are not easily accessible; and fate of several is unknown. Scattering of papers here and there has also added to the problem. Not all the important papers are located at the

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<sup>17</sup> Guy Hartcup, *Effect of Science on the Second World War*, 2000, Introduction.

Indian archives, libraries and some other government records offices several of them are retained by the imperial establishments in England and may be some of its Allies. Happily, the publication of the Nicholas Mansergh's multi-volume *Constitutional Relation between Britain and India: the Transfer of Power* has, meanwhile, brought to light a range of official documents of immense value for our purpose, yet it is not all-embracing and exhaustive.<sup>18</sup> Despite this difficulty, the sheer dynamism of the World War II and its impact on the post-War developments in the area for study, however, obliged scholars from various disciplines to take note of the War-time occurrences. Since, besides polity, trade, industry, transport, and communications were the first to experience the impact of the global crisis, economists, economic historians and political scientists were among the earliest to take up its study in their respective fields. While addressing the problems and issues arising out of the disruption and dislocation during the War period, concern for security and Post-War reconstruction had actively engaged the official attention. Their value for post-War development could not be over-looked. So, as soon as the national government initiated developments plans through the Five Year Plans after freedom, planners and policy makers looked back to learn from the wartime administrative experiences.<sup>19</sup>

However, a deeper perception of the social results of the War appears to have downed later; and it is intriguing to notice that it were the sociologist and anthropologist, and not the historians who first came up with studies focused on the subject under review. But they had to work within the parameters of their own disciplines confined to individuals, groups and organizations.<sup>20</sup> To the history students, their attention to bigger issues and problems, though historical forces at work are overview or seen inadequate. In that the chief components of contemporary backdrop-imperialism, nationalism and the

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<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby (eds.), *Constitutional Relation between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power, 1942-1947*, (also Penderel Moon from Vol. V), Vols. I-VI, London, 1970-1976.

<sup>19</sup> A. Rahman (1973); A. Rahman and K.D. Sharma (1994); and Sukhmay Chakraborty (1987) listed in the Bibliography.

<sup>20</sup> Shiv Visvanathan, *Organizing for Science: The Making of an Industrial Research Laboratory*, Delhi, 1985, is probably the most important of them. Others are V.V. Krishna (1987), Zaheer Baber (1998); for an anthropologist, see Robert S. Anderson (1975), all listed in the Bibliography.

War are rather diffused. The paucity of sources, especially archival, has often held historians back from producing broader and in-depth studies. Doubtlessly, sharing the joys of victory of the British Empire in the War, the Indian Government commissioned a massive project of the official history of the Indian Armed Forces in the World War II soon after the end of the hostilities.<sup>21</sup> Unlike its British counterpart-*History of the World War II*,<sup>22</sup> the volumes produced under the Indian Project confined themselves mostly to the different aspect of the armed operations. A wider view of the War with its socio-cultural results was yet to be taken up. The research on the War time developments in various walks of life has an intriguing feature: while the most interesting book on the evolution of science and other discipline in the countries,<sup>23</sup> the accounts of the War by the historians in Germany are sparse, strikingly, the performance of the Indian historians in this respect is today better than the Germans. The Indian scholars, scientists, politicians and even the historians, too, have written little on the technical advances in various fields, especially in technology and science in the area of our study and on the whole within the country. Of course, a few works in the two decades or so have made admirable attempts in so far as the socio-economic results of the War are concerned. However, in them too, science and technology are addressed indirectly and from the angles that generally fail to appreciate its worth and value fully as a means of development.<sup>24</sup> As a consequence the relation between science and progress in different fields is virtually untouched, ironically in a period that marked the pinnacle of science in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is only recently that the developmental aspects have started engaging attention of some historians and other

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<sup>21</sup> Bisheshwar Prasad, (Gen. Ed.), *Official History of the Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War*, Vols. 19, Delhi, 1952-1966.

<sup>22</sup> W.K. Hancock, (Gen. Ed.), *History of the Second World War*, Vols. 18, London, 1949-1971.

<sup>23</sup> A.P. Rowe, *One Story of Radar*, Cambridge, 1948; R.V. Jones, *Most Secret War*, London, 1978, and Vannevar Bush, *Pieces of the Action*, London, 1973.

<sup>24</sup> Johnnes, Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, 1987; S.B. Singh *Imperial Retreat*, Delhi, 1992; and his *Second World War as Catalyst for Social Changes in India*, Delhi, 1998. Rajat K. Ray *Industrialization in India: Growth and Conflict in the Private Corporate Sector 1914-1947*, 1979; OUP, Delhi, 1985; and Aditya Mukherjee, *Imperialism, Nationalism and the Making of the Indian Capitalist Class, 1920-1947*, New Delhi, 2002, focus more closely on the developments in the 1940s and cover industry, industrial collaborations, Allied cooperation, and planning and reconstruction.

scholars.<sup>25</sup> The official archival records are opening up slowly; meanwhile, the non-official sources assume sufficient importance, as the period abounds in them. There are books and tracts which provide valuable information on contemporary happenings. Indian view on the colonial policy, and a few journals with social concern for science, technology, industry, trade and commerce, education and rise and growth of various classes that braved through the War, like *Science and Culture*, are there to assist. Likewise, proceedings of the Indian National Congress and professional organization like the Science Congress Association offer us rich information. The private papers of scientists, of military men, political leaders, statesmen, diplomats etc. take us beyond the dark tunnels of history and shed light on the crucial goings on behind the scene.<sup>26</sup> A.V. Hill, S.S. Bhatnagar, and M.N. Saha, are the scientist and industrialists like the Tatas, Birlas and Walchand Hirachand are worth-mentioning. Going through these papers along with the official records, one is confronted with a fierce battle going on between imperialism and nationalism and bizarre things happening. A War of wits is going on between the authorities on the one hand and the Indian scientists, technocrats, industrialists and the likes on the other. This sometimes leads to intrigues, ganging up and official surveillance. Throughout the Imperial War the British employed some of their oldest tools- 'divide and rule' and racial discrimination even in scientific, industrial and other development matters. The inter-War period proved golden one as science, industry and technology in India developed. Her scientists, technocrats and industrialists earned international laurels for basic research.<sup>27</sup>

### III

It is pertinent to point out that an attempt will remain to trace out only the impact of the World War II on the province of Punjab here. However, whatever has been discussed

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<sup>25</sup> Jagdish N. Sinha, *Science Policy of the British in India during the Second World War*, 1994. For his earlier relevant works, see the Bibliography. Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c. 1930-1950*, New Delhi, 2005 is a welcome addition.

<sup>26</sup> P.C. Jain, 1943; K.T. Shah, 1943; D.R. Gadgil and N.V. Somani, 1944; L.C. Jain 1944; and A.N. Aggarwal, n.d.; and S.C. Aggarwal, 1947 (details in the Bibliography).

<sup>27</sup> Jagdish N. Sinha 'Science and Culture under Colonialism: India Between the World Wars', *IJHS*, 39, I, 2004, pp. 101-119.

above was greatly needed to understand in the larger perspective the subject under review. We are fully aware that the World War II<sup>28</sup> was one of the most significant happenings of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Because, it was much more truly a World War with large scale campaigns fought not only in Europe but also in Africa and Asia. India being under the British contributed heavily with men, material and money. The Punjab's share and contribution in the Indian Army was not less than 50 per cent. A large number of Punjabi's were recruited in different branches of the Indian Army. Lord Linlithgow,<sup>29</sup> the Viceroy of India, wrote to Lord Amery<sup>30</sup>, the Secretary of State for India in March, 1942, that the Punjab supplied nearly 50 per cent of the soldiers to the Indian Army.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the War had a devastating impact on India's economic life.<sup>32</sup> It

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<sup>28</sup> Germany invaded Poland on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939. Britain and France declared War on Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. The Germans occupied Norway and Denmark in April 1940 and invaded Belgium and Holland on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1940. Other nations joined the War with the passage of time. The Germans surrendered unconditionally at Reims on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1945. However, the War continued in the Far East. Japan controlled South East Asia and Burma. With a view to terminate the War surgically, the USA dropped two atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima on 6 and 9 August 1945 respectively. Finally, Japan surrendered on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1945. The World War II was over after colossal human and material loss.

<sup>29</sup> Marquess of Linlithgow (1887-1952): Viceroy of India from 1936 to 1943. Victor Alexander John Hope, Second Marquess of Linlithgow was the scion of an old Scottish family. He was Chairman of the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture (1926-28). He had a stiff demeanor. Indian politicians called him "Great Moghul". He was firm, resolute and hardworking man. He found resonance with the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. He was succeeded by Sir A.C. Wavell (1883-1950) as the Viceroy from October 1943 to March 1947. He was a modest, dogged, courageous, and serious minded man of integrity, fond of history and poetry. Lord Wavell had served India as C-in-C during 1941-43. He was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal since 1943. He did not enjoy confidence of Winston Churchill who sent him to secure India from Japan: Surjit Mansingh, *Historical Dictionary of India*, Vision Books, Delhi, 1999, pp. 231-32; 439-40.

<sup>30</sup> Lord L.C.M.S. Amery (1873-1955), Secretary of State for India and Burma, (1940-1945); He was born in Gorakhpur, (U.P. India). He held ministerial posts such as First Lord of the Admiralty (192-1924): Secretary of State for the Colonies (1924-29): Secretary of the State of the Dominions (1925-1929).

<sup>31</sup> *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, Document No. 1 1942, p. 328. However, for P.S. Lokanathan, the Punjab's share was just 30 per cent of the total recruitment: *Transition to Peace Economy*, Delhi, 1945, 44-45.

<sup>32</sup> B.R. Tomlinson, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Economy of Modern India (1860-1970)*, Part III, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, p. 160.

also exhausted the economic resources of the colonial state in India, particularly of Punjab which had been annexed by the British in 1849.<sup>33</sup> As a result, England ended its rule and supremacy over India which was at that time heavily in debt. The purposed present attempt is to examine the results of the World War II on the economic, socio-cultural and political life of the Punjab province. Let it be noticed that during the course of War nearly twenty lakhs Indian joined the armed forces. It was, in fact, ten-fold increase. Large scale recruitment had a great impact on the various aspects of people life in the Punjab. Especially, the Punjabi soldiers shed their blood for the British imperialist in Europe, Africa, Middle East, South East Asia and Far East. They traveled throughout the world during various campaigns. They came in contact with the subjects of various countries. This contact changed their outlook and thus broadened their vision. Above all, these recruits sent huge amounts out of their salaries to their families (parents and other relatives). This economic help to them raised their standard of living. *Pucca* houses were built even in the rural areas; some families bought agriculture land in their villages if they did not have it before the War. To some extent 'leveling of class' did take place in the province.<sup>34</sup>

Here, it will not be out of place if we take note of the fact that there are some very good studies pertaining to the World War II. Thus, the rationale to explore, probe and examine, critically the consequences of the Imperial War, particularly in the Punjab are justified. At the same time, historiography of the World War II is comprehensive and exhaustive at the documentation level. Winston S. Churchill's *The World War II* in six volumes remains a courageous attempt to historicize the War, though in an autobiographical mode, yet an authentic statement of intent.<sup>35</sup> War is multi-layered

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<sup>33</sup> The Government of India got wiped out not only Rs. 4700 million as debt on March 1946 but also accumulated over Rs. 17,000 million foreign assets in the Reserve Bank of India: Dharma Kumar (ed.) *The Cambridge Economic History in India (1757-1970)*, Vol. II, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 942-944.

<sup>34</sup> A local saying put in this way: *Naukran de Chitte Kapre* (Servants have put on clean clothes): R.S. Nakra, *Punjab Villages During the War: An Enquiry into Twenty Villages in the Ludhiana District*, BEIP, No. 91, Lahore, 1946, p. 16.

<sup>35</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vols. 6, London, 1948-54. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874-1965) was a son of Lord Randolph Churchill who acted as the Secretary of State for India in mid 1880s. Winston Churchill visited India in 1896. He held prominent positions in his public life: President of the Board of Trade (1908-10);

phenomena, a chance and even a rapture that a society passes through. At the conceptual and historiography planes, Arthur Marwick has done a comparative study to delineate the processes of social change in the context of War.<sup>36</sup> In India, the World War II got an official historian in Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad, who edited 25 volumes.<sup>37</sup> These volumes documentation needs further probing to note subterranean changes taking place at the regional level, for us the Punjab. P.S. Lokanathan<sup>38</sup> and Nandan Prasad<sup>39</sup> have enriched our understanding about the changes that took place during the World War II in India and its provinces/states. However, Johannes Voigt's *India in the World War II* is an important historical work.<sup>40</sup> Britain had to compensate India's role and contribution to the War with concessions that cut at the root of the *Raj*.<sup>41</sup>

The history of Punjab yet requires a young researcher to explore and examine the World War II such as Dr. Raja Ram of Panjab University, Chandigarh, who studied the World War I. In the late 1930s and 1940s, the history of Punjab past through to overlapping processes: changing political fortunes and impending collapse of the imperial

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Home Secretary (1910-11); First Lord of the Admiralty (1911-15); Minister of Munitions (1917-19); Secretary of State for War and Air (1919-1921); Secretary of State for the Colonies (1922); Chancellor of the Exchequer (1924-29). He remained in wilderness in the 1930s. He replaced N. Chamberlain as Prime Minister of the U.K. in May 1940 and with the Defence portfolio led the country throughout the War. He was defeated in the July 1945 election. He also remained Prime Minister during 1951-55. He got the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953. He authored *A History of the English Speaking Peoples* (1956-1958).

<sup>36</sup> Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States*, London, 1974. There are other studies on this genre such as, H.L. S.M. (ed.) *War and Society*, London, 1976. Arthur Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War: War, Peace and Social Change 1900-1967*, London 1968. Alan Milward, *The Economic Effects of the Two World Wars on Britain*, London, 1970.

<sup>37</sup> Bisheshwar Prasad (ed.), *Official History of the Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War*, Vols. 25, Delhi, 1952-66.

<sup>38</sup> P.S. Lokanathan, *Transition to Peace Economy*, Delhi, 1945.

<sup>39</sup> Nandan Prasad, *Expansion of the Armed Forces and Defence Organization 1939-1945*, Delhi, 1956.

<sup>40</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, Arnold Heinemann, New Delhi, 1987.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278, 394.

apparatus. The former process occupies the majority of the historical writings. Indeed, Sardar Khushwant Singh has devoted one complete chapter the World War II and political fortunes of the Sikhs.<sup>42</sup> David Gilmartin, Ayesha Jalal, Anita Inder Singh, Ian Talbot and Amarjeet Singh<sup>43</sup> have mainly concentrated on the changing political fortunes of different parties in the Punjab and India with a trajectory to explain ‘the politics of the partition’ of the Punjab and also India. The World War II remains at the backdrop unfocused and unexplored so far. However, Ian Talbot,<sup>44</sup> Raghuvendra Tanwar<sup>45</sup> explain the collapse of collaboration of the Punjab Unionist Party making way for the rise of the Muslim League. The British effort to make best use of research collaboration during the War has been amply documented leaving much more to dwell at such as how the World War II unleashed economic forces and pressures which made certain slogans and political preferences more amendable and appealing?

#### IV

The concept of War covers various definitions: the functional or the socio-political definition of War; the operational and the quantity criteria adopted in the definition of War; the judicial conception or the legal and general definitions of War; and then the analysis of War and violence. Before undertaking a deep and broad analysis of the causes of War, it is essential to know what a War is. A Canadian scholar Gernot Kohler highlighted the need and importance of the definition and typology of War: “The definition and typology of armed conflict and War is important in Causes-of-War Research, because causes differ between various types of conflict. The causation of a

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<sup>42</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, OUP, Delhi, 1991, Chapter 15, pp. 239-254.

<sup>43</sup> David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*, OUP, Delhi, 1989; Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985; Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India 1936-1947*, OUP, New Delhi, 1987; Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in North West and North West and North East India 1937-1947*, Delhi, 1988; Amarjit Singh, *Punjab Divided: Politics of the Muslim League and Partition (1935-1947)*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2001.

<sup>44</sup> Ian Talbot, *The Punjab and the Raj, (1849-1947)*, Manohar New Delhi, 1988.

<sup>45</sup> Raghuvendra Tanwar, *Politics of Sharing Power: The Punjab Unionist Party (1923-1947)*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1999.

large international War tends to be different from the causation of a border incident, from the causation of a Civil War, etc., although some causes may be common to all of them”.<sup>46</sup> R.M. Williams (1972) had suggested a very broader view over the multifactoriality of War causation as War itself was a very complex event: “War as a complex multi-dimensional social phenomenon has so many sources and causes that no theory of a single cause can explain its nature. One cannot find a single necessary condition and a single sufficient condition; one can only try to find sources, factors, conditions important for the occurrence of War”.<sup>47</sup> War occurs among the different human groups belonging to the international society to achieve certain socio-political ends. War is a means to achieve political ends. Therefore, it cannot be separated from politics. As human society and politics is a continuous changing phenomenon, therefore, definition of War may vary from time to time. Attempts have been made to reach towards nearly a perfect and balanced definition of War. The study of its definition has been attempted into four major dimensions mentioned as such: (i) The functional or the socio-political definition of War; (ii) The operational and the quantitative criteria adopted in the definition of War; (iii) The judicial conception or the legal definition of War considered within the framework of international law; and (iv) The general definition of War.

**The Functional or the Socio-political definition of War:**

- (a) Carl Von Clausewitz had suggested one of the most commonly accepted definitions of War through explaining the functional value of War. He thought violence as an integral part of War. War is merely a means to achieve the political ends. Hence, War cannot be separated from the national politics. Considering the motives and objectives of War, he defined War as, “An act of violence intended to compel our opponents to fulfill our will.” He further emphasized the continuity of violence with other political methods. “War”, he wrote, “is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means”<sup>48</sup>;
- (b) In the broadest sense, Quincy Wright defined War as “A violent contact of distinct but similar entities. In this sense a collision of stars, a fight between a lion and a tiger, a battle between two primitive tribes, and hostilities between two

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<sup>46</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, Greenwood Press Westport, Connecticut: UNESCO, Paris, France, 1981, p. 118.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

- modern nations would all be War”.<sup>49</sup> He (Quincy Wright 1968: 483) suggested a simple and a balanced definition of War: “A conflict among political groups, especially sovereign states, carried on by armed forces of considerable magnitude and for a considerable period of time”<sup>50</sup>;
- (c) Prof. L. Oppenheim has defined the War as "a contention between two or more states through their armed forces, for the purpose of over-powering each other and imposing such conditions of the purpose as the victor pleases"<sup>51</sup>;
  - (d) Hoffman Nickerson proposed a definition of War explaining War as an instrument of national policy: “War is the use of organized force between two human groups, pursuing contradictory policies, each group seeking to impose its policy upon the other” (cited in Palmer and Perkins, ‘International Relations’, p. 213). An anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (1941) suggested a definition of War almost similar to that of Hoffman: “War is an armed contest between two independent political units, by means of organized military force, in the pursuit of a tribal or national policy”.<sup>52</sup>

Both definitions say nothing about the amount or magnitude of violence and use of force as a prerequisite for War and hence fails to differentiate between Wars and smaller incidents among organized forces, such as coups d’etat, riots, ambush, revolt, smaller uprising and other low-intensity-conflicts etc. “In fact, War is ‘a political act, usually undertaken only when it appears that all other alternatives have failed’”.<sup>53</sup>

**The operational and the quantitative criteria adopted in the definition of War:**

Singer and Small (1972) and Deutsch and Songhua (1973) call “War” any series of events that meets the following three criteria: (a) **Size:** it results in at least 1000 battle deaths (not counting, therefore, the indirect victims through famine, lack of shelter, and disease); (b) **Preparation:** it has been prepared in advance, and/or is being maintained, by large-scale social organizations through such means as the recruitment, training and

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<sup>49</sup> Quincy Wright, *A Study of War*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1965 and London, p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> Zeev Maoz, *Paths to Conflict: International Dispute Initiation, 1816-1976*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1982, p. 18.

<sup>51</sup> S.K. Kapoor, *International Law*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Central Law Agency, 30-D/1 Motilal Nehru Road, Allahabad-2, 1992, p. 535. (Hindi Version)

<sup>52</sup> Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975*, The University Press of Kentucky, 1983, p. 50.

<sup>53</sup> *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* (in 30 Volumes) MACROPAEDIA Volume 19 Knowledge in Depth (1978), William Benton Publisher and the University of Chicago, p. 540.

deployment of troops, the acquisition, storage and distribution of arms and ammunition, the making of specific War plans and the like; and (c) **Legitimizing**: it is being legitimized by an established government or quasi-governmental organization, so that large-scale killing is viewed not as a crime but as a duty”.<sup>54</sup>

### **The Judicial Conception or the legal definition of War**

The judicial concept of War is not only closely related with the political definition of War but the legal aspect of War is also taken into account in the Quantitative criteria mentioned in its third part titled as ‘legitimizing’ in order to justify the large-scale killing during War not as a crime but as a duty. In a narrower sense, Quincy Wright defined War as “the legal condition which equally permits two or more hostile groups to carry on a conflict by armed force”.<sup>55</sup> The Marquess de Olivert declares: “War is a litigation or suit (Litigious) between nations that depends their rights, in which force is the judge and victory is the judicial award”.<sup>56</sup> The legal aspects of War stress that at least one of the Warring Party must be a sovereign nation-state. ‘A struggle can be considered a War only if the contenders or belligerents are sovereign political units (tribes, fiefs, empires, nation-states, etc.). According to *New English Dictionary* “War is a hostile contention by means of armed forces, carried on between nations, states, or rulers or between parties in the same nation or state; the employment of armed forces against a foreign power, or against and opposing party in the state”.

### **General Definition of War**

In his classic *A Study of War* Quincy Wright, tries to combine the legal, sociological, military, and psychological views of War and offer a synthesis: War may be regarded as: “an extreme intensification of military activity, psychological tension, legal power, and social integration....”<sup>57</sup> Evan Luard (1986) has concluded a general and brief definition of War: “all encounters which have involved substantial, organized fighting

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<sup>54</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, Greenwood Press Westport, Connecticut, UNESCO, Paris, France, 1981, p. 135.

<sup>55</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, Greenwood Press Westport, Connecticut: Unesco, Paris, France, 1981, p. 135.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

over a significant period may be classified as War”.<sup>58</sup> Synthetically, approach of functional and operational definitions of War further provides a general definition of War: “War is the art of organizing and employing armed force to accomplish the purpose of a group”.<sup>59</sup> Hence, War is an act of a quantum of violence used by the legalized and well-organized armed forces of two or more sovereign nation-states or of rival parties/groups within a nation-state in order to achieve a definite political goal.

### **Quincy Wright (1942, 1965)**

“Since the publication of Quincy Wright’s pioneering *‘A Study of War’* in 1942, many attempts have been made to devise a taxonomy of armed conflict....Classification of Wars by basic causes is more difficult since it is rare for a War to have a single cause”.<sup>60</sup> Quincy Wright has developed a typology of War in which the *boundary conditions of both opposite combatants* have been considered as the primary criteria of classification. On the basis of boundary conditions he distinguishes Wars among four categories: (a) **Civil War**, which takes place within the boundaries of a sovereign nation; (b) **The Balance of Power War**, in which members of a state system are at War among themselves; (c) **The Defensive War**, which acts to guard a civilization against the intrusions of an alien culture; and (d) **The Imperial War**, in which one civilization attempts to expand at the expense of another”.<sup>61</sup>

### **Evan Luard (1968, 1970)**

Evan Luard’s classification of Wars is not comprehensive and general. He places greater emphasis on the typology of *external Wars* (1865-1968) on the basis of the motivations of nation-states in their initiation of War. He made separate study for colonial and civil Wars. He regards the *external War* as “*Wars of Aggression*” because some dominant motive stimulates nation-states for aggression. He develops a classification of “external Wars” based on the main motivation of the initiating power

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<sup>58</sup> Evan Luard, *War in International Society: A Study in International Sociology*, I.B. Tauris & Co., London, 1986, p. 7.

<sup>59</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, p. 138.

<sup>60</sup> Sydney D. Bailey; *How Wars End: The United Nations And the Termination of Armed Conflict (1946-1964)*, Volume I, Clarendon Press, Oxford; 1982. pp. 9-10.

<sup>61</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, P. 140.

into four categories: (i) “**Expansive Wars**, whose main aim was the conquest of foreign territories not previously controlled, in the inter-War period (i.e. 1919-1939) were still common. For instance, the Japanese invasions of Manchuria (1931) and China (1933, 1935 and 1937-1945 during Chinese Civil War); the Italian invasions of Ethiopia and Albania; the German invasion of non-German Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, the Low Countries, the Balkans, and the Soviet Union; the Soviet absorption of the Baltic States are some examples of this kind. (ii) **Irredentist Wars**, directed against territories inhabited mainly by people of the same race as the conquerors, to bring about the reunification of a nation, whether conceived in ethnic, linguistic, or historical terms, declined. *Between the Wars* (i.e. 1919-39) there were the German occupation of Austria and German-speaking Czechoslovakia, Hungarian and Polish participation in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet occupation of Poland east of the Curzon line, and the Italian occupation of part of Savoy. *After 1945*, the North Korean attack of South Korea (1950) and the Indian attack on Goa (December 17, 1961) might be placed in this category”.<sup>62</sup> Irredentism may be defined as: “The long standing and frustrated desire of the people of one state to annex some area of an adjoining state that contain peoples of the same culture or ethnic group. Examples of irredentism include France’s attitude towards Alsace and Lorraine after 1870 and Germany’s attitude toward the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia after *World War I*”.<sup>63</sup>

“**Strategic Wars**, May be motivated by a desire on the part of a nation to enhance its logistic and military position vis-à-vis some real or imagined threat”.<sup>64</sup> *In the Inter-War period i.e.1919-1939*, the Soviet invasions of Finland (1939) and Baltic States (1940) were partly of this type. *In the postwar period*, the Israeli participation in the Suez campaign with Egypt (1956) might have been similarly motivated. **In Coercive Wars**, a sovereign government exerted force, threat or pressure on other states to compel to fulfill

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<sup>62</sup> Evan Luard, *Conflict and Peace in The Modern International System*, (1968, 1970) University of London Press Ltd., 1970, p. 68.

<sup>63</sup> J.M. Shafritz, T.J.A. Shafritz and B. Robertson, *The Facts of File Dictionary of Military Science*, Facts on File Limited Collins Street Oxford, U.K., p. 244.

<sup>64</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, p. 141.

one's will. Examples of this type are the Anglo-French attack on Egypt (1956); Arab invasion of Israel in 1948 and the Soviet repression of the Hungarian Uprising in 1956.

### **Interstate War or International War**

All Wars with system members on both sides are classified as interstate or international.

### **Extra-Systemic War**

It involves a system member against a non member. These Wars are subdivided into imperial, colonial, and civil: (a) it includes **Imperial Wars** which involve a system member on one side and an independent entity which does not satisfy the Singer-Small inclusion criteria on the other side (b) **Colonial Wars** are also included into this category. These Wars involve a system member fighting against a colony, dependency or protectorate which is peripheral to the center of government of the system member. (c) **Civil Wars** involve political factions fighting against each other in a given state. However, these Wars may become internationalized through the military intervention of one or more outside state(s) on the side of the opposing parties".<sup>65</sup>

### **Etiology of War**

"The dictionary meanings of the word '**etiology**' (US)/also '**etiology**' (Br) are (i) the study of causes and reasons (ii) the word '**etiology**' is often used in medical terminology in which it represents '**study of the causes of disease**'.<sup>66</sup>

The causes of World War II have also been summarized by the *The World Book Encyclopedia* – W.X.Y.Z. Volume 19- Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago, 54. Illinois at pp. 381-386. "The three main causes of World War II were: (a) the problem left unsolved by World War I; (b) the rise of dictatorships, and (c) the desire of Germany, Italy, and Japan for more territory. Above mentioned three main causes have been further subdivided into Secondary Causes; Cause No. 1 has been elaborated into five Secondary Causes; (i) The Versailles Treaty; (ii) The League of Nations; (iii) attempts of disarmament; (iv) Economic Problems; (v) Nationalism. Cause No. 2 has been elaborated; (i) Communism in Russia; (ii)

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<sup>65</sup> Zeev Maoz, *Paths to Conflict: International Dispute Initiation, 1816-1976*, p. 19.

<sup>66</sup> *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, London, 1989, p. 19.

Fascism in Italy; (iii) Nazism in Germany; (iv) Militarism in Japan. Cause No. 3: Desire for Territory: Aggression on the March; (i) Japanese invasion of Manchuria and China, (ii) Italian invasion of Ethiopia; (iii) Germany's invasion of the Rhineland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland (The Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis formed)"

### **Theories of War Causation**

A number of interdisciplinary approaches have been made in order to cure our ignorance of the causes of War during recent decades. Varied and numerous theories of War causation can broadly be divided into two main Categories:

- (1) Mono-causal theories of War; and
- (2) Theory of multifactoriality of War Causation.

### **Mono-Causal Theories of War**

Various scholars of different disciplines have attempted to postulate a particular theory explaining a cause/or correlate of War. Each one has emphasized over a particular determinant in the process of War causation. But all of them are inadequate and unsatisfactory to explain the occurrence of War comprehensively hence they are being rejected. "As P.A. Sorokin observed (1928), most such theories are inherently unsatisfactory as explanations since they fail to explain "When, why, under what conditions, and in what way their factor is an efficient cause of War, and why, under what conditions, and so on, it has no such influence". This is true even of recent studies which rely on statistical evidence, as Michael Wallace (1971) discussing the relationship between status inconsistency and War in the international system".<sup>67</sup>

### **Konard Z. Lorenz's Theory of Animal Aggression (1966)**

Nobel Prize winner in Physiology/Medicine in 1973 was widely recognized by his famous work 'On Aggression' (1966); he defined 'aggression' as-"The fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed against members of the same species". Therefore, aggression is an ineradicably instinctive behavior, it is not a learned reaction to social cues or environmental stimuli but a species-specific instinct man has inherited from his anthropoid ancestors in the service of evolutionary adaptation and survival".<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Sol Tax, *War, Its Causes and Correlates*, (Editor Martin A. Nettleship, R. Dalegivens, Anderson Nettleship), Mouton Publishers, The Hague, Paris, 1975, p. 58.

<sup>68</sup> Falk and Kim, *The War System: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1980, p. 84.

### **Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis**

This theory of War causation “starts with the assumption that aggression is always a consequence of frustration”.<sup>69</sup> “But in fact, frustration as such does not lead to War; whether or not it leads to War will depend on displacement techniques. War may result from frustration if the pent-up (unexpressed/repressed) aggression is successfully displaced by one state on to a foreign state or group. Displacement is achieved these days by means of mass communication and highly developed methods of political indoctrination”.<sup>70</sup> Dollard and McDougall suggested some modifications in the above hypothesis: “I should like to propose that every frustration increases the instigation to aggression, but this instigation is here termed anger”<sup>71</sup> and sometimes termed as fear. The frustration-aggression hypothesis does not wholly explain the phenomenon of War; there is incomplete chain of War causation e.g. if aggression is one of the prime ingredients of War, and aggression is originated through frustration, ultimately the problem remains still unresolved that-what causes a frustration?

### **Marxist-Leninist Theory of War Causation**

In the midst of the First World War (January-June, 1916), V.I. Lenin (1870-1924); founder of the first Socialist State, wrote the book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Lenin did an extensive research on the problem of capitalism and War and arrived at the inference that the two are inseparable.<sup>72</sup> “Since War is a troubled human relationship and belongs in the superstructure, it derives its root from the economic base. All human relations mirror the process of turning out concrete articles necessary for daily life. When the latter change, the former will also change. He considered capitalism the breeding ground of War. Lenin declared that War is a form of ‘class conflict’; and in the age of imperialism the whole world is the battlefield, the enslaving of men by men being the motivation. Thus understood, War begins with the advent of class community and

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<sup>69</sup> S.C. Gangal, *The Gandhian Way to World Peace*, Vora & Co. Publishers Private Ltd., 1960, Bombay, p. 5..

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>71</sup> Falk and Kim, *The War System: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, 1980, p. 136.

<sup>72</sup> John Yin, *Sino-Soviet Dialogue on The Problem of War*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1971, p. 11.,

ends with its disappearance”.<sup>73</sup> V.I. Lenin further elaborates: “Our aim is to achieve a socialist system of society, which, by eliminating the division of mankind into classes, by eliminating all exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, will inevitably eliminate the very possibility of War”.<sup>74</sup> So, V.I. Lenin propounded the theory of ‘inevitability of War’ and said, “Capitalism, has concentrated the earth’s wealth in the hands of a few states and divided the world up to the last bit. Any further enrichment could take place only at the expense of others, as the enrichment of one state at the expense of another. The issue could only be settled by force-and, accordingly, War between the world marauders became inevitable”.<sup>75</sup> The article “Long Live Leninism” reads like a running comment on the book ‘Imperialism’ “we believe in the absolute correctness of Lenin’s thinking: War is an inevitable outcome of the system of exploitation, and the source of modern Wars is the imperialist system”. It is argued that Wars are waged by the imperialists due to “their insatiable appetite for more wealth”. The article ends by saying that “so long as capitalist imperialism exists...the sources and possibility of War will remain”.<sup>76</sup>

Karl Marx (1818-1883) with his friend Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) wrote *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and *Das Capital* (1867). “According to Marxists the exploitation of labour leads to shrinkage of the domestic market with the result that the capitalists press for ever new markets and sources of raw materials abroad. This, in turn, leads to a policy of annexation, Colonization and War”.<sup>77</sup> “On the other hand, some thinkers did not agree with the Marxist-Leninist theory of War Causation. Writers of the classical tradition like Norman Angell and Lionel Robbins have insisted that the cost of modern Wars always exceeds possible economic gains so that there cannot be an economic motive for War. Hence, they trace the cause of War either to the fears of the uneconomically minded patriots or to the propaganda of special economic interests”.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>74</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 398-99.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> John Yin, *Sino-Soviet Dialogue on The Problem of War*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>77</sup> S.C. Gangal, *The Gandhian Way to World Peace*, 1960, p. 7.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

### **Economic Base of War Causation**

It is the widespread belief that economic is the root of all evil. “Most men devote the major portion of their time and energy to tasks related, directly or indirectly, to the production of goods and services. From that fact it is tempting to conclude, as many do, that economics is primarily or even exclusively, at the root of all human behavior”.<sup>79</sup>

#### **(a) The Economic “Devil” Theory of War**

Means that in a satanic thirst for economic gain, ammunitions makers (“merchants of death”), international bankers, and “Wall Street” capitalists, provoke Wars in order to profit by the blood of men’s sons, including their own. This view gained considerable headway in the U.S. in the inter War years (i.e. 1919-1939). There is no real-evidence to support this view, but even if it did contain a modicum of truth it is absurd (unreasonable) to think that it was of any great importance.

#### **(b) Capitalism and War**

There are controversial and even contradictory views about the relationship between capitalism and War. The orthodox Marxist view is that imperialism and War are inevitable results of capitalism. Contrary to this view: “E.M. Winslow (1948) states that the pursuit of power by states can arise from a number of factors in which economic has no part. Fear, Love of adventure, prestige, strategy, civilizing missions, political and ideological clashes has certainly been important causes of imperialism and War”.<sup>80</sup>

### **Catalytic approach in the War Causation**

There are such conditions or factors whose presence/or absence insufficiency or excess influence the occurrence of Wars. In other words, we should identify that whether a particular cause of War is leading toward or away from War. Just to explain this idea, an example of a research work *Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate Wars, 1816-1965* by Stuart A. Beamer (1992) is being cited: “Perhaps the most important contribution of this study is that it provides, for the first time, a direct assessment of the relative importance of more than a few factors that are alleged to promote or inhibit the outbreak of War. In order of declining importance, the conditions

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<sup>79</sup> Charles P. Schleicher, *International Relations: Cooperation and Conflict*, Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1963, pp. 94-95.

<sup>80</sup> Charles P. Schleicher, *International Relations: Cooperation and Conflict*; p. 287.

that characterize a dangerous, War-prone dyad are; presence of continuity; absence of alliance; absence of more-advanced economy; absence of democratic polity; absence of overwhelming preponderance; presence of major power; nothing in these findings suggests that high levels of military preparedness reduce the likelihood of War.<sup>81</sup> Considering the factors influence War Causation in terms of their presence and absence; an example can be cited from the causes of the First World War: Absence of international organizations (such as League of Nations; UNO, OAU, etc.) for amicable and negotiated settlement of disputes among nations.

### **Classification of the Causes of War**

The genesis of War is a multidimensional phenomenon therefore the theory of multi-factoriality of War causation has been universally recognized and accepted with consensus. The causes of War are not only numerous but sometimes they are very complex too. Therefore, it seems necessary to employ the analytical method for their classification to make the study of 'causes of War' easier and simpler.

Traditionally causes of War may be classified into different categories as: Psychological, economic, cultural and Ideological, Political, religious, ethnic or racial etc. R.J. Rommel has attempted to classify the causes of War as under: (a) Necessary Causes, (b) Necessary and sufficient causes. (c) Aggravating conditions, (d) Inhibiting conditions and (e) Trigger causes (it is a special type of sufficient cause). Direct and Indirect causes of War: Broadly thinking, the causes of War can be divided into two main types: Direct and Indirect. The causes or conditions which are directly correlated with the outbreak of War may be regarded as its direct causes while the causes or factors indirectly interlinked with the occurrence of War may be categorized as the indirect causes. For example, illegal or legalized control over the territory of any sovereign nation-state is the direct cause of War. Trigger causes or immediate causes of War are included in the category of direct causes of War. Sometimes 'real cause' of War is hidden deeply and aggressive party makes invasion under false pretences to justify his aggression. Therefore, War analysts must be careful enough to distinguish between Ostensible versus real; Apparent

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<sup>81</sup> *The Journal of Conflict Resolution-Journal of the Peace Science Society (International)* Vol. 36, Number 2, June 1992. Stuart A. Bremer, *Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Inter-state War, 1816-1965*, pp. 309-341. (p. 338).

versus actual; Immediate or trigger or proximate versus Remote; and finally the root cause of War. Assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife Sophia was the immediate cause of World War I - some writer called it trigger cause of proximate cause. Hence, overpopulation, Social injustice; poverty; awareness about one's political, economic or cultural exploitation; political instability in autocratic or non-democratic system of government, etc. have been considered as some indirect causes of War.

### **Overpopulation and War**

Overpopulation and War are indirectly correlated: "There is no definite evidence that overpopulation directly leads to war. Overpopulation by itself does not emerge as an important determinant of conflict and violence nevertheless it is indirectly interlinked with the outbreak of War. Choucri and Bennett (1972) and Choucri and North (1972) argued: "An increase in population must bring about increased demands for resources and a greater level of technological development before "lateral pressure", competition and crisis are likely to lead to violent conflict. In her monograph "Population Dynamics and International Violence", the most extensive quantitative analysis available to date, Chourci (1974) presents the following conclusion...population factors indeed have a pronounced effect upon the development of conflict situations, and can often be critical determinants of violence and Warfare. But the linkages between population and violence are rarely direct: complex intervening networks are at work. Major Wars, as well as local conflicts, often emerge by way of a two-step process: first, in terms of internally generated pressures and demands occasioned by growing needs associated with added population; and then in terms of reciprocal comparisons, rivalries and conflict for control over resources, territory, valued goods or spheres of influence. Each step is closely related to the other, and each can be traced to the interaction among the population, resource and technological attributes of a society. In those terms, population factors amount to critical determinants of violent conflict".<sup>82</sup>

The location and distribution of population in relation to resources is not uniform throughout the world at all. It creates economic disparities due to unequal distribution of human population and natural resources on the earth further resulting conflict-generating

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<sup>82</sup> Unesco Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies 1980, Greenwood Press Westport, Connecticut: Unesco, Paris, France, 1981, pp. 177-178.

conditions within the developing and underdeveloped countries. H.R. Khanna has pointed out the present economic disparities very aptly: “Today the developing world has 75 per cent of the world population and 14 per cent of the world income, a situation attributable not only to resource capitalism but also knowledge capitalism. This would become a source of constant irritation and create a fertile soil wherein sprout seeds of conflict”.<sup>83</sup> Unequal distribution of population and natural resources all over the world has created the economic disparities among nation-states and divided the human population into two distinct categories so called ‘the Haves’ and ‘the Have-nots’. “Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, Director-General of the WHO proceeded to argue that so long as the world is divided into “Haves” and “have-nots” a state of tension and work against peace will continue”.<sup>84</sup> “The ghastly imbalance between the Haves and the Have-Nots, between the affluent North and the deprived South, militates against the very law of nature apart from the sheer immorality of it”.<sup>85</sup> And overpopulation is directly linked with Poverty which is determined, by the factors such as ‘per capita income’, ‘level of standards of living’, etc. “And poverty does not mean only the question of hunger: with it is linked illiteracy, malnutrition and social inequity in the wider sense, all these contribute to environmental degradation”.<sup>86</sup>

### **Rise of Nationalism as an indirect cause of War**

“Nationalism has two faces: one is good while other is bad. Nationalism is the binding factor: It has led to the development of the well-known “my country, right or wrong” concept. More even concept of live and die for ones of belonging and pride, and a willingness to make sacrifices for their country. They also take a greater interest in their nation’s achievements in such fields as literature, music, and games & sports, etc. But the other side of the coin is more horrible as nationalism also produces rivalry and tension between nations. Desires for national glory and military conquest may lead to war.

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<sup>83</sup> *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, Dated 13.4.1992, p. (edit) Article entitled as ‘New World Order’ By H.R. Khanna.

<sup>84</sup> *The Sunday Tribune*, Chandigarh, dated, 16.8.1992, ‘From Hiroshima to Baghdad, ‘The cost of War’ by Dr. P.N. Chhuttani-Sunday Reading, p. 5.

<sup>85</sup> *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, Dated 19.6.1992, Edit-page-11, ‘Reflections on Rio’ by Nikhil Chakravartty.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

Extreme nationalism may result in racial hatred and in persecution of minority groups. Nationalism is a people's sense of belonging together as a nation. It also includes such feelings as loyalty to the nation, pride in its culture and history, and-in many cases-a desire for national independence. Since the mid-1700's nationalism has become an important force in international relations. Nationalistic feelings, particularly the desire of each country to govern itself, have helped change the map of Europe several times since the 1800's. Since the late 1940's, nationalism has also transformed Africa and Asia. Nationalism is widespread today, but it once did not even exist. People have not always had a sense of nationhood. Early people felt they belonged to cities or tribes. During the middle Ages, people were loyal to a number of groups and rulers. The rise of nationalism occurred along with the development of a political unit called the "nation-state". A 'nation' is a group of people who share a common culture, history, or an area of land whose people have an independent government. A 'nation-state' exists if a nation and a state have the same boundaries. Nation-states began to develop during the late middle Ages. Travel and Communication improved at that time. As a result, people became increasingly aware of the part of their country that lay outside their own community. Loyalty to local and religious leaders began to weaken, and allegiance to kings grew stronger. By the 1700's, England, France, Spain and several other countries had become nation-states. Other people developed a sense of nationhood by the early 1800's. But most of them had not become nation-states. Many persons trusted that a national group had the right to form its own state. This belief, known as the 'doctrine of national self-determination', caused many nationalistic revolutions in Europe. For example, Greece won independence from Turkey in 1829, and Belgium became independent of the Netherlands in 1830".<sup>87</sup> "Like many "isms", over the years **nationalism** has changed its meaning. Nineteenth-century nationalism gave rise to the modern nation state, to the concept of self-determination, and to Separatism".<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> *The World Book Encyclopaedia*-Volume 14, N-O, 1987 World Book, Inc. pp. 53-54.

<sup>88</sup> *World Encyclopaedia of Peace*-Volume 2, 1986, Peregamon Press, Oxford, New York, etc., p. 11.

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The World War II broke out on September 1, 1939, when Hitler invaded Poland. In the morning, the mobilisation of all British forces was ordered. An intense debate in the British Parliament began on the issues of the War and the National Government in England. An Ultimatum to Germany was served at 9.30 PM and second and final on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9 A.M. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain spoke on the Radio at 11.15 A.M.<sup>89</sup> On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, both Britain and France declared war on Germany. On the same day (Sunday) at 8.30 PM IST, Lord Linlithgow from the Viceregal Summer residence in Simla announced the War against Germany.<sup>90</sup> The Government of India immediately declared India to be at war with Germany without consulting the Congress or the elected members of the Central Legislative Assembly.<sup>91</sup> Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, was industrious, clear-headed, patient and capable. He had rock-like firmness. He was immediately immersed in war problems.<sup>92</sup> He was characterised as ‘a great War Viceroy’.<sup>93</sup> His principal claim ‘to fame was his organisation of the Indian War effort. He successfully handled both the question of supply and military expansion’.<sup>94</sup> A Defence of India Ordinance restricting civil liberties came into force the day War was declared.<sup>95</sup> It established the power of the Central Government ‘to rule by decree to promulgate such rules as appear necessary for securing for defence of British India or the efficient prosecution of the War or for maintaining

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<sup>89</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 29.

<sup>90</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Gathering Storm*, Vol. I, Cassell & Co. London, 1964, p. 363.

<sup>91</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence (1857-1947)*, Penguin, New Delhi, 1989, 448.

<sup>92</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1740-1975)*, OUP, Delhi, 1983, p. 325.

<sup>93</sup> *The Times of India*, 20.10.1943.

<sup>94</sup> Dharmjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-1943)*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 2005, p. 143.

<sup>95</sup> Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India (1885-1947)*, Macmillan, New Delhi, 1999, 376.

supplies and services essential to the life of the community.<sup>96</sup> On the eve of the War, India was even more unprepared in a material sense than Britain and with a much more divided mind.<sup>97</sup> Within the Indian National Congress, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, were sympathetic towards France and Britain. In spite of their sympathy for Britain, the Congress leaders felt outraged as the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow 'dragged India into the War without consulting the representatives of Indian people'. The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha from 10 to 14 September. Subhas Bose, Acharya Narendra Dev and Jayaprakash Narayan were also invited. Sharp differences cropped up. Mahatma Gandhi favoured the Allies against the Nazi State. However, the socialists and Subhas Chandra Bose argued that the war was an imperialist one since both sides were fighting for gaining or defending colonial territories. Therefore, the question of supporting either of the two sides did not arise. In between, Jawaharlal Nehru made 'a sharp distinction between democracy and Fascism. He had a soft corner for Britain, France and Poland. He was equally convinced that Britain and France were imperialist countries and the war was the result of the inner contradictions at capitalism maturing since the end of the World War I. He, therefore, argued that India should neither join the War nor take advantage of Britain's difficulties.<sup>98</sup> The CWC again met at Wardha on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1939 and condemned the Viceroy's Statement of 17<sup>th</sup> October as 'unequivocal reiteration of old imperialist policy'. It was resolved that any support to Great Britain would amount to an endorsement of Imperialist policy.<sup>99</sup> From the Indian nationalist point of view, the World War was 'a conflict between old and new imperialist powers'.<sup>100</sup> The left-wing groups : Forward Bloc, the Congress Socialist party, the

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<sup>96</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, Manisha, Calcutta, 1979, (first published in 1940; revised in 1970), 552.

<sup>97</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1740-1975)*, 376.

<sup>98</sup> Bipan Chandra, et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, pp. 448-49, 452.

<sup>99</sup> Dharmjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India 1936-1943*, p. 231.

<sup>100</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayessha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 128.

Communists and the Royists characterized the war as an imperialist war. They asserted that the war-crisis provided an opportunity to achieve freedom through an all-out struggle against British Imperialism.<sup>101</sup> India entered into the War not on its own will, but committed to it by its rulers. Imperialism is the same everywhere and in every age. Ethically, the war was not India's seeking. It was entirely due to European rivalries and imperialist competition. The British Government had made its subservient Government of India join in their extra-frontier Imperialist Operations.<sup>102</sup> Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, informed Lord Linlithgow that the whole strength of the Empire might have to be developed. First step was 'to increase the output of India's munition factories to the maximum in order to meet their own needs as also all outside demands'.<sup>103</sup> The Congress asked the British government its 'War aims' regarding India.<sup>104</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru argued that the Congress leadership wanted to give chance to the Viceroy and the British Government.<sup>105</sup> The Muslim League had also some reservations, yet tacitly supported the War efforts.<sup>106</sup> The Unionist Party passed a resolution on the War offering unconditional support to Britain.<sup>107</sup>

The Viceroy repeatedly declared his intention to avoid 'running after the Congress'. In fact, his attitude was part of general British policy to take advantage of the War to regain for the white-dominated Central Government and bureaucracy the ground lost to the Congress from 1937.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, his principal claims to fame was his

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<sup>101</sup> Bipan Chandra, et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, p. 451

<sup>102</sup> K.T. Shah, *How India Pays for the War*, Pratibha Publications, Bombay, 1943, pp. 6-18.

<sup>103</sup> Dharmjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India in 1936-1943*, p. 144.

<sup>104</sup> P.N. Chopra, et al, *A New Advanced History of India*, Prentice-Hall of India, New Delhi, 1966, 619.

<sup>105</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, p. 449

<sup>106</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs (1839-1988)*, Vol. II, OUP, Delhi, 1991, 239.

<sup>107</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 186-87.

<sup>108</sup> Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, 376.

organisation of the Indian war effort.<sup>109</sup> The Viceroy in his statement of 17 October 1939 harped on the differences among Indians. He tried to use the Muslim League and the Princes against the Congress and refused to define Britain's War aims beyond stating that Britain was resisting aggression. Next day, Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, spoke in the House of Lords and stressed differences among Indians, especially among Hindus and Muslims and branded the Congress as a purely Hindu organization.<sup>110</sup> Thus, the British Government had no intention of loosening their hold on India during or after the War. It was willing to treat the Congress as 'an enemy'. The Congress Working Committee on 23 October demanded a national government at the Centre and promise of Independence at the end of the War. However, the Viceroy promised Dominion Status.<sup>111</sup> The Committee rejected the viceregal statement as a reiteration of the old imperialist policy. It decided not to support the War. The Congress asked its provincial ministries to resign in protest against the British policy of involving India in the War without prior consultations with Indians. The Congress was still reluctant to give a call for a massive anti-imperialist struggle. With no assurances coming from the British, all the Congress Ministries resigned by mid- November 1939.<sup>112</sup>

Individuals and groups were willing to give help, but India as a whole sat back to watch the mighty drama unfolded in the European arena.<sup>113</sup> The Congress announced boycott of the War efforts. However, call for individual Satyagraha did not carry much appeal with the people of the Punjab.<sup>114</sup> The Unionist Party, unlike the Congress and the Muslim League unconditionally supported the British War efforts. At the local level, the

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<sup>109</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1740-1975)*, p. 378.

<sup>110</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, 449.

<sup>111</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, p. 450.

<sup>112</sup> P.N. Chopra, *A New Advanced History of India*, 620.

<sup>113</sup> P. Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1940-1975)* p-366. See also, Satya M. Rai, *Punjab Heroic Tradition*, 148-149.

<sup>114</sup> Satya M. Rai, *Punjab Heroic Tradition*, 148.

landowners actively encouraged army recruitment. Initially, there was great enthusiasm for the British cause. 'The declaration of War by England' stated the Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhpura, 'has touched the hearts of the Punjabis and the various communities are vying with each other in offering their services and resources to the Government'.<sup>115</sup> The Punjab Legislative Assembly dominated by the landlords lost no time in passing resolutions in support of the British Empire.<sup>116</sup> In the Punjab, the Unionist leaders had assured the Governor, H.D. Craik that they would join the War efforts. They also advised him to create a fund to bribe the press to the right time. Even the Governor reported to the Viceroy that 'expenditures on a fairly generous scale be fully justified in War time and would be money well spent'.<sup>117</sup> In fact, the Punjab Premier Sikandar Hayat Khan urged the Governor to fully exploit the readiness of the Punjab to help in the War and not to miss out the psychological moment when enthusiasm among the local population was high.<sup>118</sup> Economic interest as well as tradition of loyalty to the King Emperor played its part in creating an 'outburst of popular enthusiasm'.<sup>119</sup> Infact, the recruiting officers reported no difficulties in acquiring recruits for the army during the early months of 1940.<sup>120</sup>

The Akali leader, Master Tara Singh, declared that the War was a 'golden chance' for the Sikhs to regain and consolidate their position.<sup>121</sup> The War created a crisis of conscience for the Sikhs. They wanted to regain coveted position in the Armed forces.

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<sup>115</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, Manohar, New Delhi 1988, 143.

<sup>116</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 283.

<sup>117</sup> Ram Narayan Kumar, *The Sikh Unrest and the Indian State: Politics, Personalities and Historical Retrospective*, Ajanta Publications, Delhi, 1997, 89-90.

<sup>118</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military Government and Society in Colonial Punjab (1849-1947)*, Sage, New Delhi, 2005. , p. 283.

<sup>119</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 143.

<sup>120</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 283

<sup>121</sup> A. S. Narang, *Storm over the Satlej : The Akali Politics*, Gitanjali Publications House, New Delhi, 1983, 64.

The titled gentry of the Chief Khalsa Diwan promptly declared their support for Britain.<sup>122</sup> In matters of Sikh participation in the War, the Khalsa National Party, a coalition partner in the Unionist Government, openly supported the War efforts. The Khalsa Defence of India League under the Chairmanship of Maharaja of Patiala was established January 1941 to encourage and coordinate Sikh enlistment into the Indian Army. The ban on the enlistment of Sikhs was lifted.<sup>123</sup> The Maharaja of Patiala intensified war efforts among the Sikhs especially the work of recruitment.<sup>124</sup> It was reported in vernacular media in the early phase of the War, that it would be a limited War and end soon.<sup>125</sup> The ‘phoney’ War ended in Europe with the fall of France. In May 1940, Winston Churchill took over as the Prime Minister with L.S. Amery as his Secretary of State for India.<sup>126</sup> The formation of the Khalsa Defence of India League was ‘another step in the right direction’. It was argued that the strength in the army would enhance the political position of the Sikhs.<sup>127</sup> The Sikhs considered ‘the army vital for the preservation of the Sikhs as a separate entity’. The Punjab Governor wrote to the Viceroy in June 1941 that ‘the Akalis have come to realise that a decline in the Sikh military quota must result in a serious setback to the community’.<sup>128</sup> However, the non-inclusion of Sikh in the Viceroy’s Executive Council was widely grudged about.<sup>129</sup> The Viceroy nominated two Sikhs to the Defence Council.<sup>130</sup> Sardar Bahadur Sunder Singh

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<sup>122</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs (1839-1988)*, Vol. II, 239.

<sup>123</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 287. See also, Khushwant Singh, *A History of The Sikhs (1839-1988)*, Vol. II, 24.

<sup>124</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, 10.8.1941.

<sup>125</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, November 2, 1939.

<sup>126</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 243.

<sup>127</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, August 3, 1941.

<sup>128</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, pp. 155, 177.

<sup>129</sup> *The Khalsa* Lahore, August 10, 1941.

<sup>130</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs (1839-1988)*, Vol. II, 244.

M.B.E, Member, Punjab War Publicity Ward, Gujranwala, exhorted the Sikhs to join the army in large numbers. It was argued that the Sikhs are chiefly agriculturists. They supplement their income by joining the army.<sup>131</sup> Sardar Rajwant Singh Kang M.A. brought out a pamphlet “The Sikh and the Present War”. It was widely recommended and considered to be of immense help in the recruitment of the Sikhs. The Khalsa Defence of India League, Lahore, issued pamphlets highlighting the glorious traditions of Sikhism such as selfless sacrifice for the country.<sup>132</sup> The Khalsa Defence of India League, made a very vigorous speech exhorting the people to join the army in large numbers.<sup>133</sup> The Chief Khalsa Diwan supported the British Government. However, the Akali Party could not give unqualified support to the British War effort.<sup>134</sup> Propaganda, publicity, fundraising, recruitment and maintenance of law and order proceeded without difficulty because the structures that enabled recruiting officers, deputy commissioners and local notables to act rapidly and with minimum friction were already in place.<sup>135</sup> Onwards, the colonial state single-mindedly moved towards mobilisation of resources both human and material. Every stone was turned to achieve that goal.

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<sup>131</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, November 23, 1941.

<sup>132</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, September 7, 1941.

<sup>133</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, August 2, 1942.

<sup>134</sup> Satya M. Rai, *Punjab Heroic Tradition*, 148.

<sup>135</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 283

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## CHAPTER-II

### RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The history of the British policy towards science and technology as well as agriculture and industry in India before the World War II is a story of *ad hocism* and lack of a uniform and planned policy. The main factors influencing the official attitude were economic interests of the British Raj and the Empire and their political and military requirements. Local needs and indigenous demands counted only occasionally and that, too, only in a peripheral manner. Thus, there was little prospect of science, technology, agriculture, industry, etc. being harnessed in the long-term interests of the local population and their promotion as a pursuit of knowledge. India passed through three phases during the war: (i) The 'Phoney' war. It ended with the fall of France; (ii) Middle Eastern theatre. It gave boost to Indian Indian trade and industry and the army; (iii) The Japanese aggression India began to suffer the complexities of the War.<sup>1</sup> Indian resources were marshaled to finance Britain's war effort as never before.<sup>2</sup>

#### I

Although technology had played an important role in the rise and growth of British imperialism from the very beginning,<sup>3</sup> a conscious effort to use science and technology as a part of official policy in this regard was a later development. Railroads, telegraphs, irrigation systems and similar projects had come into being even earlier, but they aimed essentially at meeting the practical and immediate needs of the Empire: territorial expansion, consolidation of imperial authority and economic exploitation.<sup>4</sup> The colonies

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<sup>1</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1740-1975)*, OUP, Delhi, 1983, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History Culture, Political Economy*, OUP, New Delhi, 2006, pp. 128-29.

<sup>3</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire*, Middlesex, 1984; and Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, New York, 1981.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire*, 1981.

were generally treated as a natural adjunct of the Empire. Hence, any development in them was taken almost as an extension of the imperial benevolence.<sup>5</sup> It was not until 1895 that the question of developing the colonies in a long-term perspective and on modern lines became a subject of her official concern.<sup>6</sup> An attempt in this direction was first made in 1895 by Joseph Chamberlain when he was the Colonial Secretary (1895-1903) and continued by his successors under the Liberal Government until 1915.<sup>7</sup> The imperial policy enunciated by Joseph Chamberlain was embodied in administrative measures in Britain, which were followed in the Punjab as well as India, too. It may be recalled that by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British Empire had reached its zenith in terms of territorial expansion in India and elsewhere in the world. It was now time to consolidate and control the possessions, exploit their resources and ensure that they remained a perennial source of supply, gain and strength for the Empire in the future.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the assumption of office George Nathaniel Lord Curzon as the Viceroy of India (1899-1905) ushered in a period of enhanced official interest in scientific matters in the country. As an arch imperialist and a seasoned administrator, Lord Curzon was quick to realize the value of India's vast resources and the advantages of her strategic position, particularly of the Punjab province in the global scheme of the British Empire.<sup>9</sup> The landscape of the country had been surveyed, its flora and fauna studied, and most of the natural resources explored.<sup>10</sup> For Punjabis, agriculture was the mainstay of their economy and livelihood;

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Worboys, *Science and British Colonial Imperialism*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sussex, 1979.

<sup>6</sup> Charles William Forman, *Science for Empire: Britain's Development of the Empire through Scientific Research (1895-1905)*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1941, appears to be one of the earliest studies dealing with science and Empire, which also refers to India.

<sup>7</sup> G.W. Forman, 'Science for Empire', 1941, pp. 2, 11-23, and Chapters II and III.

<sup>8</sup> Deepak Kumar, *Science and the Raj: 1957-1995*; New Delhi, 1997, p. 105.

<sup>9</sup> Rajat K. Ray, *Industrialization in India: Growth and Conflict in the Private Corporate Sector 1914-1947*, Delhi, 1979, p. 240.

<sup>10</sup> For this and other related developments, refer to Deepak Kumar (1997) and David Arnold (2000); for specific areas, see L.L. Fermor (1976) and I.H. Burkil (1965), Marika Vicziany (1986), Ray Desmond (1992), Mathew H. Edney (1997), Richard Grove et al (1998).

the government's interest lay in its economic exploitation, as much in terms of taxes as of trade.<sup>11</sup>

The important outcome of the 1857 was that service in the armed forces was thrown open to the Sikhs. The ethnic change in the constitution of the native army was given permanence by Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief (1885-93). Some races including the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Dogras, Rajputs and Punjabi Muslims were recognised as 'martial'.<sup>12</sup> Number of infantry units in the Indian army increased from the Punjab from 28 in 1862 to 54 in 1914.<sup>13</sup> When from the World War I broke out Sikh recruitment was speeded up. The number of Sikh in the services rose from 35,000 at the beginning of 1915 to over 1 lakh by the end of the War.<sup>14</sup> Overall the Sikhs formed about a fifth of the army in action.<sup>15</sup> The Punjabis wanted to maintain their strong military traditions.<sup>16</sup> The Indian army became the Chief instrument for the expansion and consolidation of the British power in Africa and Asia.<sup>17</sup> A career in the army became an important means through which Punjabis could achieve upward mobility. The economic resources dispensed to military personnel through canal colonisation enhanced the attractions of military service for the Punjabis. Hence, the strength of the military in Punjabi society grew greater.<sup>18</sup>

The lull in the scientific activities was ended by the outbreak of the World War I. As the War raged, it revealed many a weakness of the Britain Empire.<sup>19</sup> It exposed India's industrial backwardness and her dependence on others for a variety of

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<sup>11</sup> B.M. Bhatia, "Agriculture and Cooperation", V.B. Singh, ed., *Economic History of India 1857-1956*, 1965; New Delhi, 1983, pp. 123-127.

<sup>12</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, OUP, Delhi, 1988, pp.113-14.

<sup>13</sup> S.P. Cohen, *Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*, University of California, Berkeley, 1971, pp. 32, 44, 56.

<sup>14</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1922, p. 44.

<sup>15</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of The Sikhs*, Vol. II, 160.

<sup>16</sup> W.H. McLeod, *The Evolution of Sikh Community*, OUP, London, 1978, p. 96.

<sup>17</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Making of the Middle Classes in The Punjab (1849-1947)*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 2008, p. 132.

<sup>18</sup> Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism (1885-1947)*, OUP, Delhi, 1989, p. 110.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire*, pp. 207-224.

commodities like machines and equipment, stores and prime movers, medicines, dyes and technical skill.<sup>20</sup> Notwithstanding the severe economic dislocation and disruption in all spheres of life, the contribution of India in general and Punjab in particular to the Imperial War effort was impressive and crucial.<sup>21</sup> The British realized her importance in the overall War effort and not merely in the defense east of the Suez as Lord Curzon had once visualized. As an important source of manpower and munitions, they thought, India deserved to be built up as an industrial country.<sup>22</sup> Many other factors such as the Mesopotamian disaster and the ensuing developments in Britain, the German advance in the east and apprehensions of India's direct involvement in the War combined to effect a change in the British attitude favoring her industrialization.<sup>23</sup>

Though Indian troops and majority of them was from the Punjab, were sent into action in all theatres of the War, their largest number was deployed in Mesopotamia. The planning of operations as well as the provisioning of the units by the General Staff and the Government of India, however, proved inadequate; and after the mission proved a disaster, the charge of operations had to be taken away from Delhi to London. Later, a Parliamentary Committee investigated the matter, as a consequence of which the Secretary of State of India, Sir Austen Chamberlain, had to step down; and his successor, Edwin Montague, had to declare a policy of granting to Indians an increased share in the government. This change in attitude could also be attributed to enhance bargaining position of the Congress after its electoral alliance with the Muslim League,<sup>24</sup> and the persistent demands by Indians for self-rule and industrialization of the country.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Morris, D. Morris, "The Growth of Large-Scale Industry to 1947", Dharma Kumar and Meghnad Desai, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. II, 1982; New Delhi, 1984, pp. 600-602.

<sup>21</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi, 1987, pp. 8-11.

<sup>22</sup> Rajat K. Ray, *Industrialization in India*, p. 240.

<sup>23</sup> Government of India dispatch to Secretary of State for India dated 26<sup>th</sup> November 1915.

<sup>24</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>25</sup> Resolutions of Indian National Congress (hereafter INC Resolutions) as nos. IX, 1914; XXI, 1915; XIV, 1918.

Next to industry, agriculture appears to have attracted attention of the government most. This may be attributed to the increased demand for agricultural products during the War, the difficulty in procuring from abroad certain important agricultural products (as long-staple cotton from the USA) and the famine of 1918-1919.<sup>26</sup> In 1916, two exclusive conferences, one at Pusa and the other at Simla, were organized by the Government of India to discuss agricultural improvement. The subject was taken up also by the Industrial Commission and its importance was underlined 'in the most emphatic manner'.<sup>27</sup> The government began to lose interest in the question of industrialization. The newly constituted departments of industries fared badly, and the wartime enthusiasm for industrial improvement waned before long.<sup>28</sup> But the experiences of the War would not allow the matter pass off so easily. After all, they had vindicated the importance of India for the defense of the Empire. This, together with the impetus the War had spontaneously given to industries, kept the case of industrialization alive. Industrial exploitation of forests also gained prominence after the War. The British interest in forestry was very old;<sup>29</sup> it increased considerably during the 1939 Wars as the import of many foreign materials became difficult when the Germans stepped up their submarine campaigns. The government, therefore, wanted to substitute them with local forest products. Forest products were needed to meet the enormous demands of the armed forces, and Indian timber was utilized in great quantity in several mid-Eastern theatres of the War.<sup>30</sup> The government, therefore, initiated measures for R&D and Management, aimed at exploiting the forests, which continued till the end of World War II.<sup>31</sup> However, the endeavor was marred by the shortage of staff once they were called for War duties; the economy measures and retrenchment of staff during the depression made matters worse. Transfer

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<sup>26</sup> D.R. Gadgil, *Industrial Evolution*, OUP, 1984, pp. 206-207.

<sup>27</sup> *Industrial Commission*, 1918, p. 57. For its suggestions, see pp. 34-37, 39-48, 57-63, 88-90, 145, 273-278, 285, 287.

<sup>28</sup> A.K. Bagchi, *Private Investment in India*, Cambridge, 1980, pp. 53-55.

<sup>29</sup> *Hundred Years of Indian Forestry 1860-1961*, Vol. I, Dehradun, 1961, pp. 72-84.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 81.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81-83; and *Progress Report of the Forest Research Work in India for 1922-1923 including the Administration Report of the Forest Research Institute Dehradun*, n.d.; and E.P. Stebbing, *Forests of India*, Vol. IV, 1926; London, 1962.

of the subject from the Centre to the provinces further lessened the need for the government of India to take interest in it.<sup>32</sup>

British interest in developing transport and communications also had a long history.<sup>33</sup> The exposure of India's backwardness in this sector during the World War I revived the official interest in it once again. The initiative came right from the top. In 1920, the Secretary of State for India appointed a committee to enquire into the working of the Indian Railways.<sup>34</sup> Two years later another committee reported on the railway industries.<sup>35</sup> As a welcome development, the government also showed some interest in developing the roads and mercantile marine sector. The Indian Mercantile Marine Committee was appointed in 1923 upon whose recommendation a training ship called 'Dufferin' was established as a result in 1927. This was used for preliminary training in marine engineering from 1935 onwards.<sup>36</sup>

The rise in industrial production around the War and the expansion of industries from 1920 onwards should not be attributed to any significant technological innovation. While the increase in industrial turnover was due mainly to the maximum utilization of production capacity under the exigencies of the War, the reason for the expansion of industries can be found in the enhanced demand for industrial products, aggressive nationalism and the depression. In reaction to the restrictive and discriminating policy of the government during the War, economic nationalism surged aggressively after 1918. Indian business houses expanded their industrial activities.<sup>37</sup> Walchand Hirachand started the Scindia Steam Navigation Company in 1919 and continued his fervour for economic

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<sup>32</sup> *Hundred Years of Indian Forestry*, 1961, pp. 81-82.

<sup>33</sup> J.N. Sahni, *Indian Railways: One Hundred Years, 1853-1953*, New Delhi, 1953; Henry T. Bernstein, *Steamboats on the Ganges*, 1960; Calcutta, 1987.

<sup>34</sup> *Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for India to Enquire into the Administration and Working of Indian Railway*, London, n.d.

<sup>35</sup> *Report of the Railways Industries Committee*, Delhi, 1923.

<sup>36</sup> *Progress of Education in India 1932-1937*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1940, p. 208.

<sup>37</sup> Rajat, K. Ray, *Industrialization in India*, pp. 96-113, 234-237, 276-282; A.K. Bagchi, *Private Investment*, pp. 210-211.

nationalism against the British in the years to come.<sup>38</sup> G.D. Birla expanded his industrial activities, too.<sup>39</sup>

## II

With the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in 1935, popular Congress ministries were formed in the majority of provinces in 1937. This placed the Congress in a new responsibility, and inspired others to come forward to work for national regeneration. A conference of its industry ministers was called in October 1938, which voiced the need for a comprehensive planning on an all-India level, and authorized the Congress President to take the necessary steps in this regard.<sup>40</sup> Efforts were also made to promote modern industries in some of the provinces, but they failed because of official opposition and lack of resources, planning and co-ordination.<sup>41</sup> Ultimately, all such efforts ended when the ministries resigned in 1939. However, the Congress did not lose sight of the urgency of economic recovery and reconstruction, for which it wanted a comprehensive planning on all-India basis. M.N. Saha promptly took advantage of the opportunity. In the meanwhile, he met with the Congress President, Subhas Chandra Bose, and persuaded him to appoint a committee for this purpose.<sup>42</sup> Finally, the Congress constituted a National Planning Committee (NPC) in 1938, with the noted engineer M. Visvesvaraya as chairman. He was, however, soon replaced by Jawaharlal Nehru for the sake of expediency, and a very large number of Indian scientists, social scientists, industrialists and others joined the Committee in various capacities.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> G.D. Khanolkar, *Walchand Hirachand: Man, His Times and Achievements*, Bombay, 1969.

<sup>39</sup> Medha Malik Kudaisya, *The Life and Times of G.D. Birla*, Delhi, 2003.

<sup>40</sup> P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, Bombay, 1947, Jawaharlal pp. 96-97; Nehru, *Discovery of India*, OUP, Delhi, 1985, pp. 418-428.

<sup>41</sup> 'Report on the proposed Automobile Factory in Bombay' (1939) in Confidential AICC File No. G-23/1940 (Kw-18, 19, 20, 21), at NMML, New Delhi; and Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, p. 411.

<sup>42</sup> Robert S. Anderson, *Building Scientific Institutions in India*, Montreal, 1975.

<sup>43</sup> Scientists included M.N. Saha, J.C. Ghosh, S.K. Mitra, J.N. Mukherjee, A.K. Shaha, S.S. Bhatnagar and Mata Prasad.

The World War II broke out in September 1939, and though far from the scene of action, India could not remain unaffected by the forces of change it unleashed across the globe. Myriad of problems of basic nature cropped up in the country; but what concerned the Government of India first and foremost were the immediate exigencies of the War. Military and strategic demands, obviously, stood at the top, and the government effort to meet them soon involved India in the overall War efforts of the British Empire and its Allies. It was in the context that science and technology assumed great importance; and, as the experiences would show later, the War exerted considerable influence both on their progress as well as the British policy governing them in India. On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India (1936-1937, 1938-1943), declared India at War with Germany, through a Viceregal Proclamation. Unlike in the Dominions, in India this was done without consulting the members of the Central Legislature and the Council and, not less importantly, the Indian Political opinion. Under the Defense of India Rules, promulgated shortly afterwards, the government assumed sweeping powers. The Indian National Congress and others objected to the move but ultimately agreed to India's participation in the War on the condition that freedom was granted to her as well. This was a tricky situation. So, to confuse the issue the Viceroy made what was then known as the 'Delhi Declaration' of 17<sup>th</sup> October 1939. The old offers of Dominion Status for India were repeated and more consultations with Indians were promised. But when this did not work, the government softened its attitude further and in order to seek the Indian support in the crisis, made the 'August Offer' (8<sup>th</sup> August 1940). It was a little more than a repetition of the 17<sup>th</sup> October 1939 offer which was, of course, followed by a few administrative measures aimed at satisfying the nationalist demands.<sup>44</sup>

As these moves and counter-moves were played out, the government stepped up efforts to gear up the Indian resources to deal with the exigencies of the War, not only in India but also at distant War fronts. One of the first steps taken by the government was to convene the Eastern Group Conference in 1940 in Delhi, which resulted in the formation,

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<sup>44</sup> *Indian Annual Register*, Calcutta, 1939, (Vol. II, pp. 26-228) recorded the day-to-day developments during the War. Amongst the later publications V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, Calcutta, 1957; and Johannes H. Voigt, *Indian in the Second World War*, New Delhi, 1987, are valuable sources of background information.

in February 1941, of the Eastern Group Supply Committee with headquarters in India.<sup>45</sup> It did not take long to realize the immense potentialities of science, technology and military for the successful conduct of a modern war. In Britain, prompt measures were initiated, at official as well as non-official levels, towards various aspects of War production, supply and mobilization. A War Cabinet Scientific Advisory Committee was constituted in October 1940 and a British Commonwealth Science Committee the next year.<sup>46</sup> Soon, Britain and her Allies entered into mutual consultations aimed at exploiting science for the War. Both Britain and the United States opened up Liaison offices in each other's capital. A British Central Scientific Office was established in Washington towards the end of 1940 followed by the United States Office for Scientific Research and Development in London early the following years. As the War escalated and mutual cooperation became vital, a Mutual Aid Agreement between Britain and America was signed in February 1942.<sup>47</sup>

Keeping in view the fast changing nature of the War and its gravity, the ambit of this collaboration had to be soon expanded to include the whole of the British Empire, the Dominions and beyond. This was essential also for safeguarding the long-term economic, political and military interests of the Empire.<sup>48</sup> When the Japanese joined the War and the centre of the conflict shifted to the East, India assumed a pivotal position in the global strategy of the British Empire and the Allies, and her resources needed to be developed and exploited.<sup>49</sup>

In India, realization of the value of science in the contemporary crisis came after bitter experiences. As the War raged, it badly exposed India's technical and industrial

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<sup>45</sup> M. Greenberg, 'Britain Mobilizes her Eastern Empire: Results of the Delhi Eastern Group Supply Conference', *Far Eastern Survey*, 10, 26 March 1941, pp. 58-60.

<sup>46</sup> For the wartime activities in Britain, See W.K. Hancock, ed., *History of the Second World War*, Multivolume, London, 1949, esp. the Vols. By M.M. Postan, W.K. Hancock, M.M. Gowing and Keith A.M. Murray listed in the Bibliography.

<sup>47</sup> Hancock and Gowing, *British War Economy*, 1949, esp. chapters 7, 8, 18.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Lieut. Col. Fredrick O'Connor, 'India's Military Contribution to the War', *The Asiatic Review*, Vol. XXXVI, April 1940, esp. p. 208; and Frank Noyce, 'India as a Supply Base', *The Asiatic Review*, Vol. XXXII, October 1941, pp. 845-849.

backwardness and her dependence on others for a large variety of goods and commodities essential not only for the wartime requirements but also in the times of peace.<sup>50</sup> Not to talk of the numerous War supplies, the country was unequipped even to service and maintain the defense equipment and such basic necessities as transport and communications system. This displayed India's utter inadequacy, in terms of quantity as well as quality, in the technical infrastructure and know-how. There were, no doubt, a number of scientific institutions and organizations in the country, but there was no integrated central control and coordination amongst them. Needless to say, there was no uniform official policy governing science and technology either. But the War compelled the authorities in India to have a fresh look at things and make the best use of science for victory. The understanding and activities in England and the Allied circles did have immediate repercussions in India. In response to the call for cooperation within the Commonwealth and amongst the Allies for the War, India opened her liaison offices in London and Washington; scientific and technical missions were exchanged and by 1942, a War Resources Committee was constituted. A range of activities followed in the years to come.<sup>51</sup>

The need for immediate supply of technical personnel to the fighting machinery and scores of industries that backed up the gigantic War effort was a matter of first and foremost concern. Introduction of sophisticated weapons and machinery including the aero planes added urgency to the matter. This was the reason why the Government of India was jolted out of inaction all of a sudden and compelled to encourage technical education. Industrialists showed interest in it because they, too, needed more technical hands for stepping up their production. For the average middle class Indian, technical degrees became a route to better employment.<sup>52</sup> Realizing that trained technicians were not readily available in the country, the government resorted to emergency measures. In June 1940, a War Technicians' Training Scheme was introduced. The existing technical

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<sup>50</sup> *Progress of Education in India 1937-1947*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1948, p. 172.

<sup>51</sup> For organizational activities, see S.C. Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department 1939-1946*, New Delhi, 1947; and N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *Indian War Economy (Supply Industry and Finance)*, 1962.

<sup>52</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, pp. 171-174.

institutions, factories and workshops (especially those attached to the ordinance factories and the railways) were pressed into service wherever possible, and a target to train 52,000 persons by 1943 was fixed. Under the plan for technical training drawn up by the Labour Department of the Government of India, about 300 training centers were developed and by 1945 as many as 80,000 men had been trained most of whom were absorbed into the army.<sup>53</sup> The need was so pressing that the government did not hesitate in starting such technical training centers even at places like the College of Engineering and Technology, Bengal, at Jadavpur, which had otherwise been the citadel of the National Education, in India.<sup>54</sup> Liberal allowances were given during the period of training. About a hundred special technical instructors were requisitioned from England. Under the Bevin Training Scheme, young Indians aged 20 to 30 years were trained at selected centers in England in engineering trades and in the principles of labour organization. The first batch, four batches the next year on their return, they were employed in responsible supervisory posts including in the army.<sup>55</sup>

The fall of France in June 1940 and the Japanese advance towards India changed the whole strategy of the War. In the new scheme of things, India assumed greater importance than ever before. Now the battle was to be fought and won in Asia, for which India was to be used as a base both for supply and operation. The British and the Allied effort were, therefore, concentrated on India in order to develop her into a strong base, sufficiently independent in resources and powerful enough to check the Axis advance. Soon India was taken into Allied planning and measures were set afoot to develop her accordingly. Two factors required urgent attention: (i) the country required to be provided with enough facilities for servicing and maintenance of military machines and equipment; and, (ii) her industries were to be geared up to cater to the War efforts and tide over the economic crisis caused by the War. In order to ensure this, expert missions

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174. For details, see *Report of the Technical Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board*, Delhi, pp. 24-25. *The Indian Information*, 15 September, 1945, p. 253.

<sup>54</sup> *National Council of Education, Bengal, 1906-1958*, Calcutta, 1956, p. 32.

<sup>55</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, pp. 173-174.

from the Allies, the UK and the USA in particular, visited India in quick succession. This was reciprocated by the visits of Indian technical teams abroad.<sup>56</sup>

The Ministry of Supply (Roger) Mission from Britain visited India in September 1940. But the visit of the American Technical Mission in 1942 was more important in many ways and influenced the developments in India considerably. The Mission, with Henry F. Grady as Chairman, arrived in New Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1942 and worked in India for the next five weeks conferring with officials of various departments of the Government of India and of some of the provinces and states. It also conferred with industrial leaders, businessmen and Chambers of Commerce in New Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay. It visited government munitions factories, railway workshops, shipbuilding and ship-repair shops, and the principal industrial plants engaged in the production of War materials in and around Calcutta. It also inspected the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur and major industrial plants at Bombay and the Karachi port.<sup>57</sup> The Mission emphasized the strategic importance of India to the cause of the United Nations and her great potential for industrial production of War material because of her vast natural and human resources: It believed that India was great strategic importance to the cause of the War and United Nations. On this and the allied subjects, expert committees were also constituted internally to advise the Government of India. An Industrial Utilization Committee was appointed in 1940 followed by an Industrial Research Fund the next year. A Directorate of Merchant Ship Repairs was constituted in 1942, and the same year the Grant Massie Committee was convened to advice on the procurement and production of surgical instruments. The UK Machine Tool Mission visited India in July 1944. Most of these Committees had a bearing on the introduction and expansion of new technology in the country, and suggestions of some of them led to increase facilities for technical education. In order to make available a sufficient number of technical personnel for the post-War needs, the government instituted an Overseas Scholarship Scheme towards the end of 1944. An elaborate arrangement was made in this regard and students were sent to

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<sup>56</sup> N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *Indian War Economy*, 1962, Chapters I-IV; Johannes H., Voigt, *India in Second World War*, 1987, Chapters II-II. For details, see S.C. Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department 1939-1946*, New Delhi, 1947.

<sup>57</sup> *American Technical Mission to India, A Survey of India's Industrial Production for War Purposes: Report of the American Technical Mission*, Washington, 1942.

the UK and the USA for studies.<sup>58</sup> Away from such emergency measures, technical education continued to be imparted as usual at its traditional centers, viz., universities, and schools as well as at workshops of government establishments like the ordnance factories and the railways, and at workshops of private enterprises like the one at Jamshedpur. But the state interest in these centers was limited only to such technical courses as were of immediate value for the War. Otherwise, the government was rather indifferent to the purely academic aspect of the subject. No doubt, a new Polytechnic School was started at Delhi in 1941 and new technical courses were introduced or old ones reframed at the various universities in India,<sup>59</sup> but most of the academic centers concerned were starved of funds and staff during the War.<sup>60</sup>

However, we cannot overlook certain positive developments. When the War started, technical education was not organized in the country, especially in the Punjab. This had been promoted until then only to meet the demands of such sectors as the railways, ordnance factories and a limited number of industries. There was no long-term government policy in the matter, and institutions of technical education suffered from a plurality of authority, absence of coordination and planning, and from the paucity of funds and resources, but the War and the enhanced indigenous demand for technical education obliged the government to promote it systematically.<sup>61</sup> One of the first important steps taken in this direction was the foundation of the Association of Principals of Technical Institutions, India, in 1941.<sup>62</sup> The most important step taken by the government was the appointment of the Technical Education Committee in 1943. It began with a discussion on the problem and prospects of technical education. It attributed

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<sup>58</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department 1939-1946*, New Delhi, 1947, Chapters III, V, esp. pp. 201,227,231,269-270. For scholarships, see *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, Chapter VI.

<sup>59</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, p. 171.

<sup>60</sup> Departmental proceedings are full of references to war-time cuts in finances to scientific institutions.

<sup>61</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, pp. 170-172. *Science and Culture*, *Current Science* and *Proceedings of the Indian Science Congress* are full of articles on it.

<sup>62</sup> Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> meetings of the C.A.B.E., Item XVII, *Central Advisory Board of Education: Silver Jubilee Souvenir*, New Delhi, 1960 (hereafter C.A.B.E. Souvenir) 1960, p. 83.

the restricted demand for technically trained hands in India to be limited and uncertain job opportunities, the practice of filling more remunerative posts with imported technicians and to the traditional dislike of the middle and upper class Indians for taking industrial occupations.<sup>63</sup>

The concentration of Allied troops (along with the expanded Indian Army) in and around India required the supply of hundreds of items from arms and ammunition to clothing, food and medicine. The Indian army expanded in size from just over 2,5,000 in October 1939 to over 2,251,000 in July 1945. All this necessitated revamping of basic amenities like transport and communications, and health services, along, of course, with increased defense preparedness. Thus, in a situation of acute disruption in imports and dislocation of economy, self-sufficiency in production and supply was vital.<sup>64</sup> The Government of India, therefore, moved forward, albeit belatedly, to accord priority to technical support for stepping up industrial output. Encouragement was given to a wide range of industries producing goods and articles needed for the War such as those dealing with arms and ammunition, machine tools, engineering, transport and communications, etc. In the areas where industries already existed, the government encouraged increased production; where they did not, incentive and licenses were given to start new ones.<sup>65</sup> The direct involvement of the government was, however, confined mostly to industries catering to the defense needs. In order to boost the industrial production, the government also allowed private firms to expand and diversify. In a few cases, it collaborated with them, as with the Tatas for the production of armored vehicles, railway equipment, steel and aircraft,<sup>66</sup> and with Walchand Hirachand for aircraft.<sup>67</sup> The collaboration came by

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<sup>63</sup> *Report of the Technical Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India (1943-1946)*, Delhi, 1946, pp. 1-2.

<sup>64</sup> John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945*, New York, 2001, p. 66; Sinha and Khera, *Indian War Economy (Supply Industry and Finance)*, CIHs, 1962, Pt. I; P.N. Khera, *Technical Services: Ordnance & IEME*, Pt. I, India & Pakistan, 1962.

<sup>65</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, 1947 is a very useful source on the subject. Also see *Statistics relating to India's War Effort*, Delhi, 1947.

<sup>66</sup> *Tata Papers*: Serial No. 75, Cupboard No. 1, File Nos. 8, 14, 28, 32, 44, 42, 43, 47 (December 1938-December 1947); Serial No. 76, GOI Cardboard No. 1, File No. IV,

way of assurance to them for the purchase of goods produced or also by holding shares.<sup>68</sup> Initial response of the government was rather curious, though not unexpected altogether. Austerity and economy, and not science, appeared to be their first concern. As a result, a proposal was put forward to abolish the Industrial Intelligence and Research Bureau as a measure of wartime economy. Fortunately, the Member of the Department of Commerce, Ramaswamy Mudaliar, realized the value of industrial research in wartime. He contended: ‘In wartime no economy can be too disastrous which starves industrial research and not expenditure too high which mobilizes the scientific talent of the country for the research and production of War materials’.<sup>69</sup> As the Member of the Department, Mudaliar became the first Chairman of the Board and S.S. Bhatnagar (1894-1955), the then Head of the Punjab University Chemical Laboratories, Lahore, was appointed Director, Scientific and Industrial Research, as the next person.<sup>70</sup> As the War gave impetus to the research activities of the Board, it was able to work out, within a year, several processes in its laboratories for industrial utilization. They included a method for the purification of Baluchaistan sulfur, anti-gas cloth manufacture, dyes for uniforms, development of vegetable oil blends as fuel and lubricant, plastic packaging for army boots and ammunition, and preparation of vitamins.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, as India’s importance in the Allied strategy increased further, the question of industrialization became paramount and industrial research important.<sup>72</sup> By this time, considerable pressure of Indian public opinion, too, had built up in this

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Items 33, 36, 39; Serial Nos. 92, 96, Cupboard No. 1, at TISCO Division, Bombay House, Bombay; and Verrier Elwin, *The Story of Tata Steel*, Bombay, 1958, pp. 87-89.

<sup>67</sup> *Walchand Hirachand Papers*: File No. 541, Parts I & II, (NMML), New Delhi; S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, 1947, pp. 232-233.

<sup>68</sup> See also, S. Subrammanian and P.W. Homfray, *Recent Social and Economic Trends in India*, New Delhi, 1946.

<sup>69</sup> Shiv Visvanathan, *Organizing for Science*, Delhi, 1985, p. 117.

<sup>70</sup> Commerce Department Resolution No. 148-S&T (I)/40, 27 April 1940.

<sup>71</sup> S.S. Bhatnagar, *A Brief Account of the Activities of the CSIR*, ACC No. 361, f2-678-RU (undated), NAI.

<sup>72</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, esp. pp. 60-81.

regard.<sup>73</sup> Thus, by the middle of the War, India came to have an all-India organization of industrial research with four composite bodies dealing with different aspects of scientific and industrial research. They were the BSIR, Industrial Research Utilization Committee, CSIR, and Directory of Raw Materials. Of these, the CSIR was the supreme body. Though chronologically the youngest, the Council held 'a unique position by the comprehensiveness of its functions and scope'.<sup>74</sup> The stimulus the War provided to industrial and scientific research had some productive repercussions in the major provinces and native states. It may be recalled that the Twelfth Industries Conference held in 1940 had recommended the establishment of local research committees in the provinces and states to form a liaison with the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research.<sup>75</sup> In pursuance of this suggestion, the Government of India directed the provinces and states, in early 1941, to institute such committees. Before this date, the only provinces which had research organizations of this kind were Bengal (since 1940) and Bombay (since January 1941). In response to the Central move, provincial research committees were formed in the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Madras, the Central Provinces, Berar, and the Punjab during 1941-1942. Among the Indian States, constitution of similar organizations in Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Baroda deserve special mention.<sup>76</sup>

As the importance of industries for victory in the War became clear to the government and the needs for substitutes made industrialization unavoidable, the government was obliged to consider the question of industrial research more seriously

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<sup>73</sup> Sample of Indian opinion: D.N. Wadia, 'Minerals' Share in the War, Presidential Address, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1943, *Procs. Indian Science Congress*; and in the *Procs. National Institute of Science of India*: R.N. Chopra, Annual Address, 1940, esp. pp. 26-31; *Symposium on Coal in India*; *Symposium on Heavy Chemical Industries in India*, 1943; Janan Chandra Ghosh, Opening Address to the *Symposium on Post-War Organization of Scientific Research in India*, September 1943, pp. 3-7.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Proceedings of the Twelfth Industries Conference, *Bulletins of Indian Industries & Labour No. 71*, Simla, 1941, 34.

<sup>76</sup> *Report Industrial Research 1945*, pp. 110-112.

and with a long-term perspective in mind.<sup>77</sup> The Committee was directed to make a survey of the existing facilities for scientific and industrial research existing in India including the Indian States (in the universities, research institutions and laboratories attached to industrial and other concerns); and plan a scheme of coordinated expansion of research activities by private firms, research institutions and states and others research establishments.<sup>78</sup>

Being a mode of primary production, agriculture could not be separated from industrial activities. Needless to say, it was the mainstay of life for millions in India, besides being the greatest source of revenue for the government and an important source for the export trade. Keeping in view the fact, it was not a high priority on the official agenda until recently, the government's enhanced interest in its development, during the World War II, merits some explanation. The War, of course, was the greatest factor behind this change in the attitude. Besides the vastly increased demand for food supply to the armed forces-British Indian and Allied-in and around India, the War requirements included a variety of other agriculture and allied products, ranging from dairy products to jute, silk, wood, lac and pack animals like horse.<sup>79</sup> Obviously, these demands were over and above the existing usual demands for the civilian population which had risen perceptibly over the past years.<sup>80</sup> To add to the urgency in the matter, a major famine occurred in some parts of the country in the midst of the War and compelled the government to initiate administrative measures for agricultural improvement.<sup>81</sup> The government focused its efforts in three directions; (i) to increase the financial resources for training, research and extension; (ii) to direct the educational and research activities towards specific War needs; and (iii) to improve the organization and planning for agricultural education, research and extension. When the War broke out, the financial

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<sup>77</sup> *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, 324; See also, *Proc. Of the Industries Conferences*.

<sup>78</sup> For the list of the members of the Industrial Research Planning Committee, see Appendix IV; See also, *Industrial Research 1945*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>79</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, 1947, esp. Chapters LIX, LX, LXII, LXV.

<sup>80</sup> S. Subramanian, *Statistical Summary of the Social & Economic Trends in India (In the Inter-War Period)*, Delhi, 1945, esp. pp. 1-3.

<sup>81</sup> *The Famine Inquiry Commission: Final Report*, Delhi, 1945; and B.M. Bhatia, *Famines in India*, Bombay, 1967, pp. 309-339.

position of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, the apex body dealing with agricultural sciences was quite insecure and it was not able to plan and execute long-term research programmes. In order to remedy this, the Government of India passed an Agricultural Produce Cess Act in 1940 and the annual income of Rs. 14,00,000 from this cess was proposed to be spent on agricultural research schemes.<sup>82</sup>

In response to the pressing demands during the crisis, scientific activities in the field of agriculture were directed primarily towards finding substitutes for the various materials whose import had been disrupted, demands increased or created on account of the War. Studies and experiments were encouraged to exploit agricultural products and by-products like biogases and molasses, for producing alcohol, paper pulp and insulating materials, industrially.<sup>83</sup> Research was also carried out on several plants to find substitutes for rubber and fiber.<sup>84</sup> But a greater attention was paid to forest products. The War created an enormous demand for Indian wood. It was required for a variety of purposes but especially for the extension of the railways both in India and at different theatres of the War abroad, where a huge supply was made throughout the conflict.<sup>85</sup> Efforts were, therefore, made to maintain the availability of wood and to add strength and longevity to it through improved seasoning and other processes. Experiments were also conducted to use wood as a substitute for metal.<sup>86</sup> Wood, along with other plants and a variety of forest products, was subjected to investigation and research to obtain chemicals or their substitutes to be used for the production of such materials as waterproof paints and varnishes and fire extinguishing substances. Similarly, as the demand for silk increased high on account of its use in the manufacture of parachutes, sericulture engaged considerable attention during this period.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> S&C, V, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1941, p. 574.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Report of the Director in the *Abridged Scientific Reports of the Imperial Agricultural Research Institutes for the Triennium ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 1944*, Delhi, 1946, pp. 14-15; and *Ibid.*, for 1945, pp. 14ff.

<sup>85</sup> *India's Forest and the War*, Delhi, 1948; and *100 Years of Indian Forestry 1861-1961*, Vol. I, 1961, p. 83.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*; *Annual Report* of the FRI for the relevant years.

<sup>87</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, 1947, pp. 246-248.

Besides using agro-forest resources for the War, attempts were also made to utilize ammonium nitrate and its mixtures with TNT from surplus ammunition stores as a fertilizer.<sup>88</sup> However, the intentions behind the increased state interest in meteorology and locust control may not be read in isolation from the aviation requirements during air operations.<sup>89</sup> Likewise, the rise of subjects like statistic and agronomy around this time was largely due to the official concern for exploiting agricultural resources commensurate with the demands of the War.<sup>90</sup> Here it may not be out of place to mention that throughout the War, Indian forests were exploited on an unprecedented scale leading to their fast depletion and that of the life and ecology dependent on them. The War marked a watershed in the history of ecology and conservation in India, but the government does not appear to have taken up any significant remedial measures in this regard, except a forestation in some parts of the country.<sup>91</sup> The damages caused by the War to the ecology and environment of the country, especially in the north-east and other forest tracts, are yet to be examined properly.

Meanwhile, government concern for stepping up farm production continued and was in fact heightened as the War escalated and a famine struck Eastern India in 1943. The need to provide adequate supply of food to the armed forces was an urgent necessity. As the situation worsened when the famine started showing its effects, public demand for effective remedial measures rose high.<sup>92</sup> The initial official response was concerned mainly with the growing military demands and the disruption in trade and supply. A beginning towards stepping up food production had been made when the government launched the 'Grow More Food' campaign in 1942 and 'Food Conferences' became a

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<sup>88</sup> *Scientific Reports of the IAR*, 1944, p. 16.

<sup>89</sup> *Hundred Years of Weather Science, 1875-1975*, Poona, 1976; *Scientific Reports of the IARI* for 1944; p. 11; the same for 1945, p. 12.

<sup>90</sup> *Annual Report IVRI*, 1940-1941, p. 5.

<sup>91</sup> *Hundred Years of Indian Forestry 1861-1961*, Vol. I, p. 83; and S&C, VIII, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1943, pp. 366-370.

<sup>92</sup> S&C: B.C. Guha, *The Crisis in Food*, VIII, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1943, pp. 51-55; IX, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1943; IX, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1944, pp. 509-512; and D.V. Bal, *Some Aspects of the Present and Post-War Food Production in India*, *Procs. Indian Science Congress*, January 1944.

frequent affair from that year onwards.<sup>93</sup> While the food conferences endeavored to study and monitor the food situation and planned for improvement in the future, the 'Grow More Food' campaign aimed at stepping up actual production in the field. The campaign resulted in an increase in acreage of cultivated area as well as in the production of food grains, but it did not imply and direct attempt to promote agricultural innovation. Its objective was to increase the production of food crops only and, as far as possible, with the help of existing resources. The result was that in many cases there was not only no increase in the output (despite the increase in acreage) but the yield actually came in many others. In cases where the production went up, the increase could be attributed to favorable weather conditions or to the expanded acreage resulting from the widespread propaganda. The campaign did not address such basic issues as the improvement of the production capacity of soil or of offering incentives to the tiller.<sup>94</sup> Later, at a certain stage, the government toyed with the idea of technological innovation and more relevant research in agriculture but nothing significant appears to have come out of it.<sup>95</sup>

From the viewpoint of scientific advancement, the official attention and encouragement to animal husbandry and veterinary sciences was impressive. The institute dealing with animal husbandry at Bangalore and the Imperial Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) at Mukteswar and Izatnagar in Uttar Pradesh carried out wide-ranging activities involving R&D to cater to the War needs. This included the study of diseases, development and production of vaccines, acclimatization and high-breeding.<sup>96</sup> In spite of the strain caused by the War on financial and human resources, the work of the IVRI continued to be diversified. This, as also the future needs, created the necessity of additional staff. Realizing its importance, the Central Government showed keen interest in the matter and a plan for post-War reconstruction was considered essential.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *Report of the Food grains Policy Committee 1943*, Delhi, 1944, p. 20; *Procs. Of the First Food Conference (December 1942)*, Calcutta, 1944, and subsequent proceedings.

<sup>94</sup> P.N. Singh Roy, *The Planning of Agriculture*, Calcutta, 1944, pp. 35-36.

<sup>95</sup> W. Burns, *Technological Possibilities of Agricultural Development in India: A Note*, Lahore, 1944.

<sup>96</sup> *Annual Report IVRI*, 1941-1942, p. 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 1942-1946, p. 1.

Gradually, a shift occurred in the nature and scope of the work of the IVRI. The fact that the government evinced interest in veterinary sciences is evident also from the volume of financial allocation for it. Despite its limited scope of work, the IVRI annually received a larger financial grant (Rs. 10.75 *lac* in 1944) than the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute (Rs. 8.5 *lac*) for the same period<sup>98</sup> which had a far wider scope of work and activities. This may be attributed to the overriding government concern for military demands for animal food (milk, butter, meat, eggs, etc.), animals for transportation (horses and camels) and wool and leather. In order to boost dairy production, the government established an Imperial Dairy Research Institute in 1941.<sup>99</sup> As the demand for milk for the armed forces increased tremendously, milk supply to big towns became a problem. To meet with the situation, the government decided to entrust the distribution of milk in metropolitan cities to property constituted milk marketing organizations. A Milk Marketing Adviser to the Government of India was appointed and the Chief Executive Officer of the British Milk Marketing Board, R.A. Pepperell was selected for the post. He conducted a detailed survey and made elaborate recommendations. More administrative measures followed, which, in turn, invited the attention of the provincial governments to the matter.<sup>100</sup> As the War lingered and the food situation deteriorated, the material life of millions depending on the rural economy did not show any signs of improvement. The colonial government, now in a more compromising and yielding mood, was, therefore, compelled to pay more attention to the situation.<sup>101</sup>

Towards the end of the War, Herbert Howard, Inspector General of Forests, Government of India, made out a note on a Post-War Forest Policy for India mainly in order to regenerate and rehabilitate the over-worked forests and improve their management. This resulted in a number of development schemes involving plantation activity, better research and service facilities.<sup>102</sup> Reference in this regard may also be

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<sup>98</sup> A.V. Hill, *Scientific Research in India*, 1944; Simla, 1945, p. 23.

<sup>99</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, p. 187.

<sup>100</sup> S.B. Singh, *Second World War as Catalyst* Delhi,, 1998, pp. 136-138.

<sup>101</sup> B.M. Bhatia, *Famines in India*, 1967, esp. pp. 321-324, 324-339.

<sup>102</sup> Herbert Howard, *Post-War Forest Policy for India*, Delhi, 1944; *100 Years of Indian Forestry*, 1961, p. 83.

made to other official memoranda on subjects like agric-logical development, forestry and fisheries.<sup>103</sup> The views and suggestions contained in these papers placed emphasis on research and training and expected the government to follow an active policy-open, wide and forward looking in perspective, and responsive to the local needs. While the authorities carried on their exercise to draw plans for the future, which they were not all sure to execute, the British scientific opinion came out with a clearer vision and support for agricultural improvement in India. A.V. Hill, for instance, declared agriculture ‘by far the most important industry and interest in India’, and pleaded for its ‘great expansion’ to supply adequate food and better nutrition for India’s vast population that was likely to increase considerably in the years to come and to provide for expansion of crops required for industry and export.<sup>104</sup>

Medical science and health care were another area that engaged the attention of the government. The subject was a favored one right from the beginning as far as state interest in it was concerned. It was one of the most organized sectors with a highly developed service cadre, a professional association and scores of research centers scattered all over the country. Yet, medical education continued to remain in a poor state and the research centers seldom went beyond collecting data to be utilized in Britain, training to technical personnel and production of vaccines.<sup>105</sup> The condition of public health was precarious and that of health care facilities worse. The average life expectancy of an Indian was 32.5 years, only half of that in most of the developed countries.<sup>106</sup> In 1937, the death rate in British India was 22.4 per 1,000 and for infants or children under one year of age it was 172 per 1,000 live births. In 1941, the corresponding rates were 21.8 and 158 per 1000 respectively. As regards the health care facilities, while there was

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<sup>103</sup> *Memorandum on Agric-logical Development in India*, Advisory Board of the ICAR, Delhi, 1944; Bani Prasad, *Post-war Development of Indian Fisheries and Memorandum*, Delhi, 1944.

<sup>104</sup> A.V. Hill, *Scientific Research in India*, 1944, pp. 23-25, 37-38; his Radio Broadcasts: *The National Purpose: Science and Technology in the Development of India*, 7<sup>th</sup> March 1944, Delhi; and *Science and India*, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1944, 2170 (MSS), pp. 10ff, A.V. Hill Papers.

<sup>105</sup> Anil Kumar, *Medicine and the Raj*, New Delhi, 1998; Radhika Ramasubban, *Public Health and Medical Research in India: Their Origin under the Impact of British Colonial Policy*, Stockholm, 1982.

<sup>106</sup> S&C, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199.

one registered doctor to every 1,048 of population in Britain, this ratio was one to every 9,300 persons in India. On the scale of Western countries, India required 200 thousand qualified doctors to take care of her village population, but after 75 years of effort there were only 35 thousand doctors of whom only 15 thousand resided in the villages.<sup>107</sup> The expenditure on public health in England and Wales was 1-0-9 d per capita per annum; in India, the different provinces spent only from 1/12<sup>th</sup> to 1/120<sup>th</sup> of the average of England.<sup>108</sup> And from the point of view of public health planning, India stood where Great Britain stood 100 years ago and USA and USSR 75 and 20 years ago respectively. What was alarming was that whereas the vital statistics of health were fast improving in the developed countries, it was going downward in India. She had failed to make adequate use of scientific knowledge for improving her public health. There was not an all-India health policy and the basic principles of sound public health were violated. Medical education was backward and supply of technical personnel defective, not to mention the ever present financial handicaps. Moreover, there was lack of institutional planning and coordination amongst the departments concerned. Obviously, everything was to be done in a great measure, even if it was to be the bare minimum of facilities, to restore the health of the millions in India, for which there was a persistent local demand.<sup>109</sup>

Smallpox, malaria and tuberculosis were endemic and a national scourge.<sup>110</sup> It was difficult to save the fighting troops and other British from these deadly diseases. The government was particularly alarmed at this point of time by the increase in their incidence and their adverse consequences for the military operations on the eastern front along Assam and Burma, whose humid climate and jungles bred several tropical

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<sup>107</sup> S&C, IV, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1939, p. 467; *Ibid.*, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199. Also see the statistical chart in the *Health Survey*, 1946, p. 43.

<sup>108</sup> S&C, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199.

<sup>109</sup> A.C. Ukil, *Public Health and its planning in India*, S&C, VI, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1941, p. 531, 536-539. Also see S&C: IV, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1938, pp. 285-287; IV, 7<sup>th</sup> January, pp. 408, 410, IV, 8<sup>th</sup> February, pp. 466-468, 1939; VI, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1941, pp. 535-568.

<sup>110</sup> *Health Survey*, Vol. I, 1946, pp. 10-11, 90-128. Also see S&C: S.N. Sen, *War and Tuberculosis*, VIII, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1943, 491-494; G. Ghose, *Malaria in Bengal-A Scientific Problem*, IX, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1944, pp. 495-499.

diseases.<sup>111</sup> The incidence of these diseases in the civilian population increased because of shortages of drugs, lack of proper medical help, poor food supply, malnutrition and insanitation.<sup>112</sup> The scarcity of drugs and non-availability of adequate medical assistance was, obviously, caused by disruption in imports and internal distribution, and increased consumption of medical resources by the armed forces during the War. For poor food supply nothing could be held more responsible than the official neglect in the matter. Of course, there was a terrible famine right in the middle of the War but it could have been averted or its effects minimized, had there been a sincere and timely action by the government.<sup>113</sup> Whatever the causes or effects of these factors, the prevailing conditions exposed the extreme backwardness of the country in matters of health care and sanitation, her dependence on others for medical supplies and, above all, the appalling official indifference and narrow priorities in the matter.<sup>114</sup> Ironically, however, both the diseases and the World War came as great equalizers. Under the stress of the conflict, the government had no option but to act. The onslaught of epidemics could not be postponed or countered by indifference or a piecemeal approach, especially when there was the extreme urgency of winning the War in which an ill and incapacitated soldier was, indeed, a dangerous proposition. The persistent and increasingly loud demands by Indians, scientists in particular, for better health care, nutrition and sanitation also forced the authorities to take action.<sup>115</sup>

All this produced considerable effect on the minds of both the Indians as well as the British. Indians stepped up and widened their demands for better health care, nutrition and sanitation, compelling the authorities finally to come to terms with the local needs

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<sup>111</sup> S&C: VIII, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1942, pp. 132-133; VIII, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1943, pp. 491-494.

<sup>112</sup> *Famine Commission Report*, 1945, esp. Part-II; also see *Health Survey*, 1946.

<sup>113</sup> *Famine Commission Report*, 1945, esp. pp. 26-34, 59-69; S&C, IX, 2, 1943, pp. 51-55; and M. Afzal Hussain, *The Food Problem of India*, Presidential Address, *Indian Science Congress*, Bangalore, 1946.

<sup>114</sup> S&C: VIII, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1942, pp. 83-84; VIII, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1942, pp. 134-137; H. Ghose, 1943; X, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1945.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, Also see S&C: V, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1939, pp. 190-202; VI, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1940, pp. 123-125; and A.C. Ukil, *Some Aspects of Public Health in India*, Presidential Address, *Indian Science Congress*, January 1941.

and plan for the future on a long-term basis.<sup>116</sup> This change in the official attitude in India was encouraged also by the developments in Britain and other developed countries of the West. In May 1943, the UN Conference on Food and Agriculture endorsed the principle that governments were responsible for introducing general and specific measures for improving the diet of the people. It suggested that the state of nutrition of the population be investigated by medical and public health workers and that crop planning, production of new varieties of seed and other such matters be decided on nutritional advice.<sup>117</sup> The new concern for the people's health and well-being soon found considerations at the League of Nations and its organs like the International Labor Organization (ILO). These bodies imposed on the Government of India a more formal obligation to maintain its subjects at a minimum level of health and sanitation which was occasionally monitored through inquiries and international deliberations under the auspices of these world bodies.<sup>118</sup>

These factors apart, the sheer demands of the War prompted several measures with welcome consequences. As in other fields, the first official initiative came in the form of reorganization and revamping of the medical services of the armed forces. During the War, utter inadequacy of medical cover for the expanding Indian army was strongly felt; steps were, therefore, taken on emergency basis to train medical personnel to meet the requirements. Seven medical schools were expanded and upgraded to the level of colleges and two new ones were started to produce medical graduates. Licentiates of the IMD were put through special intensive courses which brought them to a standard level in six months. Women with a reasonable knowledge of English were given three-month basic training in nursing at specially selected hospitals, who were subsequently absorbed into other hospitals to work under qualified nurses.<sup>119</sup> Similar steps were taken

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<sup>116</sup> *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, Entry 36, pp. 66-73.

<sup>117</sup> Procs. *Education Health and Lands*, Government of India: United Nations conference on Food and Agriculture Recommendations concerning Education, FN. 100-1/43E; also see *Health Survey*, Vol. III, 1946, pp. 70-71.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* Also see *Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India*, for 1940, pp. 109-110; for 1943-1944, pp. 38-39; for 1945, p. 84; for 1946, pp. 116-117.

<sup>119</sup> S.B. Singh, *Second World War as Catalyst for Social Change in India*, Delhi, 1998.

to produce radiographers, laboratory assistant, dispensers, male nursing orderlies and the like. Thus, by the end of the War India had a fairly good number of specialists who had been trained by physicians and surgeons from the UK, besides medical technicians in various categories. When discharged from military duty, many of these were employed as instructors to impart training in their areas of specialties. In the Indian military Medical Services, between 1940 and 1945, the number of personnel of different categories increased from 9,270 to 1,69,325. To treat about 5 million sick and wounded, hospital beds were increased from 11,100 to 1,97,530.<sup>120</sup>

The facilities for laboratory investigation and diagnosis of diseases were also improved. Clinical pathological services were made more up-to-date and provided with specialists and skilled technicians. The establishment of the Central Military Pathological Laboratory was an important step in this direction. In an effort to cater to the needs of the War, some of the military hospitals became amongst the best hospitals in the country and set standards for others.<sup>121</sup> Casualties and physical injuries to soldiers during fighting operations brought into focus the importance of blood transfusion as one of the most valuable procedures of treatment for saving lives. So, an Army Blood Transfusion Service (India) was set up. The blood depots at Dehradun and Poona were equipped with modern facilities for the preparation of blood products and for the assembly and sterilization of specialized apparatus used for collection and transfusion of blood.<sup>122</sup> Another contribution of the War to medical science in India was the introduction of new medical specialties and the improvement and expansion of older ones. Not unexpectedly, the beginning in this regard was made in the army medical services. While physicians and surgeons were already available, more exclusive specialties were developed in branches such as anesthesia, radiology, pathology, ophthalmology, neurology and oncology. Two specialties that deserve to be especially mentioned were physiotherapy and rehabilitation, and psychiatry.<sup>123</sup> While the former was crucial in treating injuries to

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<sup>120</sup> *Seminar*, September 1994, p. 30; also *Report Health Survey*, Chapter 13.

<sup>121</sup> *Indian Information*, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1944, p. 93.

<sup>122</sup> S.B., Singh, *Second World War*, 1998, pp. 133-134.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-135.

the limb and bones of the fighting forces, the latter helped them keep in good mental health and morale. Once the War was over, these specialties were beneficially used to treat the civilian population.<sup>124</sup> Similarly, special emphasis was placed on subjects like nutrition, for which concrete steps were taken. Efforts were made to boost the supply of milk, fruits and vegetables.<sup>125</sup>

Transport and communications was an area which received an uneven and selective attention in the colonial period. Ships had brought the British and their European cousins to India; later they were aided by the railways to expand and consolidate the Empire. In the process, indigenous tradition of seafaring and shipbuilding was done to death. The railways spread, no doubt, but only on selective routes to facilitate the mobilization of the fighting forces and colonial trade. In the circumstances, other means of transport were badly neglected, most of all, the roads—the principal mode of mass transportation in India. As regards the telecommunications, telegraph had come to India with the railways, but its use and expansion were guided essentially by the colonial requirements. Wireless and radios came rather late and became a matter of public concern not before 1939. The railways had been an area of prime interest to the British in India, and with liberal official support it had developed unhindered until the World War I.<sup>126</sup> However, once the strain of the global War fell on it, it could not hide its weaknesses.<sup>127</sup> So, in order to get it out of the crisis, the government appointed, in 1920, the Indian Railway Committee under the chairmanship of Sir William Acworth, to advice on its administrative and financial management. The committee suggested major changes in the matter. It recommended, among other things, a complete separation of the Railway Budget from the General Budget of the country, a suggestion that was introduced from 1924.<sup>128</sup> The government also accepted the broad principles enunciated by the committee

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<sup>124</sup> *Indian Information*, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1944, p. 93; and 15<sup>th</sup> January 1944, 95.

<sup>125</sup> S.B. Singh, *Second World War*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>126</sup> Ian J. Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850-1900*, Delhi, 1995; John Westwood, *The Railways of India*, Newton Abbot, 1974.

<sup>127</sup> Vinod Dubey, "Railways", V.B. Singh, (ed.), *Economic History of India*, 1983, pp. 327-347.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*; also see *Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of the State for India to Enquire into the Administration and Working of Indian Railways*, London n.d.

in connection with the reorganization of the railways. Yet the railways could not escape the adverse effects of the Great Depression. The government initiated remedial steps with the probe into the finances of the railways and economy measures; in addition, it voted, in 1932, a sum of Rs. 150 *crores* (15 million) for capital expenditure on railways for the next five years. But this could not prove of much avail.<sup>129</sup>

The World War II made matters worse. It imposed a severe strain on the railways. In addition to the movement of troops and supplies, civilian traffic and traffic of commercial goods also rose rapidly with the increasing industrial activities in the country. There was no alternative means that could be equally efficient. The traffic which used to be carried along the coast in modern steam or traditional sailing vessels before the War had to be diverted to the railways, not because it was faster but also because of the dangers of sea transport in times when the submarine operated ruthlessly. To add to the problem, even some of the waters close to the Indian coast were mined. Available shipping space, moreover, had to be diverted to the carriage of troops and munitions to and from the various theatres of the War. This considerably diminished the shipping space for other ordinary freights. Another alternative, the motor transport, was equally scarce. With the passage of the War, shortages of automobiles, their fuel and accessories increased on account of the disruption in supply as well as their enhanced use for the mechanized units of the armed forces.<sup>130</sup> All these factors and many more brought pressure on the railways. But the acute shortage of supplies of spares and exigencies of the War led to the postponement of maintenance and expansion activities, except in the most essential cases. Once India became the base of Allied military operations in the East after 1941, the fate of the Indian railways was doomed further even though it was a period of financial prosperity for it.<sup>131</sup> The maintenance and mobilization of the Allied forces inside the Indian subcontinent put the railways under increased stress. Its

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<sup>129</sup> Refer to reports of the Inchcape Committee, 1932, and the Wedgewood Committee, 1936.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*; also see NPC Series: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 227-228.

<sup>131</sup> Dubey, *Railways*, 1983, p. 343.

workshops which could have been used for R&D to enhance its own unconnected with the railways and most of them for use at overseas War fronts.<sup>132</sup>

In the circumstances, the roadways held out a better opinion for the *Raj*. Large-scale road building in British India had begun in 1830 when the Grand Trunk Road and other projects were under-taken and the Public Works Department came into being.<sup>133</sup> However, in the years that followed the railways received greater official attention than the roads. Yet the importance of roads in India could not be overemphasized. The Royal Commission on Agriculture rightly drew the attention of the government to the urgency of good communications in the context of agriculture and rural improvement in the country.<sup>134</sup> In 1927, the Government of India appointed a Road Development Committee under M.R. Jayakar to advise on the development of roads. The Committee emphasized the need of developing roads for the progress of the rural society.<sup>135</sup> On its advice, a Central Road Fund was created in 1930. From 1930 to 1945, the mileage of surfaced roads increased from 57,000 to 70,000 an increase of 23 per cent in 15 years. In 1945 there were approximately 1,45,000 miles of earth roads in the charge of different public authorities but still in a very poor state, making up 2,15,000 miles of roads of all sorts. Not unexpectedly, there were glaring disparities between the development of roads in India and the advanced countries of the world. While 75 per cent of all traffic was carried on roads in the USA, similar to those in other developed countries, in India it was not even 10 per cent.<sup>136</sup>

In the meanwhile, motor transport had steadily increased on Indian roads, especially in and around the towns. The War added to the number of the automobiles, particularly of the heavy vehicles. There were 5,000 army vehicles before the War but the number reached 50,000 in 1942. This tenfold increase in the number of vehicles may be attributed mainly to the establishment of the South East Asia Command in India. In 1943,

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 327-343; also NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 327-233.

<sup>133</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 216-219.

<sup>134</sup> *Royal Commission on Agriculture: Abridged Report*, 1927-1928, n.p., 1928, p. 8.

<sup>135</sup> *Indian Road Development Committee: Report, 1927-1928*, n.p., 1928, p. 8.

<sup>136</sup> *Asiatic Review*, April, 1947, p. 152.

thousands of special chassis (in parts) were obtained from the USA and Canada under the Lend-Lease arrangement. These were assembled by Indian workmen. Thus, by January 1945, there were 2.5 *lakh* military vehicles in use in India.<sup>137</sup> The need for mobility which contributed to the Allied victory in the African campaign and the urgency of mechanization of the fighting forces brought into focus the demand for various types of motor vehicles and of trained personnel to drive and maintain them. As a result, training centers and workshops were soon established in the cantonments. So, by 1945 there were 2.5 *lakh* motor driver-cum-mechanics in the army. Such training centers were started in every province, too.<sup>138</sup>

Though India had a long tradition of shipping in the past, it had slowly declined during the British rule.<sup>139</sup> However, with the rise of nationalism and increasing commercial activities around the World War I, indigenous business houses showed interest in it and the Scindia Shipping Company was established in 1919.<sup>140</sup> However, such endeavors had to face the official indifference and discrimination. Meanwhile, circumstances forced the authorities to initiate measures to increase the shipping tonnage and provide for the repair of ships. Therefore, the Government of India appointed, in 1923, the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee to consider the claims of Indian shipping. But the government sat over the report for three years, and it was only in 1927 that one of its recommendations was executed by establishing the training ship *Dufferin*. As expected, the Indian shipping could not grow in the years to come. Its tonnage on the eve of the World War II was only about 0.23 per cent of the world tonnage. India carried only 25.6 per cent of the coastal traffic and did not get any share in the overseas trade.<sup>141</sup>

The World War II did not better the conditions of Indian shipping. Soon after the War commenced, all the 28 ships of 1.4 *lakh* GRT, belonging to 11 Indian shipping

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<sup>137</sup> *Commerce*, 15 January, 1944.

<sup>138</sup> S.B. Singh, *Second World War*, 1998, pp. 119-120.

<sup>139</sup> T.N. Kapoor, *Shipping, Air and Road*, 1983, pp. 348-350; Satpal Sangwan, *The Sinking Ships: Colonial Policy and the Decline of Indian Shipping, 1735-1835*, in McLeod and Deepak Kumar, eds., *Technology and the Raj*, 1995.

<sup>140</sup> N.C. Jog, *Saga of Scindia: Struggle for the Revival of Indian Shipping and Ship-Building*, Bombay, 1969.

<sup>141</sup> Kapoor, *Shipping, Air and Road*, 1983, pp. 348-353.

companies, were commandeered for War purposes; while foreign ships left Indian ports for better trade prospects elsewhere with the result that India's export trade started choking her docks. About half of Indian tonnage was destroyed or lost during the War, and by 1945 it had been reduced to a low figure of 75,000 GRT only. However, the exigencies of the War obliged the government to occasionally do something to strengthen and modernize the sea transport of the country. The American Technical Mission visited the Indian ports and offered suggestions on how to develop shipping so that it could aid the Allied War effort.<sup>142</sup>

The neglect of inland water transport was a clear example of the colonial indifference to the local welfare. Before the railways came to India, inland water transport was highly developed. The railways proved fatal to this cheap indigenous mode of transportation, although it remained popular in certain parts of south India. In Madras, the Godavari Canals were important highways for water transport, which provided a cheap and ready made of access to all markets. So was the case in eastern India. Important waterways existed in East and West Bengal. The largest sea port of the country, Calcutta- depended considerably for its trade both ways upon its waterway communications. About 25 per cent of the merchandise which flowed into Calcutta from the rest of India was water-borne of which no less than 63 per cent came from Assam alone. About 32 per cent of the exports was carried by water and of this 72 percent went to Assam. The total water-borne traffic of Calcutta amounted to approximately 45,00,000 tons of which 34 per cent was carried by inland steamers and 66 per cent by country boats. In 1945, passengers carried by the steamer service in East and West Bengal numbered 1,04,00,000.<sup>143</sup> The NPC sub-committee on transport estimated that altogether the amount of boat traffic over government maintained channels was in the neighborhood of 250 million ton miles per annum-barely one per cent of the pre-War goods traffic by the railways. Thus, even at the end of the War, water transport formed an insignificant part of the country's transport services.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Grady, *Report American Technical Mission to India*, 1942.

<sup>143</sup> NPC, *Transport Services*, 1949, p. 244.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245.

Compared to shipping and water transport, aviation received a better deal. The first flying club in the country had begun operations in 1928 and by 1933 there were seven of them. These clubs performed the dual function of promoting amateur flying as well as training professional pilots and ground engineers. After the outbreak of the War, for two years all flying clubs were used for giving elementary flying training to the candidates for the Air Force. In this way 516 persons were trained, of whom 364 were accepted for commission. As the War progressed, all civil flying was suspended and the resources of the clubs were used for defense, such as army cooperation for anti-aircraft practice and other similar activities.<sup>145</sup> Keeping in view the fact that aeroplanes were the fastest means of transport, hence crucial for the War, the government agreed to allow the assembling of aircrafts in the country,<sup>146</sup> airstrips were constructed and flying clubs organized.<sup>147</sup> In 1939, there were only 12 civil aerodromes with adequate staff and facilities in the country. During the World War II, the Defense Department took over the control of all civil aerodromes and the services of all Air Traffic Controls Officers were loaned to the Air Force. By the end of the War, there were several hundred aerodromes and 2,000 yards of paved runways. Gradual transfer of aerodromes and the staff to civil aviation began in 1945.<sup>148</sup> The enormous demand for aircrafts during the War forced the government to explore the possibility of manufacturing them with the country, but the Imperial Government in London did not respond favorably. India's resources were considered too meager for it and the British government did not want to spare technical hands to India as they were needed at home.<sup>149</sup> Lord Linlithgow's proposal to shift to India a couple of aircraft factories from Britain in the light of the increased enemy threat

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<sup>145</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, p. 175.

<sup>146</sup> *Linlithgow Papers*: L.S. Amery to Linlithgow, Letter No. 22, 20 May 1940; No. 24, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1940; No. 36, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1940; No. 42, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1940; No. 30, 27<sup>th</sup> June 1940; and No. 55, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1940, in *Letters Secretary of State*, Vol. V, at India Office Library and Records (IOL&R), London.

<sup>147</sup> *Reports of the Progress of Civil Aviation in India* (Government of India, Delhi) for the war years.

<sup>148</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 258-259.

<sup>149</sup> India Office, Economic and Overseas Department to Air Ministry, 27<sup>th</sup> March 1940, I.O. Library, L/E/8/1711; and Amery to Linlithgow, No. 693, 6 June 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

there, met with the same fate.<sup>150</sup> The authorities in India, therefore, had to fall back on the plan of Walchand Hirachand to form an aircraft company with public and private capital. While the official hitch was going on, Walchand formed the Hindustan Aircraft Company with a capital of Rs. 45 *lakhs* at Bangalore. The Government of India and the Government of Mysore became equal partners contributing Rs. 25 *lakhs* each.<sup>151</sup> An American entrepreneur, W.D. Pawley, who had been manufacturing aircraft in China for six years, was associated with the venture.<sup>152</sup> India's first plane came out for a test flight in July 1941. Assembled in India, this was a Harlow, low-winged, single-engine monoplane with the same characteristics as of later-day fighters and bombers. With the advent of the system of Lend Lease in 1942, it was, however, found undesirable to have any element of private enterprise in this concern of vital importance to the conduct of the War in Asia. So, the Government of India bought out its private partners at heavy premium and took over the entire management in its own hands.<sup>153</sup> Finally, on the recommendations of the Grady Mission, production of aircraft was completely stopped at this factory to concentrate on repairs.<sup>154</sup>

Meanwhile, research and training facilities in aviation and aeronautics had been set up at the Indian Institution of Science at Bangalore. A post-graduate course in aeronautical engineering was introduced there in December 1942. Its Department of Aeronautics was equipped with a wind tunnel subsidized by Government of India and with apparatus for structural research. Thus, the Institute developed into a centre for basic aeronautical research in the country.<sup>155</sup> Later, facilities for aeronautical communication service for training of operating and technical personnel were provided at the Civil Aviation Training Centre at Saharanpur in U.P. The Survey of India worked on preparing

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<sup>150</sup> Linlithgow to Amery, telegram 910-S, 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

<sup>151</sup> G.D. Khanolkar, *Walchand Hirachand: Man, His Times and Achievements*, Bombay, 1969; for details, see *Walchand Hirachand Papers*.

<sup>152</sup> GOI, Department of Supply to Secretary of State for India, telegram 2394, Simla, 6 July, 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

<sup>153</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 253.

<sup>154</sup> Sinha and Khera, *Indian War Economy*, 1962, p. 251.

<sup>155</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 254, 263.

aeronautical maps.<sup>156</sup> Connected with aviation, meteorology came into some prominence during this period. Meteorological observation had a long history in India, which, like several other subjects, was a part of data feedback for research in the metropolis. Military operation and aviation, no doubt, added importance to it in the course of the War,<sup>157</sup> but beyond that not much was done to promote it as a science for other purposes. Parachute was a crucial component of air flying. So at the instance of the Department of Supply of the Central Government, the possibility of producing parachutes indigenously was explored. Materials and facilities for their manufacture being available, a special factory for their fabrication was put up in the middle of 1942, which came into full production by the end of the War. A scheme with a capital cost of 18,50,000 (1.85 million) provided by the British Government was also launched in order to multiply India's filature silk reeling capacity by changing over from the hand-reeling to machine-reeling method.<sup>158</sup> Later, in order to look into the problems and prospects of promoting aviation in the country as an industry as well as a means of transport, the United Kingdom Aircraft Mission visited India in March 1946. It made an intensive survey, visiting the related establishments at Barackpur, Poona and Bangalore, together with the Ordnance Factories at Kanpur, Kasipur and Jabalpur. Acting on its recommendations, the Government of India decided to establish a national aircraft industry in the country, with the aim of achieving within 20 years complete self-sufficiency for building aircrafts needed for the Royal Indian Air Force as well as for civil aviation.<sup>159</sup>

Telegraph had been an important tool of imperial control in India up to the World War I.<sup>160</sup> The growing need for faster communication gave a boost to wireless and

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<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260-261.

<sup>157</sup> *Hundred Years of Weather Service, 1875-1975*, 1976; Also see, *Annual Report Meteorological Survey of India*.

<sup>158</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 255-256.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 253-255.

<sup>160</sup> Saroj Ghose, *The Introduction and Development of the Electric Telegraph in India*, Ph.D. Thesis, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, 1974. Also see Daniel, R. Headrick, *Tentacles of Progress*, 1988.

broadcasting from the 1930s, more so during the World War II.<sup>161</sup> But here again, though the administrative steps led to the introduction of these systems in some cases and expansion in others, R&D was the missing component of the state initiative, and the elements of local welfare entered the government policy only late. Radio witnessed unprecedented expansion as both sides of the belligerents used it as a means of propaganda and education of the people. Radio broadcasting had begun on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1932 in India. Lionel Fielder of the BBC was appointed as India's first Controller of Broadcasting in 1935 and the service was named All India Radio (AIR) in 1936. As the War escalated, a separate Department of Information and Broadcasting was created in 1941. Meanwhile, the number of licenses rose from 10,782 in 1933 to 92,782 (an increase of 753.40 per cent) in 1939 and to 2.5 Lakhs (an increase of 169.45 per cent) listening sets in 1945. Initially, radio sets were imported including 40,000 from the USA under the Lend Lease, but later the government initiated measures to have them produced indigenously.<sup>162</sup> This, along with other technical needs of the War encouraged electronic industry in India.<sup>163</sup>

### III

The Indian Army in the British Empire played significant role. The Uprising of the 1857 shifted its base from the Ganga Basin and the South to the Punjab. By June 1858, the total 80,000 native troops in the Bengal Army 7,5000 were the Punjabis-the Sikhs alone numbered 23,000. Hence, the Punjab became the nursery of the Indian army to the end of the Raj.<sup>164</sup> New ideology of 'martial' and 'non-martial' races was formulated by Lord Roberts who served as the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army during 1885-1893.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> *Progress of Broadcasting in India: Report by the Controller of Broadcasting*, Simla 1940; and H.R. Luthra, *Indian Broadcasting*, New Delhi, 1986.

<sup>162</sup> *Commerce*, 6.12.1947, pp. 102-08.

<sup>163</sup> For details, See also, S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply (1947)*.

<sup>164</sup> Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, Perment Black, Delhi, 2003, p.11.

<sup>165</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Making of the Middle Classes in the Punjab (1849-1947)*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 2008, p. 19. See also, Tan Tai Youg, *The Garrison State*, pp. 58-69.

The martial races included: the Punjabi Muslims, Sikhs, Hindu Jats Pathans Dogras, Gujara, Futher the Rajputs, the Marathas and various other smatter groups.<sup>166</sup> The number of infantry units in the Indian during 1862-1914 tilted in favour of the Punjabis and Gorkhas: Punjab 28 in 1862 and 54 in 1914; Gorkhas 5 in 1862 and 20 in 1914, this constituting 62.7 per cent of the total Indian Army.<sup>167</sup> This process led towards the Punjabization of the Indian Army.<sup>168</sup> The Sikhs Rajputs Gurkhas, Dogras and the Punjabi Muslims were recognized as 'martial for general recruitment'.<sup>169</sup> By 1900, slightly more than half of the combatants of the native regiments of the Indian army were recruited from the Punjab.<sup>170</sup> In 1911, the troops from the Punjab had gone upto 65,283.<sup>171</sup> M.S. Leigh puts the number of Punjabis in the army close to 94,701 amounting to 54 per cent of the total Indian army. He includes military men serving in imperial service troops, within the Punjab and outside in India and other regions under the British Empire.<sup>172</sup>

The First and Second World Wars caused great surge towards recruitment in the army in India Europe and the USA which led to important changes in the world economy. Prices rose, industrial equipment was utilized to full capacity. Capitalists made enormous profits and the gap between the rich and the poor widened.<sup>173</sup> The World War II had a generally adverse effect on India bringing price inflation and famine.<sup>174</sup> The number of actual troops returned from the Punjab in 1881 was 43,361 which went upto 65,283 in

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<sup>166</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in Second World War*, p. 7.

<sup>167</sup> S.P. Cohen, *Indian Army : Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*, University of California, Berkeley, 2971, pp. 32, 44, 56.

<sup>168</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Making of the Middle Classes in the Punjab (1849-1947)*, p. 19.

<sup>169</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, pp. 714-15.

<sup>170</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 33, p. 71.

<sup>171</sup> *Census of India*, 1911, Report I, p. 50.

<sup>172</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, p.7.

<sup>173</sup> D. Rothermund, *An Economic History of India From Pre-Colonial Times to 1986*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1989, p. 118.

<sup>174</sup> P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction (1914-1990)*, Longman, London, 1993, 194.

1911.<sup>175</sup> Military grants became important source of mobilisation. The Lower Bari Doab Coloby reserved an area of 103,000 acres for militarymen. On the outbreak of the World War I, and additional 75,000 acres were added in a bid to stimulate recruitment.<sup>176</sup> On the eve of the World War I, The Punjabis accounted for 64 per cent of all cavalryman in the Indian army, 84 per cent in the artillery and 45 per cent in the infantry. The army exerted an unusually dominant influence in the social, economic and political development of the Punjab.<sup>177</sup> In 1914, the Indian Army consisted of 270,854 men and 45,660 auxiliary troops. The number swelled to 1,161,489 men in November 1918. By far the largest number of recruits i.e. 447,000 men were enlisted in the Punjab, the favoured recruiting province.<sup>178</sup> At the beginning of 1915, there were over 1 lakh Punjabis and of whom 86,967 were combatants in the India Army.<sup>179</sup> Out of the total 683, 149 combatant troops recruited in India between August 1914 and November 1918, about 349,688 came from the Punjab which was about 60 per cent.<sup>180</sup> Recruitment of soldiers in India was accelerated from the annual average of 15,000 a year to 300,000 a year. By 1918, India had given 8,00,000 combat troops and 4,00,000 non-combatants. India paid £150 million to the British and India troops.<sup>181</sup> Indian troops were sent into action in all theatres of war: about 5,89,000 were in Mesopotamian: 1,13,000 in France; 1,16,000 men in Egypt, 47,000 in East Africa 29,000 men in the Persian Gulf region, 20,000 men in Aden while 4000 men in Gallipoli and 5000 men to Saloniki.<sup>182</sup> The Punjab raised money through investments and donations to the tune of Rs. 92, 118, 664.<sup>183</sup> During the World War

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<sup>175</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Making of the Middle Classes in the Punjab (1849-1947)*, p. 133.

<sup>176</sup> Imran Ali, *The Punjab under Imperialism (1885-1947)*, p.113.

<sup>177</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 18.

<sup>178</sup> *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol. I, p. 47, cited in Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 8.

<sup>179</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>180</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 98.

<sup>181</sup> Surjit Mansingh, *Historical Dictionary of India*, p. 442.

<sup>182</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 9.

<sup>183</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, pp. 64-81.

I, one man in eight was mobilized in the Punjab, whereas the all-India average was one in 150. By November 1918, there was 400,000 of the total of 563,091 soldiers from the Punjab. In addition, there were 97,188 non-combatants such as craftsmen, porters, sweepers from the Punjab in the Army.<sup>184</sup> Total number of soldiers who served in the army during the World War I was 4,98,569.<sup>185</sup> The whole administration machinery was geared towards recruitment. The Punjab excelled in the task.<sup>186</sup> Financially, India made a gift to the British Government of £100 million sterling and a further one of £45 million in 1918. In 1917, a war loan of £35.5 million could be raised and in 1918, again a loan of £38 million India's expenditure in favour of the Empire amounted to £200 million.<sup>187</sup> During the course of the War, 75 new castes were included for the purpose of recruitment in the British Army. Out of these 75 castes 22 were from the Punjab majority of were cultivators.<sup>188</sup> The war remittances benefited the peasants as it brought large extra sums into the Punjab. The best of the fighting districts received more than enough money in the form of money order remittances to pay the land for the year.<sup>189</sup> The end of the World War I led to large scale demobilization. In 1935, over 1.36 Lakh pensioners in the Punjab received Rs. 1,65,26,000 through the Post Office while the land several in 1936 was Rs. 5,34,38,017. Thus, pensions equaled to a third of the total land revenue.<sup>190</sup> In 1939, the number of retired pensioners in the Punjab was 1,27,566.<sup>191</sup> Despite this, predominance of the Punjabis in the Indian army continued. In 1880, the Punjabis percentage was 18.8 which is 39.4 in and reached 45 per cent in 1925.<sup>192</sup> This was

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<sup>184</sup> Mridula Mukherjee, *The Colonializing Agriculture : The Myth of Punjab Exceptionalism*, Sage, New Delhi, 2005, 148-149.

<sup>185</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, pp. 44-45

<sup>186</sup> Michael O'Dwyer, *India as I Knew It*, London, 1925, pp. 214-19.

<sup>187</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 10.

<sup>188</sup> Edward Maclagan, "The British Empire at War: India's Response", *The Asiatic Review*, October 1939, Vol. XXX, No. 124, p. 630.

<sup>189</sup> M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, p. 15.

<sup>190</sup> Rajat K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of the Punjab*, p. 28.

<sup>191</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, *The Making of the Middle Classes in The Punjab (1849-1947)*, p. 134.

<sup>192</sup> Rajat K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, p. 18.

significant as the population of the Punjab was less than 10 per cent of the British India.<sup>193</sup> Income and world exposure, demand for imported sugar, tea, fruit and vegetables, clothes increased.<sup>194</sup>

The World War II led to a new phase in the history of British rule in India.<sup>195</sup> During the World War II, the Punjab bore the main burden of providing cannon fodder for the various theatres of the War, supplying more than one third of all military manpower. Throughout the War, the civil bureaucracy operated, seamlessly with the military establishment squeezing every village for manpower for the War. The landlords and the peasantry in rural Punjab saw the War as an opportunity to increase employment and raise prices of agricultural products. The Punjab Premier, Sikander Hayat Khan, the 'Soldier Premier' confidently assured the Punjab Governor Henry Craik that the Punjab could supply half a million recruits for the Indian Army within weeks.<sup>196</sup> The 'garrison state' was mobilized in support of Britain's war effort against the Axis Powers.<sup>197</sup> General Sir Robert Cassells, the Commander-in-Chief, India, pursuing his subterranean path had by the end of Sept. 25, 1939, added some 34,000 men to the army to whom 18,000 or 19,000 without the knowledge of Sir H.D. Graik, had come from the Punjab.<sup>198</sup> Military service offered the opportunity of an improved standard of living to the recruit and his relatives. The non-martial classes of Punjab's central congested districts were as eager to enlist during the early stages of the War as the martial classes of Rawalpindi and Jhelum. For from the official propaganda was the sight of soldiers on leave in clean new clothes, their pockets stuffed with rupees.<sup>199</sup> Initial response in the Punjab were 'enthusiastic'. The Deputy Commissioner of Attock district of the west Punjab reported

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<sup>193</sup> *Statistical Abstract for British India, 1931-32*, Table No. 1, pp. 2-3.

<sup>194</sup> Rajat K. Muzumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>195</sup> Rajat K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of the Punjab*, p. 28.

<sup>196</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 281-283. See also, Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 143.

<sup>197</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 281.

<sup>198</sup> Dharmjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-43)*, p. 147.

<sup>199</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 143.

‘keen interest in the possibility of recruitment.’<sup>200</sup> In the beginning of May 1940, the green signal was given in London for expanding the Indian Army. New Delhi was prepared to begin without delay the setting up of six divisions and equipping them with 3000 vehicles.<sup>201</sup> Meanwhile, the Commander of India, General Robert Cassell was replaced by General Claude Auchinleck in January 1941. New stimulus was added to the Army.<sup>202</sup> In the first two years of the War, mobilization and militarization were effected with impressive results.<sup>203</sup> Large sums of money flowed into the Punjab villages from recruits revealed that during April 1943- November 1944 over Rs. 20,000 were sent each month by army recruits to their relatives.<sup>204</sup> Land from the canal colonies was frequently granted as a reward for services to the war effort. In 1943, the Government reserved 200 squares of land to reward army recruiters. It became a lucrative occupation for some landlords.<sup>205</sup> The Army recruiters had observed that the ebb and flow of recruits from the villages were determined more by local conditions such as floods, diseases, availability of manpower and harvesting seasons.<sup>206</sup> In the middle of August 1941, recruitment attained a record figure of 50,000 per month. There was a heavy rush for enlistment. Recruitment was opened to ‘non-martial castes’. It included the Mazhbis and Ramdasias, Christians and Ahmadiyahs. Even physical standards were relaxed.<sup>207</sup> General Claude Auchinleck considered such a policy opportune, both militarily and politically. The personnel of the Indian Army doubled from 166,377 in 1940 to 326,497 in 1941 and further doubled to 651,655 men in 1942.<sup>208</sup> By October 1941, the figure reached 7.5 lakh.

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<sup>200</sup> R.S. Nakra, *Punjab Villages in the Ludhiana District during the War*, PBEI, Lahore, 1946, p. 8.

<sup>201</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 63.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>203</sup> R.S. Nakra, *Punjab Villages in the Ludhiana District During the War*, p. 284.

<sup>204</sup> R.S. Nakra, *Punjab Villages in the Ludhiana District during the War*, PBEI, Lahore, 1946, p. 8.

<sup>205</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, pp. 151, 177.

<sup>206</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp. 285-86.

<sup>207</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, September 28, 1941.

<sup>208</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 66.

It was claimed that there were long waiting lists. Every one in the army was a volunteer, not a conscript.<sup>209</sup> Within two years of the War, the Indian Army had quadrupled in size from about 200,000 in 1939 to 865,200 by the end of 1941, with the bulk of the new recruits coming from the Punjab.<sup>210</sup> Throughout the interwar years (1919-39), the Punjabi element within the Indian Army never dropped below three-fifth of its total strength.<sup>211</sup> The Punjab continued to be the main supplier of soldiers throughout the War, accounting for about 36 per cent of all soldiers recruited from India.<sup>212</sup> However, the demographic profile of the army changed. The Punjabi Muslims could maintain their ratio in the total strength: 43,291 men in 1940 and 165,497 in 1942. The share of the Sikhs fell noticeably: 24,723 in 1940 and 72,059 in 1942. The largest decreased was in the case of the Jat Sikhs: 18,465 in 1940 and 42,087 in 1942.<sup>213</sup> The British Government in India busied itself in raising 'an enormous Indian army: two and half million Indians volunteered to serve in the focus.'<sup>214</sup> During the War and towards the end of the British rule, the British imperial control was intensified considerably and the economic exploitation of India increased manifold.<sup>215</sup> Furthermore, the British Government was of necessity, compelled to assume practically complete responsibility for running of the economic system. Over every sector of the National Economy, the state extended its hand controlling land and capital were, in effect conscripted.<sup>216</sup> In the early 1942, it was boasted that India could raise an army of 5 lakh.<sup>217</sup> By the end of the year, an Indian army of one million was in

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<sup>209</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, October 5, 1941.

<sup>210</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 284.

<sup>211</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 293.

<sup>212</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 1988, 45-46.

<sup>213</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 66.

<sup>214</sup> Winston S. Spencer, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, Vol. IV, Cassell, London 1951, p. 182.

<sup>215</sup> Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition*, 26-27.

<sup>216</sup> Arthur Birnie, *An Economic History of the British Isles*, Methnen, London, 1945, 355.

<sup>217</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, January 25, 1942.

being and volunteers were coming in at the monthly rate of 50,000. Moreover, the claim of the swollen India army was 'mistake' in relation to the World conflict.<sup>218</sup>

In the late 1942, there appeared signs of War-weariness. Onwards, recruitment was the lowest since 1939. From 1942, onwards it was common sight in the major recruiting areas of the North-West Punjab to see only women and children at work in the fields, all of men of military age having enlisted in the army. In the Rawalpindi district two men out of every five of military age enlisted. No less than 1420 persons sent three or more sons to the armed services.<sup>219</sup> With reliance on the Sikhs becoming increasingly questionable the weight of recruitment shifted to other martial classes, particularly the Punjabi Muslim from the Salt Range Tract of the Punjab. Muslims in the districts of western Punjab showed a marked readiness to enlist and had been largely uninfluenced by any form of anti-war activities.<sup>220</sup> Between 1940 and 1942, the number of Muslim recruits from the Punjab quadrupled: 43,291 in 1940 and 165,497 in 1942.<sup>221</sup> Indian Army expanded fast: 150,000 in 1939 to 1 million in 1942 and increasing by 50,000 month.<sup>222</sup> The Punjab Governor, Sir B.J. Glancy visited three districts in late 1942. He saw a dearth of young men or most of them had gone off to the army. In the most heavily recruited districts- Rawalpindi, Jhelum and Attock, the percentage of total male population who were enrolled into the army reached 15 per cent. The balance of the communal representations in the military tilted in favour of the Muslims of Western Punjab. By 1943, the Punjabi Muslims and Pathans accounted for 25 per cent of the annual intake in the army, while the Sikhs and Hindu Jats accounted for roughly 7 and 5 per cent respectively.<sup>223</sup> The number of deserters increased. The Japanese captured Singapore in February 1942. From May 1942 to January 1943, the number of deserters more than doubled. In January 1943, there were still some sixty armed deserters at large.<sup>224</sup> From

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<sup>218</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, Vol. IV, p. 182.

<sup>219</sup> *Khizer Papers*, File No. 16, Cited in Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 175.

<sup>220</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 290.

<sup>221</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 65.

<sup>222</sup> Dharmjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-1943)*, p. 399.

<sup>223</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp. 290-91.

<sup>224</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, 245.

May 1942 to January 1943, the number of deserters more than doubled. In January 1943, there were still some sixty armed deserters at large.<sup>225</sup> Food requisitioning policy also created unrest among the soldiers. The Government undertook a series of counter propaganda campaigns through the soldiers boards and other official channels.<sup>226</sup> The demobilized soldiers caused massive unemployment. By the end of 1946, less than 20 per cent of the ex-servicemen registered with employment exchange had found work. The speedy end of the War surprised the Unionists. They had no rehabilitation scheme.<sup>227</sup> The Government offered returning soldiers ‘a meager bonus of Rs. 4 per head and 50,000 acres of land for half a million soldiers in the Punjab’.<sup>228</sup> Consequently, the Muslim League recruited ex-servicemen in its organization and gained major inroads in the recruiting areas of Rawalpindi and Jhelum.<sup>229</sup> Recruitment was extended to non-martial castes.<sup>230</sup> Coercion began to be used to sustain the supply of recruits. The Revenue officials ordered the *patvaris* to ‘to produce a certain quota of recruits and threatened with suspension if they failed to meet it.’<sup>231</sup> Anti-recruitment meetings organized by the Congress and other political parties rarely escaped the notice of the police and their informers. Their speakers were usually promptly arrested and convicted wherever they threatened to impact the local population.<sup>232</sup>

The World War II turned out to be ‘enormously destructive’. In fact, it was a large edition of World War I, indeed a ‘total War’.<sup>233</sup> It led to ‘total mobilization of manpower and economic resources’.<sup>234</sup> The Government trained 3000 War technicians in about 18

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<sup>225</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 175.

<sup>226</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 294.

<sup>227</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 165.

<sup>228</sup> *Eastern Times*, 29.9. 1945.

<sup>229</sup> *Dawn*, 8.10.1945.

<sup>230</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 145.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, 146

<sup>232</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 285.

<sup>233</sup> *The Khalsa, Lahore*, May 3, 1942.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, 476.

centres. They belonged to all the classes of communities.<sup>235</sup> The Punjab mobilized once again to support Britain in a major world conflagration. The Punjab Premier Sikander Hayat Khan issued a statement calling on the people of the Punjab to ‘maintain their splendid traditions as the sword arm of India by supporting the imperial War efforts’. In all, about 800,000 combatants were recruited from the Punjab.<sup>236</sup> During the War about a million Punjabis served in the army.<sup>237</sup> Overall, the mobilization reached 20 Lakh.<sup>238</sup> Industrial production for War purposes immensely increased. Indian industry supplied about ninety per cent of the military equipment of the Indian army guns, shells, small arms, ammunition, armored cars, uniforms, boots, etc. Thus, in Administration, in Military Service, in War production, the Indian War effort had been as great as the limiting condition had permitted.<sup>239</sup> The war economy brought in ‘galloping inflation’. The inflationary pressure emanated largely from the massive expansion in public expenditure. Between 1939 and 1945 nearly Rs. 3.5 billion were spent on defence purposes in India. The money supply in India rose from Rs. 3 billion in 1939 to Rs. 22 billion in 1945. The mints worked harder.<sup>240</sup>

By September 1941, donations in Punjab War Fund reached to £224,000. The amount gave two fighter squadrons to the Royal Air Force.<sup>241</sup> By the end of 1941, a total of Rs. 55 million had already been collected, the amount surpassing the total donated for the entire duration of the World War-II.<sup>242</sup> The War Purposes Fund and allied charities amounted to Rs. 80,424 within the first fortnight of October 1941. Gurgaon district got

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<sup>235</sup> *The Khalsa, Lahore*, May 3, 1942.

<sup>236</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 301.

<sup>237</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 45-46.

<sup>238</sup> The number of men in the Indian Army had reached 2,049,203 men on July 1, 1945: Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, pp. 214, 277, See also Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India (1740-1975)*, p. 379.

<sup>239</sup> R. Coupland, *The Cripps Mission*, 6.

<sup>240</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 129.

<sup>241</sup> *The Khalsa*, September 28, 1941.

<sup>242</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 284.

first position in matter of Defence Bonds with investments amounting to Rs. 6 lakh.<sup>243</sup> Contribution to the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund amounted to more than £1,350,000 and nearly £18 million had been contributed to Indian defence loans. Viceroy's War Fund had reached Rs. 4 crore in May 1941 and the total subscription to All India Defence loans amounted to nearly Rs. 55.5 crore.<sup>244</sup> By the end of 1941, the total amount of Punjab War Fund stood about Rs. 73.7 Lakh. The total investments stood at Rs. 5.24 crore. A sum of Rs. 45.6 lakh had been remitted to the Central War Fund.<sup>245</sup> On February 15, 1942, the War Fund collections totaled Rs. 88.6 Lakh. However, the total of investments in War loans in the Punjab stood at Rs. 6.6 crore, Amritsar district invested the biggest amount of Rs. 4,13,248. The Lyallpur distt. donated the largest sum of Rs. 85,335.<sup>246</sup> The Punjab contributed massively in the War Fund. By June 30, 1942, it reached about Rs. 1 Crore. The total investment in War loans was Rs. 6.8 crore. The Viceroy's War Fund had reached about Rs. 7 Crore.<sup>247</sup> The Khalsa Defence of India League exhorted the people to contribute to various war purposes funds liberally.<sup>248</sup> India's defence expenditure increased from Rs. 495 million in 1939-40 to Rs. 3913 million in 1945-46. *The Eastern Economist* in its issue of March 8, 1946 reported that India had paid in at least \$900 million to the Empire Dollar Pool upto October 1946.<sup>249</sup> Winston S. Churchill felt that 'India was doing nothing' on the war front.<sup>250</sup> However, Lord Linlithgow disagreed with Churchill.<sup>251</sup>

The World War II ended in Europe in May 1945. It left Britain heavily impoverished.<sup>252</sup> However, it brought about a drastic change in India. the people were in

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<sup>243</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, November 9, 1941.

<sup>244</sup> Dharamjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-43)*, pp. 189-206.

<sup>245</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, January 18, 1942.

<sup>246</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, March 22, 1942

<sup>247</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, July 26, 1942

<sup>248</sup> *The Khalsa* Lahore, August 2, 1942

<sup>249</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, 181.

<sup>250</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *Their Finest Hour*, London, 1949, p. 146.

<sup>251</sup> Dharamjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-43)*, p. 181.

<sup>252</sup> Arthur Birnie, *An Economic History of the British Isles*, 356

a discontented mood because of inflation, food, shortages, closure of War related industries and unemployment caused by demobilization. As a result of the War, there was increase in the export of Indian agricultural and industrial products to Britain. Consequently, the Indian debt had been liquidated during the War. Thus, Britain became indebted to India in 1945 to the tune of more than £ 33,000 million.<sup>253</sup> India emerged in 1945 as her largest single sterling creditor. India's balances amounted to approximately £1.300 million. Hence, India had ceased to be an imperial asset.<sup>254</sup> It was one-fifth of Britain's GNP.<sup>255</sup> The London Government had agreed to foot the bill for the use of Indian forces in the defence of the empire. Since the treasury in London was short of cash, a mechanism was devised by which India would pay here in and now and be reimbursed after the end of War. Part of the total War expenditure would be recoverable as sterling credits for India accumulated in the Bank of England.<sup>256</sup> In fact, the Government of India spent Rs. 17,400 million on behalf of the UK between 1939 and 1946. On 31st March 1939, the Government of India's sterling debt amounted to almost Rs. 4,700 million; not only was it practically wiped out on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1946, but the Reserve Bank of India had accumulated foreign assets mainly in sterling of over Rs. 17,000 million.<sup>257</sup> Between 1939 and 1945 nearly Rs. 3.5 billion were spent on defence purposes India.<sup>258</sup> In other words, about Rs. 17.40 billion of India's defence expenditure from 1939-46 (almost exactly half of the total of Rs. 34.83 billion) was recoverable from Britain.<sup>259</sup> Consequently, Britain owed a large debt of £1.3 billion to the colonial Government of India. Throughout the colonial era, India had owed a large debt to British. The imperial

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<sup>253</sup> P. N. Chopra, *A New Advanced History of India*, 629.

<sup>254</sup> P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction (1914-1990)*, 196.

<sup>255</sup> Sekhar Bandyopandhyay, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2004, 442.

<sup>256</sup> Sugata Bose, and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 129.

<sup>257</sup> Dharma Kumar, (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India (1757-1970)*, Vol. 2, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1984, 942-44.

<sup>258</sup> Sugata Bose, and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 129.

<sup>259</sup> B. R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India*, 160-61.

war charged the financial history of the British rule.<sup>260</sup> The entire sum was kept out of reach of the Indian people during the War.<sup>261</sup>

The Viceroy, Lord Archibald Wavell said, 'Our time in India is limited and our power to control events almost gone'.<sup>262</sup> Britain emerged from the War as 'the world's largest debtor'.<sup>263</sup> In a letter dated 24 October 1944, to Winston Churchill, Lord Wavell pointed out that it would be impossible to hold India by force after the War.<sup>264</sup> Winston Churchill always considered Britain's growing indebtedness as a technical failure and nothing to do with the decline of the Empire.<sup>265</sup> He considered that contracts were fixed in India extravagant rates. Thus 'sterling balances' were piled up.<sup>266</sup> Between 1940-1946, the total number of ICS officials fell from 1201 to 939. By 1945, War-weariness was acute and long absences from home were telling on morale. Economic worries has set in because of inflation.<sup>267</sup> The Civil Service, army and police had lost their morale.<sup>268</sup> By the end of the War, there was a loss of purpose at the very center of the imperial system. After 1939, majority of the ICS were themselves Indians.<sup>269</sup> Meanwhile, the British economy slowly declined. The War brought about serious depletion of the economy.<sup>270</sup> In order to meet the wartime requirements, plant and equipment were used very intensively, resulting in heavy wear and tear. The result was serious erosion of physical assets. The British left a seriously depleted economy.<sup>271</sup> The British policy

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<sup>260</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 130.

<sup>261</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, 180

<sup>262</sup> P. N. Chopra, *A New Advanced History of India*, 630.

<sup>263</sup> P.J. Jain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction (1914-1990)*, 312.

<sup>264</sup> Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India (1885-1947)*, 404.

<sup>265</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 175.

<sup>266</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, Vol. IV, Cassell & Co., London, 1951, p.181.

<sup>267</sup> P.N. Chopra, *A New Advanced History of India*, 629.

<sup>268</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, 489.

<sup>269</sup> P.K. Jain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction (1914-190)*, 195.

<sup>270</sup> Keith Forman, *Mastering Modern World History*, 485.

<sup>271</sup> K. S. Gill, *Evolution of Indian Economy*, 66.

during the War was 'directed to prevent any industrialization of India'.<sup>272</sup> The end of the War entailed large scale demobilization of men from the armed forces, factory workers and clerks.<sup>273</sup> The Indian forces of the regular units of the Indian Army numbering 2,049,203 men on July 1945 (including approximately 250,000 British Soldiers and officers) were reduced to 507,422 men i.e. to about a quarter, by July 1, 1947.<sup>274</sup> The Number of British troops also suffered major decline: from the greatest number of 249,686 in October 1945, the number of British troops in India shrunk to 29,972 men in July 1947. The proportion of British and Indian officers changed considerably. On October 1, 1939, there had been 4028 British and 396 Indian considerably. On October 1, 1939, there had been 34,590 British and 8,340 Indian officers. Officers on September 1, 1945, there were 34,590 British and 8,340 Indian officers. So, in 1939, for one Indian there were 10.1 British officers and in 1945, there were only 4.1.<sup>275</sup>

After the summer 1945, large number of demobilized soldiers began to return to the province causing massive unemployment. Furthermore, the Unionist Party's political interests were sacrificed to the requirements of raising army recruits and exporting food grains from the Punjab.<sup>276</sup> The end of War was greeted in India with a sigh of relief. The colony reeled under the heavy yoke of War effort.<sup>277</sup> The World War II provided one more graphic picture of ruthless exploitation of resources and people of India by England and the India monopolist on the other.<sup>278</sup> India paid for her participation in the War with the loss of 24,388 dead, 11,754 missing and 64,354 wounded as an estimated two million of dead by starvation.<sup>279</sup> As the War came to an end in Europe, India continued to pass through economic difficulties. Food shortages, inflation, black market continued to haunt the people in the Punjab affecting the daily lives of the people.

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<sup>272</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, 173.

<sup>273</sup> Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition*, 50.

<sup>274</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 277.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>276</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 238-39.

<sup>277</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*, 473. See also, P.N. Chopra, *A New Advanced History of India*, 629.

<sup>278</sup> G. Kaushal, *Economic History of India (1757-1966)*, 698.

<sup>279</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 278.

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## CHAPTER– III

### AGRARIAN CONTEXT

The Punjab is basically an agrarian province. The colonial state tapped the resources through colonization and canalization which led to appropriation of agrarian surplus. The Punjab agrarian society is multiform. By agriculturist, we mean those who hailed from any of the notified agricultural tribes. It was defined under the Punjab Alienation of Land (Amendment) Act, 1919. The term "agriculturist" was modified in 1940 by observing, "an agriculturist is a person who derives the main portion of his income from land."<sup>1</sup>

#### I

In 1926, efforts of the Punjab government in the field of land revenue reforms began when the Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Punjab Legislative Council.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the Punjab Government could not charge the land revenue more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the net assets when earlier the rate was 1/2 of the net assets. One more important feature of the Bill was that in every subsequent re-assessment land revenue could not be enhanced by more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> excepting areas, either urban or where irrigation would develop fast.<sup>3</sup> However, the Governor vetoed it, as he was having political differences with the native Government in the province.<sup>4</sup> But being not discouraged, the Government intensified its efforts. It further raised its demand by asking that maximum land revenue should be assessed at 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the net assets. In subsequent re-settlement, revenue may be enhanced by not more than 25 per cent of the preceding assessment.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, the Government passed the Punjab Land Revenue Act 1928. It conceded the preceding

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<sup>1</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates* (hereafter *P.L.C.D.*), Vol. XXIII, 21/3/1933, 671.

<sup>2</sup> A. Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography*, Bombay, 1946, 160.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Education, *Health and Lands*, 1926; File No. Land-Feb. 3-B, N.A.I., New Delhi.

<sup>4</sup> A. Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain*, 160.

<sup>5</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XI, 8/5/1928, 1009, 1147; See also *P.L.A.D.* Vol. XII, 4/3/1940, 49; See also, Vol. XV, 27/1/1941, 313.

demands.<sup>6</sup> By implementing this Act in settlements, wherever these became due, land revenue was reasonably reduced. In 1930, it was reduced by Rs. 2,23,000; Rs. 1,04,000; Rs. 2,28,000; Rs. 86,000; Rs. 36,000; Rs. 1,38,000; and Rs. 1,83,000 in the settlement circles of Shahpur, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura, Attock, Mianwali, Gujrat and Jhang respectively.<sup>7</sup> During the period 1928-35, the Punjab government with a view to benefiting the self cultivators went on pressing the Government that the land revenue should be fixed on the basis of self-cultivator's net assets instead of rent receiving landlords. Also, it should properly account for the cost of cultivation. This cost must include the sum due to cattle depreciation connected herewith. The Government refused to accept this proposal. The Government introduced the sliding scale of assessment of land revenue. It was done on experimental basis in districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur, in 1930.<sup>8</sup> This wholesome feature was applied on large scale since 1937. Under this system land revenue could not be raised beyond the decided rate. The crop might have been bumper, but there was no end to its downward revision, if the crop or its current price was otherwise.<sup>9</sup> The only existence of the foregoing land revenue reforms, though salutary, did not result in much profit to the agriculturists until 1937. Thereafter, these were enforced anxiously by the Punjab Government. Important result of this combination was that in re-settlement made during 1937-44, land revenue was assessed much below 25 per cent of the net assets.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Punjab cultivator became the lowest land rate payer in the country.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Punjab Land Revenue Act*, 1928, Section 48/B; See also A. Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain*, 149; See also *The Tribune*, 6/2/1933, 7; See also, *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXVI, 6/2/1935, 818.

<sup>7</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, 27/4/1930, 3.

<sup>8</sup> *The Tribune*, 6/2/1933, 7; See also, *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XI, 8/5/1928, 213, 221, 226; *Report of the Land Revenue Committee* appointed by the Punjab Government in 1927, 47 (Punjab Government, 1938).

<sup>9</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VIII, 30/3/1939, 962; See also T. Ram, *Sir Chatu Ram: An Apostle of Hindu-Muslim Unity*. Lahore: 1946. 10.

<sup>10</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXI, 12/3/1943, 214-15; See also, Vol., XIV, 6/12/1940, 856.

<sup>11</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XV, 27/1/1941, 962; See also Vol. XIX, 10/3/1942, 184.

Assessment of land revenue on income tax principles was another feature advocated by the leadership during 1927-35. Since 1940, some of them opposed it.<sup>12</sup> Their arguments for its adoption were: (i) for income tax purpose income upto Rs. 2000 was exempted. There was no such exemption in the assessment of land revenue. Thus, the latter was, in fact, a tax on the fruits of the labour of the agriculturists;<sup>13</sup> (ii) Maximum rate of income tax was 2.5 *annas* in a rupee, whereas land revenue was assessed minimum at 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the net assets;<sup>14</sup> (iii) The suspended payment of land revenue on account of a poor harvest was charged along with the next year, if the yield came to 10 *annas* in a rupee but under the income fell short of the minimum assessable in any year, he was not to pay any income tax for that year though his return for the succeeding year might have been Rs. 5000/<sup>15</sup>; and (iv) No enhancement, howsoever small, in the rate of income tax was easy to be effected. Since it had to be sanctioned by the Central Legislature, yet beside land revenue could be enhanced even through the discretionary powers of the Governor.<sup>16</sup>

The significant cause of opposition to this scheme since 1940 can be best explained in these words, "The cry was raised for the assimilation of the principles of assessment of land revenue to the assessment of income tax in the hope that Government might, in order to avert the threat, agree to make other reasonable concessions to *zamidars*<sup>17</sup>. Another argument given was that it would not be workable, because the

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<sup>12</sup> Chhotu Ram's evidence before the Simon Commission, cited in Mitra's *Indian Quarterly Register, o. cit.*, 1928, Vol. II, 123; See also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XI, 8/5/1928, 1028; See also Vol. X, 7/3/1927, 139; See also Vol. XXVI, 25/3/1935, 816; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XII, 4/3/1940, 47; See also Vol. XIV, 13/3/1942, 327-28; See also *J.G. (tr.)*, 8/6/1927, 8-7; See also 22/1/1930, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, 6/2/1933, 7; See also *Central Budget 1939-40*, 51-52; See also N.K. Sinha and A.C. Banerjee, *History of India*, Calcutta, 1967, 8th ed., 643 Also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. X, 23/2/1927 and 17/3/1927, 110, 527-28; See Also Vol. XI, 8/5/1928, 1028; See also Vol. XXI, 10/3/1932, 353; See also Vol. XVI, 25/3/1935, 816.

<sup>14</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, 6/2/1933, 7; See also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XI 8/5/1928.

<sup>15</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXI, 10/3/1932, 354-55; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore: 6/2/1933, 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XII, 4/3/1940, 47; See also Vol. XIX, 13/3/1942, 327-28.

illiterate cultivators could not maintain their accounts.<sup>18</sup> Two more factors appeared to be that one the party was in power since 1937, did not need to adopt underhand means for affording relief to the agriculturists. Moreover, success of the sliding scale of Land Revenue had appealed to many members of this party as the best. Another proposal advocated by the ruling party since 1927, which it was the inseparable part of the above discussed proposal, 'Application of the principles of income tax to the Assessment of Land Revenue', too met similar fate in 1942 at their own hands in favour of the 'Peasants Welfare Fund'.<sup>19</sup> It was to exempt holdings up to two irrigated *acres* from the payment of Land Revenue or 5 un-irrigated *acres* of land or land revenue up to Rs. 5/-.<sup>20</sup> The reason for this preference for the Peasants Welfare Fund exhibited its wider aim of setting aside the backwardness of the agriculturists of lower strata.<sup>21</sup>

On the contrary, it was held that this Fund rather should have been augmented so that the provincial Government in case of necessity could grant some relief to the small cultivators.<sup>22</sup> It appears that the Peasants Welfare Fund had been designed by them to fill in this gap; (ii) *Patwaris*, *Girdawaras* and *Tehsildars* were under the impression that by giving remission, the Government treasures would be emptied. So, they made false reports. But if they would know that booked payments could be made out of this fund, they would report the real nature of the crops and yields;<sup>23</sup> and (iii) Since the Unionists greatly espoused the cause of consolidation of small holdings, therefore, any exemption in land revenue up to Rs. 5/-, etc. would have negated these efforts by promoting the

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> It was initiated by the Unionists in 1927.

<sup>20</sup> Those paying land revenue upto Rs. 5 numbered 17.5 *lacs* in the Punjab, Vide. *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. X, 23/11/1927, 342; 1442-45; See also Vol. XI, 22/2/1928 and 23/11/1927, 79, 949, 62, 68-69; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XIX, 13/3/1942, 328; See also Vol. XXIII, 9/11/1943, 249; See also *18 Months of Provincial Autonomy*, 2-3; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Chhottu Ram's speech at Rawalpindi in September, 1943; reported in *J.G.* (tr.), 8/9/1943, 8; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XVIII, 12/1/1942, 574-23; See also Vol. XXII, 7/3/1944, 405-06, 2001; See also Vol. XXI, 12/3/1943, 216.

<sup>22</sup> *Jat Gazette* (hereafter *J.G.*) (tr.), 8/9/1943, 8; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. 12/1/1942, 574-23; See also Vol. XXII, 7/3/1944, 405.

<sup>23</sup> *P.L.A.D.* Vol. XIX, 13/3/1942; 330; See also Vol. XXI, 12/3/1943, p. 216.

fragmentation of holdings.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the much desired Peasants Welfare Fund Act was passed in 1942 unanimously. By 1944, Rs. 1.5 *Crore* had already been accumulated under this head. For future, the Punjab Government promised to contribute Rs. 55 *lakhs* annually.<sup>25</sup>

So far the means were concerned through which the Punjab government got reduced the land revenue, it was mostly persuasive. But it warned the British Government several times with dire consequences, if it failed in doing its duty to the agriculturists. In 1932 and 1933, the Unionists threatened if certain revolutionary change was not introduced in the land revenue system. Agriculturists awakened to their miseries would manifest uncontrollable riots and unrest.<sup>26</sup> Apart from reduction in land revenue, they pressurized upon the Government, particularly during the 'Great Economic Depression (1929-30)' to give very liberal remission in land revenue. Abolition of *acreage* rates was another reform, which the agriculturists emphasized. Through this tax, the Government had been charging Rs. 1.63 per *acre six monthly* to recover in 7 years the sum of Rs. 60 *lacs*, the amount that the Government had spent on digging water courses, on culverts construction and on preliminary surveys and demarcation. In 1936, the demand made for its abolition made in 1936 was justified, as return from harvest due to poor yields and slack prices were very meager. Besides, the water course and culverts were either not built or proved futile. Even surveys and demarcations done by the contractors were highly defective. Their efforts resulted in an assurance by the Government that *acreage* rates would either be reduced or abolished.<sup>27</sup>

Excessive *malikana* rate, that was realized as a part of rent<sup>28</sup> from the grantees in colonies<sup>29</sup> was the next cess that every one strongly in general as well as Fazl-i-Husain

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<sup>24</sup> Report by the *Punjab Land Revenue Committee, 1937*, 123.

<sup>25</sup> *Jat Gazette* (hereafter *J.G.*) (tr.), 8/9/1943, 8; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. 12/1/1942, 574-23; See also Vol. XXII, 7/3/1944, 405.

<sup>26</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, 6/2/1933, 7; See also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXI, 10/3/1932, 355; See also Vol. XXIII (Abdur Rehman's speech), 21/3/1933, 667.

<sup>27</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXVIII, year 1936, 320, 515, 521, 541.

<sup>28</sup> Rent was equal to *malikana* plus land revenue.

<sup>29</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXIV (D.J. Boyd and M.L. Darling's opinions), 5/3/1934, 515; See also Vol. XXVIII, 10/3/1936, 314.

and Sir Chhotu Ram in particular denounced it. However, some persons wrongly interpreted it as the interest charged by the Government on the price of the land until the grantees had paid off the whole price.<sup>30</sup> When asked the Government to reduce *malikana* rate and place it on fluctuating standard, it was argued as follows:<sup>31</sup> (i) Earlier *malikana* rates were between Rs. 2/- and Rs. 6/- per *acre*. During 1920-28, the prices of the crops had increased, it was enhanced from Rs. 2/- to Rs. 3.80/-. So when prices fell during 1929-33, the old rates should have been restored; (ii) at the outset, it was charged on fluctuating basis i.e. on the matured *acres* alone. But by 1934, local officers began to charge it for all the areas allotted to a grantee; (iii) Colonies Committee Report had too recommended *malikana* rate at Rs. 6/- per *acre* in the new colonies to start with, which it suggested should be further reduced to Rs. 4/- in the near future; and (iv) While replying the reactionary argument of M.L. Darling and Mukand Lal Puri it was demanded that grantees should vacate these lands, if they felt *malikana* so rack-renting. Consequently, the Government suspended the realization of *malikana* for three harvests. It further assured to reconsider the issue at proper time.<sup>32</sup> The Unionists Party also objected to the system of distribution and base of the crown lands on the two grounds: (i) Nearly 83 per cent of such Land was disposed or leased out to the capitalist landlords<sup>33</sup>; and (ii) The landed capitalists were very unfair, as they passed on these lands to the poor tenants on difficult terms.<sup>34</sup> In 1942, merely three thousand *acres* were to be given to the landed gentry and that also to those who did not own more than hundred *acres*.<sup>35</sup> He got enacted the Colonialization of Government Land (Punjab Amendment) Act in 1941 permitted the widows of the predeceased sons and grandsons of the grantee to become tenants of

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIV (Habib-Ullah's views), 5/3/1934, 515-16, 48-50.

<sup>31</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXIV, 5/3/1934, 522, 529, 546, 547, 549, 550, 575, 579, 646; See also Vol. XXVIII, 10/3/1936, 312-20.

<sup>32</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXIV, 1934, 312 and 322.

<sup>33</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VIII, 20/3/1939, 438-39; *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. X, 17/3/1927, 521.

<sup>34</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VIII, 20/3/1939, 438; See also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. X, 17/3/1927, 521.

<sup>35</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. VIII, 1939, 1146-47; See also Vol. XIX, 13/3/1942, 332.

Government land.<sup>36</sup> In 1944, the above said Act was amended and thereby eliminated the bad practice followed by widows under the pressure of the designated persons. The former after acquiring proprietary rights of the Crown lands in colonies, transferred them to the latter. Such transfers were upheld as valid by the courts also. Although the actual Act had laid down that such lands would normally go to the reversionary of the widows. Eliminating the drawbacks, the amended Act provided, if any condition of any grant was violated, the concerned collector could resume that land.<sup>37</sup> Crown lands were reserved for the agriculturists as well as for the scheduled caste every year. In 1942, three thousand *acres* were reserved for them;<sup>38</sup> and vigorously revived the scheme of graduate *chaks* (blocks of land) in the distribution of crown lands. About 81 such grants were made in 1938.<sup>39</sup> The scheme giving blocks of 50 *acres* each of crown lands to 73 agricultural science and arts graduates had been initiated in 1932. Thus their policy in this regard was that self-cultivator oriented so far as the developed crown lands were concerned. In the distribution of the undeveloped lands entailing big initial investments more or less he favored the big landlords. The point stands supported by the fact that large tracts of undeveloped lands in Bora, he gave to big landlords in 1944.<sup>40</sup>

The Punjab Government also attempted to introduce several modern techniques for enhancing the agriculture of the province.<sup>41</sup> Need for developing agriculture had also been stressed by the Indian Industrial Commission having in mind to ensure the supply of food to the growing population; also for the betterment of agriculturists' lot and to enhance the progress of industries.<sup>42</sup> Another step taken by The Punjab Government was the reclamation of waste lands. Since 1941, it plunged in this project. Every subsequent

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<sup>36</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), 5/9/1941, 868; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XVIII, 1/12/1941, 32; See also Vol. VIII, 1939, 1146.

<sup>37</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXII, 24/3/1944, 870-871, 75.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XIX, 13/3/1942, 332.

<sup>39</sup> *Report on the Operations of the Agriculture Department, 1939*, 88.

<sup>40</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXII, 10/3/1944, 490-93.

<sup>41</sup> *Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18*, Calcutta : 1918, 88.

<sup>42</sup> M.L. Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, Manohar, Delhi, 1977, pp. 29-30, 84, 133-34, 256.

year witnessed better accomplishment. About 14,790 in 1941; 20,000 in 1942; and 30,000 in 1943 *acres* were reclaimed.<sup>43</sup> A remarkable feature of its efforts was that it undid a long standing injustice to the small landowners. While under the previous policy, big landholders could get much above the quota of additional canal water permitted for the purpose. But under the new policy introduced by the Punjab Government reclamation work commenced. It began from the head of a tributary with the lands affected greatest by *Ahur* (barrenness). Whether these belonged to small agriculturists or big landlords, slowly reached the tail. A notable financial profit to the agriculturists and the Government as land revenue, etc. was the result of the Punjab Governments' efforts. In 1942, in reclamation lands, 8 *lac* tons of grams both worth Rs. 95/- *lac* were harvested.<sup>44</sup> Its third effort towards the progress of agriculture was collective farming. After 1938, the Government never helped it despite opposition Benches in the Punjab Legislature pressed for it during 1939-43. Its failure was due to the *Punjabi* agriculturists being full of independent character. It did not give up the right to ownership of soil, when they felt a sense of dignity, self-respect and superior social status. This view was also shared by the contemporary Government Officers serving in the Province.<sup>45</sup>

The Government's fourth step was setting up of the Government seed farms. It was done to evolve new strains of different crops and to grow the already known improved seeds in sizable quantity for supply to the agriculturists. Though its party's programme of launching one Government seed farm in each *tehsil* had been accepted in principle in 1927<sup>46</sup>, but tangible results could be seen only during 1937-44. During this period, some important inventions of improved seeds were made. The chunk of land was cultivated with these seeds. It resulted in handsome financial gain to the agriculturists. In 1938, at Kala Shah Kaku Government Farm, a new variety of rice giving two crops a year was evolved. Improved quality of indigenous potato, cultivable in Kangra district that replaced at half price the seed earlier imported from Bihar, was produced.<sup>47</sup> By 1938, the

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<sup>43.</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 355.

<sup>44.</sup> *Ibid.*, 356.

<sup>45.</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 355.

<sup>46.</sup> *J.G.* (tr.), 15/6/1927, 4.

<sup>47.</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VIII, 20/3/1939, 868; See also Vol. XIX, 10/3/1942, 185.

number of village Farmers Associations in the Punjab rose to 4500 from 2600 in 1935-36 and 3129 in 1936-37.<sup>48</sup> Their members were using these seeds themselves as well as popularizing among others. In the subsequent years their use progressively increased.<sup>49</sup> Additional *acres* covered by the improved seeds of rice, maize, *bajra*, sugarcane, American cotton, wheat and pulses increased heavily in 1937-38.<sup>50</sup>

To remove these ills, the Unionists made a modest beginning in 1924, by enhancing the number of cooperative commission shops for the sale of agriculture produce.<sup>51</sup> The following year, they also introduced the Punjab Agricultural Produce Marketing Bill. In the Provincial Legislature though explained, it was passed but it was vetoed by the Governor.<sup>52</sup> The Unionists seized the first opportunity as soon as they constituted the ministry. They got enacted the Punjab Agricultural Produce Marketing Act in 1939,<sup>53</sup> amending it further in 1941 whereby the number of the Governor's representatives were kept higher than the combined strength of the representatives of the traders, weight men and the Government on the Market Committee.<sup>54</sup> The punitive clause of the Act subjected traders, brokers, weight men measures ware-housemen etc. for the violation of any of its clauses, to a fine extending up to Rs. 500/-.<sup>55</sup> Since the above stated

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<sup>48.</sup> *Proceedings of the Agriculture Development*, Punjab No. 1203 D. 20/3/1940.

<sup>49</sup> *Reports on the Operations of the Agriculture Department for the year ending 30th June 1939*, 82; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. I, 13/7/1937, 416; See also Vol. III, 16/3/1938, 345; See also Vol. VIII, 20/3/1939, 44.

<sup>50.</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 578.

<sup>51</sup> *Report of the Committee on Cooperation in India : 1915*, para 9 (Simla, 1915); See also *Punjab Administration Report for 1919-20*, 69; See also *Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies in the Punjab for the year ending 31st July, 1925*, 19; See also year ending 31st July 1929, 31; See also see for the years 1/8/1939 to 31/2/1944.

<sup>52.</sup> *J.G.* (tr.), 15/6/1927, 4; See also *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXVIII, 25/10/1935, 245.

<sup>53</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), 11/5/1939, 105-11; See also *J.G.* (tr.), 4/6/1941, 3; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VII, 19/1/1939, 384; 466-67, 594, 903; See also Vol. XV, 26/11/1941, 71; See also Vol. 7/7/1938, 783-814; See also Vol. VI, 14/11/1938, 231-308, 321, 323, 555.

<sup>54</sup> *Department of Education, Health and Lands, Year 1941*, File No. 4-3/41-A, NAI, also *J.G.* (tr.), 11/6/1941, 3; See also 13/8/1941, 5.

<sup>55</sup> *J.G.* (tr.), 11/6/1941, 3; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. VII, 19/1/1939, 594; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXII, 4/11/1943, 113-115.

Act did not protect the agriculturists to the extent as desired by the Unionists, they therefore, got enacted another measure, i.e., the Punjab Weights and Measures Act in 1941.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, with a view to protect the peasants from the arbitrary dealings of the sugar mills got the Sugarcane (Punjab Amendment) Act passed in 1943. While the Weights and Measures Act (1941), declared the manufacture and use of false weights and scales a criminal offence. It too made the use of the Government approved weights and measures obligatory. The Sugarcane Act made a break through by providing that the income from this tax would be spent on improving roads leading to sugar factories, on providing shelters for the agriculturists and their carts.<sup>57</sup> Another significant measure, for the development of agriculture, was the procurement of reasonable cost for their produce to the tillers of the soil; by pleading an agriculturist-oriented food policy with the British Government. The Government was pressed to force the Central Government on the following points:<sup>58</sup> (i) British Government of India should either stop the import of wheat or levy a substantial import duty thereupon; (ii) It should reduce railway freight from rupee, 1 *anna* 3 *pice* per *mound* to 6 *annas* per *mound* from Punjab stations to Karachi, Bombay and Calcutta as the Australian Exporters were in a more advantageous position vis-a-vis the Punjab producers as their wheat was shipped to India just for 6 *annas* per *mound*; (iii) It should revise the exchange rate from Rs. 1 to 18 d. to Rs. 1 to 16 d., as it existed before. It's much denounced revision by the Mittal Young Commission in 1924 resulting in the reduction of return from the export of wheat etc. by 12.5 per cent; and (iv) The Punjab Government should send its agents to the important milling stations like Calcutta and Karachi to convince the millers of those places of the superiority of the Punjab wheat.

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<sup>56</sup> *Department of Education, Health and Lands, Year 1941*, File No. 4-3/41-A, N.A.I., New Delhi; See also *Mitra's Indian Annual Register, 1941*, Vol. 1, 267; See also *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), 30/10/1941, 161; See also *J.G. (tr.)*, 21/4/1941, 3; See also 30/4/1941, 3; See also *P.L.A.D.* Vol. XVII, 1/4/1941, 40-2, 54-62; See also Y. Shastri (tr.), *op.cit.*, 628.

<sup>57</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXII, 4/11/1943, 113-15; See also Vol. XVII, 1/4/1941, 402, 454-59; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), 2/12/1941, 1294-96.

<sup>58</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XVII, 17/1/1931, 263-86; See also Vol. XXVIII (Ujjal Singh), 931; Vol. XVIII, 17/1/1931, 326-27; Vol. XIX, 15/5/1931, 373-74; See also *J.G. (tr.)*, 20/5/1931, 7.; See also *J.G. (tr.)*, 27/1/1931, 1. also *J.G. (tr.)*, 25/5/1927, 7; See also 1/6/1927, 8; See also 8/6/1927, 7; See also 27/1/1931, 1.

It appears that the British Indian Government responded favorably to at least two, at least, to of their suggestions. An analysis of the step taken by it to implement that leads to the conclusion, the *de-facto* agriculturists did not gain anything. The British Indian Government did reduce railway freight from Punjab Stations to Karachi in January 1931, just after three months. Similarly, in April 1934, it imposed an import duty of Rs. 2 and 8 *annas* per quintal on wheat but reduced it to Rs. 2 per quintal in February 1935, while the price of wheat was just 2 rupees and 12 *annas* per *mound*. Yet, its adverse effect was that the prices of wheat could not rise in the following years.<sup>59</sup> During 1934-35, the prices of food-grains recovered slowly to the pre 1929 level. So, except once, when the Government was impressed upon in 1936 to increase import duty on wheat, it seems that the political factions were almost satisfied with the policy followed by the Government relating to food grains.<sup>60</sup> Food Production in India declined at a annual rate of 02 per cent during 1924-44.<sup>61</sup> On the eve of the Imperial War, food situation was ‘explosive.’ The Punjab had the largest irrigation system with 20 million acres under irrigation; canal network had 2000 miles.<sup>62</sup> Total irrigated area accounted for 52 per cent of the total cropped area in the Punjab. Improved varieties of wheat, cotton and sugar reached 50 per cent, 70 per cent and 64 per cent respectively.<sup>63</sup> With massive irrigation networks, the Punjab had emerged as ‘a new agrarian frontier’<sup>64</sup> Consequently, the Punjab agriculture transformed

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<sup>59.</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60.</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXVIII, 26/3/1936, 933.

<sup>61</sup> G. Kaushal, *Economic History of India (1757-1966)*, Kalyani Publishes, New Delhi 1997, 159-60

<sup>62</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1998, 144; M.M. Islam, *Irrigation, Agriculture and Raj: Punjab (1887- 1947)*, Manohar New Delhi, 1997, 139-40

<sup>63</sup> M.M Islam, “ Trends in crop Production in the undivided Punjab: A Reassessment,” *Arrested Development in India: The Historical Dimension* (ed. Clive Dewey), Manohar, New Deli, 1988-326

<sup>64</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab (1849-1947)* Sage, New Delhi, 2005, 17

into ‘ the most expert-oriented in the whole of Asia.’ Total agrarian production was ‘ grown for the market’.<sup>65</sup>

## II

The outbreak of the World War II created hopes of a boom. The peasants expected increasing employment and the rising prices of their produce would minimise the effects of agricultural depression.<sup>66</sup> From 1939 onwards, the Imperial War precipitated the crisis. When the prices of food grains due to the increase in the number of British troops stationed in India and due to the shipment shortage shot up, the price of cotton fell steeply.<sup>67</sup> Government policy added chaos to the confusion. While it promulgated price control order with a view to arrest any rise in the prices of the essential goods, it did nothing to support the price of cotton. There was a need to extricate the peasants from this chaotic state of affairs. Following steps were suggested to the Government of India at two food grains conferences, convened by it in 1941 and 1943 respectively.<sup>68</sup> It should impose heavy import duty on cotton at least for three years. On the pattern of the cotton purchase policy of the Government from Egypt, they suggested that the same should be followed by the British imperial government in India. The condition of price control on the sale of food grains by the agriculturists was proposed to be governed by a similar price control on the goods like kerosene oil and cloth sold by the non-agriculturists. They laid down the following principles to be carried out by the Government in the implementation of the price control policy: (a) the underlying principle of the United States Price Control Order, that fixed its price as the average of the prices of a commodity for the years 1919-29, should be adopted in the Punjab;<sup>69</sup> (b) as in England, the Government should subsidise price control

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<sup>65</sup> M.M. Islam *Irrigation, Agriculture and the Raj*, 144; Mridula Mukherjee, *Colonialising Agriculture: The Myth of Punjab Exceptionalism*, Sage, New Delhi 2007, 56

<sup>66</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 143.

<sup>67</sup> T.B. Desai, *Economic History of India*, Bombay, 1969, 25-32.

<sup>68</sup> *Proceedings of the Punjab Regional Price and Supply Board Meeting*, held at Simla on 20/6/1942, Department of Education, Health and Lands, Year 1942, File No. F-31/60/42-A, NAI, New Delhi; *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XV, 23/1/1941, 185-86; *J.G.* (tr.), 14/7/1943, 3; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XVIII, 11/12/1941, 257 and 273; See also Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 359; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 21/12/1941, 4.

<sup>69</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXII, 4/11/1943, 114; In England the Government was spending annually Rs. 138 crores to subsidise the price control. *Ibid.*, Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 359.

in India too; (c) Punjab peasants should not be forced to supply food grains at cheap rates to the deficit areas, as there the local Government were earning huge profits in food grain trades;<sup>70</sup> (d) special importance should be given to the perpetually famine stricken regions of South-East Punjab;<sup>71</sup> (e) price control should be applied to the food commodities, the principle underlying the control order that permitted a gain of 25 per cent. Afterwards, it was reduced to 20 per cent;<sup>72</sup> and (f) if the Government felt unable to enforce the above principles, it should permit the agriculturists to raise the prices of their commodities by many times as the prices of their needs had gone up.<sup>73</sup>

Apart from advantage to the rural population, it brought considerable hardship in the shape of inflation and growing shortage of consumer goods.<sup>74</sup> By the end of 1941, the supply of food was running desperately low in India. The shortfall for dominant staple rice had exceeded 2.8 million which could not be met by imports.<sup>75</sup> Government of India asked for imports of food grains into India. London rejected as it would cause division of shipping services that would effect naval operations of the Allies.<sup>76</sup> In January 1942, the Punjab Government issued an order to all farmers to declare stocks of wheat exceeding 20 *mounds* of rumours of official intentions to requisition stocks without payment began circulating and started the unsettle solders who had been concerned about economic conditions in their village.<sup>77</sup> The Unionist party advocated the introduction of price control over the goods required by the agriculturists.<sup>78</sup> Its members were rather adamant on this issue. Another gain that accrued to the cultivators as a result of their incessant criticism of the Government for having fixed low rate of wheat i.e. Rs. 6 and

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<sup>70</sup> *J.G.* (tr.), 13/10/1943, 1; See also *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 359.

<sup>71</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXI, 16/3/1943, 359.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, 4/11/1943, 115

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 144

<sup>75</sup> Ran Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 292.

<sup>76</sup> Nicholas Manserh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, July 20, 1943, pp. 133-39.

<sup>77</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 293.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXIII 7/3/1944, 405; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 21/12/1943, 4; See also *J.G.* (tr.), 8/12/1943, 5.

*annas* 6 per *mound* for the Punjab after the First Food Grain Conference (1941) was that with a view to pacify the Unionists, the Government revised the rate of wheat to Rs. 5 per *mound* in the Second Food Grains Conference held from 13 to 16 October, 1941. But as this concession was too meager to bring any satisfaction to him, so his fury against the Government remained unabated.<sup>79</sup> It is true that by the close of 1943, he had become almost rebellious against Government's unjust food grains policy. It is clear from the directions, the Unionists gave to the agriculturists of the Punjab; they should not sell their wheat crop at less than Rs. 10/- per *mound*. There upon, the Unionists declared in the face of a large number of the officials of the Central Government that if price control of agricultural produce resulted in an untoward situation in the Punjab the Local Government would not be responsible for it.<sup>80</sup> Under the Grow More Food programme, area under cultivation increased substantially: 30 Million areas 1939 and 35 million areas in 1942.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the Punjab farmer were growing more and selling more. They were securing higher prices for their produce.<sup>82</sup>

Winston Churchill categorically declared that it will be a long War and one full of sorrow and disappointment for the British Empire. Even the American President, F.D. Roosevelt prepared for a prolonged War.<sup>83</sup> The food shortage became important not only in India but throughout the world. The question of food was rooted in political and social conditions ushered in during the War. By 1943, scarcities began to be felt in the markets. The supply of manufactured consumer goods fell because of the decline or cessation of imports, fall in production in India and practically, the diversion of existing industrial capacity to the production of goods required for the War.<sup>84</sup> The Indian people's sacrifice was the sacrifice of consumption forced on them by the diversion of goods and

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<sup>79</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XVIII, 113-15; See also Vol. XXI, 359; See also *J.G.* (tr.), 14/7/1943, 2; 20/10/1943, 2.

<sup>80</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XII, year 1940, 113-15; See also *J.G.* (tr.), 8/12/1943, 5; 27/10/1943, 5; 29/12/1943, 5.

<sup>81</sup> R.S. Nakra, *Punjab Villages in the Ludhiana District during the War*, p. 1

<sup>82</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, (1849-1947)*, p. 134

<sup>83</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, September 20, 1942.

<sup>84</sup> Bhabatosh Datta, *Indian Economic Thought*, Tata McGraw Hill, New Delhi: 1978, 18.

productive power to War use. V. K. R. V. Rao argued that the main reasons for the price rise lay in the shortages caused by low production and by speculation.<sup>85</sup> The rural population also suffered from the shortage of consumer goods.<sup>86</sup> The rural population was rallied to intensify the area under cultivation through a “Grow More Food” campaign in the Punjab.<sup>87</sup> The Government of India launched in 1943 the campaign of ‘Grow More Food’.<sup>88</sup> The Punjab Government decided to increase the production of rice and millets and expected to exceed the export targets.<sup>89</sup> With the average of three years ending 1939, the area under grain crops in 1943-44 had increased by over 11 million acres providing an additional yield of 4 million tons of foodgrains.<sup>90</sup> With the beginning of the War, the official Gazette announced the control of prices of flour, oils, vegetables, milk, butter, meat, fruits, coarse cloth etc. The Deputy Commissioners got the authority.<sup>91</sup>

The prices of food and other necessities of life were soaring, the cost of living was mounting and the black market was thriving.<sup>92</sup> With the progress in the War, inflation wiped out the profits which resulted from the increase in price of such crops as wheat, maize, gram and *Bajra*.<sup>93</sup> The whole process brought untold miseries and sufferings of the mass of workers and peasants. The people has to bear hardships of manifold wage cuts, food and cloth scarcities and destitution.<sup>94</sup> After meeting the members of the Lahore Chemist Association, the prices of medicines were enhanced by 10 per cent on the stocks

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 125. Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 309.

<sup>86</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 146.

<sup>87</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, September 14, 1939.

<sup>88</sup> Mridula Mukherjee, “Some Aspects of the Agrarian Structure of Punjab (1925-47)”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XV, No. 26, June 28, 1980, A-49.

<sup>89</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow : February 12, 1943; April 26, 1943: Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics: Strains of War (1940-43)*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 253-54’ 363.

<sup>90</sup> *The Tribune*, 13.1.1945.

<sup>91</sup> Satya M. Rai, *Punjabi Heroic Tradition*, p.150

<sup>92</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, September 14, 1939.

<sup>93</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 144.

<sup>94</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, 182-83.

which were there on 1 September.<sup>95</sup> With a view to control the rising prices of commodities, it was decided by the Central Government to convene a conference of representatives of Provinces and States.<sup>96</sup> The Government had to spend much larger sums and proportions of the budget on defence. The money supply was increased to finance the deficit as never before. It caused massive inflation, causing serious erosion of real incomes.<sup>97</sup> The local merchants in the Punjab sharply reacted to price regulations. In the month of April 1941, the merchants openly protested against the sales tax. They called for the provincial merchant conference in Amritsar. It created a deadlock in different commercial centres in the Punjab.<sup>98</sup> The provincial government made many concessions to the shopkeeping class.<sup>99</sup> Owing to shortages caused by the diversions to the War needs, the prices of essential commodities especially clothing and wheat had gone up by almost 300 per cent by the end of 1941. Moreover, the disruption in imports led to an acute shortage of consumer goods and other daily necessities in the times as were in the countryside of the Punjab<sup>100</sup> The rumors and propaganda played an important role in creating scarcity.<sup>101</sup> The War time control and rationing led to the hoarding and black market. As early as 1943, in the Punjab, it became increasingly difficult to obtain without prescribed rates any commodity while price has been controlled and black market transactions were so common that it was generally felt that the entire system of price control either be drastically revived or else abandoned altogether. The opening of the depots in the large towns helped to some extent to check illegal transactions, but the inconvenience experienced by the public in making small purchases at these depots after long waits in queues detracted considerably from their value.<sup>102</sup> The prices differences

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<sup>95</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, September 21, 1939.

<sup>96</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, September 22, 1939.

<sup>97</sup> Tirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of India 1857-1947*, New Delhi, 2006, 321.

<sup>98</sup> *Akali*, Lahore, April 9, 1941.

<sup>99</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, Dated 28 April 1941 : Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43) : Strains of War*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2006, 246.

<sup>100</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 285.

<sup>101</sup> Indiver Kamtekar, "The Shiver of 1942", *Studies in History*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 2002.

<sup>102</sup> *Home/Political (I)*, File 18.1.1943 (Poll. I), GOI, NAI, 1943, p. 53.

among different provinces led to smuggling and hoarding owing to the wide disparity of prices of rice between the Punjab and the UP border and the large purchases of paddy and rice.<sup>103</sup> In December 1942, shortage of foodgrains were reported from thirteen districts, of fuel from ten, sugar from six and salt from four.<sup>104</sup> The rumors of scarcity caused hoarding of grains with peasants and merchants. In the Punjab in August 1943, it was reported that as much as one million tons out of an estimated harvest of 3.5 million tons had not yet come to the market.<sup>105</sup> By early October 1943, the Punjab exported about 1,62,000 tons foodgrains.<sup>106</sup>

It was generally alleged in the Punjab that insufficient action was taken to prevent inflation, hoarding and profiteering. The official purchases of wheat had also been considered one of the main cause for increase in its prices as the Punjab Ministry represented landowning interests.<sup>107</sup> Rapid rise in inflation caused great distress amongst the poor.<sup>108</sup> The Axis Radio propaganda during the months of Sept. 1943 was concentrated almost exclusionary on exploiting India's food difficulties which were attributed to the British rule.<sup>109</sup>

The Government of India introduced statutory price control by December 1941. The fixing of prices proved to be utterly useless as there was no machinery for implementing it. It proved extremely unpopular with wheat producing cultivators in the Punjab. The Punjab cultivators resorted to hoarding. Consequently, black market developed.<sup>110</sup> Meanwhile, an independent Department was created by the Government of India in December 1942 which organized Food conferences with the representation of the

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<sup>103</sup> *Home/Political (I)*, File 18.11.1943 (Poll. II), GOI, NAI, 1943, p. 31.

<sup>104</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and The Raj (1849-1947)*, p.1 46.

<sup>105</sup> *Home/Political (I)*, File 18.8.1943 (Poll. I), GOI, NAI, 1943, p. 148.

<sup>106</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow : October 12, 1943: Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Political: Strains of War (1940-43)*, p. 403.

<sup>107</sup> *Home/Political (I)*, File 18.5.1943 (Poll. I), GOI, NAI, 1943, p. 169.

<sup>108</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 146.

<sup>109</sup> *Home/Political (I)*, File 18.9.1943 (Poll. I), GOI, NAI, 1943, p. 43.

<sup>110</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp. 292-93.

Princes.<sup>111</sup> Mr. K.H. Henderson, District Magistrate, Lahore stated that owing to very heavy military demands on wheat supply of the Punjab, there was likelihood of shortage of wheat.<sup>112</sup> Moreover, the export of wheat was criticized in the Punjab Legislative Assembly in March 1942.<sup>113</sup> The Punjabi peasant had retaliated by withdrawing supplies from the market. The Punjab appeared on the a famine in itself.<sup>114</sup> Government of India agreed to buy wheat through a central purchasing agency in every province. Admittedly, the price controls had failed.<sup>115</sup> The Governor, B.J. Glancy reported to the Viceroy Sir Linlithgow that the organisation by the trading classes of widespread movement designed to defeat certain economic enactments passed, in particular the Agricultural Produce Markets Act and the General Sales Tax Act. The Government postponed the enforcement of the Market Act till September as it was thought that the closing down of grain markets would have been a calamitous affair leading almost inevitably to extensive outbreaks of disorder.<sup>116</sup> The colonial state became more interventionist with a wide range of regulations. The officer became a hated figure in the village.<sup>117</sup> The Government reacted immediately and introduced changes in the Acts. The producers in some places sold out their grain by secret transactions instead of in the open market suffered financially.<sup>118</sup> The District Magistrate, Lahore, Mr. K.H. Henderson issued an order fixing retail prices of fire-wood'.<sup>119</sup>

In consultation with the Wheat Commissioner of India, the Punjab Government though reluctantly agreed to allow exports of wheat and wheat products to the maximum

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<sup>111</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 206.

<sup>112</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, March 1, 1942.

<sup>113</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 146.

<sup>114</sup> *The Tribune*, 11.12.1942.

<sup>115</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p., 293

<sup>116</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, Dated March 5, 1942, Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43): Strains of War*, 296-297.

<sup>117</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 148.

<sup>118</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, Dated 17 May, 1941 : Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43) : Strains of War*, 248.

<sup>119</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, February 8, 1942.

permissible limit of 900,000 tons during 1942. Such policy of export of wheat amidst shortages made the Unionist Government unpopular. Between May and October 1943, 265,100 tons of foodstuffs were sent from the Punjab to Bengal.<sup>120</sup> By August 1943, about one million tons of grain had been procured.<sup>121</sup> The shortage of foodgrains began to be felt in the Punjab.<sup>122</sup> The Punjab Government decided to build up a reserve to the extent of 40,000 tons of wheat, to be stored at various centres to ward off artificially engineered shortages. It would have the effect of stabilizing prices at a level which would ensure a fair share of increased price of wheat going into the hands of the cultivator.<sup>123</sup> Food was characterized as 'a munitions of war'.<sup>124</sup> The Central Food Department made arrangements for providing storage accommodation for foodgrains. New constructions were contemplated in the Punjab. Accommodation for 60,000 tons had already been hired in the Punjab. The space was expected to increase upto 1.5 Lakh tons.<sup>125</sup> By the beginning of July 1945, about 7632 tons of foodgrains were dispatched from the Punjab to the deficit provinces in India.<sup>126</sup> Despite such stringent steps, there was increase in the prices of food stuffs and other commodities. On the whole, the district officers were successful in their efforts to enforce the orders passed. However, there were well founded complaints that dealers withheld all but small stocks from the market or had sought to evade control by means of adulteration.<sup>127</sup> A fair number of offenders had been prosecuted which produced some statutory results. It was feared that a prolonged scarcity of supplies in a particular area could well head to looting and riots.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab under the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 146.

<sup>121</sup> D. Rothermund, *An Economic History from Pre-Colonial Times to 1986*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 123-24.

<sup>122</sup> David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*, University of California Press, London, 1988, pp. 196-97.

<sup>123</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, May 17, 1942.

<sup>124</sup> *Indian Information*, April 1, 1944, p. 405.

<sup>125</sup> *Indian Information*, July 1, 1944, p. 26.

<sup>126</sup> *The Tribune*, 8.8.1945.

<sup>127</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, January 1, 1942 : Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43) : Strains of War*, 288.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid*, 288-89.

The Punjab Ministry adopted a conciliatory attitude to the moneyed classes and modified various proposals calculated to cause resentment among the urban community. The District Magistrate, Lahore, Mr. K. H. Henderson fixed the maximum retail prices of firewood throughout the Lahore district. Any breach would be treated as an offence under sub rule (4) the Defence of India Rules.<sup>129</sup> Through its policies of food requisition, rationing, and price control, the Raj, compromised its cardinal principle of maintaining rural stability.<sup>130</sup> In fact, during the last years of the War, the Punjab rural population became subject to a wide range of regulations. The district officer became a hated figure in the village.<sup>131</sup> On the recommendations of the fifth Price Control Conference, the Government of India have issued a food grains control order under which all persons, other than producers of food grains engaged in any undertaking which involves the purchases, sale or shortages for sale in whole sale quantities (i.e. quantities exceeding 20 maunds in any one transaction) of any of the specified food grain will be required to apply to the provincial government of a licence.<sup>132</sup> The food grains specified were paddy, rice, wheat (including wheat products), jowar, bajra, barley, grain and maize. The licence holders will be required to keep accounts in a prescribed manner and to submit monthly returns of their purchases, sales and stocks. The objective was to maintain close supervision over the prices and stocks of food grains throughout British India and to put an effective check on the hoarding of foodgrains by consumers which had caused 'Rise in Prices'.<sup>133</sup> The rationing was first introduced in July 1943 in 13 cities and areas in India. The devastating famine in Bengal led to change in public opinion.<sup>134</sup> The London Government was ready to compromise its naval operations for the transportation of food. Both Lord Amery and Lord Linlithgow agreed that India was not in the mind of

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 289.

<sup>130</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, February 8, 1942.

<sup>131</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p.302. Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj 1849-1947*, 149.

<sup>132</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, May 24, 1942.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Henry Knight, *Food Administration in India (1939-47)*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1954, p. 189.

London.<sup>135</sup> Hence, the Government of India had no option but to look internally. It had to forced requisitioning and price control.<sup>136</sup> The Government of India regarded total urban rationing as a fundamental part of all India food Policy. However, the Provincial Government suggested a partial rationing.<sup>137</sup> Earlier the Punjab Government criticized the Central Government for passing the ‘freezing of stocks of food grains pledged to certain banks’ without consulting the Provincial Government.<sup>138</sup> The Punjab Government could prevent the Central Government from acquiring all surplus for the deficit regions. The Punjab Legislative Assembly warned that price control moved result in very keen resentment and discontent among agricultural classes.<sup>139</sup> As the Bengal Famine crisis deepened further, the forced food requisitioning was introduced in 1943 in the Punjab.<sup>140</sup> Thus, the Government of India forced rationing and requisitioning upon the Punjab in September 1943 and price control in November 1943. The Unionists were deeply ‘disappointed’. The hopes of bumper harvests and handsome profits proved ‘illusory’.<sup>141</sup> Political insecurity and good prospects in black market created a situation or a result of which maize, wheat and grain had virtually disappeared from the open market by December 1945.<sup>142</sup> By November 1944, 460 towns and municipal areas were brought under rationing covering 42 million people; by February 1945, the number reached to 516 with a population of 50 million. By October 1946, about 771 times and rural areas with 150 million were brought under rationing; the number reached 878 cities and 159.5

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<sup>135</sup> Amery to Linlithgow, August 5, 1943, Nicholas Mansergh (eds.), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 158.

<sup>136</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 292.

<sup>137</sup> *Indian Information*, March 15, 1944.

<sup>138</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, October 12, 1943 : Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43) : Strains of War*, 402.

<sup>139</sup> *PLAD*, November 4, 1943, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 80-119.

<sup>140</sup> War Cabinet Papers: 27 June 1944: Nicholas Mansergh (ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 1049.

<sup>141</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, pp. 294-95.

<sup>142</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions of Punjab (1945-46)*, Lahore, 1946, p. 6.

million population in India.<sup>143</sup> Thus, the food scarcity created during the War continued till the departure of the British in 1947.

In September 1943, grain requisitioning was introduced. It turned unpopular. At the command of the Central authorities, the Punjab Government ordered its district officials to induce the release of all surplus stocks of foodgrains lying in the villages or *mandis*.<sup>144</sup> The Punjab Government questioned the policy of requisitioning from small landholders. Furthermore, it was considered difficult to lay down any satisfactory dividing line between small and big landowners. The issue of food requisitioning created immediate tension between the Central Government and the Punjab Government and Unionists.<sup>145</sup> The Government preferred requisitioning in the Punjab and in certain other Provinces, be confined to stocks held by traders and middlemen unless there is a serious danger of unrest.<sup>146</sup> The ministers thought that such a policy would help 'to induce the growers to cooperate'. The Punjab Ministry also opposed the imposition of maximum limit confined to the Punjab.<sup>147</sup> In early November 1943, the Punjab Legislative Assembly adopted without division an unofficial resolution to the effect that any attempt to control the price of wheat 'would result in very keen resentment and discontentment among agricultural classes'.<sup>148</sup> Sir Chhotu Ram, Revenue Minister openly called for cultivators to hoard their wheat until they could secure higher price for their products.<sup>149</sup> The Viceroy condemned such 'ruthless political opportunism' with the general food position in India. He asked the Government of Punjab, Sir B.J. Glancy 'to admonish him (Chhotu Ram) very severely'. However, the Governor knowing the predicament of the

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<sup>143</sup> Henry Knight, *Food Administration in India 1939-47*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>144</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 292.

<sup>145</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab under the Raj (1849-1947)*, pp. 146-47.

<sup>146</sup> Glancy to Linlithgow, Lahore, dated 30, 1943 : Lionel Carter (ed.) *Punjab Politics (1940-43) : Strains of War*, 408.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 147.

<sup>149</sup> Linlithgow to Amery, June 19, 1943: Micholas Mansergh (ed.), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, Document 1p, p. 19, See also, Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, 293.

Unionists ‘attempted to defend Chhotu Ram’. The Viceroy remained unmoved.<sup>150</sup> Lord Linlithgow feared ‘an agrarian revolution’ in the Punjab and ‘reaction the Punjab soldiers serving overseas knowing that their houses were being invaded and their families insulted under the pretext of requisitioning and their legitimate claims out of food profits being taken from there’.<sup>151</sup> Lord Linlithgow knew that his would have ‘an unsettling effect on the military districts.’<sup>152</sup> Social groups, such as the rich farmers of the Punjab, expected to make large profits from rising grain prices. However, they were prevented from doing so by the colonial state’s procurement and price-control policies. The Punjab peasants ‘complained bitterly’ about the state’s heavy-handed interventions which they deemed to be ‘detrimental to their own interests’.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, the rural poor, workers and the fixed income groups in urban areas suffered seriously; those who did not receive fixed wages, they registered high profits.<sup>154</sup> He resorted to this measure under the pressure from the Cabinet to ensure that grain was adequately supplied to the famine-stricken areas of Bengal. He further blamed that the Punjab Ministers are engaged in blackmailing thus starving peasants of Bengal so as to make inordinate profits at a time when they have already made very substantial profits indeed. He even wrote to B.J. Glancy in September 1943, ‘the procurement of the necessary surplus wheat from the Punjab is more important than any political considerations, any interest of the Ministers and even continuance of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab’. That signed the end of putting the Punjabi Zamindar’s loyalty above other all other political consideration. Thus, the British

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<sup>150</sup> Linlithgow to Glancy, New Delhi, August 17, 1943: Micholas Mansergh (ed), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, Document 86, pp. 178-80. Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 148.

<sup>151</sup> Linlithgow to Amery, 21 September 1943: Nicholas Mansergh, (eds.), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. XI, 301.

<sup>152</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 293.

<sup>153</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, p. 130.

<sup>154</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, pp. 148, 176.

destroyed the political system they so carefully created.<sup>155</sup> The Unionist were successful ‘to stave off price controls’.<sup>156</sup>

Economic conditions within the Punjab continued to deteriorate during the final years of the War. In October 1944, Sardar Baldev Singh led the deputation to discuss the food situation with the Central Food Department. However, the Food Department continued ban on the free movement of grain between the Punjab and UP. By 1944, even countryside suffered economic dislocation as badly as the towns from shortages of consumer goods and inflation. The Lahore Retail Price Index rose from a base of 100 in August 1939 to 206 in 1942 and 376 in August 1945.<sup>157</sup> Until 1944, the high prices which the farmers gained for their produce largely outweighed the increased prices and shortages of consumer goods. During the Autumn 1944, a substantial and sustained fall in agricultural prices set in.<sup>158</sup> In February 1945, in the Fifth All India Food Conference, the Punjab representative argued that ‘the Punjab Government was not convinced that rationing is at all necessary in urban areas of a surplus province like Punjab.’<sup>159</sup> Nevertheless, the Premier, Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana was unable ‘to prevent the reintroduction of price control.’<sup>160</sup> In December 1944, supplements on marriage and death were specified. Foodgrains from 32 lbs to 100 lbs for wheat for marriage and from 5 lbs to 50 lbs on death. In the case of sugar from 3.2 lbs to 34 lbs for marriage and from 3.2 lbs to 16 lbs on death.<sup>161</sup> The supplementary quantities were often reduced arbitrarily. The confectioners were often unable to prepare sweets for the festive occasions due to controlled supply to sugar. The Confectioners Association of Kasauli decided to close

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<sup>155</sup> Food Department of Lord Amery 11 January 1944: Nicholas Mansergh (ed.) *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, pp. 623-26.

<sup>156</sup> Green Paul, *Impact of Rising Prices of Various Social Stratas in the Punjab*, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1944, p. 16.

<sup>157</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, 152.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, p.152-53.

<sup>159</sup> Henry Knight, *Food Administration in India (1939-47)*, p. 191.

<sup>160</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 148.

<sup>161</sup> *Food Deptt/Rationing*, File No. RP-1000(25), Vol. I, GOI, NAI, 1945, pp. 43-46.

their business due to ‘drastically reduced’ quota of sugar.<sup>162</sup> The Central Food Advisory Council had met in April 1945 at New Delhi. It passed a resolution that no supplementary ration be given for religious, social or marriage purposes during the War.<sup>163</sup> Grain prices staged a recovery in the early months of 1945. However, the *Zamindar’s* became increasingly reluctant to market their produce. Political insecurity, unfavourable prospect for the *rabi* crop and enticement of the black market led to such a decision. Many farmers regarded the high black market prices as a legitimate compensation for their other economic difficulties.<sup>164</sup> Rationing continued after the War. On 18 August 1945, Mr. F.B. Wace, Civil Supplies Secretary, the Punjab, announced that ‘as long as acute shortage of supplies existed, control would continue’. He expected rationing for another two years. He further elaborated that ‘while army demands would decrease as a result of the cessation of hostilities, civilian demands would increase with return home of soldiers’. The All India Radio aired a weekly broadcast on every Monday morning. In the first speech R.H. Hutchings, Secretary, GOI, Deptt. of Food, remarked ‘the War forced rationing on us, and the result has been something in the nature of an economic and social revolution. The individuals have had to accept rationing without regard to class, wealth and privilege.’<sup>165</sup> The Foodgrains movement with order of 1944, which prohibited the export of foodgrains from the Punjab was brought into force with effect from September 2, 1945. The Punjab Government fixed the statutory maximum price for wheat, *atta*, rice, maize, *bajra* and *jowar* and made their sale in wholesale quantities at prices higher than statutory maximum, a punishable offence.<sup>166</sup> Food prices in wartime Britain rose about 18 per cent; in India about 300 per cent for *rationed* foods.<sup>167</sup> W.H. Kirty, Rationing Advisory to the GOI, Deptt. of Food argued that through rationing ‘we

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<sup>162</sup> *The Tribune*, 1.10.1945.

<sup>163</sup> *Times of India* 1.4.1945: *Food Deptt. Rationing*, File No. RP-1000(24), Vol. I, GOI, NAI, 1945, p. 63: Nov. 12, 1945.

<sup>164</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and The Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 153.

<sup>165</sup> *Food Deptt/Rationing*, File No. RP-1000/49, 1945, GOI, NAI, p.29.

<sup>166</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab 1945-46*, p. 4.

<sup>167</sup> Indivar Kamtekar, “A Difficult War Dance: State and Class in India (1939-45)”, *Past and Present*, No. 176, August 2002, 201.

have curtailed wastage'.<sup>168</sup> By December 1945, wheat, maize and grain had virtually disappeared from the open market. Many towns including in the canal colonies began to experience a wheat famine. The Unionist Ministry resorted to use force to requisition grain from the villages. Disturbances broke out in Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Ferozepur in the middle of the elections of 1946.<sup>169</sup> During 1945-46, 4,15,886 tons of wheat, 96,813 tons of rice and 18,055 tons of millets were exported from the Punjab.<sup>170</sup>

Cakes etc. and of milk, cream and sugar making sweetments, chocolates and ice-cream etc. should be strictly followed.<sup>171</sup> The Punjab Government passed an order which banned the consumption to bread at all the food shops. The notification stated:

“These restrictions would be applicable to all caterers and persons in charge of hotels, restaurants and eating houses, tandoors, clubs, boarding houses, tandoors, clubs, boarding houses, canteens, railways, refreshment rooms or restraints, cars, cafes and all other similar establishments and places of refreshment open to public. Only three dishes comprising of one substantial dish on subsidiary and one sweet or savoury dish exclusive of the soup dish, can be served to secured at any one meal irrespective of whether these dishes are served successively or together. A substantial dish may be replaced by s subsidiary dish. Meat, cooked fish, poultry or game fish carry or rice and meat ‘pillaus would be taken be constitute main ingredients of a substantial dish, whereas cooked eggs or cereals or vegetables, dish or rich with vegetables or egg curry or ‘dal’ or both would be ingredients of a subsidiary dish. No bread pastry, rolls, rusks and biscuits can be served with lea or with lunch or dinner except the main ingredients of a subsidiary or a sweet or savory dish. Bread according to these notifications would mean and include, loaf, bread, ‘chapatis’, ‘poories’, ‘paranthas’, ‘Phulkas’, and ‘nans’.<sup>172</sup> The people complained that they were not accustomed to eat only curries like Western nations. The notifications warned to punishments.<sup>173</sup> The colonial state targeted the ‘tuxury items’. The Extraordinary Punjab Govern ant Gazette issued on 12 March 1946 ordered that no person shall manufacture for

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<sup>168</sup> *Food Deptt/Rationing*, File No. RP-1000-49, 1945, GOI, NAI, p.34: Nov 19, 1945.

<sup>169</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 153.

<sup>170</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab 1945-46*, p. 4.

<sup>171</sup> Deptt. of Food/Rationing/RP-1085, GOI, 1946, NAI, p. 13.

<sup>172</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.3.1946.

<sup>173</sup> *The Tribune*, 23.3.1946.

sale, or sell, takes and pastry in which the flour of any cereal or other food grain is an ingredients.<sup>174</sup>

Opposition to rationing manifested in different forms. A memorandum was passed and sent to the Deptt. of Food signed by 6000 residents of Karnal against the rationing. It argued: “The Karnal is mainly an agricultural district... the population of Karnal consists mostly of agriculturalists, Zamindar, or tenants and others dependent on agriculture viz. the field labourers and other coolies working with agriculturists... that the time of harvesting the crop labourers here have usually preferred, from time immemorial, to be paid in kind and to store their requirements in food grains for the full season till next harvest comes in. They do not want to take risks and chances and always provide themselves beforehand against all eventualities in their near future. They are not prepared to part with this, their little stock at all costs which they earn to toiling in the fields... it is proposed to introduce wheat rationing in two towns only i.e. Karnal and Panipat and not in the villages. With the introduction of wheat rationing in the towns, all labourers will result a huge loss to agricultural activities as well as industries. It is considerable that they would let their own find stock for the year to be taken or sealed by the Rationing authorities and then latter on themselves go a begging for bad and mixed wheat from month to month at a much higher rate.”<sup>175</sup>

The Government spokesman alleged that ‘a curious agitation was engineered by hoarders and black-marketers. In this ‘mischievous propaganda’ every effort was made to organise hartals and processions in which ignorant people are made to shout anti-rationing slogans. It was argued that the border towns in the Eastern Punjab figure prominently in a shame to stop smuggling of food grains into the U.P.<sup>176</sup> The press voiced the feelings of the people of Karnal:

“This is scarcely surprising in view of the fact that Karnal is situated in a surplus area; it is impossible to allay with words, real or imaginary fears of

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<sup>174</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.3.1946.

<sup>175</sup> *Food Deptt/Rationing/ Fill RT-1032-7, GOI, NAI.*

<sup>176</sup> *The Hindustan Times*, 25.9.1946.

food shortages in a district from which large exports of foodgrains are a daily and a public occurrence. Many, too many have found rationing a curse instead of a blessing”<sup>177</sup>

The memorandum further stated that “the people of Karnal are already fed up with rationing of sugar, kerosene oil and cloth. There is end of corruption in Government departments dealing with these things. People can live without sugar, kerosene oil or cloth, but what is their staple food and they cannot do without it.”<sup>178</sup> However, the Punjab Government finally introduced rationing in Karnal. Ration and other government control measures placed increasing power in the hands of the districts officials, notably the tehsildars and naib-tehsildars.<sup>179</sup> The growing wartime discontent favoured the Muslim League. The Punjab Peasant began resenting state procurement and price control policies when they considered profits from the rising grain prices legitimate.<sup>180</sup> During 1945-46, 4,15,885 tons of wheat 96,813 tons of rice and 18,055 tons of millets were exported from the Punjab.<sup>181</sup> The actual exports of foodgrains from the Punjab from 1<sup>st</sup> March 1945 to the beginning of February 1946 stood about 6,80,000 tons: wheat and products 4,72,000 tons; Rice 1,00,000 tons; Grain 56,000 tons; Barley 20,000 tons; Millets 23,000 tons and maize 9,000 tons.<sup>182</sup>

Many incidents of popular protest took place against rationing in the Punjab. On 21<sup>st</sup> February, news reached that in Kaisarganj *mandi*, 400 bags of wheat were lying waiting to be exported from the city. Immediately, a procession of 3000 workers and women reached the spot. They demanded the distribution to the grain. The officials refused and instead called in *lathi* police. The people were determined to secure the grain. Soon the Congress and Communist leaders reached the spot, met the Deputy

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<sup>177</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 23.9.1946.

<sup>178</sup> *Food Deptt/Rationing/File RT-1032 RT-1032-7*, GOI, NAI.

<sup>179</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 154.

<sup>180</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia Political Economy*, OUP, Delhi, 1999, pp. 159-60.

<sup>181</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab 1945-46*, p. 4.

<sup>182</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 17.2.1946.

Commissioner and made him distribute ten bags of grain there and then.<sup>183</sup> Similarly, in Hoshiarpur, on the February 27<sup>th</sup>, ‘a stirring procession of 1500 hungry people led by the Communist party marched around the city and demonstrated in front of the grain depots, all of which had been ‘reserved’ for government servants by a fantastic edict passed a few days earlier’. The procession marched to a hoarder’s shop where 500 bags of wheat were surrounded by a crowd of women. With the Police and the Additional District Magistrate looking on not daring to stop them, the crowd peacefully sold a large portion of wheat at controlled rates. The police threatened to lathi charge but dared not. Finally, the magistrate arrested the leaders Thakur Waryam Singh and Attah Rakha Chaman.<sup>184</sup> During 1945-46, rationing of wheat, atta, sugar was in force in four cities such as Lahore, Amritsar, Rawalpindi and Simla. The basic ration was fixed at 8 *Chhattaks* per adult per day and a supplementary ration of 4 *Chhattaks* per day was allowed to those engaged in heavy manual work, with effect from February 12, 1946. However, a cut of 2 *Chhattaks* per adult per day was made in the basic ration with a view to avoiding the wastage of foodgrains and sparing every grain for the deficit areas. Rationing of rice was enforced in Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi from March 23, 1946. The people strongly protested against this compulsory inclusion of rice in the basic ration. The Government allowed 66 per cent of the ration to be drawn in the form of wheat with effect from April 14, 1946.<sup>185</sup> Rationing rapidly became a communal issue. The Muslims of Lahore and the other large towns claimed that the predominantly Hindu and Sikh Civil Supply Officers openly discriminated against them in the distribution of rationed goods. In the Ambala Division, villages complained that they received smaller quotas than the urban population. Supplies of kerosene did not find way to the villages. Peasants of Rohtak demanded replacement of Civil Supply Officer.<sup>186</sup> The supplementary rations for sugar were allowed to Hindus, Muslims and Hindus at their religion festivals

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<sup>183</sup> *People’s Age*, 31.3.1946: Sumit Sarkar, *Towards Freedom: Document on the Movement for Independence in India*, 1946, Part I, OUP, New Delhi, 2007, p. 863.

<sup>184</sup> *People’s Age*, 31.3.1946, *Towards Freedom*, 1946, Part I, p. 863.

<sup>185</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab (1945-46)*, pp. 4-5, 21.

<sup>186</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 154.

such as *Navratas*, *Ramzan* etc.<sup>187</sup> The food crisis drove a wedge into the system of patronage that the British had built in the Punjab.<sup>188</sup> In fact, the prices rose rapidly during the early 1940s and continued at very heavy levels into 1947.<sup>189</sup> In the Punjab, the year 1945-46, proved to be even more expensive to live in than the previous War years. The price of all the commodities of daily use 'appreciably advanced'. The rice was greatest the in the luxury goods. An acute scarcity was being felt in respect of many commodities and prices had registered an all round rise.<sup>190</sup> The colonial state starved the Indian lower classes.<sup>191</sup>

Improvement in irrigation and opening of the canal colonies ushered in Punjab an era of abnormal prosperity and rise in the price of land. Price of Land rose in rupees per *acre* from 30 in 1880-81 to 59 in 1895-96, 71 in 1901-02, 129 in 1910-11, 215 in 1919-20, 406 in 1929-30 and 478 in 1933-34. By 1939, out of the total cultivated area of about 30 million *acres* in Punjab, nearly 10 million *acres* and 5 million *acres* were being irrigated by canals and wells respectively.<sup>192</sup> The rise in cost attracted the small peasants to sell their lands or borrow amongst them, since the money-lenders who once held land as useless, were now eager to lend against its fruits due to the creation of property in soil and the freedom with which that property could be alienated.<sup>193</sup> The complicated legal system of the British forced them to engage lawyers on heavy fees;<sup>194</sup> Family feuds,

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<sup>187</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab (1945-46)*, p. 21.

<sup>188</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 295.

<sup>189</sup> Dharma Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India (1757-1970)*, Vol. II, p. 879

<sup>190</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab (1945-46)*, p. 8.

<sup>191</sup> Indivar Kamtekar, "A Different Dance", *Past and Present*, No. 176, Anpust 2002, pp. 220-21.

<sup>192</sup> *Board of Economic Enquiry*, Supplementary 3 to Publication No. 52, Lahore: 1940, 6; See also, Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. 2, 151; *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, 3; See also, H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, Lahore: 1936, 219; Sohan Lal, *Development of Irrigation in the Punjab*, Lahore: 1956, p.1.

<sup>193</sup> B.B. Misra, *The Indian Middle Classes*, 15; See also Barrier, N.G., 'The Formation and Enactment of the Punjab Alienation of Land Bill (1900)', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. II, No. 2 (April, 1965, Delhi), p. 160.

<sup>194</sup> S.S. Thorburn, *Report on Peasant Indebtedness and Land Alienations to Moneylenders*, Lahore, 1896, p. 47.

complex revenue and tenancy laws, and altercations over canal waters resulted into excessive litigation;<sup>195</sup> People indulged in extravagance on occasions of marriages and other rituals/ceremonies while in years of prosperity. All spent extravagantly on drinking, gambling, bribery, etc. During the scarcity years lowering of standard was not possible in order to keep up a false prestige. It had to increase indebtedness. Debts were incurred mostly for unproductive purposes. At the most less than 5 per cent of the debt was incurred on improvement of lands;<sup>196</sup> Due to uncertainty of animal life, and high cattle morality, cultivator was compelled to keep reserves of cattle, which he failed to feed properly resulting into the increase of his debts;<sup>197</sup> A sudden increase in Punjab population that rose by 24.3 per cent during 1885 and 1891, retrieved the holdings still smaller making uneconomical; this trend continued afterwards too except in 1911;<sup>198</sup> and quite a potent factor constituted the unscrupulous methods of the money-lenders like the falsifications of accounts, the high rate of interest that doubled money.<sup>199</sup>

The rate of interest was no less in twenties and early thirties of the twentieth century. It was as high as 20, 30 or 40 per cent and some time even 75 per cent whereby Rs. 18/- could swell to Rs. 6.71 *lac* in 78 years.<sup>200</sup> On litigation alone, three to four *crores* rupees were being spent annually.<sup>201</sup> About 40 per cent of the adult population attended courts.<sup>202</sup> As the Government was drawing the large number of army recruits from among

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<sup>195</sup> S.S. Thorburn, 47; *Report on Peasant Indebtedness*. See also *Report of the Indian Famine Commission*, 1901, p. 110.

<sup>196</sup> Reed, S. and Cadell, R., *India: The New Phase*, London : 1928, 97-98, 230; See also R.K. Mukherjee, *Economic Problems of Modern India*, Vol. 1, London : 1939, 72; See also M.L. Darling, *Punjab Peasant and Prosperity*, 1928, 81; See also S.S. Thorburn, *Punjab in Peace and War*, London, 1904, pp. 352-53.

<sup>197</sup> *Abridged Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture*. 1928, para 236. Also see publication. No. 52, 26 of the *Board of Enquiry*.

<sup>198</sup> This conclusion has been derived from the figures given in the *Census Reports of the Punjab* for 1881, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931 and 1941.

<sup>199</sup> Accepted rate of interest was described as '*dam deorhe Jins dooni*' per year. Vide. S.S. Thorburn, *Report on Peasant Indebtedness and Land Alienations to Money-Lenders*, ; See also H. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, p. 372.

<sup>200</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXV, 190, 830-31; See also Vol. X, 23/11/1927, p. 1334.

<sup>201</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 153.

<sup>202</sup> H. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, p. 372.

the Punjab peasantry.<sup>203</sup> If land owners were reduced to the condition of tenants or laborers they would constitute political danger of firm dimension.<sup>204</sup> Thus, the ratio in Punjab of the money-lenders to its total population during this period stood over three times of the ratio for the rest of India.<sup>205</sup> Debt in the Punjab swelled to Rs. 90 *crores*; Rs. 135 *crores* and Rs. 200 *crores* in 1921<sup>206</sup>, 1929<sup>207</sup> and 1934 respectively. Interest on it, at the modest rate of 18.75 per cent per annum stood at rupees thirty *crores* being nearly ten times the provincial land revenue and almost equal to the total annual sale price of the agricultural produce. *Per capita* debt in 1934, in Punjab being ninety rupees was the highest in British India.<sup>208</sup> The open fact was that the capital invested in the rural money-lending business in Punjab was higher than the investment in any trade or industry.<sup>209</sup> Cumulative consequence of these evils was that the peasants continued to fall deeper in debt.<sup>210</sup> Their perpetually increasing amount shackled the agriculture.<sup>211</sup> The non-agriculturists money-lenders did not invest any capital to improve the land. They contended themselves with obtaining the best rent they could.<sup>212</sup> The enhanced

<sup>203</sup> H.K. Trevaskis, *Punjab Today*, 25; See also M. O'Dwyer, *India as I Knew It 1885-1925*, London : 1925, 230; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, p. 3.

<sup>204</sup> *Government of India's Records, Agricultural Indebtedness and Land Transfers*, Vol. II, *Punjab Correspondence*, 2; Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs.*, Vol. 2, p. 154.

<sup>205</sup> *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, 3; *J.G.* (tr.), 3/6/1931, 3; *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXVIII, 11/11/1935, 423, 1013, 15, 39, 78; See also Vol. XXV, 26/10/1934, 678, 837, 891.

<sup>206</sup> M.L. Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt.*, (1928 ed.), p. 17.

<sup>207</sup> *Report of the Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, 1929-30*, Vol. 1, para 222, Calcutta: 1930; See also *Report of the Central Banking Enquiry Committee, 1931*, Vol. I, Part-I, para 77; *Punjab Indebtedness Committee Report, 1931*, in *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. XXIII, 11/4/1933, 1017-18; See also Vol. XXV 26/6/1934, 88, 335, 838, 893; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, p. 3.

<sup>208</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XXV, 26/6/1934, p. 335.

<sup>209</sup> *Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee Report, 1929-30*, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, para 22; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, p. 3.

<sup>210</sup> *Annual Reports on the Working of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act for the years 1902-03*, 12; See also 1906-07, 1-2; 1919-20, 19; See also *Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Report, op.cit.*, Vol. 1, 137-38; See also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12/1/1939, p. 3.

<sup>211</sup> H.W. Wolff, *Co-operation in India*, London : 1919, p. 3.

<sup>212</sup> H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, p. 271.

agricultural wealth due to rising prices of foodgrains and war remittances was used to redeem mortgaged land. The total cultivated area which was redeemed in 1940 was 203, 669 which went upto 482, 641 in 1942.<sup>213</sup> Moreover, the consumer goods became costlier. The peasant resorted to redeeming their mortgaged lands.<sup>214</sup>

The Unionist, rubbing out this snag was notable achievement that in 1938, they got Enactment of the Punjab Alienation of Land Amendment Act (Act X of 1938) commonly known as the *Benami* Act. It provided that the *Benami* transactions tending to evade the provisions of this Act were to be declared as null and void.<sup>215</sup> Through another step, Act of 1938, the Punjab Government checked the alienation of land by agriculturist to another agriculturist. Deputy Commissioner, after making inquiry, could declare such transactions as null and void. He, thereafter, could restore the possession of such lands to the alienators. By 1940, the Act had gone a big way in releasing agriculturists land worth Rs. 15-16 crore. The money-lenders had usurped that land through fraudulent transactions.<sup>216</sup> However, after sometime the High Court and the Federal Court struck it down as being against Section 298 of the Government of India Act 1935. It was to be operative when the beneficiary was a non-agriculturist. At this Punjab Government got legislated another measure i.e. Alienation of Land (Amendment) Act, 1943, which was immune to the above lacuna.<sup>217</sup> The urban moneylenders misused the Restitution of Mortgaged lands Act by transferring their land of friends or relatives who were on active military service.<sup>218</sup> Moreover, a breakdown in the relationship between the landlords and their village labourers developed. The war remittances gave new economic independence to labourers.<sup>219</sup> Furthermore, the financial stringency forced the unionists to abandon

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<sup>213</sup> Gulshan Rai, *Agricultural Statistics of the Punjab 1940-43*, PBEI, Lahore 1945, Table 54, 21.

<sup>214</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 144.

<sup>215</sup> *Department of Finance*, Year 1938. File No. 22(80), FD (1948); See also *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), 17/9/1938, 119; 16/6/1938, p. 80.

<sup>216</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XII, 5/3/1940, 134; See also Vol. XV 31/1/1941, p. 603.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, 8/11/1943, 196, p. 201-04.

<sup>218</sup> *Eastern Times*, 11.2.1944.

<sup>219</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 145.

many of their ambitious programmes of rural uplift. The competition of That Canal Colony project got delayed. They could not reduce the water rates in the canal colonies and to introduce a sliding scale of land revenue charges which the smaller farmers were pressing hard.<sup>220</sup>

Hence, it is to be noticed that the development made in three spheres i.e. agriculture, industry and irrigation was greatly required due to the changed scenario of the province of Punjab. This changed scenario was the direct result of the impact of the World War II and also the change that had occurred due to the World War II which had commenced in 1939 and ended in 1945. The War had completely changed the thinking of the people of this province because each and every family of Punjab had contributed in this War both in men and material. Due to the impact of the War, almost all the sections of the society living in both rural and urban areas realized that if they did not bring revolutionary changes in the field of agriculture, industry and irrigation, they would not be able to stand on their legs in the changed scenario of the country and on the whole, of globe.

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid, 148-49.' Ian Talbot, "Deserted Collaborators: The Political Background of the Rise and Fall of the Punjab Unionist Party 1923-1947", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. II, No. 1, 1982, p. 512.

## CHAPTER-IV

### TRADE, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIAL CONTEXT

The World War II broke out in September 1939; though far from the scene of action, Punjab in particular and India in general could not remain unaffected by the forces of change. It unleashed across the globe. Myriad of problems of basic nature cropped up in Punjab and also the country; but what concerned the Government of Punjab first and foremost were the immediate exigencies of the War. Military and strategic demands, obviously, stood at the top, and the government effort to meet them soon involved the province in the overall War efforts of the British Empire and its Allies. India had supplied nearly 400 million tailored 'items, 2.5 million pairs of shoes, 75,000 silk parachutes. India's chief industrial contribution was cotton textiles. At one stage, India provided the enormous amount of 1.2 billion yards of cotton per annum to the defence forces; India, in fact, clothed the armies east of Suez.<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Supply of United Kingdom placed with India an order of 3 billion blankets in October 1939.<sup>2</sup> It was in the context that science and technology assumed great significance; and, as the experiences would show later, the Imperial War exerted considerable influence both on their progress as well as the British policy governing then in Punjab.

#### I

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India (1936-1937 to 1938-1943), declared India at War with Germany, through a vice-regal proclamation. Unlike in the Dominions, in India this was done without consulting the members of the Central Legislature and the Council; the provincial councils and, not less importantly, the country's political opinion. Under the Defence of India Rules, promulgated shortly afterwards, the government assumed sweeping powers. The Indian National Congress and others objected to the move but ultimately agreed to India's participation in the War

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<sup>1</sup> Indivar Kamtekar, "A Different War Dance: State and Class in India 1939-1945", *Past and Present*, L1 176, August 2002, p.195.

<sup>2</sup> Dharamjit Singh, *Lord Linlithgow in India (1936-1943)*, ABS Publications, Jalandhar, 2005, p. 145.

on the condition that freedom would be granted to her as well. This was a tricky situation. So, to confuse the issue, the Viceroy made what was then known as the 'Delhi Declaration' of 17<sup>th</sup> October 1939. The old offers of Dominion Status for India were repeated and more consultations with Indians were promised. But when this did not work, the government softened its attitude further and in order to seek the Punjab support in the crisis, made the 'August Offer' (8<sup>th</sup> August 1940). It was a little more than a repetition of the 17<sup>th</sup> October 1939 offer which was, of course, followed by a few administrative measures aimed at satisfying the nationalist demands.<sup>3</sup> As these moves and counter-moves were played out, the government stepped up efforts to gear up the Indian resources to deal with the exigencies of the War, not only in Punjab but also at distant War fronts. One of the first steps taken by the government was to convene the Eastern Group Conference in 1940 in Delhi. This resulted in the formation, in February 1941, of the Eastern Group Supply Committee with headquarters in India especially in Punjab.<sup>4</sup> It proved its usefulness mainly by saving much time in procuring articles of military equipment in the area East of Suez. In its two years existence, it could procure goods at the value of £ 174 million. It wound up officially its activities on April 16, 1942.<sup>5</sup> India developed 'a vast industrial machine for war supplies of every kind'.<sup>6</sup>

In India, realization of the value of science in the contemporary crisis came after bitter experiences. As the Imperial War raged, it badly exposed India's and also Punjab's technical and industrial backwardness and her dependence on others for a large variety of goods and commodities essential not only for the wartime requirements but also in the times of peace.<sup>7</sup> Not to talk of the numerous War supplies, the country and the province in question were unequipped even to service and maintain the defense equipment and such basic necessities as transport and communications system. Commenting on the

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<sup>3</sup> *Indian Annual Register*, Calcutta, 1939, (Vol. II, pp. 26-228). V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, Calcutta, 1957; and Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, New Delhi, 1987..

<sup>4</sup> M. Greenberg, 'Britain Mobilizes her Eastern Empire: Results of the Delhi Eastern Group Supply Conference', *Far Eastern Survey*, 10, 26 March 1941, pp. 58-60.

<sup>5</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, 5.10,1941.

<sup>7</sup> *Progress of Education in India 1937-1947*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1948, p. 172.

situation, *Science and Culture* observed in its editorial in November 1939: "... the outbreak of the War has found India totally unprepared not only for defense and offence, but also for maintenance of the smooth tenor of civil life, should the War be unfortunately prolonged for three years. Already the prices have soared up and if the complications further increase, some of the essential commodities for which India depends on foreign countries may be entirely stopped. It should be borne in mind that in spite of the pious intention contained in the resolution of the Government of India [of 1919 sent to the Secretary of State]...we have not developed our power resources; no steps have been taken for the manufacture of essential chemicals, metals and alloys, and commodities required for the maintenance of transport and communication services. The industries for the manufacture of scientific apparatus, glass and many other essential are either in a backward condition or do not exist at all.<sup>8</sup> Lord Chatfield's Committee had recommended a outlay of Rs. 7 Crore for expanding Indian Ordnance factories. After the fall of France, India was conceived as a centre of a Commonwealth group for the supply of the Middle Eastern theatre.<sup>9</sup>

This showed Punjab's utter inadequacy, in terms of quantity as well as quality, in the technical infrastructure and know-how. There were, no doubt, a number of scientific institutions and organizations in the country, but there was no integrated central control and coordination amongst them. Needless to say, there was no uniform official policy governing science either. But the War compelled the authorities to have a fresh look at things and make the best use of science for victory. The understanding and activities in England and the Allied circles did have immediate repercussions in the Punjab. In response to the call for co-operation within the Commonwealth and amongst the Allies for the War, India opened her liaison offices in London and Washington; scientific and technical missions were exchanged and by 1942, a War Resources Committee was constituted. A range of activities followed in the years to come.<sup>10</sup> India became the

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<sup>8</sup> 'The War Comes', (editorial) *Science and Culture*, V, 5, November 1939, p. 268.

<sup>9</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Moderns India (1770-1975)*, OUP, Delhi, 1983, p. 378.

<sup>10</sup> For organizational activities, See also S.C. Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department 1939-1946*, New Delhi, 1947; N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *Indian War Economy (Supply Industry and Finance)*, 1962.

principal supplier of cotton textile, jute, and jute products, leather products and wooden furniture. India supplied 60 per cent of its total demand which upto 75 per cent.<sup>11</sup> The profit in the entire Indian economy from 1940 to 1941 rose from 161 million rupees to 223 million, while the profit in the textile industry were more than doubled from Rs. 28 million to Rs. 70 million during 1940-41.<sup>12</sup>

### **TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

The need for immediate supply of technical personnel to the fighting machinery and scores of industries that backed up the gigantic War effort was a matter of first and foremost concern. Introduction of sophisticated weapons and machinery including the aero planes added urgency to the matter. This is the reason why the Government of India was jolted out of inaction all of a sudden and compelled to encourage technical education. Industrialists showed interest in it because they, too, needed more technical hands for stepping up their production. For the average middle class Indian, technical degrees became a route to better employment.<sup>13</sup> Realizing that trained technicians were not readily available in the Punjab and on the whole in the government resorted to emergency measures. In June 1940, a War Technicians' Training Scheme was introduced. The existing technical institutions, factories and workshops (especially those attached to the ordnance factories and the railways) were pressed into service wherever possible, and a target to train 52,000 persons by 1943 was fixed. Under the plan for technical training drawn up by the Labour Department of the Government of India, about 300 training centres were developed and by 1945 as many as 80,000 people had been trained most of whom were absorbed into the army.<sup>14</sup> The need was so pressing that the government did not hesitate in starting such technical training centres even at places like the college of Engineering and Technology, Bengal, at Jadavpur, and Lahore in the undivided Punjab, which had otherwise been the citadel of the National Education, a

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<sup>11</sup> Percival Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India 1740-1975*), p. 378.

<sup>12</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 77.

<sup>13</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, pp. 171-174.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174. For details, see *Report of the Technical Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board*, Delhi, pp. 24-25. *The Indian Information*, 15 September, 1945, p. 253.

programme of *Swadeshi* movement, in the country.<sup>15</sup> Liberal allowances were given during the period of training. About a hundred special technical instructors were requisitioned from England. Under the Bevin Training Scheme, young Indians aged (majority from Punjab) 20 to 30 years were trained at selected centres in England in engineering, trades and in the principles of labour organization. On their return, they were employed in responsible supervisory posts including in the army.<sup>16</sup>

The fall of France in June 1940 and the Japanese advance towards India changed the whole strategy of the War. In the new scheme of things, India assumed greater significance than ever before. Now the battle was to be fought and won in Asia, for which India was to be used as a base both for supply and operation. The British and the Allied effort were, therefore, concentrated on India in order to develop her into a strong base, sufficiently independent in resources and powerful enough to check the Axis advance. Soon India was taken into Allied planning and measures were set afoot develop her accordingly. Two factors required urgent attention: first, the country needed to be provided with enough facilities for servicing and maintenance of military machines and equipment; and, secondly, her industries were to be geared up to cater to the War efforts and tide over the economic crisis caused by the War. In order to ensure this, expert missions from the Allies, the UK and the USA in particular, visited the Punjab in quick succession. This was reciprocated by the visits of Punjab technical teams abroad.<sup>17</sup>

The Ministry of Supply (Roger) Mission from Britain visited various provinces of India in September 1940. But the visit of the American Technical Mission in 1942 was more important in many ways and influenced the developments in India considerably. The Mission, with Henry F. Grady as chairman, arrived in New Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1942 and worked in India for the next five weeks conferring with officials of various departments of the Government of India and of some of the provinces and states. It also conferred with industrial leaders, businessmen and Chambers of Commerce in New

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<sup>15</sup> *National Council of Education, Bengal, 1906-1958*, Calcutta, 1956, p. 32.

<sup>16</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, pp. 173-174.

<sup>17</sup> N.C. Sinha and P.N. Khera, *Indian War Economy*, 1962, Chapters I-IV; Voigt, *India in World War II*, 1987, Chapters II-II. For details, see S.C. Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department 1939-1946*, New Delhi, 1947.

Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay. It visited government munitions factories, railway workshops, shipbuilding and ship-repair shops, and the principal industrial plants engaged in the production of War materials in and around Calcutta. It also inspected the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur and major industrial plants at Bombay and the Karachi port.<sup>18</sup>

To begin with, the focus of the Commission in this regard was limited primarily to servicing and repair of the military equipment and, thus, developing Punjab as what may be called a base workshop for the Allied forces.<sup>19</sup> Although this did not envisage any technical progress of an advanced nature, it pleaded, nevertheless, for enhancing the technical capabilities in the areas and at a scale never thought of in the past. This imparted urgency to the development of technical education in the province. Moreover, by advising import of technical personnel, including for technical education and technical training of Indians abroad, especially in the USA, it inaugurated an era of scientific and technical collaboration between India and the non-British world.<sup>20</sup> On this and the allied subjects, expert committees were also constituted internally to advise the British Government of India. An Industrial Utilization Committee was appointed in 1940 followed by an Industrial Research Fund the next year. A Directorate of Merchant ship Repairs was constituted in 1942, and the same year the Grant Massie Committee was convened to advise on the procurement and production of surgical instruments. The UK Machine Tool Mission visited India in July 1944. Most of these Committees had a bearing on the introduction and expansion of new technology in the country, and suggestions of some of them led to increased facilities for technical education. In order to make available a sufficient number of technical personnel for the post-War needs, the government instituted an Overseas Scholarship Scheme towards the end of 1944. An

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<sup>18</sup> *American Technical Mission to India, A survey of India's Industrial Production for War Purposes: Report of the American Technical Mission*, Washington, 1942 (This report has many versions).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*.

<sup>20</sup> Procs. GOI, *Department of Education, Health and Lands*, Health Branch: FN. 53-7/42E.; FN. 27-7/44E.; FN. 73-26/45E.I.

elaborate arrangement was made in this regard and students were sent to UK and USA for studies.<sup>21</sup>

Away from such emergency measures, technical education continued to be imparted as usual at its traditional centres, viz., universities and schools and at workshops of government establishments like the ordnance factories and the railways, and at workshops of private enterprises. But the state interest in these centres was limited only to such technical courses as were of immediate value for the War. Otherwise, the government was rather indifferent to the purely academic aspect of the subject. No doubt, a new polytechnic school was started at Delhi in 1941 and new technical courses were introduced or old ones reframed at the various universities in the country,<sup>22</sup> but most of the academic centres concerned were starved of funds and staff during the War.<sup>23</sup> However, we cannot overlook certain positive developments. When the War started, technical education was not organized in the province of Punjab and India. This had been promoted until then only to meet the demands of such sectors as the railways, ordnance factories and a limited number of industries. There was no long-term government policy in the matter. Institutions of technical education suffered from a plurality of authority, absence of coordination and planning, and from the paucity of funds and resources. The number of courses was limited and the subject was yet to become an integral part of the education system. Most of these problems continued even later, but the War and the enhanced indigenous demand for technical education obliged the government to promote it systematically.<sup>24</sup> In the Punjab, more than 300 technicians were trained in about 18 centres. They belonged to all the classes and communities. Both the literate as well as illiterate men had equal opportunities of learning how to become blacksmiths, carpenters copper and tinsmiths, fitters, moulders, painters, pattern makers, writing knowledge of

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<sup>21</sup> Aggarwal, *History of the Supply Department (1939-1946)*, New Delhi, 1947, Chapters III, V, esp. pp. 201,227,231,269-270. For scholarships, see *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, Chapter VI.

<sup>22</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, p. 171.

<sup>23</sup> Departmental proceedings are full of references to War-time cuts in finances to scientific institutions.

<sup>24</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, pp. 170-172. *Science and Culture*, *Current Science* and *Proceedings of the Indian Science Congress* are full of articles on it.

Urdu and English and necessary for some trades. Stipends of Rs. 22 and Rs 27 were given. They were trained in Lahore at N.W. Railway Workshop, the Craik Technical Institute and the Victoria Diamond Jubilee Institute.<sup>25</sup>

One of the first important steps taken in this direction was the foundation of the Association of Principals of Technical Institutions, India, in 1941.<sup>26</sup> But perhaps the most important step taken by the government was the appointment of the Technical Education Committee in 1943. Under the Chairmanship of John Sargent, Educational Advisor to the Government of India, this Committee was appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education 'to explore ways and means of developing facilities for technical education in the country as a whole'. The Committee began with a discussion on the problems and prospects of technical education. It attributed the restricted demand for technically trained hands in India to be limited and uncertain job opportunities, the practice of filling more remunerative posts with imported technicians and to the traditional dislike of the middle and upper class Individuals for taking industrial occupations.<sup>27</sup> However, the Committee appreciated the salutary changes brought about by the War. It noted the expansion of industries and the greatly increased demand for technicians.

### **SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH**

However, only the repair and maintenance of weapons and machinery used in the War was not enough. The War that was expanding both in time and space required more supplies, its ferocity demanded more powerful weapons, and the wants and shortages it created obliged the government to ensure unhindered supply and search for substitutes. This became all the more urgent after the fall of France, which brought the War nearer home for Britain; and communications with India and supplies to her were badly disrupted. Similarly, the Japanese advance in the East and fall of many British possessions like Burma and Malaya blocked supplies of a large number of items to India,

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<sup>25</sup> *The Khalsa*, Lahore, 3.5.1942.

<sup>26</sup> Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> meetings of the CAGE, Item XVII, *Central Advisory Board of Education: Silver Jubilee Souvenir*, New Delhi, 1960 (hereafter CAGE Souvenir) 1960, p. 83.

<sup>27</sup> *Report of the Technical Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India (1943-1946)*, Delhi, 1946, pp. 1-2.

such as tin, cinchona, wood and rice.<sup>28</sup> To add to the problem, the concentration of Allied troops (along with the expanded Indian Army) in and around India required the supply of hundreds of items from arms and ammunition to clothing, food and medicine. The Indian army (mostly hailed from Punjab) expanded in size from just over 205,000 in October 1939 to over 2,251,000 in July 1945. All this necessitated revamping of basic amenities like transport and communications, and health services, along, of course, with increased defense preparedness. Thus, in a situation of acute disruption in imports and dislocation of economy, self-sufficiency in production and supply was vital.<sup>29</sup> The experience of the World War I and the subsequent developments all over the world had underlined the role science and technology could play in this.<sup>30</sup> The Government of India, therefore, moved forward, albeit belatedly, to accord priority to technical support for stepping up industrial output. Encouragement was given to a wide range of industries producing goods and articles needed for the War such as those dealing with arms and ammunition, machine tools, engineering, transport and communications, textiles, steel, chemicals, timber, rubber, dyes, drugs, mining and minerals, and electrical and surgical appliances. In the areas where industries already existed, the government encouraged increased production; where they did not, incentive and licenses were given to start new ones.<sup>31</sup>

The direct involvement of the government was, however, confined mostly to industries catering to the defense needs. Establishments such as state ordnance factories and railway workshops were assigned special responsibilities and expanded to meet them. Before 1939, the Ordnance Laboratories in the Punjab had a very restricted scope and they were concerned mainly with routine testing of sample of stores to be purchased by the government. The Imperial War gave them great impetus by expanding their scope of work and making research an important part of their activities. They were now engaged on a fairly extensive scale in applied research at Ordnance General Stores, and had well-

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<sup>28</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, Department (1939-1946), 1947.

<sup>29</sup> John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945*, New York, 2001, p. 66; Sinha and Khera, *Indian War Economy (Supply Industry and Finance)*, CIHs, 1962, Pt. I; P.N. Khera, *Technical Services: Ordnance & IEME*, Pt. I, India & Pakistan, 1962.

<sup>30</sup> S&C, V, 5 November 1939, pp. 265-268.

<sup>31</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply Department (1939-1946)*, 1947 is a very useful source on the subject. Also see, *Statistics relating to India's War Effort*, Delhi, 1947.

equipped laboratories for chemicals, industrial machines and tools, textiles, lubricants, fuels, surgical instruments, parachute components and allied equipment, timber and wood ware, leather and rubber, and biological problems.<sup>32</sup>

In order to boost the industrial production, the government also allowed private firms to expand and diversify. In a few cases, it collaborated with them, as with the Tatas for the production of armored vehicles, railway equipment, steel and aircraft,<sup>33</sup> and with Walchand Hirachand for aircraft.<sup>34</sup> The collaboration came by way of assurance to them for the purchase of goods produced or also by holding shares. In still other cases it promoted private industries in a desired direction or controlled them by providing protection and assuring market, offering technical advice and facilities for import of machinery, and through grant of licenses and control orders. While these measures led to an unprecedented industrial growth and expansion, they did not necessarily imply and significant innovation and research.<sup>35</sup> When the government realized that the War was likely to continue and intensify and shortages and dislocation would get worse, it felt the need to exploit all the resources available in India. In order to obtain optimum output and quality, better scientific methods and technology had to be employed. This called for planning and organization not only of the industries and production process but also of the scientific research and technological innovation affecting them.<sup>36</sup> Initial response of the government was rather curious, though not unexpected altogether. Austerity and economy, and not science, appeared to be their first concern. As a result, a proposal was put forward to abolish the Industrial Intelligence and Research Bureau as a measure of wartime economy. Fortunately, the Member of the Department of Commerce,

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<sup>32</sup> *Report of the Industrial Research Planning Committee, 1945*, New Delhi, 1945, pp. 108-109.

<sup>33</sup> *Tata Papers*: Serial No. 75, Cupboard No. 1, File Nos. 8, 14, 28, 32, 44, 42, 43, 47 (December 1938-December 1947); Serial No. 76, GOI Cardboard No. 1, File No. IV, Items 33, 36, 39; Serial Nos. 92, 96, Cupboard No. 1, at TISCO Division, Bombay House, Bombay; and Verrier Elwin, *The Story of Tata Steel*, Bombay, 1958, pp. 87-89.

<sup>34</sup> *Walchand Hirachand Papers*: File No. 541, Parts I & II, (NMML), New Delhi; S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, Department (1939-1946), 1947, pp. 232-233.

<sup>35</sup> See S. Subramanian and P.W. Homfray, *Recent Social and Economic Trends in India*, New Delhi, 1946.

<sup>36</sup> Khera, *Technical Services*, Pts. I-II, 1962.

Ramaswamy Mudaliar, realized the value of industrial research in wartime. He contended: ‘In wartime no economy can be too disastrous which starves industrial research and not expenditure too high which mobilizes the scientific talent of the country for the research and production of War materials’.<sup>37</sup> So, though he abolished the Bureau but only to replace it with a far more comprehensive Board of Scientific and Industrial Research (BSIR). The Board was constituted on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1940 and placed under the Department of Commerce. As the Member of the Department, Mudaliar became the first Chairman of the Board and S.S. Bhatnagar (1894-1895), the then Head of the Punjab University Chemical Laboratories, Lahore, was appointed Director, Scientific and Industrial Research, as the next person.<sup>38</sup> A communiqué issued at the first meeting of the Board on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1940 outlined its functions as to: (1) advise the government on proposals for instituting special researches; (2) help in the study of problems affecting particular industries and trades; (3) make proposals for the establishment of research studentships, scholarships and fellowships; and (4) receive proposals from various research institutions and universities. A sum of Rs. 5 *lakhs* was allocated for its maintenance and expenditure.<sup>39</sup> As the War gave impetus to the research activities of the Board, it was able to work out, within a year, several processes in its laboratories for industrial utilization. They included a method for the purification of Baluchaistan sulfur, anti-gas cloth manufacture, dyes for uniforms, development of vegetable oil blends as fuel and lubricant, plastic packaging for army boots and ammunition, and preparation of vitamins.<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile, as India’s importance in the Allied strategy increased further, the question of industrialization became paramount and industrial research important.<sup>41</sup> By this time, considerable pressure of Indian public opinion, too, had built up in this

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<sup>37</sup> Shiv Visvanathan, *Organizing for Science*, Delhi, 1985, p. 117.

<sup>38</sup> *Commerce Department* Resolution No. 148-S&T (I)/40, 27 April 1940.

<sup>39</sup> The Board of Scientific and Industrial Research (Government of India): A Comparison of its Functions with those of the DSIR, S&C, V, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1940, p. 649; also *Report of the Industrial Research Planning Committee 1945*, Allahabad, 1945, p. 109.

<sup>40</sup> S.S. Bhatnagar, *A Brief Account of the Activities of the CSIR*, ACC No. 361, f2-678-RU (undated), NAI.

<sup>41</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, 1987, esp. pp. 60-81.

regard.<sup>42</sup> So, the success of the BSIR encouraged the government to put its research to actual application. In 1941, an Industrial research Utilization Committee (IRUC) was created to advise the government on the commercial utilization of the processes evolved under the auspices of the BSIR.<sup>43</sup> On the recommendations of the IRUC, the government decided to use the royalty received from the industries in return for these processes to institute a separate fund to promote industrial research. As a result, an Industrial Research Fund (IRF) was created in November 1941 and was allowed to have an annual grant of Rs. 10 *lakhs* for a period of five years.<sup>44</sup>

But the most important step taken by the Government of India to organize and promote scientific and industrial research was the constitution of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in 1942. It was created as an autonomous body to administer the newly created Industrial Research Fund. Its administration was vested with a governing body nominated by the Government of India, and the BSIR and the Industrial Research Utilization Committee were merged into it as two advisory committees.<sup>45</sup> The Council came into operation with effect from 28<sup>th</sup> September 1942. The first Governing Body was presided over by N.R. Sarkar, Member of the Council of the Governor-General, with S.S. Bhatnagar as Director, Scientific and Industrial Research.<sup>46</sup> The Council had comprehensive powers, scope and resources to promote research in various fields. Detailed in its constitution, its functions included: (1) Promotion, guidance and cooperation of scientific and industrial research through institutions and specific research project; (2) establishment or development of an assistance to special institutions or development of existing institutions for specific studies of problems affecting particular

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<sup>42</sup> Sample of Indian opinion: D.N. Wadia, 'Minerals' Share in the War, Presidential Address, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1943, *Procs. Indian Science Congress*; and in the *Procs. National Institute of Science of India*: R.N. Chopra, Annual Address, 1940, esp. pp. 26-31; Symposium on Coal in India; symposium on Heavy Chemical Industries in India, 1943; Janan Chandra Ghosh, Opening Address to the Symposium on Post-War Organization of Scientific Research in India, September 1943, pp. 3-7.

<sup>43</sup> *Commerce Department* Resolution No. 148-Ind (63)/40, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1941.

<sup>44</sup> *Report Industrial Research*, 1945, p. 109.

<sup>45</sup> *Commerce Department* Resolution No. 148-Ind (157)/41, 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1942.

<sup>46</sup> Industrial Research Fund, *Current Science*, X, November 1941, p. 493.

industries and trades; (3) establishment and award of research studentship and fellowships; (4) utilization of the results of research conducted under the Council towards the development of industries in the country and payment of share of royalties arising out of that to those devising them; (5) establishment, maintenance and management of laboratories, workshops, institutes and organizations to further scientific and industrial research, and to utilize and exploit any discovery and invention likely to be of use too Indian industries; (6) collection and dissemination of information in regard with not only scientific papers and a journal of industrial research and development; and (8) any other activity to promote generally the objects of the resolution.<sup>47</sup>

Thus, by the middle of the Imperial War, India came to have an all-India organization of industrial research with four composite bodies dealing with different aspects of scientific and industrial research. They were the BSIR, Industrial Research Utilization Committee, CSIR, and Directory of Raw Materials. Of these, the CSIR was the supreme body. Though chronologically the youngest, the Council held 'a unique position by the comprehensiveness of its functions and scope'.<sup>48</sup> Meanwhile, under this top organizational set-up scores of research laboratories and experimental stations under various departments of the Governments of India also existed, but their normal programme was often deflected to meet the exigencies of the War, or else they were starved of funds and other resources. Generally speaking, search for substitutes, testing and standardization, and repair and servicing formed the main area of their activities whether it was the Forest Research Institute at Dehra Dun, the Imperial Veterinary Research Institute at Izatnagar, Laboratories connected with jute, cotton and lac, or the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore.<sup>49</sup>

The stimulus the War provided to industrial and scientific research had some productive repercussions in the major provinces and native states. It may be recalled that the Twelfth Industries Conference held in 1940 had recommended the establishment of local research committees in the provinces and states to form a liaison with the Board of

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<sup>47</sup> *Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in India-A Review*, New Delhi, 1945, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> S.S. Bhatnagar, *A Brief Account of the Activities of the CSIR*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102-121.

Scientific and Industrial Research.<sup>50</sup> In pursuance of this suggestion, the Government of India directed the provinces and states, in early 1941, to institute such committees. Before this date, the only provinces which had research organizations of this kind, the only provinces which had research organizations of this kind were Bengal (since 1940) and Bombay (since January 1941). In response to the Central move, provincial research committees were formed in the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Madras, the Central Provinces, Berar, and the Punjab during 1941-1942. Among the Indian States, constitution of similar organizations in Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Baroda and Punjab deserve special mention.<sup>51</sup>

As the importance of industries for victory in the War became clear to the government and the needs for substitutes made industrialization unavoidable, the government was obliged to consider the question of industrial research more seriously and with a long-term perspective in mind.<sup>52</sup> Accordingly, the CSIR decided, in December 1943, to appoint a committee to undertake a comprehensive survey of the existing facilities for scientific and industrial research in the country and report on necessary measures of coordination, control, direction and development of research by various agencies necessary for the planning of such research in the post-War India. The proposed Industrial Research Planning Committee was constituted under Sir R.K. Shanmugham Chetty as Chairman in the beginning of 1944 and its report was published in February 1945. The Committee was directed to make a survey of the existing facilities for scientific and industrial research existing in India including the Indian States (in the universities, research institutions and laboratories attached to industrial and other concerns); and plan a scheme of coordinated expansion of research activities by private firms, research institutions and states and others research establishments. It was expected to suggest measures to be taken to promote, direct, control and organize such research

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<sup>50</sup> Proceedings of the Twelfth Industries Conference, *Bulletins of Indian Industries & Labour No. 71*, Simla, 1941, 34.

<sup>51</sup> *Report Industrial Research 1945*, pp. 110-112.

<sup>52</sup> *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, 324; Also see, *Proc. Of the Industries Conferences*.

activities; and report on such other steps as might be taken towards industrial and scientific research in post-War India.<sup>53</sup>

### **AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED SCIENCES**

Being a mode of primary production, agriculture could not be separated from industrial activities. Needless to say, it was the mainstay of life for millions in India, besides being the greatest source of revenue for the government and an important source for the export trade. In fact, it was not a high priority on the official agenda; the enhanced government interest in its development, during the World War II, needs some explanation. The War, of course, was the greatest factor behind this change in the attitude. Besides the vastly increased demand for food supply to the armed forces-British Indian and Allied-in and around India, the War requirements included a variety of other agriculture and allied products, ranging from dairy products to jute, silk, wood, lac and pack animals like horse.<sup>54</sup> Obviously, these demands were over and above the existing usual demands for the civilian population which had risen perceptibly over the past years.<sup>55</sup> To add to the urgency in the matter, a major famine occurred in some parts of the country in the midst of the War and compelled the government to initiate administrative measures for agricultural improvement.<sup>56</sup>

The government focused its efforts in three directions; first, to increase the financial resources for training, research and extension; second, to direct the educational and research activities towards specific War needs; and third, to improve the organization and planning for agricultural education, research and extension. When the Imperial War broke out, the financial position of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, the apex body dealing with agricultural sciences was quite insecure and it was not able to plan and execute long-term research programmes. In order to remedy this, the Government of India passed an Agricultural Produce Cess Act in 1940 and the annual

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<sup>53</sup> For the list of the members of the Industrial Research Planning Committee, see Appendix IV; also *Industrial Research 1945*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>54</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply*, 1947, esp. Chapters LIX, LX, LXII, LXV.

<sup>55</sup> S. Subramanian, *Statistical Summary of the Social & Economic Trends in India (In the Inter-War Period)*, Delhi, 1945, esp. pp. 1-3.

<sup>56</sup> *The Famine Inquiry Commission: Final Report*, Delhi, 1945; and B.M. Bhatia, *Famines in India*, Bombay, 1967, pp. 309-339.

income of Rs. 14,00,000 (1.4 million) from this cess was proposed to be spent agricultural research schemes.<sup>57</sup>

In response to the pressing demands during the crisis, scientific activities in the field of agriculture were directed primarily towards finding substitutes for the various materials whose import had been disrupted, demands increased or created on account of the War. Studies and experiments were encouraged to exploit agricultural products and by-products like biogases and molasses, for producing alcohol, paper pulp and insulating materials, industrially.<sup>58</sup> Research was also carried out on several plants to find substitutes for rubber and fiber.<sup>59</sup> But a greater attention was paid to forest products. The Imperial War created an enormous demand for Indian wood. It was required for a variety of purposes but especially for the extension of the railways both in India and at different theatres of the War abroad, where a huge supply was made throughout the conflict.<sup>60</sup> Efforts were, therefore, made to maintain the availability of wood and to add strength and longevity to it through improved seasoning and other processes. Experiments were also conducted to use wood as a substitute for metal.<sup>61</sup> Wood, along with other plants and a variety of forest products, was subjected to investigation and research to obtain chemicals or their substitutes to be used for the production of such materials as waterproof paints and varnishes and fire extinguishing substances. These experiments were carried out at different institutes of the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute at Delhi and the Forest Research Institute at Dehra Dun.<sup>62</sup> Besides its use as paint and varnish, lac was used as insulator and so it found many applications in the field of electronics and communications which played a vital role in the global War. The Lac Research Institute at Namkum near Ranchi in Bihar, therefore, became an extremely

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<sup>57</sup> S&C, V, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1941, p. 574.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Report of the Director in the *Abridged Scientific Reports of the Imperial Agricultural Research Institutes for the Triennium ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 1944*, Delhi, 1946, pp. 14-15; and *Ibid.*, for 1945, pp. 14ff.

<sup>60</sup> *India's Forest and the War*, Delhi, 1948; and *100 Years of Indian Forestry 1861-1961*, Vol. I, 1961, p. 83.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*; *Annual Report* of the FRI for the relevant years.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*; *Scientific Reports of the IARI*, 1946.

active centre of research. It worked in close collaboration with the London Shellac Research Bureau and the Brooklyn Institute of Technology, USA.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, as the demand for silk increased high on account of its use in the manufacture of parachutes, sericulture engaged considerable attention during this period.<sup>64</sup>

Besides using agro-forest resources for the War, attempts were also made to utilize ammonium nitrate and its mixtures with TNT from surplus ammunition stores as a fertilizer.<sup>65</sup> However, the intentions behind the increased state interest in meteorology and locust control may not be read in isolation from the aviation requirements during air operations.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, the rise of subjects like statistic and agronomy around this time was largely due to the official concern for exploiting agricultural resources commensurate with the demands of the War.<sup>67</sup> Here it may not be out of place to mention that throughout the War, Indian forests were exploited on an unprecedented scale leading to their fast depletion and that of the life and ecology dependent on them. The Imperial War marked a watershed in the history of ecology and conservation in India, but the government does not appear to have taken up any significant remedial measures in this regard, except forestation in some parts of the country.<sup>68</sup> The damages caused by the Imperial War to the ecology and environment of the country, especially in the north-east and other forest tracts, are yet to be examined properly.

Meanwhile, government concern for stepping up farm production continued and was in fact heightened as the War escalated and a famine struck the country in 1943. The need to provide adequate supply of food to the armed forces was an urgent need. As the situation worsened when the famine started showing its effects, public demand for

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<sup>63</sup> *Report Industrial Research*, 1945, p. 104.

<sup>64</sup> S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply Department (1939-1946)*, 1947, pp. 246-248.

<sup>65</sup> *Scientific Reports of the IAR*, 1944, p. 16.

<sup>66</sup> *Hundred Years of Weather Science, 1875-1975*, Poona, 1976; *Scientific Reports of the IARI* for 1944; p. 11; the same for 1945, p. 12.

<sup>67</sup> *Annual Report IVRI*, 1940-1941, p. 5.

<sup>68</sup> *Hundred Years of Indian Forestry 1861-1961*, Vol. I, p. 83; and S&C, VIII, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1943, pp. 366-370.

effective remedial measures rose high.<sup>69</sup> The initial official response was concerned mainly with the growing military demands and the disruption in trade and supply. A beginning towards stepping up food production had been made when the government launched the 'Grow More Food' campaign in 1942 and 'Food Conferences' became a frequent affair from that year onwards.<sup>70</sup> While the food conferences endeavored to study and monitor the food situation and planned for improvement in the future, the 'Grow More Food' campaign aimed at stepping up actual production in the field. The campaign resulted in an increase in *acreage* of cultivated area as well as in the production of food grains, but it did not imply and direct attempt to promote agricultural innovation. Its objective was to increase the production of food crops only and, as far as possible, with the help of existing resources. The result was that in many cases there was not only no increase in the output (despite the increase in *acreage*) but the yield actually came in many others. In cases where the production went up, the increase could be attributed to favorable weather conditions or to the expanded *acreage* resulting from the widespread propaganda. The campaign did not address such basic issues as the improvement of the production capacity of soil or of offering incentives to the tiller.<sup>71</sup> Later, at a certain stage, the government toyed with the idea of technological innovation and more relevant research in agriculture but nothing significant appears to have come out of it.<sup>72</sup>

From the viewpoint of scientific advancement, the official attention and encouragement to animal husbandry and veterinary sciences was impressive. Besides their routine work (which was, of course, disrupted during the War), the institute dealing with animal husbandry at Bangalore and the Imperial Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) at Mukteswar and Izatnagar in Uttar Pradesh carried out wide-ranging activities involving R&D to cater to the War needs. This included the study of diseases,

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<sup>69</sup> S&C: B.C. Guha, *The Crisis in Food*, VIII, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1943, pp. 51-55; IX, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1943; IX, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1944, pp. 509-512; and D.V. Bal, *Some Aspects of the Present and Post-War Food Production in India*, *Procs. Indian Science Congress*, January 1944.

<sup>70</sup> *Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee 1943*, Delhi, 1944, p. 20; *Procs. Of the First Food Conference (Decemeber 1942)*, Calcutta, 1944, and subsequent proceedings.

<sup>71</sup> P.N. Singh Roy, *The Planning of Agriculture*, Calcutta, 1944, pp. 35-36.

<sup>72</sup> W. Burns, *Technological Possibilities of Agricultural Development in India: A Note*, Lahore, 1944.

development and production of vaccines, acclimatization and high-breeding.<sup>73</sup> In spite of the strain caused by the War on financial and human resources, the work of the IVRI continued to be diversified. This, as also the future needs, created the necessity of additional staff. Realizing its importance, the Central Government showed keen interest in the matter and a plan for post-War reconstruction was considered necessary.<sup>74</sup> Gradually, a shift occurred in the nature and scope of the work of the IVRI. The fact that the government evinced interest in veterinary sciences is evident also from the volume of financial allocation for it. Despite its limited scope of work, the IVRI annually received a larger financial grant (Rs. 10.75 lakhs in 1944) than the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute (Rs. 8.5 lakhs) for the same period<sup>75</sup> which had a far wider scope of work and activities. This may be attributed to the overriding government concern for military demands for animal food (milk, butter, meat, eggs, etc.), animals for transportation (horses and camels) and wool and leather. In order to boost dairy production, the government established an Imperial Dairy Research Institute in 1941.<sup>76</sup> As the demand for milk for the armed forces increased tremendously, milk supply to big towns became a problem. To meet with the situation, the government decided to entrust the distribution of milk in metropolitan cities, like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Karachi, Kanpur and Nagpur, to property constituted milk marketing organizations. A Milk Marketing Adviser and also the Chief Executive Officer of the British Milk Marketing Board were selected and appointed. He conducted a detailed survey and made elaborate recommendations. More administrative measures followed, which, in turn, invited the attention of the provincial governments to the matter.<sup>77</sup>

However, the question of India's agricultural improvement could not be postponed forever. As the War lingered and the food situation deteriorated, the material life of millions depending on the rural economy did not show any signs of improvement.

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<sup>73</sup> *Annual Report IVRI, 1941-1942*, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 1942-1946, p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> A.V. Hill, *Scientific Research in India*, 1944; Simla, 1945, p. 23.

<sup>76</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, p. 187.

<sup>77</sup> Singh, *World War II as Catalyst*, 1998, pp. 136-138.

The colonial government, then in a more compromising and yielding mood, was, therefore, compelled to pay more attention to the situation.<sup>78</sup> Apart from the local demands and immediate needs, India's economic stability and material wellbeing was vital also for Britain's own position in the post-War world, whether India continued as a part of the Empire or parted with it. So, like many other areas, the government started looking at the question of agricultural improvement in the broader perspective of the post-War reconstruction. While the authorities carried on their exercise to draw plans for the future, which they were not all sure to execute, the British scientific opinion came out with a clearer vision and support for agricultural improvement in the Punjab. A.V. Hill, for instance, declared agriculture 'by far the most important industry in Punjab', and pleaded for its 'great expansion' to supply adequate food and better nutrition for India's vast population that was likely to increase considerably in the years to come and to provide for expansion of crops required for industry and export.<sup>79</sup>

In retrospect, one is, however, compelled to note that despite various plans and proposals, the state initiative in promoting agricultural research and innovation remained limited (with the exception of veterinary sciences and animal husbandry) in comparison to its record in the field of industrial research. Since basic problems affecting agricultural improvement like fragmentation of land, mass illiteracy and rural health had not been addressed, there was little possibility of any progress either in the science or the art of agriculture.<sup>80</sup> The colonial interest in modern industry and indifference to the traditional cottage industries further contributed towards keeping agricultural improvement at a low priority. Some of the small-scale industries progressed during the War but due more too

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<sup>78</sup> B.M. Bhatia, *Famines in India*, 1967, esp. pp. 321-324, 324-339.

<sup>79</sup> A.V. Hill, *Scientific Research in India*, 1944, pp. 23-25, 37-38; his Radio Broadcasts: The National Purpose: Science and Technology in the Development of India, 7<sup>th</sup> March 1944, Delhi; and Science and India, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1944, 2170 (MSS), pp. 10ff., A.V. Hill Papers.

<sup>80</sup> NPC Series: *Crops-Planning and Production*, edited by K.T. Shah, Bombay, 1948, pp. 87-111; idem, *Land Policy and Agriculture*, Bombay, 1948. Also See S&C, VI, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1943, pp. 403-406.

military demands than state encouragement. All others catering to the basic needs of the people were not technology the War brought in.<sup>81</sup>

### **MEDICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

Medical science and health care were another area that engaged the attention of the government during this period. The subject was a favoured one right from the beginning as far as state interest in it was concerned. It was one of the most organized sectors with a highly developed service cadre, a professional association and scores of research centres scattered all over the country. Yet, medical education continued to remain in a poor state and the research centres seldom went beyond collecting data to be utilized in Britain, training to technical personnel and production of vaccines.<sup>82</sup> The hollowness of the official claims regarding its progress in India became obvious as soon as the War broke out. At the time of the War, medical education and research was still in a poor state-not as much in terms of organizational infrastructure as on account of their nature and scope. This is, however, not to suggest that their provision was adequate in any way.

The condition of public health was precarious and that of health care facilities worse. The average life expectancy of an individual was 32.5 years, only half of that in most of the developed countries.<sup>83</sup> In 1937, the death rate in British India was 22.4 per 1,000 and for infants or children under one year of age it was 172 per 1,000 live births. In 1941, the corresponding rates were 21.8 and 158 per 1000 respectively. Comparative statistics showed the general death rate in countries like New Zealand or Australia as low as 9.7 whereas infant mortality in these countries was 31 per 1,000 as against 21.8 and 158 respectively in India.<sup>84</sup> As regards the health care facilities, while there was one

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<sup>81</sup> Gyanchand, 'Introduction', pp. 7-33; and V.K.R.V. Rao, "Small Scale and Cottage Industries", pp. 65-88, in P.C. Jain, *Industrial Problems of India*, Allahabad, 1942; and P.C. Jain, *India Builds Her War Economy*, Allahabad, 1943, pp. 84-102.

<sup>82</sup> Anil Kumar, *Medicine and the Raj*, New Delhi, 1998; Radhika Ramasubban, *Public Health and Medical Research in India: Their Origin under the Impact of British Colonial Policy*, Stockholm, 1982.

<sup>83</sup> S&C, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199.

<sup>84</sup> NPC Series: *National Health*, Bombay, 1948, p. 23; and *Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee*, Vol. I, Delhi, 1946, pp. 7-8.

registered doctor to every 1,048 of population in Britain, this ratio was one to every 9,300 persons in India. On the scale of Western countries, India required 200 thousand qualified doctors to take care of her village population, but after 75 years of effort there were only 35 thousand doctors of whom only 15 thousand resided in the villages.<sup>85</sup> The expenditure on public health in England and Wales was 1-0-9 d per capita per annum; in India, the different provinces spent only from 1/12<sup>th</sup> to 1/120<sup>th</sup> of the average of England.<sup>86</sup> What was alarming was that whereas the vital statistics of health were fast improving in the developed countries, it was going downward in India. She had failed to make adequate use of scientific knowledge for improving her public health. There was not an all-India health policy and the basic principles of sound public health were violated. Medical education was backward and supply of technical personnel defective, not to mention the ever present financial handicaps. Moreover, there was lack of institutional planning and coordination amongst the departments concerned. Obviously, everything was to be done in a great measure, even if it was to be the bare minimum of facilities, to restore the health of the millions in India, for which there was a persistent local demand.<sup>87</sup> But as the World War erupted, in the meanwhile, the government had little time to address the problem; instead, it hurried to deal only with those health problems which were crucial for the successful prosecution of the War.

To meet the immediate emergency, the personnel working in the medical services and research organizations were called for War duties, jeopardizing the routine functioning of their organizations.<sup>88</sup> But this was not all. With the increase in their demand, the government resorted to more emergency measures. Short-term courses with lower eligibility qualifications were introduced and provision was made for medial training abroad.<sup>89</sup> As India became an important base for Allied action after the Japanese

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<sup>85</sup> S&C, IV, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1939, p. 467; *Ibid.*, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199. Also see the statistical chart in the *Health Survey*, 1946, p. 43.

<sup>86</sup> S&C, V, 4, October 1939, p. 199.

<sup>87</sup> A.C. Ukil, "Public Health and its planning in India", S&C, VI, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1941, p. 531, 536-539. Also see S&C: IV, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1938, pp. 285-287; IV, 7<sup>th</sup> January, pp. 408, 410, IV, 8<sup>th</sup> February, pp. 466-468, 1939; VI, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1941, pp. 535-568.

<sup>88</sup> *Report Health Survey*, Vol. I, 1946, pp. 179, 201-202.

<sup>89</sup> *Progress of Education in India 1937-1947*, Vol. I, pp. 176-181.

invasion, a large number of Allied troops (British, American and Chinese) were brought into India and responsibility of their health care was laid upon the local government. Apart from the routine treatment in case of their illness and injury, prevention of tropical diseases and their acclimatization in India were vital problems to be tackled with.<sup>90</sup>

This obliged the Government of India to spare the existing medical facilities for the treatment of the armed forces and for the training of medical and paramedical personnel for specific War purposes. The government was also called upon to begin or step up production of specialized drugs and vaccines at various research centres in the country. From this point of view, the activities of the Central Research Institute at Kasauli and that of the IVRI at Izatnagar deserve special mention.<sup>91</sup> Testing of certain drugs on troops was also performed at cantonments like one at Hazaribagh in Bihar.<sup>92</sup> All this kept engaged a large section of the health machinery and consumed vast resources, depriving millions of poor Indians of even the minimal health care.

The need for making the best use of existing resource available in the country made it necessary for the government to maintain and augment the availability of various medical supplies like drugs and medical equipments which were vital for the operations of the War civil demands alike. Short supply of drugs and other medical provisions became a growing phenomenon soon after the War erupted. This was further aggravated when some sources of supply were lost. The loss of Java in 1941, for example, deprived India of a major source of supply of quinine.<sup>93</sup> Supplies were affected also on account of shortages of several chemicals like alcohol, which were used in abundance for non-medical purposes in the War. Hoarding by traders, too, was responsible for the scarcity.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> *Report Health Survey*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 93-94; J.H. Stone, *The United States Army Medical Service in Combat in India and Burma, 1942 to 1945*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1947.

<sup>91</sup> *Report Health Survey*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 93-94, 201-202. Also see the *Annual Report of the CRI, IVRI, and of All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, 1940-1944*, p. 5.

<sup>92</sup> J.H., Stone, *United States Army Medical Service*, 1947.

<sup>93</sup> S&C: VII, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1942, p. 562; VIII, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1942, pp. 83-84.

<sup>94</sup> H. Ghose, "Supply of Drugs and Medicines for the Civil Population", S&C, VIII, to April 1943, pp. 417-419; S&C, X, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1945, pp. 265-271.

To meet the situation the government initiated various measures. The question of drug control had been taken up as early as 1930 when the government constituted an inquiry under R.N. Chopra to advise in the matter.<sup>95</sup> The War conditions compelled the government to act on in recommendations. Accordingly, in 1940 the Drug Act was passed by the Central Legislature, which provided for the control of drugs imported into India as well as their manufacture, sale and distribution in the province of Punjab especially and the country in general. For this, it advised the Central Government to constitute at the earliest a Drugs Technical Advisory Board and a Central Drugs Laboratory. The Drugs Technical Advisory Board, appointed soon after, was entrusted with the responsibility of advising the Central and Provincial governments on technical matters connected with the Drugs Act. Later, it helped compile elaborate Drugs Rules which were made public, in April 1944, for discussion and debate before they were finally published and brought into effect.<sup>96</sup> However, the proposed Central Drugs Laboratory did not come into being and the Biochemical Standardization Laboratory (est. 1937) was used as a substitute by the military authorities and the Supply Department for testing drugs throughout the War.<sup>97</sup> To keep the supply position easy, the government also made provisions for punishing the hoarders of drugs. But in the face of dwindling supply, it became essential to search for substitutes, in respect of suppliers, drugs as well as sources for raw materials. Government institutions and research laboratories had already been pressed into service to produce more and more of scarce drugs and equipment; now local firms were encouraged to work in this direction. In addition, plans were conceived and sometimes acted upon to indigenously produce some of the important raw materials like cinchona and pyrethrum, and production of others like opium was stepped up.<sup>98</sup> The government interest in drugs encouraged to an extent the study of pharmacology.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> *India Drug Enquiry Committee: Report, 1930-1931*, Calcutta n.d.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 50. For Indian reaction, see S&C: V, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1940, pp. 575-577; VI, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1940, pp. 123-125.

<sup>97</sup> *Report Health Survey*, Vol. I, 1946, p. 51.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>99</sup> S&C, VII, 10<sup>th</sup> March 1942, pp. 447-452.

At this time, it became difficult to save the fighting troops and others from smallpox, malaria, tuberculosis and other deadly diseases.<sup>100</sup> The government was particularly alarmed at this point of time by the increase in their incidence and their adverse consequences for the military operations on the eastern front along Assam and Burma, whose humid climate and jungles bred several tropical diseases.<sup>101</sup> The incidence of these diseases in the civilian population increased because of shortages of drugs, lack of proper medical help, poor food supply, malnutrition and insanitation.<sup>102</sup> The scarcity of drugs and non-availability of adequate medical assistance was, obviously, caused by disruption in imports and internal distribution, and increased consumption of medical resources by the armed forces during the War. For poor food supply nothing could be held more responsible than the official neglect in the matter. Of course, there was a terrible famine right in the middle of the War but it could have been averted or its effects minimized, had there been a sincere and timely action by the government.<sup>103</sup> Whatever the causes or effects of these factors, the prevailing conditions exposed the extreme backwardness of the country in matters of health care and sanitation, her dependence on others for medical supplies and, above all, the appalling official indifference and narrow priorities in the matter.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, however, both the diseases and the World War came as great equalizers. Under the stress of the conflict, the government had no option but to act. The onslaught of epidemics could not be postponed or countered by indifference or a piecemeal approach, especially when there was the extreme urgency of winning the War in which an ill and incapacitated soldier was, indeed, a dangerous proposition. The

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<sup>100</sup> *Health Survey*, Vol. I, 1946, pp. 10-11, 90-128. Also see S&C: S.N. Sen, War and Tuberculosis, VIII, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1943, 491-494; G. Ghose, "Malaria in Bengal-A Scientific Problem", IX, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1944, pp. 495-499.

<sup>101</sup> S&C: VIII, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1942, pp. 132-133; VIII, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1943, pp. 491-494.

<sup>102</sup> *Famine Commission Report*, 1945, esp. Part-II; also see *Health Survey*, 1946.

<sup>103</sup> *Famine Commission Report*, 1945, esp. pp. 26-34, 59-69; S&C, IX, 2, 1943, pp. 51-55; and M. Afzal Hussain, "The Food Problem of India, Presidential Address", *Indian Science Congress*, Bangalore, 1946.

<sup>104</sup> S&C: VIII, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1942, pp. 83-84; VIII, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1942, pp. 134-137; H. ghose, 1943; X, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1945.

persistent and increasingly loud demands by Indians, scientists in particular, for better health care, nutrition and sanitation also forced the authorities to take action.<sup>105</sup>

Therefore, the government thought of tackling the problem with some seriousness. Several expert committees were constituted to study and advice on how to eradicate diseases like malaria and tuberculosis. Steps at different levels-training, research and treatment –were taken to deal with them.<sup>106</sup> Help from non-governmental agencies was also officially encouraged for this purpose. The Imperial Leprosy Mission, Dufferin Fund, and Rockefeller Foundation contributed in their own ways to alleviate the population from suffering and disease in the Indian sub-continent.<sup>107</sup> But these endeavors were not enough to solve the vast problems related with health in India. While the continuation of the Imperial War demanded urgent steps to improve the situation, the food supply deteriorated further on account of the famine, and civilian health worsened as a result of malnutrition and increased incidence of certain diseases. Thus, by now the official neglect in the matter and lack of planning and preparedness were in full glare.<sup>108</sup> The Famine Commission accepted the extremely bad condition of the health of the people and the poor performance of the government in this regard.<sup>109</sup>

All this produced considerable effect on the minds of both the Indians as well as the British. Indians stepped up and widened their demands for better health care, nutrition and sanitation, compelling the authorities finally to come to terms with the local needs and plan for the future on a long-term basis.<sup>110</sup> This change in the official attitude in India

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, Also see S&C: V, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1939, pp. 190-202; VI, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1940, pp. 123-125; and A.C. Ukil, Some Aspects of Public Health in India, Presidential Address, ISC, January 1941.

<sup>106</sup> *Report of the Committee Convened to Consider the Measure to...Prevent...Spread of Malaria during the construction of Roads and Railways*, Simla, 1947; and *Report of the Tuberculosis Survey Sub-Committee*, IFRA, n.p., 1940; and *Health Survey*, 1946; *IRFA & ICMR 1911-1961*; Chapter III.

<sup>107</sup> *Health Survey*, 1946, esp. Chapter IXff.

<sup>108</sup> S&C: V, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1939, pp. 199-202; A.C. Ukil, *Public Health and Planning in India*, 1941, pp. 535-541.

<sup>109</sup> S&C: V, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1939, pp. 199-202; A.C. Ukil, *Public Health and Planning in India*, 1941, pp. 535-541; also see *Famine Commission Report*, 1945.

<sup>110</sup> *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, Entry 36, pp. 66-73.

was encouraged also by the developments in Britain and other developed countries of the West. In May 1943, the UN Conference on Food and Agriculture endorsed the principle that governments were responsible for introducing general and specific measures for improving the diet of the people. The conference broadly outlined the method of approach to food policy designed to improve the nutritional standards. It suggested that the state of the nutrition of the population be investigated by medical and public health workers and that crop planning, production of new varieties of seed and other such matters be decided on nutritional advice. Emphasis on nutrition became the hallmark of the new health policy. This resulted in a greater emphasis on nutrition in medical studies.<sup>111</sup> The new concern for the people's health and well-being soon found considerations at the League of Nations and its organs like the International Labour Organization (ILO). These bodies imposed on the Government of India a more formal obligation to maintain its subjects at a minimum level of health and sanitation which was occasionally monitored through inquiries and international deliberations under the auspices of these world bodies.<sup>112</sup> Casualties and physical injuries to soldiers during fighting operations brought into focus the importance of blood transfusion as one of the most valuable procedures of treatment for saving lives. So, an Army Blood Transfusion Service (India) was set up. The blood depots at Dehradun, Poona and Lahore were equipped with modern facilities for the preparation of blood products and for the assembly and sterilization of specialized apparatus used for collection and transfusion of blood.<sup>113</sup>

Another contribution of the Imperial War to medical science in Punjab and other parts of India was the introduction of new medical specialties and the improvement and expansion of older ones. Not unexpectedly, the beginning in this regard was made in the army medical services. While physicians and surgeons were already available, more

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<sup>111</sup> Procs. *Education Health and Lands, Government of India*: United Nations conference on Food and Agriculture Recommendations concerning Education, FN. 100-1/43E; also see *Health Survey*, Vol. III, 1946, pp. 70-71.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* Also see, *Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India*, for 1940, pp. 109-110; for 1943-1944, pp. 38-39; for 1945, p. 84; for 1946, pp. 116-117.

<sup>113</sup> S.B. Singh, *World War Second as Catalyst*, 1998, pp. 133-134.

exclusive specialties were developed in branches such as anesthesia, radiology, pathology, ophthalmology, neurology and oncology. Two specialties that deserve to be especially mentioned were physiotherapy and rehabilitation, and psychiatry.<sup>114</sup> While the former was crucial in treating injuries to the limb and bones of the fighting forces, the latter helped them keep in good mental health and morale. Once the War was over, these specialties were beneficially used to treat the civilian population.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, special emphasis was placed on subjects like nutrition, for which concrete steps were taken. Efforts were made to boost the supply of milk, fruits and vegetables.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, by the middle of 1943 the authorities were in a mood to take up the question of health and sanitation earnestly. A thorough examination of the problem and a long-term planning were considered imperative. For this, the Government of India appointed, a high-power committee, formally called Health Survey and Development Committee, under Dr. Joseph Bhore, in October 1943. It was to make a broad survey of the existing conditions of health and health organizations in British India and offer recommendations for future development in the light of the post-War reconstruction. Although the report of the committee was not submitted before December 1945 and not published until 1946, its findings and recommendations deserve a close scrutiny as they present a picture of the state of affairs before and during the War. They throw light on the changing outlook of the *Raj* in the matter.<sup>117</sup> Apart from gathering information and suggestions in various ways, the committee worked through five Advisory committees dealing with (1) public health, (2) medical relief, (3) professional education, (4) medical research, and (5) industrial health.<sup>118</sup> Additionally, it invited for consultation six distinguished medical workers from the UK, the USA and Australia, who were later

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-135.

<sup>115</sup> *Indian Information*, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1944, p. 93; and 15<sup>th</sup> January 1944, 95.

<sup>116</sup> S.B. Singh, *World War Second as Catalyst*, pp. 136-137.

<sup>117</sup> For the list of the members of the *Health Survey and Development Committee*, see its Appendix VII.

<sup>118</sup> *Health Survey*, 1946, p. 3 and Appendix 57.

joined by a representative of the Soviet government. It also consulted Professor A.V. Hill in respect of medical education and research.<sup>119</sup>

The silence of the government in the matter, therefore, only proved that its interest in public health was still narrow and confined mainly to the health of the armed forces and the Europeans living in Punjab.<sup>120</sup> Its preference for Western system of medicine may be attributed also to the pressure by the British lobby in this all-time British dominated professional service in India. This pressure might have increased further when doctors of some other European nationalities flocked to India to join medical services and to practice there, after they fled their countries during the Axis prosecution in the 1930s and 40s.<sup>121</sup> This is why while the government took up certain concrete administrative steps to promote technical education and industrial research, it did not do anything much worthy except some surveys and enquiries in the field of medical science and public health.

## **TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Transport and communications was an area which received an uneven and selective attention in the colonial period. Ships had brought the British and their European cousins to India; later they were aided by the railways to expand and consolidate the Empire. In the process, indigenous tradition of seafaring and shipbuilding was done to death. The railways spread, no doubt, but only on selective routes to facilitate the mobilization of the fighting forces and colonial trade. In the circumstances, other means of transport were badly neglected, most of all, the roads-the chief mode of mass transportation in India.

### **Railways**

The railways had been an area of prime interest to the British in India, and with liberal official support it had developed unhindered until the World War I.<sup>122</sup> However,

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>120</sup> Raina, *World War II-Medical Services: India*, 1990.

<sup>121</sup> Anil Bhati and Johannes H. Voigt, *Jewish Exile in India 1933-1945*, New Delhi, 1999, esp. pp. 64-84.

<sup>122</sup> Ian J. Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850-1900*, Delhi, 1995; John Westwood, *The Railways of India*, Newton Abbot, 1974.

once the strain of the global War fell on it, it could not hide its weaknesses.<sup>123</sup> So, in order to get it out of the crisis, the government appointed, in 1920, the Indian Railway Committee under the chairmanship of Sir William Acworth, to advise on its administrative and financial management. The Committee suggested major changes in the matter. It recommended, among other things, a complete separation of the Railway Budget from the General Budget of the country, a suggestion that was introduced from 1924.<sup>124</sup> The government also accepted the broad principles enunciated by the committee in connection with the reorganization of the railways. Yet the railways could not escape the adverse effects of the Great Depression. The government initiated remedial steps with the probe into the finances of the railways and economy measures; in addition, it voted, in 1932, a sum of Rs. 150 *crores* (15 million) for capital expenditure on railways for the next five years. But this could not prove of much avail.<sup>125</sup>

The World War II made matters worse. It imposed a severe strain on the railways. In addition to the movement of troops and supplies, civilian traffic and traffic of commercial goods also rose rapidly with the increasing industrial activities in the country. There was no alternative means that could be equally efficient. The traffic which used to be carried along the coast in modern steam or traditional sailing vessels before the War had to be diverted to the railways, not because it was faster but also because of the dangers of sea transport in times when the submarine operated ruthlessly. To add to the problem, even some of the waters close to the Indian coast were mined. Available shipping space, moreover, had to be diverted to the carriage of troops and munitions to and from the various theatres of the War. This considerably diminished the shipping space for other ordinary freights. Another alternative, the motor transport, was equally scarce. With the passage of the War, shortages of automobiles, their fuel and accessories

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<sup>123</sup> Vinod Dubey, "Railways", V.B. Singh (ed.), *Economic History of India*, 1983, pp. 327-347.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*; also see *Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of the State for India to Enquire into the Administration and Working of Indian Railways*, London n.d.

<sup>125</sup> Refer to Reports of the Inchcape Committee, 1932, and the Wedgewood Committee, 1936.

increased on account of the disruption in supply as well as their enhanced use for the mechanized units of the armed forces.<sup>126</sup>

All these factors and many more brought pressure on the railways. But the acute shortage of supplies of spares and exigencies of the War led to the postponement of maintenance and expansion activities, except in the most essential cases. Once India became the base of Allied military operations in the East after 1941, the fate of the railways in this country was doomed further even though it was a period of financial prosperity for it.<sup>127</sup> The maintenance and mobilization of the Allied forces inside the Indian subcontinent put the railways under increased stress. Its workshops which could have been used for R&D to enhance its own unconnected with the railways and most of them for use at overseas war fronts.<sup>128</sup> The growing realization on the part of the authorities that their days in India were numbered led to further neglect of the railways. Not only was there no further investment (quite heavy in case of the railways), some of the existing railway networks in the country were dismantled to maintain and expand the railways in the Middle East.<sup>129</sup> It is difficult to expect any activity aimed at technological advance in such a scenario. The government on the other hand, however, tried to coordinate road-rail relations.<sup>130</sup> Of course, the railways, like many other areas of national life, engaged the attention of the Department of Planning and Development as soon as it was formed, but that is not our immediate concern here.

### **Roadways**

In the circumstances, the roadways held out a better opinion for the *Raj*. Large-scale road building in British India had begun in 1830 when the Grand Trunk Road and other projects were under-taken and the Public Works Department came into being.<sup>131</sup> It is pertinent to point that a special care was taken in respect of Punjab as this area was the

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*; also see NPC Series: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 227-228.

<sup>127</sup> Dubey, *Railways*, 1983, p. 343.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 327-343; also NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 327-233.

<sup>129</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 227-233.

<sup>130</sup> *Report of the Technical Sub-Committee to the Subject Committee on Transport and Road Rail Relations*, New Delhi, 1943.

<sup>131</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 216-219.

frontier area and the British always remained vigilant to protect their interest so they had to maintain the roadways properly and keep them intact. Yet the importance of roads in Punjab could not be overemphasized. The Royal Commission on Agriculture rightly drew the attention of the government to the urgency of good communications in the context of agriculture and rural improvement in the country.<sup>132</sup> In 1927, the Government of India appointed a Road Development Committee under M.R. Jayakar to advise on the development of roads. The committee emphasized the need of developing roads for the progress of the rural society.<sup>133</sup> On its advice, a Central Road Fund was created in 1930. This Fund was used for construction and improvement of internal roads necessary for the prosecution of the War, for which other larger sums came also from other sources. A great deal of construction and improvement of bridges, particularly in Madras, Central Provinces, and Punjab and of surfaced roads were also financed from this fund. From 1930 to 1945, the mileage of surfaced roads increased from 57,000 to 70,000, an increase of 23 per cent in 15 years. In 1945 there were approximately 1,45,000 miles of earth roads in the charge of different public authorities but still in a very poor state, making up 2,15,000 miles of roads of all sorts. Not unexpectedly, there were glaring disparities between the development of roads in India and the advanced countries of the world. While 75 per cent of all traffic was carried on roads in the USA, similar to those in other developed countries, in India it was not even 10 per cent.<sup>134</sup>

### **Motor Transport**

In the meanwhile, motor transport had steadily increased on Indian roads, especially in and around the towns. The War added to the number of the automobiles, particularly of the heavy vehicles. There were 5,000 army vehicles before the War but the number reached 50,000 in 1942. This tenfold increase in the number of vehicles may be attributed mainly to the establishment of the South East Asia Command in India. In 1943, thousands of special chassis (in parts) were obtained from the USA and Canada under the Lend-Lease arrangement. These were assembled by Indian workmen. Thus, by January

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<sup>132</sup> *Royal Commission on Agriculture: Abridged Report, 1927-1928*, n.p., 1928, p. 8.

<sup>133</sup> *Indian Road Development Committee: Report, 1927-1928*, n.p., 1928, p. 8.

<sup>134</sup> *Asiatic Review*, April, 1947, p. 152.

1945, there were 2.5 *lakh* military vehicles in use in India.<sup>135</sup> The need for mobility which contributed to the Allied victory in the African campaign and the urgency of mechanization of the fighting forces brought into focus the demand for various types of motor vehicles and of trained personnel to drive and maintain them. As a result, training centres and workshops were soon established in the cantonments. So, by 1945 there were 2.5 *lakh* motor drivers-cum-mechanics in the army. Such training centres were started in every province.<sup>136</sup> Many business firms took interest in automobiles and collaboration with foreign companies was made, but these endeavors remained confined only to import of vehicles, or their assembling in the country.<sup>137</sup>

### **Shipping and Inland Water Transport**

Though India had a long tradition of shipping in the past, it had slowly declined during the British period.<sup>138</sup> However, with the rise of nationalism and increasing commercial activities around the World War I, indigenous business houses showed interest in it and the Scindia Shipping Company was established in 1919.<sup>139</sup> The World War II did not better the conditions of Indian shipping. Soon after the War commenced, all the 28 ships of 1.4 *lakh* GRT, belonging to 11 Indian shipping companies, were commandeered for War purposes; while foreign ships left Indian ports for better trade prospects elsewhere with the result that India's export trade started choking her docks. About half of Indian tonnage was destroyed or lost during the War, and by 1945 it had been reduced to a low figure of 75,000 GRT only. However, the exigencies of the War obliged the government to occasionally do something to strengthen and modernize the sea transport of the country. The American Technical Mission visited the Indian ports and offered suggestions on how to develop shipping so that it could aid the Allied War

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<sup>135</sup> *Commerce*, 15 January, 1944.

<sup>136</sup> S.B. Singh, *World War Second as Catalyst*, 1998, pp. 119-120.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117-120; also NPC: *Transport*, 1949, p. 223.

<sup>138</sup> T.N. Kapoor, *Shipping, Air and Road*, 1983, pp. 348-350; Satpal Sangwan, *The Sinking Ships: Colonial Policy and the Decline of Indian Shipping, 1735-1835*, in McLeod and Deepak Kumar, eds., *Technology and the Raj*, 1995.

<sup>139</sup> N.C. Jog, *Saga of Scindia: Struggle for the Revival of Indian Shipping and Ship-Building*, Bombay, 1969.

effort.<sup>140</sup> Several other committees discussed the subject with reference to their own areas of study. Later, a Port Development Committee was set up in February 1945, which emphasized the importance of improving, expanding and modernization the general facilities at the major ports.<sup>141</sup>

The neglect of inland water transport was a clear example of the colonial indifference to the local welfare. Before the railways came to India, inland water transport was highly developed. The railways proved fatal to this cheap indigenous mode of transportation, although it remained popular in certain parts of south India. In Madras, the Godavari Canals were important highways for water transport, which provided a cheap and ready made access to all markets. So was the case in eastern India. The largest seaport of the country Calcutta depended considerably for its trade both ways upon its waterway communications. About 25 per cent of the merchandise which flowed into Calcutta from the rest of India was water-borne of which no less than 63 per cent came from Assam alone. About 32 per cent of the exports was carried by water and of this 72 per cent went to Assam. The total water-borne traffic of Calcutta amounted to approximately 45,00,000 tons of which 34 per cent was carried by inland steamers and 66 per cent by country boats. In 1945, passengers carried by the steamer service in East and West Bengal numbered 1,04,00,000.<sup>142</sup> The NPC sub-committee on transport estimated that altogether the amount of boat traffic over government maintained channels was in the neighbourhood of 250 million ton miles per annum-barely one percent of the pre-War goods traffic by the railways. Thus, even at the end of the War, water transport formed an insignificant part of the country's transport services.<sup>143</sup>

### **Air Transport and Aviation**

Compared to shipping and water transport, aviation received a better deal. The first flying club in the country had begun operations in 1928 and by 1933 there were seven of them. These clubs performed the dual function of promoting amateur flying as

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<sup>140</sup> Grady, *Report American Technical Mission to India*, 1942.

<sup>141</sup> *Ports (Technical) Committee Report*, 1945, n.p. 1946.

<sup>142</sup> NPC, *Transport Services*, 1949, p. 244.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245.

well as training professional pilots and ground engineers. After the outbreak of the War, for two years all flying clubs were used for giving elementary flying training to the candidates for the Air Force. In this way 516 persons were trained, of whom 364 were accepted for commission. As the Imperial War progressed, all civil flying was suspended and the resources of the clubs were used for defense, such as army cooperation for anti-aircraft practice and other similar activities.<sup>144</sup> Keeping in view the fact that aero planes were the fastest means of transport, hence crucial for the War, the government agreed to allow the assembling of aircrafts in India,<sup>145</sup> airstrips were constructed and flying clubs organized.<sup>146</sup> In 1939, there were only 12 civil aerodromes with adequate staff and facilities in the country. During the World War II, the Defense Department took over the control of all civil aerodromes and the services of all Air Traffic Controls Officers were loaned to the Air Force. By the end of the War, there were several hundred aerodromes and 2,000 yards of paved runways. Gradual transfer of aerodromes and the staff to civil aviation began in 1945.<sup>147</sup>

The enormous demand for aircrafts during the War forced the government to explore the possibility of manufacturing them with the country, but the Imperial Government in London did not respond favorably. India's resources were considered too meager for it and the British government did not want to spare technical hands to India as they were needed at home.<sup>148</sup> Lord Linlithgow's proposal to shift to India a couple of aircraft factories from Britain in the light of the increased enemy threat there, met with the same fate.<sup>149</sup> The authorities in India, therefore, had to fall back on the plan of

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<sup>144</sup> *Progress of Education 1937-1947*, Vol. I, p. 175.

<sup>145</sup> *Linlithgow Papers*: L.S. Amery to Linlithgow, Letter No. 22, 20 May 1940; No. 24, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1940; No. 36, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1940; No. 42, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1940; No. 30, 27<sup>th</sup> June 1940; and No. 55, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1940, in Letters Secretary of State, Vol. V, at India Office Library and Records (IOL&R), London.

<sup>146</sup> *Reports of the Progress of Civil Aviation in India* (Government of India, Delhi) for the War years.

<sup>147</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 258-259.

<sup>148</sup> India Office, Economic and Overseas Department to Air Ministry, 27<sup>th</sup> March 1940, I.O. Library, L/E/8/1711; and Amery to Linlithgow, No. 693, 6 June 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

<sup>149</sup> Linlithgow to Amery, telegram 910-S, 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

Walchand Hirachand to form an aircraft company with public and private capital. While the official hitch was going on, Walchand formed the Hindustan Aircraft Company with a capital of Rs. 45 lakhs (4.5 million) at Bangalore. The Government of India and the Government of Mysore became equal partners contributing Rs. 25 lakhs each.<sup>150</sup> An American entrepreneur, W.D. Pawley, who had been manufacturing aircraft in China for six years, was associated with the venture.<sup>151</sup> India's first plane came out for a test flight in July 1941. Assembled in India, this was a Harlow, low-winged, single-engine monoplane with the same characteristics as of later-day fighters and bombers. With the advent of the system of Land Lease in 1942, it was, however, found undesirable to have any element of private enterprise in this concern of vital importance to the conduct of the War in Asia. So, the Government of India bought out its private partners at heavy premium and took over the entire management in its own hands.<sup>152</sup> Finally, on the recommendations of the Grady Mission, production of aircraft was completely stopped at this factory to concentrate on repairs.<sup>153</sup>

Meanwhile, research and training facilities in aviation and aeronautics had been set up at the Indian Institution of Science at Bangalore. A post-graduate course in aeronautical engineering was introduced there in December 1942. Its Department of Aeronautics was equipped with a wind tunnel subsidized by Government of India and with apparatus for structural research. Thus, the Institute developed into a centre for basic aeronautical research in the country.<sup>154</sup> Later, facilities for aeronautical communication service for training of operating and technical personnel were provided at the Civil Aviation Training Centre at Saharanpur in U.P. The Survey of India worked on preparing aeronautical maps.<sup>155</sup> Connected with aviation, meteorology came into some prominence

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<sup>150</sup> G.D. Khanolkar, *Walchand Hirachand: Man, His Times and Achievements*, Bombay, 1969.

<sup>151</sup> GOI, Department of Supply to Secretary of State for India, telegram 2394, Simla, 6 July, 1940, IOL, L/PO/465.

<sup>152</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 253.

<sup>153</sup> Sinha and Khera, *Indian War Economy*, 1962, p. 251.

<sup>154</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 254, 263.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260-261.

during this period. Meteorological observation had a long history in India, which, like several other subjects, was a part of data feedback for research in the metropolis. Military operation and aviation, no doubt, added importance to it in the course of the War,<sup>156</sup> but beyond that not much was done to promote it as a science for other purposes.

Parachute was a crucial component of air flying. So at the instance of the Department of Supply of the Central Government, the possibility of producing parachutes indigenously was explored. Materials and facilities for their manufacture being available, a special factory for their fabrication was put up in the middle of 1942, which came into full production by the end of the War. A scheme with a capital cost of Rs. 18,50,000 (1.85 million) provided by the British Government was also launched in order to multiply India's filature silk reeling capacity by changing over from the hand-reeling to machine-reeling method.<sup>157</sup> Later, in order to look into the problems and prospects of promoting aviation in the country as an industry as well as a means of transport, the United Kingdom Aircraft Mission visited India in March 1946. It made an intensive survey, visiting the related establishments at Barackpur, Poona and Bangalore, together with the Ordinance Factories at Kanpur, Kasipur and Jabalpur. Acting on its recommendations, the Government of India decided to establish a national aircraft industry in the country, with the aim of achieving within 20 years complete self-sufficiency for building aircrafts required for the Royal Indian Air Force as well as for civil aviation.<sup>158</sup>

### **Telecommunications**

Telegraph had been an important tool of imperial control in India up to the World War I.<sup>159</sup> The growing need for faster communication gave a boost to wireless and broadcasting from the 1930s, more so during the World War II.<sup>160</sup> But here again, though

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<sup>156</sup> *Hundred Years of Weather Service, 1875-1975*, 1976; also see *Annual Report Meteorological Survey of India*.

<sup>157</sup> NPC: *Transport*, 1949, pp. 255-256.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 253-255.

<sup>159</sup> Saroj Ghose, *The Introduction and Development of the Electric Telegraph in India*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, 1974. Also see, Daniel R. Headrick, *Tentacles of Progress*, 1988.

<sup>160</sup> *Progress of Broadcasting in India: Report by the Controller of Broadcasting*, Simla 1940; and H.R. Luthra, *Indian Broadcasting*, New Delhi, 1986.

the administrative steps led to the introduction of these systems in some cases and expansion in others, R&D was the missing component of the state initiative, and the elements of local welfare entered the government policy only late. Radio witnessed unprecedented expansion as both sides of the belligerents used it as a means of propaganda and education of the people. Radio broadcasting had begun on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1932 in India. Lionel Fielder of the BBC was appointed as India's first Controller of Broadcasting in 1935 and the service was named All India Radio (AIR) in 1936. As the War escalated, a separate Department of Information and Broadcasting was setup in 1941. Meanwhile, the number of licenses rose from 10,872 in 1933, to 92, 782 (an increase of 753.40 per cent) in 1939 and to 2.5 *lakhs* (an increase of 169.45 per cent) listening sets in 1945. Initially, radio sets were imported (including 40,000 from the USA under the Land-Lease) but later the government initiated measures to have them produced indigenously.<sup>161</sup> The relatively small number of radio sets in India did not stand in the way of influencing the Indian population through propaganda by the Axis Powers. In March 1942, the Punjab Government registered a growing receptivity of the population for radio broadcasts of Axis Powers and considered step against owners of radio licenses.<sup>162</sup> This, along with other technical needs of the War encouraged electronic industries in India.<sup>163</sup>

## II

The Unionist Party, after forming the Government emphasized on the development of industry based on agriculture as well as the cottage industry in order to solve the problem of unemployment in rural and urban areas of the Punjab on one side and on the other to meet the requirements of the elite countries during and after the World War II. However its principal aim was to improve the economic condition of peasantry and to enable them to develop agriculture to meet the demands of the market. The motives of this party were clear from the statement of one of its members Sir Chhotu Ram, which was made in the general meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce on May 1, 1937. Even the *Indian Industrial Commission (1916-18)*, high-lightening the worth of the cottage industries

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<sup>161</sup> *Commerce*, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1947, pp. 102-108.

<sup>162</sup> Johannes H. Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, pp. 109-10.

<sup>163</sup> For details, see S.C. Aggarwal, *History of Supply Department (1939-1946)*, 1947.

stated one of the most striking features of Punjab industrial life as the vitality of the old domestic industries." The main cause for it seems to have been, as was also explained by this Commission and V. Anstey that the ruralities still depended for most of their needs and supplies on the local cottage industries, as the means of communication linking village with cities had not been developed. Hence, the machine made things did not enter into the lives of the villagers. Besides, the Punjab Government also had been making tall promises of this kind since long, but never fulfilled them. To substantiate its declaration of 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1939, the British Government had announced, "we can not measure the excess of strength which as industrialized India will bring to power of the empire, but we are sure that it will be welcome after the War....."<sup>164</sup> He remarked: "The prosperity of the Province and the need to solve the problem of unemployment and needs of the market are certainly pointer to this direction. Industrialization seems to be the promising solution. If we convert our raw materials into the finished goods, we can multiply the income of the agriculturist class into *lakhs*; if not for all, we can provide employment to most of the educated youth."<sup>165</sup> In the same way, it was realized by its leadership that in order to solve the problem of unemployed in rural and urban areas, independent as well as auxiliary industry for agriculture should be encouraged in the state more than before. "Until we do something for the industrialization in the Punjab we cannot achieve that standard of prosperity which we consider essential for the comfortable and easy life of the people in the state,"<sup>166</sup> once again observed Sir Chhotu Ram stressing upon the agro-based industry in 1935. The Unionists' Party demanded, once more, that all the Government aided industries in Punjab should be linked with agriculture so that in the coming War the food requirement could easily be met.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> For more details see A. Abbot and S.H. Wood, *Report on Vocational Education in India*, Delhi : 1937, p. 110.

<sup>165</sup> The same year, the Unionist Party's manifesto too declared to promote industries with particular emphasis on the rural cottage industries. Vide. *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. XIV, 1226, 1937, p. 501 and 2.7.1937, p. 947; also Vol. XV, 24.1.1941, p.270.

<sup>166</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. XXVI, 1935, p. 185.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVII, 26.10.1935, p. 53.

While expressing their views on industry, without concealing their leanings towards agriculture, the Unionists many times pleaded in the Punjab Legislative Council that despite the rural attitude of their party and preference for agriculture, it had a soft corner for promoting the industries.<sup>168</sup> This view was not due to the fact that it had decided to promote the urban occupations more, but the Unionists thought that the progress of industry could add to the prosperity of the agriculturists as well. These views found expression in one of the statements that were made in the Punjab Legislative Council in 1939. One of the best solutions to the problems of the peasants was that the state was completely industrialized and the Unionists assured the house that their Government would leave no stone unturned to industrialize the Province rapidly.<sup>169</sup> This way Punjab could bear the burden of the coming War. It was obvious that when India was involved in the War, Punjab was bound to assist the British Government of India in all of its needs.

Perhaps it was due to this reason that it was said that although most of the industrialists were non-agriculturists, yet there was no conflict between the interests of the two. That was the reason why Government announced many concessions for the establishment of industries in the Province. It was believed that the Government announced these concessions keeping in mind the requirements of the approaching War in September 1939. Even though Unionists, the staunch supporters of the Land Alienation Act (1900), they gave two more concessions to it. Firstly, the statutory agriculturists who wanted to set up industry, could mortgage a part of their land with the Industries Department in order to have loans, and this part of the land was declared exempted from the said Act.<sup>170</sup> Secondly, they exempted those plots of land from the preview of this Act as were needed for setting up industries on it. For this purpose, the Government accordingly, advised the industrialists to apply to the Deputy Commissioner and Director of Industries under Section 3 of the Act.<sup>171</sup> Thus, it is clear that Government's chief

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<sup>168</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. IV, 25.3.38, p. 268 and also Vol. III, 8.3.1938, p. 577.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 29.3.1939, pp. 860-61.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, p. 63.

<sup>171</sup> At the same time it was made clear to the industrialists that any misuse of this concession would not be tolerated, Vide. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, 12.7.1938, p.1360; also Vol. X, 27.10.1939, p. 232.

objective was to industrialize the Province of Punjab mainly to boost the agriculture. However, the Government had to face the following problems to put its plan into action.

1. At this time the industrial laws were harmful to the industry itself. These laws rather destructed the industrial growth.<sup>172</sup> Sir Chhotu Ram became a minister for the first time after the introduction of the dual government (Diarchy) in the Province. At this time industry was a reserved subject under this system. Though, state was given autonomy in 1937, even so under this system also, there were a few indirect obstacles in the way of the development of industry; for example, control over the tariff system was in the hands of the central government.
2. The state income was meager as it was not possible to spend much on the industrialization of Punjab. The famines further gave a set back to the process of industrialization of the state, for a sum of Rs. 2.70 crore out of the total income of Rs. 11 to 12 crore was spent on the relief work, during the period 1939-45.<sup>173</sup>
3. The capitalists were not desirous to invest on industry, for they found it more profitable to lend money to the agriculturists.<sup>174</sup>
4. The economic consequences of the World War I had not yet subsided when the economic depression and thereafter the World War II hit the industry. The War had a very adverse effect on the industry because the machinery could not be imported during this period. That was the reason why Government's plan of installing the glass and textile industries could not be implemented in Punjab.<sup>175</sup>

Despite all these handicaps the Punjab Government made a remarkable contribution in the industrialization of the Province, which may be studied under three heads:

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<sup>172</sup> In order to promote cottage industries, Provincial Department of Industries was set up in 1920. Vide. *Punjab Administration Report : 1919-20*, p. 83; also *Mitra's Indian Annual Register, Year 1940*, Vol. I, p. 188; also *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVII, 13.1.1941, p. 120; *Punjab Budgets with detailed estimates for the years 1937-38 to 1940-41*.

<sup>173</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. II, 21.1.1938, p. 706.

<sup>174</sup> T.A. Srinivasaraghavan, *Modern Economic History of England and India*, Vol. II, pp. 395-98; A. Latif, *Industrial Punjab*, London : 1911, p. 26, *Indian Tariff Board*, Evidence recorded during an inquiry regarding the grant of additional protection to the cotton textile industry 1932, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 45-46; M.R. Raw, *Truth about Japanese, Competition*, Bombay : 1926, pp.24-29 and 37-40.

<sup>175</sup> *Punjab Legislatives Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVII, 20.3.1941, pp. 120-132; also Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, p. 53; *Annual Report on the Working of the Indian Factories Act in The Punjab for 1939*.

The Provincial Industries Department under Sir Chhotu Ram, was working so efficiently in 1937-39 that the Punjab Legislative Council and the Industries Committee lauded it. They inspected the functioning of the Arts and Crafts Depot which besides working very properly, was earning a lot of profit.<sup>176</sup> Industrial achievements during this period were as follows: First of all, in 1937, was established a modern tannery in the public sector with dual object. The first object was that it should be a model for all the tanneries in the Province, and more so for the small tanneries in the rural areas.<sup>177</sup> The second object was to save the money spent on sending trainees to England to study tanning. It is noteworthy to mention that the production of hides in the school went up from 25 to 100 per day within a short span of year.<sup>178</sup>

Six new industrial training institutions were set up in this Province at the cost of Rs. 30,000/-. In this way, the number of these schools in the province rose to twenty two; and two thousand students received training in these institutions.<sup>179</sup> These institutions were important in themselves, for they had been set up in order to promote the cottage industries and to benefit the rural masses. Each institution had a Head Master, two artisans i.e. one drawing teacher and one language teacher. Thus, these institutions, besides imparting technical training also helped in eradicating illiteracy.<sup>180</sup> During the same year some leading members of the Unionist Party such as Sir Chhotu Ram with some Government officials traveled Multan, Amritsar, Lyallpur, Sialkot, Rawalpindi, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, etc. to find out the possibilities of promoting industries all the

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<sup>176</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. VII, 13.3.1925, p. 503; *Government's Review of the Report of the Industries Department, Punjab* for the year ending 31st December, 1925. It is cited in *Punjab Government Gazette*, Part II, 17.12.1926.

<sup>177</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1925, p. 514.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* (The review of the *Punjab Government's Report* concerning Industries Department for the year ending. 31st December 1925, cited in *Punjab Government Gazette*, Part II, 17.12.1926; *Census of India: 1931*, Vol. XVI, Subsidiary Tables III and IV).

<sup>179</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1935, p. 515; *Punjab Government's Review of the Report of the Industries Department* for the year ending December, 1925, cited in *Punjab Government Gazette*, Part II, 17.12.1925.

<sup>180</sup> *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. VIII, 6.5.1925, p. 1067 (see V.F. Gray's speech).

more. They encouraged the rich and offered them all possible help if they decided to invest in the development of industry.<sup>181</sup>

In the beginning of 1937, the significant achievement of the Government was the establishment of an Engineering College to meet the demand of industrial and commercial classes. The Chief Engineer, Asbury was sent to Thomas Engineering College, Roorkee to have a thorough study of the plan. He declared in the Punjab Legislative Council that the Engineering College would be opened in 1937 itself.<sup>182</sup> In spite of the meager allocation of fund of 8,47,000 rupees for the industrialization of the Province for the whole year i.e. 1937-38. The capitalists were assured that their government would make available more funds and thus consider their two demands sympathetically: (i) Credit by the Government to the industrial banks; and (ii) The purchase of the shares by the Government of the newly established industries.<sup>183</sup>

During the period under review the most important achievement of the Punjab Government was to get through in the Punjab Legislative Council the Mandi Hydro-Electric Scheme in the Public Sector despite the stiff opposition by Sir Gokal Chand Narang and Prof. Ruchi Ram Sahni.<sup>184</sup> The aim of this scheme was to produce 36,000 kw electricity and to provide it to the industrialists and the farmers at the rate of 7.3/4 *paise* per unit after they had got tube-wells installed. The scheme, because of the efforts of the Unionist Government was completed in 1933-34 at a cost of Rs. 6.25 *crore*.<sup>185</sup>

The Unionists during the period, 1937-46, generally criticized the industrial policy of the British Government. In 1935, Sir Chhotu Ram had expressed in the Punjab Legislative Council that the industry in the Punjab was being ignored in such a way as

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<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 515.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1068-69 and 1091.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 506 and 515.

<sup>184</sup> For details regarding Mandi Hydro Electric Scheme see *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. VII, March 12 and 13, 1925, pp. 441-42, 445-47, 451-52, 454-56, 459, 461-62, 480-85, 488-94, 496-501; also Vol. VIII-B, pp. 8, 12; Finance Department, Year 1925, File No. 152-F, N.A.I., New Delhi.

<sup>185</sup> In 1925, the cost of the Mandi Hydro-Electric Project was estimated at about 4.6 *crore* rupees. Vide *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. VI, p. 499; also Vol. VIII-B, 8.12.1925, pp. 1545-49, 1560; also Vol. XVIII, 30.7.1929, pp. 217, 242-43; also Vol. XXIII, 27.2.1933; pp. 61, 96-97, 307-27, 247-48, 360; also Vol. XXIV, 1.3.1934, p. 383.

was not done in any other developing country. Despite the indifferent attitude of the government he suggested to it to establish cottage industry in the rural areas of the Province.<sup>186</sup> According to him: (i) It could prove to be a permanent solution to the financial hardships of the agriculturists as well as the rural masses who with the help of the cottage industry, could increase their income during the lean period as well as at the time of natural calamities such as the failure of crops; and (ii) these industries could lessen the burden on the soil.<sup>187</sup> His views were perfectly in order. Similar views had been expressed by many specialists as well as some other societies. For instance, the Committee appointed by the Punjab Government to review the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture had expressed similar views.<sup>188</sup> While endorsing the view, the Royal Commission had expressed that most of the agriculturist families were bound to agriculture only due to the absence of any other occupation. They produced food not only for their own consumption, but to meet the requirement of the market and also the British Government looking to the urgent need during the course of the World War II. The only solution it recommended was that they should have been engaged in cottage as well as big industries. In the same way, M.L. Darling, wrote: "without this second string (rural cottage industry), to his bow, the Punjab peasant proprietor must always be in debt."<sup>189</sup>

At the same time, some Unionist leaders pressurized the government to set up co-operative societies which on the one hand could supply the raw material to the village cottage industries, and on the other, buy the finished goods.<sup>190</sup> According to the Unionist Government, these societies were essential to make the cottage industries profitable. These societies were needed for most of the craftsmen to buy the raw materials on credit

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<sup>186</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XXVI, p. 182.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVIII, 1.4.1933, p. 1019; Vol. XXV, 28.6.1934, p. 330; Vol. XXVI, Year 1935, pp. 546-47.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.6.1934, pp. 93,94 (See para 47 of the Report).

<sup>189</sup> M.L. Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, Oxford : 1928 – Second Edition, p. 24; *Scope of Industrial Development in the Punjab* (Simla, n.d.), pp.5-6.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 548-75.

on which they had to pay interest up to 37 per cent per annum.<sup>191</sup> It was due to the efforts of the Unionist Government that the Marketing Board was established to promote the sale of the products of the cottage industry. Its head office was located at Amritsar, with its branches at Multan, Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur.<sup>192</sup> Consequently, the Government recommended the establishment of the industries for producing rope, *nivar*, socks, basket, leather, etc., for they promised much profit with less investment. It also recommended that cottage industries such as cheese making, tailoring, dying, calico printing, carpentry, pottery, poultry farming, etc. should also be introduced in the rural areas of Punjab.<sup>193</sup> This will not only feed the villagers but at the same time it would help the British to supply in plenty to meet the needs of the soldiers who were fighting in various sectors during the World War II.

Though the Punjab Government left no stone unturned for the progress of industry in the Province, but at the same time it did not want that the industrialists should betray the government. That was the reason why it objected to certain provisions of the State aid to Industries Act in 1935, and suggested certain amendments in the proposed Act.<sup>194</sup> Although the industries Minister, Gokal Chand Narang, turned down Chhotu Ram's proposals, his basic principles for the process of industrialization of the province, that should have been adopted, can be summed up as follows:

- i) There was no provision for giving representation to the peasants and workers on the proposed Board of Industries, provided in the bill.<sup>195</sup>
- ii) The bill was silent on the issue that while deciding aid to the industries, preference would be given to those industries which were agro-based and consumed the other raw material available in the Province;<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> *Report of the Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee*, 1929, p.30.

<sup>192</sup> *Report on the Working of the Industries Department* (Punjab), 1936, p. 29.

<sup>193</sup> For more details see *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. XXV, 26.6.1934, p. 546; *Indian Tariff Board Report*; written evidence recorded during the enquiry on Sericulture Industry, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 622-23.

<sup>194</sup> *Finance Department*, Year 1935, File No. 22(24)-F.D./1945, N.A.I., New Delhi.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*; *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, Vol. XXVII, 29.12.1935, pp. 1233 and 1238; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 25.1.1936, pp. 11-16 (In principle the members of the treasury bench were in favour of the legislation of such a bill. This bill was passed as the Punjab State Aid Industries Act (1935) and replaced the Punjab Industrial Loans Act (1923). The former Act came into force on March 7, 1936.

- iii) This bill assured a minimum net return instead of gross return on the capital invested by the industrialists in the industries. In this way, there was an ample scope for the misuse of this provision,<sup>197</sup> and
- iv) The bill did not determine the limit of profit to the share holders from the government aided industries during the normal times.<sup>198</sup>

If the last provision had been amended suitably, it would have lessened to a fairly large extent the responsibility of the Government with regard to its guarantee to minimum return. It is pertinent to point out that Sir Chhotu Ram, as the Development Minister of the Punjab from 1937 to 1940, got amended the above Act and removed most of its draw backs during this period. He put in to practice his industrial views, but while doing so, he had to decide two things: Firstly, whether the additional funds available were to be spent on the expansion of the cottage industries, both rural and urban or on big industries. About the additional resources, he said in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on June 22, 1937, "The major share of the additional resources required for any serious plan of expansion and development will have to be found from fresh taxation. Their burden will have to be put on the prosperous section of the society, for levying new taxes on the poor and the farmers will make the problem of poverty all the more acute."<sup>199</sup> He, therefore, mobilized additional funds through the Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax (1941) etc.<sup>200</sup>

About the distribution of funds, the Punjab Government announced that it could not give preference to the big industries in the Public Sector over the village cottage industries. He admitted in the House that the Government could not save more than rupees two *crore* annually even after drastically cutting down its expenditure as well as making deductions from the salaries of the employees. The amount was much lower than

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<sup>196</sup> *Finance Department, Year 1935, File No. 22(24)- F.D./1945; Punjab Legislative Council Debates, Vol. XXVII, 29.11.1935, pp.59 and 933, N.A.I., New Delhi.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 992.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*,p. 1102; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), ending December, 1935, pp. 47-54.

<sup>199</sup> *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. I, 1937, pp. 501 and 506; also Vol. X, 27.10.1935, pp. 211 and 241.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

required for the fullest industrialization of the Province.<sup>201</sup> Under the circumstances when the state Government was not authorized to levy taxes on large scale on the urban population, and the Secretary of State for India did not permit any big load for the industrialization, for it would have an adverse effect on the British industries (although the people of Punjab were ready to give loan to the Government) The Punjab Government invited the industrialists to invest in free or big public sector industries. It promised essential technical know-how and legal protection to them.<sup>202</sup>

The Unionists' ideas on capitalism can properly be understood only in this context. In Chhotu Ram's words, "I have never supported the idea of finishing capitalism." However, he certainly wished to eliminate evils of capitalism. He was in favour of putting an end to the exploitation on the part of the capitalists.<sup>203</sup> He, who was committed to safeguarding the interests of the industrial laborers, opposed the Punjab Hours of Work Bill, the Punjab Fixation of Minimum Wages Bill, the 'Printing Presses Control Bill' and 'Punjab Maternity Bill.' All these bills were meant for the welfare of the laborers. His opposition can properly be understood in the light of the overall interests of the laborers and the state.<sup>204</sup> There were two main reasons for his opposition to these bills:

- i) Over 40 per cent of the industries in the province were not working well. After the passage of the above bills, the burden on these industries would have increased and they might have reached the verge of closure. There was no

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<sup>201</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. I, 22.6.1937, pp. 219, 501; also Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p. 268.

<sup>202</sup> For details see *Finance Department*, File No. 152– For 1925 *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XI-A, 26.2.1940, pp. 59 and 580; also Vol. I, 22.6.1937, p. 501; also Vol. V, 1.7.1938, p. 541, N.A.I., New Delhi.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, 23.1.1939, pp. 719-21, For details also see Vol. II, 21.1.1938; pp. 702-06; Vol. X, 23.11.1939, pp. 901-10.

<sup>204</sup> It is to be noted that the more advanced Provinces of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta didn't make any change in this Act. Vide. Vol. X, 21.1.1938, pp. 703-04; 26.10.1939, pp. 157-59; Vol. II, 21.1.1938, pp. 702-06; Vol. X, 23.11.1939, pp. 901-10.

hope of setting of new industries in the Punjab. Consequently large number of laborers might have been thrown out of job.<sup>205</sup>

- ii) In order to enforce these laws strictly, a large number of Inspectors, Magistrates and other officials, would have been recruited<sup>206</sup> leading to an expenditure of *lacs* of rupees. The Punjab Fixation of Minimum Rates of wages alone needed a Joint Board and two Magistrates in each district.

In relation to the Punjab Hours of Work Bill, an amendment was proposed in the Factory Act, 1934 of the Central Government, through this Act, sixty-hours per week for seasonal occupations and fifty two to fifty six hours per week for other trades had been fixed for all the Provinces. A similar proposal was given regarding the Fixation of Minimum Rates of Wages Bill, for making a law of this type on the part of the Central Government would have led to the minimum possibility of the private investment being diverted to other States from the Punjab.<sup>207</sup>

Several Unionists had opposed these bills due to certain unfavorable conditions. Had he visualized any hope of prosperity of the industries in Punjab, he would not have only supported but also helped these measures. Participating in the debate over the Punjab Fixation of Minimum Rates of Wage, clarifying the ideas of the Unionists, he said, "Dr Gopi Chand Bhargav and others should wait patiently to implement this bill till the situation of industrialization in the State improved. At that time we shall like to see that our laborers, instead of rupee one, received rupees two per day as wages."<sup>208</sup>

The Punjab Government for the development of industries encouraged the individual capitalists to invest their capital in this field. It assured the capitalists that it would plead with the Central Government to implement the tariff system in such a way as it might be beneficial for the development of industries in the Punjab. In this way, their competition with the foreign production would be less than before. Keeping this view in

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<sup>205</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. II, 21.1.1938, pp. 520 and 706; Vol. X, 26.10.1939, p. 158; 23.11.1939, p. 909; Vol. V, 26.5.1938, p. 459.

<sup>206</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. X, 21.11.1939, p. 910.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. X, 21.1.1938, pp.700-04.

<sup>208</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. X, 21.1.1938, p. 720; Vol. I, 12.7.1937, p. 1259; Vol. V, 1.7.1938, pp. 536 and 541-42.

mind, the Punjab Government in 1938, advised the Central Government to give due representation to the industrialists, producers and consumers in the Tariff Board.<sup>209</sup>

In 1937, the Unionists Government, once again assured the industrialists that the Punjab State Aid to Industries Act would be implemented liberally. It kept its promise in word and deed. Thus on the one hand, the Government made provisions in the budget for the guarantee of minimum profit and on the other he gave loans to the industrialists liberally.<sup>210</sup>

Another step taken by the Unionists in this direction during 1937-44 was raising the budget of the Industries Department. In 1940-41 it was raised by about 183 per cent and in 1944-45 by about 272 per cent in comparison with that of the year 1933-34. Even then, considering it to be small it established a special treasury in the department in 1937.<sup>211</sup> In 1937-38 alone, a sum of *rupees one lac* twenty thousand was disbursed as loans for the development of the hosiery industry in Ludhiana district alone. Consequently, the number of hosiery mills went up from 16 in 1934 to 62 in 1939 and 115 in 1945. At the same time, in order to encourage the industrialists to set up their units in the Province, the amount in the budget was raised to 500 percent.<sup>212</sup> When in 1937, an all India Industrial Fair was organized, the Punjab Government for the Industrial progress of the Province, went to the extent of discouraging the exhibition of any such foreign product as could stand in competition with the Indian products.<sup>213</sup> In order to give more encouragement to the indigenous goods, Sir, Chhotu Ram in 1939 directed all the departments of the State Government that the indigenous goods, particularly produced within the province should

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<sup>209</sup> *Report on the Working of the Industries Department, Punjab : 1938*, p. 23; also of 1939, p. 20; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. I, 12.7.1937, p. 159.

<sup>210</sup> During the period 1933-36, Sir G.C. Narang was the Minister Incharge of Industries, Punjab. Vide. *Report on the Working of the Industries Department, Punjab, 1939*, p. 20; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, p. 329.

<sup>211</sup> *Five Years of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab : 1838-42*, pp. 21, 27 and 47; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVII, 20.3.1941, 120; also Vol. XIX, 10.3.1942, p. 185; Vol. XXVII, 19.11.1935, pp. 296-98; Vol. VII, 13.3.1925, p. 514.

<sup>212</sup> This conclusion has been calculated from the figures cited in *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439; also see *Report of the Indian Tariff Board on the Woollen Textile Industry, Delhi : 1935*, p. 346.

<sup>213</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette*, Part I, 30.12.1938, p. 521; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. II, 17.1.1938, p. 442.

be given preference over the imported goods. The Provincial Store Purchase Department was also opened and given it full freedom to purchase goods from the local industries for the needs of the Government.<sup>214</sup> The commercial castes exploitation of the agriculturalists could no longer be attacked because of the need for their cooperation in fighting the war. Hindu and Sikh businessmen profited enormously from a new source of Government patronage in the form of civil supply contracts.<sup>215</sup>

The Unionists' Government was the first one which, for the development of the both-private and public sectors, undertook a district and industry-wise survey of the province in 1938-39 and then in 1944-45.<sup>216</sup> The Punjab Government invited the noted economist Prof. K.T. Shah to prepare a detailed plan for the industrial development of Punjab. The recommendations of this plan proved to be very valuable. The Government confirmed it in one of its statements on March 7, 1941.<sup>217</sup> Some of the other important achievements of the Punjab Government included the establishment of an Industrial Research Fund, setting up of Industrial Museum on district level and opening of a designing section at Mayo School of Arts. They benefited all the local industries greatly. The Industrial Research Fund worth rupees one *lac* fifty thousand which was the first experiment of its type in the country was set up in 1939 looking to the urgency of the possible needs which might come forth with the commencement of the World War II. In the same year, the Industrial Research Laboratory at Shahdara started working. The Secretary of the All India Village Industrial Association, Mr. Kamarappa, in a letter written in April 1939,<sup>218</sup> to the in-charge of the laboratory Dr Sarin, praised the useful work done by it, on the one hand, the Industrial Museums gave publicity to the industrial

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<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. X, 2.11.1939, p. 439; also Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, p. 127.

<sup>215</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 145.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, 16.3.1938, p. 846; Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, p. 55; Vol. XVI, 7.3.1941, p. 253; *India Year Book: 1940-41*, p. 593.

<sup>217</sup> K.T. Shah, *Industrialization of the Punjab* (Punjab Government : 1941), p. 205; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVI, 7.3.1941, p. 253.

<sup>218</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, p. 128; also Vol. III, 16.3.1938, p. 209; *Report on the Working of the Industries Department, Punjab*, 1937, p. 19; of 1938, p. 25 and of 1939, pp. 1-2 and of 1940, p. 41.

products of the Punjab, on the other. The Designing Section of the Mayo School of Art helped in preparing designs for the proposed industries.<sup>219</sup>

For the industrial development of the Punjab Province, trainees were also sent abroad for receiving training in the modern industrial technology. In 1938-39 alone, a sum of rupees ten thousand was earmarked in the budget for this purpose.<sup>220</sup> Hence, the details given above made it clear that the Punjab Government were in favour of encouraging industrialists. But at the same time they suppressed their corrupt ways ruthlessly. They put an end to the wrong tradition followed since the time, Sir Gokal Chand Narang was the minister of Industries Department that the government could start a new industry with its own investment, but when it started earning profit, it would be sold to some industrialists, but many industrialists jointly would purchase it even without paying a reasonable price. The Government amended Section 24 of the State Aid to Industries Act also. According to this a joint Hindu family was condoned from the responsibility of repaying the debt taken by the head of the family.<sup>221</sup> Another evil in those days was that the then industries were being expanded in an unsystematic manner. The new industries were being set up in an unplanned way. As a result of this the laborers had to live in slums. Moreover, it was creating an unhealthy competition. In order to remove these vices the Unionists Government got the factories (Punjab Amendment Act), 1940 passed, by which such old industries as well as the new ones to be set up as were run by power and employed forty or more persons came under an effective control of the Government.<sup>222</sup>

As is clear from the table given below, due to the efforts of Unionist Party, the number of the factories in the Province rose every year tremendously, which provided

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<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, 23.1.1941, p. 204 also Vol. III, 8.3.1938, p. 578; *Punjab Administration Report*; 1901-02, p. 179.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, 16.3.1938, p. 209; Vol. VI, 21.11.1938, p. 486; A. Abbot, and S.M. Wood, *Report on Vocational Education in India, Lahore : 1937*, p. 4.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, 13.3.1941, p. 127.

<sup>222</sup> A. Mukhtiari, *op,cit.*, p. 117; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, pp. 55,63; also Vol. XIII, 19.4.1940, pp. 915, 931 and 966.

employment to a large number of people. The number of the factory workers rose from 53,327 in 1934 to 63,268,72268 and 78302 in 1937, 1938 and 1939 respectively.<sup>223</sup>

#### Progress of Factories 1936-39<sup>224</sup>

Year	1936	1937	1938	1939
No. of factories registered	71	98	47	81
No. of factories unregistered	23	22	22	51
No. of the registered factories at the end of the year	802	862	887	917
The rate of industrial progress on the basis of 1936	--	7.3%	10.6%	14.3%

The Unionists' Government made remarkable achievements particularly in the field of cottage industry. It introduced the traveling demonstration parties which, in fact, were mobile industrial schools. They imparted training to men as well as women in different crafts. Some of such parties as were active from 1937 to 1941 have been mentioned in the Punjab Legislative Council debates. As a result of the training imparted by them, the income of the artisans went up considerably. In Hissar daily wages of weavers and spinners was one *anna* before getting the training, rose to four *annas* and eight to nine *annas*<sup>225</sup> respectively. Another important outcome of these demonstration parties was that many people, inspired by the new technical education, set up their own factories. For instance, a rich man, impressed by the new technique of preparing Ammonium, Chloride opened his own factory at Kaithal.<sup>226</sup>

In this connection, it is noteworthy to mention that the Unionists emphasized the need for raising the number and the standard of the industrial schools. This party

<sup>223</sup> P.L.A.D., Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, pp. 325,26; *The Indian Labour Year Book*, 1946, p.10.

<sup>224</sup> Factories actually working numbered 747, 748, 780 and 800 in 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1939, respectively. Vide. *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, pp. 53 and 537 (Statistics for this table prepared from the *Annual Reports on the Working Department*, Punjab for the years 1936-39).

<sup>225</sup> In 1941, there were in all 24 demonstration parties, and a sum of Rs. 26,040 was allocated for the salaries of their staff. Vide. *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 18.1.1941, p. 18; also Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p. 264.

<sup>226</sup> *Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26*, p. 13; also 1938-39, pp.24-30; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, p.626; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439; *Report on the Working of the Department of Industries, Punjab, 1926-27*, p. 17.

suggested the opening of a commercial section in each industrial training school to make them self-dependent. Its suggestion was implemented in the Government Hosiery School Ludhiana at a cost of rupees forty thousand.<sup>227</sup> The success of this proposal stood vindicated by the fact that this school earned a profit of rupees ten thousand during the first five months.<sup>228</sup> In this direction, another important contribution of the Unionists' was the establishment of a school for the training of weaving and knitting at Kulu. In order to encourage the people of this place it held a prize winning competition in weaving and knitting on the day of *Dusehra* festival annually.<sup>229</sup>

For the development of the cottage industries, another step was taken to raise the number of the co-operative industrial societies in which the most important were the weaving societies. These weavers earlier used to buy thread from merchants (*bantias*) at a high rate of interest and then sold the finished clothes to the same merchants at low prices. Now, thread and tools were available to them from the societies at reasonable rates. They could also sell their products to the societies at fare prices. They could get money in advance for their products, and without any surety, could get the necessary articles also in advance.<sup>230</sup> Besides, they could also borrow small amounts of money. In 1937-38, weavers in Panipat town alone were given Rs.6,500/- as loans. As stated earlier, Marketing Boards with their depots at Amritsar, Multan and Hoshiarpur were set up for their benefit.<sup>231</sup> In the beginning, for want of funds, the Government had to depend upon the capitalists for the initial investment, as a result of which the profit went to the pockets of the capitalists, but in 1941, the Government for the purpose arranged a sum of Rs.

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<sup>227</sup> *Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26*, p. 13; also 1938-39, pp.24-30; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, p.626; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439; *Report on the Working of the Department of Industries, Punjab, 1926-27*, p. 17.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1939, p. 439.

<sup>229</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies: 1920-21*, p. 31; also of 1939, pp. 38-39; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p. 264; Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, p. 128.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

50,000 so that their profit could be reinvested on their development and expansion.<sup>232</sup> The Unionist Party did one thing more in this direction. It opened sales depots one in Shimla in 1937-38 and another at Murru in 1938-39 for the sale of the cottage industry products. These depots were under the control of the Central Depot in Lahore.<sup>233</sup> Efforts were made to encourage poultry and bee keeping industry as well. Thus, the bee - keeping projects - one each at Nagrota in Kangra district and the other in Kullu Valley were started. For the revival and benefit of the pottery industry, a Central Agency was set up at the cost of Rs.60,000/-.<sup>234</sup>

Remarkable progress was made in the field of industrial training for women as well. The Government sanctioned grants and scholarships to the Women Industrial Training Institutes, as a consequence of which the number of the trainees marked a steep increase. The number from 200 in 1920 went up to 1400 in 1937 and 2015 in 1939 and 3050 in 1942 and nearly 4000 in 1945.<sup>235</sup> The increase in number was due to the big amount of money made available by the Punjab Government. The amount which was Rs. 6000 in 1920 was increased to Rs. 79,000 in 1940 and 1,58,000 in 1945.<sup>236</sup>

Another outcome of the efforts of the Unionist Government was the amendment in Section 17 of the State Aid to Industries Act 1940. Its purpose was to extend its field to the cottage industries, whereas earlier it was meant to help research for other industries only.<sup>237</sup> It again went to the credit of the Punjab Government which arranged Rs.30,000/-

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<sup>232</sup> In 1938-39, advanced training in dairying, bee-keeping, poultry farming and fruit preservation was being imported in the Punjab Agricultural and Research Institute, Lyallpur. Vide. *Annual Report on the Working of the Education Department, Punjab : 1938-39*, p.74; also of 1935-36, p.62; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, pp. 1613, 1939, 20.3.1939, p. 861.

<sup>233</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, p. 626; *Punjab Administration Report : 1925-26*, pp.24-30; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, p. 331.

<sup>234</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, pp. 330-31.

<sup>235</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, pp. 330-31.

<sup>236</sup> In 1941, there were in all 24 demonstration parties, and a sum of Rs. 26,040 was allocated for the salaries of their staff. Vide. *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 18.1.1941, p. 18; also Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p. 264.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, 13.3.1941, p. 18.

in 1941 to sanction loans to the poor unemployed, eager to start industries.<sup>238</sup> A major headache for the unionist Government was the shortage of consumer goods. The diversion of resources to was production and the curtailment of the imports of ordinary consumer goods were the root cause of this intractable problem. Its first impact was felt in the towns.<sup>239</sup>

The Punjab Government's efforts led to a remarkable industrial development of the Punjab. The Government Weaving Factory, Shahdara, which during the period of Gokal Chand Narang's ministry had been running in loss of Rs. 60,000/- every year, earned a profit of Rs. 56,000/- in 1940.<sup>240</sup> The state run industries, although most of them were in the cottage industry sector to a large extent, met the developmental needs of the Governments. For instance, the Central Workshop, Amritsar, produced the article needed for the *Haveli* Project.<sup>241</sup> The Government industrial schools produced the articles, partly needed to meet the requirements of the Defense Department.<sup>242</sup> The Defense Department praised their quality, in its report of 1939.<sup>243</sup> The Punjab was the only Province to have the privilege of producing blankets on handlooms. Expressing similar views Prof. K.T. Shah also wrote that druggists and silky, silver and gold embroidered woolen garments produced in this province were very well-known in foreign countries as well.<sup>244</sup> The industrial progress of Punjab is revealed from the fact that the number of the woolen mills rose from 3, which employed 1559 workers in 1925 and 2666 in 1939.<sup>245</sup> The number of cement factories went from one in 1920 to 3 in 1933, and 7 in 1942 and 11 in

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<sup>238</sup> *Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26*, p. 13; also 1938-39, pp. 24-30; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, p. 626; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439; *Report on the Working of the Department of Industries, Punjab : 1926-27*, p. 17.

<sup>239</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 146.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1939, p. 439.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p.26; also 311-32.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p.26; also 311-32.

<sup>243</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies : 1920-21*, p. 31; also of 1939, pp. 38-39, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, p. 439.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, p.264; Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, p. 128.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*

1945.<sup>246</sup> The prizes won by the Punjab in different exhibitions also reveal the keen interest taken by the Unionists Party and its government in the industrial development of the province. For instance, Punjab was awarded the first prize for its exhibits in the exhibition in Delhi. It won four medals and two certificates at Karachi also.<sup>247</sup>

The Industrial development of Punjab during the period under review drew the attention of other States' Governments as well. In a statement to *The Tribune*, Vishvanath, the Prime Minister of Orissa said in December, 1937 that in the field of industrial development, Punjab was marching much ahead of any of the other States ruled over by the Congress.<sup>248</sup> The Industry Minister of Bombay had also expressed similar views that "there was no doubt about it that Punjab Government had played a laudable role in this direction especially during the regime of the Unionists".<sup>249</sup> Thus it may be concluded that the efforts of the Punjab Government were appreciated not only by the people of Punjab but by several important men of other States also. This too displayed the importance of the agriculture based industry which could make the agriculturists, non-agriculturists, moneylenders and the industrialists prosperous. However, after independence, the Centre Government had not given due and sufficient attention to the required industrial development in this Province.

Here, it becomes pertinent to cite some achievements in the field of industry in the province of Punjab during the period under review. So attempt has been made to present the evolution of industry in two regions i.e. Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar in particular. The reason is obvious of selection these areas because of two reasons i.e. (i) the government paid more attention and the private enterprises spent more and secondly the manufactures of these two areas met the requirements of the market of that time. Of course, Ludhiana

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<sup>246</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of the Co-operative Societies in Punjab*, 1930, p. 48; also of 1938, p. 7; also of 1939, p.42.

<sup>247</sup> In 1938-39, advanced training in dairying, bee-keeping, poultry farming and fruit preservation was being imported in the Punjab Agricultural and Research Institute, Lyallpur. Vide. *Annual Report on the Working of the Education Department, Punjab : 1938-39*, p.74; also of 1935-36, p. 62; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, pp. 1613, 1939, 20.3.1939, p. 861.

<sup>248</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, p. 626; *Punjab Administration Report : 1925-26*, pp. 24-30; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, p. 331.

<sup>249</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, pp. 330-31.

was another most significant centre of industry to supply woollens and other clothes, but it has not been taken up as one can do independent work on the development of industry in this reason. However, it is to be noticed that this industry did help the British masters during the course of World War II. From April 1939, the Purchase Department of the Punjab Government replaced the Central Agency of the Indian stores Department or the main purchaser of supplies. It dealt in contracts for the supply of items as tents, hardware, textiles, leather good and machinery to the tune of Rs. 50 Lakh a year.<sup>250</sup> The Hindus business class gained the most from the growth of lucrative government civil supplies contracts. Baldev Singh's entry into the cabinet created wartime bonanza for the businessmen.<sup>251</sup>

It is a well known reality that the economic development of a region/state depends upon the conditions of agriculture, industry and trade. Industrial progress and trade are the backbone of sound economy of a region. We find that before period for our study there were no Industries in large number in Punjab as well as in India. Since then a small modern industry section slowly emerged in the Punjab economy. It expanded in the forth and fifth decade of the twentieth century out of the sheer necessity arising from the World War I and II.<sup>252</sup> The war created demand for blankets and other wollen materials. The mills could not meet the demand. The Govt. Supply Department turned towards handloom wollen industry. Handloom weaver benefited from the increased demand from the civilian market for blankets, tweeds and rugs. Moreover, the cessation of imports from Italy helped the handloom weaver further.<sup>253</sup> The post-war development plan registered the declining trend in the handloom industry.<sup>254</sup> In 1939, the number of cotton spinning and weaving mills increased to 13 mills, 2,252 looms, and 86,748 spindles.<sup>255</sup> The post-war Development Plan had suggested to set up a special spinning plant to turn out the cotton yarn.<sup>256</sup> Imports of worsted yarn led to the establishment of small worsted

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<sup>250</sup> *The Tribune*, 27.9.1940.

<sup>251</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 152.

<sup>252</sup> Alok Ghosh, *Indian Economy, Its Nature and Problems*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 9.

<sup>253</sup> *Report on the Panel on Woollen Industry*, Government of India, department of Industries & Supplies, nd. 15, 24.

<sup>254</sup> Govt. of Punjab, *Post-War Development Plan Punjab*, Lahore 1946, p. 77.

<sup>255</sup> *Statistical Abstracts of British India (1930-31 to 1939-40)*, pp. 620, 626-29.

<sup>256</sup> Govt. of Punjab, *Post-War Development Plan of Punjab*, p. 77.

poor loom weaving mills in Amritsar and hosiery knitting factories in Ludhiana. The war cut off supplies of yarn. It was imported from the UK and Australia to keep the industry alive.<sup>257</sup> Number of hosiery factories increased from 42 in 1937 to 62 in 1940.<sup>258</sup> In 1941, Ludhiana alone exceeded 100 hosiery factories.<sup>259</sup> Till 1945, a problem of hosiery machines and availability of persisted.<sup>260</sup> Before the advent of British rule in India the Punjab had a handicraft industry. But after the decline of handicrafts, the era of modern industry began. It is believed that modern Indian industry started in the last quarter of nineteenth century, as evidenced by the growth of tea, coffee and jute industries.<sup>261</sup> That was when attempts were made to introduce the factory system in several industries, notably by Europeans. For example reeling machinery had been introduced in silk fibers in the East India Company. But most of the other attempts had met with failure. Thus before the fifties of the nineteenth century there was almost total lack of factory industry in Punjab.<sup>262</sup> The number of silk factories increased from four in 1935 to eight in 1945.<sup>263</sup>

Industrial progress is the backbone of sound economy of a region. From that point of view the Punjab came pretty low. There were not many factories in Punjab till the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>264</sup> It was only after the World War I that the industrial activity made its beginnings in this region. The chief manufacturers of the province of Punjab by 1947 were cotton, fabrics, ivory or bone and copper inlay works, decorative furniture, shoes and glass work etc.

The Unionist Government in 1939-40 again assured the industrialists that the Punjab State Aid to Industries Act would be implemented liberally. It kept its promise in word and deed. Thus the Government made provisions in the budget for the guarantee of

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<sup>257</sup> *Report of the Panel on Woollen Industry*, p. 11.

<sup>258</sup> *Statistical Abstract of British India (1930—31 to 1939-40)*, pp. 59-93.

<sup>259</sup> *Report of the Panel on Hosiery Industry*, p. 1.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>261</sup> D.R. Gadgil, *Industrial Evolution of India*, Calcutta, 1942, p. 34.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>263</sup> Govt. of India, *Report of the Panel on Artificial Silk and Rayon Industry*, Department of Industries and Suppliers, Simla, 1947, p. 33.

<sup>264</sup> *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer*, Lahore, 1904, p. 150.

the minimum profit and also gave loans to the industrialists liberally.<sup>265</sup> During 1937-44 the budget of the Industries Department was raised. In 1940-41 it was again raised by about 183 per cent and in 1944-45 by about 272 per cent in comparison with that of the year 1943-44. Yet, considering it to be small it set up in 1939 a special treasury in the department.<sup>266</sup> The Post-World War plan had earmarked Rs. 4.99 crore for the development of industries.<sup>267</sup> A sum of *rupees one lac* twenty thousand was disbursed as loans for the progress of the hosiery industry in Ludhiana district alone in 1939-40. As a result, the number of hosiery mills went up from 16 in 1934 to 62 in 1939. The amount in the budget was raised to 500 percent to encourage the industrialists to establish their units in the Province.<sup>268</sup> When in 1937, an all India Industrial Fair was organized, the Punjab Government for the Industrial progress of the Province of Punjab, went to the extent of discouraging the exhibition of any such foreign products as could stand in competition with the Indian products.<sup>269</sup> To give more encouragement to the indigenous goods in 1939 directed all the departments of Punjab Government that the indigenous goods, particularly produced within the State should be given preference over the imported goods. The War created 'an excellent opportunity of capturing export market' of glass industry in the Punjab. The number of glass factories in the Punjab rose from three in 1939 to six in 1944, producing 6,600 tons of glass ware in 1945.<sup>270</sup> In the post-war phase, hosiery, surgical instruments and sports goods industries had the fight against heavy odds owing to the restrictions on the export of their products. The industries had to pass through a phase of 'a cute strain and distress' A large number of markers were thrown out

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<sup>265</sup> *Report on the Working of the Industries Department, Punjab, 1939, 20; Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, 329.*

<sup>266</sup> *Five Years of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab : 1938-42, 21, 27 and 47; Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. XVII, 20.3.1941, 120; also Vol. XIX, 10.3.1942, 185; Vol. XXVII, 19.11.1935, 296-98; Vol. VII, 13.3.1925, 514.*

<sup>267</sup> Government of Punjab, *Post-War Development Plan Punjab*, Lahore, 1946, p. 74.

<sup>268</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, 439; also see Report of the Indian Tariff Board on the Woolen Textile Industry, Delhi : 1935, 346.*

<sup>269</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette, Part I, 30.12.1938, 521; Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. II, 17.1.1938, 442.*

<sup>270</sup> Govt. of India, *Report of the Panel of Glass Industry*, pp. 30-31.

of employment.<sup>271</sup> The Provincial Store Purchase Department was also opened. It was given free hand to purchase goods from the local industries for the Government requirements.<sup>272</sup> In 1938 survey of the State the Union Government the first one which, for the development of the both-private and public sectors was undertaken district wise and industry wise.<sup>273</sup> The Punjab Government invited the noted economist Prof. K.T. Shah to prepare a detailed plan for the Industrial Development. The recommendations of this plan proved to be noteworthy, which the Government confirmed in one of its statements of March 7, 1941.<sup>274</sup> In 1939 Industrial Research Fund worth rupees one lac fifty thousand was set up. It was the first experiment of its type. The same year, Industrial Research Laboratory was started at Shahdara. The Secretary of the All India Village Industrial Association, Mr. Kamarappa, in a letter written in April 1939,<sup>275</sup> to the in-charge of the laboratory Dr Sarin, admired the useful work done by it. The Industrial Museums gave publicity to the industrial products of Punjab. The Designing Section of Mayo School of Art helped in preparing designs for the proposed industries.<sup>276</sup>

In Punjab Province for the industrial progress, trainees were also sent abroad for getting training in the modern industrial technology. In 1938-39, for this purpose alone, a sum of Rs. 10,000/- was earmarked in the budget.<sup>277</sup> Hence, the detail given above tells that the Punjab Government favored and encouraged industrialists, but at the same time they suppressed their corrupt ways with strong hands. It put an end to the wrong tradition that the government could start a new industry with its own investment. But when it

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<sup>271</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab (1945-46)*, p. 13

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. X, 2.11.1939, 439; also Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, 127.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, 16.3.1938, 846; Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, 55; Vol. XVI, 7.3.1941, 253; *India Year Book: 1940-41*, 593.

<sup>274</sup> K.T. Shah, *Industrialization of the Punjab* (Punjab Government: 1941), 205; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVI, 7.3.1941, 253.

<sup>275</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, 128; also Vol. III, 16.3.1938, 209; *Report on the Working of the Industries Department, Punjab, 1937*, 19; of 1938, 25 and of 1939, 1-2 and of 1940, 41.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, 23.1.1941, 204 also Vol. III, 8.3.1938, 578; *Punjab Administration Report; 1901-02*, 179

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. III, 16.3.1938, 209; Vol. VI, 21.11.1938, 486; A. Abbot, and S.M. Wood, *Report on Vocational Education in India, Lahore : 1937*, 4.

began to earning profit, it would be sold to some industrialists; many industrialists jointly would purchase it even without paying a reasonable price. It also amended Section 24 of the State Aid to Industries Act. According to this a joint Hindu family was freed from the responsibility of repaying the debt once taken by its head.<sup>278</sup>

The then industries were being expanded in an unsystematic manner. New industries were being set up in an unplanned way was evil in those days. Consequently, the workers had to live in slums. It was creating an unhealthy competition. To remove this evil, the Government got the factories (Punjab Amendment Act), 1940 passed. Then such old industries and the new ones were to run by power and could employ forty or more persons. These came under an effective control of the Government.<sup>279</sup> The efforts of the Punjab Government resulted in the rise of number of factories every year tremendously in the Province. The number of factories under the Factories Act increased from 132 in 1900 to 1191 in 1943 with 1,32,480 male workers.<sup>280</sup> That provided employment to a large number of men. The number of the factory workers rose from 53,327 in 1934 to 63,268 in 1937 to 72,268 in 1938 and 78,302 in 1939 respectively.<sup>281</sup> The table given below will make this fact clear:

**Table Showing the Progress of Factories: 1936-39<sup>282</sup>**

Year	1936	1937	1938	1939
The No. of factories registered in the year	71	98	47	81
The No. of factories unregistered in the year	23	22	22	51
The No. of the registered factories at the end of the year	802	862	887	917
The rate of industrial progress on the basis of 1936	--	7.3%	10.6%	14.3%

The Punjab Government made remarkable contribution in the field of cottage industry. It introduced the traveling demonstration parties. These were, in fact, mobile

<sup>278</sup> . *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, 13.3.1941, 127.

<sup>279</sup> A. Mukhtiari, *op.cit.*, 117; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, 55,63; also Vol. XIII, 19.4.1940, 915, 931 and 966.

<sup>280</sup> G. Hasan Leghari, *Punjab Wages Survey 1943*, Lahore, 1945, p. 8.

<sup>281</sup> . *P.L.A.D.*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, 325,26; *The Indian Labour Year Book*, 1946, 10.

<sup>282</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XI-A, 2.2.1940, 53 and 537. *Annual Reports on the Working Department*, Punjab for the years 1936-39)

industrial schools. They gave training to men and women in different crafts. Some of such parties as were active from 1937 to 1941 are cited in the Punjab Legislative Council debates. As a result of the training given by them, the artisans' income went up sufficiently. In Hissar, daily wages of weavers and spinners was one *anna* before getting the training, rose to four *annas* and eight to nine *annas*<sup>283</sup> respectively. One more important result of these demonstration parties was that a large number of men, encouraged by the new technical education, founded their own factories.<sup>284</sup> In this connection, it is worth mentioning to State that the Punjab Government stressed the need for raising the number and the standard of the industrial schools. It also suggested the opening of a commercial section in each industrial training school. It was to make them self-dependent. Its suggestion was carried out in the Government Hosiery School, Ludhiana at a cost of Rs. 40000/-.<sup>285</sup> The success of this proposal stood vindicated by the fact that this school earned a profit of Rs. 10000/- during the first five months.<sup>286</sup> In this direction, the Government's another notable achievement was the setting up of a school for the training of weaving and knitting at Kulu. To encourage the people of this place it held a prize winning competition in weaving and knitting on the day of *Dusehra* festival every year.<sup>287</sup>

For the development of the cottage industries, another step was taken. It was to raise the number of the co-operative industrial societies. In that the most notable were the weaving societies. The weavers earlier used to buy thread from merchants (*baniyas*) at a high rate of interest; then sold the finished clothes to the same merchants at low prices. Now, thread and tools were made available to them by these societies at reasonable rates.

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<sup>283</sup> *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 18.1.1941, 18; also Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 264.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, 13.3.1941, 18

<sup>285</sup> *Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26*, 13; also 1938-39, 24-30; *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, 626; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, 439; *Report on the Working of the Department of Industries, Punjab, 1926-27*, 17.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1939, 439; *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 26, 311-32

<sup>287</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies: 1920-21*, 31; also of 1939, 38-39; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, 439

They could also sell their products to the societies at fare prices. They could get money in advance for their products, and without any surety. They could get the necessary articles also in advance.<sup>288</sup> Besides, they could also borrow small amounts of money. In 1937-38, weavers in Panipat alone were given Rs. 6,500/- as loans. As stated earlier, Marketing Boards with their depots at Lahore, Multan, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur were set up for their benefit.<sup>289</sup> In the beginning, for want of funds, the Government had to depend upon the capitalists for the initial investment. Consequently, the profit went to them. In 1941, the Government for the purpose arranged a sum of Rs. 50,000 so that their profit could be reinvested on their development and expansion.<sup>290</sup>

The Punjab Government did one think more in this direction. It opened sales depots one in Simla in 1937-38 and another at Murru in 1938-39 for the sale of the cottage industry products. These depots were under the control of the Central Depot in Lahore.<sup>291</sup> Efforts were made to encourage poultry and bee keeping industry too. The bee - keeping projects - one each at Nagrota in Kangra district and the other in Kulu Valley were started. For the revival and benefit of the pottery industry, a Central Agency was set up at the cost of Rs. 60,000/-.<sup>292</sup> Notable development was made in the field of industrial training for women as well. The Government sanctioned grants and scholarships to the Women Industrial Training Institutes. So the number of the trainees marked a steep increase. The number from 1400 in 1937 went up to 2015 in 1939. The increase in number was due to the big amount made available by the Government. The amount which was Rs. 6000 in 1920 was increased to Rs. 79,000 in 1940.<sup>293</sup> Another outcome of

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<sup>288</sup> . *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 264; Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, 128.

<sup>289</sup> . *Ibid.*

<sup>290</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of the Co-operative Societies in Punjab, 1930*, 48; also of 1938, 7; also of 1939, 42

<sup>291</sup> *Annual Report on the Working of the Education Department, Punjab : 1938-39*, 74; also of 1935-36, 62; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 1613, 1939, 20.3.1939, 861

<sup>292</sup> *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, 626; *Punjab Administration Report : 1925-26*, 24-30; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, 331

<sup>293</sup> . *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, 330-31; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. XII, 18.1.1941, 18; also Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 264.

the efforts of the Punjab Government was the amendment in Section 17 of the State Aid to Industries Act, 1940. Its objective was to extend its field to the cottage industries, whereas earlier it was meant to help research for other industries only. It also goes to the credit of the Punjab Government which arranged Rs. 30,000/- in 1941 to sanction loans to the poor unemployed, who wanted to start industries.<sup>294</sup>

The Punjab Government's efforts led to a tremendous industrial progress of Punjab. The Government Weaving Factory, Shahdara, had been running in loss of Rs. 60,000/- annually, earned a profit of Rs. 56,000/- in 1940.<sup>295</sup> The state run industries, though most of them were in the cottage industry sector to a large extent, met the developmental needs of the Governments. For example, the Central Workshop, Amritsar, produced the article required for the *Haveli* Project. The Government industrial schools produced the articles, partly required to meet the requirements of the Defense Department.<sup>296</sup> The Defense Department praised their quality, in its report of 1939. Punjab was the only Province to have the privilege of producing blankets on handlooms. Expressing similar views Prof. K.T. Shah also wrote that druggist and silky, silver and gold embroidered woolen garments produced in this Province, were very well-known in foreign countries also. The industrial progress of the Punjab is revealed from the fact that the number of the woolen mills rose from 3, which employed 1559 workers in 1925, to 5 in 1939, employing 2666 workers.<sup>297</sup> The number of cement factories went from 3 in 1933 and 5 in 1939. The prizes won by the Punjab in different exhibitions also showed the keen interest taken by the Punjab government in the industrial development of the State. For instance, the Punjab was awarded the first prize for its display goods in the

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<sup>294</sup> . *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, 13.3.1941, 18; *Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26*, 13; also 1938-39, 24-30; *Punjab Government Gazette (Extra-ordinary)*, 20.12.1938, 626; *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, 439; *Report on the Working of the Department of Industries, Punjab : 1926-27*, 17.

<sup>295</sup> . *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 13.3.1939, 439.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 26; also 311-32; *Annual Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies: 1920-21*, 31; also of 1939, 38-39, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, 20.3.1939, 439

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 25.3.1938, 264; Vol. XVII, 17.3.1941, 128; *Ibid; Annual Report on the Working of the Co-operative Societies in Punjab*, 1930, 48; also of 1938, 7; also of 1939, p. 42

exhibition in Delhi. It won four medals and two certificates at Karachi also.<sup>298</sup> Despite this, cloth, iron, cement, sugar, Kerosene all became virtually unobtainable in the villages.<sup>299</sup>

The Industrial progress of the Punjab during the period under review drew the attention of other States' Governments. In a statement to *The Tribune*, Vishvanath, the Prime Minister of Orissa said in December, 1939 that in the field of industrial development, the Punjab was marching much ahead of any of the other States the Congress ruled over. The Industry Minister of Bombay had also expressed similar views that "there was no doubt about it that the Punjab Government had played a laudable role in this direction."<sup>300</sup> The requisitioning and rationing of grain helped the trading classes. The Hindu and Sikh businessmen were free to make large wartime profits.<sup>301</sup> As a result of inflation, the industrialists and the war contractors made huge profits.<sup>302</sup> In 1941, the Hindu and Sikh business class had disrupted commercial life for two months in protest against the passing of the General Sales Tax Act and the Agricultural Produce Market Act. The General Sales Tax Act aimed to distribute the burden of taxation more evenly between the rural and urban population. It aroused great opposition. It taxed all traders who had an annual turnover of over Rs. 5,000. The traders formed a *beopasi mandal* to fight. It organized hartals in the region's main towns.<sup>303</sup> The Industries in the Punjab were dependent on agricultural products, pressing and bailing. These were mainly seasonal.<sup>304</sup> The post-war Development Plan, Punjab, regarded 'the Punjab industrially

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<sup>298</sup> Annual Report on the Working of the Education Department, Punjab: 1938-39, 74; also of 1935-36, 62; Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. VIII, 1613, 1939, 20.3.1939, p. 861

<sup>299</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, (1849-1947)*, p. 144.

<sup>300</sup> Punjab Government Gazette (Extra-ordinary), 20.12.1938, 626; Punjab Administration Report: 1925-26, 24-30; Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. XII, 11.3.1940, pp. 330-331.

<sup>301</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 148.

<sup>302</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *India Today*, p. 182.

<sup>303</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, pp. 149-176.

<sup>304</sup> Harminder Singh, *Industrial Development in the Punjab (1901-1947)*, Unpublished M.Phil. Dissertation, G.N.D.University, Amritsar, 1981.

backward' province in the context of large scale industries.<sup>305</sup> There are a considerable decline in industrial activity after the end of World War-II as the demand created by military fell down with the end of hostilities. The factories were not in a position to switch over the production for civilian needs owing to the acute scarcity of raw materials.<sup>306</sup> The concerns manufacturing surgical instruments were paralyzed due to fall in government demand and restrictions place upon the export of their products. However, export of sports goods from Sialkot continued. Foundries at Lahore remained busy in 1945-46 with the manufacture of oil expellers and those at Batala with agricultural implements. Match factories worked to full capacity. Rubber factories began experimenting an various goods for civilian use.<sup>307</sup> Scarcity of cloth remained very acute. The demand for products of handloom weaving industry was fairly heavy but the industry was hamiting by the shortage of yarn. Supplies of coarse cloth from the cotton mill industry were very scarce. Despite demand for hosiery goods, production failed to increased on account of scarcity of yarn. In Ludhiana alone, the value of blocked-up stocks in September 1945 was estimates at Rs. 75 Lakh. In July 1945, the surgical instruments industry was paralyzed due to absence of government orders and restrictions imposed on the export of surgical goods. About 40 percent of factories closed down.<sup>308</sup> The Batala foundries were busy with the agricultural implements which were in brisk demand.<sup>309</sup> The Imperial War not only influenced the trade, commerce and industry but also political life in Punjab. It created contingencies, in which political parties began taking advantages. The developments in the Akali Dal and the Muslim League were noteworthy and significant.

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<sup>305</sup> Government of Punjab, *Post-War Development Press*, Punjab, p. 74.

<sup>306</sup> *Annual Review of the Economic Conditions in the Punjab, (1945-46)*, BEPI, Punjab, 1946, p. 3.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>308</sup> *Annual Review of Economic Conditions in the Punjab (1945-46)*, p. 15.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

## CHAPTER-V

### IMPACT ON PUNJAB POLITICS

The World War II left deep impact on the politics of India in general and the Punjab in particular. The reason was obvious: the participation of the Sikhs from the Punjab was not only extensive rather it was most important in it. The Sikhs in large number had joined the Allied armies during the course of the Imperial War. In return of the assistance given by the Punjabis as well as the Indians, the Allied countries, especially the USA and other nationalists, Liberals and even Socialists had assured various political parties at national and international level that India would be given her due i.e. independence. However, the British policy, particularly the attitude of the Prime Minister Winstons Churchill created doubts in the minds of individuals in all most all parts of the country. Moreover, it was felt that assurances given by the Allied nations might not be fulfilled. Therefore, the politics of India after the 1939-40 was radically changed. The Punjab being a special province as there were three communities instead of two, the Imperial War affected its politics to a large extent. The present chapter deals with the issues pertaining to the Sikhs broadly, as they felt that despite their heavy participation in the War and their contribution of money and men, they were denied their rightful due.

#### I

The *Shahid Ganj* agitation (1935-40) in Delhi gave birth to the *Kirpan* problem. When the *Shahid Ganj* agitation was going, the Government of India put a restriction on the sporting of big *Kirpans* by the Sikhs.<sup>1</sup> Restriction was imposed on small *Kirpans* also. For the Sikhs, the sporting of *Kirpan* was a religious obligation. It was considered a very important symbol of their identity as a community. Naturally, that constraint could not be tolerated by them. The Muslims tried to get this right for their own community as well. To appease them, the Punjab Government vide their *gazette* notification dated September 20, 1935,<sup>2</sup> exempted swords from Section 13 and 15 of the Indian Arms Act.<sup>3</sup> No doubt,

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<sup>1</sup> Harbans Singh, (ed), *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol, IV, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1998, pp. 96-97.

<sup>2</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1935, Vol. II, p. 335.

the Muslims were happy about it but to the Sikhs it made no difference as the ban on big *Kirpan* was still there. They went on with their endeavors to get the ban lifted from the big *Kirpan* also. In their joint meetings held on August 26, 1935 and December 15, 1935 the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee passed resolutions requesting the Government to remove restrictions on the big *Kirpan*.<sup>4</sup> They also asserted that the restriction placed by the Government on the sporting of two small *Kirpans* by the Sikhs was also unjust.<sup>5</sup> The SGPC described the ban on big *Kirpan* by the Government as interference in the religious life of the Sikhs.<sup>6</sup> Mangal Singh appealed to his community to back the SGPC on this issue. On December 13, 1935, a deputation of the Sikh leaders consisting of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, Sardar Ujjal Singh, Sardar Kartar Singh, Sardar Bishan Singh and Sardar Boota Singh met the Punjab Governor. They requested him to remove the ban on the big *Kirpan*.<sup>7</sup> The Governor, however, replied that he could not lift this ban as he would have to give such permission to other religions also.<sup>8</sup> On December 30, 1935, the SGPC decided to launch a *Morcha* for *Kirpan* from January 1, 1936. Master Tara Singh, Gyani Sher Singh and Teja Singh were associated with this *Morcha*.<sup>9</sup> On January 1, Sardar Boota Singh who had recently returned to the ranks of the *Akali Dal*, started the *morcha*. A *jatha* left Amritsar under Master Tara Singh.<sup>10</sup> The *Morcha* lasted till January 31, 1936 when the ban on big *Kirpan* lapsed automatically. Three hundred ninety-one Sikhs, including seventy-six women, courted arrest during this period.<sup>11</sup> One thing, however, was clear that the Shahid Ganj crisis left the Sikhs very anxious and distrustful in so far as the Muslim attitude

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<sup>3</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.9.1935, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-35.

<sup>4</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 28.8.1935 and 17.12.1935.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.8.1935.

<sup>6</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.12.1935, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/12-35.

<sup>7</sup> *The Fateh*, 31.12.1935.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 1.1.1936.

<sup>10</sup> Harbans Singh, (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p. 97. See also, Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Shiromani Akali Dal*, Punjabi Book & Co., Jalandhar, 1978, p. 142.

<sup>11</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.1.1936, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/1-36.

towards *Kirpan* was concerned. They mentioned this problem in their memorandum to the Sapru Committee. In their replies to the questionnaire of the Committee they made a special mention of the *Kirpan* and demanded an inalienable right in this respect. They emphasized: “No law shall be enacted and no executive order be given to restrict in any manner or to any extent whatever, the manufacture, sale, the keeping and the wearing of the *Kirpans* by the Sikhs”.<sup>12</sup>

It, however, goes without saying that the *Kirpan morcha* further embittered the relations between the Unionist Government and the Akalis. One more issue namely *Jhatka* also affected the relations between the Sikhs and the Muslims left its imprint on the politics of Punjab. But this issue remained prominent before the outbreak of the World War II and had been sorted out before the close of the War. Another problem of the same nature, as that of *Jhatka*, was the handicap suffered by the Sikhs in the matter of taking out their religious processions. The Muslims created difficulties in their way some times by creating disturbances to obstruct and mar their processions. Some times by arrogantly dictating them to follow a particular route. This always resulted in great tension. It was very easy for the Muslims to object to a Sikh procession by putting forth the view that the Sikh religious processions were accompanied with music which tended to mar the serenity of the Muslim mosques that might fall along the route of the processions. At Rawalpindi, Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code was imposed on account of such a demand put forth by the Muslims, on the occasion of the Guru Nanak Birthday procession. Clashes occurred again in the town on January 18, 1940 when the Sikhs were taking out a procession.<sup>13</sup> In this very town again the Sikhs could not take out a procession on the eve of *Jor Mela* in connection with the martyrdom of the fifth guru, as they were not given permission to follow the route they had so far adopted. They could not tolerate the indignity of a change in the route which the Muslims wanted to dictate them. On this very ground, the Sikhs of Gujrat also could not take out a procession in

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<sup>12</sup> Harnam Singh, *Punjab: The Home land of the Sikhs*, Lahore, 1945, p. 74. Earlier in 1937, Lal Chand Nevalrai had also suggested in the Legislative Assembly of India that this right should be universally allowed to the Sikhs irrespective of its size. *Legislative Assembly Debates*, dated 11.2.1937. V Session of the Legislative Assembly, Shimla, 1937, pp. 758-59.

<sup>13</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.11.1936, File No. 18/11-36; 31.1.1937, File No. 18/1-37.

connection with Guru Nanak's birthday.<sup>14</sup> It is, however, enough to say that this high-handedness of the Muslims constituted a great irritant for the Sikhs. They remained dissatisfied with the Unionist Government. In the matter of religious holidays also the Sikhs were given very niggardly treatment by the Unionist Government. In 1939, in the Punjab, Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind birthdays were Government holidays. In that year, however, the Guru Nanak birthday fell on Sunday and was omitted from the list of the Punjab Government holidays, whereas the holidays of Christian, Hindu and Muslim festivals which if fell on Sundays were declared as holidays on the next day, i.e., Monday.<sup>15</sup> The neglect shown to the Sikhs in the matter of religious holidays may be seen from the fact that till 1941 even the *Jor Mela*, the martyrdom day of the fifth Guru Arjan Dev, a very important festival of the Sikhs, was not observed as a holiday in the Punjab. In that year, *Sri Guru Singh Sabha*, Mughalpura (Lahore) appealed to the Punjab Education Department, and other heads of Government offices, to declare that a holiday in all the educational institutions and offices in Punjab, but in vain.<sup>16</sup> These things, though small, were yet sensitive enough to produce dissatisfaction among the Sikhs and give them a feeling that their identity was in jeopardy. Their relations with the Unionist Government were bound to be strained under such circumstances. Another issue that caused ripples in the relations between the Sikhs and the Unionist Government was the status of the *Gurmukhi* language in the Punjab. For the Sikhs, this language was a symbol of their socio-religious identity. Refusal of the Punjab Government to grant the request of the Sikhs to treat this language on par with other Indian languages made them annoyed and angry. Rather, the Government seemed to have started a systematic discrimination against this language in the province. *Urdu* was adopted as a language for elementary education in the province.<sup>17</sup> The champions of the *Gurmukhi* language had off and on tried to plead with Sir Shahabudin, the Education Minister, in favour of this language, but in vain.<sup>18</sup> The lovers of the *Punjabi* (*Gurmukhi*) language held a conference at

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<sup>14</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.6.1937, File No. 18/6-37; 30.11.1937, File No. 18/11-37.

<sup>15</sup> *The Khalsa Te Khalsa Advocate*, 29.12.1938.

<sup>16</sup> *The Fateh*, 29.5.1941.

<sup>17</sup> *The Mauji*, 7.11.1938.

<sup>18</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 16.8.1936.

Rawalpindi on April 28 - 29, 1940. Resolutions were passed asking the Government: (1) to be fair towards the *Punjabi* language; (2) to give grants for its promotion; (3) to prefer it to other languages in the Punjab offices, (4) to introduce it as an elective subject in the Boys' Colleges, as in the Girls Colleges, and (5) to create *Punjabi* sections in the college libraries.<sup>19</sup> The conference, which otherwise was an impressive affair, proved a cry in wilderness because the Punjab Government ignored the *Punjabi* language as a medium of education in the Punjab Primary Education Bill passed in 1941.<sup>20</sup> This was quite in consonance with the policy of the Punjab Government they had followed so far.<sup>21</sup> At the Roorka Kalan Akali Conference held on February 15-16, 1941 the Sikhs demanded an amendment of the Primary Education Bill and the provision for the teaching of *Punjabi* (*Gurmukhi*) in all the public schools where at least seven students desired it.<sup>22</sup> The Akalis gave one month's ultimatum to the Government at the termination of which they were to launch a *morcha*.<sup>23</sup> The Punjab Governor sent for Master Tara Singh in order to discuss the problem. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was also present at this meeting. But nothing came out of this meeting.<sup>24</sup> The matter kept on lingering and later on was taken up in the Sikandar-Baldev Singh Pact. It also found a mention in the memorandum submitted by the Sikhs to the Sapru Committee. Hence, that all these developments in the politics of Punjab definitely bore the impact of the World War II because the participation of the Sikhs in this international event was weighty and of great importance.

The Akalis were essentially of the peasant stock. They naturally got into conflict with the Unionist Government during the *kisan* agitations that took place in Punjab during 1938-39 and even afterwards. They, *inter alia*, stood for rationalization of land revenue linked with the principle of income-tax, and abolition of *begar* from time to time

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<sup>19</sup> *The Panj Darya* (*Gurmukhi* Monthly, Lahore), May, 1940 (Hereafter referred to as the *Panj Darya*).

<sup>20</sup> *The Punjab Code*, Vol. II, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Act, XVIII, Shimla, 1953, p. 949, Also *the Akali*, 5.1.1941.

<sup>21</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 9.1.1941, Also *The Fateh*, 2/9.1.1941.

<sup>22</sup> *The Akali*, 19.2.1941.

<sup>23</sup> *Linlithgow Collections*, *op.cit.*, 125/90, Doc. No. 7, D.O. No. 323, dated 28.2.1941 from the Punjab Governor to the Viceroy (Microfilms, N.A.I.).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, D.O. No. 330, dated 17.3.1941.

imposed on the peasants.<sup>25</sup> The Akalis were usually on the forefront of the *Kisan* movement.<sup>26</sup> In June, 1938 a *kisan* agitation was started in the Lyallpur district. It was caused by the remodeling of canal outlets necessitated by silting. They deployed their *jathas* for demonstrations. In this connection, they even took out a procession at Lyallpur on June 10, 1938.<sup>27</sup> The Government had ultimately to yield and open the outlets as demanded on July 29, 1938. The Akalis were again involved in confrontation with the Government in the case of Amritsar *Kisan* agitation which also rose over a proposed revenue settlement and remodeling of the outlets on the Raya distributaries.<sup>28</sup> The Government introduced a sliding-scale system whereby the land revenue payable to Government was to rise or fall in accordance with the rise or fall in the prices of agricultural commodities.<sup>29</sup> The Shiromani Akali Dal (hereafter S.A.D.) brought out a poster alleging that the revised settlement aimed at squeezing out rupees four *lakhs* more from the peasants. It also alleged that the canal outlets had been reduced in many villages and that the peasants were groaning under the burden of *malba*, *chaukidara* and *chahi* levies. The party organized a demonstration at Amritsar on July 20, 1938 in collaboration with other parties.<sup>30</sup> The demonstrators were *lathi* charged at the railway bridge. The Communist demonstrators ran away but the Akalis held the ground and received the blows calmly. Partap Singh Kairon, Darshan Singh Pheruman and Udham Singh Nagoke provided competent leadership at this juncture.<sup>31</sup> Udham Singh Nagoke suffered a number of *lathi* blows. The party formed a War Council in league with the District *Kisan* Committee. But soon it had to be dissolved on account of safety considerations. The

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<sup>25</sup> *The Akali*, 27.11.1938 (Address of Malik Dogar Singh at the All India Akali Conference, Rawalpindi).

<sup>26</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 2.6.1938 (The statement of Gyani Lal Singh, Secretary, Singh Sabha, Amritsar).

<sup>27</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.6.1938, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-38.

<sup>28</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.7.1938, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/7-38.

<sup>29</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1938, Vol. I, p. 353.

<sup>30</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>31</sup> *The Sikh World* (English Weekly, Delhi). Date of the weekly, from which this fact has been quoted, is disfigured. It is available at the Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid Research Library, Punjabi University, Patiala (Hereafter referred to as the Sikh World).

Akalis demonstrated again on July 29 in the Civil Lines area.<sup>32</sup> Ultimately, a *rapprochement* was effected and the agitation ended on August 9, 1938.<sup>33</sup> An Akalis Conference held at Palsaur, District Lyallpur, congratulated Udham Singh Nagoke and his friends for suffering *lathi* blows. It also condemned the Unionist Government of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan for these atrocities.<sup>34</sup>

A *morcha* was started at Lahore in March 1939 against the land revenue settlement. The Akalis joined it with great enthusiasm. They even recruited an *Akali Kisan Fauj* to participate in this agitation.<sup>35</sup> The Akalis did this even when the Congress could not give any significant support to this *morcha*.<sup>36</sup> They also opened a ten week *Akali* Training School at the Sikh National College, Lahore, to train the *Akali* workers for directing the *Akali Kisan Fauj*.<sup>37</sup> However, on an assurance given by the Punjab Premier Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan on September 4, the *morcha* was called off.<sup>38</sup> In this agitation, the *Akali* leaders such as Jathedars Ishar Singh Majhail, Attar Singh and Gyani Shankar Singh, General Secretary, S.A.D. were arrested and detained.<sup>39</sup> The spirited opposition of the Akalis to the Unionist Ministry endeared them to the Punjab Congress by the time World War II began.<sup>40</sup> The Congress resorted to door-to-door canvassing advising the people not to join the army.<sup>41</sup> The Congress opposition in the Punjab was in keeping with the general line of opposition adopted by their party at the All-India level, although on the point of opposition to army recruitment it was less severe. There was a section in the Congress which had for a year been favoring the idea of cooperation with the Government in the coming War even before it had started. This section was represented

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<sup>32</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 15.8.1938, File No. 18/8-38.

<sup>34</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 23.10.1938.

<sup>35</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.4.1939, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/4-39.

<sup>36</sup> *The Kirti Lehar*, 20.8.1939.

<sup>37</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.7.1939, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/7-39.

<sup>38</sup> *The Kirti Lehar*, 10.9.1939.

<sup>39</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1938, Vol. II, pp. 294-95, 310.

<sup>40</sup> Sukhmani Bal Riar, *The Politics of the Sikhs (1940-47)*, Unistar, Chandigarh, 2006, 24.

<sup>41</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.10.1939, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/10-39.

by rich traders and industrialists who wanted to reap advantages to be offered by the War. They financed the Congress and as such wielded some influence in the organization.<sup>42</sup> It, however, has to be admitted that the Congress as an organization adopted a posture of non-cooperation at this juncture, the soft and indulgent leanings of this wealthy section notwithstanding. As regards the attitude of the Sikhs at this juncture, opinion was divided. One section wanted to support the Congress whereas another section wanted to support the Government in its War efforts. The former section was led by nationalist Sikhs like Ishar Singh Majhail and Udham Singh Nagoke. The latter section was led by Master Tara Singh. Master Tara Singh said that the Sikhs should help the British on the particular point of recruitment to the army.<sup>43</sup> The Chief Khalsa Diwan (hereafter, C.K.D.), in a meeting, appealed the people to help the Government with men and money.<sup>44</sup> The Khalsa National Party, closely linked with the C.K.D., came all out in favor of the Government. Sardar Bahadur Arjan Singh Bagrian, Sardar Bahadur Sunder Singh Majithia and scores of other Sardar Bahadurs appealed to the people to render unstinted support to the Government in the hour of War. Like the trading and industrial sections in the Congress, this section of the Sikh community was very affluent and its fate was in many ways linked with that of the British. His Highness, the Maharaja of Patiala also appealed to the *Panth* to help His Majesty, the King, in that hour of peril.<sup>45</sup> Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia met the Viceroy on October 7, 1939-and impressed upon him for the recruitment of more Sikhs in the army.<sup>46</sup> Why was Master Tara Singh in favour of helping the British in this War? His argument was that the enlistment of Sikhs in the army was their strength. They could not lose this position by boycotting the British in the War. They had proudly contributed 10 per cent of the fighting forces during the World War I.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, on October 1, 1939, the Sikhs held a meeting at Amritsar under the Presidentship of Master Tara Singh. It was resolved that the Shiromani Akali Dal would

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<sup>42</sup> *Zetland Papers*, I.O.L./M2/31. Letter dated 30.9.1938 from the Viceroy to the S.O.S. (Microfilms, N.A.I.).

<sup>43</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 2.10.1939.

<sup>44</sup> *The Khalsa Samachar*, 14.9.1939.

<sup>45</sup> *Majithia Papers*, File No. 152; File No. 151.

<sup>46</sup> *The Akali*, 10.10.1939.

<sup>47</sup> *The Khalsa Samachar*, 18.10.1945.

help the British in the World War II in case they gave more representation to the Sikhs in the Army, and also accommodated a Sikh on the Executive Council of the Viceroy. They demanded a due place for the Sikhs in the services.<sup>48</sup> At this Conference, the anti-British section tried to exploit the injustice done to the Sikhs by the British in the Communal Award. But the overall consensus was that the British should not be opposed as the War provided an opportunity through which the Sikhs could get their representation in the army made up, which had been falling of late.<sup>49</sup> The Akalis could not take any decision of joining the Congress's non-cooperation movement because, apart from its suicidal results for the community, it was bound to cause intense opposition against the Akalis in the community itself. Further, it can be said that by adopting this policy the Sikhs also wanted to win the Government's goodwill and thereby retrieve the position they had lost in the earlier years. The Sikh newspapers also, even when criticizing the Government for their niggardly response to the Sikh demands, advised the Sikhs to keep on with the recruitment.<sup>50</sup>

Relations between the Government and the Sikhs suffered a setback when a Sikh squadron of the Central India Horse refused to go overseas. Thirty-five Sikhs of the 31<sup>st</sup> Punjab Regiment also deserted. Over a hundred of them were court-martialled and some were executed.<sup>51</sup> The Sikhs of the Royal Indian Army Supply Corps, serving in Africa, refused to load stores on the plea that they were not coolies. These and other similar incidents compelled the authorities to put a temporary ban on the recruitment of the Sikhs<sup>52</sup>. The Home Department, Government of India, got a survey conducted regarding the Sikh situation as it affected them in the army. It confirmed the infiltration of Communists especially in the non-combatant units. It had started since the days of *Kama*

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<sup>48</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 2.10.1939.

<sup>49</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/88, Punjab Governor D.O. No. 188, dated 13.10.1939.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, D.O. No. 1919, dated 29.10.1939, See also, *The Preet Lari*, September, 1939.

<sup>51</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, OUP, Delhi, 1991., p. 240.

<sup>52</sup> Twelve people participated in the mutiny in the R.I.H. Supply Corps and C.I.H. Squadron in Egypt. Out of them ten belonged to Punjab, one to Patiala and one to Karputhala (File No. 44/10-44, G.O.I., *Home Political*). See also, Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 240.

*Gata Maru*.<sup>53</sup> The report stated that many of the deserters had thought that they would better be needed at their homes where there was then always an apprehension of clashes between the Muslims and the Sikhs. They even feared that their lands and villages would be seized by the Muslims in their absence.<sup>54</sup> But the report also said that the rural Sikhs had not liked this mutiny. They called it a *Klank* and would see to it that it was wiped out. Moreover, joining the army also meant some economic support for them and they did not like to lose it.<sup>55</sup> The report recommended to the Government to remedy the situation in the light of this survey. For some time, the Government put a ban on recruitment from this area.<sup>56</sup> However, the Government could not adopt such a policy conspicuously and permanently for fear of agitation by the Akalis. The Punjab Government suggested that the matter could be sorted out with the Sikh leaders instead of an enquiry. No villages were therefore singled out in the *Doab* for the purpose of being black-listed for army recruitment. The Government tried to put more pressure on Baldev Singh to bring round the *Akali* leaders to the idea of open support to the British in the War. Baldev Singh, after all, bore the expenditure of the *Akali* Party. The Government tried to redress the grievances of the Sikhs. They were assured that their interests would not be sacrificed to appease the Muslims.<sup>57</sup> The Working Committee of the Akalis held a secret session on July 5, 1940, to take stock of the War situation. The consensus was that the Sikh interests would be better served by associating with the War.<sup>58</sup> They, therefore, continued with the efforts to enthuse the Sikhs for army recruitment. On February 12, 1940, a big All-India *Akali* Conference was held at Attari. It discussed many questions pertaining to relations between the Congress and the Akalis but nothing was said about the non-cooperation started by the Congress, or even about the War.<sup>59</sup> It was clear that the Sikhs could not

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<sup>53</sup> File No. 232/40 (I), G.O.I., *Home Political*.

<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, (Ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, London, 1970, Note by Mr. Lockheart dated 25.2.1942, pp. 238-39.

<sup>55</sup> File No. 232/40 (I), *op.cit.*

<sup>56</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 25/88 Punjab Governor's D.O. No. 193, dated 15.11.1939.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 125/89, Punjab Governor's D.O. No. 124-a, dated 31.7.1940; 125/88, Punjab Governor's D.O. No. 124-a, dated 15.11.1939, *op.cit.*

<sup>58</sup> *The Akali*, 6.7.1940.

<sup>59</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 356-57.

afford this luxury of non-cooperation. This was in spite of the fact that seven Akalis belonged to the Provincial Congress Working Committee also.<sup>60</sup> It also passed a resolution asking the Government to accelerate the Indian character of the Army and to impart military training to the Indian youth on a large scale. Jathedar Teja Singh Akarpuri said in his presidential address that the strength of the Sikhs in the Indian army was 40 per cent in 1885. It came down to 20 per cent in 1914 and now it stood at only 14 per cent. This, he said, was all due to the policy of the Government, and not that the Sikhs were not forthcoming for recruitment to the army. They were rather anxious to go to the army and serve the country and the community.<sup>61</sup> The Conference also advised the Congress to improve its apparatus determining its relations with the minorities.<sup>62</sup> Master Tara Singh had long correspondence with the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Gandhiji in August 1940. In his letter Master Tara Singh made out that it was a very good opportunity afforded by the War that the Indians should accept it. He made out that in case the British were defeated in the War, India might be faced with many internal and external dangers. Therefore, it was time that India took care of her strength. One method to do so was to contribute liberally to the recruitment in the army and acquire military training in time.<sup>63</sup> He said that he could not be a party to any such thing as might weaken the Sikhs or the country. He assured the Congress that he was still for it. The Sikhs would even contribute to their civil disobedience, but he appealed to it not to interfere with the recruitment drive of the British. Master Tara Singh also referred to the deterioration in the army. He wrote that the civil disobedience was affecting the army also. In this way, from civil disobedience, it was becoming military disobedience. This meant civil War and mutiny. This would taint the movement with violence and the Government would come down upon it with a heavy hand.<sup>64</sup> The Muslim League

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<sup>60</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 28.2.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/2-40.

<sup>61</sup> R.R. Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Dr. Ganda Singh (Ed.), Amritsar, 1965, p. 266.

<sup>62</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. I, p. 356.

<sup>63</sup> Jaswant Singh (Ed.), *Master Tara Singh : Jiwan Sangarsh Te Udesh (Punjabi)*, Amritsar, 1972, p. 166.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166-67.

‘officially boycotted’ the war efforts but never prevented the Muslims from taking part in it.<sup>65</sup>

On April 5, 1940, the Provincial Congress Committee converted itself into the Supreme *Satyagraha* Committee in order to prepare the province for civil resistance. Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava, the leader of opposition in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, resigned his seat to devote more time to *satyagraha*.<sup>66</sup> As a result of this development Sardar Sampuran Singh was elected the leader of the Congress Party in the Legislature.<sup>67</sup> It was decided to open a Central *Satyagraha* Camp at Lahore. Soon the District and *Tehsil* Congress Committees were also transformed into *satyagraha* committees. The Congress organization in Punjab was rent internally at this time. Satya Pal and his followers did not relish the elevation of Sardar Sampuran Singh as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party. They regarded him communalist.<sup>68</sup>

On the other side, some Muslim leaders like Shaukat Ali, Zafar Ali, Syed Habib and Maulana Ghazanvi wanted to have a settlement with the Sikh leaders.<sup>69</sup> The reaction of the Sikh leaders was that *Shahid Ganj* was not negotiable.<sup>70</sup> They were sensitive about the preservation of their religious and cultural heritage and were not prepared to compromise at any cost. Therefore, things were really very complicated. In all this, the bureaucracy tried to be neutral although they were charged with the leniency towards one side or the other, by both the camps. There is, however, no doubt that at places the bureaucracy did bungle in this sensitive affair and made the things more difficult. At one stage, the Muslim leaders went to meet the Sikh leaders for parlays on the subject. During the course of the talk, they asked the Sikh leaders to leave them alone for some time for consultation. It was then that Maulana Zafar Ali revealed to his friends that in the morning a Government Officer had assured him that the building would be handed over

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<sup>65</sup> Percival Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. II, Penguin, New Delhi, 1979, p.230.

<sup>66</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.4.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/4-40.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 15.5.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/5-40.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 30.4.1940, *op.cit.*; 15.5.1940, *op.cit.*

<sup>69</sup> *The Preet Lari* (Gurmukhi Monthly, Lahore), August, 1935 and October, 1935 (Hereafter referred to as the *Preetlari*), also *The Tribune*, 30.9.1935.

<sup>70</sup> *The Tribune*, 30.9.1935

to the Muslim. But the Maulana apprehended that such an assurance had also been held out to the Sikhs.<sup>71</sup> Even Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, admitted it to Mr. Zetland, the Secretary of State for India that the Government had not succeeded in creating an impression that its policy in the matter of *Shahid Ganj* was uninfluenced by any one.<sup>72</sup> Court after court gave decision in favor of the Sikhs but the Muslims remained undaunted. They resorted to intimidation of the Sikhs and even took to violence. At the same time, they went in appeal to a higher court. The highest court of appeal, i.e., the Privy Council also dismissed their appeal with costs on May 2, 1940. They exhausted all the legal remedies and yet did not stop browbeating the Sikhs. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan even resorted to 'dinner-diplomacy'.<sup>73</sup> He invited leaders of both Communities to dinner at his place. He tried to defuse the situation.<sup>74</sup> But such punctuations of sanity and goodwill always proved ephemeral. The problem remained inflammable as before. The Sikhs suffered some losses involving human lives but they retained their hold on *Shahid Ganj*. The outbreak of the World War II in September, 1939 and the launching of Pakistan plan in March, 1940 altered the situation in the Punjab and attention of both the parties was diverted from this issue. Gradually, the situation calmed down. Still there was not doubt that this dispute produced a great deal of bad blood and relations of the Sikhs with the Punjab Unionist Ministry deteriorated considerably.

## II

The outbreak of the World War II in September 1939 halted the activity on the *kisan-morchas* front. One thing, however, is that during the 1938-39 when the *kisan morchas* were in full swing in the province, the Sikhs invariably found themselves in these *morchas*. It was believed that during 1929-38 one *lakh* people demonstrated in Amritsar

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<sup>71</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, November 147, 1935, Speech by Mazhar Ali, Vol. XXVII, No. 10, Lahore, 1935, pp. 750-51.

<sup>72</sup> *Zetland Papers*, I.O.L./M2/31, letter dated 6.4.1938 from Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India to the S.O.S. (Microfilms, N.A.I.).

<sup>73</sup> *The Statement* (English Daily, Delhi), 3.5.1940, See also, P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.5.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/5-40.

<sup>74</sup> Files No. 14 and 61, O.H.C. (Punjabi University, Patiala), Interviews with Gopal Singh Khalsa and Shri Virinder respectively.

under Udham Singh Nagoke alone.<sup>75</sup> The Government was quite harsh towards them. For instance, Gyani Shankar Singh was awarded two years' rigorous imprisonment.<sup>76</sup> Such things created further bad blood between the Government and the Sikhs. It tended to increase the dissatisfaction of the latter with the former. Perhaps in no other field did the Sikhs feel so badly handicapped, and even helpless, as in the matter of services. No doubt, the Punjab Government had nothing to do with the representation of Sikhs in the Central Services but hardships suffered by them in this respect added to their sense of grievance against the Punjab Government also. During the long period 1922-27, 109 appointments were made in the cadre of the Indian Civil Service, out of which only two went to the Sikhs.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, no Sikh was taken into the Indian Civil Service during 1937-38.<sup>78</sup> No doubt, these posts were filled through competition but this was only an excuse to exclude the Sikhs who were handicapped being a minority. Again, up to 1940 there was not a single Sikh Judge in a High Court in the whole of India.<sup>79</sup> It is significant to note that up to June 30, 1942, there was no representative of the Sikhs in the Viceroy's Executive Council. The main reason for this neglect of the Sikhs in the Central Services was their *Gurdwara morchas* in the twenties and their alliance with the Congress in the national struggles during the twenties, thirties and early forties. Explaining it, the Government made out the excuse that talent was not available among the Sikhs.<sup>80</sup> In the Punjab, Services position was equally depressing. As against their population of 11 per cent seldom did they get a representation of more than 6 per cent. In 1927, there were 17,000 regular police men in the province out of which only 765 were Sikhs. This came to about 4.5 per cent. There was only one Sikh out of thirty-four Superintendents of Police, which meant a representation of barely 3 per cent. There were only three Deputy

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<sup>75</sup> *The Sikh Dunya*, April, 1943.

<sup>76</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1938, Vol. I, p. 295.

<sup>77</sup> *L.A. Debates*, Vol. IX, No. 19, Delhi, 1927, Reply to Q. No. 519, pp. 965-67.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* VII Session of the V Legislative Assembly, Vol. III, Shimla, 1938, (Information furnished by the Home Member in reply to Q. No. 1239, pp. 2709-10.

<sup>79</sup> *L.A. Debates*, Vol. V, No. 4, Eleventh Session of the Assembly (Reply furnished by the Home Member to a question by S. Sant Singh), Delhi, 1940, pp. 963-64.

<sup>80</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, (ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, Doc. No. 74, Telegram No. 1443-44, dated 20.5.1942 from Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, to Lord Amery, the S.O.S., p. 109.

Superintendents of Police in a total of forty-six,<sup>81</sup> which meant a percentage of about 6. On December 13, 1935, the Governor of Punjab had given an assurance to a deputation of Sikh leaders that steps would be taken to make up their representation in the police Department.<sup>82</sup> In 1938, Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia tried to retrieve the position of the Sikhs when he was able to get a Gazette Notification No. 7929-L-2643, SG-38/33386, dated October 8, 1938, issued from the Home Department, Government of India, on behalf of the Punjab Government. The quota for the Sikhs in the services in Punjab was fixed at 20 per cent.<sup>83</sup> This, however, remained a sacrosanct commitment on paper only, as even on April 1, 1939, i.e., six months after the issue of the above notification, nothing seemed to have been done to salvage the position of the Sikhs. At this time, twenty-nine superintendents were working in the offices of the Deputy Commissioners in Punjab, out of whom not even one was a Sikh.<sup>84</sup> It was a prestigious post with some power and influence attached to it. That not even one Sikh was occupying such a post could not have been a sheer chance. Similarly in 1940, out of the seventeen posts of superintendents in Punjab Civil Secretariat, only one was held by a Sikh.<sup>85</sup> In 1940, four P.C.S. Officers held the posts of heads of departments, but none of them was a Sikh.<sup>86</sup> Highly dissatisfied with this state of affairs the editor of *The Khalsa*, an English Weekly of Lahore, published an article titled 'Sikh in Government Service' in his issue of November 26, 1939.<sup>87</sup> The result was a stern warning from the Government while replying to a question in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Sunder Singh Majithia explained that the ratio of 50:30:20 was fixed for Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs respectively in the matter of representation in the services in the Punjab.<sup>88</sup> But in actuality, the position was quite different. Protests of the Sikhs, like the one expressed at their conference held at Attari on

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<sup>81</sup> *P.L.C.D.*, Vol. X, No. 18, Lahore, 1927, Reply given by F.M., Geoffrey de Montmorrency, to Q. No. 404, pp. 914-15; 930.

<sup>82</sup> *The Fateh*, 31.12.1935.

<sup>83</sup> *Majithia Papers*, File No. 86 quoted by Gurnam Singh Rekhi, *Sunder Singh Majithia*, M.A. Dissertation, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1974, pp. 83-84.

<sup>84</sup> *Majithia Papers*, File No. 144.

<sup>85</sup> *Manning of Government Departments*, Lahore, 1940.

<sup>86</sup> *P.L.A. Debates*, Proceedings dated 26.11.1940, Vol. XVI, No. 6, Lahore, 1941, p. 393.

<sup>87</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.1.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/1-40.

<sup>88</sup> *P.L.A. Debates*, Vol. XI-A, No. 1, Lahore, 1941, p. 28.

February 12, 1940, did not bring in any improvement. The Government of India notification of 1938 notwithstanding, their position in services remained unsatisfactory. This coupled with their dissatisfaction in the matters relating to *Jhatka*, *Shahid Ganj*, *Kirpan*, Sikh religious processions, Sikh holidays and the *Gurmukhi* language produced much resentment among the Sikhs as far as the Unionist Government was concerned and they remained very critical of it. But they did not resort to any extreme step like a *morcha* etc. against this injustice. Maybe, they were too much busy with other pressing problems generated by the World War II or the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan. They, however, went on ventilating their grievances through the press, deputations, conferences and resolutions.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, the Sikh Rights Protection Society had specially been created to carry on the struggle.<sup>90</sup> It was at this stage that the Sikandar-Baldev Pact was concluded. The Sikhs felt hopeful that some thing constructive would emerge from the new arrangement. Leaders had no cadre of workers. But there was no other leader of the understanding and dedication of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia. Therefore, his death almost led to the end of the party. Sardar Dasaunda Singh, the successor of Sir Sunder Singh, could not equal his stature. He had no following.<sup>91</sup> The defeat of Kirpal Singh Majhitia, son of the late Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, at the hands of the Akalis, in the Batala by-election revealed the declining importance of the *Khalsa* National Party.<sup>92</sup> This prompted Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan to effect an alliance with the Akalis because it was they who really mattered in the Sikh politics. Moreover, the Sikhs were in favour of recruitment to the army and were already cooperating with the Government in this respect. Their association with the ruling party could certainly bring in more recruits greatly needed by the Government. Besides, the Sikhs also thought that once in the

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<sup>89</sup> For instance, a deputation of influential people and retired army men met the Deputy Commissioner, Montgomery in January, 1938 and impressed upon him to safeguard the rights of the Sikhs in the Education Department: *The Mauji*, 10.1.1938.

<sup>90</sup> *The Khalsa*, 27.8.1944. The Society was established at Lahore in 1931 with S. Prem Singh Sodhbans as President, S. Jawahar Singh Dhillon as Vice-President and S. Harbhajan Singh as Secretary. Its aim was to protect the Sikh rights in the Councils, Municipal Committees, Districts Boards, and University and Government services: *The Mauji*, 9.2.1931.

<sup>91</sup> File No. 8, O.H.C. (Punjabi University, Patiala). Interview with Gyani Gurmukh Singh Musafir.

<sup>92</sup> File No. 2, O.H.C., *op.cit.*

Government, they would be able to get many of their grievances removed and their influence in the army would lend them strength.<sup>93</sup>

At this time an event of great significance happened. Gandhiji's *Harijan* observed that Pakistan could not be worse than foreign domination. His assertion that "if it (Pakistan) is not a threat but a desirable goal why should it be prevented"?, coupled with the implications of the Pakistan Scheme itself, caused serious apprehensions among the Sikhs in that they might be ignored if the Hindus and the Muslims succeeded in striking a settlement, the 1929 resolution of the Lahore Congress notwithstanding. They asked the Congress for renewal of the 1929's assurance. The Congress was irritated at this demand of the Sikhs. It titled them as narrow-minded and bigoted communalists.<sup>94</sup>

After the elections of the 1937, the gulf between the Muslim League and the Congress widened further. On the eve of these elections an understanding had been reached between the two organizations that they would act together and form coalition ministries.<sup>95</sup> This was based on the calculation that most of the Muslim seats would be captured by the Muslim League. But the Muslim League fared very badly except to a certain extent in the U.P. The League was then anxious that at least in the U.P. a joint Congress-League ministry should be formed. The Congress refused to do so<sup>96</sup> the League became bitterly critical of the Congress *Raj* and charged it with perpetrating grievous atrocities upon the Muslim community wherever it was in power.<sup>97</sup> The Muslim League 'officially boycotted' the war efforts but never prevented the Muslims from lacking part in it.<sup>98</sup> The League support was conditional, if the Viceroy would take its leaders into confidence and accept the League as the only organization that speak on behalf the

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<sup>93</sup> File No. 14, O.H.C. (Punjabi University, Patiala). Interview with Gopal Singh Khalsa.

<sup>94</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.5.1940, File No. 18/5-40, *Home Political*.

<sup>95</sup> Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1972, p. 220.

<sup>96</sup> M.R.A. Baig, *The Muslim Dilemma in India*, Delhi, 1974, p. 65.

<sup>97</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1938, Vol. II, p. 354.

<sup>98</sup> Percival Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. II, Penguin, New Delhi, 1979, 230.

Muslim India.<sup>99</sup> With the Outbreak of the War, the status of the Muslim League ‘transformed overnight’. The Viceroy summoned M.A. Jinnah on an equal footing with M.K. Gandhi. On October 18, 1939, the Viceroy dubbed the Congress a Hindu organization and the Muslim League representative of all Muslims of India.<sup>100</sup> When the Congress ministries resigned in 1939 over the War issue, the Muslim League celebrated 22<sup>nd</sup> December as ‘the Day of Deliverance’.<sup>101</sup>

In March 1940, the League came forth with the demand for the partition of India so as to establish a sovereign Muslim State. The idea of such a state was not new and had been in the air since Dr. Mohammad Iqbal had mentioned it in his Presidential address in 1930.<sup>102</sup> Some Muslim students in England, at the time of the Round Table Conference had also issued posters repeating the demand.<sup>103</sup> But it was not until March 1940 that the idea was taken seriously. The resolution passed in the Lahore Session of the Muslim League on March 24, 1940 was to the following effect:<sup>104</sup>

Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., the geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States’ in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign: that adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically units and in the regions for protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Muslims are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory

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<sup>99</sup> Baljit Singh, *The Elections and Politicisation in the Punjab (1945-47)*, Ph.D. Thesis, G.N.D. University, Amritsar, 2008, 29.

<sup>100</sup> Ian Tablot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 191.

<sup>101</sup> K.B. Sayeed, *Pakistan : The Formative Phase, 1875-1948*, OUP, London, 1968, p. 98

<sup>102</sup> Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Dr. Iqbal*, Lahore, 1944, p. 13.

<sup>103</sup> *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab*, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1950, pp. 5-6, Also, Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 262.

<sup>104</sup> C.H. Philips, (Ed.), *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives (1935-1947)*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1970, pp. 354-55.

safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

M.A. Jinnah argued that Pakistan has been there for centuries and will remain till the end of the world.<sup>105</sup> The Resolution was a red signal of danger for the non-Muslims, especially in the Punjab. They could well read the outline of Pakistan vis-à-vis their own position, when the Scheme was to be translated into reality. It caused great depression among the minorities of the province.<sup>106</sup> Winston Churchill was very happy about the Pakistan Resolution and praised it as a promising development.<sup>107</sup> After this resolution was passed, the target for the Muslim League was clear. It never swerved from it, nor did it ever try to compromise on it.<sup>108</sup> British offers like the August Offer of 1940, the Cripps Offer and the British Cabinet Delegation Plan were all tested on this touchstone and appropriate reaction was registered. This period was crowded in the history of India. The World War II was there. The Individual Civil Disobedience and the Quit India Movements, launched by the Congress, were also there. But they did not cause any distraction to the Muslim League as far as its goal in politics was concerned. The Punjab politics always remained an issue of political tension during this time. The minorities were nervous about their ultimate fate in view of the Pakistan Scheme.

The Lahore Resolution sent shivers of depression down the bones of the Sikhs. The Lahore Resolution was 'a shrewd game' of political chess in the Punjab. Despite its

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<sup>105</sup> L.A. Sherwani, *The Pakistan Resolution to Pakistan (1940-47): A Selection of Documents Presenting the Case of Pakistan*, Daya Publishing, Delhi, 1995, p. 2.

<sup>106</sup> *The Panj Darya*, April, 1940.

<sup>107</sup> V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 67.

<sup>108</sup> The Muslim League had made up its mind to go to any length in order to realize the dream of Pakistan. Much before the Lahore Resolution was moved Mr. Jinnah sent orders to Khaliqz zaman and Sidiqi, who were in Europe in March 1939, to contact Hitler and Mussolini and put up the Muslim case before them (*Zetland Papers*, MSS, BJR, I.O.L./M2/31, letter dated 12.4.1939 from, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India to Mr. Zetland, the S.O.S.) Microfilms, N.A.I.

vagueness it acquired the name of 'Pakistan'.<sup>109</sup> The months of May and June 1940, the Sikhs added to their anger against the Muslim League Resolution.<sup>110</sup> It meant a perennial subordination of the Sikhs to the Muslim rule. They knew that they were so distributed all over the province that they were bound to suffer in case the Pakistan of Muslim League's conception was formed. Moreover, their historical memories about the late Muslim rule were not happy. Also, they had no other place to go to. Under the circumstances their reaction was bound to be sharp and intense. Even before the Pakistan Resolution was formally introduced in the Lahore session of the All-India Muslim League, the Sikhs had passed a resolution against it in the All India Sikh Conference held at Attari, district Amritsar, on February 12, 1940.<sup>111</sup> The Conference was attended by about 40,000 Sikhs. Contingents of the Sikh Volunteer Corps, i.e., *The Akal Sena* were also arrayed in this Conference.<sup>112</sup> Soon after the Lahore session of the Muslim League, the Khalsa National Party held a meeting at Lahore on March 29, 1940. The meeting was presided over by Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia. The idea of Pakistan was thoroughly condemned in this meeting as well. The resolution adopted at the meeting stated that the division of India into Hindu and Muslim independent states as envisaged in the Muslim League resolution was fraught with dangers to all communities. The party felt that it might cause parting of ways between the Muslims and the Sikhs. The resolution further added that it would be the height of audacity for any one to imagine that the Sikhs would not tolerate for a single day the undiluted communal *Raj* of any community in the Punjab. As a logical consequence of the Muslim League's resolution the Sikhs, the resolution further stated, would be fully entitled to claim back the sovereignty of Punjab which was only held as a

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<sup>109</sup> P.A. Hoodbhog, "Rewriting History of Pakistan", Mohammad Aslam Khan, *Islam Politics and the State: The Pakistan Experience*, Select Book Service Syndicate, New Delhi, 1986, p. 168.

<sup>110</sup> Sukhami Bal Riar, *The Politics of the Sikhs*, p. 27.

<sup>111</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 356-57.

<sup>112</sup> *The Akali*, 14.2.1940.

trust by the British during the minority regime of Maharaja Dalip Singh.<sup>113</sup> A crisis of Sikh politics was created by the growing spectre of Pakistan in the 1940s.<sup>114</sup>

On April 15, 1940 the U.P. Sikh Conference was held at Lucknow. It was presided over by Master Tara Singh. In his presidential address he said that the Sikhs had no plan for a Sikh rule, but they would fight against any foreign or communal rule. He appealed to the Muslims of India to repudiate the League Scheme.<sup>115</sup> Two more Sikh Conferences were held at Lahore in June under the Presidentship of Baba Kharak Singh of the Central Akali Dal and Sardar Sant Singh of the Shiromani Akali Dal to denounce the demand for Pakistan.<sup>116</sup> The Pakistan Scheme was dubbed “anti-national, dangerous and disastrous to the best interests of the country”.<sup>117</sup> The Sikh press was equally vehement. The *Preet Sainik* called the Scheme anti-nationalist.<sup>118</sup> Criticizing the two-nation theory, another Sikh paper, *The Preet Lari*, said that Mr. M.A. Jinnah must be sent to jail under the *I.P.C.* for spreading hatred against other religions and communities. The paper said that the theory would give rise to *Khalistan*, *Jattistan* and *Achhutistan* and tended to sow the seeds of discord in the Indian nationalism.<sup>119</sup>

An All Parties anti-Pakistan Conference was held at Lahore on December 1, 1940. It was presided over by Mr. M.S. Aney. It was attended by the leaders of all communities. Mahashe Krishan, Jalal-ud-Din Ambar, Christian leader, Professor Abdul Majid Khan, nationalist Muslim Raja Narendra Nath, Giani Kartar Singh and Master Tara Singh, attended it.<sup>120</sup> The idea of Pakistan was unequivocally condemned.<sup>121</sup> The Hindu

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<sup>113</sup> *Mitra Register* 1940, Vol. I, p. 357.

<sup>114</sup> Indu Banga, “The Crisis of Sikh Politics (1940-1947)”, *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, (eds. Joseph T.O’ Connell et al.) Manohar, New Delhi, 1990, p. 233.

<sup>115</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 357-58.

<sup>116</sup> *The Tribune*, 10.6.1940.

<sup>117</sup> *The Akali*, 1.10.1940; See also, *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 323.

<sup>118</sup> *The Preet Sainik* (Gurmukhi Weekly, Preet Nagar), 1.4.1940 (Hereafter referred to as the *Preet Sainik*).

<sup>119</sup> *The Preet Lari*, April, 1940.

<sup>120</sup> *The Tribune*, 2.12.1940.

<sup>121</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 327.

press condemned it. Even from the Muslim side, the Khaksars, Ahrars and Jamat-i-Ulema, M.A. Jinnah was denounced as a *Kafir* and an agent of the British.<sup>122</sup> For Mahatma Gandhi the theory of Two Nation was 'an untruth'. For Jawharhar Lal Nehru, the Pakistan Scheme was foolish one.<sup>123</sup> Even Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan criticized the Scheme. He irreverently called it 'Jinnistan'. He declared that if a Pakistan meant a Muslim Raj where and Hindu Raj else here he would have nothing to do it with it.<sup>124</sup> However, all this propaganda had no effect on Mr. M.A. Jinnah who had made clear at Bombay that if the Congress stood for full freedom, it could be had only one way, i.e., there would be two independent nations.<sup>125</sup> However, in the Punjab Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan declared that in this province there would neither be *Khalistan* nor Pakistan but only the *Raj* of the *Punjabees*.<sup>126</sup> It is, however, significant that Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was present in the Conference when the Pakistan Resolution was passed. He did not raise any protest at that time.<sup>127</sup> Sir Chhotu Ram pointed out that the Two-Nation theory propounded by the Muslim League was an absurd proposition.<sup>128</sup> Many more conferences

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<sup>122</sup> A.B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and Today*, M.Ashraf, Lahore, 1948, p.78.

<sup>123</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 7, 1940

<sup>124</sup> S. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, OUP, New York, 1984, p. 185.

<sup>125</sup> *The Phulwari*, December, 1940.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, February, 1941. This was in response to the dreams of Mr. M.A, Jinnah who wanted to base his Pakistan Scheme on three planks, viz., Sir Sikandar in the Punjab, Fazlul Haq in the Bengal, and the British Government (*The Rayast*, 16.12.1940). Further, at the time of the arrival of Mr. Cripps in India, Sikandar also came out with a Scheme which said that if 75 per cent of the elected members of the Punjab Assembly passed a resolution either in favour of or against non-accession, the verdict was to be regarded by the communities of the Punjab as final and binding. However, if a resolution for non-accession failed in the procedure outlined above and the propaganda for non-accession still continued, the wishes of the Muslim community were to be ascertained, through referendum in which all Muslim electors on the favour of the non-accession was to be followed by a resolution to be passed by 60 per cent Muslim if wanting to separated from the non-acceding areas, were to be given a right for a separate state with territories towards the east of Punjab. They were to take decision in this respect through a referendum, which was to be claimed in a formal resolution passed by the vote of not less than 60 per cent of the total strength of the non-Muslim Indian members *op.cit.* (Enclosure to Document No. 243), pp. 361-62.

<sup>127</sup> *The Rayast*, 16.9.1940.

<sup>128</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 4, 1940; *Khalsa Advocate*, April 4, 1940.

were held by the Sikhs and other communities and organizations in which the Scheme of Pakistan was denounced. V.D. Savarkar said that the Hindu Mahasabha could not tolerate and moved oppose with all its might the Muslim idea of dividing India two zones.<sup>129</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> May 1940, the Hindu Mahasabha condemned the Pakistan Scheme as anti-Hindu and anti-national.<sup>130</sup>

It is quite clear from the foregoing account that the Punjab minorities were greatly alarmed. The position of the Sikhs was particularly precarious. Their relations with the Muslims underwent rapid deterioration. It was felt that unless the Sikhs were careful about their position they might find their only home in the world under the complete domination of an overwhelmingly strong Muslim power. One thing that worried them most was their small number. They were afraid that the Congress and the Muslim League might sink all their differences and arrive at a compromise. They were quite upset over Gandhiji's observation in his paper *Harijan* in which he wrote "Pakistan cannot be worse than foreign domination" and "if it (i.e., Pakistan) is not a threat but a desirable goal why should it be prevented"?<sup>131</sup> This shook the faith of the Sikhs in the Congress. They were required to fend for themselves. It was under such circumstances that they started thinking more seriously about a Sikh State with the twin object of securing and safeguarding their identity as also countering the Scheme of Pakistan. Being the War period, the Sikhs were rendering help to the British with a view to making the British extend a benevolent hand to them in realizing their Schemes.

Moreover, the Punjab formed the lynchpin of the Pakistan Scheme.<sup>132</sup> Under the Presidentship of Giani Dhanwant Singh, an Akai conference was convened in which 8000-10000 Sikhs participated. Udham Singh Nagoke Master Ajit Singh, Professor Ganda Singh strongly criticized the Pakistan Scheme.<sup>133</sup> Giani Kartar Singh considered

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<sup>129</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 27, 1940

<sup>130</sup> C.H. Phillips (ed), *The Partition of India*, p. 563.

<sup>131</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.5.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/5-40.

<sup>132</sup> Jasbir Singh and Baljit Singh, "The Sikh Response to the Lahore Resolution (1940)", *Journal of Regional History*, (N.S.), Vol. XIII-XIV, 2007-08, 151.

<sup>133</sup> *The Tribune*, March 27, 1940.

the subjection of the Sikhs to the Muslims Raj, 'nauseating'.<sup>134</sup> The Pakistan was sought to be fought by the Sikhs on two planes, viz., the physical and the constitutional. They were to proceed concurrently and also supplement each other. The former found expression in forming of the Akali Sena<sup>135</sup> and the latter got expression through the demand for *Khalistan* and other such Schemes. Dr. V.S. Bhatti was the author of this Scheme. The *Khalistan* was proposed to be a buffer state between India and Pakistan. The Scheme as enunciated by him included the predominantly Sikh districts of Punjab, the Sikh princely states of Nabha, Patiala, Jind, Faridkot, and Kalsia, as well as non-Sikh princely states such as Malerkotla and Shimla Hill states. The Punjab districts proposed to be included in *Khalistan* were Ludhiana, Jullundur, Ambala, Ferozepur, Lahore, Amritsar, Lyallpur, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura, Montgomery, Hissar, Rohtak and Karnal. The Maharaja of Patiala was proposed to be head of *Khalistan* with the aid of a cabinet consisting of representatives of the federating units.<sup>136</sup> On May 19, 1940 about 125 leading Sikhs met at Amritsar to consider this Scheme. The meeting decided to establish *Guru Raj Khalsa Darbar* in order to give practical shape to this Scheme. The Conference stretched the concept of *Khalistan* to include the territory from Jamuna to Jamrud which the late *Maharaja Dalip Singh* had given as a trust to the British.<sup>137</sup> (A twenty-one member sub-committee, Raj Khalsa Board, with power to co-opt ten more was formed to launch a propaganda campaign for '*Guru Khalsa Raj*', i.e., the *Khalistan*.<sup>138</sup> The Chief Khalsa Diwan considered the Pakistan Scheme 'a mischievous one.'<sup>139</sup> Bana Kharak

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<sup>134</sup> *The Tribune*, April 2, 1940.

<sup>135</sup> Volunteers of this Sena arrayed themselves impressively at the All India Akali Conference Attari on February 12, 1940 (P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.2.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/2-40). Master Tara Singh declared at the U.P. Sikh Conference at Lucknow on 15.4.1940 that that the Sena had been raised to organize and discipline the Sikh community in the face of dangers threatening the community (*Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 357-58). The Sena had a chequered career in view of the restrictions imposed on it by the Punjab Government since its very inception (File No. 7/1-40, G.O.I., Home Political). The organization kept on making progress and afforded psychological security to the Sikh masses during the troubled years 1940-47.

<sup>136</sup> Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1947, p. 254.

<sup>137</sup> *The Tribune*, 21.5.1940.

<sup>138</sup> *The Tribune*., 29.5.1940.

<sup>139</sup> *Khalsa Advocate*, April 20, 1940.

Singh, President Central Akali Dal declared that so long as there was a single Sikh no power could divide India into two parts.<sup>140</sup> For Master Tara Singh, it was ‘a declaration of war’ and the Sikhs would fight against any communal or foreign rule’.<sup>141</sup> The Lahore Resolution of 1940 led to ‘verbal violence’. The Sikhs reacted in panic. They began thinking towards counter-blast.<sup>142</sup> At this juncture, C. Rajagopalchari came out with his ‘Sporting Offer’ on August 23, 1940 to persuade his compatriots to accept a Muslim Leaguer as Prime Minister with a right to nominate the person of his own choice in the national government.<sup>143</sup> This was done to bring about unity in the Indian politics so that the goal of Indian Independence could be effectively pursued. The offer created acute fear and suspicion in the minds of the Sikhs. They had always feared that in its eagerness to settle with the Muslim League, the Congress would by-pass the Sikhs. The Working Committee of the *Akali Dal* considered the ‘offer’ unjust, undemocratic, anti-national and detrimental to the rights of the non-Muslim communities. The Sikhs thought that the ‘Offer’ violated the pledge given by the Congress to the Sikhs and other minorities in 1929 at the Lahore session.<sup>144</sup>

The Congress and the Muslim League being the main determining factors, the Sikhs really could not do much to prevent the partition of India. They had all along been opposed to it but they were a small minority. They had tried to put up demands for Azad Punjab and Azad Sikh State as hindrances in the way of Pakistan, but for lack of support from the Government as well as the Congress and other parties, these attempts also proved abortive. When ultimately Pakistan became a reality they joined other non-

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<sup>140</sup> *The Tribune*, April 11, 1940.

<sup>141</sup> *Khalsa Advocate*, April 6, 1940.

<sup>142</sup> Jasbir Singh and Baljit Singh, “The Sikh Response”, *Journal of Regional History* (H.S.), Vol. XIII-XIV, 2007-08, p. 158.

<sup>143</sup> V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 95, ‘if His Majesty’s Government agree to a provincial national government being formed at once. I will undertake to persuade my colleagues to agree to the Muslim League being invited to nominate the Prime Minister and to let him form a government as he would consider best’. See also, P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.9.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-40.

<sup>144</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.9.1940, *Home Political*.

Muslims in the Punjab to demand partition of the province.<sup>145</sup> But though the Sikhs accepted it under the pressure of circumstances this had turned out to be the best thing that could have happened to them. From this had resulted a situation in which the Sikhs were able to achieve what they had all along been striving to achieve, but without any success. Migration of population from the West Punjab had given them majority in the present Punjab and with that had come the control of political power. It may, however, be said that the Sikhs at that time could have demanded a special status for *Nankana Sahib* and other Sikh shrines left in Pakistan. Further, some forethought could also have been given to the problem of exchange of population and property. It was quite possible that they might have succeeded in achieving both these objects.

The Government then came out with the August Offer aimed at giving some small concessions to the Indians. It gave veto power' to the Muslim League. The British created the Muslim League as a 'counterweight' to the non-cooperating Congress.<sup>146</sup> The Indian political parties did not accept it. The Sikh position was in no way improved by it although the Hindu Maha Sabha held that the Offer was unnecessarily generous towards the minorities.<sup>147</sup> The rupture between the Congress and the Akalis became wide then. Quite an impressive volume of correspondence passed between Gandhiji and Master Tara Singh on the issue of the Sikhs joining the army. On August 15, 1940, Gandhiji wrote to Master Tara Singh that his civil disobedience was a breach of violence. He said that by staying in the Congress, on account of these ideas, Masterji was weakening his community as also the Congress. He also said that it was a strange thing that Master Tara Singh was to offer services to the British and then expect them to look after the interests of his community. The British would not accept help on his conditions.<sup>148</sup> Gandhiji advised Master Tara Singh that he was to be wholly nationalist or a communalist. In the

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<sup>145</sup> Colonel Narinjan Singh Gill in an interview given by him to the scholars of the Punjabi University, Patiala, told them that partition might have been avoided if the Sikhs had plainly told the Congress that if it accepted partition they would join the League (O.H.C., Punjabi University, Patiala, File No. 18).

<sup>146</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 192.

<sup>147</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.8.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-40.

<sup>148</sup> Jaswant Singh (Ed.), *Master Tara Singh.*, pp. 167-68.

latter case he might have to depend on a foreign power.<sup>149</sup> He also wrote him, “You have nothing in common with Congress... you believe in the rule of sword, the Congress does not”.<sup>150</sup> Gandhiji further charged that Masterji cared for his own sect whereas the Congress stood for the whole nation. In his reply, Master Tara Singh wrote that it was wrong to suppose that the Congress stood for the whole of India and did not recognize any sectarian communities. Even then they were negotiating with the Muslims. He also said that it was strange that Gandhiji was telling a very non-violent community that they were violent.<sup>151</sup> He further wrote that he had not seen a Congress as a strong body in the Punjab who believed in non-violence in the sense in which Gandhiji believed. He said that he was proud of being a Sikh who said that when all other means had failed the use of sword was justified. He further wrote that to stick to non-violence ever and always might be a faith with Gandhiji but it was not so with the Congress. Therefore, he would like to be excused if he said that Gandhiji was not a good Congress-man. He also wrote that, communalist or nationalist, he was still the same as he was in 1929. Gandhiji assured the Sikhs that no communal agreement would be acceptable to the Congress if it did not satisfy the Sikhs.<sup>152</sup> But Gandhiji, probably on account of his convictions, strengthened by his stupendous following, remained unconvinced and Master Tara Singh understood what it meant. He resigned from the Congress on September 12, 1940.<sup>153</sup> It was difficult for him to remain in an organization whose ‘dictator’ did not consider the Sikhs as patriots because they had faith in *kirpan*, even as he described Guru Gobind Singh as a “misguided leader”.<sup>154</sup> The Congress had also criticized Master Tara Singh’s gesture of offering one lakh recruits for the army to the British if they accepted the Congress demand relating to Indian independence and allowed it to write the Constitution of the country. On these grounds, Master Tara Singh could not possibly stay in the

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>150</sup> *The Tribune*, 14.9.1940.

<sup>151</sup> Jaswant Singh (Ed.), *Master Tara Singh.*, pp. 168-69.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>153</sup> *The Tribune*, 13.9.1940.

<sup>154</sup> *The Rayast*, 2.9.1940.

Congress.<sup>155</sup> Therefore, the Akalis cooperation with the Congress non-cooperation against the Government was then not forthcoming as that was there in the thirties. Rajagopalachari's "Sporting Offer" to the Muslim League was also regarded by the Sikhs as a blank assurance for the Muslims.<sup>156</sup> On September 20, 1940 the Sikhs held a Conference. Many big and small leaders participated in it. Majority of the speakers spoke in favour of keeping friendly relations with the Congress though it was also distinctly emphasized that Rajagopalachari's offer should be withdrawn by the Congress.<sup>157</sup>

M.K. Gandhiji's negotiations with the Governor General having failed, especially on the issue of freedom of expression, which the Government refused to agree in view of the War, he authorized individual civil disobedience. The Congress Working Committee took a decision about it on October 11, 1940.<sup>158</sup> All M.L.As were to turn their backs to the legislature and face the jail gates. Akalis were also permitted to join the movement if they took the vow that they opposed the army recruitment.<sup>159</sup> In the Central Legislature, Sardar Sant Singh, M.L.A., remained neutral in the division on budget despite pressure on him from the Congress benches.<sup>160</sup> He castigated the Congress through the press. He said that he did not agree with the Congress on the Defense policy.<sup>161</sup> Two *Akali* leaders met Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru before his arrest. The latter admitted that no doubt Gandhiji's attitude towards the whole affair was wrong. But he said that Master Tara Singh's attitude about army recruitment was also wrong.<sup>162</sup> Moreover, the *kirtis* influenced the Sikhs troops. Incidence of desertions by the Sikhs soldiers increased which

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<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.6.1940; 23.9.1940, also P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.9.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-40.

<sup>156</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.* The offer said that the Congress might give evidence of its good faith towards the Muslim League by agreeing to have a Muslim Prime Minister at the Centre.

<sup>157</sup> *The Akali*, 22.9.1940.

<sup>158</sup> Tara Chand (Dr.), *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 309.

<sup>159</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.11.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/11-40.

<sup>160</sup> *L.A. Debates*, Vol. V, No. I, Delhi, 1940, pp. 786-840.

<sup>161</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.11.1940, File No. 18/11-40, *Home Political*.

implied that all was not well in the Sikh community.<sup>163</sup> In Egypt, a mutiny instigated by the Sikh communists broke out in the motorized transport company in December 1939 and June 1940. More than 60 per cent of the Sikh Squadron of the Central Indian Horse refused to be transported overseas.<sup>164</sup> There was temporary suspension of recruitment of Sikhs in 1940 in the Punjab.<sup>165</sup>

Sardar Sampuran Singh, the leader of the opposition in the Punjab Legislature, offered Satyagraha and was arrested.<sup>166</sup> He told the judge in the court that he did not believe in non-violence. He had taken to it out of discipline as a Congress soldier. He was sentenced to imprisonment till the rising of the court and was awarded a fine of anna one.<sup>167</sup> The judgment in this case “aroused Homeric Laughter...and no criticism....” It is said that before demonstrating Sardar Sampuran Singh sent a message to the Joint Chief Secretary that he was in favor of recruitment. But he was also a disciplined soldier of the Congress. Further, he had steel mills which had big army contracts.<sup>168</sup> Sardar Partap Singh, M.L.A., made a prejudicial speech at Tarn Taran and was sentenced to one and a half years’ rigorous imprisonment. Sardar Mangal Singh got a notice not to shout anti-recruitment slogans in a recruitment area. But he did not accept it and was sentenced to one and a half year’s rigorous imprisonment. Shrimati Raghbir Kaur, forbidden to make speeches or attend meetings, attended a meeting at Naushera Pannuan, in Amritsar district, and shouted anti-War slogans. She was also sentenced to one year’s rigorous imprisonment.<sup>169</sup> Akali leader Darshan Singh Pheruman also took to civil disobedience. He was sentenced to eighteen months’ rigorous imprisonment for shouting anti-War slogans at Baba Bakala in Amritsar district on January 10, 1941. The Akalis could not

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<sup>163</sup> *Home/Political/File No. 216/40 Poll (I), 1940, NAI.*

<sup>164</sup> Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State*, p. 285.

<sup>165</sup> *Home Political/File No. 232/40 (Poll I), NAI.*

<sup>166</sup> Punjab Government Weekly Report on the Civil Disobedience Movement in the Punjab for the week ending 4.12.1940 (G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 3/12-40) N.A.I.

<sup>167</sup> *The Phulwari*, December, 1940.

<sup>168</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/89, D.O. No. 317 dated 29.12.1940 from the Punjab Governor to the G.G.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

afford to take an extreme view of not joining the civil disobedience. It was felt that they might join it on an issue of their own.<sup>170</sup> They felt really very bad at the humiliation caused to them by the episode of Sardar Sampuran Singh.<sup>171</sup> They could not repudiate him because he gave them good financial support.<sup>172</sup> Sardar Sampuran Singh was divested of all authority that he enjoyed in the Congress. In his letter dated December 18, 1940 Maulana Azad wrote to him that his explanation was fragile and could not stand the scrutiny of logic. His behavior in the court had brought ignominy both to him and to the party.<sup>173</sup> Sardar Sampuran Singh went to Wardha to explain his position personally to Gandhiji. He told Gandhiji that in the Punjab nobody seriously believed in non-violence. Gandhiji was very uneasy to know it. He asked him that such people should leave the Congress and let its purists fight their own game.<sup>174</sup> On December 20, 1940 he gave a statement to the press saying that the conduct of Sardar Sampuran Singh at his trial was wholly unjustified.<sup>175</sup> He sent Maulana Azad to Punjab to see the things for himself. Sardar Sampuran Singh had good parleys with Maulana Azad and assured him that he believed in the Congress ideology, including its stand on the issue of recruitment. Maulana Azad asked him to give all this in writing. Such a thing was bound to embarrass the Akalis. The press in the Punjab asserted that most *Punjabis* in the Punjab agreed with Sardar Sampuran Singh's attitude towards non-violence.<sup>176</sup> On December 27, 1940 Gandhiji invited Master Tara Singh to Sewagram to have talks with him on the issue of non-violence.<sup>177</sup> In the Punjab, the movement did not register much of success. By 31 December 1940 there had been eighteen arrests, two detentions and five convictions.<sup>178</sup> It

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<sup>170</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.1.1941, File No. 18/1-41; 15.12.1940, File No. 18/12-40.

<sup>171</sup> *The Akali*, 17.2.1941.

<sup>172</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>173</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 53.

<sup>174</sup> *The Rayast*, 23.12.1940.

<sup>175</sup> *Mitra Register*, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>176</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.12.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/12-40; 15.1.1941, *op.cit.*

<sup>177</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II., p. 55.

<sup>178</sup> File No. 3/12-40, *op.cit.*, week ending 31.12.1940.

was, however, felt that the Sikhs should take one position. It was quite bad that they violated their religion to please the Congress, and took to non-violence. They were neither here nor there. They had failed to please the Congress as well the British.<sup>179</sup> Despite all the help they rendered to the British in this War they were still held in suspicion by the latter.<sup>180</sup>

On January 19, 1941 the Khalsa Defense of India League was formed under the leadership of Maharaja of Patiala. Its aim was to prepare the Sikhs for the Defense of India by all possible means. It was also decided to send a deputation to the Commander-in-Chief pleading with him for the restoration of the former quota of Sikh recruitment. Sardar Jogendra Singh Maan, M.L.A., Lt. Raghbir Singh, Master Sujjan Singh and many other influential Sikh leaders were present on this occasion. Master Tara Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh played an important part in arranging the All Sikh Parties Conference. It gave birth to this League, but for the usual fear of their being hauled up by their opponents they did not openly take part in its proceedings.<sup>181</sup>

The Sikhs were thus caught in a dilemma. Forced by the circumstances, they were following a double policy, i.e., they were helping the Congress in the matter of civil disobedience, and the Government in the recruitment.<sup>182</sup> One thing was, however, clear that they were not at all under the influence of the Congress, as they had been in the past, and had now adopted this type of policy quite candidly. In fact, it was for the first time that they had taken to a policy independent of the Congress influence. By March 1941 enthusiasm for the civil disobedience had started slackening after a communal outbreak at Amritsar. Many resisters asked the President of the Provincial Congress Committee if they could suspend the movement. Most of those who had registered their names for courting arrest were then not forthcoming. Initially, they had got their names registered

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<sup>179</sup> *The Fateh*, 2/9.1.1941.

<sup>180</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/89, D.O. No. 309, dated 15.11.1940.

<sup>181</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.1.1941, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/1-41. *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/90, D.O. No. 320 dated 21.1.1941 from the Punjab Governor to the G.G.

<sup>182</sup> *The Phulwari*, January, 1941.

for the civil resistance only to earn publicity.<sup>183</sup> To infuse life in the movement, the Congress directed its members in the District Boards and the Municipal Committees to resign by April 10, 1941. Many Akali resisters were also forthcoming. Gyani Gurmukh Singh Musafir participated in it.<sup>184</sup> During the month of March, 1941, Niranjn Singh Talib, Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Dalip Singh Gill, Mohan Singh, Udham Singh, Ranjit Singh Mastana and Shamsheer Singh Gill were put under detention in the Punjab, on the order of the Central Government, in connection with the civil disobedience movement vis-a-vis the War.<sup>185</sup> However, the resisters were applying for exemption also. Five hundred such applications were received.<sup>186</sup> The deadline for relinquishing the offices by the city fathers in the Municipal Committees and the District Boards had also passed, but the response had been very poor. At Gujranwala, no one was prepared to resign. The Lahore Congress Committee complained that no *satyagrahi* had offered himself for arrest for the last twenty-five days and quite a few civil disobedience prisoners had applied for release on parole.<sup>187</sup> Otherwise, however, the week ending May 7, 1941, was probably the most crowded in terms of the civil disobedience. One hundred and eighty six persons courted arrest during this week and thirty-five meetings took place with audience ranging between 1000-4000. After this, however, the interest in the movement again started flagging on account of the Marketing and Sales Tax Act agitation in the province, during the week ending May 14, 1941 only forty-seven persons courted arrest. The number further went down during the week ending July 9, 1941 when only six resisters offered themselves for arrest.<sup>188</sup> After their release from jail, the leaders like Gopi Chand and Iftikharudin were disinclined to go to jails again. The ground advanced by them was that by staying out they would be able to provide an effective guidance to the movement

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<sup>183</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.3.1941, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-41.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 31.3.1941, File No. 18/3-41, *op.cit.*

<sup>185</sup> File No. 75/14-41, G.O.I., Pol. (I), *Home Department*, N.A.I.

<sup>186</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.04.1941, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/4-41.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* 31.5.1941, File No. 18/5-41, G.O.I., *Home Political*.

<sup>188</sup> Punjab Government Weekly Report on the Civil Disobedience Movement in the Punjab. File No. 3/2-41, G.O.I., *Home Political*.

which, they thought, they would not be able to do from inside jails.<sup>189</sup> The movement had almost collapsed in Punjab by then. Moreover, Gandhiji also said that there was no hurry to fill up the jails. Those who had come out of the jails were not to be pushed again into the jails if they were needed outside for the communal unity movement. This meant that the individual civil disobedience movement was a flop.<sup>190</sup> Factions led by Gopi Chand and Satya Pal were also busy cutting under the feet of each other. Satya Pal ultimately resigned causing a great setback to the organization. Satyagraha was no longer popular in the Punjab. The Congress M.L.A.s then returned to the legislature.<sup>191</sup> Naturally, the Congress could not any longer seriously expect the Sikhs to get into the movement in the face of such developments. The latter, as usual, were busy in accelerating the number of recruits to the army. Ever since the Khalsa Defense of India League had come into being the work of recruitment had become more systematic. On December 11, 1941 Master Tara Singh addressed a Sikh Conference at Delhi. There he advised the Sikhs not to indulge in the civil disobedience. But he also warned the Government that if no peaceful solution of the national problem was found the Sikh community would be constrained to take any action it thought fit.<sup>192</sup> In another speech, Master Tara Singh supported the Congress demand for independence, but at the same time he made it clear that he did not intend to oppose the Sikh recruitment to the army.<sup>193</sup> By late 1940, the Jat Sikhs registered His lowest growth in the army recruitment.<sup>194</sup> The civil disobedience campaign continued till the Japanese threat began to hover over the Indian skies and prowl round the circling seas. Twenty-five thousand *satyagrahis* had been locked in prison. However, in the new situation created by the threatening developments of the War, the Congress Working Committee declared its disagreement with Gandhiji's principle of absolute non-violence even against a foreign aggressor. Therefore, on December 15, Gandhiji resigned

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<sup>189</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.06.1941, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-41.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 15.7.1941, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/7-41.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.7.1941, File No. 18/7-41, *op.cit.*; 15.9.1941, File No. 18/9-41, G.O.I., *Home Political*.

<sup>192</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1941, Vol. II, p. 43.

<sup>193</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.01.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/1-42.

<sup>194</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 66.

his leadership of the Congress movement. The Government helped in winding up the civil disobedience by releasing the prisoners.<sup>195</sup> In 1941, the enrolment of Jat Sikhs into the army slipped further. By the end of 1941, the number of Jat Sikhs recruits dropped to half the number recruited in 1940.<sup>196</sup>

It is clear from the above that the Akalis did not take any clear-cut decision towards the civil disobedience movement. Offending the Congress was impossible. There was quite a mighty and influential section among the Akalis favouring the Congress. It included men like Udham Singh Nagoke, Hira Singh Dard, Partap Singh Kairon, Gurmukh Singh Masafir and Sampuran Singh. But, on the other hand, the necessity of maintaining the Sikh figures in the army was imperative. The Akalis, therefore, adopted a middle-of-the-road policy about the whole thing. They did not disassociate themselves from the Congress although they did not openly take to the civil disobedience in a big way. On the other hand, they did not support the Government in a loud way, although their help to the Government on the issue of War could not escape any one's notice. On July 14, 1942, the Congress passed a resolution at Wardha asking the Government to give independence to India. They promised that if their demand was accepted the Congress would muster all the resources at its command to fight back the dangers of the War. In case, however, the British did not respond favorably the Congress would resort to a mass civil disobedience movement to make the British quit the country.<sup>197</sup>

The Government of India did not respond. The All India Congress Committee met again on August 8 at Bombay to review the situation since the Wardha resolution. The situation had not changed for the Congress. The Wardha resolution was endorsed and a reaffirmation was made that the right to freedom was inalienable and had to be retrieved through civil disobedience. Instead of negotiating with the leaders, the Government in one swoop, conducted simultaneously in different parts of the country and rounded up all Congress men of note. In Bombay, Gandhiji and the members of the All India Congress

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<sup>195</sup> Tara Chand (Dr.), *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 312.

<sup>196</sup> Johannes H., Voigt, *India in the Second World War*, p. 288.

<sup>197</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, Bombay, 1947, pp. 340-43.

Committee, along with many important citizens, were arrested.<sup>198</sup> The idea was to make the movement leaderless and paralyze it completely. No doubt, the Government succeeded in its aim in making the movement leaderless, but it had a bad result in that the movement took a violent turn resulting in big human and material loss. The first phase of the movement was a natural outburst of violence after the arrest of the leaders. The second phase of the movement was related to the concentration of attacks on communications over a wide area in India. Railway lines were torn up, stations were attacked, signaling apparatus was put out of action and telephone lines were cut. This phase undertook to disrupt the normal functioning of the Government.<sup>199</sup>

In the Punjab also the Congress leaders were arrested and the Congress Committees were declared unlawful. This aroused disturbances and *hartals* in Lahore, Amritsar, Sargodha, Layllpur, Ludhiana, Multan and Gurgaon, etc.<sup>200</sup> Incidents of violence like the breaking of street lamps, removing of fish plates from railway lines, and cutting of telegraph wires were reported.<sup>201</sup> The movement was very crowded during the first two months. The students of the S.D. College, D.A.V. College, Dyal Singh College, and Sikh National College, Lahore and the Hindu Sabha College and Khalsa College, Amritsar, frequently resorted to strikes.<sup>202</sup> The Muslims did not lend support to this movement as they regarded the Congress as a Hindu body. Through a resolution passed in a meeting held at Bombay, the All India Muslim League appealed to the Muslims to abstain from the civil disobedience.<sup>203</sup> It deplored the August 8, 1942 resolution of the Congress to launch an 'open rebellion' by resorting to the civil disobedience.

The Sikhs were, however, lukewarm about this movement. This was on account of the Sikandar-Baldev Pact and the induction of a Sikh representative in the Council of

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<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 343-46; p. 359.

<sup>199</sup> File No. 3/101-42, G.O.I., *Home Political*.

<sup>200</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.8.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-42.

<sup>201</sup> File No. 3/16-42-Poll.(I) (Telegrams from the Provincial Governments on the Civil Disobedience Movement); also P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>202</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.09.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-42.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 31.08.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-42.

the Viceroy.<sup>204</sup> After the movement was launched, their attitude was the same as had been witnessed in the case of the individual civil disobedience movement of 1940 and 1941. They could not displease either of the camps. On August 27, 1942, the Shiromani Akali Dal passed a resolution at Amritsar condemning the arrest of the Congress leaders. The resolution asked the Government to release these leaders.<sup>205</sup> The Akalis could not annoy the Congress because they knew that if the Congress got into power the former would have to depend on it to fight against the Muslim League and the Hindu Maha Sabha.<sup>206</sup> The Akalis had influence in the rural areas and they became very active there. Chanan Singh Urara was entrusted with the task of enlisting volunteers for the civil disobedience in Lahore region and Sohan Singh Jalalusman was entrusted with the Amritsar area. The Punjab Government report to the Government of India for the fortnight ending September 30, 1942 stated:

So far five Akalis were persuaded to court arrest at Lahore on one occasion, whilst five others in all had courted arrest at three meetings held in Amritsar district to commemorate Sikh festivals.<sup>207</sup> It was feared that more Akalis might be forthcoming to take part in this campaign. But nevertheless, presiding at the Udowali, district Lyallpur, All India *Akali* Conference on September 26 - 27, 1942, Master Tara Singh said that at the moment the best thing was to cooperate with the British. He maintained that the freedom could be had after the War.<sup>208</sup> He said that it was no use wrecking the British in whatever they did, thereby yielding ground to the Japanese, which may mean a new mantle of slavery for another indefinite period. He unequivocally said: I agree with Gandhiji for struggle, but I am clear about our own strength. I am not in favour of a rebellion which may result in our won destruction. We should not repeat 1857 which resulted in our devastation and further confirmed our bonds of slavery.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Nicholas Mansergh (Ed.), *op.cit.*, Vol. II, Doc. No. L/PEJ/7/1816: ff70 V-I (Muslim League Working Committee's resolution dated 20.8.1942). The Muslim League described the Congress resolution of July 14, 1942 as "blackmail" *ibid.* Punjab Governor's D.O. No. 404, dated 26.7.1942 to the Governor General, p. 463.

<sup>205</sup> *The Akali*, 29.8.1942.

<sup>206</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.9.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-42.

<sup>207</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.9.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/9-42.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, See also, *Mitra Register*, 1942, Vol. II, p. 298.

<sup>209</sup> *The Panj Darya*, October, 1942.

The *Akali* posture at the moment was that they were not anti-national and were not, at the same time, pro-Government. The attitude of the Sikh press at this time also faithfully reflected the policy of the Sikh leaders. It condemned the act of violence and sabotage, but at the same time it criticized the Government for being hasty, provocative and unduly repressive. It tried to play up the idea that the acts of violence and sabotage were not a part of the Congress movement and if, as the Government said, they were the acts of the Congress then it was difficult to pinpoint that part of the country where these acts were not taking place. If they took place everywhere and if the Congress caused them then it was inconsistent with the plea of the Government that the Congress did not represent the people.<sup>210</sup> In this way that statement of Mr. Winston Churchill was refuted in which he had condemned the Congress.<sup>211</sup> The press appealed to the Sikhs not to do anything that might harm thousands of Sikhs fighting on the front, directly or indirectly.<sup>212</sup> The Akalis, it was said, wanted to cooperate with the Congress in keeping with their attachment to the national movement in the past. But the British desired that this should not happen. They deputed Major Short and many Sikh army officers to see that the Sikhs did not take to the movement.<sup>213</sup> The Congress campaign was in a moribund state then. There was very small activity left. Only sporadic incidents were reported. But they involved violence. For instance, the library of the Government College, Rohtak was set on fire.<sup>214</sup> At this time the attention of the Akalis was not so much riveted on the Quit India Movement of the Congress as they were feeling concerned over the aftermaths of the failure of the Cripps Proposals. The proposals, aiming to concede Pakistan, had caused quite an anxiety among the Sikhs. They naturally received the failure of these proposals with relief. To counter the possibility of any such proposals in future, they came out with the Azad Punjab Scheme which went on changing

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<sup>210</sup> File No. 3/101-42, *op.cit.* (N.A.I.)

<sup>211</sup> Retrospectively also it was maintained that in 1942 the Congress did not start a movement, but the people were angry and they violated the non-violence of the Congress (*The Rayast*, 15.1.1945).

<sup>212</sup> File No. 3/101-42, *op.cit.*

<sup>213</sup> Ganda Singh (Ed.), *Punjab*, Patiala, 1962. (*Partition of the Punjab* by Ishar Singh Majhail), p. 295.

<sup>214</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.11.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/11-42.

in its implications with every new offer from the Government like the Shimla Conference, the Wavell Plan and the Cabinet Mission Plan, etc. It is enough to say that the Sikhs had to pay much of their attention to the constitutional problems during the period 1942-46. Therefore, their attention towards the Quit India Movement was reduced. The other parties, including even the Congress, had also to curtail their involvement in the Quit India Movement to pay attention to the constitutional problems.

The Quit India Movement made the position of the British, who were caught in a back-breaking War, still more precarious. Master Tara Singh sincerely felt that larger the number of the Sikhs in the army the more useful they would be to both the country and the Panth in the face of emergencies that might befall India on the eve of the transfer of power to the Indians by the British. He was positively of the opinion that on the military strength of the Sikhs depend their political power and for this reason alone he wanted to see large number of Sikhs joining the army.<sup>215</sup> Yet it did not mean that the Sikhs drew a blank as far as the Quit India Movement was concerned. Their leaders like Sardar Partap Singh Kairon, Darshan Singh Pheruman, Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Babu Labh Singh and Basant Singh Moga all courted arrests. Master Ram Singh and Sardar Rachhpal Singh were interned.<sup>216</sup>

The Indian National Army (I.N.A.) was another channel through which the nationalists of India expressed their aspirations during the mid-forties. The Sikhs contributed their share to this movement also. Even before the World War II came, the Sikh emigrants had been very active in the South-East Asian region. Names like Gyani Pritam Singh and Budh Singh were prominent.<sup>217</sup> They were anxious about the independence of India. Amar Singh and Pritam Singh played a very important role in organizing the Azad Hind League (Independence League of India).<sup>218</sup> The patriots like Captain Mohan Singh were very active in the setting up of the I.N.A. in 1942. A 'Council of Action' was set up to run the affairs of the I.N.A. and Captain Mohan Singh was taken

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, Fortnight ending 31.8.1944, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-44.

<sup>216</sup> *The Sikh Dunya*, January, 1947.

<sup>217</sup> K.S. Giani, *Indian Independence Movement in the East Asia*, Lahore, 1947, p. 187.

<sup>218</sup> K.K. Ghosh, *The I.M.A.*, Meerut, 1969, p. 17.

General Officer Commanding on it. Gurbakhsh Singh Dhillon also played a very prominent role when the I.N.A. was reorganized under Subhas Chandra Bose.<sup>219</sup>

After the World War II, the Indian political parties praised the I.N.A. and also supported of the case the I.N.A. heroes Kedar Nath Sehgal, Shah Nawaz and Gurbakhsh Singh Dhillon when they were tried by the British Government on the charge of treason. The Akalis did not lag behind in all this. In a speech on October 30, 1945 Baba Kharak Singh extolled the role of the I.N.A. heroes. He threatened the Government that if it did not release these heroes, he would launch a *morcha*.<sup>220</sup> The S.A.D. also supported these heroes and even set up a Defense Committee to help the officers and soldiers of the I.N.A. in their trials.<sup>221</sup> The Sixth All India *Akali* Conference held at Gujranwala on September 29, 1945, passed a resolution that these army officers and men should not be treated as deserters. Master Tara Singh and Ishar Singh Majhail were very active in this Conference. The *Akali* even accepted Colonel Niranjan Singh Gill as the 'Dictator' of the Council of Action, appointed by the All Sikh Parties Conference held at Lahore on June 9-10, 1946.<sup>222</sup> Merits of the I.N.A. apart, its aim could not seriously be doubted. It was certainly one of the channels through which the patriots of India tried to achieve the emancipation of their motherland. As in other walks of life, the Sikhs made a significant contribution to the affairs of the I.N.A. also. More than forty commissioned officers of the I.N.A. were Sikhs.<sup>223</sup> The heroic deeds of General Mohan Singh, Colonel Niranjan Singh Gill and Captain Gurbakhsh Singh Dhillon were quite worthy of highest praise.

The Sikandar-Baldev Pact was concluded on June 15, 1942. The terms of the Pact were related to the problems like *Jhatka* meat, teaching of *Gurmukhi*, legislation regarding religious matters and services for the Sikhs under the Punjab Government. On the *Jhatka* question Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan agreed that where separate kitchens existed in the Government institutions the communities would be allowed to slaughter the

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<sup>219</sup> *The Sikh Review*, January, 1958.

<sup>220</sup> Baba Kharak Singh, *Abhinandan Granth*, *op.cit.*, pp. 213-14.

<sup>221</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. II, p. 165.

<sup>222</sup> Landen Sarsfield, *op.cit.*, pp. 119-23.

<sup>223</sup> *Indian Independence League Papers* (N.A.I., Section R6, Document No. 53).

animals according to their own rites provided they did not injure the religious feelings of others. Obviously, it was quite a restricted permission and did not absolutely meet the demands of the Sikhs. Regarding *Gurmukhi*, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan frankly said that it was not possible to accede to their demand immediately. He also said that it would be accommodated as soon as possible. Thus, there again the issue was shelved. For legislation relating to religious matters, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan agreed to set up a convention that:<sup>224</sup>

In matters which exclusively concerned a particular community, that community should alone have the right to decide if the matter, when it comes before the house, should be proceeded with or not. It can be left to the members of that community to take a decision at all stages of legislation.

Again, it was quite clear that that concession was related to future. It had nothing immediate about it. About the recruitment of Sikhs to the services Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan said that the “Government has already fixed the proportion for various communities including the Sikhs, who have been allotted twenty per cent share. It is the duty of every minister to see that no departure from this formula is countenanced”.<sup>225</sup> He also assured the Sikhs that he would support their case for the inclusion of their representative in the Executive Council of the Viceroy whenever expansion or change took place in that body. It looked then as though Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan had been exerting to see that the Central Executive Council was not expanded till his Pact with Sardar Baldev Singh had been concluded. It was difficult to imagine that that was a mere chance that the said Pact having been concluded on June 15, 1942, a Sikh representative was inducted into the Executive Council of the Viceroy on July 2, 1942. A more important reason, it seemed, was probably the Quit India Movement that was raising its head on the political horizon. In view of their military utility the Sikhs had to be insulated against the disaffection that this movement might cause among them.

The net result of the Pact was that the Sikhs got one representative in the Punjab Cabinet and one representative in the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and their support

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<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *The Tribune*, 16.6.1942 (Sikandar-Baldev Singh Correspondence).

to the Government in the matter of recruitment to the army, which was already there, was then formalized. The Pact received the blessings of the Akali Party at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the S.A.D. held at Amritsar on May 26, 1942.<sup>226</sup> The Central Akali Dal and the Congress Akalis deprecated it.<sup>227</sup> The Hindu Maha Sabha did not like this Pact as it weakened the joint Hindu-Sikh anti-Unionist front.<sup>228</sup> Mahashe Krishan, a Punjab Hindu Sabha leader, even tried to dissuade Master Tara Singh from concluding this Pact. The Muslims, on the whole, welcomed it.<sup>229</sup> To counter the criticism of their opponents like S. Kharak Singh, the Akalis described the Pact as a communal settlement rather than a political settlement which they could repudiate if it did not work to their satisfaction.<sup>230</sup>

Various descriptions of the Pact notwithstanding, it had to be admitted that it was an important landmark in the history of Punjab politics. The Khalsa National Party went into oblivion and the Akalis became partners in the Punjab Government. However, the untimely and sudden death of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan within six months of the conclusion of the Pact once again created a situation of confusion and uncertainty. Khizr Hayat Khan, the successor of Sikandar Hayat Khan, was not a communal type, but he was a weak man. He was also not shrewd like his predecessor. He often yielded to the political pressures that went against the interests of the Sikhs. No doubt, he was able to resist the pressure of Mr. M.A. Jinnah to declare his ministry a Muslim League-Unionist Coalition Ministry.<sup>231</sup> Even so, his Government gradually became more and more Muslim than Punjabi.<sup>232</sup> He could not maintain a balance between the Sikandar-Baldev

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<sup>226</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.6.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-42.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.* It was however later on alleged that the Pact had the consent of Sardar Patel whose representative was present in the Punjab throughout the Akali-Sikandar parleys. *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 221 (Letter dated 12.11.1944 from Sardar Durlab Singh to Gandhiji).

<sup>228</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>229</sup> Ganda Singh (Ed.), *The Punjab*, Patiala, 1962, p. 291 (*Partition of the Punjab* by Ishar Singh Majhail).

<sup>230</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.6.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-42.

<sup>231</sup> Nicholas Mansergh (Ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, London, 1971, Doc. No. 592, D. O. No. 442, dated 15.3.1943 from Punjab Governor to the Governor General, p. 809.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, London, 1973, Doc. No. 49, Letter dated 16.7.1943 from Lord Linlithgow to the Punjab Governor, pp. 90-92.

Pact and the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. All that naturally tended to mar the Akali-Unionist relations. The factor of Pakistan alone was enough to damn these relations. Mr. M.A. Jinnah kept on bringing pressure on Khizr Hayat Khan to make him subservient to the Muslim League.<sup>233</sup>

In such circumstances, the outstanding problems of the Sikhs could not be solved. The problems relating to *Jhatka* and *Gurmukhi* language practically remained where they were. In services also, the position remained far from satisfactory. Even in 1945 the position was quite bad. Out of eighteen Government Colleges in the state not even one was manned by a Sikh Principal.<sup>234</sup> Similarly, in reply to an unstarred Assembly Question No. 1871, in the Punjab Assembly on March 2, 1945, Sir Chhotu Ram, furnished the following information relating to the Public Works Department, Building and Roads Branch.<sup>235</sup>

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Post</b>	<b>Strength of the Cadre</b>	<b>Number of Sikh Occupants</b>
1.	Superintendent	6	x
2.	Deputy Superintendent	1	x
3.	Assistant	25	1

It was indeed very revealing that out of thirty-two posts of Assistants and Superintendents only one was held by a Sikh. It came to a little over three per cent as against the declared percentage of twenty. The position was more or less the same in other departments also. Even the Sikh Rights Protection Society could not do much to retrieve the position of the Sikhs. All its press propaganda and deputations to the authorities pleading the Sikh cause did not produce much result.

The Act of 1935 conceded a statutory Muslim majority in Punjab. The Sikhs were not satisfied with it. The Hindu Maha Sabha was also not satisfied with it. Their position under the Act had made the Muslims more arrogant. The Sikhs felt the pinch in the high-handed policy of the Punjab Unionist Government in the vital matters. The World War II

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<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 73, D.O. No. 465, dated 6.8.1943, from the Punjab Governor to the Governor General, pp. 161-62.

<sup>234</sup> *The Khalsa Samachar*, 5.7.1945.

<sup>235</sup> *P.L.A. Debates*, Vol. XXIV, No. 6, Lahore, 1945, p. 245.

changed the context considerably. The Indian political parties were in the know of all this. They wanted to cash in upon this opportunity. The Sikhs also knew about their own importance in the matter relating to recruitment in the army. The Congress passed a resolution in its Poona session on July 7, 1940 in which it demanded from the British the acknowledgement of India's right to complete independence and the formation of a National Government, consisting of representatives of main political parties.<sup>236</sup> It was in this background that the British Government, in order to elicit good support from the Indian political parties, came out with their August Offer. The offer contained three proposals:<sup>237</sup>

- (a) An immediate expansion of Viceroy's Council by appointing a number of representative Indians;
- (b) The establishment of a War Advisory Council consisting of representatives of British India and the Indian States to meet at regular intervals, and
- (c) The promotion of practical steps to arrive at an agreement among Indians "on the form which the post-War representative body should take on method by which it should arrive at its conclusions, and, secondly, upon principles and outlines of the constitution itself.

The Offer did not arouse any particular enthusiasm in the press and the political parties in the Punjab. It was realized that the statement of the Viceroy had not changed the position in the Punjab. It was, however felt that the declaration was not bad for the minorities'.<sup>238</sup> About the minorities, the declaration said that the portion of the Act of 1935, relating to minorities or the policy a plan on which it was based, could be re-examined. It was made clear that full weight would be given to the views of minorities in any future revision of the Indian constitution. The Hindu Maha Sabha went as far as to describe it a blank assurance for the minorities.<sup>239</sup> The Congress and the Muslim League both rejected the Scheme<sup>240</sup> as being unsatisfactory. On account of the assurances for the

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<sup>236</sup> Tara Chand (Dr.), *History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. II, p. 308.

<sup>237</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 14.

<sup>238</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.08.1940, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-40.

<sup>239</sup> Statement of the Governor General dated 8.8.1940 Nicholas Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, p. 878.

<sup>240</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, , p. 243.

minorities contained in the Offer, the Sikhs declared their willingness to accept it.<sup>241</sup> It looked that while making this Offer, the British masters had only the major parties in mind. Since the Congress and the Muslim League rejected this Offer, the Government did not try to proceed further even though the Sikhs, the Scheduled Castes and other organizations declared their willingness to accept the Offer.<sup>242</sup> In the 'August Offer', Lord Linlithgow demanded mutually agreed positions between the Congress and the League. To achieve this C. Rajgopalcharia, a senior member of the CWC, offered the Prime Ministership to a nominee of the Muslim League. This 'sporting offer' made on 23<sup>rd</sup> August was considered as 'unjust, undemocratic' and anti-national by the Akalis.<sup>243</sup> On the other hand, the Sikhs also did not seem to have paid any serious thought to this. No doubt, they went on pressing the Government for a seat in the Council of the Viceroy,<sup>244</sup> but they did so independent of the August Offer. This was also true of their attitude towards joining the army and co-operating with the British on the War issue. All that was clear from the fact that the All India Sikh League in their Lahore session and the Akali Political Conference held on September 30, 1940 and October 7, 1940 respectively, i.e., so soon after the August Offer, made no mention about the Offer in their proceedings.<sup>245</sup>

The Cripps proposals were the outcome of the critical War situation created by Japan's rapid advance in South-East Asia. The Congress was busy with its individual civil disobedience program. The Akalis were sulking at the working of the Act of 1935, especially at the operation of the Communal Award. They were also anxious to have a Sikh representative on the Executive Council of the Viceroy. They certainly wanted to secure their position constitutionally and would welcome any opportunity that would open dialogue for further constitutional reform in the country. Their co-operation with the

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<sup>241</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India.*, p. 95. However, the P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.08.1940, says that the position of the Sikhs was in no way improved by this offer (File No. 15/8-40, *op.cit.*).

<sup>242</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India.*, p. 95.

<sup>243</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of the Sikh Politics", *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 237.

<sup>244</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/89, D.O. No. 290 dated 27.9.1940 from the Punjab Governor to the Governor General.

<sup>245</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 323.

Government, they thought, might bring concessions for them in the next reforms. The Cripps Proposals contained the following main provisions:<sup>246</sup>

1. Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India.
2. Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.
3. His Majesty's Government undertook to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to:
  - i) The right of any province of British India that was not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decided. With such non-acceding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to agree upon a new constitution, giving them the same full status as Indian Union, and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that there laid down.
  - ii) Signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This treaty would cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it would make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but would not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other member States of the British Commonwealth.
4. The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows: unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the main communities agreed upon some other form before the end of hostilities. Immediately upon the result being known of the provincial elections which would be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial legislatures shall, as single Electoral College, preceded to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation.
5. During the critical period which then faced India and until the new constitution could be framed His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain control and direction of the Defense of India as part of their world War effort, but the task of organizing to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India.

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<sup>246</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai (Eds.), *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution*, Vol. II, London, 1957, pp. 520-21.

Obviously, the Proposals were loaded with the dangerous implications of Pakistan. The Cripps Proposals envisaged a loose federation giving the provinces the right to opt out of the Indian Union. This was the “first public admission of the possibility of Pakistan”<sup>247</sup> The reaction of the Sikhs was sharp and quick. They did not have happy experiences of their relationship with the Muslims. Bulk of their population and assets were bound to fall in Pakistan areas which meant a perpetuation of slavery for them. All shades of opinion in the Sikh politics therefore rejected this proposal. The Central Akali Dal rejected the Cripps Offer because it thought that that aimed at bifurcation of the country and bringing disunity. Presiding over a meeting of the Central Akali Dal, Baba Kharak Singh denounced the Scheme saying that it gave the same rights to the provinces that did not join the union, as it gave to the union. It clearly meant Pakistan, rather many Pakistans.<sup>248</sup> The Working Committee of the All Sikh Parties Conference, in the meeting on March 16, 1942, appointed a sub-committee to formulate the Sikh demands vis-à-vis the Cripps Proposals.<sup>249</sup> Even the Moderate Sikhs criticized the Proposals at a meeting held at Amritsar on April 5, 1942 under Sardar Jodh Singh's Chairmanship.<sup>250</sup> Sardar Dasaunda Singh and Captain Naunihal Singh Maan, the representatives of the Khalsa Defense League, another moderate and pro-Government body, had a meeting with Sir Stafford Cripps on March 31, 1942 and conveyed their disapproval of the Scheme ready to accept more than one division of the country.<sup>251</sup> In such a contingency, they represented that they would like to have a special area in which the vote could be taken by a plebiscite to ascertain whether they would join the first or the second union. This was significant inasmuch as it showed the working of the mind of the Sikh leaders as to how they wanted to protect their existence in the face of such Proposals. With the passage of time this amorphous thinking gradually came to have specific outlines relating to various Sikh homeland demands.

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<sup>247</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of the Sikh Politics”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 239

<sup>248</sup> *The Fateh*, Annual Number, Vol. 23, No. 14.15.

<sup>249</sup> *The Akali*, 18.3.1942.

<sup>250</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1942, Vol. I, pp. 256-57.

<sup>251</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I. Interview of Sardar Dasunda Singh and Captain Naunihal Singh with Mr. Cripps, Document No. 463, p. 580.

On March 27, 1942, an All Sikh Parties deputation consisting of Master Tara Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sardar Ujjal Singh and Sir Jogendra Singh had an interview with Mr. Cripps. In this interview, they showed their anxiety about the protection of the Sikhs as a minority in Punjab vis-à-vis this proposal, particularly in the face of the non-accession clause. They also raised the question of the redistribution of Punjab boundaries into two parts. Sir Stafford Cripps assured them that in the Constituent Assembly, the Congress, might not have a significant majority, would desire to get their help and co-operation by making ample provision for their protection in the new constitution. This would set a standard of minority protection which might as well be satisfactory to the Sikh community and might even entail the sub-division of Punjab into two provinces or the setting up within the province of Punjab of a semi-autonomous district for the Sikhs on the Soviet model. If this failed and the constitution did not contain sufficient clauses to satisfy them, then in the treaty which would be negotiated contemporaneously with the framing of the constitution insistence would be made on the insertion of minority protection clauses in accordance with the definition set out in the document.<sup>252</sup> If the Muslims felt that they did not get sufficient concessions to enable them to remain within the Indian Union, then it would be necessary for them to obtain a vote of non-accession by plebiscite in the Punjab. Although they had a narrow majority for this purpose yet they could be anxious to increase it so as to have a favorable atmosphere for setting up the new second Dominion. The possibility was that they would try to woo the Sikh vote by offering minority protection clauses going further than those already offered by Indian Union and possibly going as far as agreeing to a division of the Province or setting up of a semi-autonomous district. Cripps told them that if even this did not happen the British would insist on the protection of the Sikh minority to the extent that if it were not given they would consider it a breach of the treaty between the Dominion and the British Government. But Cripps made it clear to the Sikh leaders:

Once granted our decision to allow the Indian people complete freedom in determining their own constitution, there was nothing further that we could do to provide protection for minorities as we could not intervene in the making of the constitution or in its carrying out after the Dominion

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<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, Document No. 396, p. 496.

had been set up beyond insisting upon the observance by the Dominion of its treaty obligations as regards minorities.<sup>253</sup>

If we read this dialogue carefully one thing becomes clear that the British really could not do anything if the successor Dominions did not observe the treaty obligations with regard to minorities. On March 31, 1942, the All Sikh Parties Committee again met Mr. Cripps. It conveyed their non-acceptance of his proposal to him as it did not give them sufficient protection. They also made a representation to Sir Stafford Cripps.<sup>254</sup> In this they pointed out that the Cripps proposal was unacceptable to them because it conceded Pakistan and the cause of the Sikh community had been lamentably betrayed.<sup>255</sup> The Committee expressed its dissatisfaction with the document and regretted that the Sikhs had loyally supported the British in every battle-field of the empire “and this is our reward, that our position in Punjab, which England promised to hold in trust, and in which we occupied a predominant position has been finally liquidated”. They posed a question: “Why should a province that fails to secure a three-fifth’s majority of its legislature, in which a religious community enjoys statutory majority, be allowed to hold a plebiscite and be given the benefit of a bare majority? In fairness, this right should have been conceded to communities who are in permanent minority in the legislature”. They went on to ask: “Why should not the population of any area opposed to separation be given the right to record its verdict and to form an autonomous unit”? It was strange that the Sikh leaders were citing the same argument which they were countering. They emphasized the redistribution of Punjab territories. The Committee wrote that the Punjab extended up to the banks of the Jhelum and that the trans-Jhelum areas of Jhang and Multan were “added by the conquest of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and retained by the British for administrative convenience”.<sup>256</sup> The Committee made out that the huge Muslim population percentage in these two districts made Punjab a Muslim Majority Province. Conversely, the elimination of these two districts from Punjab was bound to weaken the basis of the claim made by Mr. M.A. Jinnah that Punjab should be the “centre-piece” of

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 496-97.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, Document No. 466, p. 581; 467, p. 582.

<sup>255</sup> *Cripps Proposal: All Sikh Parties Working Committee* (Anon), Lahore, 1942, p. 12.

<sup>256</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, Document No. 467, p. 582.

Western Pakistan.<sup>257</sup> During the April and May, various Akali Jathas and Singh Sabhas all over the Punjab categorically opposed the Cripps Proposals.<sup>258</sup>

It is also said that the Sikhs were perhaps the only community that was making an organized War effort by establishing the Khalsa Defense of India League to maintain its glorious traditions in the army.<sup>259</sup> The document also referred to the injustice done to the Sikhs in the Communal Award of 1935. It was also stated in the document that although for seventeen years a *Punjabi* had been appointed on Viceroy's Council, no Sikh had even been considered for such an appointment.<sup>260</sup>

The Sikh leaders made out that a careful reading of the resolution disclosed the fact that the Muslim League itself visualized the readjustments of areas and the inclusion in their separate State of only those areas in which the Muslims were in majority. On this basis if a new Province of a contiguous area of the two divisions of Ambala and Jullundur plus the three districts of Lahore, Gurdaspur and Amritsar were carved out it would have a total population of 121,51,000 (according to 1931 Census) with non-Muslims forming 63 per cent population. The other province to the west of river Ravi comprising the Multan and Rawalpindi divisions plus three districts of Sheikhpura, Sialkot and Gujranwala would have a total population of 11,429,000 with Muslims forming 77.3 per cent population. In the end the leaders, *inter alia*, stated in this document that in any

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<sup>257</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1942, Vol. I., pp. 149-50. Quoting from the Census Reports the Committee wrote:

“From the boundary of Delhi to banks of the river Ravi the population is divided as follows: Muslims: 45,05,000; Sikhs and other non-Muslims: 76,46,000.

From Delhi boundary to the banks of Jhelum river excluding Jhang and Multan districts: Muslims: 82,88,000; Sikhs and other non-Muslims: 93,48,000.

To this may be added the population of the Sikh States of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Kapurthala and Faridkot, which is about 26,00,000. Of this the Muslims constitute barely 20 per cent and this reduces the ratio of the Muslim population still further”.

<sup>258</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 240

<sup>259</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, Enclosures to Document No. 467, p. 584.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 585; 587.

interim or permanent Scheme the following points, as safeguards, must be provided either in the treaty which might be enforceable or in the constitution itself.<sup>261</sup>

- (i) The Sikh majority in the province be given the same weight age and protection as the Muslim minority;
- (ii) So long as communal electorates exist, provincial cabinets should be formed on coalition basis;
- (iii) The Sikhs should be given 5 per cent representation in the Central Legislature; (iv) A Sikh should always be given a seat in the Cabinet of the Central Government;
- (v) A Defense Advisory Committee should be set up for advising the Indian Defense Minister and a Sikh should be given a seat on that Committee;
- (vi) The position of the Sikhs in the Defense forces of India should be maintained in keeping with their past traditions and strength in those forces;
- (vii) The share of the Sikhs should be fixed in the Provincial and All-India Services on the lines already provided or may be provided for the Muslims; and
- (viii) The State should provide for the teaching of *Punjabi* in *Gurmukhi* script where a fixed number of scholars is forthcoming.

Hence, the stand of the Sikhs remained the same as it was at the Round Table Conference, i.e., eradication of communalism or the redistribution of Punjab territories. This latter proposal was their defense against Pakistan that was implied in the Cripps Proposals. Master Tara Singh expressed his annoyance at the proposals personally to Mr. Cripps and went as far as to tell him that impelled by the fears aroused by the proposals the Sikhs might be induced to cease the War effort. He also pleaded with him for a division of the Punjab.<sup>262</sup> The All Sikh Parties Conference held on April 8, 1942 at Amritsar and the meeting of the S.A.D. at Amritsar on the same day approved of the Sikh leaders' parleys with Mr. Cripps.<sup>263</sup>

The Punjab Government also cautioned the Governor-General that the Declaration of Cripps was bound to arouse fears in the minds of the minorities.<sup>264</sup> The

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 587-88.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, Document No. 455, p. 564.

<sup>263</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.4.1942, Also *Azad Punjab*, *op.cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>264</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *op.cit.*, Document No. 298, Punjab Governor's telegram dated 10.3.1942 to the Governor General, p. 398.

Congress rejected the offer because it did not envisage the responsibility of the Executive to the legislature. Further, the features of this proposal like the freedom of a province to opt out of the Union, and the virtual reservation of Defense and War were not like by the Congress. The Muslim League which was ready to accept it if the Congress accepted, rejected the Offer because the freedom of a province to cut out of the union as embodied in the offer was neither clear nor full to the point of conceding the segmentation of India as desired by it in the demand for Pakistan.<sup>265</sup> It mainly rejected the proposal because it sought to create one Indian Union.<sup>266</sup> The Hindu Maha Sabha rejected the Offer because of the principle of dismemberment of Hindustan even in rudimentary form.<sup>267</sup>

The Sikhs were relieved by the fact that the proposals were rejected both by the Congress and the Muslim League.<sup>268</sup> They were worried lest the Congress and the Muslim League should reach an understanding with each other and accept the proposals. In that case, the Sikhs would have been totally ignored from the whole arrangement. Already the British were attaching importance only to the Congress and the Muslim League and the Sikhs were being considered as something insignificant.<sup>269</sup> No doubt, in his speech in the House of Commons on April 28, 1942, Mr. Cripps referred to the anxiety of the Sikhs to procure some protection against the majority rule of one

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<sup>265</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Vol. II, *History of the Indian National Congress*, p. 332.

<sup>266</sup> *Mitra Register, op.cit.*, p. 70. It is said that League was not so much opposed to the proposal as the Congress was. And in the Congress also it was only Gandhiji who got it rejected from the otherwise well disposed Congress, in order to test the potential of his leadership. Consequently, the League, which had even passed a resolution accepting the proposal, but had withheld it pending the declaration of the Congress, also rejected it (Nicholas Mansergh, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, Document No. 227-Memorandum by the Lord Privy Seal regarding Report on Mission to India, submitted to the War Cabinet, pp. 341-43).

<sup>267</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, p. 332.

<sup>268</sup> *Linlithgow Collections, op.cit.*, 125/91, Punjab Governor's D.O. No. 390 dated 14.4.1942 to the Governor General.

<sup>269</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, Document No. 619, letter dated 13.4.1942 from Mr. M. Hallet to the Governor-General, p. 766. Mr. Cripps also admitted about such a treatment given to organizations other than Congress and the Muslim League, in his report dated 6.7.1942 to the War Cabinet (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, *op.cit.*, Document No. 227, p. 343).

community in the Punjab.<sup>270</sup> But he did not dilate further on this topic. The thing was that the Government was not prepared to hamper negotiations among big parties and as such it could not go out of the way to guarantee the minorities any security beyond general or abstract assurances. On the other hand, Master Tara Singh in his letter dated May 4, 1942 to Mr. Cripps repeated that if the British accepted the proposal of the Sikhs, regarding redistribution of Punjab territories, conveyed to him during the Sikh leaders' interview with him on March 31, 1942, Master Tara Singh could bring round the Congress and the Hindu Maha Sabha to accept the same.<sup>271</sup> Looking at the mutual eagerness of the Congress and the Muslim League to come to an understanding, and also the British trend to care only for the big parties like the Congress and the Muslim League, this was an over-optimistic assertion of Master Tara Singh. The letter evoked no specific response from Mr. Cripps. He acknowledged this letter and expressed some grateful feelings of the British towards the Sikhs.<sup>272</sup> The Sikander-Baldev Pact (1942) was an attempt at a limited cooperation between the Akalis and the Unionist and at mitigating the adverse effects of 'Muslims domination'. It left the Akali Dal free to oppose the Government and the Pakistan Scheme. It was condemned by the Congressite and Communist Sikhs and the Central Akali Dal.<sup>273</sup>

The long and short of the matter was that the Sikhs were nowhere significantly placed in this Scheme. To safeguard their position, their stand revolved round three points. First, plebiscite on the question of accession was a dangerous proposition. Second, they insisted on the re-demarcation of the Punjab boundaries. And third, in any such settlement they wanted constitutional provision for the protection of minorities in the form of representation in the legislature, army and civil services etc. since the British were chiefly concerned only with the big parties like the Congress and the Muslim League, and the latter also did not bother about others, the Sikhs felt much relieved at the failure of the offer. After the rejection of the Cripps Offer, the scene in India was

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<sup>270</sup> *Parliamentary Debates*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, House of Commons, Vol. I, 379, Cols. 828, 835-36, and 841.

<sup>271</sup> File No. 221/942, Government of India, *Home Political*.

<sup>272</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, (Ed.), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, Document No. 244, p. 362.

<sup>273</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics", *Sikhs History and Religion*, p. 241.

occupied by the Quit India Movement. On the external plane, the World War II was going on. The British tried to tackle all these problems as best as they could. In October, 1943 Lord Wavell succeeded Lord Linlithgow as the Governor-General of India. He had played a very prominent part not only as the Commander-in-Chief of India but also as a negotiator when the Cripps Mission visited India. Therefore, he understood the Indian problem and was inclined to take suitable steps towards its solution. Moreover, being General, he was the best choice for the office during the War period. In 1945, when the end of the World War II was in sight, he, in consultation with the Secretary of State for India, issued a statement for this purpose on June 14, 1945. Important provisions of this Offer were:<sup>274</sup>

1. With an idea to advance India towards her goal of full self-Government, Viceroy's Executive Council was to be constituted in such a way that all its members, except the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, would be Indian political leaders. Viceroy's control was to be decreased;
2. The Council was to have a balanced representation of main communities including equal proportions of Muslims and Caste Hindus;
3. The portfolios of Home and Finance were also to be with the Indians in this Council which was supposed to have twelve members; and
4. The Executive Council was to function as an interim National Government till the new constitution was framed by the Indians.

Two years later, the Cripps proposals tried to settle the problem but in vain. The Sikhs were happy at the failure of the Cripps Mission but they became quite fearful and mistrustful of the intentions of the British who, the Sikhs felt, had conceded the principle of Pakistan. It was in this background that the Sikhs came out with their Azad Punjab Scheme. The Sikhs felt that the Congress, despite its insistence on united India, might after all yield to Muslim League throwing the Sikhs to the tender mercies of the latter. The Muslims were determined to achieve their goal<sup>275</sup> and the Congress seemed to seek to appease them.<sup>276</sup> In 1942, at Allahabad the Congress ratified the Congress Working

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<sup>274</sup> *The Tribune*, 15.6.1945.

<sup>275</sup> Sadhu Swarup Singh, *The Sikh Demand Their Homeland*, Lahore, 1946, pp. iii-iv (Preface).

<sup>276</sup> Gurbachan Singh, Lal Singh, *The Idea of the Sikh State*, Lahore, 1946, p. 9.

Committee's Delhi resolution regarding the Cripps Proposals, that the Congress envisaged a federal union for India, no unit being compelled to remain in the union against her wishes.<sup>277</sup> The Sikh leaders Gopal Singh and Partap Singh Kairon were not allowed even to table an amendment.<sup>278</sup> Hence, the Sikhs felt that their survival was possible only if they could acquire independent power. This was possible only if they could acquire independent power. This was possible only in a tract where they would not be at the mercy of any other group. In his Punjab tour from 14-22 October, 1942, Mr. M.A. Jinnah appealed to the Sikhs to come to a direct understanding with the Muslims. But his subsequent speeches marred the effect of this gesture, because he said that, if necessary, the Muslims would achieve Pakistan by sword.

The Sikhs then felt that the British Government and the Congress party were both committed to the acceptance of Pakistan. The only way out for them was then to have a separate area for them out of the province.<sup>279</sup> This actually did not mean a sovereign state for Sikhs but it only meant readjustment of boundaries in order to bring out a territory in which no community would be able to dominate over others. This was to be called Azad Punjab where all communities were to be free. The Sikhs were thus convinced of the desirability of partition of Punjab, i.e., readjustment of boundaries. They then came out with the Azad Punjab Scheme. The Scheme, as initially visualized, was designed to constitute a new province, out of the Lahore, Jullundur, Ambala and part of the Multan divisions, in which areas the Sikhs could be able to have effective voice in the administration. They were to hold the balance of power. The All India *Akali* Conference held at Vahila Kalan, District Lyallpur, on July 24, 1942 in which Sikh leaders from all over India participated, also passed a resolution demanding the readjustment of the boundaries of the Punjab.<sup>280</sup> Infact, Azad Punjab was the name given to a province

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<sup>277</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution*, Vol. II, London, 1957, p. 525, Also Sadhu Swarup Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 39. Thus, the Congress accepted Pakistan in principle (*Ibid.*, pp. 104-05).

<sup>278</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1942, Vol. I, pp. 291-92.

<sup>279</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.11.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/11-42.

<sup>280</sup> Das Shiromani Sikh Leaders (Ed.), *Azad Punjab* (Amritsar, n.d.), (*Azad Punjab Sabandhi Itraz ate Jawab*, Gyani Kartar Singh, M.L.A., pp. 50-51). Before this, even an anti-Akali paper Sher-i-Punjab had supported the Scheme in its various issues under the captions

envisaged in the Memorandum of the Sikh All Parties Committee to Sir Stafford.<sup>281</sup> From the very beginning, the Hindus and Muslims got very hostile to this demand. The Sikh leaders tried to defend it vigorously but both the Hindus as well as the Muslims remained unconvinced about it.<sup>282</sup> The Hindus did not at all like this Scheme. They could not put up with the idea of a state where the balance lay with 20 per cent Sikhs. They, however, condemned this Scheme on the apparent ground that it was based on the idea of vivisection of the country. Sir Chhotu Ram criticized it on the basis that it was based on religious considerations whereas religion and politics were two separate things altogether. He held that the problem should be tackled on the economic plane. The Hindus further denounced this Scheme in that it tended to give rise to three-nation theory.<sup>283</sup> But the Sikhs were not discouraged. Master Tara Singh issued a statement on December 14, 1942 from Amritsar clarifying the Sikh demand for Azad Punjab. He observed:

I wish to get rid of the present communal domination established on us at all costs. The Hindus also feel this communal domination bitterly, but they are so divided that they cannot make up their mind. Many of them, in their anxiety to appear to be nationalist, cease to take a realistic view of the situation. We favor the readjustment of boundaries of the Punjab. I wish that in the Punjab proper, no community should dominate over the other.<sup>284</sup>

Gyani Kartar Singh also came out with a Scheme. It provided for a sub-province in Punjab as a part of the bigger Punjab. Its territory was supposed to run between Ravi and Yamuna. There Non-Muslims were in majority. This sub-province was to have a separate Assembly, separate cabinet and an autonomous Government. Only the Governor was to be common. For canals and hydro-electric works there was to be a joint-board. This sub-province was to have fourteen districts with a population of 1.50 crore, containing 62 per cent non-Muslims of which the majority was to be that of the *jats* and

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‘Sikhon ka Mustqbil’, ‘Khalistan Zindabad’ and ‘Agar Ham Ikathe Nahin Reh Sakte’ (Issue dated 5.4.1942, 13.4.1942 and 26.4.1942).

<sup>281</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p.242.

<sup>282</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.12.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/12-42.

<sup>283</sup> Tikka Ram, *Chhotu Ram*, Rohtak, n.d., pp. 46-48.

<sup>284</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1942, Vol. II, p. 64.

Sikhs. The population was to be composed of 43 per cent Hindus, 38 per cent Muslims and 19 per cent Sikhs. No community was to have absolute majority. This sub-province was to have all the big cities like Lahore, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Jullundur and Ambala, etc.<sup>285</sup>

On January 31, 1943 Master Tara Singh moved a resolution relating to this Scheme at the All India Sikh Youth Conference at Lahore. The resolution said that the Communal Award had placed the reigns of Government in the province in the hands of a permanent statutory Muslim Majority and the position was also being worsened further by the movement for Pakistan. The resolution emphasized that this attack on the culture and position of the Sikhs could only be countered by readjusting the boundaries of Punjab by the transfer of the predominantly Muslim districts to the North-Western Frontier Province. It further asked that the Sikh and Hindu minorities in these separated districts be granted the same weight age and safeguards as were provided for Muslim minorities in the Central Province and Madras.<sup>286</sup> Representatives from the Rawalpindi division opposed this resolution. Ultimately, an amendment was accepted to the effect that a referendum may be conducted and if two-thirds agreed to the redistribution of territories then the demand should be pressed, otherwise it should be dropped. A tour of the Western Punjab conducted by Master Tara Singh and other Akali leaders clearly revealed to them the local opposition to this Scheme. The Scheme had comparatively larger enthusiasts in the Central Punjab. But bodies like the Central Akali Dal and certain Namdhari leaders were not favorably disposed to it.<sup>287</sup> It was in this background that the All India Akali Conference took place at Bhawanigarh on March 14, 1943. At this Conference, defending the Azad Punjab Scheme, Master Tara Singh said that by the creation of Azad Punjab “not only Sikhs and Hindus of the Azad Punjab will get rid of the present Pakistan, but the Sikhs and Hindus living in the portion of Punjab, which will be cut off from the present Punjab, will also be in a better position”. He went on to say that in the Pakistan Punjab, the Sikhs and Hindus would be 5 per cent and 12 per cent

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<sup>285</sup> *The Panj Darya*, February, 1947.

<sup>286</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1943, Vol. I, p. 299.

<sup>287</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.2.1943, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/2-43.

respectively. They would, therefore, get minority weight age like the minorities in other provinces. This would mean 15 per cent representation for the Sikhs and 25 per cent for the Hindus. This meant 40 per cent representation for them as against the 47 per cent representation in the existing Legislature. Further, this 40 per cent was not to include any Hindu *Jat* or *Achhut*. They would form a better cohesive lot in the separated Punjab than they were doing in the existing Punjab where they had so many conflicting interests.<sup>288</sup> It was, in fact, a move to “cripple” the Pakistan scheme.<sup>289</sup> He said that the *Jats* and *Achhuts* always supported the Muslims in the existing Punjab to gather one political gain or the other.

By this device of changing the boundaries of Punjab we can take out overwhelming majority of the Hindus and the Sikhs from Muslim domination, while at the same time improving appreciably the position of the Sikhs and the Hindus who remain in other portion of Punjab.<sup>290</sup>

But the opposition to the Scheme continued as far as the Central Akali Dal was there. The Akhand Hindustan Conference held at Lahore on June 6, 1943 made a frontal attack on the Azad Punjab Scheme. Baba Kharak Singh, who presided over the conference made critical references to the Scheme and the *Akali* leadership. He said that since both aimed at the vivisection of India there was no difference between the Azad Punjab and Pakistan Scheme. He also said such things at another Conference held at Panja Saheb on August 16, 1943. At this Conference he condemned Master Tara Singh and said that he was no better than M.A. Jinnah.<sup>291</sup> He said that if the Sikhs and Hindus were united, 54 per cent Muslims could not exploit them. Further, Sardar Sant Singh, who had very strong views against the Scheme, also condemned it unreservedly in his article ‘Azad Punjab Nahin Chahida’ (Azad Punjab not needed). In this article, he answered the three arguments of Master Tara Singh in favor of the Scheme. First, Master Tara Singh held that the Sikhs had referred to this demand in their seventeen demands at the residence of Sardar Sant Singh in 1931, which were submitted to Gandhi Mahatma on

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<sup>288</sup> *The Panj Darya*, May, 1943: *Azad Punjab Keon?* (Sikh Rajniti).

<sup>289</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 243.

<sup>290</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1943, Vol. I, p. 295.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295; 1943, Vol. II, p. 300.

March 20, 1931. Second, since then no Sikh had opposed these seventeen demands. Third, the Azad Punjab Scheme was published in 1942 and by then all Sikhs had accepted it. Sardar Sant Singh rebutted the first two arguments saying that the word 'Azad Punjab' was nowhere mentioned in these demands. He said that the main emphasis was on the point that no community should dominate over others. In the language of those days it meant that the Sikhs be given that much representation in the legislature that the Muslim majority did not exceed the joint Hindu-Sikh number.<sup>292</sup> Sardar Sant Singh also contended that Master Tara Singh did not establish anything merely by saying that these seventeen demands were never opposed. About the third point, Sardar Sant Singh said that the Scheme had rather caused disunity in the Sikh world. Sardar Sant Singh said: "I have four main objections against the Scheme". In the first instance, the proponents of the Scheme were not clear about the boundary of the new state. If it were accepted, the area irrigated by three rivers was to be assigned to it. Did Master Tara Singh not know that proposals were afoot to add Ambala division to Delhi? If it happened, the Azad Punjab would fall like a sack without contents. In that case the condition of Hindus and Sikhs of the Azad Punjab and areas outside it would become worse. Secondly, he said that as per Azad Punjab Scheme, the important Sikh shrines like *Nankana Sahib* and *Panja Sahib* would fall outside of the Punjab boundary and the Scheme would become a painful proposition. Thirdly, he said that the Sikhs were nearer to the Hindus than the Muslims. Therefore, they would do well to remain in the mainstream of nationalism and defend their position. Fourthly, he maintained that this Scheme compelled the Sikhs to concede and recognize Pakistan. "We are conceding Pakistan only because something falls to our share also". Sardar Sant Singh alleged that this Scheme admitted the division of India. He asked the Sikhs to beware of the Pakistan proponents and the British, because both were out to destroy the Sikhs. He affirmed that in the face of such dangers the salvation of Sikhs lay only in allying with the nationalist forces and not in advocating such Scheme.<sup>293</sup> During 1942-43, the Azad Punjab Scheme evoked strong reaction from the congressite and communist Sikhs and the Hindu leaders. They dubbed it communal, anti-Hindu, anti-national, reactionary, and even opportunistic. The Sikhs of the

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<sup>292</sup> *The Panj Darya*, September, 1943.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*

Rawalpindi division dubbed it as 'suicidal' and Master Tara Singh as 'Pakistani' and 'an agent of British imperialism'.<sup>294</sup> The Azad Punjab Scheme of the Akali Dal was not taken seriously by other Indian Political leaders.<sup>295</sup>

Sardar Sant Singh made another very trenchant attack on the Scheme at the Sikh-Hindu *Milap* Conference held at Lahore on March 18, 1944. In his presidential address at this Conference, Sardar Sant Singh said that culturally, spiritually, historically and politically the Sikhs and Hindus were one.<sup>296</sup> The Scheme, therefore, became the centre of politics in the Sikh world. The proponents and the opponents were very much exercised over the whole issue, although the proponents seemed to carry more weight in the last analysis. It was estimated that in the year 1943 alone about fifty conferences were held all over the country in favor of the Scheme and appropriate resolutions were also passed. The Congress was not well inclined towards this Scheme. The secular outlook of the Congress apart, it also did not appreciate the cooperation of the Sikhs with the Government on the issue of recruitment. It also seemed to have thought that an understanding with the Muslim League might result in the settlement of the Sikh problem as well. The Muslim League also was naturally averse to this Scheme. The British were not in a position to pay more attention to this problem as they were fully engaged in the War. The Sikhs, therefore, could not achieve anything as a result of this Scheme except that they were able to make good propaganda about their cause.<sup>297</sup>

It was at this stage that they were confronted by the likely dangers of a plan set afloat by a very important member of the Congress party, called the C.R. Formula. In order to solve the political problem of the country, the author of the 'Sporting Offer' came out with another Scheme called the C.R. Formula. This formula read: "...after the termination of War, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants, held on the basis

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<sup>294</sup> Indu Banga "Crisis of Sikh Politics", *Sikh History and Religion*, 242.

<sup>295</sup> Rajiv A. Kapur, *Sikh Separation: The Politics of Faith*, Vikas, New Delhi, 1987, p.206.

<sup>296</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. I, pp. 197-98. At this Conference Sant Nidhan Singh Alam said, "Sikhs are Hindus and Hindus are Sikhs. Atma Singh Namdhari said that Hindus were the recruiting ground of the Sikh martyrs. *Ibid.*

<sup>297</sup> Harbans Singh (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. I, Punjabi University, Patiala.

of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise, shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decides in favour of forming a sovereign state separate from Hindustan, such a decision shall be given effect from to without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either state".<sup>298</sup> This was a suggestion from private member of the Congress but the Sikhs could not ignore it because its author had the approval of Gandhi. That was what the Sikhs always feared.<sup>299</sup> Unmindful of the Lahore Resolution and in keeping with its attitude towards the Sikhs displayed in the Lucknow Pact, the Nehru Report, etc. the Congress ignored the Sikhs as if they existed nowhere. Indeed, formula came as a great blow to the Sikhs. The Sikhs, except the Nagoke group, condemned the C.R. Proposal which was a flagrant violation of the Congress Resolution of 1929. On July 14, 1944, a joint statement signed by Sardar Santokh Singh, M.L.A., Sardar Harnam Singh, President, All India Sikh League, Sardar Jogendra Singh and others denounced this formula and asked how could Gandhi make such an offer in the face of the definite assurance given by the Congress to the Sikhs that it would not be a party to any communal settlement which did not give satisfaction to the Sikhs.<sup>300</sup> The Sikhs characterized the C.R. Formula as 'betrayal';<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> A.C. Bannerjee, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, Calcutta, 1965, p. 83. The formula was based on discussion which C. Rajagopalachari had with Gandhiji in February, 1943: Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 426).

<sup>299</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.3.1942, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-42. First danger in this respect appeared in 1940 when Gandhiji observed in his paper Harijan, "Pakistan cannot be worse than foreign domination". (P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.5.1940, *op.cit.*). Second danger appeared on May 2, 1942 when Mr. Rajagopalachari moved a motion at the Allahabad session of the All-India Congress Committee with a view to making possible the formation of a National Government. The motion said, "it has become necessary to ... acknowledge Muslim League's claim for separation, should the same be persisted in when the time comes for framing a constitution for India". (A.C. Bannerjee, *op.cit.*, pp. 182-83). This was, however, rejected by an over-whelming majority (120 to 15) (Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, p. 336). However, the President of the Congress still confirmed in a letter to Dr. Abdul Latif, who was working on the Scheme of Pakistan, that Jagat Narain Lal's resolution did not affect the position contained in the Delhi resolution recognizing the right of territorial units to self-determination, which remained intact and was not disturbed or discounted by the Allahabad resolution opposing Pakistan (Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, 346).

<sup>300</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 5.

<sup>301</sup> *The Tribune*, August 4, 1944.

The Congress Sikhs, however, supported this Scheme. On September 11, 1944 in a meeting of the nationalist Sikhs held at Amritsar, the C.R. Formula was approved. Speaking at the Conference, Sarmukh Singh Jhabal praised the C.R. Formula which recognized the right of self-determination of the Muslims. He criticized the Azad Punjab Scheme which meant disunity.<sup>302</sup> S. Amar Singh Jhabal said that it was a pity that those who had no hesitation in declaring their faith in Amery's assurance did not want to accept the assurance given to them by Mahatma Gandhi. Sardar Amar Singh Jhabal said that they would not be frightened by the *Hukamnamas* issued by Master Tara Singh and others against the Nationalist Sikhs and they did not care if they were called atheists or non-Sikhs.<sup>303</sup> Another nationalist organization, the Sikh Youth League, also held a meeting on October 15, 1944. In his presidential remarks Sardar Gurmukh Singh Jhabal criticized the Akalis vis-à-vis the C.R. Formula. He maintained that they were misleading the *Panth*.<sup>304</sup>

The Akalis were, however, not taken in by this flush of doctrinal sentimentality of the nationalist Sikhs. For them this formula was a red rag which threatened to seal the fate of the Sikhs as an independent political identity. Master Tara Singh who had gone into political exile since March 1944 as a result of the defeat of the *Akali* candidate on the Peshawar seat, which was played up as a verdict against the Akalis, then returned to active politics in the face of the danger heralded by the C.R. Formula. An All Sikh Parties Conference was held at Lahore on August 1, 1944. The Conference was held behind closed doors. It condemned the C.R. Formula. Sardar Baldev Singh, who presided over the Conference, said that the formula was detrimental to the interests of the Sikhs and that the Sikhs did not want Mahatma Gandhi to settle their problems. They, however, still expected that they would not be ignored in the matter of any communal settlement.<sup>305</sup> It was decided to observe August 3 as a 'protest day' against this Formula.<sup>306</sup> In a meeting

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<sup>302</sup> *Jang-i-Azadi*, 18.9.1944.

<sup>303</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II., p. 215-216.

<sup>304</sup> *The Rayast*, 16.10.1944.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>306</sup> *The Tribune*, 2.8.1944.

held on August 3, 1944, the Shiromani Akali Dal also criticized it and called it a betrayal of the Sikhs.<sup>307</sup>

In the All Sikh Parties Conference held at Amritsar on August 20, 1944. The general mood was one of 'exasperation and anguish'.<sup>308</sup> Gyani Sher Singh moved a resolution condemning and rejecting the Formula. He said that under this Scheme in the area consisting of six districts of N.W.F.P., eight districts of Sind and seventeen districts of Punjab the Muslim population would be 76 per cent and the remaining 24 per cent non-Muslims, mostly in rural areas, would be under the thumb of 76 per cent Muslims. His apprehension was that if the borderline districts or *talukas* or *tehsils* were to be allowed Amritsar might also go into Pakistan because depressed classes might join with 46 per cent Muslims in the two district *Tehsils* of Ajnala, Nakodar, Zira, Batala and Shakargarh, and go into Pakistan on account of the Muslim majority. This would result in giving away two-third of the Punjab to Pakistan.<sup>309</sup> He declared that the Sikhs must have equal rights and they could not be placed under any body's domination. If a common rule of communities was not possible in India the Sikhs would also like to see their own flag flying somewhere in their own territory.<sup>310</sup> Sardar Santokh Singh, leader of opposition in the Punjab Assembly, seconded the above resolution and said that the Sikhs would fight to the last man against the establishment of Pakistan. The Sikhs had always stood for nationalism and suffered for India's integrity. But no one, not even ten Gandhis, had a right to barter away the Sikhs. Sardar Ujjal Singh said that if Mr. Jinnah's demand was conceded he would then ask for a corridor, after which India would acquire the fate of Balkans and for the defense of that corridor then perhaps the British soldiers might be required. Leaders like Kapoor Singh, M.L.A., were still of the opinion that the Sikhs should not give their verdict and should place their point of view before Mahatma Gandhi

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<sup>307</sup> *The Khalsa*, 13.8.1944

<sup>308</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics", *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 248.

<sup>309</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol.II p. 213. it was felt that under the C.R. Formula sixteen lakh Sikhs would go to Pakistan and twenty lakhs to the Hindus territory. And if, according to Mr. Corbett's proposal, Ambala division were added to India, then all Sikhs would go to Pakistan. *The Khalsa Samachar*, 2.11.1944.

<sup>310</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 213.

to whom they should represent their case.<sup>311</sup> Through an amendment, the Azad Punjab was turned into a demand for an independent Sikh State.<sup>312</sup> Gyani Kartar Singh, however, did not agree with this view. He said that the C.R. Formula was dangerous and the Sikhs should untidily oppose it. He said that the Sikh state was the only solution left to the Sikhs then. The Sikhs favored the division of India in order to save the *Panth*. He said that this was the time to oppose Pakistan. The Sikhs had suffered because in the past they had always gone to Gandhi, but the latter was always concerned with appeasing M.A. Jinnah. He said that this should be stopped then. On September 1, 1944 Gyani Sher Singh said at Lahore that if Mahatma Gandhi and M.A. Jinnah finally agreed on the division of the country into Hindu and Muslim India the Sikhs would demand the creation of an independent and sovereign Sikh State.<sup>313</sup> On September 5, 1944, Master Tara Singh told the press representatives that the Rajaji-Gandhi formula tended to divide the Sikh community so as to throw them under Muslim and Hindu rule. This would be a death blow to the political status of the Sikhs. They could not agree to it. In a resolution passed in its meeting of August 13, 1944, the Chief Khalsa Diwan also condemned the formula.<sup>314</sup> The Gandhi-Jinnah talks however, failed. But the Sikhs felt that the danger was still not completely over.<sup>315</sup> Many a Conference was held by the Sikhs to condemn this formula. Presiding over the Akali Conference held at Mandi Bahaudin, District Gujrat, on March 24, 1945 Master Tara Singh condemned it. He proposed that in India-both at the Centre and in the Provinces-governments on the pattern of Switzerland should be created in which no community should be able to dominate others.<sup>316</sup>

To clarify their own doubts, the Sikh leaders had correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi on this issue. Mahatma Gandhi assured Master Tara Singh that nothing would be

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<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 213-14.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.210-15.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214-15.

<sup>314</sup> *The Khalsa*, 20.8.1944.

<sup>315</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.10.1944, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/10-44.

<sup>316</sup> *The Sant Sipahi* (Gurmukhi Monthly, Amritsar), April, 1945 (Hereafter referred to as the Sant Sipahi), also Jaswant Singh (Ed.), *Master Tara Singh.*, p. 155, See also, *The Akali*, 28.3.1945 and 29.3.1945.

finalized without their consent.<sup>317</sup> Sardar Durlab Singh also in his letter dated November 12, 1944 wrote to Gandhi that Mr. Jagat Narain Lal's resolution<sup>318</sup> clearly stated that the Congress would be no party to the vivisection of the country. "Is it not a fact that Rajaji's proposals run counter to that resolution?"<sup>319</sup> In his reply to Durlab Singh, Gandhi stated: "Maulana Sahib explained the implications of the Jagat Narain Lal's resolution which pleased me. But supposing that it is inconsistent with the Rajajji formula and the Congress accepts the latter, there is nothing to prevent the Congress from rescinding the resolution".<sup>320</sup> This reply was quite unambiguous and the Sikhs could not fail to understand its implications. Presiding over the *Akali* Jubilee Conference at Jandiala, district Jullundur, on November 25, 1944, Sardar Ishar Singh Majhail blamed the British Government for this political impasse in the country. He said that the arrogant attitude adopted by the Government since 1942 had greatly disappointed the Indians. The C.R. Formula, he said, was a symptom of this sense of frustration. It strengthened the hands of Pakistan proponents and hit hard those countrymen who stood for *Akhand Hindustan*.<sup>321</sup> In their memorandum to the Sapru Committee also the Sikhs opposed it. They maintained that tended to divide Sikhs into almost two equal parts, each going into two independent sovereign states, and as such it was even worse than Pakistan, because in the latter case they could at least remain compact and strive together. The Sikhs came to realize that even the Azad Punjab Scheme could not protect them, because the Sikhs falling in either of the sovereign territory of Pakistan or Hindustan would be slaves to the Muslims or the Hindus respectively. It was at this stage that the Sikhs gave a new orientation to their Scheme of the Azad Punjab and metamorphosed it into the Azad Sikh State. Hence, one sharp result of the C.R. Formula was the demand for the Azad Sikh State by the Sikhs. It was different in form and content from the Azad Punjab Scheme. This demand was "not just a counter-blast to Pakistan, as is alleged, for there is no condition attaching to its fulfillment". The Sikhs could not grow as a nation in accordance with their historical traditions, their inner urges and their political ideals, so long as they had laying over them

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<sup>317</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II., p. 213.

<sup>318</sup> All India Congress Committee's Allahabad Resolution dated 2.5.1942 (Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *op.cit.*, p. 336).

<sup>319</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 221.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 222, Gandhiji's letter dated 14.11.1944.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 1944, Vol. II, pp. 222-223.

the burden of any majority-Muslim or Hindu-whose weaker partners they would in any case have to be, in a larger non-Sikh majority state. So Pakistan or *Akhand Hindustan*, a federation or confederation, whatever shape the India of the future was going to take place, the Sikhs could not visualize themselves in it in any political situation except one of being organized in a state of their own.<sup>322</sup> Again in Pakistan the Sikhs could not hope to be anything better than fellahs. On the other hand, the undivided India with supremacy of the Hindus also did not suit them. That was why both the Hindus and the Muslims had equally been opposed to the idea of Azad Punjab.<sup>323</sup> Master Tara Singh felt that the Congress was prepared to accept Pakistan so that the Sikhs were permanently enslaved between India and Pakistan.<sup>324</sup> This, therefore, was the necessity that naturally gave birth to the idea of the Sikh State which hereafter continued to influence, in one way or the other, the landscape of the Sikh politics under various nomenclatures like the Azad Punjab, the Azad Sikh State, the *Khalistan*, etc. In their parleys with Mr. Cripps the Sikhs were contented with the redistribution of the Punjab districts so as to bring in the Azad Punjab in which all communities were to be free since, on account of their numerical placement, no one could dominate over others. Now, however, they were clear in their minds that nothing short of a Sikh State could help them. One thing was, however, still there. The Sikhs had proceeded from the premise that the Sikh State was not conditional on any political contingency, yet time and again they betrayed the thinking that they insisted on the Sikh State if Pakistan were conceded. Sardar Pritam Singh, President, Shiromani Akali Dal, said at the All India *Akali* Conference, Lahore on October 14, 1944:

The Sikhs were opposed to the establishment of Pakistan and they could not tolerate India's vivisection. But if India was to be divided and cut into pieces, the Sikhs must have a state and they must be given a homeland on the basis of the land then in their possession and their political importance.<sup>325</sup>

And yet the Sikhs did not pass the resolution regarding the Sikh state as they wanted to keep the door open for negotiations. In this Conference Master Tara Singh also

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<sup>322</sup> Gurbachan Singh, Lal Singh, *The Idea of the Sikh State*, Lahore, 1946, pp. 4-5.

<sup>323</sup> Amar Singh Dosanjh, *Sikh State* (Urdu), Amritsar, n.d., pp. 23-29.

<sup>324</sup> Tara Singh (Master), *Meri Yad*, *op.cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>325</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II., p. 218.

said that if Pakistan was given to the Muslims, who were then demanding 50 per cent representation in Pakistan, the Sikhs would not mind if they gave them 33 per cent representation along with similar 33 per cent representation to the Hindus.<sup>326</sup> This was rather strange assertion but the Sikh leaders appeared to have said so only to express their opposition to the idea of Pakistan.

On November 24, 1944, Mr. M.A. Jinnah told a Sikh deputation at Lahore that they might admit or not, but Pakistan was coming and no one could stop it. But he wondered why, instead of opposing Pakistan, they did not ask for *Khalistan*.<sup>327</sup> Concluding his Presidential speech at the *Akali* Jubilee Conference, held at Jandiala on November 25, 1944 Sardar Ishar Singh Majhail said: "One thing is clear and that is, we will never accept Pakistan and will fight to the finish".<sup>328</sup> Of course, there was no mention of the Sikh State in his address. It has, however, to be admitted that by this time the Sikhs had definitely taken a mental note of Pakistan and knowing their political, geographical and demographic limitations, they had started thinking in terms of partition and even the transfer of population.<sup>329</sup> In the memorandum, submitted to the Sapru Committee on February 22, 1945, the Sikh leaders<sup>330</sup> stated:

We have been asked as to whether we have any view to express in case the Punjab Scheme is imposed on us by an authority whose power we can't hope to challenge successfully and which may be British Government, or the agreed will of the Hindus and Muslims of India. In that case, we would insist on the creation of a separate Sikh State which should include the substantial majority of the Sikh population and their important sacred shrines and historic *Gurdwaras* and places with provision for the transfer and exchange of population.<sup>331</sup>

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, 1944, Vol. II., p. 219.

<sup>327</sup> *The Tribune*, 25.11.1944.

<sup>328</sup> *The Akali*, 26.11.1944.

<sup>329</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. V, London, 1974, Document No. 120 (Private and Secret letter dated 29.11.1944 from Mr. Wavell, The Viceroy of India to Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India), p. 253.

<sup>330</sup> Harnam Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 84. the signatories comprised eighteen Sikh M.L.A.s also. All prominent leaders like Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh, Sardar Sampuran Singh, Rai Bahadur Sardar Basakha Singh, Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh, Sardar Jogendra Singh Mann, Sardar Santokh Singh, Ishar Singh Majhail and Sardar Jagjit Singh Mann signed it.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Henceforth, the Sikhs were reconciled with the eventuality of the idea of partition of the province as also the exchange of population. The Sikh state was their answer to the challenge of Pakistan. Besides, the Sapru Committee submitted its report on April 8, 1945. It opposed Pakistan. It also recommended the constitution of a minority commission. It would, *inter alia*, examine the case of the Sikhs in Punjab.<sup>332</sup> The Sikhs were not satisfied with the recommendations of the Sapru Committee. They wanted the abolition of the statutory Muslim majority in the Punjab.<sup>333</sup> They rejected these recommendations on the basis that they did not contain any solution of the Sikhs or the Punjab problem.<sup>334</sup> Presiding over the U.P. Sikh Conference, held at Cawnpore on April 29, 1945, Master Tara Singh declared that if the Hindu majority could be done away with in the centre for the sake of the Muslims why something could not be done in Punjab for the sake of the Sikhs.<sup>335</sup> The Sikhs wanted that the formula of the Sapru Committee recommended for the formation of the Central Government should be tried in Punjab also where the Government could be equally shared by the three communities.<sup>336</sup> By the beginning of 1945, the Shiromani Akali Dal clearly emerged as the 'premier organization of the Sikhs' and their 'largest party'.<sup>337</sup>

This period was, however, very crowded with events of great importance. On the international front, there was the World War II raging in full fury. The national scene was marked by Individual Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movements and constitutional developments like the August Offer, Cripps Offer and the Wavell Plan. The Sikh leadership got absorbed in these vital matters and to that extent their attention was diverted from the previous problems. Their grievances, therefore, remained un-redressed. It was in this background that the general election took place in the country in 1946. In this election in Punjab the Muslim League captured seventy-five out of the eighty-eight Muslim seats. The Congress won fifty-one seats, i.e., forty Hindus, ten Sikhs and one

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<sup>332</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.4.1945.

<sup>333</sup> *The Akali*, 17.4.1945. Statement of Master Tara Singh.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.4.1945.

<sup>335</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. I, pp. 303-04.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 304-05. Address of Sardar Mangal Singh at the Frontier Akali Conference dated 5/6.5.1945.

<sup>337</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics", *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 249.

Muslim. The Unionists bagged twenty-one seats out of which thirteen were Muslims.<sup>338</sup> The Communists were wiped out of the Punjab Legislature. The result left no one in doubt about the mind of the Punjab Muslim voters who had clearly registered their will in favor of the Muslim League that had fought the election on the plank of Pakistan. It was in the face of this obvious danger that the Akalis and the Congress decided to join hands with the Unionists in the formation of the Punjab Ministry to keep the Muslim League at bay. The Akalis had many grievances against the Unionists but they could not support the Muslim League at any cost, although leaders like Gyani Kartar Singh were not entirely averse to such an idea.<sup>339</sup> However, *Akali-Muslim League* coalition was a self-contradictory proposition in view of the Sikh opposition to the demand of Pakistan and the opposition of the Muslim League to the idea of a Sikh State. Thus, as in the previous Unionist Ministry, the Akalis again became a partner in the New Khizr Ministry in 1946.<sup>340</sup> It could not have come about without their support. This period was very fateful in the history of the country as well as the Punjab. The principle of Pakistan had been conceded in the Cripps Proposals. The over-whelming Muslim vote to the Muslim League made the Punjab Muslim League all the more effective and demanding. The attention of the new ministry throughout remained engaged in the constitutional problems of the country. The Akalis, therefore, could not gain anything by joining the ministry. A ray of hope dawning with the Sikandar-Baldev Pact also proved illusory, chiefly due to the premature death of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan. Moreover, they were always handicapped by the fact that the Unionist Muslims were Muslims first and anything else afterwards. They were not nationalists. The premiers Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Khizr Hayat Khan well-intentioned but they could not really go against the tide. The World War II and the utility of the Sikhs in that context had inclined the Unionist Ministry towards the Akalis. After the War was over, their utility was also over. Khizr Hayat Khan tried to use them against the Muslim League. The post-war developments were rooted in the problems besetting the war period.

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<sup>338</sup> File No. 51/3-46, G.O.I., *Home Political*, Report No. 247, dated 12.3.1946. (Weekly Report supplied by the Information Bureau, Government of India, to the S.O.S.). Even out of this small number some Unionist Muslims defected from their party after some time and the strength of the Muslim League rose to seventy-nine Menon, V.P., *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 230).

<sup>339</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.3.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-46, also *The Tribune*, 3.3.1946 and 6.3.1946.

<sup>340</sup> *The Tribune*, 6.3.1946.

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## CHAPTER - VI

### POST-WAR POLITICS

The post-war development towards full self-government was initiated by the Viceroy Lord Wavell's broadcast on June 14, 1945 proposing a new Executive Council to be entirely Indian except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief.<sup>1</sup> The Shimla Conference and the subsequent Wavell Proposals during June 25- July 14, 1945 gave another occasion to the Sikhs and the Muslim League to highlight their respective demands. Master Tara Singh was recognised as the Sikhs spokesman. To discuss this Scheme with the Indian leaders, the Viceroy called a Conference at Shimla on June 25, 1945. Master Tara Singh was invited on behalf of the Sikh community. He was accompanied by Gyani Kartar Singh and Sardar Udham Singh Nagoke. The Sikhs were happy at their recognition as an important minority in the Punjab.<sup>2</sup> As usual, the Congress and the League were given more importance in this Conference also. Their nominees were invited in larger number as compared to other parties.<sup>3</sup> Lord Wavell admitted that Shimla Conference was 'not a final solution of India's complex problems.'<sup>4</sup> Master Tara Singh openly opposed the Pakistan demand and stood for an independent Sikh State<sup>5</sup>

After some deliberations, on June 29, Lord Wavell prorogued the Shimla Conference till July 14. All parties were asked to give panels of names out of which the Viceroy was to select the names for the constitution of the Executive Council. For this purpose, the Congress and the Muslim League were to submit 8-10 names each: *Harijans* four, Unionists three, Christians three and Sikhs three. It was made clear by the Viceroy to Mr. M.A. Jinnah that it was not necessary that the Muslim representatives would be

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<sup>1</sup> Baljit Singh, *The Elections and Politicisation in the Punjab (1945-47)*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, G.N.D. University, Amritsar, 2008, p.247.

<sup>2</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.6.1945, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-45.

<sup>3</sup> Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement*, London, 1945, p. 250.

<sup>4</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. I, 239.

<sup>5</sup> Sukhmani Bal Riar, *The Politics of The Sikhs (1940-47)*, Unistar, Chandigarh, 2006, p. 70.

picked up only out of the list submitted by Mr. M.A. Jinnah.<sup>6</sup> Master Tara Singh also made it clear that though the Sikhs had much in common with the Congress he must claim a separate representation.<sup>7</sup> The Conference resumed its business at Shimla on July 6, 1945.<sup>8</sup> The Sikhs prepared a list of three names to be submitted to the Viceroy. They were Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh and Partap Singh Kairon.<sup>9</sup> Negotiations were also opened with the Congress for a common Sikh name. Sardar Mangal Singh acted as intermediary in this respect. In consultation with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad he was able to get the name of Master Tara Singh approved,<sup>10</sup> which the Viceroy did not like. He wrote to the Secretary of State for India that, no doubt, Tara Singh was the acknowledged Sikh leader but his utility in the Council was doubtful, where they proposed to give Defence portfolio to the Sikh member.<sup>11</sup> For this purpose, the British liked better the name of Baldev Singh who, in the words of Lord Wavell had more brains than any other Sikh leader”<sup>12</sup>

However, the main concern of the Conference was the Congress and the Muslim League. Crisis developed over the demand of Mr. M.A. Jinnah that the Muslim members for the Executive Council of Viceroy should be picked up only from the list to be submitted by the Muslim League. But the Congress, as a national body representative of all Indians, wanted a share out of the Muslim quota.<sup>13</sup> Mr. M.A. Jinnah was not only prepared to give any share to the Congress out of the Muslim quota but also he was not

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<sup>6</sup> *The Tribune*, 30.6.1945.

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. V, London, 1975, Document No. 537. Telegram dated 25.6.1945 from dated Lord Wavell to Mr. Amery, p. 1156.

<sup>8</sup> *The Tribune*, 7.7.1945.

<sup>9</sup> *The Tribune*, 4.7.1945.

<sup>10</sup> Udham Singh Nagoke, *op.cit.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power.*, Document No. 582, D.O. No. 183-SC dated 9.7.1945, p. 1216. Wavell was further of the view that like most Sikhs, Tara Singh was not clever, nor had he much political sense (Wavell's letter dated 19.7.1945 to King George VI, p. 1278).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. VII, London, 1979, Document No. 493, Letter dated 22.10.1946 from Lord Wavell to King George, p. 773.

<sup>13</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol II, London, 1957, pp. 560-63.

prepared to share it even with the Unionist Muslims in the Punjab. The Viceroy refused to accede to such a demand of Mr. M.A. Jinnah.<sup>14</sup> Mian Muhammad Daultana, General Secretary, the Punjab Muslim League Considered the Simla Conference as 'a subtle move on the part of the British Government to create disruption in the Muslim ranks'<sup>15</sup> M.A. Jinnah characterised it 'a snare'.<sup>16</sup> M.A. Jinnah was emphatic about the fact that the League was the sole representative of the Muslims even as the Congress was the representative of the vast majority of Hindus, Master Tara Singh represented majority of the Sikhs and *Siva Raj* represented majority of the Scheduled Castes.<sup>17</sup> On July 14, the Viceroy ended the Conference and took upon himself the responsibility for its failure.<sup>18</sup> He demanded elections to both the Central and provincial legislatures.<sup>19</sup> The Punjab Government lifted the ban on the Punjab provincial Congress committees and district Congress Committees in the Punjab.<sup>20</sup> In a press conference at Shimla on July 15, Master Tara Singh blamed both the Congress and the Muslim League for its failure. He said that Mr. M.A. Jinnah was not prepared to accommodate even one Congress Muslim in the Muslim quota. It was not a tough problem and could have been solved by arbitration. About Pakistan, Master Tara Singh said that it was not an issue between the Congress and the Muslim League as it had hitherto been supposed. It was an issue between the Sikhs and the Muslims. Just as the Muslims could not submit to the Hindu domination so could the Sikhs not submit to the Muslim domination? He emphatically declared that he would demand the establishment of an independent Sikh State if the rest of India conceded

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<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Mansergh, *op.cit.*, Vol. V, Document No. 536, Telegram dated 25.6.1945 from Viceroy to Lord Amery, pp. 1153-54.

<sup>15</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 29.7.1945

<sup>16</sup> R. Suntharalingam, *Indian Nationalism: An Historical Analysis*, Vikas, New Delhi, 1983, p. 27.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1157 (Jinnah at the Shimla Conference).

<sup>18</sup> V.P., Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 207.

<sup>19</sup> Sukhmani Bal Riar, *The Politics of the Sikhs (1940-47)*, p. 73.

<sup>20</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 15.8.1945.

Pakistan to Muslims.<sup>21</sup> The All India Hindu Mahasabha also decided to fight the elections in the Punjab.<sup>22</sup>

## II

The War was then coming to an end and the short-term necessity of an Interim Government was no longer there. Lord Wavell paid a visit to England in order to get approval of the British Government for the long-term proposals to solve the Indian problem. He came back on September 16 and announced his Plan on September 19, which, *inter-alia*, suggested the convening of a constitution-making body as soon as possible, and also to ascertain after elections from the representatives of the Legislative Assemblies in the provinces, “Whether the Proposals contained in the 1942 declaration are acceptable or whether some alternative or modified scheme is preferable”.<sup>23</sup>

The Wavell Plan was rejected by the Sikhs at the Sixth All India Akali Conference held at Gujranwala on September 29, 1945.<sup>24</sup> Speaking at the Conference, Professor Ganga Singh said that the Plan was based on the Cripps Proposals which had already been rejected by them. Though the Sikhs rejected the Wavell Plan yet they decided to contest the forthcoming elections which were a part of the British proposals.<sup>25</sup> The Akalis decided to fight election independently of the Congress and other organizations.<sup>26</sup> Nawab of Mamdot, President, Punjab Muslim League put forth that ‘the fate of Pakistan would be decided by the Votes of Punjab Muslims’.<sup>27</sup> After all, Pakistan was to be fought back on the election-plane also. After the elections were over, the Cabinet Mission reached India to solve the Indian political problem.

The end of the World War II was followed by General Elections in England in which the Conservative Party lost power to the Labour Party in England. Lord Attlee was

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<sup>21</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. II, pp. 134-136.

<sup>22</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 16.8.1945

<sup>23</sup> V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, pp. 218-19.

<sup>24</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. II, p. 168.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169; 22.

<sup>26</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 250.

<sup>27</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 22.8.1945.

the new Prime Minister. On February 19, 1946 Lord Pethic-Lawrance, the new Secretary of State for India, announced in the House of Lords the decision of the British Government to send a mission of Cabinet Ministers to India in order to solve the Indian constitutional problem.<sup>28</sup> As soon as the elections to the provincial legislatures were over the Cabinet Mission reached India to solve the Indian political problem Major Short also accompanied the Mission. He had earned the reputation of being a friend and adviser of the Sikhs. This augured well for the Sikhs.<sup>29</sup> But the inclusion of Sir Cripps in the Mission, on the other hand, made the Sikhs fear lest the results of 1942 should be repeated. The Mission spent nearly five weeks in discussion with the Indian leaders.<sup>30</sup> This was done to elicit their views on the sort of constitution they desired for India: the main purpose was to ascertain their reactions to the Muslim demand for Pakistan.<sup>31</sup> He repeated the demand of *Khalistan* at the Shimla Conference. He argued said that it was futile to say that the Sikhs did not qualify for the Sikh state because they were nowhere in majority. He said that if the Jews with 10 per cent population in Palestine could be given a homeland it could as well be created for the Sikhs in the Punjab. The Government considered the policy to pursue the 'Pakistan doctrine' as an alarming menace to peace in the Punjab. The Simla Conference failed due to Jinnah's insistence.<sup>32</sup> The Akalis and the Muslim League both fought the elections of 1946 on the major issue of Pakistan.<sup>33</sup> Both got convincing success. In spite of its being the single largest party, the Muslim League was outmaneuvered by its rivals and a Unionist-Congress-Akali coalition ministry was

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<sup>28</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, p. 571.

<sup>29</sup> Allen Campbell, Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, London, 1951, p. 136, See also, Penderal Moon, *Divide and Quit*, OUP, p. 43.

<sup>30</sup> Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, Ministry of Broadcasting and Information, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 463-64.

<sup>31</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of Sikhs*, Vol. II, OUP, Delhi, 1991, p. 257.

<sup>32</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics (1940-47)", *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, (ed. Joseph T.O' Connell et al) Manohar, New Delhi, 1990,p.249.

<sup>33</sup> The Akali manifesto did not specifically say much about a Sikh State. Its main emphasis was on opposition to Pakistan (Gujranwala Akali Conference dated 29.9.1945. *The Tribune*, 1.10.1945). See also *Mitra Register*, 1945, Vol. II, pp. 165-66.

formed in Punjab.<sup>34</sup> In fact, the Akali were divided on the issue of support to the Unionist or the Muslim League. Giyani Kartar Singh favoured the Muslim League and Mohan Singh Nagoke sided with the Congress.<sup>35</sup> The Governor verified the claim of the Unionist and invited Malik Khizr Hayat Khan to form a Ministry.<sup>36</sup>

## I

The joining of the Punjab Ministry by the Akalis as partners with the Congress and the Unionists did not mean their *rapprochement* with the Congress. It only happened as the Muslim League failed to satisfy the Sikhs on the vexed question of Pakistan. The Sikh leaders like Master Tara Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh still suspected the Congress to be a Hindu organization that could not be trusted to support their interests.<sup>37</sup> Mulana Abul Kalam Azad supported the Congress coalition with the Unionists. Mahatma Gandhi also sided with Azad. However, Jawaharlal Nehru considered coalition with the Muslim League<sup>38</sup> The demand for a Sikh State still continued to be voiced through various meetings.<sup>39</sup> The Akalis decided to oppose the demand of Pakistan with their ‘concerted Panthic action’.<sup>40</sup> “The Sikh Panth would resist Pakistan to the last man”, declared Ishar Singh Majhail while unfiring the *nishan* Sahib in the presence of over 1 lakh people.<sup>41</sup> In the elections of 1946, the Akalis consolidated their position. The Muslim League surged ahead with 75 seats out of 86 seats. The Unionists were reduced to 20 seats as against 90 in 1937. However, they could cobble together a Coalition Ministry.<sup>42</sup> The Sikhs joined the ministry in 1946, as they did in 1942, so that they might be in a better

<sup>34</sup> Baljit Singh, *The Elections and Politicisation*, Ch. III.

<sup>35</sup> Raghubir Singh, *Akali Movement (1925-1947)*, Osmoson, New Delhi, p.102.

<sup>36</sup> Nicholes Mansergh (ed), *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 1139

<sup>37</sup> M.S. Sahni, *The Sikh Politics (1927-47)*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1980, p. 286.

<sup>38</sup> Mulana A.K. Azad, *India Wins Freedom* Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 138-39.

<sup>39</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.3.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-46.

<sup>40</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p.249.

<sup>41</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 1.2.1946; See also, Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-1947”, *Sikh History and Religion*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>42</sup> Baljit Singh, *The Elections and Politicisation in the Punjab (1945-47)*, pp. 199-200.

position to oppose Pakistan. In February, 1946 the Sikh leaders met under the Presidentship of Master Tara Singh and passed a resolution. It demanded the splitting of the existing province of Punjab. With its unnatural boundaries so as to constitute a separate autonomous Sikh State in these areas of the Central, Northern, eastern and South-Eastern Punjab in which the overwhelming part of the Sikh population was concentrated and which, because of the property in it being mostly that of the Sikhs and its general character being distinctly Sikh, was also the *de facto* Sikh Homeland.<sup>43</sup> On March 7, 1946, The Punjab Muslim League had organised a *hartal* throughout the Punjab. on March 9<sup>th</sup> the League celebrated 'a Traitors Day'.<sup>44</sup> On March 10, about 70,000 people attended the Muslim League meeting where the coalition Ministry was attacked.<sup>45</sup>

The Congressite Sikhs as usual took a stand against that of the Akalis. Leaders like Amar Singh Jhabal were critical of Master Tara Singh and his friends felt that by opposing Mahatma Gandhi, the Akalis were strengthening the hands of British Imperialism.<sup>46</sup> On March 27, 1946, in a meeting attended by leaders like Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Partap Singh Kairon, Gopal Singh Qaumi, Gurmukh Singh Musafir and Nidhan Singh Alam they passed a resolution condemning the idea of the Sikh State. The Central Akali Dal, the traditional adversary of the Shiromani Akali Dal, was not in favour of the partition of the province. The Dal maintained that if such a thing was to be done the Punjab must go to the Sikhs.<sup>47</sup> It was strange that the Central Akali Dal still did not cooperate with the Akalis although their demand of Punjab for the Sikhs was the same as that of the Azad Sikh State.

The Cabinet Mission which came on 23 March 1946 could not solve the Punjab problem. The Akali Dal in April 1846 submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission

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<sup>43</sup> Ajit Singh, Sarhadi, *Punjabi Suba*, Delhi, 1970, p. 101.

<sup>44</sup> Sukhmani Bal Riar, *The Politics of Sikhs 1940-47*, 89. See also, Sumit Sarkar, (ed.) *Towards Freedom: Documents on the Movement for Independence in India*, 1946, Part I, p. 283.

<sup>45</sup> *Home Political*, File No. 18/3/46-Poll (I).

<sup>46</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1944, Vol. II, p. 215.

<sup>47</sup> *The Tribune*, 30.3.1946; 2.4.1946.

and opposed Pakistan in ‘unequivocal’ terms. Communal tension was rising. There were forebodings of civil war from the Punjab, where the Sikhs feared Muslims domination in any form of Pakistan.<sup>48</sup> The Cabinet Mission met at Shimla on May 5, 1946 with delegates from the Congress and Muslim League.<sup>49</sup> On April 5, 1946 the Akali leaders Master Tara Singh, Harnam Singh, Advocate, Baldev Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh met the Cabinet Mission. They put their views separately.<sup>50</sup> The Mission wished particularly to know whether, if it were given the choice, the Sikh community would prefer the transfer of power to a single body, or to more than one body; if power were to be transferred to two bodies, which of them would the Sikh community wish to join; and if such a thing were practicable and could be arranged, would the Sikhs wish to have a State of their own?<sup>51</sup> The four leaders came out with the views which were basically the same, although they were worded differently. They were united in their opposition to the proposition of Pakistan. Master Tara Singh favoured a united India. If a division was to come, then the Sikhs stood for an independent Sikh State with the right to federate either with India or with Pakistan.<sup>52</sup> Gyani Kartar Singh straight away wanted a Province for the Sikhs. Harnam Singh stood for a united India. He advocated increased representation of the Sikhs in the proposed constitution-making body and pleaded for a separate one for Sikhs if there were to be more than one constitution-making body.<sup>53</sup> Baldev Singh favoured a united India with safeguards for minorities in the form of weighted communal proportions in the legislatures. He also put forth a scheme of “*Khalistan*”.<sup>54</sup> The Sikhs definitely stood for improvement in their position. They seemed to have told the Mission that no sanctity was attached to the so-called rule that no majority must be turned into minority. They wanted this to happen in the Punjab because they maintained that in no

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<sup>48</sup> Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India, (1936-1947)*, OUP, New Delhi, 1983, p. 152.

<sup>49</sup> Mitra Register, 1946, Vol. I, p. 54.

<sup>50</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 244.

<sup>51</sup> *The Tribune*, 6.4.1946, See also V.P. Menon, V.P., p. 242.

<sup>52</sup> *Times of India*, 6-4-1946.

<sup>53</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India.*, p. 242-43.

<sup>54</sup> Giani Lal Singh, *The Idea of Sikh State*, p. 20

other province there were three communities occupying the same position as they did in the Punjab. They said that they occupied a distinguished position in many respects and they should not be kept in a position of everlasting subjugation. They told the pressmen that if in Bengal Muslim majority could be reduced to minority in order to provide for European interests why could not the same thing be done in the Punjab for providing protection to the Sikhs?<sup>55</sup> The Cabinet Mission, however, took no notice of *Sikhistan*, *Azad Punjab* or *Khalistan* and treated the idea, as well as the Sikhs' exaggerated claim to weight-age, as something that had been put up by the Indian National Congress to thwart Muslim aspirations.<sup>56</sup> Such an outlook is further confirmed by the Amritsar Statement of April 15 by Master Tara Singh in which he said that the Sikhs could not live under the domination of any one and that the Cabinet Mission should consider the Punjab problem with reference to the Sikhs only. He again emphasized that the Sikhs wanted a united India and a common Government. But if Pakistan was conceded *Khalistan* must also be there.<sup>57</sup> Master Tara Singh met M.A. Jinnah and asked the latter if the Sikhs in the state of Pakistan would have the right of cession from Pakistan. M.A. Jinnah refused and the talks failed.<sup>58</sup> Baldev Singh also said in a statement that areas from Ravi to Meerut, containing Jullundur, Ambala, Meerut and Agra divisions should be merged and a *Jattastan* be created.<sup>59</sup> The Sikh leaders pleaded their case forcefully. They mustered all types of arguments to impress the Cabinet Mission with the genuineness of their demands. But it looked that the Mission ignored them because the authorities did not want to displease the Muslims for the sake of the Sikhs who generally went with the Congress.

Before the Mission started for India, Lord Attlee had declared in the British Government were very mindful of the rights of the minorities but the latter would not be

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<sup>55</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 199-200.

<sup>56</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 259.

<sup>57</sup> *The Tribune*, 16.4.1946. Also, Nicholas Mansergh, (Ed.), *Transfer of Power.*, Vol. VIII, London, 1979, p. 277 (Letter from S.O.S. to the British Prime Minister, conveying the report of parleys with the Sikh leaders in India).

<sup>58</sup> Jaspreet Walia, *Master Tara Singh and Sikh Politics (1920-1947)*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, G.N.D. University, Amritsar, 2005, p. 123.

<sup>59</sup> *The Tribune*, 13.5.1946.

allowed to place a veto on the advance of the majority.<sup>60</sup> Mr. M.A. Jinnah strongly reacted against this statement. He took his stand on the British Government's declaration of August 1940 that the British Government "could not contemplate transfer of their responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life" and stated that the adoption of the Prime Minister's declaration of March 15<sup>th</sup> on minorities would be "a flagrant breach history of the British rule in India".<sup>61</sup> On May 12, 1946 the Muslim League submitted a memorandum to the Mission in which they, inter-alia, demanded that six Muslim provinces (Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal and Assam) should be grouped in one group and should deal with all other matters except Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. There was to be a separate constitution-making body for the six Muslim Provinces. There was to be parity of representatives between the two groups of Provinces in the Union Executive and Legislature. No decision, legislative, executive or administrative, was to be taken by the Union in regard to any matter of controversial nature. The Constitution of Union was to contain a provision whereby Province could by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for reconsideration of the terms of Constitution and would have the liberty to secede from the Union at any time after an initial period of ten years.<sup>62</sup> Obviously, such a proposal, conceding the demand of secession, could not have been acceptable to the Congress. The Congress case was presented on April 3 by Abul Kalam Azad. It proceeded on the basis of independence and on the assumption that the future constitution would be determined by a constitution-making body. The Congress plan was that on the completion of the work of the constitution-making body, a province should have three choice: (a) to stand out of the constitution, (b) to enter the constitution by federating for the compulsory subjects like defense, communications and foreign affairs, and (c) to federate for the compulsory as well as the optional subjects.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> K.M. Ashraf, *Cabinet Mission and After*, Lahore, 1946, p. 18.

<sup>61</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.3.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-46.

<sup>62</sup> Choudhary Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, pp. 352-53.

<sup>63</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India.*, pp. 237-38.

The Shiromani Akali Dal also submitted a memorandum to the Mission. It demanded a single constitution-making body with proper representation for the Sikhs, abolition of the statutory Muslim majority in the Punjab legislature and greater representation for the Sikhs. The memorandum also said that the Sikhs had as good a claim for the establishment of a separate sovereign Sikh state as the Muslims for Pakistan. For this purpose, the Sikhs proposed that out of the existing province of the Punjab, a new province may be carved out as an additional provincial unit in the united India of the future, in such a way that all important Sikh *Gurdwaras* and shrines as also a substantial majority of the Sikh population in the existing province of the Punjab, would be included in it.<sup>64</sup> The Central Akali Dal, which had no representative character during the forties, also presented a separate memorandum on this occasion. The memorandum drew attention of the Mission to the faulty compilation of census figures which made the Muslims a majority community in the Punjab. It opposed the partition of the Punjab and reiterated the demands that had been made by the Chief Khalsa Diwan many times since the introduction of democratic institutions, viz., 33 per cent representation in the Punjab, 5 per cent in the centre and one Sikh member in the Central Cabinet. In addition to this, it also demanded 8 per cent representation in the Constituent Assembly as recommended by the Sapru Committee and a permanent 14 per cent Sikh quota in the defense services. The Central Akali Dal stood for joint electorates with reservation of seats for minorities.<sup>65</sup> Thus, when other organizations in the country, including the Akalis, had started taking a mental note of the prospects of Pakistan, the Central Akali Dal refused to accept any such possibility which had been conceded even by the Congress. It is worth mentioning, because, as in previous proposals, this time also the Congress and the League were the chief concern of the visitors. The Congress Sikhs seemed to have subordinated their own judgment to the pronouncements of the Congress, unmindful of the stakes of their own community. On April 30, addressing a Conference at Rawalpindi, the Congress Sikh leaders like Gopal Singh Qaumi, Ranjit Singh Mastana and Labh Singh Narang criticized the line of thinking of Master Tara Singh. They declared their unequivocal support for the

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<sup>64</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, p. 200-01.

<sup>65</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 258, f.n. 4.

Congress point of view.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the Ramgarhia Sikhs also in their Conference on May 8, presided over by Sarmukh Singh Chamak decided to throw in their lot with the Congress.<sup>67</sup> It looked that just as being a minority the Akalis did not trust the Muslims, the Ramgarhias also being a minority among the Sikhs did not trust the Akalis. In a memorandum submitted to the Mission the C.K.D. also opposed the creation of Pakistan.<sup>68</sup>

After discussion with Indian leaders, the Cabinet Mission presented a tentative scheme for discussion at a Conference at Shimla in an effort to find a basis of agreement between the Congress and the League. The Scheme envisaged a central government controlling defense, foreign affairs, and communications, and two sets of provinces—one consisting of predominantly Muslim, the other of predominantly non-Muslim areas—competent to deal with subjects not dealt with by the Centre. As the gulf between the two sides proved too wide to be bridged by discussion, the Cabinet Mission issued a statement on May 16, 1946, setting forth proposals based on the widest area of agreement between the two main parties.<sup>69</sup> Although the Mission recognized that the Sikhs were the third important community in India,<sup>70</sup> its proposals were really aimed at a settlement between the Muslim League and the Congress. The Mission rejected any proposal for the division of India. The statement read that the:

Setting up of a sovereign state of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan can equally, in our view, be used in favour of the exclusion of non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs. ....We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involved a radical partition of the

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<sup>66</sup> *The Tribune*, 1.5.1946.

<sup>67</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.5.1946.

<sup>68</sup> C.K.D. File No. 342.54, *op.cit.*

<sup>69</sup> Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 259.

<sup>70</sup> Statement by the Cabinet Mission to India and His Excellency the Viceroy, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1946: Maurice Gwyer, and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, p. 581.

Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces.... Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs, leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have, therefore, been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign state of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.<sup>71</sup>

The Mission suggested a three-tier confederation type of constitutional system-provinces, “groups of provinces” and a very weak centre. Of the three “groups of provinces” two were Muslim majority groups in the north-west and north-east of India. Punjab was included in the north-west Muslim majority group. No special weight-age was given to the minorities as representation was granted on the basis of the numerical strength of the communities. As part of the long-term arrangements, a Constituent Assembly was to be established for drafting a constitution. As for short-term arrangements, an Interim Government was to be formed comprising representatives of major political parties.<sup>72</sup>

Initial reaction of both Congress and the League towards the Proposals of the Mission was not unfavorable. It was felt that the Proposals were a just compromise between the conflicting demands of the major political parties and provided a reasonable chance of the transfer of power with avoidance of civil strife and its accompanying chaos and menace to life and property. But after some time, the first impression was dulled and confidence in the correctness of the initial appreciation was impaired.<sup>73</sup> In his statement of May 22, 1946, Mr. M.A. Jinnah reiterated the right to secede from the Union after ten years. He regretted that the Mission had not agreed to this demand of the Muslim League although the Congress had not serious objection to it.<sup>74</sup> The main objection of the Congress against the scheme was that the scheme left the Provisional (Central) Government weak. It also asserted that the provinces should have a choice to affirm

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 578-81.

<sup>73</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.5.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/5-46.

<sup>74</sup> Maurice Gwyer, and A. Appadorai, (Eds.), *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution*, Vol. II, pp. 586-87.

whether or not they would belong to the section in which they were placed.<sup>75</sup> But neither the League nor the Congress outrightly rejected the Scheme. Mahatma Gandhi rather welcomed it and described it as the best thing that the British could do.<sup>76</sup>

Obviously, the Sikhs were doomed. The Punjab was not only their homeland but their holy land as well, and the Punjab was in the Muslim group of provinces. The Sikhs were, therefore, the first to reject the Scheme. The Punjab Government Report relating to the period states: "Sikhs of all shades of opinion immediately rejected the Cabinet Mission's Proposals, in an anti-British vein, on the ground that they would leave them at the mercy of the Muslims".<sup>77</sup> The Working Committee of the Akali Dal, in a secret sitting on May 18, 1946 opposed the proposals and declared its intention to launch a *morcha* in order to prevent Pakistan. Babu Labh Singh wired to the Congress leaders and demanded from the Congress the implementation of the assurance given to the Sikhs in 1929. On May 19, Sardar Mangal Singh declared that the Cabinet Mission had left the Sikhs to the mercy of the Muslims and the Congress was doing nothing.<sup>78</sup> Master Tara Singh also declared that despondence, frustration, sullenness and resentment had overtaken the Sikhs.<sup>79</sup> He threatened a rebellion and said that the Sikhs would not join the Provisional Government. Gurmukh Singh Masafir said that the Sikhs had been ignored.<sup>80</sup>

Panthic M.L.A.s assembled in a meeting at the Teja Singh Samundri Hall, Amritsar, on 23 May, 1946. Resolutions expressing distress at the Mission's Proposals ignoring Sikh claims and interests were passed.<sup>81</sup> The party was pained to find that the weight-age hitherto enjoyed by the Sikhs due to their historic, political and economic importance, instead of being increased for the Constituent Assembly, was wiped out. It was further stated that the protection provided for Muslims was denied to the Sikhs in the

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 592-93.

<sup>76</sup> *The Tribune*, 27.5.1946. See also, Leonard, Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj*, London, 1962, p. 24.

<sup>77</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.5.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/5-46.

<sup>78</sup> *The Tribune*, 19.5.1946; 20.5.1946.

<sup>79</sup> *Papers relating to the Cabinet Mission Plan in India*, p. 61.

<sup>80</sup> *The Tribune*, 22.5.1946.

<sup>81</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, 24.5.1946 and 25.5.1946.

Union and Group Constituent Assemblies although the reasons given for the Muslim protection applied with greater force to the Sikhs against the Muslim majority. On May 24, Master Tara Singh, the veteran Akali leader, throwing light on the contemplated action by the Akali Party against the Cabinet Mission's Proposals, said: "We may set up a triangular *morcha* against the British Government, the Congress and the Muslim League which are going to be three major parties in the Interim Government".<sup>82</sup> Asked as to what would be the formation of their *morcha* Sardar Mangal Singh replied, "It is obvious we are not going to retain any office, big or small, either in the Province or at the Centre".<sup>83</sup>

Major Short came with the members of the Cabinet Mission. The Akalis were happy with the presence of Major Short since he was considered a specialist on the Sikh affairs.<sup>84</sup> Major Short tried to persuade the Sikhs that they would, in fact, hold the balance of power. He maintained that the Muslim League Party in the Punjab might seem hostile to them but ultimately, like the Unionists, it would be compelled to woo them. The Sikhs, however, had a strong suspicion that the Muslims were out to crush them.<sup>85</sup> They could not overlook the fact that in Section B they would have no more than four seats and the Hindus no more than nine, so that the Muslim majority of twenty-two would be able to set up a group which would give them the substance of Pakistan.<sup>86</sup> The Sikhs accused the

<sup>82</sup> *The Tribune*, 25.5.1946.

<sup>83</sup> Jag Parvesh Chander, *India Steps Forward: The Story of the Cabinet Mission in India*, Lahore, 1946, p. 207.

<sup>84</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, 45, pp.112-15.

<sup>85</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>86</sup> E.W.R. Lumby, *Transfer of Power in India*, London, 1954, p. 96. The Plan provided for election by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives to the Constituent Assembly, by the method of proportional representation with single transferable vote:

#### SECTION B

Province	General	Muslims	Sikhs	Total
Punjab	8	16	4	28
North-West Frontier Province	0	3	0	3
Sind	1	3	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>

(Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India.*, Vol. II, p. 582).

Mission of having done this to placate the Muslims.<sup>87</sup> The statement of May 16, recognized “the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims Test they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual non-Muslims majority”; but was there no anxiety among the Sikhs lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Muslim majority rule? On May 25, 1946 a big Conference was held at Lahore by the Sikhs. It was decided to fight against the unjust proposals of the Cabinet Mission.<sup>88</sup> On the same day, Master Tara Singh sent a letter to Lord Pethic-Lawrence, the Secretary for State for India, in which he repeated most of the above-mentioned arguments and apprehensions. He also wrote:

It appears that Sikhs have been studiously debarred from having any effective influence in the province, a group or general union. I refer to section 15 (ii) and Section 19 (vii) in which it has been definitely provided that the majority of both Hindus and Muslims is necessary for certain purposes. The Sikhs are entirely ignored.<sup>89</sup>

Master Tara Singh sought clarification on the following three points:

1. What is the significance of recognizing the Sikhs as one of the main communities?
2. Suppose the majority of Section B frames a constitution under Section 19 (v) but the Sikh members do not agree, does it mean a deadlock or does the opposition of Sikh members mean simply dissociation?
3. Is there any hope of obtaining for the Sikhs the same right as is given to the Muslims and the Hindus under Section 15 (ii) and 19 (iii)?<sup>90</sup>

On 1 June, the Secretary of State for India gave the reply to Master Tara Singh’s letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> May. In this letter, he expressed his inability to amend the Proposals or to put on them a new construction so as to impart interpretation favoring the Sikhs. But he maintained that this would not prejudice the position of the Sikhs in the Punjab or in the North-West Group. He also maintained that it was inconceivable that either the Constituent Assembly or any future Government of Punjab would overlook the special

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<sup>87</sup> E.W.R. Lumby, *Transfer of Power in India.*, p. 96.

<sup>88</sup> O.H.C., File No. 2, *op.cit.*

<sup>89</sup> Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, Appendix IV, p. cci.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

place of the Sikhs in the Province. He made it clear that the importance of the Sikh community could not be gauged from their number in the Constituent Assembly.<sup>91</sup> The Cabinet Mission announced the scheme on May 16, 1949 and substance of Pakistan of Pakistan to the Muslim League.<sup>92</sup> It conceded Pakistan indirectly through the scheme of grouping of provinces. In Group B, Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province were placed. It meant the inclusion of the whole of Punjab in the prospective Pakistan belt. The Sikhs vehemently criticized this proposal. The Panthic conference was held on June 10 in the mood of desperation. The considered that the attempt was ‘to alom bomb the Sikhs’ and hence survival for the Sikhs Pratinidhi Panthic board was appointed with colonel Nirainjan Singh Gill as its Chairman.<sup>93</sup> At the national level also the Muslim League and the Congress could not come to an understanding with each other. At first, the Muslim League did not join the interim Government. Its attitude became more aggressive then. On September 11, M.A. Jinnah offered the Hindus the choice between Pakistan and civil War.<sup>94</sup> He also suggested exchange of population to avoid communal riots.<sup>95</sup> In a press statement at Lahore, Sardar Swaran Singh, leader of Panthic party in the Punjab Legislature, voiced a strong opposition to the proposal of Mr. M.A. Jinnah regarding the exchange of population. He said that such a thing would not at all be tolerated in the Punjab.<sup>96</sup> In fact, the Sikhs found this idea to be very revolting. The Sikhs of the West Punjab and the N.W.F.P. were particularly opposed to this idea. But the Sikh leaders really did not seem to know their own mind. They had themselves suggested exchange of population in their memorandum to the Sapru Committee. The CWC presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru on August 9, appealed to the Sikhs ‘to reconsider their decision to boycott the Constituent Assembly. It admitted that and injustice had been

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. ccii.

<sup>92</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 251. See also, *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 200-201.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>94</sup> *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab*, SGPC, Amritsar, p. 42.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>96</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. II, p. 49, See also the *The Akali*, 28.11.1946.

done to the Sikhs'.<sup>97</sup> However, the Muslim League rejected the Cabinet Mission Scheme and gave a call for the 'Direct Action' which led to large scale violence.<sup>98</sup> M.A. Jinnah said, "we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it"<sup>99</sup> The Lahore Action Committee of the Muslim League organised a meeting of the *ulemas* and *pirs* and had a *fatwa* issued in favour of jihad<sup>100</sup> on 10<sup>th</sup> August, Mr. Feroz Khan Moon explained that the Muslim Leaguers were 'not only ready to sacrifice themselves but they would sacrifice their children also'.<sup>101</sup> The Working Committee of the Muslim League asked the title holder Muslims to renounce their titles.<sup>102</sup> Mulana Azad called 16<sup>th</sup> August 'a black day' in the history of India.<sup>103</sup>

In the meantime, the Interim Government, headed by Mr. Jawharlal Nehru got into office on September 2, 1946. Baldev Singh was Defence Minister.<sup>104</sup> September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1946 was observed as a 'Black Day' by the Muslim League.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, the League started enlistment in the Muslim National Volunteer Corps.<sup>106</sup> However, on October 25, 1946 the Muslim League also joined the Interim Government.<sup>107</sup> This, however, did not bring about any change in the attitude of the Muslim League. Their propaganda was still virulent and they talked in terms of *Jehad*, bloodshed and sacrifice. The Congress was hopeful that once the Muslim League joined the Interim Government the former would be able to bring round the latter to its own interpretation of the Cabinet Mission Proposals. The Muslim League, however, knew its own mind very well and was not

<sup>97</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikhs Politics 1940-47", *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 252.

<sup>98</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p. 212.

<sup>99</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 284.

<sup>100</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p.223.

<sup>101</sup> *Fateh*, 31.8.1946.

<sup>102</sup> *Dawn*, 20.8.1946.

<sup>103</sup> Mulana A.K. Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, pp. 142-43.

<sup>104</sup> *The Hindustan Times*, 3.9.1946. He actually assumed on 19.9.1946 (*Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. II, p. 28).

<sup>105</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazettes*, 3.9.1946.

<sup>106</sup> *Dawn*, 4.9.1946.

<sup>107</sup> *Mitra Register*, *op.cit.*, p. 270.

ready to be taken in by any such maneuvers of the Congress. It was decided to call the Constituent Assembly on December 9, 1946.<sup>108</sup> The Muslim League was apprehensive of the overwhelming majority of Congress in the Constituent Assembly relating to Pakistan. Therefore, instead of responding properly to the invitation to join the Constituent Assembly it resorted to legal quibbling. The British Government therefore invited the Indian leaders to resolve this constitutional crisis. Jawharlal Nehru, Jinnah, M.A. Liaquat Ali Khan and Baldev Singh arrived in London on December 2, 1946. It was a very crucial meeting. The British Government upheld the Cabinet Mission's interpretation of grouping of provinces contained in their statement of May 25, 1946.<sup>109</sup> The Secretary of State further stated that if the Federal Court's interpretation on grouping of provinces went against the interpretation of the British Government the matter could be opened afresh. This in a way meant that the point was not justifiable. This left the Sikhs in no doubt about their position in Section B. Sardar Baldev Singh said that the Sikhs might withdraw from the Constituent Assembly.<sup>110</sup> It is significant to note that in reply to a letter from Master Tara Singh the Secretary of State for India stated in his letter dated June 11, 1946: "I fear the Mission cannot issue any addition to, or interpretation of, the statement". But the statement of December 6, 1946 issued by His Majesty's Government not only interpreted the May 16 statement but also made substantial additions in favour of the Muslims. The Sikhs were really doomed. They had so far been clinging to the Congress in the hope of safety. The London meeting, where Jawharlal Nehru could not object to the clarification given by the Secretary of State in favour of M.A. Jinnah vis-à-vis the grouping of provinces and the decision of the Federal Court etc., sealed the fate of the Sikhs. It had, however, to be admitted that the Sikhs had been living in the world of make-belief otherwise the attitude of the Congress should have always been known to them. The Congress had admitted in its 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1942 Delhi resolution relating to the Cripps Proposals: "Working Committee could not think of compelling any territorial unit

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<sup>108</sup> *The Akali*, 22.11.1946.

<sup>109</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, pp. 660-61.

<sup>110</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 330.

to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will".<sup>111</sup> It has further to be remembered that the Congress rejected the Cripps Proposals more on the ground of unacceptable provisions relating to Defence than the non-accession clause contained in them. All the same the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress passed a resolution on December 22, 1946 in which it regretted that the British Government, vide their statement of December 6, had acted in a manner which had not been in keeping with their own assurances.<sup>112</sup>

The Sikhs were, therefore, very sore over the treatment meted out to them. The Congress was mentally prepared for Pakistan, so the plan did not sound very much unacceptable to it. The Muslim League also accepted the Proposals in its meeting held on June 6, 1946.<sup>113</sup> To hide its obvious satisfaction with the Scheme, the Muslim League in this resolution made out a few points of disapproval also. The cause of Sikhs had been betrayed. Even Mahatma Gandhi, who had earlier lauded the Scheme, wrote about them in his *Harijan*: "Are the Sikhs for whom the Punjab is the only home in India, to consider themselves, against their will, as a part of the section which takes in Sind, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province"?<sup>114</sup> On this point, the author of the "Betrayal of the Sikhs" observes:

Mr. Jinnah claims for the Muslims the right of self-determination as a nation? Perfectly correct and laudable in every way, but are the Sikhs also not entitled to self-determination as a nation? Above all have they not as much reason to fear domination by Muslims as the latter had to fear domination by Hindus and Sikhs.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Patabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, p. 315.

<sup>112</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. II, pp. 127-29.

<sup>113</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, p. 601.

<sup>114</sup> File No. 51/3-46, G.O.I., *Home Political*: Weekly Confidential Reports sent by Information Bureau to the Secretary of State for India, Week ending 29.5.1946 (Letter No. 4880).

<sup>115</sup> Landen, Sarsfield, *op.cit.*, pp. 2-3.

The Sikhs were the first to raise their banner of revolt against the Cabinet Mission Tara Singh issued a unity call of now or Never.<sup>116</sup> It is, therefore, no wonder that the All India Sikh League in its session held at Lahore on June 4, 1946 under the Presidentship of Baba Kharak Singh passed a resolution in which it, inter-alia, asked the British Government to purge the Cabinet Mission's proposals of the communal virus which has proposed to be injected through the system of provincial grouping and representation on communal basis.<sup>117</sup> Main opposition to the proposals of the Mission was, however, expressed by the Sikhs in their All Sikh Parties Conference held at The Teja Singh Samundari Hall, Amritsar, on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of June. All Sikh Parties, with the exception of the Central Akali Dal, offered their support to this Conference.<sup>118</sup> It was attended by over a thousand Sikh leaders representative of Akalis, Congress Sikhs, *Nirmalas*, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Singh Sabhas, and District *Akali Jathas* from all over the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Delhi, the United Provinces and other places. Those present also included Master Tara Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh, His Holiness Maharaja Partap Singh, the Guru of Bhaini Sahib, Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, Sarmukh Singh Chamak, President of the Central Ramgarhia federation, Inder Singh and Shivdev Singh, Congress M.L.A.s, Mangal Singh M.L.A. (Central), Sardar Ujjal Singh, Sardar Joginder Singh, Sardar Jagjit Singh, *Panthic* M.L.A.s, and Sardar Bahadur Jodh Singh, etc.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *The Tribune*, 21.5.1946.

<sup>117</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 201-02.

<sup>118</sup> *The Akali Patrika*, June 10, 1946. The Central Akali Dal was prepared to offer its cooperation provided the programme for a morcha was settled before hand, and the list of invitees was mutually prepared (*The Tribune*, June 7, 1946; *The Statement* of Baba Kharak Singh). The Central Akali Dal did not participate and yet it was a "very full and representative gathering of the Sikh *Panth*". (*Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab*, p. 28); It was attended by over a thousand Sikh leaders representative of Akalis, Congress Sikhs, *Nirmalas*, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Singh Sabhas, and District Akali Jathas from all over the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Delhi, the United Provinces and other places. Those present also included Master Tara Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh, His Holiness Maharaj Partap Singh, the Guru of Bhaini Sahib, Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, Sarmukh Singh Chamak, President of the Central Ramgarhia federation, Inder Singh and Shivdev Singh, Congress M.L.A.s, Mangal Singh M.L.A. (Central), Sardar Ujjal Singh, Sardar Joginder Singh, Sardar Jagjit Singh, *Panthic* M.L.A.s, and Sardar Bahadur Jodh Singh, etc.

<sup>119</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 11.6.1946.

Sardar Ishar Singh Majhail, M.L.A. (*Panthic*) described with tears in his eyes how the British Cabinet Mission had led down the Sikhs and said that, as a self-respecting community, they could only fight the wrong by sacrifices. He hinted at the launching of a *morcha* by the Sikhs. Babu Labh Singh, President of the Shiromani Akali Dal thought that they could save their existence only through blood-shed, for which they would have to take an irrevocable pledge before the *Akal Takht*. Sardar Ujjal Singh said in a fiery speech: “We are not going to tolerate this Scheme which will impose on us virtual Muslim rule. The British seem to have forgotten the real strength of the *Khalsa*. We shall not betray the *Panth*”.<sup>120</sup> He said that the areas which were associated with the *Gurus* and holy shrines of the Sikhs were also included in Pakistan. Master Tara Singh spoke feelingly, trembling with rage, making appeal to the *Panth* to end dissension. He said that the Englishmen should realize that the Sikhs could do more harm than the Muslims, if enraged.<sup>121</sup> Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke appealed to the Sikhs to come forward with a lakh of volunteers to preserve their existence, as against two lakhs which they had given to the Indian army to save the British Empire. He said that the proposals were based on communalism. He appealed to the Congress to come out in defense of its principles. To the Sikh public he appealed for the gift of one month’s salary, as the *morcha* would require tremendous amount of money. Nirranjan Singh Gill of the Indian National Army said that the Singapore opportunity of 1942 had come their way again and he expressed the readiness of his comrades to make the supreme sacrifices at the behest of the *Panth* and the country.<sup>122</sup> Bawa Harkishan Singh, Principal, Khalsa College, Gujranwala and Sardar Bahadur Jodh Singh, representing the Chief Khalsa Diwan (Moderate Sikhs); Nidhan Singh Alam, Namdhari; Dyal Singh, Head of *Nirmala* Sikhs; Amar Singh of Students’ Federation; Bhag Singh, Bawa Bachittar Singh (Delhi) and Pritam Singh (Sargodha) also delivered speeches assuring the *Panth* of their full support in this matter.<sup>123</sup> On the second day, i.e., the June 10<sup>th</sup>, the Congress Sikhs, who had abstained

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<sup>120</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. I, p. 204.s

<sup>121</sup> Landen, Sarsfield, *op.cit.*, pp. 121-22.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-23.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

from the first day's session, also came in led by the President, Amritsar District Congress Committee (Rural), Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman, and Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir.<sup>124</sup> The main resolution condemning the British Cabinet Mission's proposals, moved by Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh seconded by Gyani Kartar Singh, was passed unanimously. The resolution objected to the compulsory grouping of provinces which even in the words of Lord Pethic-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, "make it possible for Muslim to secure all the advantages of Pakistan without incurring the danger inherent in it". The resolution also stated that even when the Mission admitted that the Punjab is the "homeland" of the Sikhs its recommendations had liquidated their position in this "homeland". Through another resolution the Conference also set up a Pratinidhi (representative) Panthic Board with representatives from all the leading Sikh organizations including the Namdhari Darbar and Nirmala Sikhs etc. Leaders like Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh and Udham Singh Nagoke were taken on it. This body was to work for the realization of the Sikh objectives. The Conference also decided to constitute a Council of Action with Colonel Narinjan Singh Gill as its head.<sup>125</sup> It was to execute the decisions of the Pratinidhi Panthic Board. The Conference was concluded in a very grim atmosphere. But the bellicosity displayed in the speeches of the Sikh leaders had no effect on the Mission, who persisted in regarding the Sikhs, perhaps because of their wagging beards and political naiveté, as pathetic misguided dotards, who were behaving like silly children, crying before they were hurt.<sup>126</sup> There was then very little that the British could do for the protection of minorities short of establishing any states for any who were numerous enough to claim the status of separate nations. The Muslims with their ninety-two million populations might qualify for such a treatment; not so the Sikhs who numbered no more than five and a half million and could not point to a single district of the Punjab where they were in majority. They might talk of a separate Sikh State, but no one could have believed that this was a practical proposition.<sup>127</sup> The

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<sup>124</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 11.6.1946.

<sup>125</sup> Landen, Sarsfield, *op.cit.*, p. 126-27

<sup>126</sup> H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide*, pp. 152-53.

<sup>127</sup> E.W.R. Lumby, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 97.

Muslims also ignored this sullen mood of the Sikhs and did not care for them except to tender some advice that “the wisest course the Sikhs could adopt was to rely on Muslim generosity”.<sup>128</sup> In this background it looks difficult to agree with the author of ‘*Sachi Sakhi*’ that Sir Jogendra Singh, a member in the Viceroy’s Executive Council, could have weightage for the Sikhs, but the Akalis warned him not to speak on their behalf.<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, Liaquat Ali Khan the General Secretary of the All India Muslim League passed a resolution and accepted the Cabinet Mission Scheme.<sup>130</sup> Thus, M.A. Jinnah and the Muslim League rejected the Pakistan Scheme.<sup>131</sup>

On June 16, 1946 the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy announced a proposal on the formation of the Interim Government. A Sikh member was also proposed to be taken on the Executive.<sup>132</sup> The name of Sardar Baldev Singh had been mentioned as a Sikh nominee.<sup>133</sup> The Panthic Advisory Board, under the influence of Colonel Narinjan Singh Gill, who was pro-Congress expressed its inability to advise any Sikh to accept invitation to join the Cabinet.<sup>134</sup> The Congress itself rejected the Viceroy’s proposal about joining the Interim Government but accepted the proposal about the formation and functioning of the Constituent Assembly.<sup>135</sup> Master Tara Singh, however, did not appreciate this decision of the Congress. He felt that when the Congress had accepted the long term plan it was only a matter of time that it would accept the short term plan also.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.06.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-46.

<sup>129</sup> Kapur Singh (I.C.S. Retired), *Sachi Sakhi*, p. 84.

<sup>130</sup> *The Tribune*, 7.6.1946.

<sup>131</sup> Aysha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origin of Pakistan’s Economy of Defence*, CUP, Cambridge, 1990, 21.

<sup>132</sup> *The Tribune*, 17.6.1946.

<sup>133</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*. Vol. II, p. 602.

<sup>134</sup> *The Tribune*, 23.6.1946.

<sup>135</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol II, (Congress Working Committee’s resolution, dated 25.6.1946), pp. 610-11. See also, P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.6.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-46.

<sup>136</sup> *The Sant Sipahi*, July, 1946.

On 7<sup>th</sup> July, Nawab of Mamdot, President, Punjab Muslim League, commented on the Cabinet Mission plan and its failure.<sup>137</sup> The Cabinet Mission left India: It was decided that the members would report to the British Parliament on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1946.<sup>138</sup> British Sardar Baldev Singh wrote a letter to the British Prime Minister in which he charged that the Cabinet Mission had shown care only for the Muslim League. He further wrote that the Mission while admitting the fears of the Sikhs against a Muslim majority had still involved them in what must in the end amount to a perpetual Muslim communal rule, and had made no provision for the Sikh areas to opt out of this domination. He also regretted that the provisions made for resolving the Hindu-Muslim disputes in the Constituent Assembly had not been afforded to the Sikhs. In his reply to Sardar Baldev Singh, Mr. Attlee said that the statement of May 16 could not be altered in favour of the Sikhs.<sup>139</sup> In this letter, the Prime Minister wrote more or less the same things that Pethic-Lawrence had written in his letter in reply to Master Tara Singh's letter. He urged upon the Sikhs not to boycott the Constituent Assembly. On July 18, 1946 Sir Stafford Cripps made a detailed statement in the British Parliament on the Cabinet Mission's work in India. In this statement he referred to the Sikh problem also. He said:

I now pass to question of the Sikhs. It was a matter of great distress to us that the Sikhs should feel that they had not received the treatment which they deserved as an important section of the Indian people.<sup>140</sup> The difficulty arises not from anyone's under-estimate of the importance of the Sikh community, but from the inescapable geographical facts of the situation...they demand some special treatment analogous to that given to Muslims. The Sikhs, however, are a much smaller community, 5½ as against 90 millions, and, moreover, are not geographically situated so that any area as yet devised-I do not put it of possibility that one may be devised in the future-can be carved out in which they would find themselves in a majority. It is, however, essential that fullest consideration should be given to their claims; for they are a distinct and important community whose culture and interests deserve protection.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Baljit Singh, *The Elections and the Politicisation in the Punjab*, p. 288

<sup>138</sup> G.D. Khosla, *Stren Reckoning*, p. 37.

<sup>139</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, pp. 290-91.

<sup>140</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A., Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, pp. 638-39.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 639.

The statement said that population basis had been adopted for representation in the Constituent Assembly, which entitled them only to four seats out of twenty-eight seats in the Punjab or out of thirty-five in the North-Western Section for the Constituent Assembly.

We hope this situation may to some extent be remedied by their full representation in the Advisory Committee on Minorities set up under paragraph 20 of the statement of 16<sup>th</sup> May. Over and above that we have represented to the two major parties—who were both most receptive—that some special means of giving the Sikhs a strong voice in the affairs of the Punjab or the North-Western Section should be devised.<sup>142</sup>

He said that he hoped that if the Sikhs maintained undivided view amongst them and were patient they would be able to work out some satisfactory arrangement with the two main parties. As usual, the statement accepted the Sikhs as an important community whose interests and culture have to be preserved. But beyond that it did nothing. It showed its helplessness over their small number. The Sikhs were thrown at the mercy of the two major communities knowing full well that, unlike individuals, inter-community deals were never struck on the considerations of equitability or morality. Rather grab-and-run mentality prevailed in such affairs. To keep the conscience of the Mission clean, the statement also tried to suggest that the Sikhs, after all, were not united. Even this view was not very correct. The Sikhs—their main representative parties—were united in their opposition to Pakistan. Master Tara Singh was, however, of the view that this expression of sympathy had not meaning and no sincerity. He said that after the Cripps Mission went back from India, even the Secretary of State declared in the Parliament of England on April 28, 1942 that in future alternative methods would be explored which might form a “better basis for the definition of boundaries and might give representation for smaller elements such as Sikhs whose natural aspirations we appreciate”.<sup>143</sup> Master Tara Singh

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<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Parliamentary Debates*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, House of Commons, Vol. 379, Cols. 828, 835-36 and 841.

said that the situation being over, today even the British had gone back on their word.<sup>144</sup> The Governor of Punjab, Evan Jenkins also argued that if M.A. Jinnah and Nehru would accept some safeguards for the Sikhs, things would be much easier.<sup>145</sup> The Sikhs were thus greatly disappointed. Their accommodation in the Constituent Assembly was insignificant and in the Interim Government was, consequently, meaningless. On top of it all their house was also not in order. The flush of sincerity caused by the injustice done to them by the Mission's Proposals soon wore out and various leaders and groups in the community started talking in the language of their own motives. To say nothing of the eagerness of Sardar Baldev Singh to join the Interim Government,<sup>146</sup> the Congress alone as a huge political organization was sufficient to make them abdicate their own interests. The Congress Sikhs became willing, or unwilling, tools in these machinations of the Congress. It was, therefore, no wonder that even after deciding against joining the Interim Government or the Constituent Assembly, the Panthic Pratinidhi Board decided to appoint a Committee of Nine to negotiate with the Congress.<sup>147</sup> This the Sikhs did even when the past record of the Congress-Sikh relations was not very encouraging.<sup>148</sup> But placed as they were, probably, they had no better course to take except the 'willing suspension of disbelief. Therefore, by the middle of August the attitude of the *Panthic Pratinidhi* Board underwent a change and it decided in favour of joining the Constituent Assembly.<sup>149</sup> This was done on the assurance given to them by the Working Committee

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<sup>144</sup> *The Sant Sipahi*, July, 1946.

<sup>145</sup> N. Mansergh, (ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 2.

<sup>146</sup> *The Rayast*, 1.7.1946.

<sup>147</sup> It comprised Narinjan Singh Gill, President, Maharaj Partap Singh, Jathedar Udham Singh Natgoke, Gyani Kartar Singh, Baldev Singh, Sarmukh Singh Chamak, Amar Singh, Sampuran Singh, M.L.A. (Central) and Professor Mota Singh (*The Tribune*, 12.7.1946).

<sup>148</sup> Master Tara Singh quoted the crisis caused by the Rajaji-Gandhiji agreement. At that time Gandhiji admitted that if in future he made an agreement with Jinnah, both he and Jinnah would first come to Master Tara Singh for his prior approval. "Today some one should ask this Mahatma that now, before accepting Pakistan and the permanent domination of the Muslims over the Punjab, why did they not come to Master Tara Singh?" (*Sant Sipahi*, July, 1946).

<sup>149</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.08.1946 and 31.8.1946, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/8-46.

of the Indian National Congress through their resolution passed at the Wardha Session, assuring them all possible support in removing their legitimate grievances.<sup>150</sup> The decision of the Sikh Advisory Board to co-operate with the Congress in the new Interim Government and the constitutional plan was conditional in character. Their demand for constitutional safeguards remained unchanged.<sup>151</sup> This decision was adopted under the influence of Colonel Nirainjan Singh Gill.

After the Sikhs decided to join hands with the Congress in the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government, the events started moving very fast. The Muslims observed “Direct Action Day” on August 16 which has followed by four-day span of civil strife and killings.<sup>152</sup> The Sikhs felt more and more cornered and got closer to the Congress in the time to come. In his England visit of December, 1946 Baldev Singh remained more or less tied to Mr. Jawharlal Nehru.<sup>153</sup> This ultimately decided the fate of the Sikhs. The partition had to be accepted by them as the Congress had already been convinced of it. All this became a natural corollary to the doings of the Cabinet Mission. The Cabinet Mission promised Pakistan and also free India. So both the Congress and Muslim League were satisfied to some extent. But the Mission ignored the Sikhs. The Sikhs were disappointed. They were thus written off by the Congress and the League both.<sup>154</sup> Thus in a way, the British were the authors of the consequent misery of the Sikhs. The author of “Betrayal of the Sikhs” correctly observed:

Whatever members of other parties may do or say, the ultimate responsibility for settlement of the problem must rest with us, the British, and our neglect to discharge that responsibility will be nothing less than a betrayal of the Sikh nation, and resultant bloodshed.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1946, Vol. II, p. 105.

<sup>151</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.8.1946, *op.cit.*

<sup>152</sup> Tara Chand, *History of the freedom Movement in India*, Vol. II, pp.482-84. See also, P.G.R., Fortnight ending 31.8.1946, *op.cit.*

<sup>153</sup> Kapur Singh (I.C.S. Retired), *Sachi Sakhi.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>154</sup> *The Preet Lari*, May, 1946.

<sup>155</sup> Landen, Sarsfield, *op.cit.*, p. 130.

The author is of the view that a Commission should have been appointed to go into the whole question. Its report could then have been taken up by the Cabinet Mission for necessary action.<sup>156</sup> It is, therefore, clear that the Sikhs were given a raw deal by the Cabinet Mission. The Sikh leaders put forth their case as best as they could. However, different stands taken by the Communist and the Congressite Sikhs undermined the position of the S.A.D. Even the affairs of the Sikh Advisory Board remained under the shadow of the Congress that did not fail to exploit the pro-Congress ways of Colonel Narinjan Singh Gill.<sup>157</sup> The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, records in his Journal, vide entry dated May 12, 1946 that the Maharaja of Patiala came to see him and told him that the Sikhs were ripped apart. The Akali Group, the Congress Group and the Communist Group were pulling in the opposite directions.<sup>158</sup> It is clear from this that the Congress group and the Communist Group deliberately tried to torpedo the moves of the Akalis. But it has to be admitted that only the Akalis really represented the Sikhs. It may therefore be said that the British apathy coupled with the difficulties created by the Communists, the Congress and the League, blocked the way of the Akalis. In November 1946, communal riots started in the Punjab.<sup>159</sup> The Punjab showed determination to put down violence by course of martial law, if need be.<sup>160</sup> Malik Khizr Hayat Khan expressed sympathy with all the sufferers. He blamed the press for arousing communal flare up.<sup>161</sup> The Punjab Public Safety Ordinance of 1946 was promulgated.<sup>162</sup>

On January 5, 1947, the Congress finally albeit with reservations, accepted the grouping clause of the Cabinet Mission. Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh termed it a betrayal of the Sikhs.<sup>163</sup> In the session of the Constituent Assembly on April

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<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>157</sup> File No. 51/3-46, *op.cit.*, Confidential letter No. 5810 dated 4.7.1946.

<sup>158</sup> Penderel Moon, (Ed.), *The Viceroy's Journal*, London, 1973, p. 266.

<sup>159</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 10.11.1946.

<sup>160</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 11.11.1946.

<sup>161</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 16.11.1946.

<sup>162</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 20.11.1946.

<sup>163</sup> Indu Banga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47", *The Sikh History and Religion*, p. 252.

28, 1947 also the Congress said that no constitution would be forced on any unwilling part of the country.<sup>164</sup> This was the maximum that the Congress could do. It passed resolutions that accepted the December 6, 1946 statement of the British Government and also simultaneously tried to console the Sikhs. Perhaps the position of the Congress was not enviable. It could not take an extreme stand and put in jeopardy the freedom of the country, which was very much in sight then. Above all it also looked as though the Congress had become impatient by then. Even Gandhiji did not like that posture of the Congress. It was said that the resignations of Sarat Chander Bose and J.P. Narayan from the Congress at that time were in sympathy with the Sikhs who had been betrayed by the Congress.<sup>165</sup> Mangal Singh was also constrained to remark that the acceptance of the British interpretation regarding compulsory grouping by the Congress was another dangerous slip towards Pakistan. He fretfully said that the Congress had sacrificed the interests of the Sikhs. He advocated partition of the province as the solution, with river Ravi as the dividing line.<sup>166</sup>

The Sikhs were in real distress then. The whole weight of Pakistan was upon them. The problem was how, and how much, they could retrieve. Their four members in the Constituent Assembly could not do much for their community, because they were too few to influence its proceedings.<sup>167</sup> But leaving this forum would be worse, for they would lose even the platform from which they could ventilate their grievances, their microscopic number notwithstanding. Further, in this course of action they would have as well lost the sympathies of the Congress which had passed a couple of resolutions showing their resentment against the December 6, statement of His Majesty's Government. Thus the Sikhs ultimately decided to co-operate with the Congress and secure safeguards through the Constituent Assembly. Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab, assured that the Punjab Government would do everything to prevent communal disturbance in the Punjab.<sup>168</sup> Processions were dispersed with mild lathi-

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<sup>164</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 355.

<sup>165</sup> *The Sikh Dunya*, January, 1947.

<sup>166</sup> *The Tribune*, 9.1.1947 (Statement of Sardar Mangal Singh).

<sup>167</sup> *The Rayast*, 16.12.1946 (Statement of Master Tara Singh).

<sup>168</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 10.1.1947.

charge.<sup>169</sup> The Punjab Premier assured that he would not allow the Muslim League ‘to reduce Punjab to political and communal chaos.’<sup>170</sup>

On January 17, 1947 Sardar Ujjal Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh, members of the Constituent Assembly, made an emphatic assertion, “We want”, they said, “that nothing affecting the Sikhs should be decided without our consent”.<sup>171</sup> They also pointed out that no doubt they were disappointed at the All-India Congress Committee Resolution of December 22, 1946, but they would continue to co-operate with the Congress. However, if the right of communal veto was not given to them they would act according to the mandate of the *Panthic Pritinidhi* Board and withdraw from the Constituent Assembly.<sup>172</sup> In his heart of hearts Master Tara Singh was of the view that since the British-Muslim League understanding was deep there was no possibility of the same between the Congress and the Sikhs. They should at the same time also see to it that the British did not cause misunderstanding between the Sikhs and the Congress.<sup>173</sup>

### III

On February 20, 1947, Lord Clement Attlee made a very crucial statement in the British Parliament outlining the schedule for the grant of independence to the Indians. Said the British Prime Minister:

His Majesty’s Government wish to make it clear that it is their definite intention to take the necessary steps to effect the transfer of power into responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948...His Majesty’s Government will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over, on the due date, whether as a whole to some form of Central Government, or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people....<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 30.1.1947.

<sup>170</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 31.1.1947.

<sup>171</sup> *The National Herald*, English Daily, Lucknow, 19.1.1947.

<sup>172</sup> *The Akali*, 19.1.1947.

<sup>173</sup> *The Sant Sipahi*, January, 1947.

<sup>174</sup> A.C. Bannerjee, *History of India*, Calcutta, 1967, Vol. IV, pp. 279-80. See also, Indu Banga “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p. 253.

The above statement was issued under the pressure of the world leaders soon after the close of the World War II. For the first time the Indians felt convinced that the British would certainly be leaving India, and quite soon that started a run-away politics of cut-throat style in the country. On the last week of February, violence erupted in half a dozen major cities including Amritsar and Lahore<sup>175</sup> The Muslim League campaign of hatred against the Unionists was at its peak.<sup>176</sup> Master Tara Singh issued a statement that civil war cannot be avoided.<sup>177</sup> Events were further accelerated and political parties and the politicians were required to perform at breath-taking speed. It was in this wave of uncertainty and intrigues that Khizr Hayat Khan resigned on March 2, 1947 as the Premier of Punjab.<sup>178</sup> After February 20<sup>th</sup> Statement of the British Government Sir Khizr Hayat Khan had been feeling that if he still continued to lead a coalition in which the Muslim League was not represented, this would seriously jeopardize such chances as might otherwise exist of a settlement between the communities in the province.<sup>179</sup> This was a more stunning blow to the Sikhs than even the February 20<sup>th</sup> Statement. Consequently, upon the resignation of Sir Khizr Hayat Khan on March 3, the Punjab Governor invited the leader of the Muslim League party to form the Government.<sup>180</sup> The Sikh leaders and Councilors met at Lahore on March 3 and unanimously passed this resolution:

....The new circumstances created by His Majesty Government's statement of February 20<sup>th</sup> appear to have influenced the Premier's decision to resign. While we feel that the Premier was actuated with the best of intentions his decision, however, is undoubtedly calculated to facilitate the installation of the Muslim League into power in Punjab before transfer of power from British to Indian hands takes place.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Michael Edwardes, *The Last Years of British India*, p.141.

<sup>176</sup> Satya M. Rai, *Partition of the Punjab*, Asia Publishing House, New Delhi, 1964, p. 41.

<sup>177</sup> A.B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and Today*, p. 141.

<sup>178</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 42.

<sup>179</sup> *The Tribune*, 4.3.1947.

<sup>180</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 15.3.1947, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/3-47.

<sup>181</sup> Darbara Singh, *The Punjab Tragedy*, Amritsar, 1949, pp. 31-32.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March, the Governor, Sir Evan Jenkins invited the Muslim League to form a Ministry.<sup>182</sup> On the same day, i.e., March 3, 1947, a huge Hindu and Sikh public meeting, was held at Lahore in the evening. In this meeting there were dangerous and truculent talks. The Sikh leaders gave statements saying that they were determined to fight Pakistan and would oppose the Muslim League Government at all costs.<sup>183</sup> Master Tara Singh said:

....Our motherland is calling for blood and we will satiate our mother's thirst with blood....We have in our hold the legs and limbs of the Muslim League and we will break them....The world has always been ruled by minorities....I have sounded the bugle. Finish the Muslim League.<sup>184</sup>

On account of the heat generated by this meeting, March 4 was marked by bloody events in Lahore. Sir Khizr Hayat Khan showed his inability even to head the caretaker Government.<sup>185</sup> Riots broke out in the prominent cities such as Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Jhelum and others.<sup>186</sup> On March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1947, the Sikhs and Hindu students took out a protest procession. The police opened fire, killing 13 persons and injuring 103.<sup>187</sup> On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, in the face of the Muslim League's failure to form a Government, Governor's rule was proclaimed in the province.<sup>188</sup> On the same day,

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<sup>182</sup> K.C. Gulati, *The Akali: Past and Present*, Ashajanak Publication, New Delhi, 1974, p.133.

<sup>183</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.* It is said that in a bid to woo the Sikhs, the Muslim League offered the Sikhs five seats in a Cabinet of eleven (*Ibid*). It was indeed too much on the part of the Muslim League to think that the Sikhs would join such a Government whose aim was to realize Pakistan, regarded by the Sikhs as their death-knell.

<sup>184</sup> G.D. Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 100.

<sup>185</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>186</sup> Satya M.Rai, *Partition of the Punjab*, p. 42.

<sup>187</sup> H.S. Bajwa, *Fifty Years of Punjab Politics (1920-1970)*, Modern Publishers, Chandigarh, 1979, p. 71.

<sup>188</sup> Harcharan Singh Bajwa attributes the refusal of the Governor to the formation of the League Ministry to the tearing of the Muslim League Flag by Master Tara Singh with his sword on 3.3.1947, which they had brought there to install on the Assembly building. Master Tara Singh shouted in rage "Kat ke denge apni Jan magar na denge Pakistan-Pakistan murdabad" (we may be cut to pieces but we will never concede Pakistan-Death to Pakistan). *Fifty Years of Punjab Politics*, pp. 76-78. However, the flag tearing incident

Master Tara Singh also appealed to the people to observe ‘Anti-Pakistan Day’ on March 11.<sup>189</sup> This made the Muslim League all the more irritable. The behaviour of the non-Muslims in contributing their full strength to thwart the formation of the Muslim League Government of the Punjab further confirmed the views of Mr. M.A. Jinnah that all non-Muslims were anti-Muslims. But the Muslim League was then clear in its mind that the time had come for it to deal a *coup de grace* to the whole thing and realize the dream of Pakistan. The Muslim League adopted the tactics of terrorism to scare the people out of their wits. Gravest of the incidents took place in the areas comprising the Rawalpindi Division where Muslims were in preponderant majority. The casualties were particularly heavy in Rawalpindi and Attock districts.<sup>190</sup> Up to 15<sup>th</sup> March the victims of the internecine strife numbered 1,036 killed and 1,110 injured. The things were really very appalling when Lord Louis Mountbatten took over as the Viceroy of India on March 24, 1947.<sup>191</sup> He recognized the need for quick action in the face of general chaos and approaching civil war.<sup>192</sup> He did not inherit a good legacy from Lord Wavell. Allen Campbell Johnson aptly summed up: “In short, we have the people rioting; the princes falling out among themselves; the entire Indian Civil Service and police running down; and the British left skeptical and full of foreboding”.<sup>193</sup>

In this grim atmosphere, no political party could afford to be idealist. Hard and overwhelming realities of the situation had to be reckoned with. Thanks to the events since the British Government statement of December 6, 1946 the Congress had been mellowed by then. It was no longer fussy about the preservation of integrity of the country. It passed a resolution in its meeting on 6-8 March, 1947 and accepted the

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is a very controversial thing as far as its veracity is concerned. In fact Master Tara Singh denied it next day through the press saying that there was no League Flag on the spot and as such the question of tearing it with a sword never arose Jaswant Singh (Ed.), *Master Tara Singh*, p. 200.

<sup>189</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol I, p. 43.

<sup>190</sup> P.G.R., *op.cit.*

<sup>191</sup> Darbara Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>192</sup> R. Suntharalingam, *Indian Nationalism: An Historical Analysis*, pp. 451-52.

<sup>193</sup> A. Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 40.

partition of Punjab.<sup>194</sup> Moreover, but this time, the Congress had come to adopt the attitude that Pakistan issue vis-à-vis the Sikhs was a communal problem and the Congress was not concerned with it. It left it to the Sikhs to deal with it. This attitude of the Congress was nothing but an attempt to wriggle out of the solemn promises it had held out to the Sikhs since 1929. This cleared the road to Pakistan. The two major Indian political parties were reconciled to the idea of partition, although the League wanted only the partition of the country and not of the Punjab. With this crisis around, the Sikhs also tried to set their house in order like the other communities. Augmentation of the *Akali Sena* was started with renewed vigour. However, this *Akali Sena* was not trained like the Muslim Guards who were trained in stabbing and *lathi* driving, and its number did not exceed a few hundreds, much less was it an army as later on it was sought to be made out by the Leagues.<sup>195</sup> Moreover, it was only a defensive channel and had no training in politics like the Muslim League National Guards. A new organization called Shahidi Dal was also created under the direction of Jathedar Mohan Singh to help the Sikhs in the scattered areas to take measures to protect themselves.<sup>196</sup> Sikh Jathedars took a suicide oath at the Akal Takhat on April 13, 1947.<sup>197</sup> In June the Akali Sena and Shahidi Jathas were merged and a *Khalsa* Council of Action was formed with leaders like Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh and Udham Singh Nagoke on this Council, to control the Sena. Its strength at that time stood at 8,000 comprising the Shahidi Jathas in Lahore, Amritsar, Sialkot, Ferozepur, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana and Multan districts. A fifty lakh rupee fund was instituted to run the affairs of the *Sena*.<sup>198</sup> No doubt, the plan

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<sup>194</sup> Menon, V.P., *Transfer of Power in India*, p. 347. The resolution said, "These tragic events have demonstrated that there can be no settlement of the problem in the Punjab by violence and coercion, and that no arrangement based on coercion will last. Therefore it is necessary to find a way out which involves the least amount of compulsion. This would necessitate a division of the Punjab into two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part (*Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 118-19).

<sup>195</sup> *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab*, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 253-54.

<sup>196</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.4.1947, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/4-47, and Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 123-24.

<sup>197</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette.*, 15.4.1947.

<sup>198</sup> P.G.R., Fortnight ending 30.6.1947, G.O.I., *Home Political*, File No. 18/6-47.

was very impressive. But it was difficult to admit its efficacy. The thing was that when these details were drawn Pakistan had already arrived at the doorstep. There was no time to train the volunteers. Existing cadres of the Akali Sena were insufficient to fulfill the above objectives. The leaders were busy, rather over-busy, in attending to the fast moving train of political events which were so grave and complex that they hardly left them time to take care of the Shahidi Dal and impart life to it. Master Tara Singh felt that Punjab was drifting into a civil War. He received feelers for a dialogue with the League, but he again felt that the talks would not yield fruit in that atmosphere of near-anarchy.<sup>199</sup> Rather they could cost invaluable time to the Sikhs, which could otherwise be devoted to the defense-call. So far the Sikhs had been imagining that the British would not abandon them and would settle the whole thing for them before leaving the country.<sup>200</sup> But then it became clear to them that they would have to fend for themselves. On April 3, 1947, a Conference was held at Lahore wherein the Sikh leaders and legislators unanimously declared that a division of Punjab was the only remedy left to rescue them out of this situation.<sup>201</sup> The decision was reaffirmed by the *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak* Committee in its meeting held at Amritsar on April 17, 1947, under the Presidentship of Gyani Kartar Singh. It also demanded the appointment of a boundary Commission keeping in view the stakes of the Sikhs in Punjab.<sup>202</sup> On April 18, Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh and Baldev Singh met the Punjab Governor and put forward the Sikh point of view that the division of the province had then become inescapable and demanded that the boundary line defining the proposed division should be fixed at river

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<sup>199</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 45. (Master Tara Singh's statement dated 12.3.1947).

<sup>200</sup> C.H. Philips, and Mary Doreen, Wainwright, (Ed.), *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives*, Leeds, 1967, (Impressions 1938-47 by Taya Zinkin), p. 552.

<sup>201</sup> All the Sikh leaders including Master Tara Singh, Bawa Harkishan Singh, President of the *Panthic* Board and Amar Singh attended it. *The Akali*, 5.4.1947; also *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 53; and Dr. Ganda Singh, *A Diary of Partition Days* (Date and place of publication not given).

<sup>202</sup> *The Tribune*, 18.4.1947.

Chenab.<sup>203</sup> They also demanded the recruitment of additional Sikh police and imposition of martial law in the Punjab.<sup>204</sup>

All this caused some nervousness to the Muslim League. Because Mr. M.A. Jinnah had always felt that he could accommodate the Sikhs in a separate province within Pakistan. But he could not altogether relinquish a part of Pakistan in their favour.<sup>205</sup> But then the Congress and the Sikhs both were demanding the bisection of the proposed Pakistan territory itself. The Muslim League was not prepared for all this. It wanted to grab the whole of Punjab.<sup>206</sup> Thirty-nine thousand strong National Guards had been employed for that purpose,<sup>207</sup> and by April, i.e., just within two months about a million non-Muslim had become refugees. On April 30, 1947, Mr. M.A. Jinnah issued a statement that the proposal for the partition of Bengal and Punjab was a sinister move actuated by spite and bitterness. He, inter alia, said that if Punjab and Bengal were to be partitioned, all the other provinces would have to be cut up in a similar way. He again suggested that an exchange of population would sooner or later have to take place and that that could be effectively carried out by the respective governments in Pakistan and Hindustan.<sup>208</sup> All this was being done by the Muslims to make their adversaries accept the exchange of population. At first the Congress did not take this suggestion seriously.<sup>209</sup> But as the events marched forth every one understood its necessity. In fact, it became inevitable under those circumstances when the individuals and the organizations alike got quickly and automatically involved in migration. The Sikhs also got round this idea

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<sup>203</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 19.4.1947.

<sup>204</sup> H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide*, pp. 237-39. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 19.4.1947.

<sup>205</sup> R. Coupland, *Future of India*, London, 1943. Jinnah's speech on November 16, 1942 at Bombay, p. 86.

<sup>206</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 84.

<sup>207</sup> *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab*, p. 253.

<sup>208</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 1.5.1947. See also, *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, pp. 360-61 and *The Hindustan Times*, 2.5.1947. Jinnah's statement drew the retort from Rajendra Prasad that the demand for the division of the Punjab and Bengal was in terms of the Muslim League's Lahore resolution of 1940 and that it could not claim any areas which were not contiguous and in which the Muslims did not enjoy a numerical majority (Menon, V.P., *op.cit.*, p. 356).

<sup>209</sup> Sasadhar Sinha, *Indian Independence in Perspective*, Bombay, 1964, p. 24.

finally in July, 1947 when impelled by the inundation of events. Sardar Sawaran Singh, leader of the Panthic Assembly Party, said that the transfer of population was the only solution which would ultimately do well to both Pakistan and Hindustan. He suggested a partition line as would facilitate the transfer of population and property.<sup>210</sup> Such a thing was all the more necessary for the Sikhs because otherwise their population would have got divided between Pakistan and Hindustan.

#### IV

Lord Louis Mountbatten, who had come to India with a firm determination to settle things finally for the Indians, came out with his plan of June 3, 1947. On 2<sup>nd</sup> June he sounded the Indian leaders about the final plan, before making it public. The Congress accepted it and so did the League. Khizr Hayat Khan, the Punjab Premier, called it 'the work of the lunatics'.<sup>211</sup> It was said that Sardar Baldev Singh who represented the Sikhs on both these occasions, accepted the Plan rather light-heartedly. The partition was implicit in the Plan, but he did not say other than these words: "I agree".<sup>212</sup>

....It might have seemed that any far-seeing Sikh, realizing the situation which would probably result from partition, would have cut his throat or gone to War rather than accept it....But...Baldev Singh ...kept largely silent during the all-important meeting, except to agree to the plan that would cut the jugular vein of his people.<sup>213</sup>

His only insistence in this meeting was that he wanted instructions to the Boundary Commission to be included in the Plan, impressing upon them to take the Sikhs' interest more fully into consideration. But the Viceroy turned down this demand and Baldev Singh accepted this ruling. The Plan lay down:

1. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and Punjab, Excluding European members, will be asked to meet in two parts-one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of the province. For purpose of determining the population of the districts the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim majority districts of Punjab, as

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<sup>210</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 10.7.1947.

<sup>211</sup> Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 227.

<sup>212</sup> V.P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, pp. 366-67.

<sup>213</sup> Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj*, London, 1962, pp. 131-33.

given in the Appendix of the Plan, were defined as: Lahore Division: Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Sheikhupura, Sialkot, Lahore; Rawalpindi Division: Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Minawali, Rawalpindi, Shahpur; Multan Division: Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan and Muzaffargarh.

2. The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either side decided in favour of partition, division of the province would take place and arrangements would be made accordingly.
3. In the event of partition being decided upon for the purpose of final partition of these Provinces, a detailed investigation of boundary questions would be needed, a Boundary Commission would be set up by the Governor-General.<sup>214</sup>

In his press conference on June 3, 1947 Lord Louis Mountbatten made a special reference about the Sikhs. He said that the partition of Punjab had been provided at their instance, because it was mainly at the request of the Sikh community that the Congress had demanded the partition of Punjab through their resolution passed in the meeting on 6-8 March, 1947. Within week, violence spread from Lahore to Amritsar. About 4000 Muslim shops and business were burned down within the walled area of the city of Amritsar.<sup>215</sup> He admitted that the community of the Sikhs though much less numerous was yet of great importance. He said that he had spent a good deal of time to see if there was any solution which would keep the Sikh community more together without departing from the broad and easily understood principle. He left this problem to the Boundary Commission.<sup>216</sup> This was quite a diplomatic gesture on the part of one whose predecessors also, like him; had always felt concerned only with the major organizations like the Congress and the Muslim League and had never shown any direct consideration to the Sikhs. Commenting on this Plan Sardar Baldev Singh said that the Plan did not please every one, not the Sikhs, but was worthwhile. It was not all joy. It was a

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<sup>214</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, Government of India, Vol. II, p. 2. See also, *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 249.

<sup>215</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 16.3.1947; Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, p. 227.

<sup>216</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on Constitution of India*, Vol. II, pp. 678-79.

settlement.<sup>217</sup> He also hoped that this division might not last long. If anything, this latter view shows only his political immaturity. Master Tara Singh also issued a statement on June 3, 1947. He said that the Plan was unsatisfactory and disappointing. Even the Viceroy had felt obliged to admit that the Sikh solidarity was bound to be impaired by this Plan. He said that for Sikhs it was not a question of power but of existence.<sup>218</sup> But this had long been clear to the Sikhs that either they had to accept the partition which meant the split-up of their community into two parts, or they had to submit to their inclusion as a whole in Pakistan. They had decided in favour of partition, a lesser evil.<sup>219</sup> Under this apparent split about two million Sikhs, as also their canal colonies, would inevitably fall in the would-be Pakistan territory. But they were so tight-cornered that they had no way out except to futilely place their hopes in the wisdom of the Boundary Commission which, apart from “contiguous area” principle, was to take “other factors” also into consideration. The Sikhs now pinned their hopes on these “other factors” on the strength of which their boundary, they thought, might be shifted westwards so that they would not be split too badly.<sup>220</sup> Organized incendiary activities, stabbings and bomb blasts in Lahore and Amritsar forced 70,000 persons to leave the cities.<sup>221</sup> The Muslim League accepted the Mountbatten Plan on June 9<sup>th</sup> and the Congress on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Sikhs hesitantly accepted it. They preferred to remain with India.<sup>222</sup>

After the announcement of the Plan an attempt was made to see if the partition could still be avoided. Through Sant Singh, the Prime Minister of Nabha, Panderel Moon,

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<sup>217</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 255.

<sup>218</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 255-56, also *The Akali*, 5.6.1947.

<sup>219</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 69.

<sup>220</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 69-70. (Under this apparent split about two million Sikhs, as also their canal colonies, would inevitably fall in the would-be Pakistan territory. But they were so tight-cornered that they had no way out except to futilely place their hopes in the wisdom of the Boundary Commission which, apart from “contiguous area” principle, was to take “other factors” also into consideration. The Sikhs now pinned their hopes on these “other factors” on the strength of which their boundary, they thought, might be shifted westwards so that they would not be split too badly).

<sup>221</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, “A Nightmare of Two Cities: Amritsar and Lahore in 1947”, *Precolonial and Colonial Punjab*, p. 416.

<sup>222</sup> Harcharn Singh Bajwa, *Fifty years of Punjab Politics, (1920-1970)*, p. 71.

the Revenue Minister of Bahawalpur, approached the Sikh leaders, including Master Tara Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh and Baldev Singh. Moon offered to secure them a separate unit of eastern Punjab with a position in Pakistan equal to that of any other unit, e.g. Sind or western Punjab; special privileges for Sikh minority in western Punjab and also in Pakistan as a whole.<sup>223</sup> The Sikhs, however, remained skeptical about the motives at the back of this offer. One Sikh leader said that there could be no guarantee that once they achieved Pakistan, the Muslims would abide by the agreement.<sup>224</sup>

However, after about ten days, Baldev Singh was more responsive to the Muslim endeavors. May be, the Sikhs had been disillusioned by the attitude of the Congress. They seemed to be hankering after a quasi-autonomous East Punjab shorn of four Hindu districts in the south. The Congress was not agreeable to this. Hence, they were inclined to try it from the Muslims. Major Short's friend gave certain suggestions to Mr. Moon which could be made the basis of negotiations. They were somewhat like this:<sup>225</sup>

- i. There should be a separate unit of East Punjab from which the four south-eastern and predominantly Hindu districts would be excluded (The four districts would have gone to India);
- ii. The East Punjab unit should have the right to secede from Pakistan;
- iii. The authority of the Central Pakistan Government should be confined to defense, foreign affairs, communications, currency and economic planning. All other power should be vested in the provincial units;
- iv. three-fourths majority of Sikh legislators should be essential for any change in the constitution; and
- v. The Sikhs should have at least one-third share in the armed forces of Pakistan.

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<sup>223</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>224</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 85. Even before the Mountbatten Plan was announced Maharaja Yadindra Singh of Patiala, at the instance of the Viceroy, had talks with Jinnah on 16.5.1946 to explore the possibilities of Sikh-Muslim compromise. As usual Jinnah remained uncompromising and adamant. He repeated his usual verbal assurances and guarantees and wanted Sikhs to accept his word (*The Tribune*, 18.5.1947). Obviously Jinnah was cynical as to imagine that the Sikhs would still accept his word even after what they had experienced in the shape of the Punjab and N.W.F.P. brutalities which had gone unreapproached. Therefore, the talks failed.

<sup>225</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 84-86.

These were, of course, stiff terms but they did not look impossible excepting the provision about secession. A meeting was further arranged between the Sikh leaders and Mr. Jinnah at Lahore, but the Akali leaders did not reach there and it flopped.<sup>226</sup> It looked that they were not interested in a settlement with the Muslim League. But it was not keen either. “If the Sikhs were lukewarm about a settlement, the Muslims were icy-cold”.<sup>227</sup> It was understandable that the League could not gain any thing by accepting this plan. The Sikhs seemed to have opened a dialogue with the League in the impossible hope that a free state might be conceded to them. The net result was that the Sikh-League political dialogue could not fructify. Consequently, a joint conference of the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Panthic Pritinidhi Board took place on 12 June, 1947 and disapproved of the scheme for the division of India into two sovereign states.<sup>228</sup> The Sikhs of course appreciated the principle of partition but protested that the basis of the national division of Punjab was inequitable and unjust to the Sikhs. The resolution categorically stated that no partition of Punjab, which did not preserve the solidarity and integrity of the Sikh community, would be acceptable to the Sikhs. This was further elaborated in their resolution passed at a joint meeting of the Panthic Assembly Party, the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Panthic Pritinidhi Board held on June 14, 1947 which read that:

The Punjab Boundary Commission should be given express directions to make recommendations for the transfer of the Hindu and Sikh population and property from the western part of the Punjab to the eastern part after the partition has been affected on equitable basis.<sup>229</sup>

In keeping with the Mountbatten Plan, the Punjab Assembly met on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1947. It voted by ninety-one votes to seventy-seven for a separate Constituent Assembly for Pakistan. Legislators of the two sections met separately. Those of the eastern section

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<sup>226</sup> Kapur Singh (I.C.S. Retired), *Sachi Sakhi.*, p. 98.

<sup>227</sup> Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 86.

<sup>228</sup> *The Tribune*, 13.6.1947.

<sup>229</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette.*, 15.6.1947.

decided by fifty-five votes to twenty-two for partition, while the western section opposed partition by sixty-nine votes to twenty-seven.<sup>230</sup> Malik Khizr Hayat Khan commented, “the land of five rivers as we have known it, is no more today a political entity. No Punjabi is happy over it. The economic structure of the Punjab is so interdependent that it will gravely be dislocated’.<sup>231</sup> Pirzada Abdul satar gave assurances that there was ‘no reason why Hindus should migrate elsewhere’<sup>232</sup> The Boundary Commission was appointed in early July. Sir Cyril Radcliffe was appointed the Chairman and Justices Mehar Chand Mahajan, Teja Singh and Din Muhammad and Muhammad Munir as members. On August 17, it awarded 13 out of 29 districts of the Punjab to the Indian Union.<sup>233</sup> Lahore became a city of murders and fires. About 6000 houses and of 82,000 were burnt down in the Lahore corporation Area.<sup>234</sup> In all, ten million people were uprooted from the home and another half a million massacred.<sup>235</sup>

The decade 1937-47 was pregnant with constitutional developments of immense significance in the history of the Province in general and the Sikhs in particular. Further, complications were also caused by the impact of the World War II. The August Offer of 1940 went off quietly without producing much excitement or expectation for any community. In fact the outbreak of war and the preparedness of the Congress to appease the Muslim League for the large cause of freedom depended the crisis in the Sikh Politics.<sup>236</sup> The Congress, being a representative of a majority number, always stood to gain even when its gains were not apparent. The Cripps proposals left the Muslim League quite hopeful because Pakistan could be visualized through them. The Congress leaders

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<sup>230</sup> *Mitra Register*, 1947, Vol. I, p. 78. *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 17.6.1947.

<sup>231</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 25.6.1947

<sup>232</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 26.6.1947

<sup>233</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 24.6.1947; 2.7.1947. Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47”, *Sikh History and Religion*, p.254.

<sup>234</sup> Sukhdev Singh Sohal, “A Nightmare of Two Cities: Amritsar and Lahore in 1947”, *Pre-Colonial and Colonial Punjab*, p. 415.

<sup>235</sup> Durga Das, *India from Curzon to Nehru*, Rupa, New Delhi, 1975, p.263.

<sup>236</sup> Indu Banga, “Crisis of Sikh Politics 1940-47”, *Sikh History and Religion*, 254.

started calculating in their minds about bargaining with the Muslim League. Leaders like Rajaji had started garnering ideas in that direction. The Sikhs were nowhere. The Shimla Conference and the Wavell Plan took note of the Sikhs, but in the main they also tried to parley with the League and the Congress. The demands of the Sikhs were again put on the shelf. The Cabinet Mission Proposals had nothing for the Sikhs except sympathies. The fact was that the Sikhs were a minor factor in the all-India context. The British and the Congress who were concerned primarily with the overall problem did not feel it necessary to spend much care on the Sikhs particularly because their interests clashed with the Muslims interests in the Punjab. The latter were never ignored by the Government. With these handicaps around, the Sikhs could not have done better. The contradictions the Imperial War unleashed culminated in the partition of the Punjab in August 1947 with colossal human and material loss and vivisection of Indian body politic.

2<sup>nd</sup> rough & print + corr

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## **CHAPTER VII**

### **CONCLUSION**

The present study deals with the Imperial War commonly called the World War II and its results especially in connection with the Punjab of 1939-1945. Both the terms have been used synonymously. However, for India, the character of the War was imperial one. India was unilaterally forced into the War. It was much more a World War with large scale campaigns fought not only in Europe but also in Africa and Asia. India contributed heavily with men, material and money. The Punjab contributed nearly half of the Indian army. War is a complex phenomenon rooted in the precepts and policies of a regime. It requires analysis as it influences all facets of life: economy, agriculture, irrigation, trade, commerce, industry, education as well as on the political scenario of the Punjab in particular and India in general. The Punjab Governor, H.D. Craik reported Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy on September 13, 1939, 'a remarkable wave of enthusiastic loyalty in the Punjab'. Economic interest and tradition of loyalty caused 'outburst of popular enthusiasm'. The present attempt is unfold the reality beneath such a 'loyalty' as it entailed sufferings and exploitation of men and material in the Punjab and India as well

#### **I**

The Imperial War broke out in Europe on September 3, 1939. Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, declared 'India to be a belligerent country' without taking Indian political opinion into consideration. His principle objective was to harness Indian resources- both men and material-for the War efforts. He immersed himself in the War problems. From 1939 to 1945, the Punjab was mobilized once again to support Britain in a major world conflagration. Lord Linlithgow gained fame for his organization of the Indian War effort. Within weeks, about 34,000 men were recruited to the army which included 19,000 men from the Punjab. The War heralded the 'rapid growth' of the armed forces : 1,75,000 in beginning of the War to 20 lakh in the last phase of the War. Thus, a huge host of men were raised at the rate of 70,000 per month. This happened, nevertheless, when India was 'even more unprepared in a material sense than Britain'. Indian political opinion was 'divided' one. One faction in the Congress made it an issue of democracy. The other

including Jawaharlal Nehru called it the imperial war and emphasised the concern of freedom. Subhas Chandra Bose who called it Imperialist War and decided to fight against the British. Indian National Congress wanted 'the War aims' to be declared and implementation in India after the War. Lord Linlithgow's response was 'entirely negative'. Moreover, the British harped on differences among the Indians. The Congress preferred to resign from the provincial ministries. Thus, India had been 'lugged into the War as an appendix of the British Empire', in a typical imperial drive. Hence, the War more of a imperial character that a numerical one. It proved to be 'the war for resources and war with resources'. Lord Leopold Amery, the Secretary of state for India characterized war 'as essentially a war of a machines'.

It is pertinent to mention that the World War II was a crucial phase in the history of both imperialism and the evolution of science and technology. Its results were manifold and multilayered. As the Imperial War signaled the collapse of imperialism and disintegration of the political and socio-economic systems sustaining it, it inaugurated at the same time a new world order based on new ideas, institutions and modern science and technology. The collapse of imperialism encouraged struggle for freedom in the colonies leading to freedom of several of them. The War caused erosion of imperial hold which initiated the process of 'transfer of power' in a phased manner. Curiously, however, the War set in motion contradictory trends working in opposite directions: while the people in the colonies initially came in support of their masters to face the global crisis and the latter initiated liberal reforms for socio-economic reconstruction, there the nationalist leadership in the colonies considered it as an opportune time to step up their struggle for independence. Paradoxically, both of them were successful, to an extent, in achieving their ends. However, the process gave birth to complex developments and trends that were often influenced by the factors and forces operating across the globe. Moreover, the War time policies provided opportunities to the major political and economic powers of the world to adjust their position in the changing world scenario and fashion the tools for their future operations. Hence, new players emerged on the international scene and a new power structure and equation came into being. The emergence of the United States of America as a global power and its rise in the East was perhaps the most conspicuous and representative of the trend.

Since India, particularly the Punjab on the basis of their share in Army was part of the British Empire, it got thickly involved in the War. It felt its impact in full measure. The initiative for mobilization was spearheaded largely by the Unionist Government in the Punjab. The Punjab Premier, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, called on the Punjab 'to demonstrate its sympathy for Britain in practical fashion and to maintain the splendid tradition of the Province as 'the sword arm of India'. The Premier and his Ministers toured the Punjab to drum up enthusiasm for enlistment to the Indian army. They warned their detractors. However, experiences were quite different from those of the developed countries. Here, the War accelerated the process of erosion of colonial power and her transition from colonialism to democracy. It acted as a catalyst for state initiative for material reconstruction, indicating a basic shift in the colonial policy. However, the process was not so simple as it appeared at the first glance. The fierce conflict the War ignited between imperialism and nationalism released great forces of change with immense results. Meanwhile, the internal economy passed through a period of upheavals as it was exposed to the western capitalist market forces; and when the British authorities and business interests started withdrawing from India, new players entered the scene. All this had deep and long-term implications for the developments in economy, politics and science and technology as well as the state policy governing them in this particularly in the Punjab. In a large way, India was forced to feed and clothe, pay and train, arm and equip, transport and maintain all forces. The withdrawal of large members from the land, created its own problems. Due to undeveloped resources untrained manpower, India felt 'unduly heavily the strains of the War efforts'.

Studied and seen in this background, a cursory glance at the developments in India, particularly in the sensitive border province of Punjab that presented a puzzling scenario from political view point. The popular memory in the Punjab did not conjure a picture of scientific achievements, materials rejuvenation and of economic prosperity as in the case of the West. No scientific breakthrough was recorded here; no technical innovation worthy of note took place; and the socio-scientific movement that gathered strength around the time here, had different goals and priorities than those in the West. For India, especially the Punjab, it was really a turbulent time full of political upheavals, communal riots and human miseries perpetrated by a horrific famine and other natural

calamities. Yet, it was a period of unprecedented official initiative for organizing science that led to the establishment of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the first all-India body to manage and promote the various sectors of science. It was also the period of hectic scientific technical exchanges and industrial collaborations with other countries. But none of these measures apparently appeared to have produced concrete results of basic value for the local society. This experience of our country stands in total contrast with that of the advanced countries, including Britain which ruled us. This fact is mind-boggling. Hence, the main issue has to be probed in this study and also this has to be examined in a wider perspective which calls for a look into the various aspects of the subject before any conclusive opinion is offered.

It is worth mentioning that the World War II was the period when the Indian resources, especially of the Punjab were likely to be most freely used in the interest of the British Empire and its Allies. From this point of view, it is worth while to follow the development and transformation in India, a classic colony, to find out how England used our economy in her imperial interest in the condition of War there; and no War could illustrate the better than the World War II. Several problems cropping up during the War in India had their roots in the past. The British connection with the Punjab in particular and India in general started through trade much before political control brought her under complete subjugation as their colony. Though the imperial control from London was never to end absolutely, the consolidation of the British authority in India gradually minimized its needs. No wonder, the imperial control over India and also the Punjab from London was the most overbearing in the 1940s as the period presented the greatest crisis for the Empire. The collaboration model represented by the Unionists began tottering under the contingencies of the War. Any study of the official initiatives and policy measures here during the period has to be looked at not from only the angle of India as a colony alone but also from that of the British Empire, imperialism and capitalism. Thus, imperialism and colonialism on the one and nationalism as well as indigenous response on the other constitute the most dominating backdrop for the present study-a vantage point from which to look at the developments. A glance at history may, therefore, present a vivid opinion of the going-on, since the most decisive clash between imperialism and nationalism, culminating in the end of the British rule took place around the World War

II. Moreover, examination of the colonial attitude towards economy as well as science and technology through the expansion and consolidation of the British rule in India may explain several issues of the period and provide them an appropriate prospective.

Socialism gave a great momentum against colonialism setting of the process of decolonization that was boldly catalyzed by the World War II in the Punjab in particular. The impact of the Russian Revolution was felt soon after 1917 as revolutionary factions sprang in the various parts of the country. In 1925, the Communist Party of India was constituted. By 1930, the indigenous view started visualizing the country reconstruction using some of the socialist tools like planning and industrialization. Soon, the national leadership advocated socialism as a panacea of country's problems and pleaded for all-round national reconstruction. Some of the results of socialism and the socialist experiments in the USSR ought to be at once taken note of. First, opposition of socialism to all forms of inequality and exploitation and, thus, to capitalism and imperialism; second, the encouragement and inspiration it provided to the freedom movements all over the world; and, third, its world view of progress based on modern science and technology as well as modern industries. Since a perceptible understanding of these realities was a pervasive truth in India even before the World War II began. Thus, by the time the War broke out, the British Empire and imperialism were on the defensive. The process of decolonization had started. Canada and Australia had already achieved dominion status. On the Indian sub-continent, in 1937, Burma ceded from India where the struggle from freedom had entered its last phase. The constant growing pressure from the Axis powers in both the East and West; further territorial losses during the War were shown to compel the governments in London and New Delhi to consider rethinking India's problems, especially keeping in mind the geography of the border policy. All this has to be seen and viewed in the background of development the world over, especially in the former colonies. For, this, the War was not only the greatest War of the human civilization but also a major turning point in its evolution as it brought into being a new world order that increasingly sustained itself by relying on collective wisdom, democracy and modern science. During the World War II, reconstruction was another significant cause that influenced the development of science. With Britain's declaration of War against Germany, India became a party to it; she was thus subjected to its requirements, demands

and strains. In the process, she was exposed to the happenings beyond her borders and to the myriad of global forces that accelerated the pace of her freedom struggle. The early exigencies of the War led to a number of War supply and preparatory measures, stimulating industrial activities and the training of technical personnel in India. At the outbreak of the Imperial War, the Indians army needed nearly 40,000 items of supplies. The number had grown into 60,000 at the end of the War. But as the War expanded and prolonged, the situation became worse. It demanded long term measures. Responding to the situation, the colonial government launched a massive program of all-round reconstruction based on modern lines. It was drastic change in the attitude of the British towards Indian problems.

Finally, the process of transition and globalization set in motion in the 1940s in India and all over the world, requires to be addressed to follow why the happenings in took place the way they did. For India, it was not merely a period of transition from colonialism to democracy but also one of an unprecedented exposure to the global forces of change. This offered the Punjab happy and rich prospects for interaction with the world beyond the colonial and imperial confines. Yet for a country still under subjugation and tied to the Allied cooperation, the situation was really puzzling and not certain. Whilst Germany and Japan were highly admired in India for their development and ingenuity, they were officially kept at bay as enemies of the Empire. In reality, the study of developments in various walks of the life of the province of Punjab in relation to the World War II has been a relatively slow affair even in the developed countries closely involved in the War, like Britain and the United States of America. The erstwhile colonies such as India, particularly its region of Punjab that participated in the War actively, did have their own problems in the colonial legacies and also the compulsions of their international relations pursued after the War and freedom. From this point of view, one would have hoped that the end of the Cold War would encourage nations to throw open their Wartime archives to researchers. However, this prospect was not absolutely free of their problems. The recent revelations about War crimes had stirred strong nationalist sentiments several countries embittering their international relations. Information regarding secret scientific plans and missions, experiments in chemical Warfare and field trials of military medicines were pregnant with disturbing implications

arising out of racial, religious and nationalistic discriminations. These were likely to cause problems and embarrassment. It was bound to deter authorities from declassifying records in the near future, and in several cases oblige them not to ever do so at all. As such, the War was destined to remain a most secret War of history. All these issues have obstructed research here also, where, like many other regions of the developing world, the subject is yet to open up sufficiently for historical investigation. On the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World War II, nearly one and half decade ago, a spate of literature on it was produced. However, India's share and contribution were negligible. India, especially the undivided Punjab had had additional problem despite the fact that the Western science had eclipsed the indigenous knowledge and skill. Here, it could not draw the attention of historians at provincial as well as national level at once because it was yet to address the local problems meaningfully. As a consequence, political and economic problems stole the limelight for decades after liberation.

## II

It is pertinent to point out that the present attempt is to trace out only the impact of the World War II on the province of Punjab here. We are fully aware that the World War II was one of the most significant happenings of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It was much more truly a World War, in fact, a Total War with large scale campaigns fought not only in Europe but also in Africa and Asia. India being under the British contributed heavily with men, material and money. The Punjab's share and contribution in the Indian Army was not less than 50 per cent. A large number of Punjabis were recruited in different branches of the Indian Army. Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, wrote to Lord Amery, the Secretary of State for India in March, 1942, that the Punjab supplied nearly 50 per cent of the soldiers to the Indian Army. Moreover, the War had a devastating impact on India's economic life. Every industry was 'controlled'; every commodity 'rationed' and every service 'regulated'. It also exhausted the economic resources of the colonial state in India, particularly of the Punjab. It eroded imperial hold over India. As a result, England initiated the process of withdrawal of its rule and supremacy over India which was at that time heavily in debt. Indian experienced three phases during the War : (i) 'Phoney' War. It ended with the fall of the France; (ii) The Middle Eastern Theatre. It added boom to trade and industry. The size of the army

increased; and (iii) Japanese aggression. India began to suffer the complexities of the War. Thus, India was 'lugged into the fight merely as an inanimate appendage of an insatiate Imperialism'.

Let it be noticed that during the course of the War, nearly twenty lakhs Indian joined the armed forces. It was, in fact, ten-fold increase. Winston S. Churchill, the British Prime Minister, considered the numbers upwards of 2.5 million which included volunteers. The number of combatants recruited from the Punjab went up to 8,00,000. Large scale recruitment had a great impact on the various aspects of people life in the Punjab. Potential recruits were urged to fill the ranks of the Indian Army. The civilians were mobilized to support the war industries. Rural population was rallied 'to intensify areas under cultivation through a Grow More Food Campaign'. The Punjab bore the main burden of providing cannon- fodder for the various theaters of the War, supplying more than one third of all military manpower. The civil bureaucracy operated along with the military establishment squeezing every village for manpower for the War. The Punjab Premier, Sikander Hayat Khan, 'the solider Premier' assured to Governor Henry Craik that the Punjab could supply half a million recruits for the Indian army within weeks. The Punjab collected Rs. 250 million through War Loans. In the first two years of the War, mobilization were effected with impressive results. Money collected for the War Chests was equally impressive. By the end 1941, a total of Rs. 55 million had already been collected which surpassed the donation during the World War I. In the middle of August 1941, recruitment attained a record figure of 50,000 per month. By October 1941, the figure had reached 7.5 lakh. Land grants became a source of patronage for recruitment. In 1943, the Punjab Government reserved 200 square of land to increase recruitment. Furthermore recruitment from the villages was determined by local conditions such as floods, diseases, availability of manpower and harvesting seasons. Throughout the War, the Punjabi element within the Indian Army never dropped below three-fifth of its total strength. Especially, the Punjabi soldiers shed their blood for the British imperialism in Europe, Africa, Middle East, South East Asia and the Far East. The troops proved masters of rigours and intricacies of desert warfare. In the late 1942, there appeared signs of War-weariness. Coercion began to be used to sustain the supply of recruits. Quotas were fixed for the *Sarpanches* and revenue officials. Hence, hostility towards the War

and the Unionist Party increased. Moreover, the colonial state had become more interventionist. The officer associated with the Government began to hate in the villages. The number of deserters increased. The recruitment was extended to 'non-martial classes'. The Punjabi Muslims there ratio in the Army. The ratio of the Jat Sikhs decreased. They traveled throughout the world during various campaigns. They came in contact with the subjects of various countries. This contact changed their outlook and thus broadened their vision. Above all, these recruits sent huge amounts out of their salaries to their families (parents and other relatives). This economic strength raised their standard of living. Large sums of money flowed into the Punjab's villages. In 20 villages in the Ludhiana district during April 1943-November 1944, over Rs. 20,000 were sent each month by army recruits. The War added stimulus to the rural economy. Under the 'Grow More Food', area under the cultivation increased from 30 million acres in 1939 to 35 million acres in 1943. With increased agricultural income the farmers covered redeemed mortgaged land : 203,669 acres in 1940 to 482,641 in 1942. *Pucca* houses were built even in the rural areas; some families bought agriculture land in their villages if they did not have it before the War. To some extent 'leveling of class' did take place in the province.

After the close of the Imperial War, several recruits were retrenched. The demobilization brought of number of Indian Army from the highest figure of 2 million in July 1945 down to 5 Lakh in July 1947. Still there were a few, who got permanent commission in the army. In 1939, for every Indian there were 10.1 British officers. In 1945, there were only 4.1 British officers which paved the way towards total Indianisation of the Army. They indeed rose to a very high post when the British officers departed immediately after the freedom of India in 1947. A large number of soldiers were demobilized. It caused massive unemployment. By the end of 1946, less than 20 per cent of the ex-servicemen registered with employment exchanges had found work. The speedy end of the War in Asia took the Unionists by surprise. The Unionists Government could pay to the returning soldiers 'a meagre bonus of Rs. 5 per head and 50,000 acres of land for a million soldiers in the Punjab'. They joined agriculture, trade, transport and even political activity. Furthermore, a large number of Punjabi soldiers became the Prisoners of War (POW) whereas the British Commanders surrendered their weapons/arms before

the victor Japanese after Singapore's siege. At a number of other places, the Germans captured the Punjabi soldiers and made them prisoners. In all, they numbered more than 40,000 including 20,000 from the Punjab under the leadership of General Mohan Singh. But, soon these troops joined the Indian National Army of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. They fought against the British in Burma and Malaya fronts. This was the direct impact on the Indian National Army.

The immediate impact of the War on economy of the province of Punjab was not very healthy. It entailed heavy economic expenditure. The Government diverted funds to defence. The colonial military budget may have been detrimental for the Indian economy as a whole, but military expenditure benefited Punjab and the recruited Punjabis. The money supply was increased to finance the deficit. It rose from about Rs. 3 billion in 1939 to Rs. 22 billion in 1945. Money supply with the Public increased by Rs. 1776 crore between 1939 and 1945: it rose to about 7 times the pre-war level. It caused massive inflation, causing serious erosion of real incomes. In fact, the war economy came to be characterized by 'galloping inflation'. The inflationary pressure emanated largely from the massive expansion in public expenditure. Between 1939 and 1945 nearly Rs. 3.5 billion were spent on defence purposes in India. During the six years of War (1939-1945), the Indian Government spent not less than Rs. 17,400 million on behalf of the United Kingdom. India's defence expenditure increased from Rs. 495 million in 1939-40 to Rs. 3913 million in 1945-46. India paid in at least Rs. 1900 million to the Empire Dollar Pool until October 1946. The exports of Indian agricultural and industrial products to Britain increased. It liquidated Indian debt to Britain. Thus, Britain became indebted to India in 1945 to the tune of more than £1,300 million which was one-fifth of Britain's GNP. The entire sum was kept out of reach of the Indian people during the War. Many industries suffered great loss; their exports were drastically cut down. The disastrous raids of German submarines led to the sinking of many British ships. As a result, the merchants did not dare to export the manufactured goods. Besides, it had positive economic impact also.

A large number of Punjabi youth got employment abroad; they were paid fairly handsome salaries, which resulted in improving the economic condition and position of several families in the state of Punjab. New industries such as surgical factories were

established. Large scale preparation of War ammunition and arms led to the rise and growth of these industries. This way, Indian became a major supply base. Several barracks were built for the large army. This provided work to the contractors and jobs to the labours and masons. Its few benefits such as windfall gains and super-profits for the capitalists and employment opportunities for the middle classes were for out-weighted by the ravages and miseries wrought by it. There were some adverse effects on the economy as well. Food could not be imported from abroad either because those countries were occupied by the enemies of the British or because of attacks of Germans submarine. It became difficult to import rice and other food grains. The prices of food grains increased which benefited the peasants to some extent. The prosperity of the *Zamindars* affected the recruitment drive. In mid May 1943, it was noticed that ‘the prosperity of *zamindars* coupled with harvesting operations worked against recruitment’. With high wheat prices, the revenue demand could be met by the sale of a very small portion of the produce. The recruited peasantry ‘benefited’ directly from the British Indian army. Pay and pensions bolstered economic capabilities, close interaction with the British raised social standing and the policies the government strengthened the political position of those supposedly martial races. Overall, the Hindus and Sikhs benefited more from the War than the Muslims as they resorted to large-scale profiteering and often got official patronage. By 1943, scarcities began to be felt in the markets V.K. R.V. Rao argued that the main reasons for the price rise lay in the shortages caused by low production and by speculation. “Grow More Food” campaign was launched in the Punjab. The official Gazette announced the control of prices of flour, oils, vegetables, milk, butter, meat fruits, coarse cloth etc. The black market thrived. The Lahore Retail Price Index shot up from a base of 100 in August 1939 to 398 in 1946. It brought untold miseries and suffering of the mass of workers and peasants. Wage cuts were announced. The Government of India introduced statutory price control. It proved extremely unpopular with wheat producing cultivators in the Punjab. It was Sir Chhotu Ram, then Revenue Minister, Punjab who advised the peasants not to sell their crops at lower prices. The Viceroy called it ‘ruthless political opportunism’ and asked to the Punjab Governor ‘to admonish him (Chootu Ram) very severely’. The Governor, Sir B.J. Glancy tried to defend Chhotu Ram. However, the Viceroy did not budge. The Punjab Government

questioned the Policy of requisitioning from small landholders. The Policy was unpopular as it agitated the supporters of the Unionist Government under duress from the Central Government Party. The Unionists resorted to force to requisition grain from the villages. This caused disturbances in Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Ferozepur in the early 1946. Under the War's pressure, inflation crept in economy due to the money supply in 1939-1945 that had increased five-fold. Due to inflation, the industrialists and war-contractors made huge profits. The middle classes particularly in the urban areas found it extremely difficult to make both ends meet. Shortage of food grains led to the introduction of rationing of food. Food prices in wartime Britain rose about 18 per cent; in India about 300 for rationed foods. With economic dislocation, the position of the Unionist Party became precarious. The Wheat Commissioner of India, in consultation with the Punjab Government agreed to allow exports of wheat and wheat products to the maximum permissible limit of 9 lakh tons during 1942. In March 1942, the export of Wheat was criticised in the Legislative Assembly. Even then between May and October 1943, 265,100 tons of foods triffs were dispatched from the Punjab to Bengal. Since the prices in U.P. were higher, large scale food grain smuggling began from the East Punjab. As the grain prices recovered in 1945, the farmers tended to hold back the grains for higher returns. By December 1945, many towns in the Canal Colonies faced a 'Wheat famine'. The Punjab Government decided to build up buffer stock of 40,000 tons of wheat. It was generally believed that the War and the high prices would bring about equality. The war brought to the fields of Punjab a time of unprecedented prosperity. The Punjab ate more, were ford, and silver, gulped drum ghee with tea. The pricing policy 'disclosed the power or lack of various social classes in India. Moreover, the War saw the beginning of economic planning. So, a separate Department of Planning was established in 1944 for the first time to regulate the work of development.

Also there was a socio-cultural impact of the War. A large number of *Punjabi* youths left their homes in order to join different War theaters, so they went to far away places. Thousands of them lost their lives in the battle-fields. Many were severely wounded. An equal number of men were disabled for life. All these happenings had an adverse impact on the society. There were thousands of young widows and orphaned children. Several elder parents lost their young sons. A few young military men brought

non-Indian wives. All these caused socio-cultural tension, rather disastrous. There were certain effects on the cultural and religious life too. As many youths went to foreign lands, a few were converted to other religions. Of course, this happened only in some cases. Owing to foreign contacts and mixing up of men of different provinces, regions and countries more liberal cultural outlook was developed. At the same time, the War left deep impact upon the administrative structure of the province. No doubt, the War entailed huge economic burden on the masses. The World War I cost the Indians Rs 550 crore which included the free gift of Rs. 190 crore made by the Government of India to the British Exchequer. The World War II was more costlier for the Indians: Rs. 1135 crore without counting the charges for the additional indebtedness incurred on account of the War. A huge amount was raised by voluntary or forced donations for its funds. Certain new taxes were also levied. India's contribution in the War finance was 'substantial', perhaps 'beyond her ability'. Major portion of the Punjab budget was diverted for War efforts. Consequently, development work suffered set back. The colony 'reeled under the heavy yoke of the War efforts'. Despite this, Winston S. Churchill felt that 'India was doing nothing' on the war front. Famine, inflation, scarcity, hoarding and black-marketing plagued the land. Moreover, the Government could not spend very liberally on education and health services as well as other social welfare schemes. Indeed, there was a sliver lining. Sometimes, new roads, bridges, hospitals or railway lines were constructed to meet the needs of the army only. These were used by the people during the War time as well as after the War. Moreover, the radio propaganda of the Axis Powers contributed in no small measure to disconcert the masses. The radio broadcasts from Germany and Japan aggravated the panic among the people. In March 1942, the Punjab Government registered 'a growing receptivity of the population for radio broadcasts of Axis Powers' and considered steps against owners of radio licenses.

The political parties and their politics were equally affected by the results of this War. The Unionist Party was the most concerned party during the War period. Sir Sikander Hayat Khan remained the Premier or Chief Minister during 1937-1942, till his sudden demise due to heart failure. He showed 'unreserved support for Britain'. Malik Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana became the Premier, who held this post till the elections of 1945-1946. Though the Unionists suffered a severe set back; All India Muslim League

was able to carry away majority of the Muslim seats, yet Khizr Hayat Khan was able to form a coalition ministry with the help of Congress and Akalis. The Unionist Party gave whole-hearted support to the British during the total period of the War as it remained in power from 1937 to 1946. It helped raise a nearly a million recruits for the Indian Army. It organised savings and 'Grow More Food' campaigns on a massive scale. Such a notable contribution to the War effort undermined their popularity. Consequently, the Muslim League surged ahead. The Muslim League officially opposed the War efforts but encouraged the Muslims to join the army implicitly. In fact, the War turned a blessing in disguise for the Muslim League. It developed only during the war to a party of the Muslim masses. The Britain could court on a largely cooperative attitude of the Muslims and depend on a 'calculated loyalty' of Jinnah. For Winston S. Churchill, the Muslim League and the Congress, 'the great Indian political parties were 'either activity hostile or gave no help'. The British War efforts found no serious threat in the Punjab. The Sikhs found an opportunity to enter into the army. The loyalist Sikhs came forward. This was important as in the wake of the Gurdwara Reform Movement (1920-25) the proportion of the Sikhs in the army had been reduced from 20 per cent to 13 per cent. The Indian National Congress did not support War efforts of the British, it rather resisted it. However, the influence of the Congress on the Army was minimal. It began individual *Satyagraha* in 1940. It too launched Quit India Movement in 1942. Its major leaders were arrested: The *Ahrar* and the *Khaksar* parties sided more with the nationalist view point, but as they were not very powerful, their resistance did not cause much harm to the War efforts of the British. The Communist considered the War as 'imperialist' one. Communist cells 'incited labour unrest exploited local grievous and spread alarmist rumours in their attempt to disrupt mobilization efforts'. The *Hindu Mahasabha* was not very effective in this province. It never openly opposed the War efforts of the British. For the Sikh leaders, the War created 'a crisis of conscience'. On the question of War efforts, however, the Sikhs were divided. Some of their leaders wanted to give whole-hearted support to the British War efforts whereas some others took part in the Individual *Satyagraha* and the Quit India Movement. On the whole, the British were able to get a good number of recruits for their army especially in the Punjab. Certain Sikh *Rajas* liberally contributed to the War funds. The titled gentry of the Chief Khalsa Diwan

promptly declared their support for Britain. The Akalis were 'the most confused'. They had suffered at the hands of the British, yet they wanted increased numerical strength of the Sikhs in the armed forces. Thus, they pressed for more Sikhs recruitment. The Maharaja of Patiala organized Khalsa Defence of India League 'to step up recruitment'. Thus, the Sikh politician had to be both 'a political guide and a recruiting agent'. Moreover, the outbreak of War and the preparedness of the Congress to appease the Muslim League for the large cause of freedom deepened the crisis in the Sikhs politics.

It is interesting to note that the Communists proclaimed that the British were fighting an Imperialist War, so they resisted and firmly opposed the British War efforts. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1941, Adolf Hitler, German Nazi dictator attacked the USSR. Joseph Stalin welcomed the German challenge. He offered a mighty resistance. In the early stages of the War, Indian Communists changed their policy as well as attitude. They declared that with the German attack upon the USSR, it had become 'a People's War' and gave full assistance to the Allied Powers thenceforth. On the other hand, the All India Muslim League was not very strong; it got merely two seats in the 1937 elections in Punjab. Gradually, the League started gaining more popular support. The Sikander-Jinnah Pact further enhanced its influence. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1940, a Resolution demanding separate state was passed in the Muslim League session held in Lahore. The arrest of many Congress leaders during the Individual *Satyagraha* and Quit India Movement created a vacuum and the Muslim League greatly succeeded in increasing its influence. So far as the War efforts were concerned the Muslim League did not oppose it, rather it tried to criticize the Congress on all issues.

Thus, the Imperial War provided more graphic picture of ruthless exploration of resources and people of India by Britain. In relation to the world conflict, which S. Churchill never considered Indian Army, 'swollen one. However, its impact on the colonial economy in India was tremendous state starved' the Indian lower classes and satisfied the sectional interests of the Indian upper classes. The War eroded the hold of the Colonial State in India. It buckled the systems of local British control in the Punjab. As the War came to an end in Europe, India and the Punjab as well continued to suffer shortages, inflation, and black market. With the military demand down industrial activity suffered 'considerable decline.' Handloom industry suffered from the paucity of yarn.

Concerns manufacturing surgical instruments were paralyzed due to fall in demand and export restrictions. The industries of the Punjab had to pass through a phase of acute strain. In distress, workers were thrown out of employment. Moreover, Imperial War and its contingencies to recruit men and requisition food grains turned the Unionist formation interventionist eroding its base among the rural populace manifested in the elections of 1945-46. Retrospectively, the War experience assumes significance in the traumatic times of 1947. It has been established beyond doubt that the retrenched military men who were well-acquainted with the use of weapons, took leading part in the communal riots during the partition of the Punjab in 1947. Deadly weapons and military uniforms were easily available which created traps for the fleeing refugees to the both sides of the borders. Military style organization added ferocity to the partition violence. Thus, the contradictions the Imperial War unleashed culminated in the partition of the Punjab in August 1947 with colossal human and material loss and vivisection of Indian body politic.

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