

**FIGHTING FOR SIKH CAUSES IN
INDIAN PARLIAMENT**

(Icon of Parliament)

**FIGHTING FOR SIKH CAUSES IN
INDIAN PARLIAMENT**

**Speeches Of Hukam Singh, Kapur Singh,
Khushwant Singh And Tarlochan Singh In Indian
Parliament**

Edited by

Hardev Singh Virk



Arsee Publishers

FIGHTING FOR SIKH CAUSES IN INDIAN PARLIAMENT

(Icon of Parliament)

Edited by

Hardev Singh Virk

Arsee Publishers, 51 Parada Bagh, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-2

Website [http : www.arseepublishers.com](http://www.arseepublishers.com)

Email : arseepublishers@rediffmail.com

All rights reserved. No part of this Publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying recording or otherwise without prior permission in writing from both Author and Publisher.

ISBN 978-81-8299-512-3

© 2021

Publisher : **Arsee Publishers**, 51 Parada Bagh, Darya Ganj,
New Delhi-110002

Website [http : www.arseepublishers.com](http://www.arseepublishers.com)

Phone : 23280657, 65966481

Email : arseepublishers@rediffmail.com

Printer : **Arsee Printers**, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110002
Setting : (Tegh Computer) Delhi-9

Price : 250/- Rupees

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	7
Foreword : Vikramjit Singh Sahney	8
Preface : Pritam Singh	11
1. Introduction : Hardev Singh Virk	23
2. Hukam Singh's Speech on "Sikh Grievances"	33
3. Kapur Singh's Speech on "Betrayal of the Sikhs"	46
4. Khushwant Singh's Speech on "Operation Blue Star"	60
5. Khushwant Singh's Speech on "Massacre of Sikhs in Delhi"	74
6. Tarlochan Singh's Speech on "1984 Sikh Genocide"	79
7. Profiles of the Contributing Members of Parliament	92

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of Sardar Harcharan Singh (Ex-Chief Secretary, SGPC) and Sardar Tarlochan Singh (Ex-MP) for providing all help in collecting the Speeches of four Sikh Parliamentarians included in this Volume. The text of Speeches has been provided by the Library Staff of Parliament and they deserve our gratitude. Vikramjit Singh Sahney, President, World Punjabi Organisation, New Delhi deserves our sincere thanks for sponsoring this project.

Foreword

The project of publication of Speeches delivered in the Indian Parliament by the four Sikh parliamentarians (Hukam Singh, Kapur Singh, Khushwant Singh and Tarlochan Singh) fighting for the Sikh Causes was conceived by Sardar Harcharan Singh (Ex-Chief Secretary, SGPC) to bring it to the notice of Sikh diaspora and intellectuals interested in the study of ethnology at the global level. He collected the text material for this volume from the Library of Indian Parliament and started the process of vetting the speeches when all of a sudden he died of heart attack. Before his death, he left the copy of the speeches with Professor Hardev Singh Virk, a well known Sikh Scholar, who prepared a Critique of the speeches which got overwhelming response when published in Asia Samachar and the Sikh Review. The job of editing the manuscript has been carried out by Professor Virk painstakingly.

Sikhs have been torch-bearers during the freedom movement in India. Before the Partition of India, Sikhs were acknowledged as the best agriculturists of India who contributed 40 percent of revenue to Punjab state exchequer while their population was a mere 15 percent in the united Punjab, in comparison to 30 percent Hindus and 54 percent

Muslims. The odds were heavy against the Sikhs just before and after the Partition of India. They dismissed the idea to carve out an independent Sikh state and their leaders preferred to join India.

Despite all these handicaps, the Sikhs have flourished in India. They have made their presence felt in all continents. In Canada, they have created a niche in the Parliament by electing 18 MPs to the Canadian Parliament. Their representation has improved in the British parliament and elsewhere. During his last visit to India, Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, announced with pride that Canada has more Sikh MPs (18) compared with their number (13) in the Indian Parliament.

I am delighted that this booklet will provide an inkling into the Sikh issues presented by four well known Sikh parliamentarians in the Indian Parliament. Both Hukam Singh and Kapur Singh made an outstanding contribution in highlighting the majoritarian bias against the minorities in the Indian parliament. The Sikhs had to fight a long political battle for carving out a Punjabi speaking state under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956. Khushwant Singh and Tarlochan Singh recapitulated the events leading to Sikh genocide and its aftermath by presenting the Sikh Cause assiduously.

Professor Pritam Singh has made some valuable suggestions in his Preface. He recommends that speeches of other Sikh and non-Sikh parliamentarians from Punjab need to be analysed critically to know if they have made

any worthwhile contribution to the development of Punjab. I wish Sikh Scholars undertake such studies for making Punjab a leading state of India at cultural, economic and political levels. I appreciate the editing work done by Professor HS Virk to bring out this volume. I feel honoured to write the Foreword of this historical document.

Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Padma Shri

International President, World Punjabi Organisation,
New Delhi.

Preface

Professor Hardev Singh Virk has done a commendable job as an Editor to publish the speeches delivered by four eminent Sikhs in India's Parliament fighting for the Sikh causes. This book provides a useful contribution to Punjab and Sikh studies by initiating a new field of archival research in these areas, as well as by making an addition to Indian parliamentary studies. Though the criterion for selecting these four speeches has not been specified, it can be inferred that each speech refers to a critical point in India's post-1947 political history where the relationship between India and the Sikhs as a community and Punjab as a state was under utmost stress and scrutiny. Sardar Hukam Singh's speech addresses India's constitution, Sardar Kapur Singh's speech discusses the linguistic reorganisation of Punjab in 1966, Sardar Khushwant Singh's one speech is on Operation Bluestar and the other is on the November 1984 Delhi massacre and Sardar Tarlochan Singh's speech considers the genocidal violence against the Sikhs in November 1984.

I hope that this initiative of Prof. Virk will inspire another collection of speeches focussed on Operation Bluestar (the June 1984 Indian army assault on the Golden Temple). Though Sardar Tarlochan Singh's speech does

refer briefly to the assault, its historical significance in shaping India-Sikh relations deserves a separate collection of speeches made by Sikhs and non-Sikhs in India's parliament. In addition to this, two important parliamentary speeches come to mind which attracted a great deal of media attention: Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala's speech covering the same operation but focusing on the anti-Sikh violence of November 1984, and Bibi Harsimart Kaur Badal's speech almost exclusively addressing the November violence against Sikhs. It is perhaps a reflection of changing political conditions in India that, while Khushwant Singh's speech denouncing Operation Bluestar had led to an unprecedented Hindu backlash against him, in parliament and outside, which terrified him and for the rest of his life largely silenced his criticism of the Indian state on issues concerning the Sikhs, the speeches by Barnala and Badal were accepted with hesitant sympathy.

Viewed from the perspective of assessing Punjabi parliamentarians' interventions or non-interventions on issues concerning Punjab, a very fruitful research project could lie in compiling speeches by members of parliament from Punjab belonging to all the main political/ideological tendencies in Punjab: Akali, Congress, Jan Sangh/BJP, Communist, non-Communist socialist and Dalit/BSP; and making a comparative analysis of those speeches. AAP can be also added to this list as a party with an ambiguous ideological orientation. Such a project could also reveal those members of parliament from Punjab who never spoke during their tenure or spoke very little. The value of a comparative analysis can be further enhanced if in addition

to the ideological tendencies, the impact of different identities – religious, gender, class, linguistic (including educational qualifications) and caste – of the parliament members making or not making speeches is taken into account.

Of the speeches in this collection, the one by Kapur Singh and, even more forcefully, the two by Hukam Singh, allude to the majoritarian bias in the making of Indian constitution. I have referred to the speeches of Hukam Singh and Bhupinder Singh Mann, the two Sikh representatives in the Constituent Assembly that drafted the Indian constitution, in my paper analysing Hindu bias in the allegedly secular constitution of India (*Third World Quarterly*, Volume 26, Issue 6, 2005, 909-26). I emphasized the fact that neither of these Sikh representatives approved and signed the final constitution passed by the Constituent Assembly.

In his criticism of the Indian constitution, Hukam Singh touched on many general issues which he viewed as having grave implications for the Sikh community. He was particularly incisive in commenting on the imbalance of power between the legislature and the judiciary in India, where the legislature was dominant. He articulated a fear, shared by many other members of the Constituent Assembly, that the legislature might accumulate unwarranted powers that could be used in various ways to further strengthen its power. It is worth quoting him on this:

“In our Constitution a compromise [balance of power

between legislature and judiciary] has been effected which is impossible. We have imposed prohibitions on the Legislature, thus conceding that there is danger from that side, and then proceeded to permit the legislature itself to restrict the liberty. The feared robber is made the judge and the possible trespasser the sole arbiter. This is a clear deception”.

His remarks on the dangers of the provisions for emergency powers have proved to be prophetic: “Then again there are emergency provisions. As soon as there is a declaration under 358 on the report of a Governor or Rajpramukh, all liberties worth the name come to an end. The mere Proclamation of Emergency ought not to have been allowed to abrogate civil liberties”.

He remarked on the provisions regarding the procedure for the election of the President of India by criticising the fact that the President is elected by a party commanding a majority in the parliament and state assemblies, which removes the status of the President as a neutral arbiter when the party in power comes into conflict with the opposition.

Hukam Singh, as a representative of the minority Sikh community, excelled himself in viewing various provisions of the Constitution from the angle of majority-minority relations. His statement was outstanding: “The majority can oppress, it can even suppress the minority; but it cannot infuse contentment or satisfaction by these methods [denial of safeguards for protecting Sikh concerns]”.

Given that the Akali Dal had struggled for over twenty years before finally succeeding in gaining acceptance for a Punjabi speaking state, it might initially seem odd that Kapur Singh, an Akali Dal MP, should have criticized the Punjab Reorganisation Bill. However, if we look at his speech in the overall historical context that he outlined, his criticism becomes understandable. Highlighting the misuse of judiciary, he noted: "...if there is one political crime greater than any other, the ruling party has committed during the post-Independence era, it is frequent employment of judiciary".

Kapur Singh made an outstanding contribution in highlighting the majoritarian bias in the Indian parliament: "...the Sikhs are aware that, under the existing constitutional arrangements, they cannot send more than a couple of their own representatives to the Parliament and even they may not always be heard freely. How many times has it happened in this House in the recent past, that particular Members of the minority communities have been made aware, in no uncertain manner, that they must not-must never-say this thing or that, or else a hearing might be denied them, disciplinary wrath of the House has fuelled on individuals, without hearing them and without letting them subsequently submit that their punishment was not in order?"

To that indictment by Kapur Singh of the majoritarian bias in India's parliament, it is worthwhile to add Tarlochan Singh's indictment: "...[About] oppression of the Sikh community, all forget and tend to make excuses.

Whenever we try to speak about it [November 1984 anti-Sikh violence] our speech is interrupted... I am thankful to Chairman and Deputy Chairman for allowing the discussion for the first time after 25 years in this House. We were not allowed to discuss this issue earlier and even a motion of this was dissuaded in the Parliament”.

Tarlochan Singh referred particularly to the role of the police, the judiciary and the central government in demonstrating majoritarian institutional bias. He rightly questioned the use of the word ‘riot’ to describe the genocidal anti-Sikh violence in 1984: “My first objection is to calling this as riots by the Minister. What are riots? Home Minister is himself a lawyer. Riot takes place when there is fight between two groups. Our[s] was not a riot? Ours was what happened in case of Jews by Hitler in 1942-43, i.e. genocide, massacre, holocaust”.

He brought to the notice of the parliament one very gruesome case of targeted violence led by Delhi police against a retired Sikh army man who was trying to defend his family: “... even a gallantry awardee who fought in 1971 war, when his house was attacked, then to defend his house stood there with his revolver. What happened next? Then under the command of Amod Kant DCP the police attacked his house, arrested him and put him in jail for defending himself. The whole of his family was murdered and Amod Kant was given a Gallantry Award by the Government”.

Tarlochan Singh boldly invoked the UNO convention on Genocide and Article 7 of International criminal court

of crimes against humanity to demand from India's Supreme Court a trial of the guilty for the November 1984 violence:

“Today in the court of world our appeal is that there is a convention of UNO; our demand is that the Supreme court should set up a mechanism under Article 2 of the UNO convention on Genocide and Article 7 of International criminal court of crimes against humanity. The Supreme Court of India should come forward under the Act; otherwise the judiciary would be equally responsible. Today standing here I am saying that we don't have faith in the Judiciary”.

Sardar Khushwant Singh tore apart the lies of the Government— controlled media and the press subservient to the Government on Operation Blue Star. He elaborated: “We were told first that no woman had been killed. Then we were told 13 women had been killed. Then we were told that it was one of Bhindranwale's grenades that killed the 13 women. We were told by the press, “from reliable sources,” page 1, column 1, that Bhindranwale has been killed by his own colleagues. On the third day it was said, Bhindranwale died in his own hand — on page 5, and finally it was said, no, he died fighting. We had the same kind of story about the discovery of heroin, of loose women—all taken up by this subservient press, and then they suddenly vanished or contradictions were published on page 3, bottom of column 8. This is the result of censorship.”

He pointed out the degree of alienation the Sikhs were feeling: “It is unfortunate that the Sikhs who prided

themselves as the first class citizens of this country are now regarded as something worse than third class citizens. As my friend, Shri Mohunta, pointed out the other day, the discrimination has not stopped. You have to go to any airport or travel by road or rail in Northern India to see how a Sikh is treated. You will know what the discrimination is. You are constantly questioned. Even at the Srinagar airport this morning only the Sikh passengers were photographed when they were coming. Search is carried out and their cars are checked at the entry points. This discrimination is undoubtedly restricted to the bearded Sikh. Is it not really wrong of them now to ask, "do Indians still regarded us as fellow Indians"?"

He touched on the role of the army cautiously but boldly: "I am now treading on a very sensitive ground but I think it should be recorded. And that is the role of the Army. We have treated the Army as a sacred cow. What has been done in Amritsar should go on record. I first draw your attention to this report in the Times of London dated 14th June based on Associated Press account which mentions that a number of Sikhs who were taken prisoner with their hands tied behind and shot in the head in cold blood. I have not heard a single word of.... (Interruptions). Let the Government contradict it. This is the most serious allegation made. There are other equally painful things from people living in Amritsar..."

On the 1984 November genocide, by narrating his own experience, he highlighted the degree of insecurity every Sikh, however highly placed, experienced: "I was at the

receiving end of it... Sir, the assassination took place in the morning of 31st October (1984): the Prime Minister's death was announced in the afternoon and the violence began immediately afterwards starting from All-India Institute of Medical Sciences and then spread. The pattern was almost the same. The victims were invariably Sikhs. It was assumed that they shared some of the guilt of what these two assassins had done. In my own case, I live in a middle-class area near Khan Market. First, violence took place at night. Some cars standing outside the house were burnt. It continued the whole of next day. In the morning, a Gurdwara next door to me was burnt. Then, one taxi was burnt and destroyed. Shops were looted alongside; they picked up Sikh shops. I wish to emphasize that right through these days, from the 31st (October) afternoon to 1st and 2nd (November), the police was always present, always witnessing what was going on and nothing was done. Personally rang up the police station many times; I was promised that they would come to our assistance; they did not come, and ultimately even a person like me who was not expected to stand to this kind of violence had to leave my house, because I thought if my house was to be burnt, at least I would save my own life and sought shelter in a foreign embassy...in the Swedish Embassy...nobody came to my protection...".

He then provided some figures on the loss of lives and property the Sikhs had suffered, and the likely long-term consequences for India of this genocide: "In these two days, 6000 innocent Sikhs were massacred. At least 900 women were widowed 50,000 Sikhs were rendered homeless and

were removed to refugee camps; thousands of crores (1 crore is 10 million) worth of property of the Sikhs was destroyed... This time the victims were Sikhs... Now the tiger has tasted blood. This time, it was us. Next time, it will be all of you. If it happens again, there will be no Sikh. This time, it will be the propertied persons who will be the victims. I hope, what happened last time is not a precedent. If it is a precedent and you have to justify it... then, there is very little hope for the country”.

He ended his speech by making prophetic remarks: “unless the guilty are identified and punished, mark my words, there will be no settlement of the Punjab problem and there will be no peace in this country”.

Prof Virk’s collection of speeches can be considered to fulfill at least two objectives: first, it allows Punjabis in India and abroad, particularly the Sikhs, not only to investigate the role of some of the Sikh/Punjabi representatives in the Indian parliament, but also to increase their awareness of their standing in the Indian federation. Second, it helps researchers studying the Indian parliament to gain an understanding of the role of some of the Sikh/Punjabi representatives.

Finally, this collection also raises the necessity of another research project specifically in the fields of media and parliamentary studies: to study how much attention the Indian media gave to these speeches when they were made. Media coverage of speeches made in parliament is selective. If certain speeches were ignored or mentioned

only marginally, especially in the mainstream media, the majority of the Indian population will be ignorant of the issues raised. A collection of speeches such as these plays a significant part in liberating them from the records of parliamentary proceedings and presenting them to a wider readership. This collection, therefore, is most welcome from the angle of dissemination of knowledge.

I hope and trust that Sardar Tarlochan Singh and Professor Virk will make every effort to ensure that a copy of this collection reaches as many members and former members of India's parliament and of Punjab's state assembly as possible, to provide not only information, but also inspiration to democratically elected representatives to raise similar issues of wider public concern.

Pritam Singh

Professor Emeritus, Oxford Brookes Business School,
Oxford Brookes University,
Oxford (UK)

8 January, 2021.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Indian Parliament came into existence on 26 January 1950 when Indian Constitution was adopted and this auspicious day is being celebrated as Republic Day in India. In the intervening period from 15th August 1947 to 26 January 1950, it was Constituent Assembly of India which was running the affairs of government. The Constituent Assembly of India was elected to write the Constitution of India. There are two houses of Indian Parliament: Rajya Sabha (Upper house) with 245 Members and Lok Sabha (Lower House) with 543 Members.

The objective of this booklet is to highlight the contributions of four prominent members of Indian Parliament who fought for the Sikh Causes in the Indian Parliament. Out of these four, Hukam Singh was a Member of the Constituent Assembly; Kapur Singh was elected Member of Lok Sabha; Khushwant Singh and Tarlochan Singh were both Members of the Rajya Sabha. Out of the four, only Tarlochan Singh is living at present and a prime mover and motivator for me to undertake this publication.

Hukam Singh (1895-1983) was elected to the Constituent Assembly of India on 30 April 1948 as a member of the Shiromani Akali Dal. He actively participated in the Constituent Assembly's debates, and only a year after his entry was nominated to the panel of its chairmen. He continued to be on the panel till his unanimous election as Deputy Speaker on 20 March 1956, this even though he was a member of the Opposition. He was one of the two Sikh Members, the other being Bhupinder Singh Mann, who did not sign the Indian Constitution in protest against providing no guarantees to the Sikhs, as promised by the leaders of Indian National Congress, for joining India. His speech in the assembly is remarkable and full of pithy comments on the basic structure, articles and schedules of the Indian Constitution.

An overview of speech delivered by Hukam Singh shows that he anticipated some impending dangers of Indian Constitution being adopted. He has been vindicated on many counts:

1. He warned about Emergency provisions: "*The mere Proclamation of Emergency ought not to have been allowed to abrogate civil liberties*". Hukam Singh stood vindicated when Emergency was imposed by PM, Indira Gandhi, in June 1975.

2. He was a visionary who predicted the future state of affairs in India: "*The majority can oppress, it can even suppress the minority; but it cannot infuse contentment or satisfaction by these methods*".

3. He highlighted the Sikh problems diligently: *“The whole economy of the Sikh community depended upon agriculture and army service”*. The ongoing Kisan Morcha is a reflection of his fears.

4. He spoke boldly about the reasons for rejection of Indian Constitution by the Sikhs: *“The Sikhs feel utterly disappointed and frustrated. They feel that they have been discriminated against. Let it not be misunderstood that the Sikh community has agreed to this Constitution. I wish to record an emphatic protest here. My community cannot subscribe its assent to this historic document”*.

5. We must appreciate the futuristic vision of Hukam Singh who predicted that Indian State can catapult itself to a fascist state: *“This shall consequently facilitate the development of administration into a fascist State for which there is enough provision in our Constitution”*. It is going to happen during our lifetime, if the present trends of Indian polity are true indicators of future of Indian democracy.

Kapur Singh (1909-1986) was a renowned scholar of Sikhism. He was a vociferous orator in Indian Parliament and he participated in almost all debates concerning Punjab and Sikh issues. Out of his many speeches, we may refer to just two: (i) Causes of Sikh Unrest, and (ii) Betrayal of the Sikhs. The modus operandi in both these speeches is same, as there is a common thread of blame game running between the two, though they were delivered on different occasions for different purposes. This speech included in this volume was

delivered by him on 6th September, 1966 in Lok Sabha. He became popular among the Sikhs due to his Anandpur Sahib resolution of 1973 which is a magna carta of Sikhs' demands and aspirations.

Kapur Singh's speech on Bill for reorganisation of Punjab state dilates on eight different controversial issues concerning the Sikhs. He had discussed most of these issues in his popular book "*Sachi Sakhi*". I may refer to just two issues in my introduction:

1. When in 1954, Master Tara Singh reminded Pandit Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, of the solemn undertaking previously given to the Sikhs on behalf of the majority community by passing resolutions for providing safeguards to the Sikhs in free India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru coolly replied, "*the circumstances have now changed.*"

2. The ramifications of this reorganisation act of Punjab on the linguistic basis are being felt till today after more than fifty years of its enactment by the Indian Parliament. The injustices done to Punjab by sharing its water resources and power resources; merging Punjabi speaking areas in adjoining states of Haryana and Himachal; and robbing Punjab of its Capital by creating a Union Territory of Chandigarh, were vociferously referred to in the speech of Sardar Kapur Singh.

Khushwant Singh was considered as the blue-eyed boy of Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, who got him nominated to Rajya Sabha. It is well known that Mr. Singh

supported her during Emergency which was opposed by tooth and nail by the Akali leadership of Punjab in 1975. Khushwant Singh declared himself an agnostic and non-believer in the existence of God. He had no sympathy for Dharam Yudh Morcha started by the Akalis against the Congress Govt. for their demands. Rather, he was highly critical of Bhindranwale and his followers till the last days before the Army attack on the Golden Temple. So his reaction was spontaneous and he returned his civilian Award 'Padma Bhushan' after the Blue Star Operation. On 13th April, 1985 (Baisakhi day), SGPC Secretary, Bhan Singh, invited me to receive the ceremonial Siropa at Golden Temple for my services to the Sikh Panth. In the list of invitees, Khushwant Singh was occupying the top slot.

When the discussion was going on the floor of Parliament concerning Blue Star Operation and White Paper of the Government, Khushwant Singh intervened as a nominated member of Rajya Sabha with the following remarks:

“My heart is very full. I shall try to be as unemotional as I can. I will say very little about the action that the Army has taken except that I maintain this was a tragic error of judgement, a grievous mistake and a gross miscalculation which will cover many black pages in the history of India, the history of Punjab and the history of the Sikhs”.

Khushwant Singh had an image of a secular,

democrat, non-believer and a critic of Bhindranwale. When he took a stand against the Operation Blue Star and Army Action within the holy precincts of Golden Temple complex, maximum interruptions took place during his speech. He was unfazed by the interruptions of colleagues from Congress Party. He felt proud of his heritage as a Sikh as shown by his remarks: *“I admit it because I felt deeply hurt – I was suddenly pitch-forked into the eye of the storm and whether I liked it or not, without my seeking or relishing it, I found myself made into a kind of spokesman for the Sikhs”*.

He proved to be prophetic in some of his critical remarks:

1. What this action has done is to humiliate the pride of a very proud people and you know that a proud people do not forget, nor forget very easily.

2. What is more, it has widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Sikhs. This army action has made it so wide as to make it appear to be unbridgeable.

3. He makes a rebuttal of government stand about Terrorism: *“It so happens that this is chronologically inaccurate. Terrorism preceded the Akali morcha”*.

4. He exposes the false reporting of the media in no uncertain terms. Fake news were planted about the killings inside the Temple Complex due to press censorship.

5. He ridicules the planned ‘healing touch’ as

announced by the government to assuage the hurt sentiments of the Sikhs.

6. In his second speech, he raised objection to one statement in the President's address: "stern and effective action was taken to control the situation within the shortest possible time". He refutes this statement by narrating his personal experience when he had to save his life by seeking asylum in the Swedish Embassy.

Tarlochan Singh entered Sikh politics during his College days as a member of Sikh Students Federation. He came into limelight when he did not allow Pundit Nehru, Indian Prime Minister, to address religious congregation on the occasion of martyrdom day celebration of younger Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh in the historic Gurdwara at Fatehgarh Sahib on 27 December, 1953.

In the history of Indian Parliament, he is one of the rare Parliamentarians who has shown the temerity to publish the record of his speeches delivered in the Upper House of Indian Parliament. I had the privilege to review the book "Role of A Parliamentarian (Tarlochan Singh's Speeches, Mentions & Questions in Rajya Sabha)" published by Punjabi University, Patiala in 2016.

Parliament records show that he participated in almost all the debates held during his tenure as a Parliamentarian. He expressed his views boldly on Liberhan Commission Report on 10 December, 2009, regarding the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhia. In

his speech, he made reference to the secular character of Sikh religion: "There is no bigger an example in the world that the foundation stone of Golden Temple had been laid by a Muslim 'Miyan Mir'. A number of times world 'Allah' comes in the 'Guru Granth Sahib'; you will not have it anywhere else. If there is secularism we are an example of it. We say that Ram and Allah are one and the same, human beings are one, we are all brothers".

The speech under review was delivered on 14th December, 2009 during call attention motion on killing of Sikhs in 1984. This was for the first time after 25 years of the traumatic events that the discussion took place in the Parliament. Some of the highlights of his speech are as follows:

1. Sikh leaders joined India in preference to offer of a Sikh state by MA Jinnah in Pakistan.

2. Despite assurances by the Indian leaders, no special rights were included in the Indian Constitution for the Sikhs as promised to them by Gandhi and Nehru.

3. Tarlochan Singh decried that Delhi massacre of Sikhs is not a riot as propagated by Govt. of India. "Riot takes place when there is fight between two groups. Our was not a riot? Ours was what happened in case of Jews by Hitler in 1942-43, i.e. genocide, massacre, holocaust".

4. He pleaded for an appeal by the Supreme Court under UNO convention: "Today in the court of world our appeal is that there is a convention of UNO; our

demand is that the Supreme court should set up a mechanism under Article 2 of the UNO convention on Genocide and Article 7 of International criminal court of crimes against humanity”.

5. Tarlochan Singh is at his rhetoric best in his speech delivered on 14th December 2009. He reminds the Parliament: *“Why didn’t the earth shake when Mahatma Gandhi was murdered, how many Marathas were murdered in the country, because the murderer was a Marathi? When Rajiv Gandhi was killed, how many Tamils were killed? Why were only the Sikhs victimized, why the tree had to fall only on the Sikhs?”*.

6. To contradict the government argument to “forget and forgive” the 1984 episode, he reminds that Israelis have not condoned the crimes of Nazis: *“The Jews were killed in 1943-44, I had read last month that the Israelis are still searching and have got hold of a 95 years old General, a German General who had killed the Jews; the war criminals are still being arrested, still they are being tried. But here they are telling us as 25 years have passed, forget it”*.

Tarlochan Singh is known for his oratory and political acumen. His training as a public relation man in early stages of his career stood him in good stead in developing long lasting relationships with political leaders of all hues. He believes that most of the problems faced by the Sikhs in Indian state can be fruitfully addressed through a meaningful participation and logical presentation in the

democratic forums of the country. He has indomitable courage and passion to fight for the Sikh causes. I always find him pragmatic in politics and optimist in life.

End Note: The Speeches of four Honourable Members of Parliament as recorded in the proceedings of Indian Parliament have been reproduced faithfully in the next four Chapters of this volume. As a consequence, there may be some howlers and minor grammatical errors in the text, which the editor is not supposed to alter or modify keeping in view the sanctity of Indian Parliamentary proceedings.

Chapter 2

Hukam Singh's Speech in the Constituent Assembly on "Sikh Grievances"

Mr. President, Sir, I must start with paying my earnest and sincere tribute to our worthy President whose patience, forbearance and sense of justice have guided us throughout these proceeding and have contributed mostly to our successfully going through all these stages.

I join my other friends in congratulating the Drafting Committee and particularly its leader for cheerfully carrying through this heavy strain during these months. It was gigantic task and they must be feeling relieved after it.

Of course we have produced the bulkiest Constitution in the world. The Constitution of other countries are much simpler. I am not happy at all over this achievement.

The glamour of our present leaders, I am afraid, has dimmed the vision of our experts. We should have looked beyond the present. We have presumed that the Union will be equally blessed with such heroes in the future as well.

In this Constitution, no particular pattern has been followed. A Constitution moulded out of different types will not endure, because it is neither indigenous nor a

complete copy of any other single type. It is neither federal nor unitary. It is an enigmatic production, with every part stranger to the other.

The English make of Indian frame was already there as the Government of India Act 1935. We have substituted an American head in the form of a President, replaced the old limbs by an English parliamentary system, poured Australian flexibility in bones and flesh, infused Canadian look of a single judiciary and added an Irish appendix of Directive Principles and thus brought out a hybrid which we have been pleased to name the Indian Constitution. How it develops and what it bears is not known to everybody. I submit, Sir, we have overdone ourselves in certain respects and particularly in the Preamble. Besides justice, liberty and equality we have resolved to secure fraternity which is impossible of enforcement at this state. Then again we have assured liberty of thought, which is funny. Thought is an inner working of the mind and the individual does not come into contact with another or with the State until he expressed himself. Such moral virtues are impossible of achievement particularly in a secular State. Further equality of status is an empty boaster under the present Constitution. It could only be claimed in a Communist State.

Then I come to Fundamental Principles. On a first glance it would appear that the safeguarding of the Fundamental Rights set forth in Part III of the Constitution is complete. The charter is very exhaustive in description and ostensibly guaranteed.

But on closer examination it would be found that these Rights and particularly the Rights to Freedom in article 19 are hedged round with exceptions and reservations that make them ineffective in those situations when their impairment and ordinarily be apprehended. Like other Constitution, ours also has assigned separate spheres to Government and liberty, but in doing so it has allowed so much latitude to the Legislature in the matter of defining inalienable rights as to make them exceedingly precarious, and robbed them of the guarantee which could make them secure.

In his opening speech moving for the introduction of the Constitution on 4th of November 1948 Dr. Ambedkar had observed:

“Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on Indian Soil, which is essentially undemocratic.”

“In these circumstances”, he said, “it is wiser not to trust the legislature to prescribe the forms of administration.”

I wish that conviction had guided our decisions. But I find that the pervading spirit all through is the greater trust and confidence in the Legislature rather than in the Judiciary.

In my view this is an incorrect and wrong foundation on which this structure has been built. The Judiciary can be more safely entrusted with the holding of the balance between the individual and the State.

Practically all the rights in article 19 are based on one fundamental provision, namely, that the various rights are subject to the existing restrictive law or laws which may be made hereafter. What change that a citizen would feel by the commencement of this Constitution? We were told that even in U.S.A. the rights are not unqualified, and for every limitation enacted in article 19 it was said that the least one ruling of the Supreme Court could be quoted in support of that. What a funny logic? If in an extreme case, under particular circumstances, the Supreme Court declared any limitation, does it stand to reason that the same limitation ought to have been made a provision of the Constitution to be enforced at all times whenever it suited the Legislature so to do? The crucial difference is that in U.S.A. the Supreme Court is the final judge of the circumstances when any restriction is to be imposed, while in our Constitution it is the Legislature that would be the final one. We could choose either of the two methods, one in which constitutional safeguards are wholly lacking just as in U.K. and the other in which such safeguards are as complete as human ingenuity could make them, as in U.S.A. In our Constitution a compromise has been effected which is impossible. We have imposed prohibitions on the Legislature, thus conceding that there is danger from that side, and then proceeded to permit the legislature itself to restrict the liberty. The feared robber is made the judge and the possible trespasser the sole arbiter. This is a clear deception.

Then again there are emergency provisions. As soon

as there is a declaration under 358 on the report of a Governor or Rajpramukh, all liberties worth the name come to an end. The mere Proclamation of Emergency ought not to have been allowed to abrogate civil liberties. Civil liberty should come to an end only when civil authority comes to an end. These rights are incomplete without a right to work. Can you imagine of any liberty being enjoyed by a citizen who goes about hungry for want of employment, who is haunted by the fear that his family would be without food as he has not got work? Have we made any provision for such an individual? Can such a man have any interest in the administration except to blow it up? Unless material insecurity is eliminated personal freedoms are paper safeguards and worth nothing.

So far as the Directive Principles are concerned, I have already referred to this Part as a useless Appendix. (An honourable Member: Is it appendix or appendicitis?) It is 'appendix'; I accept that I am wrong; after all it grows on the appendix and therefore it is called appendicitis. I believe rights are no rights unless enforceable. It was admitted in the beginning that it was not proper to insert them in the midst of the Constitution but the mistake has been persisted. The perusal of these principles in Part IV leads one to believe that ours is going to be a Socialist State. But there is nothing in the rest of the Constitution in support of these pious platitudes.

Then we come to the President, Part V. He is to be the executive head of the Union. In the introductory speech the President was described to occupy a position similar to

the King of England; the head of the State but not of the Executive; to represent the nation and not to rule it as the symbol of the nation. His place in the administration was stated as that of a ceremonial device on the seal. But under the Constitution now settled he has been given enormous powers. Elected by the Members of the Legislatures under article 54 he would most probably be the choice of the majority party. He can only be impeached for breach of the Constitution under article 61 and not for any other misbehaviour. That in my opinion is a grave defect in the Constitution.

My second objection is about article 68(2). This can be misused. The President might, in the interest of the Party which placed him in power resign his office a few months before the expiry of his term, and may get himself re-elected for another full term of five years, though the party might be defeated in the impending elections.

Then again under article 75 the President is authorized to appoint the Prime Minister. It is not clearly laid down that he must necessarily be the leader of the majority or even be an elected member of the House of the People. Strictly according to the provision a non-member may be appointed. In a written Constitution it should not have been left to conventions which are still to grow in our country.

There are other provisions under articles 123, 358, 75(2) and others which may provide an ambitious politician an opportunity to assume dictatorial powers

while professedly acting within the strict letter of the settled Constitution which can be interpreted by its plain words and not expressed. The possibility of a virtuous dictator being corrupted by power may be remote in the case of our present leaders, but these immortals of history cannot be immortals of physical bodies as well, and the Constitution has not taken that fact into account. We have been misled by the present. We should have realised that the Constitution would survive our present leaders. We have not guarded against the emergence of dictators. I have grave misgivings against investing a single individual with such wide powers, however great he might be.

Then I come to the special provisions relating to the minorities. It would be interesting to know how an ordinary Sikh mind is working in these days. If the sacrifices for freedom were to be looked back upon, the Sikhs can feel well proud of their contributions. In 1872 in the well-known Kuka rebellion more than 68 Sikhs were blown off with cannons. In 1907 S. Ajit Singh, Kishen Singh and others played a very important part in the movement. During 1912-16, the Ghadar movement got considerable momentum by the advent of revolutionaries brought in by Kamagata Maru and other ships. Most of them were Sikhs who died cheerfully on the gallows for the love of their country. During Martial Law Regime in 1919 the Sikhs raised a bold and open revolt against the British and underwent many hardships. The Gurdwara movement, though directly organised for religious reform in Gurdwaras had its political aspect no less important, as by the huge

sufferings and strict restraint the Sikhs lowered the prestige of the rulers.

In 1937, the Akali Dal formed an alliance with the Congress and succeeded in elections on national programme against the Unionist alliance with the bureaucracy. That union must have grown closer and had been further cemented but for the Congress wooing the Muslim League in order to put up a concerted fight. The Sikhs grew apprehensive that the Congress, in their anxiety to win freedom, otherwise very commendable, might hand over their home-land to the Muslims and they might be subjugated for ever. These fears led a section of the Sikh community to chalk out an independent line of action. But, even after that, preserving their individual identity, the small community supported the Congress very faithfully in the negotiations during 1942, 1945 and 1946.

The Cabinet Mission Plan was unjust and unfair for the Sikhs and it was so acknowledged by the Congress Working Committee in their resolution dated 25th June 1946. The Sikhs got indignant and the Panthic Pratinidhi Board boycotted the Constituent Assembly by their resolution dated 5th July 1946 when the Muslim League had accepted it. The Congress Working Committee in their meeting of 10th August 1946 appealed to the Sikhs to reconsider their decision and participate in the Constituent Assembly. The Working Committee assures the Sikhs that the "Congress will give them all possible support in removing their legitimate grievances and in securing adequate safeguards for the protection of their just

interests". Immediately, the Sikhs, on this assurance, reversed their decision, and directed their Sikh representatives to raise the question of safeguards in the Assembly at the proper time in the hope that the Congress would support the Sikh demands in accordance with the assurances dated 10th August 1946 and their promises earlier in 1929. Since that day, the Sikhs made common cause with the Congress and stood firmly by it. Then again on 6th January 1947, the Congress, in accepting the interpretation put forward by the British Government on the Cabinet Mission Plan, made it clear that the right of the Sikhs in the Punjab should not be jeopardised. Later, on 8th March 1947, the Working Committee assured the Sikhs that "they would keep in close touch with the representatives of the Sikhs and other groups with a view to co-operating with them in the steps that may have to be taken and in safeguarding their interests".

The Congress was announcing again and again that all minorities shall have proper safeguards. The Muslims refused to be contented with any safeguards, but insisted on having a home for themselves. They got Pakistan, and can have no further grievance. The Anglo-Indian community has been sufficiently protected. They can have no grouse. The Parsees and the Christians are far more advanced educationally and economically and have declared that they do not want any safeguards. It is only the Sikh Community that earnestly desired, repeatedly requested that constantly cried for safeguards but have been denied any consideration. They fail to understand why they

have met this treatment. The majority can oppress, it can even suppress the minority; but it cannot infuse contentment or satisfaction by these methods.

Separate electorates have been done away with; the Sikhs submitted to it cheerfully. The reservation on population basis in the legislatures was abolished. Their representatives fell in line with the others. But the economic safeguards about services were never voluntarily given up. On scrutiny, it appears to be a very trivial thing. But it was a test case where the majority was on trial. It was said that it was a blot to acknowledge any religious minority; but the Anglo-Indians have been given safeguards in the Constitution. They are a religious as well as a racial minority according to Government's own publication. The entry about consideration of claims of Sikh community, similar entry about the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the Anglo-Indians does not impair its beauty. The whole economy of the Sikh community depended upon agriculture and army service. Lands have been left in Pakistan and their proportion in the army since the partition has been greatly reduced and is being reduced every day.

Their demands were very simple. They wanted a Punjabi speaking province. That has been denied. It was not a communal demand, but a territorial one. But the majority community in the province went so far as to disown their mother tongue. That language is in danger on account of aggressive communalism of the majority. Andhra province is a settled fact; other cases are to be looked

into; but North India cannot even be considered for it. The next was this consideration for services. That has also been denied.

Mr. Khandekar today referred that there was no untouchability among the Sikhs, and that seats had been taken out of the Scheduled Castes seats. I may briefly refer to these observations of his. Certainly according to the Sikh religion, there is no untouchability. But does it stand to reason that if there are two sons of one father and they are untouchables and one embraces the Sikh religion, he should be neglected simply because he professes that religion different from the one which he originally professed? Would that not have been discrimination on account of religion? I think that injustice has been removed and the Scheduled Castes should have no complaint about it. Then again, he made a remark that Sikhs have been given seats out of the Scheduled Castes quota. That was what I could not comprehend, because reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is to be made on the basis of population. If certain castes have been included in the Scheduled Castes, then, certainly they would bring in their population and their seats will be increased. It does not stand to reason that the Sikhs have taken away any part of their quota which the Scheduled Castes possess.

Naturally, under these circumstances, as I have stated, the Sikhs feel utterly disappointed and frustrated. They feel that they have been discriminated against. Let it not be misunderstood that the Sikh community has agreed to this Constitution. I wish to record an emphatic protest here.

My community cannot subscribe its assent to this historic document.

I now come to centralisation of powers. For the last thirty years, the policy had been progressing towards provincial autonomy. There were valid reasons for it. The vastness of the country, its multifarious population organised in units having different languages, varied social systems, uneven economic development, made it impossible to have uniformity everywhere. Even in old regions whenever centralisation was attempted in India, the system cracked under its own weight. Independent units with greater responsibility and willing co-operation would have lent greater strength. In our Constitution, each article tends to sap the local autonomy and makes the provinces irresponsible.

To sum up, our Constitution does not give anything substantial or concrete to the individual. It only gives solemn promises and pious platitudes. The Fundamental Rights are worthless as they have so many restrictions and are left at the mercy of the legislature. The right to work is not guaranteed. There is no assurance for old age maintenance or provision during sickness or loss of capacity. Even free primary education has not been provided for. The minorities and particularly the Sikhs have been ignored and completely neglected. The Provincial units have been reduced to Municipal boards. The common man has been squeezed out of politics and the President has been enthroned as the Great Moghul to rule from Delhi with enough splendor and grandeur. Any ambitious President

would discover a rich find in this Constitution to declare himself as a dictator and yet apparently be acting within this Constitution. The discontent and dissatisfaction is sure to grow without any economic solution of difficulties of the masses. This shall consequently facilitate the development of administration into a fascist State for which there is enough provision in our Constitution. May we be saved from such contingencies!

Chapter 3

Kapur Singh's Speech on "Betrayal of the Sikhs"

Mr. Chairman, Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the reorganisation of the existing State of Punjab and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

Shri Kapur Singh: Madam Chairman, I have gone through this draft Bill most carefully and I have heard the honourable Home Minister with the diligence and respect which his speeches and utterances always deserve.

Madam Chairman, as it is, I have no option but to oppose this Bill. Like the curate's egg, though it might be good in parts, it is a rotten egg. It might be edible, but only as a measure of courtesy, as it is devoid of nutritional qualities and since its putrefaction is far gone, it is really unfit for human consumption.

Shri Tyagi: It depends upon the power of digestion.

Shri Kapur Singh: I am convinced that it is deleterious for the Sikhs however strong their stomachs might be

supposed to be, as Mr. Tyagi hinted. I oppose this Bill on behalf of my constituents and I reject it on behalf of my parent party, Shiromani Akali Dal. I do so for three reasons, firstly, it is conceived in sin; secondly it has been delivered by an incompetent and untrained midwife and thirdly, it is opposed to the best interests of the nation as it will almost certainly lead to a weakening of national integration and loss of faith in the integrity of those who exercise political power in the country.

Shri Tyagi: It is not an illicit child.

Shri Kapur Singh: It is not an illicit child but it is conceived in sin. It may have the vigour of the hybrid offspring but unfortunately it is an offspring of a miscegenous union and therefore, I oppose it. I say, it is conceived in sin, because it constitutes the latest act of betrayal of solemn promises-series of solemn promises-given to the Sikh people by the accredited leaders of the majority community, by the revered leaders of the Congress national movement, and by the unchallenged spokesmen of the ruling party

It will do this House good-it will do the public a lot of good-it will do the people of India, a great deal of good-and, it will do the international community a world of good, to listen to 'a brief narration of this story of betray of a people, who, though small in numbers, have not been adjudged as of no consequence in terms of dynamism of History, a people, though modern and forward looking, are staunch guardians of the basic insights into Reality of

the ancient Hindu race, and a people who though they may be matched in qualities of courage, self-sacrifice and patriotism, have not been surpassed by any community in India or a group of people outside.

Here is the brief story of a callous betrayal of such a people-the Sikhs of India-by those whose flesh of flesh and bones of bones the Sikhs are and whose ancestors-common ancestors of the betrayed and the betrayers both-had upheld the highest and the noblest notions and standards of ethical conduct in respect of the subject of keeping faith with fellow men and redeeming promises solemnly made.

I quote from Mahabharat Adiparva, sub-chapter 74 and verse 25:

*Yo anayatha santama tmanan anayatho pratipadayete,
kinteh na kritam papam caurainatmapaharina*

It means: "He who has one thing in mind but represents another thing to others, what sin he is not capable of committing? For, he is a thief and robber of his own self."

I ask the honourable members to take their minds back to the year 1929, when the all India National Congress met, at the banks of the river Ravi-Airavati of our ancestors-and fixed complete Independence as its political goal. On that bitterly cold night of destiny, I was present as one of the student volunteers in the service of the Nation. On the previous day, the Sikhs had taken out a five hundred thousand strong' procession with veteran Baba Kharak Singh leading it on elephant back, from under the walls of

the ancient fort at Lahore, which Wall described in The Times of London, as:

“A most impressive spectacle of human congregation that put the Congress show into shame and shade.”

It was on this occasion that Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru went to meet Baba Kharak Singh, at his place on the Chauburji Road, and gave the Sikh a solemn assurance that after India achieves political freedom, no Constitution shall be framed by the majority community unless it is freely acceptable to the Sikhs. This promise was then reduced into a formal policy Resolution of the All India Congress Committee.

Afterwards, this Policy Resolution was repeatedly reiterated, officially and demi-officially, throughout the 'period upto August 1947, and it was not officially repudiated till 1950 when the present Constitution was framed. The trusting Sikhs, who in their daily prayer, extol keeping faith as the noblest of human virtues, placing complete reliance in this solemn undertaking given to them by the majority community, resisted and refused all offers and proposals made to them by the British and the other people-the Muslims whom we now prefer to call the Muslim League, proposing to accord the Sikhs a sovereign or autonomous status in the areas constituting their ancestral homeland between the river Ghaggar and the river Chenab.

This is the first link of the history which I am going to narrate here so as to provide background to the conclusion as to why the Bill should be rejected.

The second link is that in the year 1932, at the time of the Second Round Table Conference, the British Government, through Sardar Bahadur Shivdev Singh, then a member of the Indian Secretary of States Council, made an informal proposal to the Sikhs that if they disassociate finally with the Congress movement, they would be given a decisive political weightage in the Punjab, such as would lead to their emerging as a third independent element in India after the British transfer power to the inhabitants of this sub-continent.

The much maligned, the naive, Master Tara Singh, to my personal knowledge, promptly rejected this tempting offer, I was then a student at the University of Cambridge and was closely associated with these developments.

The third link is this, in the month of July, 1946, the All India Congress Working Committee met at Calcutta, which reaffirmed the assurances already given to the Sikhs, and in his Press Conference held on the 6th July, there, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spelt out the concrete content of these solemn undertaking in the following flowery words:

“The brave Sikhs of the Punjab are entitled to special consideration. I see nothing wrong in an area and a set-up in the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom.”

In these words, an autonomous State to the Sikhs within India, was promised.

Fourthly, in the early winter of 1946, the Cabinet

Mission while at Delhi communicated to the Sikhs through the late Sardar Baldev Singh that if the Sikhs are determined not to part company with Hindu India, the British Parliament in their solicitude for the Sikh people, was prepared to so frame the Independence Act of India, so that in respect of the Sikh homeland, wherever these areas might eventually go, in Pakistan or India, no Constitution shall be framed such as does not have the concurrence of the Sikhs. But Sardar Baldev Singh, in consultation with the Congress leaders, summarily rejected this offer which went even beyond the assurances given by the majority community, in 1929 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in Calcutta.

Fifthly, in April, 1947. Mr. Jinnah, in consultation with certain most powerful leaders of the British Cabinet in London, offered to the Sikhs, first through Master Tara Singh and then through the Maharaja of Patiala, a sovereign Sikh State, comprising areas lying to the west of Panipat and east of the left bank of the Ravi river, on the understanding that this State then confederates with Pakistan on very advantageous terms to the Sikhs.

Master Tara Singh summarily rejected this attractive offer and the Maharaja of Patiala declined to accept it in consultation with Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sixthly, on the 9th December. 1946, when the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly was held under the Chairmanship of Babu Rajendra Prasad. Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru moved the first and the fundamental resolution in which it was said:

“Adequate safeguards would be provided for minorities... It was a declaration, a pledge and an undertaking before the world, a contract with millions of Indians, and, therefore, in the nature of an oath which we must keep.”

What happens in case of political perjury is not a point which I propose to discuss today, for, when neither the feelings of shame, the reproaches of conscience, nor the dread of punishment from any bar is there, the sufferers can only pray to God, which the Sikhs are doing today. But since it is the perquisite of power to invent its own past, I am putting the record straight for the public opinion and the posterity by recapitulating this sorry tale of betrayal of the Sikhs, a trusting people.

Seventhly, in the month of May 1947, precisely, on the 17th May. Lord Mountbatten, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Nawab Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Baldev Singh flew to London on the invitation of the British Cabinet, in search of a final solution of the Indian communal problem. When the Congress and the Muslim League failed to strike any mutual understanding and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru decided to return to India, the British Cabinet leaders conveyed to Sardar Baldev Singh that if he stayed behind, arrangements might be made:

“So as to enable the Sikhs to have political feet of their own on which they may walk into the current of World History.”

Sardar Baldev Singh promptly divulged the contents of this offer to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in compliance with the latter's wishes declined to stay back and flew back to India after giving the following brave message to the press:

"The Sikhs have no demands to make on the British except the demand that they should quit India. Whatever political rights and aspirations the Sikhs have, they shall have them satisfied through the goodwill of the Congress and the majority community."

Eighthly, and lastly, in the month of July 1947, the Hindu and Sikh members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly met at Delhi to pass a unanimous resolution favouring partition of the country, in which resolution occur the following words:

"In the divided Indian Punjab, special constitutional measures are imperative to meet just aspirations and rights of the Sikhs."

It is these very Hindus of the Punjab, who, with the ready aid of the Government of India leaders, even when their understanding was not qualified to keep pace with the wishes of their heart, adopted every conceivable posture and shrank from no stratagem to keep Sikhs permanently under their political heel, first, by refusing to form a Punjabi speaking State in which the Sikhs might acquire political effectiveness and second by falsely declaring that Punjabi was not their mother tongue.

The Bill before the House is a calculatedly forged link in the chain, the sordid story of which I have just now narrated, when in 1950, the present Constitution Act of India was enacted. The accredited representatives of the Sikhs-the Shiromani Akali Dal - declared vehemently and unambiguously in the Constituent Assembly that,

“the Sikhs do not accept this Constitution Act; the Sikhs reject this Constitution Act.”

Our spokesmen declined to append their signatures to the Constitution Act as a token of this clear and irrevocable rejection.

I will, for want of time, skip over the story of the Sikhs, sufferings during the last 18 years in an Independent India under the political control of political and anglicized Hindus, and will merely refer to the reply which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave Master Tara Singh in 1954, when the latter reminded him of the solemn undertaking previously given to the Sikhs on behalf of the majority community. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru coolly replied, *“the circumstances have now changed.”* If there is one thing that the Sikhs know too well, it is that now the circumstances have changed.

Let us now briefly examine the immediate ancestry of the present Bill. It was on 21st March, 1966 that the Minister of Home Affairs set up a Commission presided over by a Supreme Court judge, requiring the Commission, firstly, to examine existing boundaries of Hindi and Punjabi regions of Punjab to set up Punjab and Haryana States; secondly,

by applying linguistic principles as they have resulted in the 1961 census figures; and thirdly to determine boundaries that do not involve breaking up of tehsils. All these three guidelines given to the Commission by the Government of India are found to be, when they are properly examined by people who understand the realities of politics, heavily loaded against the Punjab State, and have the effect of reducing Sikhs to even more political ineffectiveness than at present. Nor has the Shah Commission failed to take full advantage of the instruments of discrimination thus placed in their hands by the Government of India. They have, firstly, arbitrarily truncated and reduced, as much as they could, the existing Punjabi region, and secondly, applied all principles of demarcation with a left-handed justice made use of a principle where it could harm the Punjab and not used it where it could harm the resultant territorial interests of Haryana or Himachal Pradesh. For instance, Dalhousie has been taken out of Punjab and given to Himachal because it is hilly, while Morni which is of a higher altitude than Dalhousie has been taken away to be bestowed on Haryana, because its residents are Hindus, which is the same thing as saying that they are Hindi speaking.

Thus, this story goes on and every conceivable stratagem has been adopted, through truncating its areas, through divesting it of its utility undertakings in public sector, and through neutralizing its limbs of governmental apparatus and by robbing it of its capital city, and by forging the so-called common links, to reduce the Punjab

State into a glorified Zila Parishad, and to achieve these sordid and unedifying objectives, the judiciary has been made use of.

Madam Chairman, permit me to say that if there is one political crime greater than any other, the ruling party has committed during the post-Independence era, it is frequent employment of judiciary for quasi-political purpose, and the result is that the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akal Dal has passed a resolution on the 20th July, 1966 which reads:

“After having carefully viewed the findings, the reports and judgments of judicial and quasi judicial Tribunals and Forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests, comes to the conclusion, that the entire judicial machinery and the judicial process of the independent India, under influences of a certain section of political Hindus, is prejudiced and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights.”

Madam Chairman, here, it might be honestly asked, and I am sure there must be many honest Members in this House, who might ask the question as to what is this tiresome talk, this man is talking about—the Sikhs’ interests in a secular democratic India; where is the question of the Sikhs being discriminated against. There are no Sikhs or Hindus in a democratic secular set-up, and the Constitution has already established it in this country. To this, I can give a very simple reply. Constitutional provisions are not the same thing as day-to-day political realities. As for the

democracy, its form is one thing and its substance is quite another thing. Those who equate them are treacherous without art and hypocrites without deceiving. The *Mundukopanishad*; our ancient scripture tells us that Samsara is the manifestation of four modifications of self, the atma, and is called, as *chaturpad*. Likewise, a modern State, that is, the Government, has four estates: the Parliament, the executive, the judiciary and the press. The concrete realities of these four alone can furnish all acid test as to whether the Sikh problem in India is a real problem or not.

To the executive and the judiciary reference has already been made by me. I now propose to make a reference to Parliament, this august House, which is deserving of our highest respect, and its dignity is the dignity of the people of India and hence inviolable. Nevertheless, the Sikhs are aware that, under the existing constitutional arrangements, they cannot send more than a couple of their own representatives to the Parliament and even they may not always be heard freely. How many times has it happened in this House in the recent past, that particular Members of the minority communities have been made aware, in no uncertain manner, that they must not-must never-say this thing or that, or else a hearing might be denied them, disciplinary wrath of the House has fueled on individuals, without hearing them and without letting them subsequently submit that their punishment was not in order?

And, lastly the Press. We have a free Press here and a

lively and impartial press-on the whole. But, what is it like when it comes to dealing with Sikhs, that is, politically vocal Sikh, or questions largely concerning the Sikhs? In the days of his clash with Beaverbrook, Baldwin said of the Press:

“Power without responsibility, the privileges of harlots throughout the ages.”

And, I say no more, I have said enough to explain the background of the Resolution No. 2 of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal passed on the 20th July, 1966, wherein occur the following passages in relation to the scope of this Bill:

“Sikhs resolve and proclaim, their determination Consist, through all legitimate means, all such attempts to devalue and liquidate the Sikh people in a free India, and consequently, Demand that the following steps should be taken forthwith by the rulers of India to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the Union of India, namely, First the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new Punjab to be set up, namely, the areas of Gurdaspur District including Dalhousie, Ambala District including Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Saddar, the entire Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, the areas of Nalagarh, called Desh, the Tehsil of Sirsa, the sub-Tehsils of Tohana and Guhla and Rattia Block of District Hissar, Shahbad block of District Karnal and the contiguous portions of the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan must now be immediately included in the new proposed Punjab so as to

bring all contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit, to be Sikh Homeland, within the Union of India. And Second, such a new Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status on the analogy of the status of Jammu and Kashmir as was envisaged in the Constitution Act of India in the year 1950.

I am coming to a close. Madam, on behalf of the Sikh people represented by the Shiromani Akali Dal, I reject the entire schemata of this Bill, and oppose it. I call upon the Government to take necessary legislative measures to solve the problem of the Punjab in the light of the Resolution of the Shiromani Akali Dal just referred to.

*(Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol LIX, No 31,
September 6, 1966, pp 9489-9498)*

Chapter 4

Khushwant Singh's Speech on "Operation Blue Star"

*Speech delivered on Operation Blue Star in the Rajya
Sabha on 25 July, 1984*

Shri Khushwant Singh (Nominated): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I speak with my eye on the clock and will be grateful if you keep your hand off the bell. I promise that I will not take more time scheduled for my party.

We have had six hours of debate during which we heard learned discourses on Punjab politics and Akali factionalism and there has also been much recrimination between parties, each trying to blame the other. I think most people will agree that in the entire debate there has been total lack of a sense of gravity of the situation which is facing our country today. We are virtually on the brink of an abyss. There has been total absence of any realization that the country is practically breaking up. And there has been total absence of any viable suggestion on what we are to do in this situation.

I hope the Members will bear with me when I speak

because I may have some very unpalatable truths to tell. I am aware of the fact that I am a nominated Member who, as things go in this House, is the lowest of the lower caste. But since I relinquished my Padam Bhushan in a state of emotion—I admit it because I felt deeply hurt—I was suddenly pitch-forked into the eye of the storm and whether I liked it or not, without my seeking or relishing it, I found myself made into a kind of spokesman for the Sikhs. It is very ironical that I, though an agnostic, should have been suddenly become relevant to the Sikh community and my three Sikh colleagues on the other side who claim themselves to be pucca Sikhs should have become totally irrelevant when it comes to Sikh public opinion. Whether you like it or not, I now echo the sentiments of fourteen million people. So, take note of what I have to say.

My heart is very full. I shall try to be as unemotional as I can. I will say very little about the action that the Army has taken except that I maintain this was a tragic error of judgement, a grievous mistake and a gross miscalculation which will cover many black pages in the history of India, the history of Punjab and the history of the Sikhs. I will say more on what not to do to retrieve the situation. I think the best way of seeing this problem is to see backwards, to see what the situation is today and take it back to the army action and decide whether the action that the Government took was justified or not.

The situation today is this that the religious susceptibility of every single Sikh has been deeply wounded. Ninety-nine per cent of these Sikhs had nothing whatsoever

to do either with Bhindranwale or with Akalis, or with the Government or with politics of any kind. That should be borne in mind. What this action has done is to humiliate the pride of a very proud people and you know that a proud people do not forget, nor forget very easily. It is a wounded community in a vengeful mood. We have to do something to prevent it from exploding. What is more, it has widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Sikhs. The wedge was undoubtedly driven in by the Akalis, it was widened by this evil man, Bhindranwale. This army action has made it so wide as to make it appear to be unbridgeable.

It is unfortunate that the Sikhs who prided themselves as the first class citizens of this country are now regarded as something worse than third class citizens. As my friend, Shri Mohunta, pointed out the other day, the discrimination has not stopped. You have to go to any airport or travel by road or rail in Northern India to see how a Sikh is treated. You will know what the discrimination is. You are constantly questioned. Even at the Srinagar airport this morning only the Sikh passengers were photographed when they were coming. Search is carried out and their cars are checked at the entry points. This discrimination is undoubtedly restricted to the bearded Sikh. Is it not really wrong of them now to ask, "do Indians still regard us as fellow Indians?" In this situation, I have only two questions to ask:

Could any action that alienated 14 million citizens of this country, who are the backbone of its defence services,

who provide more than half of the food for this country and who live on the most sensitive borders that divide us from Pakistan be justify it?

Is it really true, as the White Paper maintains, that there was no other alternative? And as the Government and some Members of the Opposition have also said *ad nauseam* that there was no other way? My answer to both these questions is an absolute "No". I will try to spell out my views with reference to what the White Paper says. It says that two years of negotiations with the Akalis were negated by their intransigence. They kept on shifting their stand, they kept on adding to their demands and they kept on resiling from their demands under pressure of extremists. The accusation was repeated yesterday by the Prime Minister herself. Is it true that the Government did not shift from its stand, did not change its stance, did not resile from its stand? If you want any evidence of it, read the record of my former colleague, Shri Harkishan Singh Surjeet's speeches here in the discussions. He mentioned many instances when a settlement had almost been arrived at and it was the Government that changed its mind.

Every time the talks broke down, the one statement that the Prime Minister made in reply to that was that some demands of the Akalis had been granted, and with regard to those that affected the neighbouring States, the neighbouring States had to be consulted. For two years we have been told that the neighbouring States have to be consulted. What happened in those consultations? Does it take that long to contact them in Chandigarh or Simla to

find out what their reactions were? The White Paper also maintains that, it was the Akali agitation which led to terrorism in the country. The Prime Minister herself repeated, "I know from experience that these civil disobedience movements often degenerate into some kind of a violence." It so happens that this is chronologically inaccurate. Terrorism preceded the Akali morcha.

You may recall that first violence took place between Bhindranwale and the Nirankaris as early as April 1978. Thereafter, there were fake encounters between the police under Sardar Darbara Singh who was the Chief Minister of Punjab and so called extremists which gave further fillip to those terrorist activities. The murders of the Nirankari Baba and Lala Jagat Narain took place before the morcha was launched. So, this inference that the pacifist movement led to terrorism is historically and chronologically inaccurate. It has been repeated from both sides of the House that the Government had no choice but to move the army into the Golden Temple. I had sought assurances and been given the assurance — I from here and the then Home Minister from there — that the army would not be moved in because the results could be horrendous. Did the Government ever consider two alternative possibilities? No. 1, a commando action by people in plain clothes who would have gone and tried to overpower Bhindranwale and his men? There would have been a certain amount of loss of life; I have no doubt. But hundreds of innocent lives, including those of women and children, would have been spared. Did you ever consider the possibility of putting a

cordon round the Golden Temple and the city of Amritsar, occupying the Guru ka Langar, cutting off food and rations and starving those people to come out? The results would have been quite different. No. The White Paper does not mention these alternatives. All we know is that to face about 300 to 500 armed desperados— and no more—you sent in six divisions led by three full Generals, tanks, armed carriers, mountain guns and the weapons at your command to blast these people out and instead of taking two hours that you anticipated it took you more than two days to do it.

Mr. Home Minister—new Home Minister—and Mr. Deputy Chairman, I visited Amritsar a month after the action took place. I interviewed many people who were there, who were eye witnesses to the sad episode. Let me tell you that the figure of the death toll is considerably higher than what the White Paper mentions. I know the Akalis are producing their own White Paper. Perhaps it will be vastly exaggerated. But it is quite evident that the death toll was considerably higher than what you are admitting. And women and children and innocent pilgrims were also there. Even more, the damage to property is also extensive. However much you try to patch up it will not be patched up. The Akal Takht is in total shambles, including all the relics, that were inside. You have maintained that no damage was done to Harmandar. But I have seen it with my own eyes. There are over 200 fresh bullet marks in Harmandar.. .. (Interruptions) You can still see this if you go there. (Interruptions) Please bear with me. You can

contradict me (Interruptions) One Amrik Singh was inside... (Interruptions).

Shri P.N. Sukul (Uttar Pradesh): What do you mean by fresh bullet marks? Did you see?

Shri Khushwant Singh: Yes. There have been earlier actions and the bullet marks were seen by those people at that time. They are new – through windows, coming from one side, going to the other. The archives of the Golden Temple alongside the Prakrma, which housed over 1000 hand-written manuscript copies of the Granth, the Hukmnamas (Ordinances) bearing Gurus' signatures, have gone up in flames. And this was not during the action; it was after the action that this thing took place. (Interruptions).

Shri Vishvajit Prithvijit Singh (Maharashtra): The archives were used as a place of defence by the extremists. They had put in gun position. They were using all the weapons. As a result, it was destroyed. (Interruptions)

Shri Khushwant Singh: He has a great advantage. He has not been there. He is only using the White Paper. Now, I come to a very tricky thing....(Interruptions).

Shri Laxmi Narain (Delhi): The Rashtrapati also visited the place. He has not seen anything what he is telling now.

Shri Khushwant Singh: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I wish these Members would hold their patience. I am now treading on a very sensitive ground but I think it should be

recorded. And that is the role of the Army. We have treated the Army as a sacred cow. What has been done in Amritsar should go on record. I first draw your attention to this report in the Times of London dated 14th June based on Associated Press account which mentions that a number of Sikhs who were taken prisoner with their hands tied behind and shot in the head in cold blood. I have not heard a single word of... (Interruptions). Let the Government contradict it. This is the most serious allegation made. There are other equally painful things from people living in Amritsar...

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: On a point of order...

Mr. Deputy Chairman. Please sit down.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: I am on a point of order (Interruptions)

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Let him finish his speech. Please sit down.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: Please hear me. I am on a point of order. There is a procedural point. Mr. Khushwant Singh is speaking as an honourable Member of this House. The Member there cannot say '*Ham naukri diya hai* (we gave him job)' simply because he is a nominated Member, it does not mean that he is sold out. It is derogatory to the prestige of the House and the honourable Member. You must please expunge it from the record. He cannot cast aspersions on the Member. You have to expunge....

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Please sit down.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: But you please expunge it because it is a reflection on the honourable Members of this House. He cannot say that he is sold out... (Interruptions)

Mr. Deputy Chairman: How can I hear anything when so many Members speak at a time? (Several interruptions) I request honourable Members to please cooperate with the chair. Please sit down Let him complete his speech.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: But you must expunge his observation from the record. You cannot allow an aspersion against a Member to go on record. That has to be expunged.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I am trying to control the House. If all the Members stand up and start shouting, how can I hear anything?

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: You should have objected to that remark. It is an aspersion on the honourable Member. What does it mean? (Interruptions).

Shri Hansraj Bhardwaj (Madhya Pradesh): I know, I am responsible for it, I maintain it.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: You cannot shout him down when he is telling the facts. The hon. Minister will reply and not you.

(Interruptions). Mr. Deputy Chairman: Please take

your seats. (Interruptions). These shoutings do not go on record (Interruptions) Please take your seats. Yes, Mr Khushwant Singh.

Shri Parvathaneni Upendra: I am on a point of order (Interruptions)

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Let him finish his speech. Please sit down.

Shri Khushwant Singh: I have made a reference to the role of the Army. I would also like and make a request to the new Home Minister to look into the charges that are now being levelled by the SGPC or whatever remains of it and the Akali Dal of the extensive looting that has been done in the neighbouring places. Finally, we have been told how well the Army behaved. But it is with my own eyes on a wall along- side the Akal Takht, I saw a notice saying, "No smoking, no drinking allowed here." You can come to your own conclusions. These are two heinous offences in any place of worship to the Sikhs. Obviously, the troops have been doing that there and the notice was not up for them and was not taken off by the time I spotted it.

Now, I have said enough of the damage done. I think, it is far more important to turn to what possible can be the healing touch. We have been told what a healing touch should be...

Shri Khushwant Singh: Let me talk now of your concept of the healing touch. The "place of honour"— and I put the words in inverted commas— goes to the

Government— controlled media and the press subservient to the Government. I just give you a few instances where the same person holds the gun in one hand and the microphone in the other—total monopoly of the microphone this is the kind of “news” we can expect. We were told first that no woman had been killed. Then we I were told. 13 women had been killed. Then two were told that it was one of Bhindranwale’s grenades that killed the 13 women. We were told by the press, “from reliable sources,” page 1, column 1, that Bindranwale has been killed by his own colleagues. On the third day it was said, Bhindranwale died in his own hand — on page 5, and finally it was said, no, he died fighting. We had the same kind of story about the discovery of heroin, of loose women—all taken up by this subservient press, and then they suddenly vanished or contradictions were published on page 3, bottom of column 8. This is the result of censorship. And this is not the healing touch.

I give you one instance of a fraud committed on the Sikh people. We are told that Gurubani Kirtan has been resumed from the Golden Temple early morning. I am an early riser and switch on my radio at 4-30 A.M. Mr. Home Minister, take it from me. Kirtan is not from the Golden Temple; they are the tapes from Jullundur station. I may tell you why. Morning service consists of Asa Di Var, within which Ragis put in Shabads of their choice. These Ragis are clever people. They put in Shabads which have double meaning, talking about the wickedness of rulers. Obviously they were found unpalatable, because the Sikhs get different

message from Asa Di Var. But for the last 4 days, including this morning, Ardas which comes at the end of the service, came in the middle because the poor man handling the tape did not know which comes first and which in the middle. So, we had a very charming situation of the alleged Bani coming from Harmandir Sahib, with Ardas coming in the middle. Please look into it. I will give you the dates also on which it has been going on; it was certainly this morning as well. Another healing touch.

Another example now. We know of the wide scale desertions of Sikh troops at different points. Why did they take place? Because of censorship, the poor fellows did not know what was going on. If you know the custom of army – some of my retired friends would know – it is that every Sikh soldier is first made to take an oath on the Granth about being true to his oath sticking to it and fighting for the honour of his country. Every time Sikh soldiers go into battle, a Granthi goes with them with Granth Sahib carried on his head. Now, he was told, by gossip or rumour, that one of the Granth Sahib itself has been hit and the Golden Temple enshrining the Granth has been burnt. What are his reactions? It is one of anger, frustration. As a leaderless man, he was out and says: I am going to Golden Temple to defend it myself. Now, we are told by a senior Army officer that the most condign punishment will be meted out to those people. It is up to you to give them condign punishment and see the result of that healing touch.

[Shri Khushwant Singh] Now, come to Kar Seva. It is quite obvious, you failed totally to get anyone with any

credibility to take on this function and you hit upon this, if I cannot choose any kinder words (Interruptions).

Mr. Deputy Chairman: It will not go on record. You need not name... (Interruptions).

Shri Khushwant Singh: All right; cancel those words. (Interruptions).

An Hon. Member: He has withdrawn the word.

Shri Khushwant Singh: Now, let us forget it. I am concluding, if they allow me to conclude.

Shri Harvendra Singh Hanspal: Sir, I am on a point of order.

Shri Khushwant Singh: I have not finished. If they keep on interrupting... (Interruptions) This will not go on record. Mr. Khushwant Singh, please conclude.

Shri Khushwant Singh: I think, it is quite evident to everybody in this country that whatever this gentleman, let me call him gentleman, Baba Santa Singh, is doing, is against the wishes of the community. The community is not going to honour what he is doing. It will further exacerbate the feelings of the community. It is also evident now that despite what has happened, despite what you have done, you have not broken the back of terrorism. Terrorism continues. There is hijacking, breaching of canal banks, looting of banks and so on. It is evident from the fact of the enormous security precautions taken in this free country for our President and the Prime Minister. Despite

these draconian measures to put down violence in the midst of fear. You also know that you cannot keep the Army in Punjab forever. There is a limit to it. You cannot keep a people down with bayonets for too long. You should realise what the consequence will be, in regard to these people, inflamed as they are, if suddenly, this power, this control is taken away from them. I would like to place certain positive suggestions. I am a man who proposes grand gestures. I proposed at one time that the Prime Minister should go to the Golden Temple as a pilgrim. It was not taken seriously. I proposed later that the President should go to the Golden Temple. No notice was taken of either of my requests. They visited the Golden Temple after the damage has been done. (Interruptions) May I suggest now a grander gesture? Now, Sir, I would suggest that the leaders of this country; Jagat gurus, Shankaracharyas and others; leaders of the Hindu parties like Advaniji. Vajpayeeji and others... (Interruption) should join us in this Kar Seva. This is one of the ways in which we can heal the wounds. Lastly, we have a great day coming, the 12th of August, Raksha Bandhan. Let every Hindu tie a rakhi on the hands of a Sikh, which we shall reciprocate. These are the only ways in which you can repair the damage which you have done. Thank you, Sir.

Chapter 5

Khushwant Singh's Speech on "Massacre of Sikhs in Delhi"

*Speech delivered on President's Address in Rajya Sabha
on 22 January, 1985*

Shri Khushwant Singh (Nominated): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, will restrict my comments to just one single sentence in the Presidential Address and this is regarding the post-assassination violence that took place in many cities in northern India. The sentence I wish to comment upon is para 7. It reads: "stern and effective action was taken to control the situation within the shortest possible time". I will not make a lengthy speech. The little that I have to I will speak from my personal experience and I hope I will carry every Member of the house with me. I was at the receiving end of this violence which I don't think any other Member was because of my appearance; Sardar Darbara Singh does not live in Delhi; I can tell you what happened.

Shri Darbara Singh (Punjab): I know better than you about what happened.

Shri Khushwant Singh (Punjab): I was at the receiving end of it. That is why I was saying and hoping, even he would at least have the patience to listen to what I have to say before interrupting me. Sir, the assassination took place in the morning of 31st October (1984): the Prime Minister's death was announced in the afternoon and the violence began immediately afterwards starting from All-India Institute of Medical Sciences and then spread. The pattern was almost the same. The victims were invariably Sikhs. It was assumed that they shared some of the guilt of what these two assassins had done. In my own case, I live in a middle-class area near Khan Market. First, violence took place at night. Some cars standing outside the house were burnt. It continued the whole of next day. In the morning, a Gurdwara next door to me was burnt. Then, one taxi was burnt and destroyed. Shops were looted along side; they picked up Sikh shops. I wish to emphasise that right through these days, from the 31st afternoon to 1st and 2nd, the police was always present, always witnessing what was going on and nothing was done. Personally rang up the police station many times; I was promised that they would come to our assistance; they did not come, and ultimately even a person like me who was not expected to stand to this kind of violence had to leave my house, because I thought if my house was to be burnt, at least I would save my own life and sought shelter in a foreign embassy. Now, two days of violence, un-checked violence...

Shri P.N. Sukul: Which embassy was it?

Shri Khushwant Singh: It was a friend in the Swedish

Embassy; do not insinuate that I was any kind of foreign agent; nobody came to my protection. Therefore, I was justified in taking the step I took. Can this be described as 'stern and effective action and in the shortest possible time'?

Let me give you the figures, In these two days, 6000 innocent Sikhs were massacred. At least 900 women were windowed 50,000 Sikhs were rendered homeless and were removed to refugee camps; thousands of crores worth of property of the Sikhs was destroyed. Would you describe action taken as "stern and effective and in the shortest possible time?" All I wish to mention is, this tragedy has passed we are all ashamed of what happened. This time the victims were Sikhs and for understandable reasons because the assassins were Sikhs, because killings had been going on in Punjab committed by Sikh terrorists. But mark my words. People who came were lumpen elements from jhuggi-jhonpris, from villages whose lands had been acquired for expansion of Delhi. Now the tiger has tasted blood. This time, it was us. Next time, it will be all of you. If it happens again, there will be no Sikh. This time, it will be the propertied persons who will be the victims. I hope, what happened last time is not a precedent. If it is a precedent and you have to justify it as stern and effective action, taken in the shortest possible time, then, there is very little hope for the country. Now..

Shrimati Usha Malhotra: Sir, I am on a point of order. I would like to put the record straight. Action was taken within the shortest possible time. Everything was protected within two three hours. I was in London. They were all

praised for the action taken. Even the BBC. Your statement was heard over there. You were not trying to put the case straight even to them. You were trying to twist the matters and you were trying to give a different picture, while they were trying to give a ... {Interruptions}

Shri Khushwant Singh: Has this lady even faced mob coming? I do not know whether she has been the victim(Interruptions)

Shrimati Usha Malhotra: I would like to put the record straight that thousands of Sikh families were protected by the other communities.

Shri Khushwant Singh: I do not know what this kind of interruption mean. She was not even here. (Interruptions) I am speaking with the personal experience, as a man who has suffered. (Interruptions)

The Vice-Chairman (Shri Santosh Kumar Sahu): Mrs. Malhotra, you have made your point.

Shri Khushwant Singh: I hoped very much that I would be carrying the House with me. But unfortunately, I find I am not likely to do so.

Let me just refer to two reports which have come out. One is the report titled 'Who are the guilty?'. This has been prepared by Dr. Rajni Kothari, an academician. The other report, which will be in your hands in a few days, is the report by a committee presided over by the retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice S. M. Sikri. Other

members of this committee are some of the senior-most men, now retired, of the civil service, like, Badruddin Tyabji, Rajeshwar Dayal, Govind Narain. Not one of them is a Sikh. They have made a most damaging indictment in this 'Who are the guilty'? I am not going to name them because it is not done. Among the persons named are a senior Minister of the Government, several Members of Parliament, Members of the Metropolitan Council, and Members of the Delhi Municipal Corporation. I will not labour this subject. But I would ask the Government. Don't you think that these people who have been named owe it to themselves to clear their names? Does not the Government think that they have a sense of responsibility, that this kind of insinuation should not go unchallenged? I plead with you. If you have any sense of history, if fifty years from now, somebody is going to write the history of this country, of this episode and this tragedy, following the most tragic assassination of our Prime Minister, what historical documents will they have? This and the Sikri report are the only source material will historians look into? I emphasise this point entirely for this reason because I would like to say with all the power at my command that the Government should appoint a high-powered judicial commission to go into this subject and make a report. Because unless the guilty are identified and punished, mark my words, there will be no settlement of the Punjab problem and there will be no peace in this country. Thank you.

Chapter 6

Tarlochan Singh's Speech on "1984 Sikh Genocide"

English version of Speech delivered by Tarlochan Singh on 14th December, 2009 in Rajya Sabha during call attention motion on killing of Sikhs in 1984 (Original Speech is in Hindi).

Hon'ble Dy Chairman Sir, with profound grief through your medium I want to place before the Hon'ble members my views, that 25 years ago in Delhi, the Capital of India, a great cruelty was done to the Sikhs. But the greatest amazing fact is that it happened in broad day light. During the times of Nadir Shah for three days massacre took place in Delhi and then next it was in the year 1984 when it was repeated. People remember Nadir Shah till date. However, oppression of the Sikh community, all forget and tend to make excuses. Whenever we try to speak about it our speech is interrupted in between; why it didn't happen in a particular regime? Why you didn't do then? For this these people are responsible.

Dy. Chairman Sir, in this august gathering, I am here to tell what not the Sikhs have done for this country?

Guru Nanak Dev ji founded Sikhism and our present

appearance is born from Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Our history is evidence of the fact, wherever oppression took place, we stood with the oppressed.

We have never fought a war against any religion, never were we anti-Muslim, never were we anti or pro-Hindu, we fought only against oppression. In the history whenever India faced any distress then the Sikhs went out of the way to make sacrifices for it. From where did the attacks which happened against India come? These attacks came via Punjab. Who stood against these invaders? About 35000 Sikhs were massacred in a single day in *Vadda Ghalughara*. A time came that once it was declared that in India from today Sikhs have been finished, but the Sikhs rose up again. We fought a guerilla war against the invaders and our ladies also made sacrifices.

See the history of our sacrifices displayed in the Lahore Museum. When India's independence dawned everybody was aware of the fact that Punjab came under British rule 100 years after rest of India was occupied. Till 1849 our country Punjab was independent, whereas the rest of the country was under British rule. In the year 1849 British entered in Punjab. The first war of the Independence was fought by us. Not only this but those Punjabis who went to Canada, they started a *jihad* as Babbar Akalis and about 25 of Babbar Akalis embraced the gallows.

There is no such movement where we haven't contributed. I will give an example, in the year 1941 Badshah Khan had done agitation in Peshawar, bullets

were fired. Till date, the chowk is named as *khooni chowk*. The whole country was scared and an Akali jatha went on train from Amritsar to Peshawar and stood beside the Badshah Khan. Jallianwala Bagh massacre happened in Amritsar. Give one example where we haven't sacrificed for the country?

When the country got independence, we were offered a Sikh state by Jinnah, all this is in records, that we will get all the rights if we join Pakistan. We would get autonomy and other facilities. This offer of Jinnah is in records, and books have been published on this. But our leader, Master Tara Singh, said that whatever happens we will join India. We left Pakistan, even the birth place of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Nankana Sahib, and came along with you, but what have you given to us? When the Constitution was framed our members didn't sign on it. Sardar Hukam Singh became Speaker of Lok Sabha but didn't sign the Constitution. We protested that whatever rights were promised to us by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru have not been included in the Indian Constitution. All this is in records. Whatever I am saying if it comes out to be factually incorrect I am ready to offer my apologies for that and could correct it.

What happened in the country, the whole country was reorganized on linguistic basis, but not Punjab. The movement for Punjabi Suba began. Numbers of people were martyred. About one lakh people went to jail, after lot of sacrifices in the year 1966, Punjabi Suba came into being. Whether it was the attack of Pakistan on India twice or on Kashmir, it was the army of Patiala State which reached

Kashmir in 1948. Then the war of 1965 & 1971 took place. Tell us what is the amount of our sacrifices in proportion to our population of 2% in India? Count our sacrifices in the war of independence. See the plaque in *Kaala Paani*, about 90% Sikhs were imprisoned in the jail in Andaman & Nicobar, out of the total number of the people who were hanged in India about 80% were Sikhs. All this is on record but we are not putting any price of our sacrifices. We are not asking for anything. We just want to tell that we have been patriots. We have been living for this country, but what happened to us? About 25 years ago, in the history of the world such an incident has not happened, that the most sacred place of our religion was defiled by sending armies. Who went into the Golden Temple at Amritsar? The army of India went inside with an excuse to catch a person.

To catch one person the Indian Army was sent inside. Thousands of people in Amritsar were killed and Akal Takht Sahib was demolished. This is in records and not wrong, you listen to me, if I am saying wrong facts I am ready to take back. Is this not the fact that Golden Temple Complex was demolished on the pretext of capturing a militant?

In the Golden Temple complex, Akal Takht Sahib is as important to us as the Golden Temple. You demolished Akal Takht as if you were demolishing an illegal building in Delhi City, how many people died in this? So many travelers (pilgrims) died. The *Sarovar*, which is our water of life, was full of blood. The people of the world watched

it. Curfew was imposed in Punjab which was called Wood Rose. Earlier, attack on Golden Temple Complex was named Blue Star but now it was followed by Wood Rose in Punjab. How many Sikh youths were killed? In this House, I had earlier said that there are such villages in Punjab where no wedding has taken place for the last 20 years, because all the youths have been killed. No marriage party has ever gone from there. So much oppression happened then, I am leaving that issue for now, because the issue for today is what you did in Delhi after this? On 1st, 2nd & 3rd November, 2973 people were murdered in Delhi. The figure of murders was about 5000 people for the whole of India.

My first objection is to calling this as riots by the Minister. What are riots? Home Minister is himself a lawyer. Riot takes place when there is fight between two groups. Our was not a riot? Ours was what happened in case of Jews by Hitler in 1942-43, i.e. genocide, massacre, holocaust.

Then it was to catch hold of Jews and kill them; the same thing was done against Sikhs. People were sitting inside their homes; where were the riots taking place? You got marked the houses, got hold of the voter lists, traced the houses of the Sikhs in Delhi and got them marked during night and sent goons there in the morning, did arson and burnt the houses. What has Nanavati written, about which the Home Minister has described? He said "I go on record that Sikhs were congregated at a place firstly then police came along with goons. They beat the Sikhs, then put tyres in their necks and after pouring kerosene burnt

them alive". The record about which I am speaking has been corroborated by Mr Shekhar Gupta, the then correspondent, Mr Rahul Bedi, a correspondent, and by Madhu Kishwar, a woman leader; they have said on record that this type of cruelty inflicted on Sikhs in Delhi has never happened anywhere in the world.

We speak about Bosnia; when about 8000 Bosnian Serb Muslims were killed. What happened, the President of Serbia is an accused in the world court? The man who had killed Bosnian Serb Muslims, the then President, is an accused in the Hague court. He has been given an exemplary punishment. What have we gained? You have said that three people have been named by Home Minister; who are the political leaders? We want to get out of the rut of Tytler, Sajjan Kumar, etc. I want to state it clearly that whatever has happened in Delhi it was with the connivance of the police. I blame the judiciary for their silence. The extent of failure of judiciary that has happened in case of Sikhs has not happened anywhere in the world. There is activism of judiciary in every case, but when the Sikhs are killed then the judiciary goes silent. There is also discrimination against us. If we count the amount of killing in all the riots which had happened in India till date our number would be double. The number of Sikhs killed would be more than any community.

Leave everything, even a gallantry awardee who fought in 1971 war, when his house was attacked, then to defend his house stood there with his revolver. What happened next? Then under the command of Amod Kant

DCP the police attacked his house, arrested him and put him in jail for defending himself. The whole of his family was murdered and Amod Kant was given a Gallantry Award by the Government.

You also gave Amod Kant a Congress ticket for Assembly. Now against him Nanavati and Mittal Committee has said "He is unfit to be in the police". He was promoted, was given Gallantry award, why was this award given? How many Sikhs were killed in any area of a DCP, where maximum Sikhs were killed, he was awarded. I have a report of Commissioner of Police in these riots. I had asked one question, to which answer the Home Minister had replied last week. A committee was constituted of Retired Chief Justice, Dalip Kapur, and Kusam Lata, former Secretary, Govt of India. Just think, 9 Committees and Commissions were constituted. The Committee gave a factual report that 52 Police officers and SHOs were responsible. Brothers, the law of the land says that if under the jurisdictional area a murder takes place then the SHO, DCP and Deputy Commissioner are responsible. Nobody has been held responsible when in East Delhi 4000 to 5000 people were killed. This report was given by Justice Dalip Kapur and Kusum Lata Committee; I have a copy of this report. They had recommended that, there was connivance of 52 police officers of Delhi who were responsible for riots. In this report, 4 DCPs were named, also one police Commissioner, Mr Tandon, and one additional Police Commissioner, Mr Jatav. They had praised two Police Officers, i.e. Mr Maxwell Pareira and

Gautam Kaul for their exemplary work. I have all the names with recommendations given against them. When I had asked question to the Home Minister that what was the outcome of Kusum Lata Committee, in reply he said he has not read the report. This is the justice we have got, 39 inquiries were conducted by the Government, out of these in 36, accused were exonerated. Warnings were issued in three, only three persons and 13 officers who have since then retired and the murder cases are closed against the retired in the country! The law of India says since the person has retired no action can be taken against him; this is what was in the written reply given by the Home Minister. This means all the Police officers who were conniving with the culprits, were not only witness but supporters in our massacre in Delhi. They used to take the mob in government owned DTC buses and they used to watch mutely. You gave warning to the three Police officers. They are not giving answer as they have retired and there is no law to prosecute them. Brothers, I am standing before you, we are all from villages. It is clearly stated what would be the role of Police administration and under IPC where crime takes place. But when the turn of the Sikhs came all the law vanished. I have brought articles written by Mr Vir Singhvi and Kushwant Singh, two eminent journalists of the country. Mr Yechury is sitting here; I have also brought an article written by him. They have written that whatever happened during that period, the Government and the ruling party of that period were fully involved in it. Bothers, the then Prime Minister, may he resides in heavens, when complaints were made to him he said, "When a big tree

falls the earth is bound to shake". Why didn't this earth shake when Mahatma Gandhi was murdered, how many Marathas were murdered in the country? Because the murderer was a Marathi? When Rajiv Gandhi was killed, how many Tamils were killed? Why were only the Sikhs victimized, why the tree had to fall only on the Sikhs?

A number of Honorable Members have still to speak on this issue. Last week the Speaker had allowed this issue to be raised in the Lok Sabha. Harsimrat Kaur Badal had given the details in that House. I am thankful to Chairman and Deputy Chairman for allowing the discussion for the first time after 25 years in this House. We were not allowed to discuss this issue earlier and even a motion of this was dissuaded in the Parliament.

Today we have been allowed and all the members will put their views across. Our only appeal before you is that, what was the fault of the Sikhs? Why have you targeted a community who is wearing turban? Turban wearing Sikhs who were in Army were taken out of trains and killed. I asked a question from the Government on this but was told as it was a serious matter we cannot tell you. How many people serving in Defence services were killed after being dragged out of trains?

No figures were given. Sikhs were put in the furnaces of Steel plants, how many were killed? 300 Sikhs were killed in Kanpur, also in Ranchi; the list of the Sikhs killed in the whole of the country was not given by the Government of India. Leave this aside, why the trains were stopped in the

outskirts of Delhi? 46 trains were stopped to search for Sikhs. The Sikhs were taken out and killed. All the trains from Ghaziabad to Delhi had blood of Sikhs on those. Nobody stopped this killing nor was any police force sent there. The forces were not made available. Nobody considered sending a force and rescuing the Sikhs.

I remember that leaders of Delhi, Air Chief Marshall Arjun Singh and General Jagjit Singh Arora went running to the office of Home Minister and urged him to rescue the Sikhs as they were being killed in trains. But he said they were busy with the funeral of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. For three days the preparations for funeral went on and the Sikhs were being killed. Nobody was sent for rescuing and saving them. Why the army was not sent? There is Delhi cantonment area, about one lakh army is stationed here. Army cannot come to Delhi from there. Army was called from Meerut. But when the army came it was given order not to shoot. They were ordered to hold flag march and not to shoot. Brothers, check the records; not one bullet was shot by Police or the Army. Tell us if you have killed any murderer, or any goon. Then the way what could they do, what all is being done, is done by the courts.

Nobody was hanged for the murder of 6,000 Sikhs. You have not held responsible but have absolved the Lt Governor, Police Commissioner, Dy Commissioner, DCP and all the leaders. Delhi was controlled by Central Government, it is your territory. The Government of India was responsible, not the State Government. We have been told that the President and Prime Minister of Serbia are

accused in the Hague court. Who has been made accused in the courts of law of our country? We are not interested that constabulary be sent to jail. We want a clear answer who conspired for killings and where was it done? Our sister, Hon'ble Minister for Information is present here, the radio was broadcasting every day that Sikh guards have killed Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Every day it was announced that Sikhs have killed Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It was surprising that Radio which was under Government control was encouraging the goons. It was encouraging that people should rise and kill the Sikhs. Our only fault is that after leaving Pakistan we have come to you. Today in the court of world our appeal is that there is a convention of UNO; our demand is that the Supreme court should set up a mechanism under Article 2 of the UNO convention on Genocide and Article 7 of International criminal court of crimes against humanity. The Supreme Court of India should come forward under the Act; otherwise the judiciary would be equally responsible. Today standing here I am saying that we don't have faith in the Judiciary.

If similar incident happens in another State then everyday media is discussing about the activism shown by Judiciary, but what has happened in our case? For one encounter, an IG of police has been sent to jail, but here 6000 Sikhs were killed but not even a single DCP has been jailed. Please tell us for how long we have to wait? Recently, the Government of the Country had said that as 25 years have passed please forget about it.

The Jews were killed in 1943-44, I had read last month

that the Israelis are still searching and have got hold of a 95 years old a German General who had killed the Jews; the war criminals are still being arrested, still they are being tried. But here they are telling us as 25 years have passed, forget it.

Brothers, in Sikh religion in our daily prayer (*ardas*), we recall our historical record. In our *Ardas*, we mention about all the atrocities committed against us in history, when and where. This is the part of the *Ardas* which we memorize and not write. It has become deeply embossed in our hearts that the government has not done justice with us for all the atrocities of 1984 at Darbar Sahib and in Delhi.

We ask for justice. In the other house, Hon'ble Advani Ji had given a proposal that a Parliamentary Committee be constituted which would look at all the lapses. When the Police has not written FIRs then which court would give us Justice? All the Political Parties are represented here, I appeal to all the Honorable Members that you all constitute a committee. The whole of the House is assembled, I want to make this clear as our appeal. We are ready to do anything for the sake of the country and want justice from you. That is why I am standing here.

We are not against any individual; lot of people of Delhi helped us. There are stories of how neighbours helped us. Your people also helped us, I say that we got lots of individual help but who brought the goons? Organized gangs came, who brought the kerosene, who gave them all these things? I am clear, still you have time, you should

take this into account who supplied the material assistance to the gangs. The CBI has asked for permission from the government to prosecute Sajjan Kumar, but the government is not giving permission for prosecution so that the trial should start. I am surprised you have made another accused a Minister.

It is all history how those who were involved were given tickets and how they were later on cancelled. The Home Minister is witness to it as to why tickets were withdrawn from those culprits, to whom the Congress Party had given tickets but were cancelled in the evening? Do you want us that we do such things? No we are peaceful and live peacefully. We demand only justice.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Please conclude.

Deputy Chairman Sir, I sincerely thank you for the time given to me to speak. The rest of the things would be told by my colleagues. I again appeal to you that this issue would not die. If you think we would forget; we are not going to forget. This is above party lines; this is not an issue of one community. This issue concerns all peace loving people in the world. This is a humanitarian question. This should be dealt in the way as I have explained.

Thank you.

Chapter 7

Profiles of the Contributing Members of Parliament

Sardar Hukam Singh (Source: Lok Sabha Speakers)

Unanimously elected as the Speaker of the Third Lok Sabha, Sardar Hukam Singh endeavoured to follow and enforce the rules, procedures, practices and conventions of the House. His legal background and a stint as a Judge stood him in good stead in the years that he occupied the office of the Deputy Speaker and later the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Suave and soft-spoken but firm and forthright, he was widely acclaimed and respected for his clarity of thought, fairness and charming personality.

Hukam Singh was born on 30 August 1895 at Montgomery, now a part of Pakistan. After the completion of his matriculation from the Government High School, Montgomery, Hukam Singh did his graduation from the Khalsa College, Amritsar in 1917. Thereafter, he studied Law at the Law College, Lahore and after passing out in 1921, started practising in his home town Montgomery. He was the President of the Montgomery Bar Association for a number of years.

Hukam Singh was initiated into politics through the Shiromani Akali Dal and was its President for three years. He was also a member of the Montgomery Singh Sabha and its President for three years. Hukam Singh was arrested in 1924 in connection with the Gurudwara Reform Movement and was sentenced to about two years of imprisonment.

Partition forced Hukam Singh to cross over to India in August 1947. He became a refugee overnight. However, his talents were soon recognised and he was appointed Puisne Judge of the State High Court, Kapurthala in December 1947, a post which he held till November 1948.

Hukam Singh was elected to the Constituent Assembly of India in April 1948 as a member of the Akali Dal. He was also a member of the Provisional Parliament (1950-52) and was later elected to the First Lok Sabha in 1952 from PEPSU constituency, representing the Akali Party. His name was placed in the Panel of Chairmen by the then Speaker G.V. Mavalankar. The way he conducted the proceedings of the House whenever such opportunity came his way was admired by all cutting across party lines. On 20 March 1956, Hukam Singh was unanimously elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha even when he was a member of the Opposition. This was a testimony to not only his popularity but also confidence of the members in his ability to run the House in an efficient and impartial manner.

Hukam Singh was elected to the Lok Sabha for the second time in 1957 from the Bhatinda parliamentary

constituency. He was re-elected as Deputy Speaker on 17 May 1957. He also functioned as the Chairman of the Committee of Privileges, Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions, Library Committee and Committee on Subordinate Legislation.

In the General Elections held in 1962, Hukam Singh was returned for the third time to the Lok Sabha, this time on a Congress ticket from the Patiala parliamentary constituency. His credentials having been tested and fully confirmed, it was only natural that Hukam Singh was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the Third Lok Sabha. It was the considered view of the House that the office of the Speaker was safe in the hands of Hukam Singh who could zealously uphold the dignity of Parliament and the rights and privileges of its members.

During his Speakership, for the first time in the history of the Lok Sabha, a Motion of No-Confidence against the Council of Ministers was admitted and discussed in August 1963. During his term as Speaker, as many as six Motions of No-Confidence against various Councils of Ministers were admitted and discussed. Through all these stormy debates, Hukam Singh ensured that decorum and discipline were maintained in the House.

Hukam Singh was also the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the two Houses which had been formed in October 1965 to find out a solution based on goodwill and reasonable approach to the issue of the Punjabi Suba.

As Speaker, Hukam Singh led the Indian

Parliamentary Delegations to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences in Lagos (Nigeria) in October-November 1962 and in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) in November 1963. He also led Indian Parliamentary Delegations on goodwill visits to the USSR and Mongolia in September-October 1962, to U.K. and West Germany in October 1964 and to the Philippines in May 1965. At the invitation of the Government of the United States of America, Hukam Singh also led a Parliamentary Delegation to USA in June 1963.

Hukam Singh did not contest the General Elections in 1967 and laid down the office of the Speaker on 16 March 1967. Thereafter, he was appointed as Governor of Rajasthan on 15 April 1967 and stayed in office till June 1972. As Governor also, he won widespread acclamation for upholding the high tradition of the office.

As, in politics, Hukam Singh was brilliant in many other fields also. During his college days, he was a recognised sportsman and was a member of the Punjab University Hockey team during 1914 - 16. He also took keen interest in education and was the Chairman of the Governing body of the S.G.T.B. Khalsa College, Delhi. Besides, to his credit, he had a few books in English and Punjabi such as Sikh Case, The problems of Sikhs, Russia as I Saw It and Russia Today. In 1967, he was awarded honorary degree of LL.D. by the Punjabi University, Patiala.

Hukam Singh passed away on 27 May 1983 at the age of 88.

Sardar Kapur Singh (Source: Wikipedia)

He was an eminent Sikh philosopher, theologian, politician-parliamentarian, and a prolific writer of the twentieth century. As a distinguished linguist he had a mastery over English, Gurmukhi, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit.

Kapur Singh was born in a farming Dhaliwal family at village Chakk in the district of Ludhiana. His father's name was Didar Singh. He was student of Government College, Lahore and he stood first in MA Philosophy examination of Punjab University. He appeared in ICS Examination for entry into Indian Civil Service of British Empire and was successful. He was sent to Cambridge University for training where he completed his studies in Moral Sciences Tripos.

Returning from UK, Kapur Singh joined the Indian Civil Service (ICS). After serving at a number of administrative posts under the British Raj, he was summarily dismissed from service by Chandu Lal Trivedi, the governor of Punjab, shortly after Indian Independence, while he was serving as the deputy commissioner of Kangra district.

Kapur Singh was incensed at a circular issued by the government that targeted his community. It is alleged that Kapur Singh filed a protest and made the circular public and invited the wrath of the governor of Punjab. The

charges levelled against him were of corruption and insubordination. Kapur Singh fought a protracted legal battle but was not restored to the administrative service.

The Circular was Confidential but was disclosed to Akali leader Tara Singh, who had come and stayed at the residence of Kapur Singh for few weeks, violating Official Secret Act 1923. Tara Singh disclosed this matter to PM Nehru, who as an advocate knew the violation of law. Nehru told this matter to CJI Sinha who instructed judges not to give any relief to Kapur Singh after his dismissal from service.

On insistence of Akali leaders, Kapur Singh joined the Akali politics. In 1962, he was elected to the 3rd Lok Sabha as a candidate of the Swatantra Party from the Ludhiana constituency. In 1969, Kapur Singh was elected to the Vidhan Sabha in the new Punjab state from the Samrala constituency. He also remained the National Professor of Sikhism. His speech "*Betrayal of the Sikhs*" of 6th September, 1966 in Lok Sabha and Anadpur Sahib resolution of 1973 is magna carta of Sikhs demands and aspirations.

Kapur Singh was a prolific writer. The books written in English by him include *Parasaraprasna* (a classic treatise on Sikhism , Published by Guru Nanak Dev University), *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs* (a UNESCO publication), *Me Judice* (English Miscellany), *Contributions of Guru Nanak, Sikhism for Modern Man, The Hour of Sword, Guru Arjan and*

*Sukhmani, Some Insights into Sikhism , Sikhism an Oecumenical Religion. Hashish (poems in Punjabi), Saptaring (Punjabi Biographies), Bahu Vistaar (Punjabi Essays), Pundrik (Punjabi Essays on cultuture and religion) , Bikh meh Amrit (political essays and lectures in punjabi) and Mansur-al-Hallaj (Monograph of a Sufi saint in Punjabi) , Sachi Sakhi (Memoirs in Punjabi). His works have also been published by Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and Punjabi University, Patiala. He is also believed to have scripted the Anandpur Sahib Resolution 1973 of the Akali Dal. His *Sachi Sakhi* (memoirs) of 1979 is the most read book on Punjab Partition and Sikhs politics.*

Sardar Khushwant Singh (Source Wikipedia)

Khushwant Singh (2 February 1915 – 20 March 2014) was one of the most celebrated Indian author, lawyer, diplomat, journalist and politician. He was educated in Modern School and St. Stephen's College, New Delhi and graduated from Government College, Lahore. He studied at King's College London and was awarded LL.B. from University of London. He was called to the bar at the London Inner Temple. After working as a lawyer in Lahore High Court for eight years, he joined the Indian Foreign Service after the Independence of India in 1947.

He was appointed journalist in the All India Radio in 1951, and then moved to the Department of Mass Communications of UNESCO at Paris in 1956. These last two careers encouraged him to pursue a literary career. He started as Information Officer of the Government of India in Toronto, Canada. He was Press Attaché and Public Officer for the Indian High Commission for four years in London and Ottawa. From 1956 he turned to editorial services. He founded and edited *Yojana*, an Indian government journal in 1951 -1953; *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, a newsweekly; *The National Herald*. He was also appointed as editor of Hindustan Times on Indira Gandhi's personal recommendation. As a writer, he was best known for his trenchant secularism, humour, sarcasm and an abiding love of poetry. His comparisons of social and behavioural characteristics of Westerners and Indians are laced with acid wit.

Khushwant Singh was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1974; however, he returned the award in 1984 in protest against Operation Blue Star in an emotional outburst to show his solidarity with the Sikh community. In 2007, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award in India under the Congress Government headed by Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh. He served as Member of Parliament in Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament of India between 1980-1986.

Religious belief: Singh was a self-proclaimed agnostic, as the title of his 2011 book *"Agnostic Khushwant: There is no God"* explicitly revealed. He was particularly against organised religion. He was evidently inclined towards atheism, as he said, *"One can be a saintly person without believing in God and a detestable villain believing in Him. In my personalised religion, There Is No God!"* He also once said, *"I don't believe in rebirth or in reincarnation, in the day of judgement or in heaven or hell. I accept the finality of death"*. His last book, *"The Good, The Bad and The Ridiculous"*, was published in October 2013, following which he retired from writing. The book was his continued critique of religion and especially its practice in India, including the critique of the clergy and priests. It earned a lot of acclaim in India.

Honours and awards

- Rockefeller Grant, USA, 1966
- Padma Bhushan, Government of India (1974) (He

returned the decoration in 1984 in protest against the Union government's siege of the Golden Temple, Amritsar)

- Punjab Rattan Award, The Government of Punjab (2006)
- Padma Vibhushan, Government of India (2007)
- Sahitya Akademi Fellowship by Sahitya Academy of India (2010)
- Lifetime achievement award by Tata Literature Live! The Mumbai Litfest in 2013
- Fellow of King's College London in January 2014

Khushwant Singh died of natural causes on 20 March 2014 at his residence in Sujan Singh Park, New Delhi at the age of 99.

Sardar Tarlochan Singh (Source: Wikipedia)

S. Tarlochan Singh is an Indian politician who was a Member of the Parliament of India, representing Haryana. He served as Chairman National Commission for Minorities from 2003 to 2006. He served as Vice Chairman, National Commission for Minorities from 2000 to 2003.

Tarlochan Singh was born on 28 July 1933, to Shmt. Ram Piari and S. Balwant Singh in Dhudial, Punjab (now in Chakwal District, Pakistan). He is the eldest amongst three siblings. He did his early schooling in Khalsa School at Dhudial and then moved to Patiala at the time of Partition in 1947. The time after Partition was very difficult time for him and his family. For some time he had to work along with his studies. He is an alumnus of Mohindra College of Patiala where he attained his Master's degree in Economics from Punjab University, Chandigarh in 1955.

After completing his master's degree in Economics, Singh started his career in civil service as Public Relations Officer in Punjab. He served as Joint Secretary, Development, Punjab Markfed from 1972 till 1977. Markfed is the largest cooperative organization in Asia. He then served as Jt. Director, Public Relations Deptt in 1977 and served in this position till 1980. He was Additional Director, Department of Tourism, Culture, Museum and Archaeology, Government of Punjab from 1980 to 1982. Some of his other important assignments were as follows:

- Press Secretary to President of India (1983-1987).

- Managing Director, Delhi Tourism Development Corporation (1987-1993).
- Advisor, Tourism, Government of India (1993-1994).
- Chairman, Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (1997-1999).
- Vice-Chairman, National Commission for Minorities (2000-2003).
- Member, National Commission on Population (2003-2005).
- Chairman, National Commission for Minorities, Government of India (with the status of Union Cabinet Minister) (2003-2006).
- Member Rajya Sabha (2004 - 2010).

As Member of Parliament, his contributions for the Sikh cause can be summed up as follows:

- He moved a calling attention motion on 14th December 2009, on killing of Sikhs in 1984 and for the relief to the victims of 1984 riots in the Rajya Sabha.
- He moved an amendment in the Anand Marriage Act which was passed in 1908. There is no provision in this act of registration of Sikh marriages. Sikhs have been getting registration certificates under Hindu Marriage Act. He was instrumental in getting the Bill

passed for registration of Sikh marriages under the Anand marriage act. This will be a major step towards officially recognizing the Sikhism as a separate religion.

- He is the first Member Parliament who spoke in Punjabi in the Parliament. It took him about two years to get the facility of immediate translation of Punjabi in other languages, so that the other MPs can understand the speech.
- He got sanction for Maharaja Ranjit Singh's statue in Parliament complex.
- Established the Guru Teg Bahadur Museum in Anandpur Sahib in 1978.
- The Maharaja Ranjit Singh Museum Amritsar in 1980.
- Shaheed Bhagat Singh Museum in Khatkar Kalan in 1988.

Tarlochan Singh has authored half a dozen books in Punjabi and dozens of articles in local newspapers. He is an orator extraordinary and his TV interviews are popular in the mass media. He is a widely travelled person and an iconic figure in the Sikh circles.