

# Partition of the Punjab

A STUDY OF ITS EFFECTS ON THE POLITICS  
AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE PUNJAB (I) 1947-56

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ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE

BOMBAY · CALCUTTA · NEW DELHI · MADRAS  
LUCKNOW · BANGALORE · LONDON · NEW YORK

**PRINTED IN INDIA**

**BY D. D. KARKARIA AT LEADERS PRESS PRIVATE  
LIMITED, BOMBAY AND PUBLISHED BY P. S.  
JAYASINGHE, ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, BOMBAY**

*To the memory of  
My Father and Mother*



## P R E F A C E

THE partition of the Punjab was one of the greatest catastrophes that overtook its people. The unpreparedness of the people and the Government for such an unprecedented eventuality was evident in the process of migration, evacuation and resettlement. The division of an administrative, economic and cultural unit without natural boundaries demarcating the areas, was bound to have deep impact on the life of the State. A comprehensive study of the problems arising out of the partition of the Punjab, therefore, becomes important.

In view of the studies already made on the social and economic consequences of the partition of the Punjab, this study has been restricted to the administrative and political effects of the partition and deals in particular with the problems created by the influx of the refugees and its effects on the administration and politics of the State. It, furthermore, discusses the strategic importance of the area which was overnight turned into a border State and the problems arising out of it.

Since the end of the World War I, the idea of the right of self-determination had gripped the minds of all the democrats the world over, particularly in the colonial countries. It was also used to solve some of the knotty problems of large national minorities in certain countries of Europe. The idea was further elaborated in Soviet Russia after the Russian Revolution wherein the national minorities, at least in theory, were given the right of self-determination to the point of secession from the Soviet Union. Partition and territorial rearrangement, after the World War II, were the means to solve certain political and ideological issues in the different parts of the world such as in Korea, Indo-China, Germany, Israel and the like. Yet it has thrown up a host of other problems which have proved equally difficult to solve.

The partition of India was demanded mainly by the religious fanatical forces led by the Muslim League on the basis of the theory that Muslims constituted a different nation from the Hindus. The demand was supported by certain forces of the Left in the country who in their zeal to apply the solution of the right of self-determination to a widely different and complex situation, unwittingly strengthened the reactionary demand for the partition. Social ostracism

of the Hindus and revivalist tendencies in the Congress accentuated separatist tendencies. As a result the Congress failed to draw the Muslim masses in its fold. Omissions and commissions of the Congress and the Muslim League and the strategy of the rulers led to the eventuality of the partition.

The partition of the Punjab came as a corollary to the partition of India. It was felt by many people that communalism would be rooted out from the soil of India after the demand of a separate Muslim State was conceded. That it was far from correct, is proved from the sporadic clashes between different communities, castes and nationalities in India since the partition. It is particularly true of the Punjab. With the near elimination of the Muslims, this community is no longer a political force to be reckoned with, but communalism has found expression in the Hindu-Sikh conflicts. Communalism is the product of a backward economy and ideology and it can be rooted out only with progressive economic development and education in the country.

The partition shook the Punjab to its very foundations. The administrative system suffered a severe shock as a result of the depletion of personnel and the heavy burden of administration in the wake of the partition. The Punjab, thus, had to face the political implications of the problem of rehabilitation and the social, economic and cultural integration of the refugees in the body-politic of the State.

Without natural boundaries demarcating the two Punjabs, the region became the centre of conflicts between the two neighbouring countries. The Canal Water Dispute, boundary clashes, smuggling and resettlement were some of the other sources of tension between India and Pakistan. Besides the protection of the boundary line demands constant attention. Its close proximity to Kashmir area, further complicates the situation.

An effort has been made by the writer to study the effects of the partition. The writer is aware of the limitations. As it always happens with studies of contemporary politics, much significant data was not available because of its confidential nature. Besides, because of the confusion resulting from the partition, a great deal of data was lost—either destroyed or remained untraced. To make up for it, however, the writer interviewed some of the important government and non-government personnel who held positions of responsibility during the period. The research also

suffered a severe handicap because no authentic study of the history of the province since the British conquest was available. In spite of the limitations, the writer has made an attempt to make the study as objective as possible.

The writer is also conscious of the fact that some of the knotty problems of the State have been solved and a number of projects have been completed during the interval that has lapsed between the period specified for the study and the time when it is going to the press. Particularly significant is the change that has occurred in the internal politics resulting from the rift in the Akali Party and the challenge to the erstwhile undisputed leadership of Master Tara Singh by Sant Fateh Singh and his group. The decision of the Punjab Government to make the learning of Punjabi language compulsory in schools in the Punjabi region and Hindi in the Hindi region, and the establishment of the Punjabi University at Patiala, have very nearly satisfied the protagonists of Punjabi. This can further help the process of weakening the communal forces and take the wind out of the sails of the slogan of the 'Punjabi Suba'.

The Government has also taken care to remove the sense of dissatisfaction among the people of Hariyana. The establishment of a Sanskrit University at Kurukshetra, Medical College at Rohtak, Engineering College and a number of other schools and colleges in the area have done away with the discrepancy in the sphere of education, to an extent, between the western and eastern sectors of the State. The irrigation canals from Bhakhra Dam for the region will boost up its agricultural production. Coupled with other factors, it may help the integration process between the people of the area and the refugees who settled here after the partition. The demand for a separate State of Hariyana has receded further as a result of these developments.

The Chinese aggression on the Indian soil, the emergency and the Sino-Pak Pact have also changed the entire political complexion of the Punjab by uniting all the political parties in the cause of defending the motherland. The Akali Party has announced its decision to suspend its campaign for the 'Punjabi Suba' till the emergency lasts. It is to be hoped that the period will be utilized to consolidate the forces of unity. The aggression has also divided the Communist Party in the State and with the majority of its old sectarian leadership in jail, it is busy reorganizing itself on the basis of its new resolution supporting the Government in its effort to combat the Chinese

aggression. The Congress, though still faction ridden, has, thus, emerged even stronger under the powerful leadership of the Chief Minister Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon.<sup>1</sup>

In the sphere of economic development too, the Punjab has made rapid strides. The completion of the Bhakhra Dam and the Rajasthan Canal has accelerated its productive process, particularly in the fields of small scale industry and agriculture, leading to more prosperity for its people. Enquiries conducted by economic experts reveal that the per capita income in the State between 1952-53 and 1958-59, rose from Rs. 321.00 to the peak figure of Rs. 398.00. In 1962-63 it is expected to be almost the same as it was in 1958-59 which is the highest in India, Rs. 93.00 more than the all India average. It is undoubtedly a tribute to the sturdy people of the Punjab who have not only been able to rehabilitate themselves from an uprooted economy, but also have stolen a march over other parts of the country within a short period of fifteen years.

It is also gratifying to note that the problems like 'Demarcation of the Boundary Line' between India and Pakistan and 'Canal Water Dispute' have been finally settled resulting in the restoration of a sense of security in the border areas which is reflected in the rapid construction and building activity in places like Amritsar.

The political, economic and social developments during the past six years, however, need a detailed study and a probe into the causes and factors responsible for them. The writer, therefore, has not ventured to make the study up-to-date which may be taken up at some other suitable time.

4 April 1963  
*New Delhi*

SATYA M. RAI



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I WISH to express my grateful thanks to Dr. Tara Chand, Head of South Asia Department, Indian School of International Studies, without whose guidance, encouragement and sympathetic consideration this work would not have been accomplished. I am also indebted to Dr. A. Appadorai, Director of the Indian School of International Studies, and to Dr. K. P. Karunakaran who were kind enough to give me advice whenever I asked for it. My thanks are also due to Mr. H. S. Takulia for going through the manuscript and making useful suggestions, to Dr. Satish Kumar for helping me in many ways and correcting the proofs and to Mr. S. K. Arora who prepared the index.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not express my heartfelt thanks to Mr. E. N. Mangat Rai, the then Chief Secretary of the Punjab for giving me all facilities to consult the Punjab Government records, reports and other relevant materials. I also deeply appreciate the co-operation extended to me by the leaders of various political parties of the Punjab, like Sardar Gurumukh Singh Musafir, Sardar Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Master Tara Singh and Prof. Sher Singh. Last but not the least I am thankful to my husband, Mr. Lajpat Rai, who has been a constant source of inspiration to me.

SATYA M. RAI



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## ABBREVIATIONS

1. **A.I.C.C.** All India Congress Committee
2. **C.L.O.** Chief Liaison Officer
3. **C.P.I.** Communist Party of India
4. **D.Ps.** Displaced Persons
5. **EPLAR** East Punjab Liaison Agency Record
6. **M.E.O.** Military Evacuation Organization
7. **P.A.P.** Punjab Armed Police
8. **P.C.C.** Provincial Congress Committee
9. **R.S.S.** Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh
10. **R.T.C.** Round Table Conference
11. **S.As.** Standard Acres
12. **S.G.P.C** Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee
13. **S.R.C.** States Reorganization Commission
14. **T.V.A.** Tennessee Valley Authority



## CHAPTER I

# FACTORS AND EVENTS RELATING TO THE PARTITION OF INDIA—1947

## I

### BRITISH RULE AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN SOCIETY, 1757-1909

THE partition of the sub-continent of India and the emergence of Pakistan on 14 August, 1947, as a sovereign state were events with far-reaching consequences. They brought in their wake changes of great magnitude in the economic, social and political life of the people of the affected areas.

The factors which made possible the division of a unified single state, have been assessed with varying emphasis by different authorities. An influential section of British statesmen maintained that the perennial conflict between the two communities rendered partition inevitable. Sir John Strachey, followed later by Mr. Churchill and Lord Amery, were of the opinion that there was no unity in India in "European terms" and the animosity between the two communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, led to the division of the country. Some Indian writers like Dr. Ambedkar, too, following the British analysis, held Hindu ostracism responsible for the Muslim demand of a separate state. Other Indian statesmen like Gandhiji and Nehru, on the other hand, held the British policy of "divide and rule" responsible for the partition. The spokesmen of the Muslim League, however, believed that Muslims were a separate nation and the demand for Pakistan was the "urge of a nation to mould its own ideals and culture" which could not be satisfied "without having full sovereignty".<sup>1</sup>

A review of the events which culminated in the division of India would, nevertheless, show that it would be an over-simplification to trace the cause of the partition to any one factor. Partition, in fact, resulted from the action and reaction of the different factors involved in the history of the period and represented the manner in which each of the parties approached the problem. It reflected also the fundamental inability of the Hindus and the Muslims to

<sup>1</sup> Liaquat Ali Khan, *Hindu*, Madras (18 April 1946).

evolve a secular political community in spite of a common history running into a thousand years. A study of the Hindu-Muslim relations clearly shows that while attempts were made to strengthen cultural ties between the two communities, equal emphasis was not laid on the social and political factors. The social exclusiveness of the Hindus and religious aggressiveness of the Muslims helped in the process and made the fusion of two communities, into a single political entity, rather difficult.

The task of the British authorities, to consolidate their hold in India, in view of the historical conditions, accordingly, became easier. Needless to say that the foreign rule was not welcomed by the Indian people, but it is also true that the two communities responded differently to the British rule. The Hindu commercial classes who had maintained their position during the Muslim rule, took to the British rule more amiably than the Muslims who felt the direct loss of political power. In the sphere of education, too, the Hindus took to English education more readily. This education enabled them to take their place in the bureaucratic structure that the British were setting up to administer the country at that time. The rising bourgeoisie—the professional and mercantile classes—who were largely Hindus, thus became increasingly important in the existing set-up.

The Muslim reaction to the foreign rule, nevertheless, was generally contradictory to the attitude that the Hindus had adopted. The Muslims had been in political power till recently and the British were quite conscious of the hostility of the Muslims to their rule. In the educational and cultural spheres, the Muslims felt the blow more severely. The replacement of Persian by English and the introduction of western system of law and medicine, left the professional Muslim classes like 'Hakims', 'Maulvies' and 'Qazies' unemployed and frustrated. Hindus, who had readily accepted the change, thus, stole a march over the Muslims in these professions.

The decline of the Muslim nobility, replacement of their language and legal system and step-motherly treatment given to them by the British authorities for a decade or so after the Great Revolt, left the Muslims angry and bitter. Uptil 1872, thus, the Hindu middle class had widely expanded, while its counterpart among the Muslims had hardly come into existence. There was, in this way, a difference of nearly three-quarters of a century in the rise of the middle classes in the two communities.



The economic fabric of Indian society was disrupted during the pre-Revolt period. Its effects on Muslim society were particularly catastrophic. While to an extent this was inevitable, there is considerable evidence to show that it was deliberately designed to be so. It was during this period that the principle of "Divide and Rule" was openly expressed for the first time. Lt. Col. John Coke, Commandant at Moradabad, and Lord Elphinstone were agreed that it was the Hindus who had to be cajoled.<sup>2</sup>

In pursuance of this policy, Muslims were deliberately kept out of administration. This continued until 1872 when a shift in the policy was necessitated due to the change in social and economic conditions.

Foreign conquest and the imposition of alien culture had, no doubt, provoked different reactions on the Hindus and the Muslims; common sufferings of the feudal classes and the people in general, nevertheless, brought the two communities together at the time of the Revolt which, unfortunately, was short-lived. Communal tensions began to grow again when the princes were completely subjugated and a competition to secure more concessions and jobs started between the Hindu and the Muslim middle classes and were intensified since the foreign power stood to gain from such conflicts.

In the meanwhile, there was a change in the political and economic scene of the country. The political and economic discontent among the people and the rising bourgeoisie was steadily increasing, as by this time it had become quite obvious that the British did not hesitate to sacrifice India's interests to the benefit of the British manufacturer. In the political sphere, too, the Indians had to suffer discriminatory treatment. The conscious and vocal sections of the Indian public opinion resented this utter callousness of the British to Indian interests and ventilated the grievances of the Indian people through the press which had come to play an important role by this time. The Indian National Congress was formed at this juncture with official help to act as a "safety valve" against the dangerous revolutionary upsurge. The designs of the British, however, did not succeed for a long time, for after the initial policy of appeasement to the British, the Indian National Congress became the vanguard of the struggle for freedom in the country.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Ellenborough wrote in 1843, "I cannot close my eyes to the belief that this race (Mussalmans) is fundamentally hostile to us and therefore our true policy is to conciliate the Hindus." ———, "Divide and Rule" quoted in *The Modern Review*, LXV: 3 (March 1939), 249.

Though one section of the Indian leadership still believed in a moderate policy towards the British, yet the other section led by B. G. Tilak, Bipin Chandar Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai demanded the adoption of more radical politics and advocated a break with the conciliatory attitude of the past.

The new leadership which represented the new rising forces of India, was faced with a dilemma. The need of the time demanded national awakening and revival of national values in order to gratify the nationalistic urge for self-rule. To achieve that end, it wanted to mobilize the masses in the struggle against a western power. The leadership in the struggle was inspired by western values which the tradition-loving religious-minded people found difficult to understand. The leaders had, therefore, to dig in the past and coin slogans on the basis of religious traditions.

Tilak, accordingly, organized "Ganesh Festival" and "Shivaji Festival". By giving them a community aspect and making them an effective means of "creating national enthusiasm, religious consciousness and social solidarity" he succeeded in turning them into a platform of anti-British propaganda.<sup>3</sup> Through these festivals, Tilak was able to achieve the desired end of infusing the people with a religious and national fervour which "helped India to shake off her inferiority complex and reassert her personality. . . ."<sup>4</sup> The attempts at reviving the classical values and glorification of ancient India proved helpful in the cultivation of nationalist ideas, but the revivalist slogans which Tilak and his other colleagues gave to the people were essentially rooted in the religious traditions of one particular community. The result was that while they succeeded in mobilizing vast support for the anti-British movement among the Hindus, they at the same time gave rise to separatist tendencies between the two major communities, for revivalism had different significance for each of them. The slogan of revival of religious values, thus, led to the separatist movement later, for when religious pride was made to precede national pride, it was bound to sow the seed of religious conflict and hostility. Needless to say that Tilak never intended to cause any offence to the Muslims, but they (festivals) hindered the possibilities for the development of a secular and multi-religious concept of nationality and did not inspire

<sup>3</sup> V. Barnour, "Changing Characters of a Hindu Festival", 56: 74, *American Anthropologist* (February 1954), 81.

<sup>4</sup> D. V. Tahmankar, *Lokmanya Tilak* (London, 1956), 315.

the Muslims to actively participate in them in large numbers.

The role of orthodox nationalists led by Tilak, was to an extent self-contradictory. Their efforts at broad-basing the movement against foreign rule were praiseworthy, progressive and even radical. But the slogans on which they wanted to build a mass movement were self-defeating. This combination of political radicalism and social reaction had a "maleficent influence"<sup>5</sup> on the national movement and it has been difficult to shake it off even to the present day. Any possibility of the Hindus and the Muslims jointly struggling against the British, thus, receded and made the task of the separatist school easier. Subsequent events show that communalism could feed itself on the indiscreet policy adopted by the national leadership.

In the Muslim society, however, during this period, there was no evidence of resurgence of any sort. Having lost all hopes of re-establishing Muslim rule, the Muslims were frustrated and dejected. At this time, the Muslim upper class led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan felt that they must reverse the policy of non-co-operation with the British if they wanted to take advantage of the new avenues being opened by the British rule in India. In order to win over the British, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan not only emphasized political co-operation with the British, but also cultural emulation. He established a College modelled after those of Oxford and Cambridge with English as the medium of instruction. He strained every nerve to prove Muslim loyalty to the British, their indifference to the national movement and anti-government agitation. The sustained and ardent efforts of Sir Syed met with remarkable success in convincing the British officials of Muslim loyalty. A pro-Muslim shift in the British policy was evident in the seventies of the 19th century.

While the divide and rule character of the British policy was not altered, the change was designed in favour of the Muslims. The national awakening in the country made them conscious of the potential danger from the anti-British bias of the Hindu middle class and the national movement. The official circles in India, now fully realized that it was imperative not only to divide Indian forces, but to find a "counterpoise" against the rising nationalism; such an element they found in the Muslims. The implementation of this policy resulted in the "Partition of Bengal" in 1905, which was a move to create a permanent gulf between the two communities.

Another attempt to woo the loyal Muslims by conferring upon

\* R. P. Dutt, *India Today* (Bombay, 1949), 203.

them constitutional safeguards in the form of "Separate Electorates" was made by Lord Minto in 1906, which was hailed by the British statesmen as a work of statesmanship that would affect India and Indian history for many a long year.<sup>6</sup>

The policy of "Divide and Rule", social and economic differences and the introduction of separate electorates began, thus, to develop an "impassable gulf" between the two communities. It must, nevertheless, be admitted that it was not possible for the Muslims to secure an adequate number of seats on the basis of common territorial electorates. The "separate electorates were" therefore "the consequence and not the cause of separation between Mussalmans and their more numerous Hindu brethren."<sup>7</sup>

The Morley-Minto Reforms Act, 1909, conferred upon the Muslims constitutional safeguards and weightage as a protection against the majority and "reward for services rendered to the British Empire". This Act was not so much a stepping-stone in the direction of responsible government, as a disintegrating factor ultimately culminating in the partition of the country.

The separate electorates introduced by Morley-Minto Reforms gave a new edge to Hindu-Muslim competition. The existing rivalry between the two communities, which upto now was confined to a narrow field, was intensified by "... the struggle for political power and for the opportunities which political power confers. . ."<sup>8</sup>

The foreign rule which was one of the major factors in the development of nationalism in India was also responsible for dissensions in Indian nationalism. The British Government, on their part, evolved a new strategy and brought a shift in their communal policy with a view to combat the national forces. This strategy was mainly conditioned by the existence of the two communities which had been unable to form one political entity because of unequal social and economic development and existing religious differences. The presence of a third party made it possible to give these differences a communal colouring based on political motivation. Communalism which grew side by side with nationalism was, therefore, an outcome of the British anxiety to retain power and the failure of the national movement to draw equally from both the communities. Paradoxical as it may appear to a student of

<sup>6</sup> A. C. Banerjee, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, Vol. II: 1858-1945 (Calcutta, 1946), 140-42. <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Indian Statutory Commission Report*, Vol. I (London, 1930), 30.

current politics, it is true that as the national movement gained in momentum, communalism too began to acquire greater and greater importance. With the passage of time, communal differences consistently posed by the British as an obstacle to self-government, logically culminated in the demand for a separate "Islamic State".

## II

### INDIAN POLITICS, 1909-47

Communalism which had started getting expression in the later half of the 19th century, entrenched itself firmly in Indian politics during the 20th century. Once communalism was discovered as an instrument to achieve power, it snowballed by itself. The enfranchised Muslims and members of other sections were made to "... vote communally, think communally, listen only to communal election speeches, judge the delegates communally, look for constitutional and other reforms only in terms of more relative communal power and express their grievances communally."<sup>9</sup> The separate electorates became a political barrier in a society already beset by social and economic differences. Once it was introduced, it became difficult to take it away. The Montague-Chelmsford Report itself admitted that divisions by creeds and classes meant "... the creation of political camps organised against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans . . ."<sup>10</sup> The authors realized that by giving special representation, they were taking away the spirit of "give and take" which was the "essence of political life." Despite such statements, they extended communal representation to the Sikhs as well, since it was a "make-weight against Hindu nationalism."<sup>11</sup>

The Government, in addition, tried to encourage communalism by introducing rigid censorship for the nationalist press and a mild policy towards communal papers. By selecting heterogeneous elements for conferences like the Indian Round Table Conference, they would make sure beforehand that the leaders did not come to any agreement. Eventually through this process, they made the so-called "Muslim communal intransigence" an excuse to continue their oppressive hold on India. The Hindus started believing that the Muslims were sabotaging Indian independence and the Muslims

<sup>9</sup> W. C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), 181.

<sup>10</sup> Banerjee, n. 6, 221-2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

imagined that the Hindus were worse oppressors than the British. Whenever there was any agreement between the two communities and the majority community agreed to give some concessions to the minority, the Government of India was always ready to out-bid and out-wit them. The experience of Lucknow Pact is a pointer to this analysis.

The years between 1919 to 1937 which were marked by some of the most militant movements against the British rule and mass civil disobedience under the leadership of the Congress, also witnessed widespread communal disturbances which have been termed as "Civil War" by Dr. Ambedkar.<sup>12</sup> They continued unabated for the next twenty years interrupted only with brief spells of uneasy peace.

The leaders of the Congress appeared throughout to the Muslim public as the active leaders of Hinduism and Hindu revivalism. Gandhiji had picked up what Tilak left. His advocacy of "cow protection", "Hindi Prachar", "Harijan Seva" and the like was essentially Hindu in character. Such slogans as "Swaraj" and "Ram Raj" were misinterpreted many times by Muslim League leaders as an attempt at creating a Hindu Raj.<sup>13</sup> Nothing would be farther from the truth than to accept the Muslim League's interpretation of "Swaraj" but the slogan undoubtedly gave a convenient argument with which they could convince the Muslim masses about the Congress being a body catering to Hindu interests alone.

These apprehensions were further confirmed by the communal antecedents of the other eminent leaders of the Congress like Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya who were at the same time members of communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Samaj which followed an aggressively hostile policy towards the Muslims. These Hindu nationalists contributed a good deal to the development of the idea of a Hindu nation.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> B. R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India* (Bombay, 1945), 178.

<sup>13</sup> Jamil-ud-din Ahmad, ed., *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1943), 69.

<sup>14</sup> F. K. Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1944), 67, 97. Lajpat Rai and Lal Chand had severely criticized the Congress theory of a united nation and contended that Hindus were a nation in their own right separate and distinct from the Muslims and others. The theory was elaborated by Vir Savarkar and Hardyal, a prominent leader of the Punjab and founder of Ghadar Party. The Arya Samaj started the movements of "Shudhi" and "Sangathan" which were answered by "Tabligh" and "Tanzeem" by the Muslims. These movements were supported by Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya and Saif-ud-din Kitchlew and Mohammad Ali, respectively.

The Hindus and the Muslims, thus, became suspicious of one another and instead of removing the social evils within their society they tried to preserve the orthodox institutional set-up. The emphasis on social reforms having been thrown in the background, they refused to imbibe new ideas of social progress and continued to stick to their traditional sectarian and narrow outlook. Worked up to a pitch, the communal frenzy was responsible for the murderous assaults on the Hindu leaders like Swami Shradhanand on 23 December, 1926 and others. Scriptures, gods and goddesses of the other religion became the subject of attack, for instance, "Sita ka Chinala" and "Rangila Rasul"<sup>15</sup> in 1927.

The lack of popular nationalist Muslim leadership further weakened the forces of unity. Though there had been outstanding men of recognized abilities like Hakim Ajmal Khan, Tyabji, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew, Dr. Zakir Hussain and many others who contributed a great deal to the maintenance of the national character of the Congress, yet they did not have any mass following among the Muslims. The British policy of recognizing the Muslim League as the only representative Muslim organization and the Congress acquiescence to it was responsible to a great extent for the elimination of the nationalist Muslims as a group. As a result, the nationalist Muslim leaders were not identified as leaders of the Muslims. With increasing communal feelings and vitiated atmosphere, they proved utterly helpless and many had to leave the Congress fold.

The Muslims were, thus, being gradually weaned away from the Congress. In 1936, at Lucknow, the Congress passed a resolution on "Congress and Mass Contact" to bring about close co-operation with other organizations, of peasants, workers and others, with a view to broad-base the national movement. The appeal of mass contact was not taken up seriously by the Congress, but it created a stir in the Muslim League leadership. Dr. Iqbal in his letter to Mr. Jinnah suggested that the Muslim League should start a counter-movement of Muslim mass contact and emphasized the need to include an economic programme without which it was difficult to attract certain sections of Muslim masses. The Muslim League made some inroads in the rural areas where the Muslims were in a majority while the Congress was gradually losing its hold on them.

There were certain other reasons for the Muslims to oppose

<sup>15</sup> Ambedkar, n. 12, 160.

some of the secular demands of the Congress owing to their social circumstances. The limited franchise during this period made the Muslims find their safety in the communal representation. The franchise rights were based on educational and property qualifications. Under the Morley-Minto Reforms, the educational and property qualifications for the Muslims were substantially lowered; but owing to their backwardness in education and wealth, the Muslims even then, could not get seats proportionate to their population. The fear of being swamped by Hindus who were more advanced in education and wealth, in addition to their numerical superiority, made the majority of Muslim middle class converts to the Muslim League's sectarian programme. In 1937 elections, while the Congress got overwhelming majority in the Hindu majority provinces, it met with a setback in its attempt to capture Muslim seats. Out of 482 Muslim seats, the Congress contested only 58, of which also it lost 32.

By the twenties of the 19th century, the Muslim bourgeoisie had started coming up (like the Khojas in Bombay) but they could not compete with the older group of industrialists—the Hindus. The prevalent political and communal atmosphere led them into a communal way of thinking as “a circumscribed capitalism produces the conditions under which capitalism or some parallel form of group discord, flourishes. . . .”<sup>16</sup> In India the conditions were favourable to the growth of communalism because big business, the money-lenders and the landlords were largely Hindus. It should not be assumed that the Hindu working class and peasantry suffered less at the hands of the Hindu capitalists and landlords; but it was in the interest of the Muslim bourgeoisie to fan communalism, and through demagogic slogans of Muslim brotherhood and the like it succeeded in bringing the Muslim lower classes under their leadership. The Muslim communal leadership did not support the “Swadeshi” movement. Belonging mostly to the landlords and professional classes, they did not stand to benefit by giving support to the Hindu mercantile community who were bound to gain through this movement. There is no doubt that the workers in the mills and artisans engaged in cottage industries were equally to benefit by any change to Swadeshi which would mean increased wages, less competition and better employment facilities. But the Muslim League leadership, concerned only with their own narrow and selfish

<sup>16</sup> Smith, n. 9, 178.



interests, raised the slogan of a separate Muslim State where they could have a free field for development and exploitation.

The principle of majority rule, too, did not appeal to the Muslim bourgeoisie. Unlike the secular countries where the minority party is potentially an alternative Government, the Muslim League, a sectarian organization based on religious affiliations, could not possibly convert to its view-point a majority of the electorates. Since Muslim bourgeoisie could not find any possibility of projecting its conclusive interests in the eventuality of a secular state, it demanded a separate Muslim State which could be attained only by arousing communal feelings to their highest pitch.

The existence of a Muslim majority region in the north-west of India, as a "distinct entity" gave practical shape to the idea of Pakistan. The region, last to be conquered by the British, had been under Muslim rule, except during the regime of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The people of this area regarded themselves as a distinct nationality. The principle of "one nation, one state" and "right of self-determination" precipitated the Pakistan proposal. As such, it was merely a question of solving the problem of the majority of a people in a particular area rather than that of a minority in the whole of India.

### III

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF PAKISTAN

The Muslim League, though established in 1906, did not have a popular base for a long time. After separate electorates had been accepted as a device to capture political power for the Muslims, Muslim communal leaders started a campaign of arousing religious fanaticism in their community. The League, nevertheless, failed to attract the Muslim people, although it had been recognized as a major political party at the Lucknow Congress in 1916. The rivalry between the Muslim League and the Congress was intensified, when responsible government was declared as the goal of the British policy in India under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The antagonism, however, did not take an acute shape, so long as the Muslim communal leadership was divided and Mr. Jinnah remained either a member of the Congress (uptil 1920) or was actively associated with it. But Nehru Committee's rejection of the Delhi Pro-

posals<sup>17</sup> in 1927 and subsequently at the National Convention, at Calcutta in December 1928, despite powerful support from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, brought a change in his outlook and united the communal Muslim leadership against the Congress. The decision was taken against Mr. Jinnah's amendment proposals, for the Hindu Mahasabha threatened that it would withdraw its support if a single word in the Report regarding communal settlement was changed.<sup>18</sup> The acceptance of Mr. Jinnah's proposals, they apprehended, would consolidate the Muslim majority areas and convert North-West India into a solid Muslim bloc.

Contrary to the fears of the Hindu nationalists, the rejection of Delhi Proposals united the Muslim communal forces and acted as a veritable force against the discordant voice of nationalist Muslims. The "Fourteen Points" drafted later by Mr. Jinnah mark the beginning of the subsequent Muslim League demand for a separate Muslim State.

Mr. Jinnah, in addition to consolidating the Muslim League, also tried to join hands with other Indian minorities. At the first Round Table Conference, he succeeded in negotiating a Minorities Pact "by which all sections of the Indian political life, except the caste Hindus, joined hands with the Muslims. While Mr. Jinnah was breaking fresh ground in London to secure more support for the Muslim demands, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, the celebrated poet of the Punjab, declared a new goal for the Muslim League. Like L. Lajpat Rai, Iqbal also felt that since all "attempts to discover such a principle of internal harmony have so far failed. . . it would be better to recognize the Indian Muslim's right to full and free development. . . in his own Indian homeland. . ." To achieve this end, Iqbal suggested at the Annual Session of the Muslim League in 1930, that he would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state, and stated that "the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of the North-West India. . ."<sup>19</sup> Iqbal even suggested the exclusion of Ambala Division from the North-West India with a view to make it less extensive and more Muslim in

<sup>17</sup> A. H. Albiruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (Lahore, 1950), 202-4.

<sup>18</sup> N. N. Mitra, *The Indian Quarterly Register*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1929), 364-5.

<sup>19</sup> "Shamloo", comp., *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1948), 12.

character. He, nevertheless, made it clear that he wanted this Muslim State as a part of India and that the demand was not actuated by any feelings of ill-will towards other communities, but was offered as the only workable solution to the age-old Hindu-Muslim problem. The proposal was dismissed as a poet's fancy by Jinnah but Iqbal was determined to turn it into reality. He succeeded ultimately in convincing Jinnah that in this (separate Muslim State) lay the only hope for a "contented, peaceful India in general and for bulk of the Indian Muslims, in particular."<sup>20</sup> Iqbal's speeches at the League Session created a "flutter amongst the political doves-cots." Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge student, was greatly attracted by his proposals and in 1933 coined the word "Pakistan"<sup>21</sup> for his scheme. He proposed that these provinces should have an independent federation of their own. He distributed leaflets explaining his scheme among the members of Parliament and the delegates to the Round Table Conference, but no Indian, Hindu or Muslim, took any interest in the proposed scheme and described it as impracticable.<sup>22</sup>

The Act of 1935, however, helped in the process of consolidation of the Muslim areas by separating Sind from Bombay and by conferring full provincial status on N.W.F.P. The Muslim League, uptil now, did not have a mass appeal among the Indian Muslims as is evident from the 1937 election results. The Congress came into power with an overwhelming majority in all the six Hindu majority provinces and N.W.F.P. Though the Congress could not do very well in the Muslim majority provinces except N.W.F.P. and Sind, the Muslims in general remained indifferent towards the Muslim League. Non-League parties came in power in the remaining two Muslim majority provinces during these elections. Resistance to Jinnah's policy, power and influence within and without the Muslim League was evident from developments in Sind, Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Bengal.<sup>23</sup> The sense of defeat and frustration in

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>21</sup> *The Sapru Committee—Constitutional Proposals* (Bombay, 1945) (Appendix), xxxi. "P" stands for the Punjab, "A" for the Afghan Provinces, "K" represents Kashmir, "S" symbolizes Sind and last three letters "Tan" signify Baluchistan.

<sup>22</sup> Albiruni, n. 17, 181, 209.

<sup>23</sup> The inter-provincial differences did not permit unity among the Muslim forces. Sind's apprehensions to be reduced to a colony of the Punjab and Bengal's fears of North-West domineering policy in case Pakistan came into existence acted as a powerful reaction against the scheme.

the Muslim League ranks, was intensified when the Congress refused to form coalition ministries with the Muslim League in the Congress majority provinces, for "the Congress had gone to the Assemblies with a definite programme and in furtherance of a definite policy, and it could not, without being false to the electorates, admit into the Ministry persons who did not accept that policy and that programme."<sup>24</sup> The Congress refused to recognize the Muslim League as the sole representative body of the Muslims, and the Muslim League's insistence on the Hindu rather than national character of the Congress was, sometimes, the cause of the breakdown in the negotiations between the two organizations, leading to acrimonious feelings between the two communities.

The resentment of the Muslim League became more pronounced and found expression in its virulent propaganda against the Congress ministers who were alleged to pursue discriminatory policy towards the Muslims.<sup>25</sup> The Muslim League's separatist propaganda got further impetus when the Congress ministries in all the provinces resigned in 1939 and top Congress leaders were sent to jail. Schemes for the redistribution of Indian territory with a view to solve Hindu-Muslim tangle were suggested by many writers, even before the Lahore Resolution was passed in 1940. The suggestions came from both League and non-League quarters. S. A. Latif, for instance, suggested a division of the country along culturally homogeneous units as the only solution to prevent clashes among different sections.<sup>26</sup> Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the then premier of the Punjab, felt that a revision of the federal system, as provided by the Act of 1935 with a view to safeguard the religious, political, cultural and economic rights and interests of the minorities was essential. In his scheme, he provided safeguards against the domi-

<sup>24</sup> Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided* (Bombay, 1946), 145.

<sup>25</sup> The Muslim League appointed a Committee presided over by the Raja of Pirpur who submitted his report on 15 November 1938. The Pirpur Committee gave quite an exaggerated and at times baseless account of the Congress atrocities on the Muslims. It gave distorted meaning to certain innocent expressions like "Bande Matram" as anti-Islamic and idolatrous. The declaration of Hindustani in Devnagari script as the national language, "Vidya Mandir" Scheme, denial of the right of cow-slaughter were taken as anti-Muslim moves and attempts to crush the minorities. —————, *Report of the Inquiry Committee* (Lucknow, 1938).

<sup>26</sup> Syed Abdul Latif, *The Muslim Problem in India* (Bombay, 1939), 30-50.

neering Central Government.<sup>27</sup> While these two schemes dealt with only redistribution of India territorially to satisfy the Muslim demands, the Aligarh Professors' (Prof. Sayeed Zafarul Husain and Dr. Mohd. Afzal Husain Quadri) scheme was the first to assert that the Muslims of India were a nation by themselves and could not live under the domination of the Hindus, the British or any other people. Accordingly they demanded "repartition of India" into three sovereign states to be divided in Muslim India and Hindu India.<sup>28</sup>

### *The Lahore Resolution*

The resolution to form a separate state for the Muslims was passed at the Muslim League session at Lahore on 23 March, 1940. It stated: "The problem of India is not of an inter-communal character, but manifestly of an international one and it must be treated as such. . . the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into "autonomous national states." Mr. Jinnah announced in the meeting that the Muslims would not accept any constitution which resulted in a Hindu majority Government. The League Resolution was a testimony to the working of the mind of the Muslim leadership representing the Muslim bourgeoisie. Hereafter the idea which was considered impossible, now acquired new meaning and dimensions in the minds of the Muslim masses.

The Muslim masses were driven to it without realizing its significance. The Muslim League incorporated an economic programme in its election manifesto to attract the masses, and to tell the League adherents that the struggle for Pakistan had become a struggle for wages and economic prosperity.<sup>29</sup> The concept of Pakistan was given a new interpretation and a new basis. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan said in a statement, "the demand for Pakistan today is not based on the fear of the Hindu-majority at the Centre. On the other hand, it is the urge of a nation to mould its own ideals and culture and cannot be satisfied without having full sovereignty which necessarily implies full control over all departments of State without exception."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents of the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, 2 Vols. (London, 1957), 457-62. <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 462-5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 440-4. For complete text of the Resolution, see Appendix I.

<sup>30</sup> Liaquat Ali Khan, *Hindu*, Madras (18 April, 1946).

*The Lahore Resolution, its Effects and Partition, 1940-47*

The Lahore Resolution was indefinite and vague; but the demand for a separate Islamic State was quite clear. In the beginning the Congress did not take it seriously, but the public men outside the Congress had already started thinking on these lines. Dr. Ambedkar called upon every section of the public opinion in India to find out a solution to the communal problem on which depended the political freedom of India.<sup>31</sup>

The Congress was now faced with a dilemma. Gandhiji, expressing his concern on the Lahore Resolution in *Harijan*, in September 1940, said: "The partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. The cuttings (newspaper) show that the Hindus and Muslims are already at war with one another and that they must prepare for the final tussle."<sup>32</sup>

The Pakistan proposal was a severe blow to the conception of Indian unity for which the Congress had worked up to this time. The Pakistan plan was, for the first time, partially accepted when the Cripps Mission Plan in 1942 recognized the right of any Province in British India to secede from the Indian Union, if it so desired.<sup>33</sup> The Congress, too, by this time had realized that it was difficult to keep unwilling provinces with the Indian Union for a long time. Accordingly the Congress passed a resolution on 2 April 1942 wherein it recognized the principle of self-determination.<sup>34</sup>

Various proposals were put forward as alternatives to the Lahore Resolution. Sir Firoz Khan Noon in a scheme in August, 1942, suggested that the powers of the Centre should be delimited and the territory of India be divided into four "dominions". It became now, increasingly, evident to the public mind that the Muslim majority areas might have to be accepted either as autonomous units, within the Indian federation or given the option to secede. As a result of this, a section of the Congress leaders also started thinking to find ways and means to resolve the Congress-League deadlock on more or less the lines proposed by the League leaders. The attempts, to work out a formula acceptable to both the parties as envisaged by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, nevertheless, were foiled

<sup>31</sup> Ambedkar, n. 12, 412.

<sup>32</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan* (September 1940).

<sup>33</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, n. 27, 521.

<sup>34</sup> Banerjee, n. 6, Resolution of the Congress Working Committee (2 April, 1942), 419.

despite a series of meetings between Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah.

A divided India, however, implied various other complications, for instance, vivisection of a natural geographical unit, division of the Indian Army, assets and liabilities, the problem of provinces like Punjab and Bengal which though Muslim majority areas, had a great percentage of non-Muslim population. More, it was felt that the partition would not solve the problem of minorities as quite a large number of persons belonging to the minority community would be left over on both the sides. A number of eminent people, consequently, appealed to the leaders to save India from the threatened disaster of the partition. Even Lord Wavell made a strong case against partition on the basis of geographical unity of India. The Sapru Committee which met in November, 1944, submitted a new scheme of "parity" between the caste Hindus and Muslims in the Central Cabinet, in a bid to provide the Muslims with a sense of security in United India.<sup>35</sup>

The "parity" proposal was later taken up by the parliamentary leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League, Shri Bhulabhai Desai and Liaquat Ali Khan, who reached a provisional agreement in May, 1945, popularly known as Desai-Liaquat Pact.<sup>36</sup> The proposal to make parity between the Congress and the Muslim League as the basis for provisional National Government was cleverly made out to be a parity between the caste Hindus and the Muslims by the Government of India which again brought communalism to the forefront:

"This seemingly slight modification introduced by the ingenuity of the India Office in London, guaranteed a breakdown. It meant that either the Congress would have to accept relegation to the status of a Hindu organisation, or by claiming one of the Muslim seats for a Congress Muslim violate the basis of parity with the League. Alternately the League would either have to accept a Congress Muslim to one of the Muslim seats, thus, surrendering parity and accepting an inferior position to the Congress or by resisting this appear to take the responsibility of wrecking the Conference."<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Sapru Committee*, n. 21, 298.

<sup>36</sup> Mitra, n. 18, *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. II, 1945, 124-5.

<sup>37</sup> Dutt, n. 5, 527-8.

The general elections of 1946 helped to clear the mist from the political atmosphere of India since it eliminated all other organizations except the Muslim League, the Congress and the Akali Party (Punjab). The failure of the Congress and the nationalist Muslims to win Muslim seats strengthened the hands of Mr. Jinnah. He launched a campaign against the non-Muslim-League leadership and sought to dislodge them from ministries in the Muslim majority provinces. The senior British officers were alleged to have used their influence in favour of the Muslim League Party.<sup>88</sup> Since there was growing evidence that the transfer of power to India was imminent, the Muslim League leaders and its workers worked ceaselessly to bring about all the Muslims solidly behind the League in the last bid to attain political power.

The last attempt to retain a united India embodied in the Cabinet Mission Proposals carried the proviso for a separate Islamic State in case it was so desired by any of the Muslim dominated group of the provinces. Without going into the details of the scheme, it would suffice to say that the propaganda drive that followed the announcement of the Scheme and the various interpretations given to it by the Congress and the Muslim League, intensified the hostility between the two communities. The real conflict came at the time of the composition of the Interim Government, regarding the proportion of representation between the two communities and the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Congress quota which was opposed by the League.

The separatist tendencies that were manifest from time to time in the history of India had now come to such a stage that the parties concerned gave up their quest for a united India, and accepted the inevitable.

In the meanwhile, communal riots on an unprecedented scale broke out in Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar, Garmukteshwar and spread to the Punjab by March, 1947. Pakistan had, thus, become a *fait accompli*, though Mr. Jinnah's demand for five thousand mile corridor was rejected as fantastic. The communal unity which had characterized the great national upsurge after the 1st and 2nd World Wars was now a thing of the past. The separatist tendencies triumphed. The disruptive tactics of the foreign power and the growing bargaining position of the Muslims which the League did not hesitate to cash in, led to the vivisection of the country. In the time of

<sup>88</sup> Mitra, n. 36, Vol. I, 1947, 112 (i-j).



tension and strife, the chances of successful working of the Cabinet Mission Plan were obviously remote. "A united India under the Cabinet Mission Plan was . . . an illusion, the three-tier constitutional set-up envisaged was unwieldy and difficult to work. . . ." Like Mr. Menon, many others came to the conclusion that "the country should be divided rather than it should gravitate towards civil war. . . ." <sup>39</sup>

### *Mountbatten Plan and the Emergence of Pakistan*

The new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, held long discussions with the leaders of all the political parties and formulated his plan on the basis of these talks—the Plan was only a logical culmination of the desperate mood of the leadership and the people to come to some settlement. It was accepted by both the major parties of India.

Partition of India, as announced by His Majesty's Government on 3 June, 1947, <sup>40</sup> also envisaged the partition of the Punjab and Bengal which was demanded explicitly by all the non-Muslim parties of the provinces concerned. <sup>41</sup> With the partition of the Punjab, the Sikh community was divided into two equal halves, with consequences which none of the parties responsible for the partition had foreseen. The peoples of the Punjab and Bengal, Hindus and Muslims, consequently had to pay a heavy price for the acts of omission and commission of the Congress, of the power urge of the Muslim bourgeoisie and of the machinations of the imperialist power.

<sup>39</sup> V. P. Menon, *Transfer of Power in India* (Bombay, 1957), 358.

<sup>40</sup> For text see Appendix II.

<sup>41</sup> Mitra, *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1947, n. 36, 238-44.

## CHAPTER II

# THE PUNJAB AS A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE PARTITION SCHEME

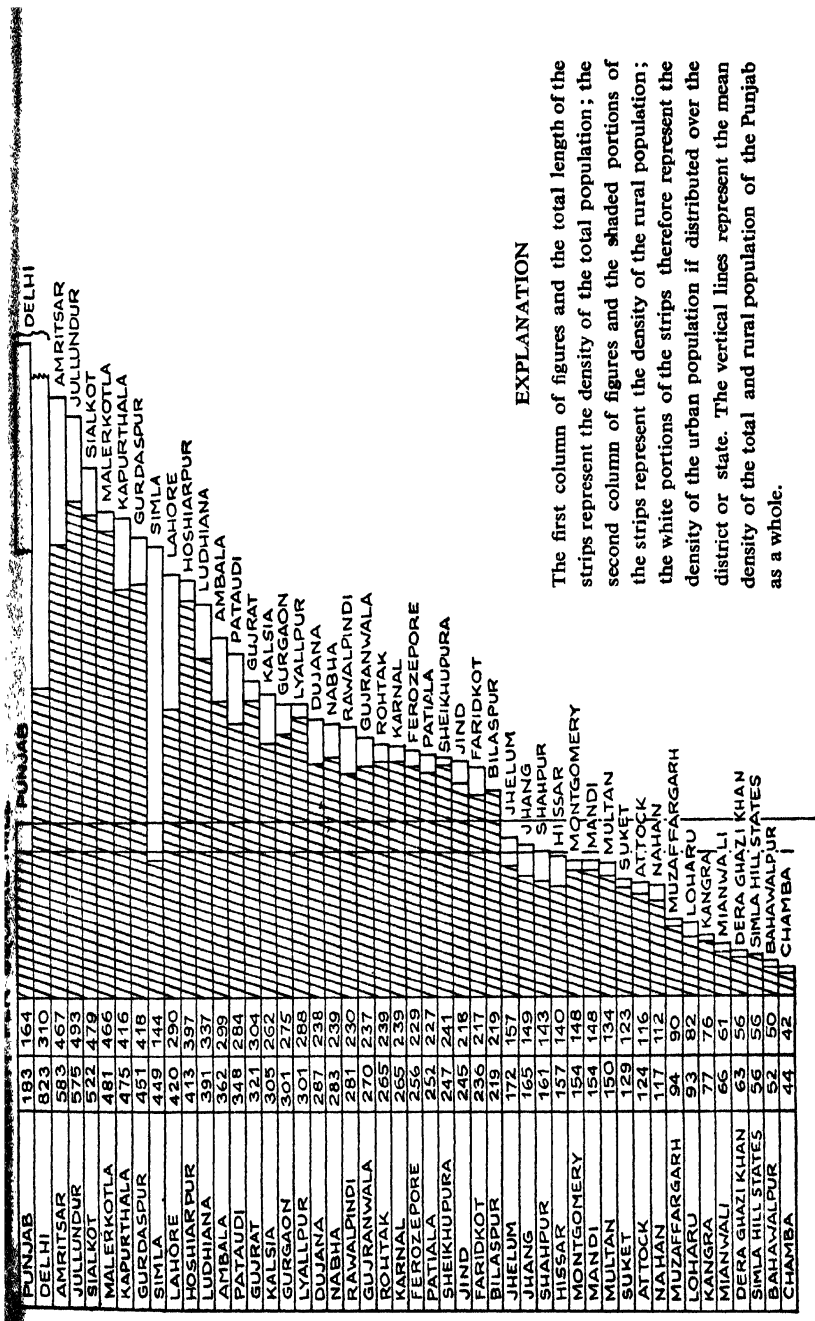
THE Punjab was the key factor in Indian politics which led to the creation of Pakistan. The religious composition of its population was not only such as to poise the Sikhs between the Hindus and the Muslims in the social equilibrium, what is more, each one of them was tied up to it with traditions of historical, cultural and economic significance. As a result of the different kinds of stakes which these communities had in the Punjab, all of them attempted to hold on to it to the end, and in the process, the partition of the region became inevitable. The partition of the Punjab resulted not only from the impact of powers shaping Indian political life and thought, but also from the effects of the British rule on the internal forces which moulded the politics of the province.

### I

#### THE PUNJAB IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, 1849-1900

The British conquered the Punjab in 1849 after the disintegration of the Sikh rule at the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. By this time, the British rule was firmly entrenched in the whole of India and the rulers had a clear and wide field for administrative effort in the province for measures different from those they had followed so long in the other provinces. They were called upon to provide the province with a new administration which would keep the peasantry and the warlike people contented and induce the people to accept the change in the Government without much resistance. They wanted to make sure that the Punjab remained their close preserve, since the continuance of British rule depended on the loyalty of the army, recruited largely from the province.

One such measure was to plan a network of canals with a view to develop Crown Wastelands and to keep the peasantry satisfied. This was a gigantic project and thousands of hardworking people were required not only to dig the canals, but also to start agricultural operations in the new colonies. People from erstwhile congested



**EXPLANATION**

The first column of figures and the total length of the strips represent the density of the total population; the second column of figures and the shaded portions of the strips represent the density of the rural population; the white portions of the strips therefore represent the density of the urban population if distributed over the district or state. The vertical lines represent the mean density of the total and rural population of the Punjab as a whole.

areas of the Central Punjab and some North-Western districts were made to settle in these areas in order to build the canal colonies.

The major section of the new settlers came from the more densely populated districts of Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and Ferozepur and were taken from the best agriculturist classes.<sup>1</sup> Colonization opened a new chapter in the life of these areas. Diagram<sup>2</sup> on p. 21 shows that these districts were dominated by the agriculturist population and they remained so even after a large number had migrated to the canal colonies. Though the migration did not affect the life in eastern districts substantially, it brought a new factor in the agricultural life of the colonies. The peasant proprietor who dominated the eastern and central parts of the province, also became an important element in the agricultural life of the colonies in the Western Punjab. This had an important bearing on the political life of the province as a whole and on the communal situation in particular in the years to come.<sup>3</sup>

The consequences of colonization did not belie expectation. The British succeeded in winning over the colonists and making them into faithful and loyal subjects of Government.

Steps were also taken by the Government to improve the quantity and quality of agricultural production by introducing better methods of cultivation, improved seeds and irrigation facilities, etc. With the increase in production, it became necessary to find markets for the surplus produce of the province. This served a dual purpose; England was enabled to import raw materials for its rapidly growing industries and the local produce found a ready market.

### *Impact of the British Administrative System on the Punjab*

Whatever might have been the academic merits of the new system, it had a number of inherent weaknesses. The introduction of proprietary rights and cash capital among the agriculturist and non-agriculturist classes brought in the rural and urban classes into conflict which in turn gave rise to communalism and sectarianism.

The Punjab peasant did not have any proprietary rights in land in the pre-British period. The community had been collectively the

<sup>1</sup> Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (Bombay, 1947), 19.

<sup>2</sup> ———, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol. XV: Part I (Lahore, Var.), 78.

<sup>3</sup> It was on the basis of the ownership of land in the canal colony districts that the Hindus and Sikhs demanded the inclusion of Lyallpur, Montgomery and Sheikhpura, in the East Punjab in 1947.

proprietary unit. It was difficult, therefore, to alienate land from the cultivator without the consent of the whole community. The terms like individual rights, "property", the "purchasing power of money", 'credit', "attachment and sale" were beyond the comprehension of the cultivator.<sup>4</sup> Since there was no legal sanction behind the debts taken or to enable the money-lender to hold land, the cultivator could pay back to his creditor whenever he had surplus. There were no middlemen. The "Bania" was quite ineffective due to the existence of (1) a vigorous village community, and (2) the apathy of the state towards recovery.<sup>5</sup> The money-lender depended more on his personal influence than that of "Kardar" (the local executive authority) for the recovery of his debt. But after annexation "a bond of debt secured on the mortgage or conditional sale of land became a sacred instrument, to be construed according to its terms".<sup>6</sup> With the establishment of Civil Law and the decline of the village community, the money-lender began to reign supreme in the village. The following factors helped in enhancing the power of the money-lender.

Canal irrigation and other favourable factors had brought amazingly increased productivity and brought with it prosperity to the people. With the advent of agricultural surplus, however, there arose a new relationship between the landowner and the tenant; the former could now let out his land on rent and live on the labour of others. "Land immediately gained a commercial value and sales and mortgage became common, causing a rise in the value of land".<sup>7</sup>

The new system strengthened the hands of the "Bania", the money-lender. The cultivator had no experience of cash transactions. The introduction of such transactions gave him opportunity to spend money in diverse ways. At the same time the trading community accumulated sufficient money which it invested in the new markets. The cash capital, thus created, drifted to the local shopkeepers and money-lenders.<sup>8</sup> Knowing that his claim would be enforced in the court of law, the money-lender began lending money against land at high rates of interest. The "Bania" who had a hold on trade and was comparatively more educated and shrewder than the cultivator, exploited the situation to fleece money out of the cultivator.

<sup>4</sup> S. S. Thorburn, *Mussalmans and Money-Lenders in the Punjab* (London, 1886), 49.

<sup>5</sup> Darling, n. 1, 170. <sup>6</sup> Thorburn, n. 4, 49-50.

<sup>7</sup> ———, *Census of India, 1921, Punjab and Delhi*, n. 2, 19. <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

A good deal of money was given by way of debt even in the first decade after the annexation. The inability of the cultivator to pay back his debt, legally entitled the money-lender to take away land and all else that he had. The authorities remained indifferent to the institution for some time; but the growing impoverishment of the agriculturist raised an alarm. Mr. Thorburn drew the attention of the Government to the pitiable condition of the Muslim agriculturist through his book "Mussalmans and Money-Lenders in the Punjab", 1886. He warned the British that the existence of such a system was dangerous to the stability of British rule in the Punjab,<sup>9</sup> and advised the Government not to invite antagonism of strong Mussalman tribes on the western side of the Punjab.

Following the publication of Mr. Thorburn's book, exhaustive official enquiries were held. As a result of these investigations, it was established that "the money-lender was slowly eating his way into the heart of the village. Mortgages, which in the early seventies had averaged only 15,000 a year, twenty years later (1888-93) averaged over 50,000; and in ten years the annual increase in the area under mortgage rose from 1,65,000 acres (1875-78) to 3,85,000 (1884-88)".<sup>10</sup>

There can be no two opinions about the fact that the agriculturist needed relief and protection badly from the clutches of the money-lender; but Mr. Thorburn emphasized the sufferings of the Muslim cultivators. This confirmed the Hindu apprehensions of a shift in favour of the Muslims as the period coincided with the overall change in the British policy on communal questions. Consequently, the situation took a communal turn because the money-lender and the agriculturist, in the West Punjab particularly, belonged to two different communities and the economic exploitation resulted in strained communal relations.

Trade was also distinctly a Hindu occupation. In 1881, the number of Hindus amounted to 6,10,000, including about 73,000 Sikh traders. There were only 30,000 Mussalman traders known as "Khojas" and "Pirachas" mostly converts from the Hindus.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly nearly two-third of the urban population consisted of the Hindus. Some of the traders took to industry, but industry in the Punjab was still in its infancy. Only such industries could be established and developed as helped to cater to local needs, or for processing raw materials meant for export.

<sup>9</sup> Thorburn, n. 4, 1. <sup>10</sup> Darling, n. 1, 174. <sup>11</sup> Thorburn, n. 4, 35.

*Social Stratification and Relations between the three Communities*

Hindus, who formed the bulk of the trading, professional and urban population, demanded patronage for industry in order to gainfully utilize their cash capital. In addition to being enterprising as merchants, they were the principal financiers and accountants of the province. In the sphere of education, too, they were ahead of the Muslims. In 1900 about 16.37 per cent of the Hindu boys of school-going age were attending schools, while only 11.67 per cent of the Muslim boys of the same age group were going to schools.<sup>12</sup> In the higher educational institutions, the Muslim percentage was still less; the Hindus were three times more numerous than the Muslims. This was attributed to the comparative poverty of the Muslims, whose children were compelled to enter their parent's vocation.

But in the religious sphere, Hinduism was passing through a critical phase. The conquerors and immigrants of various races had made a cultural impact on Hinduism in the Punjab. It led to flexibility and adaptability in the character of the people and substantially weakened the caste system which held the whole of Hindu India under an iron discipline. Because of the absence of religious fanaticism in the area, the three communities had been living in comparative peace and the Muslims and the Sikhs converted the Hindus to their faith without much difficulty. The proselytizing activity was intensified by the entry of Christian missionaries on the scene and Muslims, Christians and Sikhs competed in finding converts from among the backward classes of the Hindus. The Arya Samaj movement grew as a reaction to this challenge.

Pledged to check the inroads into Hindu religion, the Arya Samaj was bitterly opposed to Christianity, and its intense anti-Christian character made it anti-British. Also at the same time, it was both anti-Muslim and anti-Sikh which intensified the antagonism between the three communities. The Hindus started the campaign of rejuvenation of Hinduism with double force which obviously widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims and found expression in the Hindu and Sikh press. The venom spread around issues like cow-slaughter and music before the mosque and the like and became the root cause of communal riots. But the authorities displayed no active interest in the matter,<sup>13</sup> as far as controlling and preventing

<sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Punjab Administration Report, 1900-1* (Lahore Var.), 167.

<sup>13</sup> *Chaudhwin Sadi*, Rawalpindi (8 May, 1896). Quoted in Selection from Vernacular Newspapers, 1896 (Lahore, Var.), 266-7.

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such occurrences were concerned. This assumed indifference under the pretext of non-interference in religious affairs, however, was alleged to be a deliberate policy adopted with a view to accentuate differences between the different religious communities.

The religious and economic composition of the Hindus was reflected in the political organization in the region. The Hindu educated class was influenced by the Arya Samaj movement. The movement had an urban bias and had among its members lawyers, professionals, educationists and traders. The anti-British feelings, which the rising Indian bourgeoisie had developed all over India, attracted them to the Indian National Congress. The Congress had become quite popular among the Hindus in the Punjab and had notable leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai as its members.

*Muslims.* The Muslims, who were backward in the sphere of education, professions and trade, formed the bulk of rural population and were primarily agriculturists and suffered a great deal at the hands of the Hindu *Bania*.

By the end of the 19th century, communal feelings had grown sufficiently deep to create dissensions. The Muslims had already started thinking in terms of a separate Mohammedan Conference. They were opposed to every democratic move because of the fear of being swamped by the Hindus.

The proposal to introduce the elective principle in the Legislative Council in 1890, therefore, created a stir among the Muslim upper classes. The fear of under-representation led them to think on communal lines and they sent representations against the elective principle embodied in the Bradlaugh Bill in 1890. The feeling of insecurity, if this principle was implemented, made them antagonistic to every democratic measure and rendered them dependents on the British who, they thought, could prevent the introduction of such institutions as would be detrimental to their interests. Even the Congress Muslims demanded equal Hindu and Muslim representation in the Legislative Council and parity in public services.<sup>14</sup>

The Muslim landlords in the Punjab supported the policy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. They went to the extent of supporting every policy of the British and vied with each other to prove their loyalty.

*The Sikhs.* The British had taken precautions to keep the Sikh community satisfied. The Kuka movement among them,

<sup>14</sup> *Punjab Gazette* (18 January, 1890). *Ibid.*, 22, 207.

however, was a big blow to the British faith in Sikh loyalty.<sup>15</sup>

The Punjab Government, as a result, followed a double policy with regard to the Sikhs. While all those who opposed British rule were ruthlessly suppressed, the loyal element was given full patronage.<sup>16</sup>

On the religious side, the Sikhs were still considered a part and parcel of the Hindu community. The Singh Sabha movement which was started to propagate the Sikh religion, rendered useful service in the educational sphere. But politically, it was under the influence of the British. The Chief Khalsa Diwan in its letter on 16 November, 1888, went to the extent of saying that "for Sikhs British rule was better than that of Maharaja Ranjit Singh."<sup>17</sup>

The beginning of the 20th century witnessed new issues in the body-politic of the Punjab. Besides, the problems which had remained unresolved were now sharpened and demanded immediate solution. Religious controversy took an acute turn culminating in disastrous political results.

## II

### THE LAND ALIENATION ACT AND HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS, 1900-1919

The Punjab was the first province where an Act called the Land Alienation Act was passed with the aim of preventing the money-lender from exploiting the cultivator. Several other legislative measures were also passed to help the peasantry. Experiments in Co-operative Societies, Co-operative Banks and consolidation of holdings were made. But these progressive measures, instead of cutting across the communal boundaries, became instrumental in the accentuation of communal tension for it was felt by one community that they were enacted to favour the other community.

The cultivator in the Punjab was undergoing great hardships owing to the exploitation of the money-lender. It was true, therefore, that the peasant should get some relief in this respect. The main

<sup>15</sup> See *Census Report of India*, 1891, Vol. XIX, n. 2, 169; and Nahar Singh, *Namdhari Itihas, 1785-1872* (Punjabi) (Delhi, n.d.), 349-51 and 255-69.

<sup>16</sup> Pratap Singh, *Gurudwara Sudhar or Akali Lahar* (Punjabi) (Amritsar, n.d.), 411.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

object of the Land Alienation Act was to prevent the peasant proprietor from being expropriated by the money-lender. The Act also limited the transfer of landed property only among the agricultural classes. In addition, other measures like the Punjab Limitation Act, 1904, the Transfer of Property Act, 1904, and the Punjab Pre-emption Act, 1905, were passed to make the position of the peasant *vis-a-vis* the money-lender strong. The peasant, now, could not be evicted by a civil court without the intervention of the revenue authorities.<sup>18</sup> The Land Alienation Act and the other allied measures, thus, came as a big relief to the peasant and strengthened his economic position in general.

The reaction to the Act was a mixed one. It strengthened the ties between the rich landlord and the British as the Act helped the landlords to consolidate their position in the countryside. Secondly, the Muslim landlords kept the fire of communalism burning in the countryside with a view to divert the attention of the tenancy and the poor peasantry from their economic struggles. And since the money-lender was generally Hindu, he was made the scapegoat.

The Act, however, resulted in the creation of another class of agriculturist money-lender who, as experience showed, was no less rapacious and exacting than the former *Bania*. The Act sharply divided the agriculturist and the non-agriculturist, most of whom accidentally belonged to two different religious communities. The money-lenders were hit hard by the new Act.

The Act, also, encouraged separatist tendencies among the agriculturists. The communal proportion of the agriculturists was estimated to be 25 per cent of the total Hindu population; while 60 per cent of the Muslim population and about 70 per cent of the Sikhs belonged to this group. Encouraged by the favourable attitude of the British Government, the agriculturists began to demand separate agriculturist schools and services in various Government departments proportionate to their population strength. The non-agriculturist section of the community was, thus, deprived of its traditional lead over the agriculturist classes as the British Government substantially accepted the latter's demands which was greatly resented by the former.

A major section of the money-lenders, who gradually lost interest in the village now started moving towards the towns. Having cash

<sup>18</sup> ———, *The Land of Five Rivers—Punjab Administration Report, 1921-22, Vol. I (Lahore, 1923), 132.*

capital they began to invest it in other directions; for instance, in the purchase of town lands, in the distribution of produce and in the establishment of markets and other industrial enterprises. The Hindus, thus, became more and more urbanized and came to constitute the mercantile community in the cities apart from the other professions which they had already taken up. The Muslims and Hindus, henceforth, were divided not only on religious basis, but also on agriculturist and non-agriculturist or rural and urban basis. Since the agriculturist population, particularly the landlords, were benefited by the Act, it was used as an effective counterweight against the nationalist movement which was led by the urban intelligentsia during this period. That it was deliberate is evident from the discussion which Government officials had with Raja Narendra Nath on the issue and the former frankly admitted that it was an outcome of the growing rebellious tendencies in the urban group.<sup>19</sup>

The period between 1900-1919 is marked by a revolutionary upsurge in Indian history. The Punjab Government raised the rate of land taxes in the canal colonies particularly the Bari Doab Canal. This measure aroused strong resentment in the rural areas and was utilized by the political leaders to bring about communal unity and struggle against the British. Alarmed at the situation, the Government deported L. Lajpat Rai and S. Ajit Singh.

The deportation caused considerable unrest all over India. In the Punjab, public indignation was expressed in the growing strength of extremism. The Hindu press adopted a distinctly anti-British tone which resulted in a good deal of "objectionable" writing. A number of editors and printers were prosecuted for their allegedly "seditious" writings. A series of repressive measures,<sup>20</sup> known as the Press Laws were passed in 1907 to put an end to political agitation in the country.

To meet the growing unrest, the Government of India increasingly used the loyal Muslim element against the national movement. They gave special representation to the Punjab Muslims and agriculturists in the Imperial Legislative Council. At the provincial level, too, special concessions were given to the Muslim landholders

<sup>19</sup> Raja Narendra Nath, "Punjab Agrarian Laws and their economic and constitutional bearings", *The Modern Review*, Calcutta, LXV: 385 (January 1939), 32.

<sup>20</sup> G. N. Singh, *Landmarks in Indian Constitutional and National Development, 1600-1919* (Delhi, 1952), 172.

as the qualifications for the landholders' constituencies were made different from those of the Muslim and Hindu voters, to favour the former.

The revolutionary movement which was suppressed with severity, nevertheless, found expression in political disturbances in the province during 1911-15. The Ghadar movement,<sup>21</sup> one of the first non-communal movements in India, was organized by Hardayal, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakhna, Kartar Singh Sorabha and others. It had a great appeal among the Sikh Jats.

The Muslim masses, however, remained aloof from the Ghadar movement. The war between Turkey and Italy and the apparent indifference of Great Britain throughout the Balkan War, nevertheless, bitterly annoyed some Muslims. They formed the Pan-Islamic Party and infused a spirit of action and agitation among the young Muslims. The party found strong supporters among the reputed Muslim leaders like Maulana Azad, Maulana Mohammad Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali. The party joined with the Berlin Revolutionaries and asked help from the foreign powers to overthrow British rule. The conspiracy popularly known as the "Silk Letters Conspiracy"<sup>22</sup> was, however, unearthed by the Punjab Government and was suppressed with a heavy hand.

The Punjab was, thus, a nerve-centre of the revolutionary movement during this period. The plans of the revolutionaries did not succeed because two out of the three parties—the Berlin Revolutionaries and the Pan-Islamic Party did not have a mass base and the Ghadar Movement was also limited only to the central districts of the Punjab. They were, also, not supported by the political organizations like the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. It was only in 1919 when Gandhiji joined the issue of Khilafat with the non-co-operation movement which remained a purely constitutional struggle, that the cause upheld by the revolutionaries got widely known and accepted. The above movement, nevertheless, clearly manifested dissatisfaction against the British power. Unfortunately, the leadership was in the hands of Hindu nationalists like Hardayal and a few Muslim fanatics of the Pan-Islamic Party. Therefore, though they joined hands for a temporary period against a common enemy, they could not remove the communal prejudices which were to engulf the province in the years to come.

<sup>21</sup> Jagjit Singh, *Ghadar Party Lahar* (Punjabi) (Amritsar, 1955), Introduction i.

<sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Sedition Committee Report* (Calcutta, 1918), 173-8.

*Rowlatt Act and Subsequent Happenings*

The revolutionary movement in the Punjab met with a severe setback when the Defence of India Act was passed in 1915. While the Government dealt with the revolutionaries severely, it announced the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms to appease the moderate sections and thus divide the national forces. After the suppression of the revolutionary movement, the communal ideas again got the upper hand, resulting in communal riots at Patna, Gaya and Arrah (Bihar) in October, 1917. The publication of the Montague-Chelmsford Report, again strangely enough, was followed by a terrible riot at Katarpur in U.P. in September, 1918.

The riots at Arrah and Katarpur led to the spread of bitter feelings between the two communities and encouraged sectional hostility. Besides the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, which conferred partial responsible government on the provinces, had declared self-Government to be the goal of India. The bourgeoisie of both the communities considered it important to consolidate their position in politics and administration of the province in order to establish their claim to the maximum share in the government at the time of transfer of power.

But the end of the 1st World War witnessed the unity of the national forces once again. The war was followed by a steep rise in the prices of the necessaries of life, increased taxation and national calamities like famine, plague and influenza in 1918-19. The Rowlatt Bill was the last straw which broke the camel's back. The Rowlatt legislation led to unprecedented agitation resulting in the unity between almost all the communal groups. The decision of the A.I.C. C. to hold its annual session at Amritsar further increased the apprehensions of the authorities that the opportunity would be utilized to unite the Hindus and the Muslims<sup>23</sup>—a catastrophe which they were not prepared to face. The authorities felt more concerned for they could not maintain their composure when the martial people of the Punjab began to seek political education and entertain political ambitions. The news that the inhabitants of the surrounding villages had formed a "Danda Fauj" with a view to end "British Raj"<sup>24</sup> made them almost panicky. The situation was explosive, particularly, against the background of the revolutionary move-

*Disorders Enquiry Committee* (Calcutta, 1920), Vol. I, 2  
Quoted, Irving Miles, Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar (oral evidence).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-3.

ments that had characterized the period. The "Jallianwala Bagh" massacre at Amritsar was a culmination of the official reaction to this revolutionary upsurge. In an attempt to teach a lesson to the people,<sup>25</sup> nearly 400 to 500 people were killed in cold blood and more than two thousand were wounded.

The year 1919 thus, was of incalculable importance in the history of India in general and the Punjab in particular and changed the character of the national movement. From a movement of a limited section, it now became a mass movement. The year also saw the entry of Gandhiji in Indian politics which marked a turning-point in the history of the Congress in the Punjab, for it became considerably more influential in the provincial politics. It, nevertheless, remained dominated by the urbanite professionals and the mercantile community.

The period is also important for giving a communal turn to Sikh politics. The Congress, according to the Sikh leaders, had submitted to the communal device of "Separate Electorates" when it arrived at an agreement with the Muslim League at the Lucknow Congress in 1916, popularly known as the Lucknow Pact. It had agreed to the demand of the Muslims for further concessions and weightage under the pressure tactics of the Muslim League; but the Sikhs were completely ignored. Feeling sore at the Congress indifference, the Chief Khalsa Diwan submitted a memorandum to the Montague-Chelmsford Mission and also organized a deputation which waited on the Secretary of State and the Viceroy. Following in the steps of the Muslim deputation to Lord Minto at the time of Minto-Morley Reforms, the Sikh memorandum also emphasized the important position occupied by the community in the economic and political life of the province, their important position in the Indian Army and the services rendered to the British Empire. They claimed that the Sikhs were more advanced educationally and contributed 40 per cent of the land revenue and canal charges. It is interesting to note that the Punjab Government of the time supported the claim of the Sikhs for considerable weightage.<sup>26</sup>

The Montague-Chelmsford Report recognized the Sikhs' claim to separate representation; but when the franchise rules were framed, the Sikhs were given only 8 out of 54 seats. This greatly dis-

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>26</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Gurudwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening* (Lahore, 1922), 74-6.



appointed the Sikhs and after all the efforts of the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Sikh League, only two more seats were given to them; but at the same time the total number of elected seats was increased to 58. The Government refused to give any more weight-age to the Sikhs, for they did not like the Sikh organizations' alliance with the Congress on political issues. Besides it wanted to keep the Muslim seats in the Punjab intact. From this time onwards the Sikh organizations began to be more politically active with a view to safeguard their interests in a society clearly divided on communal lines. The Sikh League, nevertheless, kept on co-operating with the Congress in political matters and, therefore, the reactionary landlords and title-holders who were out to win favour from the Government did not join this organization.

### III

#### THE PUNJAB POLITICS—1919-1947

The Montague-Chelmsford Reforms introduced a new factor in Indian political life. They brought in its wake not only countrywide agitation and intensified struggle for freedom by all the sections, communities and classes, but they also introduced a permanent cleavage between the different communities. Such a situation appears paradoxical to a casual observer; but it was a natural outcome of the British policy in which the religious affiliations were given an unduly important position over the political interests of the country. Therefore, when the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme conferred partial responsible government on the provinces and declared responsible government as the goal of constitutional development in India, the struggle for power between the leadership of various communities was sharpened and they vied with one another to have the maximum share in the administration of the country after the withdrawal of the British.

In the Punjab, it was a triangular struggle. Although, the Muslims formed numerically the majority community in the province, the other communities—the Sikhs and the Hindus—enjoyed a position of advantage over them in educational and economic spheres. Having only a narrow majority over the other two communities combined and being in a position of disadvantage in almost all other respects, the Muslim leadership of the Unionist Party in

the Punjab realized that the successful working of the Reforms was not possible without non-Muslim help.<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, narrow communalism could not form a part of the Unionist Party programme. But the conflict between the agriculturists and the non-agriculturists and the fact that major sections of them belonged to two different religions, provided a basis for the strengthening of communal tendencies.

During the years immediately following the end of the 1st World War, Punjab politics was confused and political affiliations were not clearly demarcated. The Punjab remained distinctively anti-British and found expression in the movements of "Khilafat", "Gurudwara Sudhar" and "Civil Disobedience". The establishment of the Akali Party in 1920 and the Unionist Party in 1923, however, marked a new turn in the Punjab politics.

*The Unionist Party* was a party of land-holders. But it did not enjoy a large mass following. Though predominantly a Muslim organization, it included among its members Hindu and Sikh landlords and agriculturists as well. The landowners who apprehended their extinction in competition with the commercial class, had united to form a party to defend their privileges. In this attempt, they were supported by the British, who wanted to suppress the struggle for political independence led by the Indian National Congress and other national revolutionary parties.

The leaders of the Unionist Party considered the organization of parties on communal lines as highly undesirable and tried to mobilize the different communities for joint prosecution of a common programme. They gave an agricultural and rural bias to the legislative and administrative policy of the Government and interpreted their existing differences as between "have gots" and "have nots".<sup>28</sup> They alleged that the land-holding class had been more or less excluded, by the commercial classes from the economically advantageous fields. With a view to remove the disparity between these two classes, they demanded more opportunities in educational institutions and government services. This policy, however, instead of removing communal differences, helped to create a permanent cleavage between the two communities in the Western and Central parts of the Punjab, for while the agriculturists were mainly Muslims, a major section of the non-Muslims followed non-agriculturist

<sup>27</sup> Azim Hussain, *Fazl-i-Hussain—A Political Biography* (Bombay, 1946), 303.

<sup>28</sup> Mitra, *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I (Calcutta, Var.), 217-9.

professions. The Muslim leaders of the Unionist Party were of the opinion that the Hindu-Muslim controversy was bitter in the Punjab because the majority community although numerically so, was a minority in every other sense, for instance, in voting registers, in public services, in local self government, educational institutions and in economic fields. Consequently, they wholeheartedly supported the separate electorates, for otherwise they could not get seats proportionate to their numerical strength.

A natural course in any democratic and secular society to remove such a disparity would have been a struggle by the backward classes to attain adult franchise in order to have due share on the basis of population. But the Muslim leadership opposed this move of the Indian National Congress. First, half the Muslim electorates were women who could not exercise their franchise because of *Purdah* restrictions while the women of other communities could. It was apprehended that "Muslim women could not come out for twenty years even if (the) best possible purdah arrangements were made for them."<sup>29</sup> This would leave nearly half the adult population disfranchised. Secondly, adult franchise would not have benefited the landlords because this would have made them dependent on their tenants for votes in order to maintain their leadership. They were, therefore, generally against adult franchise and all other schemes of political and democratic advancement of the country. With the growth of the national demand for self-government, the Unionist Party, led by its Muslim exponents became more and more vocal in their demands to get as many concessions for their community as possible. To achieve that end, they supported separate electorates, weightage, official blocs in the legislature and special powers to the government. They realized that with the development of democratic ideas and transfer of power to Indian hands, these safeguards would not remain. They, therefore, tried to consolidate the Muslim opinion in the Punjab, so that they were not tied down to the "chariot wheels of Hindu India."<sup>30</sup> The pro-British, anti-Congress, communal and agricultural bias of the Unionist Party alienated the sympathies of the nationalists in India in general and the Punjab in particular.

<sup>29</sup> Maulana Mohammad Ali in a letter to the Prime Minister of Great Britain. Round Table Conference, 12 November, 1930 and 19 January 1931. *Proceedings of the Sub-Committee*, Part II, Sub-Committee No. 3, 144 (London, 1932) Appendix II. <sup>30</sup> Azim Hussain, n. 27, 249-50.

The Unionist Party, however, did not have much following among the masses. The political upsurge, witnessed after the 1st World War which continued upto 1930, had its effects on the Punjab. Despite, the Unionist Party's support to the British, all the three communities—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs—were pitted against the British during the period in the movements of Civil Disobedience, Khilafat, and Gurudwara Sudhar agitation.

### *Demand for Azad Punjab*

But the militant mass struggle was marred by the scramble for jobs and more share in the administration at the Round Table Conference,<sup>31</sup> culminating in the demand for territorial redistribution of the province. The Sikh community was greatly perturbed at the claim of Dr. Iqbal to a consolidated North-Western State consisting of the Punjab, North West Frontier, Baluchistan and Sind, for, acceptance of this demand would lead to the division of the Sikh population. In a memorandum submitted to the R.T.C. the Sikh delegate, S. Ujjal Singh, stated that in case the Muslims refused to accept anything but a reserved majority on the basis of separate electorates, they (the Sikhs) would, then, press for a "territorial rearrangement" of the province which would consolidate the Sikh population. They demanded, therefore, that the divisions (excluding Lyallpur and Montgomery Districts) which were overwhelmingly Muslim and were racially akin to the North-West Frontier Province should be taken away from the Punjab. This arrangement, if accepted, would leave a Punjab of about sixteen millions in which no single community would have an absolute majority and each community would be obliged to conciliate the others.<sup>32</sup>

Such a proposal was not acceptable to the Muslims. A counter-proposal for the reorganization of the Punjab boundaries was made by Sir Geoffrey Corbett.<sup>33</sup> The scheme aimed at the separation of Ambala Division from the Punjab to make it more Muslim in character by taking away the Hindu majority districts. This scheme was totally unacceptable to the Sikhs and Hindus of the province as it relegated the non-Muslims to an ineffective minority in the Punjab.

<sup>31</sup> Hereafter referred as R.T.C.

<sup>32</sup> *The Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) 1931, Appendix IV, n. 29, 555-6.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix XIV, 579-80.

Comparing the Sikh position as a minority with that of the Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces, where the Muslims enjoyed heavy weightage, S. Ujjal Singh argued that he did not see any reason why the Sikhs should not be given the same weightage which the Muslims had in Bihar and Orissa. In these provinces they formed 11 per cent and 14 per cent of the population but enjoyed 25 per cent and 30 per cent representation in the provincial legislature which meant a weightage of nearly 130 per cent and 110 per cent respectively. The Anglo-Indian minorities with a population of 0.2 per cent in the Punjab got as much as 4,000 per cent weightage in the Punjab Legislature and the Europeans got a weighted representation varying from 3000 to 9000 per cent.<sup>34</sup> This was an attempt to transform the minority into a "privileged class."<sup>35</sup> Master Tara Singh demanded that if the British Government could not accede to the demand of territorial rearrangement as suggested by them, it must take effective steps to safeguard the Sikh interests.

The demand for a separate Sikh State was revived in 1943 when the Pakistan Scheme was being fervently discussed on an All India level. In an article "Azad Punjab Scheme", Master Tara Singh emphasized that "This scheme was conceived to protect the Sikhs from the communal domination of the Muslims." Explaining the reason for his demand, Master Tara Singh stated that the Hindu and Muslim minorities could always look upon the provinces where their co-religionists were in a majority for security and protection of their rights, but the Sikhs did not enjoy similar position for they did not have majority anywhere. He, therefore, insisted upon this form of protection (Azad Punjab) until a better and more practicable form of protection was proposed.<sup>36</sup> Later in a memorandum submitted to the Sapru Committee in 1945, the Akali Party demanded the creation of a separate Sikh State which should include the substantial majority of the Sikh population and their important sacred shrines even if it meant transfer and exchange of population and property.<sup>37</sup> The Akali Party, whose demand for "Azad Punjab" was a counter-proposal to the demand for Pakistan, however, made it clear that they were in favour of a strong Centre and did not favour dismemberment of the country. It was meant to act as an effective

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 1368. <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 1403-6.

<sup>36</sup> Master Tara Singh, "Azad Punjab Scheme", *Tribune*, Lahore (23 July 1943).

<sup>37</sup> ———, *The Sapru Committee, Constitutional Proposals*, Part II (Bombay, 1945), Appendix No. VII, X/IX/X.

check on the demand for Pakistan and had the support of the Hindu organizations like Hindu Mahasabha.<sup>38</sup>

To understand the Hindu point of view in the Punjab, it is necessary to keep in mind that the Hindu position in the Punjab was different from that in the other Hindu majority provinces. They suffered from the fear of being dominated by the Muslim majority and thought that they needed safeguards to protect their culture and rights as the Muslims demanded them in the Hindu majority provinces. Although an advanced community, both educationally and economically, enjoying a position of advantage over the majority community, they always demanded that they should be treated at par with other minorities. In an atmosphere where the minority was treated as a privileged class, its thinking was moulded in a particular channel. The minority consciousness had become so predominant among the non-Muslims in the Punjab, particularly Sikhs, that when an agreement was reached among Sir Jogendra Singh, Sir Gokul Chand Narang, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Mr. Ahmad Yar Daultana on the joint electorate basis (subject to the approval of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, who gave his approval provided the Muslims could secure seats in proportion to their population), it was not accepted by the Sikhs.<sup>39</sup> They were enjoying 6 per cent weightage in the province and they were not prepared to forgo it. The opposition by the non-Muslims was interpreted to prove that "separate electorates was not the creed of the Muslims only, but of minorities irrespective of religion. It appeared that (the) Punjab Hindus had been pressing for joint electorates . . . because the Muslim voting strength was weak and (by this method) they could dominate the province. . . ."<sup>40</sup>

The prevailing communal atmosphere and pressing demands of the Muslims to have a share in administrative, educational and economic fields in proportion to their population, threw a large section of the Punjab Hindus in the fold of the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha. The Congress as well as Hindu organizations, however, had little influence in the Western Punjab and their activ-

<sup>38</sup> See *Indian Round Table Conference* (Third Session) 1932, n. 29, 555-6 and Raja Narendra Nath, "Hindu Minority in North West India", *The Modern Review* (April 1941).

<sup>39</sup> Though the Muslims had 57 per cent population in the Punjab, they were given statutory majority of 51 per cent according to the Act of 1935. The 6 percent weightage, thus, was given to the Sikhs.

<sup>40</sup> Azim Hussain, n. 27, 279-82.

ities were mainly limited to the Central Punjab. Haryana, nevertheless, remained neglected for quite sometime before it came under the influence of Sir Chhotu Ram.

### *The Indian National Congress*

The Punjab Hindus though influenced by the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha, were politically inspired by the Indian National Congress. The Punjab Congress membership was mainly drawn from the urban Hindus. The Akali Party by and large followed a policy of co-operation with the Congress, almost upto the eve of the partition. In addition, a large section of Sikh peasantry under the influence of the Ghadar Party and Kirti Kisan Party formed the bulk of the rural membership of the Congress. A major section of Punjab Congress leadership with the exception of S. Pratap Singh Kairon and a few others, hailed from urban areas and as such opposed many of the Land Reform Bills moved by the Unionist Party. This often led to a clash of opinion between the Congress High Command, who advocated such reforms as an All India policy, and the Punjab Congress. The urban and the Arya Samaj bias of the Provincial Congress kept the Muslim masses outside its fold.

The Congress penetration in the central Punjab resulted from the influx of non-communal revolutionary ideas through the "Ghadar Party", "Kirti Kisan" movements, the non-co-operation and the "Gurudwara Sudhar" agitation and the like. These movements had no base in the eastern and western parts of the province where the peasantry was overwhelmingly Hindu and Muslim respectively and the leadership of the Unionist Party had considerable personal following. The Unionist Party, therefore, could not build its strength in the Central Punjab, while revolutionary, Congress and peasant movements could not be popular in the other regions. The Unionist Party, at the same time, was against the Muslim League's intervention in the Punjab politics and succeeded in checking the League's influence in the province till 1945 when it came in open clash with the latter at the Simla Conference.

### *Muslim League*

Mr. Jinnah had by this time realized that the demand for Pakistan could not materialize unless an independent Muslim League organization was established in the Punjab and the Muslim members of

the Legislative Assembly owed their exclusive allegiance to the Muslim League.<sup>41</sup> It was essential to establish the Muslim League party in all provinces, particularly in the Punjab which was the corner-stone of any scheme of Pakistan. In pursuance of this policy, Mr. Jinnah had talks with Khizr Hayat Khan, the then Chief Minister, for nearly a week but they could not come to any agreement even after holding about a dozen meetings.<sup>42</sup>

Mr. Jinnah's insistence to merge the Unionist Party with the Muslim League, was considered as an attempt to disintegrate the Unionist Party and a violation of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. At the Simla Conference, Khizr Hayat Khan took a firm stand on the inclusion of a non-League Punjabi Muslim in the Viceroy's Executive Council and clashed with Jinnah on this issue.

The events that took place in 1947 were, thus, an outcome of the developments that had made their head-way in the last hundred years (1849-1947). The importance of the Punjab as the nucleus of the demand of the Muslim League for Pakistan, made it the hot-bed of all types of political intrigues.

The final position of the political parties in the Punjab, after the 1946 general elections, showed a change over in the party affiliations. The Muslim League captured 79 out of 86 Muslim seats; the Congress 51, the Panthic Akali Sikhs 22, and the Unionists and the Independents ten each. The Muslim League came out as not only the largest Muslim party but also the largest single party in the Punjab Assembly. It could not, however, form a ministry unless it joined with some other party. The Congress and the Akali Sikhs formed a working alliance and in their negotiations with the Muslim League, put up certain conditions which were unacceptable to the latter. The League could not reach a separate agreement with the Sikhs as they insisted on their claim for a Sikh State in the event of the establishment of Pakistan. Eventually, a coalition ministry consisting of Congress, Akali and Unionist parties, under the leadership of Malik Khizr Hayat Khan was formed.<sup>43</sup> The

<sup>41</sup> Uptil this time, there was no independent branch of the Muslim League in the Punjab. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan advised Muslim members of the Unionist Party to join the League if they liked and at the same time retaining their membership in the Party.

<sup>42</sup> Mitra, n. 28, 1944, 217.

<sup>43</sup> Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Bombay, 1959), 128-30. According to Maulana Azad, who was responsible for this alliance this move was opposed by important leaders like Nehru who argued that the Congress



Muslim League, which was determined to establish "undiluted Muslim rule" over the Punjab, felt very sore and, therefore, directed all its energies towards overthrowing the coalition ministry.

The Punjab was vitally important in the economic, political and strategic position of both India and Pakistan. The Muslim League leadership came out with some bitterly offensive remarks against the Government and the Hindus.<sup>44</sup> Their activities against the coalition ministry were intensified in January, 1947, when a ban was imposed on the Muslim National Guard and the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh on 24 January as a measure to maintain peaceful conditions in the province. This was taken as an attack on the civil liberties of the people and the Muslim League as a party. The movement was supported by the Communist Party as a "struggle for democratic rights".<sup>45</sup> The situation became so tense that the Punjab Government had to withdraw the ban on 28 January, 1947. By February, 1947, the Muslim League campaign of hatred against the coalition ministry, particularly against the Unionist members was at its peak. His Majesty's Government declaration on 20 February, expressing their intention to transfer power into responsible Indian hands, gave an impetus to the Muslim League to intensify their struggle in the last bid for getting their demand conceded.

The situation deteriorated rapidly. This proved nerve-wrecking to Khizr Hayat Khan and his Muslim colleagues. He submitted his resignation on 3 March, 1947, without consulting his non-Muslim colleagues. Demonstrations were taken out by the non-Muslims to mark their protest against the proposed League ministry which culminated in a riot the same afternoon in the city of Lahore. The Muslim League could not succeed in forming a ministry and in the absence of any other alternative, the Governor took over the administration of the province in his own hands.

The provocative statements of the Muslim League leaders and the civil liberties movement started by them had a reaction on the non-Muslim communities, particularly the Sikhs.

should have allied with Muslim League which was a mass organization and not with the Unionists. Gandhiji, nevertheless, supported the alliance which was partly responsible for Mr. Nehru revising his opinion later.

<sup>44</sup> *Tribune*, Lahore (11 April, 1946) and (8 August, 1946). Speeches by Malik Feroz Khan Noon and other Muslim League leaders.

<sup>45</sup> Mohammad Ashraf, "Mr. Jinnah and Punjab Unionist Party", *Kaumi Jang*, Lahore (23 April, 1944).

Serious riots broke out in the first week of March in almost all the important cities of the Punjab-Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Jhelum and others. Pandit Nehru made a three day tour of the riot-affected areas. A few non-Muslim delegations met him and insisted that the Punjab must be divided in case of the Partition of India. The "ghastly" events also affected the Congress approach to the problem. The Congress Working Committee in a review of the situation said, "These tragic events have demonstrated that there can be no settlement of the problem in the Punjab by violence and coercion. . . . Therefore, it is necessary to find a way out which involves the least amount of compulsion. This would necessitate a division of the Punjab into two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part."<sup>46</sup> The acceptance of the Partition Plan for the Punjab, was followed by a demand by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for the division of Bengal, as it was considered the only peaceful solution to the communal problem.<sup>47</sup>

The demand for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal upset Mr. Jinnah's plans. He denounced the demand as "a sinister move actuated by spite and bitterness" as by this the Muslims would get a "truncated or mutilated moth-eaten Pakistan."<sup>48</sup> In his attempt to avoid this catastrophic, Mr. Jinnah tried to disrupt the Hindu-Sikh unity by making an offer of an autonomous Sikh province within the State of Pakistan. The Akali leader, Master Tara Singh, on 5 April, 1947, agreed to enter into negotiations with the Muslim League on the basis of the division of the Punjab.<sup>49</sup> A section of the British officials was interested that the Sikhs should join Pakistan,<sup>50</sup> and put undue pressure on the Sikh leader to revise his decision. It was alleged by responsible Congress leaders that the British officers were siding with the Muslim League in continuing the disaffection in the Punjab. Speaking on the Punjab situation in June, Mr. Nehru said, "It seems the administration had broken down and there was no authority left in the country to enforce order. How was it, he asked, that British officers who coped with the civil disobedience movements in the past were unable to cope with the present disturbances? Where there were Congress ministries,

-, *Congress Bulletin*, No. 3, March 6, 7, 8, 1947 (New Delhi, 1947), 5.

<sup>47</sup> Mitra, n. 28, Vol. I, 1947, 238.    <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.    <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

<sup>50</sup> F. Taker, *While Memory Serves* (London, 1950), 257.

disturbances were brought under control, but where the British exercised authority, there was chaos.”<sup>51</sup>

The statement of the British on 3 June, 1947, providing for the independence and partition of the country accepted the plan for the partition of the two provinces—Punjab and Bengal—if their legislatures decided that way. The plan was accepted by all the major parties,—Congress, Muslim League and Akalis.

In pursuance of the procedure laid down in the Government statement, the two sections of the Punjab Assembly, Western and Eastern, met separately. The East Punjab section voted in favour of the partition of the Punjab by 50 against 22 votes, while the West Punjab section voted against the partition of the province by 69 to 27 votes. Consequently, the Western section decided to join the new Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and the Eastern section gave their decision in favour of joining the existing Constituent Assembly.<sup>52</sup>

Although the Muslims had only a slight majority over the non-Muslims in the Punjab and this fact kept the Unionist leadership away from the Muslim League for quite some time the distribution of Hindu and Muslim population on the Eastern and Western side of the Punjab facilitated not only the development of the idea of Pakistan, but the division of the Punjab. A glance at the communal distribution on the map of the Punjab<sup>53</sup> makes it evident that the Muslim population in Western districts varied from 60 to 80 per cent; but in the Central tract it was evenly balanced with the non-Muslims. At the same time it was this part of the province which was most advanced economically, educationally and politically, All the major political movements—Ghadar, Kirti Kisan, Khilafat, Civil Disobedience and the like were confined mainly to the Central districts. The Western as well as the Eastern districts—the overwhelming Muslim and Hindu areas, by and large remained unaffected by the national movement. Again it was for this position that both Muslims and non-Muslims clamoured to hold on which resulted in dastardly acts by both the communities. The inhuman activities which were widespread in the province were the immediate cause to force the Congress leadership to accept the partition of the country, as expressed by Shri J. B. Kripalani, the then Congress President, “. . . The fear is not for the lives lost or of the widows

—, *Hindustan Times*, Delhi (16 June, 1947). <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 268-9.

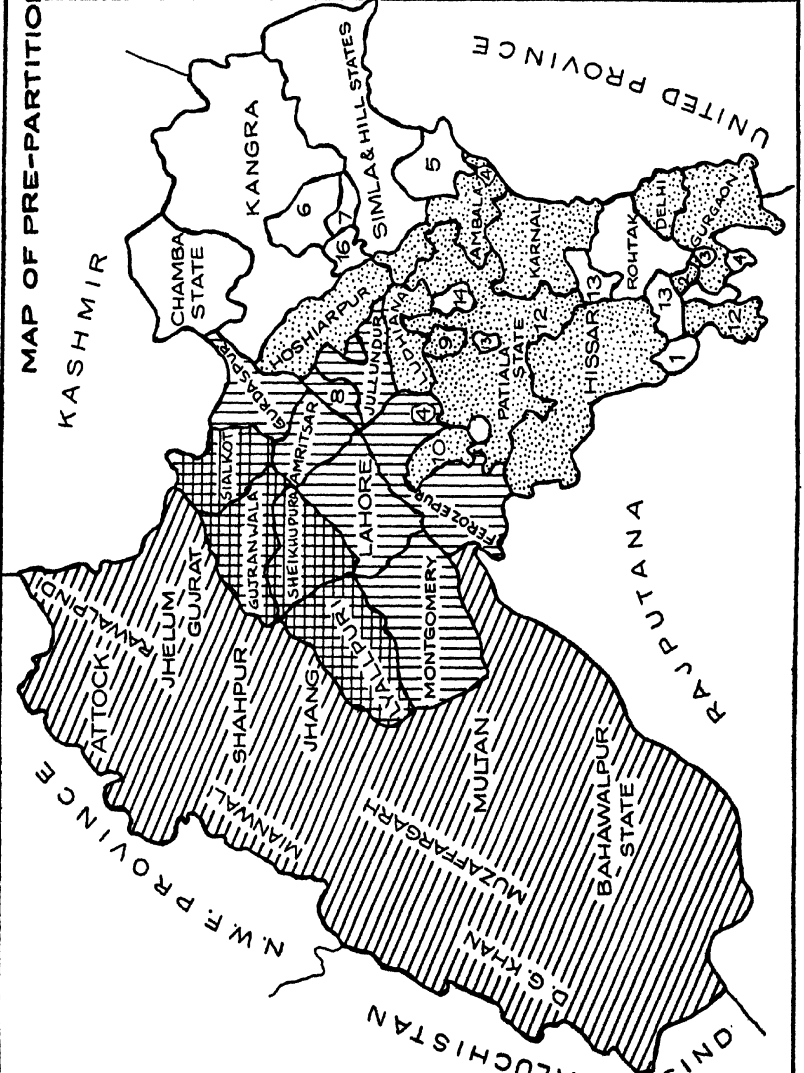
—, *Census Report of India*, 1935, n. 2, Vol. VI, Part I, 172.

# MAP OF PRE-PARTITION PUNJAB

DISTRIBUTION OF THE MUSALMAN POPULATION

OVER 80%	
60 TO 79%	
40 TO 59%	
20 TO 39%	
UNDER 20%	

STATES	NUMBERS
LOHARU STATE	1
DUJANA "	2
PATAUDI "	3
KALSIA	4
NAHAN	5
MANDI	6
SUKET	7
KAPURTHALA	8
MALEKOTLA	9
FARIDKOT	10
CHAMBA	11
PATIALA	12
JIND	13
NABHA	14
BAHAWALPUR	15
BILASPUR	16



wail or orphans cry or of many houses burnt. The fear is that if we go on like this, we shall progressively reduce ourselves to a state of cannibalism and worse . . . ”<sup>54</sup>

Thus the Congress which was against partition accepted the plan, for circumstances proved more powerful than fond aspirations. The partition of the Punjab, though a natural corollary to the partition of India, could become a fact because of the sharp conflict of interests on religious, economic and political grounds. Coupled with this were the unequal economic development and communal composition of the three parts (Western, Central and Eastern) of the Punjab which prevented the growth of a single political party having equal influence with all the three communities inhabiting these areas. The existing differences were given a communal twist due to the presence of the third party and anti-Congress policy followed by the British officials. The important position that the Punjab enjoyed in the Pakistan Scheme, turned it into the central arena of struggle among various interests and parties concerned.

The Partition Plan was accepted by the Congress, the Muslim League and the Akali Party.

But the Communist Party called the Mountbatten Award as the culmination of the double-faced imperial policy and the policy of divide and rule.<sup>55</sup> The Socialist Party disapproving the scheme said that the people had made a “reluctant acceptance” because of the series of successive acts and surrenders made. They appealed that attempts should be made to encourage unifying tendencies, in order to mitigate consequences of division.<sup>56</sup> The Hindu Mahasabha charged the Congress with ‘betrayal’ for agreeing to the Partition Plan without a referendum<sup>57</sup> and continued to adhere to its slogan of ‘Akhand Hindustan’.

Sir Evan Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, viewed the partition of the province as disastrous—“crude population figures were not necessarily the only criterion: within the districts the communities were not evenly distributed and the city and town populations often had a different communal composition from that of the adjoining country-side. . . .”<sup>58</sup>

The partition of the province, however, did not solve the communal problem, for it could not perform the miracle of bringing

-, *Congress Bulletin* No. 4, 10 July, 1947, n. 46, 9.

<sup>55</sup> Mitra, n. 28, 1947, 260-1. <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 259-60. <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>58</sup> V. P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Bombay, 1957), 347.

about a complete reconciliation of the old feuds. On the contrary in its wake cropped up host of other problems (political and administrative) which strained relations between the two dominions after their formation.

## CHAPTER III

# THE PROCESS OF PARTITION

## I

### HINDU-MUSLIM CASE FOR TERRITORIAL DIVISION AND RADCLIFFE AWARD

THE demand for the partition of the Punjab was the most radical change that the people had to face since the fall of the Sikh empire and the annexation by the British. It came as the culminating point of the social, economic and political upheavals of nearly half a century and as a result of sectarian and partisan intrigues of the parties concerned. The accentuation of communalism in the body-politic of the province left its indelible mark in the shape of horrible communal riots.<sup>1</sup> The communal venom that had seeped into the minds of all the communities, got expression in large-scale arson, murder of innocent men, women and children, looting, forcible conversions and abduction of women. These events left no doubt in the minds of the people that the establishment of a separate Muslim State was the only alternative. The possibility of a Congress-Muslim League compromise had become quite remote because of the divergent views held by both the parties in the working of the coalition ministry in the Interim Government, set up as a sequel to Cabinet Mission Proposals. It appeared as if two parallel governments had been set up, each engaged in the pursuit of its own end.

The communal tensions had been worked up to a high pitch and the entire tone of the communal leadership had become so aggressive<sup>2</sup> that even the Congress leadership began to doubt the possibility of communal unity. Mahatma Gandhi, who throughout his life had charged the British with dividing the national forces and intensifying the communal strife,<sup>3</sup> was constrained to remark, "the British Government is not responsible for the Partition. The

<sup>1</sup> The riots which started in Calcutta on the "Direct Action Day"—16 August, 1946—were followed by the Noakhali horrors, Bihar, Garhmukteshwar and ultimately made their way to the Punjab.

<sup>2</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *To the Protagonists of Pakistan* (Allahabad, 1947), 203.

<sup>3</sup> ———, *Communal Unity* (Ahmedabad, 1949), 110.

Viceroy has no hand in it. In fact he is opposed to division as Congress itself; but if both of us, Hindus and Muslims, cannot agree on anything else, then the Viceroy is left with no choice.”<sup>4</sup>

The efforts of the new Viceroy to reach some agreement with the party leaders, immediately after his arrival in India, proved futile in view of the sharp differences on fundamental issues between the Congress and the Muslim League leadership. He was now convinced that a get-together of Hindus and Muslims was impossible. The British statesmen, therefore, turned round and declared that while they wanted a united India, the Indians themselves were demanding the division of the country. Expressing his opinion, Lord Mountbatten said, “the responsibility for Partition, if it comes, is to rest fairly upon Indian themselves”,<sup>5</sup> for the British Government were willing “to obtain unitary Government for British India.”<sup>6</sup> The disagreement between the two major Indian parties, however, rendered the achievement of this objective only a remote possibility either on the Cabinet Mission Plan or any other scheme which could preserve the unity of India.

The Muslim League had unequivocally declared that it would not be satisfied with anything short of Pakistan. Accordingly, Lord Mountbatten declared that “there can be no question of coercing any large areas in which one community had a majority to live against their will under a Government in which another community has a majority. And the only alternative to coercion is partition.”<sup>7</sup> But when the Muslim League’s demand for the partition of India was agreed to, the Congress used the same arguments for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal and Mr. Jinnah after initial protests against this course, demanded the separation of Sylhet from Assam. In fact as remarked by the Viceroy, “neither side proved willing to have substantial area in which their community have a majority under the Government of the other.”<sup>8</sup> This attitude remained predominant even during the discussions among the members of the Boundary Commission. The Congress, Muslim League and Akali memoranda were also an expression of the same tendency.

<sup>4</sup> Campbell Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten* (London, 1951), 110.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VI (Alipore, Calcutta, 1950), 268.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.



### *The Demarcation of Boundary Line*

The All India Congress Committee, in a resolution declared that they wished the Punjab to be divided into predominantly Muslim and non-Muslim areas.<sup>9</sup> The Muslim League memorandum also pointed out that "the boundary should be workable and practicable boundary from the point of view of administration and should be capable of fulfilling the functions of a boundary between the neighbouring States."<sup>10</sup>

Concern was, also, expressed in official and non-official quarters about the position of the Sikhs. The Viceroy in a broadcast showed his concern for this community which had been divided in two equal halves.<sup>11</sup> In a debate in the British Parliament on the Indian Independence Bill, Mr. Butler expressed the hope that the Boundary Commission would so define the boundary that the portion of the Sikhs would be included within "one conglomerate whole" without doing damage to the balance of the Muslim and non-Muslim areas.<sup>12</sup>

The announcement of 3 June Plan<sup>13</sup> and its acceptance by the major political parties, served to stem the tide of communal hostilities for a brief period. The leaders were brought face to face with the hard reality of encountering a host of problems connected with the division of the country, which required their immediate attention. The Plan had declared that after a decision involving partition had been taken up for either province (Bengal and Punjab), a Boundary Commission would be set up by the Governor-General "to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab (and Bengal) on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. . . ."<sup>14</sup> But until the report of a Boundary Commission had been put into effect, the provisional boundaries based on 1941 census were to be used. The Muslim majority area was to comprise of the Lahore Division (excluding district Amritsar). Rawalpindi and Multan Divisions. The non-Muslim area was to consist of Ambala and Jullundur Divisions in addition to Amritsar district of Lahore Division.<sup>15</sup>

Negotiations were started to discuss the administrative conse-

<sup>9</sup> *Congress Bulletin No. 3* (Delhi, 6, 7, 8 March, 1947), 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, n. 7, 167.      <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>12</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 6: 3 (16 July, 1947).

<sup>13</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VI, n. 7, 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.      <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

quences of the partition involving all provincial subjects such as the division of assets and liabilities, the police and other services, the High Courts and provincial institutions and the like. Needless to say that the above processes required to be completed with a speed so as to enable the new provinces to proceed with their future plans independently by 15 August, the day when India was to get independence. For the final demarcation of boundaries, the Boundary Commissions were set up for both Bengal<sup>16</sup> and the Punjab<sup>17</sup> on 30 June, 1947. The Punjab Boundary Commission was to consist of the following members:

1. Mr. Justice Din Mohammad.
2. Mr. Justice Mohammad Munir.
3. Mr. Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan.
4. Mr. Justice Teja Singh.

Sir Cyril Radcliffe was invited to act as Chairman of the two Boundary Commissions. It was expected that the Commissions would give their decision by 15 August, 1947.

The task of the Punjab Boundary Commission was rather difficult, for, unlike the one on Bengal, it had to safeguard the interests of the third community—the Sikhs—who were spread over many of the Western districts and had both religious and economic links in the area. Lord Mountbatten in one of his statements said “We have given careful consideration to the position of the Sikhs. . . .” But obviously any scheme of the partition of the Punjab was to inevitably split the community; but the “exact degree of the split” was left to the Boundary Commission on which they were naturally represented.<sup>18</sup>

In the Punjab, thus the claims of the three communities were much more at variance than in Bengal. The Commission had to plod through a maze of facts and contradictory opinions. Even the members of the Commission put forward diametrically opposed view points.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 8. Two Boundary Commissions were set up, one for Bengal and one for the Punjab. The Bengal Boundary Commission consisted of: (1) Mr. Justice Bijan Kumar Mukerjee, (2) Mr. Justice C. C. Biswas, (3) Mr. Justice Abu Saleh Mohammad Akaram, (4) Mr. Justice S. A. Rahman.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-2.

### *Non-Muslim Case*

The Congress framed its demands on the basis of strategic considerations, integrity of the Sikh homeland, economic security and rational distribution of the river waters, irrigation system and canal colonics. Mr. Mehr Chand Mahajan mainly based his arguments on the interpretation of the phrase "other factors" as given in His Majesty's statement and as expressed by the Under Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons on 14 July, 1947, "the primary basis of demarcation must be majority of population. In certain cases, there may be factors which justify departure from that principle."<sup>19</sup> Mr. Mahajan, therefore, suggested that the Boundary Commission should demarcate only the predominantly Muslim and non-Muslim areas and the remaining tracts should be considered on economic, strategic and ideological basis. He argued that since the division was going to be on communal lines, the boundary line should be such as would avoid daily border incidents resulting in communal fights and should not lead to numerous cantonments and army stations. The Boundary Commission set up by the Peace Conference to demarcate the boundaries of new States formed after World War I, had laid down military defence of the border line as one of the important factors in addition to the ethnological and racial considerations.<sup>20</sup> But in case the Commission decided to proceed on the theory of units, the only real unit, according to Mr. Mahajan, was the village. It was difficult to demarcate the Muslim and non-Muslim area in some places since there had been a considerable intermixture of communities. Taking the example of Batala Tehsil, he argued, that though the tehsil had an excess of 31,000 Muslims over the non-Muslim population, the majority of them were to be found in the towns of Batala and Qadian, the rest of the tehsil was a non-Muslim majority area.<sup>21</sup>

He also claimed both the Doaba and Majha tracts for the non-Muslims on the ground that Doaba tract was a well-knit unit both linguistically and economically and the Upper Bari Doab, known as Majha tract, had been historically known as the "homeland of Sikh Jats." A large number of their holy shrines and historical monuments were also situated in this area.<sup>22</sup>

The non-Muslims, moreover, had a further claim over the tract,

<sup>19</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, n. 7, 164.

<sup>20</sup> Lloyd George, quoted regarding basis of the first World War Boundary Settlement, *ibid.*, 170. <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 174. <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

for they paid more than two-third of the total land revenue. The total revenue of the area in the three districts—Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Lahore—was Rs. 55,23,439. The Sikhs paid Rs. 33,31,591 and the Muslims Rs. 15,88,293 and others 7,03,555. The total acreage cultivated in the three districts was 37,55,127 acres. Sikhs owned 20,12,783 acres, Muslims owned 11,24,207 acres and the total non-Muslim acreage was 26,30,320. The total number of landowners and occupying tenants in the three districts was 7,07,276 out of which Muslims were 3,15,100 the excess of non-Muslims over Muslims<sup>23</sup> being 77,076.

The intermixture of the Hindu-Muslim population in the areas was so complete that it was difficult to demarcate the boundary line between the two on population basis. For instance, there was Muslim majority of 2,38,000 in the population of the three districts (Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Lahore), and there was an excess of 1,61,000 non-Muslims in the area commanded by the Upper Bari Doab Canal. Mr. Mahajan, accordingly, suggested that if the irrigation system was taken as a unit, the boundary line would be more workable. In addition to its being more viable economically and geographically such a division would be a recognition of the Sikh services as the canal was dug by the demobilized Sikh soldiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1851.

Speaking about the city of Lahore, Mr. Mahajan said that the non-Muslim contribution to the cultural, educational and industrial life of the city and to the construction of palatial buildings therein had added to the personality of the city and was of vital interest to the non-Muslims.

Taking in view the historical associations, geographical situation, strategical considerations, economic life and stability of the area,<sup>24</sup> it was important, Mr. Mahajan suggested, that the frontier of India and Pakistan should be demarcated on the west of the Ravi, and by following this line, Sheikhpura, Nankana Sahib, Lahore, Shahdara and a few other territories would be included in the Eastern tract.<sup>25</sup>

Mr. Justice Teja Singh in his report, mainly supported the arguments advanced by Mr. Mehr Chand Mahajan. He drew the attention of the Commission to the contribution of Sikh Jats in the build-

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* The non-Muslim claim of ownership of land was disputed by Mr. Din Mohammad, see 256.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.      <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

ing of Canal Colonies which as a matter of right should go to the East Punjab.<sup>26</sup> He claimed, therefore, a few more districts such as Montgomery, Lyallpur and certain subdivisions of the Multan Division in addition to the area demanded by Mr. Mehr Chand Mahajan.<sup>27</sup> Its importance increased because some of the important shrines of the Sikhs were situated in it.<sup>28</sup>

### *The Muslim Case*

The Muslim representatives in the Commission, in their report submitted that the division of the province should be strictly on population basis. Mr. Din Mohammad said that the fundamental principle accepted by the major political parties for the division of India as well as of the two provinces of the Punjab and Bengal was that of the contiguous majority area of Muslims or non-Muslims arranged in such a manner as to ensure that no inhabitants of a majority area of the one community placed in an area in which the other community was in a majority.<sup>29</sup>

He lodged a complaint stating that the Muslim population was at a disadvantage as the division between Muslims and non-Muslims connoted that all those who did not profess the religion of Islam including Christians, Scheduled Castes, Jains, Ad-Dharmis and others came under the category of non-Muslims. The character of non-Muslim majority areas could be materially affected by such a division. Giving the example of the district of Gurdaspur, he said that the difference in favour of Muslims against non-Muslims stood at 2.8 per cent. If the Christians in the area who constituted 4.4 per cent of the total population of the district, were allowed to express their desire to remain in the West Punjab, the difference would jump up to 11.6 per cent.<sup>30</sup> Similar was the case with Dasuya Tehsil in Hoshiarpur district.

Taking the population figures of district Gurdaspur, Tehsil Ferozepur, Zira, Nakodar, Jullundur, Ajnala, Nawanshahr, Phillaur, Rupar, Una, Garhshankar, Hoshiarpur, Dasuya, Thana Majitha (Tehsil Amritsar), Mr. Din Mohammad claimed the inclusion of all these areas in the territory of the West Punjab.<sup>31</sup> In

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.    <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 214-5.    <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 204-6.    <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 243-4. Mr. Mahajan in his report pointed out that the Muslim League had split up certain areas in a manner, for instance, Tehsil Fazilka as to ensure majority. Moreover according to him, the Tehsils were only admini-

addition, he pleaded for the inclusion of the district Amritsar in the West Punjab in the interest of contiguity. He agreed that the two Tehsils of Amritsar and Tarantaran had a non-Muslim majority; but they were surrounded by the Muslim majority areas. He claimed Batala Tehsil for Pakistan as it was not only a Muslim majority area but also was the industrial centre of the Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

Mr. Din Mohammad put forward the claim for the inclusion of the hydro-electric system located at Jogindar Nagar for it served the West Punjab more than the East Punjab. The project had cost the united province of the Punjab 9 crores of rupees. It should, therefore, be suggested that it should be internationally controlled in one form or the other.<sup>33</sup>

The Muslim representative, thus, claimed a number of Tehsils in Jullundur Division and a few areas of Ambala Division. The disputed districts, therefore, in the opinion of the Muslims were: Amritsar, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Jullundur, Ambala and Hoshiarpur, while the non-Muslims thought that the fate of Gurdaspur, Lahore, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sheikhupura, Lyallpur and Montgomery needs to be settled in their favour.<sup>34</sup>

The Muslim counsel, however, agreed that the Commission would have "to cut out corners" or "flatten out pockets" with a view to avoid a "rugged zigzag boundary line" which might otherwise result on the basis of population alone.<sup>35</sup>

Mr. Din Mohammad rejected the plea of the non-Muslim counsels to take into consideration strategic and defence considerations, for they were meaningless with the development of automatic rockets and atom bombs. Similarly he discarded the arguments of the opposition to take into view property considerations for they could not be made to override the interests of a community.

Mr. Munir, the second Muslim counsel, argued that the demand for the partition of the Punjab was advanced by the Sikhs, who were fully aware of the disintegration that such a division would cause to their community. He warned that any submission to the Sikh claim would result in reducing the Muslim share in the West Punjab area, production and irrigated land—a position which could never be accepted by Pakistan. He, therefore, submitted

strative units devised by the British. Therefore, the all-over majority in the region rather than small units should be taken into consideration. Same applied to other areas.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

that the Sikh claim to separate entity, solidarity and integrity should not be entertained.

The Muslim counsels, criticized the Congress and Sikh claims on the basis of property, but the Muslim representatives on the Boundary Commission themselves made similar demands, which by no stretch of imagination could be considered as based on numbers only; for instance, the claim to the tehsil Batala was made not on the strength of Muslim majority in the area but owing to the fact that large number of factories and foundries there were owned by the Muslims and a number of Muslim shrines were located there,<sup>86</sup> were equally unjustifiable. They denied the claim of the Sikhs, but did not hesitate to put forward the claim of the Ahmediya community to Qadian.

A study of the Muslim and non-Muslim claims, thus, reveals their self-contradictory tendencies. There were no fixed principles and no regard for a workable boundary line. Arguments were twisted as they suited their respective interests. Even the judicial officials who were known for their impartial and objective approach could not eschew communalism, while considering the boundary line between the two provinces. It must, however, be said in their defence that they were explicitly appointed to represent the case of their respective communities and in an all-pervading communal atmosphere, could not but represent communal aspirations.

The irreconcilable claims advanced by both the parties, obviously, could not be met. They were, however, responsible in giving unrestricted powers to the Chairman of the Commission to demarcate the boundary line. The territory under dispute was in and around the area of Beas and Sutlej on the one hand and the river Ravi on the other. The canal system had developed under the conception of a single administration and the geographical situation of the cities of Lahore and Amritsar further complicated the matter. It became particularly difficult on account of the difference of opinion as to the significance of the term "other factors" and the weight and value to be attached to those factors. Realizing the difficulty, both the parties assented that the Chairman should proceed to give his own decisions.<sup>87</sup> The decision, thus, came to be known, not the decisions of the Boundary Commission, but the Radcliffe Award which was submitted to the Viceroy on 12 August, 1947.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 303-4. For the text of Radcliffe Award see Appendix III.

As a result of the Award, 13 districts comprising the whole of Jullundur and Ambala Divisions and the Amritsar district of the Lahore Division as well as three tehsils (Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Batala) of Gurdaspur district and a part of the Kasur tehsil of the Lahore district were allocated to the East Punjab and the remaining went to the West Punjab.<sup>38</sup>

The Award was severely criticized in both Muslim and non-Muslim quarters as it prescribed one of the most unnatural boundaries ever conceived of. It ignored certain geographical features like the rivers as it was mainly based on village, tehsil and district boundaries according to "Muslim" and "non-Muslim" contiguous majority areas in the pre-partition Punjab and not the actual course of the rivers. The rivers Ravi, Sutlej, etc. cut across the boundary at a large number of points with the result that small areas of Pakistani territory fell across these rivers on the Indian side and *vice versa*. The wrong side areas which were not easily accessible to the country to which they belonged, however, continued to remain in the possession of the country on whose side of the rivers they fell after the partition.

The physical possession of territory by the two countries also did not correspond with the Radcliffe boundary in certain places either due to the vagueness of the Radcliffe Award or differences between the two countries in regard to its interpretation. Such areas became a source of perennial boundary conflicts,<sup>39</sup> and resulted in having a *de-facto* boundary line quite different from the one given in the Radcliffe Award. Consequently both the countries have different maps of the boundary line. Sir Cyril Radcliffe was conscious of these defects and expressed the hope that satisfactory political arrangements would be made by both the countries to rectify the shortcomings in the boundary line which was affected by the conflicting demands by the parties concerned.<sup>40</sup>

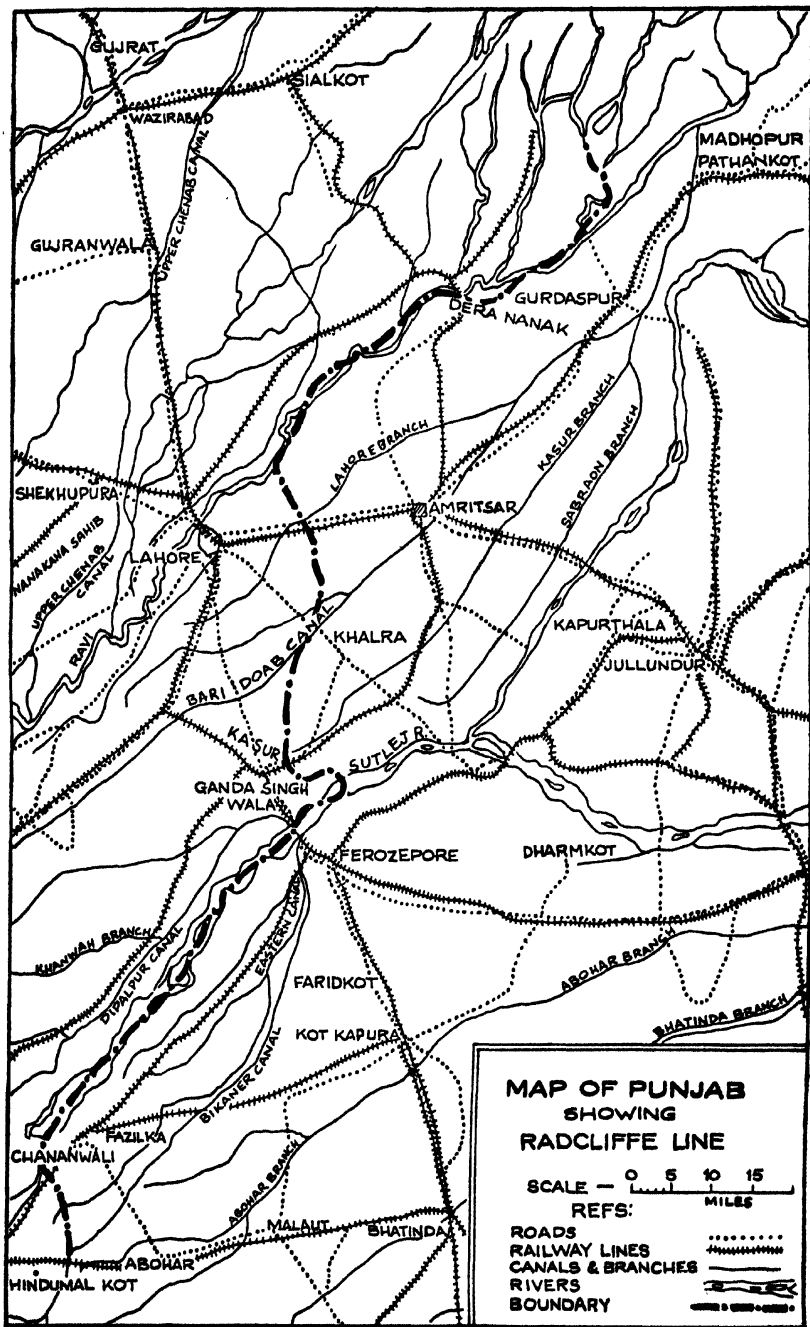
The Radcliffe Award hardly pleased any party. The *Hindustan Standard* of Delhi censured it as "self-contradictory, anomalous and arbitrary". The *Hindu* of Madras remarked that it had

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 306-7. An Indo-Pakistan Boundary Disputes Tribunal was set up to interpret the report of the Bengal Boundary Commission, in conformity with the Indo-Pakistan agreement on 14 December, 1948, but no such arrangement was made for the Punjab. Vide 315.

<sup>39</sup> To be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

<sup>40</sup> *Radcliffe Award*, n. 7, para. 12, 305.





been "less than just to the non-Muslims and that in particular, he (Sir Cyril Radcliffe) had paid scant attention to the important 'other factors' besides the principle of contiguity which by the terms of reference, he was called upon to bear in mind." The *Dawn*, the Muslim League organ, captioned its editorial as "territorial murder" and declared that Pakistan had been cheated by an unjust award, a biased decision, an act of shameful partiality by one who had been trusted to be fair because he was neutral."<sup>41</sup> The Sikhs criticized the Award as unjust to the Sikhs and exhorted their community to be prepared to make all sacrifices to vindicate the honour of the Panth. The Sikhs, it was said, should not acquiesce in decisions which threatened their very existence.<sup>42</sup> But it must be borne in mind, as pointed out by the *Free Press Journal*, that "the responsibility of this erratic Award lies wholly with the other members of the Boundary Commission who have allowed their differences to bring into play personal prejudices and fancies of the Chairman."<sup>43</sup> The Award was, however, accepted calmly by all the parties concerned because every one began to feel the futility of these protests.

## II

### MACHINERY FOR THE PUNJAB PARTITION: DIVISION OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

The partition of the Punjab was envisaged as a corollary to the partition of India. With the announcement of the 3 June Plan and the Viceroy's declaration that power would be transferred to India on 15 August, 1947, the necessity to implement the partition of the country and the provinces concerned before the "Appointed Day"<sup>44</sup> was considered as matters of primary importance.

At the Centre, in a meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 June, 1947, the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, produced a thirty-three page document prepared by his staff entitled "The Administrative Consequences of Partition"<sup>45</sup> before the party leaders. Under the plan.

—, *After Partition—Modern Indian Series* (Delhi, 1948), 30.

<sup>41</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 2 : 6, Lahore (10 July, 1947).

<sup>42</sup> ———, *After Partition*, n. 41, 30.

<sup>44</sup> 'Appointed Day' means 15 August, 1947.

<sup>45</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV (Delhi, 1950), 5.

a special committee of the Cabinet was formed to be known as Partition Council with effect from 27 June, 1947. The Partition Council worked through an administrative machinery consisting of the Steering Committee, the Expert Committees and a Secretariat known as the Partition Office. The Steering Committee was to co-ordinate the reports of the Expert Committees and present them to the Partition Council.<sup>46</sup> In order to make the partition fully effective, the Council had to decide the following matters:

- (1) the final demarcation of boundaries;
- (2) the division of the formations, units and personnel of the Indian Armed forces;
- (3) the division of the staff, organizations and records of the Central Civil Departments, the services and institutions, including Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Broadcasting, Civil Aviation, Meteorology, Public Works, Income-Tax, Customs, Central Excise, Accounts and Audit, Scientific Services, Central Waterways and Inland Navigation Board and Central Power Boards;
- (4) the division of the assets and liabilities of the Government of India including fixed installations and stores of the Defence Services, assets and property of the departments, services and institutions listed in (3) above, public debt funded and unfunded, pensions, provident funds, etc.;
- (5) the division of assets and liabilities of the Reserve Bank including Currency, Rupee Securities, bullion and foreign exchange;
- (6) the economic relations including freedom of trade and commerce, distribution of food resources, use of the port and railway facilities;
- (7) the jurisdiction of the High Courts and Federal Courts;
- (8) the determination of Domicile; and
- (9) the diplomatic representations abroad.<sup>47</sup>

The Special Committee in its meeting of 12 June, 1947, directed the provinces to set up partition machinery generally on Central lines.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 5-7, 10-13, 19-21, 48 and 188.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

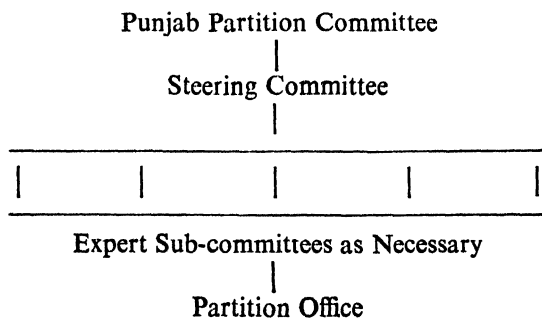
<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

*The Machinery for the Partition of the Punjab*

The matters of all India importance and broad policy were, thus, dealt with by the Government of India at the Central level; but the matters of local importance and details were left to the provinces concerned. The plan to effect the partition of the Punjab was based on the Central pattern.

Needless to say that it was difficult to effect a complete severance of the Punjab into two parts within a few weeks or months; but it was admitted on all hands that the final decision had to be taken on the most important and immediate problems, so that both parts of the Punjab could have their own Governments before 15 August.

The Governor of the Punjab, Sir Evan Jenkins, called a meeting of the leaders of the political parties—Khan Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, L. Bhim Sen Sachar and Sardar Swaran Singh—on 16 June, 1947, to discuss the matters relating to the partition of the Punjab. It was agreed that the partition machinery should be on the Central lines:

*The Punjab Partition Committee*

The Punjab Partition Committee consisted of two representatives from the West Punjab Zone and two from the East Punjab Zone with the Governor as its Chairman. It held its first meeting on 1 July, 1947, and met 24 times before the partition. The frequency, however, went down in the post-partition days and it held only 8 meetings<sup>49</sup> till November, 1956. The Punjab Partition Committee was generally guided by the recommendations made by the Expert

<sup>49</sup> —————, *Note containing Information about Third Party Claim Committee and Intervals of Meetings of the Implementation Committee* (Chandigarh Partition Branch), Unpublished.

Committees. These Expert Committees were extra-departmental bodies which were required to report to the Partition Committee through the Steering Committee. There were in all seven Expert Committees as under:<sup>50</sup>

- (1) Committee 'A' on Financial Assets and Liabilities.
- (2) Committee 'B' on Physical Assets.
- (3) Committee 'C' on Services and Records.
- (4) Committee 'D' on use of Institutions of Provincial importance.
- (5) Committee 'E' on Civil Supplies.
- (6) Committee 'F' on Budget and Accounts.
- (7) Committee 'G' on Contracts.

The work relating to the partition was given top priority over all other work of the Government. Accordingly, the Partition Committee and the Expert Committees were required to work at top speed.<sup>51</sup> Some of the important issues were:<sup>52</sup>

1. The option to services other than the Secretary of State and Provincial Services to serve in the Eastern or the Western Punjab.
2. The allocation of officers—All India Civil Services, Provincial Services, Police and the like to the two provinces.
3. The future of the Board of Economic Enquiry.
4. The Partition of the High Court, Lahore.
5. The question of the continuance of the scheme for the grant of scholarships for studies abroad and of financial adjustments between the Eastern and the Western Punjab Governments.
6. The division of the assets and liabilities of the Punjab University.
7. The question of the future of the Sikh Gurudwara Tribunal.
8. The question of finding accommodation for the East Punjab Government.
9. On questions like working of Mandi Hydro-Electric System, division of historical records, financial assets and liabilities.

<sup>50</sup> ———, *Reports of Expert Committees in connection with the Partition of the Punjab Province*, hereafter referred to as *Expert Committee Reports* (Lahore, 1947), 1.

<sup>51</sup> After 15 August, 1947, the meetings of the Partition Committee were held alternately in the capital of the West and the East Punjab. The Governor of the province, where the meeting was held, presided.

<sup>52</sup> ———, *The Agenda of the meetings of the Partition Committee* (1 July to 11 August), (Lahore, 1947), 1-24.

Some of the important issues are discussed below:

*Option to the Services.* It was decided that the services recruited on a district, division or circle basis might remain where they happened to be on the date of partition. The Partition Committee gave assurance to the employees that it would make adjustments according to the wishes and convenience of individuals within a reasonable time. The All India Services and Provincial Services, however, had been given the option to serve in either of the two provinces.

But, this decision had to be altered on the recommendation of the Special Committee of the Cabinet, in the Government of India, which suggested that every government servant should be given the opportunity to select the Government he wished to serve. Accordingly, the Partition Committee gave option to all the government employees. With a view to maintain efficiency, however, it was decided that all the arrangements for the separation of cadres should be made; but the transfers should be spread over a period and a standstill agreement should be made in respect of each service and cadre.

The replies received from all officers indicated that generally speaking the Hindu and Sikh officers opted for the East Punjab and the Muslim officials for serving in the West Punjab. Only a few officers, mostly Europeans were prepared to serve on either side. Though the wishes of the officers were to be respected, they could be asked to serve in an area other than that of their choice because otherwise either the West or the East Punjab was likely to find some of their essential services seriously handicapped.<sup>53</sup> The Steering Committee recommended that the distribution of I.C.S. and P.C.S. should be made in such a way that there was minimum dislocation. There could, therefore, arise a situation when one of the Governments could require the services of an official to a particular essential service. To meet such a situation the Steering Committee suggested that the Government concerned could ask for the loan of a particular officer from the other Government. It was, however, to be purely on voluntary basis. To provide incentive and to attract volunteers, it was agreed that all persons on deputation should be paid 20 per cent deputation allowance in addition to the safeguards for their personal security and existing terms and conditions. But the officer had the right to go back to the province of his choice. This loan

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-7.

arrangement was not to exceed more than six months.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, a number of non-Muslim officers were compelled to stay on in Pakistan for the first few crucial weeks.<sup>55</sup>

In the case of the Europeans and the Anglo-Indians, who were not members of the Secretary of State's Services, it was decided that:

(a) To an officer who refused to serve in any of the provinces after partition, nothing except passage should be given and this be considered as a financial liability of the Punjab province as a whole.

(b) An officer who was prepared to serve in both the provinces but was not acceptable to any of them, was entitled to proportionate pension in addition to passage from the Punjab province as a whole.

(c) An officer who was willing to serve in one but not in the other, and was not desired by that province, was entitled to both pension and passage from the new province which refused to take him.

(d) An officer who expressed his preference for one but was prepared to serve in the other as well, was liable for proportionate pension and passage in case he was not taken by either of them; he became the financial liability for both.<sup>56</sup>

*Punjab University.* The Partition Committee, in addition to the Government Departments, had also to make decisions on other semi-government and public assets. Since the Punjab University was an autonomous body, the Committee suggested that the problems relating to the University should be decided by a Special Committee, appointed by the Governor of the Punjab, consisting of Syndics or Fellows of the University representing various interests. The Committee had to discuss issues like the teaching arrangements for higher academic degrees, the Colleges directly controlled by the University, of valuable and physical assets and the staff employed for administrative and teaching purposes.

Opinion was divided about the division of the assets of the University. Mr. S. A. Lal, Secretary, Legislative Assembly, argued that the question of division of assets and liabilities did not arise. The Punjab University was a corporate body, it must, therefore, remain under the jurisdiction of the West Punjab Legislature. In support of his case he quoted the case of the Bombay University in

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 63. Vide also *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, n. 7, 480-1.

<sup>55</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *After Partition*, n. 41, 97.

<sup>56</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Agenda for the meetings of the Partition Committee* n. 52, 131-2.

1928 when it was separated from Sind.<sup>57</sup> Mr. G. C. Chatterjee, Mr. M. G. Singh and Mr. R. C. Soni, the non-Muslim members in the Committee, were of the opinion that the Governor was legally authorized to dissolve the Punjab University and create at any time before the 15 August, 1947, two Universities in its place.<sup>58</sup> The Government of India's Steering Committee agreed with the viewpoint expressed by Mr. S. Lal. Since the case of Calcutta University was a parallel one, it was agreed that there should be no physical division of assets, though the records and other such things had to be divided.<sup>59</sup>

*Lahore High Court.* The partition of the Punjab could not be complete without dividing the Lahore High Court whose jurisdiction extended to the whole of the Punjab and the province of Delhi. The work concerning division being considerable, it was difficult to set up a new High Court for the East Punjab and Delhi before 15 August, 1947. Besides, location of the new High Court for the East Punjab depended on the final settlement of the boundaries of the new provinces and decisions about their respective capitals. Distribution of records, transfer of staff and records to the new locale, were essential for the proper functioning of the new High Courts. It was, therefore, decided that the seat of the East Punjab High Court should be, temporarily, located in the Lahore High Court building. The jurisdiction of the Lahore High Court over the East Punjab and Delhi, however, was to cease with effect from 15 August, 1947. The Committee suggested that a new High Court consisting of the Chief Justice and 6 or 7 puisne judges should be established for the East Punjab with its jurisdiction extending to Delhi.

Following the above recommendations, all the judges of the Lahore High Court were given option to choose between the two High Courts. The division operations of the staff and records were undertaken with immediate effect. Members of both the sides agreed that the temporary arrangements should cease<sup>60</sup> on 1 March, 1948. An Arbitral Tribunal<sup>61</sup> was also set up at Central level for the settlement of disputed questions between the two Governments. The provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, too, had to refer points of disagreement to this Tribunal.

*Division of Assets and Liabilities* was one of the most important

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.    <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 144-7.    <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>60</sup> *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, n. 7, 119-20, 125.    <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.



and controversial items on which the solution of a number of other inter-provincial problems depended. The matter was referred to the Experts Committee.<sup>62</sup> The Committee was to report on:

- (1) The nature and approximate amount of the divisible financial assets and liabilities.
- (2) The possible methods of apportioning them between the two Governments.
- (3) Any other matter relevant to the financial aspects of partition.

The assets and liabilities could be broadly decided as:

Assets comprising cash balances with the Reserve Bank, treasuries and sub-treasuries, balance invested in Government of India Securities, loans and advances by government, state provident funds and the like.

Physical Assets were described as:

- (a) Productive: Irrigation works, crown waste lands, forests and works of Electricity Branch and the like.
- (b) Unproductive: Roads, bridges, buildings and the like.
- (c) Stores and Supplies: Food stocks, materials, etc. held under departmental charge.

Liabilities consisted of debts due to the Government of India, pensions and payment of provident funds.

There were, in addition, deposits of local funds in the possession of the Punjab Government amounting to Rs. 1,40,28,098 and civil deposits worth Rs. 5,53,11,279. This amount was also to be divided proportionately between the two provinces.

*Ratio for Financial Adjustment.* The division of these assets either on the basis of book value or physical apportionment, was not possible unless a uniform basis for division was agreed upon between the parties concerned. There was no agreement on the issue, for the East Punjab claimed the ratio to be fixed on the basis of population and the West Punjab contended that it should be on the basis of contribution to revenue. Both the East and the West Punjab put forward schemes for fixing a ratio by which they would benefit.<sup>63</sup>

—, *Expert Committee Reports*, n. 50, 1-3.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

	<i>Population</i>	<i>Territory</i>	<i>Revenue Contribution</i>
East Punjab	44.40	37.4	36.5
West Punjab	55.60	62.6	63.5

The Punjab Partition Committee recommended that the ratio should be fixed on the basis of population and area taken together; but there was no agreement. The matter was, therefore, referred to the Arbitral Tribunal. The Tribunal awarded that "the assets and liabilities of the old United Province shall be adjusted for the purposes of the financial settlement in the ratio of 60 per cent (for the West Punjab) and 40 per cent (for the East Punjab)."<sup>64</sup> Consequently, all the calculations for the financial adjustment were made on the basis of this ratio.

For the final financial adjustment, it was important that the receipts and expenditures of the Punjab Government be accounted for. In order to see that the accounting was done properly and without detriment to the interests of the other provinces, it was recommended that a liaison officer might be attached to Lahore Audit Office.

All adjustments between the two provinces after the partition on 15 August, 1947, were to be made through the Central Section of the Reserve Bank under the head Inter-Provincial Suspense Accounts as laid down in article 98 of the Account Code.<sup>65</sup>

The Budget Committee instructed both the governments to prepare their budgets up to 15 August, 1947, to be charged from the treasury of the United province of the Punjab.

The partition brought in its wake an abnormal fall in the receipts of revenue of the province during the current year. Business was at a standstill, the crops were standing unharvested and uncared for and it had become difficult for the Government to collect revenue and taxes because people were moving from one side to the other. There was a steep fall in the receipts of the following sources of revenue:

<sup>64</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, 1947*, Vol. IV, 347-9.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

(In thousands)

	June, 1946	For the progressive month	July, 1947	For the progressive month
Land Revenue	1,17,51	1,49,31	52,19	74,53
Irrigation	41,09	25,14	8,77	4,78
Extraordinary Receipts	36,63	1,20,94	5,36	29,16

On the contrary, government expenditure increased rapidly mainly because of the fast deteriorating law and order situation. Increase in expenditure in the month of June, 1947, alone came to Rs. 2,43,19 (thousand).<sup>66</sup>

There were certain other problems as well, which engaged the attention of the Partition Committee.<sup>67</sup> For instance, transfer of Bank accounts, vaults and safe deposits with Banks, Certificates, Bonds, Debentures and shares of Joint Stock Companies, restoration of licensed arms and ammunition, exchange of prisoners and contractors' claims which had to be taken up by both the governments.<sup>68</sup>

The problems were manifold, varied and complicated and required to be solved immediately; but the solution was delayed because the Partition Committee could not come to an agreement on many issues like the financial adjustments between the two provinces in respect of irrigation canals and projects, appreciation of the value of Crown wastelands in the West Punjab colonies and various other matters. The number of references on which there was difference of opinion between the two governments regarding financial adjustments or physical apportionment of some assets was 33 and all these references were made to the Arbitral Tribunal which made their awards<sup>69</sup> in March, 1948. The financial adjustment of all

—, *Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative)* (New Delhi, 1949), 84.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-8.

<sup>68</sup> —, *Awards of the Arbitral Tribunal Constituted under the Arbitral Tribunal, 1947. On Reference of the Punjab Partition Committee* (Simla, 1948), 1.

<sup>69</sup> See above, 61.

the assets and liabilities was worked out on the basis of 60 : 40 ratio between the two provinces.<sup>70</sup>

*Implementation Committee*<sup>71</sup>

To implement the awards of the Arbitral Tribunal and various decisions made by the Punjab Partition Committee from time to time, another Committee comprising the following officers of both the provinces was set up in August, 1948:

- (i) Chief Secretary
- (ii) Finance Secretary
- (iii) Accountant General.

The Implementation Committee held its meetings alternately at the capital towns of the Punjab (I) and the Punjab (P) after short intervals. Uptil March, 1956, 42 meetings of this Committee were held.<sup>72</sup> The Committee has not been able to wind up its work uptil now (1956), although the Inter-Dominion Conference held at New Delhi<sup>73</sup> in December, 1948, desired that the Committee should complete the outstanding work by 30 June, 1949.

In accordance with the Inter-Dominion Agreement of December, 1948, a sub-Committee known as "Third Party Claim Committee" consisting of two representatives of each, the Punjab (I) and the Punjab (P) was set up in the beginning of 1949 to scrutinize and settle claims of contractors or services rendered or supplies made to the Joint Punjab prior to 15 August, 1947. It was agreed that after the claims were passed by the Committee, payments should be made by the two Governments in respect of claims arising within their area, at the fixed ratio. The Committee met regularly in both the provinces since it was formed, and was able to dispose of almost all the claims of Muslim and non-Muslim contractors registered with it. The Committee was disbanded on 1 August, 1956.

The payments of the claims accepted by the Third Party Claims Committee, however, could not be made to the contractors con-

<sup>70</sup> ———, *Constitution of the Punjab Partition—Implementation Committees, their functions and other information relating thereto* (Chandigarh, 1958) Unpublished, 2. Hereafter referred to as 'Constitution of the Punjab Partition'.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> ———, *Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative)*, n. 67, 87.

<sup>73</sup> *Note containing Information about Third Party Committee*, 57.

cerned as there was no agreement between the two Governments in regard to the mode of payment of such claims. In order to afford some relief to the Indian nationals, the Punjab (I) Government made payments to the extent of 30 per cent of the amounts verified and accepted by the Third Party Claims Committee pending final settlement in regard to the mode of payment between the two Governments.<sup>74</sup>

It was felt that most of the matters pending before the Implementation Committee could not be disposed of on account of difficulties arising from the Evacuee Property Laws operating in both the countries and exchange value of the Indian and Pakistan rupee. The following have been the hold-ups in the finalization of the work of this Committee:

1. Custodians' (Evacuee Property) ban on cash payment to evacuees.
2. Custodians' ban on the transfer of securities belonging to evacuees.
3. Absence of agreement on method of payment to Third Parties (parties besides the two State Governments) on account of difference in currency values.
4. No arrangement for remittance of money from India to Pakistan and back.
5. Settlement of certain matters pending between Punjab (I) and Punjab (P) until similar settlement, i.e. on Central Government level.
6. Non-finalization of the reports by various Expert Committees.<sup>75</sup>

The difficulties were intensified because the question of division of assets and liabilities was not between the two provinces of the same country but between the two different states of two sovereign countries. As such, conflicting national interests played an important part in keeping a number of problems unsolved. Despite having separate arrangements for settlement of the matters between the Punjab (I) and the Punjab (P), a considerable headway could not be made in the settlement of their affairs and the Punjab (I) had to look to the Government of India, to take up the partition matters relating to the undivided Punjab with Pakistan Government at the Central level. The problem, thus, was no longer inter-provincial but international. The strained relations between the two neigh-

<sup>74</sup> —————, *Constitution of the Punjab Partition*, n. 71, 3.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

bouring states, also, came in the way of any speedy settlement of the partition matters.

The ultimate object of the deliberations of the Partition Committee was the preparation of the balance sheet of the assets and liabilities of the old Punjab. This was held up on account of political tensions between the two countries.

According to a provisional statement<sup>76</sup> prepared by the Punjab (I) Government, a sum of Rs. 22 crore (approximately) is due to the Punjab (I) from the Punjab (P). This statement does not, however, include figures on account of pensionary liability which have not yet been worked out by the actuaries and figures of the Joint Punjab Suspense Account. The above figures, also, do not include the debt liability of the undivided Punjab amounting to Rs. 31.64 crore. Of this liability, Rs. 12.44 crore (approximately) represents the loan taken by the undivided Punjab from the undivided Government of India and the balance of Rs. 19.10 crores represents the loan raised by the undivided Punjab in the open market. After accounting for the debt liability, the net amount recoverable by the Punjab (I) from the Punjab (P) would provisionally work out to about Rs. 15.70 crore. Against this liability, there are certain Government of India securities amounting to Rs. 14 crore belonging to the undivided Punjab lying frozen with the Reserve Bank of India in which the share of the Punjab (P) at 60 per cent works out to Rs. 8.40 crore. The total sum due from the Punjab (P) to the Punjab (I) after taking into account the securities in the Reserve Bank of India comes to 7.30 crore (approximately). The Punjab (I) Government, however, is not yet sure as to how this amount can be recovered.

A study of the process of the partition of the undivided Punjab makes it clear that both the governments had to face considerable difficulty in the division of the assets, liabilities and the administrative machinery, because the Punjab had been developed as one administrative and economic unit. Any attempt to bring complete severance in such a compact unit was bound to give rise to a number of problems. The division of assets and liabilities involved calculated division of everything belonging to the Punjab Government. It varied from waste-paper baskets, broken chairs to typewriters in

<sup>76</sup> East Punjab Liaison Agency Records, File No. LVIII/16/200 (Simla, Record Office), 13. Hereafter referred as EPLAR.

offices; from quinine tablets to radium in the hospitals and canal waters to Crown wasteland.

The Punjab during this very period was undergoing a bloody change. While the administrative authorities were negotiating to have joint arrangements for some time till the other province was able to make its own arrangement, the Muslims and non-Muslims were running for their lives from the Eastern and the Western Punjab. The evacuation of the unprotected mass of people required the immediate attention of the authorities both civil and military. This fact, naturally, had its effect on administrative efficiency and speed. It is probable that the difficulties would have been surmounted more easily and amiably, if the decisions had to be taken only on the administrative plane; but they were multiplied on account of tensions and conflicting national interests involved in the problem.

## CHAPTER IV

# TRANSFER OF POPULATION AND EVACUATION ORGANIZATION

## I

### TRANSFER OF POPULATION

THE leaders of the political parties and the officials were preoccupied with working out details of the division of assets and liabilities of the country, but little attention was paid to the planned exchange of population. The orgy of violence that occurred in different parts of the country, made Hindus and Muslims suspicious of each other. Transplantation of the mass of population from one country to the other, had not been envisaged seriously at any stage by either government. The Government of India thought it inconceivable that people would be prepared to leave their lands, property and their ancestral homes.

When the Muslim League leader, Mr. Jinnah suggested exchange of population<sup>1</sup> on 10 December, 1945, and again<sup>2</sup> on 15 November, 1946, it was not seriously considered by the Congress leaders. Referring to the driving out of the Hindus from Noakhali, he said that transfer of population was already in action and some machinery should be devised for effecting it peacefully.<sup>3</sup> Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan considered exchange of population a necessary corollary to establishment of a Muslim State. While promising all possible help to the non-Muslim minorities in the Muslim majority areas, he said, "After what has happened (widespread communal riots) the present position cannot be accepted with equanimity and minorities which are too scattered and helpless owing to the smallness of their numbers must not be left as a tempting prey to those who can arrange organized lawlessness."<sup>4</sup> Even the Akali leaders changed their minds after the riots in Noakhali, Punjab and other

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Jinnah, *Dawn*, Delhi (12 December, 1945).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Dawn*, Delhi (26 November, 1946).

<sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and the Partition of Punjab* (Amritsar, 1950), 216-7.

<sup>4</sup> Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, *Dawn*, Delhi (19 December, 1946).



areas. S. Swaran Singh, leader of the Panthic Assembly Party, said on 10 July, 1947, that the transfer of population was the only solution which would be to the ultimate good of both Pakistan and Hindustan. He suggested that the line of division of the country should be such as would facilitate transfer of population and property.<sup>5</sup>

The Congress leaders, however, thought that this "organised lawlessness" was only a very temporary phase. To them, transfer of population appeared a complete negation of their ideology which they had advocated throughout their political life. Mahatma Gandhi, according to a press report (2 December, 1945) unequivocally rejected the idea in the following words:

"It (exchange of population) is unthinkable and impracticable. Every province is of every Indian, be he Hindu, Muslim or of any other faith. It won't be otherwise, even if Pakistan came in full. For me any such thing will spell bankruptcy of Indian wisdom or statesmanship, or both. The logical consequence of any such step is too dreadful to contemplate. Is it not bad enough that India should be artificially divided into so many religious zones?"<sup>6</sup>

Opinions differed on the subject, but the leaders decided against planned exchange of population, for they feared that it would bring in its wake a number of other problems complicating the existing issues still further. Even if an exchange of population had been arranged between the North-West Pakistan and the East Punjab or between East and West Bengal, the position of the Muslims in the areas left in India, would have been rendered more insecure as a result of the exclusion of a major section of their community. Any plan for complete exchange of Hindu and Muslim population could, nevertheless, prove disastrous to both the states. Consequently the Partition Council passed a resolution on 2 August, 1947 to arrest further exodus and encourage the return of people to their homes.<sup>7</sup>

It, nevertheless, appears surprising that the Congress leadership agreed to the communal division of Government personnel, but could not reconcile itself to the idea of giving the same right of

—, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 2: 6, Lahore (10 July, 1947).

<sup>6</sup> M. K. Gandhi, *To the Protagonists of Pakistan* (Allahabad, 1947), 214.

<sup>7</sup> ———, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV (New Delhi, 1950), 372.

“option” to the people. Undoubtedly, it would have meant partial acceptance of the two-nation theory, but it had already been indirectly accepted by acceding to the demand for Pakistan. If the leadership had taken stock of the communal situation in the country and the communal riots in the eastern and western parts of India during the days preceding the partition, they would have realized that it would be impossible to check the mass exodus from both the sides. In view of the prevalent conditions, a lot of bloodshed could have been avoided if the leadership had agreed to the limited exchange of population at least between the West Pakistan and the East Punjab.

### *The Boundary Force*

When the communal situation became worse the leaders who had always been against planned transfer of population gradually relaxed the position. Even Mr. Jinnah did not expect that there would be such a large migration of population.<sup>8</sup> The leadership was obliged to take measures to protect the minorities in the affected areas. The Partition Council in a meeting in July, 1947, asked the Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Auchinleck to prepare a plan in case of possible clashes or disturbances in the neighbourhood of the boundaries between the two Dominions after 15 August. Auchinleck, thereupon, recommended that “the Joint Defence Council should have the authority of both India and Pakistan Governments to declare any affected districts to be ‘disturbed areas.’” He further suggested that the Joint Defence Council should appoint “a British Commander, with an adequate H.Q. who will have Military control over the area and of such troops and air forces as are considered by him to be necessary. . . .” The British Commander was to be responsible to the Joint Defence Council, through the Supreme Commander who was to have “operation control” for a temporary period.

The Viceroy suggested that a Boundary Force, consisting of the Indian troops of a “mixed class composition” under British officer’s command should be appointed and placed in charge of this area. The Force, he said, should ensure protection to the minorities and warn all concerned that in the event of trouble, the mischief makers would have to face dire consequences.<sup>9</sup> The Partition

–, *The Tribune*, Ambala (5 April, 1954).

–, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, n. 7. 169, 181.

Council, consequently, agreed that Major General Rees, Commander of the 4th Division should be appointed as Joint Commander on behalf of both the Dominions. The Council, in this way, intended to restore confidence among the minorities so that they could decide to stay back in their respective areas.

The Boundary Force, however, utterly failed to protect the minorities and the exodus of the people from one country to the other increased when Pakistan became a settled fact. But the Congress leaders kept on appealing to the people to stay on where they were. Mr. Nehru expressed his definite opinion against mass migration on 19 August, 1947, "While we shall give every help to those who wish to come to (the) East Punjab, we would not like to encourage mass migration of people across the new borders, for this will involve tremendous misery for all concerned. . . ." <sup>10</sup> He hoped that very soon peace and order would be restored.

In view of the above facts and the public announcements of the leaders in favour of retaining their minorities, the idea of a planned exchange of population, was never entertained by the Governments of the two sides, although the Muslim League had advocated it as a basis of their politics in early 1947. The Governments and the leaders could not arrest the spread of communalism and with the establishment of the two Dominions communal frenzy recurred in the most brutal form. The communal holocaust could not be avoided because "it was not an ordinary citizen who attacked. . . . The attackers were the tools of fanatical communal groups who organized these heinous crimes for political reasons. . . ." They even coerced those neighbours who tried to stand by the refugees. <sup>11</sup> Besides, both the Muslim and non-Muslim provincial leadership, though, apparently against mass migration, was either tacitly or openly encouraging the communal elements to drive out the minorities. It may appear paradoxical, but is a fact that the Governments and leadership concerned raised their voice of protest against the treatment given to their community on the other side, but they followed the same policy towards the minority groups in their own region. <sup>12</sup> The murderers of minority community were considered

<sup>10</sup> J. S. Bright, ed., *India Before and After Independence—A Collection of Nehru's Speeches, 1922-50* (New Delhi, n.d.), 439.

<sup>11</sup> ———, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan* (New Delhi, 1953), 1. (This booklet was issued by the Central Recovery Organization, India, and control Recovery Organization, Pakistan).

<sup>12</sup> ———, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 1 to 8 November,

heroes and were openly defended even in the law-making bodies. Justifying the massacre of Muslims in the East Punjab, S. Uddham Singh said in the East Punjab Assembly, "If our Hindu and Sikh brethren had not risen to defend themselves, the province of (the) East Punjab would not have existed at all. . . ." He appreciated the steps taken by the people of Amritsar to turn out the Muslims. It was alleged by some members that even some ministers were a party to this sinister move.<sup>13</sup> As a consequence physical annihilation of the minority, had become more or less a matter of determined policy with the majority communities in spite of the declarations to the contrary. The exodus of minorities gathered volume and momentum rapidly and within a few weeks life became impossible and death became the only alternative to migration. Transplantation of the mass of population from one country to the other takes place only after certain amount of psychological, ideological and physical upheaval and disturbance. The conditions in the Punjab and the brutalities and humiliations that the peoples had to undergo brought the required psychological change to induce the people to leave all that they held dear and to flee for protection and shelter to the other side where their community was in a majority. It remained the only alternative in view of the fact that the agencies established to protect the minorities were themselves guilty of the crime.

In view of the deteriorating situation and failure of the leadership and the Government to check the exodus, both the Dominions finally considered it necessary to set up machinery to evacuate the unfortunate people called refugees.

The evacuation movement plan was organized at two levels:

1. Central
2. Provincial

1947, Vol. I (Simla, 1949), 114-5. The debates during the period clearly bring out this trend. Since the subject of the thesis deals with the impact of the Partition of the Punjab (I), therefore the effects on the non-Muslims only have been taken into consideration. However, similar effects must have been felt by the Muslims in the East Punjab about which details have not yet been given primarily because no authentic records on this subject are available in this part of the Punjab, and the author had no access to records in the West Punjab.

<sup>13</sup> It may be noted that the conflict was between the Hindus and the Sikhs on the one hand and the Muslims on the other. Other religious minorities like the Christians and the Parsis, etc. continued to live in both parts of the Punjab unthreatened.

### *Central*

A number of Inter-Dominion Conferences were held between the two countries to solve some of the vexed problems concerning partition. The two Dominion Governments empowered their high level organizations to decide policy in regard to evacuation. The Partition Council decided matters of broad policy and the Joint Defence Council supplied military services and defined their functions and jurisdiction in the evacuation work.<sup>14</sup> The Joint Rehabilitation Board laid down policies with regard to the reception and rehabilitation of the refugees. The Government of India, also, appointed a special officer to act as liaison officer on its behalf with the East Punjab Liaison Agency.

### *Provincial*

The entire provincial machinery was, in fact, directed to the task of evacuation, relief and rehabilitation of the refugees. It is difficult to name any particular department which was exclusively in charge of evacuation. For instance, the Governor, Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary were in overall charge of the evacuation and resettlement of the refugees, the Civil Supplies Department had to provide them food, clothes and other necessities of life. The P.W.D. was to arrange for the accommodation of the refugees. Similarly, Police, Health and Education Department were required to maintain law and order, sanitary conditions and make arrangements for the education of the refugee children respectively. The Punjab Government, however, created a special department to work exclusively for the relief and rehabilitation of the refugees. This department appointed a number of officials and lower staff to carry through the gigantic task of relief and resettlement. The Financial Commissioner (Refugees) was in charge of the department and was responsible for the administration. He set up an office of the Custodian of Evacuees' Property who was to take charge of the evacuee property. The Custodian had to see that there was no illegal seizure of property. This applied to agricultural lands, residential property, shops, factories, banks, insurance companies and religious and cultural institutions.

The Government of the Punjab appointed a special Agency to work exclusively for the evacuation of the refugees. The Liaison Agency representing the East Punjab Government was set up at

<sup>14</sup> —————, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VII (New Delhi, 1949), 3-5.

Lahore under a Chief Liaison Officer (C.L.O.) and a number of district liaison officers. The District Liaison Officer (D.L.O.) was to act as liaison between the evacuees in the camps and the district in which they wished to go on the one hand and the district authorities on the other and dealt with all other matters regarding the welfare of the evacuees.

The East Punjab Liaison Agency was to be helped by the Military Evacuation Organization (M.E.O.) which was to arrange the movement of the evacuees across the border and was responsible for their protection *en route*. It was also to help the civil authorities in the maintenance of law and order and protect the camps of the evacuees waiting to move across the border.

The C.L.O. was to determine the priorities for the movement of evacuees on the reports of the District Liaison Officers and in consultation with a priority Board.

The evacuees differed in their composition and importance, and the Board had to decide priority of movement, according to the relative importance of various categories of refugees. For instance, the Government servants were given the first priority because they had to report for duty in the East Punjab. Any delay in their movement could seriously affect administrative efficiency. Similarly, it was felt that the peasants from the West Punjab should be given priority so that they could look after the crops left over by the Muslim evacuees in the East Punjab. In actual practice, however, it could not be done because these people who had to carry their bullocks and carts and were to be moved from remote villages where transport facilities were not available, had to proceed in caravans on foot, which obviously meant time. The urban population, consequently, had priority over the rural one. There were, in addition, cases of abducted women and children and converts who needed immediate transportation.

It was estimated that nearly 21 lakhs of Muslim refugees had moved into the West Punjab since 1 August, 1947, and that during the same period 20 lakhs of non-Muslims had left for the East Punjab.<sup>15</sup> The non-Muslim population of the West Punjab, according to the 1941 census, was 38 lakh and the Muslim population in the East Punjab was about 53 lakh. The balance to be moved, therefore, was 32 lakh Muslims and 18 lakh non-Muslims. The

<sup>15</sup> This estimate was made on the basis of the figures collected by the M.E.O. till 31 December, 1947.

plan was based on the assumption that all Muslims in the East Punjab and the Punjab States wished to migrate to Pakistan and that all the Hindus and Sikhs in the West Punjab and N.W.F.P. wished to move to the East Punjab. Railway trains, a fleet of transport planes, civilian air craft and motor trucks were mobilized to speed up evacuation. By 6 November, 1947, nearly 29 thousand refugees had been flown in both directions. About 673 refugee trains were run between 27 August and 6 November, 1947 and they were responsible for the movement of over 23,00,000 of refugees inside India and across the border. Of these 13,62,000 were non-Muslims and 9,39,000 Muslims.<sup>16</sup> Huge foot convoys each 30,000 to 40,000 strong were organized by M.E.O. and Liaison Agency to move the bulk of the rural population especially those who were still in possession of their bullock carts and cattle. Thus in 42 days (18 September to 29 October) 24 non-Muslim foot columns, 8,49,000 strong with hundreds of bullock carts and other heads of cattle, crossed the border into India under difficult and hazardous conditions. These convoys raised complex problems. Food-loaded trucks moved along with them, but whenever there was failure of food supply, Government of India had to drop cooked food as well as foodgrains and sugar by R.I.A.F. planes. On the way the columns were often attacked and suffered heavy casualties. Motor transport was used primarily to collect non-Muslims stranded in villages and other small pockets.

A large number of the East Punjab Government staff and employees of Banks and private firms were also stranded in the West Punjab. While it involved great responsibility on the part of the Government of the East Punjab to arrange for their safe evacuation, it also meant hindrance in the efficient execution of work in the various departments due to the lack of staff at a time when work had multiplied many times over. Special arrangements had justifiably to be made to evacuate the Government servants.

The East Punjab Government set up 21 refugee camps<sup>17</sup> in different districts in the East Punjab and a number of such camps in the West Punjab. The refugees were to first report at the Transit Camps opened at the entry points like Fazilka, Ferozepur, Khem Karan, Atari, Amritsar and Dera Baba Nanak, from where they

—, *Millions on the Move* (Delhi, n.d.), 5.

<sup>17</sup> ———, *Facts at a Glance* (Simla, n.d.), 1-2. Different sources give varying number about the refugee camps set up in the province.

were to proceed to the areas allocated to them under the Central plan. They could stay in the refugee camp of the area till alternative arrangements for their settlements were made for them either by the state or by their friends or relations. The population of these refugee camps had risen above 7½ lakh in November, 1947. The Government of India, therefore, set up a big refugee camp at Kurukshetra to accommodate more than two lakh refugees. A separate Rescue Home for women was also set up at Jullundur, with accommodation for 800 to 900 women.

In order to accommodate the refugees, all the schools and colleges were closed upto 29 February, 1948, and buildings were made available for camps. The Government also requisitioned all the available military accommodation in addition to providing 1,64,500 tents for this purpose. The total expenditure on refugees from 15 August, 1947, to March, 1948, excluding the amount spent by private organizations has been estimated at Rs. 22,00,00,000 by the Central Government and Rs. 6,21,44,616 by the East Punjab Government. The amount spent on the Liaison Agency alone till March, 1949, was estimated at Rs. 13,00,000.

The Liaison Agency evacuated 42,00,000 people from West Pakistan through Amritsar, Ferozepur and Fazilka in the first stage and more than 1,50,000 in the second stage. The Agency was successful in removing valuables and movable property estimated at Rs. 5,75,00,000 deposited in lockers and buried in houses.<sup>18</sup>

A major part of the work in connection with evacuation having been over, it was decided that the Agency be withdrawn on 30 November, 1948. A small office, however, was set up at Amritsar, in order to (1) dispose of the property of the Indian nationals retrieved from Lahore, (2) dispose of the shares belonging to Indian nationals removed from Lahore in the end of October, 1948, and (3) settle the matters arising out of audit accounts.<sup>19</sup>

The Indian troops were finally withdrawn in November, 1948. The M.E.O. had evacuated by the end of November, 1947 about 25,83,000 non-Muslims.<sup>20</sup> The evacuation work was almost completed by the end of December, 1947. However, the clearance of

<sup>18</sup> *East Punjab Liaison Agency Records*, File No. LXVIII/18/179-G (Simla, Punjab Government Archives) Unpublished. Hereafter referred to as EPLAR.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> ———, *Facts at a Glance*, n.17, 1. These figures show the number evacuated by M.E.O. and not the total number evacuated during the period.



'pockets' was still left. The total number of persons to be evacuated was in the neighbourhood of 1,00,000 and the number in 'pockets' was 60,000, according to Brig. Mohite, but 70,000 according to C.L.O.<sup>21</sup>

A good deal of work regarding recovery of women and children and retrieval of property still remained to be done. The abducted women were in far-flung villages, small pockets and closed districts, or with abductors who were protected by the officials of the 'Illaquas'.

Appreciating the work done by the Liaison Agency, Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava admired the courage with which they had worked, at a time when communal frenzy was raging on all sides.

#### *Organization for the Evacuation of Abducted Women*

Abduction of women and children was a part of a programme for planned retaliation. Both the Governments realized the urgency of handling this matter jointly. The Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, after one of their joint tours of the affected areas of both the countries on 3 September, 1947, declared that forced marriages and conversions would not be recognized. The decision was endorsed by Mahatma Gandhi who exhorted the Governments to "stake their all on the rescue of these women. . .for the task was so big that none but the Government could tackle it."<sup>22</sup> Special arrangements were made with regard to abducted women. "First and foremost, the need was to have an organization which would cut through routine administrative red-tape and would keep itself away from the possibility of being affected by Indo-Pakistan misunderstandings on other matters. It was felt from the very beginning that this was purely a humanitarian task above controversy and above politics . . ."<sup>23</sup> It was agreed by both the governments that the work should be given an emergency character. It was decided that a camp for non-Muslim recovered women should be set up at Lahore. Similarly, a base camp for Muslim recovered women was to be set up at Jullundur.

There were, in addition, Transit Camps in India as well as in Pakistan under the control of the Indian Central Recovery Office

<sup>21</sup> *EPLAR*, File No. LVII/25/42, Letter No. 1301/4/16-G, n. 18.

<sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan*, n. 11, 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

and Pakistan Central Recovery Office respectively, which were guarded by local police and by local workers. By a decision taken in the Conference held on 6 December, 1947, at Lahore, Special Recovery Escorts were exclusively engaged in recovery work and social workers actively associated with the search and identification of abducted persons as well as day to day running of the camps.<sup>24</sup>

The cases of recovered women fell under two categories. Some of them who did not object to being evacuated were included in what was called the "indisputable" group. They were helped to cross the border without any particular administrative difficulty. On the other hand, there were some disputed cases which had to be referred to the Tribunal consisting of two members, one from each Dominion, before they could be evacuated.<sup>25</sup> In cases of difference of opinion between the members of the Tribunal, the matter was referred to the High Powered Officers of India and Pakistan for the recovery of women. The decision of these officers which was

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 3. The primary responsibility for recovery of the abducted women was that of the local police. The M.E.O. was to render every possible help in tracing and recovering them. Miss Mridula Sarabhai was appointed as Chief Social Worker, in charge of the rescue work of the abducted women. A staff of one A.I.G., two D.S.Ps., 15 Inspectors, 10 Sub-inspectors and 6 Assistant Sub-inspectors were deputed by the Government for rescue work. It was also agreed that guides (relatives of abducted girls) should be permitted in a limited number to go to the transit camps and to the villages for recovery work in which case the police was to make every effort to provide necessary protection. There were no separate camps for the recovered women at district level, but one separate camp was maintained at the headquarter (Lahore).

<sup>25</sup> Cases where women either refused to be evacuated because of one reason or the other or where the abductors refused to surrender them or where the disposal of children was involved, were presented to the Tribunal for decision.

The Government of the Punjab appointed Shri S. S. Madan as the Legal Adviser to the East Punjab Liaison Agency at Lahore to argue the disputed cases of abducted women before the Tribunal. He also advised the Liaison Agency on matters of movable and immovable evacuee property, the exchange of prisoners and other questions concerning the evacuees and represented the point of view of the East Punjab Government before the relevant tribunals dealing with those issues.

Besides the Government of India appointed a Steering Committee with Shri K. L. Punjabi, and representatives from Liaison Agency, M.E.O. and Chief Social Worker and Provincial Organizer for recovery of abducted women, to review the work and make plans for evacuation. It also helped to co-ordinate the activities between different organizations engaged in recovery and evacuation work. *EPLAR*, File No. LVI/6/52-PI(a), n. 18.

preceded by thorough investigations in the details of the case was usually considered final.

The recovery of abducted women and children, in addition, demanded immediate attention of the authorities.

The Indo-Pakistan Agreement laid down that "the responsibility for obtaining information in respect of abducted persons be that of the Recovery Squad of the Dominion in which the abducted persons are known to be residing. Each Dominion, however, may furnish such information as may be available, to the other in respect of abducted cases known to be in the other Dominion."

In order to prepare a list of the abducted women and converts, the Central Recovery Office on either side compiled the claims of relatives who crossed the border and these lists were then sent to India by Pakistan and *vice versa*. For the compilation of these details Search Service Bureau was organized as a part of the Central Recovery Office. But due to the prevalent conditions, it was humanly impossible to prepare a reliable list.<sup>26</sup> According to the Inter-Dominion Agreement, it was decided that the statements of convert and abducted women after 1 March, 1947, were not to be taken into consideration.

There were a number of cases of forcible conversions after the 1st round of riots<sup>27</sup> in the Punjab in March, 1947. Many people were tactful enough to become converts and then inform their relatives in India about their whereabouts and their Mohammedan names asking them to make arrangements for their evacuation. Immediate steps were, naturally, taken to evacuate them as soon as the authorities came to know about such cases. But the evacuating authorities also came across cases which refused to be evacuated,<sup>28</sup> when requests were made from their relatives in India. The evacuation of abducted women and children presented the greatest difficulties. It was decided that the Muslim children recovered in the

<sup>26</sup> ———, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan*, n. 11, 10-1.

<sup>27</sup> *EPLAR*, n. 18. Message from the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, 7 January, 1948, to Brigadier Mohite, *vide* File No. II & III-15/15C.

The non-Muslims were threatened to death in case of refusing to be converted to Islam. For instance, 9 to 10 thousand persons at Sarai Sidhu, district Multan, were threatened to death if they did not become converted to Islam. Similar reports reached C.L.O. from D.L.Os., Mianwali and Sialkot.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* See letter No. 63 to C.L.O., 4 February, 1948. File No. II and III/15-C IX.

East Punjab and non-Muslims in the West Punjab, whose parents could not be traced, should be handed over to the West Punjab and the East Punjab authorities respectively.<sup>29</sup>

The recovery of abducted women was a gigantic task in view of the situation and difficulties faced by the Liaison Agency which can be enumerated as follows:

(1) The abducted women had been frequently changing hands from one man to another, therefore, the information recorded by the Special Staff could not be up-to-date.<sup>30</sup>

(2) A number of abducted women were sent to the "Azad Kashmir" territory which was considered an independent territory and where the West Punjab Government disclaimed jurisdiction.<sup>31</sup> Many times it was discovered that abducted women had been sent over to tribal areas or closed districts<sup>32</sup> which were banned for Indian officers.

(3) Some of the girls were with influential Pathans, for instance, a Pir was stated to have 30 girls in his possession, 115 were said to be with an M.L.A. and 70 in control of an ex-Registrar.<sup>33</sup> An M.L.A. was in possession of nearly 800 non-Muslim abducted girls during disturbances.<sup>34</sup>

(4) Many of the girls were reported as having been killed during the riots, while they were alive. Most of the relatives were not accurate in reporting whether the woman was actually abducted or had been left behind in the village at the time of evacuation. There were some relatives who did not register the names of their missing women with the Search Service Bureau but continued their private search and if successful, did not bother to inform the Central Recovery Office.<sup>35</sup>

(5) It was difficult to recover the girls when some of the Pakistan Police Officers, who were responsible for helping in the recovery of

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* See No. 135, 23 April, 1948. File No. XI from D.L.O., Multan, 5 May, 1948, File No. XII. See also Letter No. 651/15c/C.L.O., 8 April, 1948. File No. II/III XI 15c and File No. XII. From C.L.O. to D.L.O. Multan, 5 May, 1948, and File No. VIII-7, Report from D.L.O., Gujranwala, 5 and 12 April, 1948.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* See File No. LVI/6/52-P-1(a), 75.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* See File No. VI/11/52-VI, n. 18.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* Vide Mrs. Damayanti Sehgal's letter to Miss Mridula Sarabhai, 19 July, 1947. File No. V/1/3-P.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* File No. LVII/12/166-G. The closed districts were Cambellpore, Jhelum, Sialkot, Rawalpindi and Gujrat.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* Vide D.L.O. No. 1310, 3 July, 1948. File No. X/4, 7.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* Report from Shri R. L. Bindra, D.L.O. Lyallpur. No. V/1/3-P.

these unfortunate girls, were often themselves the culprits.<sup>36</sup>

(6) Instances were brought to the notice of the Evacuation authorities when parties of Pathans went round with abducted non-Muslim girls and later sold them off for Rs. 10 or Rs. 20; but police refused to interfere.<sup>37</sup>

(7) The magnitude of the problem can be realized from the fact that sometimes the D.L.O. had to make 5 or 6 raids to recover one girl<sup>38</sup> and according to Mian Amin Chand, Superintendent of Police, Rs. 3,000 were spent on the recovery of one abducted girl.<sup>39</sup>

(8) The problem did not come to an end here. Those women were also a prey to the lust of non-Muslim officers in charge of the camp.<sup>40</sup>

(9) The problem of rescuing abducted women was quite complex and was further complicated by psychological and social factors. Quite a number of these women had got married, and after the initial turmoil had got adjusted to that life. Many of them were pregnant at the time of evacuation. The customs of Hindu society made them feel that there was no place for them in their old homes. So, when they were forcibly evacuated by the police and brought to the transit camps a number of them escaped through ventilators or under the cover of darkness.<sup>41</sup>

The social workers in charge of the camps argued that such cases occurred because of "clever manoeuvring on the part of the abductors."<sup>42</sup> It was decided, however, that the future of doubtful cases who refused to be evacuated, should be decided by a Tribunal of one member from India and the other from Pakistan, who were authorized under the Abducted Persons (Recovery and Restoration) Act, 1949. In case of difference of opinion, the case was referred to the High Powered Officers of India and Pakistan.<sup>43</sup>

### *Recovery of Children*

A number of children had been left behind by the fleeing relations

<sup>36</sup> ———, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan*, n. 11, 35.

<sup>37</sup> *EPLAR*, File No. V/1/3-P, n. 18.

<sup>38</sup> *EPLAR*, File No. LV/5, Gujrat (15 December, 1947).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* File No. VII/19/52-IX.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* File No. VI/7. Report by H. L. Mehta, D.L.O., Lahore.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* File No. XV/4/119.

<sup>42</sup> ———, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan*, n. 11, 56.

<sup>43</sup> *EPLAR*, File No. LVI/G/52-P. 1(a), n. 18.

or the persons who had been killed. There were others who were abducted with their mothers or sisters. Such children were classified into two categories:

- (a) Children born before abduction.
- (b) Children born during the period of abduction.

Obviously, there could not be any controversy with regard to the children born before abduction; but there was a dispute for a child born during abduction period. It was decided that the first claim over such a child should be that of the mother, in case she was not willing to keep it, first preference for the future custody of the child was to be given to the abductor. In case he also showed an unwillingness to keep the child, it was to be sent to the State Home, run specially for the care and upbringing of such children. Many such cases were reported where the relatives had willingly taken the children born during abduction period along with their women and adopted them as their own family children.<sup>44</sup>

The above account makes it evident that rescue work of abducted women, was given the highest priority. But in spite of the elaborate arrangements, liberal expenditure and frantic efforts, many were left behind. The following table gives an idea of the situation:

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT FOR RECOVERIES<sup>45</sup> FROM 6-12-47 TO 31-10-52

I. PAKISTAN		II. INDIAN UNION	
<i>Number of non-Muslim women and children recovered during the period</i>		<i>Number of Muslim women and children recovered during the period</i>	
A. Punjab	5,616	A. Punjab (India)	11,129
B. Other Areas in Pakistan:		B. Other Areas in the Indian Union:	
(i) N.W.F.P.	459	Delhi Province and other 64 neighbouring	
(ii) Baluchistan	10		
(iii) Sind	56		
C. States:		C. States:	
(i) Bahawalpur	592	(i) Patiala & East Punjab Union	4,934
D. Jammu & Kashmir:		D. Jammu & Kashmir:	
Persons recovered after 21-1-49	1,593	Persons recovered after 21-1-49	482

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* Vide D.O. No. 563/CLO (29 December, 1947), File No. VII/2.

<sup>45</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Facts About Recovery of Abducted Persons in India and Pakistan*, n. 11, 13-4.

From the figures given above, it would be seen that non-Muslims in the East Punjab were as much guilty of this crime of abducting innocent women as Muslims in the West Punjab. It is, however, claimed by the East Punjab Government that they took up recovery work more honestly in this province than their counterpart in Pakistan.

It is, however, gratifying to note that the rescued women, by and large, were gladly welcomed by their relatives who realized and accepted the fact that the girls had to be in Muslim hands for no fault of theirs.

## II

### REVIEW OF THE WORK DONE IN CONNECTION WITH EVACUATION

Though the Governments of India and of the East Punjab rose to the occasion and the Liaison Officers and M.E.O. personnel rendered yeoman service in evacuating the refugees, the difficulties that the refugees had to undergo due to the vacillating policy of the Governments regarding planned mass migration and practices of nepotism, corruption and bribery rampant in the administration, cannot be underestimated. Money and influence went a long way in the speedy evacuation of the well-to-do refugees. At a time when every government servant or political leader in the East Punjab had a distressed relative or a friend needing sympathy and help, refugees could not get equal justice or attention. "There never was time when public servants had greater difficulties in steering between public patronage and personal pressure. . . ."<sup>46</sup> In the process poor refugees, particularly from rural areas suffered a great deal because they had neither money resources nor influential relatives to help them through. In addition, they became victims of the Muslim refugees who had been driven away from the East Punjab and tried to avenge themselves on the non-Muslims, waiting to leave, in the West Punjab.<sup>47</sup> Every one tried to trade in human misery. "All carriers—tonga-drivers, taxi-owners, riksha coolies and even

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 (Appendix III). Uptil 30 September, 1957, 25,856 abducted persons were recovered in India and 10,007 in Pakistan. See *Progress of Recovery of Abducted Women in India*, Advance Copy (New Delhi, 1957), I, Unpublished.

<sup>47</sup> J. Nanda, *Punjab Uprooted* (Bombay, 1948), 67.

unlicensed street porters had a roaring trade. One trip with the refugees or with their kit was equal to an ordinary month's earnings."<sup>48</sup> Even "traffic constable" at the public crossing was busier than ever as he would charge a small fee for making a "prefunctorious" search. In this race for life and death, the refugees had to buy even railway tickets at black-market rate and bribe the guard on duty, for putting their luggage in train.<sup>49</sup> The people used to go huddled together in the trains and had to sit even on the top.<sup>50</sup> Lot of profiteering was going on for seats in aeroplanes which were almost auctioned. The conduct of the pilots was scandalous. This was reported by both official and non-official agencies, including the military authorities.<sup>51</sup> Life was, thus, held at a high ransom and the refugee had to squander the remaining part of his life-savings in a bid to save his life and that of his family.

The sufferings of the refugees were further multiplied by the prevalent atmosphere in Pakistan and the frequent violations of the different Inter-Dominion agreements. Whenever these violations were brought to their notice, the Pakistan officials always promised to look into them.<sup>52</sup> The Commander of the M.E.O. expressed general appreciation of the helpful attitude of the Pakistan authorities.<sup>53</sup> But this could not go beyond the stage of mere declaration because the instructions were not properly and honestly carried out by the lower staff. Cases of violations of agreement were so frequent that smooth and peaceful evacuation was not possible. Consequently when in January, 1948, instructions were issued to withdraw Indian troops operating under the M.E.O. and leave the evacuation work entirely with the local police, there were a number of protests both from the general public and the officials.<sup>54</sup> As a result, the M.E.O. was not withdrawn till November, 1948.

The anti-Indian and anti-non-Muslim prejudices<sup>55</sup> of the Muslim officials and the public intensified communal antagonism and

<sup>48</sup> *EPLAR*, File Nos. VIII/6/15-B, 13, and XII, n. 18.

<sup>49</sup> Nanda, n. 47, 54.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> ———, *Millions on the Move*, n. 16, 4.

<sup>52</sup> *EPLAR*, n. 18, File No. LV/11/25, No. 6/C.L.O. (10 October, 1947).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* File No. LVI/6/52-P. 1(a), 31.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* File No. XV/39/113, Letter (26 November, 1948).

<sup>55</sup> In the same statement, however, he (the commander) pointed out that he could not disclose many things to the Press for fear of antagonizing Pakistan officials.



increased the tension between the two countries. The Indian Liaison Officers stationed at Lahore were also affected by the communal feelings. They were alarmed<sup>56</sup> at the military preparations carried on in Pakistan and appealed to their government to start similar schemes to give military training to the civil population.<sup>57</sup> Thus, a spirit of competition and a war of nerves had been started in the two parts of the Punjab and was intensified because of the Kashmir issue and the Hyderabad Police Action.

In this atmosphere, where communalism reigned supreme, and nepotism, corruption and bribery were the order of the day, the separatist tendencies between the Hindus and Sikhs also started making headway. The Sikhs sent signed petitions to the Governor of the East Punjab, in which complaints were made against the person responsible for distributing Military trucks for evacuation.<sup>58</sup> The allegations, however, were proved false after enquiry by Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava.<sup>59</sup> It is possible that the cases were misrepresented and exaggerated, probably, to attract attention. In the time of stress and strain, when every officer was pestered by a number of relations, friends and members of the community for preferential treatment, some such cases were bound to occur; but it is gratifying that they were not many and that, on the whole, the officials concerned remained above board, at least, as far as communal feelings between Hindus and Sikhs were concerned. But the spirit of vandalism and lawlessness had a serious impact on the administration of the state and on Indo-Pakistan relations. During the next two or three years, the State had to direct all its energies towards overcoming these difficulties and restoring normal administrative and political conditions.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* File No. II-III/3/15-C.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* File No. XIV/7/6-LHR/Pt. II, Letter, C.L.O. (11 July, 1948) and D.O. No. 13757, 132-G/14410 (7 October, 1948).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* File No. LXVIII/15/179-G.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* File No. XIV/7/6-LHR/Pt. II, D.O. No. 911/C.L.O. 6-G (16 July 1948) and C.L.O. (7 July, 1948).

## CHAPTER V

### EFFECTS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PUNJAB—1947-56

THE crisis that the Punjab had to face during 1947 was unprecedented in the history of the world. The birth of the two new provinces was just like “sundering apart of a complex living organization into two” which were destined “to lead a precarious dead alive existence for a long time to come.”<sup>1</sup> The crisis affected every sphere of life—political, economic, social, administrative, cultural and moral. The period was one of trial and tribulation. The problem assumed terrific dimensions as millions of bewildered men and women crossed the borders on both the sides. The horrible communal riots left their indelible mark on the whole social set-up of the Punjab and gave rise to acute communal tensions. Feelings of insecurity loomed large around them. The people had to undergo innumerable hardships in the process of migration and avenged themselves on the members of the other religious community. The communal tensions were further intensified as a result of the retaliation policy of the incoming refugees.

#### I

#### IMPACT ON GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The moral fabric of society was torn to pieces. Murder of men, women and children and abduction of helpless women of the other community, were considered heroic feats. “The terrible communal carnage which blighted the lives of millions of innocent people, affected the women most cruelly. The task before the government was truly arduous. . . .”<sup>2</sup> The lawless element had intensified its activities, but the government could not take any strong action against the law-breakers, owing to the following reasons:

(i) The criminal tribesmen and registered bad characters migrated

<sup>1</sup> ———, “Progress of Rehabilitation”, *The East Punjab*, 1: 6-7, Simla (November, 1948).

<sup>2</sup> C. L. Trivedi, “Address to the Legislative Assembly, Punjab”, *Our Punjab*, 3: 4, Ambala (April, 1950).

from West Pakistan along with the general body of refugees and dispersed to various places, without the police coming to know of their abodes. It took the police some years to locate their history sheets and prepare new registers of the bad characters who had come to India as refugees; but till then, they got a free chance to carry out their anti-social activities. They joined hands with the local criminals and the criminals on the other side of the border and created havoc in the provinces.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, not possible to apportion responsibility for the state of lawlessness between the local and refugee bad characters as no statistical data are available regarding the percentage of refugee offenders and the local criminals.

(ii) The abolition of the institution of 'zaildars', 'sufaidposhes' and Honorary magistrates who knew the local population, deprived the government of an important source of information regarding the activities of bad characters and with the depleted police force, the task of tracing out the criminals became all the more difficult.

(iii) Though no statistical data are available to show the effect of the partition on juvenile delinquency, it is admitted that the prevalent unsettled conditions had a maleficent effect on the juveniles. A good number of them had been left orphans and uncared for. Having been deprived of parental affection and guidance, these juveniles were tempted to go astray. Besides the congested environment of camp life, poverty, lack of arrangements for some years, as a result of unsettled conditions and general deterioration in the moral, educational and economic standards were some of the important reasons which aggravated the problem of juvenile delinquency. A sample survey held at the recommendation of the Simla Police Conference later in 1954, in the Reformatory School, Hissar, showed that nearly 70 per cent of the juvenile delinquents were those whose parents had either been murdered or migrated during the partition.<sup>4</sup>

(iv) A large number of displaced persons who had migrated to the East Punjab, had been deprived of the means of livelihood. Many of them had exhausted all their savings in the process of migration from the West Punjab to the East Punjab. With limited prospects of employment in the near future and prices of essential commodities soaring high, a number of displaced persons were

*Report on Police Administration—1948 (Simla, 1951), 1.*

<sup>1</sup> Information collected from the Police Department, Chandigarh.

providing a central reserve, was brought under the Provincial Armed Police. The P.A.P. which was to protect the Indo-Pakistan boundary line, had been equipped with a large number of vehicles to tour the border districts.

(6) The Punjab Assembly passed various legislative measures with a view to recover illicit arms, for instance, "The East Punjab Armed Bands (Arrest and Detention) Act, 3 November, 1947." The Bill, nevertheless, was not adopted without opposition. The opponents were of the view that because of a continuous threat of an attack from Pakistan, there should be free distribution of arms rather than restrictions on their possession. They were of the opinion that the individuals and organizations which had taken prominent part in mass killing of the Muslims had rendered valuable service to the Hindu community during riots.<sup>11</sup>

(7) In pursuance of the policy to clear the province of undesirable elements, the Government issued a circular to the district magistrates to prepare lists of persons who participated in killing, arson and loot. The officers were also instructed to recover the looted property from the local people, so that it could be distributed among the refugees. But this order was not carried out, for a number of officials were themselves involved in it and an honest implementation of the order would have perhaps led to the collapse of the whole administration. Speaking on the subject Mr. Prabodh Chandra said:

"I do not know how far killing of Muslims by the Hindus and Sikhs was considered a step in the right direction; but the fact remains that every officer right upto the minister wanted that this should happen . . . (yet) under the garb of this circular the poor people will be made the scape-goats and all the officers and men of influence including goondas who were recipient of the booty will be shielded . . . . During recovery of looted property (as ordered by the Government) things like radios, singer sewing machines, etc. will be sent to the houses of high police officers and the broken cots, etc. will be sent to the refugee camps."<sup>12</sup>

*East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, 1-8 November, 1947 (Simla, 1949), 48-57.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-8.

Another member S. Sajjan Singh (Patti) alleged that the police had openly indulged in looting the evacuee property. He said:

“I once went for the recovery of looted property from a Sub-Inspector of Police and we were able to recover two truck loads of goods worth Rs. 58,000. I toured 7 ‘thanas’ and I found every one right from a constable upto Deputy Superintendent (of Police) had some share in looted property. There was one man, that head Moharrar, who was an exception to this. . . .”<sup>13</sup>

The goondas and the officials were hand in glove, and this made the restoration of normal conditions of law and order and cleaning of the administration a really difficult task. At a time when politicians and officials both frequently indulged in malpractices, the government could not strictly enforce the laws to check the cupidity and greed of officials who abused their position to get pecuniary advantage.

The government, however, found that its administrative arm designed to perform this function had been badly crippled. The Muslims constituted 67 per cent of the total police force of the United Punjab. With their departure its strength was greatly reduced in numbers. Against the total strength of 20,672 men in the East Punjab in the pre-partition days, the police were left with only 7,185 “effectives”.<sup>14</sup> The training of police recruits being a lengthy process, rapid promotions, recruitment and training drive on a large scale were started with a view to bring it to normal strength. As a result of this, within a period of three years—1947 to 1950, 24 Deputy Superintendents of Police were promoted to officiate as Superintendents and 41 Inspectors were promoted to officiate as Dy. S.P.s.<sup>15</sup> and not all of them had the required experience to assume the responsible role. Similarly a large number of lower staff was promoted to the higher ranks to make room for new recruits. The process, naturally, led to a certain amount of ineffi-

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Punjab on the March—Police, Jails and Campaign against Corruption* (Simla, 1951), 1.

<sup>15</sup> Information collected from the Department of Police, Chandigarh. The promotions in the Police Department in pre-partition days were quite difficult. The average period in which an Inspector of Police was promoted to officiate as Dy. S.P. was 6 years and for Dy. S. P. to be promoted to Superintendent of police was nearly 10 years and 6 months.

ciency and weakness in the police service because the fresh recruits did not have the requisite training or experience. Training arrangements were not adequate as the drill instructors were not available—the Muslim instructors having opted for and gone to Pakistan. The general inefficiency was keenly felt, particularly, when there was a marked deterioration in the law and order situation.

The mass migration on both sides also affected other branches of administration. A large number of Muslim administrative staff had crossed over to the West Punjab or were waiting in the refugee camps to be evacuated. A major section of the non-Muslim officials and staff from the West Punjab had not yet reported on duty on account of the prevalent abnormal conditions. The government was put under severe strain in the absence of its administrative staff, but at the same time it realized the difficulties which prevented the officials from joining their duties on due dates and issued notifications to all the Departments to treat them on duty for one month from 15 August, 1947, or from the date of their release from their posts in the pre-partitioned Punjab or the West Punjab as the case may be.<sup>16</sup> The period of absence exceeding one month was to be considered as leave due or leave without allowance if none was due.

The surplus staff from the West Punjab had to be absorbed in the new set-up. The Employment Exchange opened a number of Branch Offices in all district towns of the East Punjab and made great efforts in trying to find jobs for unemployed displaced persons. Till 30 November, 1948, 1,74,584 refugees from the West Pakistan were registered by the Employment Exchange and District Employment Offices in the East Punjab. Out of these, 61,349 (35 per cent) persons were placed in different kinds of employment.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the Government of the East Punjab ordered that almost all vacancies that occurred between 15 August, 1947 and 30 June, 1948, should be filled up from the displaced government servants in order of their seniority as far as possible. Besides 25 per cent of the vacancies were reserved<sup>18</sup> for them with effect from 1 July, 1948 to 31 December, 1948.

<sup>16</sup> Notification No. 1070-G-47/547, D/Simla-E, 10 January, 1948, from the Chief Secretary to Government of the East Punjab, addressed to all Heads of Departments.

<sup>17</sup> V. P. Malhotra, *Economic Conditions of Displaced Persons Settled in East Punjab*, Part I (Towns) (Ludhiana, 1949), 43.

<sup>18</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates* (19 October, 1948), n. 11, 6-8.

Financially, too, the East Punjab Government was in a disadvantageous position. Devoid of any financial assets, the Government was faced with the problem of finding adequate resources. The Government of the East Punjab had lost the most important areas of affluent markets of trade. The State revenue was considerably reduced because of a variety of reasons, for instance, its close proximity to the border, general unsettled conditions, dispersal of industries from the state, loss of the West Punjab markets for its goods and the like. The expenditure of the province had however, rapidly increased due to the money spent on relief and rehabilitation, increased expenditure on the police and other departments. The province had no balance with it. So it had to be given an opening balance of Rs. 100 lakh out of the cash securities with the Government of India with which it started its work.<sup>19</sup>

The East Punjab Government, in addition, had to operate from different places as it was left without any seat of administration and a secretariat. The departments were housed at different places to start with, for instance, the Civil Supplies Department was located in the building of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, but later it was shifted to Ambala in September, 1947 and afterwards to Simla. The Rehabilitation Department continued to have its main office at Jullundur. The Secretariat was set up at Simla but its camp office was established at Jullundur which was finally shifted to Simla on 26 February, 1948.

The partition of the province had put the whole administrative machinery out of gear and there was hardly any department which did not suffer from its impact. There were, however, some departments which were hit the hardest, important among them being:

1. Jail Administration
2. Transport and Public Works
3. Civil Supplies
4. Education and Health

*Jail Administration.* As a result of the partition, the East Punjab was left with inadequate number of jails as all the Central Jails and most of the big District Jails and the only Borstal Institution and Women's Jail had been left in the West Punjab. The loss of "all

<sup>19</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, *Budget Estimates of East Punjab for the Period, 15 August 1947 to 31 March, 1948* (Simla, 1947), 3.

major jail industrial centres, all stocks of raw materials and other marketable goods and prisoners' clothing and beddings, struck a serious blow to the whole system of the prison administration in the State."<sup>20</sup>

According to an agreement between the East and the West Punjab Governments, it was decided that the Muslim and non-Muslim prisoners should be exchanged with effect from 5 April, 1948. The number of non-Muslim undertrials and convicts in West Punjab<sup>21</sup> was 4,088 and that of the Muslims 3,761. The number of non-Muslim prisoners, thus, exchanged for Muslim prisoners exceeded by over 300 and additional accommodation had to be arranged for them.

The Jail Department, in addition, had to reorganize jail industries and restore internal economy. The total "pucca" accommodation available in the Punjab Jails was sufficient only for about 3,500 prisoners, whereas the average population of prisoners in jails was about 8,000. To meet this shortage, the government ordered an extension of the district jails at Ambala and Ferozepur and the building of a "pucca" district jail at Hissar at the site of Camp Jail. Separate arrangements, in addition, had to be made for juvenile, adolescent and women prisoners and those suffering from T.B. Temporary arrangements, in the first instance, were made to meet this accommodation shortage by construction of new jails by:

- (i) utilizing the Camp Jail at Hissar as Borstal institution for the confinement of juvenile and adolescent prisoners received from Pakistan;
- (ii) reserving civil ward situated outside District Jail, Ludhiana, for the confinement of women prisoners from all over the state; and
- (iii) opening a T.B. section in a separate enclosure with 30 beds in the Central Jail, Ambala.

Further, in order to relieve congestion, two jail deliveries were sanctioned, the first in May, 1949 and the second in October, 1960, in addition to the premature release of 1,590 prisoners<sup>22</sup> ordered by

-, *Punjab on the March*, n. 14, 5.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6. In the meeting of high officials of the two parts of the Punjab, however, the figures were given as 3,552 for non-Muslims and 3,761 for Muslims. See *EPLAR*, File No. XV/46/129, 7. <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*



Government in celebration of the founding of the Republic of India in 1950.

*Transport and P.W.D.* The Departments of Transport and Public Works were put to a great strain. Due to the evacuation of the Muslims and non-Muslims on both sides, road transport was required to a very large degree. Vehicles were requisitioned from the United Provinces and New Delhi and were placed at the disposal of the Liaison Agency, M.E.O. and police staff both for the recovery of abducted women and the transportation of the refugees. The Department also took up the duties of postal department when there was a breakdown of the normal channels of postal transmission.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Public Works Department had to play an important part in the scheme of rehabilitation and had to divert its energies to the constructive and nation-building activity. A large number of houses were burnt during the communal riots and roads had been badly damaged as a result of heavy movement of traffic on both the sides. The Department had to launch a campaign for house-building and repair works immediately after partition. Apart from this, there was the need to build new townships for the resettlement of the refugees that demanded immediate attention.

*Civil Supplies.* The partition of the "grannary of India" at one stroke, left the province of the East Punjab a deficit food area. The new province was to have forty-four per cent of the population of the United Punjab against only 38 per cent of the land. Most of the canal irrigated and fertile virgin land was left in the West Punjab. This left the East Punjab an agriculturally poorer state which was bound to affect its economy adversely.

At the time of the partition, the total deficit of foodgrains in the East Punjab came to 35,000 tons.<sup>24</sup> As the conditions started settling down after the partition, the Government of India decided in favour of derationing and decontrol in December, 1947. The

<sup>23</sup> ———, "Rehabilitation—Problems facing Punjab in Early Period", *East Punjab*, 1: 6, Ambala (1 May, 1948).

<sup>24</sup> ———, *Punjab on the March—Grow More Food*, n. 11, 1-2. Another publication of the Publicity Department gives different figures. It says "The annual requirements of East Punjab in foodgrains are about 26,04,000 tons while the average production is only 25,56,000 tons leaving a deficit of 48,000 tons. The production in 1946-47 amounted to 24,87,000 tons leaving a deficit of 1,17,000 tons. The deficit for 1947-48 was 2,13,000 tons". See *For People's Food and Cloth*, n. 25, 12.

progressive decontrol policy resulted in the rise of prices in the adjoining areas, and gave considerable incentive to smuggling of foodgrains out of the province. Consequently, the price of wheat started rising rapidly in 1948 and went up from Rs. 12 to Rs. 18 per maund. Similarly, there was rise in the prices of other food crops. This meant great hardship for the people. A large quantity of foodgrains was purchased by the Government.<sup>25</sup>

The experiment in decontrol proved a failure. But the Government of India was not prepared to turn to the controls. Accordingly, cheap grain depots were opened in 30 important urban areas. In the meanwhile, however, conditions in other provinces had also deteriorated and the Government of India was forced to decide in favour of a return to controls and rationing. Controls and rationing were reintroduced in January, 1949, in 13 towns and in other 10 towns in February, 1949. Besides, the Government had to establish an effective agency known as the "Food Police" to check smuggling and anti-social activities of the profiteers.

The necessity to import huge quantities of foodgrains proved a great strain on the government finances. It was imperative, therefore, that food production should be stepped up and efforts should be made to exploit all available resources—a challenge which was readily accepted by the Punjabees. The East Punjab Government lent full support by providing adequate funds and expert advice. They, therefore, devised a scheme of distributing the evacuee land to the refugee agriculturists on uniform basis as a temporary measure without waiting to go into their records.<sup>26</sup>

The Punjab Government took a number of other measures with a view to make the province self-sufficient in food production. The scope of the various "Grow More Food" schemes was extended to six other departments—Co-operative, Forest, Veterinary, Irrigation, Electricity and Public Relations. It was decided to carry on "Grow More Food" drive on a "war-footing". With that end in view, a Sub-committee on "Increased Food Production" was set up in 1949 with the Governor as its Chairman, having powers to take decisions on matters of policy, to cut short red-tapism, issue directions to various heads of the departments and to watch day-to-day progress. The Deputy Commissioners were placed in charge of the "Grow More Food" campaign in their respective districts.

—, *For People's Food and Cloth* (Simla, n. d.), 2-3.

<sup>26</sup> For details see below, Chapter VI.

As a consequence nearly 40 "Grow More" schemes were approved for execution during the year 1949-50 at a cost of about Rs. 1,59,54,800. Besides 300 private model farms were laid out in the State for the "dissemination of propaganda in respect of farming on modern lines."<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, for the first time in the agricultural history of the Punjab, compulsory legislation on the subject was introduced.<sup>28</sup> As a result of the consistent efforts, the erstwhile deficit area of the East Punjab having a deficit of 35,000 tons at the time of partition became a surplus area within a short period of three years. During the year 1950, foodgrains amounting to 2,20,430 tons were sent to other deficit areas in the Union. The Punjab (I), thus, once again became the biggest single exporter of foodgrains in the country.

The phenomenal increase in food production, according to government reports, was made possible by extended irrigation facilities, reclamation of waste land, greater use of fertilizers, improved varieties of goods and by the hard labour of the peasantry. Most of the figures, however, are misleading as progress is compared with years immediately following the partition when production was at its lowest due to a variety of reasons already described.

*Education and Public Health Department.* The Education Department, which was equally badly hit by the partition, however, proffered its whole-hearted help and co-operation in the cause of providing relief to the incoming refugees. With a view to meet this national emergency, the government decided to suspend educational activities of the State for some time in order to provide roofed accommodation to the heavy influx of displaced persons from the West Punjab. Accordingly, all the educational institutions—government, municipal and private—were closed and private managements were

<sup>27</sup> ———, *Statistical Abstract, Punjab, 1947-1950* (Simla, n.d.), 66.

<sup>28</sup> ———, *Punjab on the March—Grow More Food*, n. 11, 1-2. Eight legislative measures were taken in this direction:

- (i) East Punjab Reclamation of Land Act, 1949.
- (ii) The East Punjab Utilization of Land Act, 1949.
- (iii) The East Punjab Tractor Cultivation (Recovery) of Charges Act, 1949.
- (iv) The East Punjab Conservation of Manure Act, 1949.
- (v) The Punjab Municipal (East Punjab) Amendment Act, 1949.
- (vi) The East Punjab Improved Seeds and Seedlings Act, 1949.
- (vii) The East Punjab Agricultural Pests, Diseases and Noxious Weeds Act, 1949.
- (viii) The East Punjab Holdings (Consolidation and Prevention of Fragmentation) Act.

paid compensation amounting to Rs. 19 lakh on account of their prolonged closure and loss of fees incurred thereby. A sum of Rs. 1,16,000 was also paid as repair charges for these buildings as they were mishandled by the refugees.<sup>29</sup>

Roofed accommodation, though an essential part of relief to the distressed, did not meet the demands of the displaced persons. There was the problem of organizing services of different kinds for their benefit—distribution of rations, clothes and provision of medical-aid. The organization of these services involved much more than mere distribution of food, clothes, etc. The refugees had been through a period of great strain emotionally and working with them one had to be very considerate and tactful. Apart from the organizational difficulties, the human problem that the sufferings of the refugees presented necessitated a non-bureaucratic and sympathetic approach. The vast student community, whose studies were seriously interrupted as a result of the partition, was considered most suitable to perform these services. A scheme, mutually beneficial to the refugees and the students, was devised. A large number of students could not sit for the various examinations or their results could not be announced. In order to help the students out of the difficulty and make possible voluntary and willing service to the refugees, a scheme of “social service” was formulated. According to this scheme, a student who worked for at least 70 days in a refugee camp, approved by the government, was awarded diplomas or certificates for the examinations for which they were entitled to appear or had appeared but whose results could not be announced on account of disturbances. These diplomas or certificates were considered equivalent to those obtained after passing the examinations.<sup>30</sup> This scheme not only kept the students occupied but gave them an opportunity to serve their distressed brethren. The scheme provided the government with a large number of voluntary workers for the refugee camps. The students worked day and night with a zeal and enthusiasm which was widely acclaimed. But it resulted in a fall in educational standards. Many students who could not have passed the regular university examinations, were promoted to higher classes. As a result, they could not get along well in the next higher class. Thus, in spite of liberal marking, the University

-, *Punjab on the March—Education and Public Health*, n. 14, 1.  
-, *Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab* (Simla,

pass percentage came down considerably. Apart from this, many a time, it has been widely alleged, officials who were acting as camp commandants, gave certificates to their relations and sons and daughters of their friends without their ever having entered the premises of the refugee camp. This obviously defeated the purpose for which the scheme had been devised.<sup>31</sup>

The Education Department had to encounter a number of other problems which assumed gigantic proportions. They had to take care of a large number of refugee children who had lost their parents during disturbances and had no resources to continue their studies. Similarly, arrangements of educational facilities for the children in refugee camps and rural areas and the needs of destitute scholars, demanded urgent attention. The number of candidates seeking admission to educational institutions multiplied manifold as the non-Muslim refugee students outnumbered the outgoing Muslim students, which further added to the difficulties.<sup>32</sup> The financial implications of providing education to such students as were orphans or whose parents had lost all their possessions assumed enormous proportions and it was difficult for the provincial government with limited resources to meet the expenses. The Government of India came to the rescue of the provincial government and took upon itself the whole responsibility of providing relief to such refugee students.<sup>33</sup>

The Punjab University and all the other premier educational institutions were left on the other side of the border. To fill in the vacuum, thus created, the Punjab University was established at Solan (Simla) to take up all such matters and advise the Government accordingly. With regard to more advanced University teaching at the honours or post-graduate level and technical or professional education, it was decided to make arrangements either in the existing local institutions in the East Punjab or in the University of Delhi, wherever adequate facilities were available. In the case of technical and professional education, apart from the above universities, arrangements were made in corresponding institutions in other parts of the Indian Dominion.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Experience during riots and information collected from official and non-official personnel who worked in these camps during those days.

<sup>32</sup> In the year 1947-48 the number of students rose by 1,21,767 boys and 28,421 girls. In recognized schools alone it went up by 1,39,692. See *Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab*, n. 30, 4-5.

<sup>33</sup> For details see below, Chapter VI, Section IV.

<sup>34</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, n. 11, 167.

A number of refugee students had found their way to Delhi. Accordingly, it was decided to open two camp schools under the Delhi Administration and a Camp College under the Punjab University in Delhi.

To meet the rising demand for education, the government increased the number of schools and aided the disrupted colleges from the West Punjab to restart functioning in the East Punjab. It also established new institutions for advanced studies. Accordingly, the number of recognized and unrecognized institutions for boys and girls increased from 307 to 5,895 by 1949. The number of colleges increased from 7 in the pre-partition days<sup>35</sup> in the Eastern part of the United Punjab to 39. A supplementary grant of Rs. 10,000 each to the five disrupted colleges and Rs. 7,500 each to the newly started colleges, was sanctioned<sup>36</sup> during 1949-50. Since all the teachers training colleges were left in the West Punjab, two such colleges were opened at Jullundur and Simla for men and women respectively. All the premier medical colleges and hospitals were, also, left in the West Punjab, therefore, the buildings of the Glancy Medical College, Amritsar and V. J. Hospital attached to it were renovated and extended with a view to bring them to equal standard with King Edward Medical College and Hospital, Lahore.

The East Punjab Government placed huge amounts at the disposal of the heads of the various departments, to disburse as loans and grants among the uprooted students whose studies were likely to be interrupted on account of adverse financial circumstances. The government advanced Rs. 25,18,355 as educational loans<sup>37</sup> upto 30 September, 1956.

<sup>35</sup> ———, *Report of the Director of Public Instructions, Punjab, 1949* Proceedings of the Government. Punjab, No. 3902-SEC (26 September, 1950).

<sup>36</sup> ———, *Punjab on the March—Education and Public Health*, n. 14, 2. The following institutions received financial assistance from the government under this scheme:

- Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jullundur.
- Sikh National College, Qadian.
- D.A.V. College, Ambala City.
- Dyal Singh College, Karnal.
- Bhargava Municipal College, Simla.
- Gandhi Memorial National College, Ambala Cantt.
- Government College, Hissar.

<sup>37</sup> V. P. Malhotra, n. 17, 16. The educational loans were not advanced after 1952-53.

The loans were repayable within four years of the date of the payment of the last instalment and carried interest at 2 per cent per annum. In schools a large number of students were given fee concessions. A number of other concessions had also been granted. Since it was not possible to have a record of students from the schools, it was decided to dispense with all formalities such as school leaving and migration certificates. For admissions, schools were required only to get an affidavit signed by their guardians and attested by a reliable authority. In addition, exemption from the Matriculation and Intermediate examination certificates to join the 1st year and 3rd year classes respectively, permission to failed students to appear again on account of abnormal conditions and the like were liberally granted by the University.<sup>38</sup>

Despite all these concessions and financial help, all the refugee students could not find it possible to continue their education. The displaced persons, after their arrival in the East Punjab had to start their life afresh. Many of them had lost all they had. "They had, therefore, to harness all available resources to achieve the desired object. The young children came to the rescue of their parents in this hour of trial and penury and supplemented their income by their paltry earnings." The Board of Economic Enquiry, after making survey in eight towns concluded that nearly 31.4 per cent refugee students had to discontinue their studies, because their parents could not afford to meet the expenses which their education involved. It, however, pointed out that a large number of these children would have been "lured to schools if fee and other concessions had been freely and readily forthcoming."<sup>39</sup> Female education was more adversely affected by the partition, as being non-earning members, girls were the first to be retrenched in the family economy.

<sup>38</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, n. 19, 167-8.

<sup>39</sup> Malhotra, n. 17, 15. The Board of Economic Enquiry, set up at the instance of the Premier, East Punjab, which carried out an intensive study of the social as well as economic problems of the evacuees from West Pakistan, settled in rural and urban areas of the East Punjab, conducted a survey in eight towns—Ambala City, Jullundur, Rohtak, Sonapat, Sirsa, Pathankot, Jagraon and Hoshiarpur. The enquiry was started in August, 1948, and by the end of November, 1948, nearly 4,000 refugee families had been surveyed. These figures are not absolute by any chance. To the extent that the sampling covered different towns studied, they could be taken as fairly representative of the large number of refugees.

The influx of teachers from the West Punjab who were more in number than the Muslim teachers from the East Punjab also had to be absorbed. The Government of the East Punjab by circular letters<sup>40</sup> on 25 March and 2 June, 1948 and 4 May, 1950, directed all the heads of the departments that in making new appointments, they should give preference to the displaced government servants over outsiders. All permanent government servants were to be absorbed and supernumerary posts had to be created for those who had not been absorbed or were in temporary service in the West Punjab. Similarly, instructions were sent to local and private bodies to appoint displaced employees of local bodies from the West Punjab caused by the migration of the Muslim employees. Arrangements were also made to get duplicate certificates from the West Punjab or issue special certificates in lieu of those lost at the time of the partition.

*Health.* The movement of the refugees on a mass scale, congested living in the camps, unsettled conditions and unprecedented rains and floods were partly responsible for high incidence of disease during the later half of the year, 1947. Cholera was widespread. During 1948, 3,177 cases occurred, out of which 1,676 proved fatal.<sup>41</sup> In 1949, however, conditions improved to some extent.

Prompt steps were taken to control the disease. Steps were taken to disinfect public water supplies and infected houses, improve environmental sanitation, institute anti-fly measures and to carry out mass anticholera inoculations of the inhabitants of the infected and neighbouring localities. The provisions of Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, were extended in respect of cholera to all districts.

Sanitary conditions in the East Punjab<sup>42</sup> deteriorated very rapidly after the partition due to the following reasons:

- (i) The population of towns increased out of all proportions.
- (ii) The filth of the cities was usually removed either by Muslim contractors or by the Municipal Committees by means of carts and donkeys owned by the Muslims. With the departure of the Muslims to Pakistan, the sanitation department was severely handicapped.

(iii) Houses abandoned by the Muslims contained large quantities

<sup>40</sup> Letters No. 1190-F.C-48/11542, 25 March, 1948; No. 3250-F. G. 48/29933, 2 June, 1948; and No. 2393-FR-50, 4 May, 1950.

<sup>41</sup> ———, *Punjab on the March—Education and Public Health*, n. 14, 21.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-4.



of rubbish and junk which was thrown in lanes and streets by the new occupants, which caused a further deterioration in the already insanitary conditions. The available sweepers and other members of the sanitary staff could not cope with the work. It became difficult even for some of the Municipal Committees to control the situation. The Government promulgated an Ordinance which was later passed as the East Punjab Local Authorities (Restrictions of Functions) Act, 1947, to take over sanitation from the Municipal Committees, with a view to meeting exceptional circumstances. A Sanitary Board for the East Punjab was, also, constituted in the year 1948, to deal with the sanitary schemes and projects proposed both for the rural and the urban areas. An annual sum of Rs. 3 lakh was put at the disposal of the Board to implement the proposals. The sum was distributed among the various local bodies to finance their water supply and drainage schemes during the years 1948-49 and 1949-50.

The Punjab Government, thus, had to face staggering problems of enormous magnitude, immediately after the partition. It would have been difficult for the infant state to bear the strain if the people had not given their full co-operation and the Government of India had not come to its assistance.

## II

### RELIEF

The responsibility of resettlement of millions of uprooted people, both urban and rural and unattached women and children, presented a colossal problem of providing immediate relief and finding housing accommodation, lands, shops, business concerns, factories and in large number of cases new vocations. Accordingly, the plan for rehabilitation was divided into three stages. Immediately after evacuation the refugees were put up in refugee camps. Afterwards, there was a gradual dispersal of the camp residents to the rural or urban areas as the case might be. But a large number were still left in the camps for whom no source of income could be found and they constituted the third group. Apart from this general programme of relief to the incoming refugees, there was a group of unattached and recovered women and children which offered a formidable problem.

### *Refugee Camps*

A large number of refugee camps had been set up by the Government in all the towns of the province. The whole staff of the Education Department was placed at the service of the displaced persons. Buildings of educational institutions and other available accommodation were used to put up the refugees. The roofed accommodation, however, was not sufficient, and therefore big tented refugee camps were organized. It was, nevertheless, not in the larger interests of the province to keep the education suspended for an indefinite period, it was, therefore, decided to reopen the schools and colleges, and all the residents of these institutions were shifted over to the camps.

There were more than 160 refugee camps all over the country, providing accommodation to 12,50,000 refugees. In the East Punjab alone 7,21,396 refugees were accommodated in 85 camps towards the end of December, 1947. Out of the remaining, 1,50,000 were in camps at Delhi, 53,000 in Punjab and Rajasthan States, 13,000 in Bombay Presidency, 30,000 in the United Provinces, 500 in Madras and 1,500 in the Central Provinces.<sup>43</sup> The organization and planning of these camps was more or less on similar lines; but the number of the staff depended on the strength of the refugees in the camps.

The Government spent huge amounts on the camps—their establishment and distribution of food and clothing. For instance, in a period of ten months—September, 1947 to June, 1948—it spent on Jawahar Nagar Camp, Ludhiana, alone Rs. 15,50,228/15/1, out of which Rs. 55,159/0/9 (only about 3.5 per cent) was spent on the salaries of officers and clerks, and their travelling and other allowances, and Rs. 13,42,962/13/4 (about 86.4 per cent) on food and clothing of the refugees. The figure includes expenditure on hospital and medical equipment, but excludes the expenses incurred on miscellaneous and contingency items.<sup>44</sup> The figures show clearly the large amount of money spent on these camps. Though it helped the refugees to have food and shelter, till they could find

<sup>43</sup> ———, *Millions on the Move* (Delhi, n.d.), 11-2. The number of relief camps increased or decreased according to the number of refugees. Therefore different sources give varying numbers. For instance, "Millions Live Again" issued by the Punjab Relief and Rehabilitation Department gives the number as 33 and 'A Factual Survey by the Board of Economic Enquiry' as 21.

<sup>44</sup> Om Prakash, *Social and Economic Survey of Refugee Camps in East Punjab* (Ludhiana, 1949), Publication No. 4, 75.

employment, it made them dependent on the doles of the Government. This curbed the initiative among the displaced persons and was detrimental to the spirit of self-help and self-respect. Thousands of able-bodied men and women spent their days despondently in these camps and their abilities and strength were allowed to run to waste.

It was generally felt in all refugee quarters that if the Government had distributed large sums of money among the displaced persons, instead of spending large amounts on feeding them, the problem of rehabilitation would not have been so difficult.<sup>45</sup> It is difficult to say that the alternative suggested above would have proved more successful, but, nevertheless, it is a pointer to the fact that for a speedy solution of the problem ways and means had to be found for their permanent settlement as soon as possible.

The Economic Enquiry Committee which investigated the problem, made the following recommendations for the consideration of the Government:

That the Government should

(i) take up plans for rural rehabilitation and give assistance for purchase of seeds, bullocks, fodder and implements,

(ii) open vocational centres and give free rations up to the period of training in the camp,

(iii) bring a change in the apathetic attitude of the refugees to the vocational training through large-scale propaganda,

(iv) lay emphasis on the cottage industries like carpet weaving, cycle-parts manufacturing and the like which were mainly run by the Muslims in the pre-partition days,

(v) provide roofed accommodation outside the camp to the skilled labourers and professionals staying in the camps,

(vi) step up the house-building projects and give loans to the refugees for the repair of houses, damaged during these disturbances, and

(vii) make arrangements for the widows and unattached women staying in the camps to train them in spinning, weaving, tailoring, cloth-cutting, embroidery, and other cottage industries according to their aptitude, capacity and education with a view to enable them to stand on their own legs.<sup>46</sup>

The Government policy towards the refugees was severely criticized from all quarters. S. Gurbachan Singh Bajwa, suggested that

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

instead of putting the refugees in camps, the local people should have been asked to share a part of their accommodation and belongings. Many people in the East Punjab owned palatial buildings which far exceeded their requirements. These people, however, were taking undue advantage of the refugees' adverse circumstances and fleeced them of whatever they possessed, by charging exorbitant rents and advances known as 'pugree'. The local people had, in addition, appropriated to themselves a large number of looted Muslim property. According to him, this could be avoided by compulsory legislation that the local people should share the burden by sharing housing accommodation with the refugees. He suggested that "all the persons engaged in professional work, be they doctors, lawyers, industrialists or craftsmen like carpenters, blacksmiths, etc., should under compulsion be asked by the Government to share their business with those refugees who belonged to their profession. They should enter into partnership or form limited concerns . . . ." This scheme, according to him, had manifold advantages as it would gainfully employ all the refugee craftsmen and professionals. The output could increase and it would save a lot of botheration for the refugee businessmen and professionals like doctors and lawyers who needed a good deal of initial capital to start practice.<sup>47</sup>

The scheme, however attractive it may appear, was not considered practical. The social and economic set-up of India definitely went against any such solution of the problem.

The All India Refugee Conference suggested rehabilitation-tax or "capital levy" on the local people. This appeared to be a reasonable proposition but was not considered practicable, because other states by and large considered the refugees as "unwanted aliens and a nuisance."<sup>48</sup>

The Government, therefore, did not pay any attention to these suggestions. The local population, barring the first few weeks when they entertained the refugees, had become quite antagonistic to the displaced persons, because they offered cut-throat competition to their local counterparts in their business, as soon as normal conditions were restored. In fact, they were the main obstruction in the way of speedy resettlement of the refugees. Shri Mohan Lal Saxena,

<sup>47</sup> Gurbachan Singh Bajwa, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates* (29 March, 1948), n. 11, 724-5.

<sup>48</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "The Refugees Confer" (Editorial), 1: 24, *Vigil* (5 August, 1950), 2.

Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of India, alleged that among other factors, provincial politics and local vested interests coupled with a general antipathy to the settlement of a large number of persons from outside the province were important for the delay in the implementation of rehabilitation schemes.<sup>49</sup> As a consequence, therefore, the Government started working on the schemes of rural and urban rehabilitation, independent of local co-operation. An Investigation Committee was appointed in the last week of October, 1947, to investigate the chances of accommodating the refugees in Bharatpur State. Another Committee was appointed to survey the soil in the Andamans.<sup>50</sup>

As a result of reports from various committees and suggestions from various quarters, the Government started taking measures to liquidate relief camps. The continued existence of a large number of able-bodied persons in relief camps dependent on doles from Government was proving a severe drain on the resources of the country. It also resulted in progressive deterioration of the morale of the displaced persons as they tended to become solely dependent on Government for their ultimate rehabilitation and were loth to exert themselves for resettling in life. The Ministry of Rehabilitation, therefore, decided early in 1949 that gratuitous relief should be gradually stopped and set 31 October, 1949, as the target date by which liquidation of doles in camps was to be completed. The scheme came into operation with effect from 1 July, 1949. The first step towards this objective was the substitution of non-cereal rations other than 'atta' rations, by cash allowance<sup>51</sup> of Rs. 6 only. The gratuitous relief was subjected to a gradual reduction. The cash allowance was gradually reduced and after October, there was no gratuitous relief in the general camps. In order to disperse the displaced persons, it was necessary that they should be sent to places where gainful employment was available. The Government, also, worked out a scheme to give financial assistance by way of loans in order to enable them to make a start in life.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Malhotra, n. 17, 57.

<sup>50</sup> Pratap Singh Kairon, *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates* (29 October, 1948), n. 11, 459.

<sup>51</sup> The Special Homes of destitute women and children and infirmaries were exempted from this new measure.

<sup>52</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Report of Gopaldaswami Ayyangar Committee* (New Delhi, 1950), 2.

The programme of liquidation of relief camps could not be carried out without creating avenues of work for the refugees. With this end in view, work centres were established with a total expenditure of Rs. 1 crore. The aim was the creation of work for 10,000 men and 8,000 women including 5,000 spinners. Construction of mud huts for the camps in place of tents was also undertaken to accommodate approximately 30,000 persons. A number of Special Homes were opened for unattached women and children which accommodated nearly 6,000 persons, according to a Government Press Report.<sup>53</sup>

This brought to an end the first chapter in the relief to the refugees after the great migration; but a lot had still to be done before they could be finally resettled.

### III

#### INDO-PAK NEGOTIATIONS ON EVACUEE PROPERTY AND THE PUNJAB PROBLEM

Rehabilitation and resettlement proved to be one of the most difficult and complicated problems that the infant state of the East Punjab had to face. The Punjab Government alone could not take effective steps to find a solution but had to depend upon the policy decisions of the Central Government and the co-operation of the different states in the country in their execution. It was a part of the All-India problem. The Government of India, too, could not do much either towards the solution of the problem, or payment of compensation because it was entirely dependent on the Inter-Dominion agreement (India and Pakistan). The fact, therefore, was that the resettlement of the refugees in the Punjab or for that matter, in any part of India, was an international or at least an inter-state problem.

A number of conferences were held between India and Pakistan to come to some agreement on the issue of evacuee property and various other issues arising out of the partition. Nothing was mentioned about the evacuee property in the first Inter-Dominion Conference<sup>54</sup> held on 17 August, 1947. The evacuee property issue

<sup>53</sup> Om Prakash, n. 44, 159-61.

<sup>54</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Problem of Evacuee Property and the Efforts Made to Solve it* (New Delhi, Ministry of Rehabilitation), Unpublished. An evacuee

was, however, first discussed at a meeting of the Joint Defence Council of India and Pakistan, attended by the Prime Ministers of both countries under the chairmanship of Viscount Mountbatten. Both the Governments agreed that a custodian of evacuee property should be appointed to look after the property left over by the refugees and restore it to the rightful owners.<sup>55</sup> The Governments of the East Punjab and the West Punjab issued Ordinances to that effect. Simultaneously with the issue of the Evacuee Property Ordinance, the West Punjab Government issued another Ordinance on 9 September, 1947, "to provide for economic rehabilitation" in the province. By this Ordinance, the Rehabilitation Commissioner of the West Punjab was empowered to "assume possession and control of abandoned lands, business and undertakings; grant temporary leases of abandoned agricultural holdings of the refugees for a term not exceeding one year; permit the occupation of any abandoned buildings by refugees or other persons." The Rehabilitation Commissioner could also assume possession or control of any property under the control of the Custodian of Evacuee Property.<sup>56</sup> By this Ordinance, the Rehabilitation Commissioner could take over non-Muslim property, factories or business concern in any part of Western Pakistan, even when the owner was staying there, if such a factory or business concern had stopped functioning temporarily or permanently, either due to non-availability of workmen, raw materials or some other reason. It is alleged that the non-Muslim property was openly seized under this Ordinance. The Government of India was not even informed about it and they came to know only after a very long time. The Government of India charged the Pakistan Government with the violation in letter and spirit of the statement<sup>57</sup> made on 29 August, 1947.

The matter was taken up at the Inter-Dominion Secretariat level Conference held at New Delhi on 18 and 20 December, 1947. The Pakistan representatives suggested that the Indian Government should take similar action with regard to evacuee property.<sup>58</sup> The property left by the non-Muslims in West Pakistan was many times more than that of the Muslims in the East Punjab. The Government of Pakistan was fully aware that even if the Govern-

was defined to be a person "resident in West Punjab (Pakistan) who left West Punjab on or after the 1st day of January, 1947, without appointing any person to protect his property in the West Punjab", 436.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 5. <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 7. <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

ment of India took similar action, the net loss would be that of India.

The Conference appointed a Committee to investigate the matter and suggest a solution. The Joint Official Committee which met at Lahore on 22 March, took stock of the changed situation and proposed that both the Dominions could acquire agricultural property on payment of a fair value. A Joint Valuation Board was to be set up to assess the 'fair value'. A different principle, however, was adopted in regard to the urban immovable property, including commercial and industrial undertakings, factories and workshops. The two Dominion Governments were to set up a Joint Governments Agency to arrange sale or exchange of the evacuee property. The provincial governments were empowered to requisition such property on payment of fair compensation. The Joint Urban Assessment Board was to prescribe the basis for assessing the lease money, prepare a list and give particulars of evacuee urban immovable property and assess the lease money.

With regard to movable property, it recommended that "the evacuee owner shall have the right to apply for the restoration of his movable property" unless it had been acquired or requisitioned by the provincial government or rehabilitation authorities. The report was accepted by the high ranking officials of both sides.<sup>59</sup>

The Secretariat level Conference recommended that the Inter-Dominion Conference should be called to discuss the question of evacuee property. The Third Inter-Dominion Conference<sup>60</sup> met on 22 July, 1948; but they could not come to any agreement. The Government of India alleged that "the Pakistan Government wanted to dodge and not to face the issues squarely." No agreement could be reached regarding agricultural and urban property. Even for movable evacuee property in the West Punjab, the Government started a drive to seize all of it under one pretext or another. They also extended the confiscatory provisions of the 'West Punjab Evacuee Property Ordinance' and the West Punjab Rehabilitation Ordinance, with the result that the non-Muslim refugees from the West Punjab, who up to this time had not moved to the East Punjab, thought it better to do so because living in those unsettled conditions

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-7.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 21. The Second Inter-Dominion Conference was held on 15-18 April, 1948, but problem of the Punjab was discussed only in the third Inter-Dominion Conference.



without being able to continue to promote their business interests was not a very attractive proposition. Such refugees as had already moved to the East Punjab, could not go back due to the fact that their properties were already confiscated and restoration would have involved a lot of time consuming and exhausting legal and personal efforts.

The Government of India claims that it was following a liberal policy. As a result, nearly one hundred thousand Muslims came back to resettle in the East Punjab, Alwar and Bharatpur. The stream of returning Muslims was getting momentum while no non-Muslim had gone back. Realizing their duty towards the non-Muslims, the Government of India suggested that a planned return of population to their original homes, should be arranged. But when the Government of Pakistan did not even reply to this in spite of various reminders, the Government of India introduced the permit system between the two countries.<sup>61</sup>

The Fifth Inter-Dominion Conference held at Karachi on 10 January, 1949 and at Delhi<sup>62</sup> in April, 1949, took the following decisions regarding agricultural, urban and movable property.<sup>63</sup> They agreed to exchange copies of revenue records and existing records bearing land prices. It was decided that the evacuee owner would have the right to transfer his property by sale, exchange or otherwise subject to such right as may have been acquired by the Provincial or the Dominion Government as the case may be. Both the Governments agreed to manage through a custodian such evacuee urban immovable property as had not been acquired or requisitioned by it. The evacuee owner was also given the right to apply for the restoration of his movable property, sell or dispose it off himself or through his agent; and was given facilities to inspect his movables held in charge of the Custodian. The Government concerned was to be responsible for taking all steps necessary to ensure the safety of the evacuee owners and their agents engaged in managing, disposing of or removing their movables. In addition, they were to give all possible transport facilities. It was also agreed that joint com-

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-7.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-2. The Fourth Inter-Dominion Conference was held on 6-9 December, 1948, but the two governments could not reach an agreement.

<sup>63</sup> ———, *Agreements between India and Pakistan reached at Inter-Dominion Conferences held at Karachi in January, 1949, and New Delhi in April 1949* (New Delhi, 1949), 7.

mittees be set up for the exchange of revenue and/or other records and to receive complaints and arrange for the redress of such grievances as were brought to their notice. The committees were to pay particular attention to facilities regarding the disposal, recovery, restoration and movements of goods lying pledged with banks, and goods lying at railway stations, docks and parcels, and money orders lying undelivered or unremitted at the post offices.<sup>64</sup>

But there was a vast difference between the agreements and their implementation in practice. Almost immediately after the Karachi Agreement, the Government of Pakistan issued an Ordinance that every person coming out of Pakistan had to obtain an income-tax clearance certificate, unless he went there for less than 15 days. The Government of India had not been consulted about it. The Ordinance, according to the Indian sources, "amounted to a virtual confiscation of all agricultural evacuee property as the owners could neither receive rents nor exchange or sell their property. In regard to the urban evacuee property too, the Pakistan Government slashed down the rents of urban evacuee property by 80 per cent."<sup>65</sup> Similar was the case with movable property. The Act was severely criticized. In spite of long correspondence by the Government of India, the Ordinance was not withdrawn. It was now obvious, that there were a number of obstacles in the way of private sales and exchanges of property and, therefore, honest working of the agreements was not possible. They were now convinced that "the only possible solution was for both Governments to acquire at a fair valuation, carried out by a Joint Agency of both Governments, all the evacuee immovable property situated within its territories, the debtor Dominion paying to the creditor the difference in value, according to agreed arrangements".<sup>66</sup>

The Sixth Inter-Dominion Conference held on 25-29 June, 1949, also met with failure as the Government of Pakistan was not agreeable to an exchange of urban evacuee immovable property on a governmental basis. The repudiation of the Karachi Agreement and failure of the Sixth Inter-Dominion Conference sealed the fate of the evacuee property problem. The Government of India issued an Ordinance on 13 June, 1949, which prohibited transfer of ownership

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-12.

<sup>65</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Problem of Evacuee Property and the Efforts Made to Solve it*, n. 54, 38.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

of some urban immovable evacuee property. This was followed by a Pakistan Ordinance on 26 July, 1949, on similar lines. A new Central Evacuee Property Ordinance was issued by the Pakistan Government on 15 October, 1949. By this the provisions of the Ordinance were made stricter—"any person can become evacuee from Pakistan, even though he continues to live there and has never left the country, so long as any distant relative of his has gone to India. No provision for appeal to any authorized court exists. It is no longer obligatory on the Custodian to notify the property he has taken over. . . ." Moreover, under the Ordinance the property was supposed to be vested in the Custodian from 1 March, 1947, a date about six months prior even to the partition of the country.<sup>67</sup>

The Government of India, too, issued a Central Evacuee Property Ordinance on 18 July, 1949. It claims that it made efforts in the various Inter-Dominion Conferences to come to an agreement with Pakistan with regard to the disposal of evacuee property by different means: (a) individual sale or exchange of property or (b) valuation of the property on a fair basis in both the countries and payment of the difference. But the Government of Pakistan did not accept any of the proposals.

Although the problem of immovable property could not be solved, agreements regarding movable property were more or less implemented.

This brief summary of the Indo-Pakistan negotiations regarding evacuee property establishes clearly that the Government of India was keen to arrive at some settlement with the Pakistan Government on the issue, because the property left by non-Muslims when compared to the property left by the Muslims in the East Punjab was greater in value and such a settlement could have helped it (the Government of India) towards a speedy rehabilitation of its displaced persons. The Pakistan Government, on the other hand, applied delaying tactics because it knew that any settlement of the issue would mean additional burden in the form of ready payments that would be required in lieu of the excess property in its possession.

The prolonged negotiations, undoubtedly, made the process of rehabilitation of the displaced persons more difficult. Nearly thirty-eight lakh of non-Muslims had crossed the border as against forty-four lakh of Muslims who had gone over to West Pakistan.<sup>68</sup> This leaves an excess of over six lakh of persons in terms of overall

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 53. <sup>68</sup> —————, *Facts at a Glance* (Simla, n.d.), 1.

reduction of the East Punjab population. In the resettlement process 14,67,632 persons<sup>69</sup> moved out of the East Punjab. Although the number of people that the state of the East Punjab had, thus, to accommodate was less by about twenty lakh when compared to the number of people who left the state, the problem of the resettlement in the East Punjab was by no means small. According to the 1951 census,<sup>70</sup> the total population of the East Punjab was 1,26,37,965 and the total refugee population, according to Refugee Census,<sup>71</sup> October-November, 1948, was 24,65,243, which in other words meant that every fifth person in the East Punjab was a displaced person and had to be resettled, and the seriousness of the task, involving about 20 per cent of population, can hardly be minimized.

The non-Muslims migrating to the East Punjab belonged to the rich peasantry and industrial and trading classes. There was a vast difference in fertility between the agricultural land left in the West Punjab by them and the land abandoned by the Muslims in the East Punjab.<sup>72</sup>

The partition, thus, confronted the State with the baffling problem of supporting 44 per cent of the total population of the United Punjab with only 38 per cent of the total land which "viewed from any angle, whether of fertility, or irrigation facilities, or importance of markets, bore no comparison to the lands abandoned in the West Punjab. . . ."<sup>73</sup>

The problem was intensified because it "emerged with bewildering suddenness. The new Government of (the) East Punjab, still barely on its legs, was unprepared and unequipped. . . ." The story of resettlement operations in the East Punjab, therefore,<sup>74</sup> "is an event of some significance to the country and in some respects the experience

<sup>69</sup> ———, *Census of India, 1951, Vol. I, India, Part I-A* (New Delhi, 1953), 85.

<sup>70</sup> ———, *Statistical Abstract, Punjab, 1947-50* (Simla, n.d.), 10.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-9. The problem has been discussed in details in Chapter VI.

<sup>73</sup> ———, *Statistical Abstract, Punjab*, n. 70, 65. The total area outside the West Punjab was estimated 5,20,683 ordinary acres and 2,92,460 standard acres and in Pepsu it was 7,73,643 and 4,37,195 respectively. Thus the total in two areas was: Western Pakistan, 3,95,131 standard acres; Punjab and Pepsu, 25,08,040 standard acres.

<sup>74</sup> Tarlok Singh, "Rural Resettlement in Punjab (I). The Background: A Transfer of Population", 6: 4, *Statesman*, New Delhi (25 July, 1950). This was a series of four articles that S. Tarlok Singh wrote. The Roman numerical following each reference made to these articles indicates the instalment quoted.

has an abiding interest” for all those faced with similar problems. Rehabilitation, however, was not a state subject. The urban rehabilitation programme was directly administered by the Central Government with the active co-operation of the various state governments. The Punjab Government was also directed by the Government of India to chalk out various schemes for urban rehabilitation. But in case of rural rehabilitation, all powers were delegated to the Government of the East Punjab, who were authorized to work out details for the rehabilitation of refugees on land.

The East Punjab Government, accordingly, issued many notifications and passed laws to deal with the administration of the evacuee property and provide relief to the displaced persons from Pakistan.

The first pieces of legislation were desultory in character arising partly from inexperience, partly from haste and partly from the complicated nature of the issues involved. There were glaring lacunae and shortcomings in them. But with the passage of time, fresh Ordinances, amendments and acts were passed to overcome difficult situations and intricate problems as and when they arose.<sup>75</sup>

The land resettlement operations in the East Punjab can be divided into two parts:

- (i) Rural
- (ii) Urban

<sup>75</sup> Following Ordinances and laws came into force:

1. “The East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Ordinance, IV of 1947 (Government Gazette Extraordinary, East Punjab, 14 September, 1947), 10-3.
2. “The East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property Act), XIV of 1947. This was further amended by following Ordinances and Acts:
  - (a) East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Ordinance No. II, 1948, which came into force on 16 January, 1948.
  - (b) East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Act No. XXVI of 1948, which came into force on 15 April, 1948.
  - (c) East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Ordinance No. XVI of 1948, which came into force on 30 July, 1948.
  - (d) East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Ordinance No. XVIII of 1948, which came into force on 14 August, 1948.
  - (e) East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Act No. XLIX of 1948, which came into force on 29 November, 1948.
3. The East Punjab Evacuee Property (Administration) Ordinance No. IX of 1949.
4. “Notifications No. 4891/S and 4892/S, 8 July, 1949”.
5. “Notifications No. 7399-A/S, 27 June, 1950”.

The following table indicates the rural and urban division of the numbers and also the land acreage that the two groups of refugees left in their respective provinces:

			<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Area Abandoned</i>
Refugees Punjab	from	West	29,50,000	10,90,000	57,00,000
Refugees Punjab	from	East	34,50,000	9,00,000	45,00,000
					(11,50,000 acres in Hissar and Gurgaon)

Of the total number of non-Muslims arriving from the West Punjab, 29,50,000 were of rural and 10,90,000 of urban origin. Against these the number of refugees from the East Punjab gone to the West Punjab consisted of 34,50,000 Muslims from the rural areas and 9,00,000 were from the urban area. The comparison of figures, however, gives an inaccurate impression that the East Punjab Government had a larger area of landed urban property to be distributed among the displaced non-Muslims. On the contrary, against the total area of 57,00,000 acres abandoned by the non-Muslims in the West Punjab, the total area of evacuee land in the East Punjab was 45,00,000 acres of which 11,50,000 were in the "insecure districts" of Hissar and Gurgaon. Even if evacuee land in the East Punjab States had been put in the evacuee pool, it would have fallen short for nearly 50,000 to 60,000 families.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> —————, *Millions on the Move*, n. 43, 25. The number of urban refugees subsequently increased to 13,00,000 as a large number of rural refugees settled in urban areas.

## REHABILITATION

THE movement of the non-Muslim population into the East Punjab and that of the Muslims into the West Punjab caused an upheaval in the economic life of the province. The vast disparity in the occupational pursuits of the migrants on the two sides gave a severe setback to trade and industry and greatly affected agricultural production. The standing crops had suffered a great deal as many of the departing Muslims had set them to fire. Natural calamities like rains and floods, during the period further devastated the villages. The endless stream of refugees from one side to the other made the food position extremely difficult and no attention could be paid to the crops. The first task of the Government, therefore, was to send the people to the villages. The peasant proprietors in the canal colonies in the West Punjab, who had migrated from the districts of Jullundur Division and had long been linked with the latter, "bent their steps homewards" on crossing the borders.

## RURAL REHABILITATION

The permanent distribution of land could not take place till the Government of India had come to some agreement with Pakistan on evacuee property. Besides, no facts or statistics were available on which a scheme of resettlement could be based. Accordingly, "a rough and ready scheme of distribution of land for the first harvest was drawn, and land was allotted in groups to owners as well as tenants. . . ."<sup>1</sup> The agricultural refugees were asked to proceed to the tehsils where they wanted to settle, in groups. A fixed area of land and a pair of bullocks were allotted to every adult in the family. "The scheme of group allotment was designed to ensure quick distribution of land to enable the refugees from particular villages and areas to remain together as far as possible and to enable the cultivators to pool their resources for the sowing of the

<sup>1</sup> Tarlok Singh, "Rural Resettlement in Punjab (I)—The Background: A Transfer of Population", *Statesman*, 6: 4, New Delhi (25 July, 1950).

*rabi* crop and to share amongst themselves equitably the standing *kharif* crops. These objects were largely secured and within two months, two million acres of land were occupied."<sup>2</sup>

The temporary allotment was, thus, based on an equal distribution of land, irrespective of the land left by a particular person on the other side. The average work unit was fixed at 3 acres in Kangra, 10 at Simla, 12 at Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur, 15 each in Ambala, Rohtak and Ferozepur, 18 at Karnal and 20 each in Hissar and Gurgaon.<sup>3</sup> The displaced persons were given financial assistance in the form of loans for purchase of food, seeds, bullocks and for fodder, implements and the like. Loans and grants were given for the repair of houses and wells. From September, 1947 to September, 1949 the Government spent nearly Rs. 2.21 crores.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of group allotment or equal distribution "frightened many people". Some thought it to be a "collectivist experiment".<sup>5</sup> The rich peasants and landlords felt that they were being deprived of their legitimate rights. They admitted that exigencies of the time demanded quick distribution; but soon the urge for a permanent settlement based on rights held by individuals in Pakistan started gaining ground in these circles. The temporary allotment, also, benefited the landless agricultural labourers from West Pakistan who were allotted some land till such time as administrative steps to introduce quasi-permanent allotment system were taken.<sup>6</sup> The number of such landless peasants according to the Punjab Communist Party estimates, was nearly 42 thousand families. Thirty thousand local non-refugee tenants of Muslim landlords, in addition, were liable to be dislocated in the process of re-allotment. The Communist Party memorandum to the East Punjab Government urged

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Communist Party Documents*, Jullundur. "Memorandum submitted to the Indian National Government and East Punjab Government on the subject of Rural Rehabilitation of Refugees by the East Punjab Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of India, 22 December, 1947". (File Provincial Committee Circulars, 1947).

<sup>4</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Land Resettlement Manual* (Simla, 1952), 7.

<sup>5</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Statesman* (I), n.1.

<sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Inner P. C. Documents*, 1954 (6 April, 1954) n. 3. The land policies also had another implication. The land belonging to evacuee Muslim landlords was allotted to a number of refugee peasant proprietors, who could not retain the services of the erstwhile tenants of the Muslim landlords. This resulted in tensions between the local and refugee tillers of the land.



that the rehabilitation policy must be “based on democratic foundations and fitted into the general task of building up a democratic agrarian economy and reconstruction.” They demanded that it should be in consonance with the programme of abolition of landlordism and distribution of land among tillers of the soil.<sup>7</sup>

There could obviously be no agreement between the small and big refugee landholders on the pattern of land allotment on account of the clash of interests of the two groups. The temporary land allotment policy was glaringly against the interests of big landholders and consequently they were extremely critical of this step of the government. Yielding to the pressure, the East Punjab Government evolved a policy of “graded cuts” which was comparatively more beneficial to the big landholders. But this alone was not the deciding factor which influenced the resettlement policies. There were other important factors which influenced and shaped the decisions of the Government.

1. During the first few months of 1948, an increasing measure of co-ordination was brought about between the East Punjab and the East Punjab States, so that all the evacuee land in these separate territories came to be treated as a single pool.

2. The Government of India agreed that all displaced landholders from the West Punjab and those of Punjabi extraction from other parts of the West Pakistan should be resettled on the evacuee lands in the East Punjab and Pepsu.<sup>8</sup>

3. The West Punjab and the East Punjab Governments came to an agreement to prepare copies of revenue records in their possession for the use of the other province. Exchange of records was started by the end of November, 1948 and was completed during winter.<sup>9</sup>

4. The Governments of the East Punjab and Pepsu placed the whole of the revenue staff at the disposal of the rehabilitation authorities. Eight thousand officials worked for nearly fifteen months to accomplish the task.

### *Quasi-Permanent Settlements*<sup>10</sup>

The new scheme of distribution involving over 50 lakh acres of land on the basis of individual rights, entailed a number of complicated processes. Elaborate rules and methods had to be evolved for

-, *Communist Party Documents, Memorandum*, 22 December, 1947, n. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Statesman* (I), n. 1. <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

the valuation of different classes of land and rights of different applicants for allotment. The choice of villages for the rehabilitation of these people was also a difficult task. Unlike the urban areas where a considerable degree of impersonalization is possible, the settlers in rural areas have to become a part of the village community which makes the resettlement of complete strangers a rather complicated proposition. It was, therefore, decided by the government to send groups of settlers together as far as possible and/or send them to such villages where they might have relations.

The evacuee land could not be allotted permanently until issues relating to the evacuee property were settled between India and Pakistan because legally the evacuees still continued to be the owners of the abandoned property. Accordingly, the term "Quasi-permanent Settlement Scheme" was devised which replaced the "Temporary Allotment Scheme" with effect from 7 February, 1948.

There was a marked difference in relative fertility of land in the East and the West Punjab. It was, therefore, necessary to evaluate the different classes of land on the basis of a comparable unit of value. The unit devised for land resettlement operations in the East Punjab and Pepsu was given the name of "standard acre". "A standard acre is, thus a unit of value and depending on the value of land in which the unit is translated, it represents a certain area. The standard acre, besides being useful in assessing the value of different classes of land and rights, has proved a remarkably convenient unit for purposes of calculation . . ." For the allotment of land on the basis of standard acres, the total area and rights abandoned by the displaced persons and the area and value of land abandoned by the prospective allottee in West Pakistan were reduced to "standard acres". "The standard acre like a unit of currency in which transactions in individual commodities became a medium through which all classes of land and rights, despite their differences were expressed for purposes of comparison, evaluation and calculation."<sup>11</sup>

Information was collected about the area abandoned by displaced persons by adding up the areas left by different individuals, on oral evidence. This system was defective in the sense that the displaced persons had a tendency of quoting exaggerated figures. Though stringent penalties were prescribed for false claims, it was assumed that the refugees had submitted false and exaggerated claims.

<sup>11</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Manual of Resettlement*, n. 4, 14.

This meant that until copies of "jamabandies" had been exchanged and authentic records were found, no sound scheme of resettlement could be worked out. The claims were invited in March, 1948. The broad outlines of the scheme of resettlement were drawn up in February and March, 1949, "on the strength of estimated statistics based partly on actuals and partly on assumptions and formulae . . ." <sup>12</sup> The area abandoned by the evacuees in the West Punjab, however, was more exact as it was obtained by adding up from revenue records. The crux of the problem was to assess the claims of different individuals, which offered certain amount of difficulties because the area available for allotment was markedly short of the area claimed.

The final account showed that the displaced persons in the East Punjab could receive in quasi-permanent allotment 24,48,830 standard acres against 39,35,131 standard acres left in the West Pakistan, thus leaving a gap of 14,86,301 standard acres. In order to adjust it equitably among the displaced landholders, it was necessary to apply some cut on the land to be allotted to them. Suggestions came from some quarters that this should be distributed among all the displaced persons proportionately. Another alternative was to fix a ceiling on the area in standard acres which could be allotted

<sup>12</sup> For the purposes of evolving the concept of a standard acre as a unit of value for allotment of land, S. Tarlok Singh worked out an interesting device which apparently appears to be complicated; but in fact was simple enough to be understood by the peasants. The productivity of land was the major criterion. "An acre of land which could yield 10 to 11 maunds of wheat was given the value of 16 annas and was termed as a standard acre. The physical area of a standard acre, thus, varies and all classes of land in all assessment circles were given a valuation in annas, so that they could be measured easily in terms of standard acres. In the 'barani' areas of Hissar district where the valuation of one acre was 4 annas, 4 ordinary acres went to make a standard acre. In Ordinary Canal irrigated tracts, where the value of an acre was 16 annas, an ordinary acre was the equivalent of a standard acre". The texture of soil and the available irrigation facilities were additional points to be taken into consideration in the calculation of a standard acre. To ensure further fair distribution of land in a particular village, if it was of more than one quality, it was divided into two or three blocks in which the allottees received proportionate share. See M. S. Randhava, *Out of the Ashes* (Chandigarh, 1954), 81-2.

No statistical record of the number of false and exaggerated claims is available for this period. The problem took sufficiently serious proportions to warrant attention in the year 1956 when the government opened a separate Complaint Section to deal with such cases. Its working has been discussed in detail in Chapter VII.

to any displaced person. Both the proposals, however, were rejected, as the first one went against the vast majority of small landholders who owned only 10 acres of land and less, and the second one was against the interests of such peasants as had larger holdings. Accordingly, a compromise formula of "graded cuts"<sup>13</sup> was devised. The cut was less in the case of the small and middle landholders. The scheme worked on the basis of income-tax schedules.

An allottee owning above one thousand standard acres received 50 standard acres for every thousand acres abandoned by him. According to S. Tarlok Singh, who did pioneering work in this sphere, "the cuts were based on practical considerations and had no political or reformist objectives. They, nevertheless, put an end to the large holdings which were a conspicuous feature in rural life in (the) West Punjab."<sup>14</sup>

The scheme of allocation of areas village-wise found strong favour with the displaced persons. This was, however, considered impracticable. Attempts, nevertheless, were made to consolidate the colonists from one village, or close relations, together.<sup>15</sup> "The desire for village-wise allotment of land was at bottom a search for strength through social cohesion and community values. . . ." and as such was natural and spontaneous. With a view to satisfy the natural urge of close relations and village groups to get together, the Government decided to facilitate such consolidation even if "it became necessary in the process to dislodge some sitting allottees. . .."<sup>16</sup> As a part of the efforts to consolidate relations and people coming from the same villages, applications of minors and widows were dealt with under special rules. Specific provisions were made under the different notifications of the government (which subsequently were changed into the Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabi-

<sup>13</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Statesman* (II), n. 1. For table on "graded cuts" see Appendix V.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Tarlok Singh, *Statesman* (III), n. 1. See also ———, *Important Instructions concerning Quasi-Permanent Allotment of Evacuee Land in East Punjab and PEPSU* (Simla, 1951), 1-4 and 23.

<sup>16</sup> This "consolidation process" was not initially planned by the government although, the government subsequently adopted it as a definite instrument of resettlement policy. Almost all the colonists who had relations went back to them—a very natural and spontaneous course for them to take. It, however, created a concentration of Sikh Jat population in the Central districts of the Punjab which resulted in significant political implications. See Chapter VIII Tarlok Singh, n. 4, 22-4.

litation Rules, 1955). Their wishes for settlement either with the parents or their in-laws were considered and frequently accepted.<sup>17</sup> The people from the north-western districts of Rawalpindi, Gujranwala and Sheikhupura were resettled in Ambala, Ludhiana, Karnal and Pepsu. The population from the south-west districts of Multan, Jhang and Dera Ghazi Khan were resettled in Hissar, Karnal, Rohtak and Gurgaon. It was alleged that a number of displaced persons used money and influence to move into good villages.<sup>18</sup>

The Government, while distributing land among the displaced persons, had to take into consideration the restoration and reconstruction of rural economy. The economy of the East Punjab villages had been severely dislocated by the migration of artisans, village servants, weavers, blacksmiths, potters and the like, most of whom were Muslims. Steps had to be taken to train the people in these vocations to fill the gap.<sup>19</sup>

The land resettlement process was not an easy task. The officials and the staff concerned worked day and night before the displaced persons could be resettled, but a good number were still left dissatisfied because a large area of evacuee land had been grabbed either by influential local people or displaced persons. For instance, the Patiala Praja Mandal leaders in a Press statement said that 16 lakh acres of land vacated by Muslims, 3 lakh bighas of "Nazul"<sup>20</sup> lands and 15 lakh bighas of State waste land had been grabbed by a prince.<sup>21</sup> A number of cases were brought to the notice of the authorities where displaced persons put forward bogus claims as they

<sup>17</sup> In addition to these concessions, such prospective allottees were given the option to ask for cash compensations against their verified claims in respect of agricultural land, provided such compensation converted in terms of standard acres was less than 18 acres. See also *Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabilitation Rules, 1955* (Nasik Road, 1957), 15.

<sup>18</sup> Tarlok Singh, n. 4, 15.

<sup>19</sup> The different steps taken to provide technical and vocational training to displaced persons with a view to fill in the gap created by the departure of Muslim artisans have been discussed in the following section of the Chapter.

<sup>20</sup> "Nazul" is properly escheated or lapsed to the State commonly applied to any land or house property belonging to government either as an escheat or as having belonged to a former government. Estates forfeited for rebellion after 1857 or for crime under the Criminal Law, became state property. Such lands or houses that were owned by the former government and, therefore, became the direct property of the succeeding government come under the category of "Nazul" lands. See B. M. Baden-Powell, *Land System of British India*, 3 Vols. (London, 1892), 116-7 and 239.

<sup>21</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Communist Party Documents*, n. 3.

either did not possess any land in the West Punjab or very little as compared to their claims.<sup>22</sup> According to the Communist Party, these charges were not denied by the Director of Rehabilitation, East Punjab, who agreed that about 25 per cent of the allotted land in Ferozepur was in the possession of bogus claimants.<sup>23</sup> A sizeable section of the revenue staff, zaildars and patwaris itself was engaged in grabbing land, and since the fate of the refugees continued to be entrusted to these men, the incidence of bribery, corruption and nepotism was increasingly intensified.<sup>24</sup> It was alleged that the 'Taccavi' loan had not been supplied to the needy refugees, as in the disbursement of loan also, money and influence were the main considerations.<sup>25</sup>

The resettlement work could have been done with greater efficiency and speed, if the evacuee houses had been kept intact. It is alleged that the staff in charge of the recovery of looted property sent their own men to loot the houses before they made a list of the property therein. The military and police, by and large, were openly engaged in the commission of this crime on the plea that similar things were being done in Pakistan.<sup>26</sup> A lot of money could have been saved if effective operations to recover the looted property had been undertaken, but this was not possible when some of the ministers, even, were praising the looters and justifying retention of looted property.<sup>27</sup>

Various political parties gave suggestions regarding the policy to be followed for the resettlement of the refugees. The Refugee Conference, Jan Sangh and Akali Party wanted that the displaced persons should be given full compensation on the basis of property left in West Pakistan (if necessary by requisitioning the Muslim property on this side). The Communist Party stressed that the whole land should be pooled and distributed equally among the displaced

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, E. P. P.O.C. Document No. 2/48 (12 January, 1948).

<sup>23</sup> ———, *Interview with S. Tarlok Singh, Director-General, Rural Rehabilitation, East Punjab, by Master Hari Singh, 3 January, 1948. Inner P. C. Documents File No. 2/48, n. 3, Unpublished.*

<sup>24</sup> Information collected from Complaints Section, Jullundur, Department of Rehabilitation.

<sup>25</sup> ———, *Interview with Hon'ble Mr. K. C. Neogy, Minister, Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation, Government of India, New Delhi, by Master Hari Singh. C.P.I. Document No. 4/8, n. 3 (20 January, 1948).*

<sup>26</sup> ———, *Memorandum submitted to Hon'ble Dr. Gopi Chand, the Premier, East Punjab, September, 1947, ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> ———, *Interview with Mr. Neogy, n. 25.*

landholders and landless tillers.<sup>28</sup> Such a system was considered drastic, particularly in the prevailing atmosphere of confusion and chaos in the infant state. Besides, these were fundamental issues concerning policy matters which had to be carried out on an all-India basis and in consonance with the Constitution of India. The new system (quasi-permanent allotment), undoubtedly, involved a number of administrative complications, for instance, the exchange of "jamabandis" and revenue records with the West Punjab, the evaluation, calculation and compensation to the prospective allottees for land abandoned on the other side of the border, bogus and excess claims filed by the refugees and undesirable means employed to achieve good land. All this, probably, could have been avoided, if temporary allotment had been accepted as a permanent feature. It, however, must be admitted that such a distribution would have proved inadequate to meet the requirements of the displaced cultivators. Only 24,48,830 standard acre evacuee land was available in the East Punjab. If distributed equally among 6,17,401 refugee landholders, it would have amounted to nearly 4 acres, for each, which was extremely uneconomic and inadequate. It is understood that 10 to 15 acres of land is considered to be the minimum area to meet the bare necessities of life. Equal distribution of evacuee land among refugees would have resulted in the complete collapse of rural economy, unless there was complete abolition of landlordism and feudalism in the East Punjab—a step which Governments of India and the East Punjab, were not prepared to take.

## II

### URBAN REHABILITATION

The task of urban resettlement was essentially different from that of rural resettlement both in its nature and magnitude. There were three major aspects of the problem:

- (i) Housing
- (ii) Employment
- (iii) Commercial and Industrial life.

<sup>28</sup> ———, *Agrarian Resolution for Provincial Party Conference, C.P.I Document No. 10/48, n. 3* (3 February, 1948). For comprehensive discussion on recommendations by different political parties, see below Chapter VIII.

*Housing* became a major problem on account of the following reasons:

(a) The number of urban refugees that was to be settled in the East Punjab, was estimated at 13,00,000 while the number of departing urban Muslims was nearly 8 to 9 lakh. Thus about 4 to 5 lakh of additional urban refugees were to be settled in the towns.<sup>29</sup>

(b) The non-Muslim refugees left behind in the West Punjab alone, nearly 1,54,000 houses, in addition to the houses abandoned by urban refugees from the N.W.F.P., the Bahawalpur State, Sind and Baluchistan. But the number of allottable houses in the East Punjab was only about 1,10,000. Besides, most of the evacuee houses were not equipped with necessary amenities of life like water and electricity. As a result, nearly 98 per cent of the families surveyed, lived in houses with no independent arrangement of water supply and 93.6 per cent put up in unelectrified houses.<sup>30</sup> These houses, thus, were much poorer in quality and accommodation as compared to the houses left by the non-Muslims in the West Punjab. Moreover, the influx of landless refugees increased the pressure on land and many of them shifted to towns, since they could not find employment in the villages.

(c) Another complicating factor was the unauthorized occupation of the evacuee houses by the local residents and some government servants who shifted to the evacuee houses "in an endeavour to pay lesser rent or to secure better accommodation."<sup>31</sup> As the refugees moved in, they also occupied the Muslim houses without any authorization and sometimes in excess of their requirements. Besides, the displaced persons, according to the Census Report, showed a "distinct bias" for settling in the towns irrespective of the fact whether they were townsmen or ruralites in the West Pakistan. This gave a further impetus to the process of urbanization and while the number of cities remained the same as before the partition, their population increased by 25 per cent.<sup>32</sup> Needless to say that this created an acute housing problem in the urban areas.

*Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab* (Simla, n.d.), 1.

<sup>29</sup> V. P. Malhotra, *Economic Conditions of Displaced Persons Settled in East Punjab*, Part I (Towns) (Ludhiana, 1949), 11-2. The figures of urban non-Muslim refugees were estimated at 10,90,000 to start with, but since a number of rural refugees settled down in urban areas, the number of these refugees increased to a considerable extent. See above Chapter V.

<sup>31</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab*, n. 29, 2.

<sup>32</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Census of India*, 1951, Vol. I, Part I-A (New Delhi, 1953), 239.



The first and the immediate need of the displaced persons, therefore, was to have residential accommodation. To begin with, the Government could not pay any attention to the house allotment or urban rehabilitation because it was preoccupied with the problem of immediate relief to the refugees.

The Government of the East Punjab decided in October, 1947, to allot a scale of space at the rate of 50 square feet of floor area for an adult and 30 for a child. The excess accommodation was to be shared with other families. This order, however, was not strictly enforced. The Economic Enquiry Commission Survey, conducted immediately after the partition, showed that 80.7 per cent families were holding accommodation, short of the specified limits.<sup>33</sup> The rich and influential persons always managed to get excess accommodation and afterwards it was difficult for the allotting authorities to eject them in spite of the East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Amending Ordinance II<sup>34</sup> of 1948.

At a time of national emergency, when it was expected that refugee rehabilitation would be planned at top speed, a section of the government officials, who were engaged in amassing riches, continued to be slothful in providing housing accommodation to the displaced persons. Survey of Muslim immovable urban property, even, was not completed till as late as June, 1948. As a result, refugee families had to live under most horrible conditions—in mosques and other public institutions where one room was shared by a couple of families. At the time of the Census of displaced persons, conducted in October, 1948, 8,792 displaced families were living in Dharamsalas while 15,278 families stayed in the open.<sup>35</sup>

The acute shortage of houses made it imperative for the Government to immediately take up the issue of repairing damaged Muslim evacuee houses. The Government was very slow in sanctioning repairs in the beginning; but later the work was expedited to meet the requirements of the displaced persons. The evacuee houses, however, were not sufficient to accommodate all the displaced families. The Government of the East Punjab, therefore, decided to establish model townships in the suburbs of 17 towns.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Malhotra, n. 30, 10.

<sup>34</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab*, n. 29, 3.

<sup>35</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ n. 30, 9.

<sup>36</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab*, n. 29, 3. The scheme for model township was proposed in the following towns: Jullundur, Ludhiana,

To start with, the construction of houses proceeded at a “snail’s pace”, but it made considerable progress subsequently and 3,640 houses were completed by the end of December, 1948. The Government also decided to sell these built-up houses as well as building sites in the colonies to the refugees to speed up construction work. Besides, it worked out a plan to give loans, repayable in easy instalments, to the refugee buyers for purchase of sites and building the houses. The houses, sites and loans could be adjusted against the claims of the refugees.<sup>37</sup> In order to provide a legal basis for the scheme, the East Punjab Government issued two Ordinances:<sup>38</sup>

- (i) The East Punjab Refugees Rehabilitation (Building and Building Sites) Ordinance, 1948.
- (ii) The East Punjab Refugees Rehabilitation (House Building Loans) Ordinance, 1948.

The Gopalswami Ayyangar Committee<sup>39</sup> which had been appointed by the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Government of India, to review rehabilitation work and recommend a rehabilitation plan within the available resources submitted its scheme for the year 1950-51. The Committee estimated that one lakh houses would be required for people uprooted from West Pakistan alone. This meant that nearly Rs. 50 crore were required for the purpose of house-building. Some refugees, the Committee noted, were staying with their friends and relations and about 14 lakh were accommodated in evacuee houses. There was, still, a vast number of displaced persons who were living in tents. The Committee recommended

Hoshiarpur, Rohtak, Karnal, Panipat, Jagadhri, Khanna, Hissar, Sonapat, Bhiwani, Rewari, Gurgaon, Bahadurgarh, Hansi, Sirsa and Palwal.

<sup>37</sup> Different types of houses were designed to be built to suit the various income groups, for the middle and upper middle classes. The government acquired land and developed it for housing purposes. The displaced persons could purchase this and build their own houses. They could also choose to purchase government built houses through auction by making an initial payment of 5 per cent and agreeing to pay the remaining at 3 per cent interest in 30 equal half-yearly instalments. For the benefit of the working classes and other low-income groups, cheap housing scheme was devised under which the government offered nearly 16,750 housing plots in different towns of the Punjab. In addition, the government offered land and loans to build small houses.

<sup>38</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab*, n. 29, 3-4.

<sup>39</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Report of the Committee* (Gopalswami Ayyangar) (New Delhi, 1950), 23.

that those refugees who were exposed to the vagaries of nature, should be given top priority in the provision of roofed accommodation. Building of houses on government level, however, proved to be a difficult and slow process in view of the heavy financial and administrative burden on the government and other routine preoccupations of the P.W.D. The Committee, therefore, recommended that a bulk of the house-building work should be left to private initiative as "the homeless refugees have a powerful natural urge to find a roof over their head. . . and a large volume of private initiative (could be mobilized) to good account in this behalf."<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, it was agreed that in order to promote building activity, the private bodies should continue to have Government financial aid and facilities for building materials with a view to carry out the vast housing programme chiefly through the agency of co-operative housing society. It was suggested that financial assistance should be given to them through a Housing Finance Corporation to be established for the purpose, and 10 per cent of the houses should be constructed by the Government.

The Committee, however, disapproved the idea of rationing of accommodation as impracticable.<sup>41</sup> A number of Committee's proposals regarding preference to the private initiative and the like were carried out by the Punjab Government.

*Unemployment.* The bulk of the departing urban Muslim population of the East Punjab, consisted of artisans, mechanics, craftsmen, blacksmiths, potters, butchers and the like, while the vast majority of urban Hindu and Sikh refugees from West Pakistan belonged to the trading classes. Economically, it was a difficult situation. These people could not take to their original professions because their scope was limited and they could not take to the vocations left by the Muslims as they did not have the required skills. Some of the refugee shop-keepers got hold of the shops of Muslim evacuees, and others installed temporary stalls for the purpose, but there was a limit to which stall-building and shop-building could be pursued; "a situation had arisen in many places when the number of sellers was larger than the number of buyers. . . ."<sup>42</sup> This led to an economic stagnation which could be averted only by providing technical education, so that the sons of the refugees could take to more productive occupations. Being a slow process, it could not solve the immediate employment problem. The occupational pattern of the

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8. <sup>42</sup> Malhotra, n. 30, 1.

immigrants, however, underwent a gradual change after they completed the training courses. The Board of Economic Enquiry made an interesting analysis as a result of the investigations that they carried out in the different towns of the Punjab (I). The following table shows the number of people who could not find employment in their original field of occupations after having migrated to India:

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>East Punjab</i>	<i>The number of people who could not be absorbed</i>
1. Trade & Business	1,10,847	70,269	40,578
2. Industry	6,600	4,342	2,258
3. Services	50,583	41,064	9,519
4. Liberal Professions	7,299	5,118	2,181
5. Other skilled and unskilled workers	29,784	38,884	9,100

The above table<sup>43</sup> indicates that the number of people in each one of the first four categories who could continue to earn their living through their previous occupations went down to a considerable extent. Only the ranks of the skilled and unskilled persons went up by 9,100, as against a total of 54,635 who could not take up their original occupation. This figure of people who changed their vocations represents only about 16 per cent of the sample studied. Even according to this sample the government had to find fresh avenues of employment, and resettle nearly 84 per cent of the urban refugee population in the economy of the State in such a way that it would not only meet this objective but also rebuild the economic life of the state on sound and healthy lines.

The most important gap that needed to be immediately filled was the one created by the departure of Muslim artisans who migrated to West Pakistan. According to government estimates nearly 18,54,188 Muslims, belonging to 22 different classes of artisans, migrated to Pakistan. The non-Muslim artisans who migrated to the East Punjab, numbered 2,52,873. This left a tremendous gap in the occupations. The government estimated that in order to

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

fill this gap, they required about 40,000 weavers, 15,000 potters, an equivalent number of blacksmiths, "Telis," and leather-workers, about 10,000 barbers, another 10,000 carpenters, 10 to 15 thousand butchers and 3 to 4 thousand tailors.<sup>44</sup> The immediate problem before the government was, therefore, to save the life of the province from complete paralysis. This, obviously, meant that the large populace of shop-keepers and hawkers should be diverted towards skilled labour and other such vocations. In order to fill the gap, 36 vocational centres were started all over the province. The trainees were encouraged to manufacture saleable goods which were put on sale in depots opened for the purpose. The Department of Industries, in addition, maintained 23 industrial schools and 20 demonstration parties.<sup>45</sup> In these training centres, instructions were given in the following trades:

Carpentry, Blacksmithy, Brick-laying, Moulding, General Electrical and Mechanical Vocations, Pattern Making, Watch Repairing, Turnership, Wiremanship, Draughtsmanship, Tailoring, Calico-printing, Hand-weaving, Knitting with machines, Soap-making, Lacquer work and Wood-turning, Tanning and Dyeing of Leather, Basket-making, Willow-work, Bar Mature winding, Welding, both gas and electric, and the like. A scheme for the vocational training of the displaced women and girls was also approved by the Provincial Government.<sup>46</sup>

*Commercial and Industrial Life.* The industrial and commercial life of the province in general and the border districts in particular, was disrupted to a considerable extent as a result of the partition. There was a marked disparity between the number of industrial and commercial concerns left by the evacuees on both sides of the border. According to the East Punjab Government estimates, for every 13 establishments left by non-Muslims in West Pakistan, there was only one Muslim concern in the East Punjab.<sup>47</sup> Having been reduced to a border area, the Punjab (I) could not provide any incentive to the migrant businessmen to invest in the business concerns with a view to revive them. The economic system of the province had hardly shown signs of restoration when Indo-Pakistan

<sup>44</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Statistical Abstract, Punjab, 1947-50* (Simla, n.d.), 159.

<sup>45</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "Revival of Industries in the Punjab", 3: 5, *Our Punjab, May, 1950* (Simla, 1950).

<sup>46</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab*, n. 29, 13. For details of this scheme, see below. pp. 139-40.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

relations were strained following the fighting in Kashmir. Even, the local industrialists were wanting to shift to places of safety. A scheme of reviving the economy of the state, however, could not be successful without rehabilitating the industry in the state and creating a sense of security among the industrialists.<sup>48</sup>

The mass migration on both sides had done a lasting damage to the economic structure in the province. "The social structure of the population was shaken out of equilibrium . . . (because) Employers moved in one direction and the workers in the opposite. Economic and social interdependencies were jerked out of balance and the Government and the people were faced with the colossal task of putting social and economic life again on even keel."<sup>49</sup> Economic activity in the Punjab, a few months preceding partition and afterwards was virtually at a standstill on account of the administrative machinery getting out of gear and collapse of transport system. The worst sufferers in this national calamity were the towns and villages which were once located in the heart of the province, but now happened to fall on the borders of the newly created states. Business and industrial activity in these towns was paralyzed. The economic life of the border areas was completely dislocated since labour and capital fled to safety zones.<sup>50</sup> A large number of well-to-do displaced industrialists migrated to Delhi and other parts of India and they bettered the economic life of those cities by virtue of their enterprise and investments. But the border towns were left poor and a number of factories previously located there were either closed or shifted to other areas.

The dislocation in the economic life of the Punjab (I), particularly in the border towns, can mainly be attributed to the following reasons:

(i) The communal carnage that haunted the province for nearly eight months left its shadow on the economic life of the state. Some of the factories in the border towns suffered heavily through arson resulting in the distribution of a large number of their power-looms, valuable equipment and machinery.<sup>51</sup> In the prevailing abnormal conditions, replacement or additions to industrial equipment were completely held up which further paralyzed the economy of these areas.

<sup>48</sup> K. L. Luthra, *Impact of Partition on Industries in Border Districts of East Punjab* (Ludhiana, 1949), 71-2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (Foreword), VII. <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

(ii) As already stated, nearly 54 per cent of the skilled labour of these industries<sup>52</sup> belonged to the Muslim hereditary classes. Such displaced persons as were skilled, besides being far less numerically, showed a tendency to move to safer places around Delhi. The Government could not start training centres immediately, because they were preoccupied with evacuation work. Private industry did not show any interest or initiative in this direction as they alleged that the moment a person acquired some partial skill in his particular vocation, he got tempted by the prevalent demand in the market and left the concern. This tendency could have been checked if all the factories had taken measures to train labour for their own requirements. The uncertain circumstances, nevertheless, did not encourage any such effort.<sup>53</sup>

(iii) All the main industrial centres of the Punjab, Lahore, Wazirabad, Sialkot were left in the West Punjab and the non-Muslim industries lost nearly 400 industrial establishments valued at nearly Rs. 40 crores. This had a serious impact on the investment potential of the industry.<sup>54</sup>

(iv) A large number of industries had been hit hard by the dislocation of markets as a result of the partition. The turn-out of cotton-ginning and oil-factories, hosiery industry, metal works, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, fruit products and stationery were largely consumed in the area now known as West Pakistan. Enamel ware, glass ware and chemical concerns, too, suffered greatly due to the abnormal conditions and loss of markets.

Industry, in general, thus suffered heavily, but the textile industry at Amritsar was affected the most. In the pre partition days, Amritsar was the flourishing distribution centre for trade for the area which at present comprises West Pakistan. Its trade extended up to Karachi, British Baluchistan, N.W.F.P. and Bahawalpur State.<sup>55</sup> The city was all of a sudden placed in a very unfavourable position and had to struggle hard for new markets inside India.

(v) The partition, in addition, deprived the East Punjab of the main source of raw material and the real consuming centres. Formerly, these towns used to get their raw materials from the towns

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Statistical Abstract, Punjab*, however, gives this figure to be 90 per cent, n. 44, 138.

<sup>53</sup> Luthra, n. 48, 59.

<sup>54</sup> An Industrialist, ("New Industrial Towns", 3:8, *Our Punjab*, Ambala (August 1950), 247.

<sup>55</sup> Luthra, n. 48, 61-3.

in the West Punjab. Sheikhpura and Gujranwala supplied paddy for some rice mills and canal colonies provided long staple cotton. The textile industry in Amritsar used to get some chemicals from Karachi and the chemical industry depended upon Pakistan for rock salt and salt-petre. But now, these factories had to tap new sources in order to make up for those lost in Pakistan. For import of machine goods, these areas had to depend on the port of Bombay which is two hundred miles more distant than Karachi. For instance, textile industry which gets its machinery, mill stores, raw materials, etc. from Bombay, has to take back the manufactured goods after fabrication for sale to the interior of the country. This two way burden of railway freight has proved a big handicap and seriously affected the competitive capacity of the industry.<sup>56</sup>

(vi) The economic life of the city of Amritsar got a serious setback, because overnight it became the frontier terminus of East Punjab Railways. Trade with Pakistan was of vital interest to the Punjab (I). Goods wanted by one country were available in the other, but strained relations between the two countries and consequent trade restrictions considerably affected its economic life. The business community of the Punjab (I) experienced great inconvenience in travelling to Pakistan because of the restrictions imposed by the Pakistan Ordinance, 1949,<sup>57</sup> under which they were required to have an income-tax clearance certificate before entering that territory.

(vii) The Punjab Government's indifference to rehabilitate the industry in these areas, was a severe setback to the economy of the border districts. The Government encouraged the growth of industries at places beyond Jullundur, for instance, Nilokheri, Faridabad, Bahadurgarh, Sonapat, Panipat, Jagadhri, Rupar and Khanna. Model towns and industrial estates were built at these places; but it did not care to set up any such estate in the border districts.<sup>58</sup> Though wholesale shifting was not considered desirable for political considerations, the Government was openly against the setting up of strategically vulnerable industries in this region. The Economic Enquiry Commission recommended that two heavy chemical factories, four rolling mills, four hardwares and general

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-1. See also Diwan C. Mehra, *Note from Textile Manufacturers Association, Amritsar*, 1958. A large number of textile industrial establishments of the Punjab were located at Amritsar.

<sup>57</sup> See above Chapter V. <sup>58</sup> Diwan C. Mehra, n. 56.



mechanics factories and nine electrical engineering concerns in Amritsar, should be shifted to places at a safe distance inside the borders.<sup>59</sup>

(viii) The difficulties of the border districts got intensified, when the banks enforced drastic restrictions in the supply of credit. Bank credit played a significant role in the provision of circulating capital employed by industries in the areas which became border districts as a result of the partition. Nearly 45 per cent of the circulating capital from the banks was utilized by industries in this region. The banks, too, had suffered heavily for they had not been able to realize loans from business and industry. The deposits from Pakistan had, also, not been transferred so far. The banks which survived from the tremendous shock of partition, "shifted from the Punjab towns not merely their head offices but also their main spheres of activity, particularly, so far as their investment was concerned. They virtually stopped financing trade in the East Punjab. Many of them demanded insurance covers against riots and civil commotion risks. The Insurance Companies raised their rates of insurance against these risks to abnormally high levels.<sup>60</sup>

The immediate combined effect of all the different causes which happened to operate upon industries in the border districts during the year 1947-48, could best be studied by a comparison of industrial production with that of a year earlier. The gross value of output of all the industries, surveyed by the Economic Enquiry Committee worked out to Rs. 1,014.96 lakh during 1947-48 as compared to Rs. 1,245.82 lakh during 1946-47. Thus it registered a fall of Rs. 230.86 lakh or 18.5 per cent of the total value of output. The reduction in the labour force and the contraction of output reacted heavily on the economic life of the province.<sup>61</sup>

The economic structure of the Punjab in general and of the border areas in particular, was thus adversely affected. As a consequence, many factories showed a tendency to move from the East Punjab. Nearly 66.9 per cent of the industrial establishments in the border districts showed a preference to move out of the border areas. As against this only 10 per cent of the industrial establishments from the interior districts wanted to shift from their sites. From the border districts nearly 60 per cent of those wanting to shift from their present sites, expressed a preference for shifting within the province and only 40 per cent to outside areas.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Luthra, n. 48, 74-5.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-9.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-2.

In Amritsar, the largest number of factories expressed their desire to shift. It was an alarming situation. The Government of the East Punjab, realized that unless stopped in time, it could lead to disastrous consequences and would adversely affect the public morale. Accordingly, they passed the East Punjab Factories (Control of Dismantling) Act on 4 March, 1948, which sought to control the movement of factories registered under the Factories Act, 1934, with immediate effect. According to this Law no person, unless so authorized, could remove outside the premises of a factory, machinery or even spare parts of machinery.<sup>63</sup>

The industrialists in this area interpreted this Act as a big blow to their interests and raised their voice of protest against it. The Government, however, was justified in doing so, because they could not allow the economy of the province to be disrupted. They realized that "if (the) Punjab was to survive and regain its past prosperity, new moorings should be found for . . . enterprising industrialists who were running to other provinces and States in search of livelihood."<sup>64</sup> The economic exigencies demanded that the Government should take the initiative in making a comprehensive and effective plan in order to revive industrial activity in the province. The Economic Enquiry Committee which was appointed by the Government to go into the question, in its report, recommended that new industrial townships should be built near about Delhi. While deciding about these towns, the Committee kept in view various factors like easy means of communications, availability and transmission of power, safety in case of hostilities, local potentialities and the like. This Committee also did not recommend installation of any new factories in the border districts. It, however, disapproved the idea of shifting industries from border towns, except for undertakings, which had to be shifted under strategic considerations. These included all such industries as could be promptly employed to aid war effort as for instance heavy chemicals, hardwares, steel-rolling mills and bigger engineering concerns.<sup>65</sup> The Committee recommended that the Government should pay immediate attention to the development of border towns which should be given special facilities for export of their products to

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>64</sup> An Industrialist, "New Industrial Towns", *Our Punjab*, 3 : 8, Ambala (August 1950), 247.

<sup>65</sup> Luthra, n. 48, 74 and 81.

Western Pakistan as well as other provinces in India. They should also be granted loans liberally.<sup>66</sup>

For the rehabilitation and resettlement of the displaced persons, it was necessary that the Government should plan the economic life in such a manner as to fully integrate them in the economy of the state and should fill the vacuums left by the Muslims. Accordingly, the Government took a number of legislative<sup>67</sup> and administrative steps to achieve this objective. The Government of India set up the Rehabilitation Finance Administration on 1 June, 1948, with the object of rehabilitating businessmen and industrialists of the middle and lower middle classes displaced from Western and Eastern Pakistan by making available to them medium to long-term financial assistance to meet their reasonable business and industrial requirements.<sup>68</sup>

The Punjab Government opened a number of Industrial Institutions in all the district towns in the East Punjab to provide technical training courses for small-scale industries and sent demonstration parties in villages to encourage the displaced persons to develop an aptitude for vocational training. The government granted 1,365

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 78-9.

- <sup>67</sup> 1. The East Punjab Movable Property (Requisitioning) Act.  
 2. The East Punjab University Act (as amended in part by the East Punjab Act XLI of 1948 and Adaptation of Laws Order 1950 and 1951).  
 3. The Refugee Rehabilitation (House Building Loans) East Punjab Act, 1948.  
 4. The Refugee Rehabilitation (Buildings and Building Sites, East Punjab) Act, 1948.  
 5. The Refugee Rehabilitation (Loan and Grants, East Punjab) Act, 1948.  
 6. Refugees (Registration of Claims, East Punjab) Act, 1948.  
 7. The East Punjab Holdings (Consolidation and Prevention of Fragmentation) Act, 1948.  
 8. East Punjab Utilization of Lands Act, 1949.  
 9. East Punjab Damaged Areas Act, 1949.  
 10. East Punjab Children Act, 1949.

See *The Punjab Civil Code*, Vol. III, 7th ed. (Simla, 1953), 4-325.

<sup>68</sup> The Administration consisted of a Chief Administrator and eight members—four officials and four non-officials appointed by the Government. There was also an Advisory Board consisting of not more than 15 members nominated by the Government to advise the Administration on matters of policy. There was also provision for setting up Regional Committees to advise the branches of the Administration. The Act, styled as Rehabilitation Finance Administration Act, 1948, originally applied to all the provinces of India but not to the Acceding States, but later on it was extended to whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. See *Rehabilitation Finance Administration* (Delhi, 1952), 1.

scholarships and stipends varying from Rs. 60 for the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, to Rs. 5 in Industrial Schools.<sup>69</sup>

The Government of India spent a large sum of money on relief and rehabilitation during the first three years. The total amount towards relief and rehabilitation came to 1,420 lakh up to 1950-51, the Government of India contributing 1,123 lakh and the Punjab, 297 lakh.<sup>70</sup>

### *Rehabilitation of the Unattached Women and Children*

The rehabilitation of unattached women and children was essentially an urban phenomenon, and the peculiar nature of the groups required a different way of handling their rehabilitation. A majority of them were illiterate and did not possess any hereditary skills with which they could earn their living. They represented, the most helpless victims of the tragedy of the partition who needed urgent and immediate relief. Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru recommended that they should receive the highest priority as they were "the victims of a struggle that might well be regarded as a war (and suggested that), they should be classed in the category of war-widows and war-orphan and treated as such."<sup>71</sup>

These women could be classified into two categories: (i) those whose husbands, sons and other bread-winners were killed during riots, (ii) those who, though unattached had still some relatives alive; but being out of job, they could not take up the responsibility. The responsibility for the 1st category, Mrs. Nehru emphasized, should be taken entirely by the Government and of the 2nd category, only up to the time till their relatives become self-supporting. In case some of the women were not prepared to lead a regimented life they should be given an allowance to maintain themselves.

<sup>69</sup> ———, *Statistical Abstract Punjab*, n. 44, 151. 34 industrial institutions were opened—22 for men and 12 for women. Besides, 69 demonstration parties were sent, 32 Training Centres were established—23 for men and 9 for women which turned out 6,327 and 3,140 trainees respectively up to 1950-51.

<sup>70</sup> ———, *White Paper on the Punjab Budget, 1952-53*, presented by the Punjab Government to the Parliament of India, Simla, 1952. From 1947-48 to 1950-51 a total amount of Rs. 1,023 lakh was paid by the Government of India and 107 lakh was debited to the Punjab State account. Similarly during the same period, 307 lakh was spent towards the rehabilitation of displaced persons—207 lakh falling to the Centre's share and 190 lakh to that of the Punjab.

The basis on which the expenditure on relief and rehabilitation was divided between the Centre and State has been discussed in the following Chapter.

<sup>71</sup> ———, *Report of the Committee (Gopalaswami Ayyangar)*, n. 39, 50.

The education of the destitute children demanded immediate attention. In order to meet increased expenditure, she suggested that a new tax should be levied.<sup>72</sup>

The Government accepted the suggestions of the Committee except with regard to the levying of a new tax and opened a number of Homes and Infirmaries to accommodate these women. Between 1947-50 eight "Homes" and "Infirmaries" were established at different places.<sup>73</sup> All the institutions except one, were run by the State Government itself. The expenditure was met from the grant made by the Government of India. This grant was calculated according to the number of inmates residing in these "Homes" at the rate of Rs. 25 per adult head per month. Private Institutions which agreed to look after and provide care and shelter to such women and children were given special grants for the purpose which were higher than those made to institutions run by the Government. Arrangements were also made for the maintenance of 25 displaced blind children and 25 orphans, with the Andh Vidayala, Amritsar, and Central Khalsa Orphanage, Amritsar, respectively, who received similar grants.

In addition to the above, cash allowance at the rate of Rs. 15

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>73</sup> Note from the Rehabilitation Department, Jullundur.

<i>Name of the Home/Infirmary</i>	<i>Name of Organization running the Homes</i>	<i>Date of Inception</i>	<i>Sanctioned Population</i>
1. Seva Sadán, Jullundur	Punjab Govt.	1-11-47	250
2. Gandhi Vanita Ashram	-do-	February 1948	1,500
3. Mahila Ashram, Hoshiarpur	-do-	August 1949	1,500
4. Mahila Ashram, Karnal	-do-	March, 1950	1,500
5. Mahila Ashram, Rohtak	-do-	March, 1950	1,500
6. Infirmary, Rewari	-do-	24 June, 1950	Not available
7. Infirmary, Khanna	-do-	24 Nov. 1950	-do-
8. Jainendra Gurukul, Panchkula	Jain Community	Feb. 1948	1,000

4 more Homes and Infirmaries were opened by 1953. Thus in all there were 12 such Homes and Infirmaries.

per month per head was paid to the displaced persons living outside the Homes/Infirmaries. Besides, arrangements were also made for the treatment of indigent displaced T.B. patients in the state.<sup>74</sup> Financial assistance to the extent of Rs. 30 per month per head, in addition, was allowed to those who were awaiting admission to other T.B. Hospitals. Expenditure on the treatment of these patients was met by the Ministry of Health.<sup>75</sup>

A study of the three years after the partition in the East Punjab reveals that the Punjab had to face a great upheaval during this period which was the most difficult time in the life of the new province. The events preceding and immediately following the partition unleashed the lawless forces in the state. The administration which had virtually broken down was faced with the manifold task of stabilizing the social, economic and political life of the province. The exigencies of the time demanded state initiative in every sphere of life in order to infuse a spirit of confidence among the displaced persons. These measures covered only the refugee population and the local non-refugee population did not benefit by these services. Such measures did not bring any fundamental change in the basic institutional relationship of society.

It should be, however, admitted that the East Punjab which was shaken to its roots, could meet the gigantic problems of migration and rehabilitation, because the Central Government with its vastly superior resources, mature guidance and leadership came to the rescue of the prostrate province and helped it out of the difficult situation. The Central Government withstood all the jerks and enabled the infant state to stand on its legs once again.

The efforts of the State and Central Governments would have been reduced to nought, had the displaced persons not risen to the occasion. There is no doubt that the partition made the people more aggressive, ruthless and careless about moral values of life; but it, at the same time, released creative potentialities and the best in the national character of the Punjabee. As a result, they took up the partition as a challenge and engaged themselves whole-heartedly in their own rehabilitation and the development of the economic life of the state.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* 50 beds were reserved in the Gulab Devi T.B. Hospital at Jullundur which was opened in 1952.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* A separate 100 bed T.B. Hospital was set up at Chetru (Kangra) for this purpose.

## III

## PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS

The resettlement of the displaced persons from West Pakistan was a difficult process, and involved manifold efforts of the Government of India, the Punjab Government and the displaced persons themselves besides those of the private agencies. Sociologically, it was a veritable problem of adjustment and cultural assimilation of the displaced persons into the body-politics of the Punjab (I). The integration, however, could be achieved only after a lapse of time and positive efforts on the part of the State, displaced persons and the local population. An effective policy regarding integration of the migrants in the social and economic structure of the Punjab demanded three steps on the part of the Government:

- (i) *Relief*—To provide immediate relief to the migrants—food, cloth and shelter.
- (ii) *Rehabilitation*—To provide houses, gainful employment, loans and grants for educational, industrial, agricultural and such other purposes.
- (iii) *Compensation*—To compensate the displaced persons who had left their properties in West Pakistan.

The procedure regarding relief and rehabilitation has been already discussed in the earlier pages. The Government could not, however, decide about the policy regarding compensation without any satisfactory agreement with the Government of Pakistan. It was difficult for them either to assess the value of property left by the displaced persons behind or determine the quantum of compensation without the co-operation of the Pakistan Government. It need hardly be mentioned that payment of some sort of compensation played an important part in the speedy rehabilitation and integration of the displaced persons in the economy of the State and creating a sense of security among the uprooted people.

### *Compensation*

The combination of circumstances that was responsible for the exasperating delay in compensating the displaced persons in cash or kind, made them extremely critical of the Government of India's

policy with regard to evacuee property. The stiff attitude of the Pakistan Government towards non-Muslim minorities and various Ordinances issued by them to acquire evacuee property, made the displaced persons in India feel that while the Muslim migrants from this side were having all the advantages, the non-Muslim evacuees to India were being made to suffer at the altar of secularism. It aroused a sense of dissatisfaction and frustration among the displaced persons which had its important political implications.<sup>76</sup> The Government of India, however, felt helpless in view of the non-co-operative attitude of the Pakistan Government; but they could not retaliate by acquiring the property of all the Muslims, some of whom might have left only for a temporary period with every intention to come back.<sup>77</sup> Such an action would have been a severe blow to the secular principles on which the future Indian society was designed to be built. The Government of India, therefore, turned down every suggestion from the political leaders who urged them to follow an effective policy.<sup>78</sup>

The issue, obviously, could not be evaded indefinitely. In October, 1952, the Government of India suggested to the Government of Pakistan that "as there was no possibility of the return of evacuees to their respective countries of origin and the evacuee properties were fast deteriorating, the two Governments should take over the evacuee immovable properties in their respective countries and compensate the evacuee owners according to the principles which may be mutually agreed upon. . . ."<sup>79</sup> For this purpose, the Government of India suggested that the two governments should agree upon the basis of valuation of property on the two sides. If, however, there was no agreement by direct negotiations, the matter could be settled by arbitration or by reference to an impartial tribunal. The debtor country then should pay to the creditor country the difference in value of evacuee property according to the agreed arrangements. The Government of Pakistan, however, did not accept the proposal.

The continued stalemate with the Government of Pakistan over

<sup>76</sup> See below, Chapter VIII.

<sup>77</sup> A number of such cases were brought to the notice of the Government when the Government of India ultimately decided to acquire the evacuee property in India.

<sup>78</sup> Sucheta Kripalani, "A Call for an Effective Policy", 3: 22, *Vigil* (8 November, 1952), 7.

<sup>79</sup> ———, *Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation, 1952-53* (New Delhi, 1953), 19.



the question of evacuee immovable property and constant pressure from the displaced and political leadership to take an effective step, forced the Government of India to take a decision regarding the acquisition of evacuee property in India. It decided in May, 1954, "to acquire rights, title and interests of evacuee owners in their properties in India and to utilize these properties for giving part compensation to displaced persons."<sup>80</sup> Consequently, the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act was passed in October, 1954 (subject to an agreement with Pakistan), empowering the Government to acquire evacuee properties for purposes of relief, rehabilitation and compensation.<sup>81</sup> The final Compensation Scheme, drawn up in pursuance of this Act was approved by the Parliament in September, 1955. This scheme replaced the Interim Compensation Scheme<sup>82</sup> sanctioned in 1953.

The Final Compensation Scheme, visualized the payment of compensation to over 4.50 lakh people. Under the scheme, the Government of India acquired all evacuee property valued at Rs. 100 crore and contributed Rs. 85 crore in the shape of Government built property which had been constructed for the displaced persons. A 'Pool' was thus created to be utilized to compensate displaced claimants for the immovable property left behind by them in Pakistan. The properties to the value of Rs. 10,000, each which accounted for 90 per cent of the evacuee property and 97 per cent of the Government built property were declared allottable. They were sold to displaced claimants and non-claimants at the "reserve price".<sup>83</sup> The loans advanced towards their purchase were adjusted against their claims.<sup>84</sup>

The scheme also laid down priorities in the payment of compensation as follows:

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 1954-55, 17.

<sup>81</sup> ———, *Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabilitation Rules*, 1955, n. 17, 26.

<sup>82</sup> According to this scheme, the Government had allotted evacuee property to the displaced persons, subject to agreement with the Government of Pakistan. The allotment of the houses was made only keeping in view the immediate needs of the displaced persons and in the absence of the agreement with the Government of Pakistan, this could obviously have no relation with the quantum of compensation that the refugees might otherwise have been entitled to.

<sup>83</sup> By "reserve price" means the price fixed by the government for the purchase of the government built property.

<sup>84</sup> ———, *India—A Reference Annual*, 1957 (Delhi, 1957), 151.

- (i) maintenance allowance grantees,
- (ii) inmates of Homes and Infirmaries,
- (iii) cash doles grantees,
- (iv) widows with verified claims in their own names,
- (v) T.B. patients,
- (vi) disabled persons,
- (vii) minors who were orphans,
- (viii) residents in foreign countries,
- (ix) cancer patients,
- (x) women who became widows subsequent to the filing of claims,
- (xi) claimants who themselves or their dependants were suffering from mental disability,
- (xii) students having verified claims,
- (xiii) claimants whose children were studying abroad,
- (xiv) claimants whose children were studying in medical colleges (allopathic), engineering, architectural or technological institutions in India or in the National Defence Academy.<sup>85</sup>

In pursuance of this Act, the Punjab Government laid down the mode of procedure under which applications were to be sent for compensation.<sup>86</sup> Full compensation, obviously, could not be paid because there was vast disparity between the property left by the non-Muslims in the West Pakistan as compared to that of the departing Muslims in the East Punjab. A system of "graded cut" was, therefore, introduced by which smaller claimants were ensured larger compensation. For instance, persons with claims up to Rs. 5,000 received as much as 55.6 to 50 per cent of their claims; while persons with claims up to Rs. 20,000 got 33 per cent of their claims. The percentage of payment against claims declined progressively so that a claimant for over a lakh of rupees received only 11.1 per cent of his claim. A ceiling was placed on compensation so that the amount was not to exceed two lakhs of rupees.<sup>87</sup> The cash payment, however, was to be made upto Rs. 10,000 and for the remaining amount evacuee and government built pro-

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* See also *Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabilitation Rules*, 1955, n. 17, 20-8.

<sup>86</sup> These rules are detailed in the *Displaced Persons Compensation and Rehabilitation Rules*, 1955, n. 17, 2-3.

<sup>87</sup> ———, *India—A Reference Annual*, 1957, n. 84. For detailed table on scale of compensation, see Appendix VI.

erty or plots were allotted in lieu of verified claims in accordance with a compensation scale. The displaced persons without verified claims were also given the right to purchase evacuee or government built property.<sup>88</sup>

Up to the end of December, 1956, a sum of Rs. 45.65 crores was paid in cash, Rs. 9.79 crores in property and Rs. 7.19 crores by adjustment of outstanding public dues advanced in the forms of loans from the Government for various purposes. Compensation to nearly all the persons falling under categories (i) to (vii) above has already been paid. A substantial number of claimants in categories (viii) and (ix) have also been disposed off.<sup>89</sup> For those who have claims of over Rs. 10,000 and are neither in occupation of allottable property nor have received any loan, auctions of saleable properties, are being held all over the country. These displaced persons can bid at the auctions and the value of the property purchased by them at the auctions is adjusted against their verified claims.<sup>90</sup>

### *Current Problems of Rehabilitation*

The rehabilitation of the displaced persons<sup>91</sup> proved quite complicated as there was difference in the occupational and economic pattern of the departing Muslims and in-coming non-Muslim migrants. The urban economy during the war and post-war years had been stretched to capacity and further economic assimilation was not possible. The urban rehabilitation schemes already undertaken by the Punjab (I) Government did not prove adequate to meet the needs of the displaced persons. It was necessary, therefore, to plan the economy in such a manner as to absorb all the displaced persons in gainful employment.

*Housing.* Nearly 47.50 lakh arrived in India from West Pakistan. Of these 50 per cent were settled on land and in ancillary occupations. About 90 per cent of the agricultural families were settled in the evacuee lands in the Punjab and Pepsu and the remaining 10

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 18-20. The property could be transferred to such displaced persons on the initial payment of Rs. 2,000 in rural areas or any other town and Rs. 5,000 or 33½ per cent of the value of property in other specified areas.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-5.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 84, 151. The urban rehabilitation schemes in the form of industrial townships, vocational and training centres and loans towards industrial establishments, house-building and educational loans were carried on as described earlier.

<sup>91</sup> Hereafter referred to as "D.Ps."

per cent on lands in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and so on. The urban displaced persons, however, proffered a really difficult situation as only 50 per cent of them could be settled in the evacuee houses. The Ministry of Rehabilitation agreed to bear the entire expenditure on the housing programme. The planning and implementation of the housing schemes in different states was, however, left to the various state governments. On the recommendation of the Ayyangar Committee, it was decided to give building loans to the co-operative Housing Societies and D.Ps. with a view to encourage private initiative in housing construction work.<sup>92</sup> Besides, 19 townships were set up in various states. The Central Government was directly associated with the construction of four of them—Nilokheri, Rajpura, Faridabad and Hastinapur.<sup>93</sup>

The Government of the Punjab (I) carried on most of the schemes already started such as, construction of houses and development of cities in various townships and colonies, development of Industrial Areas, grant of loans for construction of houses and business and the like, but they have not been completed so far. Besides, certain amenities like provision of drainage, roads and permanent water supply are being extended to the new townships. Up to the end of October, 1956, Rs. 4,79,48,000 had been spent on Housing Schemes in the Punjab.<sup>94</sup>

*Recovery of Loans.* A large number of D Ps. had been paid compensation by this time; therefore, it was considered necessary to discontinue loans to them.<sup>95</sup> Recovery of the urban loans, however, became a problem. In accordance with the terms for the grant of loans by the Centre to the State Government for Rehabilitation Schemes, the latter were required to repay the loans in equated instalments spread over a number of years varying from 6 to 10. It was apprehended by the Punjab Government that all the money advanced as loan might not be recovered. It, therefore, suggested to the Central Government that it would be willing to repay whatever amounts were collected from the D.Ps. Out of the total amount of Rs. 9,52,90,736 advanced as urban rehabilitation loans (Small urban loans, House building loans and Educational loans), a sum of Rs. 5,64,54,644 still remains to be recovered. Similar is the case of

<sup>92</sup> ———, *Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation, 1952-53*, n. 79, 7-8.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 1957-58, 46.

<sup>94</sup> Information collected from Department of Rehabilitation, Punjab.

<sup>95</sup> Loans to the D.Ps. were stopped with effect from 1 April, 1957

agricultural loans.<sup>96</sup> According to the present arrangements between the Punjab and the Central Governments, losses arising out of the recovery of these loans were to be shared equally.<sup>97</sup>

*Homes and Infirmaries.* Besides, there were a number of Homes and Infirmaries for the unattached women and children from West Pakistan who numbered nearly 36,000. This was a direct responsibility of the Government of India. Some of these Homes and Infirmaries have been transferred to voluntary Associations, for instance, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, All India Save the Children Committee, Trust for Sindhi Women and Children, Jainendra Gurukul Panchkula, the Ramakrishna Mission and the like. A Central Advisory Board consisting of the representatives of the State Governments, was established to advise on all matters pertaining to the moral and material well-being of the unattached women, the old, the infirm and their dependents.<sup>98</sup> In December, 1953, the Government of India appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Shrimati A. John Mathai to review the policy in respect of and the working of these Homes and Infirmaries. The Committee was required to make recommendations about their future reorganization, particularly in the light of the benefits drawn by the residents from the Interim Compensation Scheme and effective education and training facilities as provided therein.<sup>99</sup> On the recommendations of the Committee, a fairly large number of the inhabitants of these Homes and Infirmaries were dispersed on receiving compensation or after completing vocational and technical training. But this did not result in any appreciable reduction as fresh admissions, though restricted to hard and deserving cases, were continued for some more years. The average expenditure on these institutions from 1947-55 was nearly Rs. 100 lakh per year.<sup>100</sup>

*Rehabilitation of Industry.* The resettlement of the D.Ps. could

<sup>96</sup> Agricultural loans advanced upto 30 September, 1956, amounted to Rs.4,00,23,467, out of which only Rs. 1,47,40,374 including the interest was recovered. Similarly out of the total money advanced during the same period—Rs. 25,18,355, only Rs. 4,03,442 inclusive of interest was recovered.

<sup>97</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Memorandum to the Finance Commission*, 1956 (Chandigarh, 1957), 76. The Punjab Government, however, was not prepared to share even 50 per cent of the losses. She argued that since it was an all India problem, the losses should be entirely borne by the Government of India. The Central Government has conceded the demand and has agreed that the Government of Punjab should pay whatever amount was collected.

<sup>98</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation*, 1951-52, n. 79, 14-5.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 1953-54, 6. <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 1957-58, 51.

be planned on effective lines only by the rehabilitation and expansion of industry in the state. The Punjab Government was the first state to take advantage of the Government of India's State Financial Corporation Act, 1951. It set up its own Corporation on 1 February, 1953. Its objects are to offer medium and long-term financial assistance to the Industrial Concerns in the State, in one of the following activities:<sup>101</sup>

- (i) manufacture of goods, or
- (ii) preservation of goods, or
- (iii) mining, or
- (iv) generation or distribution of electricity or any other form of power.

The Finance Corporation was designed "to supplement the existing capital resources of the industry and of the commercial banks and not to supplant the same."<sup>102</sup>

The Government of India also started three types of schemes to step up industrial production:

- (i) Schemes administered by the Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment, Ministry of Labour;
- (ii) Schemes administered by the State Governments; and
- (iii) Schemes administered by the Ministry of Rehabilitation.

Nearly 12,635 D.Ps were trained under the Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment Scheme and 9,441 of them got training in regular centres organized by the Ministry of Rehabilitation<sup>103</sup> and thus were provided with the requisite technical qualifications which facilitated the finding of jobs and their subsequent rehabilitation.

The Industries Department of the Punjab Government is mainly providing technical education to supervisors, technicians and craftsmen. In order to encourage the private institutions imparting technical training, grants-in-aid to the tune of Rs. 25,800 (Rs. 18,000 for boys and Rs. 7,800 for girls) annually, were

<sup>101</sup> N. N. Kashyap. "Punjab Financial Corporation", *The Tribune*, 5: 1, Ambala (28 March, 1955).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Report, Ministry of Rehabilitation*, 1951-52, n. 79, 8.

awarded to the various recognized institutions in the state.<sup>104</sup>

The rehabilitation schemes on which nearly Rs. 60 lakhs have been spent since 1950-51 have turned out about 12,800 trainees. The Department had 27 institutions and schools to train students in leather, textile, dyeing and calico-printing, hosiery, engineering and other mechanical trades. Besides, there were nearly 13 Demonstration Training Parties for giving training in rural areas. In all 2,907 scholarships and stipends including two dozen scholarships for training abroad were granted.<sup>105</sup>

The partition of the Punjab facilitated the growth of certain industries in the province, for instance, industrialists of Gujranwala dealing in brass, after migration to the Punjab (I) installed 15 brass-rolling mills and 94 brass utensils making factories. This added to the already existing 11 brass-rolling mills and 2 brass utensil-making concerns at Jagadhri.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, before the partition, there was no sports industry in the eastern part of the Punjab; but now it is one of the most important industries in the Punjab (I). Already about 25 lakh worth of its goods are being exported to other states. The credit for the establishment of this industry goes to the initiative and hard work of the displaced industrialists from the West Punjab, who had to undergo many difficulties in the beginning due to paucity of accommodation, capital and skilled labour.<sup>107</sup> As a result of the continuous efforts, the Punjab (I) has made rapid strides in this field. At the time of the partition, there were about 600 factories registered under the Factories Act, giving employment to about 30,000 people while the number of registered factories went up to 1,204 in the year 1956.<sup>108</sup> Mainly because of its superior

<sup>104</sup> ———, "Technical Training in the Punjab", *The Tribune, Industries Supplement*, 1: 1, Ambala (28 April, 1954).

<sup>105</sup> ———, *Progress Report on First Five Year Plan and other Development Schemes in Panjab* (Chandigarh, 1956), 113.

<sup>106</sup> ———, "Good Progress in Metal Industry", *The Tribune, Industries Supplement*, 3: 7, Ambala (28 April, 1957).

<sup>107</sup> ———, "Bright Future for Sports Industry", *ibid.*, 4: 1.

<sup>108</sup> ———, *Note on Industrial Structure of Punjab* (Chandigarh, 1957), unpublished. The Punjab Finance Minister, S. Ujjal Singh, gives the number of factories in 1955 as over 2,000 giving employment to 75,000 persons. See "Punjab's Industrial Progress", *The Tribune*, 1: 6, Ambala (28 March, 1955). These figures do not tally with the figures given by the Industries Department referred above, which gives the number of factories in 1956 at 1,204 and number of workers employed therein at 54,586. Besides with a view to avoid certain labour laws, a number of big factories split up their factories. In Amritsar big

workmanship and durability of its products, it has built a national market for itself although abroad the Pakistan products are now beginning to offer competition.<sup>109</sup>

#### IV

#### DIFFICULTIES IN THE PROCESS OF URBAN AND RURAL REHABILITATION

##### *Urban*

The Punjab is still an industrially backward state. The Government of the Punjab has taken keen interest in the development of the industrial potential of the state; but its activity has remained confined to the development of small-scale and handloom industries and more particularly to the training of technical personnel for these vocations with a view to rehabilitate the displaced persons. The Punjab is primarily an agriculturist state which reveals the "unbalanced and lop-sided" character of its economy.<sup>110</sup> The Government of the Punjab is conscious of the fact that the problem of employment can be met to a considerable extent through industrial development in the State. Accordingly, the emphasis is now shifting on to rapid industrialisation. Under the First Five Year Plan the allocation for industrial development was only Rs. 53.44 lakh.<sup>111</sup> Under the Second Five Year Plan, however, a provision

factories have been converted into small units to gain exemption from the excise duty on cloth. Fragmentation of industrial establishments has been going on in Amritsar on a fairly large scale. The process is condemned, both by labour leaders and many industrialists as an unhealthy development which goes both against the interest of workers and industry. Thus it may not be correct indication of the progress of industry. However, the increase of nearly 24,586 workers employed in these factories is a definite proof of the progress made on this front.

See ———, "Fragmentation Spreading To Textile Industry", *Statesman*, 5: 4-5 (14 November, 1958).

<sup>109</sup> ———, "Small and Medium Industries Make Progress", *Statesman*, 5: 3, 4, 5 (13 November, 1958).

<sup>110</sup> Bhim Sen Sachar, "Industrial Planning in Punjab", *The Tribune—Punjab Industries Supplement*, 1: 1, Ambala (28 March, 1955).

According to the census of 1954, 65 per cent of the population in the Punjab is dependent on agriculture, 18 per cent on services, 9 per cent on commerce, 7 per cent on industry and 1 per cent on transport.

<sup>111</sup> ———, *Progress Report on First Five Year Plan and other Development Schemes in Punjab*, n. 105, 113. *The Punjab Government Gazette (Extraordinary)* gives the figures at Rs. 54.8 lakh. Under the First Five Year Plan, 26 schemes



of Rs. 1.4 crore was made for the development of large industries including Rs. 80 lakh for four Co-operative Sugar mills.<sup>112</sup>

*Finance.* There are, however, certain formidable handicaps in the development of the industry in the Punjab. Finance is one of the major factors of industrial production. The financial credit system of the state suffered a great deal as a consequence of the partition resulting in huge flight of the capital. In spite of appeals made by the Government to the financiers, industrialists and other people of the state "to shed all fears regarding instability in this border state",<sup>113</sup> the feeling of insecurity continued. Some of the industrialists who migrated from the West Punjab, have settled in the interior of the state and show preference for towns nearer Delhi. The capital feels shy of investment in the border towns. As a consequence there is chronic financial stringency. Industrialists, who can arrange for the funds required for industrial investment from their own resources, form only a small percentage. The large minority is dependent upon the institution of financing agencies for meeting their requirements. The commercial banks also do not advance long-term credit.<sup>114</sup> In such circumstances, the industrialists increasingly look towards the Government for financial aid. The imperative need for the rehabilitation of D.Ps gave a fresh urgency and importance to the problem of developing industry. The total expenditure on the industries in the form of subsidies, grants-in-aid and loans granted between 1947 to 1956 amount to Rs. 1,57,41,510—the Government of India's share being Rs. 1,27,17,648, nearly 70 per cent of the total.<sup>115</sup> The reluctance of private investors to finance the industry in the border towns and the consequent greater dependence of the latter on the government are the two most important factors affecting the economic life of the state.

*Lack of mineral wealth and proper utilization.* Large scale industry can be developed only if the two important minerals—iron ore and coal—are present in the area, but Punjab (I) does not appear to be

were started and actual expenditure on them was Rs. 45.86 lakh. In addition, Rs. 53.44 lakh were spent on Centrally sponsored schemes; most of this amount was used for loans to industries, cottage industries and handicrafts, handloom and sericulture also received attention. \*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>113</sup> C. P. N. Singh, *The Tribune*, Ambala (27 April, 1953).

<sup>114</sup> ———, *Financial Assistance For the Development of Small-Scale Industries in the Punjab* (Chandigarh, 1957), 1.

<sup>115</sup> Information collected from the Department of Rehabilitation, Punjab.

rich in these minerals. The partition has reduced the industrial potential of the Punjab (I). The state, however, is rich in other agricultural and mineral resources, for instance, forest products like soft wood, bamboo grass, reeds and other fibrous material which can provide a promising field for industrial development and consequent employment of the people. It is reported that the Districts of Mohindargarh, Kandaghat and Kangra are rich in iron ore, oil, calcite, lime stone, mica, antimony, lead and copper;<sup>116</sup> but the government has not made any proper assessment and has not been able to exploit this mineral wealth for rehabilitation purposes and industrial development.<sup>117</sup>

Apart from this the migration of canal colonists from West Punjab, helped in making experiments in the growth of cotton in the eastern districts (cotton was not grown in this area previously). As a result, the Punjab (I) began to grow nearly 8 lakh bales of raw cotton annually. Had weaving, spinning and manufacturing factories been permitted to be opened in the Punjab, a number of displaced industrialists might not have migrated to other provinces; besides a large number of unemployed D.Ps. could have been employed. It is, however, alleged that because of vested interests representing Ahmedabad and Bombay textile industries, the Government of India was against setting up cotton textile industries in the Punjab.<sup>118</sup> As a consequence, a major portion of the cotton grown here, is exported to various places outside the Punjab. On the other hand, the State imports 20 crore yards of cotton cloth from outside. There is marked disparity between the production of cotton and cloth, while it produces over 16 per cent of the country's cotton, the State's mill capacity is only 1 per cent of India's total.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Diwan C. Mehra, "Note" from the Secretary, Textile Manufacturers' Association in response to my questionnaire.

<sup>117</sup> ———, "Small And Medium Industries Make Progress", *Statesman*, 5: 3-4-5 (13 November, 1953). A Danish expert who surveyed the area on the Centre's invitation earlier in 1958, confirmed the Punjab authorities view that the Jamuna and Sutlej basins can each feed a newsprint factory. The scope for certain major industries, according to some sources, is enormous. "The State's extensive submontane ranges abound in raw materials for newsprint which is getting increasingly scarce". The Punjab forests abound in fir and spruce and it is estimated that if factories are established, nearly 30,000 tons of standard grade newsprint can be produced annually in the State.

<sup>118</sup> Diwan C. Mehra, n. 116.

<sup>119</sup> ———, "Small and Medium Industries Make Progress", *Statesman*, 5: 3-4-5 (13 November, 1958).

*Border Districts Economy.* The Punjab Government has taken no steps to rehabilitate the economy of the border districts. In fact some of the branches of Industries Department, for instance, the offices of the Dyeing and Finishing experts and Textile offices have been shifted from Amritsar to Ludhiana and Jullundur respectively. While this has been responsible for considerable demoralization of the industrialists of the border areas, it goes to the credit of those industrialists that after the partition, the textile industry of Amritsar has invested more than Rs. one crore on new machinery and buildings. The Indo-Pakistan tension is another important factor which adversely affected the economic life of these areas. While normal trade is moribund, smuggling is rampant with resultant adverse effects on the morale of the people. Though there is no panic as such at the moment, but the danger of hostilities between unfriendly neighbours, naturally, had its psychological effect on the people. It is suggested that the Government can restore confidence among the people in general and industrialists in particular by shifting headquarters of certain offices of the Punjab Industries Department to border areas, particularly, Amritsar and by building up industrial townships.<sup>120</sup>

One of the important steps that the Government took to facilitate the growth of industries was the financial assistance given to different co-operative societies set up by D.Ps. These schemes which came up in the form of work centres and other co-operative ventures in different cities and industrial townships, barring a few notable exceptions did not flourish on account of the following reasons:

(a) There was no tradition or training in the industrial co-operatives. They were started overnight due to the imperative need of the time to give technical training to the D.Ps. The members lacked co-operative character and their initiative and energy was tempered with a fair degree of rugged individualism.<sup>121</sup>

(b) To start with, the scheme proved successful against private economy, because of liberal quota provided by the Government in a "controlled economy", during the days of scarcity. With the withdrawal of 'control', they could not stand against private economy in the open competition.

(c) The officials and members of the Industrial Administration were not seasoned businessmen and lacked technique of business.

<sup>120</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Supplementary Memorandum* (Chandigarh, 1957), 17.

<sup>121</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "Small and Medium Industries Make Progress", n. 119.

The private businessmen usually adopted underhand and unscrupulous means to achieve their end. This, obviously, could not be done by the government sponsored co-operatives. On the contrary, red-tapism led to unusual delay and worked as a big handicap in competition with the open market. By the time, the Administration could receive the sanction of the officer concerned from the Industries Department, the need was over as private business would supply the material instead. In addition, there was lack of marketing facilities and working capital. Consequently, a number of running concerns were transferred to private individuals.<sup>122</sup>

### *Rural*

*Bogus and Excess Land Allotment.* The problem of the urban refugees was, thus, quite complicated, because it was concerned with a variety of classes. The resettlement of persons engaged in agriculture before migration appeared to be a simple proposition involving only distribution of land but because of general unsettled conditions and absence of revenue records and "Jamabandies" it became a very difficult process. The temporary allotment operations which started in the year 1947 were completed during the year 1950. The gigantic nature of land distribution and the speed with which it was carried through, led to a number of omissions and commissions in the allotment operations. In the days of lawlessness when favouritism and nepotism were rampant, the unscrupulous among the D.Ps. took advantage of the situation and managed to get bogus or excess land allotted for themselves. Numerous complaints were made by the dissatisfied claimants but they were not paid any attention and remained buried for a number of years. After continuous pressure, the Government of the Punjab agreed to review and revise the allotments on the basis of applications made by the aggrieved persons; but it is alleged that the State Rehabilitation Department staff did not co-operate. The Joint Rehabilitation Board of the Government of India, asked for all such cases for general check up, but the Punjab Rehabilitation Department in a note observed that there was no staggering revelation as only 1,200 standard acres of land had been unearthed as bogus. Consequently, the plan was abandoned. The note, however, proved to be false because the area unearthed during this period

<sup>122</sup> H. D. Shourie, *A Note on the Working of Nilokheri Township* (Chandigarh, Department of Rehabilitation), unpublished.

amounted to twelve thousand standard acres.<sup>123</sup>

The Government, nevertheless, realised the seriousness of the situation in the year 1956 when a large number of complaints were lodged with the Department. Preliminary inquiries into about 8,000 complaints, regarding bogus allotment of over 1,00,000 acres of evacuee land in the Punjab to the displaced persons from West Pakistan, revealed some startling information regarding the alleged tactics employed in obtaining or securing these allotments. It was alleged that the bogus allotments were made on an organized scale. The Department of Rehabilitation set up a separate Complaints Section in 1956 to deal with the pending complaints and to cancel bogus, double and excess allotment of lands and to undertake the unearthing of hidden evacuee area.<sup>124</sup>

### *Causes*

(i) The revelations of the facts regarding bogus allotment created new problems. The fall in the general standards of efficiency and the confusion that prevailed in the Land Claims Organization added to the difficulties. Besides allotment mechanism had been complicated as a result of the frequent changes<sup>125</sup> in the decisions of the government before full ownership of land was given to the allottees. In this changing process and in the absence of documents, the influential claimants got more land than their share. The scheme of land resettlement was based on the evacuee areas for which statements of "Khasra Numbers" were prepared for every village.

(ii) The scrutiny reveals that the records of rights pertaining to

<sup>123</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Tribune*, Ambala (25 May, 1958).

<sup>124</sup> As a result of the scrutiny during one and a half years 1956 to May 1958, this Section was able to retrieve 26,008½ Standard Acres in addition to unearthing of evacuee rural and urban agricultural lands to the extent of 400 acres. 14 Jamabandies have been detected to be tampered with and names of 339 displaced persons were found to have been introduced in the records giving them the benefit of land to the extent of 5,782 S.As. This was quite a shocking situation. The Ministry of Rehabilitation, Government of India, appointed a senior I.C.S. Officer in April, 1958 to investigate the alleged irregularities of allotment of agricultural evacuee land.

<sup>125</sup> Originally, Government favoured "group settlements" based on village to village settlement. Later, Government changed its policy and decided on temporary individual allotment in the light of Jamabandi documents which were exchanged at Wagha border. Then again, in February 1949, Government decided upon quasi-permanent allotment on verification of documents. Finally, in 1952, Government decided to give complete ownership of land.

the evacuee lands were not prepared up-to-date and in certain cases they were burnt during disturbances and no attempt was made by the local officials—"Patwaris"—to complete these valuable records. For instance, in village Hamira, tehsil and district Kapurthala, evacuee property to the extent of 2,231 Kanals worth lakh of rupees was misappropriated, mutilating the original record by forging the thumb impressions or signatures of the Muslim evacuees and by preparing bogus sale deeds.

(iii) In certain cases, evacuee agricultural rural and urban area was deliberately kept hidden and was not brought under evacuee pool by concealing the material facts about the alienation of lands by means of a registered deed in favour of Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan and the possession previously abandoned by local persons was retaken and the "Patwaris" did not incorporate the registered deed in the local revenue records.

(iv) In certain other cases, displaced persons, taking advantage of the uncertain conditions filed exaggerated, excess and bogus claims. They also got them verified orally by supporting each other's claims. This was exposed on the receipt of records from Pakistan; but records from Sind, N.W.F.P. and Bahawalpur were not made available. Consequently, a number of unauthorized occupants are still enjoying the benefit.

(v) A large number of claims were filed under different villages; but on the receipt of the list of evacuee property from Pakistan, they were found non-existent on record and allotment of several persons was cancelled. The latest disclosures in some cases show that these persons did not have any land whatsoever in these areas.

(vi) In addition, there were cases of double allotment. The major factors leading to double allotment of land were: (a) preparation of duplicate "Parcha claims", and (b) non-implementation of Orders passed during review and revision of allotment.<sup>126</sup>

(vii) A number of cases of excess allotment were reported to the Complaints' Section. The following were the main factors responsible for excess allotment:

(a) Non-Consolidation of "Parcha Claims".

(b) Errors in calculation of areas abandoned in West Pakistan.

<sup>126</sup> On appeal from unsatisfied displaced persons, new allotments were made to them; but in certain cases previous allotment was not cancelled, thus resulting in double allotment.

- (c) Errors in evaluation of net allotment.
- (d) Wrong determination of colony rights and class of area abandoned.
- (e) Wrong preparation of "Chhant Jamabandies".
- (f) Allotment made on temporary basis pending receipt of "Jamabandies".

(viii) The facts were revealed on the arrival of records from Pakistan; but the D.Ps. refused to hand over the excess or bogus land on the plea that they had abandoned land in a village other than the one they had entered originally. Since there was every possibility of some genuine cases, the government dumped the records at Wagha border for comparison with records of the other villages as and when submitted by Pakistan authorities. This resulted in unauthorized occupation of land, till the records were checked up again. Sometimes years passed before the truth could be discovered.

(ix) Besides, there was, sometimes, duplication of compensation to the displaced persons. The Government had made no distinction between rural and special allotment such as (a) allotment of suburban lands, (b) allotment in villages earmarked for garden colonies, (c) allotment of evacuee gardens, and (d) leases of urban evacuee lands. Many displaced persons received allotments in lieu of their urban evacuee lands and at the same time got compensation thereof from the Central Government.

(x) Sometimes delivery orders were not given to the proper persons and this led to impersonation and delivery of wrong possession to undeserved persons. It is estimated that nearly 10,000 S.As. will be added to the compensation pool when complete investigations are made. In certain cases, allotments were made in the names of those who were left behind in Pakistan and this was taken over by undeserved persons.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Information collected from Complaints Section (Jullundur, Rehabilitation Department, Punjab). The following are some of the specimen cases under various categories of bogus and excess allotment:

(i) Allotment made on oral verification in the absence of Jamabandies—village Lockett, tehsil Hansi, District Hissar, File No. 559 (2 February, 1958).

(ii) Wrong allotment due to wrong assessment of area abandoned by the Muslims. Tehsil Fatehabad, File No. 64 (6 April, 1957).

(iii) Wrong verification for urban area. File No. 958 (18 April, 1958).

(iv) Unauthorised possession by locals. Village Karalanbad, Tehsil Kapurthala, Complaint No. 1137.

(Continued next page)

## V

## APPRAISAL

A review of the rehabilitation policy of the Government reveals that the issue was shrouded in a number of complicated factors. Any effective planning for the resettlement of the displaced persons demanded a workable agreement with Pakistan on evacuee property. This was, however, not forthcoming. To start with, both the governments felt that all the migrants who had left their place of origin during the days of bloody carnage, would go back as soon as law and order was restored on both the sides. In fact the Government of India repeatedly asked the apprehensive non-Muslims to go back and assured them that full protection would be given to them. But soon, it was clear that the minorities on both sides were considered an undesirable element and were being forcibly driven out. The displaced persons had no intention of going back and considered themselves as the nationals of India. This was to be the starting point in any planning of the rehabilitation of these displaced persons.

The incoming displaced persons belonged to various economic groups and status. A number of them had left behind immovable property in the form of land and urban property, houses, factories, shops and the like. But a vast number of refugees did not have any immovable property. Their loss, however, was by no stretch of imagination less than that of those who had left property behind. These people had been deprived of all they had—utensils, clothes and occupations—they lived on. A healthy rebuilding of the society required that every displaced person should be given an opportunity to stand on his own legs. But the Government was not clear about the economic pattern that such a society should follow. The displaced persons divided in various economic groups were not united in their demand. The property owners demanded full compensation on the basis of the property left behind. A full compensation, however, was inconceivable as the quantity and quality of property left by the Muslim evacuees was far inferior to that left by the non-Muslims in Pakistan. The suggestion that there should be an equal

(v) Allotment made in name of persons who remained behind in Pakistan. Village Talwant Bhai, Tehsil Ferozepur, Complaint No. 324 (28 December, 1955).

(vi) Excess allotment, Complaint No. 3519 (20 February, 1957).



cut for all was obviously unjustifiable, for the small landholder or property-owner would have been hit hard by any such scheme. Wealth and influence go side by side and any such scheme would have meant first priority to the rich class. The scheme of compensation took into consideration only property-owners, but left hundreds and thousands of landless agricultural labourers and urban refugees, to themselves. In the prevalent atmosphere of corruption and nepotism even in this graded scheme, the rich and influential persons could have land and property of their own choice and sometimes in excess while the small landholders were allotted uneconomic holdings. The small landholders could not take to modern methods and as a result, such land remained uncultivable and unproductive. Things would have taken different shape if the government had given inferior land to the rich landlords and impressed upon them the use of modern methods. Such a scheme would have stepped up production and satisfied a large majority of small landholders who are dissatisfied even today, or, an experiment on co-operative farming could be made which would have been less complicated administratively and could satisfy a larger number, but it was alleged that the pro-landlord policy of the Congress Government was responsible for deciding against any such scheme.

## CHAPTER VII

### FAR-REACHING IMPACT OF THE PARTITION ON THE PUNJAB

THE partition of the Punjab upset the whole administrative machinery of the province and affected its social, economic and political life. Part of it, however, was of a temporary character. With the lapse of time, more efficient administration and adjustments, normal conditions were restored, but the partition at the same time introduced certain new factors which had far-reaching impact on the administrative and political life of this infant state and necessitated certain important administrative steps with regard to planning and building projects. It cannot be denied that after independence, a number of development projects have been taken up all over the country and the Punjab (1) is no exception to it; but in the Punjab, in addition, certain projects have been undertaken or expedited on account of the structural changes resulting from the partition, which had a bearing on the economic life of the state, for instance, the Chandigarh Capital Project, the irrigation projects and the Punjab armed police.

#### I

#### ADDITIONAL PROJECTS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE PARTITION

##### *Chandigarh Capital Project*

On the dismemberment of the Punjab, the eastern part was deprived of a seat of administration and a Secretariat. Simla was made into a provisional capital to start with, but it did not fulfil the requirements of a suitable capital. Its distance from the mainland of the Punjab was neither conducive to efficient administration nor to successful working of a democratic society because of its inaccessibility to the common man. Besides, it could not provide sufficient accommodation for all the offices of the Punjab Government and residential quarters of its staff. The offices, as a result, were spread over in different towns of the province.<sup>1</sup> All these

<sup>1</sup> Gopi Chand Bhargava, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, 1948-49—Budget: Estimate Speech (Simla, Var.)*, 16-7.

factors forced the government to consider the possibility of having a new capital and appointed a committee of experts to go into the details of the question.<sup>2</sup>

A number of places were proposed both from official and non-official quarters. A preliminary survey of towns like Amritsar, Jullundur, Phillaur, Ludhiana and Ambala was made and the desirability of each of these cities being chosen as the capital was examined. There were acute differences, regarding the location of the capital, even among the Government personnel and a real controversy started between conflicting interests. The idea of locating the capital in the vicinity of an existing town was ultimately given up due to a variety of reasons. As a result of the migration of displaced persons, the population of all towns, except Amritsar and Ferozepur, had more than doubled. Choice of any of these cities as capital would have involved a further increase in their population which obviously, would have adversely affected the life of the people of that city. Most of the towns lacked essential amenities, such as adequate drainage and water supply and consequently could not cater for a population far in excess of what they were originally designed for. They could not expand beyond a certain limit and the expenditure in providing amenities to the additional population and construction of official buildings and residential houses would have come to the same figure as for a new town. Moreover none of these towns could provide even one-third of the floor area required to house the Government offices, ministerial staff and buildings for the residence of officials and staff.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, it was decided that a new town "untrammelled by the traditions of the past" should be constructed and eventually the choice fell on Chandigarh.

It is not yet clear, as to who first mooted the idea. It, however, was approved in November 1950, in spite of objections from many quarters. One of the objections to the selection of this site, was that it was surrounded by "chos" which made it inaccessible in the rainy season.<sup>4</sup> The decision to have the new capital at Chandigarh also aroused great resentment among the villagers who were to be displaced. After prolonged negotiations over a period of 18 months,

<sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "New Capital for East Punjab", *The East Punjab*, 1: 10 (July 1948) (Simla, 1948), 169-73.

<sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "Why Chandigarh", *Our Punjab*, 3: 3 (Simla, March 1950), 51 and 82.

<sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Tribune*, 4: 1, Ambala (16 July, 1953).

the Government succeeded in persuading these villagers to move out and promised to give them in exchange land of the same grade and quality, in addition to provision of building material at controlled rates and compensation in cash money in case a house or land was not made available. The Government also promised other amenities like schools and dispensaries wherever these villages were to be settled. The decision to have the capital at Chandigarh involved dislocation of 17 villages covering an area of 10,970 acres and a population of 10,000 persons.<sup>5</sup>

The site at Chandigarh was given preference over all the other places, because it is a centrally situated place with respect to the territories of the Punjab as well as other administrative units in this area. It is about 150 miles from Delhi, Ferozepur, Amritsar and Gurdaspur and slightly less from Patiala and the outermost regions of Himachal Pradesh.

#### *Irrigation Projects*

The Punjab Government had not only to look after the displaced persons from the West Pakistan and finding out a seat of administration for the state, but had also to take initiative towards the economic integration of the displaced persons and make the Punjab self-sufficient. The partition of the Punjab created another problem. A large number of peasants who had converted the canal colonies into flourishing farms, by dint of their hard labour, after migration to the Punjab (I) found themselves stranded on small landholdings deficient in rainfall and devoid of irrigation facilities. Besides, with the partition, Punjab (I) lost the whole of its American cotton growing area in the West Punjab.<sup>6</sup> This deficiency had to be made up, if it wanted to be self-sufficient in the production of textiles even on a moderate scale. The partition had also left the East Punjab deficient in wheat production for the granary of India had gone to West Pakistan. Agricultural production is the mainstay of 65 per cent of its population. Improvement in agricultural production was the major aim of the government, and as a natural

<sup>5</sup> ———, *Our Punjab*, 3<sup>d</sup> 10, n. 3, 325.

<sup>6</sup> ———, *Bhakra-Nangal Project*, Vol. I, Part I, 1958 (Patiala, 1958), unpublished, 19. This objective of providing raw materials for textile industry was only partially achieved when the State started producing cotton. The product, however, could not be locally utilised for manufacturing textile goods due to other policy considerations. See above Chapter VI, 153.

corollary, irrigation came to occupy an important place in the economy of the state. The excessive food shortage in the country gave further impetus to the irrigation development.

The joint Punjab possessed a network of canals which were among the finest in the world. Out of the total cultivated area of 31 million acres as much as 13.7 million (nearly 40 per cent of the total land) was irrigated. The Eastern part of the pre-partition Punjab was almost entirely under peasant-proprietor ownership and did not possess any government lands known as crown waste land. The canal development was confined only to the Western side because of the strong political bias against the Eastern districts which were intensely nationalistic in outlook and firmly against foreign rule.<sup>7</sup> As a result of the division of the Punjab, the eastern part was left poorer both in irrigation,<sup>8</sup> development and agricultural production.

This formidable array of problems needed immediate attention from the Government in the new state. The new state had natural water, land resources, sturdy peasant energy, displaced engineers and the determination to rehabilitate its crippled economy and to remove the staggering burden of food shortage aggravated by the partition.<sup>9</sup> This could only be achieved by providing every sort of facility to agriculture which was in return dependent on irrigation development.

The Government, therefore, started working on irrigation schemes for the development of water resources. The river waters also, furnish a cheap source of power either directly or through generation of hydro-electric power which occupies an important place in the development of industry in the absence of coal and oil.

Irrigation schemes were enunciated from three points of view:

(a) As a direct result of the partition, for instance, the "Harike Project" which was constructed as a security measure.

<sup>7</sup> S. L. Malhotra, *Irrigation Picture of Punjab in the First Five Year Plan* (Chandigarh), unpublished.

<sup>8</sup> The East Punjab received only 20 per cent share in irrigation against 47 per cent in population and 34 per cent in area. Out of 31 weirs controlled canals in the Indus Basin, only 4 complete and one part canals came to the Punjab (I) which received less than 14 per cent supplies withdrawn from rivers. The total area irrigated by these canals was about 260 lakh acres, out of which the partition placed 50 lakh acres in India and 210 lakh acres in Pakistan. See *Progress Report on the First Five Year Plan and other Department Schemes in the Punjab* (Chandigarh, 1956), 96.

<sup>9</sup> ———, *The Indus Water Dispute—Facts and Figures* (New Delhi, 1954), 3.

(b) As an indirect result of the partition, for instance, multi-purpose schemes like Bhakhra Dam and other canals which were either expedited or constructed to irrigate the erstwhile non-irrigated area and to harness the river waters for irrigation purposes as far as possible.

(c) As offshoots of the above schemes, as for instance, the Beas Dam.

*(a) Schemes Necessitated by Strategic Considerations*

*Harike Project.* Eleven miles upstream from Ferozepur Headworks, the Sutlej river passes through Pakistan territory. After flowing for seven miles it re-enters Indian territory at a point four miles upstream of Ferozepur thus making a loop. From this loop the waters of the Sutlej can be diverted into Pakistan territory leaving Ferozepur Headworks high and dry. According to Indian sources, in 1948, the Government of Pakistan dug a channel from the river in their territory above Ferozepur drawing water in the Dipalpur Canal.<sup>10</sup> This channel was capable of sucking in all the river supply, leaving none for the Eastern and Bikaner Canals. As a result, irrigation on these canals would have been considerably reduced and large portions of population in the Ferozepur District and Bikaner could have been denied even drinking water. This exigency necessitated that the control point for water supply in these canals should be shifted to a safe point within Indian territories. Accordingly, Harike Project was undertaken.<sup>11</sup> The barrage was constructed across the river Sutlej at Harike a few miles downstream of the confluence of Beas and Sutlej in order to divert the water supplies into the Ferozepur feeder for utilization on the Eastern and Bhakhra Canals. It links up the Bikaner and the Eastern Canals and the Sirhind feeder.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the Rajasthan canal has also been planned which will take off from the Harike Barrage. This Canal is proposed to be the biggest canal in the world with 440

<sup>10</sup> ———, *Dawn*, Karachi (8 October, 1951). This charge was, however, categorically denied by the Pakistan Government. Instead, they alleged that the Indian Government wanted to 'dry up Sutlej Valley and imperil the lives of millions of Pakistanis. This is one of the disputed points between India and Pakistan on canal waters which has added to the tensions considerably.

<sup>11</sup> ———, *Progress Report on First Five Year Plan and other Development Schemes in Punjab*, n. 8, 107.

<sup>12</sup> Malhotra, n. 7, 5.

miles lined channel containing 20,000 cusecs of water. It will feed Rajasthan and will be used for navigation purposes as well.<sup>13</sup>

(b) *Projects as an Indirect Result of the Partition*

(I) *Bhakhra Dam*. The Bhakhra Dam Project, though, originally thought about in 1908 by Sir Louis Dane, and revised and elaborated from time to time in 1919 and 1939, was not taken up seriously until the partition of the Punjab.<sup>14</sup> Besides, the partition considerably changed the importance and planning of the project. The previous chief engineers were actuated by considerations entirely different from those by which the present engineers had to be guided. Punjab (I) had been reduced to a deficit area and the whole question had to be reviewed "with due regard to the optimum requirements of irrigation in relation to the kind of crops to be raised, rainfall, kind of soil, existing irrigation, development and depth of the sub-soil level, etc." The object was "to bring prosperity and contentment among the users and also to provide valuable food crops and long staple cotton in preference to spreading the water over maximum area, regardless of the adequacy of supplies."<sup>15</sup>

The project, which is proposed to be the highest in the world, involves the construction of a 740 feet high dam across the Sutlej in the Bhakra Valley. It will be 1,700 feet long at road level and will impound 74,00,000 acres feet of water. The Punjab Government, with a view to utilize the waters of all the three rivers, has undertaken certain other projects. They want to interlink the waters of these rivers in such a way as to utilize the surplus water of one river system in the other.

The Government, in addition, emphasized plans for major and

<sup>13</sup> ———, *Madhopur-Beas Link Project* (Patiala, File No. Madhopur-Beas Link Project, 1955), unpublished.

<sup>14</sup> ———, *Bhakhra Nangal Project*, n. 6, 8-10. The idea to construct a storage reservoir on the Sutlej originated in a note of Sir Louis Dane, Lt. Governor of the Punjab, in 1908. It was elaborated in 1919 when reservoir level was kept at R.L. (Reduced Level) 1,500 than the present designed level. It was to irrigate areas in Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Malerkotla and Bikaner State. But the project was deferred in preference to the projects in the Western districts. The Project was further revised in 1939 which raised the reservoir level. Irrigation of the Bist Doab was not within the purview of the scheme but the area was included in 1944. The height of the proposed dam was 680 feet while the present designed level is 740 feet above the foundation level.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

medium irrigation works and remodelling, repairing and extension of existing irrigation works.

The object of these schemes was to provide more water to the erstwhile unirrigated area but in the process, Pakistan was deprived of a part of the river water which originated in India and ultimately entered Pakistan territory. Some of the schemes given below led to the canal water dispute between India and Pakistan and accentuated the already existing tension between the two neighbouring countries.

(II) *Madhopur-Beas Link*. This scheme was envisaged to divert surplus supplies of the river Ravi to the extent of 10,000 cusecs for utilization in the Eastern canal, Shah Nahar Canal, Makhu canal and other areas.<sup>16</sup> In other words, the water of the river Ravi which was going to Pakistan was taken into river Beas by this project. It aimed at remodelling and strengthening of Madhopur Headworks and converting it into a barrage and construction of a subsidiary Regulator for passing additional supplies for Madhopur-Beas Link, remodelling the existing upper Bari Doab Canal and raising its capacity to 21,000 cusecs.<sup>17</sup> Pakistan grumbled that this link was a violation of the Inter-Dominion Agreement as by this project Pakistan headworks on river Ravi would be ultimately deprived of these waters. The work at Madhopur-Beas link was completed at top speed as a result of the World Bank's decision that projects already undertaken or near completion should be allowed to continue. On this information, the work at Madhopur link which was planned to be completed in 3 years<sup>18</sup> was carried out in one and a half years—1953-54 to 1955. Investigations are also afoot to divert the Chenab waters into river Ravi through Makhu Tunnels.

(III) *Sirhind Feeder Project*. By this project, the Punjab (I) plans to utilize river Ravi through Madhopur Link. Moreover the water in the river Sutlej will be saved which will increase the water-supply in Bhakra. The water can further be utilized in the W.J.C. Basin.<sup>19</sup> Construction work<sup>20</sup> on it was started in November, 1956.

—, *Progress Report on First Five Year Plan*, n. 8, 104.

<sup>17</sup> Malhotra, n. 7, 2.

<sup>18</sup> ———, *Department of Public Works* (Patiala, File Madhopur-Beas Link Project, 1955).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* File of Sirhind Feeder Project.

<sup>20</sup> ———, *Times of India*, 5: 1, Delhi (1 July, 1958).



*(c) Other Projects*

(I) *Pong Dam on Beas*. The object of this Dam is to feed the Punjab (I) Canals from Beas for the whole year with a view to make them perennial, and to increase the capacity of the Rajasthan and Shahnahar Canals.

(II) *Thein Dam*. The Government of the Punjab (I) is proposing to build a dam on river Ravi known as Thein Dam, in order to produce power and ease the water situation. In other words, by building this Dam India will control the waters of the river Ravi which is seriously objected to by Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> India also proposes to divert the Chenab waters by Chenab-Ravi Link through Mahru Tunnels and the Diversion Dam in Kashmir. By the completion of this scheme, all the three rivers will be linked in such a way as to utilize their waters wherever there is scarcity.

As a result of the irrigation facilities provided by the extension of canal water supply, the irrigated area in the Punjab (I) increased from 39.28 lakh acres in 1947-48 to 66.50 lakh acres in 1956-57. The Punjab (I) as a result made rapid strides in agricultural production. From a deficit of 35,000 tons in 1947, it became a surplus state.<sup>22</sup>

The Government plans to utilize the entire run-off of the three eastern rivers—Sutlej, Ravi and Beas, along with Yamuna in order to meet the requirements of the Punjab, Kashmir and Rajasthan.<sup>23</sup>

*Punjab Armed Police*

The partition of the Punjab had not only reduced the portion on the Indian side into a deficit province, but rendered the Punjab into a border state with an artificial boundary running for 301 miles with Pakistan. The protection of the boundary line was the foremost necessity as it was not only a boundary between the two Punjabs but between the two sovereign states whose relations were far from happy. Apart from this, the nature of the border necessitated the creation of a force which would protect the railway-line along the border. The number of vulnerable points, also, increased considerably as a result of the strategic importance of the border

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Gian Singh Rarewala, "Irrigation to Turn Punjab into Country's Granary", *Times of India*, Delhi (15 August, 1958).

In 1958, the Punjab Government exported one million bags of rice to deficit areas in addition to the other foodgrains.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

line. The Government employed the Border Police comprising advance pickets, striking reserves and headquarter reserves, along the border. The force also tackles numerous other problems which an artificial boundary is bound to create, the foremost being the interception of incursions from Pakistan.<sup>24</sup> The presence of a well-organized civil armed police helped to inspire confidence among the residents in border areas in general and the agriculturists in particular, who had to keep the land under cultivation.<sup>25</sup>

The strategic importance of the state, increased the number of vulnerable points from 24 in the pre-partition days to 139 points now.<sup>26</sup> Adequate protection of the vulnerable points is a matter which concerns the security of the entire country and additional police personnel had to be posted on these points. Consequent to the partition, railway lines which were not considered strategically important before the partition had to be classified as strategic and additional security measures had to be enforced for their adequate protection.<sup>27</sup>

Taking into consideration the security measures on the border, it was essential to collect intelligence on the border as well as across it and co-ordinate its activities with the other security staff. Addi-

<sup>24</sup> ———, *Supplementary Memorandum to the Finance Commission, 1957—Special Obligations* (Chandigarh, 1957), 7.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 9.

Consequently, the Punjab Government had to set up 93 border posts. In addition, border police was required in the matters of vehicles, wireless equipment, shelter and road communications and the like. It was calculated that 4,180 P.A.P. personnel would be needed to meet all the requirements at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 73,31,000.

The strength of the Punjab (P) Border Police on the other side is estimated to be 7,976 with 1 Commandant, 8 S.Ps., 33 D.S.Ps., 26 Inspectors, 120 S.Is., 1 Assistant, 1 Senior Clerk, 2 Junior Clerks, 195 A.S.Is., 641 M.Cs., 6,948 F.Cs. Total 7,976.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* The railway lines were classified as "Defence Department Lines" but in 1948, it was decided to entrust their protection to the State Police and thus they were also included in the "Provincial Lines" category. The total strength of "Provincial Lines" before the partition was only 408 miles (including 157 miles in the erstwhile Pepsu area); it has now increased to 912 miles (including 240 miles in erstwhile Pepsu area). Needless to say that "failure to protect these lines will imperil the security not only of the Punjab State but of the entire country". With that end in view an additional strength of 1 Deputy Superintendent of Police, 3 Inspectors, 14 Sub-Inspectors, 23 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 68 Head Constables and 1,109 Constables were employed involving an additional expenditure of Rs. 15,64,000 per annum.

tional staff for intelligence and for censorship of telegraph and telephone messages at Amritsar and Ferozepur was also engaged. The Indo-Pakistan Border created a number of problems from the point of view of security and the necessity to have an effective intelligence system to check subversive activities. It was, therefore, decided not to disband the District Security Intelligence staff which was brought into existence in 1942 to keep continuous vigil on the subversive elements during the 2nd world war. The need to have additional police strength and intelligence staff increased the financial liability of the state to the extent of nearly Rs. 1½ crore.<sup>28</sup>

The partition gave an opportunity to the unscrupulous businessmen to carry on a lucrative business by smuggling goods across the border. The problem assumed large dimensions because the division of the Punjab, which was developed as one unit, rendered both the areas deficit in certain goods, for instance, textiles, spices, "tila", etc., in the Punjab (P) and rock-salt, wheat, cotton, and the like on this side. In the absence of trade relations between the two countries, the businessmen indulged in illegal trade to meet the requirements on the other side and thus amassed wealth. In order to check this menace, the Punjab Government ordered the Punjab Armed Police to help the custom officials to keep a vigil on smugglers.

The problems arising out of the Punjab becoming a border state, thus, increased in large proportions and had their impact on Indo-Pakistan relations which intensified the existing tension between the two states.

## II

### IMPACT ON INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE LIFE OF THE PUNJAB

Basically, the administrative problems in relation to rehabilitation, irrigation and trade that the Punjab (I) had to face in the post-partition period were largely offshoots of the partition of the area and artificial nature of the boundary line. When the Radcliffe Award was declared, both the Indian and Pakistan armies were pushed from each side to occupy the boundary areas and in the

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* The non-recurring expenditure amounted to Rs. 79,59,100 and recurring came to Rs. 1,20,01,020.

process occupied some of the territories which under the Award, belonged to the other side.<sup>29</sup> The changing course of the river Ravi, also, threw up unauthorized land on both sides.<sup>30</sup> Needless to say, that unauthorized occupation of the vast territory by the other country, was bound to raise a number of disputes. The absence of cordiality in the mutual relations between the two countries, intensified the existing tensions and gave rise to numerous disputes in the three border districts of the Punjab.<sup>31</sup>

### *Boundary Line Disputes*

There have been frequent clashes in the border areas. The lot of the people living in these areas can be well imagined, for they were never certain about their citizenship. It was difficult to determine as to which laws were applicable to the areas left on the adverse side. This situation leads to a number of administrative and legal complications. The disputes have mainly arisen on account of the following reasons:<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Department of Police, Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh.

This action resulted in throwing 20,829 acres of Indian territory, as laid down under Radcliffe Award on the Pakistan side. Similarly, 25,619 acres of Pakistan territory fell on the Indian side.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* The river action was responsible in turning over 32,152 acres of Indian land to Pakistan and 30,203 acres of Pakistan territory on the Indian side. The land area forcibly held by Pakistan is 83 acres and that held by India is 59 acres.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<i>Gurdaspur</i>	<i>Amritsar</i>	<i>Ferozepur</i>
1. Kahaulwari-Ranu area	1. Ranian	1. Hussainiwala Headwork and Gatti Kamalwala
	2. Gajjal	
	3. Wan	
2. Ujh Bund	4. Muthian	2. Chuhriwala and Sowana
	5. Chak Ladhake	
	6. Pul Kanjri	
3. Dera Baba Nanak Bridge	7. Daoke	3. Sulemanki Headworks
	8. Sarja Masja	
	9. Naushehra Dhalla	
4. Gatti Chaumtra	10. Chinna Bidhi Chand	4. Gutti Dhandi Qadian
	11. Sunkatra	5. Sowarwati
	12. Kalas	6. Jhangar
5. Daulat Chak Enclave	13. Mehdipur	7. Gatti Ajaib Singh

<sup>32</sup> Information collected from the Police and Partition Branch Files on Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Ferozepur.

- (a) Acceptance of the Radcliffe Award in principle, but difference of opinion regarding the demarcation of the territory on its lines,
- (b) disputes arising out of non-transference of the territory to the rightful country for strategic reasons and agricultural considerations,
- (c) differences over the interpretation of the Radcliffe Award,
- (d) disputes arising out of forcible occupation of property across the border—revenue, land and railway line,
- (e) disputes arising out of constructing bunds and inundating villages on the Indian side.

Besides, the fallow lands lying on the border, have invariably proved the chief bone of contention between the armed forces of the two Punjabs. It is alleged by the Indian officials that after raising preliminary frivolous objections as to the ownership of the piece of land which they want to occupy, they (Pakistan men) managed to get the area declared as “disputed one” and insisted on adjudication over it from higher authorities. A few days before the discussions, it is alleged, they would surreptitiously march into it and entrench themselves overnight with a view to strengthen their claim over the disputed land on the basis of this possession.<sup>33</sup>

There have been prolonged discussions between the Government representatives of both sides. The Key-Thimayya Agreement of 25 August, 1949, did not clearly define the boundary line but agreed on a workable arrangement to avoid clashes on the border. In the case of the rivers, they decided midstream to be taken as the boundary line. But the agreement was never ratified formally and remained only a gentleman’s agreement which could easily be defied as it suited the national interests of a country. Both the governments continuously felt the necessity of correctly demarcating the boundary line and discussed the issue on various occasions at different levels. Nothing, however, came out of these negotiations, during the period under review, because the country which was in possession of extra territory, refused to hand it over to the rightful owner. Accordingly, a *de facto* boundary line came into operation instead of the *de jure* line as given in the Radcliffe Award.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> File No. 40/29/49-V. From Ch. Ram Singh, Commandant (Chandigarh, Department of Police), P.A.P. to I.G. Police, Simla, No. 586D/SB (17 September, 1952).

<sup>34</sup> File No. 40/29/49-V (Chandigarh, Department of Police), *unpublished*.

The situation gave rise to a bitter controversy between the two countries. Many cases were brought to the notice of the authorities when certain persons working at their fields were dragged by the police officials of the other country. After a correspondence the I.G. Police, Punjab (I) and I.G. Police, Punjab (P) reached an agreement. By this it was decided that such unwary persons who had been rounded up for crossing over inadvertently, should be returned to the opposite number on the other side if it was a genuine case of unintentional crossing. In spite of the agreement, however, there was frequent trespassing and violation of the territory resulting in continuous firing. The people living in the border area naturally got panicky and started moving away from there. It was an unhappy situation which no government was prepared to face. To restore the confidence of the people, a joint statement was issued by the D.I.G., West Pakistan and D.I.G. and Commandant, P.A.P., Jullundur, on 15 April, 1956. It declared that the object of the border police of India and Pakistan was to maintain peace on the border line. It was, therefore, the duty of the border officials and police to use patience and understanding in dealing with each other. Consequently, it was decided that there should be no picket (Morcha) within 400 yards on each side. With a view to check frequent firing incidents, the patrolling party of each side should keep with it a white flag which should be shown immediately whenever there was any dispute on any issue like possession of territory of the other country. It was also agreed that the post authorities should be immediately informed and in case of disagreement and if necessary, the Commandant might be asked to intervene.<sup>35</sup>

The statement exhorted the border police and Patrol parties of both the countries to maintain cordial relations and hold border meetings at suitable places in the interiors of the border line. It was necessary to maintain *status quo* and promote mutual goodwill in the areas particularly when the boundary line was not clearly indicated.

All these recommendations, however, proved inadequate in the face of hostile relations between the two countries. To put an end to these disputes, it was suggested that a barbed wire should be put up throughout the border line, but the suggestion was dropped

<sup>35</sup> ———, *Agreement regarding the return of arrested persons on the Border*. D.O. No. 7815/SB (13 July, 1957), D.O. Nos. 9497/A (18 June, 1952) and 5/2240/52 (8 July, 1952) (Chandigarh, Police Department).

on account of the enormous cost involved. The problem of demarcating boundary between the two countries on the Western side was comparatively easier for out of 301 miles long boundary,<sup>36</sup> the riverine sector comprises more than 200 miles. The problem of 'wrong' side areas and islands in the rivers, however, formed part of the wider issues of the demarcation of the boundary between Punjab (I) and Punjab (P) on the basis of Radcliffe Award.

The demarcation of boundary line, however, was a laborious process as it meant checking up every inch of land from revenue records, of the areas on both the sides as given under the Radcliffe Award. The Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan decided in favour of installing pillars on the mutually agreed boundary line. The work was taken up in the winter<sup>37</sup> of 1956.

The installation of pillars, obviously, could not solve the problem of disputed areas<sup>38</sup> which were the perennial source of conflict between the two countries. Consequently, the two governments tried to resolve the dispute at the highest level.

### *Smuggling*

Another difficult problem that the Punjab (I) had to face was the illegal trade which the unscrupulous businessmen carried on across the border. To start with, cloth, brocade and other things which were scarce in Pakistan were passed on from this side, but later it was replaced by the more lucrative trade of gold smuggling. Gold smuggling got impetus when the Goa border was sealed and in 1956-57 assumed alarming proportions as it was estimated that gold was being smuggled into Punjab (I) at the rate of 10,000 tolas per day.<sup>39</sup> In fact the gold smuggled across the Indo-Pakistan border "is no longer being measured in tolas but in maunds", a custom official observed and if nothing was done to check the flow of illicit gold, it was feared that by the end of the Second Five Year Plan "the country will have lost about 180 crore in

<sup>36</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, D.O. No. 37302 (6 December, 1958) (Chandigarh, Partition Branch, Civil Secretariat). The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr, Feroze Khan Noon, however, gave the boundary line as 325 miles.

<sup>37</sup> By 31 March, 1959, total length of 160 miles boundary line was demarcated and 1,172 pillars were installed. (Information collected from the Partition Branch, Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh.)

<sup>38</sup> There are only two major disputes on the Western boundary—Hussaini-wala Headworks and Suleimanke Headworks, both in Ferozepur district.

<sup>39</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Times of India*, 1: 7, Delhi (23 April, 1957).

valuable currency". It was certainly an alarming situation. It was apprehended by certain sources that there was an international plot to cripple the country's economy and create economic difficulties for India.<sup>40</sup> The economies of the transactions centred round the fact that gold in this country was twice as costly as in West Asian countries from where it was smuggled. It was then passed on to private hands who hoarded it in the shape of jewellery and gold bars. In return Indian currency went out of the country and found its way through Pakistan to free ports like Bahrein or to banks in Switzerland, France and England.<sup>41</sup> For every tola of gold brought into India, the net profit was Rs. 21. If 10,000 tolas were smuggled in daily, there was a clear profit of a little more than Rs. 2 lakh a day.

The smugglers evolved novel devices to smuggle gold. The custom authorities discovered it in the parts of cars, soles of shoes or in the hollow legs of a cot.<sup>42</sup> It was physically impossible for the custom officers to check smuggling on the 301 mile long border. To combat smuggling, therefore, it was imperative to get the co-operation of the Police to seize smuggled goods. The P.A.P. was brought into operation on all the pickets, against the smuggling menace. An anti-smuggling squad of the police was stationed at Amritsar to help the customs authorities.

The Indian Sea Customs Act was amended with a view to enable the customs authorities "not only to seize smuggled goods and levy on the persons concerned fines up to three times the value of the articles seized, but also to prosecute the culprits who can be awarded imprisonment upto one year."<sup>43</sup> The customs authorities also tried to reorganise their anti-smuggling machinery, to have greater vigilance on the smugglers and in the important markets in the Punjab and U.P.

The custom authorities in India, however, were puzzled at the Pakistan Government's comparative indifference to large-scale smuggling going on in that country which was interpreted by some sources as one of the methods to create economic difficulties for India.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (28 April, 1957).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* (10 April, 1957).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* (28 April, 1957). Previously the Customs officials could only seize the smuggled articles and impose fines but could not prosecute the persons concerned. The Foreign Exchange Regulations no doubt provided for prosecution, but the term of imprisonment under the Regulations and their applicability was extremely restricted. <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*



Gold smuggling provided an alluring trade to the people in the border areas. It had its impact on the moral conduct and occupations of the people. The margin of profit tempted them to indulge in this trade. At village Kakkar in district Amritsar, a majority of families, suspected of carrying on this trade, were alleged to have lakhs in their possession. Consequently, the people started losing interest in land cultivation. It was apprehended that if this practice continued, the land in these areas would be completely neglected and it would have a terrific effect on the valour and patriotic sense of the people of these border areas.

The problem, in addition, added to the responsibility of the P.A.P. Though checking of smuggling was the duty of custom officials, but since border-line protection was the function of the P.A.P., the main burden of watch and vigil of the smugglers fell on the shoulders of P.A.P. A large number, however, escaped unnoticed. It was estimated that only 10 per cent of the smugglers were caught and 90 per cent of them carried on the illegal trade unabated. Since there was no law to question the means by which a private businessman accumulated his wealth, the illegal trade continued.

The amount of smuggled gold made one to believe that at the back of the ring were rich and powerful persons on both sides who could afford to gamble with millions of rupees. They sometimes employed agents or persons to carry gold to the other side and themselves remained in their respective countries.<sup>45</sup> It is alleged that the crime was carried on with the connivance of the Pakistan officials and some of the Indian Police officials. The government took a serious notice of the situation. As a result, the conditions have improved a good deal, though smuggling still remains one of the major administrative problems both for the Central and State Governments.

### *Canal Water Dispute*

One of the most controversial issues which has been responsible for the increasingly tense relations between the two neighbouring countries, is the Canal Water Dispute.<sup>6</sup> The issue assumed an international character and attracted the attention of some notable authorities on international law towards the solution of the problem.

<sup>45</sup> Information collected by discussion with P.A.P. and Custom officials at the field trip.

As already stated,<sup>46</sup> the partition of the Punjab divided the Punjab rivers and canals. Out of the six rivers which watered the United Punjab, three—Indus, Chenab and Ravi—flow through Kashmir to the West Punjab while two—Sutlej and Beas a tributary of the latter—rise in the East Punjab and flowing long in the area subsequently join the Indus. Dams had been built on these rivers at suitable places. As a result of the partition, the artificial boundary line fell across the Indus basin and its eastern tributaries, the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi and the Sutlej—the Beas remaining wholly in the East Punjab.

The Indus (1,800 miles long) is the longest river in the Indus Basin and has the largest water-supply. Next to it are Jhelum and Chenab in terms of water supply. The remaining three tributaries, the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej, are comparatively poor in water supply and together carry about one-fifth of the flow of the entire system. More than 46 millions—equal to the entire population of Italy—live by the waters of these rivers in the Indus Basin in India and Pakistan.<sup>47</sup>

The Indus Basin Dispute which became an international issue after the partition, can be traced as far back as 1920 when the Bombay Government was apprehensive about the effects of the Punjab Schemes (including the proposal of Bhakhra Dam) on the Sakhar Barrage. According to the Tripartite Agreement of 1920, between the undivided Punjab, Bikaner and Bahawalpur, the West Punjab Canals had no right to the Sutlej waters and at the most had only a residuary interest in them, after the requirements of the proposed Bhakhra Project and other canals in the East Punjab, had been met with.<sup>48</sup> In 1934, the Anderson Committee was appointed to consider various Governments' rights, but being more or less a domestic issue, the conflicting claims were mainly dealt with as technical matter. The dispute, however, took a political and legal shape at the time of the partition of the country. The Radcliffe Award was silent on the issue of the division of these waters.

As political and religious differences took the shape of bitter partisan conflicts, it became apparent that the two States would have to deal with a number of social, political and economic pro-

<sup>46</sup> See above, Section I., 163-64.

<sup>47</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Indus Water Dispute—Facts and Figures* (New Delhi, 1954), 2.

<sup>48</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Times of India*, Delhi (11 July, 1954).

blems including the canal waters. A Partition Committee was set up in 1947 to negotiate "vital and delicate issues" between the two Punjab. The Committee, however, was not able to solve the problems that followed from cutting the rivers and canals in an arbitrary manner due to an artificial boundary between the two States.<sup>49</sup>

The question was, then, referred to a Sub-Committee of Indo-Pakistan officials who agreed "on a basis for the future maintenance and operation of the two canals which were to be served by the new boundary." The Partition Committee did not accept their proposals but referred the matter to two experts for further negotiations. As a result of the recommendations, a "Standstill Agreement"<sup>50</sup> was signed on 18 December, 1947. According to it the same proportion of water supply from the rivers concerned was allowed to the parties as had been permitted to flow downstream in the past. The Agreement was to expire on 31 March, 1948. It was specified in the Agreement that the parties "may... execute a further agreement for any period subsequent. . . ." Since no new agreement was reached between India and Pakistan, upto 1 April, 1948, the Indian authorities discontinued the delivery of waters to Pakistan through the two canals in the Indian territory—the Upper Bari Doab Canal (from Madhopur Headworks) and Dipalpur Canal (from Ferozepur Headworks).<sup>51</sup>

The discontinuance of water delivery by the Punjab Government to the West Pakistan led to immediate meetings, first between engineers and then the representatives of the two Governments at the "highest level". As a consequence the Delhi Agreement of 4 May, 1948, was signed—the flow of water, however, was restored prior to the agreement at Pakistan's request.<sup>52</sup> The Delhi Agreement clarified the basic position of India and Pakistan as agreed between the two countries.

The East Punjab Government contended that under the Punjab Partition (Appropriation of Assets and Liabilities) Order, 1947, and the Arbitral Award, "the proprietary rights in the waters of the rivers in (the) East Punjab vested wholly in the East Punjab Government" and that the West Punjab had no share of these waters as a matter of right. The West Punjab Government, however, disputed this contention on the plea that "the point has conclusively been decided in its favour by implication by the Arbitral Award

<sup>49</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Indus Waters Dispute—Facts and Figures*, n. 47, 6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

and that in accordance with international law and equity, (the) West Punjab has a right to the Waters of the East Punjab rivers."<sup>53</sup>

Under the Agreement, the East Punjab Government agreed to revive the flow of water into the two canals on certain conditions out of which two were disputed by the West Punjab: (1) the right of the East Punjab Government to levy seigniorage charges for water and (2) that the capital cost of the Madhopur Headworks and carrier channels should be taken into account. The West Punjab Government recognized the natural anxiety of the East Punjab Government "to discharge the obligation to develop areas where water is scarce and which were underdeveloped in relation to parts of (the) West Punjab." The East Punjab Government, too, without prejudice to its legal rights, assured the West Punjab Government that it had no intention to withhold water supply suddenly without giving it time to tap alternative sources.

The West Punjab Government agreed to deposit immediately in the Reserve Bank such *ad hoc* sum as might be specified by the Prime Minister of India. It was also agreed that further meetings would be held between the two Governments' representatives on the use of water supply from these canals.<sup>54</sup> The quantity of water to be supplied was to rest entirely with the Chief Engineer of the East Punjab though they agreed to the periodical joint exchange of observation of the water supply in the two canals. The Government of India in the meanwhile forwarded the Agreement of 4 May along with others for registration with U.N. Secretariat<sup>55</sup> and publication by it on 22 September, 1949.

The Agreement was followed both by India and Pakistan for many months; but the issue was revived when the Kashmir problem was being fervently discussed in the United Nations. Speaking in the Security Council on 8 February, 1950, Sir Zafarullah Khan, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, remarked that India obtained the agreement under duress, for, under the then circumstances Pakistan had to bow down before its stronger partner and submit

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* Inter-Dominion Agreement of 4 May, 1948, on the Canal Water Dispute was signed by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, S. Swaran Singh and Shri N. V. Gadgil on the Indian side and Messrs. Ghulam Mohammad, Shaukatt Hayat Khan and Mumtaz Daultana on behalf of the Pakistan Government.

<sup>55</sup> F. J. Berber, "The Indus Water Dispute", *The Indian Yearbook of International Affairs* (Madras, 1957), 54.

to its conditions on account of the inevitable consequences that would have followed in case of her refusal.

Pakistan started violating the conditions of the "Water Treaty", regarding depositing money with the Reserve Bank of India agreed on 4 May, 1948, and intimated India that it had set up an alternative E.S.C.R.O.W. arrangements and denounced the treaty as having been signed by them under "duress".<sup>56</sup> They also wrote to the U.N. Secretariat that the agreement was "without present effect". The Government of India refused to accept the unilateral abrogation of the treaty and contended that the Delhi Agreement did not contain any provision "for such unilateral termination" nor did the certified statement of Pakistan contain any indication of the acceptance of the notice of termination. The Government of Pakistan did not send any notice prior to 10 May, 1950, or even 23 September, 1950, that 4 May Agreement was not binding on them. The Government of India had informed Pakistan that they were unable to accept any repudiation or notice of termination of the Agreement. The May Agreement was registered with the U.N. Secretariat<sup>57</sup> on 10 May, 1950.

The Water Agreement was followed by four years of negotiations between the two countries when unsuccessful attempts were made<sup>58</sup> to reach some settlement. India suggested a joint technical survey of the Indus Basin so that both the Governments might know the facts of the situation, for India contended that there was enough water in the Indus Basin to fulfil the requirements of India and Pakistan by some construction here and there to utilize the water.<sup>58</sup> But it was not agreed to by Pakistan as she felt there was no need and data already collected were sufficient for the purpose.<sup>59</sup> Instead, Pakistan proposed that the matter should be referred to the United Nations or to the International Court of Justice under Article 7

<sup>56</sup> S. L. Malhotra, *Note on Indo-Pakistan Water Dispute*, 30 January 1954, (Patiala, Punjab Irrigation Branch), unpublished.

<sup>57</sup> Berber, n. 55, 54-5.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 10. Pakistan uses 66 million acre-feet of irrigated water a year, India uses only 9 million. The total annual flow of the Indus system of rivers, after allowing for losses and gains in the rivers, is about 150 million acre-feet. Thus about 75 million acre-feet flow went unused into the Arabian Sea every year (An acre-foot is an irrigation measurement unit, the amount of water required to cover an acre of land to a depth of one foot—1 cubic foot per second flowing for 12 hours—2,72,000 imperial gallons).

<sup>59</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *New York Times* (1 May, 1952).

of the U.N. Charter. While not disagreeing with Pakistan's suggestion to adjudication, Mr. Nehru recommended that attempts should be made to solve the dispute without going into complicated legal issues. He proposed that an *ad hoc* tribunal consisting of two judges from Pakistan and two from India should be set up to go into the matter for they would be better qualified than the International Court of Justice sitting thousands of miles away.<sup>60</sup> In case of deadlock, nevertheless, the dispute might be referred to the International Tribunal. Mr. Mohammad Ali, the Pakistan Prime Minister, interpreted this stand of the Government of India as one of using "dilatatory tactics". Such an allegation, however, was not correct, for India did not reject arbitration or judicial determination as a method of settling disputes which were not settled by negotiation or mediation.<sup>61</sup>

The dispute, in the meanwhile, attracted the attention of some international authorities. Mr. Lilienthal, Head of the Seven-State Tennessee Valley Authority,<sup>62</sup> visited India in 1951 and in an article in the "Collier" Weekly on 4 April emphasized the role that the proper development of the canals in the Indus Valley could play in the Indo-Pakistan relations. He recommended that since it was not a "religious or political problem but a feasible engineering and business problem" and as "river pays no attention to partition", the whole system must be developed as one unit-built and operated as one unit like the seven states T. V. A. system in the U.S.A. He emphasized that the problem was to store up the waters now running to waste into the sea and distributing them by engineering works in canals by equitable distribution in both the countries.

Mr. Lilienthal, however, justified Pakistan's legal claim to the Indus waters but clearly laid down that there was the need of active partnership between the two countries which could not be possible if India was antagonised by Pakistan. For "the army with bombs and shell-fire could not devastate a land as thoroughly as Pakistan could be devastated by the simple expedient of India's permanently shutting off the sources of water to keep the fields and the people of Pakistan alive." He further said that "this bitter controversy between India and Pakistan involves life itself for about 42 million

-, *The Hindu*, Madras (29 November, 1950).

-, *Dawn*, Karachi (14 February, 1953).

<sup>62</sup> Hereafter referred to as T V.A.

people... it is pure dynamite, a Punjab powder keg."<sup>63</sup> Mr. Lilienthal indicated that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development might finalise such a scheme if jointly worked out by the representatives of India and Pakistan and the World Bank.

The World Bank took up the suggestion made by Mr. Lilienthal and proffered help on 8 November, 1951. India and Pakistan agreed to accept the offer. A working party was accordingly set up by India and the other by Pakistan who with the help of an engineer nominated by the World Bank were entrusted with the task of preparing a comprehensive long range plan of specified engineering measures to procure supplies to each country from the Indus and its distributaries.<sup>64</sup> The working party which held its meetings in Washington in May-June, 1952, worked in a "cooperative and hopeful spirit" and agreed on the outline. After carrying studies in their respective countries, they re-assembled in Washington in September, 1953, to work out a comprehensive plan of development.

The engineering approach, however, "was clouded by outcries from partisan extremists in Pakistan during this period."<sup>65</sup> There was a pronounced drought all over the Indus Basin in September, 1952, which resulted in extreme hardship in a large part of the irrigated areas. This was taken as a deliberate attempt to deprive Pakistan of its "legitimate riparian rights". The issue was linked up with Kashmir. The then Chief Minister of the Punjab (P) in a speech on 8 January, 1953 said:

"This is the threat that occupation of Kashmir holds for this country. . . . With Kashmir in Bharati hands, Pakistan is helpless against diversion of its water, defenceless against the frequency and severity of floods and unable to counter the advanced stage of soil erosion. Diversion of waters would leave little in the way of sub-soil resources to be tapped by any practicable feat of engineering. This is the danger that confronts Pakistan and heightens the urgency of the Kashmir problem. The two problems cannot be dealt with separately. In the solution of one lies the solution of the other."<sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup> David E. Lilienthal, "Another 'Korea' in the Making" a reprint from *Collier's Journal*, 4 August, 1951 (Delhi, Ministry of Irrigation and Power, Government of India).

<sup>64</sup> ———, *The Indus Water Dispute—Facts and Figures*, n. 47, 8-9.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.      <sup>66</sup> Syed Hussain Muhammad, *Dawn* (8 January, 1953).

He expressed his fear that the canal water dispute had the seeds of developing into a "first class international crisis."<sup>67</sup> The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammad Ali, alleged that diversion of the Sutlej waters into the Bhakhra canals was responsible for shortage of water in the Pakistan canals. According to him, by this action, Pakistan's food production was threatened.<sup>68</sup> An intensive propaganda was started by the Pakistan press, political organisations and officials after the Bhakhra Canal system was opened. Some individuals and organisations went to the extent of raising a slogan of "Jihad" against India. Even "Shuba Khawateen" passed a resolution that the women of Pakistan were fully prepared "to sacrifice their all for the honour, defence and prestige of the country."<sup>69</sup>

The Indian Government categorically denied Pakistan allegations and by available statistical data proved that the rate of flow and actual supplies of water into Pakistan canals in the first two weeks of July, 1954, had actually increased<sup>70</sup> from 30,680 cusecs on 2 July, 1953 to 1,78,625 cusecs on 20 July, 1954. A spokesman of the International Bank also stated on 9 July, 1954 that the opening of Bhakhra Canals had been taken into consideration in their discussion but in Mr. Black's view, they did not present any new problem as the flow of water was sufficient for the needs of both India and Pakistan.<sup>71</sup>

The tense atmosphere in both the countries, naturally, affected the talks at Washington. The Working Parties of India and Pakistan submitted their plans for the development of Indus Basin to the World Bank. While Indian engineers proposed a comprehensive plan for development of the entire Indus Basin, Pakistan engineers prepared a plan only on the basis of requirements of Pakistan.<sup>72</sup> Besides, "these requirements were not described in relation to the actually existing supplies but gave a final figure totally unrelated to existing supplies."<sup>73</sup> The proposals made by the engineers of the

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* (26 January, 1953). Sir Zafarullah Khan also had spoken in the same strain on 8 February, 1950, in the Security Council.

<sup>68</sup> ———, *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1952-54, 13790.

<sup>69</sup> ———, *Dawn*, Karachi (10 July, 1954). These charges, however, were emphatically denied by Indian Government and Indian Press. The Indian Press commented that the main Pak motivation was to make out a strong case for an American Wheat Loan. See *Times of India* (13 February, 1953).

<sup>70</sup> ———, *The Hindu*, Madras (3 August, 1954). <sup>71</sup> Berber, n. 55, 57.

<sup>72</sup> ———, *The Indus Water Dispute—Facts and Figures*, n. 47, 12-5.

<sup>73</sup> Berber, n. 55, 58.



two countries differed widely both in concept and approach.<sup>74</sup> While the Indian Plan allocated to India all the Eastern rivers and 7 per cent of the Western rivers and to Pakistan none of the Eastern rivers and 93 per cent of the Western rivers; the Pakistan Plan allocated India only 30 per cent of the Eastern rivers and none of the Western rivers. In spite of their best efforts, the Indo-Pakistan engineers could not come to a settlement. Some basic differences were put forward by the International Bank representatives. They were:

(i) The water supplies and storage potentialities of the Indus Basin even after full development would not be adequate for the need of the area. Therefore, each side tried to have as much water supply as possible.

(ii) The Working Party, no doubt, planned the basis of the development of the Indus Basin as an economic unit, but the sovereign status of the two countries came in the way. A joint one unit plan, obviously, was not possible on account of political differences. This limited the practical potentialities of planning and prompt decisions.

(iii) The most serious difficulty that the two sides had to encounter was that they differed in fundamental concepts. "An essential part of the Pakistan concept is that existing uses of waters must be continued from existing sources. Moreover 'existing uses' in the Pakistan plan include not only the amounts of water that have actually been put to use in the past, but also allocations of water which have been sanctioned prior to the partition even though necessary supplies have not been available for use. This concept protects Pakistan's actual and potential uses on the Eastern rivers and reserves most of the water in the Western rivers for use in Pakistan".<sup>75</sup> Such a plan, naturally, could not be acceptable to India.

The basic divergence of concept together with practical difficulties mentioned above effectively blocked the progress towards settlement. It became imperative, therefore, for the Bank representatives to put forward an independent proposal for consideration of both sides with a view to reconcile the differences. The Bank Proposals recommended that "the entire flow of the Eastern rivers (the Ravi,

<sup>74</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Indus Water Dispute—Facts and Figures*, n. 47, 12-5.

<sup>75</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Proposals by the International Bank Representatives for a Plan for the Development and Use of the Indus Basin Waters*, 5 February, 1954. A Reprint. (New Delhi, Ministry of Irrigation and Power), unpublished, 1-3.

Beas and Sutlej) would be available for the exclusive use and benefit and for development by India except that for a specified transition period India would continue to supply from these rivers in accordance with an agreed schedule. . . .” The waters of three Western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab), it suggested, except for such uses as are made of them in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, should be reserved exclusively for Pakistan.<sup>76</sup>

The Bank Proposals were based on the principle that each country should be given the greatest possible freedom of action for development operations and irrigation facilities and so far as practicable avoid control by India over waters on which Pakistan would be dependent. It was believed that “leaving each country free to develop its own water resources in the light of its own needs and resources and without having to obtain the agreement of the other at each point, will in the long run most effectively promote the efficient development of the whole system.”<sup>77</sup>

The Bank, therefore, recommended that Pakistan should build up its own resources by building link canals with a view to replace supplies from India. They agreed that a temporary co-operative administration would be needed to supervise the carrying out of the transitional agreement. The Bank proposed that the cost of such works (link canals) be borne by the Government of India.<sup>78</sup>

India accepted the Bank proposals with the proviso safeguarding the water rights of Kashmir in the Western rivers. Shri S. K. Patil, Minister for Irrigation and Power, described the suggestion as basic to the settlement of the dispute. In the meanwhile Transitional Arrangements<sup>79</sup> were made from time to time between the two countries for the supply of water.

The Indus Water dispute, thus, became an extremely complicated issue on account of the combination of political, economic, legal and technical problems with an adverse historical and religious background. “A further complication is added by the fact that there are not yet in existence recognized rules of International Law concerning the economic uses of rivers which flow through more than one country. . . .”<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 5. <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>79</sup> *Ad hoc* Transitional Arrangements were made by the two Governments in 1955 (*Kharif*), 1955-56 (*Rabi*), and 1956-57.

<sup>80</sup> Berber, n. 55, 60. The International Law Association at its Conference in September, 1958, in a resolution justified the stand taken by India on Canal

Besides, the substantial settlement of a Water dispute under international law is a problem not of the interpretation of law, but of legislation in a sovereign state. The use and diversion of international rivers, for various reasons, has assumed great importance in recent years. "The requirements of modern industry and agriculture make water power and water for irrigation vital to their needs in many areas. Technical discoveries and modern machinery have made it possible to retain, divert and store water either for agricultural or power purposes."<sup>81</sup> In India, the use of river waters has an additional importance, because the Punjab (I) is an agriculturally backward area and canal waters are essential for increasing food production. In a predominantly agricultural society, it is perhaps too much to expect that India would keep on giving the supply of water to Pakistan when her own people may be clamouring for it.

The Canal Water dispute, which is primarily concerned with the Punjab, thus, has adopted an international character and has a very serious impact on the Indo-Pakistan relations.

The water of the rivers is vital to the very existence of both the states. It is, therefore, important that the issue should be amicably settled. It is clear that both the states should have their independent arrangements. India has declared its intention of completely cutting off waters from Pakistan by 1961 by which time, it is hoped Pakistan will make its own alternative arrangements. The Pakistan Government has already undertaken a number of schemes.<sup>82</sup> Some of them have already been completed and others are in an advanced stage of completion. The number of projects

Waters dispute that "a system of rivers and lakes in a drainage basin, like the Indus system of rivers, should be treated as an integrated whole and not piecemeal". The Association further remarked that an equitable distribution of waters should be in the ratio of 50: 50 between India and Pakistan, but according to World Bank's proposals, India got only 20 per cent of the share. It said that India would be justified to demand at least 40 per cent of the total quantity of water flowing in all the rivers of the Indus. The Conference clearly pointed out that India was free to construct any works over the course of the rivers in its territory and rejected the concept of a "permanent veto" by Pakistan over India. See also "Vindication of India's Stand", *Statesman*, 4: 1-2, New Delhi (18 October, 1958).

<sup>81</sup> Eagleton Clyde, "International Rivers", *The American Journal of International Law*, 1954, 287.

<sup>82</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Pakistan*, 1955-56 (Karachi, 1956), 145. The schemes are given:

1. Kurram Garhi Weir.
2. Thal Irrigation and Colonization Project.
3. Taunsa Barrage Project.

(Continued next page)

incurred by the State Government on loans which might not be recovered was to be shared on an equal basis.<sup>85</sup> But, even, this was beyond the financial strength of the State Government and it requested the Centre to undertake the entire responsibility of rehabilitation. The Second Finance Commission<sup>86</sup> realising the difficult financial position of the Punjab and agreeing with their line of argument, recommended that the Government of India should recover from the State Government only the amounts equal to the recoveries affected from the loanees.<sup>87</sup>

Out of the total expenditure of Rs. 21.52 crore, on Relief and Rehabilitation, the Central Government's share amounted to Rs. 17.76 crore, i.e. 85 per cent leaving Rs. 3.76 crore for the State Government to bear.<sup>88</sup>

#### (b) *Protection of the Boundary*

The protection of the 301 mile long boundary line was one of the very important subjects which required the immediate attention of both the Governments of India and the Punjab. It has been already stated that the forward pickets on the boundary line are protected by the Punjab Armed Police which falls under the provincial sphere. It cannot, however, be denied that the boundary line between the Punjab (I) and the Punjab (P) is of vital importance to the Government of India, and therefore, it was urged by the Punjab Government that the additional expenditure on the P.A.P. should be borne by the Government of India. The subject has been one of great controversy between the two governments. The Government of the Punjab's contention has been that the boundary between India and Pakistan and protective arrangements were necessarily a part of the essential defence measures in which the Central Government of India was vitally interested. The Government of India, however, did not accede to the State Government's request due to financial stringency. But the Punjab Government pressed its point further on

*Memorandum to the Finance Commission, 1956 (Chandigarh, 1957), 158.*

<sup>85</sup> See below, 191.

<sup>86</sup> Information collected from Finance Secretary, *vide* D.O. No. 2555-BXO/7747 (9 May, 1958).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 158-60. The total expenditure on Capital Schemes and other loans upto 1957 is estimated in the memorandum at Rs. 15,29.84 lakh, but the figures received from the Rehabilitation Department up to the end of December, 1957, are Rs. 14,26,99,000.

the plea that the foreign policy of India was not within her control and the tense relations between India and Pakistan made it imperative to employ a large police force which obviously meant larger police expenditure. Since it was truly an all India problem, the Punjab Government contended that the expenditure of nearly Rs. 77 lakh on this item be shared on an all India basis. Merely because of the geographical situation, Punjab should not be made to take upon itself the impossible financial burden, which was not justifiably and exclusively their responsibility.<sup>89</sup>

The Government of India set up a Finance Commission in December, 1951, to look into the various aspects of the administration in each state in order to estimate the extent to which a state should receive financial aid from the Centre. The Commission, while determining the need of the states for assistance by way of grants-in-aid, took into consideration the special problems created for some of the states by the partition of the country which had caused a significant increase in their expenditure. They stated that for the Punjab the allocation of revenue recommended by them would not meet its Budget needs, much less leave any margin for development. The State had additional responsibilities such as in the sphere of law and order arising out of the partition, over and above the problem of coping with the disabilities created by it, which affected its budgetary position. Accordingly, they recommended a grant of Rs. 125 lakh.<sup>90</sup>

The recommendation was accepted by the Government of India and a portion of it was allotted to the Police Department. The grant, however, proved inadequate, in view of the growing strength of the Pakistan Police personnel since 1954 and the smuggling menace which necessitated the reorganization of the Punjab P.A.P. and its increase both in numbers and effective strength.<sup>91</sup> The matter was referred to the Second Finance Commission in 1956

<sup>89</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Supplementary Memorandum to the Finance Commission, 1957*, n. 29, 7. See also *Memorandum to the Finance Commission, 1956*, n. 85, 4.

<sup>90</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Memorandum to the Finance Commission, 1956*, n. 85, 4.

<sup>91</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Punjab Government Gazette (Extraordinary) (27 February, 1958)*, 370 jjj and 370 rrr. In order to cope with the increase in work on the integration of the Punjab and Pepsu States, an Additional Inspector General of Police has been appointed. He is also supervising anti-smuggling operations which have been launched on an extensive scale in the State. The P.A.P. battalion has been raised at the cost of the Government of India and the Special Emergency Force.

and the Punjab Government in its memorandum suggested that the Border Police which had been employed since the partition should continue on a permanent basis. The Second Finance Commission justified the Punjab Government's demand and recommended Rs. 225 lakh per annum grants-in-aid to the latter,<sup>92</sup> after taking into consideration that "the State has special problems as a Border State with the scars of partition not fully healed."<sup>93</sup> This was granted by the Government of India. Out of this a part of money was allocated for expenditure on Border Police.

(c) *Development Projects*

The Government of the Punjab, in addition, had undertaken certain development projects. The expenditure could not obviously be met from available funds with the Punjab Government which were practically non-existent. The Government of the Punjab demanded that the Government of India should take up the financial responsibility of such projects which had been undertaken as a direct result of the partition and as such should be borne on an all-India basis:

(i) *Harike Project*. The project which was unproductive had been constructed due to strategic reasons.<sup>94</sup> The project estimates for the construction of the Barrage together with certain off-taking canals at a net cost of Rs. 1,451 lakh, was submitted to the Government of India. Since the project was constructed mainly in the interest of the existing Eastern and Bikaner Canals and was a direct result of the partition, the Punjab Government approached the Government of India that it should be entirely financed by the Centre (at least the unproductive portion) and that the loan should be converted into subsidy.<sup>95</sup> In spite of repeated requests, however, the Central Government did not concede the Punjab's view point.

<sup>92</sup> Information collected from Finance Secretary, Punjab, n. 87. The grants-in-aid by the Government of India, since partition, were given on the following scale:

1947-48	.. Rs. 100 lakh.
1948-49	.. Rs. 175 "
1949-50	.. Rs. 175 "
1950-51	.. Rs. 75 "
1951-52 to 1956-57	.. Rs. 125 "
1957-58 onwards	.. Rs. 255 "

<sup>93</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary), n. 91, 370 v.

<sup>94</sup> See above Section I, 165.

<sup>95</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Memorandum to the Finance Commission*, 1956, n. 85, 75-6.

(ii) *Capital Project—Chandigarh.* The need to have a new capital, for the infant state, has already been described in the earlier pages. In preparing the project, an attempt was made “to assume recovery of the maximum possible development expenditure by the sale of plots”, which was fixed at a comparatively high price. There was, however, going to be an expenditure of Rs. 470.71 lakh on unproductive works, mostly on essential administrative buildings. The Punjab Government approached the Centre for a subsidy for the Project on the following grounds:

1. “This unproductive expenditure which is inescapable cannot be met from the balances available to the Punjab Government. . . .”

2. “The loss of Lahore, a highly developed town, from the point of view not only of the administration, but also business and culture, was the direct consequence of the partition, and the cost involved in setting up the administrative buildings should be borne on an all-India basis.”

3. “Even if it is assumed that, as a result of a final settlement with the West Punjab (P) Government, this State will get its share of the assets of the Joint Punjab Government, these would not be anywhere near adequate to provide for the unproductive works involved, in view of the very high costs of construction on Government offices and buildings. The hope, however, of getting such assets is remote.”<sup>96</sup>

The Government of the Punjab, in addition, required money for a large number of other projects for which it took loans from the Government of India, repayable in accordance with the terms of

<sup>96</sup> —————, *Memorandum to the Finance Commission*, 1956, 77.

The Chandigarh Capital Project Estimate for the Second Five Year Plan has been raised by the Planning Commission from Rs. 11.92 lakh to 13.20 lakh, as due to the integration of the States of the Punjab and Pepsu, the scope of certain works in the Capital Project has to be enlarged. See *Punjab Government Gazette (Extraordinary)* (27 February, 1958), n. 91, 370 But the *Memorandum to the Finance Commission* gives the Project Estimates at Rs. 1,675.23 lakh, see 78.

The Government of India gave a subsidy of Rs. one crore only for the year 1956-57. The Punjab Government stressed that since they had not recovered their share of Rs. 4.4 crore (present day cost to the order of Rs. 10 crore) out of Rs. 10.92 crore of the estimated book value of the administrative buildings in the United Punjab, it was essential that the Central Government should give them a grant of Rs. 513.98 lakh required for unproductive works by converting the loans already given, into a subsidy. The matter was referred to the Second Finance Commission.

the loans—the most important among them being Bhakhra Nangal Project. The total Debt Liability outstanding at the end of the year 1955 was estimated at Rs. 159.78 crore.<sup>97</sup> These loans were taken according to requirements and their terms of repayment varied from year to year. Rs. 1,397 lakh were repaid by the end of the year 1956 leaving Rs. 15,470 lakh as outstanding on 1 April, 1956.

The debt liability of the Punjab has been steadily increasing at a rapid pace on account of the development programme undertaken by the Government. This seems to be beyond its means. Expressing its fears to the Finance Commission regarding this large liability, it pointed out that the financial stability of the State could easily become shaky, if the projects on which large amounts were being spent did not prove productive according to anticipations. Even at present these large loans were throwing great strain on the revenue of the State on account of payment of interest.<sup>98</sup>

The State Government has met with scathing criticism for spending lavishly on the administrative buildings at Chandigarh and other building projects in view of the other important problems awaiting solution. There is no doubt that economy measures in the planning and construction works of these projects would have made some difference in the overall expenditure of the State. The debt liabilities incurred by the State in pursuance of these development projects, would limit, if not completely seal, the pace at which development activities in the State can be planned in the coming future, for the State is already committed to repay its debts. It cannot, however, be denied that every underdeveloped country has to take up projects like Bhakhra Dam to expedite the pace of production. The Chandigarh Project, too, shows a sense of determination and confidence of the people of the Punjab to build a new Punjab.

It is gratifying to note that the gigantic task of rehabilitation of

<sup>97</sup> ———, *Punjab Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) (9 March, 1956), 249. *Punjab Government Gazette* (extraordinary) (27 February, 1958), 370 ww. gives the total debt liability as on 1 April, 1958, as Rs. 1,93,29,52,837. These figures, however, do not include debt of the Pepsu Government which was estimated at Rs. 12,95,39,926. See 377 ccc. Thus the grand total of the debt liability of the Punjab after integration stands at Rs. 2,06,24,92,763. The Finance Secretary's D.O. No. 2555-B & C-58/7747 (9 May, 1958), gives an estimate of the total outstanding debt liability as on 1 April, 1958 at Rs. 20,625 lakh. The total public debt liability of the Punjab Government estimated by the Finance Commission on 1 April, 1957, comes to Rs. 17,526 lakh. See *Memorandum to the Finance Commission*, n. 85, 238.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*



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millions of D.Ps. and integration of a good section of them in the economic and administrative set-up of the State has been more or less completed, though certain problems still remain to be solved. This has absolved the State from one of its major obligations. It must be stated to the credit of the Central Government as it was only through their liberal help and financial assistance that the Punjab could sustain the shock, though it was no less due to the undaunted spirit of the enterprising Punjabee who took the partition as a challenge.

## CHAPTER VIII

# IMPACT OF THE PARTITION ON THE POLITICAL LIFE OF THE PUNJAB (I), 1947-56

### I

#### POLITICAL PARTIES AND REHABILITATION

THE partition of the Punjab shook the administrative, economic and political machinery of the province to its foundations and brought into its wake a host of complicated problems. The problems were so inter-linked that aggravation of one complicated the other, although it is difficult to say whether the solution of one tangle could lead to the unknitting of the other.

There was, however, an apparent unity among the people of the Punjab, immediately after the partition. People belonging to all shades of political opinion and parties, directed their energies to provide relief to the millions of refugees, daily pouring in from the West Pakistan. There could, obviously be no difference of opinion among the political parties on the question of urgency of the problem, the need for their settlement and their ultimate integration in the social, economic and political set-up of the State. But the lines on which the rehabilitation and integration process was to take place, brought out sharp conflicts among them.

The Punjab was, thus, faced with two totally new problems for which its political acumen had to discover an adequate and satisfying solution:

1. The political implications of the problem of rehabilitation and the social, cultural and economic integration of the refugees in the body-politic of the Punjab.

2. The consequences of the state being reduced to a border-state and the resultant tensions following the unhappy relations between India and Pakistan.

### II

#### COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN THE PUNJAB

The evils of separatist, communalist and partisan intrigues—the

accumulated result of the historical development of the previous half a century of non-secular politics—have been written for the Punjab in flaming letters of blood. The ephemeral unity among the various political parties and social and religious groups which was witnessed in the face of common adversity during the immediate post-partition days, soon started showing signs of disintegration and the parochial and communal tendencies began getting expression once again. The factors that made possible, the dissensions being brought to surface, can be traced to the policies followed in the pre-partition days and post-partition developments.

The boundaries of the Punjab, like those of the other provinces in India, had not been demarcated by any considerations of linguistic homogeneity, but of administrative convenience. It is a matter of common knowledge that certain eastern districts, known as Haryana, were tagged on to the Punjab, by way of punishment for participating in the revolt<sup>1</sup> against the British rule during the Mutiny of 1857 in keeping with the British policy of putting heterogeneous elements together. At the same time, certain other areas, within homogeneous cultural units, were preserved for princely states. Besides, religious affiliation was made a pre-condition for voting qualifications. The question of language, otherwise a unifying link, having got mixed up with the religious sentiments of the Punjabees,<sup>2</sup> created more complications. All this led to an impasse where people sharing common cultural and linguistic heritage and living in the territorially contiguous areas could not develop the accepted common characteristics of a nationality which tend to grow in the struggle of a colonial people towards emancipation from foreign domination.

The Punjab was the homeland of all the three major communities—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, in addition to Christians. Punjabee was the spoken language of an overwhelming majority of the people belonging to various religious communities inhabiting the Punjabi-speaking area; although it did not become the medium for formal and business communications. As a result of the con-

<sup>1</sup> Hukum Singh, *A Plea for Punjabi Speaking State* (Amritsar, Secretary, Shiromani Akali Dal, n.d.), 9.

<sup>2</sup> The question of religion had got mixed up with language issue, even on an all-India basis as a result of the adoption of Urdu by Aligarh University and Hindi by the Banaras Hindu University as their principal languages. This, however, became a disintegrating influence only in areas where the language was not an already unifying force. The Punjab was one such region.

tinuous Muslim rule in this region, Urdu was widely studied by all sections of the people and in addition to English, was the court language as well as the medium of instruction in most of the schools.

After the First World War, when India entered a new phase of freedom struggle, communal tendencies got expression in various directions. Language could not remain untouched from such influences. During the Census of 1931, the language issue was coloured with immediate politics. Such a sentiment "caused Muslims in many parts of India to return Urdu as their mother-tongue and the local vernacular as the subsidiary language though precisely opposite was the real fact. . . ."<sup>3</sup> In 1941, Mr. Yeats, the Census Commissioner of India, suggested that since communal prejudices affect the language, religion and language be dropped from future censuses. He deplored the situation when language had been corrupted so much by political influence that people returned a language about which they knew nothing. Warning against it, he said, "if this is how leaders imagine they can misuse a census then there is not much hope for India. . . if communal passions are running high ten years hence, the language question should be given up."<sup>4</sup>

\* In the Punjab, in an attempt to consolidate their own community, the leaders induced the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs to declare Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi as their mother-tongue respectively, in an area where, according to Akali sources, nearly 90 per cent spoke Punjabi.<sup>5</sup> This identification of religious communities with specific languages gave the latter also distinct religious colouring and further deepened the division between the communities. Even after the partition, though Urdu had almost been eliminated from the education curriculum, opposition to Punjabi as a medium of instruction in the educational institutions and as language in courts, continued. In the first post-partition census, in 1951, the columns on language and mother-tongue were retained despite the warning given by the Census Commissioner in 1941 (referred above).

<sup>3</sup> ———, *Census of India, 1931, Vol. I, India, Part I, Report* (Delhi, 1933), 349.

<sup>4</sup> ———, *Census of India, 1941, I, India—Administration Report* (Simla, 1942), 18-21. The situation was not particular to the Punjab only. In Bihar, where Hindi was known throughout the province, the Muslims insisted on returning Urdu "notwithstanding the fact that Muslims in that province are generally acquainted with the Hindi script". Similar was the case in Rajasthan.

<sup>5</sup> ———, *Memorandum by Shiromani Akali Dal to States Reorganisation Commission* (Amritsar, S.G.P.C. Office), unpublished, 10.

The situation took an ugly turn during the Census operations when both Hindu and Sikh communal leaders and newspapers alleged that the Hindu and Sikh Census staff were forcibly writing Hindi or Punjabi as the language of that section of the people as the case may be. The Deputy Commissioner, Jullundur, commenting on the situation remarked that it was difficult to say who was right and who was wrong; but the fact remained that such activities were a danger to the peaceful atmosphere of the state.<sup>6</sup> It is quite possible that the acceptance of the advice of the 1941 Census Commissioner might have saved the state from the near-inflammable controversy that developed around the language question and perhaps might not have taken its present shape.

The language controversy was intensified because the partition of the Punjab divided the Punjabi-speaking population and rendered the East Punjab almost equally divided into Hindi and Punjabi-speaking areas. The influx of Punjabi speaking displaced persons from the West Punjab, however, changed the context of the language problem to certain extent. Whereas the linguistic character of the Punjabi-speaking region did not change with the arrival of the refugees, the resettlement of a large number of Punjabi-speaking people in Haryana created a new balance of linguistic forces which had to be taken into consideration in finding a solution to the language problem.

The absence of a leadership, enjoying confidence of all the sections and communities, which could help towards the solution of the knotty problem, further complicated the issue. The partition uprooted the leadership. The displaced leaders who came over to the East Punjab found that they had to establish themselves afresh in the truncated Punjab.

The accentuation of communalism in the body politic of the province, left indelible mark in the shape of riots. The incoming Hindus and Sikhs who had undergone untold sufferings at the hands of Muslim fanatics, developed a general sympathetic attitude for the communal elements who were busy in driving out the Muslims from this side. The respectability that the communalists achieved during the riots, gave them sufficient strength to enable them to continue to exploit refugee sentiments. The delay in land allotment, slow implementation of the rehabilitation plans by the government and the inefficiency, corruption and nepotism that loomed large

<sup>6</sup> —————, *Akali Patrika*, 5: 1 Jullundur (16 February, 1951).

in the government offices, spread a wave of dissatisfaction among the displaced persons which was fully exploited by the communal leaders.<sup>7</sup> Pre-partition communalism, thus, found itself continually nurtured by the efforts of interested communalists. The despondency and exasperation with which the atmosphere was surcharged and the terrible feeling of discontent that stalked over millions of people at the loss of all or much of what they valued most in life, helped the communal leadership to utilize them for building a base for themselves. This had its impact on the Congress leadership<sup>8</sup> and other shades of public opinion. With a view to establish themselves among the displaced persons, the Congress leaders in general and the refugee leaders of this organization, in particular, became very vocal in condemning the atrocities committed by the Muslims, at the same time condoning similar activities of their own co-religionists and getting concessions for the refugees. This introduced another disintegrating factor in the already confused policies and politics of the faction-ridden ruling party.<sup>9</sup> The inability of other secular parties to provide an alternative further strengthened the communal outlook.

\* This aspect of communalism found another vehicle of expression in the Punjab (I). The partition had changed the political pattern of the province. The near elimination of the Muslims from the political scene had a far-reaching impact on the political life of the state. The Hindus who constituted a minority of 30 per cent in the United Punjab, now became a majority with about 70 per cent of the state population. The erstwhile majority community—the Muslims—who were a substantial minority in the eastern part of the United Punjab, were now completely eliminated as a political entity.<sup>10</sup> The Sikhs, who had always played the role of a balancing force between the Hindus and the Muslims in the pre-partition days, now became the only substantial minority community in the East Punjab.<sup>11</sup>

The division of the Punjab on communal lines, spread a sense of indignation and frustration among the Sikhs because the hopes of

<sup>7</sup> See above, 155-56. <sup>8</sup> See above, Chapter V, Section I. <sup>9</sup> See below, 207-13.

<sup>10</sup> The pre-partition ratio of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs was 28:57:13 respectively.

<sup>11</sup> There are a few Muslims in Qadian in Gurdaspur district and in Gurgaon district. They, however, do no longer figure in the political life of the state. The only two Muslim representatives of the Punjab Legislative Assembly are tried Congressmen.

creating a Sikh State (Azad Punjab) raised by the Sikh leaders and supported by the Congress and Hindu leaders, had not been fulfilled. The Sikhs felt that they had been given a raw deal in the distribution of territory between the Hindus and the Muslims. Giving an expression to this feeling, Master Tara Singh said:

“Every minority except the Sikhs had been given justice. The Muslims demand was Pakistan, they got it. The Scheduled Castes wanted representation on population basis with right to contest additional seats and they got it. The Sikhs demanded that they would not (like to) be dominated by any single community and they were being kicked for repeating the same demand which the Hindus supported before partition—with which the Congress sympathised.”<sup>12</sup>

The Hindu-Sikh tensions, as a result, became more pronounced.

The partition strengthened their roots in more than one way. The influx of the refugees who settled down in different parts of the Punjab (I) also became a contributory factor. To start with, they had been warmly welcomed by the local people, but soon after, their enthusiasm got damped when the refugees offered severe competition in all walks of life.<sup>13</sup> This competition was more keenly felt in Haryana where the displaced population introduced a new factor in the social, economic and political life of the region and gave rise to new conflicts which were sharpened on account of the already existing feeling among the local people of Haryana that they were exploited by the more advanced people from the erstwhile Central Punjab in administration, politics and economy.<sup>14</sup> The local-refugee tensions which were an overall problem of the state, however, assumed a deeply communal colour in the Jullundur Division. The rehabilitation policies of the government also unwittingly contributed to this. The refugees from rural areas of the West Punjab who were mainly Sikh colonists from Jullundur Division, were settled in their home districts and those coming from

<sup>12</sup> —————, *The Tribune*, 3: 3, Ambala (20 October, 1949). The reference to “the same demand” is to the pre-partition demand for Azad Punjab and subsequently Sikh State which had the explicit support of the Hindus as a counter-weight against Muslim demand of Pakistan. See above, Chapter II.

<sup>13</sup> See above, Chapter V.

<sup>14</sup> Thakurdas Bhargava, *Lok Sabha Debates—Report of the States Reorganisation Commission* (New Delhi, 1956), 1120.

South-Western districts, mainly Hindus, were allotted lands and houses in the South-Eastern districts of the Punjab.<sup>15</sup> Other refugee Hindu traders and professionals moved towards Delhi and other parts of India, but a substantial section of the Sikh urban displaced persons, who were comparatively smaller in number, got settled in Jullundur Division. Because of the nature of the composition of population, the local-refugee conflict turned into a clash of communal interests, round which the tensions grew and deepened. In the South-Eastern districts, however, the local refugee conflict, which was otherwise more acute, retained its original character for both these groups belonged to the same religious community. The problem, which is thus the same, both in its context and substance in the two regions, takes different turns due to the different communal composition of the population in these areas.

The vernacular press, owned and run by vested interests, also contributed its share to the deepening of the schism between the two communities. Most of these newspapers deliberately gave prominence to particular kinds of complaints and news items which had a very damaging impact on the public mind. They tried to perpetuate the existing differences and discredit the leadership of the other community. The press and communal leadership, thus, "divided the people into water-tight departments"<sup>16</sup> and developed a narrow, communal outlook<sup>17</sup> among them with an obvious object to increase its sale value.<sup>18</sup>

Communalism, in the Punjab, is a legacy of the past. The partition which came as a culminating point of the social and political upheavals of nearly half a century, however, did not bring any revolutionary change in the political outlook and thinking of the people. Religion even today remains a very important factor in Indian society and enjoys such an exalted place in its cultural traditions and values that nearly all the top leaders and intellectuals have, at one time or the other, devoted their attention to its study and analysis, but their writings and views do not reach the vast majority of people who are illiterate and unable to benefit from

<sup>15</sup> See above, Chapter VI.

<sup>16</sup> Jagjit Singh Mann, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 21 March, 1949 (Simla, 1949), (16), 45.

<sup>17</sup> Amarnath Vidyalkar, *Bahmi Itihad Aur Regional Formula* (Urdu) (Jullundur, 1956), 22.

<sup>18</sup> This was admitted by one of the important local leaders of Amritsar.



their writings. On the other hand, it is the interested politician who exploits the already aroused feelings and sentiments of the people in the name of religion and fans the spirit of religious fanaticism and bigotry among them. This is as much true in the post-partition days as it was before the country became independent.

Although religious fanaticism and communal feelings played an undeniably important role in the political life of the state, there were certain other factors which contributed towards the intensification of the existing political tensions. An analysis of the following points will facilitate the understanding of the different political process which in one way or the other add to the difficulties of the situation:

(1) Communal representation in the services immediately after the partition and the subsequent developments in this connection.

(2) Intra-factionalism in the Congress; its alliances with the communal groups and the intra-organizational rural and urban conflicts within it.

(3) The question of language and the State Reorganization.

The first two factors listed above, as can be seen, constitute a carry-over of the peculiarities of the pre-partition days politics for which the leadership has not been able to find adequately satisfactory solutions. The last item has arisen during the last 10 years or so and has assumed a great importance to warrant a close scrutiny in a separate chapter.<sup>19</sup>

### *Representation in the Services*

Communalism and religious fanaticism had penetrated in the services in the United Punjab, for communities were represented therein in proportion to their strength. The pre-partition basis of communal representation in the services was continued for nearly three years before it was replaced by the more rational merit basis of recruitment.<sup>20</sup> But during this period complaints by each community regarding the over-representation of the other, its own under-representation and discriminatory treatment by officials of the other community were continuously made and publicized.

The evil practice increased the communal tensions. Communalism

<sup>19</sup> In view of its importance, the question of language and States Reorganization is being dealt with in a separate chapter.

<sup>20</sup> Bhim Sen Sachar, *East Punjab Assembly Debates*, 13 October, 1949, n. 16, (3), 17.

had so deeply penetrated in the body-politic that even the known non-communalist leaders like Dr. Prakash Kaur and S. Niranjan Singh had started expressing concern about it publicly. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, Dr. Prakash Kaur had made an allegation that nearly 70 per cent of the officials had become communalists.<sup>21</sup> S. Niranjan Singh writing about the same, said "most of the officials from the Judges of the High Court, Secretaries of the various Departments to the Constables and peons are, whether Hindus or Sikhs, communal minded. . . ."<sup>22</sup> As a result, it was difficult to expect help from this group of people in the process of cleansing the provincial administration of the evil of communalism. Having been recruited on communal basis, they continued to maintain the same communal mentality. The communal passions which were aroused during the riots, were inflamed by the irresponsible writings of the vernacular press.

Speaking on the subject, Mr. Jagjit Singh Mann, M.L.A, said:

"It is the communal tension which we have got as a legacy from the British. After the partition of the Punjab, this evil has become all the more aggressive. I think, it is the main cause of tension. They have been recruited on communal basis and now they find it hard to shake that label. There is no change in their mentality. . . (and) all the government officials from the highest down to the lowest, have got communal mentality. So long as this mentality is not changed, the relations between the two sister communities cannot be improved."<sup>23</sup>

It was alleged by the representatives of the minority community that the Sikhs were given discriminatory treatment and the "Sikh representation in almost all the Civil Departments of the East Punjab Government (was) very low. So much so that in higher grades and key-posts in some of the departments, they are hardly ten per cent."<sup>24</sup> With a view to substantiate this allegation, figures were quoted from the various departments, for instance, in the Industries Department the percentage of Hindus in the gazetted

<sup>21</sup> Prakash Kaur, *ibid.* (21 March, 1949), (16), 49.

<sup>22</sup> Niranjan Singh, "Sikh Problem", *The Tribune*, Ambala (27 December, 1948).

<sup>23</sup> ———, *East Punjab Assembly Debates*, 21 March, 1949, n. 16 (16), 49.

<sup>24</sup> Udham Singh Nagoke, "Injustice to the Sikhs in Government Services". File No. 4(2)—*Sikh Rights 1949-52* (Amritsar, S.G.P.C.), unpublished, 8-9.

posts varied from 71.5 per cent to 96 per cent, while Sikh percentage varied from 19 per cent to 4 per cent. Similarly, it was said about the P.W.D. and Electricity, Excise and Taxation, and Food and Civil Supplies Departments. It was alleged that the "Hindu officers in the Department(s) are so much intoxicated with power which is based on an absolute majority that in day to day official dealings, they are (spreading) the venom of communalism, hatred and persecution to the extent of forcing the Sikh employees to leave the Department(s)." This, it was alleged, was achieved by different methods, for instance, (i) refusing leave of all kinds to the Sikh employees, (ii) discriminatory treatment for producing medical certificate for sick leave, (iii) over-burdening the Sikh employees with heavy volume of work, (iv) no arrangement for their residential accommodation, (v) recording "bad annual remarks" for the Sikhs, "exaggerated and beautifully worded remarks" for the Hindu officials and the like.<sup>25</sup> They even charged the Punjab University Senate and Education Department for "being completely dominated by the Hindus who (were) communal in their outlook and actions."<sup>26</sup> With a view to ensure adequate Sikh representation in services, the S.G.P.C. recommended that "two separate lists of seniority for the Hindus and the Sikhs, be introduced."<sup>27</sup> Speaking on the same subject, S. Gurbachan Singh Bajwa, who subsequently became the Minister for Finance, said in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 17 March, 1949, that communalism was rampant in almost every department and the subordinates of one community were feeling aggrieved at the treatment being meted out to them by the Head of the Department belonging to the other community.

"Prevalence of communalism in services", he said, "is having serious repercussions on the public life of the province. . . . If we want to avoid a repetition of the past tragedy, the confidence of the minority community shall have to be won by the majority

<sup>25</sup> Sikh employees in the Industries Department, "Sikhs in the Industries Department, East Punjab". S.G.P.C. File No. 4(2), No. 3868 (19 June, 1949). See also File No. 16, Rs. 2448 (21 May, 1949), [No. 6519 (6 September, 1950), and File No. 4(2) No. 19, n. 24. •

<sup>26</sup> S.G.P.C. File No. 4(2) No. 1, n. 24.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* File No. 16, R. 2448 (21 May, 1949). It is, however, gratifying to note that there was sharp fall in complaints to the S.G.P.C. after 1950, when according to the Indian Constitution, recruitment to the services on communal basis was stopped.

community . . .” He alleged “It was the reluctance of the majority community (to win over the confidence of minority) which brought about the partition and I am afraid if the majority community again behaves in that manner, results would again be disastrous. The majority will have to face the realities. . . . Repression cannot kill the spirit of the people.”<sup>28</sup>

This was, undoubtedly, a serious warning and a danger signal, but the majority community had its own grievances. In fact, they charged the government with “marked preference (and) favouritism for the Sikh community” which permeated in almost all the branches of the Government services. Quoting figures of representation of the two communities in the services, Dewan Alakh Dhari, the spokesman of the Maha Punjab Samiti and ex-Diwan of Alwar State, proved that the Sikhs enjoyed a weightage of three hundred per cent in their favour.<sup>29</sup> Writing on the subject, he said :

“Conviction is deepening that the Akali war cry regarding discrimination against Sikhs in public services of (the) Punjab is but a red herring drawn with a view to divert attention from the real state of affairs. The factual position is that during the last few years, there has been—and it still continues—a heavy recruitment of Sikh community in the Government services, out of all proportion to their numerical strength in the population of the Punjab State.”<sup>30</sup>

Much of the conflict and discord, however, was due to the clamour for offices or distribution of loaves and fishes or political advantages. Communalism was greatly fomented by the disgruntled servicemen, professionals and traders who always took shelter behind it and tried to exploit it. The services gained more importance

<sup>28</sup> —————, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 17 March, 1949 (Simla 1949), (15), 78-9.

<sup>29</sup> Dewan Alakh Dhari, *Case for United Punjab* (Ambala, 1956), 40. Quoting the Rehabilitation Department figures on this page, Dewan Alakh Dhari complains that “instead of the appropriate share of 30% the Sikh community has monopolized one hundred and sixty per cent of the total appointments”. This, according to him, represents a weightage of over 500 per cent. This is a very interesting instance of how figures can be manipulated to arithmetical falsities in order to serve the desired ends.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

after independence as "services, now, were a source of political power and if any community (was) ignored in them, it (would) naturally try to snatch this power."<sup>31</sup>

It is interesting to note that communal leaders of both the communities adumbrate the alleged injustices in the proportion of services given to their respective communities. Both groups quote the relative strength of the members of their communities in different government departments. The Sikh communal leaders pick up the departments of Industries, P.W.D. and Electricity, Excise and Taxation, Education, Food and Supplies, where the percentage of Sikh employees is accidentally relatively small. They ignore government departments which have a larger number of Sikh employees. The Hindu communal leaders, on the other hand, reverse this process and quote figures from the Departments of Rehabilitation, Police, Agriculture, Rent Control and the like where the Sikhs were in comparatively larger number. Neither of the two groups tried to take the overall picture of the employment situation, and when both groups further limited the choice of selected cadres in these departments, the figures could easily be manipulated to give the desired results. Furthermore, all administrative and political steps were interpreted in the communal spirit. The result was that officers would shirk taking decisions lest they be misinterpreted and many times deliberately acted in ways which would otherwise be questionable.

This "calculated communalism" was exactly on the pre-partition communal lines. The Congress was not unaware of the danger inherent in the situation.<sup>32</sup> The factional and opportunist trends in the ruling party, however, led them to make periodic alliances with the communal parties. S. Bhagwant Singh speaking in the 57th Session of the Indian National Congress, said, that they could not eschew communalism from Punjab politics because "communalists had taken the garb of Congressmen and were doing their best to keep the reactionaries entrenched in power." He further stated that it was easy to combat the Akalis and Jan Sangh, but it was rather impossible to "fight these elements, if some of our co-workers are as communalistic as the Akalis themselves."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ishar Singh Majhail, *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 17 March, 1949, n. 28, (14) 51-3.

<sup>32</sup> Congress President, "Speech in Ludhiana", *The Tribune*, Ambala (1 October, 1954).

<sup>33</sup> —————, *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi (20 October, 1954).

Communalism, thus, is eating into the very vitals of the political life of the Punjab. It has found its most glaring expression in the fight over the proportion of employment in government services. Although this is not the only area in which it is firmly entrenched, the dissatisfaction among the educated classes as a result of the distribution of jobs is enormous. This sense of frustration is a phenomenon which is generally known to have facilitated the growth and development of fascism in Europe. In India, however, this has been channellized by the continuation of communalism through the efforts of several fascist organizations claiming to represent the interests of different religious communities. In their programmes, they over-emphasized the communal aspect of politics and undermine the very foundations of democracy by negating the secular basis of the democratic political organization.

### III

#### INTRA-FACTIONALISM<sup>34</sup> IN THE PUNJAB CONGRESS

The fissiparous and communal tendencies got further impetus from the weakness of the Congress and other secular organizations in the pre-partition days and deepening of intra-factional struggles in the ruling party during the post-partition period. It has already been observed that after the death of L. Lajpat Rai,<sup>35</sup> the Punjab Congress did not have the benefit of a strong leader of his stature who had some influence with the High Command. In the first four years of the post-independence era, the Punjab Cabinet functioned on a group basis. Each Minister had a few members of the legislature at his back and the Chief Minister selected his team keeping in mind an aspirant's following. . . .<sup>36</sup> Sectionalism within the Congress, nevertheless, was intensified because Sachar-Kairon group dominated the State Congress and the Election Committee, while Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava group had an overwhelming

<sup>34</sup> Intra-factionalism is a common feature of all the political parties in India. Congress, however, has been particularly picked up for being a ruling party, factionalism within which has a far-reaching effect on the political life of the state and the varying strength of the opposition parties.

<sup>35</sup> See above, Chapter II.

<sup>36</sup> Staff Correspondent as told by a Ministerial spokesman "The Inside Story", *The Hindustan Times* (28 January, 1954).

majority in the Ministry.<sup>37</sup> Outside the Congress, the communal forces were getting stronger day by day, culminating in the murder of Mahatma Gandhi on 30 January, 1948, by a member of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh. Finding it difficult to ride over the communal forces in the province, the Congress Government agreed to ally with the Akalis and banned the R.S.S. This arrangement worked well for some time, till the internal differences in the Congress and the cliques raised their head once again having an adverse effect on state politics and administration. Mr. Jagat Narain, Minister for Education, Health and Transport, deplored this tendency and remarked if "one set of Congress workers complained against an officer and demanded his removal. . . another set supported him and requested his retention. . . . Sometimes, Congress workers who originally complained against an officer, sought later that he should be excused and protected. . . ." <sup>38</sup> As a result the officers also began to act in a partisan manner and tried to please and placate one section at the cost of the other section of public opinion. This was bound to affect the efficiency of the officers and administration, though it did not do any credit to the Congress, the Government or the administration.<sup>39</sup> Evidently, administrative corruption could not be eradicated unless the ministers eschewed factionalism in their policy. This, however, could not be achieved as the group-politics in the Punjab "deepened on the varying fortunes of one or other group or individual at the Centre." It was a common talk that "if Pandit Nehru had not gone to the United States in 1949, the Sachar Ministry may have had a longer life than six months, that if Sardar Patel had lived or if Maulana Azad had not postponed his tour of the Middle East in May, this year, by some ten days, the Constitution would not have been suspended in the Punjab. . . ." <sup>40</sup> The inner-conflicts were further strengthened by

<sup>37</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *National Herald*, Lucknow (29 September, 1951).

This may sound anomalous that while Dr. Bhargava had an overwhelming majority both in the Assembly and the Ministry, the Sachar-Kairon group dominated the Punjab Pradesh Congress. To start with, Dr. Bhargava could unite all the factions of the Congress under his leadership, but gradually the opposition faction led by Sachar and Kairon began to consolidate their strength by winning over the members within the Congress. The changes in the High Command leadership also helped in this process. All this combined lead to the situation where there was a clear conflict between the Provincial Congress leadership and the Government.

<sup>38</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Tribune*, Ambala (4 August, 1953).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* (Editorial), (5 September, 1951).

Nehru-Tandon differences in 1951, which culminated in the resignation of Mr. Nehru from the Working Committee and later Mr. Tandon's resignation from the Congress Presidentship. In the Punjab, the Pradesh Congress and the Legislative Party conflicts took the most unpredictable turn. The group led by S. Pratap Singh Kairon and Bhim Sen Sachar, charged the Government for using maladministrative practices, condemned the evil of bribery and corruption in the State and alleged that 90 per cent of officers were corrupt.<sup>41</sup> The continuance of this deadlock could act to the detriment of both the Congress and the State. The ministerial tangle in the Punjab attracted the attention of the Central Parliamentary Board who called the leaders of various groups to discuss the matter. Reviewing the Punjab affairs, it expressed the opinion that the differences in the Punjab Congress were more frequent than in other states. While in most of the other states, there were only two opposing groups of Congressmen, in the Punjab (I), there were nearly a dozen factions<sup>42</sup> whose changing combinations afforded great scope for ambition and intrigue. The situation was very tense. Dr. Bhargava, however, still enjoyed a majority in the Legislative Assembly. Consequently, no alternative ministry could be formed. A section of the Congressmen, therefore, advocated Governor's rule.<sup>43</sup>

The Central Parliamentary Board advised Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava to resign. Normal constitutional government was suspended and President's Rule was introduced in July, 1951. Commenting on the situation, Mr. Nehru said:

"The story of the Punjab during recent months has been a long complicated and rather depressing one. The State is one of our most important. . . . Its importance has become even greater by the fact of its being the frontier province of India. Unfortunately, it has been the scene of factional and communal strife

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (5 May, 1951).

<sup>42</sup> Though there were four main factions in the Congress, there were factions within these factions which made stability in the Congress a difficult task. The four groups were:

1. Satyapal-Kitchlew-Sachar group.
2. Bhargava group
3. Kairon-Jagatnarain group.
4. Sri Ram Sharma group.

<sup>43</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Statesman*, New Delhi (7 April, 1951).



for a considerable time and the situation was rapidly deteriorating in many ways. In particular, there was a continuing conflict between the Ministry and the Congress organisation in the province. The Parliamentary Board decided that in the circumstances, the functioning of a Congress Ministry was not desirable. They did so in the hope that this unusual step might tend to put an end to this factional strife."<sup>44</sup>

As a sequel to this decision of the Parliamentary Board, Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava, after putting up some resistance, resigned from the Congress membership. Expressing his resentment against the decision, he alleged that the High Command had taken a partisan view of the whole affair because he did not belong to the majority faction in the High Command. "After the sad demise of Sardar Patel, it was found easier to drive away all those out of the Congress who were taken to be of Sardar Patel's group. I am the first victim."<sup>45</sup>

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava, M.P., supporting this point of view, deplored the interference of the Congress High Command at every step in the internal affairs of the Punjab and said: •

"Two of our ministers sitting at Delhi—Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad—mediate and decide the mutual differences among the Punjab ministers. Both of them are revered personalities and we are obliged to them for their valuable advice; but this system is responsible for all factionalism and bickerings. The mutual bickerings of our ministers in fact do not disappear, but the fear of these great personalities makes them to say that they have no differences and everything is alright (while in reality, it is not so). All the people of the Punjab—Hindus and Sikhs—feel that there is no responsible government in the Punjab. All of us are frustrated. . . ."<sup>46</sup>

-, *Hindu*, Madras (8 July, 1951).

-, *Statesman*, New Delhi (1 December, 1951). See also *Hindu*, Madras (6, 15, 29 December, 1951).

There were large-scale resignations and expulsions from the Congress, during the period, in Madras, Hyderabad, Maha Kaushaj, U.P. etc., 69 were expelled from the Punjab, 25 from Bihar and 295 from U.P. A number of Congress members were suspended in addition. From U.P. alone 204 members were suspended while 106 were expelled from Maha Kaushal Congress Committee.

<sup>44</sup> Thakur Das Bhargava, n. 14 (Translated from Hindi).

The internal differences in the Punjab Congress—a carry-over from the pre-partition days—might have been removed completely if the Punjab had the benefit of a mature leadership, enjoying confidence of different Congress sections. Its absence was responsible for frequent quarrels and bickerings. As soon as the Bhargava group went out of the Congress, differences between the Sachar-Kairon group came to the surface. After the general elections, the Sachar-Kairon group got into the Assembly in overwhelming majority and dominated the State Congress at the same time. Mr. Sri Ram Sharma, now, had to play the second fiddle. S. Pratap Singh Kairon, the iron man of the Pradesh Congress, was the recognized leader of the group having mass support in the rural areas of the Jullundur Division, but Mr. Sachar, who had only limited following in the urban areas of the Punjab, was picked up as the Chief Minister since he enjoyed the support of Mr. Nehru and Maulana Azad.<sup>47</sup> Such a situation could not bring about the much desired stability either in the Punjab Congress or the Punjab Ministry. The struggle for power within the Congress revived once again, culminating in the exclusion of Mr. Sharma from the Government and the Congress.<sup>48</sup> The refusal of the Congress High Command<sup>49</sup> to hold an open enquiry left “its members wallowing in personal squabbles and accusing each other of grave irregularities”. “It keeps its eyes shut even to flagrant cases of nepotism and corruption. . . .”<sup>50</sup>

The Congress High Command was not oblivious to the rising

—, *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi (1 January, 1954).

<sup>48</sup> Mr. Sachar asked Mr. Sharma to resign as there was a difference of opinion between them. On his refusal, however, Mr. Sachar tendered the resignation of his Cabinet and excluded Mr. Sharma from the reconstituted ministry in July, 1953.

<sup>49</sup> There were allegations and counter-allegations. Mr. Sharma demanded open enquiry into the conduct of the Ministry which was, however, not agreed to by the High Command. An enquiry from the General Secretary of the A.I.C.C. Mr. S. N. Aggarwal, justified the Chief Minister's action. As a result, Mr. Sri Ram Sharma, Prof. Mota Singh, Mr. Abdul Ghani and Mr. Kedar Nath Sehgal were suspended and later, with the exception of Mr. Sri Ram Sharma, were expelled from the Congress for five years for alleged anti-Congress activities. Mr. Sharma resented the decision of the High Command as partisan and said they did not expect any justice and fair-play from the A.I.C.C. so long as the Great Maulana ruled over the destinies of the Punjab. See *Times of India* (18 October, 1953), and *Tribune* (22 January, 1954).

<sup>50</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Tribune*, Ambala (1 October, 1953).

- tensions in the Punjab Congress and repeatedly exhorted its members to put an end to internal strife and differences, but nothing could prevent the fissiparous tendencies which had taken deep roots in the latter. The split between the dominant Sachar-Kairon-Jagat Narain group, culminating in the exit of both Sachar and Jagat Narain from the Congress,<sup>51</sup> brought to an end the power conflict within the ruling party, for a short while to be revived again when the language question assumed importance in the political life of the State.

The peculiar communal position of the Punjab introduced a new element in the power struggle within the Congress. The generally communal atmosphere prevalent since the partition, the absence of strong and mature leadership in the ruling party and the weakness of the leftist forces, created a situation in which the disgruntled elements and the dissidents from the Congress, found themselves forced to ally with the communal bodies if they had to keep themselves politically alive. The Congress organization itself, which claims to be a secular organization, frequently entered into agreements with the communal organizations, giving the latter a status of respectability in the public eyes. These members who enter the Congress without shedding their communal and sectarian attitudes, permeate their own bias and prejudices in the body-politic of the Punjab Congress and thus sharpen the communal conflicts within and without the latter.<sup>52</sup>

The A.I.C.C. at its session in 1952, warned its members against the existing communal and separatist tendencies and declared that "there should be no alliance, co-operation or understanding, explicit or implicit, between the Congress and any organization which is essentially communal in character and functions, whatever its designations might be".<sup>53</sup> But it was not strictly implemented. The

<sup>51</sup> ———, *The Times of India*, New Delhi (17 September, 1953).

<sup>52</sup> The decision of the Congress to ally with the Akali Party was severely criticized by a section of the Congress and other political parties. Babu Bachan Singh, M.L.A. made scathing criticism of the above Congress decision of overnight declaring the rank communalists as its members. On an all India plane, Shri Jai Prakash Narain expressed his surprise at the A.I.C.C. decision to permit R.S.S. members to be its members and declared it as "opportunist and unprincipled". The only object being to retain its power both in the Central and State governments. See *Tribune*, Ambala (12 December, 1949), and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta (11 October, 1949).

<sup>53</sup> ———, *Congress Bulletin No. 2*. "Proceedings of the Meetings of the All-India Congress Committee", Calcutta, 22-3 March, 1952 (New Delhi, A.I.C.C., 1952).

discussion on communalism and the declarations that the Congress should have “no explicit or implicit understanding” is a regular feature since 1920, but the very fact that its uncompromising adherence to secularism had to be emphasized again and again proved that its leaders were aware of the existence of communalism among its followers.

The Congress policy of appeasing communal elements had a very damaging impact on the well-meaning nationalist Sikhs, similar to that on the nationalist Muslims against Muslim League in the pre-partition days. The Congress believed it to be “temporary and a prophylactic against communalism to persons who in their turn believe that what is intended to be temporary is in fact the thin end of the wedge and can be made permanent.”<sup>54</sup>

The Punjab politics, which was seething with communal feelings, found another expression in the revival of the age-long rural-urban, agriculturist-non-agriculturist and local-refugee conflicts. In the pre-partition days, the urban areas of the Central Punjab and rural areas to a limited extent, were the nerve-centres of its activities. The urban-group within the Congress, however, dominated the provincial Congress.<sup>55</sup> After the partition, the struggle between urban and rural groups, became more pronounced resulting in the ousting of the influential urban group from the control of the Congress organization and the government.<sup>56</sup> The strength of the Congress in urban areas received a jolt as a result of the dispersal of urban population to the different towns of the East Punjab, Delhi and surrounding areas. The rural-agriculturist refugees, majority of whom were Jat Sikhs from the Canal Colonies from the West Pakistan, got integrated in the agriculturist economy of the state, thus strengthening the agriculturist group within the Congress. But the urban refugees, who spread in the south-eastern districts of the Punjab, Delhi and its suburbs and other parts of India, could not help in consolidation of urban group within the Congress.<sup>57</sup> As a result, the Congress organization had to lean

<sup>54</sup> ———, “The Nationalist Sikh Convention”, *The Tribune*, Ambala (22 January, 1951). See also *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi (8 June, 1956) and *Hindustan Standard*, Delhi (4 October, 1956).

<sup>55</sup> See above, Chapter II.

<sup>56</sup> The struggle between Kairon on the one hand and Sachar and Jagat Narain on the other, was a struggle between the rural and urban interests for supremacy in which rural group emerged as the stronger one. See above, 211.

<sup>57</sup> See above, *ibid.*

heavily on the agriculturist group which was accidentally Sikh. This position has been frequently exploited by the Hindu communal elements in the state, to discredit the Congress organization and government.

The communal situation in the Punjab, thus, offers a very dismal picture. The area which had been the centre of the first secular, political movement and subsequently revolutionary anti-British struggle,<sup>58</sup> today faces a problem which is unique in its own way and needs to be tackled in that context.

<sup>58</sup> See above, Chapter II, Section II.

## CHAPTER IX

# LANGUAGE AND STATES REORGANIZATION

## I

### LANGUAGE IN THE PUNJAB POLITICS

A STUDY of the language problem is very vital to a correct understanding of the political situation in the state. The problem is unique and although it can be broadly compared with the linguistic demands of other regions, because of its peculiar characteristics, it needs to be studied in the specific context of communal and political factors of the state.

The history of the development of the language controversy is varied and is spread over the last half a century. In the Punjab of pre-British days—under the Mughals and the Sikhs—the Court language was Persian<sup>1</sup> and even Punjabi language was, invariably, written in Persian script. Under the British, however, Urdu was made the Court language in addition to English, a position which it continued to enjoy till the partition.<sup>2</sup>

During the last decade of the 19th century two important social reform movements gained strength in the Punjab. The Arya Samaj struck roots among the urban Hindu population and propagated the use of Hindi in the Devanagari script. Since the “Satyarth Prakash” was written by Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj movement (whose mother tongue was Gujarati) in Hindi, the language and the script assumed a certain religious halo in the minds of the Arya Samaji Hindus.

The cause of Punjabi, on the other hand, was taken up by the Chief Khalsa Dewan—a religious organization of the Sikhs—during the same period. Propagation of Sikh religion and “Amrit Prachar”

<sup>1</sup> Amarnath Vidyalkar, *Bahmī Itihad Aur Regional Formula (Regional Formula and Communal Unity)* (Jullundur, 1956), 76. Persian and Urdu dominated all over India during the Mughal rule.

<sup>2</sup> Even after the partition, Urdu continued to be the Court language. Under the Sachar formula and the Regional Formula, it has been provided that both Hindi and Punjabi will gradually replace English and Urdu. See Appendix VI.

were two of their declared aims. They produced a number of books and pamphlets in Punjabi in Gurumukhi script, dealing with various aspects of Sikh religion. The Gurumukhi script was given its present form by the Second Guru of the Sikhs and the holy Granth is also written in the same script. Because of all these factors, the Sikhs developed a certain degree of attachment to the Punjabi language which the other two communities did not have.

The Court language and the medium of instruction in all the schools of the Punjab was Urdu. In their personal and official correspondence, nearly all Punjabees used Urdu and English. The major vernacular newspapers, representing different viewpoints and political interests, were printed in Urdu in the pre-partition<sup>3</sup> days and this position continues even today. As a result, every literate male Punjabee knew Urdu all through this period. There were a few educational institutions run by various religious organizations where the children were taught Hindi and Punjabi, but they were relatively few in number and even there every student was taught Urdu.

The language, however, got linked with the communal politics of the province, particularly after the Aligarh and Muslim League movements. The Muslims rarely learnt any other language than Urdu and English. In the evergrowing communal atmosphere, the demands for giving better place to Hindi and Punjabi increasingly gained momentum. Ultimately, the government agreed to accede to these demands and recognized the status of both these languages in the educational curriculum under the Sikandar-Baldev Singh Pact.<sup>4</sup>

The situation, thus, gave rise to an anomalous position in which the spoken language of the region did not get an all-round loyalty from the different sections of the people, and could not acquire the status which other languages—like Bengali and Telugu—enjoyed in their respective regions. Language, generally, is regarded as a unifying force which cuts across several sectional, sectarian

<sup>3</sup> This position of Urdu, however, was limited to the male Punjabee population of the province. Among non-Muslim women, Urdu was comparatively less known. Hindi was more widely known among the urban Hindus because of the influence of the Arya Samaj. In the rural areas, although the number of literate women was very small, the knowledge of Gurumukhi script was more widely prevalent, irrespective of religious affiliations.

<sup>4</sup> Vidyalankar, n. 1, 20.

and communal divisions. In the case of the Punjab, however, the language question further deepened the existing communal divisions, which over-shadowed the cohesive characteristics of the Punjabee.<sup>5</sup>

The decision to change the status of Urdu as the only medium of instruction and to replace it with Hindi and Punjabi was partly due to the communal atmosphere prevalent in the province. In pursuance of the fulfilment of this demand of the people, the Education Department of the East Punjab Government ordered that

“All education in the schools of the East Punjab shall be given in the mother-tongue of the children and either Devnagari or Gurumukhi script can be used in the 1st and 2nd class, provided arrangements be made to teach Gurumukhi in the third class in schools where initially Hindi is taught. The same rule is required to be observed in such schools where the initial education was in Gurumukhi.”<sup>6</sup>

The order contained the seeds of what later came to be known as the Sachar Formula. Although this government order included all the elements round which acute controversies developed subsequently, surprisingly enough during that period no one objected to its implementation.<sup>7</sup>

The language issue assumed its political importance only in the year 1949, for it was preceded by the demand for a Punjabi-speaking state and other concessions by the Akali Party.<sup>8</sup> The question was referred to the Punjab University with the expectation that the academicians would find a solution mutually satisfactory to both the communities. But the educationists proved to be as susceptible to political pressure as the politicians. The Hindu members constituted a majority in the University Senate and when the Sikh members discovered that their demand could not be met, they walked out of its meeting in protest. The Hindu members adopted a resolution embodying their point of view which in the absence of the support of the other community was not considered a workable

<sup>5</sup> This explains the fact that the urge for a reunity of the two Bengals has a lot of popular mass appeal, this idea of a reunited Punjab has not even been entertained by people. A few poets and dreamers are its only votaries.

<sup>6</sup> Vidyalankar, n. 1, 20-1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 21. <sup>8</sup> See below, 221-24.



solution. Consequently, the Punjab Government decided to take the initiative in the matter.<sup>9</sup>

The Punjab Government submitted its proposals popularly known as "Sachar Formula"<sup>10</sup> on the language question on 1 October, 1949. According to this, the state was divided into two linguistic regions, Punjabi and Hindi. The language of the region was to be the medium of instruction in all the schools till matriculation stage, and the children were required to learn the other language at the secondary stage. The choice for the medium of instruction in the educational institutions was left entirely to the parents or guardians of the pupils. The formula, however, was not obligatory for un-aided recognized schools where the medium of instruction was to be determined by the management concerned. It was decided that English and Urdu would remain the official and court languages and were to be progressively replaced by Hindi and Punjabi.

The "Sachar Formula" was widely acclaimed by the Sikhs including Akalis, though they criticized the right of the parents to choose the medium of instruction for the education of their children.<sup>11</sup> The proposals, however, met with severe criticism at the hands of the Hindu organizations like the Arya Samaj, the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha. In order to counter the Akali demand of the Punjabi Suba, and the claim of Punjabi as the regional language of the Punjabi-speaking area, these organizations and the Hindu vernacular press started a campaign that the Hindus of this area should declare Hindi as their mother-tongue. A meeting of the headmasters and principals of Hindu High Schools was called to oppose the introduction of Punjabi. The headmasters and principals of Khalsa High Schools retorted by calling a meeting on 23 May 1951, and resolved that the rights of Punjabi should be safeguarded and the "Sachar Formula" should be implemented.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Niranjan Singh, "Charde Punjab Vidya De Zariye Da Hal—Sachar Formula" (The solution for the medium of instruction in the New Punjab—Sachar Formula), *Akali Patrika*, 2: 1 (19 September, 1949).

<sup>10</sup> ———, *Papers Relating to Hindi Agitation in Punjab* (Chandigarh, Public Relations Department, 1957), 11. The proposals were signed by the following members:

1. Bhim Sen Sachar
2. Gopi Chand Bhargava
3. Ujjal Singh
4. Kartar Singh

<sup>11</sup> ———, *Akali Patrika*, 3: 1 (22 October, 1949).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 1 (23 January, 1951) and 3: 2 (14 February, 1951).

The Akali press and leaders started a counter-propaganda which was intensified during the census. Both the Hindu communal and Akali papers warned their communities that they should be careful about false entries by the Census staff,<sup>13</sup> as it was openly alleged that the enumerators deliberately made false entries in favour of Hindi or Punjabi in accordance with their own preference for one or the other language. The atmosphere was so much charged with communal poison that the members of two communities clashed in a number of places.<sup>14</sup> The situation, thus, took a bitter turn. "This led during the last census operations to a situation in which the separate tabulation of Hindi and Punjabi-speaking people had to be abandoned."<sup>15</sup>

The conflict between the Hindus and Sikhs, however, took a sharp turn from this day onward. The Sikhs felt that the Hindus by denying the right of the Punjabi as their mother-tongue wanted to gain a position of superiority over them. The Hindu communal organizations, objecting to this right of Punjabi, argued that the government by declaring Gurumukhi as the only script for Punjabi had denied to them their right to name their mother-tongue. They were, they declared, left with no other alternative but to declare Hindi as their mother-tongue.<sup>16</sup>

In the heated communal atmosphere, the press carried on the campaign in the bitterest of language. The respective causes of Hindi and Punjabi were vociferously propagated and the dazed observers in the rest of the country saw that this war of wits was being carried on in Urdu.

The questions of the language of the state and choice of the medium of instruction in schools may not have been as difficult and complicated issues as they appeared to be subsequently but for the fact that they got mixed up with the question of the reorganization of the state. The latter had its peculiar connotation in the light of the political events culminating in the partition of the country.

India did not have clearly defined states. A number of adminis-

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 3 (23 February, 1951). During the month of February a number of communal riots took place in several parts of the province. These disturbances were mainly connected with the language in the census operations. See *Hindu*, 7: 7, Madras (11 February, 1951).

<sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Report of the States Reorganization Commission, 1955* (New Delhi, 1955), 141.

<sup>16</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Akali Patrika*, 3: 2, Jullundur (18 January, 1951).

trative areas had grown up almost haphazardly as a result of the conquest and suppression by the British. These provinces were not always cultural and linguistic units but were based on the administrative convenience of the rulers. Consequently, a demand for the linguistic reorganization of the states grew along with the development of national consciousness and the growth of anti-British feelings and nationalism.

The Indian National Congress first supported this demand in a resolution in 1921 and continued to do so till after the partition.<sup>17</sup> The Constituent Assembly of India appointed a Linguistic Provinces Commission under the chairmanship of Mr. S. K. Dar, a retired judge of the Allahabad High Court. The Commission recommended a postponement of the consideration of this question on the plea that a reorganization of the states mainly on linguistic considerations was not in the larger interests of the Indian nation.<sup>18</sup> Following this, the J.V.P. Committee, appointed in the Jaipur Session of the Indian National Congress in 1948 also suggested a postponement of the redistribution of the provinces on linguistic basis under the plea that such a step would cause "serious administrative dislocation and political and economic instability". The Committee made a specific reference to the problem of states reorganization of the northern areas and categorically expressed itself against any such "rectification of (the) boundaries . . . in the immediate future."<sup>19</sup>

Mr. Nehru provided an explanation of the change in the Congress attitude towards the reorganization of the states. Linking it with the partition of the country, he said that "the other partitions in the country have, undoubtedly, made many of us hesitant about changing the map of India . . . For . . . to unsettle and uproot the whole of India on the basis of a theoretical approach or linguistic division seems to me an extraordinarily unwise thing".<sup>20</sup> But this change of attitude on the part of the Congress did not slow down the pace with which the demand for linguistic states was gaining momentum. Forced by the 58 days' fast of Mr. P. Sriramulu<sup>21</sup> and his death,

<sup>17</sup> ———, *Report of the Linguistic Provinces Commission*, 1948 (New Delhi, 1948), 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>19</sup> ———, *Report of the Linguistic Provinces Committee*, 1948 (New Delhi, 1953), 15-6.

<sup>20</sup> ———, *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* (Delhi, 1954), 57.

<sup>21</sup> ———, *The Times of India* (16 January, 1953).

the Government had to concede the demand for Andhra, and finally decided to appoint a high powered commission to consider the question of reorganization of the States.<sup>23</sup>

The demand for the reorganization of the Punjab goes back to 1930 when S. Ujjal Singh and Pandit Nanak Chand made a proposal before the Round Table Conference to that effect.<sup>23</sup> The demand was reiterated in 1945 before the Sapru Committee<sup>24</sup> and again in 1946. But at that time the reorganization was demanded more on the basis of communal considerations and as a counter-proposal to the demand of Pakistan by the Muslim League, rather than on the basis of linguistic considerations.

The Punjab, immediately after the partition, was faced with a number of other problems and the Akali Party extended its whole-hearted support to the Congress in all political matters.<sup>25</sup> In fact Master Tara Singh gave a rebuff to the Pakistan propaganda, that there was a demand for a Sikh state in the following words: "the bogey of a Sikh State in (the) East Punjab which is being conjured up by the Pakistan propaganda machine in order to create dissensions between (the) Hindus and (the) Sikhs . . . (the) Hindus and (the) Sikhs will rise and fall together. Their fates are inextricably linked. . . ."<sup>26</sup>

### *Demand for Punjabi Suba*

The demand for a "Punjabi Suba" was, however, made in February, 1948. Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader criticized the Government of India's policy of not referring the question of demarcation of boundaries of the Punjab to the Dar Commission and said "We have a culture different from the Hindus. Our culture is Gurumukhi culture and our literature is also in the Gurumukhi script." He added "we want to have a province where we can safeguard our culture and our tradition."<sup>27</sup> Answering the criticism that his demand smacked of communalism, he declared that he wanted the right of self-determination for Panth in religious, social, political

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* (16 May, 1953). <sup>23</sup> See above Chapter II. <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Statesman* (2 December, 1947).

<sup>26</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Hindustan Times* (21 September, 1947).

<sup>27</sup> Other Akali leaders also made similar declarations. Jathedar Pritam Singh, a prominent Akali leader, in his address to All India Sikh Students Federation, said that the Sikhs had a different culture, dress, living and a different code of behaviour and as such must have a separate province to themselves. See *Akali Patrika*, 2: 1, Jullundur (11 October, 1949).

and other matters and added that "if this was dubbed as communalism, he was a communalist".<sup>28</sup> He, however, made it clear that they did not want a separate and independent sovereign state. It would be "a part of the federal unit which will have to give financial aid and help in the defence." Though the Akali leader did not foresee any possibility of transfer of population in case their demand was conceded, because (the) Hindus and (the) Sikhs had lived together for a long time and had developed blood relations, yet, he did not rule out any such possibility in case the relations between the communities got estranged "resulting in making the transfer of population inevitable."<sup>29</sup> The demand got impetus when minority rights were being discussed by the Constituent Assembly. The question relating to the treatment to be accorded to the Sikhs was referred to a Committee of the Constituent Assembly which included Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Ambedkar.<sup>30</sup> This Committee appointed a ten-man sub-committee to evolve an agreed formula in respect of all communal questions affecting the East Punjab. The sub-committee recommended that "in view of the fact that seats in the House of People and the Legislative Assemblies of the States had been reserved for other religious minorities, provisions for reservation of (seats for religious minorities of) the East Punjab and other States should also be made if and where demanded." Some of the members of the sub-committee urged that the Sikhs should be given more seats in the Legislature than was their due on population basis, but the sub-committee could not come to a unanimous decision on this point.<sup>31</sup> The Minority Committee, however, disapproved the suggestion of the reservation of seats for religious minorities, and consequently no seats were reserved for the Sikhs in any legislature.

The communal issue in the Punjab was further complicated when the Sikh members of the East Punjab Assembly, except S. Pratap Singh Kairon, presented 13 new demands as a sequel to abandon the demand of redemarcation of boundaries on a linguistic basis. The important among them were:<sup>32</sup>

1. Representation be given to the Sikhs on the basis of 1941

—, *The Tribune*, 4: 1 (26 February, 1948).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* (1 August, 1948).

<sup>29</sup> —, *The Hindustan Times* (Editorial) (8 November, 1948).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* (15 November, 1948).

<sup>32</sup> —, *The Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta (15 November, 1948).

Census without excluding Sikhs who had migrated to other provinces.

2. They should be given five per cent representation in the Centre and reservation of seats in other provinces.

3. One Sikh Minister and one Deputy Minister be taken in the Central Cabinet.

4. Posts of the Governor and the Premier of the East Punjab should go alternately to a Hindu or a Sikh.

5. Fifty per cent representation in the Provincial Cabinet and the Assembly be reserved for them.

6. Gurgaon district and Loharu State should be separated from the East Punjab.

7. Forty per cent seats in services should be reserved for Sikhs.

8. If the above demands are rejected, Sikhs should be allowed to form a new province of seven districts including Ambala.

It is interesting to note the parallel that exists between the thirteen points demands presented by the Sikhs to the Constituent Assembly in 1949 and the thirteen points Delhi Proposals made by the All India Muslim Convention in 1927 subsequently and more widely known as Mr. Jinnah's fourteen points. Communal leadership of both the religious groups demanded parity in the Cabinet with the majority community, reservation of seats in the services and separate electorates.<sup>33</sup> It is ironical that while the Muslim League ultimately led the Muslims towards Pakistan, in their 8th point, the Sikhs also submitted that in case their demands were rejected they should be allowed to form a new province of seven districts including Ambala where they would be in a numerical majority. The only difference appears to be that while the Muslim League demanded an independent sovereign state for the Muslims, the Sikh communal leadership continued to swear their loyalty to the Indian Union. But the parallel between the two patterns was so unmistakably clear that the growth of apprehensions in the minds of the rest of the population was not completely unjustified. Another saving grace was the absence of the interested third party who in the case of the Hindu-Muslim differences exploited the situation to their own advantage.

These demands, however, were not acceptable to the Congress or the Constituent Assembly. S. Hukam Singh pleaded the case of the Sikhs in the Constituent Assembly, but Sardar Patel reminded

<sup>33</sup> —————, *The Tribune*, Ambala (18 November, 1948).

him that the Sikh members had agreed that they would not ask for any further concessions if the Sikh backward classes were given rights equivalent to the Scheduled Classes and the Constituent Assembly decided that there was to be no reservation for minorities in services except for the Backward and Scheduled Castes.<sup>34</sup>

The Sikhs, however, were not unanimous in this separatist demand. Even Giani Kartar Singh opposed it by saying that the demand was "anti-national and harmful to the Sikhs and therefore (could) not be accommodated in the secular set-up of the Indian Republic. . . ." Besides it would still further divide the Sikh population in a much worse manner than the partition of the country in 1947 did.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Reaction to the Demand for Punjabi Suba*

The suspicious, hostile and rather aggressive attitude of the Hindus, further complicated the political situation in the Punjab. The majority of them were of the opinion that the Muslim League could achieve Pakistan because of the appeasement policy of the Congress. Now that the partition was a fact and a majority of the Muslims had gone over the other side, the Government of India should follow a strong policy towards all religious minorities. They were aware that all the erstwhile Muslim League members who were left behind in India, would like to merge their political identity with the Congress. In the Punjab, they had been nearly eliminated and those that were left had neither the strength, nor courage, nor the resources to put up the demands made in the pre-partition days once again. Therefore, only one such minority was left which had to be kept satisfied—the Sikhs. The Akali demand for a separate Punjabi Suba, was interpreted as a strategy designed to create a separate Sikh State and the Press other than Akali, condemned the move as following the foot-steps of the Muslim League.<sup>36</sup> In fact, it was the communal leadership of both the communities which continued the old communal propaganda.

Master Tara Singh, however, alleged that the Hindu leaders and a particular section of the Hindu press in the Punjab were

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 3 (23 November, 1949).

<sup>35</sup> ———, *Akali Patrika*, 1: 1, Jullundur (16 October, 1949).

<sup>36</sup> ———, *The Hindustan Times* (11 November, 1948). This attitude adopted by the Hindus was not a new one. As early as September, 1947, a deputation of the prominent Hindu leaders from the Punjab waited in deputation separately on Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel and warned them against letting the Sikh problem assume serious proportions.

responsible for the unfortunate situation and were "leading the present anti-Sikh agitation".<sup>37</sup> The conditions, nevertheless, were explosive and needed immediate attention of all concerned.

## II

### SCHEMES FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE STATE AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATES REORGANIZATION COMMISSION

The question of the reorganization of the Punjab, hovers round the demand of the Akalis for a separate state which has taken different names over the last quarter of a century.<sup>38</sup> The origin of the demand, the complexity of regionalism, linguism and other parochial sentiments in the prevalent communal atmosphere, divided the people of the Punjab on this vital issue. To have a representative picture of the situation, it is, therefore, important to study the attitudes of the different political parties towards the question in the given context. The following political and regional parties and groups took an active part in the discussion of the above-mentioned problem and proposed various schemes for the reorganization of the state.

#### I. The case for a Punjabi-speaking Province:

- (a) The Akali Party
- (b) The Communist Party
- (c) The Socialist Party.

#### II. The Case for Haryana Prant.

#### III. The Case for Himachal Pradesh.

#### IV. The Case for the Maha Punjab.

#### V. The Case for Greater Punjab.

#### *The Case for a Punjabi-speaking Province*

*The Akali Party.* The case for a Punjabi-speaking province has been expounded, propagated and pursued by the Akali Party. Punjabi, according to them, is the oldest language among the languages originating from the Aryan language.<sup>39</sup> Besides, it has got its

-, *The Tribune*, Ambala (18 November, 1948).

<sup>38</sup> See above Chapter II.

<sup>39</sup> ———, *Memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission* (Punjab) (Amritsar, n.d.), 3-4.



own script—Gurumukhi—which had originated from Brahmi script. It has its own separate culture and folk music and dances. Though the language had been disowned by the members of the other communities in pre-partition and post-partition days, owing to their narrow political ends,<sup>40</sup> none can deny the deep Punjabi imprint on the people living in the area.

The Akali Party recommended that the Punjab should be divided into three regions on language basis:<sup>41</sup>

- (i) Punjabi-speaking Area.
- (ii) Hindustani-speaking Area.
- (iii) Himachal Pradesh.

(a) Such a division, they asserted, would demarcate the territory in three compact geographical areas. At the moment, they argued, patches of territory were distributed among various states, for instance, Himachal had been cut into two pieces by the Kangra district. A redistribution, on lines suggested by the Akalis, would bring the desired change of uniting the people on linguistic and cultural basis and would render administration casier and more efficient.

(b) The proposed Punjabi-speaking area would be economically viable and would be surplus in agricultural production and would not lag behind in industry. This would naturally lead to financial stability of this state.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-3.

<sup>41</sup> ———, *A Case for Punjabi-Speaking State* (Memorandum) (Amritsar, n.d.), 12-4.

*Hindustani-Speaking Area*: Rohtak, Gurgaon, Hissar (except Sirsa, Fatehabad and Thana Tohana), Panipat Tehsil.

*Pepsu*: Mohindargarh district and part of Jind and Narwana.

*Himachal Pradesh*: Present Himachal, Kandaghat district of Pepsu and Simla and Kangra district of the Punjab.

The proposed Punjabi-speaking province was to have an area of 35,458 square miles and population of 12 millions. It was to consist of following areas of the Punjab, Pepsu and Rajasthan.

*Punjabi-Speaking Area*

*The Punjab*: Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Ambala, Karnal (except Panipat Tehsil), Hissar (Sirsa, Fatehabad and Thana Tohana).

*Pepsu*: Patiala, Barnala, Bhatinda, Kapurthala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Sangrur (except Jind and Narwana Tehsil).

*Rajasthan*: Ganganagar District.

(c) The argument that the security of the state would be endangered in the Punjabi-speaking State was born out of the mistrust of the Sikhs developed in the minds of certain leaders; but this was not doing justice to those who had “sacrificed their best for the achievement of freedom” and their “unalloyed patriotism” which impelled them to undergo lot of sufferings. Besides, the Sikhs were not demanding an independent territory. The Punjabi-speaking State, they argued, would not, in any way, change the complexion of the population on the border. The memorandum said that it was fantastic to think of migration of the Hindus from the new State and give the analogy of the creation of Pakistan and the subsequent holocaust. Hindus would be the full-fledged nationals of the new state.<sup>42</sup> They were living quite amicably in Pepsu and the Sikhs would not be in a larger proportion in the Punjabi State. “Does that appeal to any sane Indian that India is safe when Hindus are 70 per cent in (the) Punjab, and its security would be jeopardised if they become 55 per cent . . . .”<sup>43</sup>

(d) Replying to the argument that the divided Punjab would weaken the defence line of the country, the memorandum said the reorganized Punjab would not be smaller in size than North West Frontier Province in the United India. On the other hand, it would strengthen the border defence for this homogeneous state, inhabited by the most sturdy people as it must be, would be a guarantee against any aggression from the North West Frontier of India.

The above arguments sound quite reasonable, but it is a well-known fact that the Akalis do not demand the Punjabi-speaking state only on the basis of the above arguments. The Akali Party has never made secret of the fact that a Punjabi-speaking province was being demanded to safeguard the Sikh minority interests against the Hindu majority. The Akali leaders never bothered to explain to non-Sikh Punjabees that their interests would be as well safeguarded in the proposed new state as those of the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh’s mind is clearly revealed in the following excerpts from a verbatim report of his conversation with the then Chief Minister of the Punjab: “I want the position of the Sikhs to be raised anyhow. This (the cover of the Punjabi-speaking State) serves my purpose

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-7. The possibility, however, was not ruled out as pointed out by Master Tara Singh, in case the relations between the two communities were estranged.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

well as it does not offend against nationalism and also secures encouragement of the Punjabi language". He admitted that "the fundamental point is that it is a question of existence for the Sikhs" and exhorted the Chief Minister to accept the demand "under the slogan of the Punjabi-speaking State".<sup>44</sup> The demand was supported by a major section of the Sikhs in other places.<sup>45</sup>

This approach was basically wrong. The people in general and the Hindus in particular strongly disapproved of any separatist tendencies; and the communal approach of the Akalis, to an otherwise democratic demand, antagonised the other community. The communal elements among the Hindus took advantage of the prevailing sentiments by starting a counter-agitation in favour of the Maha Punjab which led to a sharp division between the two communities. The problem, however, proved a knotty one. Though the Akali demand was sectarian, it became difficult to isolate it as it synchronized with the democratic demand of redistribution of states on linguistic and cultural basis.

*The Communist Party.* The Communist Party, in its memorandum to the S.R.C. put up a strong case for the Punjabi-speaking province which was in line with their All-India policy of reorganization of the Indian territory on linguistic basis. They, however, emphasized their differences with the Akali Party with regard to the basis for this demand and inclusion of certain territories in the proposed new state. They criticized the inclusion by the Akalis of certain territories like Narnaul and Mohindargarh, Bawal and Dadri (these were granted to Patiala, Nabha and Jind princes as rewards for their loyalty to the British and in fact were not Punjabi-speaking areas) which was essentially due to communal considerations and could not be justifiably supported. Similarly such areas as Gurgaon, Rohtak and Karnal, were joined with the Punjab, as a punishment for taking active part in 1857 struggle, though they were predominantly Hindi-speaking areas. In view of this, the Party recommended that Pepsu State should be dissolved and merged in the Punjab, but the Hindi-speaking areas of the Punjab and Pepsu

<sup>44</sup> Dorem, "The National Scene, The Akali Revival", *The Times of India* (2 February, 1955). When the author had an interview with Master Tara Singh at his residence at Amritsar, the latter made it clear that the Punjabi Suba demand was a bid to protect the 'Khalsa Panth' against the Hindu religious and intellectual inroads.

<sup>45</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *National Herald* (19 November, 1951).

should be made into a separate Haryana or Hindi-speaking state. The Punjab Government had itself, they argued, admitted the bilingual character of the state by introducing "Sachar Formula". The Communist Party was of the opinion that the hilly districts of Kandaghat of Pepsu and Kulu in Kangra district should be joined with Himachal Pradesh. Such an arrangement, according to them, "would eliminate the present friction over the language question and create favourable conditions for the progress and development of the regional language, *i.e.* Punjabi (in Gurumukhi or Devnagari script). . . ." Besides it would meet the "legitimate aspirations of Punjabi-speaking and Hindi-speaking people and of the people of Himachal Pradesh. . . ." The memorandum categorically declared that their approach was basically different from that of the Akali Party, for it was put forth as a common demand of all Punjabees and was based on the rational principle of linguistic homogeneity. The Akali approach, on the other hand, was entirely communal as they talked of "Hindu domination and satisfaction of Sikh demands" and posed the issue as if only one community—the Sikhs—were concerned with it. Similarly, they criticized the slogan of the Mahā Punjab as there was no cultural, economic or historical "justification for lumping all this territory together into one state."<sup>46</sup>

The approach of the Communist Party, however rational it may appear, did not take a realistic view of the situation. They took it for granted that Punjabi Suba was the "common demand of all Punjabees" and overlooked the fact that the demand was opposed by a major section of the Hindus of Jullundur Division. The party leadership, thus, was not able to make a correct analysis of the varied social and economic forces affecting the political life of the State and could not give an unambiguous line on the problems facing it. Owing to its broad theoretical support for linguistic reorganization of the States, it was notable to assess clearly the role that religion played in the Punjab politics. As a result, many a time its followers were infected by the language propaganda of their co-religionists. Not being clear, the leadership unwittingly fell in the mire of vacillation, resulting in periodic turn-about in its politics and slogans.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> ———, *Memorandum submitted by the Punjab-Pepsu Committee, Communist Party of India, to the States Reorganisation Commission (22 May, 1954) (Jullundur, C.P.I.), unpublished.*

<sup>47</sup> Though the Communist Party supported the slogan of "Punjabi Suba" from the very beginning, it has been changing the concept quite frequently. Supporting the demand as one based on the right to "self-determination" in

*The Praja Socialist Party.* The Praja Socialist Party, like all the other left-wing parties, supported the formation of states on linguistic basis. In the memorandum submitted to the S.R.C., it advocated the creation of three states:

- (i) Pahari State, comprising Pahari-speaking areas of the Punjab, Pepsu and certain districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- (ii) Greater Delhi or Haryana State, comprising Hindi-speaking areas of the Punjab, Pepsu and certain districts of Agra and Meerut Division of U.P.
- (iii) Punjab, comprising of contiguous Punjabi-speaking areas of the Punjab and Pepsu.

The memorandum, with a view to counteracting fissiparous and separatist tendencies and affecting better administrative co-ordination and economy, had recommended a common Governor, a common High Court, a common Public Service Commission and interchangeable services for all the three states of the region.<sup>48</sup>

Shri J. P. Narayan warned all the parties concerned against suppressing the language question. "That way lies danger to national unity. Let us not invest this natural desire with the epithets of parochialism or treat it as a crime against the nation. The present exaggerations and aberrations of linguism would not have appeared had we frankly accepted the linguistic case and proceeded fairly and squarely to meet it."<sup>49</sup>

Both the PSP and the Communist party, thus, supported the demand for Punjabi-speaking province. The approach of the Communist and Socialist parties was diametrically opposed to the Akalis. The Praja Socialist Party generally supported the demand for linguistic reorganization of the state but in view of the complicated nature of the question, they suggested the creation of linguistic zones within the same state set-up to provide protection for various linguistic groups.

pre-partition days, it denounced the very basis of a Punjabi-speaking state in 1948, without Punjabi-speaking population on the other side of the border joining it. There was, however, yet another shift when the latter slogan was condemned as "Left Sectarian Deviation in the Party", which once again gave a slogan of the Punjabi-speaking province. See *Inner P. C. Documents—2* February, 1949 (Jullundur, Communist Party Office), 121-8.

<sup>48</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Janata*, 10: 23 (14 August, 1955), 11.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 11: 3 (12 February, 1956), 3.

The demand, in addition, enjoyed the support of the All India Linguistic Conference, which held a Conference at Ambala in March, 1955. Master Tara Singh, who made an unusually conciliatory and persuasive speech in the Conference, said "I consider myself a part and parcel of the Hindu culture and civilisation. I have never demanded an independent state of the Sikhs out of the Indian Union. A Punjabi-speaking province within the Indian Union is the maximum that I demand."<sup>50</sup>

The sharp division between the Punjabi-speaking people themselves, however, proffered a situation which could not easily be ignored.

#### *A Case for Haryana Prant*

Apart from the Punjabi-speaking population of the state, there were other shades of opinion and regions which had to be taken into consideration in the reorganization of the State. Haryana and Himachal were two such areas, the aspirations of whose people, demanded attention of all concerned.

The demand for Punjabi-speaking province and appointment of the S.R.C. gave an impetus to the movement for a separate Haryana or Hindi-speaking state. The economically backward people of Haryana demanded a separate state for they alleged that they had been discriminated against by the more advanced Punjabees, in all fields of education, administration, politics, trade and commerce. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava, speaking in the Parliament gave figures from various departments, and as represented in ministries, Parliament and State Legislatures, to prove that Haryana had only 5½ per cent representation.<sup>51</sup> In the field of education, too, they fared no better. Out of 4,500 primary and middle schools in the whole of the Punjab, only 1,400 were in Haryana. Out of 500 high schools, 170 were located in this region and only 16 out of 42 colleges fell to its share. The region did not have better representation in other walks of life either. Out of 16 delegates to the A.I.C.C. only 4 were from Haryana. Similar was the case in the Election Board, the Credentials Committee and the Election Tribunal. He admitted that the demand for separate Haryana like Punjabi Suba,

<sup>50</sup> ———, *The Akali*, 6 : 1, Jullundur (5 April, 1955). (Translated from Punjabi).

<sup>51</sup> Thakur Das Bhargava, *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol. I, 1955—*Report on the States Reorganisation* (New Delhi, Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1955), 1120-1.

was a product of frustration.<sup>52</sup> Prof. Sher Singh asserted that nearly 90 per cent of the people of Haryana Prant were of the opinion that they should have no connection whatsoever with the Punjab and wanted that they should be "linked with the area, with the people of which they have everything in common, tongue (language), dress, habits and customs (and) with whom they were united before the Great Revolt of 1857, to form a separate state."<sup>53</sup> Pandit Sri Ram Sharma also supported the demand for Haryana Prant and pointed out that the Hindu urban exploiters class of Jullundur Division wanted to sabotage the movement for a separate Haryana State.

Three conferences were held in the year 1955 to support and propagate the case of Haryana Prant. It was alleged by Dewan Alakh Dhari that all of them were dominated by the Akali leaders who wanted "to advance the Akali cause by working through the smoke-screen of 'Haryana Prant'."<sup>54</sup>

The demand for a separate Haryana province is essentially a part of the post-partition political developments in the state. There is no doubt that the people of this region were dissatisfied and had a long-standing grouse that the non-Haryana Punjabee was the dominant and the exploiting element in the trade, commercial and administrative life of their region, but they felt it in a greater measure with the penetration of Punjabee displaced persons in every walk of life in this region. The movement for Haryana Prant was, thus, initiated by the educated and wealthier section of the Haryana people who foresaw in this new development greater possibilities for themselves. To this end, they gave support to the demand of Punjabi Suba and criticized the Maha Punjab slogan, for the hope for a Haryana Prant lay only in the achievement of Punjabi Suba. The trading and commercial interests of Jullundur Division which mainly included the Punjabee Hindus, saw in this move a loss of markets and other avenues of benefit to them and therefore opposed it strongly.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Punjab Vidhan Sabha Debates*, Vol. II : 6, 2 November, 1956 (Chandigarh, 1955).

<sup>54</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "Haryana Prant—An Akali Stunt", *Organiser*, 9: 8 (3 October, 1955), 6.

<sup>55</sup> Chaudhari Kartar Singh, *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, 9 : 1, 24 November, 1955 (Chandigarh, 1955), 41.

*Case for Himachal Pradesh*

Like the Hindi and Punjabi people, the people of Himachal Pradesh also demanded that the existing separate administrative entity of their region be maintained so that they could safeguard their legitimate interests against any encroachment from the people of the more advanced Punjabi-speaking areas. There prevailed a "deep seated feeling of distrust against the men of the plains".<sup>56</sup> Dr. Parmar, the Chief Minister, said "some of our neighbours who have been looking for the exploitation of these backward people and who are ignorant of our peculiar habits, customs, traditions, culture and language have not looked favourably to the emergence of this new province. . . ." He emphasized that they had a different language, culture, customs, manners and in fact their whole social order was different from that of the Punjab. He demanded that hill tracts belonging to the Punjab and Pepsu should be made an integral part of Himachal Pradesh.<sup>57</sup> The Himachal Assembly, in fact, voted in favour of a separate Himachal Pradesh<sup>58</sup> by 34 votes to 3.

The demand for separate Haryana and Himachal Pradesh divided the Hindu population of the state. The Maha Punjab Samiti condemned the demand for Punjabi Suba on the plea that the Akalis were communalists and their loyalties were not above suspicion. But a similar argument could not be used against the people of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh who were predominantly Hindu. The popularity of the demand for linguistic reorganization can be assessed from the fact that out of the overall population of the whole area (172 lakh), nearly 118 lakh supported the division of the Punjab on linguistic basis.

*Case for Maha Punjab*

The Maha Punjab demand was supported by the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh and the Arya Samaj. They criticized the demand for the Punjabi Suba as a purely communal demand camouflaged as a demand for a linguistic state and advocated the formation of the Maha Punjab comprising the Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and a few districts of Western U.P. which was more suitable in the changed political situation of the state after the parti-

<sup>56</sup> Karan Singh, *Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly (Hindi)* (28-30 November, 1955) (Simla, 1955) 10 (b).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.      <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 52(c).



tion. The consideration of unity and security of India must outweigh all other considerations, they argued. It was necessary, therefore, that western frontier along-side "aggressive" and "hostile" Pakistan should be properly safeguarded. The strategical geographical situation of the Punjab, in their opinion, demanded that it should be strong enough to face the challenge. "Statesmanship and practical needs of administration and defence then demanded that this truncated Punjab be consolidated, enlarged and reinforced by the integration of all these princely states dotted over it as islands to form Maha Punjab having a unified and uniform administration."<sup>59</sup>

1. Economically Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh belonged to one common zone. The various development projects taken up by the Punjab Government further unify the area and serve a major portion of all the three states. Besides financially only East Punjab was viable unit. "Both Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh depend on doles from the Centre. . . ."<sup>60</sup>

2. Historically, the whole of the area had been united for almost a century, with one University and a uniform educational pattern, one judiciary and administration.

3. The interested parties had raised the questions of language and culture. "India as a whole has a common basic culture which underlies the fundamental unity of the whole country". The people in the Punjab spoke various dialects like Lahanda, Majhi, Malvi, Bhattiani, Multani, Doabi, Pahari, Dogri Jatu and Bangru. But all of them together were known by the general name of Hindi and the dialects in the Punjabi were sometimes described by linguists as Western Hindi.<sup>61</sup> The Punjabi, they argued, had no one recognized script. Punjabi was written in Urdu or Devnagari script by the non-Sikhs. After the partition, Hindi began to take the place of English and Urdu, but this natural change was checked by dragging the language issue into the political arena. The aim for

<sup>59</sup> ———, *Why Maha Punjab—Memorandum by Punjab Jan Sangh* (Ambala Cantt., n.d.), 2.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. This, however, was strongly denied by Shri Har Dayal Singh, M.L.A., Himachal Pradesh, who said that they did not take a single pie from the Centre in 1948-51. Like other states, they started taking for Five Year Plan. See *Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly Debates*, n. 56, 5.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 10. This is emphatically denied by the supporters of Punjabi. In fact Punjabi has been recognized as one of the 14 languages by the Indian Constitution.

creation of the Punjabi-speaking state, they alleged, was to serve a state where the Sikhs would be either numerically a majority or such a substantial minority as "to make them the real power in the state." Being a demand of only 30 per cent of the total population of the Punjab (I), it was totally undemocratic and sectional slogan.<sup>62</sup>

4. The linguistic pattern in the Punjab had been changed, they argued, after the partition.

"The little difference that existed between the dialects spoken there and those spoken in the rest of the Punjab has been well nigh obliterated by the mass exchange of population between (the) East Punjab and (the) West Punjab. According to 1951 Census about 15 lakh Punjabi-speaking refugees from (the) West Punjab have settled over Ambala (Division)... To cut them away from (the) Punjab would be a gross abuse of the linguistic principle. . . ."<sup>63</sup>

On the basis of the above argument, they submitted that since Punjabi no longer remained limited to a specific geographical region, after the partition, the Akali demand for the creation of the Punjabi Suba was unjustified.

5. The Akali demand was described as analogous to the Muslim League demand for division of the country in the pre-partition days. It was being supported by the Communist Party which wanted "to weaken the frontier region of India". All the other political parties of the Punjab including the Congress and the P.S.P. supported the demand for the enlarged Punjab.<sup>64</sup>

The Jan Sangh case for Hindi, remains a subject of great controversy. The supporters of the Gurumukhi script claim that it is older than Devnagari. Even if the Jan Sangh point of view is conceded, it goes against the principle of the development of a language and Gurumukhi script cannot be run down because it was developed in the 16th century. It is strange that the advocates of Gurumukhi script should be considered as traitors while the same lovers of Hindi from other non-Hindi-speaking areas have made no pretence to conceal their antagonism towards Hindi.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-3.      <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-4.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. The charge against the Communist Party is uncalled for in this respect. The P.S.P. never supported Maha Punjab demand. Its recommendations have already been given. See above, 230-31.

<sup>65</sup> Vidyalkar, n. 1, 17-8. When Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Railway Min-

*The Congress*

The Working Committee of A.I.C.C.<sup>66</sup> in its meeting in April, 1954, decided that all Congress Committees and Congressmen should have full freedom to represent their points of view before the States Reorganization Commission. In case of any difference of opinion, the minority in any Congress Committee was free to represent its views before the Commission. The Punjab Congress Committee, accordingly, decided that Congress members would meet the S.R.C. in their individual capacity. It is an open secret that majority of the Hindu Congressmen advocated merger of Himachal Pradesh and Pepsu in the Punjab, while a large number of Sikh Congressmen supported the demand of the Punjabi-speaking province. (This had its political implications which would be discussed subsequently.)

The Punjab Government, in its memorandum to the S.R.C. advocated the formation of the Greater Punjab which was more or less on the same lines as suggested by the Hindu Congressmen.

The efforts to achieve their end were stepped up by all the political parties. With a view to check the popular upsurge and maintain peaceful conditions, the Punjab Government imposed ban on shouting of slogans including that of the "Punjabi Suba". The Akalis threatened direct action—"Morcha", but the Government of India<sup>67</sup> declared that it was prepared to meet the challenge. The "Morcha", however, attracted large mass of population, from the villages and enjoyed both implicit and explicit support of a number of parties.<sup>68</sup> The clash between the police<sup>69</sup> and processionists within the precincts of the Golden Temple on 4 July, 1955, led to widespread resentment all over the state against the unwarranted official action and agitation assumed unthinkable proportions. Realizing the inherent danger in the situation, the government withdrew ban on 12 July, 1955 which was followed by Akali declaration of suspension of 64 days old "Morcha" against the government.

ister, introduced the Budget in Hindi before the Parliament, the opposition members including Jan Sangh leader, late Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee and several other leaders of Jan Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha walked out of the Hall.

<sup>66</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Resolutions on States Reorganisation, 1920-56* (New Delhi, A.I.C.C., n.d.), 8.

<sup>67</sup> Prime Minister Nehru and Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant, the Union Home Minister, expressed themselves strongly against the threat of Akali agitation. See *Times of India* (10 May, 1955) and *The Hindustan Times* (11 May, 1955).

<sup>68</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Tribune*, Ambala (16 June, 1955).

<sup>69</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi (18 June, 1955).

The Akali agitation, however, took a new turn after the States Reorganization Commission had submitted its report.

*The Recommendations of the States Reorganization Commission*

The problem in the Punjab, thus, was unique for as observed by the S.R.C.

“while other demands for separation from existing composite States have had the backing of an overwhelming majority of the people of the language group seeking such separation, the demand for a Punjabi-speaking State is strongly opposed by large sections of people speaking the Punjabi language and residing in the areas proposed to be constituted into a Punjabi-speaking State. The problem, therefore, is *sui generis*. It has to be examined against its own peculiar background.”<sup>70</sup>

The Commission was of the opinion that linguistic homogeneity was considered an instrument to ensure clear association of the Government with the people, but this criterion did not apply to the Punjab because both Hindi and Punjabi were understood by the people with equal facility. Besides, while the “substratum” of Punjabi was akin to modern “Lahanda”, its superstructure was a dialect of Western Hindi. The thin line of difference had been further blurred by large scale settlement of Punjabi-speaking migrants from the Western Punjab in all the districts of the Punjab.<sup>71</sup>

The Commission repudiated the fear of the Akalis that the Punjabi language would suffer, if Punjabi Suba on linguistic basis was not formed. The Commission observed that the demand of Punjabi being written in Gurumukhi script alone was relatively of recent growth. Reputed classical Punjabi writers like Waras Shah had written their works in Persian script. “The problem of language in the Punjab is, therefore, primarily one of scripts and in this battle of scripts, sentiment is arrayed against sentiment.”<sup>72</sup>

The Commission was of the opinion that the formation of the proposed Punjabi-speaking State would neither help to solve the

<sup>70</sup> ———, *Report of the States Reorganisation Commission*, n. 15, 141.

<sup>71</sup> The Report of the States Reorganisation Commission was submitted to the Government of India on 30 September, 1955. The overall basis on which they arrived at their conclusions have been given therein, n. 15, 36-46.

<sup>72</sup> ———, *Report of the States Reorganisation Commission*, n. 15, 143.

script problem, nor the communal problem. The imposition of Gurumukhi script on a section of the people strongly opposed to it would create a number of other problems for "whatever the legitimacy of such a demand may be, there is no method by which a person can be compelled to adopt a mother-tongue other than that for which he himself shows his preference. . . ." <sup>73</sup> Therefore, even a Punjabi-speaking province would remain a bilingual state for instructions in Hindi would have to be arranged on an extensive scale, particularly when Hindi was being used by 62.2 per cent of the candidates from Jullundur Division, as shown in the Punjab University Examinations <sup>74</sup> from 1950-55.

The allegation that the people from Haryana were given discriminatory treatment was repudiated by the Commission after receiving some facts and figures from the Punjab Government. The irrigation schemes had been formulated or implemented to extend them to the dry areas of Hissar and Rohtak and the contention that the original plan of Bhakra Project had been varied to the disadvantage of the area had no basis. <sup>75</sup>

Taking into consideration the economic and administrative advantages, the Commission recommended that Himachal Pradesh should be merged with the Punjab, but suitable arrangements should be made to ensure that economic development of this area was not impeded. Besides "the India-China border in this region admits of easy infiltration and the defence and security requirements of the region must remain a special concern of the Central Government. . . ." The Commission, therefore, was of the opinion that a stronger and more resourceful unit than the existing Himachal Pradesh should be established. <sup>76</sup>

The Commission also discarded the demand of the Maha Punjab that certain portions of the Delhi State and two or three neighbouring western districts of Uttar Pradesh should be included in the territory of the new Punjab for "on administrative grounds, there is no case for the further addition of territories to the proposed Punjab State".

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.    <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*    <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 152. The Chairman of the Commission, however, did not subscribe to the view that Himachal Pradesh should be merged with the Punjab. See 238-43. He was of the opinion that there was deep-seated distrust in the region against the people of the plains and there was genuine and widespread uneasiness among them over the question of merger. Their newly achieved feeling of emancipation from feudal regime should not be dampened by new overlordship.

From a political point of view, the acceptance of the proposal is likely to have very undesirable repercussions.<sup>77</sup>

After discarding all the alternative proposals, the Commission recommended that the existing States of the Punjab (except the Loharu sub-tehsil of Hissar district), Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh should be merged in a single integrated unit. The area between Satluj to the Indus was a single natural unit. The central part had vital economic links with the hill districts of Himachal where the catchment areas of this river system of the Punjab were located. Besides the irrigation system of the whole of the Indian Punjab was one and indivisible with immense power potential which could help the famine-ridden Haryana region to be converted into a productive area.

The partition of the Punjab, besides dividing the Punjabi-speaking community into two parts, had scattered them all over the country.

“The Punjab has, during the recent years passed through the very severe ordeal of Partition. It is only by the joint and heroic effort of the Hindus and the Sikhs that it has been possible to rehabilitate the political, social and economic life of the province which was so completely disorganised as a result of (the) partition. It would be most unfortunate if a number of complex problems were created at this time by a further division of the State with all its undesirable consequences.”<sup>78</sup>

The partition, thus, weighed heavily with the Commission to decide in favour of a single unit consisting of the Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh. It appealed to the Sikhs not to press their point for their immense creative energy needed “greater opportunities than those which a small unit (could) offer.” The Sachar-Gyani Formula, in the opinion of the Commission, when implemented effectively could do away with some of their apprehensions. It expressed hope that if the settlement proposed by them was accepted “a great deal of time and energy, which are now spent on the reconciliation of divergent points of view, will be released for implementing the far-reaching development plans.”<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.      <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.      <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 155-6.

## III

## REACTION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES TO THE S.R.C. REPORT AND REGIONAL PLAN

*Reaction to S.R.C. Reports*

The States Reorganization Commission Report submitted on 30 September, 1955, however, once again revived the communal tensions. It was discussed at length in the Parliament, State Legislatures and in all political quarters. It had a mixed reception. The Hindus from the Jullundur Division were generally satisfied but it evoked violent reactions in the Sikh quarters. They alleged that it was a conspiracy to destroy the Sikh nation and that the S.R.C. had delivered "Sikhs bound hand and foot to the slavery of an aggressively communal group."<sup>80</sup> Master Tara Singh declared on 11 October, 1955 at "Manji Sahib" that they had already announced their no confidence in the Commission and, therefore, they were not bound by its recommendations.<sup>81</sup> Gyani Kartar Singh said that out of the 14 recognized languages in the Indian Constitution, 13 states had been formed on linguistic basis. Only "Punjabi Suba" had not been formed because Sikh loyalty was suspected.<sup>82</sup> Even the Congress Sikhs in a Convention on 5 November, disapproved of the S.R.C. Report on the Punjab and stated that justice had not been done to the minority community.<sup>83</sup> The Report met with scathing criticism at the hands of the Sikh legislators both Akali and non-Akali. Bhai Jodh Singh speaking on the subject said that if Punjabi Suba had been formed, the communal parties would have vanished and the parties would have been formed on political rather than communal basis.<sup>84</sup> S. Sohan Singh Josh, the Communist leader, was of the opinion that the conflict was mainly between the Hindu and Sikh leaders of the Jullundur Division. Best of the people of the Punjab, the Himachal and Pepsu were agreed in favour of linguistic States.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, M.L.A.s from Haryana, Ch. Sri Chand, Pandit Sri Ram Sharma, Prof. Sher Singh and others reiter-

-, *The Tribune*, Ambala (7 October, 1955).

-, *Akali* (Punjabi), 5: 1, Jullundur (13 October, 1955).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 1 (14 October, 1955).

<sup>83</sup> ———, *The Tribune*, Ambala (7 October, 1955).

<sup>84</sup> ———, *Punjab Legislative Council Debates*, 12: 1, 11 November, 1955 (Chandigarh, 1955), 32.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 12: 2 (25 November, 1955), 26.

ated their demand of a separate Hindi-speaking State<sup>86</sup> widely known as "Haryana Prant".

The Akali Dal, thus, made a common cause with the other language groups. A five-member Akali delegation headed by Master Tara Singh met the Prime Minister, Maulana Azad and Pandit Pant on 23 November, 1955 to represent their point of view.<sup>87</sup> As a result of the negotiations a compromise formula was evolved known as "Regional Formula".

### *Regional Plan and Reaction of the Political Parties*

The Regional Formula<sup>88</sup> divided the Punjab State on linguistic basis, with a view to safeguard the interests of the two language groups. To ensure, however, administrative unity of the state,<sup>89</sup> it provided for one legislature, one governor and one council of ministers for the whole of the reorganized state of the Punjab. Two regional committees, consisting of the members of the State Assembly belonging to each region (except the Chief Minister), were constituted to deal with specified matters. Legislation relating to specified matters was to be referred to the Regional Committees. The Regional Committees could make proposals to the State Government for Legislation with regard to questions of general policy not involving any financial commitments which were to be normally accepted by the other. In case of difference of opinion, the matter was to be referred to the Governor whose decision was to be final and binding.

The Government of India empowered the State Government to demarcate the Hindi and Punjabi regions. The regional language of each region was declared as the official language. With a view to promote the development of the two languages—Hindi and Punjabi—it recommended establishment of the two separate departments. It could not, however, offer any solution to the ticklish question of choice of mother-tongue and medium of instruction in the schools, but recommended that "Sachar Formula" should continue to operate in the existing Punjab State, while in the erstwhile Pepsu State, the existing arrangements should continue.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>86</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Punjab Vidhan Sabha Debates*, 2: 6-7 (24 November, 1955), n. 53, 8-99.

<sup>87</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Hindustan Times* (24 November, 1955).

<sup>88</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Papers relating to Hindi Agitation in Punjab*, n. 10, 9-10.

<sup>89</sup> The Himachal Pradesh was made into a Centrally administered area.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-2. According to the Sachar Formula the parents were authorized



The Regional Plan was accepted by Master Tara Singh and the Akalis after long deliberations. In a Press statement on 15 March, 1956, explaining the reasons for the acceptance of the Plan, Master Tara Singh said that the scheme fulfilled the aspirations of the Sikhs to an extent and at the same time did not give them any opportunity to dominate others—a power if given might make them “undemocratic and narrow-minded.”<sup>91</sup>

*Maha Punjab Samiti.* Regional Plan, however, was not acceptable to the Hindu communalists and the people of Haryana. The Maha Punjabees were opposed to the suggestion of Hindi being made a second language in the proposed Punjabi region and accused the Government of yielding to the Akali pressure. In a Conference held at Karnal on 25 June, 1956, it resolved “in the considered opinion of this Conference the Scheme for Regional Standing Committees is no solution of the Punjab problem and is also no solution of the peculiar problem (backwardness of the area) of Haryana.”<sup>92</sup>

The Regional Plan gave an opportunity to the Maha Punjab Samiti to turn the tables against the Akalis and get active support of the people of Haryana who upto now had supported the demand of the “Punjabi Suba”. The Samiti arrayed the sentiments of the people in this region against the advocates of the Punjabi-speaking province on the following basis:

1. By the Schemes, areas with considerable resources had been tagged to the Punjabi region while areas with poorer resources were incorporated in the Hindi region. Even the provision for allocation of preferential funds for Haryana as recommended by the S.R.C., it was alleged, had no place in this Scheme. The people of Haryana were discriminated against. All the technical institutions and important colleges, for instance, Medical, Agricultural, Law and Industrial Colleges were located in the Jullundur Division.<sup>93</sup>

2. The Regional Scheme made study of Punjabi language in Gurumukhi script compulsory for the children of this region from the 5th class. This was already in practice according to the Sachar Formula. But the Samiti now pressed the point that Punjabi was to declare any language for the children as their mother-tongue, but in Pepsu, Punjabi in Gurumukhi script was prescribed the medium of instruction in the Punjabi-speaking area and Hindi in Devanagari script in the Hindi-speaking area.

<sup>91</sup> ———, —, *The Tribune* (16 March, 1956).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* (26 June, 1956). <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

neither the regional nor the national language for the people of Haryana. Therefore, its study should not be compulsory in this region for their children.<sup>94</sup>

The Maha Punjab Samiti threatened "direct action", if a mutually satisfactory solution to the Punjab tangle, was not found by 17 June, 1956. They opposed the Government-Akali settlement for they had not been previously consulted. They suggested that a round-table conference of Akalis and other parties should be called to recommend agreed changes.<sup>95</sup>

The main impediment in the way of the solution of communal problem in India has been that hardly any attempt has been made to make the two groups or representatives of the communities to sit together and find a solution of the existing problems. Appeasement of one community over the other always intensifies communal tensions. As a matter of policy, a secular government should have no truck with communal parties but if ever it is essential in the interest of the particular state, the other party should not be ignored. In the Punjab, this has been the perennial problem and the Congress with the best of its intentions and motives has not been able to break new grounds for the solution of the problem but has been following the old British pattern in bringing about communal amity.

The Government of India neither withdrew the Regional Plan as suggested by the Maha Punjab Samiti, nor did they call a Round Table Conference.<sup>96</sup> The Samiti launched a movement—known as Hindi-Satyagraha. It followed a new tactical line. On the language issue, it brought the Arya Samaj to the forefront to fight the cause of Hindi both in the Punjabi and Hindi-speaking areas. By raising the slogan of "Hindi in danger", it not only united the Hindus of the Jullundur Division and Haryana, but aroused sympathies of Hindi lovers from outside the Punjab. There seems to be a complete unanimity of opinion among Hindus irrespective of party labels that no language should be made compulsory medium of instruction while a majority of the Sikhs insist on Punjabi in Gurumukhi letters as the compulsory regional language. The division is very

"New Power Alignment in the Punjab", *Organiser*, 10: 42 (24 July, 1957).

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 9: 39 (7 May, 1956), 1.

<sup>96</sup> It is widely known that Master Tara Singh was strongly opposed to any such move and that was the major reason why such a Conference was not held.

sharp in the legislatures, urban areas and educational institutions. The anti-Punjabi sentiments of the Haryana people, who already suffered from a sense of discrimination, were cleverly exploited by these leaders. They argued that in a bid to keep the people in this region perpetually backward, the politicians from Punjabi region had manoeuvred to tag the economically underdeveloped districts from erstwhile Pepsu State to the Haryana region and thus plan to perpetuate their domination over the whole of the Punjab. They supported the demand of Haryana to equitable distribution in services and education grant at the ratio of 50:50 for some years "to catch up the leeway". They recommended that the "Chief Ministership should rotate by turns between the Hindi region and the Punjabi region". The Ministerships, Parliamentary Secretaries, key appointments and other spoils must be partitioned on 50:50 basis and financial resources also should be divided on the same basis.<sup>97</sup>

The Maha Punjab Samiti by this subtle move, played a double edged game which left the democratic and progressive forces in the state absolutely confused and dazed. It struck a severe blow to the "Punjabi Suba Movement" and exploited for their cause, the resistance of the people in Haryana to learn Punjabi. That it is a basic element of the mechanics of a bilingual Punjab, is deliberately ignored by the Maha Punjabees and is too subtle for the common man to appreciate.

The educated classes in the Haryana region stand to gain by the suggestion of equal ratio between the Punjabi and Hindi regions. It is amazing how the urban Hindus of Jullundur Division and nearly the entire population of Haryana united on the Hindi issue, particularly when the latter are very bitter against the Jullundur Division trader and administrative officials who are alleged to be the chief exploiters of their land and people. It is difficult to analyze the exact motivation, but it is alleged in some quarters that Punjab urban Hindus are actively supporting this move because very few Sikhs know Hindi and if Punjabi is not made compulsory, then the Hindus will have to learn only one script while the Sikhs may learn both the scripts owing to their religious and cultural affinity to Punjabi. Since Hindi is the national language and is going to count tremendously in future for administration and trade in the inter-

<sup>97</sup> Dewan Alakh Dhari, "The Travails of Haryana", *Organiser*, 10: 41 (1 July, 1957), 7.

state transactions, they would gain a position of advantage over the Sikhs. Thus, initially the Hindu communalists denied that Punjabi was their language but when this argument did not hold good, they started saying that Punjabi should be permitted to be written in Devanagari script.

“The Hindus of the Punjab have no objection whatever—in fact they enthusiastically support the efforts of the State Government—to the propagation, improvement, technicalization and scientific advancement of the Punjabi language and Gurumukhi script. . . but the 70 per cent majority Hindu community of the Punjab seriously objects to—and to which the Hindu majority will never—repeat never—submit to the dictatorial attitude of compelling us to learn our mother-tongue exclusively in the Gurumukhi script.”<sup>98</sup>

*Akali Party.* The Regional Plan, which was welcomed by the Akali Party, divided its members as a section of it felt that the party had no utility now. A few of its important members like S. Gian Singh Rarewala joined the Congress<sup>99</sup>—a move severely condemned by Master Tara Singh. Under the pressure of the dissidents, however, the Akali Dal decided to abjure its political activities and allowed its members to join the Congress. The decision, apparently, strengthened the Congress organization, but it introduced a new faction in the already faction-ridden ruling party. Besides, it gave an opportunity to the Jan Sangh to condemn Punjab Congress and Government policies as pro-Akali and consequently pro-Sikh and anti-Hindu.

*Punjab Pradesh Congress.* The Hindi-Punjabi issue divided the people of the Punjab so sharply that it set all the political parties to revise their attitudes and policies regarding the whole problem. It accentuated the already existing differences between the Punjab Congress. There are two distinct groups—one against compulsion, and saying that Punjabi should not be imposed on unwilling people who do not have to enter into trade and administration, the other group led by Giani Kartar Singh stressed that any alteration in the Regional Formula would mean inviting agitation from the other

<sup>98</sup> Dewan Alakh Dhari, “Language Problem of Punjab”, *Organiser*, 9: 15 (28 November, 1955), 10.

<sup>99</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *The Hindustan Times* (8 June, 1956).

side.<sup>100</sup> Fifty Congress members took a deputation to Pandit Nehru and submitted a memorandum.<sup>101</sup> Fourteen members of the Congress Legislative Party resigned from the Congress membership on the language issue. This group included important members like L. Jagat Narain, Shrimati Sita Devi, Mr. Ralla Ram, Mr. Suraj Bhan, Vaid Ram Dayal and Prof. Sher Singh. The language controversy as a result came to the forefront in the local Congress politics. It strengthened the communal trends in the organization, for it sharply divided the Hindu and Sikh Congressmen. Important members like L. Jagat Narain, one time general secretary of the Punjab Pradesh Congress and minister in the Punjab Cabinet, openly wrote against the Regional Formula in the press.<sup>102</sup> A majority of the Congress M.L.As. from Haryana<sup>103</sup> actively supported the Hindi agitation. The official Congress leadership, no doubt, condemned it as a move by the dissident Congressmen to capture power in the coming elections,<sup>104</sup> but that the disruption did incalculable harm to the Congress prestige in the state, is beyond doubt.

The sharp conflict at the P.C.C. level, at a time when according to the A.I.C.C. President, the Congress had "no roots below the P.C.Cs." was a sad reflection on the political life and Congress organization of the Punjab. He continued:

"Mandal Congress Committees or Tahsil Congress Committees are there in some parts of India, but they are not live and dynamic units with active contacts with the masses. Our organisation, therefore, suffers in representative character and is also ineffective so far as its day-to-day contact and solution of the grievances of the people are concerned."<sup>105</sup>

*Communist Party.* Even the Communist Party realized that there was no unity in the people of the Punjab on the linguistic issue and that the prospects of a separate Haryana Prant being created in the near future were remote. The Regional Formula had been condemned by the Communist Party as nothing but a rehash of the

<sup>100</sup> ———, *Proceeding Register—Meeting of the Punjab Pradesh Congress held at Sonapat* (28 June, 1957) (Patiala, Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee), unpublished.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* (23 May, 1956).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* (29 July, 1956).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* (2 June, 1957).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* (29 July, 1956).

<sup>105</sup> ———, *Circular Letter to the Presidents of the P.C.Cs.*, 6 June, 1957. File No. P.C.C./118.

Maha Punjab Scheme as advanced by the Maha Punjab Samiti and other communal organizations. This assessment, however, was not correct as the Regional Plan was opposed tooth and nail by the Hindu communalists, while the Akalis were a party to the agreement. Consequently the Communist Party revised its stand and said that the linguistic slogan should be deferred till the people reached basic level of consciousness to achieve the end. It, however, warned against the dangers inherent in the situation. "The first is that the people of the Punjabi area will be pitted against the Haryana area people on demands for finances, (and) for development. The second is that the communalists would seek to create communal passions on several issues inside the regional Councils." The Party, therefore, gave a call to start a movement to unite the people of the Punjab, irrespective of communities and to make them realize that development of the Haryana area was in the common interest of all. This, in its opinion, was one way of reducing the tensions and hostility between the two peoples of the Punjabi and Hindi-speaking areas.<sup>106</sup> The bitterness between the two regions is quite marked and is highlighted by the recent friction between the Punjabi and Haryana groups within the Congress. In the meantime the Arya Samaj and other Hindu communalists are trying to intensify the differences between the two areas by emphasizing the differential treatment given to the Haryana area by the Regional Plan.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Ajay Ghosh, "Letter to the Punjab Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India, Jullundur", *Inner P.C. Doc. No. 20/56* (8 June, 1956) (Jullundur, C.P.I. Office), unpublished.

<sup>107</sup> Dewan Alakh Dhari, who is the spokesman of Maha Punjab group, played upon the anti-Punjabi sentiments of the people of Haryana by saying "The hard core of the Plan is embedded in the quagmire of acquired supremacy for Sikhs in selected areas of (the) Punjab". Besides, according to him, a proposal for creation of a separate Haryana Prant stands no chance of being supported unless the territory of Haryana State was enlarged by absorption of the Agra and Meerut Divisions of Uttar Pradesh and the districts of Alwar and Bharatpur from Rajasthan. The mere excision of a few districts of Ambala Division in the Punjab and their conversion into a dwarf-sized "Haryana State" will not be in the interest of the people even. See Dewan Alakh Dhari, "Scrap The Punjab Regional Scheme", *Organiser*, 10: 1 (13 October, 1958).

The Akali Dal has revived its demand of the Punjabi Suba and has made it clear that the ultimate goal of Akali leadership is the establishment of a Sikh State. Master Tara Singh, however, has met with opposition from Giani Kartar Singh, who is against "precipitating the issue in a manner that might jeopardize the Akalis' right to share political power as the rightful nominees of the Sikh community". But the Tara Singh group which has no ambition to share power

Needless to say that a linguistic state would lose its meaning and purpose unless steps are taken to check the fissiparous tendencies of communalism and sectarianism.

### *Appraisal*

The partition unleashed the worst type of human misery and gave an opportunity to the unscrupulous officials, businessmen and politicians to exploit the situation in their interest. The tendency gave rise to corruption, nepotism and bribery in administration and communal and sectarian conflicts in social and political life in the state.

The partition, besides, had a different reaction on the two communities—Hindus and Sikhs. The majority of the migrant and local Sikhs were peasant proprietors whose love for land is proverbial. Having lost their sacred shrines and cultural centres in the West Punjab, they tried to consolidate themselves in the truncated Punjab on this side and thus fulfil their political and cultural aspirations. The Hindu displaced persons belonging to the urban industrial and commercial group, stood to gain economically by identifying themselves with the vast Hindu community all over India. As a result, the Sikhs gave a slogan of Punjabi language, Punjabi culture and Punjabi Suba; while Hindus decried it by raising the counter-slogans of Hindi, Hindu culture and Maha Punjab. The past traditions and political aspirations of both the communities helped to mould their consciousness in two opposite directions, leading to the accentuation of communal and sectional ideology. Behind the questions of language, script, refugees and locals, services, political controversies and the reorganization of the state, therefore, looms the frightening and perhaps enlarging, shadow of communalism. In a circumscribed, backward economy where one can hope to achieve his economic ends at cost of the other, these tendencies get further impetus.

in the existing set-up, does not care much for this factor. The Akali Party is, thus, faced with a dilemma. The recent defeat of Master Tara Singh in the presidential election of S.G.P.C. by Giani Kartar Singh's group might precipitate the matter still further. See———, *The Times of India News Service, The Times of India*, 6: 7 (9 October, 1958).

## CONCLUSION

THE partition of the Punjab brought a revolutionary upheaval in the social, economic and political structure of the state. That it came as a culminating point of the existing economic and political aspirations of the two religious communities—Hindus and Muslims—is of incalculable importance in the study of the post-partition developments. The accentuation of communalism in the body-politic of the province resulting from the bloody carnage, the consequent sharp decline in the moral values and deterioration in the law and order situation, left the Punjab in a state of confusion and chaos.

The flood of human misery witnessed after the division of the Punjab, intensified nepotism, corruption, bribery, maladministration and communalism in the administrative services. The economy of the state had been completely disrupted. The partition was a severe blow to industry and business, and depleted the strength of skilled labour.

The state was, thus, faced with thoroughly confusing issues. The task of rehabilitation of the millions of uprooted people at a time when the administration was showing signs of complete breakdown, added to the complexities of the problem. The pre-partition communalism and post-partition administrative chaos were nurtured by the confused policies and politics of the faction-ridden ruling party. The traditional weakness of the congress party in the area, absence of mature leadership and increasing strength of the communal parties left every well meaning citizen of the state in a dilemma.

Forced by the exigencies of circumstances, the Government took up certain important steps to stabilize and rehabilitate the economic and administrative life in the state. The disrupted economy, departure of skilled labour to the West Punjab and that of the migrant industrialists to the places outside the East Punjab made it incumbent on the state Government to take initiative in providing vocational guidance and passing laws to revive industry in the state. The necessity to distribute evacuee land and urban property equitably among the refugees, made the state to devise a scheme of "graded cuts". Besides it took up the building of houses and shops in the new town-



ships in an attempt towards the speedy resettlement of the displaced persons.

These measures, however, did not bring about any substantial change in the economic, administrative or political basis of the state. The partition, nevertheless, helped in breaking through certain old traditions. The people belonging to a village or "Biradari" were spread over various parts of the country and thus helped in relaxing the rigidity in caste and Biradari systems to an extent. It is a matter of common knowledge that inter-caste and inter-province marriages are more prevalent among the displaced families as compared to the local people. Besides, under the economic stress and strain, the women came out to help their kith and kin, by getting into some kind of profession that they were capable of, which naturally expedited the process of emancipation of women in the tradition-stricken Hindu society. The efforts of the displaced men and women towards resettlement have been responsible for the rehabilitation of the millions of migrants to this side. It is believed that nearly all the displaced persons have been resettled either on land or in urban areas. The statistics, however, do not take into account the number of persons who suffered human and material loss during the partition and though apparently resettled, have not been able to adjust themselves psychologically in the new set-up. Besides, a considerable number of persons, not having been able to find suitable jobs, were forced to put up small stalls with an insignificant capital. By no stretch of imagination, these people can be considered as resettled—a factor which cannot be easily ignored by a student of history.

The partition, however, gave an impetus to healthy economic development in the state both in the agricultural and industrial spheres. The need to step up production in the erstwhile deficit districts now comprising the East Punjab and compensate for the loss of cotton-producing areas to the West Punjab made, both the people and the state to intensify their efforts towards this direction. As a result, a number of irrigation projects, including the Bhakhra Dam (which was planned earlier but could not be implemented before the partition) were taken up and their completion was expedited with the Central help. Similarly, state aid to industry was greatly increased with a view to rehabilitate the migrant industrialists, increase industrial production and absorb a section of unemployed and under-employed displaced persons. The partition

which had given a severe blow to the agricultural and industrial economy to begin with, thus helped later to expedite the process of economic development, to an extent.

The partition, nevertheless, enforced certain population changes, which created a new situation in certain areas of the state. The settlement of the Sikh refugees mainly in Jullundur Division and of the majority of the Hindu refugees in the Ambala Division consolidated the religious division in the state and had deep impact on its political life. Similarly, the local-refugee tensions in the eastern districts of the Punjab, getting expression in various directions, have thrown up a new set of problems. It is, however, hoped that with the passage of time, cultural integration would become possible. The displaced persons who form only 15 per cent of the total population in these districts, numerically are not a factor to be reckoned with. But their influence in the field of trade, education and social behaviour is having deep penetration in the local population. The Punjabi language is widely understood in these areas including Delhi. Faced with a tough competition from the displaced persons in every walk of life, the local population is making rapid strides in educational and economic advancement. It is generally believed that after a few years the artificial division created by partition on local-refugee basis would be eliminated and the Jat-Bania conflicts might be revived again. In such a situation, the displaced traders might join hands with the local Bania. Though it is difficult to be very positive in the analysis of the impact of the partition in the area, it is, nevertheless, recognized by some eminent political leaders that with the educational, economic and political advancement of the area, local-refugee differences are bound to disappear.

The partition, however, by dividing the erstwhile Punjab into two parts has changed the political pattern of the East Punjab. Placed as a frontier state between the two countries whose relations are far from being happy, with Kashmir problem still hanging fire and Canal water dispute remaining unsettled, the Punjab is of incalculable importance both from the point of view of defence and maintenance of peaceful conditions in the entire country.

Many people in India were convinced that the partition, by removing disruptionist element from the body-politic of India in general and that of the Punjab in particular, would help to eliminate communalism from political scene and put an end to inner struggles. That the establishment of a separate Muslim state resulting from

the communal politics pursued by a section of politicians for nearly half a century, would tend to intensify the communal aspirations and thinking of the communal leadership, was not taken into account. The strengthening of communal forces immediately after the partition was considered only a passing phase. The controversy over the language issue in 1951 and the reorganization of the state at a later date, nevertheless, brought democratic forces face to face with the grim reality that communalism was still strong enough to raise its ugly head. The fact that even the members of the congress organization were dabbling in communal politics, was a very distressing point and needed the immediate attention of all concerned.

The shadows of partition still loom large in the state. Religion, which remains an important factor in the political life, can be exploited by the interested parties even today to fan communalism for their own political ends. The fact of the industrial potential being mainly possessed by one community, the Hindus, and agricultural property by the other, the Sikhs, gives the economic rivalry, a communal twist. The confusion between the religious and racial minorities in the historical context of Indian conditions further added to the complexities of the problem. The denial to recognize the spoken language of the area as the regional language, by a section of people belonging to Hindu community, has created a new situation in which the language instead of unifying the people belonging to different religious groups, has been responsible for disintegration, to the distrust and fear of the minority community.

The Hindu-Sikh tensions prevalent in the Punjab, however, need not make one oblivious of the factors that unite the two communities. The area of conflict is concentrated in a region which has been traditionally the vanguard in the secular and revolutionary movement in the state. Even during the most crucial period of the country's struggle for freedom and the Muslim League's struggle to attain Pakistan, this area remained aloof from communal conflicts until the horrible communal riots engulfed the whole province.

The Sikhs have been considered "a part and parcel of the great Hindu community"<sup>1</sup> even by the Hindu organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh and the Arya Samaj. Historically, the Sikh cult was formed to protect the Hindu religion. That

<sup>1</sup> N. C. Chatterji, "Punjab Regional Formula—A Communal Award", *Organiser*, 10: 8 (15 October, 1956), 5.

the Sikh and Hindu religions are synonymous, is proved by the following couplet of the Sikh "Guru":

"Sakal Jagat Me Khalsa Panth Jage  
jage Dharma Hindu Sakal Banda Bhaje"

The Hindus and the Sikhs have the same cultural traditions, social customs and behaviour. There being no restrictions on inter-dining and few on inter-marriages, it is not difficult to find cases where some members of family may practise Hindu religion and others the Sikh religion. The blood relationship between the two communities will go a long way in fostering a sense of unity and cultural homogeneity between them.

In the political sphere also, the situation is not very discouraging. The Sikh position is different from that of the Muslims in the United Punjab who could not be persuaded to come under the Congress flag in significant numbers. While a considerable section of the Sikh masses—both urban and rural—is under the communal influence of the Akali party, a sizeable section of the Sikhs is under the Congress and communist parties which stand by secular principles in politics. This goes to prove that the Sikh masses are not totally non-secular in their outlook as the majority of the Muslims were in the pre-partition Punjab.

A new factor is also emerging slowly but surely in the present sombre situation in the state in the growth of industry and working class. Already a sizeable number of industrial workers in such towns as Amritsar, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Batala, Ambala, Jagadhari, Faridabad, Hissar and Patiala have organized themselves on class basis to protect their interests and to secure better working and living conditions for themselves. This force though small at present and hence not very effective in influencing perceptibly the political situation in the Punjab, is a developing force with great potentialities. With the further rise in the tempo of industrialization in the state a strong working class is bound to emerge and given proper leadership and organization, will make its imprint on its political life.

Punjab has been traditionally an agriculturist province and is known for its sturdy and efficient peasantry. But peasant farming by its very nature is an individual enterprise while industry is a corporate one. While the former breeds individualism, sectionalism,

casteism, which in the given circumstances takes communal turn; the latter teaches co-operation both in the process of production as well as for the protection of class interests.

From the above, however, it should not be construed, that living as it does in the communal atmosphere, the Punjab working class has not been or is not likely to be affected by its virus. Immediately after partition when the hurricane of communal passions swept the whole Punjab community clean of all decency, morality and sense of human values, the working class in the Punjab towns did not remain unaffected, though its participation in the holocaust was insignificant as compared with that of the other sections.

Therefore, while not committing the error of over-emphasizing the role of the working class in the Punjab (it being numerically small, mostly unorganized and connected with small-scale industry scattered all over the province), it would be equally wrong not to see and further develop the potentialities of this section of the Punjabi people to combat communalism.

The separatist tendencies could have deeper roots and wider influence, if the establishment of a separate state for Muslims—Pakistan—had solved all the other cultural, political and economic problems. The experience of Pakistan, makes it clear that religion alone is not an adequate basis for fostering a sense of unity among the various racial and cultural groups. With the establishment of Pakistan, the parochial, cultural and racial differences which were lying dormant during the Muslim League struggle for a separate state, have raised their heads, leading to some of the bitterest cultural and racial tensions in that country. Besides, Pakistan has not made any spectacular advance either in economic or in political sphere. It is evident beyond any shadow of doubt that a state based on religious unity is not the panacea for all the social, economic and political problems. The political and economic instability of Pakistan acts, therefore, as a deterrent factor towards further "Balkanisation" of India in general and the Punjab in particular. Even the extremists amongst the Akali leaders are not oblivious of these hard facts and know that a separate Sikh state will have disastrous consequences. Therefore, they have not demanded independent Sikh state outside the Indian Union. The possibility of another partition of the Punjab as apprehended by Hindu communal organizations, does not, therefore, stand a close scrutiny and is obviously a remote one.

The situation, however, need not make one complacent about the

political developments in the Punjab. Looking from the point of view of the political parties, the situation is very frustrating. The congress is busy solving its nearly insoluble intra-party factional disputes and the incessant quarrels between its adherents for the spoils of office which does not have a salutary effect on administration. Among other secular parties, the Praja Socialist party is so miserably weak in the state that it is in no position to make political capital out of the situation. Even the communist party recognized the influence of communal forces when it revised its stand on a Punjabi-speaking state and declared that unless all Punjabees were brought to a common level of Punjabi consciousness, the demand could not be made. The party has not succeeded so far in persuading the urban Hindu population of Jullundur Division on the question of language and mother-tongue, nor has it found any via-media through which it can secularize the attitudes of people at the grass roots. The Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha are gaining in strength among the Hindu population in urban areas and the Akali party is making rapid strides among the small Sikh traders and industrialists in the urban areas on the one hand, and the middle peasants in the countryside on the other. The old urban-rural conflict, thus, is assuming a new and more dangerous pattern of communalism.

The need of the situation demands a radical change in the basic attitudes towards social and economic problems in the state. One of the foremost steps that need to be taken is to check the rapidly developing influence of communalism and inculcate secular ideas in the educational institutions with a view to save the future citizens at the most formative period of their life, from the communal venom.

It is high time that both the majority and minority communities stop looking for solutions to their problems on communal lines. Communalism can thrive only in a backward society. It can be combated in an economically expanding society where genuine economic competition does not get mixed up with communal, regional or sectarian politics, and by bold implementation of a progressive economic programme. It is incumbent on the secular political parties of the state, irrespective of immediate political setbacks to put forward boldly and fearlessly a genuinely secular programme and slogans and create wide and grass-root contacts with the people to foster healthy, social and political attitudes amongst them. For a prosperous, politically conscious and indus-

trially advanced Punjab will be a source of strength, not only to the people in rest of the country, but will play an important role in the maintenance of healthy and peaceful relations with the neighbouring state. But the inner conflicts, bitterness and tensions if continued might give an undesirable turn to the political events and hamper economic and political progress, having its impact on the political course in the country. Much depends on the way the situation is handled.

LAHORE RESOLUTION<sup>1</sup>PAKISTAN RESOLUTION OF THE LAHORE SESSION OF THE ALL INDIA  
MUSLIM LEAGUE, 22-24 MARCH 1940

WHILE approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and the working committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 27th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October, 1939, and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue, this Session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the schemes of federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to, and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October 1939 made by the viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935, is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

Resolved that it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and Sovereign.

That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the Constitution for Minorities in these

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, Vol. II (London, 1957), 443-4.



units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Muslims are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This Session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of Constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.

METHOD OF TRANSFER OF POWER<sup>1</sup>

STATEMENT CONTAINING THE FINAL DECISION OF HIS MAJESTY'S  
GOVERNMENT 3 JUNE 1947

LORD Mountbatten discussed the Indian problem with the leaders of different political parties after which he flew to London with his Suggestions. His Majesty's statement on 3 June, 1947 contained the final decision regarding the method of transfer of power, and partition of the country if the Muslims so desired.

5. The provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will therefore, each be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim-majority districts and the other the rest of the province. For the purpose of determining the population of districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim-majority districts in these two provinces are set out in the Appendix to this announcement.

6. The Members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, division will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.

7. Before the question as to the partition is decided, it is desirable that the representatives of each part should know in advance which constituent Assembly the province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united. Therefore, if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands, there shall be held a meeting of all members of the Legislative Assembly (other than Europeans) at which a decision will be taken on the issue to which Constituent Assembly the province as a whole would join if it were decided by the two parts to remain united.

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, Vol. II (London, 1957), 670-4. This plan is popularly known as Mountbatten Plan.

8. In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide which of the alternative in paragraph 4 above to adopt.

9. For the immediate purpose of deciding on the issue of partition, the Members of the Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab will sit in two parts according to Muslim-majority districts (as laid down in the Appendix) and non-Muslim-majority districts. This is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature as it is evident that for the purposes of a final partition of these provinces a detailed investigation of boundary questions will be needed; and as soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either province, a Boundary Commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned.<sup>3</sup> It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. Similar instructions will be given to the Bengal Boundary Commission. Until the report of a Boundary Commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundaries indicated in the Appendix will be used.

14. If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections to choose their representatives on the scale of one for every million of population according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's plan of May 16th, 1946. Similar elections will also have to be held for Sylhet in the event of its being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal. The number of representatives to which each area would be entitled is as follows:

<i>Province</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>Muslims</i>	<i>Sikhs</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sylhet District	1	2	Nil	3
West Bengal	15	4	Nil	19
East Bengal	12	29	Nil	41
West Punjab	3	12	2	17
East Punjab	6	4	2	12

<sup>3</sup> Separate Boundary Commissions for the partition of Bengal and the Punjab were appointed under the Chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliffe.

15. In accordance with the mandates given to them, the representatives of the various areas will either join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

16. Negotiations will have to be initiated as soon as possible on the administrative consequences of any partition that may have been decided upon

- (a) between the representatives of the respective successor authorities about all subjects now dealt with by the Central Government including Defence, Finance and Communications;
- (b) between different successor authorities and His Majesty's Government for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power;
- (c) in the case of Provinces that may be partitioned, as to the administration of all provincial subjects, such as the division of assets and liabilities, the police and other Services, the High Courts, provincial institutions, etc.

19. In order that the successor authorities may have time to prepare themselves to take over power, it is important that all the above processes should be completed as quickly as possible. To avoid delay, the different Provinces or parts of Provinces will proceed independently as far as practicable within the conditions of this Plan. The existing Constituent Assembly and the new Constituent Assembly (if formed) will proceed to frame Constitutions for their respective territories; they will, of course, be free to frame their own rules.

20. The major political parties have repeatedly emphasized their desire that there should be earliest possible transfer of power in India. With this desire His Majesty's Government are in full sympathy, and they are willing to anticipate the date June 1948 for the handing over of power by setting up of an independent Indian Government or Governments at an even earlier date. Accordingly, as the most expeditious, and indeed the only practicable way of meeting this desire, His Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this

announcement. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India in respect of which they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

## APPENDIX III

### SIR CYRIL RADCLIFFE'S AWARD<sup>1</sup>

SIR Cyril Radcliffe, Chairman of the Boundary Commission for the Punjab<sup>2</sup> and Bengal, submitted his award to His Excellency the Governor General, on 12 August 1947.

1. I have the honour to present the decision and award of the Punjab Boundary Commission which, by virtue of section 4 of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, is represented by my decision as Chairman of that Commission.

2. The Punjab Boundary Commission was constituted by the announcement of the G.G., d/the 30th June, 1947, Reference No. D. 50/7/47-R. The members of the Commission thereby appointed were:

Mr. Justice Din Muhammad  
Mr. Justice Muhammad Munir  
Mr. Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan  
Mr. Justice Teja Singh

I was subsequently appointed Chairman of this Commission.

3. The terms of reference of the Commission, as set out in the announcement, were as follows:

“The Boundary Commission is instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. In doing so, it will also take into account other factors.”

We were desired to arrive at a decision as soon as possible before the 15th of August.

4. After preliminary meetings the Commission invited the submission of memoranda and representations by interested parties. Numerous memoranda and representations were received.

5. The public sittings of the Commission took place at Lahore, and extended from Monday, the 21st of July 1947, to Thursday the 31st of July 1947, inclusive, with the exception of Sunday, the

-, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VI (Alipore, 1950), 303.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this Appendix, East and West Punjab have been referred to as E. & W. Pb.

27th July. The main arguments were conducted by Counsel on behalf of the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the Sikh members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly; but a number of other interested parties appeared and argued before the Commission. In view of the fact that I was also acting as Chairman of the Bengal Boundary Commission, whose proceedings were taking place simultaneously with the proceedings of the Punjab Boundary Commission, I did not attend the public sittings in person, but made arrangements to study daily the record of the proceedings and of all material submitted for our consideration.

6. After the close of the public sittings, the Commission adjourned to Simla where I joined my colleagues, and we entered upon discussions in the hope of being able to present an agreed decision as to the demarcation of the boundaries. I am greatly indebted to my colleagues for indispensable assistance in the clarification of the issues and the marshalling of the arguments for different views; but it became evident in the course of our discussions that the divergence of opinion between my colleagues was so wide that an agreed solution of the boundary problem was not to be obtained, I do not intend to convey by this that there were not large areas of the Punjab on the west and on the east respectively which provoked no controversy as to which State they should be assigned to; but when it came to the extensive but disputed areas in which the boundary must be drawn, differences of opinion as to the significance of the term 'other factors' which we were directed to our terms of reference to take into account; and as to the weight and value to be attached to those factors, made it impossible to arrive at an agreed line. In these circumstances my colleagues, at the close of our discussions, assented to the conclusion that I must proceed to give my own decision.

7. This I now proceed to do. The demarcation of the boundary line is described in detail in the schedule which forms Annexure A<sup>3</sup> to this Award, and in the map attached thereto Annexure B.<sup>4</sup> The map is annexed for the purpose of illustration, and if there should be any divergence between the boundary as described in Annexure A and as delineated on the map in Annexure B, the description in Annexure A is to prevail.

8. Certain representations were addressed to the Commission

<sup>3</sup> For Annexure A see Boundary Award.

<sup>4</sup> For Annexure B see Boundary Line map.

on behalf of the States of Bikaner and Bahawalpur both of which states were interested in canals whose headworks were situated in the Punjab Province. I have taken the view that an interest of this sort cannot weigh directly in the question before us as to the division of the Punjab between the Indian Union and Pakistan since the territorial division of the province does not affect rights of private property, and I think that I am entitled to assume with confidence that any agreements that either of those states has made with the Provincial Government, as to the sharing of water from these canals or otherwise will be respected by whatever Government hereafter assumes jurisdiction over the headworks concerned. I wish also to make it plain that no decision that is made by this Commission is intended to affect whatever territorial claim the State of Bahawalpur may have in respect of a number of villages lying between Sulamanke Weir and Gurka Ferry.

9. The task of delimiting a boundary in the Punjab is a difficult one. The claims of the respective parties ranged over a wide field of territory, but in my judgement the truly debatable ground in the end proved to lie in and around the area between the Beas and Sutlej rivers on the one hand and the river Ravi on the other.<sup>5</sup> The fixing of a boundary in this area was further complicated by the existence of canal systems, so vital to the life of the Punjab but developed only under the conception of a single administration and of systems of road and rail communication, which have been planned in the same way. There was also the stubborn geographical fact of the respective situations of Lahore and Amritsar, and the claims to each or both of those cities which each side vigorously maintained. After weighing to the best of my ability such other factors as appeared to me relevant as affecting the fundamental basis of contiguous majority areas, I have come to the decision set out in the schedule which thus becomes the award of the Commission. I am conscious that there are legitimate criticisms to be made of it; as there are, I think, of any other line that might be chosen.

10. I have hesitated long over those not inconsiderable areas east of the Sutlej River and in the angle of the Beas and Sutlej Rivers in which Muslim majorities are found. But on the whole I have come to the conclusion that it would be in the true interests of neither state to extend the territories of the W. Pb. to a strip on the far

<sup>5</sup> ———, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VI (Alipore, 1950), 306.



side of the Sutlej and that there are factors such as the disruption of railway communications and water systems that ought in this instance to displace the primary claims of contiguous majorities. But I must call attention to the fact that the Divalpur Canal, which serves areas in the W. Pb., takes off from Ferozepore headworks and I find it difficult to envisage a satisfactory demarcation of boundary at this point that is not accompanied by some arrangement for joint control of the intake of the different canals dependent on these headworks.

11. I have not found it possible to preserve undivided the irrigation system of the Upper Bari Doab Canal, which extends from Madhopur in the Pathankot Tehsil to the western border of the district of Lahore although I have made small adjustments of the Lahore-Amritsar district boundary to mitigate some of the consequences of this severance; nor can Hydro-electric Scheme which supplies power in the districts of Kangra, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Sheikhupura and Lyallpur. I think it only right to express the hope that, where the drawing of a boundary line cannot avoid disrupting such unitary services as canal irrigation, railways and electrical power transmission, a solution may be found by agreement between the two States' of some joint control of what has hitherto been a valuable common service.

12. I am conscious too that the award cannot go forwards satisfying sentiments and aspirations deeply held on either side but directly in conflict as to their bearing on the placing of the boundary. If means are to be found to gratify to the full those sentiments and aspirations, I think that they must be found in political arrangements with which I am not concerned and not in the decision of a boundary line drawn under the terms of reference of the Commission.

*New Delhi,*  
12th August, 1947.

(Signed) CYRIL RADCLIFFE

### BOUNDARY AWARD<sup>1</sup>

1. The boundary between the East and West Punjab shall commence on the north at the point where the west branch of the Ujh river

<sup>1</sup> —————, *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. VI (Alipore, 1950), 306.

enters the Punjab Province from the State of Kashmir. The boundary shall follow the line of that river down the Western boundary of the Pathankot Tehsil to the point where the Pathankot, Shakargarh and Gurdaspur tehsils meet. The tehsil boundary and not the actual course of the Ujh river shall constitute the boundary between the East and W. Punjab.

2. From the point of meeting of the three tehsils above mentioned, the boundary between the East and W. Pb. shall follow the line of the Ujh river to its junction with the river Ravi and thereafter the line of the river Ravi along the boundary between the tehsils of Gurdaspur and Shakargarh, the boundary between the tehsils of Batala and Shakargarh, the boundary between the tehsils of Ajnala and Shahdara, to the point on the river Ravi where the district of Amritsar is divided from the district of Lahore. The tehsil boundaries referred to, and not the actual course of the river Ujh or the river Ravi, shall constitute the boundary between the East and W. Punjab.

3. From the point on the river Ravi where the district of Amritsar is divided from the district of Lahore, the boundary between the E. and W. Pb. shall turn southwards following the boundary between the tehsils of Ajnala and Lahore and then the tehsils of Tarn Taran and Lahore, to the point where the tehsils of Kasur, Lahore and Tarn Taran meet. The line will then turn south-westward, along the boundary between the tehsils of Lahore and Kasur to the point where that boundary meets the north-east corner of village Theh Tharolian. It will then run along the eastern boundary of that village to its junction with village Chalhianwala, turn along the northern boundary of that village, and then run down its eastern boundary to its junction with village Waigal. It will then run along the eastern boundary of village Waigal to its junction with village Kalia, and then along the southern boundary of village Waigal to its junction with village Panhuwan. The line will then run down the eastern boundary of village Panhuwan to its junction with village Gaddoke. The line will then run down to the eastern border of village Gaddoke to its junction with village Nurwala. It will then turn along the southern boundary of village Gaddoke to its junction with village Katluni Kalan. The line will then run down the eastern boundary of village Katluni Kalan to its junction with villages Kals and Mastgarh. It will then run along the southern boundary of village Katluni Kalan to the north-west corner of

village Kals. It will then run along the western boundary of village Kals to its junction with village Khem Karan. The line will then run along the western and southern boundaries of village Khem Karan to its junction with village Maewala. It will then run down the western and southern boundaries of village Maewala, proceeding eastward along the boundaries between village Mahaidepur on the north and villages Sheikhupura, Kuhna, Kamalpuran, Falehwala and Mahewala. The line will then turn northward along the western boundary of village Sahjra to its junction with villages Mahaidepur and Machhike and Sahjra and then proceed along the boundary between villages Rattoke and Sahjra to the junction between villages Rattoke, Sahjra and Mabbuke. The line will then run north-east between the villages Rattoke and Mabbuke to the junction of villages Rattoke, Mabbuke and Gajjal. From that point the line will run along the boundary between villages Mabbuke and Gajjal, and then turn south along the eastern boundary of villages Mabbuke to its junction with village Nagar Aimanpur. It will then turn along the north-eastern boundary of village Nagar Aimanpur, and run along its eastern boundary to its junction with village Masteke. From there it will run along the eastern boundary of village Masteke to where it meets the boundary between the tehsils of Kasur and Ferozepore.

For the purpose of identifying the villages referred to in this paragraph, I attach a map of the Kasur tehsil authorized by the then Settlement Officer, Lahore District, which was supplied to the Commission by the Provincial Government.

4. The line will then run in a south-westerly direction down the Sutlej River on the boundary between the districts of Lahore and Ferozepur to the point where the districts of Ferozepur, Lahore and Montgomery meet. It will continue along the boundary between the districts of Ferozepur and Montgomery to the point where the boundary meets the border of Bahawalpur State. The district boundaries, and not the actual course of the Sutlej River, shall in each case constitute the boundary between the E. & W. Pb.

5. It is my intention that this boundary line should ensure that the canal headworks at Sulamanke will fall within the territorial jurisdiction of the W. Pb. If the existing delimitation of the boundaries of Montgomery district does not ensure this, I award to the W. Pb. so much of the territory concerned as covers the headworks, and the boundary shall be adjusted accordingly.

6. So much of the Punjab Province as lies to the West of the line demarcated in the preceding paragraphs shall be the territory of the W. Pb. So much of the territory of the Punjab Province as lies to the east of that line shall be the territory of the E. Pb.

(Signed) K. V. K. SUNDARAM  
*Officer on Special Duty.*

## APPENDIX IV

GRADED CUTS<sup>1</sup>

The scheme of "graded cuts" was devised on the basis of Income-tax Schedules.

<i>Grade Standard Acres</i>	<i>Rate of cut</i>	<i>Net allotment at maximum of grade (S. As.)</i>
Upto 10 acres	—	—
More than 10 but not more than 30	25%	7½
„ „ 30 „ „ „ 40	30%	21½
„ „ 40 „ „ „ 60	40%	27½
„ „ 60 „ „ „ 100	55%	36½
„ „ 100 „ „ „ 150	70%	48½
„ „ 150 „ „ „ 200	80%	61
„ „ 200 „ „ „ 250	85%	78½
„ „ 250 „ „ „ 500	90%	103½
„ „ 500 „ „ „ 1000	95%	128½

<sup>1</sup> Tarlok, Singh, "The Standard Acre: Unit of Value for Land Allotment," *Statesman*, 6 : 5 (26 July 1950).

## APPENDIX V

### COMPENSATION SCALE<sup>1</sup>

<i>Assessed value of claim</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
500 to 2,000	66.6
2,000 to 5,000	59.0 to 50.6
6,000 to 10,000	47.9 to 41.10
12,000 to 20,000	38.8 to 33.3
22,000 to 30,000	32.2 to 29.3
35,000 to 50,000	26.1 to 20
60,000 to 1,00,000	20
1,25,000 to 2,00,000	19.45 to 18.34
2,50,000 to 5,00,000	17.84 to 16.36
6,00,000 to 10,00,000	15.99 to 14.75 <sup>2</sup>
11,00,000 to 15,00,000	14.30 to 12.25
16,00,000 to 18,00,000 and above	11.80 to 11.11

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Rehabilitation, *Displaced Persons' Compensation and Rehabilitation Rules, 1955* (Nasik Road, 1957), 47-8.

## APPENDIX VI

# REGIONAL PLAN<sup>1</sup>

### OUTLINE OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEES IN THE PUNJAB

1. THERE will be one legislature for the whole of the recognized State of the Punjab, which will be the sole law-making body for the entire State, and there will be one Governor for the State, aided and advised by a Council of Ministers responsible to the State Assembly for the entire field of administration.

2. For the more convenient transaction of the business of Government with regard to some specified matters, the State will be divided into two regions, namely, the Punjabi-speaking and the Hindi-speaking regions.

3. For each region there will be a regional committee of the State Assembly consisting of the members of the State Assembly belonging to each region including the Ministers from that region but not including the Chief Minister.

4. Legislation relating to specified matters will be referred to the Regional Committees. In respect of specified matters proposals may also be made by the Regional Committees to the State Government for Legislation or with regard to question of general policy not involving any financial commitments other than expenditure of a routine and incidental character.

5. The advice tendered by the Regional Committees will normally be accepted by the Government and the State Legislature. In case of difference of opinion, reference will be made to the Governor whose decision will be final and binding.

6. The Regional Committees will deal with the following matters :

- (i) Development and economic planning, within the framework of the general development plans and policies formulated by the State legislature;
- (ii) Local self-Government, that is to say, the constitutional powers of municipal corporations, improvement trusts, district boards and other local authorities for the purpose

<sup>1</sup> ———, *Papers Relating to Hindi Agitation in Punjab* (Chandigarh Public Relations Department, Punjab, 1957), 9-10.

- of local self-government of village administration including Panchayats;
- (iii) Public Health and Sanitation, local hospitals and dispensaries;
  - (iv) Primary and secondary education;
  - (v) Agriculture;
  - (vi) Cottage and small-scale industries;
  - (vii) Preservation, Protection and improvement of stock and prevention of animal diseases, veterinary training and practice;
  - (viii) Ponds and prevention of cattle trespass;
  - (ix) Protection of wild animals and birds;
  - (x) Fisheries;
  - (xi) Inns and inn-keepers;
  - (xii) Markets and fairs;
  - (xiii) Co-operative societies; and
  - (xiv) Charities and charitable institutions, charitable and religious endowments and religious institutions.

7. Provision will be made under the appropriate Central Statute to empower the President to constitute regional committees and to make provision in the rules of business of Government and the rules of procedure of the Legislative Assembly in order to give effect to the arrangements outlined in the preceding paragraphs. The provisions made in the rules of business and procedure for the proper functioning of regional committees will not be altered without the approval of the President.

8. The demarcation of the Hindi and Punjabi regions in the proposed Punjab State will be done in consultation with the State Government and the other interests concerned.

9. The Sachar Formula will continue to operate in the area comprised in the existing Punjab State and in the area now comprised in the PEPSU State, the existing arrangements will continue until they are replaced or altered by agreement later.

10. The official language of each region will, at the district level and below, be the respective regional language.

11. The State will be bilingual recognizing both Punjabi (in Gurmukhi script) and Hindi (in Devnāgari script) as the official languages of the State.

12. The Punjab Government will establish two separate

departments for developing Punjabi and Hindi languages.

13. The general safeguards proposed for linguistic minorities will be applicable to the Punjab like other States.

14. In accordance with and in furtherance of its policy to promote the growth of all regional languages the Central Government will encourage the development of the Punjabi language.



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