

CONCLUSION

Sardar Bhagat Singh was not only a great revolutionary but a great political thinker also. He has discussed the problem of revolution in a colonial society through a new perspective. In the present dissertation a modest attempt is made in understanding the ideas of Bhagat Singh on national revolution in a colonial society. Bhagat Singh was a unique revolutionary in the sense that the early terrorists like chaphekar were moved by the religious considerations and even great revolutionaries like Savarkar, Shyamji Krishna Varma and Bagha Jatin were inspired by spiritual nationalism. They did not have the clear vision of the future. But Bhagat Singh had clearly visualised the vision of future and understood the theory of socialist revolution.

In the first chapter of the dissertation the basic colonial character of British rule and its harmful impact on the lives of the Indian people, which continuously developed India's colonial dependence and under development which led to the rise and development of powerful anti-imperialist movement in India is studied through historical perspective. The continuous resistance to the British rule wholly traditional in nature, from the very inception of the rule took three broad

forms : (1) Civil rebellion, (2) Tribal uprisings, and (3) Peasant movements and uprisings. But a powerful national struggle against British imperialism developed in India during the second half of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. From the beginning of the 1890's opposition began to develop against the Congress leadership, its organization and the ideas which it represented. As a result the extremism or militant nationalism emerged in the closing years of the 19th century. The terrorism grew with the development of extremist movement in the Congress. Terrorism that first emerged in 1897, reappeared in the middle of the first decade of the 20th century. The rise of extremists and terrorism was now linked to the Draconian British policies and repressive measures.

There appeared the cult of bomb and number of political dacoities were committed. Now revolutionary movement started to grow in bigger dimensions. Many conspiracy cases were instituted against them by the rulers. Indian revolutionaries abroad also added the colourful chapter to history of freedom movement of India. In contrast to our earlier revolutionaries who suffered ideological and political immaturity which was inevitable at that early stage, the Ghadar movement made positive advance over them. It took a big step forward and added a new dimension to freedom struggle. It stood for overthrowing the British rule by armed revolutionary activities and replacing it

with establishment of national republic based on the principles of freedom, equality and secularism. The Ghadar movement served to be the womb to give birth to many revolutionary leaders like M.N. Roy, M. Ahemad and many others. The Ghadar movement failed but it was rooted in Punjab and the Punjab peasantry was in ferment. Further along with this the massacre of Jalianwala bag and Akali movement to free the gurudvaras from the control of pro government corrupt Mahants added fuel to the militancy. Thus we have seen in this chapter that by 1920-21, the whole of Punjab was simmering with discontents. The political situation in Punjab was in the militant phase and politics of the state was greatly radicalised. It is argued that Bhagat Singh and his friends were the product of this militant nationalism, and many revolutionary movements in Punjab.

In the second chapter Bhagat Singh's life, the ideological influences on him and his development as revolutionary thinker and as revolutionary leader are discussed. Bhagat Singh's ideas were greatly influenced by the deep political ferment that was taking place at the very core of Punjabi society. He was convinced from the boyhood that his life was meant for the service of the nation. Here we find three major ideological streams that influenced his political thought. First, from his family side he was influenced by the reformist Arya Samaj ideology

and patriotic nationalism. Secondly, he was influenced by the ideas of armed revolutionaries like Ghadarites who claimed that India could become independent by using the violent methods against the oppressive and exploitative British imperialism. Thirdly, he was influenced by the Marxian socialist ideology which became popular after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Meanwhile he was moved considerably by the idea of ' Propaganda by deed ' expounded by Bakunin. It was ultimately the philosophy of scientific socialism that poured the positive content in his revolutionary ideology. At the end of his career he was Leninist and stood for the establishment of the socialist state of workers and peasants. Thus, in Bhagat Singh we find the synthesis of revolutionary nationalism, anti-imperialist patriotism and Marxian socialism.

In the third chapter we have studied Bhagat Singh's ideas on contemporary situation like conditions of workers and farmers, imperialist exploitation, Non-cooperation movement of Congress led by Gandhi, Gandhi's non-violent method of struggle etc. Here we see Bhagat Singh developed as a political thinker who dealt with the problems that divided the Indian people i.e. problem of language, caste, creed, untouchability, religion and communalism. Bhagat Singh had analysed the causes of untouchability and had asked untouchables to launch their independent

movements and to revolt against the system. He had also supported the views that like Muslims the untouchables should also be given the separate representation. We have seen that as rational, secular and socialist thinker he had advocated the class approach against problem of caste and communalism. He had argued that these feelings had economic basis and the real answer against it was creating the class consciousness in the minds of the people. He held that the communalism was a handiwork of imperial powers and their stooges. He even argued that due to its weakness the congress party and Gandhi would not be in a position to solve the problems. Bhagat Singh emphatically argued that the Gandhian method of struggle which extremely relied on non-violence was largely useless from the points of masses.

In the fourth chapter, we have studied his ideas on National Revolution in a colonial society which occupy very important place in his writings. In the beginning Bhagat Singh had shown that all important, previous political movements except Ghadar movement had been lacking in the clear cut ideal for which they were fighting. He had held that revolution necessarily implied the programme of systematic reconstruction of society on new and better adapted basis, after complete destruction of the existing state of affairs. In the light of this thinking he had criticised both the methods of struggle

for national independence - one adopted by early revolutionaries and the other by Gandhi and Congress. He had reminded the people that the present national movement was bound to end in some sort of compromise. He held that national struggle led by the Congress was a struggle mainly dependent upon the middle class and few capitalists. The bourgeois leaders could not dare to tackle the sleeping lion of workers and peasant as it would be irresistible even after the achievement of national independence. It is clear that Bhagat Singh stood for systematic change by well organised communist party and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat..

Thus here Bhagat Singh stood for liberating the masses from both the bondages of imperialism and capitalism. He stood for proletarian revolution. He had also given the clear programme of the national revolution. Finally, he had dealt with the problem of relationship between terrorism and revolution. He had argued that terrorism in our country was the result and manifestation of lack of the strong scientific revolutionary thinking. He had reminded that the history of terrorism is the history of failures in many countries of the world. What he finally meant was that mere bomb throwing was not going to help and we had to develop mature theory and practice of revolution.

In the fifth chapter we have attempted the critical appraisal of Bhagat Singh's social and political ideas. It must be remembered that Bhagat Singh and his ideas represented in general many revolutionary terrorists of late 1920's. Bhagat Singh made the ideological advance over the previous terrorist revolutionaries and played a significant role in freeing the revolutionary movement of his time from the vague ideas of nationalism and religious mystecism. He filled it with economic content. Bhagat Singh shared the challenge posed by communists and left-wing youths to the bourgeois perspective of the national movement. Bhagat Singh clearly visualised the transformation of the terrorist revolutionary movement into the left communist revolutionary movement in India, because Bhagat Singh grasped that socialism was a product of the historical process and that, therefore, as a system it was the product of the conditions of social existence and social forces. The contributions of Bhagat Singh are critically discussed and drawbacks are analysed in this chapter.

CRITICAL REMARKS :

Bhagat Singh was a great political revolutionary and made a great advance over his predecessors in understanding the social, economic and political problems of India. Bhagat Singh discarded the religions, traditional ~~and~~ social outlook

and looked forward to modern ideas like secularism and socialism. Bhagat Singh contributed in three important aspects. In the first place Bhagat Singh revealed the correct understanding of the problems like language, religion, caste, untouchability and communalism. He correctly realised that the real cause behind the communal riots was economic and the real remedy for the problems those divided the Indian people was in the improvement of the economic conditions of the masses. It is highly noteworthy that Bhagat Singh suggested untouchables to get organised independently and asked them to revolt against the entire system.

In the second place Bhagat Singh's understanding of the role of the congress and Gandhi is highly appreciable. He was rightly convinced that the Congress movement would not lead to the complete economic freedom of the masses. He correctly understood the limitations of the Congress and movement led by the Congress. He considered Gandhi as 'kind hearted philanthropist! But, he said, what was needed most was a dynamic scientific social force. At the same time he appreciated the immense awakening in the country by bringing the masses into politics. He wanted to 'salute him' for starting the movement on mass base. But with regard to the programme meant for the upliftment of the peasants and workers his programme was ^{more} radical

than that of Congress. He was also at advanced stage than Congress or Gandhi with regard to the acceptance of ' Complete freedom ' as a goal of the movement.

Further in the third place Bhagat Singh's ideas on revolution reveal his mature understanding. He had broadened the scope and meaning of the revolution by defining it correctly. His entire socialist ideology was based on class analysis.

Inspite of his many contributions and strong points we find some weaknesses in his ideas. Theoretically, the concept of revolution was well understood by Bhagat Singh. But its practical aspects were neglected by him. Of course it was mainly due to the lack of historical experience of mass revolutionary movements like that of Russia and China. Bhagat Singh could not establish rapport with communist party or communist movement. Consequently he lacked the experience of mass movement and mass participation. In some respects his understanding of congress and Gandhi remained imperfect. In fact the strong points in Gandhian movement were not taken note of completely.

Bhagat Singh during the last days of his career had come to abandon the terrorism. The socialist within him had finally overcome the terrorist. But at least to some extent

emotional thinking and reliance on terrorism still pervaded 172
his thinking. His strategy of ' Propaganda by deed ' failed
to provide an alternative leadership to Gandhi and Congress.
Bhagat Singh was revolutionary leader but not a statesman in
the company of Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and others. This fact is
amply proved by their decision to throw the bomb in Assembly
in which they sacrificed its most promising revolutionary. A
true revolutionary party would never have taken recourse to
such a step. He was a great critical appraiser of the situation
and existing problems and a leader with great promises. But
the promises could not be fulfilled because of peculiar historical
situation.

While concluding our discussion we can say that
Bhagat Singh represented his times and the advanced ideology
of that period with the limitations of the particular situation.
But we can not miss the fact that he was perhaps one of the first
Indian revolutionaries with roots in the indigenous social and
political movements who broadly understood the theory and
practice of revolution in a colonial society.