

CHAPTER - II

BHAGAT SINGH - IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

1. BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF BHAGAT SINGH
2. IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES ON BHAGAT SINGH
3. DEVELOPMENT OF BHAGAT SINGH AS REVOLUTIONARY LEADER

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BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF BHAGAT SINGH :

We have seen in our **last** chapter that by 1920, the whole of Punjab was simmering with discontent. The Jalianwala bag massacre, the Akali agitation to free the Gurudwaras from the private hands, failure of the Ghadar movement and an unprecedented awakening in the Punjabi people in general and the Sikh peasants in particular gave birth to militant nationalism and many revolutionary movements in Punjab. Thus in the second decade of this century Punjab forged ahead of Bengal and Bombay provinces in the political activities.

Sardar Bhagat Singh, who was born in 1907 was the product of this time. His life and ideas were shaped by the ideas of patriotism and nationalism. He was convinced that he was born to serve the cause of the nation. Hence he denied to get married and wrote a letter in which he reminded his father that " you must be remembering that at the time of my sacred thread ceremony, when I was quite young, Bapuji (grand father) had declared that I was being pledged for the service of the country."¹

Bhagat Singh's ideas were greatly influenced by the deep political ferment that was taking place at the very core of Punjabi Society. The colonial state in India was challenged by Gandhi and his congress though their methods were reformists. It was for the first time in the history of Indian revolutionaries that new theory of revolution in the colonial society was expounded by Bhagat Singh and his friends.

Bhagat Singh was born in Banga village near Lahore in Sikh family of patriots on 27th Sept., 1907. His family was famous for the record of sustained freedom struggle against the British rule. At the time of his birth his father Kishan Singh, as well as his both uncles Ajit Singh and Swarn Singh all were in jail for taking part in freedom movement.² His grand father was a devout Arya Sa Jamaji. His father was also an ardent Arya Samaji and his uncle Sardar Ajit Singh was a leading member of the extremist wing of the Congress party. Ajit Singh for his famous revolutionary activities had been deported to Burma in 1907 along with Lajpat Rai and other leaders.

After completing his primary education he joined D.A.V. School at Lahore in 1916. Responding to the call of Gandhi he left his studies in early twenties. Then he joined the National College, which was started by Lajpat Rai and was

known as the Centre of seditious activities. Bhagat Singh and his friends enthusiastically used to participate in the non-violent Non-cooperation movement of the Congress led by Gandhi.³ Bhagat Singh was very much fond of reading. He used to read intensely many standard books on different subjects during those days. In the words of Late Rajaram Shastri, the Librarian, 'Bhagat Singh used to devour books'. His favourite subjects were Russian revolution, the Soviet Union, revolutionary movements of Ireland, France and India, anarchism and Marxism.⁴ Bhagat Singh as a voracious reader, devoted himself wholeheartedly to the study of History, Politics and Economics. Along with his associates he created a study circle on the model of the study circle of Russian Social Democrats. Jatendra Nath Sanyal, in his biography 'Sardar Bhagat Singh' praised Bhagat Singh for his intellectual capacity. He wrote "Bhagat Singh was an extremely well read man and his special sphere of study was socialism. It is generally believed that very few in India could be compared with him in the knowledge of this special subject."⁵

In 1924 he ran away from home, when his relatives pressed him to get married, and dedicated his life to the liberation of India. He joined the revolutionary movement

in 1924, when he was only sixteen years of age.⁶ He went to Delhi and worked as a reporter in the 'Arjun' and then went to Kanpur. There he remained in close touch with a revolutionary group. He worked as sub-editor in famous radical weekly 'Pratap' edited by Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. Later he worked in the Urdu section of 'Kirti'. Bhagat Singh used to write in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and English and had acquired mastery over all these Languages.⁷

While studying in the college Bhagat Singh and his other associates started an organisation which was named as Navjawan Bharat Sabha. The prominent among his associates were Bhagawati Charan, Sukhdev, Dhanvantri, Ehsan Elahi, Sondhi Ram Krishna and Jaya Chandra Vidyalankar, a teacher of National College. Ramchandra was elected as President of the Sabha. Bhagat Singh became its founder general secretary and Bhagawati Charan became its propoganda secretary.

The Sabha easily became a meeting ground of the revolutionaries and began to give cover to their secret activities. It also did its utmost in spreading revolutionary ideas among people. Navjawan Bharat Sabha consisted mainly of young people from the families of clerks, peasants and tradesmen.⁸ The most important form of the Sabha's work was propaganda of

socialist ideas and of the necessity for strong action against British rule. The Sabha declared " Complete Independence of India by all possible means " as its aim. It is said that, the Sabha in its meetings and activities among the people became more effective than the Congress, drawing large audience and response.⁹

In 1928, Bhagat Singh and his associates issued the manifesto of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha which put forward the slogan " Revolution by the masses and for the masses." In other words, Swaraj for the 98% of the people.

In 1927 Bhagat Singh was arrested in connection with Dussehra Bomb explosion in Lahore, but he was acquitted. Then he went underground and visited Delhi, Kanpur and other places where he established contacts with other revolutionaries. Now he belonged to prominent group of revolutionaries like Chandra Shekhar Azad, Sukh Dev, Raj Guru, Batukeshwar Batta, Shive Verma and others. He organised revolutionary activities in Punjab, Delhi and U.P. Bhagat Singh and his associates attempted to rescue their revolutionary friends, Jogesh Chatterji and S.N. Sahyal, from the jail, who were detained in connection with the Kakori Mail Decoity Case. But they could not succeed in this attempt.¹⁰

The Kakori case was a major setback to the revolutionaries of Northern India. Bhagat Singh and his associates now set out to reorganise the HRA under the overall leadership of Chandra Shekhar Azad. Accordingly the meeting of different revolutionary groups was called on 8th & 9th September, 1928. It was held in the remnants of the Fort of Firoz Shah in Delhi. It was attended by 60 members including five lady members.¹¹ Azad could not attend the meeting but had been consulted and had given his consent to the decisions to be taken by majority. Bhagat Singh and Sukh Dev suggested that their party should be named as Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (Army) and the name was adopted. Azad was declared as the Commander-in-Chief of the HSRA.

The visit of the Simmon Commission in 1928 witnessed the countrywide strikes and demonstrations. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha also decided to protest against the visit of Simmon Commission at Lahore. The procession was led by Lala Lajpat Rai. Saunders, Deputy Superintendent of Police, made a brutal assault on Lalaji. As a result of series of injuries Lalaji died later. A wave of indignation swept all over the country. There was wide spread resentment and anger among the people. Bhagat Singh suggested that they should avenge the death of Lalaji.¹² Ajoy Ghosh wrote " party decided to strike a blow. In November, 1928 Saunders, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, the man who had led the lathi-charge, was shot dead in front of the police

headquarters in Lahore. It was an action that was acclaimed by the public with joy.¹³ Rajguru, Bhagat Singh, Jaya Gopal Azad all after assassination, escaped conveniently from that place. On the next day they distributed a few red leaflets in Lahore city. Later it was found that those were written by Bhagat Singh.¹⁴ They declared "This government is the most oppressive government of the world. (and) we aim such a revolution which would end exploitation of man by man. Long Live Revolution."

Then Bhagat Singh left for Calcutta. There he came in contact with Bengal revolutionaries. Yatindranath Das readily agreed to teach them how to make bomb.¹⁵ They learnt it and went to different places like Agra, Delhi, Lahore to prepare the bombs.

Now the HSRA decided to throw bomb in the Assembly Hall to oppose the passage of the public safety Bill and the Trades Disputes Bill. On April, 8, 1929, two bombs exploded in the Central Assembly which were thrown by Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt just after the Trade Dispute Bill - a measure directed against the working class movement had been passed. Bhagat Singh and Dutt were arrested on the spot. "They did not resist and soon their names became household words in India and their photographs appeared everywhere."¹⁶

They could have escaped easily. But they remained standing there shouting the slogans like ' Long Live Revolution' and ' Down with Imperialism '. They also dropped some leaflets on the behalf of the HSRA. It began with a quotation from a manifesto of French Revolution that an explosion was necessary to make the deaf hear. They admitted their responsibility and explained why they had done this.

They were tried and sentenced to transportation for life. They used the court as a platform to publicise the revolutionary and socialistic aims of the party. While in jail Bhagat Singh and Dutt had demanded that they should be treated as political prisoners and the facilities should be given accordingly to all revolutionaries. As protest against the horrible conditions in jails they went on hunger strike. They were supported by their comrades in Lahore Jail. This received tremendous publicity. On the 30th June, the whole country observed as Bhagat Singh and Dutt Day. After 63 days hunger strike in Lahore Jail Jatin Das expired on 13th September, 1929. At Calcutta, a two-mile-long procession of more than six lakh people carried his coffin to the cremation ground.

Meanwhile, the discovery of a huge bomb factory at Lahore run by Sukh Dev and later on at Saharanpur run by Shiv Verma led to the arrest of many important members of the HSRA.

Government lost no time in instituting the Second Lahore Conspiracy case of 1929 against them. Bhagat Singh who had already been sentenced to a life term was brought to Lahore as an accused in this case. Now Government promulgated ordinance on 2nd May, 1930, giving summary powers to special tribunal for the trial of the prisoners of Lahore Conspiracy case. They were actually beaten by the police in the open court. The tribunal which had become virtual farce of the trial gave its judgement on 7th October, 1930. Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev, Rajguru were sentenced to the death and 7 others were sentenced to transportation for life. * This was greeted with general strikes and demonstrations throughout the country *.¹⁷

Bhagat Singh came to know that he could be hanged any time any day, but he continued his studies even in jail. In fact he virtually converted the jail into University. ¹⁸ His last message to the country was ' Down with Imperialism ', ' Long Live Proletariat ' and ' Long Live Revolution '. They were executed on 23rd March, 1931. Many persons, all over the country, wept and refused to eat food, to attend schools, or to carry on their daily work when they heard the news of their hanging.¹⁹

IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES ON BHAGAT SINGH :

When Bhagat Singh entered the National revolutionary politics, the country witnessed withdrawal of non-cooperation movement by Mahatma Gandhi. But the Gandhian ideas did not influence him because he was attracted towards the ideology of the armed revolutionaries. But the ideology of these revolutionaries was mainly based on patriotism and the vague feeling of nationalism. The ideology of the earlier revolutionaries did not have positive content. Only the Ghadar revolutionaries upheld the idea of Secular Nationalism. Bhagat Singh was a witness to these changes. In 1923 itself he made it clear that Language was the basic Nationalism and true Nationalism should be based on economic content meant for workers and peasants.

There were 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 who claimed that India could become independent by using the violent methods against the oppressive and exploitative British imperialism. And

thirdly, he was influenced by the socialist ideology which became popular after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. 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.

Since his childhood Bhagat Singh was influenced by the revolutionary ideas as he was born with the rich inheritance of his noble family's record of great sacrifice in the cause of national independence. His Grand father Arjun Singh encouraged all his three sons to enter in to politics, who in their turn entered the freedom movement with great enthusiasm.

Ajit Singh, Bhagat Singh's uncle, was an organizer of suffering peasants and founder of famous " Bharat Mata Society". The Government reports had noted that " Ajit Singh during the last two months has openly advocated sedition".²⁰ He was arrested in June, 1907 and deported finally to Mandalay alongwith Lala Lajpat Rai. Again after his release he worked as an Indian revolutionary in several foreign countries until India got freedom.

Kishan Singh, father of Bhagat Singh, had also been participating in the revolutionary movement. During the 1st World War he was associated with Ghadar party of the Sikh peasants. He was put in Jail for several times. Swarn Singh, the Second uncle of Bhagat Singh, had also joined the Bharat Mata Society. He published anti British literature and participated in peasant movement. As a result he was prosecuted and imprisoned in Lahore Jail. Due to hard work and harsh treatment he became a TB patient there and later died at the age of 23 only.²¹ Thus Bhagat Singh grew up in his childhood hearing tales of his brave uncles and father.

He was also influenced by the cultural heritage of Punjab which strengthened his nationalist thinking. The message and sacrifice of the Sikh Gurus were source of inspiration to him. Guru Teg Bahadur's message to uplift and protect the downtrodden as the chief duty of the Sikhs appealed to the humanitarian thinking of Bhagat Singh. In Guru Govind Singh's innovation to the sword, Bhagat Singh found a strategy to fight against the British rule. Bhagat Singh also got inspiration from the message of Swami Vivekanand and Swami Rama Tirtha, especially their sympathy to the cause of the poor.²²

Bhagat Singh was born in Sikh family which was by no means an orthodox family. His Grandfather and father had always opposed orthodox traditions and superstitions.²³ His Grandfather Arjun Singh was a devoted Arya Samajist who met Swami Dayanand personally and took the work of spreading modern scientific education based on cultural renaissance.²⁴ During those days Sikhs used to send their children to 'Khalasa School'. But Arjun Singh sent his children to 'Saidas Anglo-Sanskrit School', at Jalandhar. He was against the practice of untouchability.²⁵ It was great courage during those days to oppose it. All these things influenced Bhagat Singh and shaped his secular and rational outlook.

Alongwith influences from his family and cultural heritage of Punjab he was impressed by other events in and outside the country. The stories of the heroic deeds of the Kuka sect, the bravery and sacrifices made by the Babbar Akalis had deeply touched him. When he was reading in school he learnt about the Ghadar party movement. The Ghadarite revolt, and the martyrdom of Kartar Singh Sarabha at the age of 22; provided a new orientation to his ideas. Kartar Singh became Bhagat Singh's hero. Thus in his early days of boyhood he was inspired by Ghadar revolutionaries and their ideas of Secular nationalism.

Later he wrote in ' Chand ' a short life sketch of Kartar. In ' Kirti ' also he wrote regularly the life sketches of different revolutionaries from Kuka rebellions, Chaphekar brothers, Madanlal Dingra to Ashfaqullah Khan. He later published secretly book ' The First Indian War of Independence ' written by V. D. Savarkar.²⁶ He had also translated Sachin Sanyal's 'Bandi Jeevan' in Punjabi.

Then came the masscre of Jalianwala Bag in 1919 in which about a thousand people were slaughtered by General Dyer with the intension of ' teaching a lesson ' to Indians. The news of this butchery also moved Bhagat Singh deeply. He immediately went from Lahore to Amritsar. He kissed the earth there sanctified by the blood split and carried with him a little of the red soil.²⁷

In early 1920 communism emerged as a new factor in India. After 1920 Bhagat Singh and his associates were attracted towards the new socialist state of Russia and towards the ideas and principles it embodied. In 1921-23 communist groups were formed at number of places by Nalini Gupta, Shaukat Usmani and Ghulam Hussain. Bhagat Singh established rapport with the ' Kirti Kisan Party ' of Sohan Singh Josh. Bhagat Singh worked for some time on editorial staff of the ' Kirti ' a socialist journal edited by Sohan Singh Josh. There he was

influenced by the socialist and the Marxist ideas. Similarly another phenomenon which impressed them was the great upsurge of the working class especially the great strike of Bombay workers and later Calcutta and Kanpur strikes in the twenties.

In the beginning Bhagat Singh and his associates were influenced by the idea of a Russian anarchist . Bakunin. The credit to bring Bhagat Singh from anarchism to socialism goes to comrade Sohan Singh Josh and Lala Chhabil Das. Bhagat Singh had easy access to Dwarkadas Library through its librarian Raja Ram Shastri who was sympathetic to their activities. Principal Lala Chhabildas also used to give suggestions about the books who was well read and inclined towards socialism. Dwarkadas Library had good collection of books on politics including books on Marxism and Soviet Russia which were rare things in the country those days.

Bhagat Singh extensively studied various subjects during the period 1924 to 1928. According to late Raja Ram Shastri, Bhagat Singh's favourite subjects were Russian revolution, the Soviet Union, revolutionary movements in Ireland, France, India. and anarchism and Marxism.²⁸ By the end of 1928, he had his associates declared Socialism as the ultimate goal of their movement.

The communist manifesto, though a small book, had great impact on Bhagat Singh and his associates.²⁹ In his article ' Why I am an Atheist ' he wrote " I studied Bakunin, the anarchist leader, something of Marx, the father of communism, and much of Lenin and Trotsky and others - the men who had usccessfully carried out a revolution in their country. They were all atheists".²⁹ At Kanpur Bhagat Singh had read Karl Marx's Capital in addition to other Marxist, socialist and revolutionary literature.³¹ It was but natural that Bhagat Singh and his friends were greatly impressed by the Courage of Communist implicated in Kanpur conspiracy case of 1923-24 and later Meerut conspiracy case of 1929. They admired the courage and dedication of these socialist.

The Russian Revolution went a long way in radicalising the political ideas of Bhagat Singh and his associates. The socialist literature and Soviet Union captured the imagination of Bhagat Singh and his associates to such an extent that they began to regard the Soviet Union as the state nearest to their ideas.³² Ajoy Ghosh had stated that " studies in prison depended the love that we already cherished for the Soviet Union and on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the November revolution in 1930, we sent greetings to the Soviet Union hailing its victories and pledging support to the Soviet state against all enemies.".³³

Thus, Bhagat Singh in the beginning was influenced by the ideas of patriotism and nationalism, principles and teachings of Arya Samaj, and ideas of Ghadar revolutionaries. Then the idea of 'propoganda by deed' expounded by Bakunin and Kropotkin appealed considerably to Bhagat Singh. In the later phase of his intellectual development, however, socialist and Marxist ideas, and ideas of Lenin and Trotsky influenced him so much that he disavowed his faith in terrorism. Finally, he came to emphasize the need for a political awakening, struggle by the masses, and 'Proletrain revolution'.

In Bhagat Singh we find the synthesis of revolutionary nationalism, anti-imperialist patriotism and Marxian socialism. In his last days he became a Communist and advocated the establishment of the well-disciplined communist party. He stressed the importance of the work among the masses and said "The real revolutionary armies are in the villages and in the factories, the peasants and Labourers".³⁴

DEVELOPMENT OF BHAGAT SINGH AS REVOLUTIONARY LEADER :

We have seen the ideological influences on Bhagat Singh and his development as a revolutionary political thinker. He was not only a revolutionary thinker but a revolutionary leader of the Hindustan Republican Socialist Association. Along with his friends, he organised several political activities and armed activities against the British Government in India.

In his early days after returning from Kanpur, Bhagat Singh found that the 'Guru Ka Bagh' agitation was in full swing in Punjab. Manmathnath Gupta has pointed out that this was no doubt a religious movement, but it had sought to reform religious practices". The conformists among the Sikhs opposed it. But the marchers were welcomed and feted under the leadership of Bhagat Singh.³⁵

During the college days Bhagat Singh emerged as the organizer and leader of youth movement. He and his associates used to stage historical plays for arousing national sentiments among the people.³⁶ They established their organisation named 'Naujawan Bharat' Sabha' in 1926. Bhagat Singh played prominent role even in organizing the meeting and also in working of the Sabha. They hated conservative and

reactionary ideas and instead held Scientific, secular and materialist outlook. They used to arrange speeches and community dinners in which all communities took part.³⁷ It is important here to note that the rules of membership barred Muslim League, Sikh League and Hindu Mahasabha from joining this Sabha. It was free from any communal influences. For its membership, every person was made to sign a pledge that he would place the interests of his country above those of his community.³⁸ Before admission the new members were screened for their progressive socialist ideology. The Sabha became more effective than the congress in its activities and meetings.³⁹ It was getting more response from the people. Dr. Kichliew and Subhas Bose often participated in the functions of Sabha.

The Sabha, in its Amritsar Conference in April, 1928 declared that in addition to their earlier goal of complete independence through all possible means, it also stood for the establishment of a socialist republic of the labourers and peasants of the whole of India to be achieved by all possible means.⁴⁰ It also stood to organise the labourers and peasants. And in order to translate that objects into reality, various programmes were arranged. The branches of Naujawan Bharat Sabha were soon extended to Ludhiana, Jullundur and many other places. The Sabha established rapport with the Kirti Kisan

party under the leadership of Sohan Singh Josh. In September, the Sabha took a leading part in the workers' and Peasants' conference at Lyallpur.

As shown by Dr. Mittal S.C. the Naujawan Sabha played a significant role in the political history of Punjab during 1926-29 by spreading anti-British and revolutionary ideas among the youths. In first place it showed interests in anti-Government movements launched by political parties, and its members associated themselves with the boycott of the Simon Commission and the British goods. They agitated against the Trade Dispute Bill and the Public Safety Bill etc. Secondly, they took interests in the communist activities of Kirti Group by organising a workers' and peasants' conference.⁴¹

All these factors enabled the Sabha Group to develop ideologically. By 1926, they were ideologically inclined towards Russia and Socialism. But in the initial stage they were not very clear about the differences between Socialism and Communism. As Shiv Verma has correctly pointed out 'Ideologically both Lahore group and Kanpur group of revolutionaries were confused till that time (1926), thought a search for the correct ideology had started.'⁴² By the beginning of 1928 they had discarded anarchism and accepted socialism as their creed. This, however, did not mean that they had understood Marxism in its totality.

Kanpur group of revolutionaries was also moving along the same line but its pace was not as rapid as that of the Sabha Group. Bhagat Singh tried to establish contacts with Kanpur and Bengal groups of revolutionaries. He could establish close contacts with Azad, Shiva Verma, Ajoy Ghosh, Jatin Das, Yashpal and many others. In the beginning of 1928, Bhagat Singh took the initiative and suggested the idea of forming an all India organisation by bringing different groups together. His proposals were :⁴³

- 1) The time had come to boldly declare Socialism as the ultimate goal.
- 2) The name of the party should be changed accordingly, so that people might know what was their ultimate goal.
- 3) They should undertake only such actions which might have direct relationship with the demands and sentiments of the people, and they should not waste their time and energy in killing petty police officials or informers.
- 4) They should mainly depend on government money for funds and avoid, as far as possible, actions on private houses, and

- 5) The principles of collective leadership should be strictly observed.

Bhagat Singh discussed all these points with his associates and also consulted Azad and obtained his approval. In Delhi meeting on 8th and 9th September, 1928, his proposals were accepted by a majority of six to two after long discussion.

Thus, by 1928, they had come to the advanced stage of ideological development and decided to organise the Army on the basis of sound organisational principles. Finally as pointed out by Bipan Chandra they created a new collective leadership, adopted socialism as their official goal and changed the name of the party to the 'Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (Army)'.⁴⁴

Even though, by 1928, the HSRA and its leadership was rapidly moving away from individual heroic action and assassination and towards mass politics, Lala Lajpat Rai's death, as the result of a brutal lathi-charge when he was leading an anti-Simon Commission demonstration at Lahore on 30th October, 1928, led them once again to take to individual assassination.⁴⁵ They considered it as a direct

challenge. And so, on 17th December, 1928, Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru assassinated, at Lahore, Saunders, police official involved in lathi-charge on Lalaji. In a red poster, but up after the assassination, they justified it as follows :

" The murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police official. (it) was an insult to the nation. It was the bounden duty of young men of India to efface it.. We regret to have killed a person but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed..... Shedding of human blood gives us but blood shed at the alter of a revolution is unavoidable. Our objective is to work for a revolution which would end exploitation of man by man".⁴⁶

During 1920 organised trade union activity was on the increase. Massive and militant strikes of the working class was a countrywide phenomenon and the influence of Socialist ideas was rapidly increasing. While writing on this state of affairs, Nehru wrote " Vague Communist and Socialist ideas have spread among intelligentsia, even among Government officials The Meerut conspiracy case had helped greatly in directing people's mind to these new ideas, and the world crisis had compelled attention. The general direction of the gentle wind was obvious, but still it was a gentle breeze, unsure of itself."⁴⁷

But with regard to Bhagat Singh it proved to be sure wind which swept the country. The British imperialists decided to introduce two bills - the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Dispute Bill, with the intention to reduce the civil liberties of citizens in general and to crush the left and working class movement in particular.

When Bhagat Singh came to know about these bills he sharply reacted and requisitioned a meeting of the central committee of HSRA. He placed his following suggestions before it.⁴⁸

- 1) The party should protest against the adamant attitude of the government by throwing bombs in the Assembly.
- 2) Those selected for the action should not try to escape but surrender and, during the course of the trial, use the forum of the court to propagate the aims and objects of the party.
- 3) He along with one more associate, should be permitted to carry out the decisions.

His first two suggestions were accepted easily and finally they decided to sacrifice two of its best members

for the sake of the ideals of the party. On April, 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh, B.K. Dutt threw two bombs in the Central Assembly against the passage of the bills. The aim was not to kill, for the bombs were relatively harmless.⁴⁹ They later even claimed that the event was "an attack directed against no individual but against an institution itself".⁵⁰ They also proclaimed that their intention was 'to make the deaf hear' and 'prepare the masses for the coming revolution'. Here it showed that still they had a faith in bombs, but they were gradually coming out of secret and individual terrorist activities.

As stated by Ajoy Ghosh, "Bhagat Singh had none of the Characteristics of the traditional terrorist leader - perhaps the first among us to be drawn towards socialist ideas, he was an avowed atheist and had none of the - religions beliefs of earlier terrorists".⁵¹ Bhagat Singh and his associates gave complete good-bye to God, religion and mysticism. They became secular and anti-communal. On the basis of different documents, manifestos, statements, articles, and letters it can be said that they accepted socialism as their goal and stood for establishment of classless society. They also held that the form of Government after revolution would be some sort of dictatorship of the proletariat.

After intensive studies and prolonged discussions in Lahore Jail, Bhagat Singh came to the conclusion that individual killings of informers and officers would not lead to realisation of the goal.

On October 19, 1929 Bhagat Singh sent a message to the Punjab students conference in which he said : " To day we can not ask the youth to take pistol and bombs They have to awaken the crores of slum dwellers of the industrial areas and village living in worn-out cottages".⁵² Finally he realised that " mere bomb throwing was not only useless but sometimes harmful". He even felt that the true revolutionary party would be the communist party which must organise the ' real revolutionary armies ' - the workers and peasants working in the factories and fields - to carry forward a revolutionary mass action. He exhorted the young political workers to read Marx and Lenin and enlighten and educate the masses for a final struggle. He held that they require the Communist party of professional revolutionaries and it need not be an underground party, rather the contrary.⁵⁴

Bhagat Singh was an important leader of the revolutionary group and along with his friends he carried out many daring revolutionary activities and the armed missions

against the British Government. Last of his actions was throwing of bomb in the Central Assembly to protest against the passage of two repressive bills and to expose the democratic sham that was indulged in the British Government. As a leader he was far sighted, brave, fearless and good at planning the moves. He inspired confidence in the minds of the colleagues and went forward. He believed that the revolutionary leader should lead his team at the time of battle and willingly embraced the death.

We have seen in this chapter the ideological and political development of Bhagat Singh. Here we have to bear the fact in our mind that during this period Bhagat Singh was very young. He was barely 23 when he was judicially assassinated by the British Government. But despite this fact he showed remarkable maturity in political ideas and revolutionary activities. He was not only a daring revolutionary leader, he was equally great as a revolutionary thinker. In the subsequent two chapters we shall study the problem of revolution in the colonial system with reference to the ideas of Bhagat Singh.

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