

EMINENT FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF PUNJAB

Fauja Singh

The book, series I on the subject, contains life-sketches, in brief, of twenty-two eminent freedom-fighters drawn from different parts of the pre-1947 Punjab. In selecting them all possible care has been taken to follow a well-thought-out objective criterion. For the preparation of this book information has been collected from all available sources including personal interviews with freedom-fighters or people knowledgeable about them.

The book is no doubt a homage to those great men and women who staked their all in the sacred cause of liberation of the Motherland from the yoke of British imperialism. But it is not merely that. It provides a valuable source material for the scientific study of the freedom movement of the Punjab.

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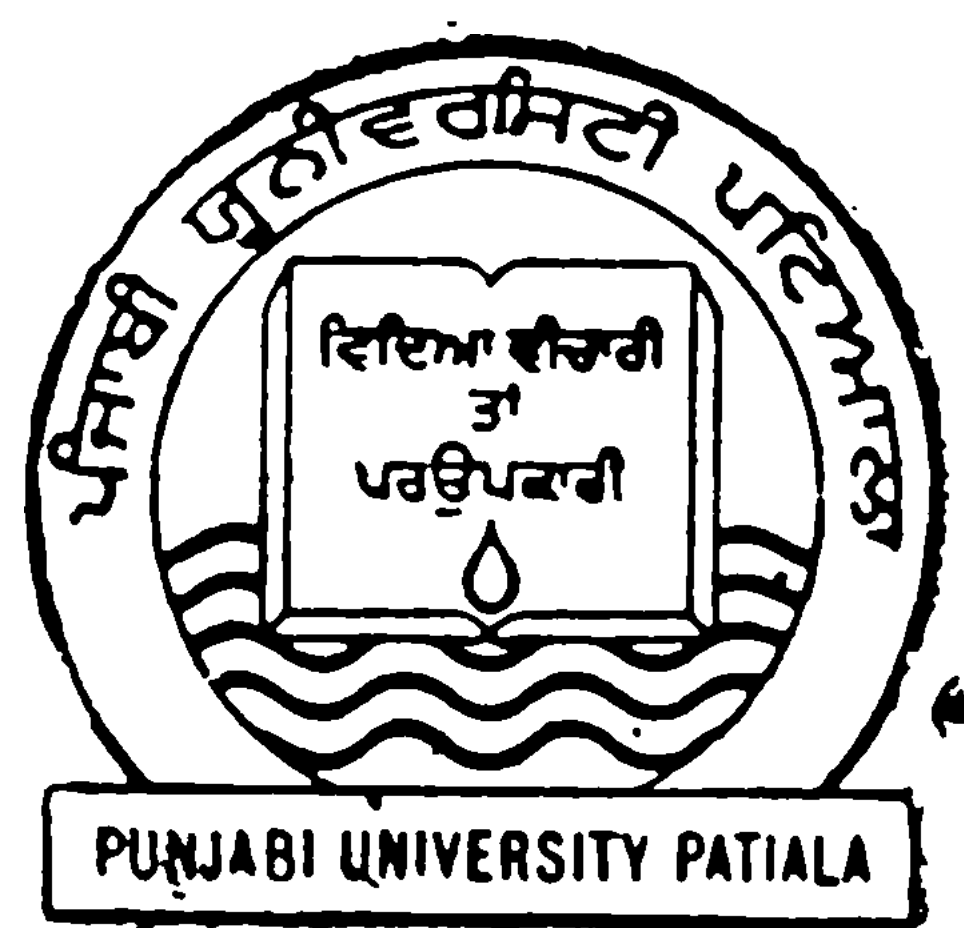
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FAUJA SINGH



PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA
DEPARTMENT OF PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES

SERIES I

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**IN HONOUR OF GREAT MEN AND WOMEN WHO STAKED THEIR
ALL IN THE CAUSE OF LIBERATION OF THE MOTHERLAND**

FOREWORD

The dust in the battlefield of the Anglo-Sikh Wars had not yet settled when the struggle for freedom was launched afresh. Sham Singh Attariwala—"One old chief devoting himself to death like Decius of old" and the self-sacrificing Bhai Maharaj Singh led this struggle for independence. They were followed by countless heroes who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of the country. The untold sufferings and sorrows through which they passed to break the shackles of slavery is a story of recent past. The British officers could not remain unmoved by their sacrifices. Sir Henry Cotton wrote in his *India and Home Memories* regarding the killing of sixty-three *Namdharis* in 1872 : "I can recall nothing during my service in India more revolting and more shocking than these executions, and there were many who thought as I did". This degrading method of executing freedom-fighters without trial continued in the Punjab till the early decades of the present century. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Governor of the Punjab, wrote thus : "It is not desirable at present time to allow trials of these revolutionaries or other sedition-mongers to be protracted by ingenuity of counsel and drawn out to inordinate length by committal and appeal procedures". The ruthless suppression could not damp and depress the spirit of the Punjabis. Each setback only served to goad them on to fresh and more vigorous efforts.

Many resplendent names shine through the dark

century of foreign rule (1846—1947), when the free spirit of the Punjab struck again and again at the citadel of British imperialism till it was rendered weak and hollow. Many sons of the soil mounted the gallows smilingly. Even in the final phase, partition of the Punjab in 1947 was a long and horrowing tale of death and destruction, of rape and abduction involving millions of people. Thus the Punjab had to pay the highest price for freedom.

It is very difficult to construct the contemporary history especially when we are living under the impact of these events. An effort has, however, been made to collect the bio-data of the freedom-fighters because their memories are still fresh, and their contemporaries can give facts and figures of their struggle against the foreign rule.

Two projects, the history of the freedom movement in the Punjab and Who's Who : Punjab Freedom-Fighters—were transferred to the Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, in 1967. The second project is almost complete. In this volume, biographical accounts of over three scores of prominent freedom-fighters have been given. But the list is not exhausted, and we propose to cover the remainder in another series which will be brought out very shortly. I congratulate Dr. Fauja Singh, Head of the History Department and his colleagues in the Punjab Historical Studies Department, on their efforts in this behalf.

I hope that this work will be beneficial to scholars of history as well as to readers in general.

Punjabi University
Patiala
August 11, 1972

KIRPAL SINGH NARAN
Vice-Chancellor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heart-felt acknowledgements are due to Sardar Kirpal Singh Narang, Vice-Chancellor, without whose support the work would not have seen the light of day; to my colleagues Dr. S. K. Bajaj, Dr. Romesh Walia and Shri Gursharan Singh who spared no pains to make the project a success; to Sardar Hazara Singh, Production & Sales Officer, who laboured hard to see it through the press; to Shri G. D. Sachdev who discharged the onerous responsibility of proof-reading; and to Shri Surjit Singh, University Photographer, who prepared many of the photographs included here for block-making. I am also thankful to the proprietor and staff of the Yugantar Press for their full cooperation.

FAUJA SINGH

PREFACE

This is the first series of our work on the subject dealing with 92 eminent freedom-fighters of the Punjab. Being time-bound we regret that many important names have been left out. They will be covered in the next series which will be undertaken after 15th August, 1972.

The selection of freedom-fighters for this purpose has been a delicate and difficult task and opinions may differ in some of the cases. As far as possible we have tried to be fair. Our criterion of selection has been three-fold : (1) We have understood the Punjab to mean the undivided Punjab of pre-1947 period, inclusive of Punjab States, present Haryana and present Himachal, but exclusive of NWFP and Jammu & Kashmir; (2) leadership role—the impact produced by one as a leader; (3) in the absence of such leadership role, minimum five years' term of imprisonment.

A few words regarding the collection of material for this work will not be out of place here. In the case of freedom-fighters who are still alive, our account is generally based on the information supplied by the people concerned. In the case of others, biographies, autobiographies, year books and *Who's Who* volumes have been consulted. Where verification was felt to be necessary, it was made by means of inquiries from fellow freedom-fighters. We regret that jail records were not available to us for this purpose. The official intelligence records also

could not be consulted for shortage of time. Therefore, it is possible that some inaccuracies may have crept in, for which we are really sorry.

All the same, there is much valuable information collected in the book. Not only our knowledge about the life and role of individual freedom-fighters will be richer; our study of the freedom movement will also be greatly benefited by this effort which *inter alia* reveals class-roots of the participants and the major influences under which they entered the mainstream of national politics. For instance, it will be noted with great interest that many of these people came to the nationalist path *via* military service, or residence or travel abroad.

In the preparation of this work we have taken particular care that the descriptive accounts of the freedom-fighters should be accompanied by their photographs. We are glad that in more than eighty cases we have been able to do that. All the same, we are sorry that photographs of the remaining few could not be obtained well in time for the printing of the book.

FAUJA SINGH

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INTRODUCTION

I

(1849—1900)

Freedom struggle in the Punjab presents the spectrum of a growing popular participation. Starting with sporadic and spontaneous outbursts against the British the struggle gradually emerged as a national movement with the objective of obtaining independence, which aim was ultimately attained in 1947. As it evolved and grew wider and wider in scope, it projected varied ideological currents ranging from reformation to revolution, from gun-barrel philosophy of terrorists to Gandhian non-violence, from aristocratic protests to peasant outbursts, and from fanatic religious zeal to glorious national sentiments all converging upon the single-eyed aim of achieving freedom of the mother-land from foreign yoke.

The origin of the freedom movement in the Punjab may be traced back to the interregnum between the two Anglo-Sikh wars, 1846-48, if not earlier. As the foreigners, once the foothold was gained, manoeuvred to become virtual rulers of the Punjab, the Sikhs under the leadership of Dewan Mulraj, Chattar Singh Atariwala, Sher Singh Atariwala and Bhai Maharaj Singh made a formidable bid to liberate their beloved country from the iron clutches of the British. Failing in their attempt they surrendered in 1849 and thus the Punjab was annexed. However, Bhai Maharaj Singh refused to bow down. He planned to secure stealthily the person of Maharaja Dalip

Singh and to raise a rebellion in his name in the Bist-Jullundur Doab. Although his early arrest foiled his attempts, he had attained a measure of success in his plan before he was deported to Singapore as a life long prisoner.

The Punjab, when annexed to the British Empire in India, was placed under a new administration. There is a general belief that the Sikhs shed all their feelings of nostalgia within a few years of the annexation and quickly adapted themselves to the new order of things. This presumption is based on the belief that the Sikhs extended help to the British during the revolt of 1857. Even accepting partial validity of the argument, it is warned that the adjustability of the Sikhs should not be carried too far despite the Punjabis' unique adroitness in adjusting themselves to varying geographical conditions.

The Sikhs' assistance to the British has been misunderstood. In fact, by and large the people in the Punjab viewed the British Government with distrust and resentment. Disarming of the entire Punjabi population had left them bereft of the means of self-defence. Many of the Sikh dignitaries who had taken part in the fighting against the British were languishing in prisons; many others were living under humiliating conditions. The lands of the *jagirdars* had been considerably cut down. The Khalsa Army having been disbanded, a large number of the erstwhile soldiers had been driven to the plough. Land revenue had been, no doubt, reduced, but the benefit accruing from the reduction was completely neutralized by the Government's insistence on its payment in cash. Steep fall in prices more than cancelled the profit from

good harvests. Under such conditions, payment of land revenue in cash was almost an impossible task, so that the state demand had to be reduced more than once. Social reforms carried out by the state agency injured the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus and Sikhs. Likewise, schools and hospitals set up by the new rulers were suspected of being agencies to convert people to Christianity. Their suspicions were rather strengthened because of the intensive proselytizing drive of the Christians and the active support of provincial administrative authorities in this connection. John Lawrence was a zealous patron of Christian missions and contributed towards their cause a sum of Rs. 500 annually out of his own pocket. Amongst those who got converted, the most notable was Maharaja Dalip Singh.

Among the other communities of the Punjab, the Hindus were as indignant as the Sikhs about the activities of the missionaries and state interference in their religious beliefs, though in the case of the Sikhs it may be said that their bitterness was deeper on account of the loss of political power and privilege they had suffered recently. The Muslims, however, were favoured by the British as against both the Hindus and the Sikhs. But at the same time the Mussalmans of India were passing through a most critical period of their history. Utterly disappointed with the British Indian Government, they had launched the Wahabi movement against them. The Mussalmans of the Punjab could not wholly escape the despondency overhanging the minds of their co-religionists in other parts of the country.

Such was the state of affairs in the Punjab when the

revolt of 1857 broke out. This revolt was engineered by the sepoys of the Bengal Army of the East India Company. As they had assisted the British to conquer the Punjab and also as they constituted a greater part of the army of occupation in the land, they could not invoke the sympathy of the Sikhs or Punjabis in general for their cause. Nor could the appeals of the Mughal Emperor lately restored to power have any effect on their minds. Nevertheless, they did envisage restoration of independence of the Khalsa Kingdom, which is so evident in the Parliamentary Paper No. 238 of 1859. It unequivocally expresses the apprehensions of the authorities : "Universal revolt in the Punjab would have broken out, if Delhi had not fallen soon into our hands". The Paper further states that as detachment after detachment was moving towards Delhi from Punjab, and cantonment after cantonment was being vacated, "then, Punjabis realized how isolated they were from the rest of India. Then their minds passed from confidence to doubt, then to mistrust, and then to disaffection. The last symptom had begun to appear when Delhi fell". As early as 18th May 1857, John Lawrence had apprehended an uprising in the Punjab. He had once demurred : "I recollect their (Sikh) strong nationality, how completely they were demoralized for some twelve years before annexation, and how much they have to gain by our ruin".¹

During this period of crisis, the Punjabis exhibited utter apathy. This fact may be explained by several factors. Disarmed as they were, the Punjabi soldiers could

1. Bosworth Smith, *Life of Lord Lawrence*, II, 53.

not act promptly, particularly in the absence of competent and imaginative leadership. It may conveniently be surmised that had the administration of John Lawrence been a little less watchful, it was quite likely that the Punjabis would have risen in revolt against the foreigners. Another important reason for such a state of affairs in the Punjab was the timely assistance afforded to the British by the cis-Satluj Sikh States and influential Punjabi chieftains. Their attitude, though not different from the one displayed by them during the Anglo-Sikh Wars, was certainly demoralising. Moreover, some mercenary elements took advantage of the opportunity and joined the British armed forces to fight against the Hindustani rebels. Even so, it was only after the fall of Delhi that they began to come in for recruitment in the British army in large numbers.

All the same, it is quite significant that despite Government's vigilance and suppressive measures, some sporadic incidents happened in the Punjab symptomizing the agitated minds of the Punjabis. At Amritsar a large number of *bairagees* were arrested and locked up. One Brahmin, named Radha Kishan, was publicly hanged. Many Sikh soldiers were also hanged for their anti-British activities. At Ludhiana people not only sympathised with the mutineers but also collected arms which were later seized by the Government. No less than twenty-two persons were sentenced to death. At Ferozepur a *sadhu* named Sham Dass collected some followers with "treasonable intent"². He was executed and his followers were attacked and killed. Raja Pratap Chand of Kangra was also executed with five others. At Rupar, Mohar Singh, a Sikh, declared

2. Parly. Paper 238 of 1859, p. 27.

British rule at an end, ordered the end of cow-slaughter and proclaimed Khalsa Raj. He along with two others was executed. At Sialkot : "Even the Punjabee military police revolted. Treasury was looted, a 12-pounder gun taken away and the magazines blown up. The villages of the neighbourhood also revolted and entered the city. Many village leaders were executed and about fifty of the villagers were flogged".³ An uprising of a considerable magnitude was raised at Googaria, south of Lahore, by wild and predatory tribes. Insurgents numbering one lakh and twenty-five thousand were a hardy, brave and atheletic race of pastoral habits. They "were fired by the idea of extinction" of the British rule.⁴ They cut off the imperial communication with Bombay and their rising affected the whole of the Multan region.

It took about twenty-five days for 1500 troops of the Government to put down the insurgents. On the north-west frontier, outbreaks occurred at Naushehra and Mardan. The people of Peshawar were suspected of conspiring to strike against the British during the *Id* festival. As regards the territory lying between Ambala and Delhi, the British authority, for some time at least, practically disappeared. The Nawabs of Jhajjar and Dadree and the Raja of Ballabharh threw in their lot with the rebels. When the revolt was finally put down, the whole of this affected area was penalized by annexing it to the Punjab.

After the storm was over, the victors generously rewarded their supporters in the Punjab. The rulers of the

3. Parly, Paper 238 of 1859, p. 27.

4. *Ibid.* pp. 13, 54.

various Sikh States and all those Sikh leaders who had given assistance in the hour of need were awarded titles and their territorial possessions were enlarged. Moreover, the old recruitment policy which had resulted in the predominance of the Hindustani sepoy in the Bengal Army, was completely abandoned and a new policy in this regard was devised which, along with the Pathans, Punjabi Mussalmans, Rajputs, Jats, Gurkhas and Dogras, declared the Sikhs a martial race worthy of preferential treatment in recruitment to the armed forces.

Nevertheless, the core of the Sikh and the Hindu community continued to nurture distrust and resentment towards the foreign rulers which soon after the Revolt of 1857 erupted in the popular movement called the Kuka movement under the leadership of Baba Ram Singh, a carpenter saint of the village Bhaini, District Ludhiana. It is interesting to note that the new leadership in the Punjab, as in other parts of the country, emerged from the lower middle classes, upper classes having everywhere succumbed to the British power or temptations offered by them.

Inspired by Baba Balak Singh, a prominent saint of Hazro (District Campbellpur), Baba Ram Singh, like his master, felt deeply concerned about the rapid decadence in the social and religious life of the Sikhs. Disgusted with the vicious atmosphere of intrigues and counter-intrigues that set in after the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, Baba Ram Singh left his service in the Khalsa Army in 1845 and went home. After the Annexation, slanderous propaganda of Christian missionaries against Indian religions and the setting-up of a string of slaughter-houses

for the supply of beef, a phenomenon strictly forbidden under the Khalsa regime, made the Hindus and the Sikhs realize the heavy loss that they had suffered by losing independence.

The extremely sensitive mind of Baba Ram Singh could not approve of the new cultural influences which were not only pernicious but also harmful to their culture. Nor could he leave the society to its fate, because it had sunk deep in the morass of evil social and religious practices which had produced devitalising effects on the people.

After pondering for many years over the problems facing the people Baba Ram Singh devised a plan to revive the glorious traditions of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh's days. By enlisting a few companions to whom he administered *khande di pahul* (nectar of double-edged sword), he set up the nucleus of his organisation in 1857. A strict code of discipline was laid down for the members of the new organisation which was termed the Sant Khalsa so as to distinguish it from the body of routine Sikhs. According to this code, the members were required to lead pure and clean lives attuned to the Name of God, to develop regular and disciplined habits, and to shun such social customs as female infanticide, child marriage etc. To inculcate martial spirit in the devotees, the code prescribed group recitation of *Chandi di Var* (a martial composition of Guru Gobind Singh) to the accompaniment of *havan* (a ceremony of pouring of ghee on burning flames). As the wearing of *kirpans* was forbidden, the members of the new fraternity were enjoined upon to bear *lathis*.

As regards the organizational set-up, Baba Ram Singh appointed *Subas* (governors) to collect funds for the Sant Khalsa. By imparting military training to youngmen, he built up a para-military organization. His followers were popularly known as Kukas, because when assembled at religious congregations they used to emit loud shrieks (*kuks*). As a stroke of strategy, they avoided official postal arrangements and, in fact, relied on their own *sowars* for purposes of communication. They also avoided official courts and used the good offices of their local *panchayats* for the settlement of their mutual disputes. They were also instructed to send their children to local *pathshalas* where education in the mother tongue was imparted, instead of the newly established government schools which followed the Western system of education.

The Kuka movement made long strides and soon attracted the attention of the authorities. Baba Ram Singh travelled widely in the Punjab with a long entourage of his followers in the manner of a chief. Wherever he went, he administered *pahul*, admitted new members to his fraternity, condemned princes and chieftains and denounced idolatry and casteism. By 1863 he had built up a well-knit following running into several thousands, who regarded their leader as a reincarnation of Guru Gobind Singh, the founder of the Khalsa.

As the movement grew in strength, its anti-British character crystallized. With the increasing popularity of the movement, the Government began to take a very serious view of it. Several restrictions were imposed upon Baba Ram Singh and his followers. Now the Baba himself was not allowed to move out of his village.

Bhaini. These restrictions produced an electrifying effect and boosted both the morale and numbers of the Kukas. Realizing its mistake, the Government removed all restrictions in 1867.

65 Having secured the freedom of movement, the Kukas intensified their activities. In 1871 they killed some butchers of Amritsar and Raikot. In the Amritsar Case four Kukas were hanged and two sentenced to transportation for life. In the Raikot Case four Kukas were hanged. A few months later, still bigger raids were organized on Malout and Malerkotla with the motive of acquiring weapons. All the raiders were immediately rounded up. Leaving two ladies who were released, seventy-five of them were blown off from the mouths of cannon, one was hacked to pieces and two were transported for life. The Kuka headquarters at Bhaini was placed under police surveillance. Most of the *Subas* were banished. Ram Singh himself was exiled to Burma where he breathed his last in 1885. Meanwhile, attempts were made to establish contacts with Nepal and Kashmir. But due to the pusillanimity and duplicity of their rulers, the attempts achieved little success. Similar overtures were made after 1872 towards Russia. A Kuka *Suba* visited central Asia many a time and tried to persuade Russia to invade India to help the Kukas in expelling the British from India. During the eighties of the last century, there were signs of another storm. Maharaja Dalip Singh had reached Moscow. This fact as well as the circulation of certain prophecies among the Kukas raised their hopes high for the forthcoming years. Budh Singh, the younger brother of Baba Ram Singh, was the main

motive force behind the revived activity of the Kukas. But due to factors such as liberal employment of Sikhs in the army, support of the Sikh literate elite and landed aristocracy to the British and the vigilance of the Government, the movement once again failed to make any appreciable mark.

But the Kuka movement left a significant stamp on the outlook of the people of the Punjab. Some of the Ghadar leaders, like Sohan Singh Bhakna, were inspired by the glorious sacrifices of the Kukas or Namdhari Sikhs. Later on when the Congress assumed importance in the Punjab, it owed much of its success in the region to the support of the Namdharis.

After the Kuka movement had passed its meridian, liberal sections of the Sikh community, under the influence of Western ideas, tried to reinterpret Sikhism so as to make it consistent with their modern scientific outlook. Naturally, the Singh Sabha movement, as the new attempt came to be known, tried to purge the Sikh creed of all such beliefs and practices as with the passage of time had become an integral part of the Sikh doctrine. The agency of the new educational system was used by them to bring about social and religious improvement. Thus, the Singh Sabha movement created a sense of cultural awareness as well as identification, thereby furnishing a base for future progress. But this movement in its early years had enjoyed the support and favour of the British Government. The leaders of the movement, whether drawn from the upper classes or belonging to the English-educated intelligentsia, did not relish the idea of joining any national activity; rather their prudence

lay in securing benefits for the community through official patronage. All the same, the significance of the movement lies in this that it gave a new leaven to the Sikh society and helped to develop it into a self-conscious nationality ready to guard its national interests at any price.

The other major communities of the Punjab, the Hindus and the Muslims, underwent a similar process of reorientation. The Dev Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj were the best-known reform movements of the Hindu community of the Punjab. The first, headed by Shri Anand Agnihotri, emphasized the ideas of social work and ethical excellence. However, it had a very limited impact on the society. The Brahmo Samaj having originated and developed in Bengal was introduced into the Punjab by Keshab Chandra Sen and Surendra Nath Banerjee. Credit for this may also be given to the Bengali *Babus* in the service of the Punjab Government, such as Pratap Chandra Mazumdar and Navin Chandra, who popularised this monotheistic creed in the Punjab. Epitomising what is the best in all religions, it presented a reformed and modernized form of Hinduism which could adequately meet the challenge of Christian missionaries. Emphasizing the unity of God and mankind, it projected religion as a universal force and at the same time assisted in moulding a national outlook.

The movement which was destined to play predominant role in the Punjab and which overshadowed the other two Hindu movements was the Arya Samaj of Swami Daya Nand, founded in 1875. To revitalise the society from within, Swami Daya Nand preached the pure Indian

religion as enunciated in the Vedas. He rejected all subsequent beliefs and practices, because they were not part of the original religion and were incorporated later. The Arya Samaj attacked the activities of Christian and Muslim missionaries and advocated readmission of converts into the Hindu fold by means of *shudi*, a ceremony of purification. As a result of this element in the teachings of the Arya Samaj, a spirit of militancy inevitably entered into its ranks. The movement, though it had no direct concern with political affairs, provided a strong national, emotional and cultural base to counteract the Western influences.

Starting with a deep-rooted prejudice against the foreign rulers, the Muslims launched a revivalist movement, called the Wahabi movement, to capture political power by forcibly ousting the English from the land. The leaders of the Wahabi movement continued their struggle even after the suppression of the Revolt of 1857. Gradually, this movement lost its vigour and faded away in the same manner in which its contemporary Kuka movement did. After its failure, the educated Muslims changed their attitude towards the British Government and took to Western education as a means of improving the lot of their community. Politically, they shed off their traditional hostility to the British and became their loyal subjects, thinking that their new policy would enable them to serve the interests of their community better. The new attitude was reflected in the Aligarh movement of Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan. In the Punjab, the new attitude was mostly reflected in the Ahmediya movement started by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed of Qadian of Gurdaspur District in 1889.

II. Its role in the Punjab (1900—1920)

The process of socio-religious transformation released by the reform movements of the last quarter of the nineteenth century in the Punjab had prepared the people for a new phase of militant national activity. The cultural revolution in the Punjab had produced a powerful educated middle class. The members of this class were vitally influenced by the contemporary events, such as the Russian defeat at the hands of Japan (a tiny Asian country) and the partition of Bengal. They had also imbibed feelings of patriotism⁵ from the vast amount of new literature produced during the period. In a situation like this, it was not unlikely that the misdirected policies of the Government should pave the ground for an awakening among the common people and a popular agitation. One such policy was to pass a bill regarding the new colonies of the Punjab.

After having annoyed the commercial elements and money-lenders by the Land Alienation Act, 1901, the Punjab Government raised the irrigation rates in the Bari Doab Canal Colonies, perhaps to secure its so-called rightful share of increase in the yield of cotton and sugarcane due to improved irrigational facilities. By the end of 1906, the Punjab Government had also decided to tailor the rights of the cultivators with the avowed intention of reducing them to the position of tenants. The result was

5. The Punjabee, 21 March, 1907. Quoted in 'Damien Arjons' *The Moderates and the Extremists in the Indian National Movement, 1923-24* (Bombay), 1967.

the rise of a popular agrarian agitation. In early 1907, public meetings were held in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lyallpur to demonstrate public resentment to the official Bill brought forth to effect the changes desired by the Government. In one of the meetings at Lyallpur, Lala Lajpat Rai, vindicating the claim of the peasants to legitimate ownership of land, said :⁶

“Wherefrom did the Government bring these lands ? The blood of our fore-fathers was shed on it; we conquered it and inhabited it; these lands are, therefore, either ours or God’s . . . Government officials are servants to serve us and not to rule us. Do not fear the jails nor death.”

Ajit Singh, another fiery orator, who spoke in this meeting, gave a call for revolt.⁷ He told his countrymen that three hundred million Indians could easily defeat the hundred and fifty thousand Englishmen in India. The soul-stirring song ‘*Pagri Sambhal Jatta*’ composed by Banke Dyal invoked self-respect in the Punjabi peasant. With the prosecution and closure of *The Punjabee* and the threatened enhancement of revenue by twenty-five per cent, the movement spread rapidly leading to the first agrarian movement of a considerable size. At Rawalpindi Ajit Singh made another appeal for non-payment of the enhanced cess and called upon the peasantry to stop cultivation. The president of the meeting, Lala Hans Raj, thinking that Ajit Singh by his severe criticism of the Government was inciting violence, tried to stop him. Feeling hurt, Ajit Singh left the meeting immediately. Three lawyers, the President, Gurdas Ram and Amolak

6. *Ibid.*

7. See f.n. No. 5.

Ram, were served with notices summoning them to appear before the court. They were prosecuted for preaching sedition. Besides, six of their compatriots were arrested and put behind the bars. They all languished in jails. On 2nd May people observed a complete *hartal* and gathered in the compound of the District Courts of Rawalpindi. Their numbers fast swelled on account of the fact that there was a simultaneous strike in the Government arsenal, the Railway workshop and a private workshop. When the Magistrate refused to cancel the proceedings, the crowd broke into violence and destroyed the furniture of the court. Even the houses of European officers were not spared.

The cumulative effect of the British action was the rapid spread of discontent in the province. A very significant development was the formation of the *Anjuman-i-Muhibban-i-Watan*, popularly known as Bharat Mata Society. Its important members were Ajit Singh, Sufi Amba Prasad and Lal Chand Falak. Prolific writers and fiery orators as they were, they inculcated the idea of nationalism in the minds of the people through press as well as platform.

The peasant disaffection infiltrated into the ranks of the army due to a close liaison between the two. The imminent celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Revolt of 1857 and the sympathies of the Sikh infantry with the disaffected made the Government apprehensive of the existence of a popular revolt. Suspecting that Lala Lajpat Rai was the brain behind, and Ajit Singh, the principal agent, the Government deported the former and whisked away the latter to Mandalay. In due course of time, the

movement abated partly due to the repressive measures of the Government but primarily due to the vetoing of the Colonisation Bill by the Governor-General. Moreover, the plans of the revolutionaries were forestalled by an official raid upon the Tilak Press, Hoshiarpur, in which much of their secret literature was captured by the Government.

The period from 1909 to 1913 was of comparative quietitude. However, it was like a lull before the storm. On the national plane, many events of great significance took place during this period. So far as the Punjab was concerned, the rise of the Ghadar movement soon after the outbreak of the first World War imparted a new dimension to political activities of the people.

THE GHADAR MOVEMENT

Pressed by the necessity to earn their livelihood, Punjab peasants migrated to far and near countries of Asia and America where they established themselves as cultivators and labourers. After a few years of the Punjabis' stay there, the Canadian and American authorities began to apprehend adverse economic and social effects for their own countries from these foreign elements. Consequently, the Punjabis began to experience great difficulties from the native people. Partial treatment and unnecessary official restrictions, to count only a few, were among the factors which forced the Punjabi settlers in sheer self-defence to organize themselves. To their great chagrin and utter disappointment, even the British Indian Government whom they had faithfully served for sixty years, refused to help them. Their anti-White and anti-British feelings were further accentuated by the propaganda of the

Russian communists who had sought shelter there from the Tzarist regime and of the German spies who had infiltrated into the U.S.A. and Canada. Acting upon the radical advice given to them by Lala Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh, Bhai Parmanand, Barkatullah and Hardy, they organized themselves into the Ghadar Party to liberate their motherland, by force if necessary.

At the Washington meeting of the Indians in the summer of 1913, the Ghadar Party came into existence under the banner of the Hindustani Workers of the Pacific Coast with Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna as its President and Hardy as its Secretary. Soon, the organization shifted its headquarters to San Francisco from where they brought out a journal named *The Ghadar* (meaning revolt) in three Indian languages—Urdu, Punjabi and Gujarati. Much of the popularity of this newspaper may be explained by the selection of its name, *The Ghadar*.

The first issue of *The Ghadar*, dated November 1913, spelled out unequivocally its aims and objects in the following words :⁸

“Today, there begins in foreign lands, but in our country’s language, a war against the British Raj . . . what is our name ? *Ghadar*. What is our work ? *Ghadar*. Where will *Ghadar* break out ? In India.”

Its columns listed crimes perpetrated by the British in India and arousing the national self-respect of the Indians inspired them to fight for Indian freedom as their respect depended upon the freedom of their country. Besides

8. Khushwant Singh, “India’s First Armed Revolution—The Ghadar Rebellion of 1915”, Paper read at the Asian History Congress, 1961-62, New Delhi, p. 17.

The Ghadar, the Yugantir Ashram, headquarters of the Ghadar Party, published important pamphlets like *Ghadar di Goonj* (echoes of rebellion), *Ilan-i-Jang* (declaration of war), *Naya Zamana* (new age), and *The Balance-sheet of the British Rule in India*.

In 1914 occurred the famous episode of the *Komagata Maru*. In order to check the influx of Indians into Canada, the authorities there prohibited the entry of all those emigrants who did not possess \$200 and who had not made a continuous journey from India to Canada. As there were no direct ship services from India in those days, the new ordinances had the effect of totally stopping the movement of Indian emigrants to Canada. However, one ingenious Baba Gurdit Singh, an enterprising Sikh business magnate, circumvented the ordinance by hiring a Japanese steamer and sailed to Canada with 376 persons on board. The occupants, with the exception of a few, were all Punjabis.

To the great surprise of the passengers, they were not allowed to land, excepting the domiciles of Canada, when the ship touched the port of Vancouver. The Canadian authorities threatened Gurdit Singh that they would impound his ship in case of non-payment of the Charter's fee. He could not make the payment until he had fulfilled his contract with the passengers. Meanwhile, provisions also ran short resulting in distress and misery. At last after two months of stay in the Canadian waters the ship turned back towards Hong Kong.

Still, the sufferings of the passengers did not come to an end, they being not allowed to land either at Hong Kong or at Singapore. After a tortuous and long journey,

the vessel finally reached the Budge Budge Harbour at Calcutta on 26th September, 1914. Owing to the outbreak of the first World War, their entry into India, too, was prohibited by an ordinance. Special arrangements were made to carry the passengers from Calcutta to the Punjab. But when some of the passengers refused to comply with the orders, the local police resorted to force. The conflict which ensued, resulted in 18 killed and 25 wounded. Gurdit Singh along with twenty-eight of his companions succeeded in making his escape.

The *Komagata Maru* incident was followed by Ghadriles' call to the Punjabis settled in the U.S.A., Canada and South-East Asia, to get back quickly to India to liberate her from the foreign yoke. The *Komagata Maru* affair served as an indicator to the distressed Indians that they must make a revolution in the country during the war.

The first group of the Ghadriles left San Francisco in August 1914 by the ship '*Korea*'. Ram Chandra who after the escape of Hardy to Switzerland had assumed control of the Ghadar movement, categorically put forth the objective of their mission in his address to the Ghadriles :

"Your duty is clear. Go to India. Stir up rebellion in every corner of the country. Rob the wealthy and show mercy to the poor. In this way gain universal sympathy. Arms will be provided to you on arrival in India. Failing this, you must ransack the police stations for rifles. Obey without hesitation the commands of your leaders."

To fulfil their mission, the Ghadar revolutionaries began their long journey to India in large numbers. On

their way at important stations such as Hong Kong, Penang and Singapore, they established contacts with Indian troops having deep sympathy with their cause.

Of all the ships that carried the Ghadriles to India, *Tosa Maru* is, perhaps, the most important. With about three hundred persons aboard it, the ship touched the Indian shore on 29th October, 1914. The Government of India being extremely vigilant immediately arrested four of their leaders and packed the rest of them by a special train to the Punjab where they were interned in the central jails of Montgomery and Multan. Despite the best efforts of the Government, their security measures were not always successful and one thousand Ghadriles, by the end of December 1914, managed to reach the Punjab undetected.

After reaching the Punjab, the Ghadriles set themselves to execute their plans of raiding police stations to procure arms and to derail trains and destroy bridges. They failed to produce adequate impact by following these methods, for they could not execute their plans properly on account of keen vigilance of the authorities. The Ghadriles also opened bomb factories at Amritsar and Lahore.

As the primary object of the Ghadriles was to spread disaffection in the troops, some of them manoeuvred their way to the ranks of the Indian army. While in the army, the agents of the Ghadar party organized secret cells to impart political education to soldiers. In a short time they established such cells in almost all the cantonments of the Punjab. The night of 21st February, 1915 was fixed by Rash Bihari Bose as the time for the Indian

soldiers to revolt against the foreign rulers. First call was to be given by the 23rd Cavalry at Mian Mir.

As ill luck would have it, the Government, through their agents, came to know the plans of the Ghadriles well in time. Acting quickly, the Government rounded up the Ghadriles, sentenced eighteen of them to death, out of whom twelve were executed. Efforts of the Ghadriles did not achieve much due to the repression of the Government and the poor response of the people. Poorly organized and inadequately equipped, the Ghadriles were no match for the Government. Moreover, in the meantime the Government of India had armed itself with special powers to meet any challenge from their Indian adversaries by passing the Defence of India Act. Summary trials of all suspects of the Lahore Conspiracy Case were instituted. Out of the suspects sent for trials, 46 were sentenced to death, 194 were awarded transportation for life, and 93 were sentenced to varying terms, whereas only 42 were released.

Here a brief reference may be made about the Silk Conspiracy directed from Kabul by two revolutionaries, Barkatullah⁹ and Mahendra Pratap.¹⁰

During the Great War, with the help of Germany the Ghadriles formed a Provisional Government in Kabul with

9. A resident of Bhopal. He was a professor at the Tokyo University in 1909. There he started a paper *Islamic Fraternity*. He visited Cairo, Constantinople and St. Petersburg; ultimately joined Hardyal at San Francisco where he became a Ghadrile leader.
10. He was a wealthy landowner of U.P. He married into a Sikh ruling family. During his visit to Europe, he met Hardyal and came under his influence.

Mahendra Pratap as President and Barkatullah as Prime Minister. To enlist the support of the Muslim Chiefs of West Asia and to dissociate the Russians from the British, the Provisional Government at Kabul ingeniously sent letters written on silk and sewn inside with clothes to India. Some of the letters fell into the hands of the Government and the plot was discovered. This plot, known as the Silk Letters Conspiracy Case, proved completely abortive, though it was not without its impact on the minds of the Indians, more particularly, of the Punjabis.

Though the Ghadar had failed, its members continued in a state of mental strain and some time after led to fresh agitations. Having contributed 4,00,000 soldiers to the Indian Army to protect the British Empire, the Punjabis demanded their legitimate rights, not as a favour but as a reward for their services. The Government, however, gave them nothing except a few high-sounding tributes and glittering medals. When prices were soaring high during the war, the expectations were that they would fall down after the war, but these expectations proved false. The natural consequences of such a phenomenon were strikes and lock-outs. The outbreak of plague, influenza and famine in the wake of the war exhausted whatever patience was left with the people. To cap all, the policy of the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, to set aristocracy against the educated middle class exasperated the latter. The Muslims who formed the majority in the Punjab developed a feeling that they had been deceived by the Government as it had not cared to fulfil assurances given to them.

About this time started the Rikab Ganj Morcha in

New Delhi against the Government of India. The outer boundary wall of the Rikab Ganj Gurdwara had been demolished by the Government as early as 1912 and a good slice of territory belonging to the Gurdwara had been usurped by them for the purpose of building the new capital at Delhi. This was highly resented by the Sikhs but as the Great War soon broke out, they kept quiet for the time being. In 1918 they resurrected the question of the demolished wall and started an agitation over the issue. Ultimately, the Government had to yield and accept the demands of the Sikhs, but it was not before many Sikhs had undergone great sufferings and tribulations.

Thus, the situation in the Punjab was now very tense. It just needed a spark to set the whole province ablaze. The Rowlatt Bills soon provided the necessary ignition.

THE ROWLATT BILLS

The Defence of India Act was only for the duration of the war and it was supposed that with the end of the war it would also come to an end. But the situation still being quite explosive, the Government of India did not wish to part with the special authority vested in it by the Act. Therefore, the Government was anxious to formulate such laws as could conveniently replace the existing Defence of India Act. On the recommendations of the Rowlatt Commission, instituted to suggest necessary legislation to deal effectively with the revolutionaries after the war, two bills were drafted out of which only one could be passed. It was intended to confer upon the Government extraordinary powers of dealing with sedition. The

spirit of this legislation is aptly summed up in this popular statement of those days : “*No dalil, no vakil, no apil*”, meaning “no argument, no lawyer, no appeal”.

To demonstrate people's resentment against the Rowlatt Bills, termed Black Bills by the Indians, Mahatma Gandhi called upon the people to observe *hartal* on 6th April. It excited great enthusiasm in the Punjab. Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Kitchlew, the leaders who were guiding the movement in the Punjab, were immediately arrested and removed to the Dharamsala Jail. As the news leaked out, people gathered at the Hall Gate to march in a procession to the Deputy Commissioner's office to plead for the release of their beloved leaders. On their way, the mob was twice fired at by troops, killing about ten persons. Infuriated at this treatment, the mob resorted to murder, arson, looting of banks, burning of railway stations, cutting of telegraph wires etc., etc. It was against this background of mutual hatred and violence that Miss Sherwood was brutally assaulted in Kucha Kaurhianwala.

Wherever the news of the Amritsar firing spread, it led to violent events. A violent mob in Kasur killed two European warrant officers and damaged public buildings. Near Tarn Taran, a railway station was looted and burnt. At Lahore, when *hartal* was being observed, a black flag procession was fired at. These are only a few examples of the disturbances which took place in the various districts of the Punjab.

To improve the rapidly deteriorating situation, the town of Amritsar was handed over to General Dyer on 12th April, 1919 for administration, but the proclamation

to this effect, according to the Hunter Commission Report, was not properly communicated to the public. On 13th April, the Baisakhi Day, a public meeting was organized at Jallianwala Bagh, an area enclosed by high house-walls on all sides except one where there was a small outlet. Since it was the Baisakhi festival and the place was so near the Darbar Sahib, an unprecedented crowd assembled in the Bagh. Without any prior warning, General Dyer blocked the only exit and ordered his troops to open fire at the people. Within minutes about 500 people fell dead or wounded. It was virtually a massacre of a most non-violent gathering.

More than any single event, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre shocked the conscience of humanity and shook to the foundation Indians' faith in the *bona fides* of the British Government. As if the massacre was not enough, General Dyer made all those who passed through the street where Miss Sherwood was assaulted, crawl on their bellies. Flogging and other third-degree methods of inflicting punishment were some other measures devised for the public humiliation of Indians most of whom were innocent people having nothing to do with the Jallianwala Bagh meeting.

III

(1920—1937)

The year 1920 witnessed a tremendous change in the temper as well as tempo of the nationalist movement in India. With lingering shadows of the first World War and inhuman atrocities committed by the British Raj

culminating in the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy,¹¹ the movement adopted a new objective, *swaraj* accepted a new leadership, that of Mahatma Gandhi, and adopted new methods, both non-violent and revolutionary. Thus, the "nationalist, middle-class agitation was transformed into a mass revolutionary movement".¹² This statement is more true of the Punjab than of any other part of the country, as the focus of the movement from now onwards shifted north-westward. The chain of events in this phase reached its climax in 1937 when independence in terms of political power became the great desideratum.

Political stalemate induced by the Minto-Morley Reforms was broken by the Montague Declaration of 20th August, 1917. Frustrated and dismayed by the Act of 1919 and the treatment of the Muslim Caliph, Hindus and Mussalmans both joined hands in a common cause against the British. The economic crisis with which the Punjab was confronted, brought into the fold of the movement the youth of the country, who converted northern India into a wide arena of revolutionary activity. But unfortunately, the orthodoxy of both Hinduism and Islam recoiled and communalism caught both the mind and the imagination of the people. Communal antagonism, after it took deep roots, heightened the mutual distrust of the communities and events began to shape the future in terms of a two-nation ideology.

THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

In the post-World War period two major developments.

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11. Resolution moved by Gandhiji at a public meeting held at Bombay on April 14, 1902 with Mr. M.A. Jinnah in the chair.
 12. *Evolution of India & Pakistan* by C.H. Phillips, p. 201.

precipitated the situation in the Punjab : (i) violent reaction to the enactment of the Rowlatt Act (The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1919), taking the form of joint Hindu-Muslim demonstration meetings and *hartals*; (ii) Pan-Islamic movement. The defeat of Turkey at the hands of the British sealed the fate of the Turkish Sultan who was also the *Khalifa* of the Islamic world and thus the symbol of Muslim unity. Comprehending the wide implications of the issue, Gandhiji, without a moment's loss, snatched the opportunity, for in his opinion it offered the best way to cultivate good relationship between the the Hindus and the Muslims. He wrote, "Khilafat question will not recur for another hundred years. If the Hindus wish to cultivate eternal friendship with Mussalmans, they must perish in the attempt to vindicate the honour of Islam".¹³ In response to Gandhiji's call, 17th October was widely observed as the Khilafat Day. It not only demonstrated the unpopularity of the British policy towards Turkey but also signified the Hindu urge for identification with the Muslims. As the movement was inspired by Muslim religious sentiments, the Hindus in the beginning could not go beyond a verbal expression of sympathy with the cause. But among the people of rural areas, the word Khilafat assumed a deeper meaning.¹⁴ They wholeheartedly participated in it to oppose the Government. For creating a revolutionary atmosphere in the Punjab credit must also be given to local newspapers, such as the *Zamindar* published in Lahore and the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* published in Delhi. The

13. Young India, 1919-22, p. 408.

14. Jawahar Lal Nehru, *Autobiography*, p. 69.

Khilafat movement brought into the fold of national activity the *ulema* or the conservative scholarship of the Muslim community. Thereby, it helped in strengthening and intensifying the Muslim role in the national movement.

Gandhiji was thinking of launching a non-cooperation movement as a mode of struggle against the Government. It took Gandhiji about three months to bring round the vacillating Muslim leaders who were sceptical of the efficiency of Gandhiji's method of political struggle. On 22nd June, 1920, eighty-two Muslim leaders urged the Viceroy to modify the Turkish peace terms. Failing this they declared that they would make a common cause with the rest of the people of India. On 1st August, 1920 Gandhiji inaugurated the Non-Cooperation movement and appealed to the people to surrender titles, honorary posts and observe *hartal* as the attitude of the Government towards the Khilafat and Punjab atrocities had made it impossible to cooperate with it. At a special session of the Indian National Congress called under the presidency of Lala Lajpat Rai on 4th September 1920, an appeal was made to public servants to dissociate themselves from the administration and Government educational institutions and to boycott councils and foreign textiles. While moving the above resolution Gandhiji said, "The Mussalmans of India cannot remain honourable men and followers of the faith of their Prophet if they do not vindicate its honour at any cost. The Punjab has been cruelly and barbarously treated . . . And it is in order to remove these two wrongs . . . that I have ventured to place before this country a scheme of non-cooperation".

The Resolution was passed despite the opposition of C. R. Dass, B. C. Pal, Annie Besant, M. A. Jinnah and Madan Mohan Malviya. The only eminent leader, besides the Ali Brothers, who supported Gandhiji was Moti Lal Nehru. At its Annual Session in December 1920 at Nagpur the decision of non-cooperation was ratified with the declaration, "Swaraj by all peaceful and legitimate means" instead of constitutional means. The refashioning of the structure of the Indian National Congress and the crop failure which affected both the peasants and the workers, helped the movement to assume a mass character. The Akali movement brought the Sikh masses into the fold of the freedom movement. Boycott of councils, courts, schools, and foreign cloth, and above all boycott of the Prince of Wales' visit to India in December, 1921 on the one hand, and Hindu-Muslim unity on the other, unnerved the whole administrative machinery and an era of repression reopened commencing with the arrest of leaders. Twenty-five thousand persons were put behind the bars. By the end of 1921, the activities of the Akalis in the Punjab, the Moplah revolt on the Malabar coast, the peasant movement in U.P. and the recurrent strikes by the working class combined with the Non-Cooperation campaign to threaten the very existence of the British Empire in India. But the ghastly tragedy at Chauri Chaura where 22 policemen were burnt alive in a Thana, changed the whole situation. Gandhiji felt so shocked that he withdrew the movement in February, 1922 to avoid further violence. The sudden withdrawal of the campaign unleashed a wave of anger and resentment among the people.

No doubt, the Non-Cooperation movement failed, but there is no denying the fact that it converted the nationalist movement into a revolutionary one¹⁵ and, further, gave it a mass character. Moreover, the movement by accepting and emphasizing the need of a constructive programme initiated a process of national regeneration which henceforward became part and parcel of the freedom movement. By exposing the weaknesses of the Government, it inculcated a new sense of self-respect and fearlessness amongst the people.

But at the same time the abrupt cessation of the movement left the people aghast. In his growing awareness of the inherent weaknesses of the Indian society, Gandhiji after his release in 1924 devoted himself completely to the constructive programme. Such of the Congress leaders as Moti Lal Nehru and C. R. Das who did not agree with Gandhiji, formed the Swarajist or Council Entry Party to fight elections to get into the legislatures. The Hindu-Muslim unity effected in the beginning of the movement proved short-lived and broke down under the weight of new strain, leading to violent communal riots. In the Punjab both revolutionary and communal activities got intensified. In short, the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement set into motion divergent and after mutually conflicting trends which formed the predominant features of India's political life during the twenties.

CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE

As suggested earlier, after the suspension of the Non-

15. Coupland, *India : A Restatement*, p. 119.

Cooperation movement, Gandhiji decided to follow the programme of constructive work. But this was neither militant nor lively enough to satisfy those who wanted positive political action. In their search for an alternative, they hit upon the policy of resistance from within as followed by Ireland under the leadership of Charles Stewart Parnell. Council entry was recommended by Moti Lal Nehru and C.R. Das, two prominent leaders of the Congress. No-changers among the Congress led by M. A. Ansari and Rajagopalachari managed to carry through a resolution at the Gaya Session of the Indian National Congress in 1922, saying . . . "it is necessary again for the people of India to withhold participation in the elections of the next year as an essential programme of non-violent non-cooperation".¹⁶ In disapproval of this resolution, C.R. Das resigned the Congress Presidentship and announced the formation of a Swaraj Party. Thanks to the efforts of Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad during 1923-24, a second Surat was averted. In November, 1924 an agreement was reached and the Swarajists were permitted to contest elections on behalf of the Congress with the condition that the Swarajists on their entry would not cooperate with the Government and instead offer "uniform, continuous and consistent" obstruction in the procedure of legislation in the councils.¹⁷ The positive programme of the Swarajists was to secure legitimate demands of the country accepted within reasonable time.

16. See Report of the Thirty Seventh National Congress, Gaya (1922), p. 77.

17. *Congress Ideology and Programme*, 1920-47, p. 261.

Assailed both by the liberals and the Gandhites, the Swarajists during their tenure in councils tried to come up to the latter's estimation. In the first two years, the Swarajists secured many triumphs. They successfully obstructed the working of the Dyarchy. But soon a growing section from within the Swarajists began to extend responsive cooperation to the Government, a clear-cut violation of the spirit of non-cooperation. Attempts to effect a conciliation with the dissidents failed. The Swarajists, though weakened, continued to drill "walk out and walk in" till 1929 when the Indian National Congress asked them to abstain from the councils for more active participation in the freedom struggle.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

When the Swarajists were engaged on their *parnellite* tactics, Gandhiji was assiduously working to rejuvenate the spirit of India. Being acutely aware of the fact that political freedom without social and economic freedom had no significance. Gandhiji launched a programme of constructive work. For centuries a large section of the Indian society, the so-called untouchables, was subjected to social injustice and social disability. Deprived of the right of social equality, political freedom had no significance to them. In 1927, at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, Gandhiji urged "upon the people of India the necessity, justice and righteousness of removing all disabilities imposed by custom upon the depressed classes . . ." On 12th February, 1922 the Working Committee of the Congress, at its meeting at Bardoli, declared removal of untouchability to be an integral part of the Congress programme.

Another salient feature of the constructive work was the attempt to change the economic creed of the Congress. Resonance of the spinning wheel is most articulate in this period. To safeguard the wealth of India and to supplement the resources of millions of peasants and poor people, and above all, to give a jolt to the British textile industry, Gandhiji launched a massive campaign of weaving and wearing *Khadi*. At the Gaya Session 1922, the Congress constituted a committee to assist the All-India Trade Union Congress, set up some time earlier, to organize the factory labourers. The Communist Party of India, though still in the embryonic stage, rendered valuable help in the organization of the labour class. From 1920 onwards Lala Lajpat Rai and many other leaders played a prominent role in this work. But their efforts in this field were not comparable to their efforts in the field of peasant organizations.

AKALI MOVEMENT

Freedom movement in the Punjab during the period following 1920 presents a unique picture of people's participation. The basic driving force behind all movements of the period was the awakened middle class. As a result of their spirit of supreme sacrifice, the Ghadriles had created a great stir in the country. The Gandhian method of non-violence was another great influence which had effect on Punjabi intellectuals. Influenced by these and some other factors, the new leadership of the Sikh community could not abstain from political activity. The idea of liberating India from the colonial yoke of the British brought all sections of the people into the fold of the movement.

The broad based people's movement, originating by and large in the war-period, 1914-18, reached a high water mark in the Punjab during the first half of the twenties with the appearance of the Akali movement. Though apparently the Akali movement assumed a religious form with a religious end to achieve, in reality it was a revolt of the community against the temple-holders, known as Mahants and their supporters, the British. Belonging to the *Udasi* sect of the Sikhs, these Mahants had gradually grown into wealthy feudal-type landlords. They deprived the poor peasantry of their rights. The Mahants misappropriated the Community's income from the gurdwaras and their endowments and flouted the traditions and customs of the Sikhs.

With a view to bringing their holy temples under the control of the community, the Sikhs convened a conference at Amritsar in July, 1920. The conference instituted a small committee for the purpose. The Akalis were supposed to take the oath that they would not resort to violence. They were so much under the spell of Gandhiji that in October, 1920 the Sikh league, premier organization of the Sikhs at that time, gave its full approval to Gandhiji's campaign of non-cooperation against the Government.

A mandate was issued from the Akal Takhat summoning an assembly of the Sikhs to meet on 15 November, 1920 to elect a representative body of the *Panth*, to govern and control the Golden Temple and other shrines. But meanwhile the Government of the Punjab, with the assistance of the Maharaja of Patiala, had constituted a committee with the motive of foiling the attempt of the Sikhs.

Despite the alliance of the Mahants, the Government and the hired detachments to prevent the Akalis from convening their meeting, the Akalis were successful in organizing the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee to take up the administration of their gurdwaras.

The conflict between the Akalis and the Government ensued in January, 1921 in Tarn Taran. It was provoked by the Mahants. Two Akalis fell victims to the priestly violence. Events of this kind were repeated on a wider scale at Nankana Sahib, the birth-place of Guru Nanak. On 20th February, 1920, Bhai Lachhman Singh led a *jatha* to put an end to the scandalous state of affairs prevailing under the management of Mahant Narain Das at the Nankana Sahib Gurdwara. Armed Pathans and desperadoes hired by the Mahant fell upon the peaceful *jatha* and killed about 200 Sikhs. The whole Indian nation was shocked by this most outrageous massacre. A large number of the wounded were also burnt alive. In the face of this inhuman treatment by the hirelings of the Mahant, the Akalis showed a tremendous spirit of non-violence. Appreciating their non-violent struggle, Mahatma Gandhi issued an appeal saying : "The work is not solely of the Sikhs, everybody should share it".

The tragedy of Nankana Sahib was still fresh in the minds of the people when the Government resorted to repressive measures to suppress the movement of the Akalis. But it did not succeed in this and soon began to send feelers to the temple committee for a compromise.

On 7th November, 1921, the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar took away the keys of the Golden Temple. Presumably, the motive of the Government was to hinder

the transfer of control over the management of gurdwaras to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. This tended to provoke another agitation. But before the situation took a very ugly turn, the Governor of the Punjab yielded. He returned the keys to the S.G.P.C. and ordered the release of the Akali prisoners. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi : "First decisive battle for India's freedom won : Congratulations".

Hardly a few months had elapsed when a fresh clash occurred between the Akalis and the Mahants at Guru Ka Bagh, a temple situated about ten miles north of Amritsar. On the complaint of Mahant Sunder Das that under the agreement with the S.G.P.C. only the gurdwara was surrendered and not the adjoining land from where the Sikhs were cutting wood for their community kitchen, when the police arrested a few Sikhs for this offence, the Akalis launched a *morcha* which continued for twenty days. Every day a *jatha* of Akalis went to the disputed spot and was mercilessly beaten by the police. In August the police shot down a number of Sikhs. The Working Committee of the Congress, while condemning the ruthless policy of the police, appointed a commission to investigate the events of Guru Ka Bagh. Calm and cool courage and marvellous self-restraint displayed by the Akalis fetched them hearty felicitations of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress.

The struggle still continued. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha who was a sympathiser of the Akalis, observed the Martyrs Day to honour all those who had laid down their lives at Nankana Sahib. This noble, though indiscreet, act of the Maharaja was resented by the

British Government. On the pretext that he was not having good relations with the Patiala State, he was forced to abdicate. This compelled the Sikhs once more to launch an agitation which is commonly called *Jaito Da Morcha*. They led *jathas* which were subjected to all kinds of torture. The atrocities perpetrated by the police aroused the sympathy of the people at large for the Akalis. The Indian National Congress deputed Jawahar Lal Nehru, Principal N. K. Gidnain and K. Santhanam to make an on-the-spot study of the situation. They were also arrested like the Akalis. While the *Jaito Morcha* was still going on, another clash took place at Bhai Pheru in the District of Lahore.

One of the most striking features of the Gurdwara Reform movement was that it was carried on in the true spirit of non-violence. It confirmed Gandhiji's saying that non-violence is a weapon of the brave only. The movement, however, began to fade in 1923. Internal differences of the Akali leadership created a rift in their ranks. The more radical section of the Akalis did not approve of the non-violent method of struggle and formed a separate organisation to meet the British challenge.

BABAR AKALI MOVEMENT

Those who did not subscribe to the cult of non-violence held a separate meeting at Hoshiarpur in March, 1921 and decided to raise an open armed revolt against the Government and to physically punish the toadies. Kishan Singh, a dismissed Havaladar Major, organised a band of people called *Chakravarti Jatha*, a mobile propaganda organ. Besides terrorising the oppressive government

servants, their object was to communicate their message of revolt to the people as well as the army. Their field of operations, to begin with, was confined to the Districts of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur. They called their press organ by the name of the Babar Akali Doaba.

Betrayed by his own relations, Kishan Singh was arrested on 26th February, 1923. Enraged at this treachery, the Babars committed a series of political murders. They created tremendous awe among the government servants and stooges of the entire Doaba Bist Jullundur. To deal effectively with the situation, the police rounded up many people, but the majority of them were innocent. To save the innocent people from being penalized, the Babars announced the names of their comrades who had committed the murders. Out of the 186 Babar prisoners, five were sentenced to death, eleven to transportation for life, and thirty-eight to various terms of imprisonment.

Displaying deeds of rare heroism, the Babars won wide sympathy and admiration of the people. They inculcated the spirit of supreme sacrifice for the nation in the people. The movement, though short-lived, formed part of the background against which a new revolutionary movement was organized by Bhagat Singh and his friends a few years later in the Punjab.

KIRTI KISAN PARTY

During 1920's we witness the beginning of the socialist movement in India. The Punjab did not lag behind other parts of the country in having a party of this kind. Strenuous efforts of Bhai Santokh Singh and Abdul Majid fructified in the formation of the Kirti Kisan Party in

1927 on the lines of Workers and Peasants Parties in Bengal and Bombay. *The Kirti*, a newspaper, was its official organ for the propagation of its ideas. In the beginning it worked for the reduction of rents, abolition of *nazaranas*, etc. Its collaboration with the Nau Jawan Sabha, a revolutionary party and its growing influence over the rural population particularly of the Lahore and Amritsar Districts, created serious apprehensions in the minds of government officials. In curbing the activities of the party, the authorities were greatly assisted by the Unionist party of the Punjab. To meet the challenge of the Government the leaders of the Kirti Kisan Party changed their label and joined the Communist Party.

REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY

The withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement provoked the youth of the Punjab and persons like Bhagat Singh plunged into the arena to follow the example of Bengali revolutionaries.

In March, 1926 Bhagat Singh organized the Nau Jawan Sabha with the object of inspiring the Punjabi youth for revolutionary activity to liberate India from foreign yoke. With the assistance of Kedar Nath Sehgal, Sardul Singh, Anand Kishore Mehta, Pindi Das Sodhi and Ram Chandra, the Nau Jawan Sabha soon became a force to reckon with. It gained great publicity by inviting eminent political leaders to its meetings. Dr. Bhupendra Nath Dutt, a Bengali revolutionary, Phillips Spratt, a member of the British Communist Party, and Jawahar Lal Nehru, a leftwing Congressman, spoke from its platform.

In 1928 the Nau Jawan Sabha assumed a new character. It set up branches in various districts and in association with the Kirti Kisan Party, worked hard to spread its net of activities. A 'Tract Society' was established whose primary function was to publish radical literature. Among its important publications may be mentioned *The Wealth of Nations* by Hardyal and *Bharat Mata ka Darshan* by Chabil Das etc. This literature was mostly circulated among the students at Lahore, a major educational centre of the Punjab. The Sabha also organized, on a very big scale, a procession under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai to register its protest against the all-white Simon Commission. While heading the procession Lala Lajpat Rai received fatal blows of police lathis and succumbed to the injuries on 17th November, 1928. Greatly enraged at this tragedy, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Yash Pal and Chandra Shekhar Azad, within a month of the Lala's death, killed Mr. Saunders, a high police official of the Province.

Immediately after this incident the Punjab revolutionaries went underground and organized an all-India revolutionary party under the name of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. After learning the art of bomb-making from Jatendra Nath Das of Bengal, they opened bomb factories at Agra and Lahore. They were the Agra-made bombs which were thrown into the Central Assembly Hall by Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt with a view to terrorizing the British administration in India. Discovery of the bomb factory at Lahore and confessions of Jai Gopal and Hans Raj Vohra led to what is known as the Lahore Conspiracy Case of 1929. After the

mockery of a trial, three heroes of the Nau Jawan Sabha, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru, were sentenced to death in October, 1930.

Despite nationwide appeals to the Viceroy and to the Privy Council to commute the death sentences of Bhagat Singh and his companions into transportations for life, the British Government remained unmoved. Inspired by the supreme sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Hari Kishan, a lad of nineteen, opened fire at Sir Geoffray, Governor of Punjab, in 1930. He was immediately arrested and sentenced to death. The last wish he expressed before he was hanged, was to see Bhagat Singh and he forced the Government to comply with his wish by undergoing a fast unto death. The gallantry of Bhagat Singh made such a deep impact upon the minds of the youth that he became a legend even before his execution.

Sohan Singh Josh, Kidar Nath Sehgal and Abdul Majid, who were also among the collaborators of Bhagat Singh, were implicated in the Meerut Conspiracy Case of 1929. Such ruthless acts of the officialdom had their desired effect and the revolutionary movement gradually petered out but certainly not without leaving behind an indelible mark on the people of the country.

OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

The period is also noted for a great spurt in communalism. The Muslim League, after a lapse of four years' inactivity, re-entered the political arena of India in 1924. By now the All India Khilafat Committee had become *functus officio*, as Kamal Pasha after deposing the Sultan and abolishing the Caliphate had declared Turkey a secular

state. The Hindu Mahasabha, too, had undergone a transformation. Originally an organisation for social reforms, it had gradually drifted into politics to safeguard the rights of the Hindus as against the Muslims and to combat the tendencies of Hindu leaders to appease the Muslims. Madan Mohan Malviya, the founder of the Banaras Hindu University, was its ablest leader.

The communal politics of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha resulted in mounting communal tension between the Hindus and the Muslims. Lingeringsuspensions in the minds of Muslims and Hindus after the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement were intensified by the question of communal representation in legislatures and services. To meet the Muslim challenge successfully and to safeguard Hindu rights, privileges and interests the Arya Samaj conducted a vigorous campaign of *shudhi* and *sangathan*. On the other hand, the Muslims emphasized *Tanzim* and *Tabligh*. The communal tension thus created led to serious communal riots. The worst tragedy of this communal drama was enacted at Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province.

On the other hand, M. N. Roy and his associates, trained at Tashkent, had worked hard to establish a communist party of India. Phillips Spratt had organized a workers and peasants party in Uttar Pradesh. Within a short time it had its branches spread all over North India. Its connection with the revolutionaries and other militant elements and its implication in the Meerut Conspiracy Case, 1929, invited the wrath of the Government and communist activities in India suffered a temporary setback.

TOWARDS PURANA SWARAJ

A statutory provision of the Government of India Act, 1919 was that a royal commission would be set up after ten years to enquire into the working of the reforms and to determine the extent and nature of further action, if necessary. Apprehending that the new House of Commons emerging from the elections due in 1929, might have a labour majority, the Conservative Government instituted an enquiry commission of seven members with Sir John Simon as its Chairman. This all-white Commission was boycotted in India by all the political parties right from 3rd February, 1928, the day it landed in India. Wherever the Commission went it was received with black flag demonstrations. At Lahore, in one of these demonstrations, as pointed out earlier, Lala Lajpat Rai fell a victim to police atrocities.

The Simon Commission, though universally rejected, indirectly induced the Indian leaders to draft a constitution of their own reflecting a fair measure of agreement among the various Indian political parties. The first conference in this connection was held on 12th February, 1928 at Delhi under the Chairmanship of Dr. M. A. Ansari. It was followed by an all Political Parties Conference in August, 1928. But the experiment of drafting a constitution ended in fiasco mainly due to Jinnah's opposition at the Calcutta Convention. Despite its failure to secure the support of the political parties for the Nehru Report, as the draft constitution was called, the Indian National Congress appealed to the British Government to accept it and transfer political power to India on its basis. But nothing concrete came out of it.

The next step was the declaration of *Purana Swaraj*, i.e., complete independence as the final political goal of India at the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress, 1929. Finding the Government adamant in its resistance to their political aspirations the Congress launched the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930. The movement commenced with the famous Dandi March of Gandhiji, which captivated the attention of the whole of India. This time also, there broke out sporadic cases of violence but now Gandhiji was determined and he allowed nothing of the sort to affect the continuity of his struggle. A mention here may be made of the gruesome incident in Peshawar. On 31st May, 1930 during the Civil Disobedience movement, Ganga Singh Kamboj, an employee of the Military Dairy, was shot at while travelling in a tonga with his family, by a British Lance Corporal. His two children Harpal Kaur, 9½ years, and Bachitar Singh, 16 years, died on the spot, whereas his wife was seriously injured. Dead bodies of the children were taken out in a procession which was fired at without any prior warning. In 17 rounds which were fired nine men were killed and eighteen wounded as per government record.

Meanwhile, the First Round Table Conference was convened to discuss the recommendations of the Simon Commission. There being no enthusiasm about these recommendations, only a few parties and a few individuals, such as T. B. Sapru, M. A. Jinnah and Mohammad Ali, attended the Conference. Two significant developments took place during the course of the Conference: one, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar demanded separate representation for the depressed communities; and second, the

Muslim leaders unequivocally expressed their desire to get a major share in political power in the provinces where they had majority and reservation of rights where they were in minority.

After the First Round Table Conference, the British Prime Minister invited the Congress to revise its policy. Much against the wishes of some members of the Congress Working Committee, Gandhiji decided to have a meeting with the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. The interview which lasted for about a fortnight, resulted in the conclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5th March, 1931. The sum and substance of the Pact was the suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement and the Congress agreement to participate in the Second Round Table Conference.

While Gandhiji was preparing for the Round Table Conference, the whole country was in political turmoil. In the North-West Frontier Province the Red Shirts under Abdul Gaffar Khan were resolutely engaged on picketing Government institutions. In U.P., Jawahar Lal Nehru was running a no-rent campaign of the peasants. In Bengal the activities of the terrorists were in full swing.

The Second Round Table Conference in which the Congress participated proved a failure and Gandhiji returned empty-handed. Communal harmony in the country suffered a new set-back as the depressed classes now started behaving like other minorities in the assertion of their separatist claims. Gandhiji repented for having participated in the Round Table Conference before securing the confidence of minorities.

On 17th August, 1932 the Viceroy threw a bombshell in the form of the Communal Award which fixed

representation on percentage basis for each minority including the depressed classes. Thinking that such a step would tend to divide the society further, Gandhiji, on 13th September, 1932, went on fast unto death till the depressed classes decided to return to the Hindu fold. Realizing the gravity of the situation, both Hindus and Harijans concluded the Poona Pact under which the Harijans were granted a mode of special protection within the fold of the Hindu community. Consequently, the Harijans agreed to withdraw their demand for separate political representation and in the light of this Communal Award had to be and was modified by the Government.

TOWARDS NEW CONSTITUTION

After the third and last session of the Round Table Conference held on 17th November, 1932, the British Government published a White Paper on the basis of which a bill was framed and introduced in Parliament on 19th December, 1934. It became an Act on 2nd August, 1935. The new constitution envisaged an all-India federation having a Federal Court and a Federal Public Service Commission. The dyarchy in the provinces was replaced by provincial autonomy. At the Centre, however, a sort of dyarchy was introduced, because it was felt that the country was not yet ready for the transfer of full responsibility. The federal scheme of the Act was stoutly opposed by all political parties of India, as it suffered from several serious defects. The provincial scheme was, however, much better and when it was inaugurated in 1937, the various parties agreed to give a fair trial to it.

Communal relations during the thirties as well remained tense and riots were frequent and widespread. In Karachi over the murder of a Hindu and at Lahore over the disputed site of the Shahidganj Gurdwara serious riots took place. Riots also occurred in U. P. and Bombay. It was under such circumstances that the elections of 1937 were fought and conducted. Results of the elections were most satisfactory to the Congress, though it was seriously mauled in the Punjab and Sindh. The Muslim League, however, fared very badly, which created the feeling in many quarters that it was not the sole representative body of the Muslims.

Growth of political consciousness also influenced the people living in the Princely States. A few of the Princes were, no doubt, enlightened rulers, but, by and large, they were relics of the medieval age. Economically backward and politically retarded, the people of these states were denied even those rights which the British had long granted to their subjects. Inspired by the political movements of the British India, the people of the Princely States launched struggles to abolish feudalism and to achieve their democratic rights. With the help of the Indian National Congress, the local leaders of the states established an organisation of their own, known as the Praja Mandal.

One of the most important causes which resulted in the rise of the Praja Mandal movement was the mutually protective alliance between the British India Government and the Princes. With the rising tide of nationalism, the foreign rulers began to bank more and more upon the support of Indian rulers. The political upheaval of the early twenties in the Punjab had brought the people of the

Princely States and the British empire closer to one another. The progressive wing of the Akali Dal began to interfere in the internal matters of the Princely States of the Punjab—Patiala, Jind, Nabha, Kapurthala, Faridkot, Malerkotla, Kalsia and Nalagarh. The arrest of some prominent and popular leaders by the Patiala State greatly agitated the minds of the people who on 7th July, 1928 convened a meeting at Mansa. The deliberations of the Conference led to the birth of the Punjab Riyasti Praja Mandal, the first political organization in the Punjab States.

On 10th August, 1928, at a meeting held in the office of the Akali Dal, Amritsar, the Punjab Riyasti Praja Mandal decided to extend its activities to some other neighbouring States, such as Loharu, Pataudi, Nahan, Bilaspur, Mandi, Saket, Chamba, Bhawalpur and Kashmir. Its primary objectives were (i) curtailment of royal purses and privileges; (ii) establishment of popular legislatures; (iii) establishment of independent judiciary; and (iv) securing of other rights for the people.

The Praja Mandal movement assumed still wider dimensions with the help of the Indian National Congress working outside the Princely states. The Princes used all sorts of methods to liquidate the Praja Mandals. Midnight raids were made on village after village. The participants were rendered homeless and their property was confiscated. Ordinance was issued in 1938 B. U. in the Phulkian States prohibiting assembly of four or more persons. Sewa Singh Thikriwala, President of the Punjab Riyasti Mandal, was arrested and sentenced to eight years of imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 5,000. As a protest against ill-treatment, he went on hunger strike in the jail

and died on 20th January, 1935.

Seven years later when Mahatma Gandhi called upon the British to quit India in 1942, the Praja Mandal vigorously supported the national movement. In the Act of 1935 the Princes were given the option to join the all-India federation or to stay away. The people of the States in the Punjab expressed their readiness to merge with India in order to end the aristocratic and autocratic rule of the Princes. The agitation of 1946 in the Faridkot State conducted under the able leadership of Giani Zail Singh and Mr. Brish Bhan was directed against the arbitrary rule of the Raja of Faridkot.

IV

(1937—1947)

From 1937 onwards the triangular political contest acquired a new edge. The Congress struggled for independence, the Muslim League for a well-secured and effective position for the Muslims, and the British exploited the mutual differences of the two to delay the transfer of power to Indians.

The Victory of the Congress and the relative discomfiture of the Muslim League in the elections of 1937 posed a new serious problem. The Congress was returned in majority and formed governments in most of the provinces. The Muslim League, convinced of its poor showing was desirous of entering into coalitions with the Congress, particularly in U.P. The Congress took a stiff attitude on the issue and expressed its willingness for coalition only on the condition that the nominees of the League would resign the League membership and sign the Congress

pledge before entering the governments and further, would not be the only representatives of the Muslim community. This was too much for the Muslim League which now turned against the Congress and started a campaign of virulent propaganda against it. The two-nation theory was now brought forth which claimed the Muslims to be a separate nation entitled to a separate state. In 1940 the resolution was passed by which the Muslim League demanded Pakistan, a Muslim state to be carved out of the predominantly Muslim areas of the country.

In 1939 started the Second World War. Since Great Britain was involved in the war, India being her dependency was also declared to be a belligerent country. The Congress protested against this Act of the Government on the ground that in this matter the people of India had not been consulted. Soon after, all the Congress ministries resigned and Mahatma Gandhi was authorised to launch individual *satyagraha* against the Government. The aim of this *satyagraha* was not to attain *Swaraj* but only to attempt to counteract the war propaganda of the Government.

The individual *satyagraha* did not prove effective on account of its limited character. It was only when the Japanese were pressing hard on the British in South-East Asia that the Government began to make overtures to get Indian support to their war efforts. In March, 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps, a socialist and a friend of Jawahar Lal Nehru, was sent to India with authority to offer independence as soon as hostilities ceased. The restatement by Cripps of the British policy towards India that it was

their duty to protect the minorities displeased the Congress leaders who outright rejected the proposals brought by him. Very appositely, the Congress described his proposals as a post-dated cheque on a failing bank.

The atmosphere of frustration which prevailed in the country and the growing Japanese pressure towards India convinced Mahatma Gandhi of the necessity to launch what came to be termed the Quit India campaign. This movement was started in 1942. Gandhiji's call had deep effect upon the Indians. The Government took a very serious view of it and tried to stop it even before it was started. The Indian National Congress was declared an illegal institution. The leaders and other important participants were arrested en masse and no force was spared to put down the agitation quickly. In six months the movement began to subside, as it could not continue without competent leadership. It got a further setback when the Communists, with Russia joining hands with Britain in the war, changed sides to support the British Government in India. With the Congress going into the wilderness, the situation took a favourable turn for the Muslim League which used the opportunity full well to consolidate its position in the country.

A brief mention may also be made of certain efforts originating outside of India and aiming at the freedom of the country. The chief sponsoring organization of these efforts was the Indian National Army, commonly known as INA, operating under the able leadership of General Mohan Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose. Subhash or Netaji as he was called by his followers, was a conscientious objector to the Gandhian technique of *satyagraha*

and non-violence. He was a believer in militancy and planned to raise the banner of an armed revolt in India and abroad. After his dramatic escape from India, he first proceeded to Berlin and from there went to Saigon and Rangoon. As the Japanese installed a puppet government in Burma, Netaji established the Government of Free India in the Andaman-Nicobar Islands. With the help of some eminent Punjabi army officers he formed the Indian National Army consisting of Indians who were residents of South-East Asia, or who had been taken prisoners of war by the Japanese. The recruits of the newly founded army displayed a great sense of patriotism and sacrifice and fought many battles in the country's cause. This was despite the fact that they were short of provisions and equipment. Majority of them were drawn from the Punjab. The INA was disbanded after the war.

By the close of the year 1944, victory was clearly within the sight of the British. As the situation eased, the Congress leaders were released. But by now the Muslim League had grown so much in size and stature that it began to demand treatment of equality with the Congress. Thus the whole struggle for freedom degenerated into a conflict for power between these two major political parties.

After the war in 1945 the Labour Party came into power in England. The new Government ordered general elections in India. The results of the elections indicated marked communal divisions among the Indian electorate. The Muslim League fared much better this time, because majority of the Muslim voters had voted for the League. In the Punjab, it secured 79 seats out of the total of 175

seats. No other single party marshalled so many seats. The Congress, the Sikhs and the Unionist Party all had to combine to prevent the Muslim League from coming to power. In Bengal and Sindh, the position of the League was even stronger. The position of the Congress was weaker than in the year 1937 but even so, it commanded majorities in most of the provinces and was in a position to form ministries there.

Meanwhile, another mission consisting of three cabinet members, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. Alexander, was sent to India to explore the possibility of a political settlement among the various parties of India. The Cabinet Mission, as it was called, held discussions with prominent Indian leaders and then offered a scheme of their own which ingeniously sought to reconcile the various conflicting interests. The scheme held out the prospect of maintaining the unity of India while at the same time it largely met the view point of the League. But unfortunately, it was shipwrecked on the rock of the great mutual mistrust that subsisted between the Congress and the League. Undismayed by the fate of the Cabinet Mission, the Labour Government of England decided to set up an Interim Government consisting of representatives of both the major political parties. On the insistence of the Congress for having a nationalist Muslim in the cabinet, the League refused to join the Interim Government. Thereupon, the Congress alone was asked to form the government, which it did. After a few months, the Muslim League also came in and joined the government if only to exploit the position from within. But even with this, the gulf between the two parties was not abridged.

To force issues, the League now decided on a policy of 'Direct Action'. The first Direct Action Day was observed on 6th August, 1946. The celebrations unleashed a chain of violence and communal riots. It was now clear that the division of India was inevitable and nobody could prevent it.

Lord Mountbatten was specially sent to India to work out, in consultation with Indian leaders, a scheme by which the partition of India could be carried out peacefully. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had long been advocating the two nation theory and there was no real difficulty with him. The Congress was reluctant, but that, too, was persuaded by the new Viceroy to agree to the partition of the country. The Sikhs were on the horns of a dilemma. They were deadly opposed to the creation of Pakistan. Their demand for a separate Khalsa state was not practicable and could not be accepted. At last, on the assurance of the Congress that they would be given a special treatment in India, they decided to throw in their lot with the Congress. On 2nd June, 1947, a plan for the division of India was announced, and after its acceptance by the Congress and the Muslim League, 15th August, 1947 was fixed as the deadline by which power was to be transferred. During this period of preparation, a one-man commission consisting of Sir Cyril Redcliffe was appointed to divide property and armed forces and to demarcate boundaries of the new states, India and Pakistan. This stupendous work was done in record time.

At last, the long and historic struggle for independence came to its fruitful end on 15 August, 1947. This glorious day was, however, marred by tragic events of communal

riots, violence and arson. The relations between the Muslims on the one hand and the Hindus and Sikhs on the other were at razor's edge. Finding themselves insecure in the lands of their forefathers, the Hindus and the Sikhs of Pakistan migrated to India. Similarly, the Muslims who felt insecure in India migrated to Pakistan. In the course of these migrations, lakhs of precious human lives perished. Those who were lucky to complete thier journeys, had to face, on both sides of the international border, untold privation and misery. It appeared as if the last rites of independence were being performed with the blood of the seekers of independence. No part of India suffered so much as the Punjab did. Also, perhaps, no part of the country could have stood it so well and so successfully. The refugees from West Pakistan have since done so well that there is hardly anything about them which could suggest that only twenty-five years ago they were uprooted from their ancestral homes and were placed in a state of utter uncertainty.

In retrospect, the study of the freedom struggle in the Punjab leaves no student of history in doubt that the Punjab played a leading role in India's fight for freedom from the British yoke. In fact, the Punjab was second to none in its passionate urge and efforts for independence. That her people were more inclined towards revolutionary and violent methodology than towards the non-violent principle of Mahatma Gandhi need not detract from the glory of their achievement, for the daring souls who preferred violence over non-violence did not hesitate to stake their all for the sake of their motherland. But the role of those Punjabi freedom fighters who

adopted peaceful and non-violent methods, is no less glorious. The performance of the heroes of the different *morchas* of the Akali movement, for instance, has few parallels in the entire range of our freedom movement in respect of its heroic character.



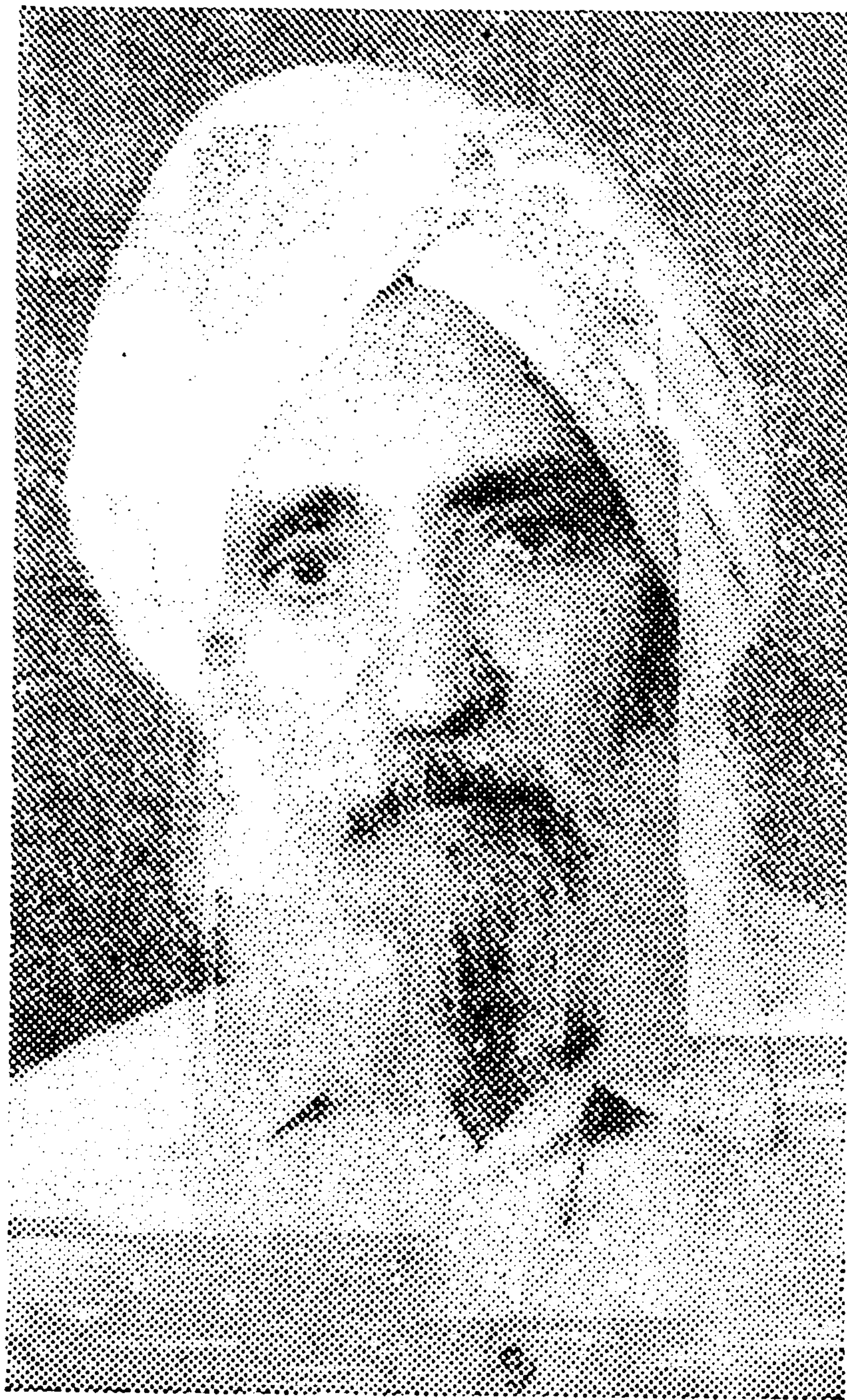
ACHHAR SINGH CHHINA

He was born in October, 1899 at village Chhina. Tehsil Ajnala, District Amritsar. He passed Matriculation in 1917 from Khalsa College, Amritsar.

In 1921 he went to the United States of America along with Partap Singh Kairon. In 1922 he joined the California University at Berkeley and studied there for about a year. The same year he joined the Ghadar Party in San Francisco and got his first lesson in national politics. A year later he joined the Ford Factory Training School in Detroit.

In 1932 he left America and went to the Soviet Union for the study of socialism and joined a college in Moscow. From there he returned to India after four years in 1936. But on his return he was not allowed to live in peace. The same year he was arrested at Lahore and was detained in Lahore Fort for two months. In 1937 he was interned in his village for the whole year. In March, 1938 a Congress meeting was attacked by anti-Congress men at Fatehwal village in District Amritsar. Being involved in the case he had to go underground to escape the clutches of the police.

During his underground stay in Calcutta, he was introduced to Subash Chandra Bose by Niranjan Singh Talib, a well-known freedom-fighter. Bose expressed his desire to go to the Soviet Union. For this purpose Achhar Singh visited the Frontier Province to make arrangements



for his escape to Russia. There he met Bhagat Ram Talwar who helped him to make arrangements for the stay of Subash Chandra Bose in Peshawar and from there for his escape to Kabul. After making necessary arrangements he returned to Calcutta to bring Bose to Peshawar, but Bose was arrested for taking part in Black Hole Calcutta movement in 1940 and consequently could not avail himself of the opportunity.

But Achhar Singh himself utilized the opportunity and went to the Soviet Union in 1940 by crossing the Hindu-Kush mountains on foot. In 1941 when the Soviet Union was attacked by German forces, he decided to return and set out on his homeward journey across the Himalayas in the same manner. While crossing the Hindu-Kush he was arrested at Gilgit and was brought back to Lahore where he was locked up in Lahore Fort Cell. After staying for 4 months in Lahore Fort, he was transferred to the Campbellpore Jail from where he was released on 1st May, 1942.

In 1942 he was elected President of the Punjab Kisan Sabha and held this position for seven years. It was in that capacity that he organised the Harsa Chhina Moga Morcha in 1947, as a result of which he was detained in Lahore jail for three months.

In 1948 he went underground but was arrested in 1950 and detained in Ambala jail. While he was in jail, he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1952. In 1957 he was again elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and remained its member till 1962.

AJIT SINGH

Ajit Singh was born at village Khatkar Kalan in District Jullundur (Punjab) but later shifted to village Banga in District Lyallpur of the same province. He was son of Arjan Singh and Jai Kaur and uncle of the famous Punjabi martyr-hero, Bhagat Singh. He belonged to a Jat Sikh family. He received his school education in Sain Dass Anglo-Sanskrit High School, Jullundur and his college education in the D. A. V. College, Lahore. After passing the B.A. examination, he joined the Law College at Bareilly but could not complete the course due to his bad health. Till 1907 he was an obscure figure. The agrarian policy of the Government to raise rates of revenue assessment and irrigation and to pass a Canal Colonies Bill depriving the land-grantees of some of the rights they had been enjoying from the beginning, brought him suddenly to the forefront and he joined Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders mainly hailing from towns in agitation against the Government. During his early years he had imbibed patriotism from his father and the writings and speeches of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Tilak's famous declaration, '*Swaraj* is my birth-right and I shall have it', particularly had profound effect upon his sensitive mind. His subsequent close association with Lala Pindi Das, Lal Chand Falak and Sufi Amba Prasad gave him further inspiration for the national cause. His two brothers, Kishan Singh and Swaran Singh, were his close associates in the revolutionary work. It is said that quite early in life he came in contact with some extremists in Calcutta and some Bengali Babus frequently visited his residence in



Lahore.

He was a fiery speaker and on April 21, 1907, at a meeting at Rawalpindi, he made a violent attack on the Government and exhorted his audience to stop cultivation until the revenue was reduced. Such was the effect of his speech that the mob, in a fit of excitement after the meeting, began to set fire to Government buildings. The Government took a very serious view and deported Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh to Mandalay in Burma. Both of them were released after six months. The patriotic urge in Ajit Singh was not smothered by this act of deportation. Rather, after that he was even more active and began to publish revolutionary literature. He started a paper *Peshwa* with Sufi Amba Prasad as its Editor. When this paper was banned, it was published under other names, such as *Bharat Mata*, *Sahaik*, etc. He also wrote some booklets which were immediately banned by the Government. They were *Baghi Museah*, *Muhibban-i-Watan*, *Bandar Bant*, *Ungli Pakarte Punja Pakara*, *Ghadar 1857*, etc. He also established a revolutionary society called Bharat Mata Society. His association with Syed Hyder Riza was responsible for the foundation of the Indian Patriots Association.

In 1908 he delivered a speech at Lahore congratulating Bepin Chandra Pal on his release. He was given a warning for this speech, but undaunted by it he gave a lecture in Bradlaugh Hall in November, 1908 in which he attacked the British system of education. The Government regarded his activities as dangerous and planned to arrest him, but he fled away to Persia before any harm could be done to

him. There he started a paper in Persian to advocate the cause of India's independence. From Persia he proceeded to Rome where he became a lecturer in a college. From there after some time he went to Geneva and Paris. When the First World War broke out he shifted from Europe to Rio de Janeiro in South America. From there he kept in close touch with the Ghadar Party in San Francisco.

During the Second World War (1939-45) he shifted back to Europe and met Subash Chandra Bose in Italy. He was allowed to return to India only after the end of the war. But unfortunately, now he did not have long time to live. He died on August 15, 1947, the very day India became independent. His memorable dying words were, "Thank God, my mission is fulfilled and I am leaving this world".

In politics, he belonged to the Revolutionary School. In his view, revolution was the only means to achieve independence. He did not approve of the policy of the Congress and used to say "You can't have anything by begging. Organize your strength and snatch (it) off". He held the British Government responsible for the economic decay of the country. The British educational system, to him, was an agency of demoralization and denationalization. In religious outlook he was broad-minded, almost secular.

AMRIT KAUR (Rajkumari)



She was born in the royal Ahluwalia family of Kapurthala on 2nd February, 1889 in Lucknow. She was the only daughter of Raja Sir Harnam Singh who was entrusted with the management of Kapurthala estates in the region of Oudh.

Her father having embraced Christianity, Amrit Kaur inherited her religious faith from him. She got her education in England. After completing her studies at Sherborne School for Girls, Dorsetshire, she joined a college in London. Along with her studies, she took keen interest in sports and became a good player of tennis, winning several championships.

With such a social background as this, Amrit Kaur could have chosen any career of luxury but strangely enough and fortunately for the country she only felt at home among poor and illiterate men and women. She took to social work found much pleasure and peace in it.

She was initiated into national politics by the liberal Congress leader, Gopal Krishan Gokhle, a good friend of her father. After some time she came under the spell of Mahatma Gandhi and became one of his close followers. She served him as his Secretary for 16 long years.

She took active part in the Salt Campaign and was arrested in Bombay. When the Communal Award was announced, she condemned it outright. For her seditious activities she was convicted on 16th July, 1937 and imprisoned. During the Quit India movement 1942,

she led many processions, one of which was subjected to a ruthless *lathi* charge in Simla. On her way back from Simla she was arrested at Kalka.

As a trusted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was a believer in non-violence. She devoted herself specially to the constructive programme of Gandhiji and spent much time for the uplift of women and eradication of social evils such as early marriage, *purdah* system and illiteracy among womenfolk. She was a co-founder of the All-India Women Conference (1927) and was elected its Secretary in 1930. From 1931 to 1933 and again in 1938 she was Chairman of the Conference.

In 1932 she gave evidence to Lord Lothian's Franchise Committee, and in 1933, as a member of the delegation of women's conference, she testified before the joint Select Committee of British Parliament on Indian constitution reforms.

She was the first woman to be appointed member of the Advisory Board of Education of the Government of India. She became member of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and went to London in 1945 as a member of the Indian delegation to UNESCO. The following year she was chosen Deputy Leader of the Indian delegation which attended the UNESCO session held in Paris. She was the leader of Indian delegations to WHO's annual meetings in 1948, 1949, 1951 and 1953. She also served on the Board of Trustees of the All-India Spinners Association. There were numerous other societies with which also she had close connections.

In the first Indian Government formed after freedom in 1947 she was selected as Health Minister, and for ten years, 1947—1957, she continued to be member of Lok Sabha and Health Minister. During her tenure of office she concentrated her energies on improvement of general sanitary conditions in the country and greatly increased the number of welfare centres, hospitals and medical colleges. After 1957 she was elected member of the Raj Sabha for several years. She died on 6th February, 1964.

ARJAN SINGH GARGAJ

He was born in 1911 at Tarn Taran, a prominent Sikh religious centre in District Amritsar, and belonged to a Ramgarhia Sikh family. He passed his Matriculation examination in 1926. Later, he passed the Gyani examination of the Punjab University, Lahore. Besides English and Punjabi he had a good working knowledge of Urdu and Hindi. Teachings of Sikh Gurus and Sikh history made a deep impact on his sensitive mind. Among the eminent personalities who moulded his views were Baba Kharak Singh, Randhir Singh and Jawahar Lal Nehru. The ideas of Karl Marx and the French Revolution (1789) also left a deep imprint on his thinking. Arjan Singh was drawn into the freedom movement while he was still very young. He was a great nationalist and participated in almost all movements launched by the Indian National Congress. He was thrice imprisoned : in 1933, 1937 and 1939.

Journalism and literature were the principal media through which he made his main contribution to the national struggle against the alien government. The journals having his closest association were the *Kirti Jang-i-Azadi* and *Nawan-Zamana*. Among his books the titles that stand out are *Shaheed* and *Do Pair Turna Par Turna Matak De Nal*. He also wrote poems depicting the miserable condition of Indian peasants.

In the field of social work, he devoted himself to spread of education. It was his firm belief that the idea of nationalism could not be fully comprehended by uneducated persons. To concretize this belief he opened a number of schools in villages. He had no faith in caste, community and regional barriers.

A man of progressive outlook and a committed socialist, Arjan Singh strongly advocated the development of small-scale as well as large-scale industry, for without that he thought, progress was not possible. A communist as he was, he favoured nationalization of all basic industries in the country.

Arjan Singh had little faith in public speeches. He preferred to discuss his problems with his collaborators in small groups.

He died on 10th January, 1963.



ARUR SINGH (Doctor)



Born in 1890 in village Sanghowal, District Jullundur, he was son of Pal Singh *alias* Arjan Singh. He had education only up to the 5th class but he picked up a good working knowledge of medical treatment of animals by working as a compounder in a veterinary hospital of Jullundur. For this reason he came to be commonly addressed as Doctor Arur Singh. Even at this early stage of his life he was reputed for courage, adventurousness and hardihood.

A village-fellow of his, Banta Singh, turned a new leaf in his life. He was a Ghadrite revolutionary and had returned from Canada in December, 1912 with the firm determination of helping the cause of revolution in India. Under his powerful influence, Arur Singh resigned his service in hospital and became an active member of the revolutionary organization. He tempered with railway lines and telephone wires. Not long after, his warrants of arrest were issued but undaunted by anything of this sort, he went underground and for about two and a half years moved from place to place exciting people for a revolt against the Government. While engaged on this work, he murdered one traitor and seven policemen and was also connected with the throwing of a bomb on the Viceroy at Delhi. When once in course of these activities he was visiting the Lahore jail to meet a friend of his confined there, he was challenged by a policeman to reveal his name. In utter disregard of consequences, he gave up his name with the result that he was immediately put behind the bars. This happened on 2nd

November, 1916.

Dr. Arur Singh was tried in connection with the Second Supplementry Lahore Conspiracy Case. After a trial which lasted for nearly two months, 8th November, 1916 to 5th January, 1917, he was sentenced to death and shortly after was hanged.

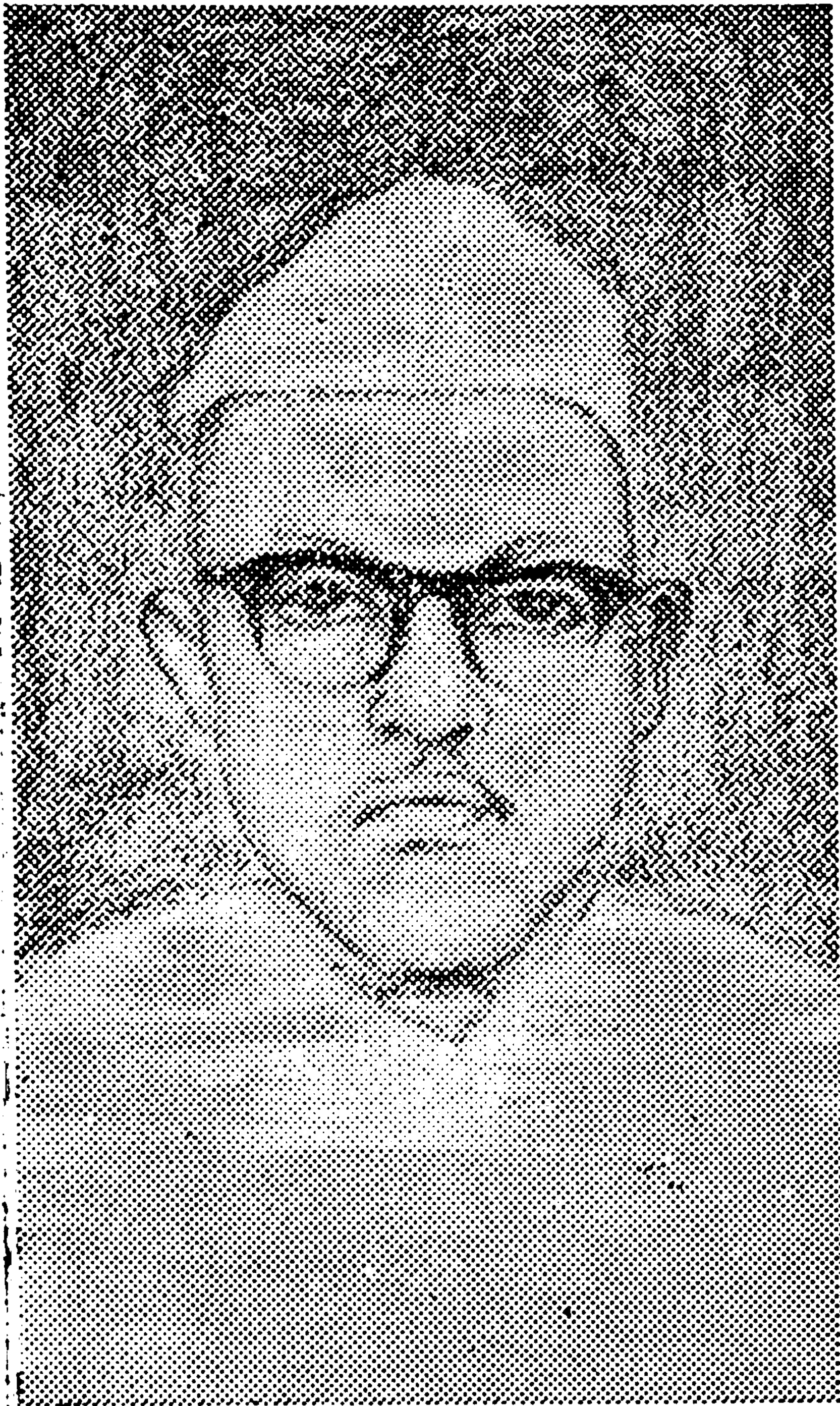
During his trial he refused to defend himself; rather he frankly confessed everything about all his political activities. Death held no terror for him, for it is said that till the last day of his life he continued to have sound sleep.

Dr. Arur Singh's family as well suffered heavily on account of him. His son was dismissed from the Indian Army Service for no other fault than the one that he was son of Arur Singh.

AVTAR NARAIN GUJRAL

He was born on 4th June, 1892 at Pari Darwaza in Jhelum District (now in Pakistan). He matriculated from Arya High School, Multan where his father was in Government service. He graduated from the D. A. V. College, Lahore and passed LL.B. examination from the Law College, Lahore. He had the good fortune to study at the feet of Mahatma Hans Raj and Principal Sain Das, celebrated educationists of the Punjab. In 1918 he joined the legal profession at Jhelum where he continued to practise till 1947.

During the Martial Law days in 1919 his warrants of arrest were issued on account of a lecture which he had



delivered before the public against the British rule in India, but before the warrants could be executed, Martial Law was lifted and he escaped imprisonment. During the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930 he was arrested and sent to jail for one year. However, after eleven months' stay in jail he was released on account of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Again he was arrested and sent to jail in 1941 in the Quit India movement. 4 month after his release in 1942, he was rearrested and detained in jail till the end of 1944. During this period his wife Shrimati Pushpa Gujral was twice arrested and imprisoned for six months each time. His son I. K. Gujral and his daughter Uma Gujral were also sent to jail for various terms and his youngest daughter Sunita Gujral who was an infant at that time, had to stay with her mother in jail and thus underwent the full term of her mother's confinement. In this way the whole family was in jail, and their residential house was attached and locked.

When Independence was declared in August, 1947, there was practically a total exchange of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim populations between East Punjab and West Punjab. He offered to work as honorary Liaison Officer in his home district, Jhelum, to arrange migration. He worked there in that capacity till the total Hindu and Sikh population of Jhelum District was evacuated.

In February, 1948, he was appointed the first Industrial Tribunal, Punjab, under the Industrial Disputes Act and he worked as such till 1959. From 1932 to 1947 he was member of the Municipal Committee, Jhelum and for many years its Vice-President. He was President of the Bar Association, Jhelum from the year 1931 to 1947.

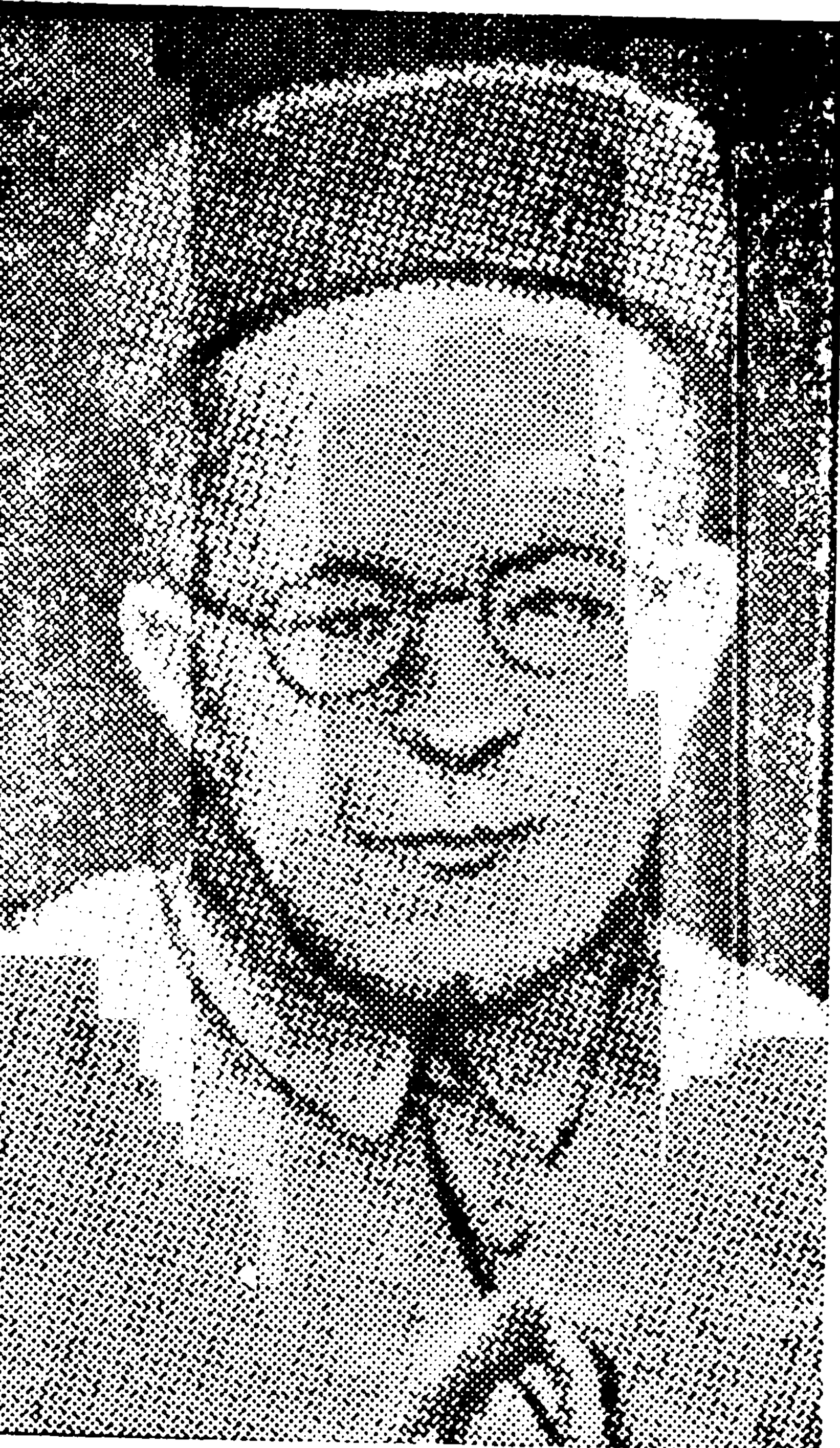
He was elected member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and attended its first meeting at Karachi on 14th August, 1947. For about four years he was member of the Punjab Legislative Council and Deputy Leader of the Congress Legislative Party. He was President of the District Congress Committee, Jhelum from 1919 to 1947; member of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee for a number of years; and member of the All-India Congress Committee for a couple of years before 1947.

He is now member of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee as well as member of the All-India Congress Committee. He is founder with his wife Shrimati Pushpa Gujral of Nari Nekatan, Jullundur where infants born out of wedlock are received, maintained and educated. They have built for that purpose a beautiful two-storeyed building on a vast area with playgrounds and with vegetable and fruit gardens.

Of his two sons I. K. Gujral is now member of the Lok Sabha and a Union Minister, and Satish Gujral, a world-famous artist.

BAL MUKAND (Bhai)

A daring revolutionary of early twentieth century, he hailed from the family of the famous martyr of Sikh history, Bhai Mati Das, and was a real cousin of Bhai Parmanand. He was born in 1889 at village Kariala, District Jhelum (now in Pakistan) and his father's name was Bhai Mathura Das. After graduation Bal Mukand took to the profession of teaching. His interest in national



movement was aroused while he was a student. The events of 1907 had great impact on his mind and he became an ardent nationalist. He, however, did not like the methodology of the moderates who dominated the Indian National Congress at the time and enrolled himself as a member of the Revolutionary Party in Lahore. As such, he engaged himself in preparing and distributing patriotic literature.

On 23rd December, 1912 when Lord Hardinge was marching in state through the Chandni Chowk, Delhi, a bomb was thrown on him as the result of which the Viceroy received minor injuries and one of his attendants was killed. About five months later on 17th May, 1913, a bomb was exploded in the Lawrence Garden of Lahore outside the Montgomery Hall where Europeans were enjoying a ball. The investigations that followed these two cases, revealed Bal Mukand's connection with them. Several arrests were made. Bal Mukand was arrested in 1914 from Jodhpur where he was working as Tutor of the Jodhpur Maharaja's sons. His room at Jodhpur as well as his house at Kariala were thoroughly searched but nothing incriminating could be found. All the same, he was held guilty of complicity in both the bomb explosions and distribution of objectionable literature. He was sentenced to death on October 5, 1914 at the end of a trial which was held at Delhi. It is said that he was first awarded life imprisonment but as the Punjab Governor Sir M. O' Dwyer thought it too mild for such a great revolutionary, the award was converted into death sentence.

Bal Mukand was hanged in the Ambala Central jail

on May 11, 1915. He was just 32 years old at that time.

BAL RAJ BHALLA

Bal Raj Bhalla hailed from an illustrious family of the Punjab noted for sacrifice and social work. He was born in June, 1888 in Tehsil Wazirabad of Gujranwala District. His father, Mahatma Hans Raj, was a well-known educationist and a public leader of the Punjab and was the first Principal of the D.A.V. College, Lahore. Bal Raj's mother, Thakur Devi, was of a religious bent of mind. His brother Yodh Raj, once the Chairman of the Punjab National Bank, is now a leading business magnate of Bombay. Bal Raj was married to Shakuntala Devi in 1925. He was an arch-revolutionary and had a hand in most of the conspiracies hatched against the British till, 1940.

Bal Raj after receiving his school education at Wazirabad, joined the D. A. V. College, Lahore, from where he passed his M. A. in 1911. But because of his participation in the revolutionary movement, all of his degrees were confiscated. Influenced by the ideas of Dadabhai Naroji, R. C. Dutt Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, B. G. Tilak and Bengal revolutionaries like Rash Bihari Bose and Khudi Ram Bose, he joined the freedom movement at the young age of seventeen. He was also deeply influenced by philosophical and mystic literature which had created a strong militant nationalism in India.

He had no faith in religion. Like all revolutionaries,

he was assertive by temperament, firm in convictions, and sensitive to sincere affection. Courageous as he was, he was always ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of freedom. A man of extremely puritanical habits, he was against caste system and untouchability and fought for widow-remarriage though he did not strictly believe in equality of sexes.

Bal Raj was a protagonist of scientific and technical education. He wanted science and English to be made a compulsory part of the school curriculum. At the same time, he realized the significance of studying Sanskrit and Hindi. He was amongst the first to assert that the Government, should impart free education up to degree classes.

Bal Raj was a revolutionary and worked to raise an armed revolt against the British empire in India. To him nothing was unfair, including even murder of British officials and bank robberies, for the noble cause of freedom. He was imprisoned in 1919 for participating in a conspiracy to prepare and throw a bomb on the Governor General. The conspiracy was foiled and he was put behind the bars for three years. He was again imprisoned in 1927 for two and a half years in connection with the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case. Later, he had another term of imprisonment lasting for one and a half years.

He had no sympathy for the non-violent methods of the Congress. Following the Bengal revolutionary tradition he admired Subhsh Chandra Bose and other like-minded people. He was a follower of Lala Lajpat Rai who was a close friend of his father. At one time he left India

for England from where he secretly went to Germany.

Although he did not hesitate to adopt any measure to expell the British from India, yet he favoured free government in India to be based on the British pattern. Later on, he fell under the spell of Gandhiji and renounced the creed of pistol and bomb.

He propagated his ideas through his writings and speeches in English, Hindi and Punjabi. Like his father he was enthusiastic about disseminating rural education, but due to his pre-occupation with revolutionary activities, he could hardly do anything in this respect. He was an intellectual and commanded great respect in academic circles.

BALWANT SINGH (Canadian)

He hailed from village Khurdpur, District Jullundur and was born in 1882. His father, Budh Singh, was a well-to-do man and commanded respect in the area. For his education young Balwant Singh joined Middle School, Adampur but had to leave off after the sixth class on account of his early marriage. When he grew old enough, he got employment in Battalion 36 of the Indian Army. While posted at Mardan, he came under the influence of the famous Sant Karam Singh. He resigned his service after a period of ten years and then in April, 1906 went to Canada. There he helped raise the first *gurdwara* of Vancouver and himself took up the office of the *Granthi*. Under his able stewardship the *gurdwara* quickly developed into a popular community centre for the Indians in



Canada.

Being a popular figure among the Indian community, it fell to his lot to lead the Indian struggle against the unjust emigration laws of the Government of Canada. In 1911 he came to India accompanied by Bhag Singh and Sunder Singh and toured the country to enlighten the Indian public about their difficulties in Canada. Having done this, they sailed back to Canada. On the way when they reached Hongkong they were refused tickets for Vancouver. In the alternative, they purchased tickets for San Francisco. But on reaching there they were not allowed to land and were forced to return to Hongkong. They again tried and after a long struggle succeeded in getting tickets for Vancouver. But their troubles were not over. At Vancouver, their families were refused permission to get down from the ship. Ultimately, provisional permission was granted on the understanding that they would have to go back if the orders from the Emigration Officer, Ottawa, were to the contrary. But once in, they refused to leave Canada in any case, for which Balwant Singh and his companions had to undergo great difficulties. To settle the dispute on a permanent basis, a deputation was sent to India to plead with the Government of India and Indian people to take up their cause with the Canadian authorities. The deputation was led by Balwant Singh. When not satisfactory response was received they went back with the conviction that the only remedy of their troubles was to free their country from political slavery. Balwant Singh from now on became an ardent freedom-fighter. When the *Komagata Maru* passengers were denied permission to land and

were in great trouble, Balwant Singh played a leading role in collecting funds for them. In consequence the authorities came down heavily upon him and implicated him in a false case of murder of Hopkinson, Emigration Inspector. Although nothing could be proved against him and he was released, things were made so hot for him that he had to leave immediately along with his whole family. At Shanghai he despatched his family to India in company with one Kartar Singh and himself stayed back to work for the cause of freedom among Indians there. In 1915 he proceeded to Bangkok where he was arrested in a state of illness. As a prisoner he was first brought to Singapore and then to Lahore. After the mockery of a trial in the Lahore Central jail he was hanged in 1916.

BANARSI DASS GUPTA

Banarsi Das Gupta, a freedom fighter of long standing, was born at village Manehru in District Mahendergarh of Haryana in 1918. He passed his Matriculation from Dadri and his B.A. examination from the Birla College, Pilani (Rajasthan). He started his political career at a very young age. In his early twenties he attended the All-India States Peoples Conference held at Ludhiana in 1938. The Conference which was presided over by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, was a major step in the co-ordination of freedom struggles in British India and Princely India.

During the Ludhiana Conference, political workers from the Jind State assembled under the leadership of



Hans Raj Rehbar and founded the Jind State Praja Mandal. With the formation of this Praja Mandal B. D. Gupta's life became a long story of incessant struggle. He was imprisoned in the Jind State for six months in 1941 in connection with India's fight for liberation from the British and the British-backed Rajas. He was interned for three years in his village during the Quit India movement of 1942.

At different times Gupta served as President and Secretary of the Jind State Praja Mandal. In 1946 he represented Bhiwani in the Jind State Assembly. Afterwards, he made Bhiwani the major base of his activities.

As a member of the Congress, B. D. Gupta served as President of the Hissar District Congress Committee for seven years and as member of the All-India Congress Committee for almost a decade.

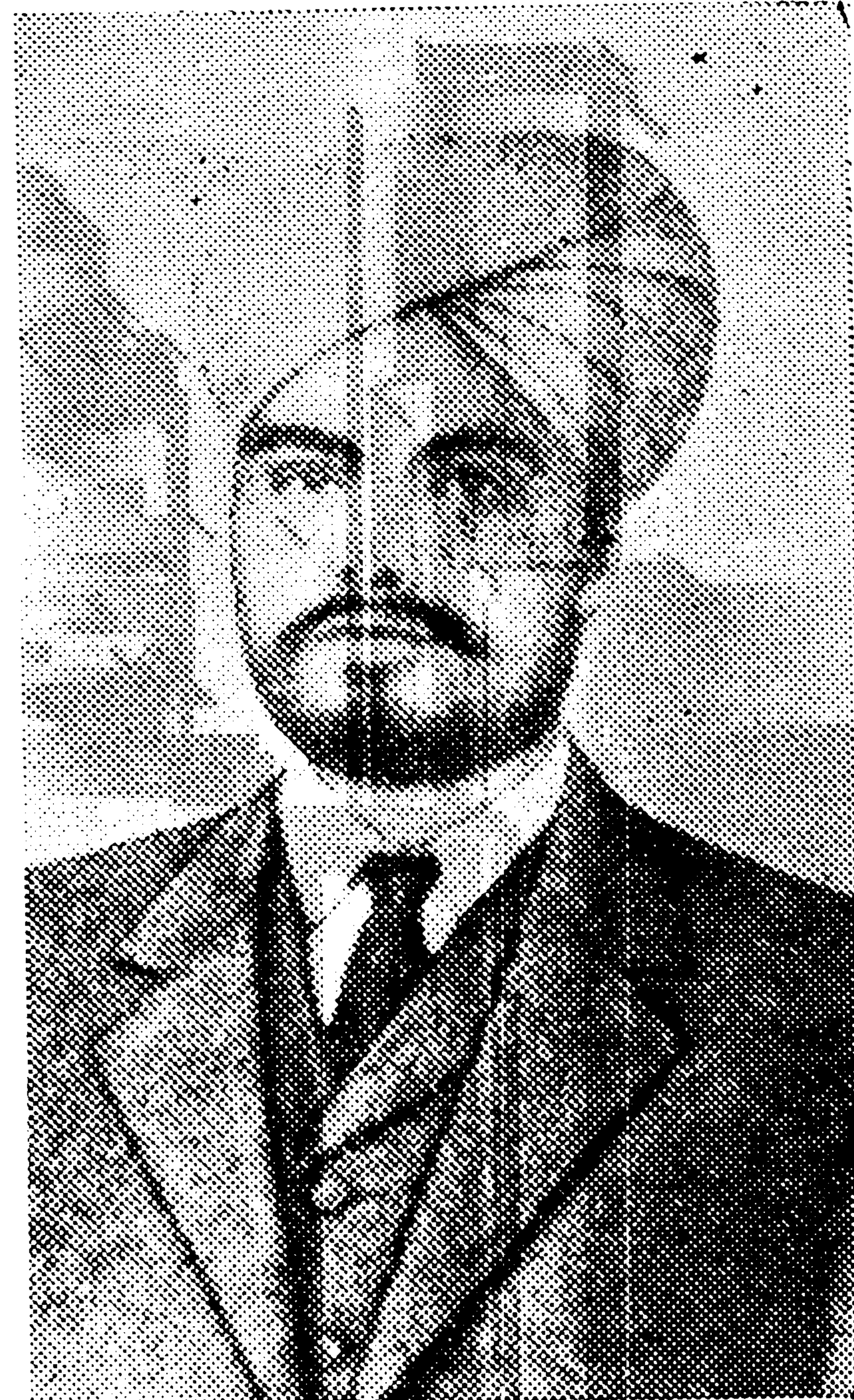
For eight years he edited *Apna Desh*, a Hindi weekly.

At present he is Speaker of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha.

BANTA SINGH

A veteran leader of the Ghadar Party, Banta Singh was born in 1890 at village Sanghowal, District Jullundur. His father, Buta Singh, was a prosperous farmer and commanded great respect in the village. Banta Singh received his early education at the Bal Primary School and after that passed the Matriculation examination from the Anglo-Sanskrit High School, Jullundur. Having done

that, he decided to go abroad. On the way to America, he came across some people of his acquaintance in Singapore and Hongkong in dire distress and helped them out with money despite the fact that he himself badly needed every pice he had. When he reached Canada, he found his countrymen deeply involved in a national movement aimed at expulsion of the British from India. He felt instinctively drawn towards it and started working for the *Ghadar*, the Party organ. As the international horizon became overcast with dark clouds of war, he genuinely began to feel that his place of work was not America but India. Accordingly, he returned to India in December, 1912 and embarked on a well-thought-out programme of winning over Indian soldiers in military cantonments to the national cause. His house became a rendezvous of revolutionaries such as Harnam Singh Tundilat, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Munsha Singh Dukhi and Rash Bihari Bose. With a band of youngmen mostly drawn from his own village he tempered with railway lines and cut telephone wires near the Suranasi Railway Station and committed a political dacoity in village Alawalpur. When arrests began to be made and a police post was set up in his village, he quietly slipped away. In his absence his father Buta Singh, his brother Santa Singh and two close relatives of his were detained. Later on, his father was released but his brother was sentenced to 14 years' and the two relatives to 7 years' imprisonment each. When he was working underground, he once went to Lahore to forcibly get hold of some fire arms. There he was detected and two policemen attempted to arrest him and his companion Sajjan Singh. He hit back and killed one of



them. Having done that he escaped and boarded a railway train at Mughal Sarai. But a few policemen also followed him and succeeded in boarding the same train. Banta Singh jumped down from the running train and frustrated the designs of his pursuers. Soon after, with the help of a few other revolutionaries he made a raid on the police *chowki* at Mananwala and seized all their firearms. When they were chased by the police, all but Banta Singh were arrested. Undaunted by what had happened, Banta Singh continued his work as usual. He was declared an absconder and a prize of two squares of land and two thousand rupees was announced for anyone catching him. His own close relative, Partap Singh of village Jaura in the Tanda Police Station, fell victim to the temptation and betrayed him into the hands of the authorities on 15th June, 1915. He was tried under Martial Law in the Central Jail Lahore and sentenced to death. He was hanged on 12th August, 1915.

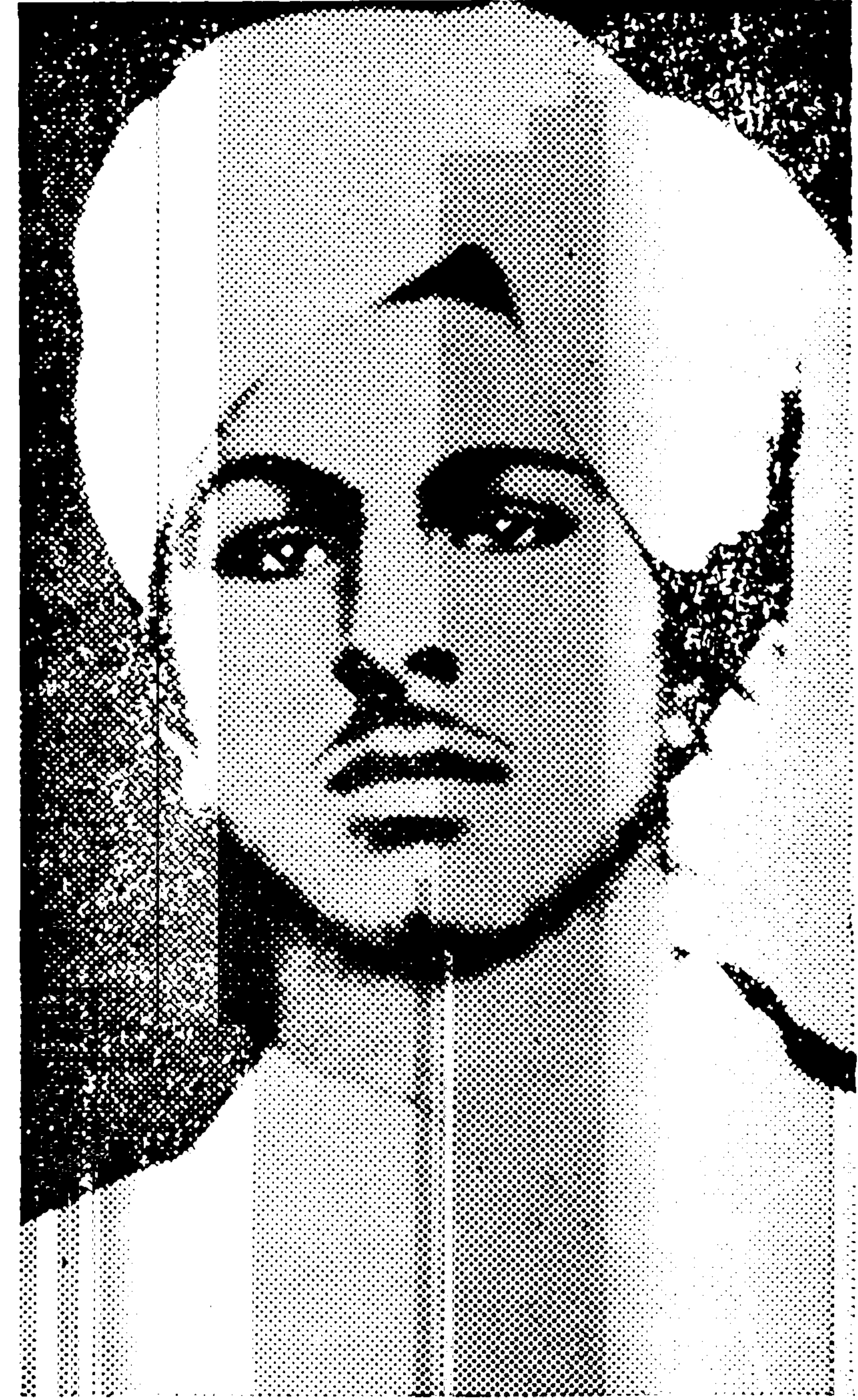
BHAGAT SINGH

He belongs to the front rank of Punjabi heroes martyred in the cause of national movement. He was the scion of a Sandhu Jat family which originally resided in the village Khatkar Kalan in District Jullundur but at the time of Bhagat Singh's birth was settled at the village Banga (Chak No. 105) in District Lyallpur. He was born on September 27, 1907. His grandfather Arjan Singh, his father Kishan Singh and his uncle Ajit Singh were all well-known for their advocacy of reforms and

their revolutionary activities. His mother Vidya Vati had the reputation of being a pious and devoted woman. Professionally, his father was an insurance agent, incharge of the Punjab branch of the Industrial-Prudential and Wulhan Insurance Company.

Bhagat Singh received his early education at the primary school in his village. Having passed the fifth class examination from that school, he joined the D.A.V. School, Lahore, in 1916. Here he came into contact with some well-known political leaders of his time, namely Anand Kishore Mehta, Lala Pindi Das, Sufi Amba Parsad, Lala Lajpat Rai, Ras Bihari Bose, etc. Kartar Singh Sarabha's supreme sacrifice and the proceedings of the Lahore Conspiracy Case left a deep impact on his sensitive mind. A similar effect was produced on him by the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy (1919) and the Khilafat movement. In response to Mahatma Gandhi's call for non-cooperation in 1921, Bhagat Singh left his school and joined the National College newly opened at Lahore. At this college which was a centre of revolutionary activities, he came into contact with revolutionaries such as Bhagwati Charan, Sukhdev, Ranbir Singh, Ram Kishan and Tirath Ram. He passed his F.A. examination but left his studies while he was a B.A. student. He went to Kanpur early in 1924 where he met Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, B. K. Dutt, Chander Shekhar Azad and some Bengali revolutionaries. He now became member of the Hindustan Republican Association formed by the revolutionaries of Uttar Pradesh and was initiated into revolutionary activities.

On the request of his father, he returned to Lahore



early in 1925. On reaching his village, he arranged for the reception of an Akali *jatha* which was on its way to Jaito Morcha. Thereafter, he worked for a newspaper of Delhi, *Vir Arjun* but only for about five or six months. He returned to Lahore and joined the Kirti Kisan Party founded by Sohan Singh Josh and Santokh Singh. Shortly after, in association with other revolutionaries, he founded a new association known as Nau Jawan Bharat Sabha, with himself as its Secretary.

In October, 1927 Bhagat Singh was arrested for his objectionable activities and bound for Rs. 60,000. In July, 1928 prominent revolutionaries of India decided to accentuate their activities and held a meeting in September, 1928 at Kotla Feroz Shah in Delhi. Bhagat Singh was one of the key figures in this meeting. When the country was in the grip of 'Simon, go back' agitation, Lala Lajpat Rai organised a procession to register the protest of Lahore people against the Simon Commission. Bhagat Singh and his co-workers marched in the forefront of this procession. The brutal attack of the police on Lala Lajpat Rai caused his death on 17th November, 1928. The whole of the Punjab was in rage at the death of their beloved leader and Bhagat Singh determined to avenge his death by shooting Scott and other British officials responsible for this foul deed. He shot down Assistant Superintendent Saunders mistaking him for Scott and making a dramatic escape from Lahore travelled to Calcutta in the guise of a rich man accompanied by his wife and a servant.

After some time, he left Calcutta and established a bomb factory at Agra. Having no faith in Gandhiji's

non-violence, the revolutionaries decided to attach the attention of people by throwing bombs in the Central Assembly Hall. In pursuance of this decision Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt threw two bombs while the Assembly was in session. Bhagat Singh was arrested on the spot.

During his trial, Bhagat Singh refused to employ any defence counsel. In the jail, he went on hunger strike to secure humanitarian treatment for fellow-political prisoners. Bhagat Singh along with Sukh Dev and Raj Guru was awarded death sentence by a special tribunal on 7th October, 1930. Despite great popular pressure and numerous appeals by political leaders of India, Bhagat Singh and his associates were hanged in the early hours of 23rd March, 1931. Their bodies were cremated on the bank of the Sutlej in Ferozepur. Then he was just 23 years 5 months and 27 days old but when he died he had lived long enough to become a legend, a symbol and a source of inspiration for all future freedom-fighters of India.

BHAGWAN SINGH LONGOWALIA

He was born at Longowal, a small village about 12 miles away from the historic town of Sunam, belonging to the erstwhile Patiala State. Like most of the political workers of those days coming from Sikh peasantry, he learnt his first lessons in politics through the Gurdwara Reform movement (1921—1925).

Bhagwan Singh joined the Akali agitation for *gurdwara* reform in 1922 and soon became its prominent worker



participating in *diwans* and activities connected with forcible occupation of *gurdwaras*. On 24th May, 1922 he was convicted and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000 for a seditious speech delivered at Sherpur (Patiala State). On 27th June, 1922 the same court in another case awarded him nine months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 under Section 342 I.P.C. yet in another case he was accused of having tried to take forcible possession of the *gurdwara* of Heron in company with other Akalis and was sentenced to one and a half years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 250. All sentences were to run concurrently.

Bhagwan Singh was, however, released before time on 21st April, 1923. About a year later, he was again tried for a seditious speech delivered at an Akali gathering at his own village and was convicted and sentenced to 3 years' rigorous imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 500. In July, 1924, his property as well was confiscated. He was released when following the passage of the Gurdwara Reform Act of 1925 most of the Akali prisoners were set free. But Bhagwan Singh was not going to rest. Almost immediately he plunged into the agitation for release of the veteran leader, Sewa Singh Thikriwala. In open defiance of the orders of the District Magistrate, Sunam, he led a *jatha* of agitators from his village Longowal to join a protest rally at Nagla on 11th July, 1926. In 1928 a big *diwan* was held at Thikriwala in protest against the continued detention of Sewa Singh. Speaking at the meeting, Bhagwan Singh denounced the Simon Commission and the British Government as strongly as he did the State Chiefs. The Patiala Police arrested a

large number of Akali workers who participated in this meeting, but somehow, Bhagwan Singh effected his escape into Punjab territory. Thereafter, he operated mostly from outside the Punjab States. When later Mansa and Sunam developed into important centres of the Praja Mandal movement, Bhagwan Singh maintained his liaison with these centres by operating from the *gurdwaras* of Budladha and Khadial. In his programme he was greatly assisted by the Akali leaders, Master Tara Singh and Baba Kharak Singh.

Bhagwan Singh was a founder member of the Praja Mandal of the Punjab States. He represented the States' people at the All-India States' Subjects Conference held at Calcutta in 1928 along with the annual session of the Indian National Congress. He was the chief spirit behind the memorial submitted to the Viceroy of India narrating the misdeeds of the Maharaja of Patiala. A copy of the memorial was submitted to the Bombay session of the All-India States Peoples Conference held in 1929. It was mainly due to his efforts that the Conference set up a high-powered committee to go into the charges listed against the Patiala Ruler.

In December, 1929 the first regular session of the Punjab Riasti Praja Mandal was held at Lahore where Bhagwan Singh was elected General Secretary of the Mandal. In his capacity as General Secretary he intensified the movement in Patiala and in other Punjab States. The success of the historic Ludhiana session of the Praja Mandal was in a large degree due to his efforts. Now, his warrants of arrest were issued for

his 'seditious' activities. Not long after, he was arrested and tried for seven different offences and sentenced to an aggregate period of 22 years R.I. and a fine of Rs. 900. On 14th November, 1934 he was admitted to the Central Jail, Patiala where he went on hunger strike for 11 days out of his regard for Sewa Singh Thikriwala

He was released as a result of the Tara Singh Bhupindra Singh Pact, 1935. Instead of feeling happy at his release, Bhagwan Singh was furious at the compromise of Master Tara Singh and vehemently denounced the agreement. Thereafter, he parted company with the Akali leadership and forged a new alliance with Hindu urban intelligentsia and Communist workers in the Punjab States. In the result his political ideas underwent a radical change and he became a doughty champion of social and economic change with political reform.

He died in 1944.

BHAGWATI CHARAN

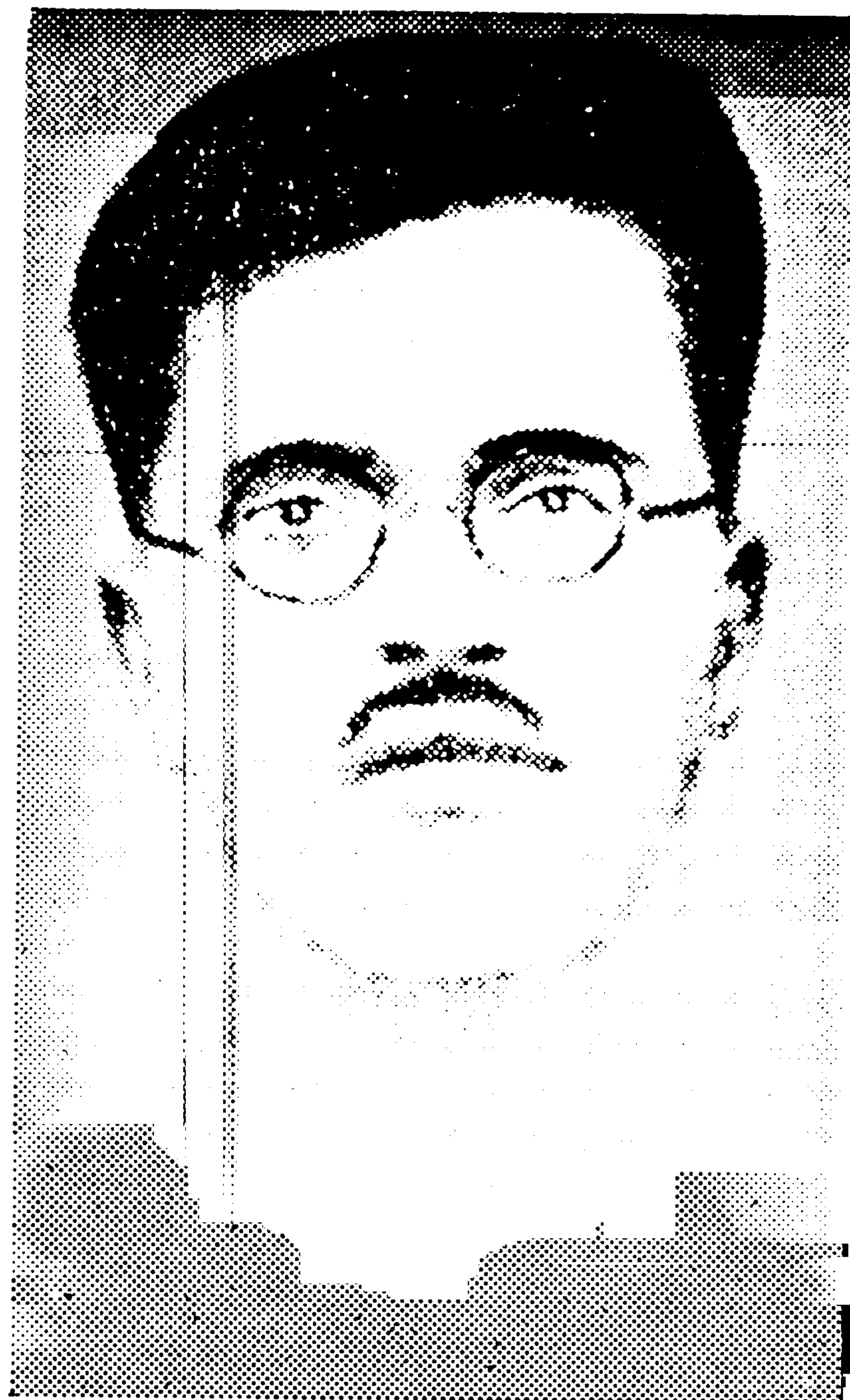
Bhagwati Charan was born at Lahore in a Brahmin family of District Gujarat. His father Rai Sahib Pt. Shiv Charan was a railway official. Bhagwati Charan was married to Durga Devi who herself made a great contribution in the freedom movement. He passed his B. A. examination from the National College, Lahore founded and run by Lala Lajpat Rai. It was during his stay at this college that he was initiated into the revolutionary movement. In collaboration with Bhagat Singh and

Sukhdev, he founded a study circle on the model of Russian revolutionaries.

In 1927 this revolutionary group formed the Nau Jawan Bharat Sabha with Bhagwati Charan as Propaganda Secretary. Both Bhagat Singh and Bhagwati Charan undertook an extensive tour of the Punjab and delivered lectures with the help of lantern slides on the lives of Indian revolutionaries. But they were prohibited from their work by the Punjab Government.

Bhagwati's house in Lahore was a popular meeting place of revolutionaries. The sad episode of Lala Lajpat Rai's death deeply stirred their minds. Bhagwati Charan was party to the murder of Saunders and the throwing of bombs in the Central Assembly Hall by Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt. He made an abortive attempt to explode the Viceroy's railway coach near Delhi. In 1930 Bhagwati along with his friends made strenuous efforts to get Bhagat Singh and his associates released from the Lahore jail. For this purpose a plan was prepared and first June 1930 was fixed as the D Day. But all his efforts were dashed to the ground because of his sudden and tragic death on May 28, 1930 as the result of a bomb exploding in his hand during its testing on the bank of the Ravi. His last words mark the depth of his emotional involvement in the freedom struggle. "Had this death been late by two days, I would have attained more success before dying. Now that desire of mine has remained unfulfilled."

After Bhagwati's death, his mission was continued for some years by his widow, Durga Devi, popularly called Durga Bhabhi. She made an attempt upon the life of



Sir Malcolm Hailey, but he escaped. For this she was imprisoned for three years. After her release she became President of the Delhi Congress Committee. Shortly after, she retired from politics and took to teaching.

Though a Brahmin by birth, Bhagwati Charan did not suffer from caste prejudices. He was liberal in outlook and always worked for Hindu-Muslim unity. Having no faith in the non-violent philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, he preached and practised the creed of bomb and pistol to terrorise and oust the British from India. When Mahatma Gandhi published a pamphlet denouncing the creed of violence, he brought out a counter-pamphlet in defence of the revolutionary creed and distributed it publicly. He attributed all economic ills of the country to foreign rule and appealed to the youth and workers of the country to revolt against the authorities. He was a socialist who felt convinced that poverty and want in India could only be removed by a violent revolution and a complete overhaul of the social system.

CHAMAN LAL (Diwan)

A descendant of a prominent Hindu family of West Punjab, he was born in 1892. He got his education from the Convent School, Murree, Gordon Mission College, Rawalpindi and private tutors at Folkestone, London and Paris. After completing his general education he thought of getting professional education in Law. For this purpose he joined the Middle Temple (England) in 1910 and passed the Bar final in 1914. Three years later he got

Honours Degree in Jurisprudence from the Jesus College, Oxford.

He first came in close contact with the freedom movement of India in 1918-19 when he accompanied the Home Rule Deputation headed by B. G. Tilak and toured through the length and breadth of England. On his return to India in 1920 he joined the staff of *The Bombay Chronicle* as Assistant Editor. The same year he helped to lay the foundation of the All-India Trade Union Congress which is one of the major Indian labour organisations of today.

In 1923 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council. He retained its membership continuously till 1930 when he resigned on account of his differences on a tariff issue. During the same period he founded a new daily newspaper called *The Nation*.

It was for his expert knowledge of labour matters that in 1928 he was selected Advisor to the Labour Delegation to the International Labour Conference held at Geneva and in 1932 Labour Delegate to the International Labour Conference Bureau. During the same year he proceeded to Canada as member of an Indian delegation. From 1929 to 1931 he served as member of the Royal Commission on Indian Labour. In between he was nominated to attend the first Round Table Conference but sensing the political climate of the country he declined the offer.

During the twenties and the thirties he held several other positions of distinction. He was President of the Sind Provincial Conference in 1929; President of the

North-Western Railway Recognized (Registered) Union from 1929 onwards; President of the All-India Telegraph Workers' Union from 1929 onwards; President of the All-India Postal and the R.M.S. Association in 1930; and was Founder of the All-India Trade Union Federation. He wrote a book dealing with labour problems, namely : *The Coolie* or *The Story of Capital and Labour in India*.

After Independence as well he continued to take active part in the affairs of the country. As member of Parliament he made rich contributions to its deliberations. Later, his talents were deemed fit for diplomatic purposes and he was appointed ambassador in Turkey and Latin America.

He is still alive and is leading a retired life in Delhi.

DARSHAN SINGH PHERUMAN

He was born in 1883 at village Pheruman in the district of Amritsar, his parents' names being Chanda Singh and Raj Kaur. He had education only up to Matriculation. He made his debut in politics by taking part in the Akali movement (1921—1925).

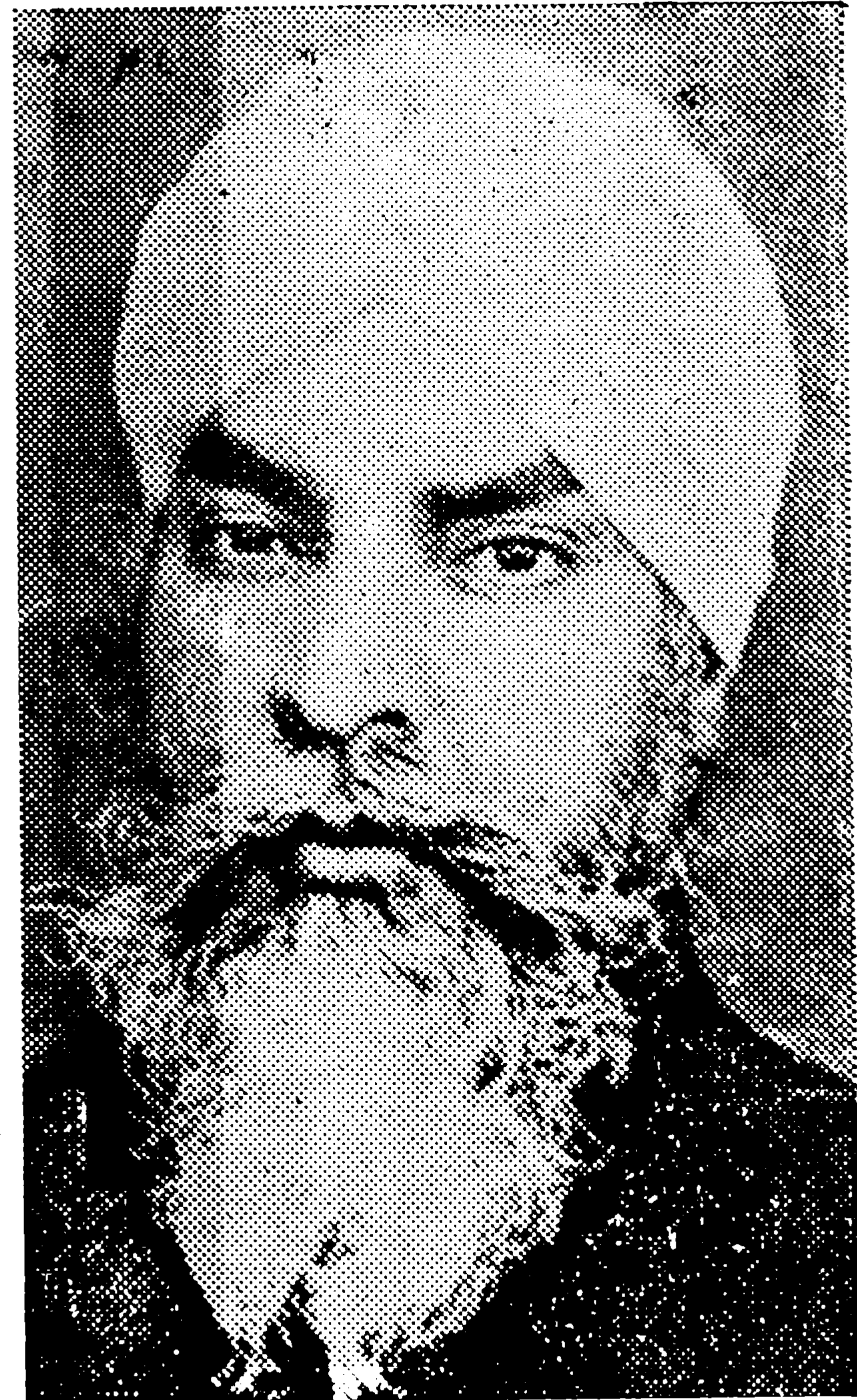
He was arrested in connection with the Keys Morcha and imprisoned for one year. He also took part in the non-cooperation movement on account of which he was imprisoned for 14 months. He led the Shahidi Jatha No. 14 in the Jaito Morcha. For this offence he was arrested and confined in the fort of Bhagsu for ten months. After

his release he proceeded to Malaya but continued the fight for freedom from there. For his political activities there he was arrested and detained. In the jail he was put to severe torture for which reason he had to resort to hunger strike for 21 days. Later when he was released, he was ordered to leave the country immediately.

On his return he participated in the Civil Disobedience movement and underwent imprisonment for another year. British Government filed a suit against him in 1932, as a result of which he was sentenced to jail for a term of one and a half years. In 1936 he took part in the *Kisan* movement and two years later headed a big procession of farmers, which was *lathi*-charged, he himself receiving severe blows. For the same offence he was arrested and sent to Shahpur Jail for one year's rigorous imprisonment.

In 1942 he took part in the Quit India movement and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. After Independence as well, he continued to lead a life of dedicated service to the nation.

His end was fully in keeping with his past career of sacrifice, devotion and suffering. On October 27, 1969 he died a martyr, a public hero, after 74 days' unbroken fast undertaken over the question of faithful observance of solemn pledges made before the public.



DUNI CHAND (Lala)



Born in 1873, Lala Duni Chand passed his B.A. examination from the Forman Christian College, Lahore. After that he joined the Oriental College, Lahore wherefrom he passed the Honours examination in Persian language and literature in 1894. Afterwards, he acquired professional training by passing the Licentiate-in-Law examination. He practised at the bar until 1921 when in response to Mahatma Gandhi's call for non-cooperation he suspended his practice and sought imprisonment. In 1922 he was sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment under the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

After his release from jail, he successfully fought election to the Punjab Legislative Council as a member of the Swarajist Party founded by Moti Lal Nehru and to C. R. Dass. While in the council, he tried his level best to make a success of the obstructionist Swarajist programme.

When civil Disobedience started in 1930, he once again suspended his practice of law and courted arrest.

He occupied a prominent position in the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and as such was elected member of the All-India Congress Committee in 1920. This membership he retained continuously throughout his long political career. During the days of the Civil Disobedience movement the Congress organization was declared unlawful and Lala Duni Chand being a member of the Congress Working Committee was sentenced to 6

months' imprisonment. In recognition of his services to the national cause, he was invited to serve on the Punjab Jail Enquiry Committee in 1929 and later in 1935 was elected Acting President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee during the period of absence of the permanent President, Dr. Satyapal.

With the passage of years, the lure of freedom struggle proved so strong that he decided to give up his lucrative practice at the bar altogether to be able to give maximum time to national work. When the Civil Disobedience movement began, he was arrested and confined.

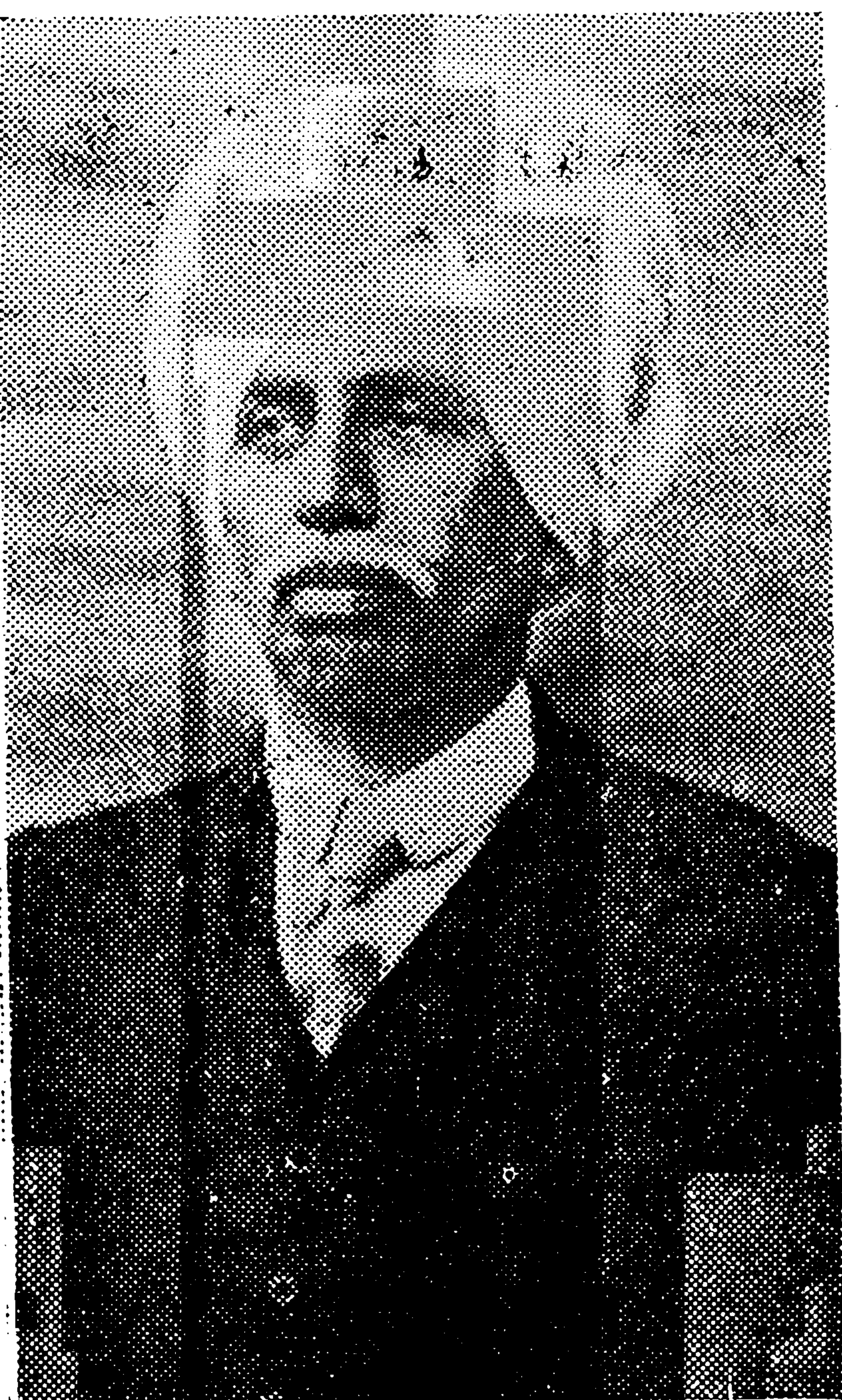
After Independence he lived for many years and died only recently. Although he occupied no public positions in the post-Independence period of his life, his interest in national affairs was as keen as ever.

He was an Arya Samajist by faith and played an active part in its activities from 1899 onwards. He had deep interest in education and was Manager of the Anglo-Sanskrit, High School, Ambala from 1906 to 1921. He was also member of the Managing Committee of the D. A. V. College, Lahore for several years.

DUNI CHAND (Lala)

An eminent Barrister and Congress leader of Lahore, Lala Duni Chand was born in 1870.

He received his college education from the Forman Christian College and the Government College, both of



Lahore. After that he went to England for professional education in the subject of Law. He joined the Grewy's Inn and was called to the bar in 1896.

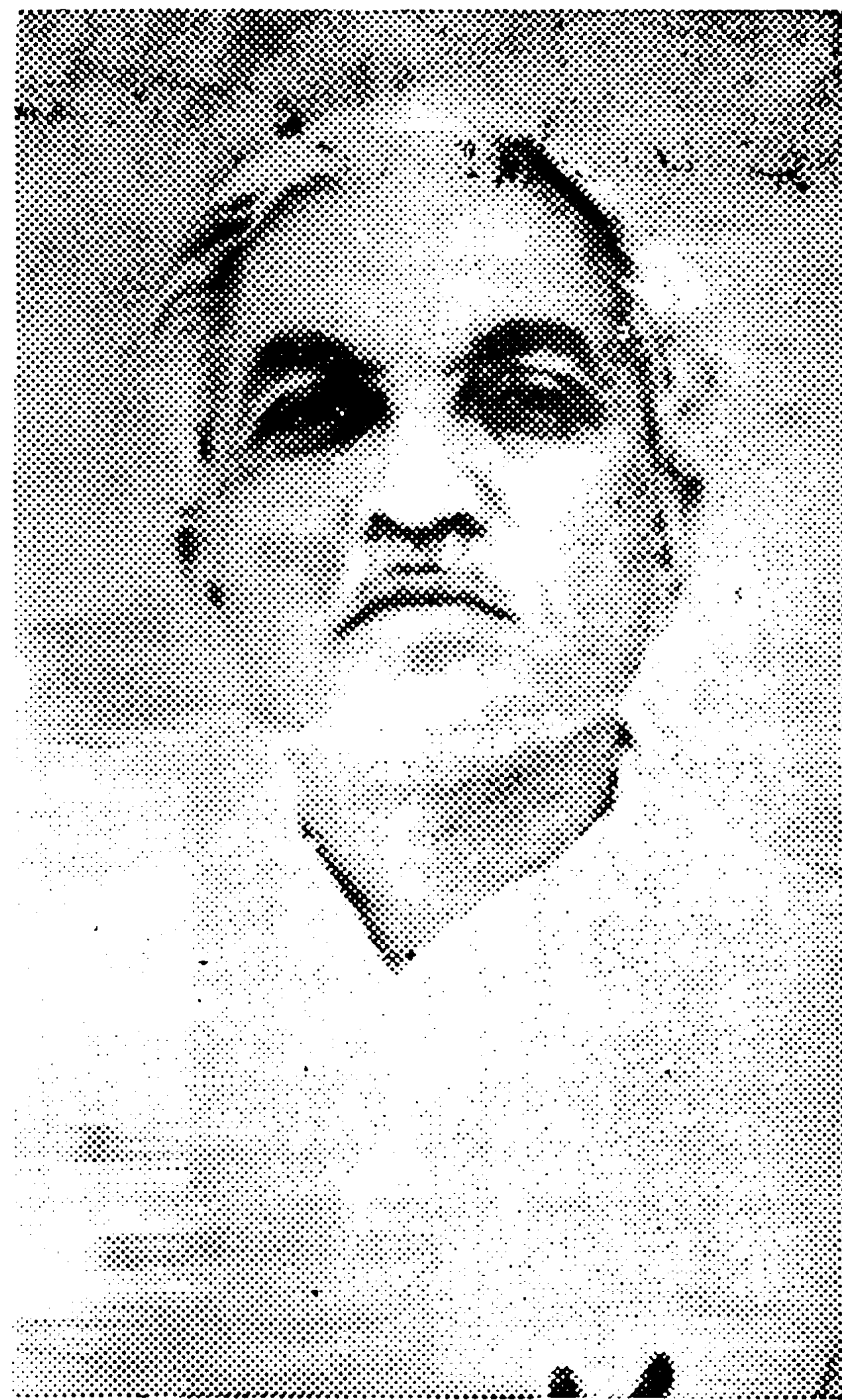
On his return to India he started his legal practice in the High Court of Lahore and soon became a prominent lawyer of the city. But his interest was not limited to his profession. He was equally interested in the affairs of the Lahore Municipality and the national struggle for freedom from British rule. Once he became member of the Municipal Committee, Lahore, he retained his membership for over 25 years.

Quite early in his career he became an active Congress worker. He was not only member but also President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for many long years. His role in the anti-British disturbances of 1919 in the Punjab was so conspicuous that he was punished with deportation. The punishment was later commuted to life imprisonment. But he did not have to serve his full term and was released in December, 1919. Two years later, he actively participated in the non-cooperation movement of 1921 and suspended his practice in response to the call of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1921 he led the *satyagraha* in connection with the Lawrence Statue, which made him an immediate target official wrath and he was sentenced to 8 months' imprisonment. Nine years later he led, together with other Congress leaders of the Punjab, the Civil Disobedience movement in the province, for which he had to serve another term of confinement.

He died before the Individual Satyagraha movement. His death was deeply mourned by his colleagues and admirers.

DURGA DAS KHANNA

Durga Das Khanna, son of Lala Jai Chand Khanna, was born on 8th February, 1909. He matriculated from the Central Model School, Lahore in 1924 and graduated from the Forman Christian College of the same city in 1929. Having passed his B.A., he joined the Law College, Lahore and got the degree of LL.B. After that he became a practising lawyer. He joined the band of revolutionaries led by Bhagat Singh in 1926 and became an active member of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. As such, he mainly operated on the students front and organized a number of students unions in the Punjab Province. The Lahore Students Union in which he occupied various offices at various times, became the vanguard of the revolutionary movement. Durga Das was arrested on several occasions. In December, 1930 he was hauled up in connection with the conspiracy to shoot the Punjab Governor, Sir G. F. Montmorency, in which Hari Kishan was sentenced to death. Although a death sentence was passed against him also, yet the charge could not be proved and he had to be released. Then he became member of the Indian National Congress and in 1942 took active part in the Quit India movement started by Mahatma Gandhi. He was detained as a security prisoner for two and a half years in different jails such as Lahore Fort, Lahore Central Jail and Ferozepur Jail. He obtained his release towards the end of 1945. In 1946 he was elected member of the Lahore Corporation.



In 1960 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council. As a legislator he made a great mark so that

in 1965 he was elected Chairman of the same body.
He is now leading a retired life at Chandigarh.

GOPI CHAND BHARGAVA

He was born in 1889 at Sirsa in the district of Hissar. His father, Munshi Badri Prashad, was a government servant. Gopi Chand received his early education at the Government High School, Hissar. Then, he went to the D. A. V. College, Lahore. After completing his studies there he joined the Medical College Lahore, wherefrom he got the M.B.B.S. degree in 1912.

In 1913 he set up as a medical practitioner. His hard work and devotion to duty brought him fame and success within a few years. It is remarkable of him that instead of making his profession a means of money-making, he underlined its noble aspect and used the great opportunity to serve fellow human beings. Not only did he give the benefit of his services free of charge to the poor and the needy but also quite often defrayed out of his own pocket the expenses on the medicines needed by them.

He was wholly absorbed in his professional work until the brutal massacre of Jallianwala Bagh (1919) gave him a rude shaking and turned his ideas to the national struggle for freedom.

Falling under the spell of Lala Lajpat Rai's magnetic personality, Gopi Chand joined the Indian National Congress in 1921. In the same year he was elected Secretary of the City Congress Committee as well as Secretary of the District Congress Committee. The

following year he became President of the City Congress Committee. At the same time, he was member of the Provincial Congress Committee. From 1921 to 1926 his membership of this body was continuous but after that it proceeded with intermitant gaps.

He took an active and leading part in various Congress movements and was several times arrested and kept in jail. He took keen interest in the constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi. Particularly, he interested himself in the propagation of *Khadi* and was a member of the All-India Spinners Association and a trustee of the All-India Village Industries Association. So far as the latter was concerned, he was on its Board of Management for many years. Another branch of the Congress programme to which he devoted himself was the removal of untouchability and uplift of depressed classes, and for a long time was a member of the Harijan Sewak Sangh, being President of its Punjab branch.

He was member of the Lahore Municipal Committee from 1920 to 1924. He became elected member of the Punjab Legislative Council in 1927 and remained so till 1929. He was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1937 and when the Unionist Ministry was formed under the leadership of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, he became the leader of the opposition, a role in which he acquitted himself with distinction and credit. He left the Punjab Assembly in 1940. In 1946 he was re-elected to the Punjab Assembly and his membership continued till 1951. It was a measure of his importance that he was appointed a member of the Punjab Partition Committee.



On 15th August, 1947, on the dawn of independence, he became the Chief Minister of the East Punjab Province. During the next few years, till June, 1951, he was either Chief Minister or Minister of the newly carved-out State. During this crucial period he did his level best to evolve order out of the chaos created by Partition.

He left the Congress in 1951 as a sequel to his differences with the Congress Parliamentary Board. After remaining independent for a time, he made a common cause with the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party founded by Acharya Kriplani. But he did not achieve much success in his new venture which is significant, nevertheless, for his protest against the increasing deterioration in Congress ideology.

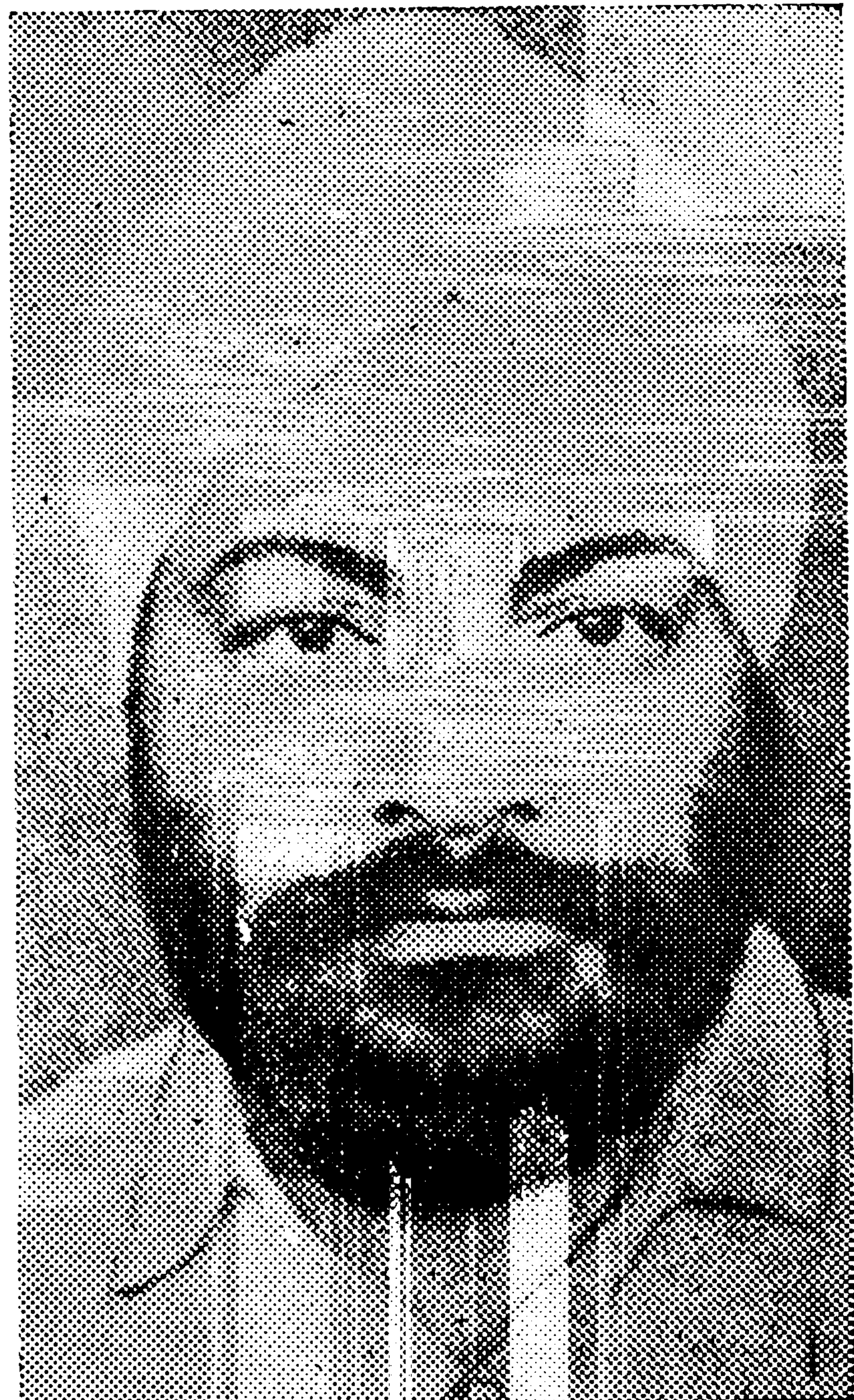
In addition to politics and professional work he found time to write a book, '*Constructive Programme as Defined by Gandhiji*', and a number of articles and pamphlets dealing with burning questions of the time. In recognition of his contributions the Punjab University, then located at Solan, conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D.

After a long public career packed with manifold achievements, he died on December 26, 1966.

GULAB SINGH

He was born in 1913 at Barki, a suburb of Gujar Khan now in Pakistan, the names of his parents being Wazir Singh and Gujri Devi. His father was a modest businessman belonging to the Bindra sub-caste.

Gulab Singh received his education first at the District Board Middle School, Gujarkhan and then at the Khalsa High School, Lahore from where he passed his Matriculation examination. During his stay at the Khalsa High School he was greatly influenced by one teacher, Dewan Singh, who by recounting great episodes from the pages of Sikh history inspired him for a similar heroic mission. Gulab Singh also took keen interest in the freedom struggles of Ireland and Italy and read with great interest biographies of Garibaldi and Mazzini. The other factors which stirred his mind were proceedings of various conspiracy cases and accounts of adventurous deeds of the Ghadrates and Babbars. Later, he came in close contact with revolutionary leaders, such as Chander Shekhar Azad, Bhagwati Charan, Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt, and himself became a revolutionary at the time when he was just 16 years of age. He was involved in the plot hatched in 1930 to derail the Viceroy's train at Delhi, when Bhagat Singh was in jail awaiting the day of his execution, Gulab Singh was an active party to the efforts of the revolutionary group to secure his release. The plot miserably failed with the death of Bhagwati Charan and almost all its chief organizers including Gulab Singh were arrested. He was tried in the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case, 1930 for seditious activities and bomb



explosions and sentenced to death on 13th December, 1933. Then, he was shifted to one of the condemned cells meant for people to be executed, but after a time his death sentence was commuted to life transportation. He was released on 13th February, 1946 after 16 years of imprisonment.

After Independence he joined the Socialist Party. Till then his belief had been that political liberty should have preference over social reform. His interest in the social and economic welfare of his people was, even then, never in doubt. He perceived the economic interest of Great Britain in retaining her hold on India and thought that the British deliberately ignored the growth of Indian industry. For the uplift of Indian villages he underscored the need of promoting cottage industries, but he regarded the development of heavy industry as equally necessary for the progress of the country.

He has written an account of his political adventures centring round what he described as his passionate beliefs : "Act so that others may be inspired to act similarly out of their own free will". The title of his book is *Under the Shadow of Gallows*.

His brother, Amrik Singh, was also a great freedom-fighter and was awarded death sentence in the same case. But his appeal to the High Court was accepted and he was released on 25th May, 1934.

Gulab Singh is still alive.

GURDIT SINGH (Baba)

He was born in 1860 at Sarhali, a place in District Amritsar of the Punjab, 24 miles from Amritsar and 12 miles from Tarn Taran. His father Hukam Singh was a petty peasant who had, besides Gurdit Singh, two sons and one daughter. His grandfather, Rattan Singh, had been a high-ranking military officer in the Khalsa Army and had fought against the British during the Anglo-Sikh Wars. Rattan Singh was so patriotic that he declined the British offer of a *jagir* after the annexation of the Punjab. Later on, Hukam Singh went to Malaya where he settled down as a contractor.

Gurdit Singh received little education in his childhood. He was admitted to a local school, Chubacha Sahib, where *Gurmukhi* and *Gurbani* (sacred literature of the Sikhs) were taught, but he did not like the harsh treatment of his teacher and left the school. However, at the age of 12 or 13 he privately acquired elementary education so as to be able to correspond with his father in Malaya. This incidentally enabled him later on to write an inspiring account of his *Komagata Maru* adventure under the title, '*Guru Nanak. Jahaj de Musafiran di Dard Bhari Katha*'.

Gurdit Singh visited Malaya in about 1885 but returned to India shortly after. He again went there in the beginning of the 20th century and conducted business in Singapore and Malaya as a contractor and became prosperous. He returned from there in 1909. In 1911 he raised his voice against forced labour, *begar*. He wrote to the Government complaining against officials who



forced poor villagers to work for them without remuneration, and when he received no response, he exhorted the people of his village to refuse to be subjected to *begar*.

Hearing of the intolerable new restrictions of the Canada Government on the entry of Indians into their country, he chartered a Japanese ship, *Komagata Maru*, in 1914 to meet the Canadian conditions of a through sea-voyage. The ship, renamed as *Guru Nanak Jahaj*, had a total of 372 passengers out of whom 351 were Sikhs and 21 Punjabi Muslims. The ship sailed from Hong Kong to Vancouver on April 3, 1914. The obstructions put up by the alien authorities and the hardships faced by its passengers turned them into staunch nationalists. When the ship reached Vancouver on May 22, 1914, it was not allowed to anchor and was attacked by the police at night. The attack was repulsed by the hungry passengers but it created a great stir among the Indians in Canada, and at one time they even planned to burn and destroy the city of Vancouver in case the passengers were attacked by a warship. The situation was saved by a timely agreement and the ship sailed back to India. It reached Budge Budge on September 29, 1914. However, the passengers were not allowed to enter Calcutta, they were rather ordered to board a Punjab-bound train especially arranged for the purpose. This they refused to do and a bloody scene was enacted. Many of the passengers were shot dead, a great many escaped. Baba Gurdit Singh himself escaped and remained underground for many years till in 1920 on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi he made a voluntary surrender at Nankana Sahib and was imprisoned for five

years. After his release he settled down at Calcutta where he died on 24 July, 1954.

GURMUKH SINGH (Baba)

Son of Sardar Hushnak Singh and Smt. Prem Kaur. Gurmukh Singh was born in 1888 at Lalton Khurd, District Ludhiana. He studied up to Marticulation at a Church Mission School of Ludhiana and was a school-mate of Kartar Singh Sarabha. In 1914 he decided to go to America. When he reached Hong Kong, he learnt about the new restrictions imposed by the Canada Government. Fortunately, he got a seat in the *Komagata Maru* of Baba Gurdit Singh. When the ship reached Canada, its passengers, notwithstanding that they had fulfilled the condition of a through voyage from India to America, were not allowed to leave their ship and enter America. After a great deal of suffering the ship sailed back to India with all its passengers. At the Budge Budge Ghat (Calcutta) where they landed, a serious clash occurred between them and the police. In the melee many of them were injured and arrested. Gurmukh Singh was able to effect his escape, but only for a short time. Three days later, he was captured at Calcutta and confined in the Alipur jail. After three months he was brought to the Punjab and was let off with internment in his own village. This was because the Maharaja of Kapurthala who was a member of the Inquiry Commission set up on this occasion was assured by somebody of his good conduct.

Though placed under orders of internment, Gurmukh



Singh did not change his attitude towards the Government. Kartar Singh Sarabha whom he had known from school days and Rash Bihari Bose had great influence upon his mind and on their advice he committed dacoities at Sanhewal and Mansuri, both in District Ludhiana, with a view to collecting money for political activities. He also made efforts to establish secret contacts with Indian soldiers in some of the Punjab cantonments. But all plans of Gurmukh Singh and his companions went away on account of betrayal of one of their colleagues.

Gurmukh Singh was among the many revolutionaries who were arrested after the disclosure of the plot. He was confined in the Lahore Central Jail and tried in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case along with others. On being sentenced to transportation for life, he was sent to *Kala Pani* (Andaman Islands). In 1919 he was transferred to the Madras jail for preaching sedition among the non-political prisoners of the Islands. The transfer created in his mind the idea of running away but he preferred to wait for a better opportunity. The desired opportunity came during his transfer from Madras to Manali (U.P.) in 1922. He jumped off a running train with his fetters on and escaped to the Punjab. From there, after some years, he proceeded to Kabul via Khybr Pass in company with Teja Singh Swatantar.

He carried on his political work from Kabul for a number of years. When the British Government learnt about his whereabouts, it exerted pressure on the Afghan King to surrender him. At this critical time Russia came to his rescue. Before he could be captured and surrendered,

He was secretly whisked away to Moscow. After a brief stay at Moscow, he planned to return to India via Italy and East Africa.

In 1934 he was rearrested on suspicion of being in correspondence with Ghadriles and transported to *Kala Pani* to complete the remainder of his incarceration which was now enhanced by six months by way of penalty for his 'misconduct'.

He remained in confinement on the Andaman Islands till 1945 or so. After that he was transferred to the Punjab and kept in the Multan jail. From there he was released in 1947 on the country's attainment of freedom.

After Independence he enrolled himself in the Communist Party of India and in the All-India Kisan Sabha. As such he has taken part in many Kisan *morchas*. He is also a co-founder of the Deshbhagat Yadgar Committee, Jullundur.

Though eighty-four years old now, he still has the spirit of a revolutionary in him.

GURMUKH SINGH MUSAFIR

He was born on January 15, 1899 at village Adhwal in District Campbellpur, now in Pakistan. The place, noted for producing soldiers, produced this poet, humorist and politician. He received his education at Rawalpindi and Lahore.

He started his life in a humble but noble way as a teacher in the Khalsa High School, Kallar. There he



worked under the headmastership of Master Tara Singh. His work of four years as teacher earned him the epithet of *Giani*.

The Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy of 1919 left a deep scar on his mind. When the Akali movement started in 1921, he resigned his post in the school to participate in it. He threw himself heart and soul into the struggle and found himself singing of the sufferings of the people and calling them to action through his sensitive and ringing Punjabi poems.

Though the movement was directed towards freeing Sikh religious places from the corrupt management and control of the hereditary class or *Mahants* or *Pujaris*, it assumed the character of a national struggle against the British Government, and the Indian National Congress naturally extended it to its full moral support. While leading a *jatha* in the Akali agitation, Gurmukh Singh Musafir was arrested for the first time in 1922. Some years after his release from imprisonment he was elected *Jathedar* (head) of Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar. This position he continued to occupy for many years. He was also for some years General Secretary of the S.G.P.C. as well as of the Shiromani Akali Dal.

When the Civil Disobedience movement was started in 1930, Gurmukh Singh took an active part in it and on account of that was imprisoned for one year. In 1930, he became member of the All-India Congress Committee, an honour that has rested with him up to now.

Musafir was Chief Editor of the widely read Punjabi Paper, *Akali* from 1937 to 1940. In 1940 he gave up this

responsibility on account of his differences with Master Tara Singh. Through his writings in the columns of this paper he did his best to promote the Sikh as well as the national cause.

He was again arrested during the Individual Satyagraha movement of 1940. In 1942 he attended the All-India Congress Committee meeting held at Bombay, and as this meeting took the decision of starting the Quit India movement against the Government, he was arrested immediately after his return to the Punjab. He remained in the jails of Shahpur and Sialkot till his release in 1945. While he was in jail, his father, one of his sons and a daughter died. He refused to be released on parole even in face of such tragedies.

In 1947 he was elected a Congress member of the Constituent Assembly which gave the country her present constitution. After the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, he became a member of the first Indian Parliament and has retained this position up to now.

During the post-Independence period he played a significant role in building up the Congress in the Punjab. He was chosen President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee in 1949 in recognition of his meritorious services in the national struggle for freedom. He was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 61st Session of the Indian National Congress. Although he has always preferred to be a member of the Parliament rather than a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, he has always maintained his keen interest in Punjab politics. For a few months in 1966 he even held the Chief Minister-

ship of the newly carved-out Punjabi Suba.

In 1954 he attended the Stockholm Peace Conference as an Indian delegate.

Apart from his involvement in political work, Gurmukh Singh Musafir has actively participated in the literary and cultural renaissance in the Punjab.

He is the author of a number of books of Punjabi poetry and short stories. Most of them have a direct or indirect bearing on the freedom movement. Though seventy-three now, he is assiduously engaged on writing books on Punjab martyrs.

HARBANS SINGH (Giani)

He was born at village Sirhala Khurd, District Hoshiarpur. His father, Khem Singh, was an army Havaldar. When he retired from his service and returned to settle down in his village, he sought the co-operation of his people in opening a school in the village on nationalist lines, where education should be free for all children. The appeal that he made on this occasion evoked an immediate response. He said, "Brothers, the schools started by the British are preaching slavery. Let us boycott them and open a national school of ours in which children should receive education free of charge".

In 1921 Havaldar Khem Singh and his younger brother Surjan Singh were arrested for taking part in the Akali movement and the school was forcibly closed. At that time Harbans Singh was studying at the Khalsa School,

Baddon. Hearing of the arrest of his father, he consulted some of his school friends and forthwith left his studies to take an active part in the Akali struggle against the British. At that time Guru Ka Bagh Morcha was in full swing. Giani Harbans Singh immediately proceeded to Amritsar and joined one of the Akali *jathas* commissioned to take part in the said *morcha*. Along with other members of the *jatha*, he was subjected to ruthless *lathi* blows which he braved with unique courage and composure of mind. After the *lathi*-charge he was arrested and detained in the Campbellpur jail. While in prison, he was again subjected to harassment and torture but he remained undaunted as before. After his release he joined the Babbar Akali Party in the conviction that only revolutionary methods could be effective in fighting an enemy like the British. The Babbar movement was, however, crushed by the Government. But Giani Harbans Singh was lucky enough to survive and take part in subsequent national movements.

In 1930-31 he participated in the Civil Disobedience movement of the Indian National Congress and had to undergo imprisonment for one year.

After the outbreak of the Second World War (1939-45), Harbans Singh again became active in his anti-government activities. Suspecting him, the Government posted a police *chauki* at his village Sirhala Khurd. But he proved too clever for the Police and went underground to carry out his revolutionary programme. A big reward was announced by the Government for anyone who helped them effecting his arrest. For a long time he could not be

traced. But then through the treachery of a colleague of his, he was arrested at village Jama Rai, District Amritsar. A dangerous man as he was considered, he was at once removed to the Lahore Fort where he was put under trial for charges connected with the Kalka Shooting Case and the Kiratpur Murder Case. The court sentenced him to death and he was hanged on 3rd April, 1944.

HAR DAYAL (Lala)

Lala Har Dayal played a very important role in the struggle for India's independence. He was born at Delhi on October 14, 1884. His father, Gauri Dayal Mathur, a Reader in the District Courts at Delhi, was not a man of wealth but was a scholar of Persian and Urdu. Har Dayal was the sixth of his seven children.

He received his school education at Delhi. For higher education, he sought admission in the Government College, Lahore from where he took his Master of Arts degree in English Literature, standing at the top of the list of successful candidates. In another year, he did M.A. in History and established a new record in the University. He was awarded a State scholarship by the Government of India which entitled him to a three years' course of post-graduate studies at Oxford in England. Going abroad he studied for the Honours School of Modern History. Like many young Indians, he had the ambition to take the I.C.S. examination. But he soon dropped the idea and plunged into the struggle for freedom of India.

In England he developed close associations with revolutionaries and reformers like C. F. Andrews, Bhai Parmanand, Shyamaji Krishana Varma etc. By becoming a member of Abhinav Bharat, a revolutionary association, he came in close contact with Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. There after he began to contribute profusely in the *Indian Socialist*. He went further registering his protest against the British oppression of Indians, especially the arrests of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh in 1907, he resigned his State scholarship in England and returned to carry on political work at Lahore. On his way to the Punjab in January, 1908, he halted at Poona where he met B. G. Tilak and G.K. Gokhale. Later, he left his wife who was expecting her first child at Patiala and adopted the life of a wandering monk. He began to dress simply, eat frugally and think deeply. On the advice of Lala Lajpat Rai, Har Dayal started a centre at Lahore for the training of young men. During these days he regularly contributed articles to the *Modern Review* and *The Punjabee* and openly associated himself with the revolutionaries. His influence upon students particularly was very great and a large number of them became his followers. As the situation became tense, he left India and reached London in September, 1908.

With the murder of Sir W. C. Wyllie by Madan Lal Dhingra, Indian revolutionaries in London shifted to Paris. Har Dayal accompanied them and inaugurated the *Bande Matram*, a monthly journal, in September, 1909. On July 8, 1910, the leap of the younger Savarkar created a great sensation in the world. Har Dayal tried hard to get Savarkar repatriated but all in vain. Finding Paris



uncogent for revolutionary activities, Har Dayal left for the U.S.A via West Indies and South America. In January, 1911 he reached Boston and soon after left Harvard to meet Bhai Teja Singh, a prominent Punjabi in U.S.A. From Harvard he went to Honolulu and then to San Francisco. Here in collaboration with Bhai Parmanand, he began to work for the rejuvenation of his countrymen. With the help of Sikh settlers in California, he instituted six scholarships for Indian youth who would choose to work for the welfare of India. As his popularity increased and the First World War drew closer, he helped to organise the Ghadar movement in U.S.A. In 1913, he was General Secretary of the Hindustan Gadar Party, also called Hindi Association of Pacific Coast. With the help of contributions from Indians abroad, a press was established and a paper, the *Ghadar*, was brought out in many languages. As Har Dayal was the real brain behind the movement, the British Government pressed the U.S. Government to arrest him. Consequently, he migrated to Germany and in October, 1914 sought German support for the liberation of India.

Distressed at the attitude of the German Government, he left Germany in October 10, 1918 for Stockholm and finally settled down in Sweden where he earned his livelihood by teaching and lecturing. He stayed in Sweden till October, 1927 when the British Government granted amnesty to all political refugees and with that Har Dayal was able to return to England. In 1928, twenty years after he had said goodbye to the University of Oxford, he decided to do from the same learned institution his doctorate on *Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*

in October, 1931 he submitted his thesis and was awarded the degree. Next year, his thesis was published in London. From now onward he followed only literary pursuits.

Har Dayal stayed in England for about 10 years. In September, 1938 he left for U.S.A. to deliver lectures at various Universities over there. It was at Uppsala in Philadelphia that he breathed his last on 4th March, 1939.

HARI KRISHAN

He was born in 1912 at a small village called Ghalladher in District Mardan of North-Western Frontier Province. His father, Gurdas Mal, was a great patriot and took deep interest in the freedom struggle. Himself an excellent marksman, he took special pains to train his sons, particularly Hari Kishan, in this art. When eighteen years old, Hari Kishan came to Lahore in the company of his cousin, Chaman Lal Kapur, who had secret connections with revolutionaries of the Punjab. This was the time when Bhagat Singh and his comrades had been sentenced to death and were shortly to be executed. Hari Kisan was introduced to Durga Das Khanna, Ranbir Singh of *Daily Milap* and Virendra of *Daily Partap*. A plot was hatched to shoot down the Punjab Governor, Geoffrey Montmorency on 22 December, 1930, when he would be presiding over the Convocation of the Punjab University, Lahore. Hari Kishan, for his proficiency in pistol shooting, was selected for the task in preference to a few other persons. He entered the Convocation Hall on a borrowed



entry pass and carried his pistol hidden in the cavity of a book, undetected by police guards. As Dr. Radha Krishnan was sitting by the side of Governor, Hari Kishan delayed his work and fired only after the function when the Governor was moving out. He wounded his arm but failed to kill the Governor as the chair on which he stood disturbed the steadiness of his hand. One Sub-Inspector of Police, Chanan Singh, was killed on the spot. Another Sub-Inspector of Police, Wadhawa Ram, and one English lady were wounded. Hari Kishan refused to escape and was arrested immediately and imprisoned in the Central Jail, Lahore. As a prisoner, he expressed a wish to meet Bhagat Singh. When it was refused, he went on hunger strike, so that the wish had to be granted and Bhagat Singh was brought to his room for a few minutes. A little later, he was shifted to the Lahore Fort where he was subjected to all kinds of tortures. He was sentenced to death on 26th January, 1931. The sentence being confirmed the Punjab High Court, he was executed on 9th June, 1931 in the Mianwali jail.

Hari Kishan's father, Gurdas Mal, was extremely sad that his son had failed to hit the mark. He was constantly harassed by the police after Hari Kishan had been arrested. 52 different cases were filed against him. He survived his son only by 25 days. His age at that time was 48 years.

Durga Das Khanna, Ranbir Singh and Chaman Lal Kapur were also arrested in connection with the same shooting case. But nothing could be proved against them and they were all released by the High Court.

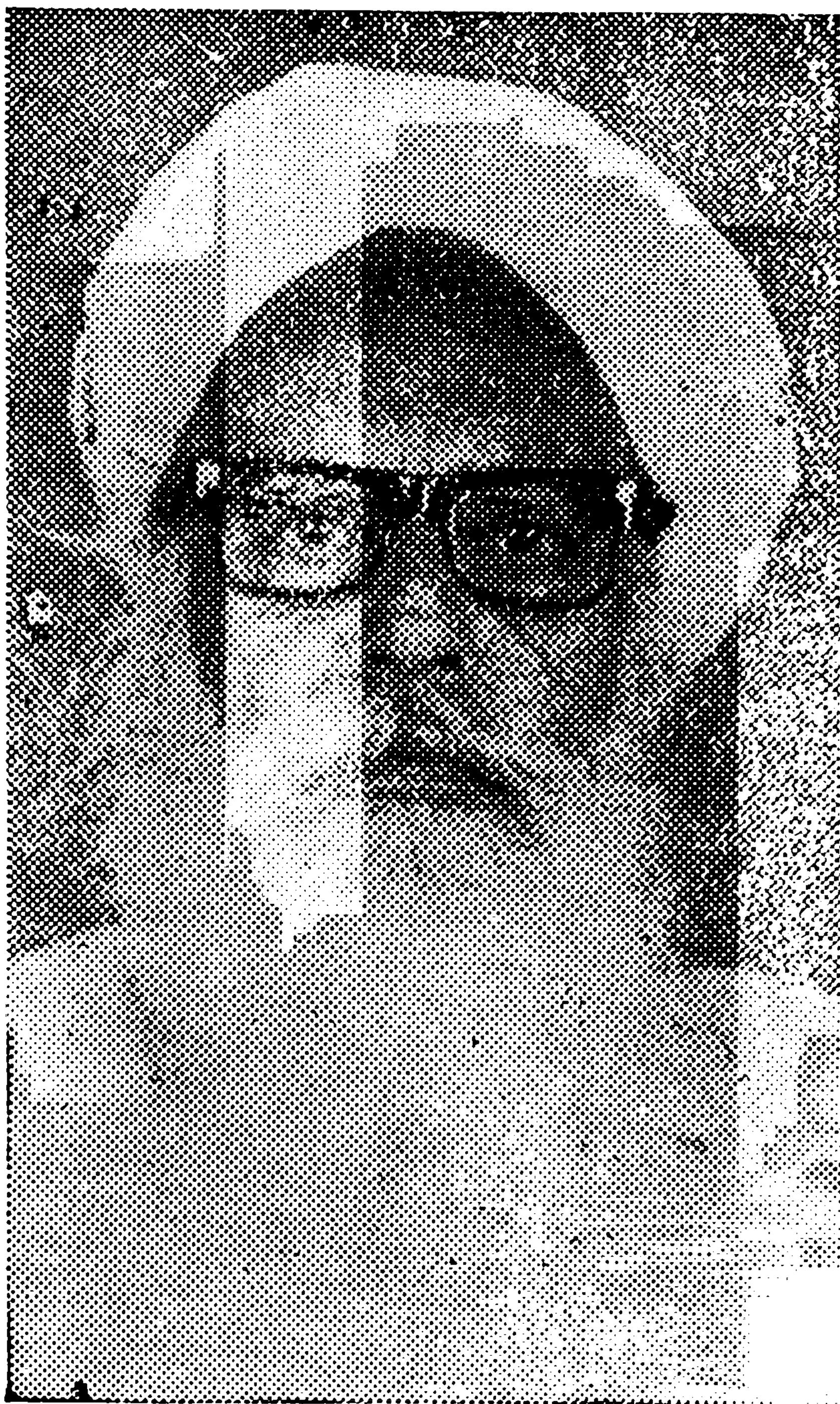
One of Hari Kishan's brothers was Jamna Das who later helped Subhash Chander Bose in slipping away through the Khyber Pass in the guise of a Pathan.

HARI SINGH (Master)

Hari Singh was born in March, 1902 at village Dhost Kalan, Tehsil Bhunga, Kapurthala State. His father, Ishar Singh, hailed from a common peasant family. After passing B.A. examination and doing one year's course of B.T. training, he became a teacher in a private High School. Later, from 1930 to 1937 he served as Headmaster of the Khalsa High School, Baddon, District Hoshiarpur.

While he was a teacher, he began to work in the States People's movement. He was one of the founders of the Punjab Riasti Praja Mandal in 1928 and also one of its Secretaries. He was one of the prominent organizers of the All-India States Peoples' Conference held at Lahore in 1929 at the time of the historic session of the Indian National Congress. He was elected to the Assembly of Kapurthala State in 1929-30. He was also member of the Committee constituted to recommend constitutional reforms for the State. In 1934-35 he led an anti-feudal peasant struggle in Kapurthala State. In March, 1935 he led a demonstration against the Maharaja of Kapurthala at the Delhi Railway Station. On account of that he was imprisoned for one year.

In 1937 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly from District Hoshiarpur on Congress ticket. In the same year he was elected President of the Punjab



Riasti Praja Mandal. As such, he was among the chief organizers of the All-India States Peoples' Conference held at Ludhiana in 1938. At this meeting he was elected a member of the Standing Committee of the All-India States Peoples' Conference. In 1939 he was arrested in District Hoshiarpur and prosecuted in connection with four speeches made by him in support of the Lahore Kisan Morcha against the increase in land revenue made by the Unionist Ministry. He was sentenced to nine months' jail in each case. In May, 1940 he was arrested under the Defence of India Rules and was detained in the Deoli Detention Camp in Rajasthan along with other leftist prisoners. While there, he participated in the famous hunger strike which led to the winding up of that Detention Camp and repatriation of all security prisoners to their home provinces. He was then confined in the Special Jail, Gujarat and in November, 1942 was sent home for village internment from which he was released in October, 1945 after the termination of World War II.

In 1946 he became General Secretary of the Punjab Kisan Sabha which led peasants' struggles in the Harsa Chhina Moga Morcha, Nilibar tenants' struggle and Patiala tenants' struggle.

After Independence, he remained underground from 1948 to 1952 for being a member of the Executive of the Punjab Branch of the C.P.I. He was specialized in the problems of agricultural labour in the Punjab and helped to build up a 40,000 strong union of agricultural workers.

In 1962 he was elected member of the Punjab Legislative Council and remained so till 1970. During the same

period he served on several important Committees of the legislature, such as Public Accounts Committee. He also worked as a member of the Punjab Government's Taxation Enquiry and Resources Committee from July, 1969 to November, 1971.

He has been a member of the National Council and Central Control Commission of the C.P.I. for 12 years. He is now leading a retired life at Chandigarh.

HARI SINGH USMAN (Baba)

He was born in 1880 at Baddowal, District Ludhiana. After serving in the British Indian Army for a short spell, Baba Hari Singh, then a young man of 27, went to U.S.A. in 1907 to earn his livelihood. Being a man of sturdy build, he could have earned a lot through sheer hard labour, but instead, found the atmosphere choking because the slave Indian coolies were an object of contempt and ridicule in a free society. This aroused feelings of patriotism and national pride in him and he plunged heart and soul into the Ghadar movement launched by Lala Hardyal, Baba Sohan Singh and other revolutionaries. In 1914, taking advantage of the weakness of the British power, caused by her involvement in a global war with Germany, the Ghadar party planned an armed uprising in India. Baba Hari Singh was entrusted with the delicate and dangerous task of accompanying the ship laden with arms and ammunition, procured with German assistance, to centres of rebellion in India.

But the British Naval Intelligence got scent of the



adventure, and after a hot pursuit forced Babaji and his compatriots to consign the ill-fated cargo to the sea and take refuge in Java (Indonesia). Babaji retired deep into the jungle and mountaineous territory of Java and with the active assistance of an Indian settler assumed the name and acquired the passport of a Pathan servant, Usman Khan, who had recently died.

The gates of his return to India having been sealed with Government directions to shoot him at sight, he was obliged to settle down in Indonesia. There he married a local beauty of Sandanish race and Muslim faith and with the help of the German Consul to Indonesia, got jobs in tea, rubber and coffee plantations. The years that followed made substantial additions to his fortune and family.

But the patriotic fervour still kept burning in the deep recesses of his soul. The Second World War provided India with another opportunity to break the shackles of slavery. He readily offered his services to the Japanese who were then giving tough time to the British. In liaison with their secret service, he started working among the Indian forces in South-East Asia to arouse their patriotic feelings against British imperialism. He played a significant role in the foundation of the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army and became Secretary in the Overseas Recruiting Department in the League Headquarters, which role brought him in close contact with Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. Here on the South-Eastern Front his eldest son Hira Singh Handry who was born and brought up in Indonesia, laid down his life fighting for the freedom of his Fatherland.

Though a friend and admirer of the Japanese for their valour and valuable assistance, Baba Usman openly criticized them for their imperialistic designs on India and the alleged rape of Indian womanhood at the hands of their soldiers in the occupied territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. For this outspokenness, he had to suffer many insults and injuries.

In 1945 when the war ended, Baba Hari Singh Usman went back to Indonesia, but his restless spirit gave him no peace. The Indonesian struggle for Independence was in full swing and his sympathies were naturally with the native population. This earned him the wrath of the ruling Dutch. On the charge of helping the rebels he was captured, mercilessly beaten and put behind the bars along with other Indonesian patriots. On another occasion, a group of religious fanatics nearly cut his life short.

With the help of some Indian merchant friends in Jakarata, he secured his release from prison, and in October, 1948, set foot on the soil of free India, after an absence of 41 years, to spend the rest of his days in his ancestral village, Baddowal. He died on 15th August, 1969.

Though without a formal higher education, he was a man of letters in his own right. In 1914, after Kartar Singh Sarabha had left U.S.A. for home, Baba Hari Singh took up the Editorship of the Punjabi section of the Party organ *The Ghadar* for sometime. A few of his poems were then published under the pen-name *Faqir*. His poetic narration of the events of the Second World War in 757 stanzas of 4 lines each running into 127 closely written

pages, is the only writing of its kind in Punjabi. Besides, he wrote five *Qissas* and about 50 short poems on varied topics in Punjabi and Urdu, making the best use of his well-earned rest. In Urdu prose, he wrote some essays concerning youth, character and the country. All these works were written under the pen-name *Gumnam*—the unknown—and still remain unpublished.

The following cloth banner which is characteristic of the man, appears on one of the walls of his house at Baddowal :

Free Thinker

Hari Singh Usman

Na Hindu Na Musalman

HARKISHAN LAL (Lala)

He was born on April 13, 1864 at Leiah in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan, now in Pakistan. He graduated with Honours in Mathematics in 1887 and then went for higher studies on a State scholarship to the Trinity College, Cambridge (England). After completing his studies there he returned to India in 1890. For a time he worked as a teacher of Mathematics at the Government College, Lahore and as a teacher of Persian at the Oriental College, Lahore.

He began to take part in national politics soon after his return from abroad. He attended the 8th annual session of the All-India Congress in 1892.

In 1896 he turned to business and floated the Bharat

Insurance Company. One of the clauses in the constitution of this Company said that none of its shares could be held by non-Indians. During 1901—1906 he helped to promote and organize a number of new companies, such as the Punjab Cotton Press Company, the People's Bank of India, the Amritsar Bank and the Cawnpore Floor Mills. When the Punjab National Bank was established, he became its Honorary Secretary. In all such ventures, his outlook was patriotic and his object was to help in building up the national economy of the country on the basis of principles of *Swadeshi*.

Having done his Bar-at-Law, Harkishan Lal started practising law in 1913, first at Dera Ismail Khan and then at Lahore.

Many years after, he was elected President of the Political Conference at Jullundur which was held on 18th and 19th April, 1919. He was arrested in the same year in connection with the Martial Law disturbances in the Punjab and was tried by a special tribunal on various charges including conspiracy and waging war against the King Emperor, attending an unlawful assembly and circulating rumours and being member of the new revolutionary Committee formed on April 12, 1919. He was convicted and imprisoned in the Lahore Central and Mianwali jails but was released shortly before the Indian Congress met in Amritsar in December, 1919.

He died on February 13, 1937.



HARKISHAN SINGH SURJEET



Born on 23rd March, 1916 at Bandala, District Jullundur, he received education up to Matriculation. He was still at school when he started his association with the national movement. In 1930 he joined the Naujawan Bharat Sabha which had been founded by young revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and Bhagwati Charan. After the execution of Bhagat Singh and his friends Rajguru and Sukhdev, young Harkishan Singh participated in the Civil Disobedience movement. Though he was a minor at the time, he was arrested and imprisoned for a period of four years in 1932 for his seditious activities. After he was released from Jail, he joined the Communist Party of India. In 1936 he became a co-founder of the Kisan Sabha in the Punjab. Henceforward, his interest lay not merely in the political content of liberty; its social and economic contents exercised equal pulls on his mind. In order to propagate his ideas widely among the people, he started a journal called *Dukhi Duniya* from Jullundur. But the repressive policy of the Punjab Government came in his way and he had to shift to Saharanpur from where in 1938 he brought out the paper under a new name, *Chingari*. The same year he was elected Secretary of the Punjab Kisan Sabha.

When the Second World War broke out, all important Communist leaders were rounded up and detained in Rajasthan. Harkishan Singh was one of these detainees. He was released along with other comrades in 1943.

His political activities were intensified after 1947, as to his mind Independence was no more than attainment of

political liberty. In 1951, he was elected Secretary of the State Committee of the C. P. I. Two years later, his services to the Party were recognized by giving him a seat on its Politburo.

After some years when internal differences of the C. P. I. led to a split and a new organisation under the name of the C. P. M. (Communist Party of India-Marxist) was established, he threw in his lot with the new party which elected him to its Politburo in 1967.

But his active association with the Kisan movement remained unaffected. Rather, he became a key figure in it and in 1969 was elected Vice-President of the All-India Kisan Sabha.

At present he is one of the central figures of his Party, C. P. M. Besides, he is Editor of the Party's Punjabi paper, *Lok Lehar*.

He is author of a book called *Future of Kashmir* in which he has put forth the stand of his Party on this vital matter.

HARNAM SINGH SAHARI (Babu)

He hailed from the village Kahari-Sahari of District Hoshiarpur and was son of Sardar Labh Singh. He passed the Middle examination at the age of 16 and then got military service in Risala No. 30 at a salary of eleven rupees per month. While in service he came in close contact with Balwant Singh *Shahid* and the two became fast friends. After serving in the army for about a year



and a half he resigned his service and came back to his village to partake of his father's burden. In 1907 he decided to go abroad and actually left for Canada the same year in December. On reaching there he got admission in an educational institution and studied for three years. On the completion of his course he got employment in the India Trading Company which had floated by some Indian settlers over there. The *Ghadar* movement was yet to start in America when he took up the work of promoting national consciousness among his countrymen. For this purpose he brought out an English newspaper called *Hindustan*. The Government of Canada disapproved of his political activities and ordered him to quit Canada within 48 hours failing which he was threatened with immediate deportation. So, he had to leave the country but after sometime the orders of externment were rescinded and he was allowed to return to Canada.

In 1911 he proceeded to California and got admitted in the Barkeley University for higher studies. When the *Ghadar* paper was brought out in 1913, he completely identified himself with its aims and objects and frequently contributed articles to it. Babu Harnam Singh was one of those people who worked actively to help the passengers of the *Komagata Maru* in their distress and was taken in custody along with some of his friends while holding secret parleys with them. Immediately, he was sentenced to deportation under emigration laws. At this critical time his countrymen in California came to his rescue and got him released on bail by making a deposit of 2,500 dollars as security money. Later on, when it appeared that the

case was going against him, the security money was quickly withdrawn and he was sent off to India with a view to helping the cause of revolution in his own country. On his way back, after passing through Japan and China he decided to stay in Siam (now Thailand) and Burma. Here he resumed his national work enthusiastically and tried to win over Indians, both in the army and outside, to the cause of revolution. In this work he had Sohan Lal Pathak as his close associate and helper. While working for a revolt against the British in Burma, he was suddenly arrested and detained in the Mandalay jail. A special court was created to try the case, which sentenced him to death. Before he could be executed, he managed to run away from the jail but only to be recaptured soon after. He was hanged on 14 August, 1914.

HARNAM SINGH TUNDILAT

Born in 1884 at Kotla Naudh Singh, District Hoshiarpur, Harnam Singh was known as *Tundilat* as he lost one of his arms in explosion while engaged on manufacturing of bombs. Being the son of a poor Jat farmer, Gurdit Singh, he could not continue his schooling beyond the 5th class and got no more than a rudimentary knowledge of Urdu and Persian. The Singh Sabha movement of the Sikhs, however, made deep impact upon his young mind, for which reason he grew up liberal and enlightened in his social and religious beliefs.

For some years in his early life he served in the Indian Army. At the age of 22, he left India for the United



States. From there he made a short visit to Canada, returning to the United States in 1909-10.

While staying in the United States, Harnam Singh received his political education from Lala Har Dayal and other revolutionaries who happened to be functioning there at the time. He joined the *Ghadar* movement in 1914. Regarding the foreign rule as a curse, he, like most of the Ghadriles, believed that the majority of "our ills are due to our slavery". He also believed that armed revolt was the only way to liberate India.

Being in the confidence of Lala Hardy, Harnam Singh started as his bodyguard, in which capacity he had constant association with the Lala whose inspiring leadership and ideology had deep effect upon him. He wrote Punjabi poems in the magazine of the Party and gradually rose to the position of a member of the Board of Editors of the paper. During his stay at San Francisco, he learnt from one Mr. Jack the technique of manufacturing bombs. And it was here that in a mishap he lost his right hand.

Soon after the outbreak of the First World War, he returned to India. After getting into the Punjab, he went from village to village, inviting the people to revolt against foreign rule. At Lahore, he met Rash Bihari Bose. In revolutionary work in India he was the right hand man of Kartar Singh Sarabha.

When the Government of India grew suspicious of his activities, he along with Kartar Singh Sarabha decided to flee the country. However, when he reached Peshawar, he changed his mind, thinking that it would be a cowardly

act on his part. Soon after he was arrested and tried in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case. The court sentenced him to death but later the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and he was transported to the Andamans. While there, he went on hunger strike to press the demands of fellow-prisoners. After undergoing imprisonment at places such as Madras, Poona, Bombay, Mianwali and Ambala, he was released in 1930 on grounds of ill health.

After his release he joined the Kirti Kisan Party and later on, the Communist Party which was born out of it. On account of his political activities, he was again imprisoned in 1941 and was detained till 1945. This valiant soldier of freedom died in 1962.

HIRA SINGH BHATHAL (Baba)

Son of an agriculturist, Sardar Chanan Singh, Hira Singh was born in 1899 at village Bhathal, District Phul, erstwhile Nabha State. He passed only the Primary examination. When he came of age, he joined the Indian Army as a Sepoy. Though he was posted in France at the time of Jallianwala Bagh massacre, his mind was deeply stirred by the tragedy so that he pledged to devote the rest of his life to the struggle for the country's freedom. On 21st June, 1919 he was dismissed from military service on account of his 'undesirable' activities.

The annual session of the Central Sikh League for the year 1920-21 was held at Lyallpur. Hira Singh attended the meeting. When he returned to Nabha, he was arrested



and sent to jail for five months. After his release he was interned in his village. In 1922 he participated in the non-cooperation movement by burning foreign cloth and making a speech against the government. The result was that he was sentenced by a Nabha Magistrate on three counts to two years' imprisonment and confiscation of property. When he was released, he was convicted of another

sedition and deported from the State. He remained in exile upto 1945.

From Nabha he shifted his activities to Patiala territory, where shortly after he was arrested at Kanjhala (Dhuri) and sentenced for one year. He was confined in the Patiala jail when Sewa Singh Thikriwala was also there. When he was freed, the police continued to shadow him. At one time he caught hold of a Sub-Inspector, Yakub Khan, of Patiala State and tied him to the wheel of a *gadda* (bullock cart).

In 1930 Hira Singh participated in the Salt Campaign with his whole family. Again in 1932 the whole family courted arrest in Delhi. The same thing happened in 1946 when the Nabha Satyagrah took place. Thus, all the members of the family, Hira Singh, his wife Harnam Kaur and their six children were freedom-fighters—perhaps a unique feature in the whole history of our freedom movement. Another feature, equally interesting, about the sufferings undergone by the family is that two of the children were born in jail.

Hira Singh with his family was in prison in 1947

when India got Independence. But better days were not far off. With the dawn of Independence the Nabha Ruler changed his mind and restored the confiscated property of Hira Singh.

After Independence, in 1952 Hira Singh fought election from the Sherpur Constituency and won. His rival Gurbakshish Singh forfeited his security deposit. In 1967 again he contested election but lost it to Hardit Singh Bhathal.

Hira Singh is now leading a retired life at his native place, Bhathal which has furnished the suffix of his name. Both husband and wife are receiving, as political sufferers, a monthly pension of Rs. 60 each from the Punjab Government.

IFTKHARUDDIN

Iftkharuddin (Mian) was born in 1907 into a renowned Mian family of Lahore. His father Jamaluddin, a rich landlord, was for some time Parliamentary Secretary in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Mian Iftkharuddin was related to Begam Shah Nawaz, Chief Justice Sir Abdur Rashid and Mrs. Mian Muhammad Shafi. After receiving education at the Aitchison College, Lahore, he proceeded to England and graduated from the Balliol College, London. In early thirties he again went abroad and visited almost all European countries and the U.S.A. On his return to India, he joined the Indian National Congress and in a short time became a leading spokesman of Congress politics in the Punjab Province. He became President

of the Provincial Congress Committee in 1940 and was elected Secretary of the Congress Legislature Party during his tenure of membership of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. He was imprisoned for two years on account of his active participation in the Quit India movement of 1942.

As a member of the Indian National Congress, he stood for national unity, communal harmony and casteless society. He favoured constitutional and non-violent methods for achieving independence. He was an uncompromising nationalist, a severe critic of British imperialism, and a staunch opponent of the ruling unionist party. He advocated that landholdings below fifteen acres should be exempted from land revenue and that the incidence of water-tax, *Abiana*, should be shifted to landed aristocracy. He was also a strong protagonist of education. Besides compulsory education up to the Primary standard, he emphasized the need to re-orient education to the requirements of Indian society.

But his nationalism did not go deep enough. In 1946 he left the Congress and joined the Muslim League and thereby became a separatist. In 1947 when communal riots broke out in the Punjab, a Peace Committee was set up. He served on that Committee but no practical good came out of it. Among other members of the Committee were Master Tara Singh, Swaran Singh, Gopi Chand Bhargava and Bhim Sen Sachar.

After Independence, he functioned as Minister of Rehabilitation in the Pakistan Government. In 1950 he was elected President of the Muslim League but in the

same year was expelled from the party. Thereafter, he founded a new political party of his own, named Azad Pakistan Party.

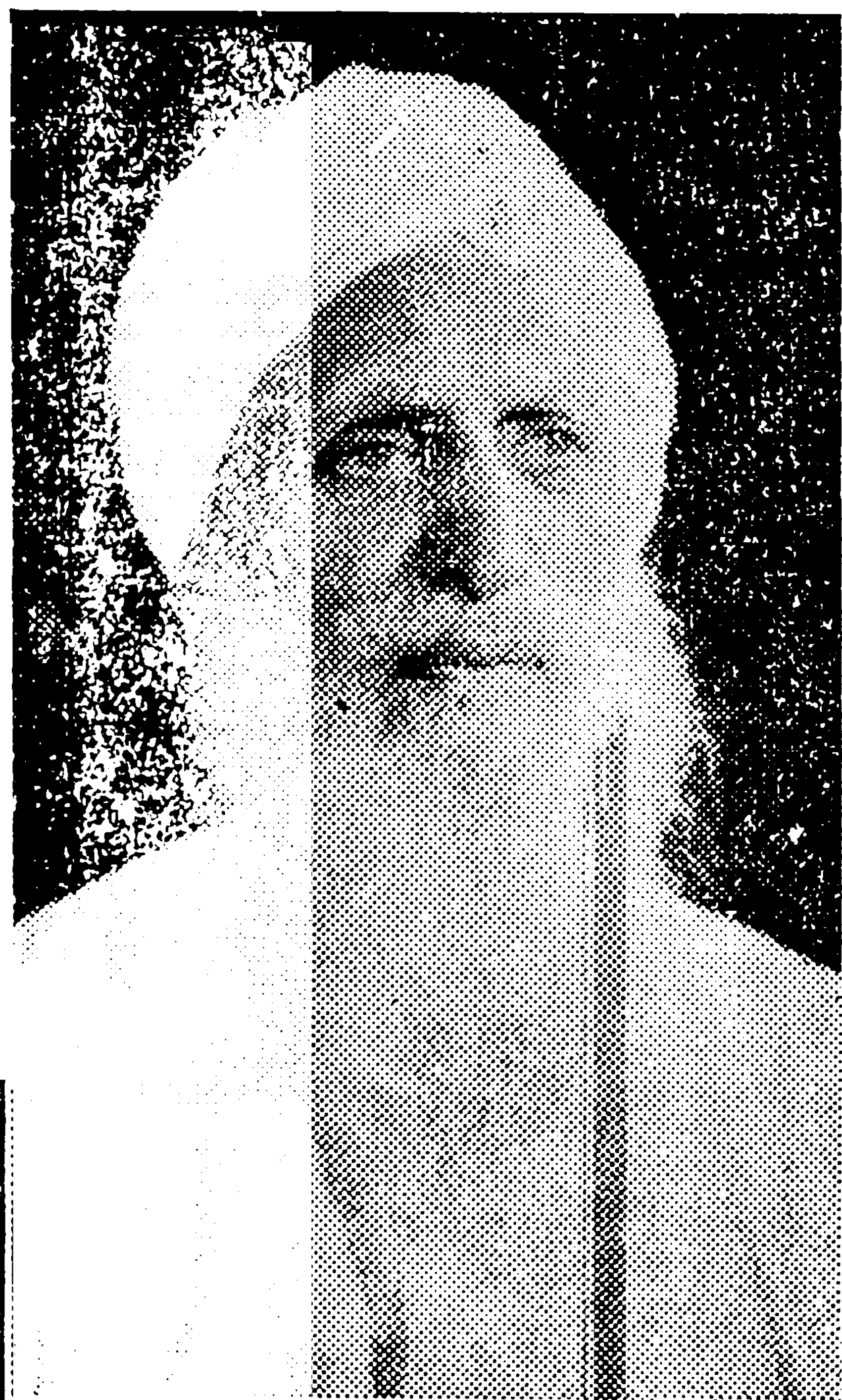
He died on 1962.

ISHAR SINGH MAJHAIL

It was in January, 1901 that Ishar Singh Majhail was born at Shahbazpur, Chak No, 60, District Lyallpur in the Punjab. His father, Sardar Asa Singh, gave him school education at Khalsa High Schools of Ambala and Ludhiana. After passing his Matriculation examination, he studied at the Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar.

Even as a young student Ishar Singh Majhail was deeply interested in politics. The urge proved so strong as to pull him of his studies and the year 1923 saw him squarely poised in the political arena of the Punjab. Then followed a career of hectic political activity. He got himself enlisted in the Indian National Congress in 1923 and was imprisoned for five months for his political activities. Sometime later, he was again arrested and imprisoned for a period of two years for his participating in the Nabha agitation (Jaito Morcha). In 1929 he was interned for a year. Further internments came in 1938, 1939 and 1942. In 1942 he was confined in jail for two years for taking part in the Quit India movement.

In 1946 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly. After partition in 1947 he was appointed Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation, Civil Supplies,



Industries, Forests and Agriculture. He maintained his position as Minister till 1950 when the Bhargava Cabinet resigned in difference to the wishes of the Congress High Command.

Ishar Singh, before his retirement from active politics, was one of the most eminent figures in Sikh politics. He was General Secretary of the Reception Committee of the Sham Singh Akali Congress held in 1938 at Attari. He held prominent positions in the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (S. G. P. C.). He was elected General Secretary of the Shiromani Akali Dal in 1945. In Akali politics, Ishar Singh Majhail, Udham Singh Nagoke, Darshan Singh Pheruman and some others represented the left wing and were closer to the Indian National Congress than other Akali leaders, such as Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh.

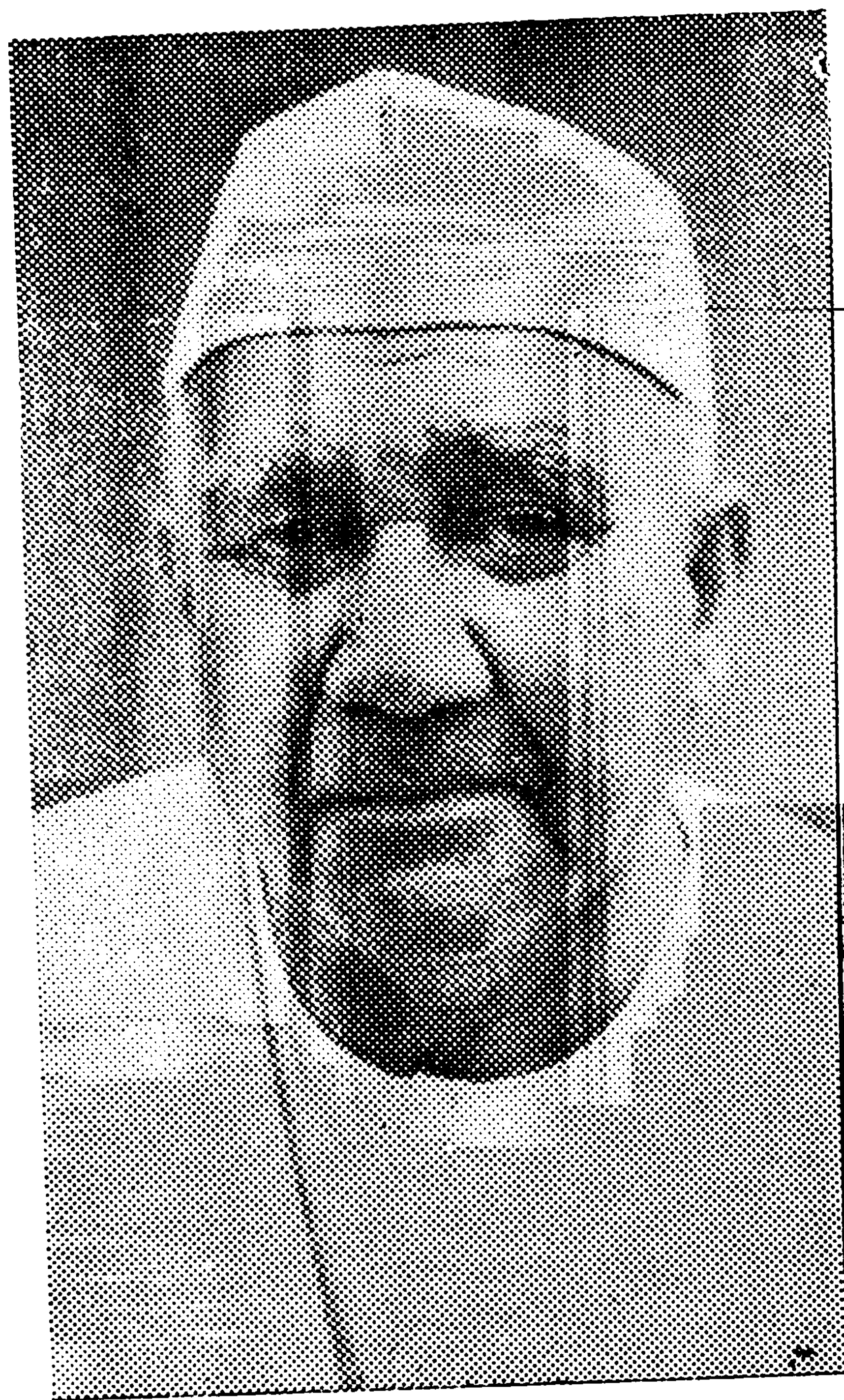
He was President of the Durbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Committee, Amritsar from 1939 to 1949. Before that he occupied the office of the Vice-President of the same body for a number of years.

JAGAT NARAIN (Lala)

A Chopra Khatri by caste, he was born at Wazirabad, District Gujranwala (now in Pakistan) in 1889. He graduated from the D. A. V. College, Lahore in 1919. After that he joined the Law College, Lahore but left his studies in 1920 at the call of Mahatma Gandhi and joined the non-cooperation movement. He was arrested in

1921 and was sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment. In jail he stayed with Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders and acted as Lalaji's Personal Secretary. In 1924 he joined Bhai Parmanand's Weekly Hindi paper *Akashvani* as Editor. He participated in all the *Satyagraha* movement launched by the Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and was in jail for about nine years on different occasions. His wife and other members of the family also suffered on account of their participation in the freedom movement. His wife was in jail for six months and so were his minor sons and daughters. His eldest son, Ramesh Chandra, was arrested in the Quit India movement and detained for a few months.

Lala Jagat Narain was President of the Lahore City Congress Committee for seven years and leader of the Congress Party in the Lahore Corporation. He was member of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for more than thirty years and member of the All-India Congress Committee for about the same number of years. After partition he was member of the Jullundur Municipality and member of the Jullundur improvement Trust for a period of 5 years each. In 1951 he was elected General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and was given the charge of organising the party campaign in the General Election of 1952. He himself was one of the candidates put up by the Congress. After his election as member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, he was included in the Punjab Cabinet headed by Bhim Sen Sachar as Minister of Education, Transport and Health. As Minister he had the credit of nationalising transport and school books up to the 8th class. He was



Chairman of the Ludhiana and Delhi Maternity Hospitals in 1954 and 1955 and has been occupying this position now again for the last four years. During the year 1954-55 he was also President of the All-India Northern Sewa Samiti.

He left the Congress Party in 1956 on account of certain differences with the Congress High Command. He was elected to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha in 1956 and to the Rajya Sabha in 1964 as an independent candidate. In 1968 he joined the B.K.D. but left it in 1969. He is a widely travelled man and has the reputation of a leading journalist of the Punjab with over 40 years of experience. He is Leader Writer in the Hindi daily *Punjab Kesri*, Jullundur and the daily *Hind Samachar* (Urdu), Jullundur.

JAGAT SINGH

An eminent martyr of the *Ghadar* movement, Jagat Singh *alias* Jai Singh was born at village Sursingh, District Lahore (now District Amritsar). He was son of Arur Singh, a much respected farmer of the place. Before Jagat Singh went abroad he served in Risala No. 35 of the Indian Army, but after a short time he got fed up with military service and left it. Having an adventurous bent of mind he did not like to stay at home and went to China where he took up the assignment of a watchman for a short period. After sometime he proceeded to Canada and got employed in a certain mill in which about 300 Indians were working. These Indians had

raised a local *gurdwara* and had set up a committee of seven membris to manage it. Jagat Singh was elected member of that committee within a brief span of his arrival there.

The free atmosphere of Canada made a deep impact upon his sensitive mind and he realized that he had a duty to work for the freedom of his Motherland. He, therefore, regarded the formation of the Ghadar Party in 1913 as a godsend. When the first World War broke out in 1914, the Ghadriles of America decided to send bands of freedom fighters to India with a view to raising a rebellion against the British. Jagat Singh arrived with one of the first batches. Such members of the band as escaped the clutches of the police immediately engaged themselves in revolutionary work. But their efforts did not quite succeed and most of their secret centres of activity were captured by the police. However, they remained undaunted and decided to send the most daring among them out of the city of Lahore so that the work could be continued. Jagat Singh was one of the people selected for the job. While, he and his companions were going in a tonga in Lahore, all of a sudden a few police men stopped the tonga and asked its passengers to accompany them to a nearby police station for search and investigation. The Ghadriles had pistols on their persons and instead of complying with wishes of the police men, shot down a few of them. One of Jagat Singh's companions was caught on the spot. Jagat Singh himself tried to escape but was soon overtaken and arrested. He was tried in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case and sentenced to death and hanged.

During the time Jagat Singh was engaged on his



revolutionary work, he took part in political dacoities in Ludhiana and Amritsar, helped in the manufacturing of bombs and endeavoured to seduce Indian troops at Sargodha.

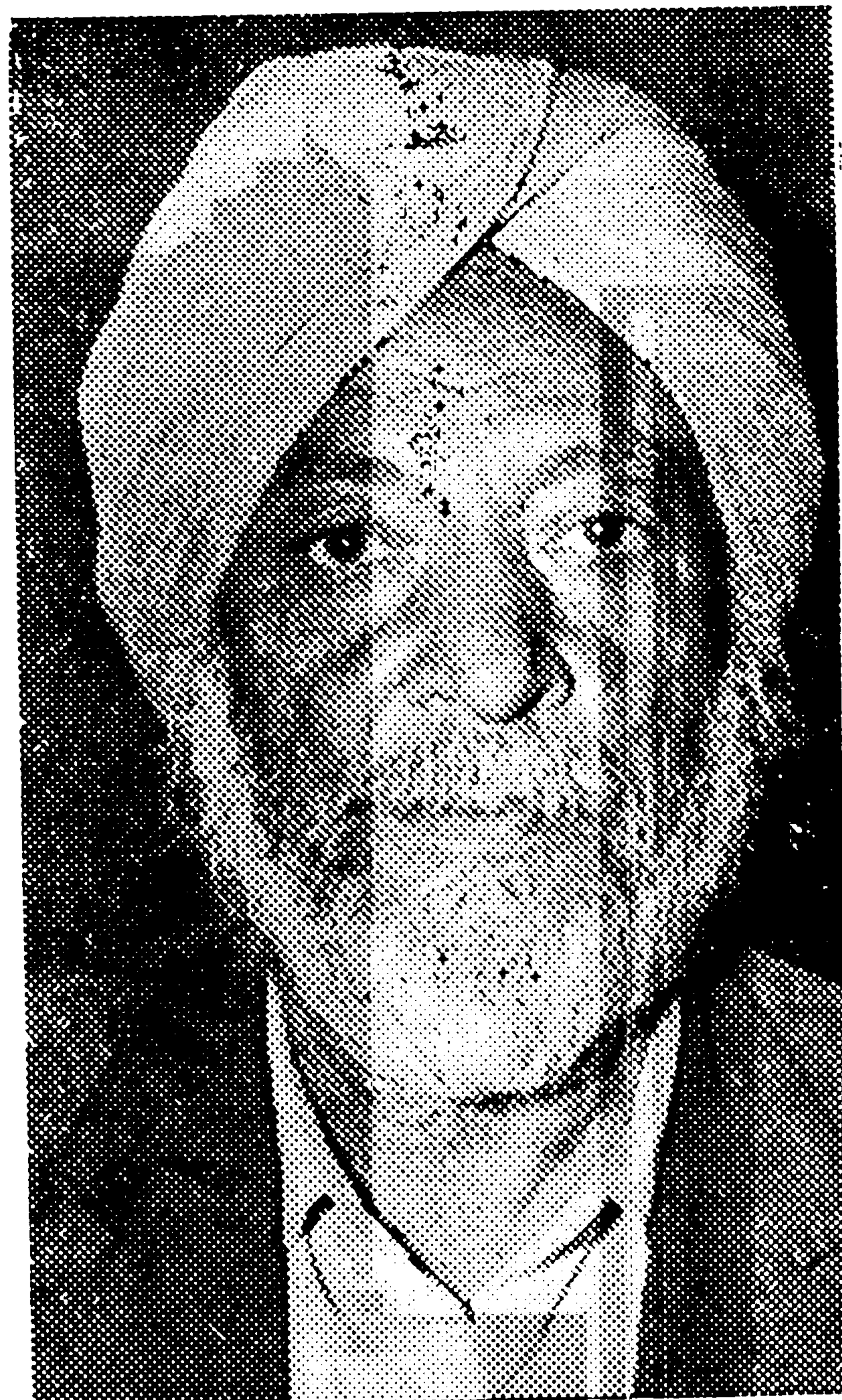
He was reputed for his hefty physique and leonine heart.

JANGIR SINGH JOGA

Son of Sardar Uttam Singh Chahal, he was born on 11th October, 1908 in village Joga, District Bhatinda. After completing Primary education at his village school he joined the Rajindra High School, Bhatinda. Just when his Matriculation examination was two months off, he left his studies and joined the non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi. He and 25 of his companions were tried on the charge of picketing foreign cloth shops and sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the Lahore Central jail. After his release he joined the Akali movement which was then in full swing. He played a leading role in the *Jaito morcha* and soon grew prominent enough to become General Secretary of the Akali Jatha, Patiala State. Later when a vigorous agitation started in the Punjab States against the continued detention of Sewa Singh Thikriwala, he became a leading participant in that. He was one of the four delegates of the Punjab States (others being Bhagwan Singh Longowalia, Hira Singh Bhathal, and Sant Ram Nabha) who attended the Calcutta sessions of the Indian National Congress. There they moved, after consulting fellows-delegates from other

Indian States, a non-official resolution demanding of the Congress to extend its activities to the Indian States, but the resolution could not be adopted. All the same, they successfully persuaded Mahatma Gandhi to set up a Congress sub-committee to assist the people of the States to form a separate organization of their own. Thus was born in 1928 the Praja Mandal which held its first session at Bombay the same year.

On the eve of the Simon Commission's visit to Patiala in 1929, a big meeting was held at Thikriwala to chalk out a programme for the boycott of the Commission. The meeting was declared unlawful and Jangir Singh with eight other leaders was arrested and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. On the same occasion he was deprived of his office of *numberdarship* (headship of village). When he was released after a year, he found the country being swayed by the Civil Disobedience movement. He together with many of his erstwhile companions, such as Harnam Singh Dharmgarh (Patiala) Shamsheer Singh Langri (Jind), Chanan Singh Dangarh (Nabha), Kartar Singh Kalsan, Bhagat Singh Tatogal (Dhuri) and Hari Singh Margind was rearrested and detained for one year more for participating in the movement. As soon as he secured his release, he found another trial waiting for him on the charge of leading a band of *Satyagrahis*. The result was another term of one year's imprisonment. Back from jail, he brought out in 1933 from Amritsar a weekly newspaper called *Desh Dardi* with a view to consolidating the Praja Mandal movement in the Punjab States. The paper lost its security deposit twice and once its Editor, Jangir Singh Joga, was awarded three months'



imprisonment for writing an 'objectionable' editorial note. The paper had to be closed after 5 years. But Jangir Singh never stopped his political activities. Up to 1946 he had to go to jail as many as fifteen times. He was in jail even when the country was celebrating Independence in 1947. During the period ending with 1947, he adorned the offices of General Secretary and President of the Punjab States Peoples' Conference on several occasions.

In 1948 he resigned his membership of the Congress on account of his differences with Sardar Patel, the Union Home Minister of those days, and became a member of Communist Party of India. Ever since he has been participating in all agitations launched by this party and consequently has served several more terms of imprisonment in Punjab jails. In 1953 while in jail he was elected to the Pepsu Legislative Assembly in absentia. In 1957 he won his first election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and since then has been member of this august body without any break.

In course of his participation in the struggle for freedom he had to pay, on various occasions, a total fine of Rs. 15,000, besides the confiscation of his personal property.

JANGIR SINGH PHAGUWALIA

Son of Sardar Waryam Singh and a great political figure of the erstwhile Patiala State, Jangir Singh was born in 1899 at Phaguwal, Tehsil and District Bhawanigarh.

Before he entered politics, he was a soldier in the Indian Army serving with 14 Sikh Regiment which he joined on 11th November, 1917 at Multan. The places where he was required to perform his military duties were Kabul and Mesopotamia. While in Mesopotamia he was twice confined for short periods for his insistence on wearing black turban and *kirpan*, to prominent symbols of Sikh resurgence at the time. Unnerved by the growing national consciousness of the Sikhs, British authorities had imposed a ban on the wearing of these articles, arousing, as was to be expected, a strong resistance movement among the Sikhs.

At the time of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Jangir Singh was posted at Multan. Such was the impact of the incident on his mind that he and his companions in the Unit solemnly resolved that in case any such occasion arose, they would fire at the British and not Indians.

His service record being unsatisfactory, he was dismissed from service and he remained in confinement in Masopotamia for six months.

When he returned home after his release, the Guru ka Bagh Morcha was in progress. He actively participated in it by organizing *Akali jathas* along with Wazir Singh Daftriwala and Pritam Singh Gojran. In the Jaito agitation which followed after a year or so, Jangir Singh's part was even greater. On account of that he was arrested and sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment and confiscation of property in 1924. The place of his incarceration was the District Jail of Bhatinda.

In 1929 the veteran Akali leader, Baba Kharak Singh,



conducted a hurricane campaign in the Patiala State criticising the State authorities for the continued detention of Sewa Singh Thikriwala. Jangir Singh was a leading figure in the agitation and was severely beaten for his activities.

With the establishment of the Praja Mandal in the State the movement against the State Government was intensified. Jangir Singh extended his full support to it and shortly after, was appointed its Secretary. In that capacity he participated in the Praja Mandal agitation at Amritsar in 1933. Consequently, he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment which was subsequently extended by two years.

The Master Tara Singh-Maharaja Bhupindra Singh Pact of 1935 was a clever manoeuvre of the Maharaja to weaken the movement against him by driving a wedge between the Akalis and the Praja Mandal. Jangir Singh bitterly opposed the Pact, for which reason he was arrested and sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment by a Bhawanigarh court. The sentence was later reduced and he was released before time.

During the period of his confinement, the Praja Mandal movement had taken a new turn and had fallen under the dominant influence of Communists and urban Hindus. Therefore, after his release he had second thoughts on the matter and patched up his differences with Master Tara Singh and was present at the Bhawani-garh Akali Conference in 1943.

Three years later, Jangir Singh again had differences with Master Tara Singh and set up a seprate organization

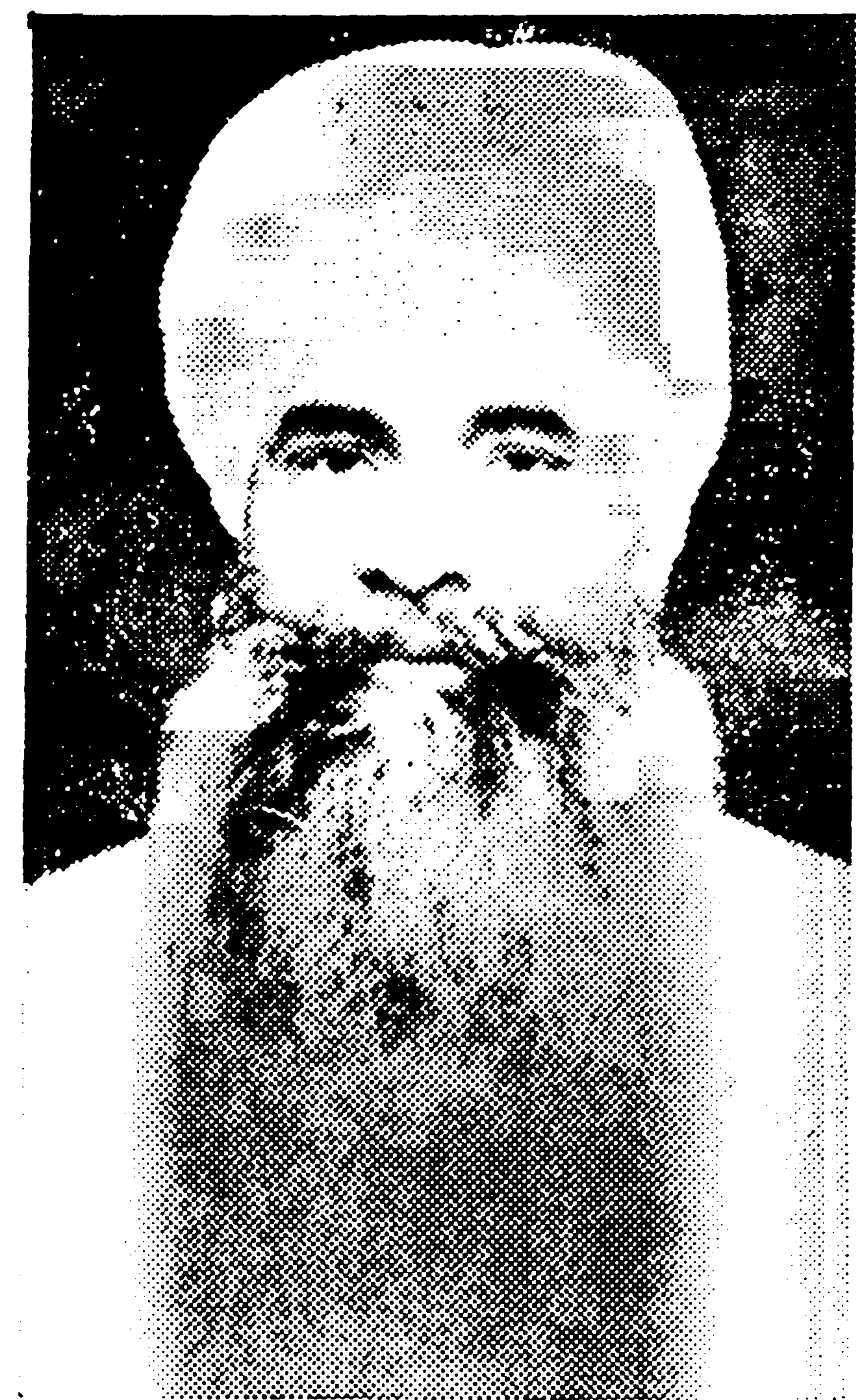
called Malwa Akali Dal and pursued an independent line of policy.

After 1947 he supported the formation of Pepsu but was opposed to its merger with the Punjab. For a time he was successful, because the merger took place only after 1956. In 1954 he won election to the Pepsu Assembly on Akali ticket. His second electoral victory was won the elections of 1967 when he contested a seat of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

At present he is living a retired life at his native place, Phaguwal and is drawing a pension of Rs. 70 per mensem as a political sufferer.

JAWALA SINGH (Baba)

He was born in village Thatian, District Amritsar, sometime during the sixties of the nineteenth century. His father was a small land-owner and the family eked out their living with great difficulty. Like many other daring Punjabi peasants of those days, Jawala Singh proceeded abroad in search of better economic prospects. He left India in 1905 and went to California via China, Panama and Mexico. Reaching there he purchased a piece of land and started farming in collaboration with Baba Wasakha Singh. After he had been in California for a few years he realized together with some other Sikh settlers the urgent need of having a cultural centre where they could meet occasionally and discuss matters of common interest. For this purpose a *gurdwara* was built up.



Stockton, which subsequently became a centre of a revolutionary activities.

The freedom and liberty that people enjoyed in America created a deep impression upon his young mind and with a view to making his own countrymen imbibe that spirit, he invited four students from India to study there and all their expenses were met by him. His patriotic spirit earned him great popularity and he was elected President of the California Branch of the Indian Association, the first organization that had been set up by the Indian settlers over there to guard their interests. The inhuman and discriminatory treatment meted out to them by the natives and the unsympathetic attitude adopted by the British Indian Government in the matter created a powerful feeling in the minds of Jawala Singh and his friends that the root cause of all their troubles and hardships was their political subjection. Once this feeling was born, the timely outbreak of the First World War created the necessary opportunities to strike a blow for the attainment of their objective. Taking advantage of the favourable turn in the situation, Baba Jawala Singh, Baba Wasakha Singh, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna and Lala Hardyal toured the Pacific Coast impressing upon their people the urgent need of a powerful political organ to bring about a revolution in India. The new organ that thus came into being was the famous Ghadar Party with the *Ghadar* as its vehicle of political propaganda.

The main aim of the party being to organize an armed rebellion in India, several batches of revolutionaries were sent to India. Baba Jawala Singh was one of the principal

leaders of the first big batch which left San Francisco for India on 29th August, 1914 by the ship called *Korea*. From Hong Kong a new ship *Tosha Maru* was hired for the onward journey to India. At Singhapur Jawala Singh and some other leaders tried to win over the loyalty of Indian regiments and to incite them for a national revolt against the British, but not much success was achieved.

As soon as they landed at Calcutta, most of them were arrested including Baba Jawala Singh and all their plans were frustrated. In 1915 the Baba was tried in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case and was sentenced to life imprisonment. He remained in jail for 18 years and was released in 1933. When he was serving his term in the Andaman Islands, he went on hunger-strike against the inhuman treatment of prisoners by the authorities.

After 1933 he identified himself with the cause of peasants and workers and worked for the Punjabi paper *Kirti* which voiced their grievances. For his new activities he was rearrested in 1935 and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. But this did not affect his zeal and he continued his work as usual. When he was on his way to Bengal to attend a session of the All-India Kisan Conference, he met an accident on the way and died in 1938. His whole life was a life of dedication to the national cause.

KANSHI RAM (Pandit)



A Joshi Brahmin, Pandit Kanshi Ram was one of the founder-members of the Ghadar Party. He was born in 1883 at village Maroli Kalan, District Ambala, in the house of Pandit Ganga Ram. After passing his Matriculation examination from Patiala, he learnt telegraphy and got employment in the District Office, Ambala City, on Rs. 30 per month. He was married at the early age of ten.

Kanshi Ram embarked on a revolutionary career about the year 1903 after he had gone to America and seen with his own eyes the miserable plight of his countrymen over there. Though he was just a labour contractor in a timber factory, he soon became well known on the west coast on account of his revolutionary ideas. He was a great admirer of Sufi Amba Prasad and Lala Hardyal and among his close associates were Sohan Singh Bhakna, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Santokh Singh and G. D. Kumar. Before the Ghadar Party was founded, Kanshi Ram was a prominent member of the Indian Association and a founder of the Indian Independence League at Portland. The Ghadar Party, when founded, owed much of its success to the intellectual and financial contribution of Kanshi Ram. At the very outset of the Ghadar Party's career he made a handsome donation of 200 dollars towards its funds. As Propaganda Secretary and later as Treasurer he rendered meritorious services both in the consolidation and expansion of the Party.

When the Ghadar Party decided in 1914 to send bands of freedom-fighters to India, Kanshi Ram readily offered his services. On his arrival in India in October, 1914 he

selected Ludhiana as the centre of his activities. An essential part of the programme being to spread sedition among Indian soldiers, Kanshi Ram visited several army cantonments and explained the aims and objects of his Party.

To secure more funds for the implementation of the secret plan, he decided with the help of a band of 15 revolutionaries to plunder the Moga Government Treasury on November 25, 1914. Somehow, the police came to know of their design and tried to intercept them. A violent clash occurred in which a Sub-Inspector of police and a *Zaildar* were shot dead. But the contemplated attack failed to materialize and Kanshi Ram and some others were arrested. They were tried and sentenced to death and confiscation of property in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case. On this occasion Kanshi Ram was asked by the Judge, "why don't you apologize and secure your release?" 'I have done my duty and now you do yours', was the prompt reply of Kanshi Ram. He was hanged on 27th March, 1915 and his property worth rupees forty thousand was confiscated.

A few days after his execution two boxes containing arms hidden in false bottoms arrived for him from a merchant of Japan. Kanshi Ram had left these arms in Japan with a merchant and had promised 1000 yens to him if the boxes arrived safely in India.

KARTAR SINGH DARVESH



A veteran freedom-fighter, Kartar Singh Darvesh was born at Sangrur in October, 1907. His father's name was Sada Singh.

He was initiated into politics by the Akalis when he was only fourteen and was studying in the seventh class at the Raj Singh School, Sangrur. He was arrested on 9th September, 1923 for taking active part in the observance of the Nabha Day. But he was soon released. In 1924 he was taken in custody by the State Administration headed by Shri Bihari Lal Dhingra for his getting a few articles published in newspapers eulogizing the role of the Akalis.

He was arrested again in January, 1929, this time for extending a welcome to Baba Kharak Singh who had launched a movement against Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala for his high-handedness and enmity towards the Akalis, particularly Sewa Singh Thikriwala.

On 26th January, 1930 fell the first anniversary of India's declaration of Independence. The occasion was publicly celebrated at Sangrur. Kartar Singh was held responsible for this and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. Again on June 11, 1931 he was arrested by the Jind State authorities for his participation in the Akali *morcha* launched with a view to forcing the Maharaja of Patiala to insert names of the peasants of the Bala Wali area in place of his own name as owners of land in revenue records. He was kept in detention until January, 1931. In the later part of the year 1931 there was another *morcha* in Jind State. Kartar Singh took active part in it and was detained for six months.

In 1933 the Jind State authorities arrested him under the Phulkian State Act according to which the Rajas of the Phulkian States, in sympathy with one another, could arrest anybody suspected of creating mischief in any of these States. On this occasion he was sentenced for one year.

After the outbreak of the second World War he was arrested in October, 1940 under the Defence Act of Jind State and was confined in a detention camp at Dadri uptil March, 1941. After his release his movements were restricted to the limits of the Sangrur Municipal Committee and he was ordered to report his presence twice a day at the Sangrur Police Station for one full year. In 1943 he was again hauled up by the State authorities under the Defence Act of Jind State and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

In 1945 as Secretary of the Akali Jatha Sangrur he led the movement against the unjust and tyrannical rule of Mr. Kaula, Prime Minister of Jind State and an arrogant henchman of the British. The result was another term of detention for him.

KARTAR SINGH (Giani)

A middle-class farmer's son, he was born in 1901 at village Nagoki, District Lyallpur (now in Pakistan). He matriculated from Khalsa High School, Lyallpur. After that he sought admission in college with a view to receiving higher education but owing to an attack of smallpox he had to cut short his studies. From quite

early days in his career he had the inclination of his mind towards politics. Political writings of Bhai Parmanand and Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, particularly, had deep effect upon his mind. As a youngman of 18, he participated in the historic Amritsar procession taken out a few days before the occurrence of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. Two years later he zealously took part in the non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi. The Akali agitation which commenced in 1921 had even greater fascination for him. He took part in both Guru Ka Bagh and Jaito *morchas*. In the Jaito *morcha* he headed a *jatha* of 41 *Satyagrahis*, for which reason he was arrested and jailed for 6 months. In 1924 he became prominent enough to become a member of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal. In 1930 he took part in the Civil Disobedience movement and hence he was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

He was returned to the Punjab Legislative Assembly in the provincial elections of 1937. From now onwards his role assumed even greater significance. Being a member of the Panthic Party he became the chief lieutenant of Master Tara Singh in the championship of Sikh rights. With the Muslim League's Pakistan resolution passed in 1940, the danger to Sikh interests in the Punjab loomed large, on the horizon. Kartar Singh was bitterly opposed to the League's demand for vivisection of the country and stood for the freedom of an undivided India. The struggle was hard and long because the Government appeared to have a soft corner for the Muslim League. He together with other Sikh leaders opposed the Cripps Plan |

as well as the Cabinet Mission Plan as being hostile to Sikh interests. To make the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan more difficult he posed the Sikh demand for Khalistan. But India had to be divided despite all his efforts to the contrary.

After partition he played a leading role in the rehabilitation of displaced people from West Pakistan. When the Shiromani Akali Dal was merged with the Congress Party, he was included in the second Bhargava Ministry as Minister of Education and Revenue. During his tenure of office he tried his level best to promote the cause of Punjabi language and literature. In particular, he tried to solve the thorny language problems facing the new State and the well-known Sachar Formula was largely his contribution to the settlement of the problem. In the heyday of his career he was considered the brain of the Akali Party.

Though still living, he is in a critical state of health and may not be with us for long.

KARTAR SINGH JHABBAR

A popular hero of the Akali movement of 1921-25, he was born in 1874 at village Jhabian, District Sheikhpura, now in Pakistan. His father, Teja Singh, was a well-to-do Virk Jat agriculturist. For want of local facilities, the father did not pay much attention to the education of his son except that he sent him to the local *gurdwara* school where Kartar Singh picked up elementary knowledge of *Gurumukhi*. But later, on his own Kartar Singh



joined the Gurmat Vidyala at Amritsar and became well-versed in Sikh literature. The training at the Vidyala also made him a fine speaker and a good writer. After that he settled down at Lahore and took to preaching of Sikhism in the city as well as the countryside. His stay at Lahore continued for seven years. Besides Sikhism he was interested in promotion of education. In 1917 he started a Middle School at Sacha Sauda, District Sheikhpura.

The great national stir aroused in 1919 over the agitation against Rowlatt Bills and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy turned him a nationalist. He actively participated in the demonstrations against the Black Bills and delivered a series of lectures against the atrocities perpetrated by the Government. Consequently, he was arrested and after a mock trial was sentenced to death. But fortunately, the death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He was taken to the Andaman Islands for incarceration. Once again fortune smiled upon him and he was released in 1920 as the result of a Royal clemency.

Even when he was back home in the Punjab, Government kept strict surveillance over his movements. He was now a confirmed Congressite and spoke bitterly against authorities.

His predominant interest, however, was in the field of *gurdwara* reform. Completely fed up with the immoral ways of *mahants* and *pujaris*, custodians of Sikh shrines, he advocated direct action and organized a strong band of Sikh crusaders for forcible occupation of *gurdwaras*. He played a leading role in the expulsion of *mahants* from

Har Mandir Sahib and Akal Takhat (Amritsar), Babe di Ber (Sialkot), Punja Sahib (Hasan Abdal), Sacha Sauda (Sheikhupura) and the *gurdwaras* of Nankana Sahib. His second imprisonment took place immediately after the Nankana tragedy. This was for a period of 5 months. In 1925 he was arrested for the third time for anti-Government speeches. This time he was subjected to severe tortures with the result that his health suffered a great setback. He remained in jail till December, 1928.

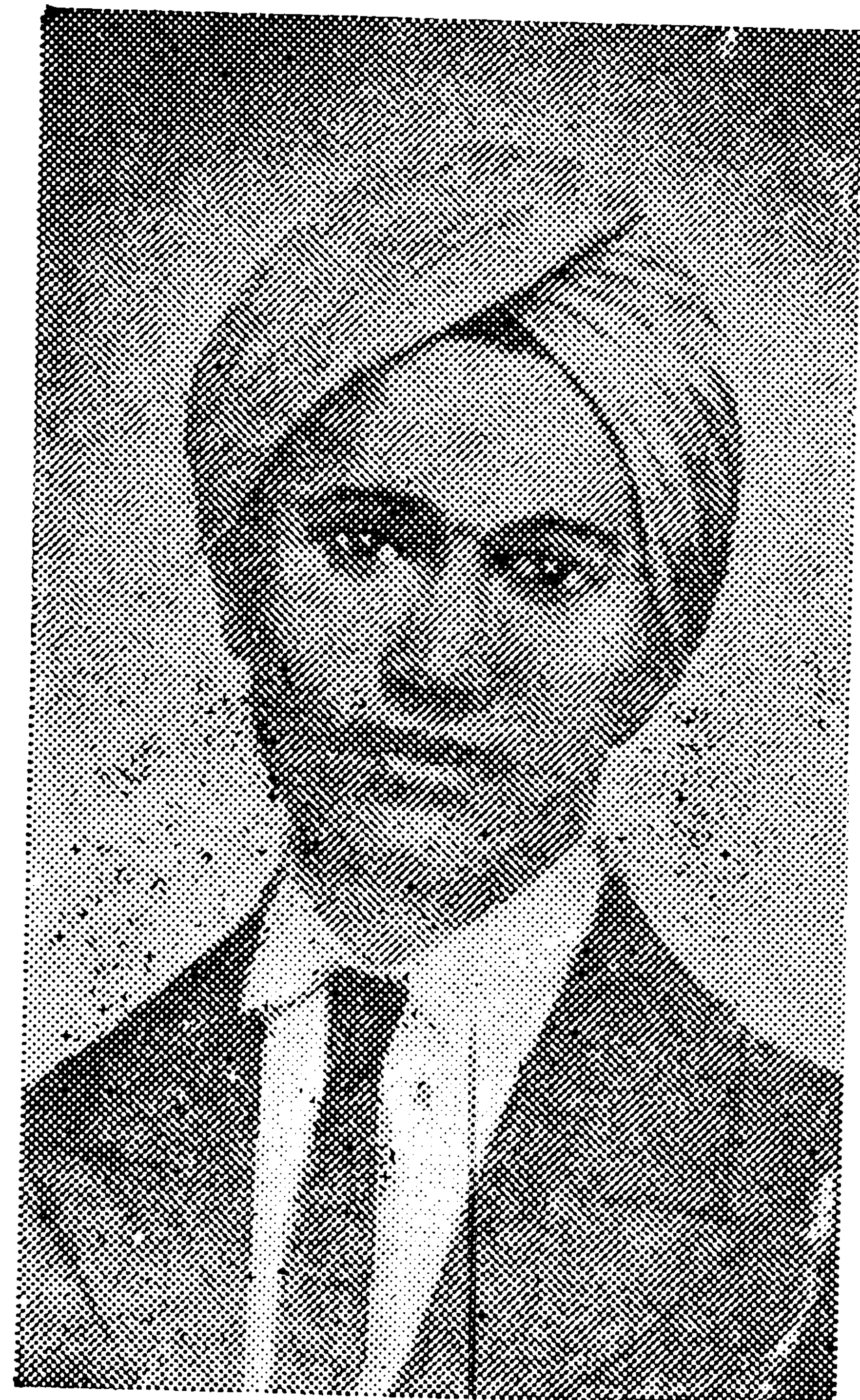
In 1935 the police cooked up a false case of murder against him. He might have been hanged but for the timely intervention of the Maharaja of Patiala.

After the passage of the Gurdwaras Act, 1925, Kartar Singh led a quiet life at his village devoting himself mainly to religion. Even so, he could never tolerate any challenge to his community from any quarter and in time of need was prepared to sacrifice his all for its sake.

He died on 20th November, 1962 at Habri in District Karnal.

KARTAR SINGH SARABHA

One of the most eminent freedom-fighters of our country, Kartar Singh was born in 1896 at Sarabha, District Ludhiana. His father's name was Mangal Singh. He passed the Matriculation examination and thereafter joined a college but did not pursue his studies further because of his father's untimely death. Otherwise, too, he did not take much interest in his studies. In 1910 Kartar Singh proceeded to San Francisco (U.S.A.). Those



were the days when national consciousness was fast growing among Indians residing in America. Kartar Singh's young and sensitive mind quickly imbibed the influence and he became an ardent nationalist. The *Ghadar* newspaper was actually his child and to begin with, he bore practically the whole of its burden. Later on, however, some other people came forward to share the work with him. About the same time, he trained himself in the mechanism and repair of aeroplanes.

After the outbreak of the first World War, Kartar Singh returned to India and became a collaborator of noted revolutionaries such as Babu Rash Behari Bose and Babu Surinder Nath Sanyal who were working secretly to bring about a political revolution in the country. Kartar Singh selected the Punjab as the centre of his activities and commenced his work with political dacoities in a bid to collect arms and money for the contemplated revolution. Attempts were also made to establish secret contacts with Indian soldiers in military cantonments. When preparations were complete, 21st February, 1915 was fixed as the day of rebellion. Unfortunately, however, one of his confidants, Kirpal Singh, divulged the secret to the Government. The result was that the whole plot was frustrated by the vigilance of the police. Apprehending the danger of arrest, Kartar Singh and his friends Harnam Singh Tundilat and Jagat Singh fled across the north-west frontier of the country. But then suddenly they realized that their behaviour was cowardly and retraced their footsteps. This change of programme was effected chiefly at the bidding of Kartar Singh who would rather sacrifice his life than leave his companions in the lurch.

While coming back, Kartar Singh was arrested near Sargodha and imprisoned in Lahore Central jail. When he was being tried on the charge of sedition, he took the entire blame upon himself. The Judge was astounded to see such a young boy behaving in such a non-chalant manner. In view of his tender age he advised the young revolutionary to modify his statement, but the result was the very opposite of what was desired by him. Kartar Singh made an even more uncompromising statement on the basis of which he was sentenced to death and hanged in 1916.

During the period of his detention in Lahore Central jail, Kartar Singh managed to get hold of some instruments. With their help he wanted to cut the iron-bars of his window and escape in company with some other people. But the plan was rendered abortive by the jail authorities who learnt about his designs well in time and seized the instruments from underneath an earthen pitcher in his room.

At the time of his execution Kartar Singh was hardly twenty years old. But such was his courage that in the course of his detention he gained 14 pounds of fresh weight.

KEDAR NATH SAIGAL

Kedar Nath Saihgal, Managing Agent of the Mohini Films Ltd., Lahore, came under the spell of national politics during the days of the Punjab agrarian unrest in 1907. When the Bharat Mata Society was set up by Ajit



Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad, he joined it and soon became an active political worker. He took a leading part in the first campaign launched in the Punjab for non-payment of taxes. To promote the cause of Indian nationalism he founded two nationalist papers known as *Khabardar* and *Urdu Akhbar*. His writings in these papers were considered objectionable by the Punjab Government and his security deposits were forfeited. In 1911 he was arrested under the Arms Act and detained for a year. In 1915 he was rearrested in connection with the First Lahore Conspiracy Case but was released after a year's trial.

Immediately after this he was rearrested under the Defence of India Act and interned in District Multan for a period of four and a half years. In 1920 he secured his release but instead of taking rest he plunged into the non-cooperation movement in 1921. At that time he happened to be General Secretary of the Congress Committee, Lahore. He was hanged up and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment in 1922. After his release he was rearrested and sent to jail in 1923.

In the ranks of the Indian National Congress he occupied a position of prominence. He was member of the All-India Congress Committee till 1935. In 1925 he presided over the deliberations of the Punjab Political Sufferers' Conference. Being essentially a man of radical bent of mind, he had close association with the revolutionaries of the country. He was a co-founder of the Naujwan Bharat Sabha which acquired great name and fame under the leadership of Bhagat Singh. When the first meeting of this Sabha was held in the Jallianwala

Bagh, Amritsar, in 1928, Saigal was elected its President. He was also a co-founder of the Complete Independence League and the Kirti Kisan Party in the Punjab, both set up in 1928. He took a leading part in organizing the boycott of the Simon Commission and was involved in a riot case in connection therewith. In 1928 he was arrested in the Saunder's Murder Case and imprisoned for 3 years. During the period of his incarceration he was taken to Meerut for interrogation in connection with the Meerut Conspiracy Case. He remained there as an under-trial prisoner for a period of 4 years and was then sentenced to a term of 4 years' rigorous imprisonment. On his appeal the Allahabad High Court spared him the additional term and he was released in 1933. From 1933 to 1936 he functioned as General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee.

He lived on for many years after Independence. He died only some years back.

KHARAK SINGH (Baba)

“In the fight for India's freedom if you find a bullet in my back, do not count me as one amongst the Sikhs of the Gurus and do not cremate my dead body according to the Sikh rites. A disciple of the Great Gurus is an ideal saint-soldier and it supposed to fight in the vanguard and face the bullets in the chest and not in the back, and we the Sikhs shall never allow any foreigner to rule over Motherland, and we shall brook no injustice.” Thus declared Baba Kharak Singh while presiding over the All-



India Sikh Conference held in Lahore in 1929 to protest against the recommendations of the Simon Commission.

Baba Kharak Singh was born in 1868 at Sialkot. He belonged to the first batch of graduates of the Panjab University, Lahore. After passing B.A., he joined the Allahabad University for a law degree but owing to the sudden death of his father, had to cut short his studies in the middle.

In 1912 he was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 5th Session of the Sikh Educational Conference held at Sialkot. He presided over the historic session of the Central Sikh League held in Lahore in 1920, at which Mahatma Gandhi, the Ali Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew were present and advised the Sikhs to throw in their lot with the Congress. In 1921 he helped found the S.G.P.C. and was unanimously elected its President. Afterwards, too, he held that exalted office on several occasions.

He launched the first *morcha* against the Government in November, 1921, which is popularly known as the Keys *morcha*. He was among the first to be arrested. His arrest led to a vigorous storm of protest against the Government. Within six weeks the Government yielded and released him. This victory infused a new energy and vigour in the political life of the Punjab, and according to Mahatma Gandhi, was the "first decisive battle won for India's freedom". In the same year he was elected President of Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. A few weeks after this event he was arrested and sentenced

to five years' rigorous imprisonment.

In December, 1922, jail authorities imposed a ban on the wearing of black turban. Baba Kharak Singh and his companions resolutely defied this. Thereupon, the authorities forcibly removed his turban. Baba Kharak Singh could not tolerate it and took a vow that he would remain naked wearing only a *kachha* (drawers of Sikhs) until the Government removed the ban. As soon as this fact became public, a great agitation arose in the whole of the Punjab. Ultimately, the Government removed the ban and asked Babaji to wear clothes. In 1925 the Punjab Legislative Council passed the Gurdwaras Act and recommended to the Government to release Baba Kharak Singh. After having remained naked for more than four years in prison, he came out naked from the jail in June, 1927.

He organised a mammoth demonstration in 1928 when the Simon Commission visited Lahore. He was again sent to jail in 1931 but was released after six months. He was rearrested in 1932 and detained for 19 months in prison. Once again he was taken in custody in 1935 for his scathing criticism of the Communal Award.

During the Individual Satyagrah movement in 1940, he was detained in jail until December, 1940. While in jail, he fell seriously ill and lost his eyesight which was, however, restored by an operation in 1943. The last imprisonment that fell to the lot of Baba Kharak Singh was towards the end of 1944 when he presided over the deliberations of the Akhand Hindustan Conference held at Gujranwala. But he was released soon.

In spite of his old age, Babaji did not stop his activities. He was one of those leaders who unhesitatingly took up the cause of the I.N.A. in 1945. During the elections of 1946 he toured the whole of the Punjab and the N.W.F.P. and made a magnificent contribution to the success of the Congress.

Babaji's life was an eloquent sermon of service to the nation. He was an unconquerable freedom-fighter who, according to Jawahar Lal Nehru, during his whole life had never surrendered to what he considered to be wrong or evil, whatever the consequences might have been.

At another place Mr. Nehru said about him, "There are few hands which can uphold the honour and preserve the dignity of the national Flag better than those of Babaji".

He died on 6th October, 1963.

KISHAN SINGH GARGAJ

The only son of his father Fateh Singh, Kishan Singh was born at village Baring, District Jullundur, a place just two furlongs to the east of Jullundur Cantonment. Before he entered on political activities, he was in the Indian Army for a period of about fifteen years serving in Battalion No. 35. He was promoted to the rank of Havaldar Major and was due for promotion as Jamadar when he resigned his service. While in the army, he was once accused of anti-British remarks and detained in Quarter Guard for 28 days.

When he left the army, the Akali movement was in full swing. Without any hesitation he became member of the Shiromani Akali Dal and after a short time was appointed its General Secretary. But he had no faith in the non-violent methodology of the Akalis and gave preference to armed struggle over peaceful *morchas*. Circumstances helped him to translate his ideas into practice. In the Akali Conspiracy Case, Hoshiarpur, his warrants of arrest were issued. To evade arrest he became a fugitive and started working underground. Shortly after, he organized a band of radicals and gave it the name of Chakravarti Jatha (ever-moving band). The band was meant to carry on propaganda against the British Government and to strike awe in the minds of its functionaries by use of arms whenever necessary. Among its members the most notable were Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri, Karam Singh Dhriman, Babu Santa Singh and Master Mota Singh. To begin with, he held special *diwans* where he made powerful speeches advocating the use of arms for freedom from British rule. The next step was to take action against ultra-loyalists like *numberdars*, *sufaidposhes* and *zaildars*. A meeting was held in 1922 where it was decided to warn these people first and to cut off the ears of those who did not heed the warning. Even lists of such people were drawn. After sometime, however, the decision was revised and it was resolved that the real remedy was to assassinate them. The same meeting decided to reorganize the Chakravarti Jatha under the name of Babbar Akali Dal. Kishan Singh was elected its President, Dalip Singh Gaunsal became its Secretary and Babu Santa Singh its Treasurer. Karam Singh Ligar, Karam Singh Daulatpuri and Ude



Singh were elected working members. The new organization brought out a revolutionary paper which was printed at a press called *Udaru Press* (flying or mobile press). Seeing the rapidly growing influence of the Babbar Akalis. Government put up a prize of rupees two thousand on Kishan Singh's head. A number of dacoits fell under his spell and agreed to abide by the discipline of the Babbars and to work in collaboration with them.

While he was working full-steam, Kishan Singh (called Gargaj from his powerful manner of speaking) was all of a sudden arrested at Pindori Mahal on 26th February, 1923 through the treachery of one Kabul Singh of his own village, Baring.

He was detained in Lahore Central jail. A special court was created for his trial which lasted from 2nd June, 1924 to 28th February, 1925. The most remarkable feature of the trial was Kishan Singh's long statement running into 125 pages in indictment of repressive British administration. As was to be expected, he was sentenced to death and was hanged on 27th February, 1926. At first the jail authorities refused to hand over his dead body to the members of his family but the huge crowd that had gathered outside the jail ultimately forced them to accede to the public demand. The body was cremated on the bank of the Ravi.

Jathedar Kishan Singh was in the prime of his youth at the time of his execution—not more than 35 years. On account of his passionate patriotism, integrity of character and power of speech he had verily become the *beau ideal* of people.

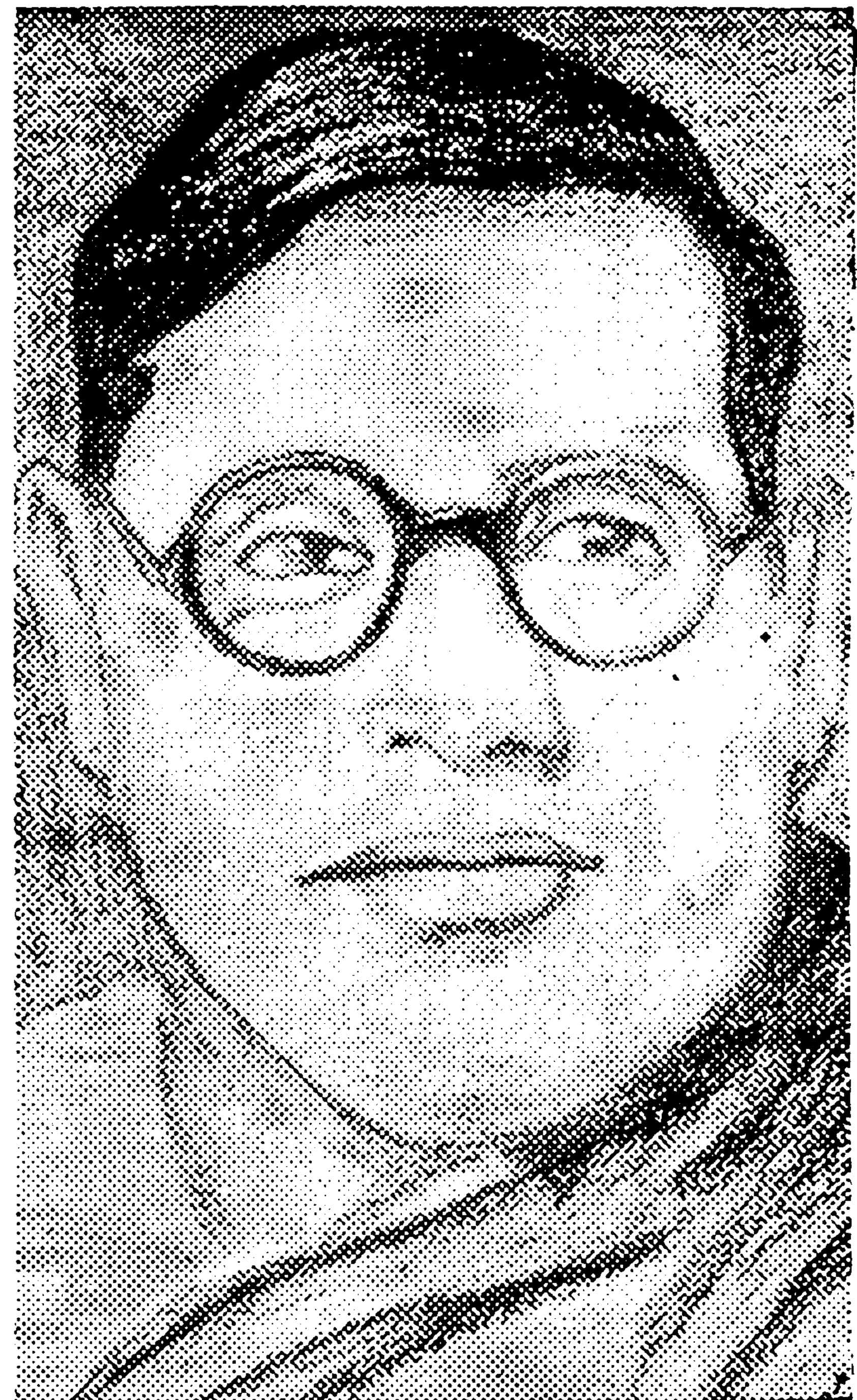
KRISHNA GOPAL DUTT

An intellectual prodigy and a noted freedom-fighter, he was born in January, 1899 at Sialkot in the house of a well-to-do businessman, Pandit Vaish Nath Dutt. He first studied at the Murry College, Sialkot and then shifted to Lajpat Rai's National College, Lahore wherefrom he graduated in 1923.

While he was a student, he was attracted by the national movement of India and participated in the non-cooperation agitation of 1921. After the withdrawal of this movement he joined the Swaraj Party of C.R. Dass and Moti Lal Nehru and was appointed General Secretary of its Punjab branch.

During the next ten years or so, he faced a great deal of rough and tumble of national politics and had to undergo quite a few terms of imprisonment. He was most active in the boycott demonstrations against the Simon Commission organized in the Punjab. When elections were held to the Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1937, he was duly elected and was appointed Chief Whip of the Congress Legislative Party. In 1938 he became Deputy Leader of the opposition. Later when the Congress left the legislature as a protest against the Government's war policy, he actively participated in the Individual and Quit India movements and consequently was put behind the bars.

Before Independence Dutt went thrice to Europe and once to America to propagate the cause of India's freedom. A notable journalist and a brilliant speaker, he



employed both the media in the service of the national cause. He blended patriotism with cultural refinement and philosophical outlook.

He was elected President of the first conference of the Punjab Working Journalist held in 1957.

LAJPAT RAI (Lala)

Pre-eminent among the Punjab freedom-fighters, he was born on 28th January, 1865 at a small village, Dhudike, in District Ferozepur. His father Munshi Radha Krishan, a *banya* by caste, was a teacher of Persian and Urdu in a government school.

Lajpat Rai was a brilliant student and won academic distinctions despite his ill health. Having passed the Matriculation examination, he pursued the study of law and passed the First Certificate of Law examination from the Panjab University. In 1883 he started his practice as a lawyer. Meanwhile, his close association with Lala Hans Raj, Gurudatta Vidyarathi and Chetnanand gave him deep interest in religion, education and social reform. In particular, he was greatly influenced by the Arya Samaj movement in the Punjab.

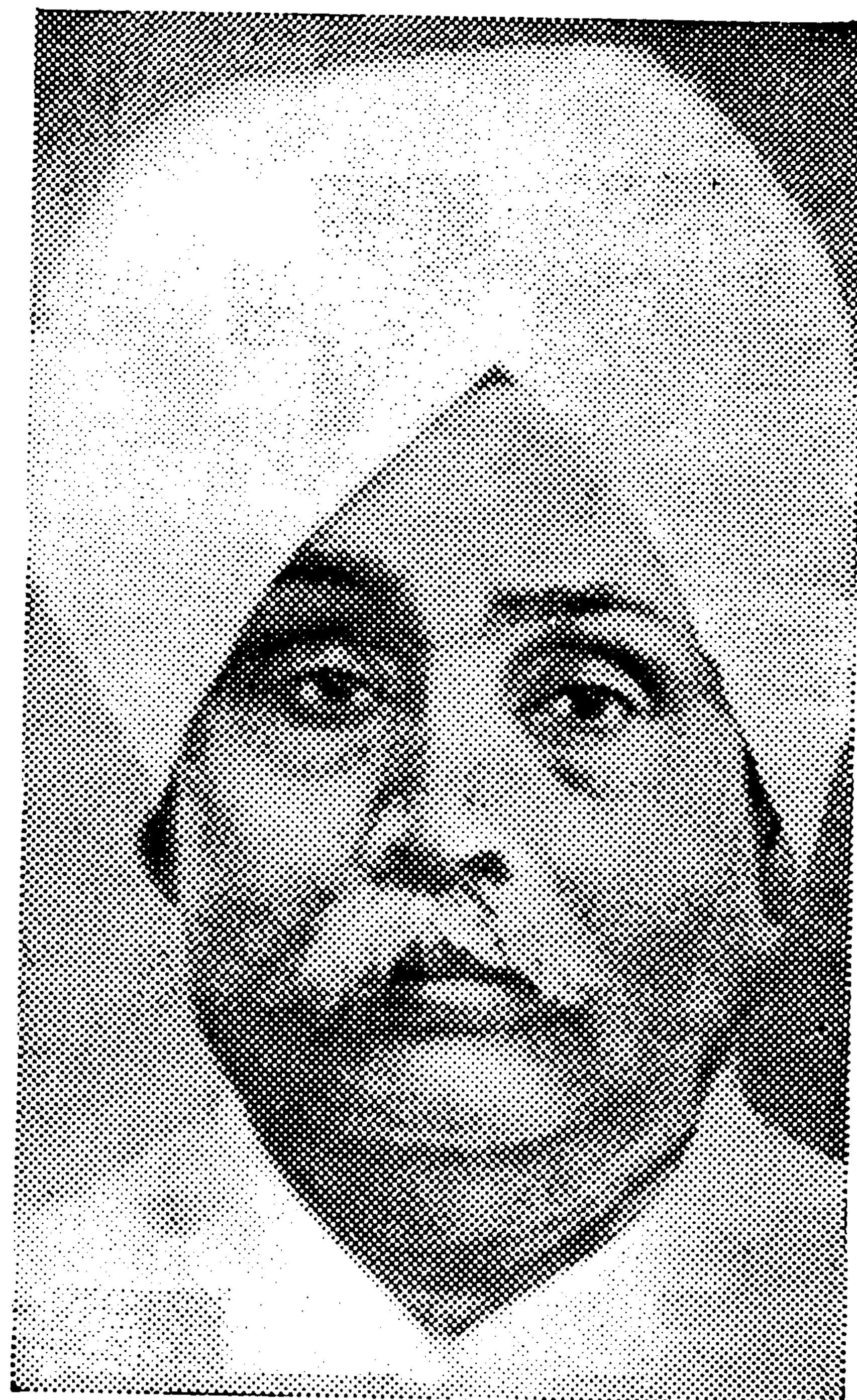
Originally, he started his practice of law at Hissar where he organised a branch of the Arya Samaj. As Lahore could provide much better opportunities for his professional and other activities, he shifted his residence there. Being a champion of modern education, he played a leading role in the foundation of the D. A. V. College,

Lahore and collected a major portion of its endowment fund of 5 lacs of rupees. His interest in education even took him to America and Japan where he made a close study of their educational institutions. He was equally active in the field of social service. In 1897 and again in 1899-1900, he organised a Hindu orphanage relief movement which rendered help to about 2000 orphans. Similarly, in the famine of 1901 and the earthquake of 1905 he helped the distressed people.

Lajpat Rai's main field of interest, however, was politics. He started his political career by joining the Indian National Congress and attending its annual session of 1883 at Allahabad. An active, sincere and selfless worker, Lajpat Rai soon acquired a place of importance in national politics. In 1905 he was selected along with Gokhale to go to England to explain to the British public the evils of unsympathetic bureaucratic government under which India was then labouring. A staunch nationalist and revolutionary as he was, he joined the extremist wing of the Congress led by Bipin Chandra Paul and B. G. Tilak and strenuously worked for a radical change in the Congress policy.

In 1907 the Punjab was gripped by agrarian unrest. Lajpat Rai together with Ajit Singh whipped up a strong resistance against the Punjab Colonization Bill which seriously affected the interests of people of the Canal colonies. Consequently, he was deported to Mandalay on 9th May, 1907. This created a wave of indignation in the whole country and he was released after six months.

A few years later, he proceeded to America where he



came in close contact with the leaders of the *Ghadar* movement. His activities abroad were considered dangerous by the Government of India and a ban was imposed on his return to the country. After the war was over, the ban was lifted and he came back to India on 20th February, 1920. It was an occasion for national rejoicing and the Indian National Congress honoured him by electing him its President. In his absence the Punjab had been brutally mauled. The Rowlatt Bills and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy embittered him all the more against the Government. Therefore, when the non-cooperation movement was launched, he plunged into it whole-heartedly with the result that he was arrested and jailed.

After this movement when he was released, he joined the Swarajist Party but he could not pull on with Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and had to leave it. With a vein of extremism in him he always kept close contacts with Indian revolutionaries and secretly gave all possible encouragement to them. That is the reason that people like Bhagat Singh had such a deep reverence for him. His end was in keeping with his career. While he was leading a procession at Lahore against the Simon Commission in 1928, he subjected to a severe *lathi*-charge. The lion of the Punjab, or Punjab Kesri as he was called, succumbed to the *lathi* blows and died after a month on 17th November, 1928.

Lajpat Rai dead was even more dangerous than Lajpat Rai alive. His death unleashed hectic revolutionary activity which culminated in the execution of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev in 1931.

MADAN LAL DHINGRA

Son of an eminent medical practitioner, Sahib Ditta, Madan Lal was born in 1887. He passed his Intermediate examination from Amritsar and then joined a Lahore College for further studies. After a few months he left his studies on securing a job in the Settlement Department in the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. There also he did not stay for long. In 1906 he left for England for a course in engineering.

On October 19, 1906 he was admitted in the University College, London. While he was pursuing his studies there, he began to attend political meetings at the India House. He was initiated by the revolutionary Indian leader, Savarkar, into the membership of his society called *Abhinav Bharat*. He was then generally considered a non-chalant and pleasure-seeking type of person. But Savarkar thought highly of him. Those were the days when British oppression against Indians was at its height. In a short span of time Savarkar, Kanhya Lal, Barindra, Bhupendra, Khudhi Ram Bose and Haim Chandra Das were captured and sentenced to death. This infuriated the young revolutionaries in England who decided to penalize the harshness of the Government by assassinating Sir Willian Curzon Wylie, Political Aide-de-Camp at the India House. Incidentally, Wylie was a good friend of Madan Lal's father. But this did not deter Madan Lal from his firm resolve to shoot him. For this purpose he diligently prepared himself with regular practice in revolver shooting.



On July 1, 1909 there was a meeting at the Imperial Institute, London where Sir W. C. Wyllie was present. Madan Lal at last got his long-awaited chance. He had a six-chamber revolver in his pocket and a smile on his face. Wyllie went around for courtesy talks. When he made for Madan Lal, his friend's son, and was just opening his mouth to talk, Madan Lal fired at him at point-blank-range. The political Aide-de-Camp died on the spot. Madan Lal threw away the revolver and made no attempt to escape. He was surrounded by the crowd and captured. When his hands were being tied, he laughed in derision and said, "Please let me correct my specs".

The news created a great sensation in the whole of India and England. Madan Lal's act was condemned by his father and other relatives but was eulogized by nationalists and revolutionaries. He was tried by a British court and sentenced to death. In a statement before his death Madan Lal said these words : "Neither rich nor able, a poor son like myself can offer nothing but his blood at the altar of Mother's deliverance and so I rejoice at the prospect of my martyrdom". On August 17, 1909 Madan Lal Dhingra was hanged.

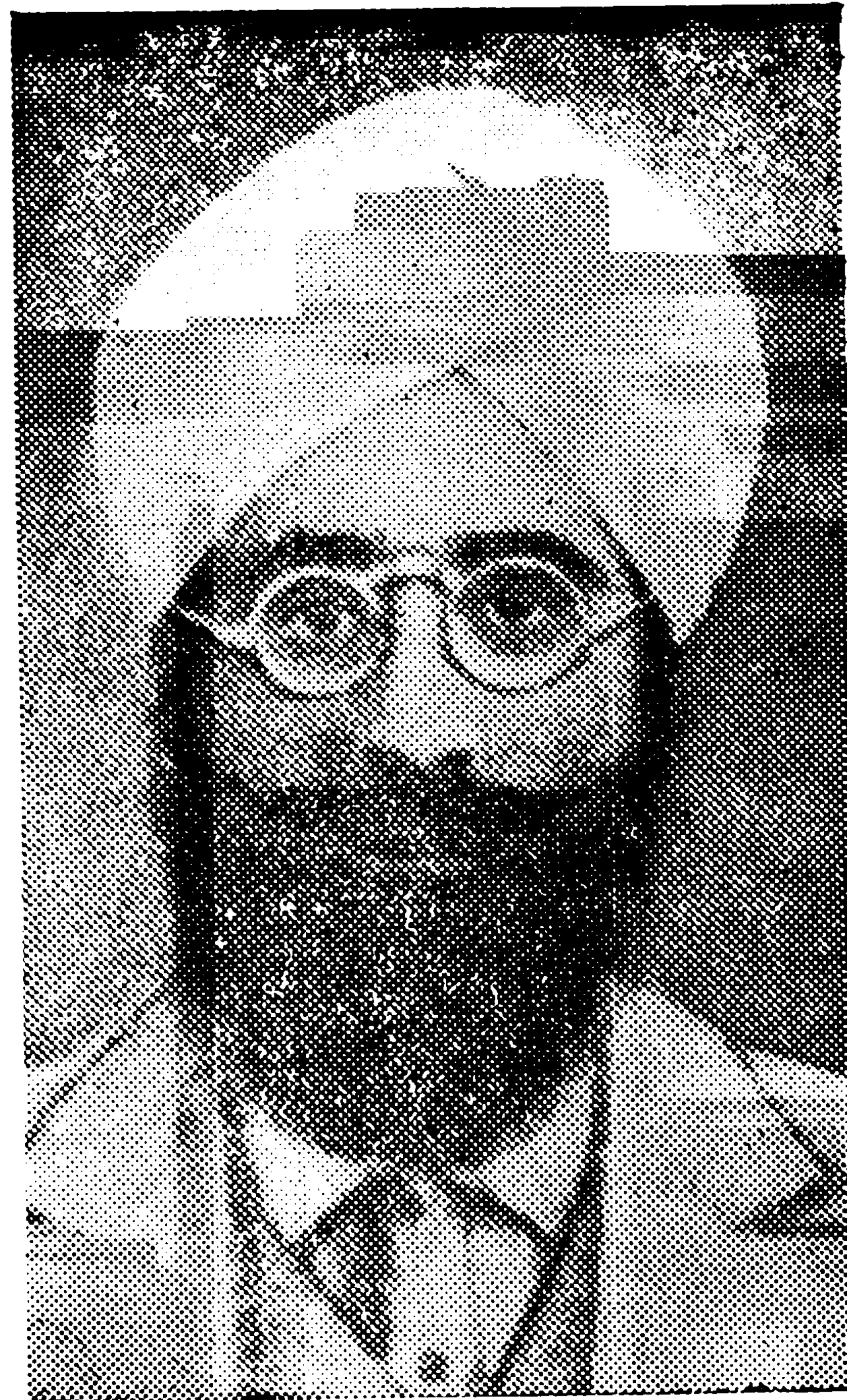
MATHRA SINGH (Doctor)

Son of Bhai Hari Singh, Mathra Singh was born in 1883 at Dhudial, District Jhelum (now in Pakistan). He was educated at the Khalsa High School, Chakwal. At the age of 18 he left the school to take up service with a private pharmaceutical firm of Rawalpindi, Messrs Jagat

Singh & Brothers. In five years' service he picked up working knowledge of medicines and then in 1906 became a partner in a firm of Chemists, H.D. Thakar Das & Co., of Naushehra Cantonment. Henceforward, he began to be commonly addressed as Dr. Mathra Singh.

After the deaths of his wife and daughter in 1913, Mathra Singh decided to go to America. On reaching Shanghai he learnt that it was not possible to enter Canada and consequently changed his mind and set up a temporary medical stall in Shanghai. A little later he made another attempt to go to America. This time he was allowed to enter the country but his companions were not. Therefore, they all returned to Shanghai and then to India.

From now onwards Mathra Singh was a bitter critic of British authorities. When he heard about Baba Gurdit Singh taking a whole shipload of people to Canada by a privately hired boat, *Komagata Maru*, Mathra Singh and his brother Labh Singh thought of availing themselves of the opportunity. But when they reached the harbour, the ship had already left. Thereupon they decided to travel by another ship up to Shanghai where they hoped to catch the *Komagata Maru*. Once again they were too late for it. Mathra Singh and his brother now took up residence in Hongkong. They got in touch with some Yugantar Ashram leaders and adopted their programme enthusiastically. By distributing cyclosty ledcopies of the *Ghadar* paper and by holding public meetings Mathra Singh endeavoured to prepare the Indians there for a rebellion against the British Rulers in India. The Hong Kong



Government got scent of his activities and did not allow the returning *Komagata Maru* to stop there. Mathra Singh who had drawn a list of 50 people who would make use of that ship to return to the Punjab and help in the engineering of a political revolution in the country, was not disappointed and immediately arranged another ship for the purpose. Back in the Punjab in May, 1914, he took a headlong plunge in revolutionary work. Having some knowledge of science he took upon himself the work of bomb manufacturing. When the police learnt about his activities, attempts were made to arrest him. But he quietly slipped away to Kabul where he was appointed Chief Medical Officer by the Afghan Government.

It was about this time that an official announcement was made declaring a reward of one square of land and two thousand rupees on his head. At Kabul he continued his national activities. In course of his stay there, he is said to have paid one visit to Germany and several visits to Iran.

When the Provisional Government was established at Kabul through the efforts of Raja Mahendra Partap and Maulvi Barkat Ullah, it is said that Dr. Mathra Singh was appointed one of the ministers. As such, he once happened to go to Russia, where all of a sudden he was arrested at Tashkent through the treachery of an Indian acquaintance of his.

He was brought to Lahore via Iran and detained in the Lahore Central jail where after a brief trial in camera he was sentenced to death and hanged on 27th March, 1917. Even his dead body was not handed over to his family and was cremated in the jail itself.

MOHAN SINGH (General)

General Mohan Singh, founder of the first I.N.A., was born in 1909 at village Ugoki, District Sialkot. His father, a Jat agriculturist of modest means, had breathed his last before his birth and his mother died when he was just 5 years old. Therefore, he was brought up by his maternal uncle. He received education at Khalsa High School, Sialkot up to Matriculation and then went in for an army career. He joined 2/14 Punjab Regiment as a Sepoy. But his talents were meant for a better station in life. He competed for the King's Commission and was selected. For training he was sent to the Kitchner College from where he passed out in the first batch in 1935. He was then posted in 1/14 Punjab Regiment and after a few years' service was promoted Captain in 1940 and Major in 1941.

At this time the second World War was in full swing. In 1941 he was sent to Malaya to fight back the Japanese who were posing a serious threat to the British Empire from the east. Being the seniormost Indian in his battalion he frequently came into conflict with his European officers over matters Indian. For instance, he protested against the anti-Indian attitude of his C.O. in the selection of people for Emergency Commissions. As a result of his and other Indian officers' stand, Indian food, hitherto taboo in the officers' mess, began to be served at all meals in the Regiment.

When the Japanese invaded Malaya, he fought against them for 3 days, and then availing himself of the opportunity approached them to secure their support in raising an



Indian National Army to oust Britishers from India. Within a week of his joining the Japanese in December, 1941, he raised an army of one thousand men and fought against the British in Malaya. By the time Singapore fell he had about 10,000 Indian soldiers under his command.

After working with the Japanese for 13 months, he discovered that they were not sincere in their friendship towards India and he refused to be a puppet in their hands. When the Japanese were convinced that he could not be exploited for their selfish ends, they threw him into jail on December 29, 1942 and kept him a closely guarded prisoner till the end of the war. At the time of his arrest, the I.N.A. consisted of about 17,000 armed and equipped soldiers, some 25,000 trained soldiers (known as surplus volunteers) whom the Japanese did not equip with arms, and about two hundred thousand volunteers who were not allowed to be enlisted by the Japanese.

When in 1945 after the fall of the atom bomb in their country, the Japanese laid down their arms, Mohan Singh effected his escape from jail and went into hiding in the Island of Java. But he soon realized that to remain in hiding like that was no honourable act and voluntarily surrendered himself to the British. He was brought to Delhi as a prisoner on November 23, 1945 and in due course of time was released like other I.N.A. officers.

Since then he has been taking keen interest in agriculture and politics. As a farmer he has developed a flourishing garden colony at Jugiana in the District of Ludhiana. In politics after some initial disappointments he was now emerged as a successful congress leader. As

organizer of the recent elections in the Punjab he has won a vast majority of seats for the congress, thereby putting it back into power. As for himself, he has preferred to become member of the Rajya Sabha.

MOTA SINGH (Master)

Master Mota Singh came into prominence in the Akali movement. He was one of the founder-members of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. He was at once a staunch Akali and a left-wing nationalist. He organised and popularised the Akali movement and fought for national freedom. He was an effective speaker and knew the art of moving masses emotionally and carrying them with him.

As a freedom-fighter, he did not believe in Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence. He did not mind the use of all sorts of means but had a preference for armed struggle.

At the time of the Nankana massacre on February 21, 1921 he was not in India. He had secretly gone away to Kabul to make contacts with those Ghadar Party leaders who had set up a revolutionary government there. At Kabul he also came into contact with some Bolshevik leaders of Russia. He is reported in Government files to have brought from there Rs. 10,000 for his political work. He returned to the Punjab and worked underground.

He appeared in public at Nankana Sahib in February 1922 at the time of the first celebration of the martyrdom



of Nankana heroes. Lakhs of people had gathered there on the occasion. He suddenly appeared at the *diwan* and made a thundering revolutionary speech, exhorting the Sikh congregation to make a revolution and overthrow the British Government by means of armed struggle. Having delivered the speech, he disappeared from the site and despite all efforts of the police officers to arrest him, he could not be found. He had successfully evaded arrest.

Government declared him a "Proclaimed offender" and put a big prize on his head. This fact further endeared him to the people.

One day, Mota Singh went to his village Patara (District Jullundur) where as a result of information provided by an informer, he was arrested by the police in June, 1922. After a farcical trial he was sentenced to 5 years' rigorous imprisonment.

But before his arrest he had "succeeded in gathering round him a revolutionary band composed of some of the most desperate Sikh criminals of the Jullundur and Hoshiarpur Districts, including one or two ex-soldiers and several returned emigrants". This was the nucleus of the Babbar Akali movement, according to Government reports now lying in the National Archives of India.

After he was sentenced, Master Mota Singh was harassed and punished by jail authorities time and again because he was keeping contacts with outside people and the Babbar Akali movement. Even a few warders and convict *numberdars* were punished for arranging to send his messages outside. In order to prevent him from keeping

contacts with outside people, Government took a decision to transfer him from one jail to another, which ultimately landed him in a Burma jail.

When he came out of jail, the Babbar Akali movement had been crushed. Now, he started working with Communist workers in the Kisan Sabha and became an executive member of the Sabha.

During the Second World War Mota Singh was detained in the Deoli Camp jail (Rajputana) along with Punjab, U. P., Bihar and Bombay Communists and Socialists.

Mota Singh was one of the important leaders in the Congress organisation. He was highly respected by the people of the Doaba and had the greatest influence there. He went to jail several times and became an M.L.A. after Independence.

He died on 9th January, 1960.

MUNSHA SINGH DUKHI

A famous Ghadrte, he was born on 1st July, 1890 at Jandiala (Maujke), District Jullundur. His father Nihal Singh was a Subedar in the Indian Army. His formal education did not go beyond the Primary stage which he completed at his village school, but otherwise he had a good working knowledge of English, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and Hindi.

Like many other people from the Bist-Jullundur Doab, he went abroad for better economic prospects and settled



down in San Francisco. While in America, he played a notable role in the foundation of the Yugantar Ashram in collaboration with Lala Hardyal, Sohan Singh Bhakna and other Ghadrite leaders. Later when bands of Ghadrite heroes began to arrive in India with a view to engineering a revolution in the country, Munsha Singh accompanied one of these bands and arrived in India. He was soon arrested and put behind the bars. He was tried in the Second Supplementary Case Lahore in 1916 and sentenced to life imprisonment and forfeiture of property on 5th January, 1917 under IPC 121, 121 A, 124, 596, 397, 398, 131, 132. The other four people who were awarded the same punishment along with him were Batan Singh Kahari, Fazal Din Fatehgarh, Hari Singh Chhotun Thoba, and Kehar Singh Sanehwal. The same court sentenced five people to death. Their names are Babu Ram Fatehgarh, Hafiz Abdulla Jagraon and Rur Singh Sangowal.

Munsha Singh was confined in the Hazaribagh Central jail and the jails of Lahore, Campbellpur and Multan. Later on, he was freed under a Royal clemency in 1920. Amongst other patriots who were with him in the Hazaribagh jail were Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Banta Singh Sangowala, Dr. Arur Singh, Dr. Bhagwan Singh and Puran Singh Jandiala.

After Independence he was granted, as a political sufferer, a monthly pension of Rs. 170. He was a Punjabi poet of high merit and an experienced journalist and wrote a number of books of both prose and poetry. As a Punjabi poet he has been honoured by the Punjab

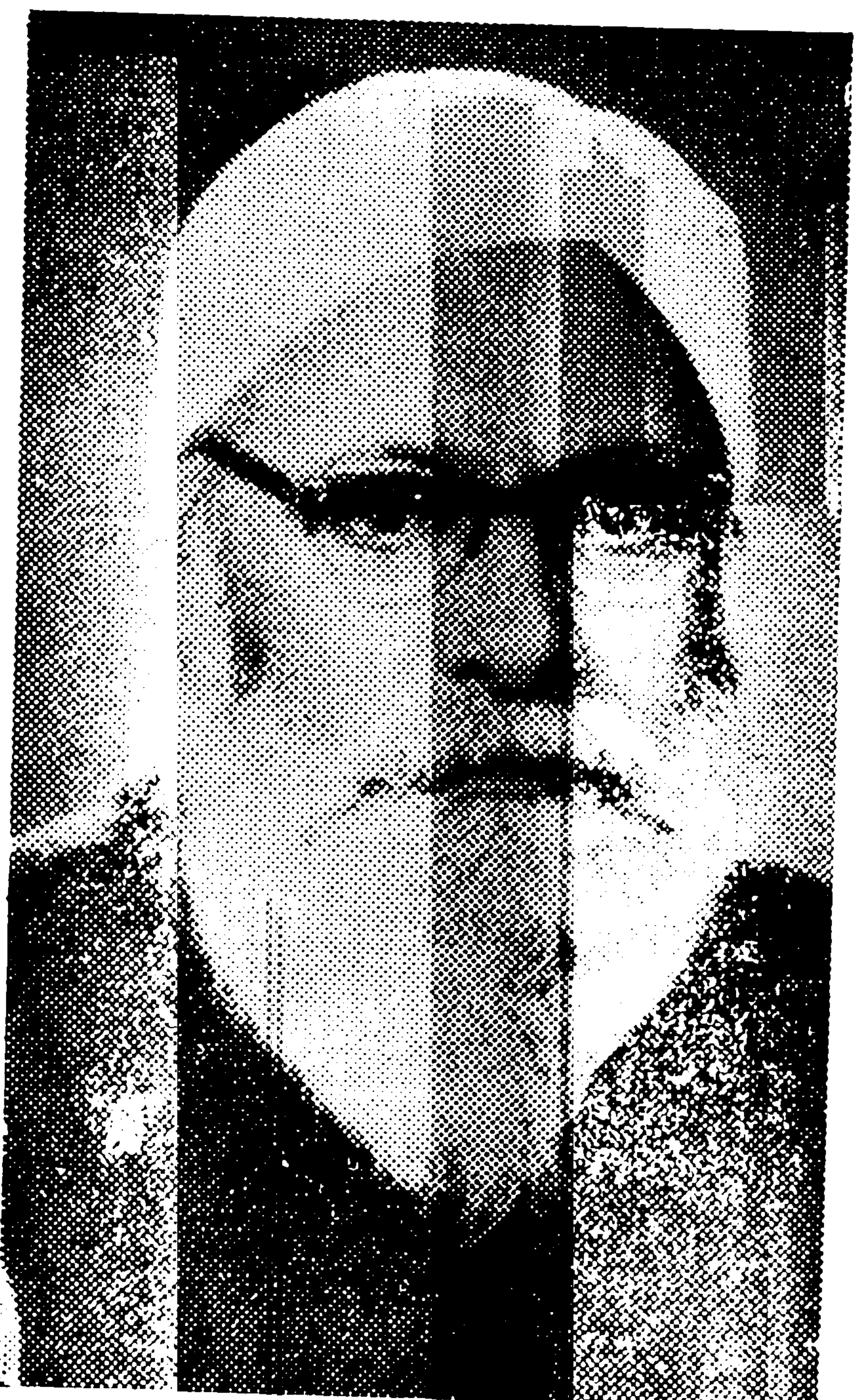
Government. In 1969 he was personally requested by the Chief Minister of the Punjab to preside over a *Kavi Durbar* to be held in the Jallianwala Bagh. But since he had decided to fly to U.K., he declined the invitation.

He died at Phagwara on 26th January, 1971 and was cremated at his native place Randhawa.

NIRANJAN SINGH TALIB

Niranjan Singh Talib, a veteran Congress leader and a true devotee of Gandhism, was born in 1901 at Nabha. His father's name was Sardar Rattan Singh. He passed the Matriculation examination from State High School, Nabha and for higher education joined the Khalsa College, Amritsar. While he was a student of the 3rd year class at college, he left his studies at the call of Bapuji in 1921 during the non-cooperation movement.

He worked as Private Secretary to the Maharaja of Nabha who was dethroned and banished from the State and interned at Kodaikanal for his anti-British activities. Niranjan Singh remained with him for three years. Since he was not allowed to re-enter his native State, he had to settle down at Calcutta where he started in 1930 a Punjabi daily paper called *Desh Darpan* which continued upto the end of the 2nd World War. During this period he was convicted many times for seditious writing and once for keeping unlicensed arms. Total imprisonment in all these cases was four and a half years. The places of his confinement were : Alipur Central jail (Calcutta), Lahore Fort, Montgomery Central jail, Rawalpindi Central jail,



Jhang jail, Lahore Central jail and Gujarat Special jail.

At Calcutta Niranjan Singh came in contact with Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. At the time of Netaji's disappearance from Calcutta, he was arrested and brought to Lahore Fort for interrogation and trial and was kept there in solitary confinement for seven months. After that he was detained as a security prisoner for five years on the charge of aiding and abetting in the case of Netaji's disappearance from India.

In all, Mr. Talib underwent an aggregate imprisonment of over nine years in different cases at different times. He remained in exile from his native State for 23 years, i.e., from 1923 to 1946.

He restarted the same nationalist Punjabi paper *Daily Desh Darpan*, after his release from jail. In 1956, at the call of the late Partap Singh Kairon and late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, he came back to the Punjab State for participation in its active politics. From 1957 to 1967 he served the Punjab as legislator, Deputy Minister, Minister of State and then Cabinet Minister.

At present, he is a member of the All-India Congress Committee, President of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee and Chairman of the Punjab State Khadi and Village Industries Board.

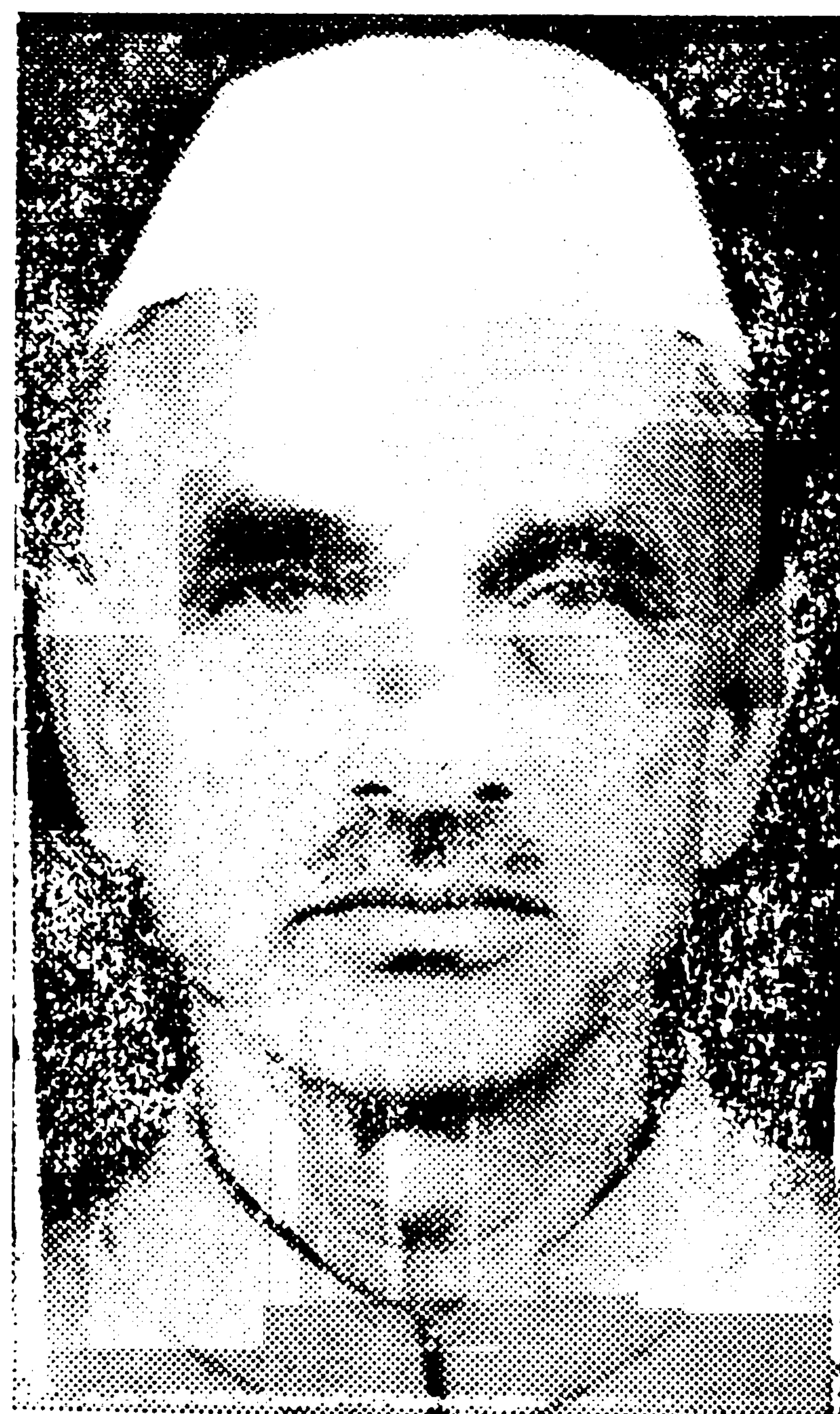
PADAM DEV

Now a senior minister in the Himachal Government, Padam Dev was born on 26th January, 1901 at village Bhamnoli, District Mahasu (Himachal Pradesh). The names of his parents were Bali Ram and Ram Devi.

After completing the formative period of his career, he became member of the Indian National Congress. His active role in the freedom movement commenced with his participation in the Salt Campaign with which Mahatma Gandhi opened his Civil Disobedience movement in 1930. In the same year he became President of the Himachal Pradesh Praja Mandal which had lately been established to organize the people of the Punjab Hill States against the now outdated Princely Order. As a Praja Mandal leader Padam Dev took active part in the Hyderabad State agitation in 1939. His political activities were considered dangerous and he was arrested in 1941. When he was released after sometime; he courted arrest during the Quit India movement, 1942.

Later, when the Himalayan Hill States Regional Council was formed, he had the privilege of being its first General Secretary. Subsequently, he played a leading role in the Suket State Satyagrah which led to the integration of Simla Hill States into what came to be known as the Himachal Pradesh.

In 1948 he was appointed member of the Himachal Pradesh Advisory Council but he resigned it soon after. In 1952 he was elected to the Himachal Pradesh Assembly and became Home Minister in the government formed



after the elections. In 1957 he fought and won election to the Lok Sabha. But in 1962 he returned to Himachal politics with his election to the Himachal Pradesh Territorial Council. Five years later when new elections were held, he again won his seat on the Council. Together with the Chief Minister Dr. Y. S. Parmar, Padam Dev played a leading role in securing the status of a full-fledged State for Himachal Pradesh.

PARAS RAM

A prominent political leader of Himachal (formerly part of undivided Punjab), Paras Ram was born on 15th February, 1916. He belongs to District Kangra.

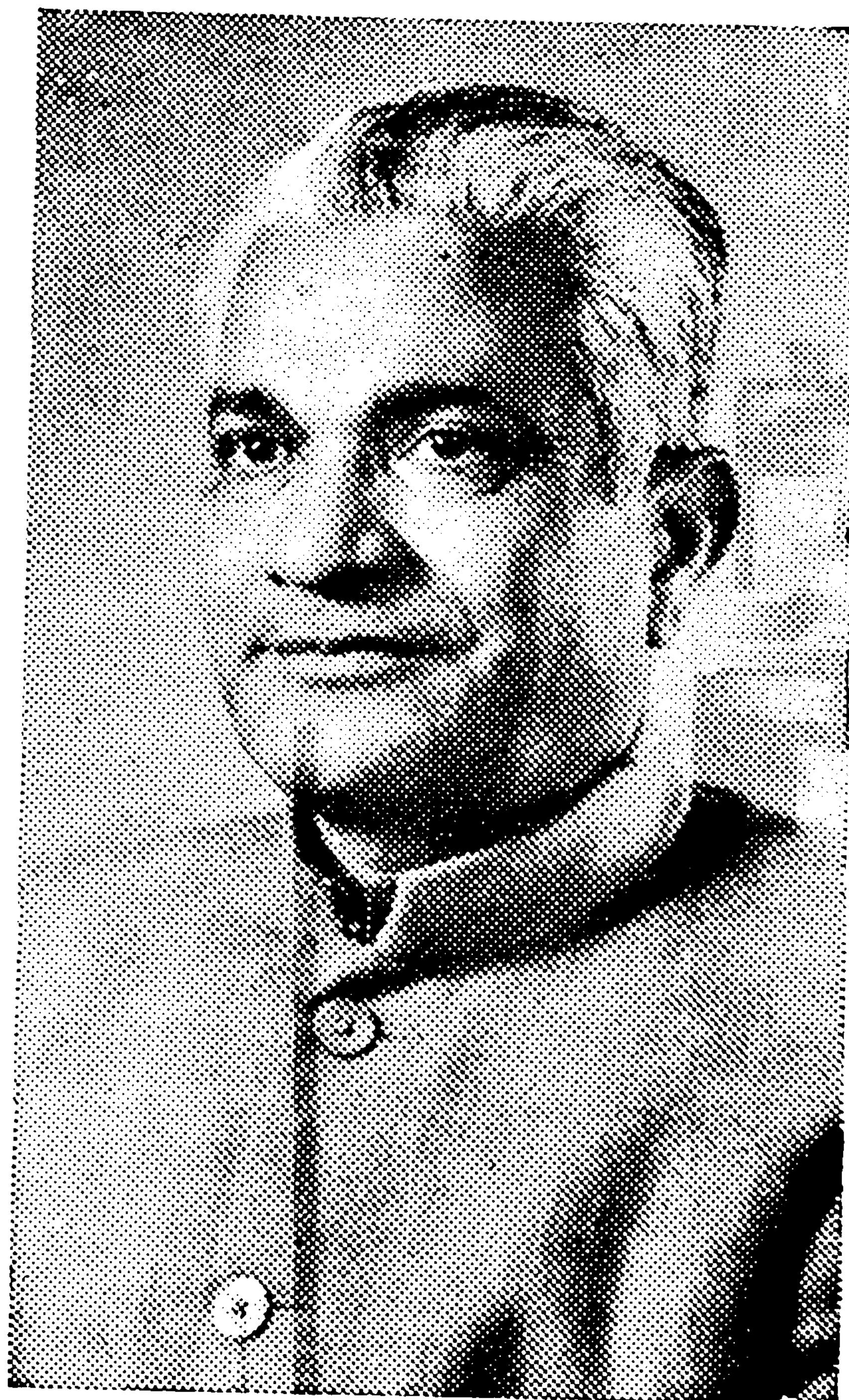
He was a student of the Panjab University, Lahore from where he passed his B.A. examination in 1934. As a student, he was an active member of the Students' Federation and played an important part in both student politics and freedom movement during the period 1930—42.

In the beginning he was an active worker of the Indian National Congress and enthusiastically participated in the Civil Disobedience and Quit India movements.

After 1943 he left the Congress and became a member of the Communist Party of India. Gradually, he gained prominence among the party workers and was elected District Secretary. After a time he became member of the Provincial Committee and the National Council of the C.P.I.

In 1967 he won election to the Himachal Pradesh Assembly and formed a united front of opposition parties, called Samyukta Vidhayak Dal, himself becoming its Deputy Leader.

Even outside the Assembly he occupied several important public positions in 1971. He was Chairman of Progpur Panchayat Samiti; General Secretary of the Beas Dam Oustees Action Committee; President of the Kangra District Wholesale Cooperative and Marketing Supply Society; and Director of the Kangra Central Cooperative Bank Ltd.

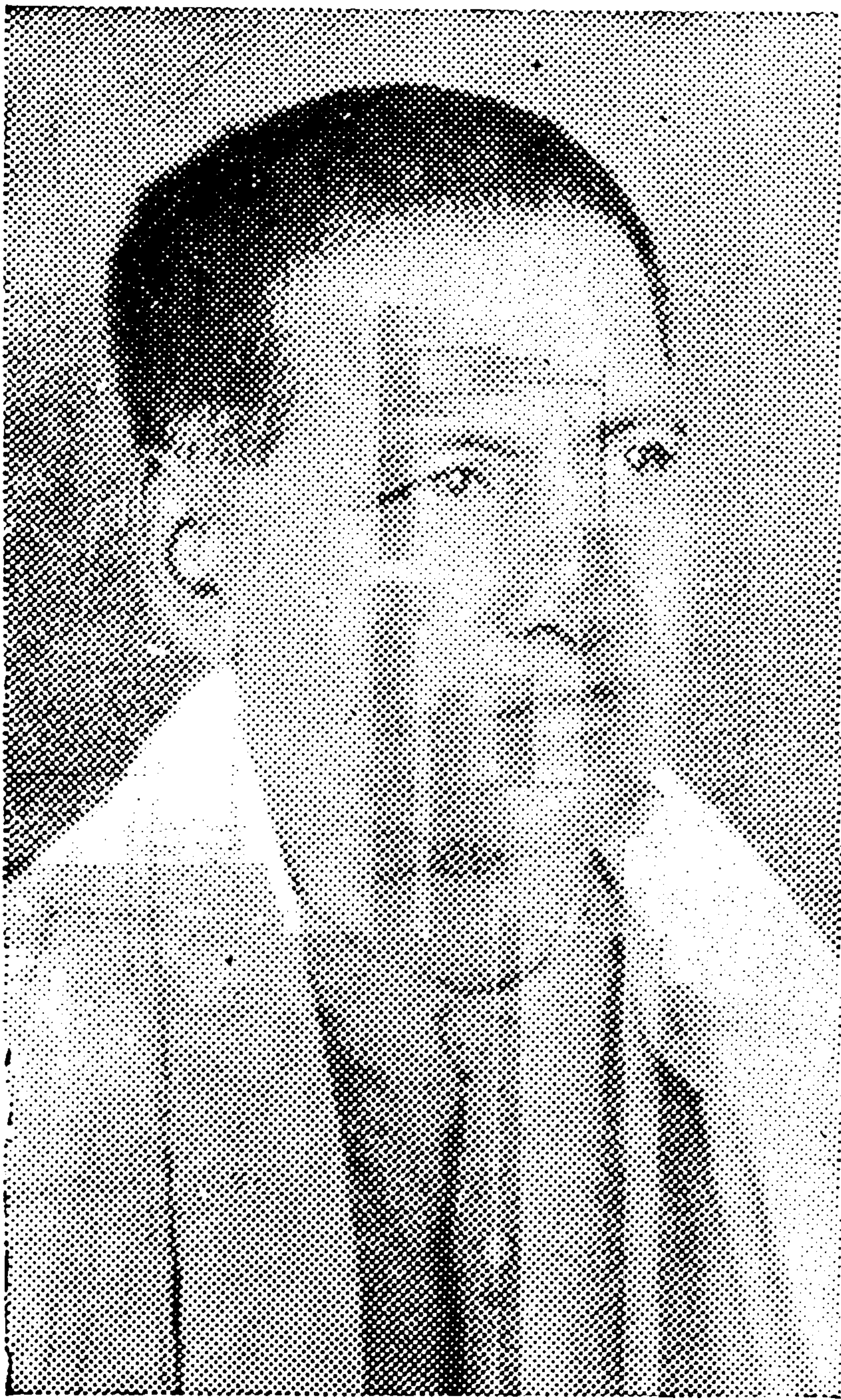


PARMANAND (Bhai)

A prominent public figure of the Punjab, Bhai Parmanand descended from the family of the famous Sikh martyr, Bhai Mati Das. His father's name was Bhai Tara Chand Mohyal who belonged to village Kariala, District Jhelum. Being an Arya Samajist by faith, Parmanand visited South Africa as a religious missionary.

Himself an M.A. of the Panjab University, Lahore, he was deeply interested in promotion of education. He was a life-member of the D. A. V. College, Lahore and Chancellor of the Punjab Vidyapith.

In 1912 he proceeded to America. After visiting the British colonies in South America he went to North America where he came in contact with Lala Hardyal and other leaders of the *Ghadar* movement and became an active Ghadrite. He accompanied Hardyal on his lectur-



ing tour to Portland in 1914 and in the interest of *Ghadar* wrote a book *Tarikh-i-Hind*. On his arrival in India he was arrested in connection with the First Lahore Conspiracy Case and was sentenced to death in 1915. The sentence was later commuted to one of transportation for life and he was imprisoned in the Andaman Islands till 1920. As a prisoner he was subjected to rigorous labour. By way of protest against the harsh treatment of political prisoners, Bhai Parmanand went on hunger strike for two months. He was released in 1920 as the result of a general amnesty ordered by the King-Emperor, George V.

During the twenties when the Hindu-Muslim problem assumed an acute form, he became a champion of Hindu rights and interests and as such greatly strengthened the Hindu Mahasabha as a counter-poise to the Muslim League. He quickly acquired an all-India stature and was elected President of the 15th Annual Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Ajmer. During the same year he went to England to advocate the Hindu cause before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. After the 16th Annual Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Cawnpore in 1935 under the Presidentship of Rev. Bhikshu Ottama, he was elected its Working President. The 17th Annual Session of the same body held at Poona under the Presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya elected him its Vice-President. He was a powerful speaker and an effective writer whose ideas inspired hundreds of youngmen for the national cause. He made use of a weekly Hindi paper, called *Akashvani* as a vehicle of his political ideas.

PARTAP SINGH KAIRON

Partap Singh was born at Kairon, District Amritsar, in 1901. His father, Nihal Singh, was an educationist who founded in his village a high school wherein young Partap Singh received his early education. After that, he joined the Khalsa College, Amritsar. While he was a student of this college, he decided to proceed to the U.S.A. for higher education. In the U.S.A. he got associated with Indian freedom-fighters and was drawn into revolutionary politics. But he completed his education and took his Master's degree from the Michigan University.

Returning to India he joined the Shiromani Akali Dal, premier political organization of the Sikhs, and for some time served as Editor of the well-known rebel Sikh newspaper, *Akali*. After sometime he found that temperamentally he was not suited to sectarian politics and resigned his membership of the Akali Dal and joined the Indian National Congress in 1930. Those were the days when the Civil Disobedience movement was in full swing. During this movement he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for presiding over the banned session of the Punjab Congress Committee at Amritsar in 1932.

In 1938 he courted arrest for leading a Kisan agitation against *Abiana* (water cess). In 1942 when the Quit India movement started, he was arrested and detained for his active participation in it. He secured his release in 1945 along with other detainee.

Within a short time of his association with the



Congress, he became a prominent figure in Punjab politics and was elected member of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee. After some years he was placed on the Congress High Command. He held the office of General Secretary of the Punjab Pradesh Congress from 1939 to 1946. Later, he was President of the same organization from 1950 to 1952. Besides, he was member of the Congress Working Committee from 1946 to 1953.

He began his parliamentary career in 1937 when he was first elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly on Congress ticket. In the elections of 1946 he was again returned to the Punjab Legislature as a member of the Congress Party. In the same year he was elected member of the Indian Constituent Assembly.

After Independence he was included practically in all governments formed by his Party. From 1947 to 1949 he was Minister in the Gopi Chand Bhargava Cabinet and from 1952 to 1956 Minister in the Bhim Sen Sachar Cabinet and held the portfolio of Development.

On January 23, 1956 he was sworn in as Chief Minister of the Punjab. As head of the Government his greatest service to the State was to rid it of factional politics and to establish a strong and stable administration. The state made great strides forward on the path of progress and prosperity during his tenure of power. He resigned Chief Ministership on June 21, 1964. A little later, he was shot dead while travelling by car from Delhi to Chandigarh.

Sardar Partap Singh was a rare combination of strength of character, boldness, honesty of purpose and simplicity.

PINDI DAS (Lala)

Lala Pindi Das hailed from village Vaniawaal, District Gujranwala (now in Pakistan). He was born in June, 1886. His father Lala Isher Das was a rich and prosperous man widely respected by the people of the locality. When he was hardly twelve years of age, he was married to Shrimati Parmeshri Devi, daughter of Lala Maya Das Kapur.

After completing his studies in 1904, he plunged into the freedom struggle. He soon became an active member of the *Anjman-i-Muhiban-i-Watan* (society of lovers of the country). He actively participated in the Anti-Colonization Bill movement. For his activities which were considered objectionable by the Government, he was convicted and sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 1907.

On the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 he was rearrested under the Defence of India Rules and was detained throughout the war years. When he was released after the war, he came under the spell of Gandhiji's magnetic leadership and intensified his Patriotic activities as a disciplined soldier of the Congress.

He participated in all Congress movements such as Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience and Quit India, suffering imprisonment or detention each time. In all he spent 16 years in jail. During the Martial Law days of 1919, he was confined in a small cage and subjected to great tortures.

For twelve long years (1920-32) he worked as a member



of the working Committee of All-India Congress Committee. In addition, he was for several years Financial Secretary of the Punjab Provincial [Congress Committee. While in the Congress he worked hard to promote and consolidate Hindu-Muslim unity and *khadi* development schemes.

He was a journalist of no mean repute. For forty long years he continued writing in Hindi and Urdu on the burning problems of the day. He was also a poet of considerable merit and distinction. He published about a hundred books, a record which few politicians are able to excel.

Dedicated to the nation, he drafted his wife Parmeshwari Devi as well as his daughters—Swadesh Kumari, Sadarsh Kumari, Satya Bala and Swaraj Kumari into the struggle for freedom. All of them except the youngest underwent two years of imprisonment from 1930-32—a unique example of patriotism.

Lala Pindi Das lived on for many years after Independence. He died on 17th July, 1969.

PRABODH CHANDRA

A prominent living Congress leader, son-in-law of the famous freedom-fighter, Lala Pindi Das, he was born on 24th October, 1911 at Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan). His parents Satya Dev and Durga Devi provided him with the best available education. He was educated at Multan, Amritsar and Lahore. He passed the B.A. and M.A.

examinations of the Panjab University, Lahore in 1934 and 1936 respectively.

Even as a student, he was deeply interested in politics and he entered into the main stream of national politics *via* the students movement in the Punjab. He became a member of the Students Organizing Committee as early as 1929. Three years later, he became President of the Lahore Students Union and in 1934-35 he got the Presidentship of the Punjab Students Union. In 1936 he was Chairman of the All-India Students Conference. In this way he may justly be regarded as one of the founders of the students movement in the country.

As a nationalist he suffered imprisonments on several occasions during the freedom struggle. In 1929 he was arrested in connection with the Multan Bomb Case. Afterwards, he courted arrest in the Civil Disobedience and Quit India movements.

In 1945 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly on Congress ticket.

Since Independence (1947) he has been playing an important role in Punjab politics. In 1952 he contested election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly. After his victory at the polls, he was appointed Parliamentary Secretary. Four years later he was appointed Minister in the Punjab Government for the first time. From 1962 to 1964 he functioned as Speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. When Ramkishan succeeded Partap Singh Kairon as Chief Minister, Prabodh Chandra became Minister for the second time and was given the portfolios of Education and Health. With Gurmukh Singh Musafir



succeeding Ramkishan, the Cabinet was reconstituted and Prabodh Chandra was given new portfolios of Community Development, Panchayats, Labour and Employment, Town and Country Planning and Urban Estates. In September, 1970 he was elected member of the Lok Sabha and is up to now member of that body.

Besides politics, he has interest in writing. Over the years he has written a number of books, namely : *Sixty Years of Congress*, *Humanity Uprooted* and *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Prabodh Chandra's wife, Sadarsh Kumari, is also a freedom-fighter and was jailed for two years.

PRITAM SINGH GOJРАН

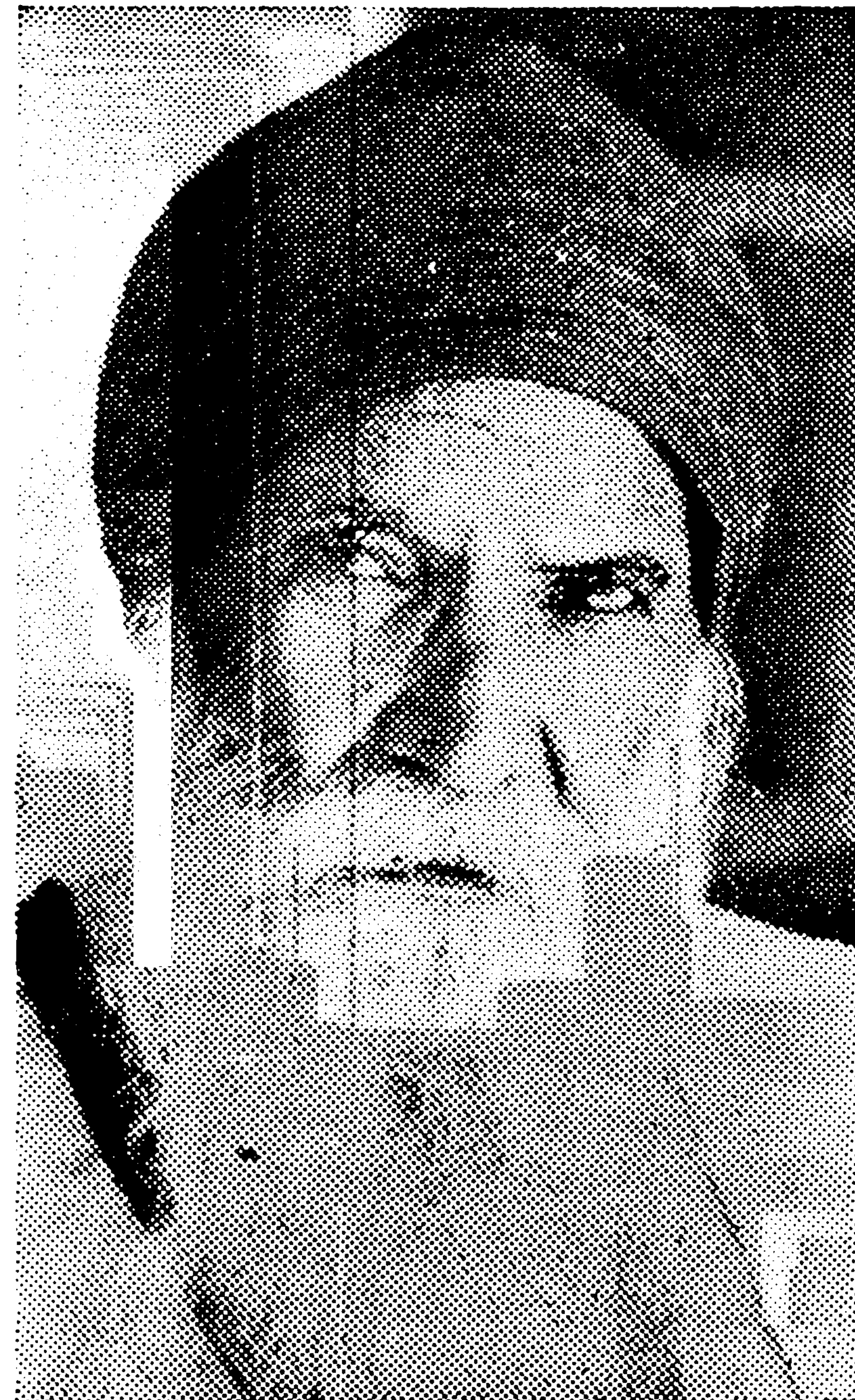
His original name was Dalip Singh. The present name, Pritam Singh, was assumed after *Amrit* (*Khande di Pahul*). He was born in 1896 at village Gojran, Tehsil Moonak, District Sunam (erstwhile Patiala State). His father, Sardar Kishan Singh, died when Pritam Singh was just a child. When his mother remarried, he went along with her to his new father's house. His father Kishan Singh was an armyman and so was his adopted father Hira Singh who was in service with the Rajindra Lancers.

Like Jangir Singh Phaguwalia and many others, Pritam Singh started his career with military service. He joined the Indian Army in January, 1915 and was enrolled in 58 Rifles. The first World War being in progress at the time, he was posted on the Suez Canal and took active part in fighting against the Arabs. It was during the period of his service in the army that he developed revulsion against drinking and meat-eating and became a teetotaller which he has been ever since.

He was released from service in 1920. Having a religious bent of mind from the beginning, he used his newly gained leisure to get religious education from Mahant Prem Partap Singh and Mahant Harkishan Singh. It was about this time that he was baptised as *Amritdhari Singh*.

He was at Lahore in connection with his training in vehicular driving when the Nankana Sahib tragedy occurred and deeply stirred his mind. Henceforward, he began taking keen interest in the Akali movement for control and management of *gurdwaras*.

The Nabha agitation followed by the Jaito *morcha* led to his arrest and imprisonment in 1923. For his active participation in the movement he was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment and was confined in the Bhatinda jail. After his release in 1924 he participated in an unlawful Akali conference, for which reason he was again sentenced to six months' confinement. When he was about to be freed, his term was enhanced by six months. Ultimately, he secured his release after the



passing of the Gurdwaras Act, 1925, as a result of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh and Giani Sher Singh's intercession with the Maharaja of Patiala.

In 1926 Pritam Singh joined the anti-Bhupinder Singh agitation. On the advice of the Ghadrite Babas Jawala Singh and Wasakha Singh, the leaders of the movement built up their centres of operation in British territory. The first most important issue before them was the continued determination of Sewa Singh. Pritam Singh whole-heartedly supported the campaign for his release. He was most active when Baba Kharak Singh was conducting his tour in the Patiala State. On account of that, he was detained for a period of 11 months.

With the formation of the Praja Mandal in 1928, he began to take all the more interest in the movement against the State Government. In 1933 there was a Praja Mandal *morcha* at Amritsar. Pritam Singh took part in that and suffered another detention of six months. Two years later when an agreement was reached between Master Tara Singh and Maharaja Bhupindra Singh, he took the hard line of the Praja Mandal and denounced the agreement. As he happened to be outside the State of Patiala at the time, it was not possible to take action against him easily.

Later, certain developments took place which brought about a change in the attitude of Pritam Singh. After the Akalis left it, the Praja Mandal came under the domination of Communist and urban Hindus. He could

not reconcile himself to this situation and reverted to the politics of Master Tara Singh in 1943 when he attended his Akali Conference at Bhawanigarh. Thereafter, his main concern was to build up a strong Akali counter-weight to the urban - and communist - dominated Praja Mandal. He formed a Praja Unnati (development) Board in the State for the welfare of the people.

After Independence he was one of those who supported the formation of Pepsu as against the merger of the Punjab States with the Punjab.

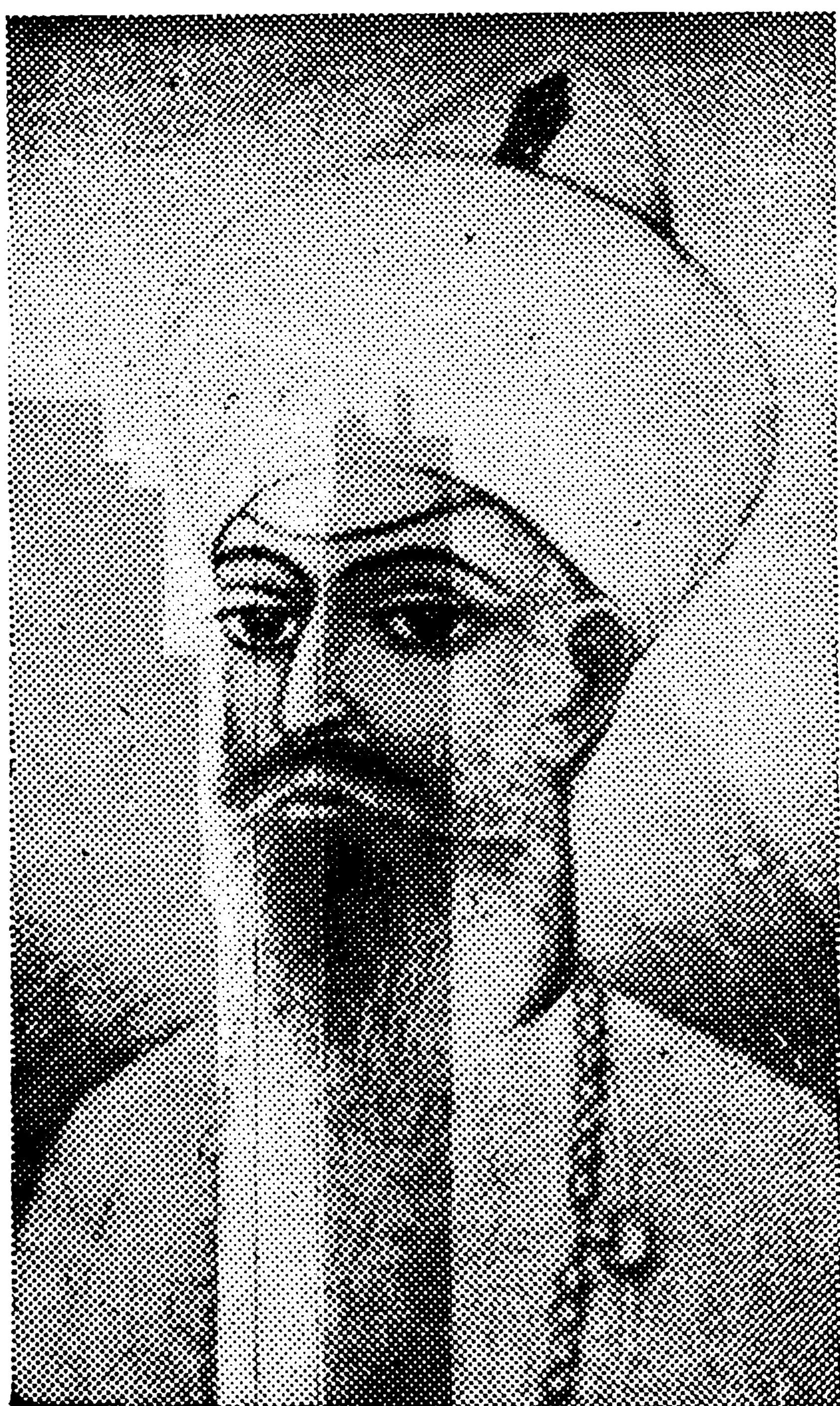
In 1952 he fought election to the Pepsu Assembly from the Lehra Constituency but was defeated by Brish Bhan. However, two years later he won his seat from the same constituency.

He is now leading a retired life at his native place, Gojran. Out of regard for his meritorious services the village Panchayat has assigned to him a portion of the *Shamlat* (common land) for his subsistence.

He has been a bachelor throughout his life.

RAM SINGH (Bhai or Baba)

He was born in 1826 at village Bhaini in the District of Ludhiana. His father, Jassa Singh, belonged to the lower middle class and worked as a carpenter in his village. Not much is known about Baba Ram Singh's early career, but it appears that he got his early education in *Gurmukhi* and *Gurbani* (Sikh scriptures). When he grew up, he enrolled himself in the Khalsa Army and served for several



years in the Risala of Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, grandson of Ranjit Singh. During the period of his service he fell under the spell of a Sikh saint of Hazro, Baba Balak Singh. Under the influence of his spiritual master's teachings he got disgusted with the deteriorating state of affairs around him and bidding good bye to service went home.

In 1857, the year of the great Indian Revolt, he founded what he called the Sant Khalsa which became the nucleus of his Namdhari or Kuka movement. A few years later in 1863, he issued a comprehensive code of discipline for his followers. The code went a long way in consolidating the ranks of the Kuka movement.

Babaji made extensive tours through the Punjab and his *diwans* (religious assemblies) were attended by huge crowds. As his teachings contained critical references to several elements of Western impact, such as education and cow-slaughter, British authorities felt alarmed and interpreted his movement as a bid to restore the Khalsa *Raj* in the Punjab. In 1863 Baba Ram Singh and his followers were placed under police surveillance. This act of official repression proved a shot in the arm for the movement which thereafter made rapid strides and took the form of a political revolutionary organization. The Kukas were now asked to boycott British institutions such as schools and colleges, courts, post and telegraph offices and steps were taken to establish alternate arrangements which had the appearance of a parallel government. The province was divided into 22 divisions and each division was placed under a *Suba* or governor.

When the Government learnt about the rapid growth of the movement, it saw wisdom in removing the ban on the activities of the Kukas in 1869. This gave further encouragement to them. Some of them made attacks on graves, marks of cremation and *Smadhs* (memorials raised over cremation spots), all objects of worship by superstitious people.

In 1871 a programme of attacks on slaughter-houses and butchers was adopted. The slaughter-houses of Amritsar and Rai Kot were raided as a result of which several butchers were killed at both the places. The assailants were traced out and were hanged after summary trials. The most important attack was, however, reserved for Malerkotla in 1872, in the course of which the Kukas killed 10 men and wounded seventeen, their own losses being 8 killed and 31 wounded. 68 Kukas were rounded up. Out of them 65 were blown up from the mouths of guns and one was cut to pieces by sword.

The years 1869 to 1872 were also marked by attempts on the part of Baba Ram Singh to establish contacts with the Rulers of Nepal and Kashmir with a view to strengthening his anti-British movement.

After the Malerkotla affair, the entire Kuka movement was outlawed, a police post was set up at Bhaini, the headquarters of the movement, and all prominent leaders including Baba Ram Singh were taken into custody. Baba Ram Singh was deported first to Allahabad and then to Burma and he remained there as a state prisoner till his death in 1885.

During the period of his incarceration in Burma Ram

Singh continued to keep contact with his people in the Punjab through letters and personal messengers. The main theme of his letters and messages was the prediction that they would soon be free from the yoke of the *ferangis* (Britishers). Thinking that Russia was opposed to the British empire in India, he sent a letter in *Gurmukhi* which was addressed to the Russian Government. This letter was carried to Russia by a *Kuka Suba*. Later on, this letter as well as the Russian reply to it fell into the hands of a spy who handed them over to the British authorities.

RANBIR SINGH

Son of Lala Khushal Chand of the *Daily Milap*, who is now Shri Anand Swami Saraswati (a *Sanyasi*), Ranbir Singh was born in 1907 in Jalalpur Jattan, District Gujarat (now in Pakistan). He got his education at D.A.V. School, D. A. V. College and Law College all situated at Lahore. A prominent student as he was, he was elected Secretary of the Lahore Students Union in 1926, and he continued to occupy this office till 1930. In 1928 he was elected General Secretary of the All-India Students Convention at Lahore which was presided over by Subash Chandra Bose.

A year earlier, in 1927, he joined the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army. This was the organization to which our great heroes, Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev, Raj Guru, Chander Shekhar Azad, Ram Prasad Bismal, Ashfaq Ullah and Bhagwati Charan belonged. He played

an active part as a member of this revolutionary party and was privy to most of its secret plans and activities.

In 1930 while he was a student of the Law College, Lahore, he was arrested as a suspect in the Punjab Governor Shooting Conspiracy Case along with Durga Das Khanna and Chaman Lal. All the three of them were charged with (i) conspiring to murder the Governor, and (ii) abetting the murder of a police officer and the wounding of certain other people. They were all sentenced to death in 1931. On being allowed to appeal to the High Court, the charges levelled against them were found not proved and they were released. But in the course of the trial which lasted for about nine months, they were confined in condemned cells usually reserved for people guilty of capital punishment.

Shortly after his release in September, 1932, Ranbir Singh was rearrested under the Punjab Safety Act by the Punjab Government and was detained in Lahore Fort. At the end of this detention he was again taken in custody under Regulation III of 1818 of Bengal and was not released till October, 1933. During this period he stayed in the jails of Lahore and Mazaffargarh. A confidential report of Punjab Government of those days refers to him in these words : "If Ranbir remains out of prison, no British officer in Punjab or North-West Frontier Province is safe. He alone can upset the whole system of Government".

In December, 1933 he joined his father's Urdu paper, the *Daily Milap* as Sub-Editor. Henceforward, journalism was his chief weapon of fighting the nation's struggle for



freedom. In 1947 he shifted to Delhi and in 1953 became full-fledged Editor of his paper on the retirement of his father. He is now Editor of the *Daily Hindi Milap* also.

Since Independence he has occupied important positions in the All-India Newspaper Editors Conference. He was its Treasurer in 1953, General Secretary from 1957 to 1964, and its President in 1967. Since 1947 he also travelled widely in the world and has about 35 books to his credit besides thousands of editorials in his own newspaper.

RANBIR SINGH (Chaudhari)

Chaudhari Ranbir Singh hails from a patriotic Jat family of Haryana. He was born at Sanghi, District Rohtak. His father, Chaudhari Motu Ram, was an agriculturist but unlike most other *zamindars* had a nationalist outlook. He was one of the topmost leaders of Rohtak, a zealous social reformer and the founder of the first public high school in Rohtak. He joined hands with the Congress and fought for a seat in the Punjab Council on Congress ticket in 1924.

Ranbir Singh was educated at Vaish High School, Rohtak and Ramjas College, Delhi from where he obtained his B.A. degree in 1930.

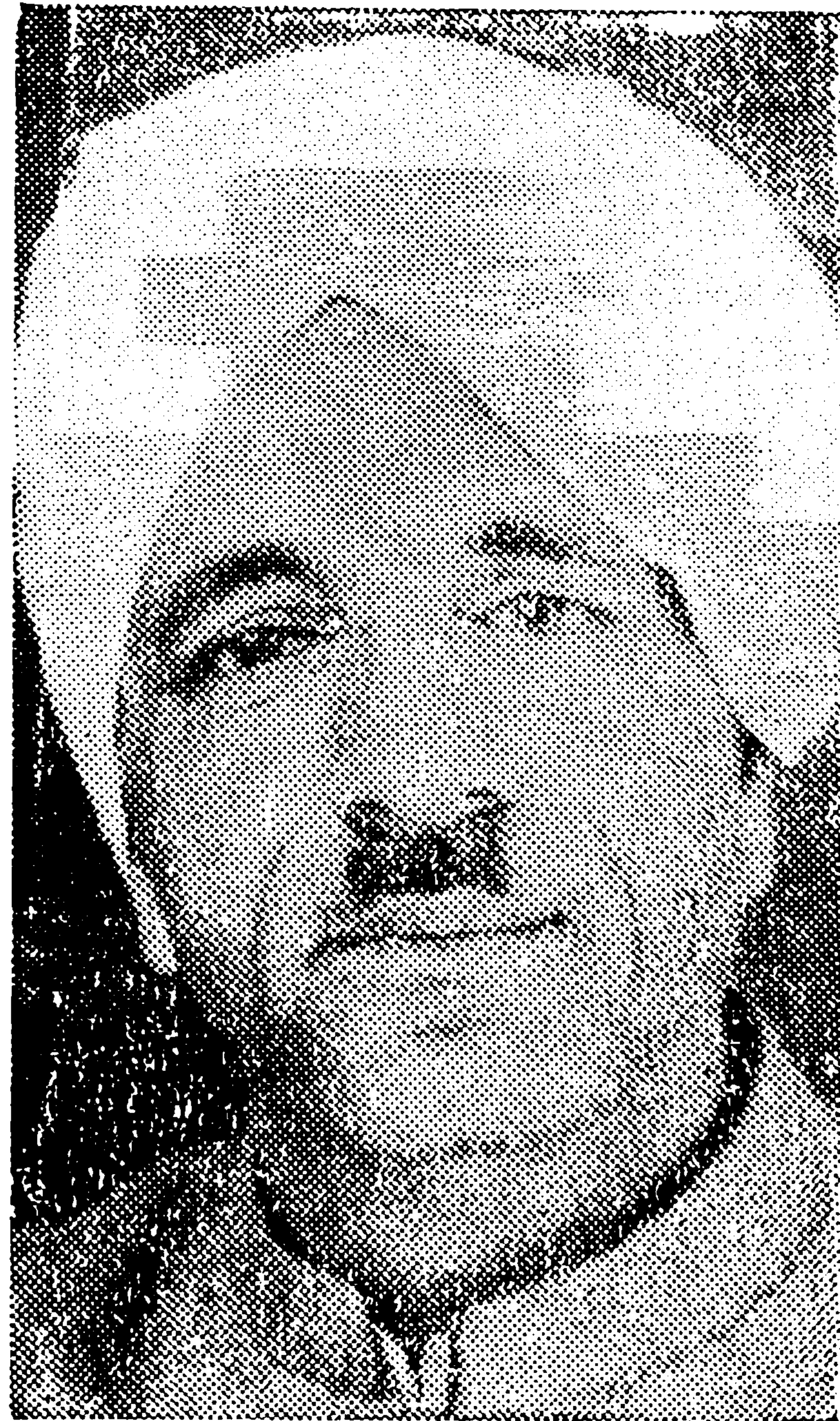
It was in 1940 that he first joined the freedom movement as an individual *satyagrahi* under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He was arrested and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. Immediately after his

release he defied the ban. Lest the police should lay their hands upon him, he went underground but under Gandhiji's instructions he made a voluntary surrender to the authorities and was put behind the bars. When he was set free, he resumed his active participation in the national struggle. The result was that he was taken in custody and kept in detention during the whole of the Quit India movement. He was released from prison in 1945 along with thousands of other freedom-fighters. In all he was in jail for a period of four years.

The impact of Chaudhari Ranbir Singh's struggle on his family was tremendous. The whole family made great sacrifices. His father resigned his post of *Zaildar*, while his uncle, Dr. Ramji Lal, gave up his lucrative job of Civil Surgeon. In consequence, the members of the family were subjected to great harassment. For instance, his elder brother was falsely implicated in a murder case.

Chaudhari Ranbir Singh all along showed deep interest in the welfare of *Kisans*. He founded the Rohtak Krishak Multipurpose Cooperative Societies. He was Secretary of the Socialists-sponsored Punjab Kisan Sabha in 1946. Then, he was also President of the District Kisan Sabha. In 1950 he was elected General Secretary of the Bharat Kisan Congress. In 1949-50, he was selected Delegate to the International Agricultural Producers Conference but was unable to attend it.

Prompted by the same urge for the upliftment of *Kisans*, he started a chain of Primary schools in his own district. In 1946 he laid the foundation of the Subash High School at Rohtak.



To keep his people well posted with latest happenings, he brought out a Hindi weekly entitled *Haryana*.

In 1947 he was elected to the Constituent Assembly and three years later he became member of the Indian Parliament. As M.P. he served on a number of important Committees, such as Standing Committee on Agriculture and Standing Committee on Rehabilitation.

He is still alive and is a very dynamic figure in the affairs of the State of Haryana.

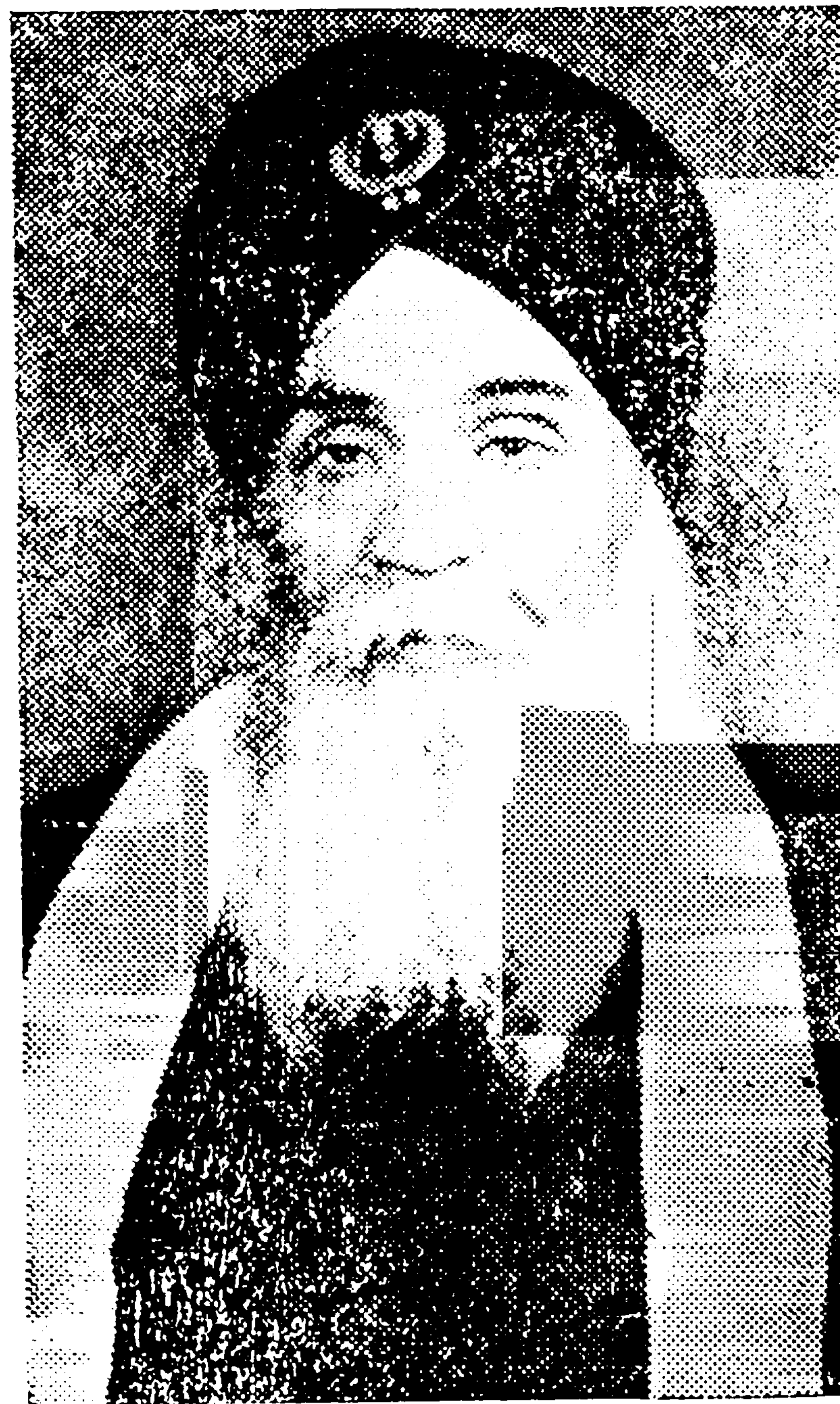
RANDHIR SIGNH (Sant)

A great spiritualist and a fearless freedom-fighter, Bhai (also Sant) Randhir Singh was born on 7th July, 1878 at Narangwal, District Ludhiana. His father, Natha Singh, was a Judge in the Nabha State. After passing the B.A. examination of the Panjab University from the F. C. College, Lahore, Randhir Singh got employment as Tehsildar. But he did not like the service and resigned it in 1903. After that, he served for short periods as Head Clerk at Abbotabad and as Hostel Superintendent in the Khalsa College, Amritsar.

In 1908 he participated in the famous Damdama Sahib Conference which decided to establish Fanch Khalsa Diwan with its headquarters at Bhasaur. The years from 1908 to 1914 were spent mostly in travelling about and preaching of Sikhism.

In 1914 a great commotion was generated in the Sikh community over the demolition of a boundary wall of the

Rikab Ganj Gurdwara, Delhi by the Central Government. A huge *diwan* was held at Lahore on 3rd May, 1914 to protest against the high-handedness of the Government. Bhai Randhir Singh participated in this meeting accompanied by a big *jatha*. The *Komagata Maru* affair was another important factor which aroused national feelings in his mind and turned him against the British Government. He offered his cooperation to the *Ghadar* revolutionaries and worked in close collaboration with them to put an end to foreign rule in India. After some preparatory work had been done, 21st February, 1915 was fixed as the date of rising. But the whole plan was rendered abortive by the timely action of the police. A large number of revolutionaries were now rounded up. Among them, Bhai Randhir Singh was arrested on 9th May, 1915 at Nabha and detained in the Ludhiana jail for a few months. From there he was transferred to the Central jail, Lahore in October, 1915.



Bhai Randhir Singh was convicted in the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case and sentenced to life imprisonment on 30th March, 1916. As a prisoner, he had to live in a number of jails such as Lahore, Multan, Hazari Bagh and Nagpur. In all, he spent 16 years in prison and during this period he went on hunger strike on as many as ten different occasions on one issue or another. His sufferings were great but also great was his capacity to suffer and his will-power to surmount difficulties. All this is well reflected in his *Jail Chithian* (letters from jail).

After his release in 1932, Bhai Randhir Singh devoted himself entirely to spiritual activities such as *Akhand Path*s

(uninterrupted reading of Holy Granth), *Kirtan* (singing of holy hymns), *Amrit Parchar* (administration of Guru Gobind Singh's steel baptism) and *Gurdwara Yatra* (visits to Sikh shrines). He wrote a large number of books on Sikh religion, which provide a spiritualist's interpretation of Sikhism. The total number of his works, both big and small, is over 40.

He died on 16th April 1961.

RATTAN CHAND (Mahashe)

Rattan Chand, one of the heroes of the Jallianwala Bagh episode, was born in 1875 at Ludhiana. He was son of Lala Sita Ram Khanna, a middle-class businessman operating in Tehsil Phillaur of District Jullundur.

Rattan Chand did not join any school and had his elementary education at home. He never passed any school or university examination, but he learnt Urdu and often contributed articles in the *Daily Partap* (Urdu), then published from Lahore. Professionally, he was a piece-goods broker at Amritsar. He was married twice, first with Lakshmi Devi and after her death with a widow, Puran Devi.

From early childhood he had a flair for singing and when he grew up, he developed an interest in national songs which he sang at public meetings. Mahashe Rattan Chand who was popularly known as Ratto, joined the Bharat Mata Society of Ajit Singh and worked in close association with him. For some years he was member of the Indian National Congress. In 1919 he personally

donated two thousand rupees and also collected donations from the people for holding the All-India Congress Session at Amritsar. Late, on the question of the Communal Award of 1933 he left the Congress and joined the Hindu Mahasabha.

Mahashe Rattan Chand's period of greatest contribution to nationalism was from 1907-1947. As early as 1907 he took an active part in the agrarian movement in the Punjab. He sang the famous song '*Pagri Sambhal Jatta*' in villages and towns and moved the hearts of his listeners.

During the Amritsar disturbances of 1919 Mahashe Rattan Chand was most active. He headed the Ram Naumi demonstration on 9th April, 1919 and opened a *Chhabil* (supply of free cold drinks) for people. Next day, he headed the procession going to the Civil Lines to demand the release of Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Kitchlew. After the procession was fired upon at the Railway Bridge, he became violent and played a leading role in attacks on Europeans and their banking institutions in the city.

He was immediately arrested and after a summary trial the Martial Law Court sentenced him to death. This was later commuted to transportation for life. According to the charges levelled against him by the Martial Law Commissioner, "Mahashe Ratto recited a poem at the meeting on 30th March 1919, was a speaker at the meeting of 6th April, and one of the conspirators who arranged *hartal* and a big meeting on 5th and 6th April".

Rattan Chand remained in Andaman Islands for

about eight years up to 1928. Thereafter, he was kept in Multan, Lahore and Campbellpur jails. He was released in 1936 after undergoing seventeen years of rigorous confinement.

After being released from jail, Rattan Chand left the Congress and joined the Hindu Mahasabha, following the example of Bhai Parmanand.

SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW (Dr.)

His place of birth was Faridkot. After receiving early education in the Punjab he went to the Cambridge University (England) wherefrom he passed his B.A. examination. After that he received instruction in law and was duly called to the bar. He took his Ph.D. from a German University.

On his return to India Dr. Kitchlew started his legal practice at Rawalpindi in 1913. From there he shifted to Amritsar in 1915. It was about this time that he got interested in national politics and became a member of Mrs. Besant's Home Rule movement. Other subjects which interested him most at that time were the questions of Hindu-Muslim unity and Pan-Islamism. But until 1918 he was little known and it was the anti-Rowlatt Bills agitation in 1919 that brought him into lime light and made him the 'Hero of Jallianwala Bagh.' Along with Dr. Satyapal and Lala Duni Chand of Lahore he addressed dozens of meetings in towns and cities of the Punjab arousing the people's indignation against the Black Bills. He was prohibited from speaking on 4th April,

1919. Six days later Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew were arrested and despatched to Dharamsala to be kept in detention there. The result was that the situation in the city of Amritsar went out of control and ended in the holocaust of 13th April, 1919 in the Jallianwala Bagh. Later, he was tried under Section 124 A of I.P.C. and sentenced to transportation for life. But he was released on 26th December 1919 as the result of a Royal proclamation declaring a general amnesty of political prisoners.

After his release Dr. Kitchlew gave up his practice of law in order to be able to participate more actively in the Khilafat and Congress movements. He became a front-rank leader of these organizations and took prominent part in the non-cooperation movement of 1921-22 and the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930-33.

During the Akali movement as well he took active part in the Jaito *morcha* for which he was arrested on 21st February, 1924. In 1929 he seconded the famous Lahore resolution pertaining to the demand of complete independence. In July, 1934, he observed a week's fast for the national cause. He was President of the Punjab Provincial Congress for one term and member of the All-India Congress Committee for many long years. In all he spent about 14 years in jail.

After Independence his interest mainly centred round the issue of peace in the world. He was President of the All-India Peace Council and member of the Presidium of the World Peace Council. He was the first Indian to receive the Stalin Peace Prize.



SANT RAM (Seth)



He was born at Lahore in 1889. His father, Jamiat Rai Seth, was in Government service. Sant Ram received his early education in Government High School, Kasur.

From 1914 onwards Sant Ram was in the thick of the fight for India's freedom. In 1916 he organized a branch of B.G. Tilak's Home Rule League in Amritsar and also set up in the same year a Congress Committee for the city. In the agitation against Rowlatt Bills he was most active and in the company of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal conducted a hurricane propaganda campaign through the Punjab towns and cities inciting the people to rise against the Bills and to strengthen the agitation. When in 1919 the Indian National Congress held its annual session at Amritsar, he was member of the Reception Committee organized to host the session. Soon after he was elected General Secretary of the Amritsar City Congress Committee, and in that capacity he actively participated in the non-cooperation movement. On account of that he was arrested and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Later, Sant Ram was one of the chief figures in the anti-Simon Commission demonstrations organized in the Punjab. He was General Secretary of the first 'War Council' organized in 1930 at Amritsar with Dr. Kitchlew as its dictator. In 1931 he was arrested and sentenced to a two years' term for taking part in the Civil Disobedience movement.

In 1937 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and as legislator served on a number of committees of the legislature. In 1940 he was imprisoned for six months for delivering an 'objectionable' speech. He was again sent to jail in 1941 while he was acting as Dictator of the Individual Satyagrah movement in Amritsar. In 1942 he took active part in the Quit India movement, for which he was kept in Mianwali jail for three years. During the period of his detention he lost two young members of his family but refused to come out on parole. In 1946 he was again returned to the Punjab Assembly on Congress ticket.

During the disturbances of 1947 Sant Ram saved hundreds of Muslims in distress and supplied them with rations even at great risk to his own life. He helped Miss Mridula Sarabhai in the recovery of abducted women. He also rendered great help in organizing refugee camps in Amritsar on that occasion. Earlier, he had worked for the sufferers of Bihar and Quetta earthquakes.

After Independence, he had serious differences with the Congress and seceded from it. Thereafter, he paid his attention mainly to social work. As President of the Harijan Sewak Sangh, Amritsar, he opened free schools for Harijan boys and girls.

SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

A front-ranking freedom-fighter, Sardul Singh Caveeshar was born at Amritsar in 1886. He had his degree in post-graduate studies from the Panjab



University, Lahore in 1909. During the period of his studies he proved himself a first class football and Cricket player.

Sardul Singh began his public career with the bringing out of the *Sikh Review* in 1913 at Delhi. When agitation started over the demolition of a portion of the outer wall of Gurdwara Rikab Ganj, Delhi, he played a leading role in it with the result that he was externed from Delhi for his 'objectionable' activities.

Thereafter, he shifted to Lahore and started a newspaper, called the *New Herald*. From the very foundation of the All-India Sikh League in 1919, he was among its most active members and was elected its Secretary in 1920 and its President the following year. The same year, in recognition of his services to the national cause, he was elected Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. During the period 1921 to 1922 he actively participated in the non-cooperation movement and the Akali *morchas* on account of which he was arrested and sentenced to transportation for 5 years. But he did not have to complete the whole term and was released after a year only.

In 1925 Sardul Singh presided over the Punjab Provincial Conference. In 1926 he resigned the membership of all Sikh organizations in order to devote himself wholly to the national cause. In 1928 he was elected member of the Congress Working Committee. This position he held for several years till he left the Congress for good. He acted as President of Indian National Congress in 1932 and 1933. He was sentenced four times

in connection with the Civil Disobedience movement.

In the closing years of the thirties he resigned his membership of the All-India Congress Committee over the question of office acceptance and joined the Forward Bloc of Subash Chander Bose. He was elected President of the Bloc after Subash Chander surreptitiously left India in 1941. As such, he was charged with having contact with Subash Bose and being party to his plans and was detained for four years under the Defence of India Rules. He resigned the Presidentship of the Forward Bloc in 1948.

After Independence he ceased to be an active political leader. His death occurred on 26th March, 1963.

He took keen interest in journalism and writing of books. His publications include many religious and political tracts and books. Among them the most important ones are : *Non-Violent Non-Cooperation*, *The Sikh Studies*, *India's Fight for Freedom*, *Gandhism versus Commonsense*, *Indian Politics* and *Successful Life Insurance Agent*.

SATYAPAL (Dr.)

A great pillar of Congress movement in the Punjab and a noted physician, Surgeon and Dentist, Dr. Satyapal was born in 1885. After passing the B.A. examination of the Panjab University, Lahore in 1902, he joined medical college and passed the M. B. examination in 1908. Thereafter, he settled down as a medical practitioner at Amritsar. When the first World War broke out, he left



private practice and got a Commission in the Indian Medical Service of the Indian Army.

At the time of his release from the army after the termination of the war, the Punjab was in a state of great turmoil. The post-war economic discontent and the anti-Indian Rowlatt Bills touched the deepest chord of his heart and he became an ardent national leader. Along with Dr. Kitchlew and Lala Duni Chand of Lahore he went from town to town agitating against the Black Bills. When in 1818 trouble arose at the Amritsar Railway Station over the refusal of railway authorities to issue more platform tickets, he became leader of the agitation and President of the Railway Grievances Committee and ultimately the demand of the people was conceded.

From then onwards Government regarded him as a dangerous man. He was prohibited from speaking on 29th March, 1919 and on the morning of 10th April, 1919 was whisked away to Dharamsala along with Dr. Kitchlew. This created a great furore in the city leading to the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy of 13th April. Dr. Satyapal was sentenced to death by the Martial Law Commission, but later, this sentence was commuted to transportation for life and afterwards to life imprisonment. However, he did not have to suffer long because he was released in December, 1919 on account of a general amnesty proclaimed by the King-Emperor.

In 1921 he participated in the non-cooperation movement and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. In 1930 he was again imprisoned for three years. After he was released, he was rearrested and imprisoned in

1934 on charges of sedition for two years. His role in subsequent *Satyagraha* movements started by the Congress was equally active. Besides, he successfully guided the destinies of the Punjab Congress as its President for several years. In the disturbances of 1947 he was wounded at Lahore.

After partition he tried to revive his medical practice in Amritsar but politics had greater lure and took him to Simla and Chandigarh. He became Speaker of the Punjab Legislature Assembly in 1952. This office he held till his death on April 18, 1954.

In the words of Partap Singh Kairon, "Dr. Satyapal was a first-class patriot, a first-class friend and a first-class Congressman. He was the strongest man of the province. He served the Congress as few could in the State. He was a valiant fighter for freedom. He saw the glow of freedom and blessed this 'Jyoti' to keep on burning for ever".

SEWA SINGH THIKRIWALA

Real founder of the Praja Mandal movement in the Punjab and a giant among freedom fighters, Sewa Singh was born in August, 1878 at village Thikriwala, Patiala State. His father, Dewa Singh, was an important official in the same State. When he grew up, Sewa Singh also got appointment as a State official. But he did not allow his official position to come in the way of his interest in the educational and other programmes of the Singh Sabha movement. At Thikriwala, his own village, he raised a



big *Gurdwara* which afterwards became a prominent centre of Akali and Praja Mandal movements.

When the Akali movement started, Sewa Singh was already counted among the chief Sikh leaders of the area. The Nankana massacre and the deposition of the Raja of Nabha, Ripudaman Singh, moved his heart deeply and he began to play a leading role in the Sikh agitations regardless of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's advice to him to the contrary. Soon after, he was arrested along with many other Akali leaders in the Akali leaders Conspiracy Case and detained in the Lahore Central jail. After the *Gurdwara Act* of 1925 was passed, the Punjab Government offered conditional release to the Akali prisoners. Sewa Singh was one of those who refused to be released on any condition. Ultimately, the Government yielded and released him in 1926 without any condition.

But as soon as Sewa Singh stepped out of the Lahore Fort, he was arrested by the Patiala police and detained in the Patiala jail. He was tried in the court of Barnala on the charge of a minor theft (stealing of a *garwi*—a tiny round utensil) and though the charge could not be proved, he was not released. This act of high-handedness on the part of the State Ruler led to a fierce agitation in the State. Baba Kharak Singh conducted a hurricane campaign throughout the State demanding immediate release of the Thikriwala and condemning the State Government for its arbitrariness. Inside the jail, Sewa Singh went on hunger-strike as a protest against maltreatment by the jail officials. When his condition grew critical, he was released on 24th August, 1928.

As soon as he was free, he threw himself headlong into the Praja Mandal movement of which he had been elected President a little earlier. In 1929 he attended the historic Congress Session at Lahore which declared complete independence to be the political goal of India. At the same time, a conference of States' people was held in the Bradlaugh Hall. Sewa Singh acted as Chairman of the Reception Committee on this occasion.

After some time, a conference of the Punjab Riasti Praja Mandal was held at Ludhiana under the leadership of Sewa Singh. In 1930 he headed a deputation which waited upon the Viceroy at Delhi and submitted to him a memorandum regarding the atrocities of the Maharaja of Patiala. During the same year in October a big gathering of the All-India States Peoples' Conference was held at Ludhiana. Here, Sewa Singh, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, made a historic speech which landed him in a Patiala State jail immediately after the Conference. After the mockery of a trial he was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment and a fine of ten thousand rupees. He was, however, released after four months by the Maharaja under pressure from the All-India Praja Mandal leaders.

When the Maharaja of Patiala saw the increasing popularity of the Praja Mandal movement in the State, he started negotiations with Sewa Singh in 1931. The negotiations, however, broke down over the demand of Sewa Singh for an elected assembly in the State. In July, 1931 he went to Simla to attend the third conference of the Punjab Riasti Praja Mandal. The conference could

not be held on account of disturbance created by some hirelings of Patiala, but Sewa Singh utilized the occasion to have a discussion with Mahatma Gandhi on the problems of States' peoples.

Earlier in January, 1931 he had attended a meeting of the All-India Peoples' Conference at Bombay. At this time he was also President of the Shiromani Akali Dal. In November, 1932 he went to participate in a *diwan* to be organised at Jind by the Akalis of Sangrur. The *diwan* was banned and the particular *gurdwara* where it was to be held, was locked from outside. Sewa Singh was taken in police custody but was released shortly after. In the same year he was arrested and detained for a few months by the Malerkotla Government for his participation in the celebrations of the Kothala Day Anniversary. At this place ten peasants had been killed in police firing on 17th July, 1927.

On 15th May, 1932 he presided over an Akali Conference at Khudiala and made a powerful speech. In April, 1933 he attended the fourth conference of the Punjab Praja Mandal at Delhi and played an effective role in its proceedings. A month and a quarter later he took part in a meeting of Praja Mandal leaders at Amritsar where it was decided to send *jathas* of people to the office of the Lahore Political Agent. In consequence, Sewa Singh was served with orders to quit Amritsar immediately and not to enter the districts of Lahore and Amritsar for two months. After that when he reached in Thikriwala, he was arrested by the Patiala police on 25th August, 1933. Several charges were levelled against

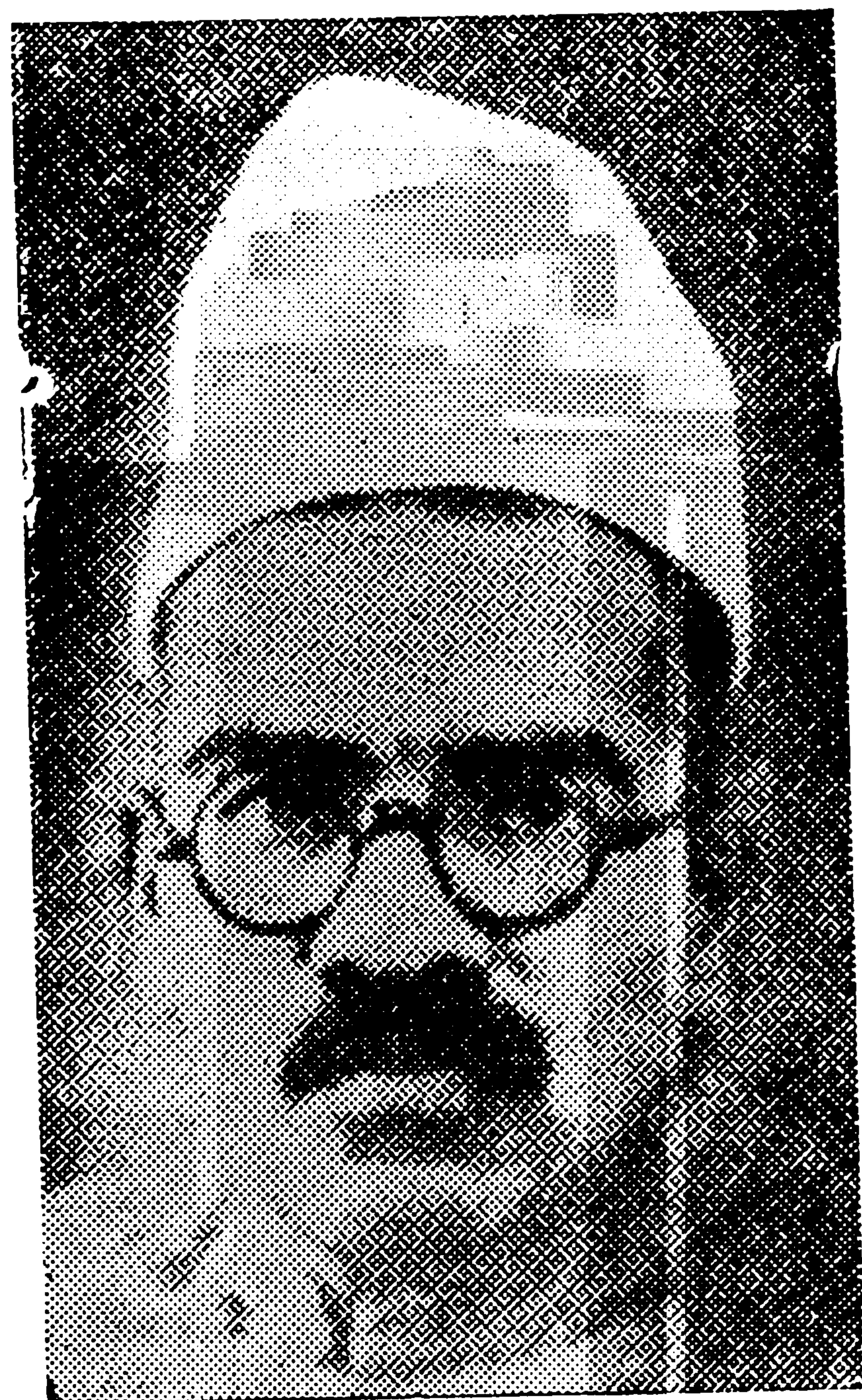
him but he refused to defend himself. He was sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500 in the Khudiala Akali Conference Case. He had hardly been in jail for six months when he went on hunger-strike as a protest against ill-treatment by the jail authorities. The Government did not pay proper heed to his health and he died on 20th January, 1935.

SHAM LAL (Lala)

A leading Congressman of Rohtak, Lala Sham Lal was born on 12th August, 1883. He passed his Matriculation from the Rohtak High School and his B.A. examination from the D.A.V. College, Lahore. Then he joined the Law College, Lahore and took his degree in law in 1905. Soon after he commenced his legal practice at Rohtak and in a short time became a prominent leader of the Bar there.

In course of time Sham Lal was drawn towards the national movement and founded the Rohtak District Congress Committee in 1917. He actively participated in the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills in 1919 and later suspended his practice to play an active part in the non-cooperation movement. Afterwards, he became President of the Rohtak District Congress Committee, member of the All-India Congress Committee and senior Vice-President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee.

In 1930 he suspended his practice again and went to the Sabarmati Ashram of Mahatma Gandhi. The same



year he was tried for sedition and imprisoned for nine months for taking part in the Civil Disobedience movement. After his release he was put in charge of the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case as a Senior Counsel. While arguing a revision petition in the High Court in connection with this case, he was committed for contempt of court for having questioned the impartiality of the judges and was asked to withdraw his statement. He took a bold stand and refused to comply with the orders and asked the judges to punish him as they liked. He was, however, spared the punishment.

Sham Lal also argued the Delhi Conspiracy Case in the High Court. Before 1937 he was the only Congress member of the Punjab Legislative Council.

He died an untimely death on account of heart failure on 6th January, 1940.

Lala Sham Lal was a staunch Gandhite. The famous revolutionary Gulab Singh has written about him : "He represented an ideology different from mine. He had all his life struggled and fought for the sake of our country in his own way—Gandhi's way".

He was a close associate and friend of Lala Duni Chand of Lahore.

SHANKAR SINGH (Giani)

Son of Sardar Inder Singh and Smt. Partap Kaur, he was born on 20th February, 1899 at his maternal father's village, Khaira Dona, Kapurthala State. His own village

was Johl Dhaiwala, Tehsil Tarn Taran, District Amritsar. His father was an agriculturist by profession.

Shankar Singh passed the Vernacular Middle examination from the Middle School, Fatehabad, District Amritsar and the Junior and Senior Special Classes from Randhir High School, Kapurthala. Subsequently, he passed the J.V. Teacher's Training Course from the Khalsa College, Amritsar and B.S.D. (*Parcharak's* Training Course in Sikh divinity) from the Shahid Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar.

In 1918 he joined the Indian Army as a soldier and served in 45 Rotary Sikh Regiment until 1921 when he resigned his job on the patriotic call of Mahatma Gandhi. On account of his participation in the Congress and Akali movements he was arrested and convicted in 1922. In two different cases decided respectively on 17th May and 26th June, he was awarded imprisonment for six months with a fine of Rs. 50. The fine was realized by the Government by attachment of his property. As prisoner, he stayed in the Camp jail, Montgomery and the District jail, Multan.

In 1930 he took an active part in the Salt Campaign with which the Civil Disobedience movement was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. He manufactured and sold the forbidden salt at a number of places and incurred severe punishment at the hands of the Government. He was also Member of the band of 100 *Satyagrahis* who marched from Amritsar towards Peshawar under the leadership of Master Tara Singh. For making a seditious speech in this connection he was arrested and convicted under section



108 I.P.C. and sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment. He was confined in the jails of Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala, Attock and Multan.

In 1938 a Kisan *morcha* was launched against the revised land revenue assessment of the Unionist Ministry in the Punjab. Shankar Singh actively participated in the agitation and through his speeches tried to excite the people against authorities. Two cases were instituted against him and in each of them he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. This time the places of his confinement were the jails of Amritsar, Lahore and Shahpur.

Giani Shankar Singh's next conviction fell during the days of the Quit India movement. He offered *satyagraha* at Tarn Taran against the recruitment of soldiers in the Indian Army. This was, in fact, an organized protest against Master Tara Singh's pro-recruitment attitude. Shanker Singh was arrested in 1943 under Defence of India Rules. From January 26 to May, 23 he was detained in Gobindgarh Fort, Amritsar for interrogation. This was a period of severe torture for him. After the investigation was over, he was sentenced to one year and four months' rigorous imprisonment. From 24th May, 1943 to the end of October, 1943 he was kept in the New Central jail, Multan and was treated as a security prisoner (Class II). From November, 1943 to 14th October, 1944 he was detained in the Central jail, Lahore as a Security prisoner (Class I).

From the time of his discharge from the Indian Army he was mostly associated with *gurdwara* committees. To begin with, he was a *parcharak* (missionary) of the

S.G.P.C. (Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee). Then for some years he served as Secretary, Parbandhak Committee of Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. From 1940 onwards, with a few brief intervals, he functioned as Manager, Sri Darbar Sahib, Tarn Taran upto 1954 when he left the *gurdwara* service. In May, 1955 he was appointed P.A. to Partap Singh Kairon and he remained at that post till January, 1956. After that he served as P.A. to Mohan Lal (Home Minister, Punjab) upto July, 1959. The same year he was appointed Supervisor, Public Relations in the Punjab administration.

At present he is leading a retired life at Tarn Taran but even now he is very active both mentally and physically.

SHER SINGH (Baba)

One of the front-ranking Ghadrates, Sher Singh was born in 1880 at village Wain Poin, District Amritsar. His father, Sardar Kesar Singh, was an agriculturist by profession.

Sher Singh was a prominent figure of the *Ghadar* movement in America. In 1914 he formed his own band of revolutionaries and left for India by *Canada Maru*. At Hong Kong he met the members or other revolutionary bands who had left America earlier by *Korea Maru* and a few other ships. They were soon joined by volunteers from Shanghai and Manila, so that they became a sizable crowd. In the *gurdwara* of Hong Kong a number of secret and open meetings were held to consider the



problems before them. As a result of these deliberations a Central Committee was formed to plan and coordinate the programmes of revolutionaries after their arrival in India. Sher Singh was selected a member of this committee. He was also appointed a group leader and as such was required to guide and supervise the activities of his followers.

The revolutionaries left Hong Kong by two ships, *Tosha Maru* and *Moshima Maru*. When they reached the port of Singapore, members of the Central Committee including Sher Singh had secret meetings with Indian soldiers posted there and instigated them to a revolt against the British. Although there were no immediate results of their attempts, later on a Mohammedan Regiment did rise into rebellion.

After Singapore the port of Penang was their principal halting place. Here also attempts were made to get into touch with Indian Regiments and to instigate them for a rising against the authorities. Sher Singh was one of those representative leaders who met the Resident at Penang and successfully pleaded with him for grant of necessary facilities for the Ghadrite passengers.

When the ship by which Sher Singh was travelling reached the port of Budge Budge (Calcutta), he was immediately arrested along with many other leading figures such as Jawala Singh Thathian and Nidhan Singh Chugha.

On being brought to Lahore he was confined in the First Lahore Central jail. Here he was tried in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case and sentenced to transportation

for life and forfeiture of property.

After remaining in confinement for a period of 18 years in various jails, mostly in the Andaman Islands (*Kala Pani*), he was released in 1933.

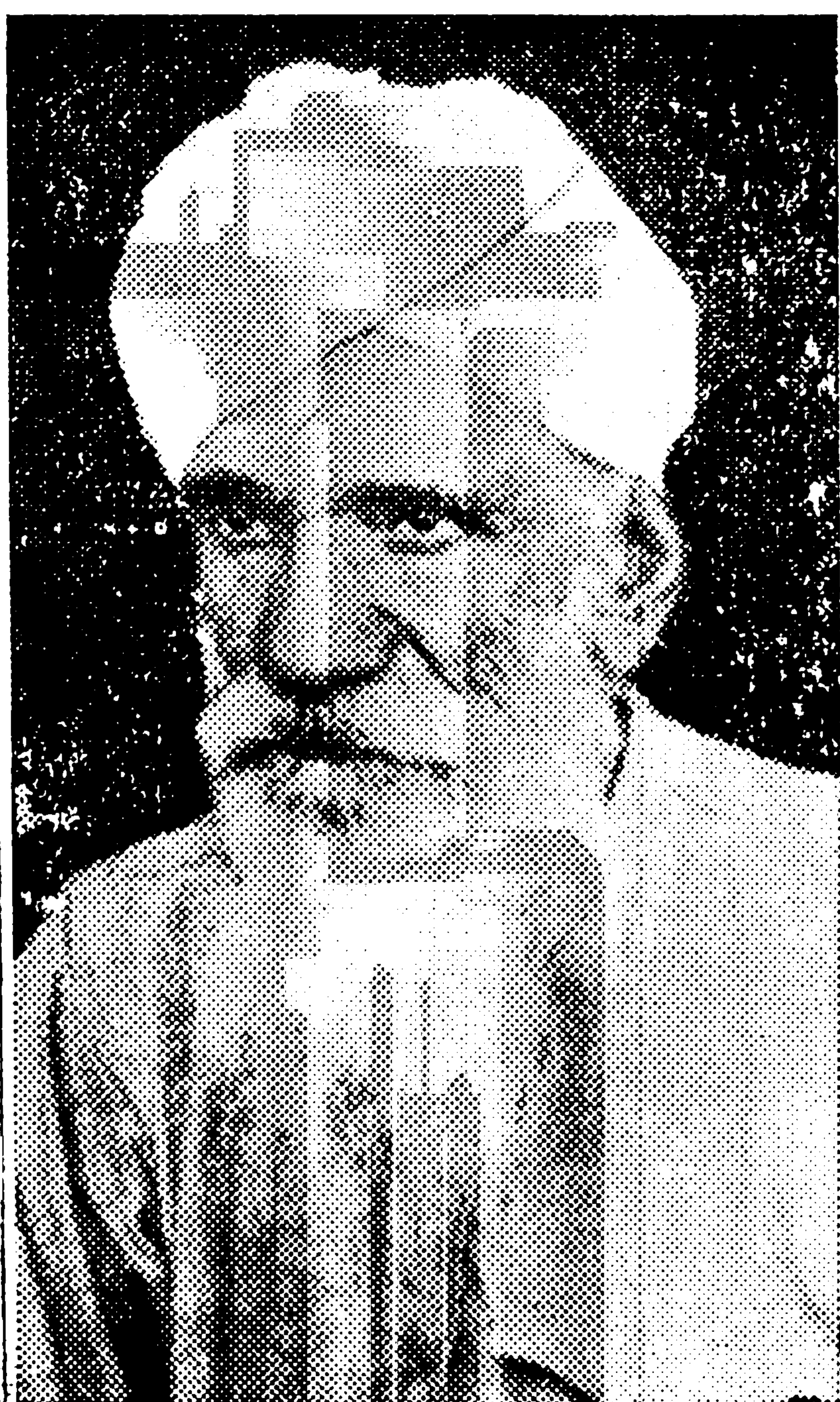
After his release he came under the influence of the Communist Party and actively associated himself with the *Kisan* movement. In 1938 he took part in the *Kisan morcha* organized against the revenue policy of the Unionist Minister in the Punjab. On account of this he was sentenced to one and a half years' imprisonment.

When the second World War broke out, he together with other Communist leaders was arrested and detained at the Deoli Camp Jail (Rajasthan) in 1940. From there he was finally released in 1943.

But he did not stop his activities. Both before and after Independence he zealously carried on his work in the *Kisan* movement and took part in a number of *morchas* organized by the Kisan Sabha.

SOHAN SINGH BHAKNA (Baba)

Born in January, 1870 at village Khutral Khurd, District Amritsar, Sohan Singh was the only son of Sardar Karam Singh, a well-to-do peasant who died when Sohan Singh was hardly a year old. As there was no school in the village, Sohan Singh received his early education at the local *gurdwara*. When he was eleven, a primary school was opened in the village. When he completed his primary education from here, he had



already grown too old, so that he did not pursue his studies any further. He spent, rather wasted, the first twenty-five years of his life at his native place in the manner of a care-free youngman. During this period he fell into bad company and squandered away most of the land and money in the possession of the family. He would have completely ruined himself but for the saintly advice of a noble man of a neighbouring village, Baba Kesra Singh Kuka.

To wean himself completely from the evil company, as also to recover the old prosperity of the family, he migrated to the U.S.A. about the year 1907 and joined the Punjabi immigrants in California. In course of time the miseries and hardships suffered by Indians in America made him an ardent nationalist. Things came to a head during the first World War. Driven to desperation by the attitude of foreign governments and desiring to seize the opportunity presented by the war, Sohan Singh, Lala Hardayal, Pt. Kanshi Ram and a few others put heads together and founded the Pacific Coast Hindi Association. Sohan Singh was elected its first President. The same Association later came to be known as the *Ghadar Party*.

As desired by the Party, Sohan Singh left America even before the World War broke out and returned to India as the head of a band of revolutionaries by the ship *Namsang* following the *Komagata Maru*. He was commissioned, among other things, to have contacts with the *Komagata Maru* passengers before their arrival in India and to guide their activities and to form links with principal Indian political leaders, revolutionaries and parties

with a view to advancing the cause of the Ghadar Party and to arrange for the supply of arms and weapons to the Party workers. He reached Calcutta in October, 1914 but was arrested immediately. He was then tried and sentenced to death in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case. Later, on appeal to the High Court the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. He was released after 16 years.

In jail he went on hunger strike in 1929 in sympathy with Bhagat Singh and his comrades. When Bhagat Singh tried to dissuade him on account of his old age, he said, "What if the body looks old, the revolutionary in me is not old". Such was the spirit he retained right till his death.

When he stepped out of prison in mid-thirties, he again plunged into political activity. His first concern was to get the *Ghadar* prisoners released. Even so his main interest henceforward lay in the welfare of peasants and he participated in several *Kisan morchas*. This brought him closer to the Communist Party of India. When the second World War started, he was arrested and sent to jail at the Deoli Camp (Rajasthan). In 1943 he was released along with other detainees of his Party.

For the next twenty-five years of his life, he continued working for the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party of India. At one time he was President of the All-India Kisan Sabha. He was so popular among its members that the Kisan Sabha decided to honour him by holding a conference at his village Bhakna Kalan from 2nd to 4th April, 1943. It was sheer coincidence that Babaji had been released a day earlier.

He died on December, 1968 when he was just one month short of 99 years of age.

SOHAN SINGH JALALUSMAN

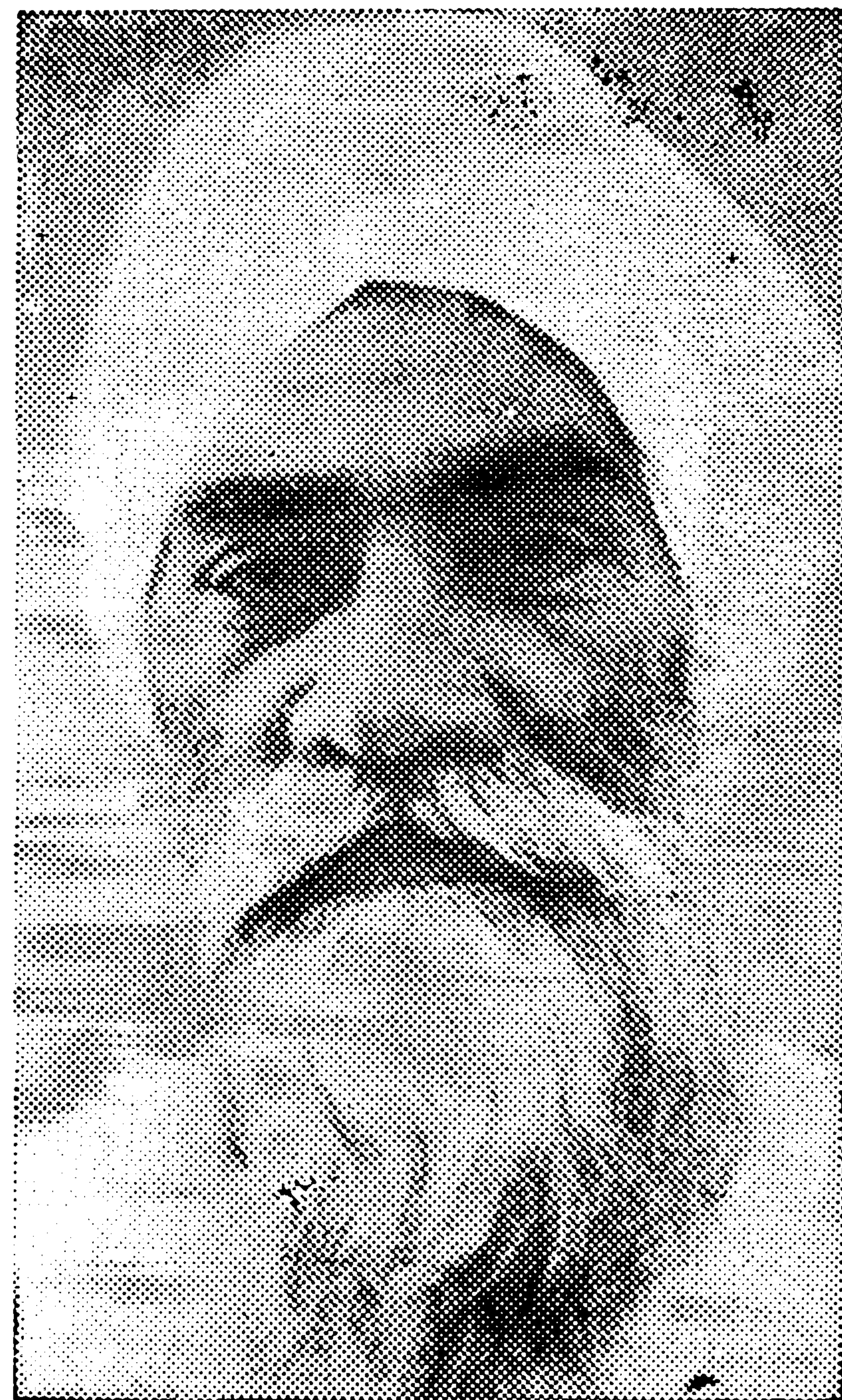
He was born on 23rd March, 1901 at village Jalalusman, District Amritsar. His father, Sardar Jawahar Singh, was an agriculturist by profession. Since his parents died when he was a small child, he could not have the benefit of formal education. Gradually, however, by his own efforts he picked up a working knowledge of Urdu and Punjabi.

On obtaining majority he got into the Indian Army as a Sepoy. The political ferment of 1919 affected some army ranks as well. After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Sohan Singh planned with some young soldiers serving with Risalas 19, 72, 92 and 93 to destroy their foreign officers by means of bombs when they assembled for inspection of their units. The plot had to be abandoned because information about it leaked out betimes.

At the end of the year 1919, Sohan Singh resigned his service in the Army and made up his mind to take an active part in the Congress and Akali agitations. In 1924 he was imprisoned in the Nabha jail for one year and a half for being member of the ninth *jatha* in the Jaito *morcha*. When the Civil Disobedience movement started in 1930, he was detained for three months in the Amritsar jail but was released after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

In 1933 a committee was set up to work for the release of Ghadrите prisoners. Sohan Singh being a member of

this body was served with orders of internment within the District of Amritsar. Notable among other people punished along with him were Partap Singh Kairon, Wasakha Singh Dader and Munshi Ahmad Din. The period of this internment was six months. In 1935 an agitation was started under the leadership of Udham Singh Nagoki against increase in land revenue rates. For taking part in this movement, Sohan Singh was imprisoned for a year and a half in the Multan jail. In 1938 he took part in the Kisan agitation and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment in the Shahpur jail for breach of Section 144. In 1941 he and Ishar Singh Mujhail were falsely implicated in a murder case and had to remain in the Gurdaspur jail for eight months.



In 1942 was started the Quit India movement. Sohan Singh was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for taking active part in it. He served this term in the Lahore Central and Jhang jails. At the time of partition in 1947 he together with some of his friends constituted a Defence Committee for the protection of Non-Sikhs against Muslim onslaughts.

Before 1947 Sohan Singh held several important positions in the administration of Sikh shrines and educational institutions. He was member of the S.G.P.C. from 1930 to 1954; President, Local Gurdwara Committee, Tarn Taran Sahib from 1939 to 1945; President, Baba Bakala Gurdwara Committee from 1931 to 1935; and President, Khalsa High School, Baba Bakala for 5 years.

Since Independence as well he has maintained his interest in education. He is a founding father of the

Sathiala Degree College and the Udo Nangal Girls Middle School.

He won his first election to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha in 1952 and since then continuously has been member of the Punjab legislature.

SOHAN SINGH JOSH

A veteran freedom-fighter, Sohan Singh Josh was born on 12th November, 1898 at village Chetnapura, District Amritsar. His father, Lal Singh, was keen on the good schooling of his son, but the difficulty was that there was no school nearby. Some years later when a school was opened, Sohan Singh, in spite of his comparatively advanced age, got admission in it. Afterwards he passed the Middle examination from a Church Mission School and the Matriculation from D.A.V. School, Amritsar. For higher education he joined the Khalsa College, Amritsar but had to leave it soon after on account of financial difficulties.

Search for employment took him to Hubli and later to Bombay where he worked up to 1918 in the Censor's office. Coming back to his native village he began to work as a school teacher. But this was not for long, as his real interest lay in the country's struggle for freedom. In 1921 when the Akali movement started, he enthusiastically participated in it and travelled from village to village preaching against the Government. For his seditious activities he was arrested and tried in the Akali Leaders' Conspiracy Case and sentenced to three years'

rigorous imprisonment. At that time he was member of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal.

As his political experience widened, he got interested in social and economic aspects of the freedom movement as well and helped in laying the foundation of the Kirti Kisan Party in the late twenties. From 1927 to 1929 he worked as General Secretary of this Party. In December, 1928, he presided over the first All-India Workers and Peasants' Conference held at Calcutta. Simultaneously, he was working in the Naujawan Bharat Sabha set up by Bhagat Singh and his friends. He was President of this body in 1928 and was privy to all revolutionary decisions regarding the shooting of Scott and the throwing of bombs in the Central Assembly Hall. Afterwards, he was tried in the Meerut Conspiracy Case and convicted.

His ideology brought him close to the Communist Party of India and so far as the Punjab is concerned, he was among its founding fathers and acted as its Secretary for several years. In 1937 he was the first Communist elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly. When the second World War started in 1939, he was arrested as a security prisoner and detained in the Deoli Camp jail, Rajasthan. He was released in 1943.

Having a flair for writing, Sohan Singh from the beginning of his political career adopted journalism as his major vehicle of national propaganda against the Government. He was associated with the rebel Sikh paper *Akali* brought out by Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri. In 1925 he helped to bring out the revolutionary



paper, *Kirti*. When in 1935 *Kirti* assumed the name of *Parbhat*, once again Josh was its Editor and Publisher. In 1943 the Communist Party of India brought out a new paper, *Jang-i-Azadi* and appointed Sohan Singh as its Editor.

A confirmed Communist as he was, political freedom from the foreign yoke in 1947 failed to satisfy him and he continued his struggle for economic freedom. This again landed him in jail from 1948 to 1950, but his spirit remained undaunted and he continued his work through the columns of *Nawan Zamana* of which he was the Editor for several years. In 1962 when the Chinese attack on India occurred, he was once again arrested and detained in the Yole Camp jail (Kangra).

Though now very old, Josh is still an active member of the Communist Party of India. But with the passing of years his literary interest has greatly advanced and he already has to his credit a number of books of historical and general nature.

SOHAN LAL PATHAK

In the house of Pt. Chanda Ram, a poor Brahmin of Patti, District Amritsar, Sohan Lal was born on 7th January, 1883. Being a brilliant student, he won scholarships and prizes a number of times while he was at the local school. But he discontinued his studies after he passed the Middle examination and secured employment in the Irrigation Department. After a short time he left this service and joined the Normal Training School,

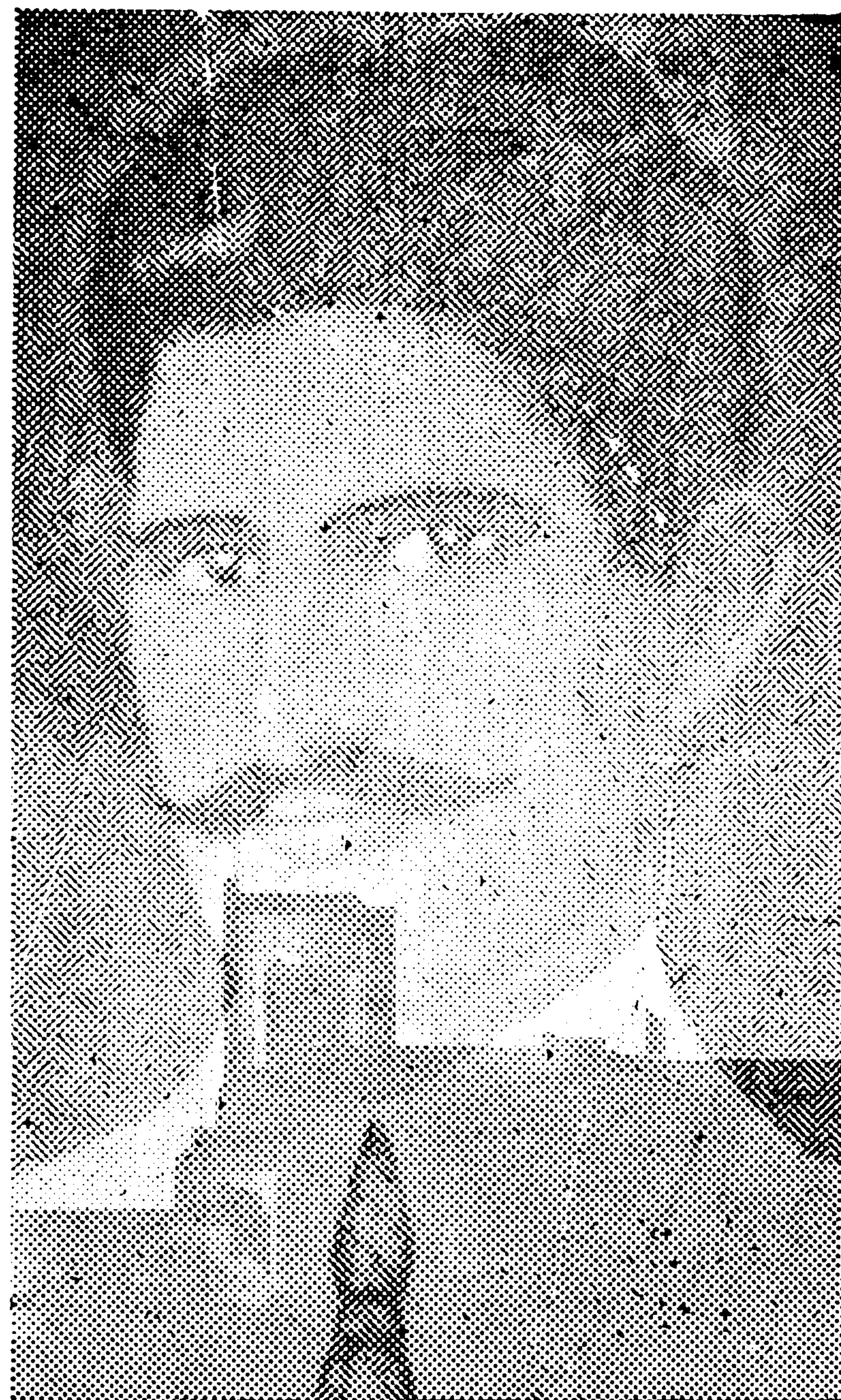
Lahore. On the completion of the course he took up the work of a school teacher.

Sohan Lal had two brothers and one sister. At the age of 18 he was married to Shrimati Laxmi Devi of Kalanaur, District Gurdaspur. He was extremely devoted to his parents and brothers.

During his stay at Lahore, he developed strong leanings towards the national movement. The revolutionary uprising of 1905-7 created a deep impact on his mind. He resigned his job as a protest against the Headmaster's ordering him to break off his contacts with Lala Lajpat Rai and other national leaders. Thereafter, he became joint Editor of the Urdu journal *Bande Matram* working under Lajpat Rai. Simultaneously, he joined the classes which Lala Hardyal had started at Lahore to impregnate the youth of India with the fire of revolution. About this time his wife gave birth to her first child but within a week both the child and the mother expired. With this, the family situation became dismal and hopeless. Among the survivors, his father was now too old to work and his elder sister was an issueless widow.

In such tragic circumstances, Sohan Lal left India in 1907 for Siam (now Thailand) and the Philippines. After visiting India once in between, he left for America for higher studies in Pharmacy.

In America he once again came in contact with Hardyal who had set up the Ghadar Party in California with a view to raising a general rebellion in India. Sohan Lal lost no time in becoming an active worker of this Party.



When the leadership of the Ghadar Party started sending bands of revolutionaries to India, Sohan Lal took upon himself the assignment of raising a revolt among Indian soldiers of the British army stationed in Burma, Malaya and Singapore. As a result of his propaganda, Indian soldiers in Singapore revolted in March, 1915 but were brutally put down and arrested. Many of them were shot dead.

But Sohan Lal remained undaunted and shifted the field of his activities to Burma. Immediately, a search was started for the arrest of this dangerous revolutionary. It was not so easy to lay hands upon him, as he knew the local language and moved freely in the country in the dress of the native people. At last the Government succeeded in arresting him in August, 1915 at Memyo (Burma). He was detained in the fort of Mandlay during his trial. The court declared him guilty and sentenced him to death. He died on the gallows on 10th February, 1916. Another great freedom-fighter who died with him on the gallows was Harnam Singh Kahari Sahari.

SOMPRAKASH SHAIDA

A distinguished firebrand of the student community, Somprakash was born on 19th June, 1919 in a Brahmin family of Attock. He had his early schooling at the Sanatan Dharam High School, Rawalpindi and his higher education at the D.A.V. College, Lahore. Politics was in his very blood and in later thirties he rose to be a powerful student leader in the Punjab with dedication to the

national cause of India's freedom. In 1941 he was elected Student Secretary of the Punjab Congress Socialist Party. All this happened while he was still at college and had not secured his Master's degree in Economics, which he did in 1942.

The Quit India movement of 1942 provided an excellent channel for canalizing his great patriotic exuberance. He organized an underground movement in the Province and in the guise of a bearded man eluded the grasp of the Intelligence Department and the police till December, 1942 when he was suddenly arrested. He remained in detention till March, 1946.

After his release, Shaida devoted all his energies to the building up of the Socialist Party in the Punjab. He was elected Joint Secretary of this party in 1946 and again in 1950. In 1951 he was elected its Secretary. Like other Socialists he seceded from the Congress after Independence.

Somprakash had a fine record of suffering and sacrifice to his credit. Even during his career as a student, he suffered imprisonment for one year. In all, he has been in jail for an aggregate of about 5 years.

An excellent speaker and a good worker, he was Editor of *Bande Matram* and *Naya Punjab* for a considerable length of time.



SUDARSHAN (Seth)

A great financier and leader of the Punjab Congress, Seth Sudarshan was born at Jhansi in 1903. His father, Udho Prasad, was an engineer in the service of the U.P. Government. Young Sudarshan had a rather chequered career as a student. After studying for a while at Allahabad at the Convent School, he came to Karnal from where he passed the Matriculation examination of the Panjab University, Lahore. Then he proceeded to the Government College, Lahore, but his studies were cut short abruptly while he was a student of F.A. classes, by the untimely death of his father in 1922.

Sudarshan's father who was a zealous Arya Samajist, was also a staunch nationalist. The son inherited his urge for nationalism from his father and at the early age of 16 began to take an active part in the Rowlatt Bills agitation as an ardent Congress volunteer. During the dark days of the Martial Law Administration he narrowly escaped death on three occasions.

The death of his father forced young Sudarshan to seek for himself a suitable means of livelihood. The acquisition of a furniture shop in 1924 provided him with an opening and he commenced his business career as a dealer in furniture. In 1925 he managed to obtain Tatas' agency for Jullundur and thus entered the iron and steel trade which became his main business henceforward. By 1929, through sheer hard work and force of character, he became a leading iron magnate of India and was handling one of the largest agencies of the Tatas.

But his attachment to the Congress continued unabated and with his accession to affluence he started helping the Congress financially. The Lahore Session of the Congress in 1929 owed its success in a large measure to his munificence. He was a great devotee of Madan Mohan Malviya and Lala Lajpat Rai. He turned his thoughts to public life in 1930 when he was elected to Jullundur Municipality. From 1937 to 1946 he was President of Jullundur District Congress Committee and member of the Punjab Congress Working Committee. Like most national workers of note he was arrested and kept in jail several times.

In 1937 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and was appointed Chief Whip of the Congress Party. During the elections of 1946 he was the chief organizer of the Congress election campaign and it was largely through his untiring efforts that the Congress won such a great success at the polls. His own election was unopposed. At that time he was often called the 'Steel Man' of the Punjab and the 'brain behind the Congress'. After the elections he played a major role in installing a coalition ministry in the Punjab. It goes to his credit that he was made Chief Whip of the Coalition Party in the Punjab Assembly.

During the Communal riots of 1947 he acted with admirable courage and expedition and visited, at great risk to his own life, places like D.I. Khan, D.G. Khan, Peshawar, Sargodha and Sheikhupura and rendered valuable and timely help to large numbers of people in distress.



Partition (1947) hit his business very hard and he suffered enormously but he braved the difficult situation in the same spirit in which he had faced his difficulties earlier.

SUKHDEV

Son of Ram Lal, he was born at Lyallpur (now in Pakistan).

He was a member of the Revolutionary Party in Lahore and a close associate of Bhagat Singh Shaheed. Like Bhagat Singh, he took active part in revolutionary activities and helped in organizing revolutionary cells in the Punjab and other areas of North India. He was privy to the plot of shooting which resulted in the death of Saunders, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Lahore on December 17, 1928.

He was arrested at Delhi on April 15, 1929 after the bomb explosions in the Central Legislative Assembly Hall by Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt. He was tried as one of the principal accused in the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case and was sentenced to death. He died on the gallows in the Lahore jail on March 23, 1931 along with Bhagat Singh and Rajguru.

TARA SINGH (Master)

A giant among the political leaders of the Punjab, Master Tara Singh was born at village Harial, District Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) on 24th June, 1885. His father, Bakshi Gopi Chand, was a village *Patwari*. Tara Singh's original name was Nanak Chand and he got his present name on embracing Sikhism at the age of 17. He received early education at his native village and later joined the Khalsa College, Amritsar from where he graduated with Honours in 1907. During his academic career he won numerous prizes and other distinctions. In the field of sports he distinguished himself by attaining captainship of football and hockey teams. In 1908 he was appointed Headmaster of the Khalsa High School, Lyallpur.

When the Akali movement started in 1921, he readily joined it and soon came to be recognized as one of its most important leaders. He was elected member of the S.G.P.C. and actively participated in all the *morchas* of the movement. He was arrested thrice in this connection. On the third occasion he was charged with sedition along with other prominent Akalis and tried for three long years. After the passage of the Gurdwaras Act 1925 he was offered release on condition but he outrightly rejected the offer. After some time the Government had to release him unconditionally. Coming out of jail, he campaigned vigorously for the release of a co-worker, Sewa Singh Thikriwala, who was still a prisoner in the Patiala jail. Ultimately, the Maharaja of Patiala had to bow down.



During the late twenties Master Tara Singh took active part in the boycott of the Simon Commission. He denounced the Nehru Report, i.e., the constitution prepared by a committee presided over by Moti Lal Nehru, because he thought that it denied a fair deal to his community. When in 1930 the Civil Disobedience movement was launched by Mahatma Gandhi, he completely identified himself with it. The news of the massacre at Peshawar in the Kissa Khani Bazar rudely shook him and he immediately set out towards the Frontier at the head of a *jatha* of 100 people wholly clad in black. He was arrested at Lahore. While in jail, he was elected President of the S.G.P.C. in absentia. From now onwards he became the undisputed leader of the Sikh community. As President of the Shiromani Akali Dal he had at his beck and call a strong and well-knit political organization to help him to build up his supremacy among the Sikhs.

During the second World War he broke with the Congress not because his enthusiasm for independence was any the less, but for the reason that he wanted to safeguard the future of his community as against the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan inclusive of the whole of the Punjab. He strongly opposed the Cripps Proposals, and the Cabinet Mission Plan as they failed to do justice to the just and legitimate demands of the Sikhs. His demand for Azad Punjab was conceived mainly in the spirit of a counterblast to the Muslim demand for Pakistan. It was mainly due to his uncompromising attitude that East Punjab was saved for India at the time of partition.

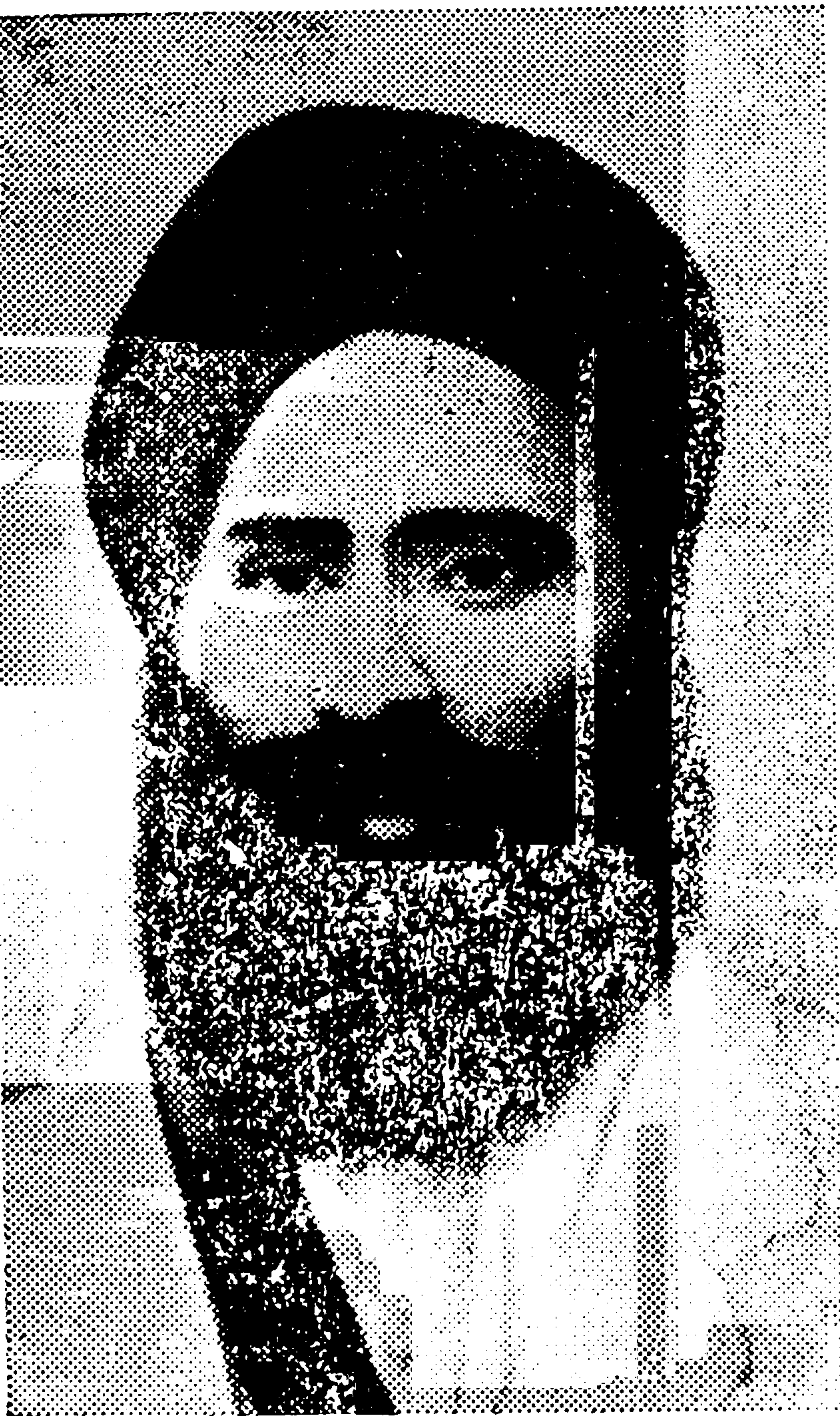
His struggle was not ended with Independence in 1947. He continued his campaign for the protection of Punjabi language and a State to be carved out on that basis. For this he was arrested several times, but his firm resolve for the achievement of his object remained unaffected and though several agitations had to be launched during the fifties and the sixties, the end was ultimately achieved in 1966.

Master Tara Singh was reputed for his incorruptibility and even his worst enemies had great regard for him. He died in November, 1967.

TEJA SINGH SAMUNDRI

Son of a Sikh jat, Deva Singh, and a recognized Akali and Congress leader, Teja Singh Samundri was born in 1881 at village Rai Ka Burj, District Amritsar. When new land was granted at Samundri in District Lyallpur, the family shifted there and hence the suffix Samundri came to be attached to his name. The father, and after his death, Teja Singh was appointed Headman of the village. He received some education in his childhood and later when he grew to manhood, he joined the Indian Army in Risala No. 22 where he was soon promoted to the position of Instructor. But he did not like to serve in the army and resigned after three years.

Then he joined the Chief Khalsa Diwan and established at his own village a branch of it called Khalsa Diwan Samundri and engaged himself zealously in propagating Sikh religion. Shortly after, he set up the Khalsa Diwan



Bar which was a larger organization but with similar aims and objects. Being deeply interested in education, he helped in building up a number of institutions, for instance : Middle School, Rai Ka Burj; Khalsa High School, Lyallpur; Khalsa High School, Sarhali, District Amritsar; and Khalsa College, Lyallpur. He was President of the Khalsa High School, Lyallpur and Manager of the Khalsa High School, Sarhali.

His political career started with his active participation in the Gurdwara Rikab Ganj agitation in 1914. He organized *diwans* at Patti, Lahore and in the *Bar* and delivered anti-Government speeches in this connection. Disillusioned about the role of the Chief Khalsa Diwan in the matter, he severed his connection with it and became a radical leader.

He was one of the founders of the rebel Sikh newspaper, *Akali* and donated generously towards its funds. He was also one of the Major organisers of *Akali* and *Pardesi*. After the Nankana Sahib tragedy on 20th February, 1920 he joined the S.G.P.C. and devoted himself whole-heartedly to the Gurdwara Reform movement. He was arrested in connection with the Keys *morcha* at Ajnala in 1921. After his release, he took active part in the Guru Ka Bagh *morcha* in 1922 and sent many *jathas* to participate in it. About this time he became member of the Congress Party as well and was elected member of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. In 1923 he was elected member of the All-India Congress Committee. In the same year he was elected Vice-President of the Shiromani Akali Dal. He was arrested in October, 1923

in connection with the Jaito *morcha* and after trial on a charge of sedition was confined in the Amritsar jail. From there he was transferred after a year to the Lahore Fort and afterwards on 25-1-1925 to the Lahore Central jail. After the Gurdwaras act of 1925 was passed, he refused to give any undertaking demanded by the Government and preferred to remain in jail rather than secure his release on condition. He died in jail on 17th July, 1926.

TEJA SINGH SWATANTAR

Teja Singh was born on 16th July, 1901. His father, Sardar Kirpal Singh, was keen on his son's education. Teja Singh passed his B.A. examination from the Khalsa College, Amritsar. After that he did his M.A. in Punjabi from the Panjab University, Lahore.

While he was still at college, he actively participated in the freedom movement. He was leader of the students strike in Khalsa College, Amritsar on the *Jallianwala Bagh Day* and worked as a lieutenant of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew. He joined the Akali movement from the very start and was member of the first S.G.P.C. and of the working committee of the Akali Dal. He led an Akali *jatha* to recover the *gurdwaras* of Teja and Othian in Gurdaspur District. On this occasion he was accompanied by his father, wife and sister Vaid Kaur. Later, he joined the Guru Ka Bagh *morcha* and *Kar Sewa*, Amritsar. About the same time, he organised the *Swatantar Jatha* (band of freedom-fighters) and plunged into revolutionary



politics. He was a supporter of the Babbar Akalis and cooperated with them on occasions.

Soon after he went to Afghanistan to establish his contacts with foreign legations there and to explain to them the import of national and Akali revolutionary struggles. From Afghanistan he proceeded to Russia and then to Turkey in August, 1923. In 1924 he joined the Turkish War College where he stood second and got President Kamal Pasha's Commission in 1927. He studied in the Staff College of Turkey up to August, 1929.

After leaving Turkey he travelled like a globetrotter all over the continent of Europe and visited several places in North and South Americas. In Brazil (South America) he met the veteran revolutionary Ajit Singh and in North America he tried to reorganise the Ghadar Party.

After travelling widely in America he returned to Europe and joined the Kutub University, Moscow in September, 1932. He studied there up to July, 1934 and then he left for India *via* Africa landing in Bombay on a false passport towards the end of 1934. He remained underground till he was arrested on 16th January, 1936. He was confined in the Cambelpore jail as a state prisoner till May 1, 1942. During this period of detention he was elected unopposed to the Punjab Legislative Assembly from the Lahore (West) Constituency on 7th May, 1937. He remained member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly up to 1946.

All along, he was working hard to promote the interests of peasants and workers. In 1942 he became Vice-President of the All-India Kisan Sabha and remainde

so till 1945. He was President of the Post and Telegraph Union of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir State and Baluchistan for the period 1944-45 and Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of India from April 1944 to March, 1947.

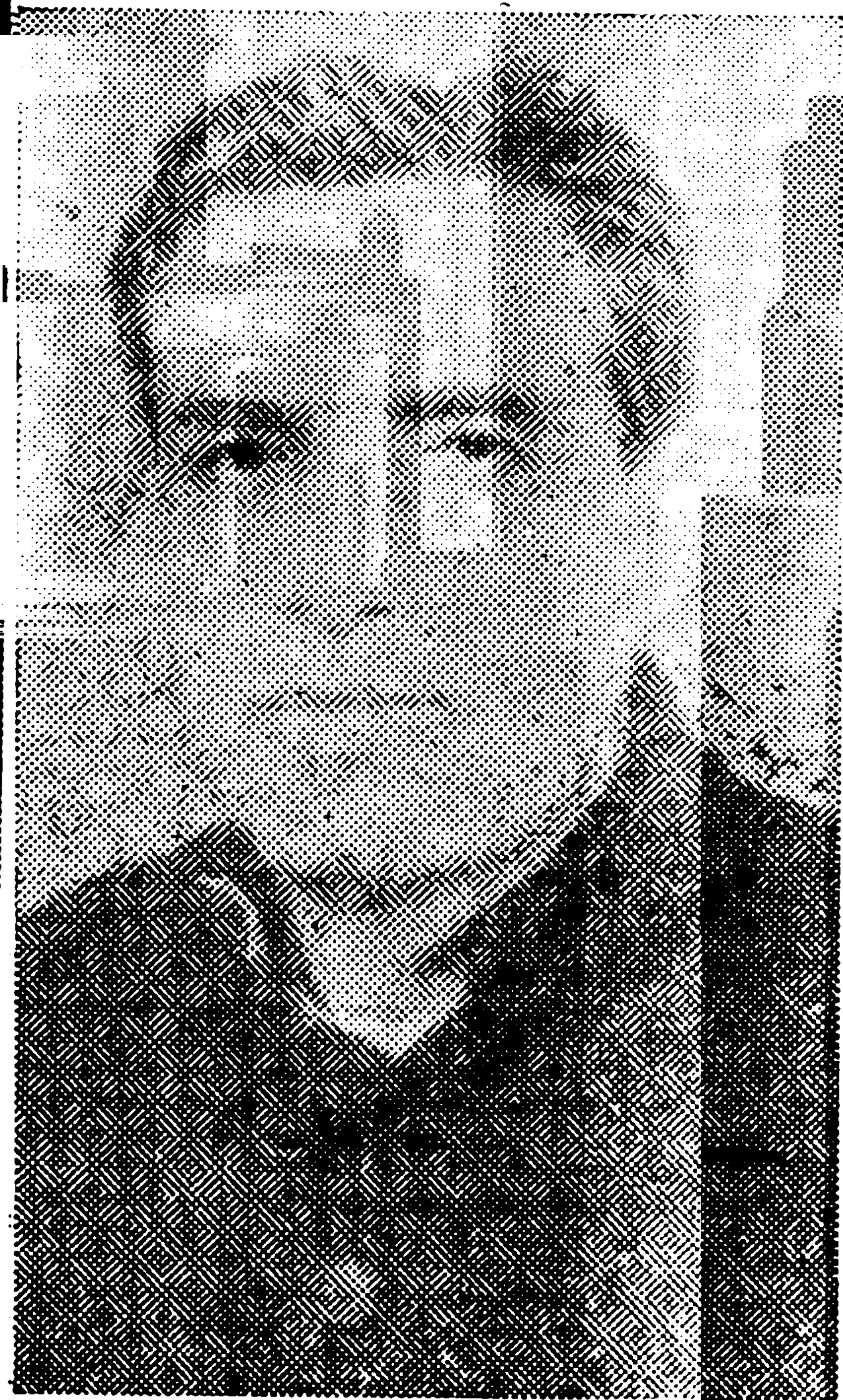
In 1948 he founded the Lal Communist Party of which he was Secretary from January 8, 1948 to July 13, 1952. Since he was a strong protagonist of land reforms, he organised and led many tenants' struggles in Pepsu. To evade arrest by the authorities he remained underground from March 28, 1948 to January 1, 1963. He is closely linked with the Punjab Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party of India.

In the General Election of 1971 he was elected member of the Lok Sabha.

TILAK RAJ CHADDHA

He was born at Rawalpindi in 1914 and his father was a rich jeweller of the town. As he grew into a young man, the wealth of his parents ceased to have much allurements for him. He spent the best years of his life on his consuming passion—India's liberation from foreign yoke.

At college he was a shining student and won numerous distinctions in the form of prizes and medals. His achievements in the sphere of extra-curricular activities were equally creditable. There was seldom a discussion or a debate in which he did not participate with distinction. In 1937 he took his degree of M.A.



But Tilak Raj was not merely a scholar. He was also a revolutionary leader and organizer all through his college career. He participated in meetings, demonstrations, processions, and strikes and when necessary, worked underground. He was one of the founders of the Socialist Party in the Punjab in 1934.

After 1937 he became a lecturer in the D. A. V. College, Rawalpindi with the party's permission. While in service there, he organized the student front of the Socialist Party. In 1939 he resigned and went underground to work for the anti-British movement of the Socialists. But he was caught hold of in 1941 and detained for a period of five years. While in jail, he was elected unopposed to the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

Since 1946 he has been a whole-time worker of the Socialist Party. Uptil Partition he edited the *Bande Matram* in Lahore. Then he shifted to Delhi and edited the same paper from there till 1948 when the Socialists broke off their relations with the Congress and its paper, *Bande Matram*.

After the parting of ways between the two parties, Congress and Socialist, Tilak Raj resigned his seat in the Assembly and came to Jullundur to organize there the State Office of his Party. As a first step in the programme, he brought out a new newspaper called *Naya Punjab*.

Since then he has devoted himself whole-heartedly to the promotion of socialism in the country. On several occasions he has worked as State Secretary of the Socialist Party. But though a sincere and devoted Socialist worker, yet his efforts have failed to produce any

lasting results, mainly for the reason that in the top echelons of the Party the requisite unity and cohesion has been lacking.

UDHAM SINGH

Udham Singh was born on 26th December, 1899 in Sunam (then in Patiala State). He became orphan when he was a mere child. At the age of two his mother died and his father, Tehal Singh, breathed his last five years later. He was brought up in the orphanage of Amritsar where he received his early education. He witnessed another tragedy in the death of his elder brother Sadhu Singh when he was only 19 years of age. Having thus suffered at the hands of Fate, he developed an intensely emotional character. He could not bear the sufferings of others.

The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy was a turning point in his life. After General Dwyer had massacred a wholly unarmed gathering. Udham Singh went to the Bagh rescue the husband of one Shrimati Ratna Devi. While identifying the dead body of the person, he himself received a bullet shot in his right arm. He was deeply moved by this bloody scene and took a solemn pledge to inflict a suitable penalty on the main culprit, the Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

He soon managed to leave for Africa. From there he went to the U.S.A. where he got interested in revolutionary activities. On receiving an invitation from Bhagat Singh he returned to India with 25 companions



and arms. By that time he was a clean-shaven Sikh. When he reached Lahore, he was arrested on account of his being in possession of arms. He was tried and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment.

He was released in 1932. The following year he duped the police and escaped to Germany, and ultimately reached London and joined an engineering course. But his real object was different. He purchased a 6-chamber revolver and ammunition. For a long time he was on the look out for a suitable opportunity to get out his target, Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

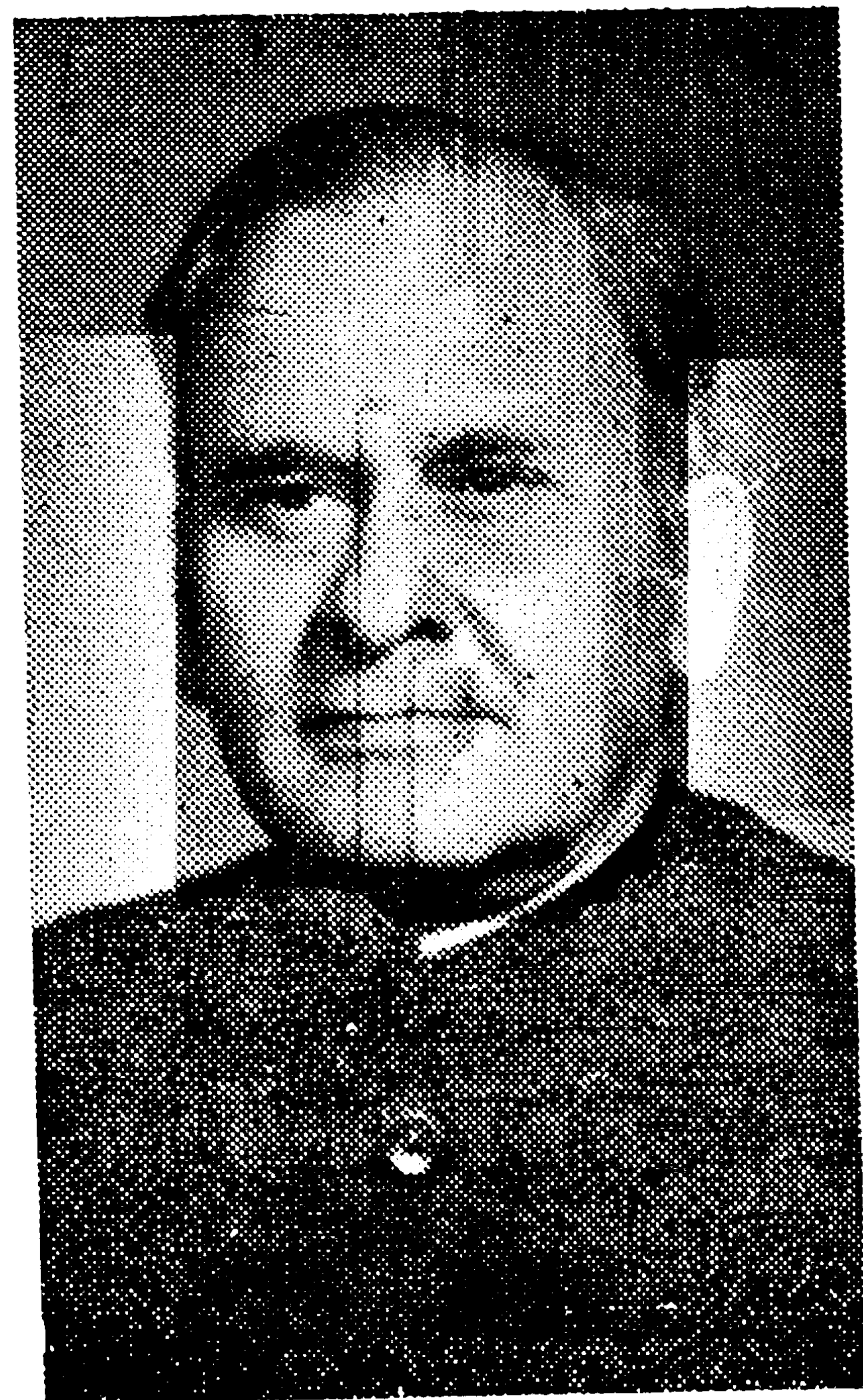
The long-awaited opportunity came at last on 13th March, 1940, about 21 years after the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. On that day at 4.30 p.m. in the Caxton Hall Udham Singh found his victim and fired five or six shots at a stretch from his revolver. O'Dwyer was hit twice and he yielded his ghost instantaneously, while Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, was injured. Udham Singh was arrested on the spot and produced before the court. When the court asked him about his name, he replied, "Ram Mohammad Singh Azad". As was expected, he was sentenced to death. He died on the gallows in London on June 12, 1940.

Udham Singh's act is a rare example of a firm and successful determination maintained for many long years to avenge a national insult perpetrated upon the motherland.

VIRENDRA

Son of Mahashay Krishan, he was born on 15th January, 1911. He was yet a student when he started taking part in the national movement, particularly in revolutionary activities in the city of Lahore. In 1928 he was arrested as a suspect in the Saunders Murder Case but shortly after was released, as nothing could be proved against him. Next year, he was again suspected of having been in the firing on the Viceroy's train but luckily this time too he escaped punishment. In 1930 he was an active party to the plot to murder the Punjab Governor at the time of his presiding over the Convocation of the Punjab University, Lahore. It was he who managed to secure the pass on which Hari Kishan was admitted into the Convocation Hall. In consequence he was suspected and arrested. While the chief culprit, Hari Kishan, was found guilty and sentenced to death, Virendra and a few others had to be released because the charges levelled against them could not be established. In 1931 and 1932 he took part in the Civil Disobedience movement for which reason he was detained. While in jail, he passed the M.A. examination in Economics. After his release he joined the *Daily Partap* as its Editor. His writings in the newspaper were considered objectionable and he was convicted in 1933 under the Press Act of India.

When the Quit India movement started in 1942, the patriotic spirit in him was again aroused and he became an active participant in the movement. On account of this he was arrested in 1942 and detained in Shahpur and



Sialkot jails till 1945 when he was released along with other political prisoners. In the movement of 1942 his father and two brothers also courted arrest and were imprisoned.

There was yet another conviction in 1947 when some of his writings in the Press were taken exception to.

Since Independence he has shown deep interest in three subjects : politics, journalism and education. He was member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from 1948 to 1952 and member of the Punjab Legislative Council from 1958 to 1964. Earlier from 1947 to 1949 he functioned as Director General, Public Relations, Punjab. In the field of journalism, he brought out in 1954 a Hindi daily paper, called *Daily Vir Partap*. He is now the proprietor of both these papers. In recognition of his journalistic services he has recently been elected member of the standing committee of the All-India Newspapers Editors Conference.

In the sphere of education, he has interested himself in the management of a number of important institutions namely, D. K. College, Moga (President), D. M. College for Education, Moga (President), Doaba College, Jullundur (Vice-President), and Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jullundur (Vice-President).

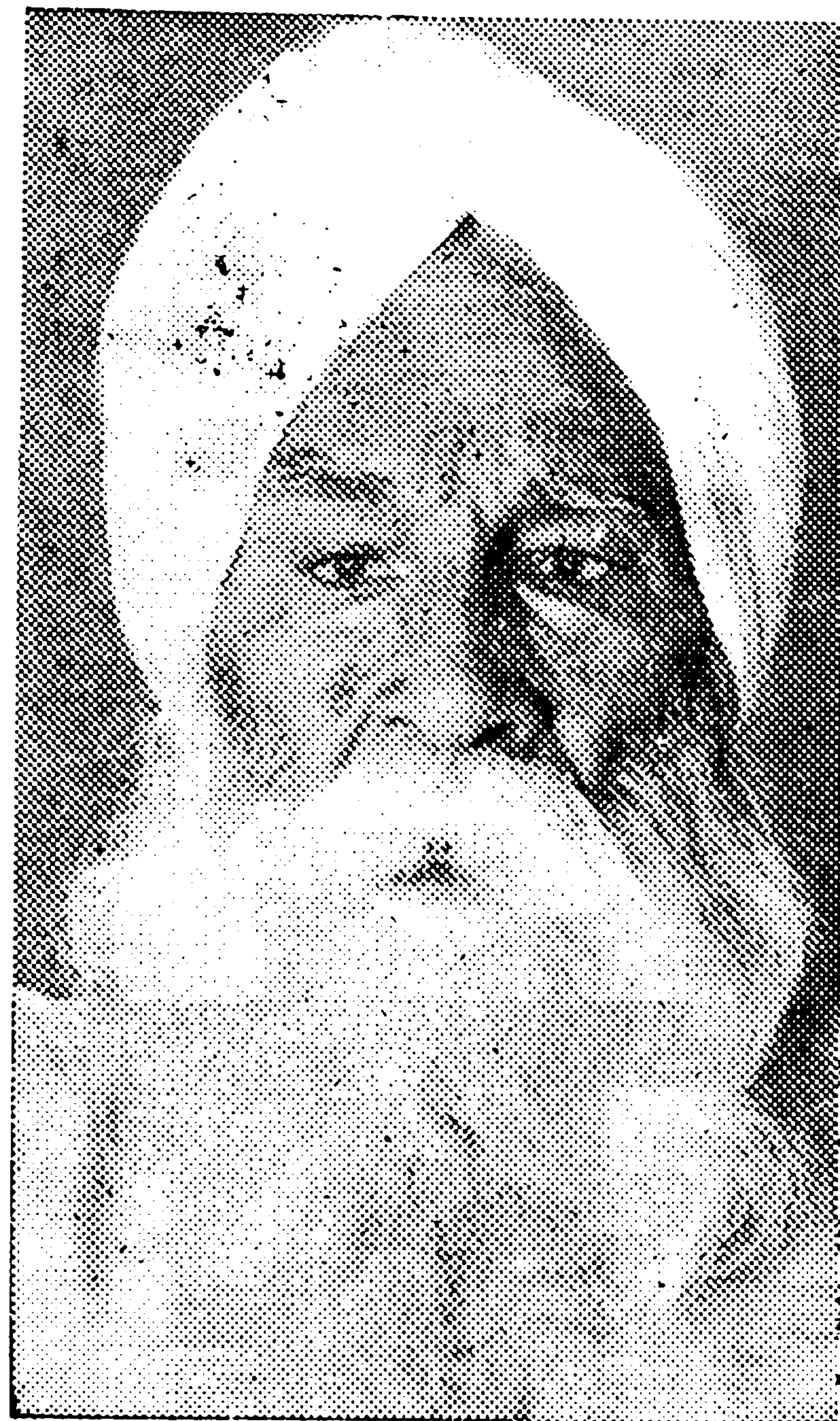
WAZIR SINGH DAFTRIWALA

His native place, also his birth place, was Daftriwala, a village in Tehsil Bhawanigarh, District Sunam (then in Patiala State). Born in 1898, Wazir Singh (original name

Sawan Singh) was son of Sardar Kaku Singh who was a tenant of a Police Inspector, Santokh Singh. At the age of eight, he was taken by his grandfather to District Lyallpur, where during his four years' stay he was given religious education—the only education he had. At the age of 17, he got employment in the Patiala State Forces (Rajindra Lancers). When the first World War was in progress, he was sent to Mesopotamia in 1916 on military duty. On his return from there in 1918 he was sent to Fort Sandaman (NWFP) in 1919-20.

He remained in the army up to 1923, where he received his first lessons in patriotism. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre stirred his conscience deeply. After his discharge from service, he started participating in politics and set up an Akali *jatha* in the Patiala State. His activities created suspicion in the minds of authorities and he was arrested in connection with the Nabha Day on 9th July, 1923 and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. After his release he organized and sent *jathas* to the *gurdwaras* of Bhai Pheru and Jaito. Four years later he participated in agitation regarding the Bhupindra Sagar which had been developed as a pleasure spot by the Maharaja of Patiala. The lake, Bhupindra Sagar, had submerged hundreds of acres of arable land and the peasants were greatly agitated over this matter.

He was in prison when Baba Kharak Singh was conducting his campaign in the Patiala State for the release of Sewa Singh Thikriwala. After his release from jail he actively worked for the Praja Mandal as a loyal follower of Sewa Singh. In 1932 he was arrested at a *diwan* at Dhuri for a seditious speech against the State



and was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. He was subjected to severe tortures in jail.

In 1941 Wazir Singh was arrested at Samana for apprehension of breach of peace and detained for a few months in the Patiala jail.

Since Independence he has consistently been a Congressman. In 1954 he fought election to the Pepsu Vidhan Sabha but he lost it to Jangir Singh Phaguwalia another great freedom-fighter.

ZAIL SINGH (Giani)

Son of a devout Ramgarhia Sikh, Kirpal Singh, and an eminent Praja Mandal and Congress leader, Giani Zail Singh was born in 1916 at village Sandhwan, Faridkot State. He studied at the Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar and acquired proficiency in Sikh literature. As a child, an indelible impression was created on his mind by the great fervour and self-sacrificing spirit of the people who participated in the Jaito *morcha*. Another thing which moved his mind deeply was the constant oppression perpetrated on the people by the Rulers of the States and their officials. Thus, from the very formative years of his life, Gianiji had a bias in favour of Akali politics and resistance to political oppression.

But it was the struggle for release of Sewa Singh Thikriwala that brought him into limelight. The Akali leadership in the Faridkot State was divided into two groups respectively led by Nand Singh and Sandhura Singh. Zail Singh joined the radical and militant group

of Sandhura Singh, and once he took this decision, he never allowed any thought of retracing of steps to cross his mind. He was the chief organizer of the religious-cum-political conference held at Kotkapura on 10-12 September, 1937. A big poster announcing the programme of the conference was issued by him as General Secretary of the State Akali *jatha*. At this conference a number of resolutions were moved by him voicing peasants' greivances and demanding educational and administrative reforms. The Raja of Faridkot took a serious notice of the proceedings of the conference and immediately passed orders banning all such meetings in future. The organizers of the conference, Zail Singh, Janga Singh, Sandhura Singh, Gurbux Singh and two others, were given a stern warning by the State Government on 21st September, 1937.

But this only whetted Zail Singh and his colleagues' zest for the work they had undertaken. In July, 1938 they set up a *Zamindara Sabha* to voice the grievances of peasants. In August, 1938 they attended a political conference at Harike Kalan, District Ferozepur, and enrolled themselves as members of the Indian National Congress. In December, 1938 they set up the Faridkot Congress Committee with Sandhura Singh as President, Zail Singh as General Secretary and Mian Ubaidullah as Vice-President. In 1939 Zail Singh attended the Ludhiana session of the All-India States People Conference which was presided over by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Soon after this, the Faridkot Congress Committee of Sandhura Singh and Zail Singh launched a struggle for civil liberties and held a big demonstration in Kotkapura. As a result of this, the State



Government instituted cases against a number of organizers of the rally. In 1940 the same Congress Committee launched a flag *satyagraha*. Zail Singh was now arrested and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. He was released after the second World War in 1945.

The most spectacular work of Giani Zail Singh as a freedom-fighter, however, was his struggle of 1948 in which he formed a parallel government and besieged the State Secretariat of Faridkot. This was a big shot in the arm for his political career and at once secured for him a front-rank position among the Congress leaders from the Punjab States.

Since 1947 he has held a number of important positions. In Pepsu he was Minister of Revenue in 1948-49 and Minister of P.W.D. and Agriculture in 1951-52. After the merger of Pepsu with the Punjab, he was Vice-President of the Punjab Pradesh Committee in 1956-58 and member of the Rajya Sabha from 1956-1962. In 1971 he was elected to the Punjab Assembly followed by his re-election to the same body in 1972. Since 17th March, 1972 he has been Chief Minister of the Punjab. ● ● ●

Dr. Fauja Singh was born in September 1918 at a place called Balian Kalan in District Sialkot (now in Pakistan). After a brilliant academic career he joined the teaching profession in 1943 and served in several degree colleges. In 1958 he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Delhi. He joined Delhi University as Reader in History in 1961. In 1967 he was selected by the Punjabi University of Patiala as Director, Punjab Historical Studies and as Professor and Head of the Department of History. Ever since he has been holding the dual charge.

He has several original and edited works to his credit. Among them the most notable are *Military System of the Sikhs*, *Kuka Movement*, *History of the Punjab* Vol. III, *An Atlas of Guru Gobind Singh's Travels*, *Punjabi Veer Prampara* and *Punjab da Itihas*. His research papers are numerous. Modern Indian history and Punjab history are his areas of specialization.

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