the restive crowds. The Government naturally considered it impolitic and inexpedient to arrest them from such a huge mass of indignant and excited humanity. Next morning when Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah learnt that a warrant had been issued against him, he came out of the mosque with great difficulty and offered himself to Brigadier Sutherland for arrest. Gilkar was also arrested. They too were removed to the Badamibagh cantonment. Maulvi Abdur Rahim was arrested on the third day. A few days later they were removed to Hariparbat fort under a strong military guard. The city was under curfew and martial law had been clamped down. The army was under orders to shoot at sight and even then the army lined the entire route from Badamibagh cantonment to the fort, on both sides of the road—a distance of nearly five miles, to ensure their transfer without any public hindrance.

MARTIAL LAW AND THE REIGN OF TERROR

With the imposition of martial law, a reign of terror was let loose in the city; the incidents at Maharaj Ganj were immediately avenged by Hindus under the protection of, and in some cases, in collaboration with the army, by looting their Muslim neighbours in the predominantly-Pandit inhabited localities of Rainawari, Gunpatyar, Haba Kadal, Krala Khad and Barbar Shah. The army rule brought the vilest of cruelties in its train. Rowlat Act brutalities were repeated in the streets with greater callousness; Muslims were forced to kiss the Dogra flag, lick the shoes of the soldiers and salute every soldier with the Dogra salutation "Jai Dev Maharaj". Many incidents were reported when cavalry men entered isolated Muslim houses and ravished females. At Nawan Bazar a man was killed and two others wounded by military firing. A Christian lady, Mrs. Thakar Das, who appeared as a witness before the Dalal Riot Inquiry Commission, testified on oath that a soldier opened fire on a man who was running away and that another shot was fired at a water-carrier who was crossing a bridge. In another incident which was also placed before the Commission, the fingers of a small Gujar boy were blown off within the military lines. It goes to the lasting credit of the Muslims of Srinagar that they not only lighted the torch of freedom with a toll of so many human sacrifices but also defied the curfew and despite martial law, resulting in indiscriminate firing and ruthless repression by the trigger-happy soldiers, brought out hundreds of processions during those stormy days in defiance of Government regulations. According to official figures 326 persons were arrested in connection with incidents at Maharaj Ganj alone. Pandit Bazaz testifies that Hindus took undue advantage of the imposition of martial law and got every Muslim, with whom they had any grudge, arrested by the army, ostensibly on the allegation of being connected with the freedom movement.

Immediately after the firing outside the Central jail, all roads linking Srinagar with the outside world were closed and telegraph and telephone communications forthwith suspended, to prevent the news of the massacre from immediately reaching other parts of the State as well as the outside world. One Mr. Abdul Latif, a resident of Jammu, was employed as a chauffeur in the Tosha Khana. On the 13th evening he was ordered to drive a government vehicle from Srinagar to Jammu where he reached on the morning of 14th and conveyed the news of the tragedy to the relatives of Mistri Yaqub Ali. His son Sheikh Abdul Haiy conveyed it to Mr. A.R. Saghar, an intelligent young man who had just entered public life. They decided to leave for Lahore in order to convey it to Muslim newspapers. In Lahore they first went to Maulana Abdul Majid Salik who took them to Syed Mohsin Shah, an old-stock Kashmiri, for several years passionately working for the uplift of Kashmiri Muslims. Together, they went to Allama Iqbal. When he learnt of the killings, Iqbal is stated to have told them:—

> "One thing which clearly stands out about Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah is that he has completely removed from the Muslims of Kashmir the fear of going to jails or of facing the Dogra army. But with your limited resources and, comparatively, the unlimited resources at the disposal of the Dogra Government, you cannot continue like this for a long time; therefore, the only way out is to launch a movement in the Punjab and send volunteers from here because the Maharaja's resources would not be sufficient to withstand such a movement for a long time; he will have to seek the assistance of the British Government and when this assistance is sought and naturally, made available, that would be the appropriate moment for us to demand that if they wanted to intervene in the dispute on the side of the Maharaja, then they must equally ensure that important grievances of the State Muslims were also redressed."[1]

This is what actually happened soon afterwards and shows the great insight of Allama Iqbal.

Hand-written revolutionary posters appeared in Srinagar two or three days after the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. These were written on the shop of Pir Abdul Ahad Shah. The Government successfully traced their origin and arrested Mr. Ahad Shah, Khawaja

1 As told to this writer by Sh. Abdul Haiy.

Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and his sister's husband, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Kara. They were charged with treason but the case was later withdrawn.

Immediately after the firing on 13th July, the Muslims cut off telephone wires between the Central Jail and the Palace as well as between the Jail and the Police Headquarter. The Maharani donated a sum of rupees 3,000/- for distribution to the families of the deceased. During the next few days, the body of a Muslim women was recovered from the river in Srinagar; the body of a Pandit who had been cut into pieces, was brought to the hospital. Similarly, a Muslim boy whose hands and feet bore bullet marks, was also brought to the hospital.[1]

Again, in Srinagar, a Hindu grocer, probably a mahajan, was caught selling (to Muslims) spices ground to powder mixed with poison; he was arrested. The Muslim women took out a procession on 24th July, which terminated at the Mazar-i-Shohada. They again came out in a procession, on 27th July, participated by about 5,000, carrying black flags. It was lathi-charged; 10 women received injuries. Addressing the procession at Mazar-i-Shohada, a woman speaker said:

> "Our men should sit in their homes and wear burqas!... We are proud of our Punjabi Muslim brethren but so far they have confined themselves to merely issuing statements. ...We request the members of the British parliament to take our grievances to the League of Nations. ...We appeal to the army not to oppress women as it was no chivalry. But if they have any such instructions, they will find us ready to meet the challenge."[2]

THE BLOODSHED IN JAMMU

When news of the 13th July firing reached Jammu, the Youngmen decided to stage demonstrations. Among those who played a prominent role in the subsequent agitation, were S. Ghulam Haider Shah, Anwar Khan, Ghulam Pehlwan, Fazal Pehlwan, Gulzar Hussain Qambar, M. Meraj Din, Nabi Bakhsh Unsri, A.R. Saghar, Sain Mahna Qasab, Mohammad Hussain, Hamid Shah Andrabi, Mohammad Amin, Mufti Mohammad Ishaq, Ghulam Qadir Butt, Hussan Bakhsh Zargar, Nawab Mochi, Sh. Ghulam Qadir and Ch. Nawab Khan. Some of them were arrested for defying Section 144 Cr. P.C. but released four days later. Hindu officers felt very much annoyed but found themselves unable to suppress the movement which was spreading far and wide. Pressure was, therefore, exerted on Zaildars, Lambardars, and retired government officials to help in curbing it. Holding of mass meetings became a daily routine everywhere. There was hardly a day

1 Inquilab, 25th July 1931.
2 Inquilab, 2nd August 1931.

when a procession in defiance of Sec. 144 Cr.P.C. was not taken out or a public meeting held. Ch. Hameedullah Khan, later leader of the Muslim Conference Parliamentary group, Sheikh Abdul Haiy and Sheikh Mohammad Salim, later Inspector General of Police Azad Kashmir Government, then B.A. students, remained actively associated with the Movement.

On 14th August a meeting was scheduled to be held in the Muslim Hall. As police surrounded it ahead of schedule, Muslims quietly moved on to Shahi Masjid. When the police came to know of the shifting of the venue, they rushed there but hundreds of people had already entered the mosque. Ch. Niaz Ahmad, city Magistrate, prevented the entry of Mr. Saghar. Thereupon, Sheikh Ghulam Qadir managed to climb to the minaret of the mosque and delivered a highly emotional speech. More than two dozen Muslims were arrested.

The repression let loose by the administration, instead of discouraging the people, built a spirit of self-confidence and courage which had been lacking for several decades. There was open defiance of the prohibitory laws. In the processions taken out and public meetings held in Jammu, people recited specially composed poems. A verse each, from two popular poems are given below:

اسیں پیدل ٹر کے جاواں گے
راجے نوں تختوں لاہواں گے

The other verse referred to the police firing outside Central Jail, Srinagar:

صدقے جانواں میں اس نماز اتوں
جس نماز اتے رفلاں چایاں نیں

The lack of communications and transport did not hinder the agitation. If any incident took place anywhere which required immediate attention of the neighbouring villages, slogans of Allah-o-Akbar and Islam Zindabad were raised from house-tops; the same were repeated in other villages with the result that Muslims living miles away were alerted within minutes. This process was particularly effectively employed in Mirpur district.

On 2nd November 1931, a band of Ahrar volunteers was attacked by Rajputs on their entry, near the village, Top Sarkhania, some two miles from Jammu on the Akhnoor side; a volunteer was killed. The tension in the city having extended to the Prince of Wales College,

there were minor clashes between Muslim and Hindu students. These were prompted mainly by Principal Seva Ram Suri's address in course of which he said that the Muslims were fighting for "loaves and bones". The Muslim students led by Sheikh Abdul Haq, Abdul Gani, Nazir Bajwa and Sheikh Mohammad Salim took exception to these unwarranted remarks which was followed by a hand to hand fight resulting in serious injuries to Sri Niwas, a Hindu student leader. When the news of the death of a Muslim from Punjab at Top-Sarkhania reached the city, hundreds of Muslims led by Sheikh Ghulam Qadir ran to the scene. Meanwhile, large numbers of Hindus gathered in Rugunath Bazar and city chowk; some were armed. The intention was to attack the Muslims, if they took out a procession. Eventually they attacked Ghas Mandi, raising slogans against Islam and Muslims as also 'Maharaja Bahadur Ki Jai'. Some passersby were attacked and injured. The Muslims were at the time holding a meeting at Shershah when they learnt of the presence, in the neighbourhood, of the excited Hindu mob. Sheikh Abdul Haq went upstairs and loudly shouted 'Jehad, Jehad'. Thereupon, Salim Khan, son of Umra Khan, Anwar Khan, Ghulam Pehlwan, and some others ran to the Ghas Mandi Chowk, raising counter slogans of Allah-o-Akbar and Ya Ali. Hindus started brickbatting from their roofs. Anwar Khan was seriously injured. One of the Hindu demonstrators died on the spot. In vain did Ghulam Pehlwan try to lift Anwar Khan who succumbed to his injuries a few hours later. These incidents were followed by rioting. By the next morning, the shops owned by Muslims in Panjterthi, Mandi Bazar, Bazar Bhabarian, Pacca Danga, Dhakki Serajan, Rugunath Bazar and city Chowk were almost wholly looted. Curfew had been clamped down to prevent Muslims from retaliation. Mr. Jenkins, later Governor Punjab, arrived on the next day with a British regiment which took control of the city immediately and started patrolling the streets. Martial Law was imposed and all offices and shops remained closed for 12 days. The British Administrator ordered registration of cases. Sheikh Abdul Rahim and Sardar Alam Khan Police Inspectors and Mirza Iqbal Din and Fazal Alam Sub-Inspectors were entrusted with the investigations. Fearing prosecution, bulk of the looted property was thrown by Hindus in the ponds known as Talab Rani and Rugunath temple talab. It was recovered several days later in a damaged condition. The British Army camped in the Company Bagh and remained in Jammu for over two months.

On the 3rd day were Muslims permitted to assemble in Pir Qadir Shah graveyard in order to offer Namaz-i-Janaza for Anwar Khan and four other martyrs.

The following persons took a prominent part in the Movement: Ch. Abdullah Bhalli and H. Abdul Rahim of Ranbirsinghpura, M. Ilam Din and Dr. Izzat Khan of Akhnoor, Kh. Amkallah, Kh. Amir Din, Kh. Aziz Din and Sheikh Imam Din of Reasi, M. Abdul Subhan of Ramban, Kh. Ahmad Din and Kh. Shamas Din of Banihal, Kh. Mohammad Khalil of Dodah, Kh. Ghulam Rasul and Kh. Ghulam Rasul Bhadarwahi of Bhadarwah, Kh. Nasrullah Haq of Kishtwar, Kh. Mangtu Mir of Balote, and Mirza Faqir Mohammad of Rajouri.

NON-MUSLIMS TESTIFY

The prisoners at Badamibagh were not treated well and the food served was extremely unsatisfactory. So, on the suggestion of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the "royal prisoners", as they came to be known, went on a hunger-strike which compelled the Government to give them better treatment.[1] The entire business stood suspended. As news of the happenings in Srinagar reached other parts of the State, Muslims struck business, absented from their daily vocations and a country-wide movement for securance of political rights engulfed the whole State. According to Tribune dated 21st July, 1931, not even vegetables were available anywhere and the mail from outside the State remained piled up and undelivered. A procession at Nawan Bazar, in Srinagar, clashed with the army and in the firing resorted to by the latter, five Muslims were killed on the spot and fifteen seriously wounded. Though the curfew was lifted after a few days, not more than two persons were permitted to get together anywhere but it was of no avail. Colleges, schools, banks, offices and post offices remained closed because Hindu employees considered it unsafe to step out of their homes while Muslims were in no mood to resume their normal vocations until the Government came forward with substantial concessions. The traffic between Srinagar and Jammu remained suspended for 13 days. There were serious Hindu-Muslim clashes in Srinagar wherein three Hindus were killed and 163 injured.[2]

Says Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz:

"It was for the first time in the history of Kashmir that people had struck work for political ends. Uptil now business used to be suspended only on occasions of deaths in the royal family but now it had been done in furtherance of the national cause; the strike was so complete that it had become difficult for anyone to open the shops. The Government did its very best and brought down its utmost

1 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 52.
2 Inside Kashmir, p. 130.

pressure to cool down the enthusiasm of people so that they may resume their normal vocations but it was doomed to fail. In the city the processions of volunteers, of children and those of women had become a common sight and every minute news of these processions were coming from different parts of the city. There were so many lathi-charges; section 144 had been imposed but it was being defied everywhere and when people were asked as to why they were on strike and when would they give it up, the only reply made anywhere this question was asked, was that "we shall obey the orders that Master Abdullah might give in the situation after his release from jail."[1]

The strike continued for fifteen days. Muslim losses were estimated at twenty-five lac rupees on account of arson and plunder by the Army and Hindu mobs and another ten lacs on account of the suspension of business. The Government thereupon announced the appointment of a Commission consisting of three Judges of the High Court headed by Sir Barjor Dalal. Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, was nominated to represent Muslims but he declined the invitation so long as political prisoners were not released. The Government then nominated two Muslims, Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai and Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl thinking perhaps that by doubling their representation, Muslims could be roped in but both sent in their resignations immediately, stating that so long as Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues were not released, it should not expect any cooperation from them. Despite the enquiry thus being a one-sided affair, some Christians and foreign visitors did appear to speak out the truth.

Mrs. Irwin, wife of Major H.R. Irwin, told the Middleton Commission that she saw a policeman enter the shop of a Muslim on the 27th of September. He was followed by armed soldiers, who gave a beating to the shop-keeper with their rifle butts. Father Eric Biscoe, Vice-Principal Mission High School, Srinagar, told the Commission that he saw prisoners brought from Shopian in a lorry being compelled to raise the slogans of "Maharaj ki Jai", and that they were being mercilessly beaten. He also told the Commission that during martial law, all means of communication and transport had been stopped. Lt. Col. Johnson, in a written statement to the Commission, said that four cavalry men mercilessly beat unarmed people; that when his wife intervened on

1 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 55.

their behalf, she was insulted. He told the Commission that on 26th September at about 6.25 p.m. when they were returning from the Srinagar Club, they found that two civilians had been way-laid in front of the Llyods Bank building and soldiers were beating them mercilessly; that his wife ran for their rescue and requested the soldiers to stop beating but they insulted her; that in the meantime the car of the Prime Minister was sighted and he told him as to what had happened. He further told the Commission that the Prime Minister told him that the army was not under his control; that Miss Lodge also came by that time and all of them went to Brigadier Sutherland and complained to him; that they learnt from the Brigadier that the mounted soldiers belonged to the Palace Guard.

Another English visitor Miss Harrison Thompson told the Commission that a prisoner was being ruthlessly beaten and that she intervened and saved him with great difficulty.

Al-Fazal published the following statement of a non-Muslim lady in its issue, dated 18th August, 1931:

"On the 15th of July at 10 a.m. I was attracted by the screams of women; I found a man who was crossing the bridge and inquired from him what the matter was. He told me that a man had died a natural death and that women were mourning him; within two minutes I heard firing from the direction of Mohallah Tashwan and soon afterwards saw soldiers coming from that side. I came out of my house alongwith my son. I saw that the soldiers pursued a boy who was standing on the bridge and eventually fired at him. He fell down between the shops of a baker and a butcher. My son ran to him for help, but one of the soldiers fired at my son also who escaped miraculously. In the meantime a water carrier was seen coming in front of us; he too was fired at and fell down; a third person who was passing by that side was also fired at and fell down; while he was still struggling with life, he was subjected to two more shots. All this happened in two to three minutes. I asked the soldiers as to who had permitted them to fire so indiscriminately and called upon them to show me a written order to that effect. They told me that they had the permission and retired. In the meantime some one came from the Nawan Kadal side on a bicycle; finding me in a state of harassment, he enquired from me as to what the matter was. I told him that indiscriminate firing had been resorted to in this Mohallah and that we were in danger and requested him to telephone the army; a military officer came some time later and heard the entire account from me."

The name of the lady is not given in the newspaper but it seems she was Mrs. Thakar Das, a Christian lady, who appeared before the Enquiry Commission.

THE QAZI FROM DELINA

While Srinagar city was thus going through the pangs of blood-shed, and an unprecedented wave of political demonstrations was sweeping through, the situation in the muffasils was no less grave. The important bridge at Sangham, forty five miles from Srinagar, which connects the two capitals on the vehicular road, was set on fire on 24th July; a few Dogra soldiers on duty sustained injuries. A number of peasants were arrested and collective fine amounting to rupees twenty thousand was imposed on the Muslim inhabitants of the locality.[1] It was actually blown up by a group of young terrorists headed by late Mirza Mehr Ali, of the State Police force. He later settled in Baramula and spoke to this writer of the incident. At Vichar Nag, there was a clash between a procession and a group of soldiers; some processionists snatched away the latter's rifles. Firing was resorted to, resulting in loss of life.

Baramula is a town thirty four miles from Srinagar on the Jhelum Valley road connecting Rawalpindi with Srinagar. It is the gateway to Kashmir valley. When news of the Srinagar happenings reached the district, there was wide-spread resentment. Pandit Balkak Dhar, S.D.M., with whom the reader is already acquainted, convened a meeting of the lambardars, Zaildars and other notables. Among the participants was Qazi Abdul Ghani of Delina, a semi-literate lambardar of nearly thirty five years age. After explaining the position to the audience, as Government saw it, the Pandit asked for their reaction towards the movement launched by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah against the Maharaja. Expecting a reaffirmation of their loyalty to the ruler, in view of their being under his thumb, Dhar must have been rudely shocked when Qazi Abdul Ghani stood up to announce boldly that they shall judge his programme on merit and if they found that he was fighting for their rights, there should be no doubt in any quarter that they shall stand by him and suffer any hardships. As these words had emerged from the depths of his heart and were an eloquent tribute to the patriotism and sincerity of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, there went in the air a spontaneous cheer by those assembled in the compound. The Qazi was immediately arrested, put in a jute sack and given a severe beating from which he could not recover for a long time. But it goes to his credit that while being thus rolled, beaten and humiliated, he kept on repeating his support for the Movement. Ever afterwards, he ruled the hearts of

1 Inquilab, 6th August 1931.

his people who elected him a member of the Legislative Assembly despite his extreme poverty. While Abdul Ghani was thrown into prison, another young man from the town, Maulvi Ahmedullah, took up the reins of leadership. The method adopted was that volunteers or processionists, as the case was, went to the Jhelum Valley road and brought the traffic to a halt while holding placards detailing their grievances. As it was summer and the season for visitors, the halting of the traffic, even for an hour or so resulted in the gathering at the spot of scores of visitors from the plains, a great majority of whom were Englishmen or Europeans. The immense advantage of this pattern of agitation was that it reached the highest circles in the Government of India, who could no longer be hoodwinked by false reports from the local Government.

SHER-I-KASHMIR

Within a few days of his imprisonment, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah came to be known as "Sher-i-Kashmir" and anyone acquainted with Kashmir knows that the overwhelming majority of the people in the State know him only by this name. How he came to be known as "Sher-i-Kashmir" has been detailed earlier and how efforts were made by some elders from the community to build him up into his present stature may be briefly narrated here. In the politics of Eastern countries, the role of the individual is very important and a study of freedom movements in Afro-Asia would reveal that it is only with an extra-ordinary national leader, as pivot of a Movement, that a nation has succeeded either in its march for freedom or economic advancement. In Srinagar there were a few leaders of public opinion such as Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, and Munshi Shahab-ud-Din who had not only the inherent good of their people at heart but also realised that unless someone was built up into a national leader, it was difficult to start a movement and, much more difficult, to sustain it. Themselves they were not only old but also possessed neither the stamina nor the requisite qualities of leadership which they envisaged for such a national leader. When Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah appeared on the scene and slowly but steadily rose in popular estimation, his sincerity of purpose and inherent qualities of leadership attracted their attention. They saw in him the man of the hour who alone, if properly supported, could create a national awakening among Kashmiris. So, after his arrest on 14th July, through the efforts of these leaders, the "Sher-i-Kashmir" slogan was taken up so spontaneously by the people that within a few weeks, the whole valley was resounding with it. This was not all. In subsequent public appearances, these and other elders of the community whom

people had known for their wisdom, scholarship, piety and self-respect, treated him, in the glare of watchful congregations, as a Saviour who possessed the powers of spiritualism and was capable of miracles. For instance, they would bow before him; someone would take out his shoes; another one would kiss his hands; yet another would touch his clothes and then raise his hands in prayer; while retreating from him, they would not turn their backs towards him. All this created a deep impression on the thousands of spectators and gave him an aura of holiness. Added to this manipulation, his moving recitation of the Holy Quran, his tall and imposing stature and the most important of all, his own sincerity and undaunted courage in being the first to have challenged the hated Dogra Rulers to a political battle, all helped to make him a Hero.

Kashmiris are traditionally a hero-worshipping race and it was only natural that a man of his pluck and courage and with such sincere manipulators around him, should have almost overnight touched the heights of fame. Then again, as usually happens, many a legend about him became current which though not true but were, nonetheless, believed by the general mass of people. One such story that gained wide currency was that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was thrown into a cauldron of burning oil but came out unhurt; that he told the Maharaja who was a witness, before jumping into the cauldron, that even if he were to die, there would be hundreds of Abdullahs to lead the Movement. Another story was that his name was inscribed on the leaves of cocoon trees. Actually what happened was that the leaves developed some disease that took the shape of two parallel lines which were interpreted to the people as "Sher-i-Kashmir". The educated class could not be duped in but then literacy among them was almost non-existent and it is a fact that whenever a literate Muslim told them that the lines did not read "Sher-i-Kashmir", he was laughed at by the illiterate groups around him who told him on his face that he was not literate enough to be able to read it! The story also entered the Maharaja's ivory tower and leaves were at once sent for to be personally examined by him.

The following incident was related to this writer by Haji Ahmedullah of Sopore: Soon after 1931, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah paid his first visit to Handwara. At a mass meeting attended by over forty thousand peasants, when Sufi Mohammad Akbar, later a member of the Indian Parliament rose to request him to address the meeting and had just said, "Now I request Hazrat Sher-i-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.....", the audience spontaneously roared in deep reverence: صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

Kashmir shall always remember these Elders not for the stories they invented but for their sincerity in not only allowing but also enabling a

youngster to rise in the estimation of his people and assume the mantle of leadership. It is so because it is our sad experience almost all over the Muslim world, with a few exceptions, that our leadership can be aptly compared to shadeless growths in the countryside. These leaders unfortunately never realise that they cannot live for ever and must, by the laws of Nature, make room for a successor. They never build up their successors and in most cases almost everyone with promise is devoured as a possible source of challenge. It is not realised that trust begets trust and instances are rare when such lieutenants may have abused the confidence reposed in them by their leaders.

In Kashmir Valley we have a class of folk-singers who are popularly known as Ladi Shah. They resemble, in some of their habits, to gypsy tribes and earn their living by reciting popular ballads to street crowds. The instrument they use is called "trum trum". It consists of an iron rod about three feet in length with circular iron rings resembling bangles, about a dozen in number, around it. The "Ladi Shah" is very adept at the use of the instrument and creates serene and appealing music from it. The atrocities committed in Srinagar and elsewhere in the Valley were, as normally happens, the subject of many a popular ballad and folk-lore. It was Ladi Shah who carried the news of the movement together with the poets' usual exaggerations and the fables that had by then sprung up around the person of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, to every nook and corner of the Valley. For instance, the ballad that became immensely popular after 13th July, was composed by Mr. Ahmedullah Punjabi, a Kashmiri poet from Srinagar. One of its stanzas sang:

"Yim traye bandook shoran,
Tim riayth police sorun,
Thapa beye Maheshar,
Insaf aith wanan chha."

Trans:

Those who escaped the bullets, were arrested by the pigs, that the police is, personified by Thapa and Maheshar. Is this JUSTICE?

In the stanza, the poet has sarcastically commented on the Maharaja's announcement at the time of accession that Justice was his religion. It was a common sight to see a Ladi Shah seated on the third storey of purdah-observing houses in cities and towns, surrounded in a circle by tearful women, while he, almost unaware of

his surroundings, kept reciting these ballads from the very core of his heart. Most of the ballads had the following refrain line in each stanza:

"Kan thau, beh wanai Sher-i-Kashmir".

Trans:

Listen! I am going to unfurl the story of Sher-i-Kashmir.

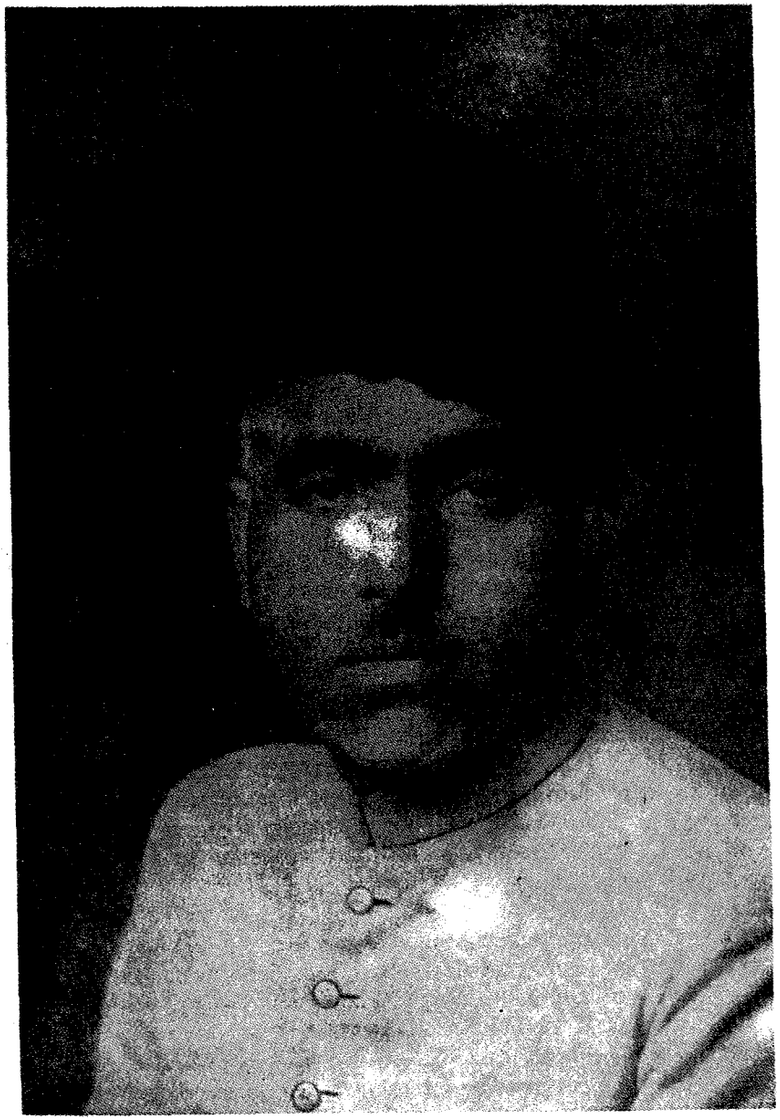
Says Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, his bitterest critic who, as subsequent narration would show, damaged his image more than anybody else:

> "By far the most important of all the Conference leaders is Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the man who has been the chief hero of the Kashmir movement and has been primarily responsible for the politics of the State during several years in the past. It would be no exaggeration to say that Sheikh Abdullah is the National Conference. Many legends came to be woven round his personality when he was at the zenith of his fame. At one time he was the most respected man among the Muslims, who conferred on him the title of "The Lion of Kashmir". I have seen people kiss the hand that touched his body. He was often mobbed by his devotees and at times had a narrow escape on such occasions. No one, in the history of Kashmir, has enjoyed so much popularity with the masses as he."[1]

GOVERNMENT—OPPOSITION AGREEMENT

On 25th July, the Maharaja appointed Raja Hari Kishan Kaul, a Pandit civil servant, from outside the State, as Minister-in-Waiting and after a few days, when Mr. Wakefield was dismissed and had to leave the State in disgrace, as Prime Minister. Mr. Wakefield was accused of encouraging the agitation. It has been hotly denied both by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as well as Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan. Actually it was Mr. Wattal who, on account of considerable influence in the Dogra hierarchy, succeeded, through intrigues, in persuading the Maharaja to believe that Wakefield was working against his interests. The truth is that Mr. Wakefield was one of the most seasoned British officers in the sub-continent, having already put in about forty-five years service, both in British as well as Indian India. A man of experience and foresight, he was the only well-wisher of the Maharaja among his advisers and sincerely desired a meeting ground between the ruler and the ruled. The Maharaja was ill-advised to terminate his

1 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 60.



SHER-I-KASHMIR

services and force him out in disgrace because, the situation worsened after his departure.

Hari Kishan Kaul, being a Pandit, could have no political pull with the Muslims and even if he had been sincere in his efforts to find out a solution of the problems facing the Government which he certainly was not, Muslims were bound to treat him with suspicion. It is said that he had undertaken to suppress the Movement within three months; he had the full support of the Maharaja as also of the entire Hindu community. The army had by now been despatched to all the towns and given control of the civil administration. Almost every bridge and Government building was guarded.

Hari Kishan Kaul started with an effort to win over such Muslims who were considered socially important but realised soon that they had lost their influence and were of no avail. The popular mood was so defiant that they would have been lynched by angry mobs if they had openly acted against the interests of the people. The realisation thus dawned that the key to peace lay in the hands of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah alone. He, therefore, deputed Khawaja Noor Shah Naqshbandi, Khwaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai, Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, and Pandit Rughnath Mattu, Tehsildar, to the State prisoners in the fort and conveyed the readiness of the Government to release them forthwith provided they undertook not to make any speeches against it. According to Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah straight-away turned down the offer and said, "We have never indulged in any unconstitutional activity nor do we have any intention to do so. We only want that justice be done to the Muslims and their rights as citizens of the country, be restored to them. If it is unlawful to make these demands through constitutional methods or to launch a movement for their restoration, then we are certainly guilty of unlawful activities and we shall always do the same".

The duplicity of Mr. Kaul may be judged from the fact that while on the one hand he initiated negotiations with the prisoners, at the same time the following royal proclamation was issued at his instance:

> "Whereas a few bad characters and goondas have committed acts of plunder, arson and murder in Srinagar and have disturbed the peace of the city, so much so that the Government had to seek the assistance of the army to stop such acts, and whereas information has been received from villages that these goondas are indulging in the same acts there, the Maharaja Bahadur hereby advises

his subjects who are by nature peaceful, to stay away from disturbances, and live like peaceful citizens as they have been living so far. The Government takes this opportunity to warn them that it is adopting measures to punish those responsible for the previous incidents and prevent repetition of the same in future. The Government hereby pledges to take stern measures against the law-breakers."[1]

The proclamation failed to impress anyone, least of all the Muslims. On the contrary, it was clearly provocative because it had described political leaders and workers as goondas and law-breakers and had threatened stern action against them. Meanwhile, the strike continued; processions, meetings and demonstrations also continued unabated. In fact the proclamation intensified them. When the Government realised that it cannot win over the prisoners nor suppress the popular revolt, it again offered to release them if they undertook, even nominally, not to indulge in unconstitutional activities. Consequently, the prisoners were released on 1st August. Although no problem had been solved nor had the grievances been redressed even partially, the release of political leaders was doubtlessly a great victory for the Movement because apart from showing the inability of the Government to suppress the mass movement, it had also demonstrated to the people what magic their unity and sacrifice could mean. Addressing his first post-release meeting, on 2nd August held in the Jamia Masjid, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said:—

"Muslims have inherited it from their ancestors that they should face hardships with patience. The blood shed by the martyrs has cemented the foundations of our Movement. We are loyal to the Maharaja and do not want to put him to unnecessary trouble but let there be no doubt that we shall never be faltering in voicing our demands even if it leads us to the gallows."[2]

The Government issued a press note, published in daily Tribune dated 3rd August, 1931, explaining the release of the leaders. As usual, the tone was provocative which did not help in bringing about any improvement in the situation. Before their release, the leaders had told the Government that unless their demands were accepted, there was no use in releasing them. The Government had thereupon requested them to accept their release and present a memorandum of their grievances to the Maharaja on 6th August. On 3rd August the leaders informed the Government that they had not been able to prepare the draft and sought a brief post-

1 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 60-61.
2 *Ibid.* p. 64.

ponement. Therefore, the date was extended to the 10th of August; meanwhile the Government continued its repressive policy. All emergency laws that had been enforced in July continued to remain in force; the curfew was not withdrawn; section 144 continued to be clamped down. Hundreds of political workers continued to be detained and scores of Muslim civil servants who had been suspended on charges of complicity in the movement also continued to remain suspended. It was, therefore, obvious that the Government had failed to create a favourable climate for the Muslim leaders to call on His Highness and present a memorandum. So they informed the Government that unless it was prepared to prove its bonafides by the withdrawal of emergency laws, the release of all political workers and the withdrawal of suspension orders against its Muslim employees, no useful purpose could be served by their meeting with the Maharaja or the submission of a memorandum.

In response to an appeal issued by the All India Kashmir Committee, Kashmir Day was observed all over the State on 14th August, 1931. A complete hartal was observed, and processions were taken out which terminated in public meetings. In Srinagar there was a complete hartal. A mass meeting of women was held at Mazar-i-Shuhada which was attended by about thirty thousand women. It was addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan and Mistri Yaqub Ali. It was followed by another mass meeting at Jamia Masjid. The orphaned children of the martyrs had been specially brought to the meeting and seated on the dais. They aged from six months to three years. When their identity was disclosed, the audience burst into tears and cries of anguish rented the air. It was after fifteen to twenty minutes that calm prevailed. At the end of the meeting, the blood-stained clothes of the martyrs were displayed to the audience. Loud cries of anguish again rose in the air and it was with these feelings that the meeting dispersed. Some of these clothes were later secretly taken to Sialkot where they were exhibited in a public meeting attended by over a lac of people and addressed by Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmud and Maulana Ataullah Shah Bukhari.

The Maharaja's Government issued a press note which was published in the Lahore press claiming that the call for a Hartal on 14th August received no response in Srinagar. Like other statements of the type, it was wholly untrue and in this connection we have the evidence of Lady Nethersole who was in Srinagar and whose contradiction was published in the Civil and Military Gazette of 22nd August, 1931. The letter is reproduced below:

"Sir, In your paper of the 16th, under the heading "Kashmir Day in

Srinagar", is the telegram sent by the Publicity Officer which is absolutely untrue.

There was complete hartal here on Kashmir Day from dawn of 14th to dawn of 15th instant. Not one Muslim shop open anywhere. No tongas even. No boats, save for those going to Masjids for prayers and supplication. I myself went everywhere—saw everything.

The Muslim cause is hard enough, God knows in this most distressful country, with deliberate and damaging lies being broadcast to their detriment. I enclose my card."[1]

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, therefore, felt free to continue with his political agitation and started a mass campaign. The Maharaja then invited Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Sir Sapru was himself a Kashmiri Pandit whose forefathers had migrated from the State and settled in Allahabad. He was an Adviser of the Maharaja, of course, without any official designation. His leanings towards Congress were too well known. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and some of his colleagues had detailed discussions with the Maulana who advised them to present their grievances to the Maharaja. Therefore, on 15th August, the Muslim representatives met the Maharaja but instead of a memorandum, they presented a short address wherein, after reiterating their loyalty, they demanded the removal of Hari Kishan Kaul but the Maharaja immediately replied that he had complete faith in Kaul and that he had no intention of getting him replaced. The meeting, therefore, instead of bringing any understanding, caused further estrangement. So the mass campaign already in full swing continued unabated. When Hari Kishan Kaul found that there was no other way out, he invited to Srinagar one of his friends, Sir Mehr Shah of Punjab. On his arrival, a meeting took place at the residence of the Prime Minister between the Muslim representatives and the Prime Minister. As a result of lengthy discussions, an agreement was worked out and signed by the parties; it was also signed by Sir Mehr Shah as a witness. As per terms of the agreement, the Government undertook that:—

1. As soon as the agitation was called off, all emergency regulations and orders in force since two months, would be suspended,

2. The High Court would be requested to release on bail all those who stood accused of rioting as well as those who were already on trial.

1 C.M.G., dated 22-8-1931.

3. The hearing in these cases shall remain suspended until the publication of the Dalal Riot Inquiry Commission report.

4. All such government servants who had been dismissed or suspended or degraded on charges of complicity in the Movement, shall be restored to their posts provided they gave an assurance that in future, they will not take part in the agitation.[1]

The Muslim representatives, on their part, undertook that:

1. The agitation was to be suspended which was explained to mean that no speeches aimed at creating hatred against the Government or the Maharaja or any other community, would be made.

2. It was to be announced in the Jamia Masjid and other mosques that Muslim nationals of the State did not take inspiration from any outside elements and that while being loyal to the Maharaja, they hoped that he would sympathetically consider their grievances.

3. They would appeal to their sympathisers (outside the State) that so long as the Government did not take a decision on the memorandum that they were about to present, no steps likely to affect the political climate, may kindly be taken.

4. The normal laws of the country would not be affected by the agreement.[2]

What happened in Srinagar city soon after the firing incident at the Central jail and the promulgation of Martial Law, can better be described by quoting from the memorandum that was later presented to the Maharaja:

"Some constables of the Training school who were coming towards the city in a lorry, attacked innocent and peaceful Muslim passers-by inflicting death on some and injuries on some others.....one or two severely injured persons were being removed from the Central jail to a private hospital of Doctor Abdul Wahid and were attacked in the way; the injured were also beaten and succumbed to their injuries .....With the promulgation of Martial Law, army wrought havoc on the Muslims on the instigation of Hindus; the passers-by were

1&2 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 70&71.

murdered; peaceful citizens were forcibly brought out of their homes and tortured and arrested; nothing was left undone to disgrace, dishonour and destroy Muslim homes; women were assaulted and outraged; small children were not only beaten but also killed so much so that the statement of a non-Muslim woman throws considerable light on these incidents. Wherever it was possible, poor men and women were either drowned or strangulated; the dead bodies of the martyrs are still being recovered from the river. In Maharaj Ganj and Bohri Kadal conditions were so bad that for three days Muslim residents remained besieged in their homes without any means of subsistance. The havoc wrought between Habba Kadal and Safa Kadal is beyond description. Hindus served food and other delicious eatables to the army to keep them under their influence; in Maharaj Ganj, Domba Kadal, Nawab Bazar, Bateyar and Vichar Nag, many innocent Muslims were killed by the army in collaboration with local Hindus. Law and order did not exist even in its shadow nor did the officers care for the norms of laws and justice; they acted like bigoted Hindus who seemed to have taken a vow to perpetrate oppression. Although processions were banned, the Congress workers took out a procession illegally, yet no action was taken against them."

Looking at the understanding, now from the year 1977, one can easily conclude that it was of no great use and the Muslim representatives may well have declined to be a party to it but things have to be judged in their historical perspective. It seems that the agreement was not after all as bad in the year 1931 as it now seems to be, when the British intervention on the side of the Maharaja stood assured under treaty obligations. Apart from giving immediate relief to hundreds of political workers and binding the Government to accept the humiliating position of taking back into its service scores of its employees, who, in violation of service rules, participated in the Movement which by itself was a recognition of its strength and the importance that these youth, unknown a year ago, had assumed on the national level, it gave them a breathing space to prepare themselves for a second round of clash with the Government. Political movements for reforms are not like a battle in the conventional sense where the fate of one or the other party is finally decided in a single combat. It is a long drawn-out battle where there are many an encounter. Having thus undoubtedly emerged stronger from the first encounter than they were at any time before, they now began to prepare themselves for the second round.

However, the popular mood in the cities of Srinagar and Jammu was uncompromising and defiant. There were elements also at work, as they everywhere are, in league with the Government who wanted to sabotage

the Movement and destroy the growing national leadership. They were very active and interpreted the compromise as a betrayal of the people and a demonstration of weakness. Some even said that they had been bought over. The compromise was signed on 26th August and on the same evening a crowd attacked the house of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and shattered its windows while he was away. On the 27th a public meeting was held at Jamia Masjid which attracted almost the entire male population of the city. Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah explained their position and told them that it was in the interests of the people that the offer, inviting grievances in writing for consideration by the Maharaja, should have been accepted and the Government given an opportunity of redressing them. The meeting was also attended by Sheikh Din Mohammad, a leading Advocate of Gujranwala who later became a Judge of the Lahore High Court. The pact also sent a wave of discontent among the Muslims of Jammu city. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas had to rush from Srinagar and explain the position in a public meeting.

KASHMIRIS SET UP A WAR COUNCIL

In a few days, tension again returned to the scene because the Government failed to reinstate some of its employees who had been earlier dismissed or suspended. Interpreted as a breach of faith, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah resumed its severe criticism. A memorandum had in the meantime been drafted. The initial draft was perhaps prepared by Khawaja Ghulam Ahmad Ashai. After its approval by the local leadership, it was carried to Lahore by Maulvi Abdur Rahim to be shown to the All India Kashmir Committee which had been formed soon after the 13th July firing. A detailed account of the activities of the Committee and the invaluable support received by the Movement from Muslims of India in general and those of Punjab in particular needs a separate chapter and will, therefore, be taken up separately.

While Maulvi Abdur Rahim was away in Lahore and the memorandum was under scrutiny with the All India Kashmir Committee, the Government struck again and arrested Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah on 21st September. He had been earlier officially informed that it would make a definite reply on the same day. He and Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah were both summoned to the residence of the Prime Minister, Kaul. Senior officers were already present. Strangely enough, the Prime Minister immediately began by hurling abuses on Sheikh Abdullah. "You are a big Badmash! You don't give up your mischievous activities", said he. There was great tension. Sheikh Abdullah protested against this insulting attitude in strong and firm words; this made the Premier

almost mad; he continued, "You are talking non-sense. We will teach your people a lesson because you do not give up your mean activities". Sheikh Abdullah retorted by telling him, "……your plans will surely destroy the foundations of this State. Kashmir Durbar has been subjecting us to oppression and injustice for too long. I do not like the repetition of incidents that have already taken place (Muslim killings) but I must tell you that it will result in very serious consequences for the Government if it again seeks to shed the blood of Muslims……".[1]

It was perhaps too much for the haughty Premier who considered himself a "Strong hand" and had undertaken to suppress the Movement within three months. He, therefore, made a show of force, interrupted Sheikh Abdullah and told him, while burning with rage:

> "You are a mean fellow. I order your arrest here and now and I will see what grief you and your community can cause me or the Government".[2]

He was removed again to the Badamibagh cantonment. According to Mr. Bazaz:—

> "The arrest of Sheikh Abdullah this time was entirely different from his earlier arrest because while at that time he was simply Master Abdullah, he had by now become Sher-i-Kashmir with the result that as soon as the news of his arrest became known, Muslims immediately suspended their business and huge crowds from all over the city began converging towards Jamia Masjid."[3]

A public meeting was held and a War Council announced! The fact that the Committee now formed to carry on the agitation was named "War Council" is of significance as it showed the defiant and emboldened mood of the dumb driven Kashmiris. That a people, who just a few months before, stood condemned as cowards, should now be talking publicly in terms of a war with their ruler, showed unmistakably not only the success of the mass agitation but also how deeply it had stirred them. Mufti Jalal-ud-Din was appointed first dictator of the Council. He was succeeded by Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, whose arrest was followed by a succession of scores of other volunteers. Processions became a common sight; business remained suspended and every evening thousands of Muslims used to gather either at Jamia Masjid or Khanqah-i-Mualla, as directed on the previous evening, where volunteers offered themselves for arrest after making highly anti-Government speeches.

1&2 Taseer, p. 123.
3 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 74.

On 22nd September people again collected in the Jamia Masjid and came out in a procession. The army mishandled the situation and instead of allowing them to take out a peaceful procession, barricaded their route. In such situations, prohibition always provokes the mob and brings forth defiance of authority. This is what happened. The army fired certain rounds not because it was attacked but simply because people had defied the ban on processions. Three men were killed on the spot and more than a dozen injured. On the same day the military also opened fire on another procession at Maisuma which included women, killing two men and wounding three, including a woman. On 23rd September, about forty thousand men and women again collected in the Jamia Masjid for the purpose of giving their dead heroes a befitting burial. A serious clash would have certainly taken place but for the timely arrival of Nawab Khusro Jang, Minister-in-Waiting, who brought a written order from the Prime Minister giving permission for a procession. It remained peaceful and the martyrs were buried at the same place where the martyrs of 13th July had been laid to rest.

Those killed at the Jamia Masjid were:

1. Nasir-ud-Din, aged 22 years, of Chankral Mohalla.
2. Ghulam Rasool Kakroo, aged 28 years, of Chinar Bagh.
3. Assadullah Gilkar, aged 20 years, of Nar Paristan.

An eye witness account given by the correspondent of daily Al-Fazal, dated the 29th of September, 1931, is reproduced below:—

> "Sheikh Abdullah and his Lt. Maulana Jalal-ud-Din were arrested on 21st. The Muslims kept awake all through the night on account of the depth of shock. With the out-break of dawn, they started gathering at Jamia Masjid. At 8-15 a.m. the army appeared on the scene and took up position on the eastern side which is at some height. At 9 a.m. the army and the police surrounded the Mosque but the arrival of people continued unabated and about 25 thousands had gathered by 9.10 a.m. when 40 cavalry men appeared at the main gate; all other gates were closed. The mounted cavalry charged their beasts on the hundreds of Muslims who were outside the Mosque and when they ran for safety towards the prayer hall, the army opened fire killing four and wounding hundreds, fifteen of whom had serious injuries……

At 12 a.m. women and children took out a joint procession near Gau Kadal. They were lathi-charged by the police and mounted soldiers caused them injuries with their spears. Armed police then opened fire killing eight men. The dead bodies were seized by the army and only one of them was later handed over to Muslims.....

Curfew was clamped down at 9 a.m. On 23rd, a Mussalman who was asleep on his shop, at Habakadal, was shot dead."[1]

On the 27th Ramazan, while the usual protest meeting was in progress in the Khanqah-i-Mualla, Maulvi Mohammad Saeed, then Arabic teacher in the S. P. High School and a resident of Karnah, Muzaffarabad district, appeared on the stage and announcing his resignation from service, offered himself for arrest. The Magistrate on duty Khawaja Salam Shah, Assistant Governor, after blocking most of the exits, ordered the police to take as many prisoners as they could lay their hands on. Consequently hundreds were arrested though most of them were released after being 'straightened' in the thanas. Seventy five persons were summarily tried and sentenced to three months rigorous imprisonment and a fine of rupees ten each. Among them was Mr. Ghulam Rasool Arif, Editor weekly "Hamdard". Another case under section 332/353, Penal Code (assaulting Government servants while performing official duties) was registered against him and sixteen others as some officers had, in the scuffle, received injuries but the case was later withdrawn. On 23rd September, warrants for the arrest of Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl and Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai were issued. Mr. Ashai was arrested at midnight but Mr. Shawl could not be traced.

WOMEN MARTYRS AND NARCHHOO PALTAN

In Kashmir valley, women also made a notable contribution to the Movement. Such enthusiasm was really not expected of them. In Shopian, Mst. Sajida Bano, aged 25 years, who had recently lost her husband, received a bullet wound in military firing. She was pregnant and died alongwith the child on the spot. The second woman to die was Mst. Jan Begum, widow of Abel Lone, aged 35 years, resident of Khawajapura in the locality of Nowshera, Srinagar, who was killed in a police firing. The third martyr was Mst. Freechi (فریژی), widow of Khawaja Razaq Joo Bohru, resident of Mohallah Jalal Sahib, Baramula, who died of a bullet wound received in a military firing. She hurled a kangri on the

1 Al-Fazal, 29th Sep. 1931.

face of a police officer in course of a procession of women which disfigured him permanently. The fourth woman to die was Mst. Fazli, who was killed on 24th September, 1931, when the military opened fire on a procession of women which was parading the Maisuma Bazar, Srinagar. Unprecedented and unexampled in the history of British India!

Processions of women were a common feature of the agitation in various localities of Srinagar and the towns of Baramula, Sopore, Islamabad and Shopian. Fire brigades were frequently employed to disperse them. It goes to the credit of the daughters of the Valley that although illiterate and unaware even of their social rights and traditionally confined to their homes, they braved hardships smilingly and fought shoulder to shoulder with their men-folk for the emancipation of their country from Dogra rule. It has already come on record that some of them were arrested and had to undergo imprisonment.

Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah proclaimed a Jehad as the only answer to meet the extreme repression perpetrated by the authorities and their trigger-happy soldiers. This Fatwa of religious obligation to take up arms against the Government was supported by other religious divines, who were known for their sectarian disagreements with the Mir Waiz. The Muslims who were already tired of peaceful demonstrations against a callous and morally depraved administration, welcomed the announcement. Consequently on the 24th September, 1931, all able-bodied Muslims from Srinagar and its immediate neighbourhood were seen surging towards Khanyar, in groups, armed with axes, spears, lances and even a few match-lock rifles. Syed Mirak Shah Kashani, another religious divine, known for his piety and scholarship, came out of his seclusion in Shalimar and marched on horseback with a naked sword in his hand at the head of thousands of ill-armed followers. From Batamalinu, Khawaja Ahmedullah started with a thousand men, similarly armed. Within a few hours, about sixty thousand Muslims gathered at Khanyar which houses one of the most sacred shrines in the State. A clash with the army was expected any moment and it was, in fact, for this purpose that such a large number of people had collected with whatever arms they could lay their hands on. The main weapon with them was "narchhoo". It resembles a long spear with the only difference that sometimes its extreme edge, instead of being made of a single sharp blade, consists of five blades, resembling a hand. It is used for the catching of fish. It is for this reason that the gathering has gone down in history as 'narchhoo paltan.' For a few hours, some of them even held a training camp in the adjoining large garden of Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl where they were taught how to snatch away rifles from the soldiers. The Government managed to take

photographs of the crowd which were shown to Hari Singh, and it was wisely decided to withdraw all troops and armed constables from all parts of the city. Had this not been done, there is little doubt that hundreds of people would have died as a result of a determined show down. The Maharaja sent Nawab Khusro Jang, Sahibzada Noor-ud-Din, Khawaja Salam Shah and Brigadier Sutherland, to calm down the highly excited mob and invite them to send immediately a deputation to represent their grievances. They succeeded in persuading the mob to remain peaceful and send a deputation. Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl, Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah, Mir Waiz Hamdani, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, and Agha Saeed Hussain Jalali were present on the spot. At a hurriedly-held meeting, it was decided to send Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah, Saad-ud-Din Shawl and Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah. When they went to the palace, they were made to sit and wait for two hours before being ushered in to the presence of the proud ruler. He was bareheaded and without even answering their formal salutation, harangued in chaste Kashmiri with a loaded pistol in his hand:

> "Have you started a revolt? Do you want to start a war against my Government? Listen! If I wish I can skin you alive right now in my presence and there is no one to prevent me or ask for my explanation, but as I had proclaimed at the time of accession that Justice is my religion, therefore, in deference to my commitment, I forgive you. I am fully alive to the difficulties of my subjects; they are like my children. I will enquire into their grievances myself without any pressure and will redress these but I wouldn't allow anyone to instigate my subjects to rebellion. I shall shoot such persons one by one. Go and tell those people who are assembled at Khanyar to return to their homes. Such persons who are instigating a rebellion against my Government will receive such examplary punishment that no one shall thereafter have the courage to raise his fingers."[1]

Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah wanted to interrupt and say something but Sutherland "requested" the Maharaja to grant him "permission" for two hours only so that he could annihilate not only the deputationists but also their supporters. Nawab Khusro Jang then 'reminded' the Maharaja that he had brought them on the explicit understanding that they will represent their grievances and that among them was also Mir Waiz, the religious head of the State Muslims. It was then "agreed" that the deputationists will return to Khanyar immediately and

1 Taseer, p. 135.

after dispersing them, bring about a peaceful climate, conducive for the presentation of their grievances to the Maharaja. When they returned back, they did not tell the great mass of humanity as to what had actually happened and how they had been abused and threatened by the haughty ruler. They just told them that the Maharaja had agreed to receive a memorandum containing their grievances and promised to redress them. They, therefore, appealed to them to disperse and return to their homes peacefully. It is not known as to whether these leaders withheld the information out of fear for the Maharaja or because they considered it inexpedient to further excite an already excited mob by telling them that the Maharaja had insulted their representatives and that the officers on whose assurance and invitation they had been sent to the palace, had actually abused the confidence that had been reposed in their word of honour. However, there is no doubt that withholding of the information was expedient and wise because if the mob had known what actually happened in the palace, no leader may have been able to prevent them from resorting to violence. Being ill-equipped and ill-armed, the great majority of them were either wholly unarmed or were carrying merely sticks, the army and the armed police, armed with deadly weapons, could have easily repulsed their attack and at the same time, left hundreds of them in a pool of blood. According to the Government version, the mob carried three hundred rifles.[1] This, no doubt, is an exaggeration.

Next morning, a military display was held in the city. All available soldiers with their rifles, bayonets and machine-guns staged a march past. A big State flag which consisted of red and yellow colours was carried at the head and every Mussalman passer-by was compelled to salute it and raise the slogan of Maharaja Bahadur Ki Jai. Those declining, were arrested and summarily sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Hundreds were subjected to whipping. Four whipping centres were opened in Srinagar at the Central jail, the Maharaj Ganj police station, Thana Kothi Bagh and the exhibition grounds Batamalinu. Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Hamdani, Haji Mohammad Subhan, Sadar-ud-Din Mujahid, Qureshi Mohammad Yusuf and Ghulam Mohammad Bande, all of whom later achieved prominence in the Liberation movement, also were sentenced to public whipping.

On the 24th September, the Government promulgated another emergency legislation called Notification No. 19-L of 1988. It was drafted on the lines of the Burma Ordinance of 1818. It was first enforced in Srinagar alone but was subsequently extended, by separate Notifications, to the city

1 Kashmir Ka Gandhi, p. 75.

of Jammu and the towns of Anantnag, Sarnal, Mattan, Bijbihara, Pulwama, Baramula and Sopore. It defined as "turbulent person" a person who had committed an offence punishable under sections 121, 121-A, 122 or 123 of the Penal Code or "against whom operations are being carried out by any military force or the police for the purpose of restoring and maintaining law and order in any area". It empowered any competent authority under the Act to arrest without warrant any person against whom a reasonable suspicion existed that he had promoted or assisted to promote or who *intended to promote* dis-affection against the authority of the Government or that he had acted or *intended to act* in a manner prejudicial to the restoration or maintenance of law and order. The authority was also empowered to "order any person that he shall not enter, reside or remain or shall remove himself from and shall not return to any area specified in the order, or shall conduct himself in such manner, abstain from such acts or take such orders with any property in his possession or under his control as may be specified in the order". Any person could be appointed as a special Police officer. The Government or its agency could take possession of any land or building; even the movable property of any one could be confiscated. In short, unlimited powers were conferred on the military, police and persons from the civil administration regardless of the rights of individuals. Non-compliance with the order was made punishable with imprisonment extending to three years or with whipping not exceeding thirty stripes or fine extending up to Rs. 1000/-. Collective fine could also be imposed. Even the spread of rumours "whether by words spoken or written or by sign or by visible or audible representation or otherwise" was made punishable with imprisonment extending to one year or by flogging or fine extending up to Rs. 1000/-. Similarly offences under sections 121, 121-A, 122, 123, 152-A, 160, 186, 187, 188, 189, 227, 505, 506, 507 and 508 Penal Code or under section 17 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1971 Bikrami were made cognizable and non-bailable.

The misbehaviour of the troops has been described by Mr. Bazaz in the following words:—

> "They gave full play to their racial animosity and religious perversity when dealing with the Muslims. Although the Ailan enjoining people to stand up and salute all military officers, high and low, passing through the streets, was not issued, yet the military men carried it into effect and people were harassed everywhere on this account. Men were dragged from their shops and even houses on mere pretences and severely beaten; the contents of their shops were looted. Some Europeans have recorded their evidence that this was being done entirely unprovoked. Brigadier Sutherland had to arrest several Military men when this wanton aggression went to extremes."[1]
>
> "The flogging centre was the Exhibition ground which is on the road side near Amirakadal in the city. The civilised Government officials would not cover the place while flogging a poor wretch who was exposed to the full gaze of the passer-by, strip naked of all his clothes. One hundred respectable and grown up men were sentenced to flogging and in several cases it was severe as no less than thirty stripes were administered on their bodies."[2]

Even Mr. Middleton had to admit:—

> "The summary trials which were conducted were necessarily based mainly on information supplied by the police or the troops. It was unlikely that non-official Mohammadans would come forward to give evidence against each other and I feel quite certain that non-official Hindus would fear to do so during the continuance of the excitement and ill-feelings which followed the disturbances. In these circumstances there was a rich field for dishonest minor officials to exploit and it would be surprising if no bribery had occurred. The cases mentioned in evidence are allegations not proved but I have no doubt that they are based on facts."[3]

THE KILLINGS CONTINUE

As seen above, the Movement had already spread to the muffasils where people gave up their normal vocations and a large number were thrown behind bars; but as yet no incident of firing had taken place anywhere outside the city except in Shopian. On 23rd September, the Muslims of Islamabad observed a complete hartal to register their protest against the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and in support of their demands. A huge procession was taken out which was stopped by the military. The processionists resented obstruction and demanded passage, which being refused, brought about a serious clash. According to an official press note, the mob hurled stones on the army which led to the firing but eye-witnesses insisted, that stoning was resorted to in retaliation for the firing. Twenty-five Muslims, including a child aged 13 years, lay dead on the

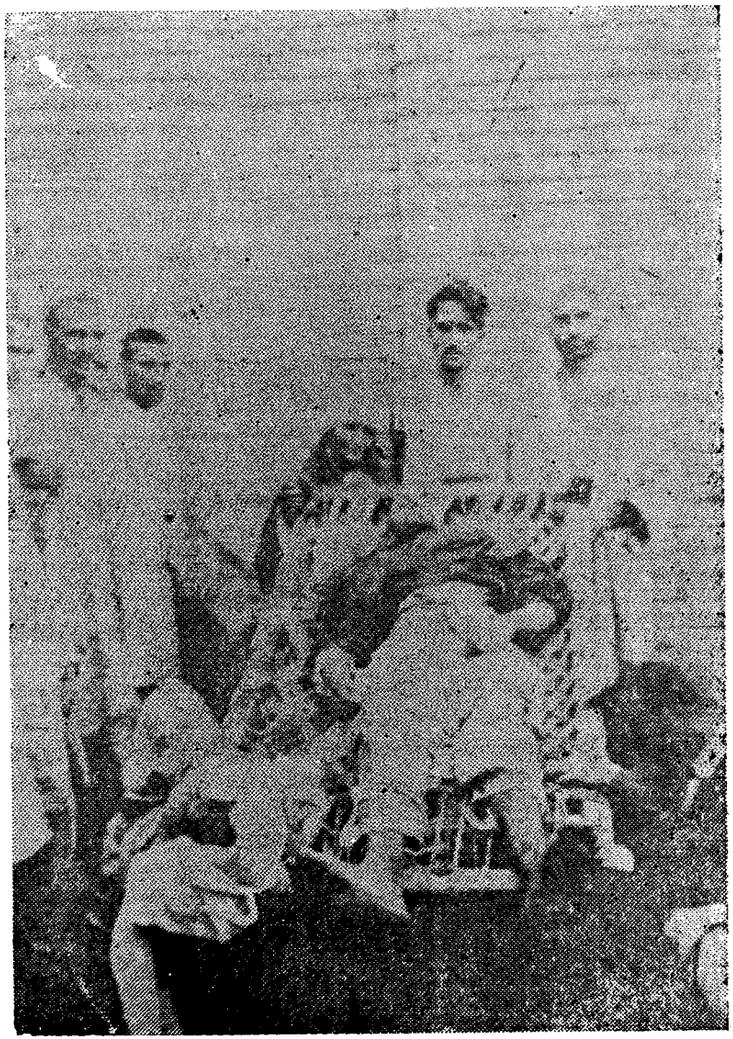
1 Inside Kashmir, p. 151.
2 Inside Kashmir, p. 152.
3 Enquiry Report.

spot and about one hundred and fifty were wounded, some, very seriously.[1] The names of 21 victims are given below:—

1.	Razaq Ahangar	.. 55 years
2.	Ghulam Ahmed Malik	.. 50 years
3.	Gani Butt Kawa	.. 35 years
4.	Gani Darzi	.. 35 years
5.	Rehman Malik	.. 60 years
6.	Pir Mohammad Maqbool Shah	.. 40 years
7.	Aziz Sufi alias Ali Waza	.. 50 years
8.	Kabir Shah Azad	.. 50 years
9.	Pir Gani Shah	.. 40 years
10.	Habib Wani	.. 30 years
11.	Mohammad Posh	.. 22 years
12.	Ghulam Hussain Malik	.. 13 years
13.	Ghulam Ahmad Zev	.. 36 years
14.	Jamal Vigy	.. 25 years
15.	Ghulam Rasool Sheikh	.. 28 years
16.	Juma Wani	.. 19 years
17.	Subhan Wani	.. 30 years
18.	Mohammad Butt Chikan	.. 30 years
19.	Ramazan Butt	.. 20 years
20.	Ali Mohammad Rishi	.. 25 years
21.	Abdul Ahad Mir	.. 60 years

The Martial Law Regulation No. 19-L had introduced whipping as a mode of punishment. The jails had not only been speedily filled in but even the maximum space available in police stations, had been exhausted. The fear of jails had completely disappeared. Hundreds of men of all ages were coming forward everywhere to court arrest and to have the satisfaction of having made their contribution to the cause of freedom. At the same time, it also enhanced their prestige in the eyes of the community. It was a common sight those days in the length and breadth of

1 Taseer, p. 394.



ہم تمہاری ہی طرح کودے تھے اس طوفان میں
جان کی بازی لگا دی ہم نے اس طوفان میں

Kashmir valley to hear volunteers chanting epic poems and marching towards jails to offer themselves for arrest. The flogging took place at the most conspicuous place in the towns and inside the thanas in the city. The punishment was inflicted publicly. The victim was undressed in order to make his buttocks available for the blows, with his hands, legs and waist tightly tied to a pole. Some of them received as many as thirty stripes in a single session, different sentences having been awarded under different sections. In ninety percent cases the victim bleeded profusely and in many cases they fainted. A few died as a result of the injuries received or the shock undergone. Among them was Maulvi Ahmedullah, the leader of the Movement in Baramula town, who received as many as thirty stripes, was unable to regain his health and died a few weeks later. Among other martyrs, the names that have survived neglect and forgetfulness are:—

1. Ghulam Mohammad Butt, aged 25 years, resident of Srinagar. He died in Kothi Bagh thana in course of whipping.

2. Ahmed Butt, aged 30 years, who died in Central jail Srinagar, also in course of whipping.

In Shopian, another town in Islamabad district, a Muslim faqir was arrested on 23rd September for shouting slogans considered seditious by the authorities. Next day he was placed on trial before a Hindu Munsif. On Friday, the 26th of September, thousands of Muslims who had gathered in the Jamia Masjid for prayers, condemned his arrest and demanded his release. Resolutions were also passed criticising the Government for the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues. After the meeting, a procession was taken out. The same Munsif, acting as the Magistrate on duty, ordered the troops to open fire. Some demonstrators were injured. After a few moments, the people regrouped again and continued the procession. At some distance it was fired at again. Some people were again injured. The mob, therefore, became violent and seized a police Head constable who was beaten to death on the spot; the police station was also attacked. Firing was again resorted to, further injuring some persons. Further army reinforcements were sent from Srinagar and what happened next may better be described in the words of Pandit Bazaz:—

> "During the period of the military control, the tale of excesses which I have described while writing about the Srinagar disturbances was repeated. The police had ample reason to torture the Muslims as one of their members had been murdered. Military men helped them to take their revenge on the poor, defenceless and unarmed people.

From all accounts, official and non-official, it can easily be gathered that there was no law in the town. A large number of people left the place or went into hiding. Those who remained behind had to attend the identification parades as the police was busy in investigating the cases of the riot and the murder of the police official. While the villagers were thus engaged with the police, the chivalrous Rajput soldiers would roam about the town, enter their houses, loot them and abuse their women folk. Several cases of rape were reported to Mr. Middleton who himself admits grave suspicion about one having actually taken place. Shopkeepers were first ordered to open their shops and were then arrested and taken to the thana for investigation. In their absence the shops were looted. Every torture against Muslims was perpetrated. People were beaten on the slightest pretext and made to stand up and salute every soldier or police official who passed through the streets and the lanes of the town..... When four soldiers came to arrest a Mohammedan, he jumped from the window. The soldiers questioned his wife. She became dumbfounded and her nerves broke down. After the departure of the soldiers, her husband found her lying dead. Such is the horrifying tale of the Ordinance Raj at Shopian."[1]

Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, was then approached by Brigadier Sutherland and sent to Shopian as an official under Notification No. 19-L to help in restoring normal life in the town. It is probable that the Brigadier may not have been acting on his own and may have been asked by the Prime Minister to do so in order to discredit him. He undertook the responsibility but only a few days after reaching Shopian, was arrested by the army authorities, summarily tried and sentenced to six months imprisonment on the charge of having urged the Hindus not to give evidence against Muslims who were being tried by Summary Courts. Mr. Middleton could not help observing in his report that in his opinion "the Munsif made ill-advised use of his summary powers in this instance".

But what was the effect of this unending stream of torture and vandalism in the name of law? This is what Mr. Bazaz has to say:—

"As I write these lines, admiration rushes forth from the bottom of my heart, and my head bows in reverence to the unbounded spirit of sacrifice which a large number of men and women, illiterate, unsophisticated and defenceless, manifested humbly, patiently and meekly, by undergoing the brutal torture which was inflicted upon them.

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 154-55.

The present structure of the national movement truly rests on the solid and secure foundation of those sacrifices. These atrocities, though extreme in their severity, did not produce the desired effect."[1]

Those killed in the firing at Shopian are :—

1. Abdul Qudus Tak, aged 50 years;
2. Aziz Shah, aged 50 years;
3. Mohammad Dar, aged 40 years;
4. Khizar Butt, aged 50 years;
5. Sajida Bano, aged 25 years.

With his pride humbled and self-confidence shattered, Hari Kishan Kaul now again tried to come to terms with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. He sent Thakar Kartar Singh and Pandit Jivan Lal Matto who tried partly to frighten him of serious consequences for his person and partly to win him over. Having failed to make any head-way, next time Pandit Jiwan Lal visited him alone but again he had to return disappointed. Meanwhile the Government was also working for the disruption of Muslim unity and seems to have partially influenced the thinking of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. Pandit Jiwan Lal again visited the jail and took Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in a closed car to his own house where Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah, Maulvi Mohammad Yahya and Ghulam Mohammad Pandit were already waiting for him. Mir Waiz told him that he had already promised to the Government that he (Sheikh Abdullah) would forthwith stop making any speeches until the presentation of the memorandum to the Maharaja. Sheikh Abdullah was naturally surprised and told him that he should not have made such a commitment without his prior approval. However, in keeping with his respect for Mir Waiz, he offered to abide by any decision that the Muslim representatives, sitting as a Committee, may take in the matter. After the meeting, he was again removed to the Badami Bagh cantonment.

On the occasion of his 36th birthday on 3rd October, in a Durbar held in Srinagar, Hari Singh gave a sealed envelope to the Prime Minister who read it to the audience. It was a proclamation, announcing the release of all political prisoners, the withdrawal of Notification No. 19-L as well as all emergency laws, and the withdrawal of the army to its peace time positions. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and other political prisoners were therefore forthwith released.

In Jammu, Mr. A. R. Saghar and Sheikh Ghulam Qadir were arrested on 18th August. Next day Chaudhri Nawab Khan, father of Chaudhri Ghulam

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 156.

Abbas Khan, and Chaudhri Hukam Din, father of Mr. Saghar were also taken into custody. Born on 5.3.1910 in Jammu city, Mr. Allah Rakha Saghar came under the influence of the political movement that was raging in north India while still in his teens. Instead of continuing his studies, he jumped into the political arena and soon gained considerable prominence. A highly intelligent man and one of the few political workers in the State who can both speak and write with equal fluency and ease, Mr. Saghar soon became one of the top leaders of the freedom Movement. In the politics of Jammu province upto 1939 and in the politics of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference after its revival in 1942, Mr. A. R. Saghar has doubtlessly played the role of the party manipulator without which the role of Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, as the party light, would remain incomplete and inconclusive. Perhaps it is this unpleasant role that has largely blurred his public image in certain sections.

On 18th August, a Muslim woman carrying vegetables for sale was way-laid by Pandit boys near Khanqah-i-Sokhtah, adjacent to the house of Pandit Shyam Lal. Her clothes were torn and she was left almost naked. On 11th August, a child aged two to three years, was beaten and wounded by Hindu hooligans. The dead body of a Muslim woman was recovered from the river; she was allegedly drowned by soldiers, presumably after rape. On 24th September, 1931, a public meeting was held in Jammu under the auspices of the Children's Association which was addressed by student leaders Ghazi Ismail, Abdul Hamid and Inayatullah, condemning the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. In the evening, another public meeting was held in condemnation of the firing at Srinagar. It was addressed by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas, A. R. Saghar and Sheikh Ghulam Qadir. On 25th September, Muslim children took out a procession and on the 28th, a procession was taken out by small girls. Towards the end of September, the services of Malika Pukhraj, the Court dancer, were terminated and she was replaced by Hiran, a Hindu courtesan from Cawnpore. There seems no truth whatsoever in the stories in circulation since 1931 about the involvement of Malika Pukhraj in the freedom struggle. Qazi Mohammad Ahsan, Maulvi Mohammad Yasin, Mohammad Abdullah and Jalal-ud-Din were arrested in Sopore towards the end of September. A hartal was observed for four days. In Shopian, Habibullah Tak, a political worker, suffered a leg-fracture at the hands of the army.

In Jammu, a procession taken out by children on 3rd August, protesting against the killings in Kashmir valley, was lathi charged by the police as a result of which several children including Abdul Qayyum,

Ghulam Hussain, Khurshid Ahmed, Inayatullah, Mohammad Hussain, Mohammad Ismail and Ghazi Ismail Shaheed, all under 10 to 12 years, were injured. In consequence of a lightening strike, the Government was compelled to call off a military parade scheduled for 1st August in Srinagar to overawe Muslims.[1]

In Muzaffarabad, though the Muslims were agitated about happenings in other parts of the State, no political activity was visible for a long time. The lull was broken by Hindu students of the local High School who took out a procession raising anti-Muslim and pro-Maharaja slogans. This was resented to by the Muslim students, resulting in a mutual clash. The provocation was condemned in subsequent meetings held in several mosques. The Government sent Mr. Salam Shah from Srinagar who ordered the arrest of about two dozen Muslims including Master Abdul Aziz, his brother Khawaja Fateh Joo, Pir Hisam-ud-Din Gilani, later M.L.A., Khawaja Abdul Qadir, Chaudhry Wali Joo, Faqir Joo Kada and Pir Qalandar Shah. They were removed to Srinagar, summarily tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. A contingent of the Dogra army remained stationed here for sometime.

1 Inquilab 6th August 1931.

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CHAPTER X

The Muslim Demands

Muslims were now called upon to present memorials of their grievances to the Glancy Commission. To minimize its importance and arm itself against any consideration, the Government also asked other communities to present their grievances. No such demand was made on Hindus, Dogras, Sikhs or Europeans. They were like the privileged ruling class and had no grievances. They were like the privileged ruling class and had no grievances. A memorandum that Mirza Afzal Beg had taken to Lahore, had since been received, after being approved by Yaqub Khan, Secretary of the Civil & Military Gazette. Thereafter Ismail, Qureshi and Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard to assist Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues in drafting any changes that may be deemed necessary. To track them down was to ravish the moon. Mr. Zahir Ahmed claims to have drafted the final memorial. An advance copy was sent to the palace on 3rd December. On 15th December, the aforementioned representatives met, along with the Maharaja in Talab Mauza Srinagar. The memorandum which was read by Khawaja Saadud Din Shaq, in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee, is reproduced below:

Kashmir Ki Kahani, p. 102

CHAPTER X

The Muslim Demands

The Muslims were now called upon to present a memorandum of their grievances on 16th October. To minimize its importance and arm itself with an excuse for postponing its consideration, the Government also invited other communities to present their grievances. No such demand had been voiced by them because Pandits, Mahajans, Dogras and Sikhs had in fact no grievances. They were like the privileged ruling communities of the medieval ages. The memorandum that Maulvi Abdur Rahim had taken to Lahore, had since been received, after being revised and redrafted by the All India Kashmir Committee which sent Maulana Yaqub Khan, later Editor of the Civil & Military Gazette, Maulana Mohammad Ismail Ghaznavi and Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard to Srinagar to assist Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues in bringing about any changes that may be deemed necessary. It took them several days to revise the draft. Mr. Zahur Ahmed claims to have typed the final script.[1] An advance copy was sent to the palace on 18th October. On 19th October, the aforementioned representatives had a meeting with the Maharaja in Taleh Manzil, Srinagar. The memorandum which was read by Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee, is reproduced below:—

1 Kashmir Ki Kahani, p. 102

"IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST MERCIFUL AND BENEFICENT.

To,

His Highness,
The Maharaja Bahadur of Jammu and Kashmir State,
Srinagar.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

While presenting this Memorial to Your Highness for your kind consideration, we, the representatives of Jammu and Kashmir Muslims, beg respectively to offer our sincere thanks to Your Highness for your very graciously granting us an opportunity of laying our grievances and needs before you, and for granting amnesty to most of the political prisoners and under-trial persons on the auspicious occasion of Your Highness' birthday.

We assure Your Highness that the reforms and improvements which we are going to suggest do not owe their origin to any artificial agitation. In fact a long series of unbearable hardships and disabilities under which we have been labouring have forced us to the conclusion that without the reforms and improvements, contained in this humble Memorial, the lives of the Muslim subjects of Your Highness will continue to be extremely miserable.

We acknowledge with gratitude that Your Highness and Your Highness' ancestors have enacted some good laws for the State and have effected certain praise-worthy improvements, and we are convinced that Your Highness and Your Highness' ancestors have been inspired by sincere love and solicitude for the State subjects, but, as Your Highness would concede, no single individual can, without the help and co-operation of others, look after the welfare of a vast territory like Jammu and Kashmir. Neither can good laws alone, without the help of sympathetic officials, bring about any good results. We, therefore, beg respectfully to state that inspite of certain good laws, Your Highness' subjects cannot enjoy peace and prosperity unless they are afforded suitable opportunities to influence and criticise the work of the Executive responsible for the observance of the said laws. The truth rather is that even for the enactment of good laws the help and cooperation of the peole are essential, for, without knowing from the people their real needs and requirements, no truly good laws can be made.

After these introductory remarks we beg to submit that, excepting the Royal person of Your Highness, the Muslim subjects of the State

have lost all confidence in the officials of the State to the extent that they cannot even wait till such time as may be required for the framing of reformed constitution and its subsequent introduction. The delay involved would, we are afraid, be looked upon not as something essential but as a ruse for putting off the needs of Your Highness' Muslim subjects.

Your Highness' Muslim subjects, therefore, humbly pray that in order to allay the aforesaid misgivings and to convince them that the State Executive is really prepared to help in the fulfilment of the good intentions of Your Highness, a declaration of policy indicating a change of heart and covering the following points may kindly be immediately made. This declaration should be to the effect that:—

1. All those officials of the State, who have immediately before or during the disturbances, offended the religious feelings of the Muslims or in any way interfered with their religious practice, be properly punished after due enquiry.

2. All Mosques, grave-yards and other sacred places, together with their original attached property in the possession of the State or transferred by the State to a third party, be restored to the Muslims.

3. All those persons, who have been dismissed, suspended, degraded or otherwise punished in any respect in connection with the present political movement, be reinstated or restored to their posts, position or grade, as the case may be; similarly their relatives should not be made to suffer in any way on their account.

4. Suitable compensation be granted to the relatives of those who were killed during the disturbances and also to those who were disabled therein.

5. The cases of such political offenders, as have been convicted for some alleged acts of violence or abetment, and have failed to appeal, be gone into by Your Highness in order to find out whether in the present time of political advancement, their offences really amount to violence. If Your Highness does not find them guilty of violence, they should be released. It is further prayed that in considering all such cases, Your Highness may also be graciously pleased to exercise Your Royal prerogative of mercy.

6. An independent Commission should be appointed to inquire into the conduct of the State officials, the Police and the Military, towards

the people during the days of the political disturbances with a view to finding out whether their behaviour was in conformity with the law as popularly understood. If any of the officials is found guilty in this respect, he should be properly dealt with, irrespective of his position or rank.

7. Your Highness' subjects most respectfully submit that no permanent peace is possible unless the same law be enforced in the State for freedom of press, freedom of speech, and for the establishment of Anjumans and Associations as obtains in British India. As matters stand, we are deprived of all the ways and means of intellectual and economic progress. Our wise men are unable to benefit the people by their wisdom, and our masses cannot improve their condition without organisation.

8. As a proof of the fact that the Muslim subjects of Your Highness will in future be treated fairly, a declaration may kindly be made immediately to the effect that there would be perfect religious freedom in the State and that conversion would entail no confiscation of property in favour of relatives as is the practice at present. Your Highness, who, we believe, fully recognises the value of religious liberty and tolerance, will agree that there is no justification for a person to be deprived of his property on his conversion to another religion; for, it amounts to religious interference, and in the presence of such practice, Your Highness' Muslim subjects cannot have any sense of security in the matter of their being treated fairly.

9. Lastly, we beg leave to state that Your Highness' subjects can enjoy real peace only when they have been conceded their right to an effective share in the legislation of the State and of criticising the administration. Any legislation to secure this end would, however, require time. Therefore Your Highness' Muslim subjects, and as far as we know, a section of Your Highness' Hindu and Sikh subjects as well, think it necessary that at least an immediate assurance may be given to them to the effect that in future they would be treated in accordance with some definite constitution, and a declaration may be immediately made that Your Highness' Government will be based on constitutional principles.

CONSTITUTION

1. Fundamental Rights

Your Highness, after referring to the points which need immediate attention, and starting with the presumption that Your Highness will be pleased to concede them, we beg leave to present an outline

of the constitution which will, in our opinion, satisfy the people and serve as a basis for future development.

In our opinion it is vitally essential that the eternal and unchanging elementary rights of humanity, of which Your Highness' subjects are almost deprived in all contrast to the outside world, should be fully and properly secured for them. These rights are the following:—

1. Perfect religious freedom in respect of religious observance, practice, preaching, conversion and the rights connected therewith as obtains in British India.

2. Perfect freedom of assemblage and of setting up Anjumans as obtains in British India.

3. Perfect freedom of speech as obtains in British India.

4. Freedom of the press with only such necessary restrictions as obtain in British India. In this connection we may add that as there exists no press in the State at the present time, and we cannot at once avail ourselves of the freedom asked for, the State authorities should have no objection to the circulation of Muslim papers from outside within the State. We see no reason why against all usage of civilised countries, the State should object to and stop the circulation of such papers as criticise, in public interest and with due deference to the person of Your Highness, the attitude and behaviour of some of its officials, or point out defects in the existing laws and regulations of the State.

5. There should be perfect equality of rights and equality of treatment for all State subjects in all respects.

2. Constitution of the Executive and the Legislature

(*a*) *The Executive:*

It should be laid down that:—

1. The policy of the State shall, henceforth, be the increasing association of the State subjects in the administration of the State on the lines of a progressive Representative form of Government.

2. The Ministers shall, of course, be appointed by the Ruling Chief but Muslims should be represented on the Ministry in proportion to

their numerical strength. If capable Muslims from among the Muslim subjects of the State are not available to fill the posts, recruitment should be made from the Muslims outside the State until the time when the Muslims of Kashmir become sufficiently advanced to be appointed as Ministers, as is the practice for the importation of non-Muslims at present.

3. No Minister shall in future remain in office for more than five years.

4. If 70 percent of the members of the Legislature (about which recommendations follow), pass a resolution to the effect that they have no confidence in a certain Minister, that Minister shall forthwith be relieved of his duties.

5. The Ministers shall be responsible to the Ruler, but if the representatives of the country should demand from them any information concerning their respective departments, they shall be bound to furnish the required information to the Legislature except with regard to matters connected with the person of the Ruler, his heir-apparent, or such foreign affairs as the Ruler may think wise not to disclose.

6. Though the Ministers would not be resopnsible to the Legislature, yet they should be instructed by the Maharaja Bahadur in the letter of appointment to respect the opinion of the majority and to act in conformity with it, so far as possible.

(b) The Legislature:

It should be laid down that:—

1. There shall be a Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir to keep His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur and his Executive informed of public opinion and to frame the necessary laws.

2. After such an assembly has been constituted, no new law which has not been passed by the said Assembly, and no old law which has been abrogated by it, should be enforced in the country excepting such temporary ordinances as the Maharaja Bahadur may enforce on occasions of violent disturbances or grave emergencies; but such ordinances shall not remain in force for more than six months.

3. At least seventy per cent of the members of the Assembly shall be elected and thirty percent may be nominated by His Highness, the

Maharaja Bahadur. Of the 30 nominated members, 10 should be Rajputs, being an important minority and representing the ruling dynasty; the rest of the nominated members should be according to the population proportion of the various communities with the proviso that of the total 30 nominated members, one half should be non-officials.

4. Rules shall be framed in a way that the elected representatives of different religions are returned in proportion to the number of their respective adherents.

5. As regards franchise, it should be on as wide a basis as practicable, and the method of election to the Assembly should be based on the direct system.

6. The Assembly shall be the sole authority for legislation. It shall also have the power to criticise the work of the various departments, to pass a vote of confidence or non-confidence in the Ministers, to demand from them such information as may be necessary for a thorough knowledge of the working of their departments, and to discuss the annual budget. No new tax shall be imposed, nor any of the old taxes enhanced without first obtaining the sanction of the Assembly. In special circumstances, however, the Maharaja Bahadur shall have the power of veto in legislation.

7. No legal action shall lie against a member of the Assembly for expressing any opinion whatever on the floor of the House, except with regard to the person of the Ruler or his heir-apparent.

8. The President of the Assembly shall be nominated by the Maharaja Bahadur for the first term. Afterwards the Legislature shall have the power to elect its own President.

9. A fixed percentage of the total income of the State should be set apart as Privy purse for the Maharaja Bahadur and his family, and excepting this sum, all items of the State budget should be open to criticism in the Assembly.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Municipalities as constituted at present are no good, and are rather responsible for making this useful institution unpopular with the people. We, therefore, request that Municipal Committees be established in all the towns of the State on the following lines:

All municipal work should be entrusted to the town committees in which elected members should form the majority. The President also should be from amongst the non-official elected members. The Wazir Wazarat may be empowered to nominate upto 10 percent of the members, and where the total number is less than 10, there should be one nominated member provided the elected majority is not thereby affected.

Similarly in all districts, District Boards should be constituted, the members of which should be elected except 10 percent who may be nominated by the Wazir Wazarat. For the first five years, the Wazir Wazarat may preside over the District Boards. Later on, however, the President should be elected from among the elected members by a majority of votes.

The Municipal Committees and the District Boards should have the same duties and powers as in the Punjab and should, like the Assembly, have communal representation.

We respectfully request your Highness to be pleased to immediately issue necessary instructions with regard to the establishment of Municipal Committees and District Boards on these lines.

JUDICIARY

Seventy percent of the High Court Judges should be Muslims.

REVENUE

Land Revenue should be assessed on the same lines as in the Punjab.

SERVICES

Communal proportion should be observed in all grades of services and the basis of recruitment should be the minimum qualification.

1. If the requisite number of Muslims of high education are not available, recruitment be made from less qualified Muslims in preference to better qualified non-Muslims. For instance, Matriculate Muslims should have preference over non-Muslim graduates excepting of course with regard to such departments in which high technical education may be essential. In this way Muslim representation in the services should be increased by at least 10 percent every year until they get their due share in the services.

2. There should be a Public Service Commission in the State and the different communities should be represented on it according to their numerical strength.

3. His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur should have the power to appoint 25 percent of the total number of higher grade posts directly with due regard to communal proportion.

4. Where necessary, age restriction should be relaxed to redress communal inequality.

CONCLUSION

Your Highness! these are our main suggestions with regard to the future constitution of the State and the fundamental rights of the State subjects. There are other suggestions as well, respecting some of the acute grievances of Your Highness' Muslim subjects, which, though requiring careful thought and consideration, are such as may be adopted in a much shorter time than the framing of a Constitution. Owing to their different nature we are submitting these grievances in the form of an Appendix to which, it is prayed, Your Highness may be pleased to give immediate attention.

We conclude this Memorial by again offering our sincere thanks to Your Highness, and hope that keeping in view the advancement of the times and the noble example already set by some of the Ruling Chiefs of the Indian States, particularly those of Cochin and Mysore, Your Highness will be most graciously pleased to give your very kind and sympathetic consideration to our humble Memorial, and will thus strengthen the bonds of love and affection by inspiring your Muslim subjects, who have ever been loyal to your Highness' family, with even stronger feelings of loyalty and devotion.

We beg to remain,
Your Highness' most loyal
and
devoted subjects.

1. Muhammad Yusuf (Mir Waiz).
2. Ahmedullah (Mir Waiz Hamdani)
3. Saad-ud-Din Shawl.
4. Syed Hussain Shah Jalali.
5. Ghulam Ahmed Ashai.
6. Yaqub Ali.

7. Shahab-ud-Din.
8. Abdul Hamid.
9. Ghulam Abbas.
10. Gauhar Rahman.
11. S. M. Abdullah.

Representatives of Jammu and Kashmir Muslims.

Srinagar Dated : 19 October, 1931.

APPENDIX

1. Zamindars

(*a*) Zamindars of Kashmir are deprived of proprietary rights over their lands whereas those of Jammu fully enjoy these rights. The people of Kashmir cannot sell or mortgage their lands of their own will. They cannot even cut the mulberry, the walnut and the chinar trees grown on their private lands or make use of them, nor can they remove the dead and fallen timber of such trees with the result that the Kashmir Zamindar is no better than a mere tenant. There is no reason to make a distinction between Kashmir and other parts of the State. The State cannot claim proprietary rights over Kashmir lands merely because Kashmir was purchased from the British. A transaction of this kind could only affect the rights of government but not the proprietary rights of the subjects on their lands. No government has the right to sell the proprietary rights of the lands belonging to the people. We therefore request Your Highness to be most graciously pleased to restore Your Highness' Zamindar subjects to their full proprietary rights. In this connection we may add that the view expressed in certain quarters that the present system is in the interest of zamindar himself, is incorrect. There can be no justification whatever in depriving a person of his lawful rights with the alleged object of protecting him against the danger of his land passing into the hands of moneylenders. In our opinion this danger can and should be effectively guarded against by the introduction of Land Alienation and Pre-emption Acts. Anyhow nothing should stand in the way of full proprietary rights being granted to the Kashmir Zamindars.

(*b*) The zamindars have acute grievances against the departments of Forests, Revenue, Police, Games Preservation and Mulberry-

culture. It is therefore requested that a Commission consisting of non-official elements be appointed to inquire into these grievances, and submit a report to Your Highness with a view to improving their condition.

(*c*) Bribery is common and chiefly affects the zamindars; effective steps should be taken to stop it.

(*d*) The way in which Nautor rights are granted to State servants and others is mostly objectionable. Nautor prepared by zamindars should on no account be given away as grants. Those already given should be cancelled.

(e) Coronation concessions granted to zamindars have been frittered away by wrong interpretations. Steps should be taken to rectify the mistakes.

(*f*) The grazing tax is too heavy; it should be as in the neighbouring British territory.

2. Bakarwals

(*a*) The tax on the Bakarwals is too heavy and is ruining them financially. The annual tax of two rupees, seven annas, per goat sometimes exceeds the price of the goat itself. The object underlying the tax is apparently to encourage sheep-breeding which is helpful in the woollen industry and the protection of forests. But these considerations do not justify the imposition of so heavy a tax which is ruinous for the great investment of the Bakarwals. The object in view may be secured by means of sheep-farming, State subsidy and by educating the Bakarwals. We, therefore, humbly pray that the tax on goats should be the same as that on sheep, or it may be slightly higher.

(*b*) The Muslim Bakarwals have been branded as a criminal tribe, while the Hindu tribes who follow a similar profession bear no such stigma. This invidious distinction is causing great heart-burning, and may kindly be immediately removed. If any Bakarwal is guilty of an offence, he should be dealt with under the ordinary law of the land.

3. Arms

The people of Kashmir are deprived of the right of possessing arms, whereas their fellow subjects of Jammu have no restrictions.

It is requested that this invidious distinction may kindly be removed. Similarly there should be no distinction between Jammu and Kashmir in respect of game laws for State subjects.

4. Military

There are no arrangements for the Military education of the Muslims, with the result that they are deprived of their due share in the high military posts. The existing Military College at Jammu, being a Hindu Wakf, benefits the Hindus only. It is necessary therefore that the State should establish a high class Military College of its own, and only those who undergo a course of training in this institution should be appointed to higher posts in the Army. The rights of Muslims and other communities should be duly safeguarded in this College in proportion to the strength of their population.

5. Customs

Certain custom duties levied at present are hampering the trade of the country. No duty should be levied on goods exported from the State. Nor should any import duty be imposed on medicines or on goods imported personally, or through mail for bonafide private use. No duty should be levied on genuine State-made goods on re-import whether shown to custom officers or not before export.

6. Labour

The condition of the labourers of Kashmir is pitiable. We request that a Commission be appointed to enquire into their condition, hours of labour, terms of contract with the employers, etc., and that after considering its report, a law should be framed which should secure to the labourers their legitimate rights. New means of employment should also be found out for the unemployed.

7. Education

The Muslims of Kashmir are deplorably backward in education. Unfortunately Mr. Sharp's report, which would have benefited them, was not acted upon. To improve the condition of the Muslims educationally, in addition to Mr. Sharp's recommendations, the following measures may kindly be adopted immediately:—

(*a*) The number of Middle and High schools should be increased, and each important centre of Muslim population should have adequate arrangements for education. It is hoped, Your Highness will be pleased to issue immediate instructions for this purpose.

(*b*) Colleges for higher industrial education should be started, with one at Srinagar.

(c) In order to make up for the educational backwardness of Muslims, more special stipends should be reserved for and awarded to Muslim students. Promising Muslims should be sent out to British India and foreign countries for higher education.

(d) Adequate number of seats for Muslim students should be reserved in professional and technical institutions, and also in the science faculties of schools and colleges.

(e) Instruction is imparted in Hindi in certain Girls schools, which is proving a great obstacle in the way of Muslim girls. This obstacle should be removed. The medium of instruction for girls should be Urdu as it is for the boys."[1]

The Maharaja made a brief reply. The tone of his speech was conciliatory. He promised due consideration and at the same time informed them that he had decided to appoint a Commission to go into their grievances and that an announcement was to be made soon.

To demonstrate its sincerity, the Government announced the restoration of Pathar Masjid, Srinagar, though certain conditions were imposed, which were naturally not accepted by the Muslims. On 29th November, a big public meeting was held in the Mosque to celebrate its reopening for prayers. In recognition of the part played by him since 1924 in the agitation for its restoration, Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl was invited to preside over the meeting which was addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Syed Mirak Shah, Mian Ahmed Yar and Pir Hissam-ud-Din. The city was profusely illuminated. A massive structure, with a spacious compound, entirely built of chiselled stone, it was built by Empress Noor Jahan and is one of the most impressive Mughal monuments in the State. Its reopening for prayers, after nearly a hundred and thirteen years, being a historic occasion, was solemnised as a national festival. It has since been the venue of many an important political meetings.

THE KILLINGS CONTINUE

In the month of November, the Movement took a serious turn in Mirpur. Sardar Gauhar Rehman Khan, a member of the Young Mens'

1 Ahmedia Jamaat Library, Rabwah.

Muslim Association, who has been already noticed as a member of the Jammu delegation that was to wait upon the Maharaja, went to Mirpur to launch a no-tax campaign. A new Settlement had taken place in the district which had worked very harshly against the tillers of the land. The land revenue had been increased; Nautor outstandings had been inflated and the categorisation of land had been also done unjustly, resulting in arbitrary enhancement of land revenue. It was under these circumstances that a no-tax campaign was launched by Gauhar Rehman in consultation with and the approval of the local leadership, among whom was a fiery young man, Illahi Bakhsh, whose forefathers had migrated from Kashmir valley during the great famine. The Movement soon caught the imagination of the masses and in a matter of few days, realisation of taxes came to a stand-still. It also spread to the tehsil of Mendhar in Poonch Jagir and parts of Rajouri. On 5th Poh, 1988 (20th December, 1931), the Government promulgated Notification No. L-24 to provide enhanced punishment for the non-payment of Government dues. It made participants in the Movement and even those who could be suspected of any support, express or implied, liable to imprisonment extending up to six months or fine without any limitation or both. With the promulgation of the Notification, a stream of Muslims were sent to jail, summarily tried and sentenced. Among others, who were arrested and later became dedicated workers of the freedom Movement were Illahi Bakhsh, Mohammad Akbar Khan, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah of Siakh and Haji Wahab Din in Mirpur tehsil, Raja Zaman Ali in Samahni, tehsil Bhimber and Sardar Fateh Mohammad of Kerala, Mendhar. The imprisonment of a large number of peasants for refusing to pay land revenue and in some cases, the sale by auction of their movables, heightened the agitation. The district had a sizable population of Hindu money-lenders who had been fleecing the peasants for well over a century. As could be expected, they identified themselves with the Government and at some places, like Mirpur and Kotli towns, organised small demonstrations expressing their support for its policies. It was naturally resented to by the Muslims and part of their anger therefore got diverted against them. Another reason was that the Hindu money-lenders, personified, on the spot, the hated Dogra rule with some of its most hateful aspects. The result was that at some places there were Hindu-Muslim clashes. For instance, at Alibeg, a small village in Mirpur tehsil, some houses and shops were set on fire, which unfortunately also engulfed a part of the adjacent gurdawara. Sukhchainpura and Dadyal also witnessed incidents of similar nature.

In Mirpur two peasants were shot dead by a Government supporter Chaudhri Fazal Ellahi who was arrested for fear of popular reaction but later released and the case against him withdrawn. When the area was

handed over to the army, they repeated the same excesses of which they had been guilty in the Valley but here, unlike Kashmir valley, sympathetic Muslim Punjab being just a few miles away, thousands crossed into Jhelum and Gujrat to seek refuge from persecution.

The Mahajans of Rajouri were notorious for their extremely dishonest dealings with the poor Muslim peasantry. In 1914, one Maulvi Abdur Rehman who criticised the money-lenders for their malpractices, and condemned the Government for protecting them, was arrested alongwith many others. Many a mosque were sealed and saying of prayers at the Eidgah was forbidden.

On 9th Magh, 1988 (21st January, 1932), thousands of Muslims collected at the Eidgah in Bharouta to say their Jumma prayers in defiance of the 18-year old prohibitory order. On the advice of Sardar Teerath Singh, the SDM, who frightened them to believe that the Muslims were about to loot them, the Hindus closed down their business. At the same time, the army and the police, assisted by bands of armed non-Muslims, surrounded the Eidgah. The S.D.M. then sent a deputation of pro-Government Muslims, comprising Mirza Habibullah, Munshi Feroz Din, Chaudhri Wazir Ali, Fateh Lone, Ghaffar Joo Zargar and Sheikh Fazal Alam (Police Head constable), to persuade them to leave the Eidgah without saying their Jumma prayers. The deputationists were assured that they had no intention to disturb peace and would return to their homes after saying their prayers. Simultaneously, a large procession of Muslims came from Darhal and joined the prayers. After prayers a public meeting was held to condemn the Government for Muslim killings in the Valley and to express their support for the popular demands. In the meanwhile, appeared a Dogra Risala alongwith Sardar Teerath Singh and Amar Nath, Munsif Reasi. Together with men from the infantry, who were already on duty, they fell upen the audience but without resorting to firing, pushed them towards Thakar Dawala which has a narrow foot-path for exit, sandwiched between a river on one side and a huge mountain on the other. Just when the great majority of the congregation, was negotiating the foot-path, the brave Dogra soldiers opened fire, killing 25 persons on the spot.

Nine persons were arrested. Later, when a summary inquiry into the incident was held by Sahibzada Mohammad Umar, Magistrate, at the persistent demand of Muslims, both the S.D.M. as well as the Munsif claimed that no firing order had been given by them. It was established in the inquiry that the army had fired seventy-two rounds. Among the dead, sixteen belonged to Drahl and nine to Bharouta.

The names of only ten are available from records and are given below:—

(1) Shahab-ud-Din	Caste	Gujar	Kablu
(2) Bahadur Ali	,,	Gujar	Bargoi
(3) Chala	,,	not known	Laba
(4) Hashmat	,,	Gujar	Pallandi
(5) Faqir	,,	Gujar	Saj
(6) Kala	,,	Jarral	Bara Khana
(7) Shafu	,,	Jarral	Rajouri
(8) Diwan Ali	,,	Mughal	Ghamir
(9) Kala	,,	Thakur	Drahl
(10) Bilo Malik	,,	Malik	Drahl.

In Kotli, on the night falling between the 6th and 7th of Magh, 1988 (18th and 19th January, 1932), the town was besieged by a large crowd of Muslims from the surrounding villages as reprisal for the forced evacuation of its Muslim inhabitants on account of ever-increasing hostility displayed by Dogra troops and its Hindu inhabitants. The attack failed because of their out-dated arms and the limited quantity of ammunition which got exhausted in a few hours; six Muslims lost their lives in the encounter. It was preceded by the burning down of houses belonging to Hindu money-lenders in villages Chaula, Panjeda, Kotli Solan, Seri and Khui-Ratta, causing considerable loss. Two Hindus lost their lives in the incidents. On 13th Magh (25th January, 1932), a second raid also failed for similar reasons but resulted in a greater tragedy because twenty-two Muslims, who had taken up positions in the house of one Gul Mohammad, to direct match-lock fire on a near-by army picket, were surrounded by Dogra troops after their ammunition exhausted and burnt alive in the same house. Next day their charred bodies were buried in a single grave on the out-skirts of Kotli. The grave is situated on the roadside in front of the air-field. It is a sad commentary on the Muslims of Kotli that not even a plaque exists to identify their resting place and enshrine their memory. After the failure of this effort, scores of Muslims were arrested and tried for murder and rioting; prominent among them were Karim Dad Khan alias Keema from Panjera, Hashim Khan alias Hasho, and Fazal Ellahi from Kotli proper.

In Mendhar, Sardar Fateh Mohammad Karelvi, who had earlier been a member of the State police force, led the agitation. Many a money-lenders'

property was destroyed and their account books burnt down. There was, however, no loss of human life. The commotion spread to the town of Poonch where the local Raja had to retire to his fort and remained cut off until army reinforcements arrived on the scene. In these parts also, scores of Muslims were put on trial. Most of the trials were held by Sardar Mohammad Ayub Khan, who later retired as a District and Sessions Judge in the post-freedom era.

By the time the no-tax campaign in the Mirpur district had assumed the shape of a gigantic popular movement, the Maharaja's administration had almost collapsed in various parts of the State and he was, therefore, compelled to seek the assistance of the British Government. British troops were moved from Jullundhur cantonment to Jammu and Mirpur alongwith some political officers. Mr. Jardine was put in charge of Mirpur district. Royal Air Force planes were also pressed into service for observation purposes in the district, because of the absence of adequate means of communication.

Mr. Salisbury of the Indian Civil Service was appointed Administrator of Jammu and Amar Singh of the Punjab Police as D.I.G. Mr. Lawther, a D.I.G. in the Frontier was appointed Inspector General of Police in place of Lt.-Col. Gandharb Singh who was retired in consequence of the enquiry into police firing outside the Central Jail, Srinagar. Mr. Salisbury tried to pacify agitated Muslim minds by immediately making some changes in the administration and promoted some Muslim Officers to responsible posts so that he could also have access to the Muslims through men whom they were prone to lend their ears. They ignored the official routine or the cumbersome bureaucratic procedures. Several times they wrote orders on cigarette packets and ensured their compliance. Several Hindu officers including Ch. Chaiter Singh Charak, Governor Jammu, were relieved forthwith as they had proved unfit to handle the situation.

Despite elaborate measures on the routes of entry, the Army as well as the Police failed to stop the entry of the volunteers from Punjab because of the eagerly-extended help by Muslims inhabiting the border. A large number of Additional Police was recruited to cope with the situation but the influx was so regular and heavy that the authorities found themselves helpless. With the winter setting in, there was lack of space to keep them in custody and only barbed wire fencing was sometimes considered sufficient. The entire State being in a whirlpool of disturbances, the swift movement of the Army and the Police was almost impossible especially due to the lack of transport and the non-cooperation of Muslim masses who had, for a century, been used as

beasts of burden. From some villages in Jammu district where Muslims were in a majority, the Hindu population quietly slipped away to Jammu.

THE IMPERISHABLE BEGUM BOHRU

While matters stood thus in Jammu province, a worker of the Movement, Mufti Zia-ud-Din of Poonch, who was in Srinagar, was banished from the State. The banishment of a political worker at a time when Muslim grievances were being examined by the Glancy Commission, had an immediate public reaction because the Muslims interpreted it as proof of bad faith. The Notification No. 19-L which had assumed great notoriety was again enforced. In defiance of an order served upon him a few days earlier, prohibiting him from making any public speech, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah addressed a public meeting. The ban was obviously provocative and no political leader can but treat such an order with contempt and defiance. He was arrested on 23rd January from a house-boat and removed to Badamibagh cantonment. Tried summarily, he admitted the contents of his speech and was sentenced to six months imprisonment. Hartals and processions were as usual resorted to. In Srinagar there were many lathi charges in which scores of people received injuries. It was winter when Kangris (fire baskets) are in common use. The people freely resorted to their use as a weapon against the army and the police. Near the old bridge In Baramula town on the 28th January 1932, a clash took place with the army in which the latter resorted to firing. One man was killed on the spot and a few were injured among whom was this writer's cousin, Habibullah Saraf, who later succumbed to his injuries.

The names of the martyrs are given below:

1. Freechi, widow of Khawaja Razaq Bohru, aged 30 years.
2. Ghulam Rasool Nazir, aged 35 years.
3. Habibullah Saraf, aged 25 years.

Begum Bohru, better known as Mst. Freechi (فریڑی), the rosy-cheeked, robustly built 30 year old widow of Khawaja Razaq Bohru, a specimen of the famed Kashmiri beauty, had been, like most of her town sisters, deeply disturbed by the continuing news of the innocent killings all over the Valley and played a prominent part in the processions taken out by women in the town. On the fateful day, a number of women took out a procession. They were mourning the martyrs and cursing the oppressors. When they reached near the right bank of Jhelum, in the midst of the town, the police blocked their passage and a Sub-Inspector used abusive language against political leaders. Freechi could bear it no



بیکسوں کی آہیں مظلوموں کی چیخیں دردناک
ہر طرف سے سن رہے ہیں آج بھی ہم زیر خاک

longer. It was the midst of winter and there had been considerable snow-fall. Freechi was carrying a Kangri filled with burning charcoal. She hurled it on the Sub-Inspector from some distance. It crashed straight into his face which was burnt and permanently disfigured. The gallant woman was shot dead on the spot. Almost the whole town walked bare-footed and bare-headed behind her, when taken for burial.

There was firing in Sopore as well, resulting in the death of the following:—

1. Abdul Ahad Shosha, aged 25 years.
2. Abdul Aziz Mashqi, aged 35 years.
3. Mohammad Khan, aged 20 years.
4. Mohammad Sheikh, aged 25 years.
5. Jabbar Ganai, aged 33 years.
6. Abdur Rahim Dar, aged 30 years.

In Uri, Muslims took out a procession after Juma prayer in support of popular demands for reforms and in sympathy with the martyrs. The military opened fire, killing nine persons.

In Handwara, a tehsil of Baramula and the personal jagir of Hari Singh, military excesses exceeded all limits. Far away from the Jhelum Valley road and cut off from other parts of the Valley, every soldier considered himself to be the master of the situation. Firing was resorted to many a time. Twenty-two Muslims were killed, among whom were the following:

1. Ahmed Lone, aged 38 years.
2. Abdul Ahad Hajam, aged 29 years.
3. Ghulam Rasool Wani, aged 60 years.
4. Jabbar Khan, aged 30 years.
5. Kamal Dar, aged 40 years.
6. Rustam Khan, aged 25 years.
7. Assad Wani, aged 30 years.
8. Ahmed Sheikh, aged 30 years.
9. Wahab Dar, aged 40 years.
10. Rehman Mir, aged 35 years.
11. Rustam Dhar, aged 28 years.
12. Jabbar Mir, aged 35 years.

On 28th January, 1932, a deputation of Muslim representatives met Mr. Glancy in Jammu. The imprisonment of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah came up for discussion. Mr. Glancy arranged a meeting

with the Maharaja on the next day. The deputation consisted of Mistri Yaqub Ali, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Syed Mohammad Amin Shah, and Sheikh Mohammad Amin. Mistri Yaqub Ali was spokesman of the deputation.[1] However, nothing came out of the meeting.

THE BRITISH INTERVENTION

With the publication outside the State of the news pertaining to the firing in Srinagar on the 13th of July, sprang up an organisation known as the All India Kashmir Committee. The Committee conducted a brilliant campaign in support of the Muslims of Kashmir. Another wing of Muslim public opinion in Punjab represented by the Ahrar did not subscribe to a constitutional agitation and believed that the best way of helping them was by sending volunteers to court arrest in support of their demands. Therefore, they launched their "Kashmir Chalo" Movement in September, 1931 when at least 2,500 volunteers entered the State and were taken into custody. The movement remained suspended till October because of the truce agreement between the Muslim representatives and the Government and in the hope that the memorial that was being presented to the Maharaja may bear fruit. But as Muslim demands were not readily accepted, the Ahrars felt that the Maharaja was just biding for time and had no intention to redress the grievances. So, on 29th October, they resumed their movement and in a few days, over two thousand Muslims were arrested on Suchetgarh border alone. This happened before 2nd November, 1931.

Realising that his resources were too inadequate to meet the worsening situation, the 'Prop of the British Government' and the 'Sipar-i-Saltanat-e-Englishia', therefore invoked the infamous Treaty of Amritsar and appealed to the Governor-General for help and protection. The latter was only too glad to render such assistance. Collapse of a hireling and that too in so strategic an area as Kashmir and more so, as the result of a popular revolt, was fraught with grave political consequences in the sub-continent itself. This was a situation with which the British Government could never be happy. So they immediately rushed to the aid of the Satarap and despatched, as first instalment, the Gora Rifle Brigade from Jullundhur cantonment. It was under these circumstances that the Maharaja announced the appointment of the Glancy Enquiry Commission on 12th November, 1931.

GLANCY COMMISSION

On 12th November, the Maharaja issued the promised proclamation appointing a Commission known to students of Kashmir history as the Glancy Commission. It was appointed to look into the grievances of various sections of the people, particularly those of the Muslims because it were they who had serious complaints against the Government. In the proclamation, the Maharaja also committed himself to the convening of a conference under the chairmanship of Mr. Glancy, after the Commission had completed its task, to consider constitutional reforms. The announcement was, therefore, very well received. On 13th November, at a largely-attended public meeting held in Srinagar, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah introduced a resolution welcoming its appointment and the commitment for introduction of constitutional reforms. Similar resolutions were passed in other places.

Mr. Glancy, who in later years, invited strong criticism by the Muslims of Punjab for his pro-Hindu leanings as Governor, had already served the State as Finance Member of the Cabinet and it was during this period that he had developed friendly relations with Hari Singh; it was natural that a close understanding should have developed between the two. When the Maharaja felt compelled to appoint an Inquiry Commission, partly because of his Government's failure to suppress the popular revolt inside the State and partly because of the highly effective agitation carried on in India generally and in Punjab in particular by Muslim organisations, in support of Kashmiri Muslims, he deliberately selected Glancy to chair it. No Hindu would have been acceptable to the Muslims; no Muslim could be trusted by him in the matter and as he had to appoint an Englishman to give the Commission a semblance of neutrality, he requested the Government of India to loan the services of Mr. Glancy. Four non-official members were nominated to assist him. Two representatives nominated in consultation with Muslim leaders were Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai from Kashmir valley and Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas from Jammu province. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, then a young graduate, who had already made an impact in Srinagar as a rising liberal leader, was to represent Hindus and particularly Pandits while Mr. Lok Nath Sharma from Jammu was to represent the Hindus of Jammu province.

The Commission began its work in Srinagar and then shifted to Jammu. Mr. Lok Nath Sharma withdrew from its deliberations in December because it rejected his demand for the exclusion from consideration of the question of Hindu converts right to ancestral property, which had been raised by Muslims. In vain were efforts made by Mr. Glancy and the Muslim representatives to persuade the Hindus to ask Mr. Sharma to return to the Commission or nominate someone else in his place. The report was presented to Mr. E.J.D. Colvin, who had in the meantime been appointed Prime Minister in

1 Taseer, p. 190.

place of Hari Kishan Kaul on 22nd March, 1932. After detailing the Muslim grievances and quoting facts and figures officially placed before it, which have been already mentioned elsewhere in the book, the Commission made the following recommendations :

1. Muslim religious shrines, Khanqah Sokhta, Khanqah Bulbul Shah, Khanqah Dara Shikoh (Srinagar), Maishahi Bagh Mosque (Gandarbal), Khanqah Sufi Shah (Jammu city), Bahu Mosque (Bahu) and the Srinagar Eidgah be restored to Muslims.
2. Complete religious liberty should be enjoyed by every class and community.
3. Malikana to the State should be remitted. Proprietary rights in respect of all lands of which ownership is retained by the State (Kashmir Valley and Mirpur tehsil) should be granted to the occupancy tenants.
4. A special Inspector for Mohammaden education should be appointed. Recommendations of Mr. Sharp should be implemented and number of Muslim teachers should be increased.
5. All communities should receive a fair share in Government appointments. All vacancies should be properly advertised. In the case of local appointments, inhabitants of the district concerned should be appointed.

   The Commission also laid down the minimum qualifications for appointment to various branches of administration.
6. The grazing tax should be suspended in certain specified areas while in other places it should be ensured that it is not pressed too heavily.
7. Nautor areas (revenue outstandings on account of land newly brought under cultivation) in Mirpur tehsil should be written off.
8. The rights of agriculturists should not be impaired by privileges conferred on other classes.
9. All unauthorised exactions should be stopped. There should be decentralisation of power so that Ministers and Heads of Departments can function properly.
10. Payment according to proper rates should be made in connection with whatever labour is requisitioned for State purposes.
11. Villagers should receive full benefit of forest concessions especially in regard to fuel and timber for buildings.

12. Industrial development should receive urgent attention of the Government.

The Commission also recommended the abolition of marriage-tax, reduction in meatless days and a host of other measures relating to improvements in various departments.

The non-official members could not agree on certain points and, therefore, three notes of dissent formed part of the report. The first note was jointly attached by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan and Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai, demanding:

1. Abolition of disabilities imposed on converts to Islam from Hinduism. Mr. Glancy had not been able to agree to the Muslim point of view and had in his report just confused the issue.
2. Restrictions on the licensing of arms in Kashmir valley and Frontier districts should be removed.
3. The Rajput Training School, Jammu, should either be abolished or its admission thrown open to all sections of the population.

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz also appended a note of dissent. It should be said to his lasting credit that his conduct was extremely honourable. There is no doubt that no other Pandit leader could have supported the just demands of Muslims because it correspondingly meant a diminution in the sphere of influence of his community. There is no doubt that the recommendations of the Commission would not have been what they were but for his courage and liberal mindedness. For his contribution, he holds a permanent place of honour in the hearts of Muslims who had, on many an occasion in later years, the opportunity of repaying, in some small measure, the debt of gratitude that we owe him. In his dissenting note, Mr. Bazaz recommended that the Srinagar Eidgah which was being made over to Muslims, should continue to remain available to all the communities as pasture and recreation ground, as in the past.

Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas also appended a separate note on certain issues, the most important among them being the grant of proprietary rights and assessment of land revenue. Chaudhri Sahib told this writer, while we were together in Montgomery jail, that a note had originally been written by Babu Mohammad Abdullah, the father

of Mr. Qudratullah Shahab, who was, at one time, incharge of a Sub-Division. Mr. Glancy considered the note too strongly-worded and failing to persuade Chaudhri Sahib to withdraw it, offered to draft a note on his behalf. Next morning, Mr. Glancy's note was approved by Chaudhri Sahib and the same was appended to the report. It recommended:

1. Muslim representation in services should be brought to their population ratio within ten years. In order to accelerate the process of achieving this target, Hindu employees who were already fifty years old or had put in twenty five years service, should be retired and the vacancies filled in by Muslims.

2. Departmental promotions should not exceed one-third.

3. Recruitment to the cavalry should be thrown open to Muslims and in all new Regiments, Muslims should get at least one-half.

4. A Public Service Commission should be appointed and recruitment should be made through it.

5. Malikana dues should be remitted and proprietary rights granted to all tenants.

6. While in the Punjab, land revenue was assessed on the basis of one-sixth of produce, here in Jammu it was one-fourth; it should be brought at par with the Punjab.

PANDITS' ROTI AGITATION

Kashmiri Pandits were unhappy with the recommendations; so were Muslims because the Commission had not accepted many of their important demands, such as representation in the Services in accordance with their ratio in the population; grant of licences for keeping arms in Kashmir valley and Frontier districts, throwing open of the State Army to Muslims of Kashmir valley, the repeal of laws preventing conversion of Hindus to Islam which had actually brought to a stand-still the spread of Islam both in the Valley as well as in the Frontier districts where, but for these discriminatory laws, the Hindu or Buddhist population would by then have been further reduced. Arthur Neve has conceded that but for the establishment of Dogra rule, Islam would have by now spread to other parts of Ladakh. The Muslims, however, welcomed the recommendations as a first step towards

achieving further gains and, therefore, did not come out in the streets but not so the Kashmiri Pandits.

The Pandits presented their demands and so-called grievances in a 141-page document. It was claimed that the Khanqah-e-Mualla was originally a Kali Mandir and that it should be made over to them. As these grievances were in fact imaginary and had been put forth merely to counter Muslim demands and cover their preponderance in the administration, they could cut no ice with a fact finding commission like the one headed by Glancy. They next tried to force Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz to follow in the foot-steps of Lok Nath Sharma and tender his resignation. It is possible that some higher ups were in the back ground and the intention was to damage the representative character of the Commission. Pandit Bazaz was bold and imaginative enough not to fall a prey to this conspiracy and showed great courage and strength of character by actively continuing his participation in its deliberations. This enraged the Pandits who indulged in cheap abuses against him and made his continued residence in the house of his forefathers impossible. In order to save himself and his family from violence and disgrace, Bazaz abandoned his home and shifted to a Muslim locality and took up residence in the house of one Mohammad Sultan from where he later started his weekly newspaper "The Vitasta". The breach and estrangement thus generated between him and his community continued ever after.

The recommendations of the Commission shocked the Pandit community in particular because it had not only factually proved their highly undue representation in Services but had also recommended measures, such as the laying down of the least qualifications for recruitment to many sectors of employment. Instead of recognising the merit of the recommendations and considering themselves still a specially privileged community because the Commission had not really done full justice to Muslim demands, they started a bitter and venomous campaign against Muslims. Public and private meetings at Shittal Nath Mandir became frequent. Finally they decided to launch a movement known as the 'Roti' Agitation. It was also decided to mobilize college and school children. They used to hold meetings in Hindu localities where some students would raise a cry: "Bhaaiyo, re bhaaiyo" and the crowd would respond with the slogan "Kaiyun bhai". Someone would then enquire "Kiya chahtey ho" and then, all of them would thrice raise the cry of "roti, roti, roti". The Pandit boys, in groups of twenty, would visit Government offices and snatch away the writing-holders from clerks who were mostly Pandits. This continued for about ten days but the Government took absolutely no notice. Then, those who were

in the back ground, introduced violence. One day a procession of students started from Shittal Nath and raising anti-Maharaja slogans went to Chankral Mohallah where shop-keepers were compelled to close down their shops. The duty Magistrate intervened and arrested a few students. Pandit Jia Lal Killam lodged a complaint with the Maharaja which was ignored. On the other hand, the I.G.P., who was an Englishman, ordered the flogging of the agitators and put Pandit Bishamber Nath A.S.P. incharge of the Flogging Centre. A few Pandit students actually suffered the sentence but then the movement fizzled out too quickly. Pandit Jia Lal Killam and Kayshap Bandhu were sentenced to six months imprisonment each.

During the agitation, Kashmiri Pandits voiced the following demands :

1. Free land grants for cultivation;
2. Special scholarships for industrial and technical education; and
3. Cash grants to start factories and similar other works.

Pandit Ragho Nath Veshnavi, Advocate, who was then a student of third year and spent a month in jail alongwith seventeen other students, later stated publicly, that he was distressed to learn that the agitation was a farce and had been started by Jia Lal Killam, Kayshap Bandhu and other Pandit leaders as a counter against Muslim demands.

Calm prevailed for a few months after the publication of the Glancy Report. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah spent a part of his time in undertaking a strenuous tour of the Valley. Everywhere he was hailed as a Saviour. His popularity was now at its zenith. Part of his time he spent outside the State where he had gone to meet leaders of the All India Kashmir Committee, the Ahrars and Editors of the Muslim press in Lahore to thank them for their help and invaluable support.

On his return to Srinagar, it was decided to float a political organisation embracing Muslims of the entire State to provide them with a political platform. While preparations for the conference were afoot, disturbances broke out again. A cleanliness week was being observed in the city in connection with the Maharaja's birthday observed on 3rd October. The Government had a few days earlier released the list of the recipients of 'Karan Singh Scholarships' and because of the Muslim agitation, for the first time, Kashmiri Pandits did not receive the lion's share to which they had been accustomed to. So they decided to boycott the celebrations. On 22nd September, a procession was parading

the city. At Habakadal, some Hindu on-lookers brought down a photograph of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah from a ceremonial arch. To register their protest, the Muslims immediately closed their shops and came out in the streets. The celebrations had to be cancelled. Hartal remained in force for about a week. The house of Pandit Jia Lal Killam, who had made a highly provocative speech to a Hindu crowd at Shittal Nath a day earlier, was attacked. He and his family had to be evacuated under military protection. One hundred and fortyfive persons, 82 Hindus and 62 Muslims, were injured in the riots. A Kashmiri Pandit and a Muslim woman were killed. When news of the clashes spread in the country-side, clashes took place there also, particularly in Islamabad where a few Hindus were injured and some shops looted. At this stage Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah convened a meeting of all sections at Gol Bagh and succeeded in bringing back peace to the city. Pandit Jia Lal Kliam came there at the head of a Hindu procession, after Muslims had already assembled. He expressed regrets on behalf of Hindus and tendered an unqualified apology. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah succeeded in persuading Muslims to forget the incident.

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CHAPTER XI

Muslim India Rallies to Support

THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM KASHMIRI CONFERENCE

It has already come on record that about a lakh of Muslims migrated from the State on account of the Sikh-Dogra oppression resulting in widespread famines and economic strangulation. Most of them settled in Punjab. In a few generations, they became a highly educated and economically prosperous community in the free atmosphere prevailing in British India. It was only natural that they should not have forgotten the land of their origin and maintained a sentimental attachment towards it. This was not unusual and may be traced even in such highly advanced countries like the United States whose Presidents, Kennedy Nixon and Carter, visited their towns of origin in Ireland after assuming the reins of office.

In 1896, sprang up an association named Anjuman-i-Kashmiri Mussalmanan-i-Lahore. Its first meeting, held in February, was also attended by Sheikh Mohammad Iqbal, who became famous later as Allama Sir Mohammad Iqbal. He read the following poem:—

ہزار شکر کہ اک انجمن ہوئی قائم
یقین ہے راہ پہ آئے گا طالع واژوں
مثال شانہ اگر میری سو زبانیں ہوں
نہ طے ہو زلف رہ شکر ایزد بے چوں
خدا نے ہوش دیا متفق ہوئے سارے
سمجھ گئے ہیں تیری چال گنبد گردوں

چراغ عقل کو روشن کیا ہے ظلمت میں
ہمارے ہاتھ میں آ جائیگا در مکنوں
بڑھے یہ بزم ترقی کی دوڑ میں یا رب
کبھی نہ ہو قدم تیز آشنائے سکوں
جو تیری قوم کا دشمن ہو اس زمانہ میں
اسے بھی باندھ لے اقبال صورت مضموں

IX Before 1909, when Iqbal was its Secretary, the Association had widened its sphere of activities. It was, therefore, renamed Anjuman-i-Kashmiri Mussalmanan-i-Punjab. As it had, by 1920, established organisational contact with Kashmiri Muslims living outside Punjab, its name was changed to that of All India Muslim Kashmiri Conference. Some members of the Association also started publication of newspapers solely devoted to the cause of the uplift of Muslims in the State. Sheikh Jan Mohammad Ganai who owned a book shop, started publication of a weekly newspaper from Lahore named "Kashmir Gazette". Before 1909, Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq started publication of another weekly named "Kashmiri Magazine". In 1926, another weekly named "Kashmiri" started publication from Lahore. Hundreds of copies were sold in the State, particularly in the Valley. They contained articles and poems calling upon Muslims to educate their children, bring about social reforms and change their fatalistic outlook about things around them. They also carried on a mild agitation against the Kashmir Government for the discriminatory policy it was deliberately pursuing to deprive Muslims of their rights in services, enlistment in the army and advancement in the educational field. The campaign helped in creating a strong public opinion both inside as well as outside the State which the Dogra Government could not ignore for a long time. It also set up a publicity cell known as the "Kashmir Publicity Board" which published pamphlets about the inequalities and discrimination suffered by Kashmiri Muslims under the Dogra rule.

In 1909, the annual session of the All India Mohammadan Educational Conference was held in Amritsar. Allama Iqbal read the address of welcome on behalf of the Reception Committee and Nawab Salimullah Khan, the Nawab of Dacca, himself a Kashmiri, presided. The Conference was attended by many other leading Kashmiris from Punjab. The All India Muslim Kashmiri Conference also held its annual session in Amritsar at the same time. It was also presided over by Sir Salimullah. Among the resolutions adopted were those demanding the admission of Kashmiris to the army and for treating them as an agricultural tribe in the Punjab. Addressing the meeting, Nawab Salimullah Khan said:—

"پوشیدہ نہست کہ اسلاف ما بہ غرض سیر و سیاحت و ترقی تجارت و حصول روزگار راہ غربت گرفتند و از خطہ جنت نظیر انفراق نمودہ دریں ملک ہندوستان بہ مقامات مختلفہ اقامت درزیدند و در صورت اجنبی زندگانی سے گذرند ہنگامیکہ آفتاب مغربیہ بہ ہندوستان طلوع نمود و اقوام مختلفہ دیار از علوم مغربیہ بہرہ اندوز گشتند ، درآں زماں بزرگاں خطہ با وجود مشکلات مہاجرین دریں راہ قدم بہ نہادند و افتاں و خیزاں خویشتن را بجائے رسانند کہ امروز بہ اعتبار علوم و فنون و حصول مراتب و وجاحت دنیویہ و ادائے فرائض دینیہ و بہ نظر تہذیب اخلاق در صف اقوام ترقی یافتہ جا گرفتند" ۔

Allama Iqbal visited Kashmir valley perhaps for the first time in July, 1921. It was here that struck with indescribable poverty of the Muslims he wrote the famous verses quoted below:—

کشمیری کہ با بندگی خو گرفتہ — بتے مے تراشد ز سنگ مزارے
ضمیرش تہی از خیال بلندے — خودی ناشناسے زخود شرمسارے
بریشم قبا خواجہ از محنت او — نصیب تنش جامہ تار تارے
نہ در دیدہ او فروغ نگاہے — نہ در سینہ او دل بے قرارے
ازاں مے فشاں قطرہ بر کشیری — کہ خاکسترش آفریند شرارے [1]

In a letter addressed to Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq who had dedicated his life to the cause of the uplift of his fellow Kashmirians, Allama Iqbal wrote:—

"ہندوستان میں سب سے پہلے اور سب سے زیادہ اس ملک کو بیدار کرنے کی ضرورت ہے ، اس لیے کہ اگر اس ملک کے لوگ بیدار ہو گئے تو وہ انشاء اللہ سارے ہندوستان کی ترجمانی کریں گے"[2]

Iqbal was emotionally involved in the Movement for Muslim advancement in Kashmir. In all his poetic works, he has given vent to his feelings and drawn a vivid picture of the sufferings of his Kashmiri brethren under the tyrannical rule of the Dogras. He always did his best to find time from his busy life to participate in the meetings of the Anjuman-e-Kashmiri Mussalmanan-e-Punjab and later, the All India Muslim Kashmiri Conference

1 Payam-i-Mashriq.
2 Tarikh-e-Aqwam-e-Kashmir.

and very often had specially composed poems to recite. Given below are some verses that have been preserved in the writings of Mr. Fauq and saved from being lost:—

(۱) کہکشاں میں آ کے اختر مل گئے اک لڑی میں آ کے گوہر مل گئے
واہ واہ کیا محفل احباب ہے ہموطن غربت میں آ کر مل گئے

(۲) موتی عدن سے لعل یمن سے ہوا ہے دور یا نافہ غزال ختن سے ہوا ہے دور
ہندوستان میں آئے ہیں کشمیر چھوڑ کر بلبل نے آشیانہ بنایا چمن سے دور

(۳) سوتدابیر کی اے قوم یہ ہے اک تدبیر چشم اغیار میں بڑھتی ہے اسی سے توقیر
در مطلب ہے اخوت کے صدف میں پنہاں مل کے دنیا میں رہو مثل حروف کشمیر

(۴) پنجہ ظلم و جہالت نے برا حال کیا بن کے مقراض ہمیں بے پروبال کیا
توڑ اس دست جفا کیش کو یارب جس نے روح آزادئی کشمیر کو پامال کیا

Among others who were associated with this organisation, from time to time, were Nawab Sir Salimullah Khan and Nawab Habibullah Khan from Dacca, Syed Mohsin Shah, Advocate, Khawaja Amir-ud-Din, Sheikh Jan Mohammad Ganai, Khawaja Feroz-ud-Din Ahmad, Bar-at-Law, Lahore, Sheikh Din Mohammad, later Governor of Sind, and his brother Sheikh Atta Mohammad, Advocate, Gujranwala. According to the available records, the office bearers for the year 1924-25 were as follows:—

1. Sheikh Atta Mohammad, Advocate — *President, Central Standing Committee.*
2. Syed Mohsin Shah, Advocate — *General Secretary.*
3. Khawaja Feroz-ud-Din Ahmad, Bar-at-Law. — *Joint Secretary.*
4. Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq — *Assistant Secretary.*
5. Khawaja Ghulam Nabi — *Finance Secretary.*
6. Khawaja Sadrud Din — *Honorary Secretary.*

The Association also rendered financial assistance to private Maktabs run by local Muslims in parts of the Valley. Financial assistance by way of interest-free loans was also given to promising students who were unable to pursue their studies on account of poverty. Complete figures are not available now except for the year

1924-25 when twenty scholarships amounting to Rs. 3,000/- were sanctioned by the Committee. The records also show that a sum of Rs. 25,000/- was spent on scholarships during a period of twelve years ending with 1924.[1] The requisite funds were raised through voluntary subscriptions from amongst members and non-members but exclusively from the Kashmiri Muslim community in northern India.

It was mainly due to the efforts of the Association that the Government of India deputed its Educational Commissioner Mr. Sharp to Srinagar in 1916 to enquire into the grievances of Muslims in the field of education.

In 1927, the Maharajah's government asked for applications for the grant of scholarships for studies abroad but not a single Muslim was selected. All their applications were rejected. Syed Mohsin Shah, General Secretary, lodged a strong protest with the Maharaja.[2]

In a public meeting held under the auspices of the Majlis-e-Khilafat, Amritsar, under the presidentship of Saif-ud-Din Kitchlu, the repression of the Srinagar Silk Factory labour was severely condemned. It was addressed, among others, by Mr. Pir Mohammad, Abdus Salam Hamdani, Sh. Hisam-ud-Din, Hassan Mir, Editor Ziafat-i-Panch and Syed Atta Ullah Shah Bukhari. An amendment introduced by Mr. Hassan Mir condemning the British Government for its neglect and inattention, was unanimously accepted.[3]

The Cause of Muslim Kashmir was also taken up by leading Muslim newspapers of the sub-continent particularly 'Inquilab', 'Al-Fazal', 'Siyasat' 'Al-Aman', 'Sun Rise', 'Eastern Times', 'Muslim Outlook', 'Zamindar' and 'The Light'. Together they commanded a large circulation. For historical reasons, Muslims of the sub-continent have been dedicated believers in the concept of international Muslim fraternity; so when the concept of Pan-Islamism took birth in its present shape after the unjust treatment meted out to the Muslim Caliphate in Turkey, Muslims from one end of the country to the other, gave it a ready and enthusiastic response. It was not, therefore, unusual that the sufferings of the Muslims of Kashmir under Hindu rule should have caused resentment in Muslim India and these newspapers should have been successful in creating a strong public opinion by the time the Movement for reforms inside the State took the shape of a popular revolt in July, 1931.

1 Fugan-i-Kashmir, 1926.
2 Inquilab, 15th Oct. 1927.
3 Zamindar, 27th Sep. 1924.

On 8th July, in a meeting of leading Muslims held in Lahore, it was decided to observe a Kashmir Day on 10th July. It was also decided to observe an All India Kashmir Day on 24th July. The Working Committee of the Anjuman-i-Islamia, Punjab, in a resolution, rejected the Wakefield Enquiry Committee report regarding Tauheen-i-Quran as unsatisfactory and unacceptable. On 15th July, Muslims of Lahore held a public meeting outside Mochi Gate which was addressed by Malik Barkat Ali Advocate, Maulana Mohammad Yaqub, Editor Light, Niaz Ali Advocate and Mian Fazal Karim. A committee comprising Maulana Mohammad Yaqub as President, Maulana Illam Din Salik as Secretary and Maulanas, Abdul Majid Qarshi and Mohammad Bakhsh Muslim as members, was constituted to arrange for the 24th July public meeting.[1]

THE ALL INDIA KASHMIR COMMITTEE

The news about the 13th July indiscriminate and unprovoked firing outside Central Jail Srinagar reached Lahore on the 16th evening and was published in the Muslim press on the 17th morning. About seven to eight thousand protest telegrams were sent to the Maharaja by Muslim individuals and organisations from all over India. Thousands of telegrams were also addressed to the Viceroy urging immediate intervention. It was after the receipt of a telegram from the Viceroy, reported to be strongly-worded, that the Maharaja invited Muslim representatives to meet him on 16th August.[2]

The publication of the news sent a wave of indignation all over Muslim India resulting in protest meetings and processions almost in every city, town and important village, expressing their sympathy and solidarity with the Muslims of Kashmir and calling upon the British Government to depose Hari Singh and take the State under its direct administration. Press statements were issued by all prominent Muslim leaders condemning the outrage and assuring Kashmiri Muslims of their full support.

Hundreds of poems appeared in newspapers in condemnation of the firing which were recited to huge crowds. In fact, two of them, one by Abdul Majid Salik, Editor daily Inquilab Lahore and the other by Agha Hashar Kashmiri, are remembered even to this day and are still heard from public pulpits.

As there was no central organisation to co-ordinate these activities in various parts of the country, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Amir of the Jamaat-e-Ahmedia, taking initiative, convened a meeting of some

1 & 2 Inquilab, 12th & 23rd August 1931.

of the leading Muslims at Simla on 25th July, 1931, to consider the situation. The meeting was held at Fair View, the Simla residence of Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan of Malirkotla. It was attended by the following:[1]

1. Sir Sheikh Mohammad Iqbal.
2. Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmed.
3. Sir Zulfikar Ali.
4. Khawaja Hassan Nizami.
5. Nawab of Kunjpura.
6. Syed Mohsin Shah, Advocate.
7. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Rahim Bakhsh.
8. Maulana Mohammad Ismail Ghaznavi.
9. Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard.
10. Maulana Noor-ul-Haq, proprietor Muslim Outlook.
11. Syed Mohammad Habib, proprietor Siyasat.
12. Sahibzada Abdul Latif, brother of Sir Abdul Qayyum from N.W.F.P.

The dignatories expressed their grave concern over the mass killings and assured the Muslims of Kashmir of the full moral and material support of the Muslims of India in their struggle. The meeting took the following decisions:—

1. An All India Kashmir Committee was set up with Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmed as President and Maulvi Abdur Rahim Dard as Secretary to forge a common platform for co-ordination of the movement that had so spontaneously sprung up in India immediately after the 13th of July.
2. The Committee was to campaign both at home and abroad for the redress of the grievances of Kashmiri Muslims.
3. The 14th of August was declared as Kashmir Day and an appeal was issued to Muslims to organise processions and hold public meetings as a demonstration of solidarity with the Muslims of Kashmir.

As the work of the Committee progressed and its formation became known in the country, the following leaders were also co-opted as members:—[2]

1. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy (later Premier of Pakistan), Calcutta.
2. Haji Abdullah Haroon, M.L.A. Karachi.

1 Inquilab, 29th July 1931.
2 Zahur Ahmad, p. 65-66.

3. Doctor Shafaat Ahmed Khan, M.L.C. Allahabad.

4. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, one-time President Muslim League.

5. Maulana Yaqub Khan, Editor "Light", Lahore.

6. Maulana Mohammad Shafi Daudi, Patna.

7. Sahibzada Abu Zafar Wajihud Din, Calcutta.

8. Doctor Zia-ud-Din Ahmed, M.L.A., later Vice Chancellor, Aligarh.

9. Mian Jaffar Shah, later a Minister in the League Government, Peshawar.

10. Syed Mirak Shah Deobandi.

11. Maulana Mir Mohammad Ibrahim of Ahl-i-Hadis, Sialkot.

12. Maulana Abdul Hamid Zafar (later Bhashani of Bangla Desh).

13. Maulana Ghulam Rasul Mehr.

14. Maulana Abdul Majid Salik.

15. Maulana Mazhar-ud-Din.

16. Maulana Noor-ul-Haq.

The Committee:—

(*a*) Gave financial assistance to the dependents of jailed political leaders, martyrs and those wounded in the firing;

(*b*) It gave financial support to the agitation;

(*c*) It arranged for the medical treatment of the injured;

(*d*) It arranged legal defence for political workers;

(e) It provided legal assistance in the preparation of cases before the Middleton and Glancy Commissions.

On 3rd August, Secretary Kashmir Committee telegraphically requested the Maharaja to receive a deputation consisting of Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan,

Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Khan of Kunjpura, Khawaja Hassan Nizami, Khan Bahadur Sheikh Ibrahim and Maulana Ismail Ghaznavi; the permission was refused. Another telegram sent by President of the Committee to reconsider it, also had no effect. On 17th July, a Kashmir Committee was formed in Sialkot. Among its members were Sheikh Abdul Qadir, Bar-at-Law, Mr. Abdus Sami Pal and Maulvi Mohammad Ibrahim. The same night a public meeting was held under the presidentship of Abdus Salam. A second public meeting was held on 24th July under the presidentship of Mr. Ghulam Haider.

14th AUGUST 1932—KASHMIR DAY

The appeal issued by the All India Kashmir Committee for the holding of public meetings and processions on 14th August was signed among others by Allama Iqbal, Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy, Maulana Abu Zafar Waji-ud-Din, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Mian Jafar Shah and Shafaat Ahmed Khan.

Kashmir Day was first observed in Peshawar on 20th July, in Cawnpore on 28th July and in Lahore on the 24th. Huge processions were taken out which terminated in mass meetings addressed by local Muslim leaders; resolutions were passed supporting the demands of Kashmiri Muslims. On 14th August, thousands of meetings were held all over India. A pamphlet was circulated in thousands containing demands which included the setting up of a Legislative Assembly. It may be noted that this demand was made for the first time. In Bombay, the meeting was presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali. The procession, reported by the local press as the biggest in the history of the city, was controlled by one thousand uniformed volunteers. In Patna, the procession was led and the meeting presided over by Maulana Shafi Daudi.

According to the files of the Daily Inquilab, public meetings were held throughout the sub-continent. In Jhelum, it was presided over by Mohammad Bashir, Pleader; in Deoband it was addressed by Maulana Mohammad Tayyab, Maulana Hussain Ahmed and Syed Mirak Shah; in Calcutta, the meeting was addressed by Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, Abdul Haleem Ghaznavi, Mr. Abu Tahir and Maulana Abdur Rauf; in the southernmost town of Calicut, a public meeting was held under the auspices of the Central Muslim Association; Mr. K. K. Pokar presided. In Sialkot, a procession participated by about sixty thousand Muslims, all of whom were bare-headed, was taken out from Shah Channan. Complete hartal was observed in the city. A public meeting held at the termination of the procession was presided over by Mr. Ghulam Haider and addressed by Malik Ziaullah, Khawaja Hakim Din, Ismatullah, Noor Hussain, Abdul Latif, Mohammad Ali, Karam Ellahi, Advocate and Khawaja Feroz-ud-Din,

Advocate. In Lahore, Muslims observed a complete hartal. The procession which started at 6 p.m. from outside Delhi gate, was participated by about a lac of Muslims. Volunteer corps from Muslim Ittehad Water Works, Children corps, Sitara-i-Hind corps, Anjuman-e-Naujawanan-i-Islam, Anjuman-i-Dawat-i-Sulat, Mohammad Ali Corps, Jamiat-ul-Muslimeen, Anjuman-e-Ahmedia, Takia Sadhu Corps and other groups, numbering twenty and in uniforms, formed its vanguard. Almost all important Muslim leaders participated. Outside Mochi Gate and at two other places, the processionists mourned the martyrs of Kashmir. Allama Iqbal, who presided over the meeting, recited some specially composed verses. It was also addressed, among others, by Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Syed Mohsin Shah, Sheikh Azimullah, Malik Abdul Aziz, Meraj-ud-Din, Maulana Daud Ghaznavi, Maulvi Fazal Karim and Chaudhri Mohammad Rafique. At Dehra Dun the meeting was presided over by Syed Mujtaba Hussain while at Monghir it was presided over by Khan Bahadur Shah Mohammad Yahya M.L.C. At Gaya, the meeting was presided over by Hafiz Mohammad Rafique. At Aligarh, Haji Mohammad Saleh Sherwani presided over the meeting while Doctor Attaullah Butt and Hafiz Mohammad Usman delivered speeches. At Agra a procession was taken out with black flags; the public meeting was presided over by Mehdi Haq Sahib while Basharat Hussain was the principal speaker. A public meeting was held at Wana in the tribal area. Mir Moazzam Shah presided. It was addressed by Abdul Aziz, a college student and Maulvi Abdul Latif. An eight-year old child Shah Abdur Rashid also addressed the meeting and offered his life for the Cause of Kashmir. At Montgomery, a ladies' meeting was held at Qadir Manzil which was addressed by Mahmooda Begum. At Gujrat complete hartal was observed in the city. A procession was taken out in the afternoon which started from Jamia Masjid and was preceded by dozens of horsemen with unsheathed swords as if marching towards a battle. The procession terminated at 4 p.m. and a public meeting was held at 9 p.m. under the presidentship of Chaudhri Abdullah Khan, Chairman of the Municipal Committee. At Karachi the public meeting was presided over by Haji Seth Abdullah Haroon while at Baqar Ganj, it was presided over by Maulvi Hasham Ali. In Allahabad, the home town of Pandit Nehru, the public meeting was presided over by Abdul Hassan Jafri; it was held in the Mohammad Ali Park. At Hyderabad (Sind), the meeting was presided over by Sir Ghulam Mujadid. At Montgomery, the Anjuman-e-Islamia arranged a procession which was joined by all Muslim lawyers, members of the Municipal Committee and the District Board. It was headed by a group of volunteers raising slogans of "Kashmir Chalo". It may be recalled that this slogan had become the popular rallying cry in Muslim India in their movement launched in support of the Muslims of Kashmir. At Simla, which was then the seat of the Viceroy, a procession was taken out which termina-

ted in a public meeting at Jamia Masjid; Hassan Imam, Bar-at-Law and member of the Council of State, presided. A procession was taken out in Mangalore, again in extreme south, which was headed by volunteers of the Mohammad Ali corps. A meeting was held at Masjid-e-Azam which was presided over by Mahmood Sharif Khan. In Peshawar, the main public meeting was held at Masjid-e-Mahabat Khan, which was addressed by Khan Mohammad Salim Khan. In Delhi, a bare-headed procession was taken out which terminated in a public meeting at Jamia Masjid. In Poona, the meeting was addressed by Abdul Baqi, Syed Ashraf Ali and Abdur Razzaq. In Commilla, now Bangla Desh, the meeting was presided over by Mr. Daulat Ahmed. Doctor Mirza Hameedullah Beg presided over the meeting at Jullundhur Cantt. At Lucknow, a meeting was held at Aminudaullah Park under the presidentship of Munshi Mahmood Ali. In Rangoon, the public meeting was presided over by Maulana Ahmad Ashraf. A meeting of Muslim women was held at Hyderabad (Deccan) at the residence of Begum Seth Abdullah Allah Din. Another meeting of Muslim women was held at Sikandarabad at the residence of Begum Syed Humayun Mirza. A meeting of women held at Sialkot and chaired by Fazilat Khatoon was addressed by Mahmooda Hamad, Saeeda Ulfat, Saeeda Ismat and Zainab Bibi. Another meeting of Muslim women was held at Athwal which was addressed by Muneera Begum. Public meetings were also held at Sargodha, Bhagalpur, Jhang, Shahjahanpur, Lyallpur, Rangpur (Bangla Desh), Cuttock (Orrisa), Balasur, Devlali, Mansehra, Karnal, Hazro, Kunjah, Kohat, Narowal, Tarangzai, Chowinda, Ajnala, Mandi Bhalwal, Ludhiana, Ambala, Nowshera Cantt, Gurdaspur, Mussouri, Arwal, Jhandhanwala, Karnal, Panipat, Kalanoor, Meerut, Bhini, Hoshiarpur, Fateh Jung, Mandi Bahaudin, Muradabad, Okara, Saharanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Zafarwal, Bhera, Shahdara, Chakwal, Rohtak and hundreds of other places.

The day was observed with great enthusiasm all over the State, especially in Kashmir valley. In Srinagar, Muslims observed a complete hartal. Three public meetings were held in the city, the biggest at the Jamia Masjid which was attended by about fifty thousand men and women. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas made his first speech in the Valley on this day when he read from a prepared text in Urdu. Two boys recited a Kashmiri poem. It was also addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Maulvi Abdur Rahim and Mistri Yaqub Ali. A public meeting was held in the Jamia Masjid Gulmarg which was presided over by Jalal-ud-Din. In Shopian, complete hartal was observed and a procession taken out which terminated in a public meeting held under the presidentship of Mir Waiz Maulana Ghulam Hassan. Mir Waiz Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah recited a persian poem in memory of the martyrs. Mr. Ghulam Rasool also recited a poem. In Bandipura no public meeting could be held

as section 144 had been clamped down. The town, however, observed a complete hartal.

The Kashmir Committee held a meeting in Sialkot on 12th and 13th September, 1931. Another meeting was held in Lahore on 24-10-1931. By this time the Dogra Government had appointed the Dalal Commission of which mention has already been made elsewhere. The Committee rejected its appointment as inadequate and unsatisfactory.

The Committee also arranged for the publication of Kashmir news in British newspapers such as Ring Post, Sunday Times and Daily Telegraph, London. They supported the demands of Kashmiri Muslims for the expulsion of Hari Kishan Kaul and the introduction of reforms. Maulana Farzand Ali, Imam of the London Mosque, organised the campaign in London. The matter was raised in the British Parliament several times. The Chairman of the Committee had a meeting first with the Political Secretary of the Government of India, incharge of the States and later called on the Viceroy and impressed upon him the urgent necessity of introducing reforms. He also met the Governor of Punjab. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was also helpful in projecting the Muslim point of view.

Khan Bahadur Rahim Bakhsh, a member of the Committee, was then staying in Cecil Hotel, Simla. His immediate neighbour was one Mr. Lani, a representative of Statesman and the London Times etc. He was instrumental in getting news about Kashmir published in the London press through the courtesy of his neighbour.

Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Sir Agha Khan, Maulana Mohammad Shafi Daudi and Sir Mohammad Zafarullah Khan, while in London in connection with the Round Table Conference, met the Secretary of State for India in connection with the situation in Kashmir.

The Kashmir Committee deputed a number of lawyers to defend hundreds of Muslims who were being tried on charges of murder, arson and rioting. Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Advocate who later rose to be a Judge of the Lahore High Court, first defended the Shopian case. Chaudhri Aziz Ahmed Bajwah was sent to Jammu. Mir Mohammad Bakhsh and Maulvi Ghulam Mustafa, Bar-at-Law, Gujranwala also worked at Jammu. Chaudhri Mohammad Assadullah Khan was sent to Mirpur. Sir Mohammad Zafarullah Khan was also associated with several trials. Sheikh Mohammad Ahmed, Advocate, Kapurthala, Qazi Abdul Hamid,

Advocate, Amritsar, and Chaudhri Yusuf Khan, Advocate, Gurdaspur also appeared for the defence. Chaudhri Ismatullah appeared before the tribunal at Mirpur, Bhimber, Nowshera, Rajouri and Jammu. Chaudhri Assadullah conducted the cases in the High Court. With decrease in the work-load at Jammu, Mir Mohammad Bakhsh alone dealt with the Court work while Mr. Mustafa and Mr. Aziz, Advocates took up the presentation of the case before the Middleton and Glancy Commissions. Lt. Mohammad Ishaque acted as their Secretary.

After Mr. Glancy presented his report, the Government unncessarily delayed the implementation of its recommendations. The Muslims thought that it was not perhaps fully happy with the report and wanted to avoid its implementation. Therefore, on 4th April, 1932, a deputation of the All India Kashmir Committee, consisting of Doctor Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Maulana Mohammad Shafi Daudi, Mr. A. H. Ghaznavi, Nawab Abdul Hafiz Khan, Captain Sir Sher Mohammad Khan of Domeli, Jhelum, Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan of Kunjpura, Shah Masud Ahmed, Doctor Mirza Yaqub Beg, Khan Bahadur Rahim Bakhsh, Syed Mohsin Shah, Sheikh Fazal Haq Piracha, Syed Habib Shah and Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard, led by Sir Zafrullah Khan, met the Viceroy in New Delhi and put forth the following demands:

1. Immediate implementation of the recommendations made by the Glancy Inquiry Commission.

2. Increased representation for Muslims on the Glancy Committee on Constitutional Reforms.

3. Release of all political prisoners.

4. Immediate stoppage of the migration of State Muslims to Punjab.

The Viceroy was also told that to proceed with the determination of the question of political reforms, while leaders of public opinion were in jail, was meaningless and could hardly be expected to carry any weight with their followers, for whose satisfaction the Committee had been appointed. The Viceroy seems to have advised the deputation to take up these matters with the Kashmir Government. It was obviously understood that he was to use his influence with the latter. A deputation of the Committee consisting of Syed Mohsin Shah, Advocate, Maulana Mohammad Yaqub Khan, Mr. Majid Malik, Maulana Mirak Shah and Maulana Dard therefore met Col. Colvin, Prime Minister at Jammu on 23rd April 1932 and presented the following demands:—

1. Witndrawal of all repressive Ordinances.

2. Release of all political prisoners.

3. Impartial enquiry into the misconduct of officers at Baramula, Sopore, Handwara, Kotli and Rajouri.

4. Appointment of at least two Muslim Ministers commanding confidence of the community.

5. Adequate representation for Muslims in the proposed State Assembly.

AHRAR'S KASHMIR CHALO MOVEMENT

While the All India Kashmir Committee was thus engaged in a constitutional struggle for getting the grievances of Kashmiri Muslims redressed and for justice being done to them, the Ahrar organisation in Punjab had different plans though with the same end in view. Being avowedly anti-British and having spent many years of their lives in British jails, the Ahrar leadership, equally genuinely, believed that the type of agitation carried on by the All India Kashmir Committee did not provide an answer to the situation. By their very training, were they prone to think in those terms. The fact that the All India Kashmir Committee was headed by Amir of the Ahmedi Jamaat, that its Secretary was also an Ahmedi and that the campaign was being conducted mainly with the funds provided by Ahmedis, was considered by them as an unhappy sign from the religious point of view. There had been acute differences between the Ahmedis and the general body of Muslims. There was a section of Muslims, Ahrars included—who did not take kindly to the Kashmir agitation for reforms being led or conducted in Punjab by the Ahmedis. One reason was that it provided the latter with an opportunity to reach the general mass of Muslims on a question that stirred their hearts and thus enabled them to establish their bonafides. There were also elements who thought that the Ahmedis thereby wanted to make inroads in the Valley and then use it as a base to spread their influence in northern India. The Ahrars also seem to have thought that the Ahmedis, being wedded, as a matter of fundamental policy, to loyalty to the British crown, could not revolutionise the situation or go beyond certain limits which according to their light, did not furnish the requisite answer to the dictates of the situation. They also seem to have believed that it afforded them (Ahmedis) an opportunity of mass contact as well as of winning the respect of the Muslim masses. Therefore, they decided not to associate themselves with the All India Kashmir Committee but, nevertheless, make their contribution, indepen-



Ghazi Elahi Bakhsh

dently. Incidentally a great many leaders of the Ahrar Party were descendants of the Kashmiris who had migrated from the State on account of the Sikh-Hindu oppression.

They therefore decided to storm the State with what may be called, a civil invasion by sending in a mass of volunteers and thus involve not only the British Government but also exhaust the resources of the State. Consequently, towards the middle of September, some volunteers started entering the State from different directions but before the movement could gain momentum, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was released on 4th October and the way cleared for presentation of a memorandum. Under these circumstances, it was only natural that the Ahrars should have suspended their Movement. Meanwhile negotiations began in Srinagar between the Ahrars and the Kashmir Government which, however, broke down towards the end of October. The Kashmir Government had also not taken any steps to indicate that it was willing to accept the Muslim demands. Therefore, the Ahrars again started their movement in late October with Sialkot as the principal base camp.

Ahrar volunteers also entered Mirpur via Jhelum. On the entry of some volunteers through this route, one Ellahi Bakhsh, a volunteer from Chiniot, was bayoneted by a Dogra Police Inspector, Vishva Mitter. The young man died on the spot in great pain. Had he been removed to the hospital immediately, his life may have been saved but no such effort at all was made by the army or the police on duty. He was the first Muslim martyr from India to lay down his life in the Cause of Kashmiri Muslims and the second man from outside the State to do so, having been already preceded by Mr. Thorpe. Years later, Ghazi Ellahi Bakhsh successfully managed to get his nose chopped off as a reprisal.

When the news of the murder of Ellahi Bakhsh became known, Muslim Punjab was almost in flames and volunteers started pouring into Sialkot from all over the country. Some of them came from places as far away as Lucknow and Calcutta. Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari and other Ahrar leaders toured Bengal, U.P., Delhi and other places. Taj-ud-Din was arrested at Ludhiana. Within three days, thirty six hundred volunteers were arrested in Jammu city alone. A batch of twenty one volunteers used to leave Sialkot for Jammu at brief intervals. The first batch was led by Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar. He was arrested alongwith the volunteers, summarily tried and sentenced to two years imprisonment. He had earlier returned from Srinagar alongwith Master Taj-ud-Din Ansari where they had gone at the invitation of the State Government to negotiate a settlement; the negotiations, however, failed. Within seven days, ten thousand volunteers entered the State in this sector alone. A few days

after the death of Ellahi Bakhsh, a batch of thirty volunteers, headed by Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad, came to Kohala and captured the bridge. They had taken an oath to accomplish their job, no matter what the consequences. In the struggle for its capture, many a volunteer got severely injured. The Dogra army on duty very wisely did not resort to firing as it was bound to have brought a quick response from the otherwise peaceful surroundings and given the Movement a new turn which would not have been at all to the advantage of the Dogra Government. Traffic remained suspended for two days. A few days later, six volunteers from Lucknow, led by Ghazi Munney Khan, entered the State via Gurdaspur. This front had to be abandoned because of the poor means of communication and also because the entire area was overwhelmingly inhabited by Hindus. Agha Shorish Kashmiri, then a lad of hardly 17 years, led a determined batch to Kohala and when prevented by the army from crossing the bridge, plunged into the fast running waters of Jhelum and swam it ashore.

The Maharaja found that his administration was crumbling and that his resources were too inadequate to meet the situation created by the mass entry of these determined volunteers. So he requested the Viceroy for intervention and assistance. An Ordinance was promptly issued investing the Punjab Governor with special powers to deal with the emergency. British forces together with many an officer from the Political department were immediately despatched to the State to take control of the situation.

While the Movement was thus in progress, a Muslim youth was killed by Hindus in the course of a procession taken out in Lahore in connection with Kashmir. A day later, Muslims retaliated and a few Hindus were killed. The Government arrested Illam Din, Chief Salar of the Ahrar volunteers but he was found innocent by the Court and acquitted. A meeting was convened towards the end of November by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan at his residence. It was attended, among others, by Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmed, Syed Mohsin Shah, Maulana Afzal Haq, Nawab Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash and Malik Barkat Ali as a representative of the Muslim League. Sir Sikandar conveyed, on behalf of the Government of India, the announcement made by the Kashmir Government at the instance of the former about the appointment of the Glancy Commission. While the Ahrars rejected the announcement on the spot, others sought time to consider its implications.

The Government then convened a meeting of the Ahrar Working Committee at Borstal jail, Lahore. The members were collected from various jails. Chaudhri Afzal Haq, President of the Ahrar Party who

was out of jail, due to illness, had several meetings with his colleagues. The Committee was unwilling to call off the movement so long as the demands of Kashmiri Muslims were not met by the State Government.

After the promulgation of the Ordinance by the Governor-General, the entry of Ahrar volunteers was banned and they were arrested on the British Indian soil. About forty five thousand Muslims from Punjab and five thousand from other provinces, mainly from Delhi, U.P., Bihar, Bengal and C.P., were arrested during a period of hardly three months. It may be noted that in no Congress movement, including the Quit India agitation of 1942, did the number of detenus in any year exceed eighty thousand, but here fifty thousand were arrested during three months only and that also when the agitation remained mainly confined to Punjab as it was considered sufficiently resourceful to meet the demand for volunteers. According to the official Ahrar sources,[1] twenty-one volunteers died in Punjab jails due to fever and cold. The normal accommodation in Punjab prisons was exceeded four times. The widow of Chaudhri Abdus Sattar of Ferozepur, a member of the Ferozepur Municipality and a noted public figure who died in the midst of the Movement, stepped into his shoes, was sentenced to six months imprisonment and placed in C class. Her brother-in-law, Abdul Haq, was a practising Barrister.

MUSLIM LEAGUE'S TRADITIONAL SUPPORT

The two major political parties, Congress and Muslim League had adopted, generally, a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of Indian States. This was unfortunate. Actually the policy originated with the Indian National Congress mainly because the overwhelming majority of the 562 State rulers, were Hindus and most of them, like Hari Singh, were sympathetic to its brand of nationalism. The policy of non-intervention was bound to work harshly against one-fourth of the sub-continent's total population who lived in these States because the Princes were thus left free to treat their subjects as they pleased so long as they remained personally loyal to the Congress creed. Some even financed the Congress. Another reason for adopting this policy was that the astute Congress leadership, acutely conscious of the likelihood of a Hindu-Muslim civil war on the exit of the British in view of their traditional hostility (the Pakistan Resolution had not as yet been adopted by the All India Muslim League), wanted to rely on the private armies maintained by the Hindu Princes.

The All India Muslim League, however, did not fully subscribe to this policy and its record clearly shows that so far as Kashmir is concerned, it

1 Ahrar and Kashmir.

did not remain inactive and from time to time took cognizance of the happenings inside the State. As early as 1918, the following resolution was unanimously adopted at its Delhi session held on 30th and 31st December, 1918:—

"The All India Muslim League begs to draw the attention of the Kashmir Durbar to the hardships suffered by the Mussalmans of Kashmir under the system of the collection of revenue in kind and appeals to the Ruler to appoint a Commission to investigate their complaints.

The League requests the Durbar to hand over the Pathar Mosque to the Mussalmans, and places on record its deep regret at its constant desecration.

The League also regrets to point out that the imposition of begar on Mussalmans alone is a great injustice to them and should be put an end to immediately."[1]

In the fifteenth session of the All India Muslim League held at Lahore on 25th May, 1924, the following resolution, proposed by Pir Taj-ud-Din and seconded by Mr. Mohammad Sadiq, was unanimously carried:—

"The All India Muslim League greatly deplores the continued unsympathetic and indifferent attitude of the Kashmir Durbar towards the political and educational needs and aspirations of the Mussalmans of Kashmir State, and resolves that in view of the grave situation existing in Kashmir, a special sub-committee of the All India Muslim League be formed to find out ways and means for uplifting the poor and downtrodden Mussalman community of that State, and to bring home to the Kashmir Durbar the paramount necessity of providing special facilities of educating the Mussalmans of the State, and ameliorating their present helpless condition, and to give the Mussalmans of Kashmir, who form 95 per cent of the population of the State, their rightful place in the public services and in the administration of the State."[2]

The attitude of the All India Muslim League was not negative. When the Kashmir Government enacted the Agriculturists Relief Act, the measure was officially welcomed by the League. The following resolution moved by Doctor Kitchlew and seconded by Khawaja Gul Mohammad was passed at its eighteenth session held at Delhi from the 29th to 31st of December, 1926:—

1 Pirzada, p. 602.
2 G. Allana, p. 56.

"The All India Muslim League expresses its gratification at the enactment of the Agriculturists Relief Act by His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur of Kashmir with a view to ameliorate the present deplorable condition of the Agricultural population of the State."[1]

The 22nd session of the All India Muslim League held at Delhi, adopted the following resolution:—

"This meeting of the League, while expressing its deepest sympathy with the position of the Muslims of Kashmir, and putting on record its sense of satisfaction at the practical proofs given by the Muslims of India of their common brotherhood with the suffering of Muslims of Kashmir, earnestly hopes that the gallant struggle which is being carried on, both inside and outside Kashmir, shall speedily result in securing to the Muslims of Kashmir those rights of humanity and citizenship for which such enormous sacrifices have been made."[2]

Addressing the 26th session of the League at Patna held between the 26th and 29th of December, 1938, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah made the following pertinent observations in his presidential address:—

"I would ask the Congress, what is it doing in Kashmir? The Arya Samajists, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress nationalists, as also the Press, the subservient Press of the Congress, why are they silent about the affairs of Kashmir State? Is it because Kashmir is a Hindu State? Is it because the vast majority of the Indian subjects of Kashmir State are Muslims? I have no doubt about the real meaning of the Congress solicitude for the people of the Indian States.

Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose has said in one of his speeches that the Congress wants to make an alliance with the people of the Indian States. May I ask: do they want to make an alliance only with those who are Hindus or also with the Mussalmans?"[3]

Speaking in the session, Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed, Parliamentary Secretary Punjab said that the Congress had directed its "Home Department—Hindu Mahasabha" to take steps to bring the States under its influence. He added that the Congress kept its eyes shut towards the

1 Pirzada, p. 100.
2 Allana, p. 95.
3 Pirzada, p. 307.

rights of Muslims in Kashmir. He accused the Congress of "suffering from a minority phobia", and of "trying to suppress the Muslims in every conceivable manner, both in British India and the Indian States".

Given below are a few extracts from Muslim and British-controlled newspapers:—

London Times, quoted from Statesman by Daily Inquilab dated the 12th December, 1931, commented:—

> "The Muslim demands are wholly correct; their complaints are well founded and their sincerity is above board. The manner in which they have framed their demands clearly shows that they do not demand more than they deserve and this is the greatest proof of their cause being just. The defects in the State administration are due to the fact that Muslims have no voice in the Maharaja's Cabinet and there is no one to enquire into their grievances. While the Maharaja has started efforts to remove illiteracy and economic disparity, he should also see that Muslims are represented in the Cabinet and their legal and constitutional rights are not denied to them."

Wrote the Daily Statesman, quoted by Al-Aman Delhi, dated 28-10-1931:

> "When Muslims demand that there should be improvement in the administration of Kashmir, every intelligent and fair minded person should support their demand but we find that it is not so. On the other hand there are people who not only oppose them but also support the Maharaja."

Tayagbholi, Ajmere, dated 23rd November, 1931 commented:

> "There is no doubt that Muslims of the State live under deplorable conditions.....,there is no doubt also that they deserve pity. They have every right to represent their grievances to the Government and compel their acceptance."

HINDU INDIA CONDEMNS THE MOVEMENT

It is unfortunate that pro-congress newspaper records pertaining to 1931, to say the least of the period preceding it, have not been available to me anywhere, otherwise a voluminous book could be compiled about the pro-Maharaja role played by the Congress and its press. According to

Master Taj-ud-Din, a pro-Congress Ahrar leader all through his active life, Mahatama Gandhi said in a statement at the height of the popular movement against the Maharaja that "Congress should not interfere in the affairs of the State". The statement was issued to strengthen the hands of the Maharaja and to condemn the support Muslim-Kashmir was receiving from Muslim India. The Muslim "nationalists" in Punjab immediately withdrew their support and resigned from the offices they held in Committees that had sprung up in their towns.

The following extract from an editorial in the pro-Congress Daily Tribune, Lahore, dated 7th November, 1931, is worth mentioning:—

> "The very difficult situation in Kashmir, in connection with which the Government of India have, at the request of Kashmir Darbar, sent British troops to the State and an Ordinance has been promulgated by the Governor-General conferring additional powers on the Punjab Government, is made up of two distinct but related elements. The first element, which from the point of view of the administration, is also the more immediately important, is, of course, the ingress of Muslim jathas into the State territory from British India. It was this which made the situation, which has always been fraught with potential danger, one of actual danger."

No better proof of Muslim India's all-out support can be had than to quote the same paper. It wrote on 14th August, 1931,

> "Until the mobilisation of the British Muslims outside the Kashmir border, Kashmir never had any Hindu Muslim problem at all. The present agitation which culminated in the unfortunate necessity for opening fire on an unruly mob, is but the inevitable corollary of feelings and sentiments roused by organised agitation by the All India Kashmir Conference and the whirlwind campaign of falsehood and half-truths indulged in by the rabid section of the Muslim Press. The State had to proscribe some of the papers recently with the result that the same seditious sheets appear in another garb."

Writing editorially on 2nd August, 1931, under the self-explanatory caption "Muslim agitation against Kashmir", the Tribune said:

> "The formation of an All India Kashmir Committee with such men as Sir Mohammad Iqbal and Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan at its head to carry on an agitation against the Kashmir State shows the length of dishonouring absurdity to which Muslim communalism is prepared to go. We are told that the Committee has no other object in view except to secure

elementary rights for the inhabitants of Kashmir and particularly for the Mohammedans.....And is Kashmir the only State where the inhabitants are without elementary rights of citizenship, as that term is now understood? The plain fact is that whole of the present artificial agitation, at the head of which the Committee has placed itself, is a deliberate and almost undisguised attempt to establish Muslim Raj in Kashmir. Such an agitation must be condemned by all true nationalists in India.....*As regards the alleged grievances of the Mussalmans of Kashmir against the State, it is a matter of common knowledge that no section of the people of that State are treated with greater consideration or have less in the way of grievances than the Muslim subjects of His Highness!* We have not the smallest doubt that the Viceroy will take a proper measure of this spurious agitation and will treat it as it deserves to be treated."

Only a Congress newspaper could go to such depths of daring falsehood.

On 14th November, 1931, a deputation of sixteen leading Hindu-Sikh members of the Central Assembly, led by Sir Hari Singh Gour, waited upon the Viceroy in connection with the Kashmir situation. They included post-independence India's Finance Minister, Mr. Shanmukhum Chetty and Mahasabha President, Bhai Parmanand. According to the Tribune, dated 17th November, the deputationists "expressed their anxiety that no attempt should be made to coerce the Maharaja through British Indian Muslim influences.....they emphasised the strategic importance to India of the Kashmir frontier and the danger of surrendering it to the Pan-Islamic school of thought".

Hindu India did not confine its condemnation of the Movement to public statements or newspaper editorials only. They went much farther. According to the same paper, the following resolution was passed in a meeting of the Rajputs of Ambala district held on 27th July, 1931:

"The meeting condemns strongly the incessant propaganda of the Muslim Press of the Punjab against the Hindu ruler of Kashmir and characterises it as most mischievous, malicious, and selfish.....This meeting assures His Highness that the services of the Rajputs of Ambala District are ever at His Highness' command in the maintenance of law and order. This meeting heartily sympathises with all those Hindus who have been looted, murdered or injured by Muslim goondas and hooligans."

The "chivalrous" Rajputs had not even a word of sympathy for the absolutely unarmed Muslims—more than a hundred—who were bullated by the "brave" Dogra soldiers and left to die in pools of blood.

According to the same paper, about six thousand Hindus, including a batch of "Hindu Defence Force volunteers", paraded Lahore streets on 20th December, 1931, "in order to make a demonstration of sympathy with the Maharaja of Kashmir and his Government.....The processionists raised shouts of 'Dogra Raj Zindabad', 'Hari Singh Zindabad' and 'Hindu Dharam Ki Jai". The para-military organisation was brought into being first by the Hindus of Lahore. They were given training in the use of fire-arms at secret hide-outs in predominantly Hindu localities. The initial idea, it seems, was to despatch them to the State to augment the State forces so as to maintain the Hindu dynasty in power. The organisaton soon spread to other parts of Punjab and ultimately became the nucleus of the provincial branch of the since notorious Rashtriya Sevak Sangh.

Hindu press went even as far as to misrepresent the very objectives of the Movement as if there was absolutely nothing wrong with the Dogra Government and as if the Muslim inhabitants were extremely happy with their lot. Subtly seeking to shield the Dogra tyrant, the Tribune wrote editorially on 8th August:

"At the bottom of this essentially engineered agitation there are two sinister ideas, each as unpatriotic and anti-national as the other. One is to divert attention from the burning issue of India's constitutional deliverance.....the other is to further the professed aim of the Iqbal school to have a chain of provinces and States under Muslim Raj in the northwest of India....As regards the Kashmir agitation itself, we have not a moment's doubt that the better mind of the Muslim community will condemn it as strongly and whole-heartedly as it is condemned by the better mind of other communities."

The incident that took place on the Eid day at Jammu was thus twisted by the Lahore Congress daily "Pratap" in its issue of 13th May, 1931:

"The Sub-Inspector had just enquired from a respectable man as to whether it was a lecture or some preaching with regard to Eid; the Muslims got infuriated just on this enquiry and hurled abuses on the Sub-Inspector, who went away silently."

Writing in its issue dated 3rd July, 1931, the newspaper carried the following mischievous report:

"It has been reliably learnt that the Government is contemplating action against the communalist Muslims of Jammu. The local officials have sent a report to the Maharaja Sahib that if action was not taken against these Muslim miscreants, the result would be serious. It is also said that the Kashmir Government is contemplating action against the mischievous (Muslim) newspapers from Punjab. The documents are being prepared."

Given below are a few more extracts available here:

"The Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir enjoy more privileges than the Hindus of the State. Under these circumstances, their feverish preparations for a revolt, are the result of a conspiracy.....The need of the hour is to annihilate the conspiracy. The ugly forces that are making their appearance in the State ought to be uprooted and destroyed."[1]

"Muslims undoubtedly enjoy more rights and better privileges than the Hindus of the State."[2]

"The Muslims of Kashmir want to depose the Maharaja and capture its Government. They will return to peace only on the day the Maharaja abdicates."[3]

"The agitation that has been let loose in Kashmir is not meant for redress of any grievances but to overthrow the Government."[4]

"If Hindu India really wants to save the State from falling into the hands of Muslims, they will have to give up their complacency and start active struggle, otherwise it will be too late to shed tears of sympathy for the Hindus of the State. It is time to wake up, to get ready and save the Hindu kingdom which is now lying at the mercy of unclean and brute hordes."[5]

"Kashmiri Pandits, Dogras and other sections of Hindus should in this emergency get together and adopt a common programme in consultation with Hindus from outside (the State) to safeguard not only themselves but also their (Hindu) State".[6]

1 Daily Milap, Lahore qouted by Inquilab, 17-7-1931.
2 *Ibid*— 26-9-1931.
3 Daily Pratap, 28-9-1931.
4 *Ibid*—, 1-10-1931.
5 *Ibid*—, 4-11-1931.
6 *Ibid*—, 5-11-1931.

"The grievances being published by Muslim Press and the loud cries raised by them about the conditions in Kashmir State are known to all truth-loving people to be utterly unfounded."[1]

"Kashmiri Muslims should think as to how they have fallen a prey into the hands of thugs (meaning their leaders) and how they are being used as tools in a conspiracy against their ruler. The conditions that exist at the present time should suffice to open their eyes. As an act of repentence the least that they should do is to declare that they do not want redress of their grievances and that they would live under the same conditions as exist at the moment."[2]

Among the distorted captions given to news from Kashmir published in these newspapers, may be cited onlyt he following which were banner-head-lined:

"Massacre of Hindus in Kashmir"; "The revolt of Muslim slaves", meaning Muslim inhabitants; "Invasion of the Hindu State by Muslims"; "Loot and arson in Kashmir", etc. etc.

The following editorial from daily Inquilab published in the paper's issue dated 30th September, 1931 will, to some extent, show the anti-Muslim attitude adopted by Congress and its Press:—

"People who proclaim that they consider intervention in the affairs of Indian States as being against the policy of the Congress may kindly explain as to whether it is the policy of the Congress that it should close its eyes from the States where Muslims are subjected to oppression and tyranny but on the other hand if even a single Hindu (in a Muslim State) has any complaint, then to send telegrams after telegrams while on its part the Hindu press makes great fuss of the incident. Do not the Congressite Muslims consider us even human beings? The Hindu press while remaining loyal to its Congress creed, can add insult to our injuries but these Congressite Muslims consider it necessary (for their association with the party) to support the tyrant and the oppressor. Is it the Congress creed that tyrants should be supported? Has Gandhijee gone to England (to attend the R.T.C.) for these ends? It is therefore clear that if India gets freedom, Muslims will be treated like street dogs."

The Daily Pratap wrote on the 23rd of October, 1931:

"As you sow, so shall you reap is a proverb which fully applies to the Maharaja Sahib of Kashmir. The greatest achievement of his reign so

1 Hindu, Madras, 24-10-1931.
2 Daily Milap 14-9-1931.

far is that he created a movement that Jammu was for the Dogras and Kashmir for Kashmiris. The State employees from Punjab have been subjected to several harsh restrictions. The Kashmiri Pandits also supported the slogan that Kashmir was for Kashmiris and treated Punjabi Hindus as strangers but now the Muslims of Kashmir are planning to turn out the same Kashmiri Hindus from the State or let them live as their slaves."

Daily Milap wrote the following editorial note on the 26th of September, 1931:—

"When I read Muslim newspapers which claim that Kashmiri Muslims were loyal to the Maharaja and did not desire to dethrone him or capture the Government but are only fighting for their rights and are for that reason staging peaceful demonstrations, they are treating the whole world as fools or are just making a demonstration of their own insanity. But now that the Maharaja has acknowledged their loyalty and is considering their demands, it has been proved that those people who had been criticising the Muslim newspapers (meaning the newspaper itself and other Hindu newspapers) were in the wrong and had been uttering non-sense."

The same newspaper wrote on the 25th of November, 1931, in an editorial:—

"The Jammu and Kashmir State has frequently given concessions to Muslims and despite rebellion, disturbances and sabotage, they have been frequently pardoned, but they still persist in their mischievous activities; Hindus are being looted as usual and slogans are being raised against the Maharaja but even then Maharaja Hari Singh continues to forgive his Muslim subjects and by releasing rebels, assassins, decoits and mischief-mongers, has been foolishly deluding himself that he can thus win over those who can only be won over by strong means. The internal revolt could easily be suppressed by the State with its own resources but in order to meet the outside threat, the Maharaja had to seek assistance from the British and that is how and why the British army has entered the State. It is, therefore, clear that the responsibility for meeting the heavy expenses of the British army falls on the shoulders of Kashmiri Muslims because it is they who, by creating disturbances, made it necessary to invite these troops.

The mischief spread by outside Muslims in connection with Kashmir contained many a slogans such as the poverty of Kashmiri

Muslims; that they were dying of starvation and that they were groaning under heavy taxation and the way out to save them from this poverty and starvation discovered by the Ahraris, has been such that the State will undergo a further burden of lakhs of rupees and after all it must come again from the pockets of the State people."

The Milap then called upon the Muslims of the State to ask the Ahraris and the Ahmedis to meet the increased expenditure of the State. The paper also wrote:—

"We want to tell the British Government that it is only by continuing and strengthening the Hindu State (meaning the Jammu and Kashmir State) between the Indian Empire and the foreign frontiers that the internal security of the Indian Empire, can be guaranteed."

"One of the Muslim demands is that if a Hindu were to embrace Islam, he should not be deprived of his ancestral property. This demand is wholly against the Hindu Law of Inheritance which lays down that only such a person is entitled to ancestral property who follows his religion. To seek a change of this law amounts to creating permanent disturbance in the State and to wipe out the Hindus. The Muslims from outside the State are welcome to move the Heavens and the Earth but they should remember that these laws shall never be changed."

In another issue of the paper, the editorial said:

"If at this stage any English or semi-official news agencies are given any hint to support the Muslims or if the British Government were to allow the State administration to be weakened in any manner, it should remember that it will have to pay very dearly for the same. This will also determine as to whether the Government intends to allow the Pan-Islamic concept of Sir Mohammad Iqbal to take roots or take appropriate steps to save the world and its peace from this grave danger (of Pan-Islamism). It is the duty of the British Government that at this critical stage they should take care of the future of the world and should not for that reason allow Kashmir to become a prey to Pan-Islamic concept."

The daily Pratap commented editorially on 22nd November, 1931:

"My son can resort to Satyagrah in his own home but can my neighbour have recourse to it in my house and if he does so, I will not call it

Satyagrah but shall treat it as an attack upon my house and shall face him with all my moral, legal and physical strength."

Soon after the observance of the Kashmir Day by Muslims, the Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs also observed a Kashmir Day. They observed a complete hartal, took out processions and held public meetings expressing their solidarity with the Hindu Maharaja. On 1st September, 1931, a delegation from Punjab met the Maharaja in Jammu and demanded strong action against the Muslims. It was followed by a Hindu boycott of fruit, shawls and other articles exported from Kashmir valley. Another deputation was sent to Jammu on 8th November; it met the Prime Minister and other Hindu leaders and on its return, issued a mischievous statement claiming that Muslims only wanted restoration of their mosques and permission to convert Hindus. On 16th October, Rai Bahadur Bakhshi Sohan Lal, Bar-at-Law, and A. Satyarthi, President and Secretary respectively of the Arya Surajia Sabha Punjab, led a deputation to Jammu and met the Maharaja and other Hindu leaders and assured them of their support. Bhai Parmanand of the Hindu Mahasabha disclosed in his newspaper "Devta Saroop" that Maharaja Pratap Singh had told Hari Singh on death-bed, that as a principle of fundamental policy, he shouldn't try to improve the condition of Muslims. On an appeal issued by President of the Arya Surajia Sabha, an All India Kashmir Day was again observed on 29th November, 1931,to protest against the setting up of the Glancy Commission.

The Working Committee of the Akali Dal, in a meeting held at Amritsar on 5th August, condemned the Muslim agitation for reforms and offered the services of the Sikhs to the Maharajah. The Akali Dal also appointed a two member committee to keep an eye on the situation.[1]

The daily 'Akali', official organ of the Dal, wrote in an editorial:

"If the dispute had been between the Maharajah of Kashmir and his subjects and for the rights of all his Kashmiri subjects, we would have been on the side of the Kashmiris but here we see that the dispute in Kashmir is entirely for the strengthening of Muslim forces and it is being led by those who want to see the establishment of a Muslim State in northern India and are determined to enslave Hindus and Sikhs in the said State; we feel therefore, convinced that in this matter we must oppose the Muslims."[2]

1 & 2 Inquilab, 8th, 12th, 30th August, 8th Sep. and 14th August 1931.

On the 27th of August, in a joint meeting of Pandits and Sikhs held at Lahore under the presidentship of Omkar Nath Mattu, a Praja Mandal with an executive of 13 members was set up to "protect Hindu-Sikh interests."[1]

Several public meetings were held in Punjab in the first week of September condemning the Muslim agitation for reforms and the support it was getting from Muslim Punjab; the Viceroy was called upon "to use his obligations under the treaty" to "assist the Maharajah."[2]

A statement was issued from Bombay by Dr. Moonje and Mr. Vijyaragacharya, prominent Hindu leaders, condemning the Muslim agitation and the support it was getting from India. The two leaders threatened to launch, in retaliation, similar movements against the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Bhopal.[3]

Hindu press and leadership in the Punjab succeeded in persuading the British Governor to take action against the Daily Inquilab, Lahore, which was spear-heading the campaigin for reforms in Kashmir. Consequently, a fresh cash security of Rs. 3,000/- from the newspaper proprietor and a cash security of Rs. 2,000/- from the Muslim Printing Press, Lahore, where it was printed, was demanded. Hundreds of offers began pouring into the office of the newspaper to pay it but Abdul Majid Salik declined to accept them and announced that if the order was not withdrawn within ten days, he would cease its publication. A meeting of the Muslim members of the Unionist Party was thereupon held at the residence of Malik Firoze Khan Noon. It was of the view that to have singled out Inquilab for action while no action was taken against the Congress Hindu Press which had been indulging in a highly objectionable campaign against Muslims, was discriminatory. So a deputation consisting of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Malik Firoze Khan Noon and Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din, President of the Punjab Council, met the Governor with the result that before the expiry of ten days, the security demanded from the press was cancelled and that demanded from the newspaper was reduced to Rs. 500/-.

Syed Mirak Shah contributed to Muslim newspapers of Punjab articles on Kashmir under the cover name "Sur-i-Israfil"; Maulana Zahoor-ul-Hassan under the name of "Nasir Mirpuri" and Maulvi Mohammad Saeed from Karnah, under the name of "Rajulun Yasaa". Among the contributors was also Mr. Abdul Majid Qarshi who made the most valuable contribution of them all. As a consequence he lost his

1 to 3 Inquilab, 8th, 12th, 30th August, 8th Sep. and 14th August 1931.

service and later started a weekly paper, "Jamhoor". Mr. Abdul Majid Salik has written of him:

> "Qarshi was one of the prominent political workers from Jammu and actively participated in every movement side by side with Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan and A. R. Saghar.....He was the most prominent representative of Daily Inquilab in the State and I have no hesitation in saying that whatever he wrote in the columns of my paper on Kashmir, was the best example of honest and balanced journalism."[1]

1 Sarguzasht, p. 336.

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CHAPTER XII

Formation of the Muslim Conference

THE INITIAL DIFFICULTIES

It was at the early stages of the mass Movement that the need for the formation of a State-wide political organisation was keenly felt but in the absence of the freedom of association, no steps could be taken to meet the need. The way was, however, cleared with the acceptance of the Glancy report and the recommendations made by him later as Chairman of the Franchise Committee. Extensive consultations were therefore held with men who had gained prominence as a result of their role in the Movement. All, except a few led by Sardar Gauhar Rehman, who wanted a separate organisation for Jammu province, welcomed the move. Sheikh Abdullah was, therefore, invited to Jammu to thrash out the issue. As a result of the discussions held with Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Mistri Yaqub Ali, Sheikh Ghulam Qadir, A. R. Saghar and others, it was unanimously decided to float a single organisation embracing Muslims from all parts of the State.

Another difficulty was presented by the restricted movements or exile of certain leaders. For instance, Syed Mirak Shah had been exiled; the movements of Mian Ahmed Yar Khan, Advocate and Mufti Zia-ud-Din had been restricted to Muzaffarabad and Jammu city respectively. Through the intervention of the All India Kashmir Committee, whose representative Syed Zainul Abedin had several meetings with Col. Colvin and Mr. Lauther, the prohibitory orders were rescinded.

In Jammu city, some workers continued to have mental reservations about the utility of floating a single political party. Among them,

of course, was Mr. Gauhar Rehman. In a public meeting held at Talab-i-Khatikan on 15th September, 1932, they accused Sheikh Abdullah of having given a written undertaking to the Government to dissolve the Movement if the recommendations of the Commission were accepted. Nothing could be farther from truth. Looking at it even from a purely narrow angle, how could a man who had, on the strength of the very Movement, emerged from oblivion as a legendary hero, dissolve it? The proceedings of the meeting were published in newspapers dated 21st September. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan promptly issued a detailed statement in weekly Pasban which had recently started publication with Mr. Meraj Din as Editor-proprietor, repudiating the accusations and stressing the absolute need for maintaining unity.

Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard, Maulvi Ismail Ghaznavi, Syed Habib Shah, Editor Daily "Siyasat" and Mr. Zahur Ahmed were despatched to Srinagar, by the All India Kashmir Committee, to help in making the necessary arrangements. Financial assistance was also made available alongwith a car to facilitate the movement of workers.

THE FOUNDING FATHERS

After the release of political leaders on 4th June, 1932, the move gained momentum. According to Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masoodi, the decision to form a party and name it Muslim Conference was taken in the Central Jail Srinagar in course of discussions he had with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, while both were interned together.[1] According to Mr. Taseer, the All India Kashmir Committee was largely responsible for this decision. A Committee was therefore set up to convene the conference. It drafted a constitution and decided to name the organisation as the "All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference". The inaugural session was held on the 14th, 15th and 16th of October, 1932, in the historic Pathar Masjid, Srinagar, under the presidentship of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. It was a unique gathering, especially in the sense that all Muslims, irrespective of their religious differences or social distinction, sat shoulder to shoulder on the same platform with the common object of providing Muslims with a single political platform. Even Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah who had lately criticised Sheikh Abdullah and kept himself aloof from the main stream of Muslim political thinking, also participated. A platform, fifteen feet high from the ground was constructed in the spacious ground of the Masjid on which sat about two hundred representatives and about a hundred press representatives and observers. The ground adjacent to the mosque, which was later utilised for the construction of Mujahid Manzil, the party head-

1 Taseer, p. 171.

quarters, was converted into a part of the pendal to accommodate the unprecedented audience. Hundreds of house-boats were hired to house the delegates. The Committee which made arrangements for the conference and drafted the constitution, also adopted a party flag which consisted of a green cloth, representing Muslim faith, with a crescent and star which was also the flag of the All India Muslim League and which now, in addition to a piece of white cloth representing minorities, is the national flag of Pakistan. The flag hoisting ceremony was performed on 14th by Waliullah Zain-ul-Abedin, a representative of the All India Kashmir Committee. According to Mr. Taseer, the session was attended by about three lakh men, women and children who turned the pendal into a place of pilgrimage.

The open session began on 15th October, in the evening. Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai read the address of welcome. Later, messages received from Muslim leaders and organisations from outside the State were read to the audience.

In his presidential address, after being unanimously elected to the office, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said:

> "During the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, Hindu Ministers with Hindu revivalist thinking left nothing undone to suppress the Muslims and subjected them to such oppression that signs of an awakening began to make their appearance which is proved by the incidents at the Silk Factory and the famous memorial presented to the Viceroy; the incidents, however, failed to open the eyes of the rulers; instead, they attempted to tighten their grip so much so that it led to a ban on Khutba on the day of Eid and the extremely provocative incident of 'Tauheen-e-Quran'.....
>
> We are extremely grateful to the Muslims of India in general and those of Punjab in particular for their unparalleled sacrifices and total sympathy in course of our trials and tribulations. We are also thankful to the Muslim press of the sub-continent for having so effectively represented our case.....
>
> Our Movement is not directed against the minorities. I assure all my countrymen, be they Hindus or Sikhs, that we shall always try to redress their grievances but they must also respect our just rights."[1]

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah then proceeded to make an exhaustive review of the Glancy report and told them which of the demands had

1 Taseer, p. 261.

still remained unfulfilled. He demanded an end to the forfeiture of property on change of religion, freedom of association and the withdrawal of restrictions still in force on the freedom of speech. He also demanded freedom of press and the repeal of Emergency Laws. He regretted that although the demand to set up a Legislative Assembly had been accepted in principle, no concrete steps had been taken so far to bring it into being. He also regretted that although Muslims formed 54% of the population in Jammu province (Poonch district was excluded from representation in the Assembly), only seven seats had been allocated to them in the proposed Assembly. He made an impassioned appeal to encourage female education, social uplift, arts and crafts and to give up wasteful expenditure on the occasions of marriages.

On the opening day, three sub-committees were appointed; one, consisting of seven members, was to prepare a resolution on Glancy recommendations regarding constitutional reforms and also to consider the draft constitution of the Party. Another committee, consisting of 21 members, was to consider points of disagreement with the Glancy report and the third one, consisting of 22 members, was to consider all other matters. These committees worked almost round the clock for three days and presented ten resolutions in the open session as also the Party constitution; all these were unanimously adopted. In one of the resolutions, a demand was made for the setting up of a neutral Commission to enquire into the grievances of the Muslims of Poonch, who were groaning under the tyranny of their local Raja as well as his overlord Hari Singh. It was also demanded that laws in force in the Jagir be replaced by corresponding laws in force in the State. Representation for the people of Poonch in the proposed Legislative Assembly was also demanded. Among other resolutions were those relating to forfeiture of property on conversion to Islam, representation in Services on the basis of population, enlistment of Muslims in the army reduction in land revenue, release of political prisoners and the repeal of emergency laws in Mirpur etc. By another resolution, the President was commanded to call a meeting of the General Council within four months to determine as to whether the Government had fully acted on the recommendations of the Glancy Commission and in case it had not done so, to draw up a programme of action to compel their implementation.

The Conference elected the following office-bearers:

Vice-President	—	Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Advocate.
General-Secretary	—	Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan.
Secretary	—	Maulvi Abdur Rahim, Pleader.

By electing Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan as General Secretary, although he could not, on account of his residence in Jammu, be handily available to the President, who was himself at Srinagar, the idea was to establish a healthy convention that both the offices were not to be held by either of the two provinces at the same time. If presidentship went to Kashmir province, the office of the Secretary had to be filled in by a man from Jammu province and vice versa.

In the beginning of November, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, accompanied by Ghulam Qadir Gandarbali, proceeded to Lahore to hold discussions with Muslim leaders. Towards the end of December, Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai also left for Lahore for the same purpose. A meeting of the Working Committee was held in Jammu on 17th December. The Committee called upon the Government to implement the resolutions adopted by the Party at Srinagar; it also issued a four-month ultimatum for acceptance of its demands.

On 20th January, 1933, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah returned to Srinagar and immediately plunged himself into feverish political activity. On 13th February, he circulated the following letter to members of the Working Committee:—

> "Glancy Commission's recommendations did not meet even the minimum demands of Muslims but it is a matter of deep regret that some of the recommendations and the orders issued for the implementation of others, have so far remained unimplemented so much so that even matters pertaining to the restoration of mosques and khanqahs, grant of proprietary rights to the tenants, the freedom of Press and platform, the setting up of a Legislative Assembly, facilities for the extension of education, withdrawal of emergency laws from Kotli, Rajouri and Mirpur, etc. have remained in a state of suspense."

A meeting of the Working Committee was, therefore, convened on 5th March to determine what action may be taken to secure their implementation.

A Committee consisting of the following was also set up to contact non-Muslim leaders, seek their co-operation and persuade them to participate in the Movement that may next be launched against the Government: Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai, Agha Saeed Hussain Shah Jalali, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, Pir Hissam-ud-Din Gilani, Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Butt, Mian Ahmed Yar, Maulvi Mohammad Hussain, Munshi Abdul Aziz

and Abdul Majid Qarshi. The Committee was unable to achieve any positive results because of the non-Muslims' non-co-operation.

Simultaneously with the circulation of the letter, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah started a mass campaign in the city to acquaint the public with the state of things and prepare them for civil disobedience; it unnerved the Government. The grim spectacle that it had to face in 1931, on account of its despotic inactivity, was too recent to be forgotten. Therefore, fearing another round with the masses, the Prime Minister, Col. Colvin, accompanied by his Minister for Law and Order, Mr. Wajahat Hussain, came to Srinagar and initiated negotiations with the Muslim representatives. Letters were also exchanged. The meeting of the Working Committee began on 5th March and the deliberations continued upto 8th March, as negotiations were still under way. On 8th March, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah read the following statement before the Working Committee which was released to the press:

> "At the request of the Governor of Kashmir, I had a telephonic conversation with the Prime Minister. In reply to my letter, I received a letter from him last evening expressing a desire to have further talks with me with regard to our demands. I, therefore, had a meeting with him which lasted two hours. The Prime Minister conceded that some recommendations of the Glancy Commission had not been implemented so far but that the delay was due to reasons beyond his control. The Prime Minister was also keen to hear specific complaints."

A few days later, a memorandum was submitted to the Government which also included a demand for complete freedom of association and speech. All recommendations were immediately accepted.

MIR WAIZ MOVES AWAY FROM THE MAIN-STREAM

Towards the end of 1931, the estrangement between Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah, which has been the cause of great damage to Muslim interests, apart from having blurred the image of the two leaders themselves, had unfortunately begun to cast its ominous shadows. The sudden but growing popularity of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was exploited by certain reactionary elements in the city, sometimes at the behest of the Government, to create a feeling of jealousy and mistrust in the mind of Mir Waiz. Whenever both appeared together in the public, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was the centre of bigger attraction and greater ovation. It was but natural that it should have created a sense of personal bitterness in the mind

of Mir Waiz whose family, only a year ago, was the most powerful and influential in the Valley. It was, however, unfortunate that Mir Waiz could not rise to the occasion and recognise the historical processes that make and unmake the destinies of man. One courageous step, involving great personal risk at the opportune or inopportune moment, has very often in history led either to the total annihilation of the man concerned or placed fame and glory at his feet. That is what actually happened in the case of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and the failure of Mir Waiz to recognise this important fact resulted not only in the division of the Muslims of Srinagar city into two permanently hostile camps, now in their third generation, who were at times thirsty of each others blood, instead of continuing their united movement against their common oppressor, but also resulted, as could be expected, in the further decline of the power and prestige that once belonged to the family of Mir Waiz. There is no doubt that some Pandits encouraged the rift because they felt that only a division in the Muslim ranks could delay their dethronement from power. Mir Waiz was himself an honest man of simple thinking whose heart throbbed for Muslims and their abject conditions as much as that of any other Muslim leader, but the tragedy was that he was weak of resolve and hence easily amenable to the powerful lobby of vested interests, who, for their own ends, desired a cleavage between him and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

While Sheikh Abdullah was in jail for the third time, Mir Waiz had started with his moderate criticism. On 17th August, 1932, open clashes broke out between the die-hard followers of the two leaders at Amirakadal where Mir Waiz had gone to deliver a religious address. Mir Waiz was protected by the police and removed to his home unhurt. The District Magistrate issued an order under section 144 prohibiting Mir Waiz from addressing congregations anywhere outside the Jamia Masjid; Mir Waiz Hamdani was restricted to Khanqah-i-Mualla and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah to the Pathar Masjid. This order remained in force for two months but, as earlier stated, Hindu-Muslim clashes broke out in the city towards the end of September, 1932. It brought the mutual bickering to a temporary halt and Mir Waiz participated in the October, 1932 conference, as already stated earlier.

Hari Kishan Kaul succeeded in persuading Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah to meet him at his residence. Mr. Abdul Aziz Fazili, Ghulam Ahmad Pandit and Ghulam Mohammad Pandit acted as intermediaries. He told Mir Waiz Sahib that he was greatly respected by the Government and considered in importance second only to the Maharaja; that the Govern-

ment was prepared to give sympathetic consideration to Muslim demands but that it needed a peaceful climate; that the Government was prepared to release Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah right now if he expressed a wish to that end but that it had its own responsibilities as well. Mir Waiz was carried by this argument, whereupon Kaul drafted a telegram to the Viceroy on his behalf 'informing' h'm that 'peace' prevailed in Kashmir; that Muslims were loyal to the Maharaja and that they desired to settle their dispute with their Ruler, themselves. Mir Waiz signed the telegram and as a token of appreciation, an annual honorarium of Rs. 600/- and a royal Khilaat was awarded to him and the same was at the same time, widely publicised, obviously with ulterior motives. The Khilaat consisted of two rolls of English makhmal each measuring nine yards, four rolls of China silk, a silver tray and a shawl. When the news became public, Mir Waiz was severely criticised and his action condemned as a betrayal of the Movement. He was, however, wise enough to realise the blunder he had committed and in a subsequent meeting held at Jamia Masjid, returned the awards as unacceptable.

With the departure of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah for Lahore, Mir Waiz again started a campaign against him; this time it was more virulent. It was now alleged that he had joined the Ahmedia sect which, however, was, factually, absolutely incorrect because Sheikh Abdullah has all along remained a follower of the Hanafi Sunni sect. The campaign hurt his followers which led to a serious clash on 30th January, 1933, in the Khanqah-i-Naqshband, Srinagar. Being winter, 'kangris' were freely used by the hooligans causing burns to many; two persons were taken into custody.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had to leave for Lahore again, to continue his consultations with Muslim leaders. Ramazan Eid fell on 6th April, 1933 while he was still away. The Government served an order on Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah to hold his congregation at Jamia Masjid whereas Hamdani was required to confine his congregation to the Eidgah. Unfortunately both disobeyed. Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah went to the Eidgah and Mir Waiz Hamdani to the Jamia Masjid. In the clashes that the two religious leaders thus invited, hundreds of Muslims were injured. The interior of the city was practically in the hands of goondas for many hours. This was a deliberate act on the part of the Government because its plan was to create as much mutual bitterness among Muslims as possible. As the followers of Mir Waiz consisted mainly of well-to-do people, they were the worst sufferers. Some of Sheikh Abdullah's volunteers committed excesses which should put any man to shame. Both the Mir Waiz were challaned under section 107, Criminal Procedure Code, for breach of public peace. The Additional

District Magistrate demanded sureties for keeping peace in the sum of Rs. 1,000/- each. While Mir Waiz Hamdani complied with, Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah refused to execute a bond. He was, therefore, sent to Udhampur jail on 27th April, 1933. This led to demonstrations by his followers in and around Zainakadal, his stronghold. A procession was taken out in the city. Women also took out a procession under the leadership of one Jan Bibi which squatted on Zainakadal for hours.

The news about the impending arrest of Mir Waiz had leaked out before it could be effected. A large number of his followers, some of whom have all along been fanatically devoted to him, assembled on the gate of his house to prevent his arrest. This vigil continued for a few days and it was only after they had withdrawn that Mir Waiz was arrested on 27th April 1933.

On the same day when Mir Waiz was taken to Udhampur, Sheikh Abdullah was returning from Jammu and botn had a chance meeting in the way. The Government released Mir Waiz on 3rd May 1933 and brought him to Srinagar. It transpired that security, as demanded, had been executed on his behalf by one of his followers without his knowledge. The Valley remained unaffected outside Srinagar because Mir Waiz had practically lost all influence over there. On 17th May, Mohammad Khalil Wani, a worker belonging to the party of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who had been earlier injured in a clash, breathed his last. The funeral procession was attended by about fifty thousand people. On 31st May, 1933, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar and Mufti Zia-ud-Din were arrested; three persons from the Mir Waiz party were also taken into custody. As the Government was conscious of the grave repercussions of Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, therefore, Notification No. 19-L was simultaneously promulgated and the city handed over to the Army. Publication of newspapers was banned, but the order was subsequently withdrawn. When the news of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's arrest became known, all shops were closed and processions started appearing almost in all parts of the city. These were lathi-charged; firing was resorted to by the Army in Amirakadal and Maisuma resulting in the death of one and injuries to several others. A War Council was again constituted and a platform set up at Khanqah-i-Mualla. This time the number of volunteers who offered themselves for arrest was so large that not all were taken to jail. Some were sent home after being sentenced to flogging; they included educated youth. Some women were also arrested. An English woman, wife of a retired Chief Engineer, was externed because she had expressed sympathy with a procession while it passed the Nedous Hotel where she was staying.

The important aspect of the Movement is that with the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, it immediately lost its sectarian character and became a national Movement demanding not only the release of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah but also the acceptance of political demands.

A huge procession marched towards the Residency road and stopped in front of the Nedous Hotel where the processionists squatted for two days, despite unending rain. Another innovation introduced this time was that people appeared on their roof-tops at night and raised anti-Government slogans. An order making such slogan-mongering punishable was issued and hundreds of men and some women had to pay fines or court arrest for defiance or alleged defiance of the order. Most of the men arrested in this connection were sentenced to flogging. The agitation also spread to other parts especially Akhnoor, Kotli, Kulgam, Baramula, Bijbihara, Sopore, Dodah, Handwara, Bandipura and Anantnag. Hundreds of workers were arrested and sentenced as above. In village Wampura, tehsil Badgam, a procession was severely lathi-charged resulting in the death of one man and injuries to several dozen of them.

Sheikh Abdullah was removed to Reasi jail. The question of his arrest was raised in the British parliament on 9th July; Sir Samuel Hore, the Secretary of State for India was questioned with regard to his arrest, the situation in the State and the action that the Imperial Government intended to take in the matter. A meeting of the Working Committee was convened to consider the situation which was followed by an appeal, by some leaders, to stop the agitation on the assurance that the release of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was being actively considered. With this announcement, peace returned to the Valley. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was brought to Batote and the Government publicly promised to release him within six weeks provided a compromise was arrived at between the two factions in Srinagar which could be a basis for a permanent peace. Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah and Khawaja Ghulam Ahmed Ashai met him in Udhampur jail. A punitive police chowki was set up at Maisuma from the 10th of Sawan; its expenditure, estimated at one thousand eight hundred and twenty eight rupees, was borne by the residents of the locality as a collective fine but exemption was made in favour of Hindus, Sikhs and followers of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. Sheikh Abdullah was released on 7th August. Despite rains, a big procession was taken out in the city and illuminations were organised throughout the Valley. In a public meeting held at Hazoori Bagh on 15th August and attended by about thirty thousand people, a welcome address was presented to him. Entry to the meeting was by tickets and yet it attracted such a huge gathering which also included some European

ladies. Sheikh Abdullah then undertook a tour of the important centres of Kashmir Valley, acquainting people with their rights and urging upon them to remain united and continue the Movement for their betterment.

MIR WAIZ FLOATS A PARTY

On 17th August, Mir Waiz addressed a congregation at Ziarat-i-Dastgeer Sahib situate in Serai Bala. The meeting appears to have been disrupted by followers of Mir Waiz Hamdani with the result that a serious clash took place resulting in injuries to a number of people. Hari Singh High Street had to be closed to traffic and military and police contingents rushed to the spot. Mr. Lauther, the then Inspector General of Police, whose book "My Madness in a Mad State" having been proscribed by the Government of India on the representation of the Maharaja's Government and which was not available even in the India Office Library or the British Museum, is reported to have ordered the police on duty:—

"Let them say, what they say;
Do not say, bakra chey."[1]

The clash was unfortunately followed by an intense mutual bickering in all parts of the city. Incidents of beating and looting of stray individuals were common. Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad who had by now come to be known as Ghulam Mohammad Gandhi, perhaps because he had been working as a clerk in Khadi Bhandar and himself wore Khadi, assumed the role of a Salar. A volunteer corps was raised by him, one of whose wings, consisting mainly of lorry drivers from Maisuma, was known as "Maisuma Regiment", which frequently attacked the followers of Mir Waiz. It has to be recorded regretfully that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah gave them full support and encouragement and was sometimes found moving with these groups with a hockey stick in his hand.[2] The tussle was so intense that many persons divorced their wives because of their divided loyalties. The common practice for both the parties was that whenever a person, belonging to the opposite faction, was found in their stronghold, someone would raise the slogan "Ya Ali" which was a signal for assault and immediately the poor man was surrounded by his opponents. Then some other person would raise the slogan of "Malmali" which meant that his turban was to be taken off. It may be noted that in those days turban was almost universally used by Muslims as their head-wear. Someone would then raise the slogan "Haidri" which was answered with the

1 Taseer, p. 288.
2 *Ibid*, p. 290.

further slogan of "chadri" which meant that he was to be relieved of the cash and articles of daily use he was carrying. The wretched soul was then subjected to a severe beating.

Under these circumstances, Mir Waiz thought it necessary for his survival to set up an organisation of his own. A meeting was held in the house of Khawaja Mohammad Abdullah Bassu, in Maharaj Ganj, which was attended by his leading supporters. Khawaja Abdullah Joo Bassu who died a few years back was considered to be one of the principal advisers of Mir Waiz. This writer has known him personally for some time and found him a man of piety, who was intensely dedicated to Mir Waiz and his family. Abdus Salam Parimu proposed that the new party be given the name of "Muslim League" but as Muslim League had not by that time assumed the importance of a great popular movement and perhaps also because Allama Iqbal with whom Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had personal contact, was actively associated with it, it was decided, on the suggestion of Soofi Ahmad, to name it as "The Azad Muslim Conference". Mir Waiz supported the latter proposal which was adopted. Most of the loyalist Muslims such as Abdur Rahim Bande, Munshi Assadullah Vakil, Khizar Mohammad Zaru, Haji Munshi Assadullah of Sukalipura and Ghulam Mohammad Malik were among its "founding fathers". They were unpopular for their pro-Government leanings; some of them had even been used as puppets against the Muslims when the latter were going through trials and tribulations, only recently. The formation of a party with such persons as its pillars did not, therefore, augur well for it. It failed to attract popular support and remained confined to Zainakadal, the city stronghold of the Mir Waiz family. The only good that the Conference achieved was the introduction into public life of Khawaja Abdus Salam Dalal, a man of immense courage who later achieved prominence as a dedicated soldier in the cause of the Pakistan Movement.

The first session of the new party was held at Jamia Masjid. As a counter move, Mir Waiz Hamdani acting on inspiration from Sh. Abdullah, set up a society known as "Anjuman-e-Ittehad-o-Taraki". The Society convened a conference of its supporters on the same dates at Khanqah-i-Naqshband. It was attended, among others, by Mian Ahmed Yar Khan, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate and Ghulam Nabi Gilkar. The main theme at the session of the Azad Muslim Conference unfortunately was loyalty to the Dogra dynasty, which surely proved enough to discredit it in popular estimation so much so that it died a natural death within a few years. The conference convened as a counter has gone down under the name of "Shoda Conference" because its main theme was criticism and abuse of Mir Waiz and his family.

Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and his volunteers attacked the Jamia Masjid session and hurled brick-bats to disrupt it. Thus the unity that had brought the Muslims of Kashmir so close to their national goal, had to pass through a severe test.

However, an immediate good that followed the setting up of the Azad Muslim Conference was that the Muslim Conference leadership had to pay their undivided attention to organising their own party. They feared that in the absence of a well organised party, they may not be able to fight on two fronts. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues, therefore, started touring Kashmir valley. Muslim Conference branches were opened in every town and important village. Among those who thus came in the lime light and helped in organising the party were Soofi Mohammad Akbar from Sopore, Sheikh Mohammad Akbar from Baramula, Qazi Abdul Ghani from Delinah, Maulvi Mohammad Yasin from Sopore, Abdur Rahim Dar, Abdul Kabir Khan and Mukhtar Ahmad from Bandipura, Abdul Ghani from Tral, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg from Islamabad, Master Abdul Aziz from Muzaffarabad and Ghulam Qadir from Gandarbal. They also set up a national Baitul Mal with Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad as its Chief Administrator.

The next session of the Muslim Conference was held at Mirpur on the 15th, 16th and 17th of December, 1933. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was again unanimously elected President in recognition of his unique role in the Muslim awakening. Allama Iqbal who had been invited to attend the session, was unable to do so but sent the following letter:—

"Lahore,
Dated 12th October, 1933.

Dear Sheikh Abdullah Sahib,

Aslam-o-Alaikum. I have received your invitation just now. I was very happy to read in newspapers about the Kashmir Muslim Conference. I have full faith that all the leaders of Kashmir will soon straighten their matters. I am praying to God for this and hope that He will crown you with success. I was sorry to learn that many an organisation have recently sprung up because I have no doubt that your mutual differences will greatly obstruct your march. Unity is the only way through which you can achieve your political and social ends. The Muslims of India have suffered so far only because of the absence of unity among them; its members and especially its Ulema have been playing into the hands of others and are even now playing in such

hands. Any way I pray to God that your State may not witness such an experience. I am really sorry that I cannot participate in the Conference because of pre-occupations. I hope you are well.

Yours
Mohammad Iqbal"[1]

(Original in Urdu)

The Conference passed numerous resolutions touching upon freedom of press, repeal of section 108-A, Criminal Procedure Code, which empowered the Government to banish any person either from his home or town or even the State itself arbitrarily, withdrawal of restrictions on change of religion, immediate setting up of the Legislative Assembly and Municipalities, representation of Muslims in Government services according to their population and removal of discriminatory measures against the agriculturists and the labourers. By another resolution, the Conference passed a vote of no-confidence against Mr. V. N. Mehta, the Revenue Minister and demanded his immediate removal. In another resolution, non-Muslims were again requested to participate in the Movement for restoration of democratic rights and assured that the party had nothing against them as a community.[2]

MILK-MAID BECOMES A PRINCESS

It was at this stage that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah married his present wife Akbar Jehan Begum, who later played a prominent role in bringing about a change in the mental attitude of her husband towards the State's future affiliations. She is the daughter of a convert to Islam from Christianity, Mr. Harry Nedous, an Englishman who was then a major shareholder in the chain of Nedous Hotels at Lahore, Srinagar and Gulmarg. It is said that truth is sometimes stranger than strange. Mr. Harry was one morning sitting in a lawn of the Nedous Hotel Gulmarg, enjoying the blissful solitude of the 9000 feet high hill-resort, surrounded by silvery snow-capped mountains and a smiling sun. The solitude was suddenly but pleasantly broken by the essentially feminine music produced by the movement of bangles. As if awakened from a deeply absorbing dream, Harry's dreamy looks subconsciously searched for the origin of the voice but alas! he was no longer the haughty Gora Sahib, the owner of the fairy land that the Gulmarg Nedous then was. Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a globe-trotter himself, told this writer that he had not come across anywhere in the world, such a beautiful, picturesque and heavenly spot as

1 & 2 Taseer, p. 297.

that of its location. He had been totally humbled by the beauty of the young, care-free but proud Kashmiri Gujar milkmaid who had, perhaps providentially, come in place of her father to deliver some milk to the Hotel. Harry ultimately proposed marriage but was snubbed by her and referred to her parents. He acted essentially as a Westerner and she equally essentially as an Easterner. He went to her parents; they had no objection provided he embraced Islam. A Westerner, to whom love transcended every other consideration, he surely had no objection and this is how the illiterate Cinderella became Mrs. Harry Nedous. He took her to England and Europe several times and it is a tribute to both that their love endured to the very last and their mutual devotion never knew a strain. Begum Abdullah was their first child. She was first married to a Muslim who passed as a Pir and had obtained prominence in the social circles of Bombay through a strange coincidence. A prominent Englishman doing business in the city had applied for a certain contract. He was not hopeful but, all the same, was extremely keen to get it. Some Muslim friends introduced him to the Pir who raised his hands in prayer and gave him a blessing. It so happened that he got the contract. This resulted in his sudden rise in the social circles of the city, which, however, he had to leave, not much later, on account of some indecency at a certain party. He came to Lahore and made Ravi road his centre of activities. Reported by his neighbours to be awesomely handsome, he appears to have been far from being pious in the accepted sense and frequently misbehaved with his wife. He resembled the legendary Lawrence of Arabia and was once even mobbed in the vicinity of Lahore when some Muslim youth mistook him for the Colonel. Differences broke out between him and his wife with the result that through the intervention of some neighbours, one of whom gave the details of the Pir quoted above in course of an article published in Agha Shorish Kashmiri's weekly Chattan in early fifties, who were employed in the Lahore Civil Secretariat, she was divorced and straightaway joined her father at Srinagar. Probably, her arrival in Srinagar coincided with the rise of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Harry Sahib, as he is affectionately known in the Valley, desired to bring about the marriage of his divorced daughter with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and this is how it came about. Begum Abdullah who is known as Madar-e-Meharban has not only received western education but also more than average religious education. Until a few years back, she used to observe purdah. It is said by women who have heard her reciting the Holy Quran in public meetings that she has a melodious voice and her recitation is greatly inspiring. A very intelligent woman and a devout Muslim, it was openly said in the official circles in New Delhi that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's "breach" with India was primarily brought about by Begum Abdullah and Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, who were referred

as "Double B" meaning Begum and Beg. Mr. Morarjee Desai is credited with having coined the term. They have three sons, Tariq, Farooq and Khalid and perhaps two daughters.

A few weeks after marriage, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah left for Lahore to clarify his position with members of the All India Kashmir Committee. By then, differences had cropped up due to the Ahrar campaign against the association of Ahmedis. Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmed, therefore, tendered his resignation. It is claimed by Ahmedis that it was reluctantly accepted because most of the members, including such non-Ahmedis as Sir Mohammad Iqbal, the Nawab of Kunjpura, Sir Zulfiqar Ali, Abdul Majid Salik, Maulana Ghulam Rasool Mehr and Syed Habib, Editor Daily Siyasat, sincerely felt that the Head of the Jamaat-e-Ahmedi had made valuable contribution to the cause of Kashmir and that his association with the Committee was in the best interests of the Kashmir Movement because of the dedicated organisation he commanded and the wide resources at his disposal.[1] It has to be recorded with regret that the Committee had to be dissolved a year or two later, and even during this period it was not able to make any effective and worth-while contribution. There is no doubt that it was primarily the mass awakening of Kashmiri Muslims themselves and their rendezvous with death and danger that compelled the Dogra Government to grant them some of their long-denied rights, but at the same time it has got to be very clearly admitted that the contribution made by the Muslims of India towards their realisation was very substantial and but for it, the repression, torture and killings would have increased manifold in this lawless State before Muslim demands could be expected to be accepted.

However, had the strife been kept out of the Committee and had it been allowed to continue to function as Muslim India's united advisory and assistance group for Kashmir—a role in which it had been confirmed by the passage of time, I have no doubt, that the politics of the State may not have been exposed to the Congress influence and the forces of Hindu domination, spear-headed and camouflaged by Congress nationalism, could have been successfully kept out.

While he was in Lahore, things moved swiftly in Srinagar. One Hakim Habibullah, an A.S.P. was demoted to Inspectorship. A few young workers hurriedly revived the Muslim Young Mens' Association and issued an ultimatum containing various demands including the restoration of the Hakim to his previous post. The

1 Zahur Ahmad, p. 242.

ultimatum gave the Government seven days for a decision and simultaneously the formation of a War Council was announced at a public rally at the Hamdan mosque. Pir Mubarik Shah Qadri, Editor weekly 'Rehnuma', Srinagar, was put in overall charge of the Council though the arrangement was kept secret. The Government did make a reply within the stipulated time but asked for more time to consider the demands. The request was rejected.

BLOOD FLOWS AGAIN

In Muttan (district Islamabad), a Hindu-Muslim dispute arose about the possession of a plot of land. A Committee, comprising Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl and Pandit Shiv Narain Fotedar, constituted for an on-the-spot investigation, submitted a report but the Government did not come to any quick decision while the local administration was backing the Hindus. Under these circumstances, the Association thought it useless to delay its action and started an agitation in Srinagar from 27th January, 1934. Among those arrested were Mir Ghulam Hussain, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and Mir Waiz Hamdani. On 28th January, the Notification No. 19-L was again enforced and at the same time the following leaders were exiled: Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masudi, Sadr-ud-Din Mujahid, Mohammad Maqbool Bayhaqi, M. A. Sabir, Syed Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Andrabi and Maulvi Ghulam Mustafa Masudi. Mir Waiz Hamdani was ordered not to allow the use of the Hamdan mosque as a platform for agitation. He disobeyed the order and appeared at one meeting wearing a shroud-like white cloth customarily used for the dead in Kashmir and delivered a biting attack on the repressive policy of the Government. He was arrested and exiled for one year. Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and Mir Ghulam Hassan Gilani were removed to Reasi jail, while Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Kara, Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Hamdani, Mohammad Iqbal Chhapri and Qureshi Mohammad Yusuf were summarily tried and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of rupees twelve hundred each. In a few days the entire Valley was in the grip of a political storm. In addition to flogging, the workers were now also subjected to heavy fines and being unable to pay it on account of poverty, their movable property was confiscated and auctioned. Invariably Muslims stayed away from auction sales and invariably also it were the Hindus who came forward to take undue advantage of the situation and purchased it at nominal rates.

The agitation remained confined to Kashmir valley alone. It was at this stage that the highly unsatisfactory Franchise Committee Report

was published. As the people were already deeply involved in a movement, it added insult to injury. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who was still in the plains, condemned it as a "disappointing document".

As already stated, the Movement had already spread to other parts of the Valley. On Friday, the 3rd of February 1934, Muslims of Pulwama in the district of Islamabad, held a meeting at Eidgah which was addressed by their local leaders, Mohammad Akbar Dar, Abdul Ghani Trali and others. Ignoring the order of the tehsildar, as Magistrate on duty, to disperse and demolish the pendal, the congregation resumed the meeting after saying Jumma prayers. The Tehsildar thereupon ordered the troops on duty to open fire which resulted in twelve deaths and more than three dozen injured. Given below are the names of the martyrs:—

1.	Ali Malik	— 30 years
2.	Habib Butt	— 35 years
3.	Ghulam Mohammad	— 28 years
4.	Sultan Tola	— 32 years
5.	Rehman Dar	— 39 years
6.	Amir Dar	— 26 years
7.	Munawar Magrey	— 30 years
8.	Sultan Malik	— 32 years
9.	Amir Sheikh	— 35 years
10.	Qasim Mir	— 30 years
11.	Qadir Sheikh	— 33 years
12.	Wahab Dar	— 24 years

Notification 19-L had by now been promulgated all over the Valley. The inhuman punishment of flogging created great resentment everywhere. In Bijbihara, some Muslims were sentenced to public flogging; they included old men and a few teenagers who bled profusely and fainted. One can imagine the state of shock and anger that it must have produced. A procession was taken out on 6th February to protest against the inhuman and medieval punishment of flogging. Complete hartal was also observed by the business community ; Muslim students absented themselves from their schools to join the procession. The procession was raising anti-Government slogans and demanding the withdrawal of the army from the town. This was intolerable for the troops on duty who fired on the procession resulting in three deaths and more than a dozen injured. The names of the martyrs are given below:

1.	Subhan Dar	— 23 years
2.	Habib Kamrazi	— 35 years
3.	Habib Dar	— 32 years

The Editor weekly 'Sadaaqat' who visited the town on 7th February, wrote in his paper:—

> "Bijbihara has been turned into a city of the dead. No one seems to be acquainted with anyone else. I tried my best and it was after a hundred difficulties that a boy of ten years was persuaded to take me to the houses of my acquaintances but no one was available as almost every male member had left the town and gone elsewhere for fear of the army."

An editorial in the weekly contained the following sentence: "Hartal (in Badgam) was so complete that none except a few dogs could be found on the roads". The Government interpreted the word 'dogs' as meaning its officers; the Editor was therefore arrested and detained without trial. The Editor, weekly 'Albarq', Srinagar, M. A. Sabir was arrested for publishing news about Bijbihara killings etc. and sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah issued several statements condemning the repression. He also met members of the Central Assembly, Editors of leading newspapers and senior officers of the Government of India and acquainted them with the grave situation in the State.

CH. GHULAM ABBAS AS DICTATOR

On 10th February, 1934, a meeting of the Working Committee was convened at Sialkot. It was convened outside the State in order to facilitate the participation of exiled members. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was of the view that the agitation ought to be called off because it had been started by youngsters without prior consultation with the parent body and without their authority. In his view it was highly inexpedient to allow a precedent to be set up for anyone, anywhere, to stand up without authority and proper planning and involve the parent body in an agitation. He, therefore, proposed that simultaneously with the withdrawal of the agitation, the Government offer for negotiations be accepted, but on account of the killings at Pulwama and Bijbihara and the mass incidents of flogging, lathi-charges, fines and other repressive measures, the Working Committee instead chose to dissolve itself and empowered its General Secretary, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, to initiate negotia-

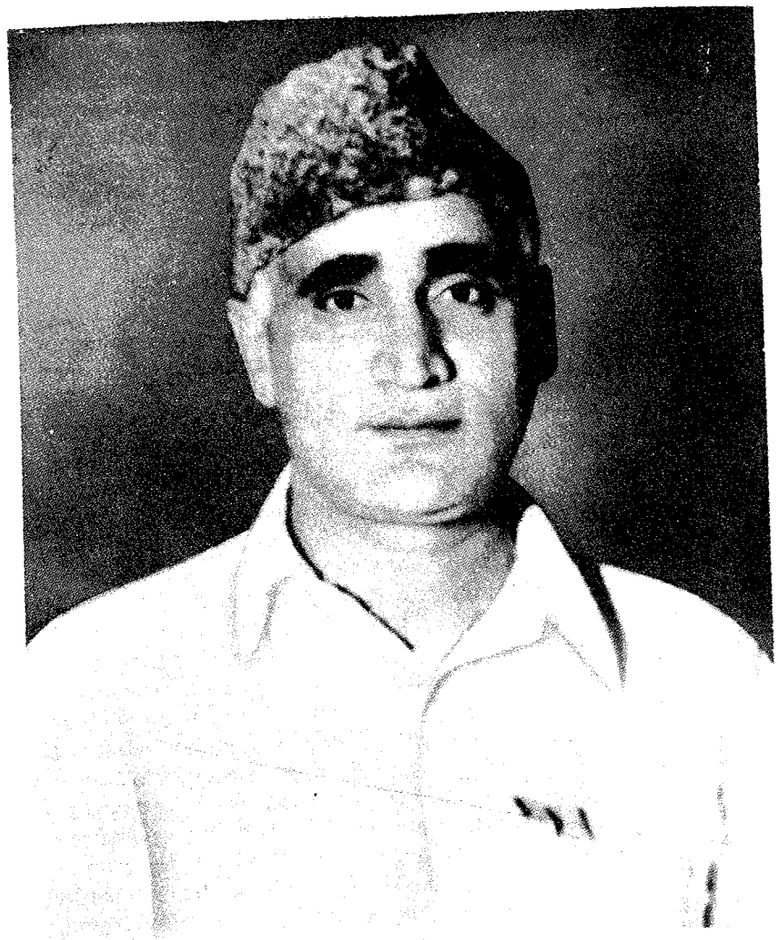
tions with the Government for the acceptance of its demands within fifteen days, failing which, he was to provide a programme of action. As the Constitution was suspended, he was named Dictator. The Durbar had already shifted to Jammu which was the Dogra's winter capital.

Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas sent a copy of the resolution to the Prime Minister and appended to it two memoranda: one dealt with the non-implementation of the Glancy Commission recommendations and the other detailed the MC point of view with regard to the proposed Legislative Assembly and the Franchise report. Prime Minister Colvin invited Chaudhri Sahib for talks on the question of Glancy recommendations' implementation but did not say anything as to whether he was or was not also prepared to discuss the Constitutional reforms issue. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas wrote him back that unless the Government was willing to enter into negotiations on this issue also, he saw no useful purpose in a meeting. As the Prime Minister was not ready or, perhaps, in a position to commit himself in writing, the Dictator released the correspondence to the press and ordered the launching of a Civil Disobedience Movement.

In Srinagar, Khanqah-i-Mualla again became the centre of agitation. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan was arrested after addressing a meeting here and sentenced to six months imprisonment on the charge of spreading disaffection against the Government. A Srinagar volunteer Abdul Ghaffar followed him to the stage; as he could not make a speech, he only said that he seconded the speech made by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas. He then recited the following verse of Iqbal:

سلطانئی جمہور کا آتا ہے زمانہ
جو نقش کہن تم کو نظر آئے مٹا دو

He was arrested at the same time and sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment for having seconded the speech of Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas and to a further imprisonment of 1½ year with a fine of Rs. 500/- for having recited the above verse. The agitation remained confined to the cities of Srinagar and Jammu where scores of workers offered themselves for arrest. Those arrested in the Valley included Haji Abdul Aziz Bande from Srinagar, Haji Abdul Ghaffar from Handwara, Mir Ghulam Hussain from Khanyar and Mr. Young Abdullah from Sopore. Among those arrested in Jammu was Mr. A. R. Saghar who was sentenced to four months rigorous imprisonment. It seems the Movement could not gain momentum for various reasons, one of them being that a large section of workers was of the opinion that in view of the impending elections, the Civil Disobedience



CHAUDHRI GHULAM ABBAS

Normally the Government arrests all leaders simultaneously whenever a movement is launched or is about to be launched. This is done to deprive people of an organised lead but this time the Government did not adopt this course perhaps because it was aware that in view of the impending elections, most of the political leaders and workers were not in favour of an agitation. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was in Lahore at the time of the arrest of Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas, therefore, decided to call off the Civil Disobedience Movement. A meeting of the General Council held on 27th of August, 1934, unanimously endorsed his decision.

THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

In continuation with the recommendation of Mr. Glancy, the Government had appointed, on 31st May, 1932, a Franchise Committee under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Sir Barjour Dalal, with the following members:—

1. Mr. L. W. Jardine, Vice Chairman.
2. Rao Bahadur Sardar Thakar Kartar Singh.
3. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Qaiyum.
4. Mr. Ram Nath Sharma, Registrar, High Court, Secretary.

On 24th March, 1933, Sir Elliot was appointed in place of Mr. Jardine and Mr. Heera Nand Raina took over as Secretary in place of Mr. Sharma. The Committee which was even apparently unrepresentative as no non-official was appointed to it, recommended the setting up of a Legislative Assembly consisting of seventy five members. The distribution of seats was as follows:—

1.	Elected Muslims	= 21
2.	Elected Hindus	= 10
3.	Elected Sikhs	= 2
4.	Nominated members	= 42

It also provided that the number of Muslims, including, of course, the nominated members, shall not be less than 32 and that of Hindus shall not exceed 25 but at the same time 12 out of the non-official members could be appointed from any community which was a device to further cripple its representative character and enable the Maharaja to give undue representation to Hindus.

The right of franchise was extremely limited. So far as women were concerned, the right of vote was limited to those who had passed

the Middle standard or an equivalent examination. On the male side, the following were given the right of vote:—

1. Zaildars, lambardars and safaidposh;
2. Imams of Mosques or Muftis, Prohats of temples, Granthis of a Gurdawara and Priests of Churches who were working as such at least six months before the preparation of the electoral rolls;
3. A title holder;
4. A retired pensioner; provided the pension was not less than rupees ten a month;
5. Doctors, Hakims, Vaids, Lawyers and Teachers;
6. A person who had passed at least the Middle standard examination or an equivalent examination in Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit or Hindi;
7. A person who paid, as annual land revenue, at least rupees twenty;
8. Illaqadars, Jagirdars or such muafi holders to whom had been assigned a revenue of not less than rupees twenty per annum ;
9. An occupancy tenant who paid, at least, rupees twenty as annual rent;
10. A person who owned immovable property of the value of at least rupees six hundred;
11. A person who paid at least rupees twenty as annual grazing-tax provided he was not a Bakarwal.

Another rule enacted with the malafide intention of preventing popular political leaders from entering the Legislature, was that any person who had been tried by a criminal court and sentenced for an offence carrying an imprisonment of more than six months was disqualified from contesting the elections for a period of five years beginning from the day the sentence came to an end. It had, however, been provided that he could do so if the Government granted an amnesty.

It appears that the Government had conveyed to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, unofficially, that in case Muslim Conference decided to contest

the polls, political prisoners were to be freed through a general amnesty. But unfortunately, at the eleventh hour, it went back on its promise and declined to release them. The Muslim Conference could not, at that late stage, beat a retreat and in any case it would have been impolitic and highly inexpedient because it would have enabled the Government to bring into the Legislature loyalist elements whom it could conveniently parade as elected representatives of the people. It seems that the Government, after careful consideration, decided to provoke the Muslim Conference to a boycott of the elections and that is why at the eleventh hour, it declined to release political prisoners. The plan seems to have been to create a sudden deadlock and by administering a shock to expectant public opinion, drive them to a hasty boycott.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues, however, decided to continue with the polls and telegraphically informed their workers in the muffasils to put up any available candidate in their constituency against pro-Government elements. In Srinagar, Muslims had five seats and consequently five candidates were brought into the field, namely, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, Khawaja Ali Mohammad, Haji Ahmedullah Shahdad, Syed Hussain Shah Jalali and Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. Among the candidates nominated by the Azad Muslim Conference against three seats were, Khawaja Abdul Ahad Farooqi against Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl against Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and Khawaja Muzaffar Shah against Syed Hussain Shah Jalali. It may be noted here that Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl had, since about two years, separated from the main stream of Muslim politics and associated himseif with the Mir Waiz group. Exact reasons for his breach with the Muslim Conference are not known but it seems from circumstantial evidence that gradual independent working of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was not to his liking. It also seems that he was psychologically more inclined towards Mir Waiz which may have also resulted in a cooling off between him and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The following members were elected unopposed:—

1. Khawaja Sanaullah Shah, Handwara;
2. Khawaja Ghulam Hassan Malik, Kulgam;
3. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Islamabad;
4. Khawaja Mohammad Akbar Dar, Islamabad;
5. Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Khan, Badgam;
6. Khawaja Mohammad Shafi Shah, Baramula;
7. Mian Ahmed Yar Khan, Muzaffarabad;
8. Sardar Fateh Mohammad Khan, Poonch;
9. Sardar Khan Mohammad, Poonch;
10. Chaudhri Abdul Karim, Mirpur;

11. Raja Murawat Khan, Bhimber;
12. Chaudhri Abdullah Khan Bhalli, Jammu;
13. Sheikh Mohammad Amin, Jammu city;
14. Col. Abdur Rehman Khan; Udhampur;
15. Major Atta Mohammad, Reasi;
16. Mian Qurban Ahmed, Kathua.

All non-Muslims, were returned unopposed. They were:

1. Pandit Amarnath Kak, Srinagar;
2. Pandit Jia Lal Killam, Srinagar;
3. Lala Amarnath Kohli, Jammu;
4. Pandit Dev Nath Shastri, Jammu;
5. Bakhshi Moti Ram, Jammu;
6. Chaudhri Chatar Singh, Jammu;
7. Pandit Ram Chand Dubai, Jammu;
8. Kotwal Lachhan Ram, Jammu;
9. Wazir Ganga Ram, Reasi;
10. Pandit Gobind Ram Bala, Kashmiri Hindu;
11. Sardar Budh Singh, Sikh from Mirpur;
12. Sardar Kanaya Singh, Sikh from Kashmir province.

Elections as such were fought only in Srinagar city, which witnessed a hectic campaign. Minor clashes occurred in certain localities but better sense largely prevailed. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah addressed dozens of meetings. So did Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. The contest was no longer between candidates on the basis of their comparative personal merit but between the Muslim Conference and the Azad Muslim Conference. The polling took place on 3rd September, 1934. The Muslim Conference captured all the five seats. The result gave a shattering blow to the prestige of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. It showed unmistakably how a man totally unknown four years back had, by sheer dint of sacrifice and selfless dedication to the Cause of his people, shattered the influence of a family which was undisputed and supreme for over a century. At the same time, it created greater bitterness especially in the camp of Mir Waiz who was from now on confirmed in the pursuit of a separatist policy.

Among the non-official members nominated by the Maharaja were the following:—

1. Major General Thakar Janak Singh;
2. Khan Bahadur Thakar Saeed Hussain, Srinagar;
3. Pandit Ram Chand Razdan;

4. Wazir Tej Ram;
5. Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, Srinagar;
6. Pandit Sham Sunder Lal Dhar;
7. Thakar Prem Singh;
8. Thakar Sadhu Singh;
9. Sardar Mal Singh;
10. Chaudhri Abbas Ali, Mirpur;
11. Mohammad Abdullah, Zaildar;
12. Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Advocate, Jammu;
13. Munshi Assadullah;
14. Pandit Lok Ram Sharma;
15. Raja of Khaplu;
16. Mehdi Ali Khan of Kharmang;
17. Wazir Mohammad Khan of Astore;
18. Khawaja Safdar Ali, Zaildar;
19. Rahim Shah Bande, Srinagar;
20. Sultan of Dopatta;
21. Bagat Ram;
22. Lala Sharbu Nath Nanda;
23. Sardar Hari Singh;
24. Lala Ram Lal, Poonch;
25. Babu Ram Das Chinhani;
26. Lajpat Rai;
27. Raja of Zangol.

It will have been noted that Muslim elected members constituted only 28 percent. The Assembly was almost powerless. The Maharaja retained all Legislative powers as inherent in his person; he also had the authority to veto the laws and resolutions passed by the Assembly; there could be no discussion either with regard to the army or the privy purse. The Maharaja could nominate any one at any time as a member of the Assembly for any particular purpose. The Assembly members were given a daily allowance of rupees five when it was in session.

The first session of the Assembly was held on 17th October, 1934, at Shergarhi in Srinagar. The Maharaja attended the inaugural session and the Prime Minister read a proclamation known as Regulation No. I of 1991 Bikrami which had already been published in April and which defined the powers of the Assembly. The members had no experience of legislative decorum. It led to many interesting speeches. For instance, Haji Ahmedullah Shahdad, a grey-bearded, turbaned business-man from Srinagar, told the Assembly:

یہ سب رنگ لایا میاں شیر کشمیر

The Muslim Conference had been able to capture fourteen seats. At a meeting of the Working Committee, which was also attended by the newly elected members, Mian Ahmed Yar was elected Leader of the Assembly Party and Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Deputy Leader. It should be said to the credit of Kashmiri-speaking members that although forming majority in the Party, they elected a Punjabi-speaking colleague as their leader. It was in keeping with the Muslim awakening which aimed at breaking linguistic and regional barriers. While addressing the Assembly, Mian Ahmed Yar expressed his Party's dissatisfaction over the franchise report as well as the limited powers of the Legislature. He said that the people of the State deserved better treatment. On the other hand, the non-Muslim members, except Sardar Budh Singh and Jagat Ram, a Harijan member, who boycotted the inaugural session, showered lavish praise on what they termed as the "magnanimity" of Maharaja Hari Singh in setting up the Assembly. The session lasted till the 2nd of November.

The third annual session of the Muslim Conference was held at Sopore on 11th, 12th and 13th November, 1934. Mian Ahmed Yar Khan who had been already elected Leader of the Parliamentary group, was elected President for the ensuing year. The Conference was a great success and was attended by thousands of workers. It adopted many resolutions demanding a wider franchise, larger powers for the Assembly, implementation of Glancy recommendations, opening of industries and improvement in the health and education sectors.

ABDULLAH UNDER NEHRU-SPELL

After the session, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah left for India to renew contacts with leaders of political thought over there. It was during this sojourn that he had a meeting with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru which had far-reaching consequences in Kashmir politics. His fore-fathers had migrated from the State. His wife Kamla was also of Kashmiri descent. As a shrewd Hindu politician, he could not look with favour upon the growth of such a strong exclusively Muslim Movement, especially in such a strategically important part of the sub-continent. To Nehru, the sub-continent was like a ring in which Kashmir valley occupied the position of a gem. This unfortunately was the time when Muslim League was extremely weak; it was plagued by factionalism; the Ulema had, on the whole, thrown in their lot with the Congress which had, under the leadership of Mr. M.K. Gandhi, emerged as the most powerful political party in the country. The London Round Table Conference had failed to evolve a constitutional formula acceptable to all, but it was apparent that some sort of internal autonomy was at

hand. In the internal tussle for power and ascendency in the Congress, Pandit Nehru had already emerged successful as the protege of Mr. Gandhi and there was no doubt in the mind of any intelligent observer of the political scene that any constitutional reforms or the grant of Dominion status meant his political power. These were the circumstances and this was the political climate when Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah left for the plains.

The reader may usefully recall here the creditable role played by Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz in the Glancy Commission and even afterwards. A very shrewd Brahmin, he was able to think much ahead of his generation when he identified himself unreservedly and generously with the Muslim aspirations. This naturally endeared him to the Muslim rank and file. He was thus able to build himself into a position of confidence with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Maulana Mohammad Saeed, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and many others. He was gradually able to impress upon them that the real tussle was not between the Hindu masses and the Muslim masses but between the rich as against the poor and between the ruled and the ruler, irrespective of being Muslims or Hindus. The argument that, after all, the benefits secured as a result of the Muslim struggle such as the setting up of the Legislative Assembly, freedom of press, platform and association and benefits by way of the grant of proprietary rights and abolition of grazing tax etc., were made available not only to Muslims who suffered for their securance but also to non-Muslims who made no contribution at all towards that end, seems to have impressed them. It is also possible that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, having achieved infinite heights of popularity in Kashmir, might have been also tempted by the wider field of activity and influence that association with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru could offer in the sub-continent. All this was unfortunate but it seems this is how it happened. It has been already noted how soon after 1931 appeals for co-operation were issued to non-Muslims and how even committees had been set up to enlist their support. There appears little doubt that all this was due, primarily, to the influence that Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz exercised in the ranks of the Muslim leadership as well as the dismal picture that Muslim politics in the subcontinent presented at the time.

Let the background story be told by Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz himself:—

> "With the publication of the report of the Grievances Enquiry Commission as well as of other reports by B. J. Glancy which he submitted to the Maharaja in May, 1932, regarding the constitutional reforms and freedom of press and platform, it became widely known that all

State Hindus did not oppose the Muslim demands and that at least a section of the Kashmiri Pandits whom Prem Nath Bazaz represented were anxious to see that the legitimate grievances of the State Muslims are redressed and a progressive form of Government established in the State. This created a moderating and sobering influence on the Muslim mind. A few young Muslim leaders including Abdullah began to think of re-orientating the Muslim politics on broader, healthier and non-communal lines. Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz met only two months later on a historic afternoon in July 1932 in the Chashma Shahi Garden to thrash out the problem. This meeting proved to be of great significance. The decisions taken in it by the two after a frank, detailed and heart to heart discussion of the basic issues, have considerably influenced the State politics. It was in this meeting that Abdullah and Bazaz firmly resolved that the Kashmir Freedom Movement will be conducted on secular, progressive and democratic lines. Both of them promised to work together till the goal of complete freedom was achieved.

After Chashma Shahi meeting Abdullah and Bazaz met frequently to review progress of their mission during the succeeding months. Meanwhile, unfavourable wind began to blow in the State. The reactionary Hindus considered the various Glancy reports as a challenge to their stronghold in State politics. They could easily see that their vested interests were being demolished and if the process was allowed to continue, before long, there would be a popular government in the country which in other words would mean the rule of the Muslims—the majority community in the State. These reactionaries therefore tried their best to frighten the Government so that it might desist from becoming just towards the Muslims. Public meetings were held in which irresponsible and provocative speeches were delivered by Hindu leaders. This caused a riot in Srinagar during October and passions ran very high. It was surely not a suitable climate for introducing secular politics in the country. Though therefore the implementation of the proposal drawn in the Chashma Shahi Garden was postponed indefinitely, Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz continued to keep in close touch with each other.

Influenced by the writings of progressive Pandit intellectuals, published in the columns of Vitasta, the Working Committee of the Muslim Conference constituted a sub-committee in 1933 to find out ways and means of uniting Hindus and Muslims. This sub-committee could not function but it indicated that the idea of joint action in politics had taken birth.....

The Working Committee suspended the Constitution of the Conference and appointed Ghulam Abbas as "Dictator" with the purpose of either getting the grievances of Muslims redressed by correspondence with the Government or by launching a movement of civil disobedience. Abbas prepared his memorandum to the Government in consultation with Abdullah and Bazaz. It is noteworthy that while discussing the constitutional reforms for the State in the memorandum, Ghulam Abbas demanded that there should be a system of joint electorates for the proposed Legislative Assembly, a thing which has always been hateful to Muslim communalists.....

Early in 1935 Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz felt that the time had arrived to make the first move in the implementation of their scheme for re-orientating Kashmir politics on secular lines. They were, however, cautious not to precipitate the matters. On 1st August, 1935, they jointly started a weekly journal "The Hamdard" in Urdu to popularise the ideology and to lay the foundation of progressive Nationalism in the State. The inauguration of the first issue of the journal was performed by Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlu in a big public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar. From the very start, the Hamdard attempted to blaze a new trail in the affairs of the State. It was a standard-bearer of democracy and unity of all Kashmiris without any consideration of caste or creed they professed. Often it published articles bitterly and frankly critical of orthodox views. Its readers came from all classes and communities. In a country where all other papers were either thoroughly Muslim or totally Hindu in their outlook, the Hamdard stood alone, a class by itself. It was mainly through the sober, thoughtful and inspiring writings of this weekly that the Muslim Conference was converted into the National Conference in 1939 A.C."[1]

An attempt was made in Srinagar as early as 1933 to set up a National Conference. On 7th August, 1933, a provisional committee to that end was formed with Syed Ahmed Shah Gilani, a Christian, as President and Pandit Radhey Nath Kaul as Secretary. Of course, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz was one of its members and in fact the brain behind it. The Committee could not make any head-way partly because neither Muslims nor Hindus felt attracted by nationalism and partly because its office bearers carried no weight with the public. In 1936, yet another effort was made by the formation of a Students' organisation known as "The Kashmir Youth League". Its declared objects were (1) to organise young men and women for the service of the country; (2) to fight by all legitimate means

1 Freedom Struggle, p.

for the realisation of responsible Government in the State; and (3) to work for the economic, social and cultural uplift of the people. Yet another effort was made in 1937 when in August, a workers and labourers organisation known as "The Mazdur and Kisan Sabha" was formed, again in Srinagar. The first Students' conference was held in Srinagar on 7th November 1936. The second annual conference was again held here in autumn 1937 under the presidentship of Doctor Mohammad Ashraf, then Secretary of the Indian National Congress. The most prominent student leader then was Pandit Kashi Nath Bamzai, a man of great intelligence, foresight and wisdom.

The fourth annual session of the Muslim Conference was held in Srinagar on the 25th, 26th and 27th October, 1935. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, who had been released from jail after serving a sentence of one year, was elected President for the next year. He was taken through the city in a splendidly-organised river procession which started from Chhattabal and terminated at Amirakadal. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah seems to have taken special care to accord his estranged colleague from Jammu a really warm reception, perhaps to bring about a complete melting of the bitterness engendered in the recent past. Many non-Muslims, including Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Pandit Kayshup Bandhu, Jia Lal Killam and Shyam Lal Saraf, also attended the session as observers. The session was held at Pathar Masjid. Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad was Secretary of the Reception Committee with Mir Waiz Ghulam Nabi Hamdani as President. In his presidential address, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas said:—

> "The martyrdom of the martyrs of Kashmir had been like the touch of the Messiah for us and their sacred blood has provided a cure for our political ailments; they were all men of God whom He specially chose for the object. Had the Government, at the time of bringing constitutional reforms, at least taken note of the N.W.F.P., perhaps the continued unrest and disturbances in the State could be permanently brought to an end. So far as education, political awakening, social and cultural developments and the suitability of the people to take over the administration of the country is concerned, we can say it with confidence that the inhabitants of this State are under no circumstances and in no way, behind the people of N.W.F.P.; so if the English Government can show a sense of tolerance and liberalism in the very beginning of the introduction of reforms in the Frontier, we see no reason why the State Government should not have done the same."[1]

1 Taseer, p. 336.

Speaking about the Hindu-Muslim unity, a theme, as we have already seen, that was being repeatedly brought into lime-light, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan said:—

> "While forgetting the bitterness of the past, I, on behalf of the Muslims of the State, very sincerely appeal to my non-Muslim countrymen that they should extend their co-operation to us. I assure them that Muslims have no intention to deprive any nation of its legitimate rights and that they are seeking justice for every one and demand for themselves only those rights that belong to them. *Let us all join together to struggle for the emancipation of our country. I hope the non-Muslim leaders will, in the interests of the country, consider my appeal courageously and honestly. They must rest assured that the real good of their nation also* lies in the same."[1]

The Conference re-elected Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masudi as General Secretary. He has also been Editor of the National Conference's official organ "The Daily Khidmat" from its very inception.

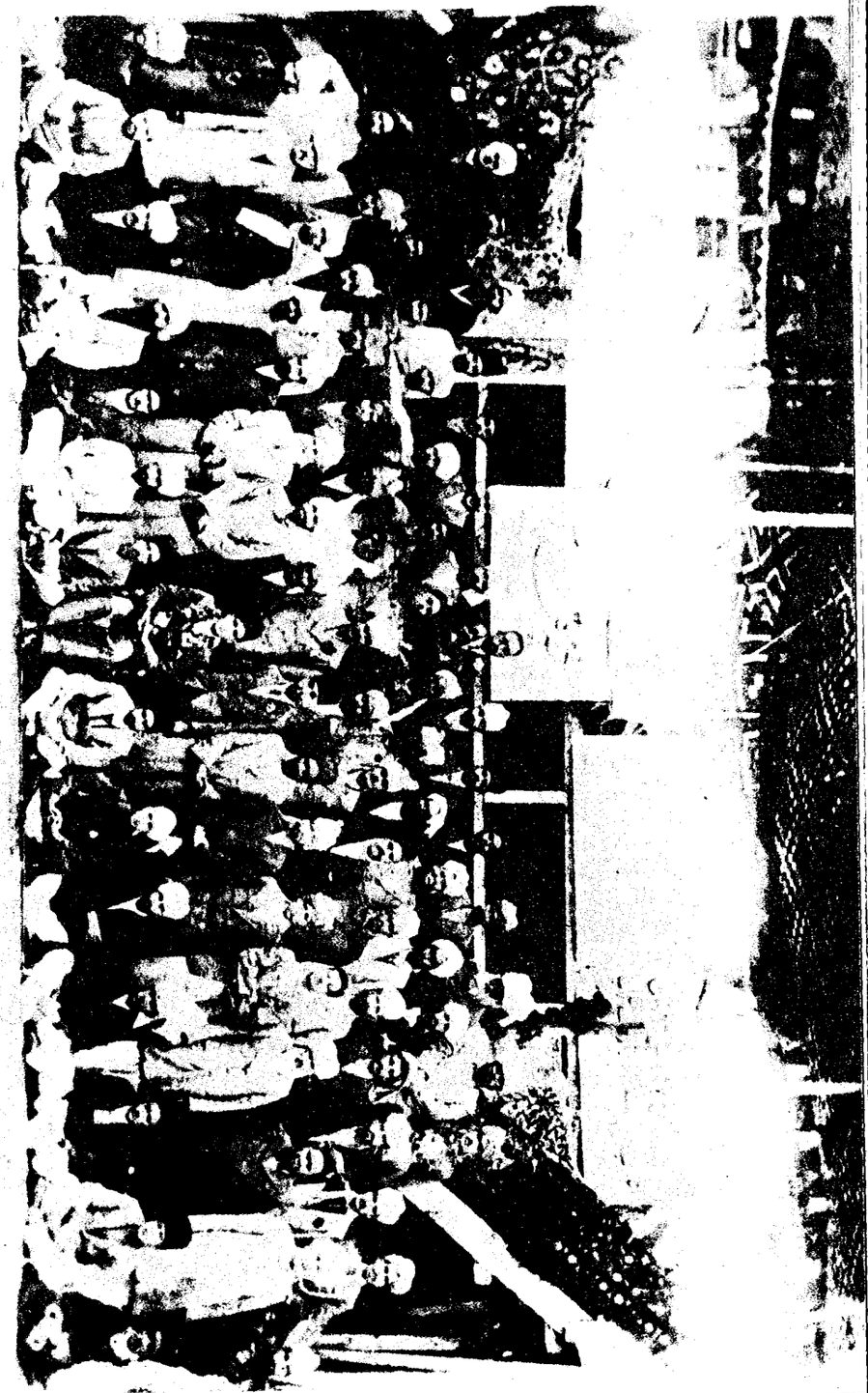
The need for a permanent Party premises, came into focus soon after the formation of the Conference in 1932. Consequently, with funds raised by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in Srinagar, a spacious building was constructed in the grounds adjacent to Pathar Masjid; it was named Mujahid Manzil. Apart from several rooms in the ground floor which housed Party offices and spacious lawns, the building has a hall and a few residential rooms in the first floor. The General Council and the Working Committee have since held their meetings here. Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad was in-charge of the project.

Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had returned from England and re-entered the Indian political scene by assuming, on great public demand, presidentship of the All India Muslim League, paid a short visit to Srinagar in 1936. This was his second visit to the Valley; these will be dealt with alongwith his third and final visit which came about in 1944.

GILGIT LEASED TO BRITAIN

With the failure of the Round Table Conference, the British Government gave its decision which is known as the Communal Award and which envisaged separate electorate for different communities. In 1935, the British Government enforced a constitutional measure known as the Government of India Act of 1935. On the provincial level, it introduced a limited autonomy while at the centre, it envisaged

1 Taseer, p. 341-342.



Muslim Conference Workers in Srinagar with President of the Party in 1935.

a Federation, consisting of both the British as well as Princely India. Maharaja Hari Singh had attended the Round Table Conference as a delegate and, in his speech, had largely supported the aspirations of the Indian National Congress. The Congress did not accept that part of the Act which related to the coming into being of the Federation but accepted, though with reservations, the part that related to the provincial autonomy. The Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference could not close its eyes towards these important developments. It demanded that the Maharaja should not join the Federation without prior consultation with the representatives of the State people and that in any case, if the State was compelled to join it, only elected representatives of the people had the right to sit in the Federal Parliament.

It was also during this year that Gilgit was leased to the British Government for a period of sixty years. Gilgit had assumed great importance once again in the British colonial policy. With the overthrow of the Czarist regime, a Communist dictatorship had not only seized power but had since consolidated its hold on Soviet Russia. This had brought Communism almost to the door-steps of Kashmir. Britain had always considered Russian presence across the Pamirs a constant threat to its Indian and Far East Empire. With the growth of Nazi militarism and Mussolini's Fascism in Europe, the danger posed by the presence of Russia just across the Pamirs, assumed greater importance. According to British military experts, it necessitated Britain's direct presence in Gilgit. The civil and military administration of the Political Agency of Gilgit was already in the hands of the Viceroy. A vassal of the British whose kingdom was a gift from the Imperial Government to his great-grand-father and which itself depended for its existence on British support, the Maharaja had identical interests with the British; so a lease agreement was executed on 29th March, 1935 between the Maharaja and Col. L.E. Lang, the Resident, on behalf of the British Government, which authorised the Viceroy to assume the civil and military government of the civil district of Gilgit subject to the condition that the territory would continue to be included within the dominion of the Maharaja and the rights pertaining to mining would also be reserved to the Kashmir Government. It was also agreed that the flag of His Highness shall permanently remain hoisted at the Headquarters of the Agency; that ceremonial salutes would be fired on such occasions as the birthday of His Highness and Hindu religious festivals, Dussehra, Basant, etc; that British army shall not be entitled to pass, in normal circumstances, through areas lying on the right bank of Indus. The agreement was signed at Jammu and Mr. M.A.F. Metcalf, Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the Government of India, signed it at Delhi on 3rd April, 1935, on behalf of the Viceroy.

Some Hindu historians have vainly but designedly tried to link the lease of Gilgit with the Muslim liberation movement in 1931 and tried to create an impression that it was British-inspired in order to get Gilgit on lease. Apart from the fact that there is no evidence at all to support the charge of British inspiration, they need not have resorted to any pressure tactics in order to get the lease. Apart from being, by Treaty, bound to satisfy Britain's strategic requirements born, in this case, out of fears of a foreign invasion, the Maharaja's interests in the region did not run counter to those of his overlords; on the contrary, these were exactly identical. Although British imperialism and the Indian Princes played a complimentary role, Britain could have survived without the Princes, but the latter could in no case have survived even for a few months without the mighty protection that British presence in the sub-continent made them available. In fact, as we have already seen, Hari Singh was the only member in his entire dynasty whom they brought up from his very childhood as a protege. The insinuation has been invented to defame the Muslim Movement. It is customary for Hindus to condemn all Muslim movements in the sub-continent as British-inspired.

Muslim Conference did not hold any annual session in 1936. On the 8th of May, a Responsible Government Day was observed by the Party. In response to an appeal issued by its President, Ch. Ghulam Abbas, for co-operation, in Srinagar, Poonch and Jammu not only were the meetings presided over by non-Muslims but they also constituted the principal speakers. Public meetings were also held in Reasi, Rajouri, Bhimber, Ranbirsinghpura, Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Bandipura, Bijbihara, Handwara and Pattan. Resolutions were passed condemning the State Assembly as inadequate and unrepresentative and demanding the setting up of a Legislative Assembly to which the Government should be fully responsible. This demand was particularly necessitated by the experience in the Assembly which showed that it could do little for the good of the people and the only advantage it provided was that Muslims were able to use it as a platform for publicising their grievances. On 29th October, 1936, Sardar Budh Singh, addressing its summer session, condemned it as a toy Assembly and tendered his resignation. Following in his foot-steps, Muslim Conference members tendered their resignations on 27th November in protest against the rejection of its demand for the withdrawal of the grazing-tax bill. It is interesting to point out that even the Dogra Sabha of Jammu had earlier demanded a better constitution than the one that was in force. By-elections to the seats vacated by Muslim Conference members were held in February, 1937, and the same members were again returned on Party tickets. This again demonstrated the unique popularity of the Party among Muslim masses.

The fifth annual session of the Conference was held in Poonch city on the 14th, 15th and 16th of May, 1937. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was elected President, said:—

"The demand for a powerful Assembly and responsible Government is not new but has been voiced from our platform from the very beginning of the freedom movement, especially since 1934..... We have full confidence that the poor among the Hindus and the Sikhs will in near future join hands with us in our struggle for the achievement of responsible Government. We shall continue our efforts in this behalf.

In our neighbouring country, the British India, Hindus are in a majority in some provinces while Muslims are in a majority in some others. *Our declarations with regard to the safeguarding of minority rights are undoubtedly far better than those which are contained in the relevant resolution passed by the Indian National Congress. We have not resorted to stock phrases and thus practically avoided grant of rights to the minorities (the reference is obviously to the Indian National Congress)* but have in clear words accepted their rights and offered them an agreement. If the State minorities insist that they should get the same rights in the State which will be available to the minorities in the subcontinent, we have no objection in accepting the same. It is now for our Hindu and Sikh brothers that without wasting any further time they should join hands with us so that we get rid of the irresponsible Government. From amongst the non-Muslims, a group has already come in the field who sincerely wish to remove poverty and hunger from the country and who sincerely desire to associate themselves with the Muslim demand for responsible Government. It is their desire that we evolve a common platform so that the caravan may move ahead towards its goal with redoubled strength. It is our duty to welcome the desire for co-operation on the part of this group."

Referring to the Government of India Act of 1935, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said:—

"The second part of the constitution which relates to the setting up of a Federation, has a direct bearing on the States and their inhabitants because representation from the States has been provided in the Federal Assembly as well as the Federal Council. *The way the British statesmen, while drafting the constitution, callously ignored the rights of eight crore citizens of Indian States, constitutes the darkest page in the*

*dark history behind the enactment of this constitution. These eight crore citizens have been treated like cattle, whose views and desires have received no consideration at all from the British Government. The right to nominate their representatives has been given to such persons (Princes themselves) of whose ill-treatment they are already tired. If the intention of the British Government by bringing the States in the Federation is to secure the support of the States, then it is clear that it can be done only by winning the sympathies of the eight crore inhabitants of the States and not by getting the support of a limited number of Nawabs and Maharajas.....*Those leaders of India (both Congress and League had adopted non-intervention in Indian States as their official policy) who feel hesitant at this time from representing these eight crore inhabitants will consider it necessary for their success on the coming into force of the Federation to enlist the support of these people."[1]

In a resolution the Maharaja was asked not to join the Federation and if he desired to do so, then to get the State representatives for the Centre elected by the people; it was also demanded that the representative character of the Assembly be increased and the Cabinet be made responsible to it. Among other resolutions, pertaining to local problems, the Conference demanded the setting up of an Intermediate College in Poonch, the opening of a new hospital in Srinagar and the establishment of a University.

PROVOCATION AND APOLOGY

Two incidents of disrespect to Muslim religion occurred at this time. It appears that some Kashmiri Pandits were bent upon creating Hindu-Muslim tension. The first incident occurred in Srinagar on 7th June, 1937. Addressing a meeting of Pandits at Shital Nath, Pandit Shiv Narain Fotedar, President of the "Yovak Sabha", said:—

"Hindus have the same respect for cow which the Muslims have for Prophet Mohammad" (Peace be upon him).

It was a deliberate attempt to provoke Muslims. No Muslim was present in the meeting but as the intention was mischief, it was reproduced in the Sabha organ, daily "Martand". Naturally there was resentment among Muslims who closed their shops and assembled in the Jamia Masjid. The Government enforced section 144. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah being away at Bijbihara, Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah who had by now almost completely withdrawn from the political field, was persuaded to lead a procession in defiance of the ban. Near Bahoori Kadal, the police tried, unsuccessfully, to block its passage. It resorted to

1 Taseer, p. 350.

firing, resulting in one death and injuries to a score of people. The young martyr's cot was placed at the head of the procession which then continued its march. On the way, police resorted to a lathi charge; Mir Waiz received several injuries and, to make the confusion worst confounded, he was forthwith arrested. As soon as the news reached Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, he hurried back to Srinagar and in a statement condemned Shiv Narain Fotedar and publishers of Martand; he also condemned the police brutalities and expressed his total solidarity with the rank and file of the Muslim community. Casting aside his personal differences, he said:—

"Religion is nobody's monopoly. If Mir Waiz has been compelled to have super in jail, we shall certainly be with him at dinner."[1]

Afraid of the grave consequences that were bound to ensue, Fotedar immediately tendered an unqualified apology; Martand also apologised and pleaded *mis-reporting* as an excuse. This did not satisfy Muslims. A few days later, Shiv Narain Fotedar, accompanied by Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, took a round of the city in an open car and tendered personal apology at important centres.

The second incident took place in Poonch city. A Kashmiri Pandit doctor who was Superintendent of the jail, was alleged, in course of an inspection, to have thrown from a shelf, a copy of the Holy Book. Muslims immediately closed business. Thousands of people armed with axes and whatever other weapons could be locally available, gathered in the vicinity of the palace and squatted there for many days. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah accompanied by Sardar Budh Singh and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz hurried to the town. The Government tendered an unqualified apology; the Superintendent was immediately suspended and an inquiry instituted against him.

Mir Waiz was unconditionally released, after 15 days.

A few months later, some Hindu temples in the city were set ablaze at exactly the same time and, in some cases, some of the statues were disfigured. Some Muslims were arrested, one of whom, Jumma, turned an approver. The commitment proceedings were held in the Court of Khawaja Abdul Ghani, Magistrate 1st Class, Poonch, who later retired as Law Secretary cum Judge High Court of the Azad Kashmir Government. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg and Mian Ahmed Yar were deputed by the Party to defend the accused.

1 Taseer, p. 355.

Most of them were discharged in the committal Court and the remainder acquitted by the Sessions Judge as there was no evidence to support the charge.

In November, 1937, an organisation of labourers was set up in Srinagar under the leadership of Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Kara. On 14th November, it observed a Labour Day. The labour movement was supported by Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. Mr. Faiz Ahmed Piracha from Punjab, who came to Srinagar from Peshawar in 1929 and was actively associated with the labour movement, was externed on the allegation of being a Communist. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz was prohibited from making any speech for six months.

M.C. SUCCESS IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The term of the Legislative Assembly, which had been elected for a period of three years, expired on 31st December, 1937. In the previous election, despite unfavourable circumstances, the Muslim Conference had been able to capture sixteen out of twenty one seats. The voters who constituted only three percent of the population, belonged either to the upper or the upper-middle class. Even then the Government was afraid of elections as it expected the Muslim Conference to capture the whole lot of Muslim seats. Efforts were, therefore, already afoot to create dissension in their ranks. While in Kashmir the loyalists and big land-lords were available to oppose its candidates, Jammu province provided a more fruitful field because of tribal rivalries among Rajputs, Jats and Gujars.

But despite all-out Government efforts to deprive Muslim Conference of as many seats as possible, the latter was able to capture nineteen out of twenty one seats. Those elected on its ticket are as follows:—

1. Mian Ahmed Yar, Srinagar;
2. Agha Saeed Hussain Shah Jalali, Srinagar;
3. Haji Ahmedullah Shahdad, Srinagar;
4. Mr. M. A. Hafeez, Srinagar;
5. Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Srinagar;
6. Khawaja Akbar Dar, Avantipura;
7. Khawaja Ghulam Nabi, Kulgam;
8. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Anantnag;
9. Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad, Badgam;
10. Maulvi Mohammad Saeed, Muzaffarabad;
11. Mirza Attaullah Khan, Reasi;

12. Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan, Jammu;
13. Khawaja Mohammad Khalil, Udhampur;
14. Mr. A. R. Saghar, Jammu;
15. Lt. Fazlur Rehman, Bhimber;
16. Sardar Fateh Mohammad Khan, Haveli Mehnder (Poonch);
17. Subedar Khan Mohammad Khan, Sudhnutti Bagh, Poonch;
18. Qazi Abdul Ghani, Baramula;
19. Khawaja Mohammad Akbar Soofi, Handwara.

The following two gentlemen were elected as independents but soon afterwards joined the Muslim Conference Parliamentary Group:—

1. Pir Zia-ud-Din, Badgam;
2. Chaudhri Abdul Karim, Mirpur.

Pir Zia-ud-Din had been denied Party ticket and it goes to his credit that he cast aside his personal bitterness in the larger interests of Muslims.

Among non-Muslims, the following were elected:—

1. Doctor Balram Das, Jammu city;
2. Lala Dina Nath, Jammu city;
3. Chaudhri Lachhman Singh, Jammu district;
4. Mr. Shiv Lal, Udhampur;
5. Wazir Ganga Ram, Reasi;
6. Chaudhri Avatar Singh, Kathua;
7. Lala Ajudhaya Nath, Mirpur;
8. Sardar Dhian Singh, Mirpur-Poonch; Sikh;
9. Pandit Amarnath Kak, Srinagar city;
10. Pandit Shiv Narain Fotedar, Srinagar city;
11. Pandit Deva Kaul, Kashmir;
12. Sardar Kirpal Singh, Kashmir; Sikh.

Among the nominated members, were:—

1. Rai Bahadur Pandit Amar Nath Purbi (Chamber of Commerce);
2. Mr. Jigmat Dadool (Ladakh Budhists);
3. Kahloon Labzang Chewang (Ladakh Budhists);
4. Mr. Mohammad Ali Shah, Askardu;
5. Mr. Wajid Ali Shah, Kargil;
6. Raja Hussain Khan, Astore;

7. Maulvi Mohammad Jawad Ansari, North Kashmir;
8. Khawaja Abdur Rahim Bande, Srinagar;
9. Mr. Ram Rakha Mal, Jammu;
10. Mr. Jagat Ram Aryan, Udhampur;
11. Mr. Satya Pal Vohra, Srinagar;
12. Sardar Mal Singh Khosla, Udhampur;
13. Babu Ram Das, Chinhani;
14. Lala Ram Lal, Poonch;
15. Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Jammu;
16. Pandit Lok Nath Sharma, Jammu;
17. Munshi Assadullah, Srinagar;
18. Kotwal Shiv Lal, Jammu.

The first session of the Assembly was held at Rajgarh palace in Srinagar on 7th September, 1938. Mian Ahmed Yar was again elected Leader of the Muslim Conference Assembly Party and Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, its Deputy Leader. Immediately after taking oath, Mian Ahmed Yar made the following statement:—

> "Sir, under the circumstances prevailing in the State at present I and my Party should not have attended the session even for a minute but as we had to take the oath of allegiance to His Highness, the Maharaja Bahadur, we did not consider it proper to absent ourselves on this occasion. However, as a protest against the repressive policy of the Government, we walk out and will not take part in the proceedings of the House."

A meeting of the General Council was held on 5th January, 1938, at Srinagar under the presidentship of Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, then Vice President of the Party. A resolution was passed expressing its solidarity with the Muslims of Palestine. In another resolution, the Maharaja was called upon to desist from joining the proposed Indian Federation and in any case, announce, for public information, the terms and conditions of accession. The Council also demanded the appointment of Muslims as Prime Minister and Chief Secretary. It may be noted here that among the 28 Prime Ministers the State employed since 1846, no Muslim ever held the post up to 1948. No Muslim had until the passage of the resolution ever held the post of the Chief Secretary.

Sometime later, the Maharaja increased the number of his Cabinet from three to four and appointed Muslims to two of them but neither of the two, Sir Abdus Samad and Nawab Khusro Jang, belonged to the State. The same year, a Hindu-Sikh political conference was held in Jammu. It appears to have been officially inspired to unite non-Muslims in order to support the Government's possible participation in the Federation.

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CHAPTER XIII

Muslim Conference Re-named National Conference

INITIATING THE MOVE

The sixth annual session of the Muslim Conference was held in Jammu on the 25th, 26th and 27th March, 1938. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was elected President. Sheikh Mohammad Amin, M.L.A., headed the Reception Committee. Addressing the session, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah said:—

"It is essential that all those people who suffer from the present system of government should get an opportunity to join in the struggle for the achievement of responsible Government. Who are these people? They are not only Muslims but also Hindus and Sikhs, untouchables and Budhists, nay, all citizens of the State. Some Muslims have a misconception that all non-Muslims are living a life of comfort. This is not correct. Only a few thousand among them stand protected against inequalities and disabilities otherwise the rest of them are like you, poor, indebted, illiterate and suffer from other excesses. The demand for responsible Government is not meant for eighty percent Muslims alone but for all inhabitants of the State; therefore it is necessary to march together with the twenty percent non-Muslims.

The main problem now before us, therefore, is to initiate joint action and form a united front against the forces that stand in the way of the achievement of our goal. This will require re-naming of our

organisation as a non-communal political party, necessitating amendments in its constitution.

I reiterate today what I have said so often: firstly, we must end communalism by ceasing to think in terms of Muslims and non-Muslims when discussing our political problems. Secondly there must be universal sufferage on the basis of joint electorate. Without these two, democracy is lifeless.

You complain that Hindus belonging to the vested interests are reactionary and stand in the way of our progress. But have we not had the same experience in the case of capitalist Muslims also? It is significant as well as hopeful that despite many difficulties, some non-Muslims have co-operated with us though their number is very small. Their sincerity and moral courage make us feel their strength. We must therefore open our doors to all such Hindus and Sikhs who, like ourselves, believe in freeing the country from the shackles of an irresponsible rule."[1]

In the Subjects Committee meeting a resolution was introduced by Maulvi Mohammad Saeed, that the name of the Conference be changed to that of All Jammu and Kashmir Political Conference which, in other words, meant to open its doors to non-Muslims by dropping the word "Muslim". Raja Mohammad Akbar from Mirpur supported the resolution. It was opposed by A. R. Saghar, Sheikh Mohammad Amin and Abdul Majid Qarshi who said that the "Millat came first while politics came later". Mr. Saghar and Sheikh Mohammad Amin introduced an amendment seeking to defer its consideration in order to elicit public opinion so that the same could be taken up again in the next session. Introducing the amendment, Mr. Saghar said, "politics came first and religion and millat, later" but at the same time he was strongly of the opinion that without taking into account the general sentiments of the people which could not be known as the resolution had been abruptly introduced, it was not proper to bring about such a far-reaching change. The logic was irresistible. It is a tribute to the political rules of the game then in vogue, that the amendment was accepted by the Subjects Committee and the resolution deferred for further consideration.

In May, 1938, a party known as National Congress was set up in Srinagar, with Khawaja Mohammad Umar Butt B.A. as President and Pandit Ragho Nath Veshnavi as General Secretary. Among its other founding members were Mr. Madan Lal, Veer Prakash, Seth Kishori Lal

1 Taseer, p. 361.

and Khawaja Ali Mohammad Butt of Basant Bagh. The Party had no links whatsoever with the Indian National Congress. It merged, later, with the National Conference. In April, 1938, an association named National Conference was formed in Jammu with Mr. S. A. Sheikh as President.

On 28th June, 1938, the Working Committee of the Muslim Conference met in Srinagar to consider the question of changing the name of the party. After marathon discussions lasting five days and spread over fifty-two hours, it passed the following resolution:—

"Whereas in the opinion of the Working Committee the time has now come when all the progressive forces in the country should be rallied under one banner to fight for the achievement of Responsible Government, the Working Committee recommends to the General Council that in the forthcoming annual session, the name and the constitution of the organisation be so altered and amended that all people who wish to participate in the political struggle are enabled to become members of the Conference irrespective of their caste, creed or religion."

According to Mr. Rashid Taseer, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Sheikh Ahmed Din Banihali, Mr. Abdul Majid Qarshi and some other leaders opposed the resolution whereupon they were asked to resign from the party.[1] This they did not.

The resolution had now to be approved by a plenary session of the Party but before it could be done, a clash was precipitated by the Government. Raja Mohammad Akbar Khan of Mirpur had, sometime back, been sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100/- in connection with a speech delivered in criticism of the Government. Raja Akbar is remembered as a selfless political leader. A zamindar by birth with some landed property, he was the pillar of the Movement in his district. Simple of habits, he led an austere life and had great compassion for the poor. He founded and edited a weekly, "Such", published from Mirpur which was known for its fearless advocacy of the down-trodden.

THE 1938 AGITATION

The Responsible Government Demand Day was observed on 5th August 1938. Processions were taken out, public meetings held and resolutions adopted repudiating the existing system of irresponsible Government and expressing full faith in the ultimate establishment of complete responsible Government. Appeals were issued to all patriotic

1 *Ibid.*, p. 367.

elements "to muster under the banner of freedom and prepare for the coming struggle for victory which alone could usher in complete political, economic and social emancipation". Prem Nath Bazaz, Jia Lal Killam, Kayshup Bandhu, Shyam Lal Saraf and Sardar Budh Singh participated in these meetings.

The passing of such a heavy sentence against a political worker of standing could not but be taken note of by the Party High Command. It, therefore, had a spontaneous reaction. Hartals and public meetings were immediately ordered all over the State. It is even otherwise customary for political workers to act as a sort of brotherhood whenever any member is victimised by the Government. Raja Mohammad Akbar had appealed against his conviction. It was on the rejection of the appeal that the agitation started. Mr. A. R. Saghar composed a poem about the incident, which contained the following stanza:

میر پور کے مجاہد اکبر
بات کرتے تھے ادعا کرکے
مسترد ہوگئی اپیل بھی آج
بات بھی کھوئی التجا کرکے

On 27th August, 1938, the Government enforced section 144 in Srinagar. On the next day, a public meeting, in defiance of the prohibitory orders, was held at Hazratbal which was addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Maulana Masudi, Pandit Kayshup Bandhu, Pandit Jia Lal Killam and Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. Another meeting was scheduled to be held at Pratap park on the next morning but some of the leaders, including Sardar Budh Singh, were arrested immediately after the Hazratbal meeting. Immediately after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, the city observed a hartal and processions began to be taken out in various localities. Hindus, as a community, abstained from the agitation and even kept open their business premises. Women and children also brought out processions. At Amirakadal, the car of Mr. Ayyengar trampled down a youth while a procession was parading the business centre. The injured man was removed to the hospital by the Prime Minister himself. One Abdul Kabir Sheikh, son of Mohammad Sheikh, aged 35, resident of Abiguzar, Srinagar, was killed as a result of a lathi charge resorted to by the police in Maisuma bazar. One Mohammad Ismail Najar, son of Samad Najar, aged 19½ years, resident of Makhdoom Sahib was killed by military firing, again in Maisuma bazar. Both were buried at Mazar-e-Shohda. Fourteen persons were arrested on the 29th. Pandit Jia Lal Killam and Pandit Bazaz were arrested on the 30th. The procession taken out on the 3rd day, terminated at



تھا پر پرواز اپنا بھی کبھی افلاک پر
آج ہم قبروں میں سوئے ہیں فرش خاک پر

Khanqah-e-Mualla where Sadar-ud-Din Mujahid offered himself for arrest. Mr. Saghar was arrested in Jammu on 29th August. On the next day a protest meeting was held condemning the arrest of political leaders. The agitation continued for a few weeks mainly in the city of Srinagar but partly in other parts of the State. On 7th September, eight persons were arrested from Khanqah-e-Mualla, nine from Kangan and eighteen from Saura. Twenty three persons were arrested on 9th September. Among those arrested from the muffasils included Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg from Islamabad, Sufi Mohammad Akbar from Sopore, Sheikh Mohammad Akbar and Mr. Mohammad Maqbool Sherwani from Baramula. A women's procession was taken out in Baramula. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan came to Srinagar a few days after the arrest of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. He addressed a public meeting at Khanqah-e-Mualla on 15th September and was immediately taken into custody. All the leaders were sentenced to six months imprisonment. About a thousand persons were arrested, including about 5 dozen non-Muslims.

Before their arrest, a manifesto known as the National Demands was issued under the signatures of twelve leaders, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Maulana Mohammad Saeed, Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Mian Ahmad Yar, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Pandit Kayshup Bandhu, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, Sardar Budh Singh, Pandit Jia Lal Killam, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, Pandit Shyam Lal Saraf and Doctor Shamboo Nath Peshin.

The Declaration said :—

> "The ever-growing menace of unemployment amongst our educated young men and also among the illiterate masses in the country, the incidence of numerous taxes, the burden of exorbitant revenue, the appalling waste of human life due to want of adequate modern medical assistance, the miserable plight of uncared for thousands of labourers outside the State boundaries, and, in face of all this, the patronage that is being extended in the shape of subsidies and other amenities to outside capitalists, as also the top-heavy administration that daily becomes heavier, point to only one direction that the present conditions can never be bettered as long as change is not made in the basic principles underlying the present system of Government.
>
> Our cause is righteous, reasonable and just. We want to be the makers of our own destinies and we want to shape things according to our choice."[1]

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 196.

ENDORSEMENT BY THE PLENARY SESSION

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was released from Muzaffarabad jail on 28th February, 1939. The release of other leaders followed.

The aloofness of Hindu and Sikh masses from the Movement sent a wave of opposition among Muslims against the likely change of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference. The educated Muslims were particularly apprehensive. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, therefore, undertook a tour of the Valley to check the growth of opposition to the move. In this he unfortunately succeeded because none among the leading lights of the Party came forward either to lead the opposition or to organise it. So many people have now come forward either to take credit for having opposed the move which, in fairness to history, they never opposed or to offer excuses for their default but the whole truth, as it stands out, is that for one reason or other, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was allowed to push the whole Party in the direction of his liking and thus cause irreparable damage to the Muslim Cause.

A meeting of the General Council was held in Srinagar on 27th April, 1939, to consider the 28th June W. C. resolution. Unfortunately, details of the deliberations have not been available. All that is known is that it confirmed the resolution.

Consequently, a special session of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was held at Srinagar on the 10th and 11th June, 1939, under the presidentship of the known-leftist Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. It was attended by all the prominent leaders and workers of the Party. Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masudi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, introduced the following resolution:—

"The special session of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference approves the Working Committee Resolution No. 5 of 28th June, 1938, for the change of the name of the Conference and for bringing about the necessary amendments and changes in its Constitution, which was confirmed by the General Council in its session held on the 27th of April, 1939.

This Conference, therefore, decides that it shall henceforth be named as All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and every citizen of Jammu and Kashmir, who is a major, whether male or female, shall, irrespective of his religion or race, be entitled to

become a member of the Conference, provided he undertakes in writing to have the setting up of a Responsible Government and the securance of individual liberties as his political goal.

This session also resolves that until the next annual session, the existng Working Committee and the General Council, the office bearers and delegates to this Conference shall function in the same capacity as office bearers and members of the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference."[1]

Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq said in his presidential address:—

"Any responsible Government cannot be the Government of any particular class or party or religious group but, on the other hand, every individual comprising the forty lac inhabitants of the State will be a component part of the same and will have the same share in running it; it is, therefore, essential that in the struggle for the attainment of responsible Government, every citizen of the State, irrespective of religion or race, should be able to participate and make his contribution; for channelising these sacrifices and conducting the Movement in an orderly manner, a common platform in the shape of a single Organisation is the first important step.

The proposal (to change the name of the Party moved in the last session at Jammu) *was kept pending so that on the one hand, public opinion is elicited and on the other, the doubts existing in certain sections of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in this behalf, could be removed. But much time had not as yet elapsed when political conditions in the sub-continent began rapidly moving. The question of the State's participation in the Federation assumed greater importance; the Viceroy intensified his efforts to win over the Princes and our State silently decided to join the Federation. It is for this reason that the question of forming a common platform could* not be further postponed."[2]

It seems that at early stages Ch. Ghulam Abbas Khan had reservations about the change. He was apprehensive that Muslim demands such as repeal of the penal provision relating to cow-slaughter or legal impediments in the way of a Hindu's conversion to Islam, would, in a joint Hindu-Muslim platform, recede, as of necessity, to the background. It may be said to the credit of both the leaders—Abdullah and Abbas, that despite their differences, arising mainly out of what may be termed as "personal let downs" at crucial moments in their respective careers, which had

1 Islah, 16th June, 1939.
2 Taseer, p. 377.

gradually embittered their never-too-warm relationship, the reality of their essentially-complimentary role—one couldn't speak Punjabi while to the other, Kashmiri was like the proverbial Greek, did not escape their sight. At the same time, both were anxious to avoid a division among Muslims that would have weakened their weight and certainly they didn't want or perhaps could not even bear the destruction of a platform that had been built so laboriously and at such a huge cost in human sufferings. Behind-the-scene discussions therefore continued even after the Working Committee resolution. Mr. A.R. Saghar who played a leading role in the parleys has told this writer that he had been, from the very beginning, of a socialistic frame of mind and was therefore enthusiastically in favour of the change. These discussions were successful and consequently, Mr. Saghar announced in a public meeting held in the Mujahid Manzil Srinagar on 30th March that the questions that had been agitating the minds of the Jammu leaders and especially that of Ch. Ghulam Abbas Khan, regarding the renaming of the Party, had been satisfactorily answered by the leaders from Kashmir valley particularly through the efforts of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and that they were now in full agreement with the proposed change. The meeting was also addressed by Hakim Mohammad Hussain.[1]

Sometime later, a public meeting was held in Jammu before the General Council meeting of the Party but after the Working Committee meeting in which the decision to change the Party name had been taken, which was addressed by both Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas told the meeting that the differences that had developed between him and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah regarding the change of the Party name and related matters, "had been resolved and that in future he will continue to work with Sheikh Sahib for the betterment of all the people inhabiting the State". He also announced the agreement of party workers from Jammu. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah told the meeting that the State people were divided into three groups: those who supported the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabhites and a "few poor Congress-men", but that actually "the tussle was between the have's and the have not's " and that, in his opinion, "no betterment of the people could be expected so long as the political struggle was not launched on these lines."

CH. GHULAM ABBAS AND SAGHAR SUPPORT NATIONALISM

Consequently all the important leaders from Jammu, including Ch. Ghulam Abbas Khan, Mr. A. R. Saghar, Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan, Hakim Mohammad Hussain etc. attended the special session and

1 Al-Islah, 21st April, 1939.

except for Chaudhri Hameedullah, supported the Working Committee resolution to rename the Party as All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Reproduced below is the full text of the speech delivered by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan in the special session:

"Since the question involved, in so far as the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir are concerned, is one of life and death, it is necessary that I should fully state my scattered thoughts. I make bold to say that whatever we did since 1931, was done from a communal platform and generally speaking, it was for the political and religious rights of the Muslims because, though constituting 80% of the population, they were leading an oppressed life. *During these 8 years, we have tried to relieve them of these difficulties and we are thankful to God that we have succeeded in doing so. As times change, the circumstances and the surroundings also change. The position of Associations can be compared to children who grow with the passage of time. Whatever we did so far was well and good but now our needs have increased and to put an end to the unresponsive character of the government, it has become necessary to bring all the communities on a common platform. It is true that Muslims are oppressed but it is also true that Hindus are also oppressed,* though some of them are pro-Government and on account of their service interests, are not prepared to co-operate with us. What we want is to put an end not only to the oppression under which we Muslims are labouring but from which sections of the Hindu population are also equally suffering. *With the passage of time, the thoughts and surroundings also change. The political robes which we donned eight years back, have not only grown old but have also become outworn and thread-bare. We now need to wear robes which would be a source of pride for us as well as a matter of pride in the eyes of the world.*

A very important matter that is presently engaging my mind is that we should have been today addressing Hindus and Sikhs but Maulana Saeed addressed Muslims and I too am addressing them which shows that we are not as yet fully awakened and what we have done so far, looks like having ploughed in the sand. *I am by nature a pessimist and temperamentally lean towards despair.*

Those Muslims who are opposing the move to rename the Muslim Conference as National Conference, are the same people who have hitherto been opposing the Muslim Conference. The Government machinery is also opposing the renaming of the Party because it thinks that if Muslims take this step, they will succeed in their struggle for the attainment of

1 Al-Islah, 16th June, 1939.

Responsible government. Alongwith them, the non-Muslim communalists are also opposing the move. This combined opposition unmasks the real motives of the Opposition.

Our old system is changing into a new one; some misunderstanding and confusion is therefore not unnatural. *The first misunderstanding is that Sheikh Sahib and his colleagues have sold themselves to the Congress or someone else (the reference is to Mr. Ayyengar) and it is said that we have become the disciples of Gandhiji. Let me state that we are the followers of none except the Holy Quran. Gandhiji is an acknowledged leader of India but the statements issued by him regarding the recent happenings in Travancore and Rajkot are disappointing. His opinion is that people living in Indian States should strive for agreements with their rulers and bow before them but we cannot make applications and supplications to Mr. Ayyengar for our demands. We will secure our rights bravely and courageously. You should not expect us to become disciples of Gandhiji but in so far as his followers and disciples are concerned, we have the same place for them here as we have for those who differ with him.*

Whichever party from outside the State extends its support and help, we will be ready to accept it. It is said that we are opposed to the Muslim League. I think Mr. Jinnah is a capable politician. He has a prominent place in the British-Indian politics. It is his view that the majority should gain the confidence of the minority. At this moment, we are pursuing the same policy. In the ultimate analysis, since the platform is common, we have no links with any communal organisation but if Muslim League wishes to render help in our joint demands, we will be ready to accept the same but we will not be prepared to sell our freedom of conscience to any outside organisation.

The question now is that after the Muslim Conference is changed into the National Conference, who will project their demands but then, the important goal of the National Conference is to protect the interests of all communities and it will, therefore, protect the political and religious rights of Muslims. My nationalism is to live and let live. It is to remove the disabilities from which I am suffering and at the same time, remove the disabilities from which others are suffering. *It is true that the attitude of the Government towards Muslims has been unmerciful. It is also true that the problem they are faced with is how to protect their interests but people should have confidence in us and should remember that the statements issued by Sardar Budh Singh and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz in connection with cow-killing, were much stronger than the statements issued by us. The minorities will take care of our rights*

and we shall take care of their rights and I have no doubt that we shall be able to solve these problems with the large-heartedness of our non-Muslim brethren. It is said that Islam is in danger. It is possible that we are sinners but as against those who have appropriated to themselves the exclusive right to speak for Islam, we are better Muslims and have a bigger capacity to defend the rights of Muslims than these people. It is ridiculous to suggest that 80% Muslims are afraid of 20% Hindus. Why are Muslims afraid these days? It is because we are not true Muslims. We are Muslims by profession and not by our actions but in fact there is no danger now."[1]

At the end of his speech, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas appealed that the resolution be adopted unanimously and stated that if there was difference of opinion, it should be expressed with full freedom but after the passage of the resolution, the dissenters should bow their heads or else take their own path.

Opening his speech with the following verse:

بقدر شوق نہیں ظرف تنگ نائے غزل
کچھ اور چاہیئے وسعت میرے بیان کیلئے

Mr. A.R. Saghar said:—

"In so far as reasons to support the renaming of the Party are concerned, Maulvi Mohammad Saeed and Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas have stated them in detail. This proposal has been examined (by some preceding speakers) in the light of what they thought to be the principles of Islamic Shariat. It is forgotten that in our day-to-day life, we come across situations, wherein we do not deal only with the Muslims. To drag religion into political matters and that too, to such an extent as to make it the hangman's rope, is not a correct approach because by so doing, we only make controversial a very sacred thing (the religion). We should not use religion in a manner that it creates difficulties in our day-to-day life. If we do not change our place, we shall not be able to achieve our objectives. The sphere of politics has so tremendously increased now that we can no longer confine ourselves to the sphere which we had selected for ourselves eight years ago. India or Kashmir of today cannot move ahead without accepting Nationalism. Nationalism is the best way of doing full justice to the minorities and we shall not only be defending our Islamic heritage but shall also be defending the rights of non-Muslims."[2]

1 & 2 Al-Islah, 16th June, 1939.

Speaking in favour of the resolution, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg said:

"The Muslims of Kashmir should learn a lesson from what happened in Rajkot. Despite the fact that Gandhiji and other important forces from British-India were supporting the Hindu majority, they were frustrated by the small minority consistng of Muslims and Harijans. However insignificant the minority, no majority can succeed without their co-operation. It has been claimed that we (Muslims) shall alone render sacrifices and achieve our rights and that the minorities will also benefit from the same but self-respecting leaders like Budh Singh and others do not want these rights as a charity; they want to contribute their bit in shaping the future and offer sacrifices to achieve their rights. Religion should not be brought to bear on political and economic matters. *Chaudhry Hameedullah has referred to the role of Hindu money-lenders but I can name Muslim members of the Assembly who opposed laws that were brought to benefit the peasants. Similarly, I can name Muslim members of the Assembly who opposed the resolution for giving Muslims due representation in Services.* This at least shows that all Muslims do not share the same view-point regarding economic matters and that the real division among the masses is economic and not religious. When the Muslims of Kashmir went through the hell of sacrifices earlier, there were Muslims who opposed them and similarly there will be Muslims who will oppose them even now. Sardar Budh Singh who resigned his membership of the Assembly as a protest against the grazing-tax, can be preferred to such Muslims as a political ally. All Hindus and all Muslims will never come together but those who fight the battle of freedom will ultimately succeed."[1]

Addressing the meeting, Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz said:—

"I have never been so happy as I am today; it is so overwhelming that it is not possible for me to express myself coherently and with ease. From the very beginning, it has been my longing to bring all the communities on a common platform. Whenever I expressed these views to my friends, they used to laugh at me but Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah used to say that unity will be achieved, though, progressively and slowly. The Pandits used to say that they had expelled me from their community and that is why I talked of things which were detrimental to them while the Muslims used to say that in reality, Bazaz was a C.I.D. planted by the Kashmiri Pandits who wants to damage Muslim interests but God alone knew the secret of my heart" :

مگر میرے دل کا بھید خدا ھی جانتا ہے -

1 Al-Islah, 16th June, 1939.

The 1931 revolution was not a communal disturbance; it should be called a national revolt because it broke the chains of slavery though afterwards some people gave it a communal direction to fulfil their selfish interests."[1]

The resolution was strenuously opposed by Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan, Maulvi Rafi-ud-Din, Mr. Ghulam Haider Gori, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate, Sheikh Ahmed Din Banihali and Khawaja Ghulam Ahmad Ganai of Bhadarwah. Opposing the resolution, Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan said:—

"Whatever has been gained by Muslims so far, has been due to the efforts of the Muslim Conference. National Conference will not be able to work for Muslims; Muslims are at present backward and less organised than others; therefore, by changing Muslim Conference into National Conference, other people will take undue advantage from the backwardness of Muslims.

The politics of Kashmiri Pandits is confined to Services alone; it is, therefore, futile to expect co-operation from them. Those who are joining our ranks do not command the confidence of their community; it is no wisdom to give them all things that our house possesses.

There can be no unity between the weak and the strong. They cannot march together. In Jammu we have Hindu money-lenders while Muslims constitute the poor peasantry. Unity among them is impossible. Rajputs pride themselves to be rulers; they do not therefore, feel any need for unity; that is why no other nation is coming forward even by an inch. How then are you going ahead by changing your own Organisation"?[2]

According to Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, when the resolution was put to vote, out of a total of 176 delegates, only three voted against. According to Rashid Taseer, Sheikh Ahmad Din Banihali, Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah, Advocate and Khawaja Ghulam Ahmad Ganai from Bhadarwah (W. C. members), walked out in protest.

This happened on 10th June 1939. Non-Muslims, therefore, attended the special session on 11th June. Addressing the session, Pandit Jia Lal Killam said:—

1 & 2 Weekly Islah, 16th June, 1939.

"We can seek assistance from any outside organisation which is prepared to do so without any strings but if we will not take any assistance from anyone, it is the Muslim League or the Hindu Mahasabha because while the former demands the partition of the motherland, the latter seeks to establish Hindu Raj. However, if parties like Ahrars or Jamiat-ul-Ulema wish to help us, we shall accept it."[1]

We have already seen that the name proposed to be given to the Party at the Jammu session only a year ago was the All Jammu and Kashmir Political Conference. That too could have served the purpose because, after all, the proposed name was, in the Congress terminology, non-communal. What then was the necessity of dragging in the word 'national'?

In April, 1939, a sub-committee with Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq as Chairman and Maulvi Mohammad Saeed and Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad as members, had been set up to suggest amendments in the Party Constitution so as to bring it in conformity with its new name. Pandit Jia Lal Killam, Mian Ahmad Yar Khan and Pandit Janki Nath Sapru were also consulted. The amended constitution was adopted on 10th June, 1939, after a five hour debate. Mr. Ghulam Haider Gori vainly opposed the insertion of the word 'National'. The President was authorised to nominate non-Muslims to the General Council and the Working Committee.[2]

CH. GHULAM ABBAS EXPLAINS HIS POSITION

Records, that have survived the ravages of time on this side of the Cease-fire line, show that although Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan was not basically opposed to the change, as such, he was, in fairness to him, quite apprehensive that the Hindu elements may impulsively drag the new party into the fold of the Congress without being able to attract support from their communities. He expressed his fears to his colleagues and this is what Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz has said as to what happened:—

"Some of the delegates including Abbas privately expressed fears about the future of the political Movement after the change was effected. They were not sure that the State Hindus would sincerely and whole heartedly support the freedom struggle. A meeting was held in which Abdullah, Abbas and Bazaz discussed these doubts and fears. It was obvious that the large majority of the State Hindus would prefer Dogra rule to a democratic Government, but that the reorientation would immensely strengthen the forces of freedom and

1 *Ibid.*
2 Taseer, p. 386.

enable Hindu and Sikh progressives and patriots to participate in the struggle was also clear. Muslim leaders feared that the National Conference would become a hand-maid of the Indian Congress. But Abdullah, Abbas and Bazaz solemnly declared that it would be most harmful and dangerous to bring the Kashmir Freedom Movement under the influence of any outside organisation. It was decided that the organisation should keep aloof from the Indian National Congress as well as the Muslim League. On these assurances, misgivings of Abbas were allayed and he gave his fullest support to the resolution in the plenary session of the Conference."[1]

Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan has given the following version of the events:—

"In course of negotiations with Abdullah party, Sheikh Abdullah and Pandit Bazaz were questioned as to whether the religious, political and administrative grievances of Muslims against the Kashmir Government which included cow slaughter, restrictions on change of religion, encouragement of Hindus, unjust treatment in the matter of Services etc. could be treated by Pandit Jawahar Lal as reasonable and worthy of attention. In this connection I said just by the way that even nationalists like Pandit Jawahar Lal were in fact against Muslims and it was impossible that he would support the above grievances. Upon this it was agreed that Pandit Ji's opinion on all these matters be obtained through correspondence.

Pandit Ji's reply was fully according to my expectations and desire. He strongly condemned Kashmir Government's repressive and discriminatory laws against Muslims and also supported their grievances. (It seems there is a misprint. What Chaudhri Sahib probably wanted to say was that Pandit Ji's reply was against his expectations and wishes).

After mutual political discussions and internal parleys, it was decided that a special session of the Muslim Conference be convened at Srinagar for taking a decision about the setting up of the National Conference. Consequently the following conditions were settled for the formation of the National Conference:—

1. It will be in the objectives of the National Conference to struggle for the religious, economic, political and administrative grievances (of Muslims).

1 Struggle for Freedom, p. 170.

2. Separate electorate, which was already in force with regard to elections to the Assembly and other bodies, shall remain in force.

3. Sheikh Abdullah will not own Congress politics nor will he support the Congress in any case.

4. In the struggle against Maharaja Hari Singh, all the nations inhabiting the State, shall have an opportunity of participation and the goal of the Conference would be to set up a Responsible Government.

These conditions were moved on my behalf in the open session and accepted by the opposite party. It was also announced on our behalf that we were joining the National Conference under an agreement and that we shall take a final decision only after watching the attitude of the standard-bearers of nationalism. Consequently it was after every possible precaution that we joined the National Conference. Hindu press unanimously opposed the formation of the National Conference because in their view the above conditions had turned it practically into a communal organisation."[1]

Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas has then proceeded to detail the circumstances that influenced his decision to support the formation of the National Conference. They are as follows:—

"Sheikh Abdullah was now out of our hands and had adopted Nehru as his Guru and probably also as his spiritual leader. In view of the political situation obtaining at the time and the policy pursued by the Maharaja and his Government with regard to Muslims, it was considered by us suicidal to cause disruption in Muslim ranks.

2. All prominent workers were agreed that Muslims of the State should not have two organisations.

3. *Every one at the time thought, according to his own lights, that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah may not conspire to finish Muslims.*

4. In view of the 80% majority of Muslims, the participation of non-Muslims could not affect their separate identity.

5. The conditions under which the National Conference was being brought into being, were totally communalistic.

1 Autobiography, p. 211 & 212.

6. The nationalist idea had not been accepted. What was stressed was that, according to Muslim point of view, merging of Hindus and Muslims was impossible; that unity of action between them was possible only on the basis of a political agreement. The Conference had merely decided to allow Hindus to join their ranks.

7. We also wanted to build an excuse with Hindus and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah."

"My personel weakness also contributed to the situation. The last eight years' extreme and continuous political struggle which also included every sort of physical, spiritual and monetary worries, had so broken my courage that I was not alone in a position to run an independent organisation.

Hazrat-e-Quaid-e-Azam visited Srinagar in 1935(6). I was the President and Sheikh Abdullah and myself were still together. I presented an address of welcome on behalf of the Muslim Conference; in reply to which Hazrat-e-Quaid-i-Azam said that as Muslims are in an overwhelming majority in the State, it is the duty of their leaders that they should not only win over the hearts of non-Muslims but also carry them along like a wheel of the political vehicle."[1]

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's version is not before us as yet because the autobiography he is writing has not been published so far. Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas published his book in 1950 when he was Supreme Head of the Azad Government and when hatred against Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, especially on this side of the Cease-fire line, was at its height. I had the occasion to discuss certain aspects of the book with Chaudhri Sahib and I must record it in fairness to everybody including the departed leader, that he regretted its publication. The publishers of the book have added a note of their own in the very beginning of the book which is reproduced below:—

"When this book had completed the printing and binding stages, the learned author felt the necessity of additions and alterations but as our patrons were insisting upon an early publication, we are extremely sorry that we have not been able to comply with the wishes of the author."

What parts the learned author wanted to eliminate and what he wanted to add instead, shall never be known now, but one wished that the publi-

1 Autobiography, p. 213.

shers had not cared so much for the financial loss involved and had instead complied with his wishes. Unfortunately, the conditions which have been mentioned by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan could not be traced in any record of the proceedings available on this side of the Cease-fire line. However, it appears that the necessity of explaining to a Pakistan readership his support for the change pushed him, unreasonably and uncharitably, too far. Real greatness essentially lies in frankly acknowledging rather than trying to explain away a mistake. Afterall, it is human to err.

THE NATIONAL DEMANDS

The Working Committee having authorised the co-option of non-Muslim members, Sardar Budh Singh, Pandit Jia Lal Killam, Lala Girdhari Lal Dogra, Pandit Kayshup Bandhu and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz were nominated to the Committee. The first session of the newly formed National Conference was held at Anantnag from September 30th to October 2nd, 1939. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was elected President. It was also attended by Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan and Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan. The Conference adopted a resolution embodying the National Demands proclamation issued earlier on 29th August, 1938, which said:—

"(*a*) The present system of administration shall be replaced by Responsible Government subject to the general control and residuary powers of His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur as hereinafter mentioned.

(*b*) The Ministry shall be responsible to the Legislature and shall have, subject to such responsibility, power to control the expenditure of the revenues and also to make such grants and appropriations on any part of those revenues or of any other property except the following which shall remain under the control of His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur:—

1. Expenditure on the Military Service.
2. Expenditure classed as Political and Foreign.
3. Payments of all debts and liabilities hitherto lawfully contracted and incurred by His Highness in Council.
4. The Darmarth Trust.

(*c*) The Principle of Responsibility to the Legislature shall be introduced in all branches of administration subject to general control, reservations and residuary powers vested in His Highness in respect of control of Military, Foreign and Political affairs, etc., provided that the proposal of His Highness for appropriation of any revenues or moneys for Military or other expenditure for Foreign and Political purposes shall be submitted to the vote of the legislature, but that His Highness shall have power, notwithstanding the vote of the Assembly, to appropriate upto a fixed maximum any sum he may consider necessary for such expenditure.

(*d*) The Legislature shall consist entirely of members elected by constituencies, founded on the system of adult franchise. Provision should be made for the representation of labour, trade, landlords, and educational interests by means of election.

(*e*) The election to the Legislature shall be made on the basis of joint electorates; seats should be reserved for the minorities, and all safeguards and weightages should be guaranteed to them in the Constitution for the protection of their linguistic, religious, cultural, political and economic rights according to the principles enunciated, accepted or acted upon by the Indian National Congress from time to time. In addition to the above, the religious rights and sentiments of all the communities should always be respected and not interfered with.

(*f*) All the subjects of the State, without distinction of creed or caste, shall be admitted for service in all Services of Defence, and for that purpose His Highness shall be assisted by a Minister responsible to the Assembly.

(*g*) No subject of His Highness shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, property or of association, of speech or in respect of writing except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice and as a result of lawful and open trial."[1]

It was in this session that the National Conference adopted its new flag which consists of a red cloth with the sign of a white plough inscribed in its centre. By another resolution the Conference appreciated the intention underlying the statement issued by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress about the War and the British policy towards the political aspirations of the Indian people.

NEHRU'S FAILURE TO PUSH HINDUS INTO NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Immediately after the formation of the National Conference, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah set up a religious body named as "the Auqaf Commi-

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 316.

ttee" to administer the uniquely prestigious shrine at Hazratbal and look after other Muslim Waqf properties. Another function of the Committee was to arrange the anniversary celebrations of the Holy Prophet's (Peace be upon him) birth. This was not liked by the Hindus. Private criticism ultimately became public and generated mutual bitterness. Says Pandit Bazaz:

> "Mr. Abdullah is a devout Mussalman and believes that much of his success has been due to the fact that he has been a true follower of Islam."[1]

Celebration of Eid-e-Milad-u-Nabi had been a regular feature of Muslim Conference activities over the past years. In 1940 when it was observed on 24th April, it was the first anniversary after the formation of the National Conference and as the general mass of Muslims was not happy with the change and thought that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was moving away from their interests and coming, more and more, under Hindu influence as represented by Nehru, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah utilised the occasion as an opportunity to belie this growing popular belief and demonstrate his continued devotion to Islam and commitment to Muslim interests. As usual he took great pains in making the celebrations a great success.

During the two weeks preceding the main observance, meetings were held in different parts of Srinagar, which were addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Maulana Masudi and Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad. The theme of the meetings, apart from religious sermons, was the need for Muslim uuity.

لو وہ بھی کہتے ہیں کہ یہ بے ننگ و نام ہے
یہ جانتا تو آگ لگاتا نہ گھر کو میں

A psychologist can analyse better but it seems that it was because of the background, detailed above, heavily weighing upon his mind that in course of a speech, while drawing a comparison of different religions, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah described Islam as Sun and other religions as Stars.[2] The Hindus were quick to forget the political compulsions in the background and hastened to interpret it as the ultimate victory of Islam over Hinduism on the ground that the appearance of the Sun heralded the disappearance of the stars. The so-called Hindu nationalists have considered nationalism as being something incompatible with a

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 347.
2 *Ibid*, p. 325.

Muslim nationalist's devotion to his religion. To them a good Muslim nationalist is one who may not practise his religion. A storm of protest was therefore raised. He was condemned as a "rank communalist". His 'nationalism' was ridiculed and condemned as a fraud. It was said that in the garb of nationalism, he still wanted to establish 'Muslim Raj'. The campaign was spear-headed by "Martand". However, Sheikh Abdullah remained unmoved. When the Working Committee met on 28th April, 1940, in connection with the impending visit of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, some Hindu members took exception to the above remarks and sought an explanation. Sheikh Abdullah was deeply angered and replied by saying that he was a "Muslim first and Muslim last".[1]

It was Pandit Nehru's second visit, the first having taken place more than twenty years ago. He was to be the guest of the National Conference. A Reception Committee was set up with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as Chairman. On 30th April, Pandit Jia Lal Killam and Pandit Kayshup Bandhu resigned from the Party. According to Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz:—

> "Though there is no doubt that they acted hastily, it is unfair to judge them by the isolated action. They were forced to take this step by the oppressive communal atmosphere which was daily increasing inside the circles of the Conference."[2]

Accompanied by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Pandit Nehru arrived in Srinagar on 30th May, 1940. He toured Kashmir for ten days and advised Hindus to join the National Conference and strengthen the hands of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. The National Conference, aided this time by Hindu money and resources, took out a pompous river procession in his honour, which was, however, marred by noisy demonstrations staged by hostile Muslim groups owing allegiance to Mir Waiz Maulana Yusuf Shah at Ghat Malik Sahib, Ghat Chhatabal, Ghat Hafiz Sahib, Nawankadal, Bulbul Lankar, Aalikadal, Ghat Sheikh Moosa and Masjid-e-Badshah. The demonstrators raised the slogans of "Go Back Nehru", "Muslim League Zindabad" and "Quaid-e-Azam Zindabad". Beyond Fateh Kadal, there was no hostile demonstration but at Amira Kadal some people raised pro-Muslim League slogans and it was here that Pandit Nehru had a narrow escape, as a ceremonial gate crashed down just a few seconds after he had crossed it.[3] On 31st May, he addressed a public meeting in Hazoori Bagh; Sheikh Abdullah presented an address of welcome. Given below is the English translation of a hand-bill issued by the Muslim League Srinagar and circulated in the city in large numbers:—

1 Inside Kashmir, p. 327.
2 *Ibid*, p. 327.
3 Weekly Al-Islah, p

"WILL PANDIT NEHRU EXPLAIN"

1. In course of a speech at the All India States People Conference at Ludhiana in 1939, you said that you were a Kashmiri and that your sympathies were with Kashmir. But where were you and where were your sympathies when in 1931 the Muslims, who are in an overwhelming majority, were compelled to start a movement for political reforms?

2. From 1931 to 1938, the Muslims of the State launched many a movement for securing their legitimate rights. Where were your sympathies during all this period?

3. Your Congress colleagues had, in their speeches as well as writings, condemned the participants of the freedom struggle of 1931 as goondas and miscreants. Why didn't you then express your sympathy with the Movement and how is it that now you have come here as a guest of these very alleged goondas and mischief-mongers and are pretending to support them?

4. Is it correct that many a leading Congressites had opposed the separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency and the introduction of reforms in N.W.F.P. and it was the All India Muslim League which supported the legitimate demands of the Muslims of Sind and N.W.F.P.? If it is correct, then how is it that your heart, now, goes out in sympathy for the Pathans of N.W.F.P.?

5. Is it not a fact that both you and Gandhiji have of late been going to the Frontier to create a false sense of confidence in the minds of the Pathans and thus damage the larger interests of the Mulims of India and establish Hindu Raj in the sub-continent?

6. Is it not a fact that you have come to Kashmir simply because the All India Muslim League has recently come forward with a constructive programme for Muslims and you want to get it opposed by Muslims of the majority provinces?

7. When Hindus of Hyderabad started an agitation in the name of religious freedom, both you and Gandhiji supported them in various ways but although Muslims of Kashmir suffer from many limitations on their religious freedom such as the prohibition on the change of religion and the award of ten years imprisonment for cow-slaughter, are you ready to help them in getting these monstrous laws removed and if Muslims start a movement in this connection, would your sympathies be with them?"[1]

1 Al-Islah, 6th June, 1940.

A copy of the hand-bill was handed over to Pandit Nehru. It was published under the signatures of Mr. A.U.Wafa, Propaganda Secretary of the Muslim League, Srinagar. Nehru, however, chose to remain silent and did not answer these questions in any of the many meetings he addressed.

Nehru's decision to visit Srinagar was entirely his own. He had no formal invitation from Sh. Abdullah or his party. There can be no doubt that he must have been fully posted with the political situation. He must have been, therefore, aware that although Sh. Abdullah had abandoned the mainstream of Muslim political thinking, he had, all the same, failed to win the support of the Hindu minority. He seems to have, therefore, decided upon the visit, partly to pat Sh. Abdullah for his new creed in order to sustain his nationalism which had, at the very start, showed its impracticability in a Hindu-ruled State and partly to win Non-Muslim support for his party in the better and wider interests of Hindu India. He did not succeed in pushing non-Muslims into the Party but his private counsel did succeed in reducing the frequency and volume of their vituperative attacks. A long meeting with Pandit Shiv Narain Fotedar also failed to bring about the desired change. Pandit Nehru visited Jammu on 11th June, 1940, for an over-night stay. He was accompanied by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

The expectation of Muslims that Hindus would dissolve their communal parties under advice from Pandit Nehru and join the National Conference to make a common cause for the establishment of responsible Government did not come true. This affected very adversely the standing of the National Conference in the eyes of Muslims and even caused deep frustration to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues. Sometime later Pandit Kayshup Bandhu, in course of a statement, explaining his resignation from the National Conference, made the following disclosure:—

> "I told Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah that he had no right to compare other religions with Islam on the public platform, compare Islam with Sun and other religions with stars. Upon this he replied that I must remember that he was a Muslim first and a Muslim last; I, therefore, brought this to the notice of the members of the Working Committee who were present in the meeting. Pandit Jia Lal Killam then told Sheikh Abdullah that he should not say like that but could say that he was a Muslim as well as a Nationalist. To this Sheikh Abdullah replied that this was not his faith. Pandit Killam then asked him as to why then was he a nationalist? To this Sheikh Abdullah replied that he was a Nationalist because the Quran tells him to be a Nationalist. Upon this I said, "Sheikh Sahib, if some day you come to know that the Quran tells you not to be a Nationalist, what will you do?"

Sheikh Abdullah replied, "I curse such nationalism which is not permitted by the Holy Quran."[1]

The Martyrs' Day came close on the heels of Pandit Nehru's return. In keeping with the traditions of the Party, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah began preparations for its observance by the National Conference. The move was strongly opposed by his Hindu colleagues as in their opinion, it was an anti-Hindu movement with which they had nothing to do except that it was directed against them. Therefore, they refused to associate themselves with the programme. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah naturally and correctly brushed aside their opposition and proceeded with the observance of the Day with all the seriousness and solemnity that has ever marked its observance by Muslims.

The National Conference held its annual session in Baramula on 27th, 28th and 29th September, 1940, under the presidentship of Sardar Budh Singh. Less than five feet high, Budh Singh was known as a Mahatma for his passionate devotion to the cause of the poor. Having joined the State service at an early age, he held the important post of Wazir-e-Wazarat at the time of resignation. He withdrew into forests and spent many a year in meditation. This writer has heard him tell a public meeting in Baramula that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was the reward of his prayers. Having joined the National Conference at the time of its formation, he remained attached to it ever after. While on a visit to Baramula, a few years before partition, this writer accompanied him to a quarry outside the town where some labourers were taking out stones by dynamiting rocks. When told that they had to pay a substantial part of their earnings as tax, Budh Singh was really in tears. After partition he became a member of the Indian Parliament. The non-Muslims never listened to him seriously nor acted on his advice. A kind and pious man himself, he was, however, unable to influence either the thinking or the actions of Sikhs, to say the least, of Hindus.

The number of delegates was not very large and public attendance was thin due to heavy rains. On the 2nd day, the open session had, therefore, to be shifted to the Jamia Masjid while the delegates' meetings were held at the residence of Mr. Saif-ud-Din Shah, a member of the State Assembly from Sopore but a resident of Baramula. The Conference adopted many resolutions; one, moved by Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, demanded grant of proprietary rights to tillers of the land. In another resolution, moved by Mirza Afzal Beg, the Conference demanded replacement of land revenue by a sort of income-tax or, in the alternative, to assess land revenue on the same scale as was used in the levying of income tax. It was a

1. Al-Islah, 1st August 1940.

demand that has not been put into practice even in the year 1976 by India. Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq moved a resolution demanding the setting up of a separate department to look after the welfare of labourers, who migrated to the plains during winter for seasonal employment.

By 1941, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's disillusionment with the Nationalist creed had further increased. He seems to have begun to realise that by converting the Muslim Conference into National Conference, he had, without attracting any substantial support from the non-Muslims, even lost the ground he so solidly held among Muslims. Addressing a public meeting in Srinagar on 28th July, 1941, he asked, "In a country like Kashmir where Kashmiri Pandits cannot even tolerate the construction of a bath room by Muslims on the banks of Jhelum, what is the use of preaching Nationalism? People who cannot even tolerate the washing of hands and face by us on the banks of Jhelum, surely, cannot be united with us".

The next annual session of the National Conference was held in Srinagar on 22nd, 23rd and 24th August, 1941. Sardar Budh Singh was re-elected President. It was also attended by the Frontier Gandhi. This he may have done on advice from the Congress High Command so as to build up a personal friendship between him and the Kashmir Gandhi in order to use it for the furtherance of Congress goals in the State. In the procession which is traditionally taken out in connection with the annual session of political parties all over the sub-continent, slogans of Nara-e-Takbir and Islam Zindabad were raised frequently which at least showed what Muslim masses thought of nationalism. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah performed the flag hoisting ceremony. The main resolution reiterated the demand for the grant of responsible Government. A special feature of the session was a grand Mushaira presided over by Sir Abdul Qadir. Hafeez Jullundhuri recited a poem.

In a meeting of the Working Committee held in Jammu towards the end of January, 1942, it was decided to launch a campaign for the relief of the poor who were badly hit by the rising cost of living. It was also decided to set up a volunteer corps with Bakhshi Ghulam Muhammad as Commander and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as Salar-e-Azam. After the meeting, Sheikh Abdullah left for India to meet Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. No annual session was held in 1942, largely because of the situation brought about by the "Quit India Movement" launched by the Indian National Congress in August, 1942. The Working Committee again met in Srinagar on the 16th, 17th and 18th of May, 1942.

It decided to open a training camp for political workers lasting over two weeks. It also decided to extend full support in war efforts. This decision ran counter to the Congress policy. A press conference was, therefore, held on 22nd May 1942, which was addressed mainly by Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq who explained why they had changed their policy with regard to the War. He said that because of the entry of Russia, it was no longer a war between the Imperialists but had become a Peoples' war. It may be recalled that this was the line adopted by the Communist Party of India to justify its overnight shift in the matter.

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CHAPTER XIV

Revival of Muslim Conference

THE BEGINNERS

The transformation of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference into the National Conference was not well-received by Muslim masses. They had lived as a nation, distinct from the Hindus, throughout the centuries of their history. They had never inter-married; they had never even shared each other's food; their dress, their culture and their customs were all diametrically opposed to one another; so much so that while the Mussalman tied his turban from right to the left, a Hindu tied it from left to right; the Muslims rode the horse from its right side but the Hindu did it from the left side; even the ornaments worn by women, to say the least of their dress, were entirely different. From the very start of the non-Muslim occupation, beginning with 1819, the Hindus had wholly identified themselves with the Government and shared in its glories as well as misfortunes while the case with the Muslims was entirely different. It was the Hindu who oppressed them as a soldier; it was the Hindu who oppressed them as an administrator and again it was the Hindu who, as money-lender, sucked the very blood out of them; it was the Hindu neighbour who acted as a Government spy and on whose whims and pleasure, depended the security and honour of his Muslim neighbours. How could under these circumstances the gospel of nationalism, that was now being preached from the political pulpits, carry conviction? True, that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was supremely popular in large parts of the State but how long could his personal estimation with the people throw dust into their eyes and stop them from coming face to face with the hard realities of the situation?

A large number of delegates to the special session which renamed the Party, were opposed to the change but unfortunately they were like a

shepherdless flock of sheep because none of the important leaders such as Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, Maulana Masudi or A.R. Saghar came forward to give them the necessary lead while, on the other hand, their unanimous advocacy of the nationalist creed caused great demoralisation.

Workers from Islamabad who had bycotted the special session met immediately afterwards and resolved to continue their work under the name of the Muslim Conference but as the most important political leader from the district, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, was in the National Conference, they were not able to make any real headway. Similarly, in Srinagar a group of young workers under the leadership of Qureshi Mohammad Yusuf dissociated themselves from the National Conference and decided to preserve the Muslim Conference. On 15th September, they organised a big procession which paraded various localities of the city and eventually, though unsuccessfully, tried to capture the Mujahid Manzil, the new headquarters of the National Conference built on Muslim Waqf land with funds solely contributed by Muslims. Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad came with a large band of volunteers with the result that some workers of the Muslim Conference including Qureshi Mohammad Yusuf were severely beaten. Mr. Nazir Ahmed Shah, the Magistrate on duty and several policemen were also injured. The building was damaged as a result of mutual brick-batting. In the evening the National Conference held a public meeting at Pathar Masjid which was addressed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad and Pandit Jia Lal Kilam. The people were publicly advised to maintain calm but after the meeting ended, a large crowd formed into a procession and paraded parts of the city raising slogans against the opponents of the National Conference.

In Jammu the news of the renaming of the party was received with mixed feelings. Vast sections of Muslims were opposed to the change. The campaign against the adoption of Nationalism was gallantly spear-headed by Professor Mohammad Ishaque Qureshi, one of our leading intellectuals who was later distined to play an important role in the freedom struggle. A few weeks later, a public meeting was convened by a local group in the name of the Muslim League. Maulana Ghulam Haider presided while Professor Inayatullah of the Punjab Muslim League, Professor Ishaque, and Maulvi Rafiuddin were the principal speakers. The meeting which was pronouncedly convened to pass a resolution of no-confidence against Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, was disrupted by his supporters. A few weeks later, another attempt to maintain the separate entity of Muslims was made, again in Srinagar, by Khawaja Ghulam Mohiud-Din,

Editor Weekly 'Rehbar', Khawaja A.U. Raina, Khawaja M. G. Haleem, Mr. M.I. Saghar, Khawaja Abdus Salam Dalal and Syed Mubarak Shahin who formed a new party under the name of Muslim League. Mir Abdul Aziz, who had recently returned from Aligarh, after passing his M.A., LL. B., was elected President. On 23rd March, 1940, a public meeting was held at Badamwari Mohallah, Srinagar under the presidentship of Mr. Ghulam Rasul Azad. A resolution was passed calling upon political workers, who had dissociated themselves from the National Conference, to revive the Muslim Conference.

Professor Ishaque from Jammu and Professor Aziz from Srinagar attended the historic Lahore session of the All India Muslim League which passed the Pakistan Resolution. Prof. Aziz was nominated a W.C. member of the All India States Muslim League. On 6th October, 1940, a deputation of the All India Muslim Educational Conference comprising Khan Bahadur Azizul-Haq, Speaker, Bengal Legislative Assembly, and Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University, Mr. Ali Afzal, Secretary Bengal Legislative Assembly, Haji Abdul Hassan, a former Director of Education, Kashmir Government and Doctor Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din, Bar-at-Law, Lahore arrived in Srinagar to investigate the state of Muslim education and take up the issue with the State Government. They were met by a large number of local Muslims, especially the educated youth who, apart from an exchange of views, thanked them for the continued interest of Muslim India in their well-being.

In June 1940 a weekly newspaper, "Paigham" owned by late Mr. Yusuf Qureshi and edited by Mr. Nizam-ud-Din, started publication from Srinagar and campaigned for the revival of Muslim Conference. Yet another Weekly, Al-Islah, owned by the Ahmedis, also launched a campaign condemning the formation of the National Conference and for revival of the Muslim Conference.

Eventually, on 10th October, 1940, 12 political workers met in Srinagar and decided to revive the Muslim Conference. They said in a statement:—

"It is not our intention to enter, at present, into a public debate about the merits and demerits of the formation of the National Conference; nor do we desire to say, at this stage, as to what consequences have flowed from it and how it has damaged the larger interests of Muslims; however, we have arrived at the conclusion that the purpose for which the so-called nationalist elements among the Hindus desired the formation of the National Conference was to

kill two birds with one stone; they were not able to do so by themselves and, therefore, resorted to the help and co-operation of Muslim leaders.

An important session of the Muslim Conference is being convened very soon and all sympathisers and well-wishers will be invited for participation so that by joining our heads, we may be able to evolve an agreed programme."

The signatories were: (1) Sardar Gauhar Rahman, Jammu city; (2) Sardar Fateh Mohammad Khan, M.L.A. Poonch; (3) Mirza Attaullah Khan, M.L.A., Rajouri, (4) Qazi Abdul Ghani Delinah, M.L.A. Baramula, (5) Pir Zia-ud-Din, M.L.A. Badgam; (6) Babu Mohammad Abdullah, M.L.A. Jammu; (7) Chaudhri Abdul Karim, M.L.A. Mirpur; (8) Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan, M.L.A. Jammu; (9) Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq, Baramula; (10) Syed Hassan Shah Jalali, Srinagar; (11) Khawaja Mohammad Yusuf Qureshi, Srinagar, (12) Mr. M. I. Saghar, Srinagar, (13) Mr. Ghulam Haider Gauri, Editor, "Naujawan", Jammu and (14) Syed Mirak Shah, Srinagar.[1]

It was a courageous statement of far-reaching importance. At a time when the entire top leadership of the Muslim Conference had put its whole weight on the side of 'nationalism' and none of them had the courage of conviction to come forward to provide Muslims with an alternate leadership, these fourteen leaders, some of whom belonged to the second rank of Party leadership while some were even farther below, displayed great courage and unusual initiative in challenging the top leadership of the National Conference to a public duel. The Muslims of Kashmir owe them a debt of gratitude.

While these developments were taking place inside the State, the political picture in the sub-continent was fast undergoing a change. Hitler had easily over-run a large part of Europe. With the declaration of war against Germany by the United Kingdom, the sub-continent was also thrown into the flames of war. This was done without any consultation with the leaders of the country. Meanwhile, the All India Muslim League, after having suffered a serious set-back in the 1937 elections, had, under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, come to life. The Nawabs, the jagirdars and the title-holders, were there as before, but now, for the first time, it had begun to attract the masses. The assumption of power by the Indian 'National' Congress at the provincial level, had almost blinded its leadership to the realities of the situation; they not only ignored the Muslim point of view

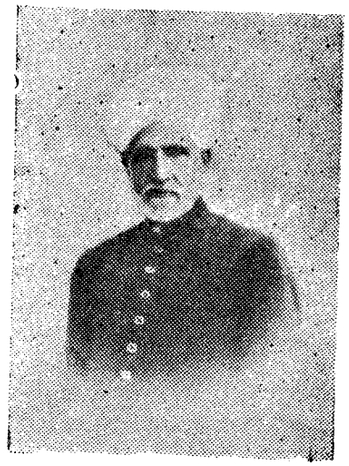
1. Al-Islah, 10th October, 1940.



Mistri Yaqub Ali



Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah Vakil



Munshi Shahab-ud-Din



Hussain Shah Jalali

in matters partaining to administration but also initiated policies at the provincial level which unmistakably exposed it as being inherently anti-Muslim. This also helped, in a way, in raising the popularity of the Muslim League. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru tried his best to stop the growth of Muslim League by initiating what was termed as a mass contact campaign but despite the almost infinite resources at his disposal, it ended in a fiasco. At one time, he thought of the Congress ground to be so sure that in a public utterance at Calcutta he claimed that there were only two parties in the sub-continent, the British and the Congress. Instead of helping him, it clearly hurt the self-respect of Muslims who realised that the only way to save themselves from Hindu domination was by strengthening the All India Muslim League. When the Muslim League annual session was convened on the banks of Ravi on 23rd March, 1940, it was no longer the Muslim League of 1937 but had already become a strong force on the political map. It was in this session that the demand for the partition of India and the creation of a Muslim majority Sovereign State, which later came to be known as the "Pakistan Resolution", was passed amidst national jubilation.

These events and the clearly emerging division of Hindus and Muslims into two camps, the first trying to suppress and exterminate the other while the other desperately trying to preserve its entity, could not but have a deep, spontaneous and abiding impact on the political scene in the State. The National Conference had not been able to attract any sizable non-Muslims support. There is no doubt that about sixty Hindus and Sikhs courted arrest in 1938 but it seems that most of them did so with the deliberate aim of creating a more favourable and congenial atmosphere for putting an end to the extremely popular as well as powerful Muslim platform—the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, because by 1944, all that remained of the non-Muslim contribution, was a group of half a dozen top Hindu and Sikh leaders whose communities were completely opposed to the Party and continued to remain embraced with their own rabidly communal organisations such as the Yovak Sabha, the Dogra Sabha, the Akali Dal and the like. Muslims naturally could not fail to take due notice of this important fact and therefore voices began to be raised and questions began to be put to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues as to what purpose had been served by destroying the powerful Muslim platform that had so successfully championed their Cause and brought them considerable relief. The National Conference leadership had no answer.

It was in this atmosphere that a parting of ways took place between Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan. While the former chose to continue with the nationalist platform, the latter

decided to severe his connections with it and tendered his resignation sometime after Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's visit which took place in May, 1940. According to Prem Nath Bazaz, "Chaudhri Sahib resigned without assigning any reasons". However, the reasons are not far to seek. They were working in different environments. Kashmir Muslims are essentially a hero-worshipping people with their own language; they do not have as much contact with Muslims in the Punjab as their co-religionists in Jammu. On the other hand, Jammu province has a long and easy border with the Punjab. Jammu and Sialkot, apart from close proximity, were linked by rail and road. Their mother-tongue is Punjabi and their culture is exactly the same; there have been inter-marriages since times of old. The result was that they were more apt to look towards Muslim Punjab for political lead; it was for this reason that the political climate in the Punjab had a direct, immediate and harmonious impact in Jammu province. The growing strength of the Muslim League in the Punjab and the demand for a separate Muslim homeland, therefore, frustrated efforts to win over Jammu Muslims towards nationalism. It must be said to the credit of the Muslims of Jammu that, en masse, they were the first in the State to frustrate the scheming of the Indian National Congress by adopting the Pakistan creed. It may also be noted that the 1931 Movement had resulted in the increased representation of Muslims in the Services. The exclusive Muslim platform provided them protection and support. It aired their grievances, fought for their promotions and operated as a standing pressure-group in their Cause. Reciprocally, especially in Jammu province, they financed its activities and guided the course of its day-to-day actions. It was quite natural, under these circumstances, that they should have been fiercely opposed to the change. As the majority of the gazetted officers was Punjabi-speaking, it was only natural that opposition to the change was stronger and deeper in Jammu than on this side of Banihal. That is why even when Ch. Ghulam Abbas Khan and Mr. Saghar were in the National Conference, it made no particular impact in this province and was largely ignored. It was under these circumstances that, in 1942, after remaining inactive politically for about two years, Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan lent his public support to the revival of the Muslim Conference.

EFFORTS AT IMPOSING SANSKRIT SCRIPT

Persian was the State's official language for many centuries and Kashmiris, both Hindus and Muslims, were so conversant with it and spoke and wrote it so fluently that Allama Rashidi has traced as many as sixteen hundred and seventy-eight[1] Kashmiri poets of Persian language in his

1. IVth Volume, p. 4.

recently-published monumental work, Tazkira-e-Shoura-e-Kashmir. The importance of Persian language in the State may also be judged from the fact that only five hundred poets of Persian language have to-date been traced from the land of five rivers and even among them, a good number are of Kashmiri origin.

The Sikhs despite their extreme hatred against Muslims and all that they had stood for, did not, it may be said to their credit, effect any change in the State language. It was during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh that the setting up of Patshalas was given unusual attention and large sums were spent on reviving Sanskrit learning. In 1898, Pratap Singh replaced Persian with Urdu as the official language. It was done at the instance and for the benefit of Punjabi Hindus who held some of the key jobs and who used the change as an effective means to import Urdu-knowing relations, friends and supporters from the Punjab. Kashmiri Muslims were not affected as their recruitment to the Services was and remained extremely restricted. The change, however, did adversely affect Kashmiri Pandits and it were they who raised their powerful voice against it. It was mainly because of their efforts that the Government was compelled, in a few years, to make hereditary State citizenship, an added qualification for entry into the Services. However, in so far as Muslims were concerned, it did not create any ill-will against the Government because Urdu and Persian have a common script—the Arabic script; its alphabet being the same as that of the Holy Book; the change, therefore, was neither deeply felt nor resented.

With the growth of Hindu nationalism in the sub-continent, fathered by such intense revivalists as Tilak, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and the like, a militant movement for Hindu supremacy which had no place for any other community, except on its own terms, began to fire the imagination of the great majority of Indian Brahmins and the first to come under its spell were the educated and the feudal hierarchy among them.

Kashmir State had always a special appeal for Hindu India for the simple reason that it was a State with a Muslim majority but ruled by a Hindu Prince. There were, no doubt, hundreds among the 562 Indian States ruled by British-protected Hindu feudal dynasties but nowhere else did a Hindu prince rule a Muslim majority. It was, therefore, the first Hindu kingdom of its kind since Muslims over-ran the sub-continent more than nine hundred years ago. When Brahmins talked of freedom from the British, it meant, apart from the exit of the foreigners, the realisation of their deep longing to rule Muslims. That the same end stood already attained in Kashmir State, made it all the more dearer to their hearts.

With Ayyenger at the helm of affairs, the more militant among them decided upon a more drastic measure towards the cultural genocide of

Muslims by compelling them to learn Hindi. Yet another reason for its imposition was that Urdu being the State's official language, large sections of non-Muslims were not attracted by Sanskrit or Hindi. It seems that the elders of the community were afraid of the supposed consequences flowing from their coming generation being brought up under the influence of Urdu language.

The conspiracy to impose Hindi began to reveal itself quite suddenly. An advertisement was published in a newspaper inviting applications for the post of a clerk in the correspondence section of the Maharaja's office; it asked for applications from Hindi-knowing persons only. Nobody took serious notice but a few days later was issued a press-note announcing that the Government had named the State Council of Ministers as Amatia Mandal, President of the Assembly as Prumukh and the Assembly Members as Praja Sabha Sad. The announcement was naturally received with misgivings; it seemed wholly unnecessary. Political parties were not taken into confidence. The Assembly itself was not consulted; public opinion was not elicited. These facts together with the secrecy and suspicion surrounding the announcement were bound to excite Muslim public opinion. It was not unnatural that they should have interpreted it as the beginning of a sinister move to impose Hindi. Even otherwise, the very concept of Raja and Praja, as understood, was wholly misplaced and un-acceptable in the middle of the twentieth century. It was sheer obstinacy and bull-headedness to coin the term Praja Sabha (the Subjects Assembly) for an Assembly which included popularly-elected representatives. That these fears were not unfounded, was soon confirmed when letting the cat out of the bag, the Government appointed a Committee of the following experts in the field of Education, drawn both from inside as well as outside the State, to consider the question of the medium of instructions:

1. Khawaja Ghulam Saiyidain, Director Education, Chairman;
2. Doctor Zakir Hussain, Principal Jamia Millia, Delhi;
3. Mr. Tyndale Biscoe, Principal, C.M.S. High School, Srinagar;
4. Mr. Ram Chand Mehndiratta, Inspector of Schools, Jammu;
5. Qazi Mohammad Ishaque, Inspector of Schools, Kashmir;
6. Pandit Nand Lal Kunzru, Headmaster, S.P. High School, Srinagar, Secretary.

The Committee was of the opinion that introduction of two scripts

was highly undesirable as it would encourage separatist tendencies. It may be noted here that the proposal before the Committee was about the introduction of the Devanagri script in addition to the Persian script already in vogue. The Committee took the view that as Urdu was spoken and written throughout the State, any change was bound to result in unnecessary hardship both for the people as well as the Government. It, therefore, recommended that Persian script should continue to remain compulsory but, at the same time, Hindus or others desirous of learning Hindi may be given facilities to do so, beginning from the third primary. As the Government intended mischief and had an ulterior end in view, it did not accept the unanimous report of the Committee. The Education Minister Raja Mohammad Afzal Khan, who had supported the recommendations, was relieved of his post. On 21st October 1940, the Government instead issued Council Order No. 989/C which laid down that:—

1. The language should be a common one i.e. simple Urdu but it can be written in two scripts, namely, the Persian as well as the Devanagri script.
2. All text books should be written in the same language which was defined as simple Urdu but it should be published separately in both the scripts.
3. Students shall have the option to choose either of the scripts for their education.
4. Wherever the number of students desirous of having education in Devanagri script or otherwise is fifteen percent or above, it shall be necessary for the teacher of the subject concerned in the school to be acquainted with both the scripts.
5. Such teachers who are not acquainted with both the scripts will be given a period of one year to learn the other script.
6. In future, a person who is not acquainted with both the scripts, would not be recruited as a teacher.
7. The teachers already in service, but awaiting confirmation, were not to be confirmed until they learnt the other script.

It had grave implications. By this time the representation of Muslims in the Education department, on the level of teachers, had risen to about forty percent. Not one was acquainted with the Hindi script. The Council Order introduced an element of uncertainty and insecurity in relation to their future employment; it also made it impossible for any Muslim to be recruited as a teacher unless he had learnt the Hindi script.

No doubt fifteen percent Hindu majority did not exist in every school in Kashmir valley but Hindus being in control of the administrative wing of this sector, it was both easy as well as within the morals of at least most of them to adjust a vacancy against a school having fifteen percent or more Hindu students and this is what actually happened. Again, it created a psychological atmosphere about the growing importance of the Devanagri script which itself was sufficient to attract every community including the Muslims because the Government was the only employer as there were no industries worth the name.

The resentment of Muslims was very great, but to this I shall come a bit later. Here it may be stated that, according to Professor Wahid-ud-Din Saleem, Urdu language has drawn from different languages in the ratio shown against each: Hindi which includes words from Punjabi and Purbi: 21,644 words; words which came into being after a mixture of Hindi and other languages: 17,505 words; Arabic words: 7,584; Persian words: 66,041; English words: 500; Sanskrit words: 554; miscellaneous: 181 words. He has collected these figures from Farhang-e-Asfia, an authoritative work prepared in Hyderabad Deccan where considerable research was conducted in connection with the growth and development of Urdu. It may also be stated here that according to Doctor Ban, a French research scholar who wrote a book on Indian languages in 1900, the Urdu-knowing population in India then was 8 crore 25 lakhs; Telegu speaking: one crore seventy lakhs; Hindi speaking: thirty lakhs; Punjabi speaking: one crore sixty lakhs; Gujrati speaking: 95 lakhs; Bengali speaking: 3 crore ninety lakhs; Marathi speaking: one crore seventy lakhs and Tamil speaking: one crore and thirty lakhs. Sometime later, the Indian National Congress prepared a map about the languages according to which Urdu was spoken by about seventeen crore and twenty lakhs.

HIND URDU !

Another mischief was then perpetrated in that the Madrasi Prime Minister ordered the replacement of the word 'simple Urdu' by the word 'Hind Urdu' and also took pride in coining the term, claiming to have given a lead to the sub-continent. It may be noted here that the word 'Urdu' is of Turkish origin and this fact coupled with its being written in the Quranic script, have been largely responsible for its condemnation by Hindu revivalists who forget that it is the only language which came into being through the joint efforts and contact of Muslims and Hindus. The new word was opposed not only by Muslim masses but also by the Director of Education, Khawaja Ghulam Saiyidain and it was therefore withdrawn on the 4th of February, 1943.

On 8th February, 1943, by a Council Order No. 113/C, it was enacted that in future, the language to be used as medium of instructions and

named 'simple Urdu' was to have a common vocabulary consisting of words which were common to Urdu and Hindi but unfortunately the vocabulary officially prepared had two thousand such alleged Hindi words which, far from being common with Urdu language, could not be understood even by an averagely educated Hindi knowing person; they had been deliberately drawn from the orthodox Sanskrit language. The draft of the vocabulary was prepared by Doctor Raghu Vira of the International Academy of Indian Culture, Lahore, and was referred to a ten-member committee headed by the Home Minister, Khan Bahadur Jafar Ali Khan. The draft was submitted in March, 1942 and it took the Committee about ten to eleven months to scrutinise it. Ultimately it submitted a report with an improved and much enlarged vocabulary as the common medium of instruction. The Government divided the vocabulary into two parts. Part one consisted of simple Urdu words while part two of such Hindi words as were not included in part one but were considered necessary to enable students to take up Hindi after the 5th class. It was to be printed in two editions in the following manner:—

(*a*) Arranging the words in order of the Persian alphabet with their Devanagri rendering against each, and

(*b*) Arranging the words in order of the Devanagri alphabet with their Persian rendering against each.

In the language readers in either script, Hindi words taken from part II of the vocabulary, corresponding to simple 'Urdu' words in the main text, which were taken from part I, were to be given within brackets. A summary of part II Hindi words with their part I simple Urdu equivalents were also to be given at the beginning of each lesson in the language readers. A five percent margin of extra words outside the approved vocabulary were allowed to authors in the writing of all books including language readers; a ten percent margin being permissible in the case of the poetry section of language readers. The press note boastfully said:—

> "The work involved careful selection, consultation with experts and examination of the whole problem from all points of view. The object of the vocabulary is primarily to suit the requirements of the State but it may be taken that the pioneering work done in the State will be of value in some measure at least, in the solution of the problem from the All India stand point."

The Committee, which considered the vocabulary, constituted as follows:—

1. Minister incharge Education, Chairman;
2. R.B. Pandit Ram Chandra Kak, Member;

3. Director of Education;
4. Mr. M.A. Shahmiri;
5. Mr. Sampurananand;
6. Mr. Mohammad Ibrahim, Principal;
7. Pandit B.M. Dattatraya Kaifi;
8. Doctor Abid Hussain;
9. Doctor Sidheshwar Verma;
10. Doctor Raghu Vira.

The Committee was also asked to suggest how text books in the approved vocabulary may be prepared, published and made available in the schools.

There was also in existence a Text-book committee which had a Muslim majority. Assuming that due to strong State-wide Muslim resentment, it would resist the introduction of the proposed text-books, it was reconstituted; by adding four Hindu and two Muslim members, it was converted into a Hindu majority committee. As the Committee was unable to arrive at a unanimous decision because of the difference of opinion between its Muslim members on the one hand and the Hindu members on the other, it was divided into two committees, one consisting entirely of Muslim and the other, of Hindu members. The Muslim members unanimously demanded that text-books for Muslims should be in Urdu vocabulary and that Hindi words which were not part of the Urdu language, as normally spoken or written, should not be included in it. The Hindu members were more reasonable than the Government. While they agreed that Urdu books may not contain any Hindi words, they recommended that Hindi text-books should contain words termed as Hindi in the vocabulary officially prepared; this meant that they supported the Government to the extent of importing orthodox and unintelligible Sanskrit words into Hindi. This was opposed by Muslims but the Hindus being in a majority, carried their point of view. However, it is interesting to point out that the Government rejected even their recommendations and announced that the so-called common vocabulary prepared by it shall be inserted in Urdu books also. The Text-book Committee was again reconstituted with the sole purpose of dropping Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan from its membership because of his steadfast and dedicated campaign against the imposition of Hindi.

The script orders created an uproar throughout the State. The first to issue a strong statement in condemnation of the move was Maulana Mohammad Saeed, General Secretary of the National Conference. He was followed by other top-ranking Muslim leaders of the party such as Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Mian Ahmad Yar, Bakhshi

Ghulam Mohammad and Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. Among those outside the National Conference who also came out with strong statements voicing Muslim sentiments were Chaudhri Ghulam Abbas Khan, Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah, Mr. A.R. Saghar, Qureshi Mohammad Yusuf and Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan.

The National Conference Working Committee which met in Srinagar on 28th November, 1940, condemned the move as "ill-conceived, mischievous and definitely anti-national". Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz suggested that the Government might be asked to make the knowledge of both the scripts compulsory for all students whether Muslims or non-Muslims. In his view this alternative was better than what the Government had decided to do; the Working Committee rejected the suggestion. All non-Muslim members opposed the official resolution which was adopted with a majority vote. The Working Committee also considered as to whether the Parliamentary group needed any instructions to move an adjournment motion in the Assembly but decided that it was competent to determine its course in the light of the Party stand. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz, therefore, tendered his resignation from the Working Committee but continued his association with the Party as an ordinary member. Commenting on the script controversy, the Lahore Congress daily "Tribune" wrote in its issue of the 29th November:—

> "We are not at all surprised that the script controversy has caused a rift in the ranks of the Kashmir National Conference. The attitude that the Conference or rather its Muslim members, who happen to be in an over-whelming majority in it, has taken up in this matter, is not only inconsistent with its professions of nationalism but has created feelings in the minds of non-Muslims that they cannot expect justice from the Conference Party in the matter of safeguarding their linguistic and cultural interests. The result is that the already few non-Muslims who are in the National Conference are one by one severing their connections with it....And what the Kashmir Government had done is to give recognition to both Devanagri and Persian scripts while keeping Urdu as the medium of instructions in educational institutions. Is there anything wrong or unreasonable in this act of Government? Was it not its duty to do so to satisfy the legitimate demand of the minority community? If anybody could have any grievance, it was the Hindus, because the Government, while conceding to them the right of having their children educated through the Devanagri script, still kept Urdu as the medium of instructions. But unfortunately it was left to the Muslim members of the National Conference Party, who were least expected to raise a controversy

on this issue, to read a meaning into the official order which it did not convey."

Commenting again on the National Conference agitation on the question, "Tribune" wrote on 9th December:—

> "At its annual session held at Anantnag, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference adopted a resolution embodying what is popularly termed as 'National Demand'. This 'National Demand' guaranteed to the minorities 'all the safeguards and weightages for protection of their legitimate linguistic, religious, cultural, political and economic rights accordiing to the principles enunciated, accepted or acted upon by the Indian National Congress from time to time'. Do the Muslim members of the Conference stand by that 'National Demand'? If so, may we enquire if their attitude on the script question is consistent with the assurance contained in the "Demand"?"

On 14th January, 1941, the National Conference organised a Statewide Protest Day against the script order and to endorse its W.C. resolution on the question. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah addressed a huge meeting attended by about thirty thousand persons, held at Shahi Masjid, Srinagar. Mir Waiz Mohammad Yusuf Shah addressed a similar meeting at Eidgah.

There was also a further parting of ways between Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. They had been jointly running a weekly, 'Hamdard', but in January, 1941, the former dissociated himself from it. The National Conference Working Committee met in Jammu in January and accepted the resignation of Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. It also considered the correspondence that had passed between its President Sardar Budh Singh and the Prime Minister on the script question and the Arms Act.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY MEMBERS RESIGN IN PROTEST

A meeting of the National Conference General Council was held in Srinagar on 25th May, 1941. The Council, besides condemning the Arms Bill, demanded the withdrawal of the Devanagri Script Order. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz opposed the resolution on the script question. A Pandit member moved an amendment demanding that the matter be referred to Congress leaders for opinion. It was strongly opposed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who said that the Congress did not belong to the

Indians but it was a Congress of Sumpurnanands and Piyare Lals (the latter was Private Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi). Severely criticising the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi, Sheikh Abdullah said:—

> "Gandhiji does not always say in what he really believes. He has taken wrong decisions a thousand times. Hindus may treat him as a Mahatma but I am not prepared to do so. In the past he has committed a hundred mistakes. Every action of his is self-contradictory. *The communal tension in India is of his creation. It is he who has poisoned the politics of the sub-continent. In fact the truth is that Muslims are not at all at fault and it is Gandhiji who wants to be unjust to them. I know that Hindus are in control of the Congress. It is the Congress of fanatic Hindus like Sampurnanand and Piyare Lal*"[1]

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz walked out of the Council session as a protest against the speech while Sh. Abdullah was still on his legs, answering his objections and explaining his own policy.

In Muzaffarabad, Muslim students boycotted their classes and took out a procession protesting against the attitude of their Headmaster who was forcing them to read Hindi. Chaudhri Hameedullah Khan moved an adjournment motion in the Assembly demanding cancellation of the script order. Speaking in support of his motion, he said that the Hindu Prime Minister wanted to destroy Muslim culture but that the Muslims were wide awake and determined to frustrate these efforts. He was supported by National Conference members Mian Ahmad Yar Khan, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, Sheikh Mohammad Amin and Maulvi Ghulam Mustafa. The motion was disallowed by the President and, therefore, seventeen, out of the 21 elected Muslim members, staged a walk out against the aggressive attitude of the Government. The National Conference then called upon its Assembly members to resign their seats en bloc as a protest against the anti-Muslim policy of the Government. The direction was immediately obeyed; all of them tendered their resignations forthwith. The Party High Command explained its decision in a statement which stated:

> "The National Conference, despite having declared the 1939 Constitution as wholly unsatisfactory and reactionary, had co-operated with the Government in order to give it a fair trial as in its opinion there were some provisions which were useful and needed a trial. But, unfortunately, the Government has, of late, enacted laws which have destroyed even the faint hope of reaping any benefit from the said Constitution. Acting on the policy of divide and

1 Al Islah, June 1941.

rule, it enacted the Arms Act which exempted Hindu Rajputs on the false pretence of religious duties although in British India Hindu Rajputs have never demanded exemption from the Arms Act on this ground. The Government then introduced a double script although the Education Reforms Committee, which included such eminent educationists as Doctor Zakir Hussain, had expressed the opinion that it will divide Hindus and Muslims into two groups; again, Glancy recommendations with regard to the Services have been ignored; the Conference is therefore of the opinion that the Government is deliberately resorting to measures that are bound to result in increasing the inter-communal tension. The National Conference Assembly Party walked out of the Assembly as a protest against these dangerous moves and submitted a report to the Parliamentary Sub-committee. After due consideration, the Working Committee has decided to call upon its Assembly members to resign from their seats as the Party does not deem it proper to take any drastic action, for the time-being, in view of the international situation."

THE NEW CONSTITUTION

A new and more comprehensive Constitution was promulgated on 7th September, 1939, by the Maharaja. It had been drafted by his personal Advisers and it seems that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the eminent lawyer from Allahabad, was largely responsible for the document. Nominally it increased the number of elective seats in the Legislative Assembly from 33 to 40 in a House of seventy-five and thus gave an impression that it now had an elected-majority but the truth remains that it was a device to hood-wink casual observers. The seven seats transferred from the nominated quota were termed as 'special quota constituencies' and were to be filled in by the following:—

(*a*) Tazimi Sardars:

(1) Jammu province including Chenani and Poonch Jagir.

(2) Kashmir province including Frontier districts.

(*b*) Jagirdars, Muafidars and Mukkararidars holding a jagir, Muafi or Mukkarari from the State of not less than rupees five hundred per annum:

(3) Jammu province including Chenani and Poonch Jagir.

(4) Kashmir province including Frontier districts.

(*c*) Land holders owning land assessed to land revenue of not less than rupees 250 per annum:

(5) Jammu province including Chenani and Poonch Jagir.

(6) Kashmir province including Frontier districts.

(*d*) Pensioners receiving rupees 100 or more as monthly pension:

(7) Jammu and Kashmir State.

It needs no argument to show that members elected on such an extremely-restricted franchise, confined as it was to a small minority whose very existence and influence depended upon the absolute rule of the Dogra dynasty, could be no other than those who were more loyal than the King himself. Experience also shows that these seven persons invariably supported the Government.

The people of Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit were denied the right of popular representation. Instead, the Maharaja reserved to himself the right to nominate two Buddhists from Ladakh and one Muslim each from Askardu, Kargil and Gilgit.

Even with this limited franchise and such over-whelming majority in the Assembly, the Maharaja still lacked self-confidence as is true of all despots. Therefore, he reserved all powers to himself and this is what Section 5 of the Constitution laid down:—

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this or any other Act, all powers, Legislative, Executive and Judicial, in relation to the State and its Government are hereby declared to be and to have always been inherent in and possessed and retained by His Highness and nothing contained in this or any other Act shall affect or be deemed to have affected the right and prerogative of His Highness to make laws, and issue proclamations, orders and ordinances by virtue of his inherent authority."

How powerless the Assembly was, may be judged from Section 24 of the Constitution which dealt with reserved matters:—

"It shall not be lawful for the Praja Sabha to consider or deal with any matter or enact any law relating to or affetcing:

(*a*) His Highness or any member of the royal family or the management of the royal household;

(*b*) Relations, treaties, conventions or agreements between the State and His Majesty the King Emperor of India or the Government of India or with foreign powers or the Government of any State in India now subsisting or in force or hereafter to be established or made;

(*c*) Matters of Frontier policy including those relating to Ladakh and Gilgit;

(*d*) Such matters relating to the Jagirs of Poonch and Chenani as His Highness may specify;

(*e*) Rights specifically granted to Illaqadars or Jagirdars by their sanads;

(*f*) The organisation, discipline and control of the State forces;

(*g*) The departments declared by His Highness from time to time as Hazur departments;

(*h*) The Dharmarth Trust;

(*i*) The provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder and their repeal or modification; and

(*j*) Such other matters as may be specified by His Highness from time to time.".[1]

Section 28 provided, among other things, that if an Assembly member had a conviction against him by a criminal Court for an offence punishable with a sentence of imprisonment for a term of six months or more and the sentence was subsisting or an order binding him to be of good behaviour or an order of internment or externment had been passed by a Magistrate or the Council of Ministers or the His Highness which was still in force, unless a period of five years or such less period as His Highness may allow in any particular case, had elapsed since his release, he was to lose his seat. Maulana Masudi and A.R. Saghar had been sentenced to six months imprisonment in 1938 and though returned to the Assembly unopposed, were hit by the provision and lost their seats. Mr. Mohammad Abdullah, father of the now famous Qudratullah Shahab, was later elected in the bye-election in place of Mr. Saghar. The provision itself was mischievous and undemocratic because Assembly members are, invariably, political workers and on account of frequent

1. J & K Laws, Vol. III, p. 811.

clashes between the political parties and the autocratic regimes, they are bound to suffer imprisonment, internment and externment. The life of the Assembly being only three years, the provision was designed to keep out leading members of the National Conference and the Muslim Conference (both Muslim in character).

Section 31 provided that even the Prime Minister could, on the passage of a Bill by the Assembly, refuse to forward it to the Maharaja for his assent and return it for reconsideration in whole or in part together with any amendments which he may recommend. Thus the prerogative enjoyed by the Head of the State was also conferred on the Head of the Administration. It seems that this device was adopted to spare the Maharaja of the blame that is usually attracted by refusal to assent to a bill.

Even if a Government bill failed to receive a passage, it could still be enforced and the intention seems to have been to further reduce the importance of the Assembly. This is what Section 34 of the Constitution laid down:—

> "Where the Praja Sabha refuses leave to introduce, or fails to pass in a form recommended by the Council, any Bill, His Highness may declare that the proposed legislation is essential for the good Government, safety or tranquillity of the State and such Bill shall, on such declaration, become an Act as if it had been passed by the Praja Sabha and assented to by His Highness".

It had been hoped by the general public and particularly by the National Conference circles that with the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference and with Mr. Ayyengar at the helm of administration, the Government would adopt a reasonable attitude towards the political aspirations of the people and initiate some measures for the attainment of responsible Government. Unfortunately for everybody, these hopes proved to be unreal. The enforcement of the Arms Act, the imposition of Hindi, victimisation of political workers and the extremely anti-people attitude adopted in the Assembly to stifle opposition, embittered feelings and led to a widening of the gulf that already separated the Maharaja and the people. Meanwhile important developments were taking place on the international scene. By the middle of 1943, Africa had been cleared of the Axis and Italy as well as Germany had been put on the defensive. There was no doubt now that the Allies were winning the war. The Cripps proposals, the Quit India Movement and the immense popularity that was being daily gained by the All India Muslim League were clear indications that a political settlement in the sub-continent could

no longer be much delayed after the war. The Maharaja, therefore, seems to have been advised to take steps, even if half-hearted, towards the democratisation of the Government. The grim reality seems to have dawned, though not fully, that the days of personal rule were fast coming to an end.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

It was under these circumstances that on 14th July, 1943, a few days before the departure of Sir Maharaj Singh, the Prime Minister, the Maharaja announced the appointment of a committee known as "The Royal Commission of Inquiry" which was headed by Chief Justice Ganga Nath. It had twenty members, six of whom were Muslims. The National Conference was represented by Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg and Khawaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. It was set up at a time when Quaid-e-Azam was in correspondence with Lord Wavell with regard to the situation obtaining in the State.

The Commission held its first meeting in Srinagar on 19th August, 1943, and its last meeting was also held here on 27th October, 1944. In all it examined two hundred witnesses among whom were Khawaja Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Maulvi Abdul Wahid, Editor Al-Islah and Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah Nasr-u-Din. While the former two effectively brought home the economic and social disparity of Muslims in various districts and their backwardness in the educational field, Mr. Nasr-u-Din placed before it the justification of Muslim demand for cow-slaughter and the repeal of the penal law making it punishable with imprisonment of ten years. Fully acquainted with Sanskrit, the Maulana made a deep impression while quoting from Vedas and Shastras, to support his contention that cow-killing was permitted among the early Aryans and that there was no forfeiture of property on conversion to another faith. All communities including Hindus, Harijans, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians presented their grievances and examined witnesses in support of their respective claims. The National Conference and the Muslim Conference boycotted it, as in their view, it fell far short of their expectations and also because its composition was a clear indication that it was a mere eye-wash. Because of their boycott, the Commission lost much of its importance. Even otherwise, it was idle to expect anything spectacular from a Commission of such composition.

The Commission was told by Wazir Feroze Chand, the Revenue Commissioner, that while land revenue in Kashmir valley was assessed at thirty percent of the produce, in Jammu province it was assessed at twenty

five percent. Doctor Gobind Lal Vashnevi, Director Medical Services, told the Commission that only 1/30th of the State's income was spent on medical aid: the total amount spent under this head in 1943 was rupees nineteen lacs. The Inspector General of Customs told the Commission that custom was levied even on tea valued at rupees five and on salt of the quantity of 20 seers.

On 27th October, 1944, the Chairman placed before the members a copy of the report that he had prepared for submission to the Government and asked them to sign it. It is interesting to note that all members unanimously refused to affix their signatures unless and until each paragraph was discussed and stamped with approval. This was not acceptable to the Chairman and the members, therefore, walked out in protest. It is said that the Chairman then submitted the report to the Maharaja. When we recall that after the boycott of the Commission by the National Conference and the Muslim Conference, it was left with wholly pro-Government members led by Major General Janak Singh, a very close relative of the Maharaja, one is naturally intrigued as to why the report was not signed by them? The inner story shall perhaps never be known in its entirety because none except the Maharaja, the Chairman and Janak Singh knew it. It, however, appears from circumstantial evidence that Ganga Nath, having been under constant criticism both inside as well as outside the Assembly for his anti-Muslim utterances, had become conscious of his highly controversial position as Chairman of such an important Commission, at least in so far as the cruel verdict of history was concerned. It was reported in the columns of weekly "Javed", the non-official organ of the Muslim Conference and edited by the normally knowledgeable Mr. Saghar, that the Chairman made the following recommendations:—

(1) The Arms Act be amended which in effect meant that the exemption granted to Hindu Rajputs from the operation of the Act to enable them to keep fire-arms without a licence, was to be repealed.

(2) The sentence in the case of cow-slaughter be reduced from ten to two years.

(3) Proprietary rights be given to tenants all over the State.

(4) The status of Hindi and Urdu, as it then existed, be maintained and that there should be no further orders in this connection.

(5) Forfeiture of property on conversion from Hinduism should be maintained.

The Government being too conscious of its Hindu character and drawing its source and strength from the fanatic Hindu elements in the sub-continent, was not willing to go so far as to accept such part of the recommendations that either reduced the feudal or penal burden on the Muslims or deprived the Hindus of their superior citizenship by bringing them at par with their Muslim countrymen. It seems that efforts to persuade Mr. Ganga Nath in the opposite direction had failed and, therefore, the device adopted to sabotage the report, was by using the Government hordes in the Commission in the manner indicated above. That Ganga Nath retired soon afterwards (and was succeeded by K.B. Sheikh Abdul Qaiyum of the same High Court) lends support to the "Javed" report. It is also important to point out that the report was not contradicted.

KAZAK REFUGEES

About four thousand Kazak refugees driven out by Russian Communists entered Ladakh after years of guerrilla warfare. Among their principal leaders were Mohammad Ilyas and Usman Pasha. They had about four thousand horses, three thousand camel and twenty thousand sheep. The Dogra army stationed at Ladakh at first made a desperate effort to prevent their entry but as the borders were partly ill-defined, partly undefined and, in any case, too large to be defended by the Maharaja's Government, the effort to prevent their journey to Leh proved futile. The truth is that the Government came to know of their entry only when they were a few marches away from Leh. They were permitted to remain in and around Leh while negotiations continued. The refugees sought permission to settle anywhere in the State but the Dogra Government was the last on this planet to accept such a request because it meant not only the addition of four thousand heads to the local Muslim population but what is more, it also meant the presence of a four thousand strong martial community who had taken up arms against Communists in defence of their honour and were apt to do so again anywhere else. Having failed to get permission for resettlement, despite public demands voiced all over the State, they requested for a passage to British India, the Government of India having agreed to allow them entry. An agreement was, therefore, arrived at which authorised the Government to disarm the refugees and in return, provide them with a passage through the State territory. The heartless Dogras, however, deliberately delayed their departure from Leh and gave permission only after snow had begun to fall on the Zojilla Pass.

According to a resolution passed by the National Conference Working Committee, dozens of them were killed and hundreds of cattle lost while crossing the pass. The resolution also stated that no medical aid was provided. The National Conference requested for permission to render them relief but this humanitarian request was rejected. The Government very cruelly laid down a strange route for their exit. The normal route was to bring them to Bandipura and thence straight to Muzaffarabad *via* Jhelum valley road. It would have spared the refugees the great hardship and the loss of life and cattle that they had to suffer while crossing the State on the difficult and maiden route chalked out for them. They were brought to village Khadanyar, about three miles outside Baramula town on the right side of Jhelum towards Uri. This writer visited the camp like hundreds of other citizens of Baramula and saw their sad plight. Hunger, sickness and long journeys through dense forests and steep mountains had almost broken their bones and yet they looked a cheerful people and took pride in having undergone these hardships to preserve their faith and maintain their freedom.

From here they were taken to Muzaffarabad where they were housed in temporary camps on the out-skirts of the town. The Government of India sent an English officer of the Political department who had separate meetings with Ilyas and Usman Pasha and also visited the refugee camp and the hospital. Ultimately it took over the responsibility of their maintenance. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and Maulana Masudi visited them at Khadanyar and Muzaffarabad. One of these visits to Muzaffarabad took place on 5th February, 1942 when they brought truck loads of relief articles. The National Conference had already set up a Relief Committee in Srinagar with Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad as Chairman. Had the Government accepted its offer, the relief work could have been organised on a much wider scale. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah visited Delhi alongwith Maulana Masudi and had talks with officials of the Government of India for their relief and resettlement. As a result of his representations, New Delhi made a grant of rupees three lacs for their immediate relief. In Muzaffarabad, they lost a woman who was abducted by some unknown persons. They gave the Government three days ultimatum for restoring her to their relatives. The Dogra army which was camping in the town was immediately summoned. It surrounded their camp and there was some bloodshed. Ultimately the refugees left for Punjab on 5th May, 1942.

They were not resettled at any particular place in British India. With the passage of time they got scattered over north India and particularly in the districts of Jhelum, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi and Lahore. This writer saw a large number of them in Jhelum in 1950-51.

They were doing a thriving business in Karakuli caps. A few years later, after we had entered into the Amercian-sponsored Military alliances, they suddenly disappeared from the town and rumours have been current persistently that they were picked up by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States, smuggled out of Pakistan and after training, at least some of them were smuggled into the Soviet Union for spying. In December, 1973, this writer met two Kazak shop-keepers in Mecca who had been among these refugees. They confirmed that some had "gone" back to Soviet Russia.

SERVICES, INCOME, LITERACY

The All India Educational Conference held its 17th session in Srinagar under the presidentship of Mr. Amar Nath Jha, Vice Chancellor of the Allahabad University. The working sessions were held between the 25th and 29th of September, 1941. An education exhibition was inaugurated by Doctor Zakir Hussain. The Conference was inaugurated by Maharaja Hari Singh. Among topics discussed were University education, training for teachers, Secondary education, technical education, moral and religious education, international fees, modern education and examinations. It was a great success as almost all sections of people, except the Kashmiri Pandits, extended their whole-hearted support. The Pandit community had been campaigning for the removal of Khawaja Ghulam Saiyidain from the post of the Director of Education and as the Conference was being held in Srinagar on his initiative and he being in over-all charge of its arrangements which was incidentally the first All India Conference of any kind to be held in the State, the Pandit community made frantic efforts to sabotage the arrangements but made a miserable failure. Daily "Martand", official organ of the Pandit political party "The Sanatan Dharam Yovak Sabha", carried the following verse of Iqbal for years at the head of its front page under the caption "Director Education and We":—

"نہیں منت کشِ تابِ شنیدن داستاں میری
خموشی گفتگو ہے، بے زبانی ہے زباں میری"

"Martand" accused Khawaja Ghulam Saiyidain of pursuing an anti-Hindu policy. How could such a policy be pursued in a State where the administration from top to bottom was in the hands of Hindus? That this propaganda was mischievous and unfounded, is proved from the fact that Sir Gopalaswami Ayyengar paid warm compliments to Saiyidain in course of his address at the Conference. Saiyidain who retired as Education Secretary of free India, belonged to the pro-Congress Jamia Milia School of thought in the field of education. It was because of his efforts to do

justice, in so far as he could in the circumstances of the State, to the Muslims in the matter of services, scholarships, foreign training and expansion of educational facilities, that the Pandits were unhappy with him.

The Glancy Commission had made it obligatory for the Government to publish, annually, a statement showing the representation of different communities in the Services. The purpose was obvious. In 1947 the Government, therefore, placed before the State Assembly the following statement showing the representation of various communities between April, 1944 and April, 1945:—

Cadre	*Muslims*	*Hindus*	*Sikhs*	*Others*
Gazetted ..	150	325	21	11
Non-gazetted ..	4,269	6,875	566	128
IVth grade servants ..	3,568	3,546	635	217

This table would show that the over-all Muslim representation was hardly forty percent as against their population figures of seventy-seven percent. In the gazetted cadre it was not more than thirty percent. However, it must be conceded that there had been a marked improvement since 1931.

In 1942-43, the State income, according to the Administration report, was three crore thirteen lacs and eighty five thousand rupees. The main items of revenue were as follows:—

Forests	Rs. 83,64,000
Customs	Rs. 67,30,000
Land Revenue	Rs. 55,69,000
Silk Department	Rs. 41,91,000

According to the statement of Income and Expenditure placed before the State Assembly, the income for the year 1944-45 was rupees four crore twenty lacs and fifty four thousand out of which, forests accounted for rupees one crore fourteen lacs. The total expenditure on roads, Public Works Department, Education, Medical, Agriculture, Veterinary, Co-operatives, Panchayats and Village up-lift was only rupees eighty eight lacs twenty seven thousand which came to 20.8 percent of the total income.

The total number of civil as well as criminal cases pending in the Courts In 1944 was 63,379. The number of educational institutions was 1888 out of which 269 were for girls. The number of students was one lakh eighteen thousand one hundred ten. The number of Muslim students was sixty one thousand five hundred seventy one, which means about 52 percent.

In 1945 the number of tourists rose to thirty two thousand six hundred seventy six. They included eighteen thousand five hundred seventy five foreigners. Among them, five thousand spent the summer in Gulmarg, four thousand at Nagin Bagh, three thousand seven hundred seventy seven at Pahalgam and 425 went as far away as Sonamarg. The number of hotels went up in Gulmerg from 7 to 19 in five years and from one to five in the Nagin Bagh.

According to the statement made by Mr. Abdul Wahid, Editor, Al-Islah, before the Royal Enquiry Commission, the average daily income, as per census of 1941, in different districts was as follows:—

Jammu district	.. Rs. 2.00 to Rs.3.50 per month per head.
Kathua	.. Rs. 2.00
Udhampur	.. Rs. 2.50
Reasi	.. Rs. 3.00
Mirpur	.. Rs. 3.00
Baramula	.. Rs. 4.00
Anantnag	.. Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 4.00
Ladakh & Askardu	.. Rs. 1.25
Kargil	.. Rs. 0-7-9

According to the 1941 census, the rate of literacy was as follows:

Jammu district	.. 5.58%
Kathua	.. 5.77%
Udhampur	.. 5.56%
Reasi	.. 4.2 %
Mirpur	.. 7.5 %
Baramula	.. 4.3 %
Srinagar district	.. 3.95%
Pulwama	.. 3.88%
Anantnag	.. 5.6 %
Kulgam	.. 5.6 %
Askardu	.. 1.27%
Srinagar city	.. 21.91%
Jammu city	.. 35.26%

The economic condition of the people was deteriorating partly because of the rising cost of living but mainly because of the absence of opportunity for employment. But for the recruitment in the Indian army due to the World War, there would have been a near famine. Food was very scarce. Same was the case with fuel, especially in Srinagar. Rationing was introduced in important towns but the supply was irregular, besides, being much below the requirement per head. Black market therefore thrived and one has to record it with sorrow that the Government took no effective steps to punish the hoarders and black marketeers only because the bulk among them were influential Hindus. The Maharaja started a Poor Fund with a personal donation of rupees two lacs which was used mainly to provide employment to eight thousand labourers who normally went to Punjab for seasonal employment in winter and partly to help the needy and the distressed. Obviously, these measures, commendable no doubt, were, however, infinitely inadequate to meet the growing unemployment and poverty.

Unfortunately the position in the Northern region where there was neither any organised public opinion nor any press or platform, was far worse. It was still ruled like a medieval kingdom. In Baltistan, for instance, even as late as 1944, villagers were required to supply, on demand, to Government employees, firewood at the rate of 2½ annas per maund whereas in the market at Astore it was sold at five annas per maund. Ghee was to be supplied to them at Rs. 2 per seer; hen for six annas a seer; eggs, one paisa per egg and milk, six annas per seer. The poor people had to purchase these articles from the market at higher rates and supply the same at a loss to themselves.

JAMMU FOOD RIOTS

The food scarcity was extremely grave in Jammu city. Meetings were held and processions taken out demanding more ration shops and better and regular supply. The Government did not take timely notice of the angry mood of the people. Atta was sold at rupees sixteen per maund. In July, 1943, the Government was ill-advised to close down cheap food shops with the result that Hindu Mahajans began stocking wheat and selling it in the black market. It is possible that some Hindu officers may have been in league with the anti-social elements. By 23rd September, the public agitation assumed dangerous proportions. The Government arrested some leaders but as normally happens in such situations, instead of silencing the people, it deepened their anger mainly because the matter directly concerned every family. The Government, therefore, enforced Defence Rule 50 and prohibited the holding of meetings and

taking out of processions. In order to register their protest against these measures, about one thousand persons collected in the city chowk. The Police resorted to a lathi charge but had to withdraw as the mob retaliated with brick-bats and lathis. They burnt down the car of the District Magistrate as also a police lorry. On 24th September at about 6.30 p.m., a group of five students suddenly appeared at the city chowk to initiate a civil disobedience movement. A mob estimated at about six thousand which had already collected at the chowk, shouted anti-Government slogans. This infuriated the armed police, resulting in a clash. The Police was ordered to open fire. Nine persons, including two Muslims, were killed and thirteen injured.

The firing was condemned by all sections of the people. Public meetings were held and hartal observed in sympathy with the victims of the firing. In response to a demand voiced from every quarter, the Government appointed a Commission with Sir Gobind Madgaonkar, an ex-Judge of the Bombay High Court, as Chairman and Doctor P.K. Sen, ex-Judge Patna High Court and a member of the Maharaja's Judicial Board of Advisers and Mr. Justice Qazi Masud-ul-Hassan of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court as members to enquire into the incident and locate its responsibility. Appointed on 11th October, 1943, the Commission submitted its report on 5th January, 1944. All political parties co-ordinated their efforts to present the people's point of view before the Commission which held its sittings in Jammu city. It was for the first time that even Dogras co-operated with their Muslim neighbours in condemning the Government and exposing its anti-people policy. The Commission unanimously recommended the dismissal of Pandit Raghu Nath Kaul A.S.P. and fourteen armed policemen who had resorted to unnecessary firing; it also recommended the forced retirement of Lala Bej Nath D.S.P. after completing the period of service necessary to earn full pension. The Commission recommended censure of Mr. Said Ali, Inspector-Police and also recommended that no responsible post in the executive should in future be given to Pandit Sukhya Lal Raina, A.D.M. The Maharaja declined to dismiss the constables on the ground that they had acted on the orders of their superiors. The Maharaja's stand was justified because any one in his place with any sense of duty and conscience would have acted in the same manner. The Government paid rupees thirty six thousand as compensation to the dependents of the deceased. The Maharaja also ordered that the balance of pay and allowances, amounting to rupees five thousand, payable to Thakar Himat Singh, an Additional Revenue Commissioner from U.P. on deputation to Kashmir Government as Revenue Minister, be forfeited on account of the dereliction of duty. By the time the order was passed, the Thakar was already back in U. P.



یہ ہماری جاودانی زندگانی کے نشان
چاند تاروں کی طرح روشن ہیں زیر آسماں

The silk factory remained closed for two hundred and fifty-seven days out of 429 days from 28th Maghar, 1998 to the 29th of Magh, 2000. The daily wage of a skilled worker was annas eight and nine pies and of an unskilled worker five annas only. One can imagine the abject poverty of a factory worker who was paid so little and who was employed only for less than six months a year.

TARA DEVI AS REGENT

Towards the beginning of 1944, Maharaja Hari Singh was appointed a member of the Imperial War Council as a representative of the Indian Princes. Sir Feroze Khan Noon represented British India. On the eve of his departure for London, he appointed a Regency Council to carry on the dayto-day administration in his absence. It consisted of the following:—

1. Her Highness Maharani Tara Devi, Chairman.
2. General Janak Singh.
3. Sir B.N. Rao, Prime Minister.

The Maharaja also laid down in writing that:—

1. No change shall take place in the Government;
2. The orders issued by him from time to time shall neither be changed nor amended;
3. *Sentences of death or life imprisonment or other sentences needing his confirmation shall await such confirmation until his return;*
4. No new gazetted post shall be filled in nor shall a non-gazetted post be upgraded;
5. Promotion to gazetted posts and punishment of gazetted officers shall remain in suspense;
6. No additional expenditure exceeding rupees one lac shall be incurred;
7. All political matters shall await his return;
8. The Prime Minister shall maintain a memo of his talks with the officials of the Government of India.

The Maharaja arrived in London on 11th April. It seems that relations between him and Tara Devi were sore for a long time.

Maharaja Hari Singh was not free from the vices that normally go with youth or feudalism but the truth remains that whether it was Gulab Singh, Ranbir Singh, Pratap Singh or Hari Singh, in the matter of moral turpitude, as commonly understood, they were above the average Nawabs and Rajas of the sub-continent and it must be recorded to their credit, in fairness to everybody including this writer's responsibility as a historian, that as far as my enquiries are concerned, they were not publicly involved in any scandal with any subject woman. So far as Muslims are concerned, only one woman, Bua Bundan from Poonch is traced among the concubines of Gulab Singh. Similarly, Bua Murad Begum from Gilgit was a concubine of Ranbir Singh. It is possible there may have been others. However, these were exceptions and not a rule. The truth remains that they did not maintain harems as understood from the term and as was the universal practice with Rajas and Nawabs in northern India. They employed no agents to search for delicate beauties among their subjects. In this respect their sense of honour and duty, in their capacity as rulers, was admirable and enviable. Why Hari Singh did not divorce his wife is partly because she was the mother of the heir-apparent, crown prince Karan Singh, and partly because divorce being unknown to orthodox Hindu Law, he could not afford, as a Hindu ruler, to take such a step. Another reason was perhaps his realisation that after all, his wife was little to blame.

A Hindu-Muslim clash occurred in Jammu on 29th August, 1945, on the occasion of the Janam Ashtami procession. Offensive slogans were raised by the processionists against Muslims and the Muslim League and, as a protest, a few Muslim youngsters who were watching the procession, raised counter slogans. It was a signal for the Hindus to attack Muslims in various localities of the city. Five shops belonging to Muslims were looted but no action was taken against them. This pattern was followed at other places as Hindus were becoming aggressive. In Bhadarwah, on 24th Phagan 2003 (March 1947) a Brahmin, Rakhi Chand, fired on four Muslims (two of whom were Abdul Haiy and Ghulam Hassan Khan) though they remained unhurt. On an enquiry made by the local administration, it was found that the rifle belonged to Bakhshi Thakar Das, Tehsildar Bhadarwah. No action was taken against him.

On 15th February, 1946, another Hindu-Muslim riot took place in Jammu city while Muslims were observing Eid-e-Milad. The procession taken out to celebrate the birth of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), was attacked by Hindus, leading to a hand to hand fight. Twenty eight persons were hospitalised, two of whom, one from each community, later succumbed to their injuries. Twenty four persons, mostly Muslims, were arrested. Rule 50 of the

Defence Rules banning processions and public meetings was promulgated. Within three days the number of the injured rose to seventy two. The city observed a complete hartal for many days. A public meeting was held in Srinagar condemning the attack on the procession. Curfew was clamped down and collective fines imposed. A tribunal consisting of Pandit Sri Chand Dutt, a retired A.D.M. and Khawaja Abdul Qadir, Sub Judge, Udhampur, was appointed to try the riot cases.

In the World War, 71,667 soldiers were provided by the Jammu and Kashmir State.[1] They were directly recruited by the Indian authorities. About forty thousand hailed from Poonch district alone. Detachments of Jammu and Kashmir army were also sent for active service. Among them was the Ist Jammu and Kashmir Mountain Battery which left India on 25th September, 1940 for the Middle East under the command of Major (later Lt. Col.) Bhagwan Singh. It participated in the campaign in Africa. The Maharaja sanctioned a hereditary jagir of rupees 3600 per annum in favour of Bhagwan Singh.

A sum of fifty thousand sterling was contributed by the Maharaja towards the Governor General's fund for the purchase of tanks and war planes. A committee under the chairmanship of Maharani Tara Devi, set up for the welfare of the armed forces, collected about seven lac rupees. Lacs of rupees were also contributed by the Government towards the war fund. In recognition of these services, the Maharaja was granted the honorary rank of Lt. General and his wife was made a member of the Imperial Order of the Crown.

Lord and Lady Wavell visited Kashmir in October, 1945, for a week. They came on 7th October and visited Gulmarg on 13th October. Imaginary photographs of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Hazrat Imam Hussain and Hazrat Imam Hassan found mysteriously hung in the Art gallery at the Exhibition grounds on 11th October were quickly removed before any untoward incident could take place. Lord and LadyWavell were at the time at the premises. Muslim demand for an inquiry was brushed aside. A memorandum was submitted to the Viceroy by the Muslim Conference workers from Srinagar supporting the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan and detailing their grievances against the Maharaja's Government.

THE PRESS

The first paper to be published from the State was the weekly "Ranbir" named after Maharaja Ranbir Singh and published by a public-spirited

1 Mr. Sarwar Abbasi in Kasheer, Oct. 1976.

Dogra youth Mr. Mulak Raj Saraf. It was started from Jammu in June, 1924. Despite its moderate views and pronounced pro-Dogra leanings, it was ordered to stop publication in May, 1930 for having published proceedings of a procession taken out in the city to protest against the arrest of Mr. Gandhi by the British Government. The announcement of the Maharaja said:—

> "It is not my intention to curb in any way the legitimate expression of opinion or fair and just criticism of the policy and acts of myself and my Government. The policy regarding these matters will continue unchanged and I shall be quite willing to entertain applications whether in Jammu or in Kashmir from other journalists wishing to start another newspaper or newspapers within the State territory so long as their bona fides are not in question."

Many applications had been vainly moved for the grant of permission to publish weekly papers. After the recommendations of the Glancy Commission, a press law, largely on the lines of a similar law in vogue in British India, was enforced in May, 1932; some newsppapers made their appearance soon after. The Press could be divided into two groups: the Muslim Press and the Hindu Press; both advanced the interests of their respective co-religionists and were exclusively owned, edited and staffed by them. It must be said to the credit of Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz that he blazed a new trail. Making a pleasant departure, he not only employed Muslims on his staff but also pursued a policy of liberalism, uninfluenced by petty communal considerations. He also helped many political workers, irrespective of their party affiliations, to gain prominence.

At the time of partition, the more important papers and the parties they represented were as follows:—

1. The daily "Khidmat" Srinagar, official organ of the National Conference;
2. Weekly "Javed" Jammu, the unofficial mouth-piece of the Muslim Conference;
3. Weekly "Ranbir", a pro-Government and pro-Congress newspaper;
4. Daily "Hamdard" edited and owned by Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz;
5. Daily "Martand", official organ of the Kashmiri Pandits;
6. Weekly "Al-Islah" of the Ahmedia community;
7. Weekly "Shamsheer", official organ of the Sikhs.

There were three English weeklies, "The Kashmir Times", "The Kashmir Chronicle" and the "Sentinel". The National Conference started an English version of daily "Khidmat" towards the end of 1945 but it did not last long because of the Quit Kashmir Movement. Pandit Kayshup Bandhu owned and edited a weekly newspaper called "Desh". It advocated, largely, a socialist policy. Some papers were published by private individuals from Srinagar, Jammu and Mirpur. Among them were weekly "Chand", weekly "Such" published from Mirpur by late Raja Mohammad Akbar Khan, weekly "Rehbar" Srinagar and weeklies "Millat" and "Jauhar", Srinagar edited by Mir Abdul Aziz and non-official organs of the Muslim Conference. Mr. Abdul Majid Qarshi owned and edited a weekly named "Jamhoor". Munshi Meraj Din owned and edited Weekly "Pasban" and Mr. Ghulam Haider Ghouri owned and edited weekly "Naujawan". These were published from Jammu. In 1940 a Kashmiri weekly "Gash", meaning light, started publication from Srinagar. It was owned by Mr. Mohammad Amin. It was the first and the only paper to be published in Kashmiri language but it is a curious fact that it had to close down because Kashmiri is largely an unwritten language and it is therefore difficut to read it.

However, except for "Hamdard", "Khidmat" and "Javed", they did not sell more than a few hundred each. Daily "Khidmat", being official organ of the National Conference, was purchased and sold like a party paper and the Party naturally saw to it that its workers took interest in its sale and distribution. Weekly "Javed" also had considerable sale, partly because of being the unofficial organ of the Muslim Conference but largely because of the personal political standing of its talented and shrewd Editor-*cum*-proprietor Mr. A.R. Saghar. However, it must be recorded in fairness to everybody that the best newspaper and with the largest circulation, was the daily "Hamdard". It was published on six pages of a large size. Its get up and printing was superior to every other paper and its presentation of news as well as views on various topics of political interest was always balanced, admirable and interesting. Having given up active party politics since 1941, Pandit Bazaz, a man of great talents, intelligence and perseverance and with a broad liberal political outlook, completely merged himself in his paper and built it up so much that the great Quaid-e-Azam likened it with a London paper. Pandit Bazaz was also in personal touch with political workers from all over the State, irrespective of their party affiliations and thus had the unique opportunity of being in the know of political currents and cross-currents. A man of great courage, the credit for destroying the mass popularity of the National Conference among the Muslims of Kashmir valley must, largely, go to him. He had to pay for it several times, both at the hands of the Government which either demanded cash securities or imposed

censorship or the National Conference which resorted to hooliganism. In 1946 he was shot at while returning to his home from his office and severely wounded. He was confined to bed for several months but the paper continued to appear regularly under the able stewardship of comrade Mir Abdul Aziz.

The entry of daily "Dawn" into Government offices was banned in 1943. There was no written order but all colleges, schools and libraries suddenly stopped purchasing it. No explanation was offered by the Head of any institution and it seems that they had been verbally told to discontinue its subscription. Mr. Khurshid Hassan Khurshid, General Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Students Union and Mr. S.A. Rehman, Organizing Secretary, met Sir Maharaj Singh, the Prime Minister, in May, 1943, and later called on the Director of Education and the Chief Secretary but in vain. Even offers by the Muslim students to purchase it with their own funds and place it in the College libraries was rejected. In 1940, entry of daily "Ehsan", a Muslim newspaper from Lahore, was banned. The ban was condemned in a public meeting held in Srinagar under the auspices of the Muslim League.

Freedom of press as understood in the post-independence era was unknown. Apart from countless restrictions inherent in the Press laws, the Government reserved the right to interfere even on trivial matters; this power was very often abused. Even this was not considered enough and, therefore, newspapers were divided into two categories. Roughly, we may divide them into the White List and the Black List. Government press notes and advertisements were reserved only for the White List. The result was that these privileges were available only to the pro-Government papers. This retarded the growth of the press because private advertisements were unknown and newspapermen depended upon Government advertisements to keep their papers going.

In 1945, weekly "Pasban" which is now published from Sialkot by the same Editor Mr. Meraj-ud-Din Ahmad, was compelled to tender an apology for having criticised the Prime Minister. The same year censorship was imposed on "Hamdard", "Vitasta" and "Javed". Weeklies "Rehbar" and "Islah" were blacklisted in 1940. Notices under Rule 35 of the Jammu and Kashmir Defence Rules were issued to three newspapers in Srinagar to show cause why proceedings should not be taken against them. The Press resented the notices and in a joint statement, Editors of all the newspapers, except "Ranbir", condemned the Government action. Said the Editors:—

"After having failed in maintaining public order, the Government has now cracked down upon the national Press. It seems to have been frightened by the criticism of its policies and actions offered by the newspapers from time to time. All newspapers had been warned to desist from criticisim and three daily newspapers have been now asked, on the basis of certain news and articles published in their columns, to show cause why action should not be taken against them under the Defence Rules. It seems that the Government has come to the conclusion that it can no longer continue its policies without gagging the press. It is important to point out that a Government with a State national as Prime Minister and with two popular Ministers in the Cabinet, is resorting to Defence Rules and that too at a time when the War is over and such emergency and extraordinary laws need to be brought to an end. We raise our voice of protest against the undemocratic and tyrannical action of the Government. We feel that public opinion is being suppressed and freedom of press has fallen into jeopardy."

This happened in August, 1945.

The question of press restrictions was raised in the British parliament in September, 1945. A cash security of rupees three thousand demanded from Pandit Bazaz was raised by the paper through donations from its readers but at the same time the order was challenged in the High Court. A Full Bench of the Court decided against the newspaper and an appeal was, therefore, taken to the Board of Judicial Advisers. Mr. Indar Das, a lawyer of great abilities from Jammu appeared on behalf of Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz.

In Srinagar, Muslim journalists formed their own Association in 1946 and affiliated it with the All India Muslim Journalists Association.

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