

Sikh Reaction to Pakistan Resolution 1940

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The Muslim League demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims of India was essentially based on two-nation theory according to which the Muslims wherever they lived, whatever language they spoke and wherein their economic and other interests lay, formed one nation against. This concept of nationalism, though completely in consonance with the teachings of Islam, was nonetheless not compatible with the definition of a modern democratic state. Advocacy of this doctrine by the Muslim League, therefore, stirred alarm particularly among the non-Muslims of those areas that were to fall under the jurisdiction of the proposed state of Pakistan. Such feelings were rampant more in the Punjab than anywhere else and more particularly amongst the Sikhs as they were confined only to the Punjab and in that province, too, they formed only 13 per cent of the total population and, to crown it all, they did not constitute majority in any single district of the province.

Evidently, the Punjab was to be included in Pakistan because it was the hub of Pakistan, without which Pakistan was almost inconceivable. If it were so the Sikhs had the fear of losing their separate identity besides many privileges which they expected to enjoy in United India. As Pakistan was claimed on the basis of religion, it was an additional cause of apprehension for the Sikhs. The Sikhs were, therefore, unwilling to yield to what they called '*Mohammadan Raj*'. Master Tara Singh, a prominent Sikh leader gave vent to Sikh feelings by stating that: "We are opposed to Pakistan because it is not the

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protection of Muslims, but their domination over the minorities".¹ The British Governor of the Punjab, Glancy, writing as late as 1945 expressed similar opinion. He wrote: "... Non-Muslims especially Sikhs ... will not submit peacefully to a Government that is labelled as Mohammadan *Raj*".²

When the All India Muslim League adopted the famous Pakistan resolution on March 23, 1940, it "roused widespread concern" and "shocked many sections of public opinion" including the Hindus who, in the words of V.P. Menon, were "greatly angered."³ The Sikh reaction was equally strong and instant. On March 24, the Sikhs held a public meeting at Amritsar and "urged the audience to be prepared to make sacrifices to resist the scheme adumbrated by the Muslim League."⁴ Only a week later, on 29th March, 1940, the Akali Jatha in its meeting at Amritsar condemned the Pakistan Scheme.⁵ Akali Conference at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) on 6-7 April, 1940, presided and addressed by Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and many others, passed a resolution calling upon the Sikhs to resist the creation of Pakistan.⁶

The Sikh press, like-wise, took the line that "any attempt to set up a permanent Muslim majority in the Punjab would be wholeheartedly resisted".⁷ Besides this widespread condemnation of the

The Sikhs, mostly concentrated in the central Punjab, had four main centres of their population i.e. Ludhiana, Amritsar, Faridkot and Patiala. The highest percentage of their population, i.e. 44.5 per cent, was in Faridkot." (Census of India 1921, Vol.xv (i), in Kirpal Singh, *The Partition of the Punjab*, (pb. University of Patiala, 1972) 6.

1. *The Civil & Military Gazette*, Lahore, 12 April 1941, cited in Latif Ahmed Sherwani (ed.), *The Pakistan Resolution to Pakistan (1940-47), A Selection of Documents Presenting the Case of Pakistan* (National Publishing House, 1969), 32-33.
2. Nicholas Mansergh, (ed.), *The Transfer of Power (1942-47)*, Vol. VI, (H M S O , 1976), 72.
3. V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power*, (Orient Longmans, 1957), 83.
4. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1940, Vol. XLII, No: 13, 30 March, 1940, 165.
5. *Ibid.*, No:14, 6 April, 1940, 192.
6. *Ibid.*, 207-08.
7. *Governor Punjab's Report*, 30 April, 1940, L/P&J/5/243, Punjab, 1940 (i), 202, India Office Library.

Pakistan Resolution by the Sikhs in their public meetings and in the press, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee — a religious body devoted by tradition and custom to the preaching of Sikh religion and management of Sikh *gurdwaras* — in its meeting of 3 April, 1940, endorsed the decision of the Khalsa National Party, which was an ally of the Unionist Party in the Coalition Government of the Punjab, and called upon the Sikh members of the Provincial Legislature to withdraw their support from the Unionist Party unless its Muslim members dissociated themselves from the Muslim League.⁸ A Guru Khalsa Darbar was provisionally formed at a meeting held at Amritsar on 19 May, 1940, having amongst its objectives the regaining of the Punjab and the establishment of a Sikh kingdom between River Jamuna and Jamrud (near historic Khyber Pass).⁹ Similarly, condemnation of the Pakistan scheme continued to be the main theme of all speeches made at a series of Sikh 'diwans' held at various places. The implications of the Pakistan scheme caused serious apprehensions among the Sikhs that they might be ignored if the Hindus and Muslims succeeded in finding a settlement of their differences. Sikh resistance to any form of Muslim domination found expression in well-advertised gatherings to celebrate old historical events likely to appeal to Sikh sentiments, like the 'Ghallughara' day, in the memory of the defeat of the Sikhs by Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1761. The day, though had not been observed before, was observed by the Akali Party¹⁰ on 26 May, 1940 and meetings were held simultaneously at Amritsar and Lahore. These meetings were, however, thinly attended, only by 13000 and 800 persons respectively.¹¹

The British authorities attached little importance to the propaganda campaign which was bluntly being carried on against the Muslim League's partition scheme.¹² But, as the Pakistan continued to be the obsession of the Sikh community, it eventually led to

8. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1940, Vol. XLII, No: 14, 6 April 1940, 191.

9. *Ibid.*, No: 20, 25 May, 1940, 278.

10. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, second half of May, 1940. L/P&J/ 5/243, 163, IOL.

11. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1940, Vol. XLII, No: 21, 1st June, 1940, 299.

12. *The Viceroy to the Governor, Punjab*, 18 April, 1940. Mss Eur F125/ 149, 31, Linlithgo Papers, IOL.

“provocative and partly armed processions” by the Sikhs on the 9th of June and by the Sikhs and Hindus combined on the 16th of June, 1940, which consequently seriously perturbed, besides the Muslims, the British Government also.¹³ It is worth mentioning that these (partly) armed processions were taken out in spite of the ban on display of arms which had been imposed since the Khaksar — police clash on 19th of March, 1940 at Lahore. The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab in his fortnightly report for the second half of June, 1940 drew attention of the Government to the war-like preparations which were then being carried out by the Muslims, Sikhs and Princely States. This report caused considerable alarm in London.¹⁴ The Secretary of State for India, Lord Zetland, suggested that a preliminary enquiry should be conducted so that “the attempts to stimulate communal feelings” and “particularly the Congress attempts to utilise Pakistan issue” could be check-mated.¹⁵ In fact, the Sikhs, fearing an internal disorder, had started enlisting themselves in the *Akali Sena* (a militant arm of the Akali Party) and arming themselves. Their increasing subversive activities, communalistic in character and directed towards prejudicing the internal peace of the province and also interfering with the effective prosecution of War, necessitated detention of scores of persons including 5 members of the Legislative Assembly.¹⁶

The Sikh unrest eventually led to a ‘mutiny’. The Sikh soldiers refused to comply with the orders to proceed overseas. This was followed by desertion of the Sikh soldiers from units affecting badly the Muslim soldiery also. The Sikh soldiers took the line that they would not go lest overseas to a war which was not their own but would preferably stay in India in order to fight their own war with the Muslims. Consequently, the Muslim soldiers also refused to go lest

13. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, 1st half of July, 1940. L/P&J/ 5/243, pb., 1940 (i), 125-26.

14. *The Viceroy Office, Delhi's note addressed to one, Mr. Walton of India Office*, London, dated 22.8.1940. L/P&J/5/216, NWFP, (1940), 7.

15. *The Secretary of State for India's note to Sir Dawson of the India Office*, London, *ibid.*, 5.

16. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, second half of June, 1940. L/P&J/5/ 243, pb.(i), 140.

their strength in comparison with Sikhs should weaken.¹⁷ Subsequently, Major-General Lockhart in his note which he prepared on 25 February, 1942 for the War Cabinet Committee on India, summarised the Sikh trouble in these words:

One of the main reasons for this reluctance to enlist as well as for the number of desertions which occurred, was the current opinion that if Sikhs went overseas, their lands and villages would be seized by the Mohammadans who were plotting to seize power in the Punjab. (The) Sikhs were therefore wanted in India to protect the community against the Mohammadans.¹⁸

This "seditious infection" according to the official investigation, came from "a Communist Centre at Meerut".¹⁹ An organisation known as 'Kirti' was allegedly responsible for all this trouble.²⁰ The mutiny soon spread to Egypt (and elsewhere) where Indian army had been engaged in the War.

The Military authorities in Egypt, therefore, asked the commander-in-chief to muster out of the Sikh Company of the 31st Punjab Regiment — which was obviously the worst affected company — as this battalion and other battalions in the brigade lost confidence in them. The commander-in-chief ordered accordingly. But his action was considered unduly lenient by the Governor of the Punjab²¹. As the Sikh reservists and recruits had also shown signs of trouble, the Secretary of State for India therefore desired that appropriate "steps against instigators outside the Army" should also be taken.²² A Conference at Army Headquarters, Lahore, on 29 July 1940, attributed the trouble to the "bad influence" prevalent at the homes of the soldiers and the "politics" in general. The same Conference decided to stop at once the recruitment of Sikhs for M.T. (Mechanical and Technical) and similar

17. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, 13 July, 1940. Mss Eur, F 125/89, 124 (a) Linlithgo Papers.

18. Nicholas Mansergh (ed.), *The Transfer of Power (1942-47)*, Vol. I, (H M S O, London, 1970), 239.

19. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, 31 July 1940. Mss Eur, F125/89, 132 (a) , Linlithgo Papers.

20. *The Viceroy to Governor, Punjab*, Sept., 1940. Mss Eur, F125/149, 56, Linlithgo Paper.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *The Viceroy to the Governor, Punjab*, (tele), 20 August, 1940. *Ibid.*, 48.

corpses. However, M.J.D. Anderson disagreeing with the recommendations of the Conference, noted that "the step proposed might lead to communal disturbance on the scale of civil war".²³

It appears that the British Government was divided as to the question of dealing with the deserters. It was however the opinion of the military commander-in-chief which finally prevailed. The deserters, according to the Chief, had committed "no offence" though they had lost the confidence of the military authorities. He was, therefore, in favour of pursuing a policy which had been dubbed by his critics as "unduly lenient". The Governor-General and Viceroy was, likewise, inclined to deal with the situation politically. In order to counter-act the designs of the communalists playing the role of anti-war party and also to boost up the recruitments, the Government appointed some 50 "Sikh gentlemen" and as a result the position with regard to recruitment considerably improved.²⁴ However, at the same time, it was feared that the situation might deteriorate if the Indian National Congress decided to make "attempt to utilise the Pakistan issue" to its own advantage, which was evidently the root cause of present communal antagonism in the Punjab.²⁵ The India Office, London, therefore, contemplated the possibility to inveigh the Pakistan idea, though, of course in very guarded language. But the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgo, came out very strongly against any such suggestion to "letting it appear in any way that the British Government were trying to discredit the Pakistan idea."²⁶ Nonetheless it was decided to utilise Sikandar Hayat's influence in pacifying communal feelings. Sikandar, therefore, on the invitation of both the Indian as well as the Middle East Army Headquarters, visited Egypt and Sudan, the worst affected centres of

23. *The Governor, Punjab to the Viceroy*, 31 July, 1940. Mss Eur, F 125/89, 124(a), Linlithgo Papers.

24. *The Viceroy to the Governor, Punjab*, 6 Sept., 1940, Mss Eur, F125 /149, 56, Linlithgo Papers.

25. *The Secretary of State for India, Lord Zetland to Sir Dawson of India*, London, L/P&J/5/216, 5.

26. (Viceroy Office, Delhi) to Mr. Walton (India Office, London) dated 22.8.1940 in *ibid.*, 7. It was probably on the percolation of the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgo, that when a couple of months later the Secretary of State for India made an appeal to Indians, he instead of discrediting gave "implied encouragement to Pakistan scheme" (V.P.Menon, *The Transfer of Power*, 97).

the trouble in late December, 1940.²⁷ By such measures the British Government succeeded to bring the situation under control.

The apprehensions of the Sikh community were however not removed and were, in fact, very difficult to be dispelled so long as the Pakistan idea loomed large over the Indian horizon. If the Sikhs were unwilling to live under what they called 'Mohammadan *Raj*' in united Punjab, the only other alternative left open to them was to demand (jointly with the Hindus of the Punjab independently on their own) the exclusion of those districts from the rest of the province where the non-Muslim were in a majority. But such a demand was apparently much more harmful for the Sikh community as any judicious line of demarcation could cut the community into two almost equal halves, thereby weakening them still further. The Sikh demand to push the dividing line to farther West so that colony districts, i.e., Montgomery (Present — day Sahiwal) and Lyallpur districts should remain out of the pale of Pakistan looked unrealistic. Yet, there was one more option for the Sikhs that they should enter into an agreement with either of the two communities, the Hindus or the Muslims. But for a compromise with the Muslims, Muslim League's "communalism" stood in their way.

Moreover, there was another consideration which hampered the prospects of a settlement between these two communities. This consideration centred round the question whether or not (some sort of) central structure of united India would be retained. Had India remained one and united, the Hindus or, in other words the Indian National Congress, and not the Muslims (or the AIML), was to have an upper hand in Indian politics. If that be the case, it was from the Sikh point of view not advisable to enter into dialogues with a party which was, at any rate, relatively a weaker bidder. As until the announcement of 3 June, 1947, there had apparently been the chances of retention of some sort of centre for united India, the Sikh community, therefore, held back to negotiate an agreement with either of the major political parties. Furthermore, the Sikhs by not entering into an agreement with either of the two parties continued raising their price higher and higher with the hope to extract maximum favourable terms for themselves.

27. *The Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 20 Jan. to 21 Feb., 1941, Vol. XV, (Lahore, 1942) 69 (Sir Sikandar's statement viz., his visit to Egypt and Sudan). Sir Sikandar reached Egypt on 20 Dec. 1940 and proceeded to Sudan on 3 January, 1941 (L/1/1/1427 (Sir Sikandar), 1938-41, 15,17.

Their stratagem looked flawless. But they overlooked this very fact that their bargaining position was weaker due to the lower percentage of their population. Their proportionately larger contribution to the army of which they were very proud of and which was, no doubt, greatly valued by the British rules, too, was unable to make good their numerical deficiency.

The British, in fact, earnestly desired to save the Sikh community from the disaster awaiting them in the wake of the partition of the Punjab. The Government therefore came to the rescue of the Sikhs and influenced the course of event on more than one occasions. In doing so, the Government was moved not by the motive of sympathy for the Sikhs alone (which was of course there) it had its own imperialistic designs, as well. However, all those proposals which came directly or indirectly from the Government from time to time intended to avert the division of the Punjab particularly that which would result in the split of the Sikh community. But apart from the proposals of the British Government, it is worthwhile to see how did the Sikhs, as a reaction to the Pakistan scheme, wanted to readjust their position where their rights and interests could be safeguarded effectively. In the following paragraph a study has been made of those proposals which were presented by the Sikh leaders from time to time.

Encouraged by the Muslim League demand of separate homeland for the Muslims of India, the Sikhs, too, aspired to create one for themselves. This proposed Sikh homeland was given various names. Usually it was known as Khalistan, some times it was called "Azad Punjab scheme". An amended variant of that scheme was later named as "new Punjab Province Proposal". The Sikh leaders were, however, not unanimous as to the area which this state or province was to comprise of. Understandably, the sprawl of the Sikh community throughout the province and also their being not concentrated in any specific area with any substantial majority made the task of making some concrete suggestion with regard to the boundaries of their Sikhistan/Azad Punjab/New Punjab province far more difficult. Besides, it was also not clear to the Sikh leadership whether the Sikhistan or the new province which they claimed would be independent and sovereign or form part of Pakistan or remain in the Indian Union.

A Sikh convention held at Lahore in May, 1940 resolved to re-establish Khalistan by regaining the kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

which stretched between Jamuna and Jamrud and which, according to the Sikh leaders, was held by the British as a "trust" handed over to them a century ago by Maharaja Dulip Singh, the last Sikh ruler of the Punjab.²⁸ In fact the demand for Khalistan was first made by the All-India Akali Conference at Attari (Amritsar district) soon after the passage of the Pakistan Resolution by the All India Muslim League. The area of this Sikh State was to extend from the River Chenab in the West to the River Jamna in the East.²⁹ Subsequently, Dr. V.S. Bhatti of Ludhiana, in his pamphlet entitled Khalistan, proposed that the Sikh state should also include Multan and Delhi, besides the Sikh states ruled by Sikh princes and even the Malerkotla state ruled by a Muslim prince. He demanded for his land-locked state a corridor running through Bahawalpur, Sindh and Rajputana enabling the Sikhs to have an outlet to the Gulf of Cutch. Bhatti's Khalistan being evidently a sovereign state was to serve as a buffer between Pakistan and Hindustan.³⁰

The Shiromani Akali Dal put forth the demand of an autonomous Sikh state consisting of the territories almost the same as suggested by Dr. Bhatti with an additional claim to certain hill-states of the North and North-East. The rationale was also given by the Dal for making such a high-pitched claim. First, the overwhelming part of the Sikh population was concentrated in that area. And two, most of the properties in this area were owned by the Sikhs.³¹ Later, the Dal, however, revised its own proposal and renamed their proposed state as "Azad Punjab" which was to be created after separating the overwhelmingly Muslim majority areas i.e. Rawalpindi Division and Multan Division. In the Azad Punjab all the three communities, the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, had an equal proportion of population and could live therein amicably. The Azad Punjab was to remain in the Indian Union in the event of the partition of the country.³²

28. *The Tribune*, Lahore, 21 May, 1940.

29. Anup Chand Kapur, *The Punjab Crisis; An Analytical Study*, (New Delhi, 1985), 64.

30. Quoted in *ibid.*, 65-66.

31. Kirpal Singh, *The Partition of the Punjab*, 9.

32. Swagat Address, Azad Punjab Conference, Amritsar, 28 Feb., 1944, in *ibid.*, 9-10.

Besides these high-pitched and evidently unrealistic demands, there came a relatively more reasonable suggestion from the leader of the same Shiromani Akali Dal, Master Tara Singh, who in his interview with Stafford Cripps in March 1940 intended to redistribute the Punjab into two provinces with the River Ravi as the boundary between them. This "new Province" carved out of the Punjab was to consist of Ambala and Julundhur Divisions and also the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore (of the Lahore Division).³³ Sardar Baldev Singh, another very influential Sikh leader and a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in his meeting with the Cabinet delegation on 5 April, 1946, reiterated that as the Sikhs felt unsafe both in case of united India or of Pakistan, they, therefore wanted a province where they were in a dominant or almost dominant position.³⁴ This new Province was subsequently named as "Hindu-Sikh State" by the Panthic Pritinidhi Board and was to comprise of those districts of the Punjab where the Muslims were in a minority. The Board in its meeting held at Amritsar on 30 January, 1947, appointed a sub-committee which included Master Tara Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh, Bawa Harkishan Singh, besides others, to work out the details of and a strategy for the implementation of the Scheme.³⁵

A couple of months later, Master Tara Singh visited Calcutta and succeeded to win the support of "the big non-Muslim industrialists" who, in his own words, were "ready to support the Hindu-Sikh minorities in the Punjab financially." And according to an unsubstantiated rumour Tara Singh brought with him huge amount of money from Calcutta to finance his scheme aimed to damage the Muslims of the Punjab. But the Sikhs, after having withdrawn their claim from the three much important districts of the West Punjab (i.e. Lyallpur, Montgomery and Sheikhpura), had in this re-constituted province of the Punjab a fear of being dominated by the Hindu jats. Master Tara Singh, therefore began to advocate the theory of "mass migration" as it was to give the Sikh community "a strong handle to bargain with (the) Congress against the Muslim League". And it was

33. Quoted in *ibid.*, 8.

34. Nicholas Mansergh, (ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, (1942-47), Vol. VII, 139.

35. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1947, File S/415 Vol. LXIX, No: 6 dated 8 Feb., 1947. However the Governor of the Punjab, Maudi, says that: This meeting was attended, among others, by Baldev Singh, Swarn Singh, Kartar Singh, Tara Singh and Odha Singh. (Maudi's Papers, Mss Eur, F164/21 A, IOL).

also anticipated that Quaid-i-Azam would at the same time be compelled to either concede a Sikh homeland within Pakistan or an independent Sikhistan. It was further believed that by dint of this partition plan "the Muslims in the Central and Eastern Punjab would be kept as hostage for a good behaviour of west Punjab Muslim towards their minorities." Tara Singh's new plan was, however not appreciated by the Congress High Command.³⁶

Considerable divergence of opinion between the Hindu and Sikh leaders over the division of the Punjab led to a split between the communities. While the Hindus of the Central Punjab insisted on the Lahore Division being included in the non-Muslim area, the Hindu Jats of the Ambala Division, wanted a new province to be formed incorporating the Ambala Division, Delhi and the western districts of the United Provinces.³⁷ Chaudhry Lahri, a Hindu Jat leader of Ambala Division, in his interview with the Governor of the Punjab on 4 April, 1947, reiterated that "the Jats definitely want a Province of their own and do not want to be included in any Sikh State".³⁸

The Sikh community, however, was not unhappy if the Hindu Jats wanted a new province of their own. They rather felt more comfortable after the exclusion of a dominantly Hindu area from the "Sikh state". If that be the case, the Sikh state amalgamated or federated with Phulkian States (i.e. the Princely Sikh States of the Punjab) would be free to join Indian Union or Pakistan.³⁹ Nonetheless, the Congress High Command considered the idea of Sikh confederacy impracticable and was not favourably disposed to the plan of a sovereign Sikh State, too. Giani Kartar Singh and Master Tara Singh held a series of meetings with the Congress leaders at Delhi in the

36. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab 1947, File s/415, No 15.12 April, 1947, 174-75. The Akalis secretly advocated 'migration scheme amongst the refugees who after the communal riots at Rawalpindi and certain other cities of the West Punjab were forced to leave their homes and taken refuge in Amritsar, Patiala, (*Ibid.*, No: 18, 19 April, 1947, 192).

37. *Ibid.*, No:9, 10 May, 1947, 33-34.

38. 3/1/176, Punjab 1947, Governor Punjab's interview with Ch. Lahore on 4 April, 1947, 26, 10L.

39. R/3/1/176, Governor Punjab's interview with Giani Kartar Singh, 10 April 1947, 32, 10L, the Intelligence reports also substantiated this view expressed by Giani Kartar Singh to the Governor of the Punjab. (See *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1947, File, S/415, No: 26, 28 June, 1947, 337).

second week of June, 1947 but were greatly "disappointed" at the attitude of the latter.⁴⁰ Congress attitude, therefore, caused a split within the Sikh ranks. The industrialist and capitalist group of the Sikhs which adhered to the Congress desired the new Punjab Province to consist of Ambala and Julundhur Divisions and Delhi. The other group led by Giani Kartar Singh which included a considerable number of the Sikh landed aristocracy desired the territory between the River Chenab and the River Sutlej, where the Sikh aristocracy had large estates and where the Sikh population was greatly concentrated, to be included in the proposed new province.⁴¹

In spite of the fact that the Sikh leaders continued changing their position with regard to their demand for a separate state or a province, (which being a result of external pressures portraying their inner differences) "never forgot that they once owned (whole of) the Punjab", as Lord Wavell, the Governor-General, after his interview with the Sikh leaders Master Tara Singh and Sardar Baldev Singh, on 6th June, 1946, rightly assessed their inner feelings.⁴² Lt.-General Sir Francis Taker also reached the same conclusion when he stated that the Sikhs were "bound one day to try to re-establish the realm of Ranjit Singh from Peshawar to Delhi."⁴³ Needless to emphasise that such a line of thinking proved disastrous for the Sikhs as it stopped them to realise ground realities objectively, formulate their demands discreetly and negotiate a 'settlement' with either of the major political parties of India on the terms which safeguarded their national interests squarely.⁴⁴ This extreme line proved a great obstacle in the way of Sikh-Muslim League accord, too. Yet there were some other important factors which made such an accord impossible. The dye was cast. So the division of the Punjab became inevitable in the wake of which came the havoc that was unparalleled in modern history.

40. *The Police Abstract of Intelligence*, Punjab, 1947, File S/415, No: 25,21 June 1947, 326.

41. *Ibid.*, Vol., XLII, No. 16, 19 April, 1947, 192.

42. Panderal Moon (ed.), *Wavell, The Viceroy's Journal*, (Oxford University Press, 1974), 288.

43. Francis Taker. *While Memory Serves*, (Casselle Co., 1950) 257.

44. For the indecisiveness of the Sikh leadership, see Maqsood and Stockdale, *The Khalistan Riddle*, (Modern Book Depot, Islamabad, 1988), 41.