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INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT REVOLUTIONARIES IN AMERICA

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*To the Sacred Memory
of Those
Who Have Enriched
the Saga of
India's Freedom*

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**INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT
REVOLUTIONARIES IN AMERICA**

PREFACE

The story of the Indian revolutionary movement in and outside the country, in the context of the saga of Indian Independence, has an abiding appeal and interest. The secrecy and mystery shrouding this aspect of India's Freedom Struggle and the excitement it lends only stimulate the curiosity and eagerness of the inquirer. Since Independence painstaking research has been trying to reconstruct the story of the Indian revolutionary movement and put it in its proper place on the canvas of modern Indian history. The task, however, is not easy. Material is far from adequate. In many cases, the evidence is one-sided and subjective. Legends and myths still persist.

This modest study on Indian revolutionaries in the USA against the background of World War I was undertaken during my stay in the United States in 1963. I had requested the India Office Library, London through the University of Illinois for a micro-filmed copy of the San Francisco Trial Records (1917-1918). The request was turned down because of the fifty-year ban on the document. This was a big handicap which was only partly made up by the availability of microfilmed copies of the Selected Pages of the Trial Records at the University of Stanford and Asian Studies Centre, Berkeley, California. Supplementary and corroborative evidence on the activity of these revolutionaries and their sympathizers was collected from several American newspapers of the period and other sources. Of these, the old copies of the California newspapers are not likely to be available outside the library at Berkeley. I have indicated the sources of information as clearly as possible. I hope, with all its lapses this monograph does not suffer from the paucity of documentation.

This study is, by no means, a complete history of the Indo-German Conspiracy on the American soil. The Conspiracy was an abject failure. Still, one feels that its ramifications were wide, and the conception of this international conspiracy was dignified and laudable. The conspiracy with its wide sweep, its strategy and its intrigues was unprecedented in the history of any people striving for emancipation. It created fright in the minds of the Anglo-Indian administrators. But the execution of the plans was tardy and the conspiracy exposed the weakness and the hollowness

of a section of the Indian revolutionaries. The monograph only tries to give a glimpse of some aspects of this movement. The author fervently hopes that in the near future some competent scholar will bring the entire story of this enterprise under the lurid light of investigation, research and analysis and add a useful chapter to the history of modern India.

This treatise is based on a series of articles published in the *Modern Review*, Calcutta, between November 1964 and February 1967. I thank the Editor for permitting me to use these articles for the purpose of bringing out this monograph.

I also take this opportunity to thank, among others, Prof. Richard Park, formerly of the Asia Foundation, New Delhi, for suggesting some source materials; Prof. Margaret Fisher and her colleagues of Asia Studies Centre, Berkeley for the facilities offered and arranged; Dr. G. Berreman of the same Centre for preparing a reading list on the East Indian immigrants in America; Prof. Robert North of Stanford University for kindly allowing me to use the microfilmed copy of the Selected Pages of the San Francisco Trial Records; Prof. R. W. Johannsen, Chairman of the Department of History, University of Illinois and Dr. Juggenheimer, University of Illinois Campus Director for U.S.A.I.D. Participants, for providing me with facilities for visiting several University centres in pursuance of the study; and Dr. S. R. Sen Gupta, formerly Director of Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, for sponsoring my visit to the USA.

I am also indebted to Prof. B. N. Banerjee, late of the United Nations team of experts to the Government of Libya for his valuable suggestions and last but not least, to Shri Sris Kumar Kunda of Jijnasa for the trouble he has taken to bring out this book.

1 | The Seed-Time

It is only in recent years that some attention has been paid to the organized activity of Indians resident in foreign countries for the cause of India's self-government and freedom. People interested in the story of the gradual evolution of India's freedom movement, have, of course, been familiar with the efforts of individuals like Dadabhai Naoroji, Madame Cama, Shyamaji Krishnavarma, V. D. Savarkar, Madanlal Dhingra and others. Later, India's cause abroad was furthered by Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bepin Chandra Pal and a host of other patriots. After the emergence of Gandhiji's leadership Indian nationalists became more vocal, eloquent and persuasive in Great Britain and the United States of America. As the Gandhian movement grew in intensity and volume, public opinion abroad became more and more sympathetic to our national aspirations. Groups and individuals working for the Indian cause succeeded in creating a better understanding of the Indian issues.

The task of the Indian patriots working abroad in the pre-Gandhi era was comparatively difficult. For one thing, no broadbased political struggle on a national scale had been organized at home. For another, Indian patriots working in England would meet with hostility, and, others working in a country like the United States would most likely, meet with indifference and apathy—initially at least. The political relationship between India and England was not conducive to the work of this nature. Besides, there was in the dependency, in the first decade of the current century, a wave of extremist views accompanied by the cult of violence. Indian nationalists in England were political suspects. In January 1905, Shyamaji Krishnavarma¹ “—started in London the India Home Rule Society—and issued the first number of the *Indian Sociologist*, a penny monthly, as the organ of his Society. In that paper he describes the Society as having the object of securing Home Rule for India, and carrying on a genuine Indian propaganda in England by all practicable means.” The India House, an adjunct to the Society, became in 1906 and 1907, “notorious as a centre of sedition, and in July 1907, a question was put in the House of

Commons inquiring whether the Government proposed to take any action against Krishnavarma. Soon after, and probably in consequence of this enquiry he left for Paris and took up his residence there.”³

INDIAN IMMIGRATION TO USA AND CANADA

The situation was different in the United States. The people there were not directly involved in India's struggle for emancipation. By and large, they were uninformed and uninterested. The few that knew about it were, by virtue of their historical traditions and democratic instinct, favourable to the Indian aspirations. There was, however, an animosity bred not by ideology but by racial issues. It was the result of a growth in the volume of East Indian immigration at the turn of the last century. Most of these Indians came by way of the Pacific Ocean and spread out in the states of California, Oregon and Washington. A good number crossed into the United States from Canada.

The great majority of the Indians coming to Canada in the early years of this century belonged to the Punjab. This is also true of the west coast of the United States. A few came from Gujrat, Oudh and Bengal and some other parts.⁴ The first group to arrive in British Columbia in Canada came in response to an appeal made for agricultural immigrants.⁵ Immigration received an impetus because of the readiness with which some steamship companies sold tickets in their own interests, the propaganda of certain Canadian business concerns with a view to getting cheap labour, the activities of some Indians who wanted their own countrymen for exploitative purposes, and the persuasion of other Indians in Canada who highlighted the industrial opportunities of the new land for the benefit of their friends and relations. Some of these Indians had travelled through Canada after attending in England the celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign in 1897, and were impressed by the economic opportunities there. Although the majority of the immigrants to the Pacific coast came directly from India, some arrived from Burma, Shanghai, Hongkong and also from China where they had been either in the police or the army, or, had worked as watchmen or contractors. It has been suggested that some of the immigrants from the Punjab were encouraged to come to the Pacific coast by the stories of freedom, prosperity and a congenial climate, particularly in California.⁶

CANADIAN OPPOSITION

To the Indian immigrants Canada, being a part of the British Empire, made an easy appeal and the province of British Columbia was chosen by them. The initial reaction of the local people to these small groups of strange foreigners was one of contemptuous indifference. With the increase in the number of the Indian settlers, however, anti-Indian feelings came up on the surface. Indifference gave way to resistance. Some Indians escaped to the United States. There were riots and the "immigrants were forced by the mob to re-enter Canada." This hostility was born out of a conviction that the Indians were being imported into the new Continent by the capitalists to lower the scale of wages and cripple the strength of white labour. The conviction though untenable in many cases in view of the size of the countries involved and the scarcity of labour there, persisted. It led to many frictions. Behind all this lay the annoyance of the white man with the colour of the immigrant's skin, his incomprehensible habits and the policies of the concerned Governments. ".....The policy of exclusion of Indians (called Hindus in America) originated through British initiative as early as 1907-08 when the Canadian authorities shamefully ill-treated the Indian immigrants and advocated exclusion of Indians from Canada. The present Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Mackenzie King, was the first to put forward this idea. The Canadian authorities, with the approval of the British Government in England and possibly with the full sanction of the India Office, made the proposal to the American authorities that they should exclude Indians as they had excluded the Chinese. This proposition was presented demi-officially, as I was told on excellent authority, by Lord Bryce, the then English ambassador in Washington. This proposition was made after a riot occurred in the city of Bellingham (Washington State) when several Hindu labourers, working in the sawmills were mobbed by Americans. These Hindu labourers once belonged to the Indian army, and they sought assistance from the British Consul at Seattle, which was flatly refused."

The following extracts culled from the columns of an American newspaper may give us some idea of the situation. Incidentally, the reporter or contributor is an Englishman who investigated the Asiatic problem on the Pacific coast. "I watched the Dominion Immigration Officer at Vancouver examine 183 Indians one

morning. He is a kindly man, and the struggle between his humane impulses and the orders he had received from his superiors made his work painful to him." The reporter then describes how veteran Sikh soldiers with war medals and distinguished military service record were barred entry into Canada because they were short of the dollar requirement (which was \$25 for each person) by a narrow margin. These and other Indians, "were herded together in quarters not fit for animals. Later, they were allowed to land, but they were not welcomed in barber shops and other places." The report contains stories of other Indians who were subjected to mob violence in Canada and the United States, and with reference to the particularly sad plight of a Mota Singh, the reporter observes, "that he and other Indians were easy subjects for the agitators is obvious." The reporter also narrates the plight of an Indian scholar who in the course of his visit to America to study the educational systems of Canada and the United States, was pelted by some hoodlums.

Not that all Canadians were hostile to the Indian immigrant. Even the Immigration Officer for Vancouver, Dr. Alexander S. Munro remarked in a leading newspaper of the city, "It is a shame these 'Hindoos' are treated as they have been". Groups of men and women stood by the side of the Indians.¹⁰ But racial prejudice was deep-rooted.

Hindustani immigration into Canada was on the increase till 1908. The figures for the fiscal years 1905, 1906, 1907 and 1908 were 45, 387, 2124, and 2623 respectively, making a total of 5179. The figures for 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1915 were 6, 10, 5, 3, 5, 88 and 1 respectively.¹¹ From 1909 to 1920 only 118 Indians came to Canada. The contrast between the figures of 1908 and 1909 is revealing. A Royal Commission in 1907 recommended the exclusion or restriction of oriental labour including the Indians. Next year, the question of Indian immigration was particularly discussed by Canada's Deputy Minister of Labour with the British Government. As a result, certain measures were adopted whereby Indian labour was practically excluded from Canada, although the Hindus were not specifically mentioned in the Canadian Immigration Act or even in the Orders of the Governor-General in Council. Section 38 of the Immigration Act provided for the exclusion of any immigrants, "who have come to Canada otherwise than by continuous journey from the country of which they are natives or citizens, and upon

through tickets purchased in that country". For an Indian it was almost impossible to satisfy this condition. By an Order-in-Council dated June 3, 1908, "the amount of money in possession required in the case of East Indian labourers upon landing was increased from \$25 to \$200."¹³ No wonder that immigration figures after 1908 registered such a sharp decline.

REACTIONS IN INDIA

The immigration restrictions in Canada had their natural reactions in India. Strong exception was taken to the 'continuous journey clause', and the 28th session of the Indian National Congress held at Karachi in 1913 urged the Imperial Government for its repeal. The Congress said, "the order in question has practically the effect of preventing any Indian not already settled there (in Canada), from going to Canada, inasmuch as there is no direct steamship service between the two countries, and the steamship companies refuse through booking, and further subject the present Indian settlers in Canada to great hardship by precluding them from bringing over their wives and children."¹⁴ In 1913 again, three Sikh delegates from Canada visited the Punjab and addressed meetings on the subject of Indians in Canada.¹⁴

KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT

One important sequel to the Canadian Immigration Act was the episode which though tragic, is symptomatic of the misunderstanding, suspicion and hostility that characterized Indo-British relations for the major part of the first half of this century. This was the famous Komagata Maru incident. One Gurdit Singh, in deference to the Continuous Journey Clause chartered a ship, the Komagata Maru, through a German agent at Hongkong, issued tickets and took passengers there and at Shanghai, Moji and Yokohama for Vancouver. The vessel sailed out of Hongkong on April 4, 1914, and arrived at Vancouver on May 23. The immigrants¹⁵ were refused admission into Canada and the vessel was ordered out of the port. Tempers were frayed. The passengers insisted on their right to land since they were British subjects. Meanwhile a balance of 22,000 dollars still due for the hire of the ship was paid by the Vancouver Indians. Representations to the Canadian and the British Governments were of no avail. There were scuffles with the police. Finally, in the face of armed resistance the ship withdrew on July 23. The whole affair had cost

the immigrants about \$70,00 and had put them to great hardship and sufferings.¹⁶

As the ship sailed back the First World War broke out. The Komagata Maru, under official instructions, had to proceed direct to Calcutta despite the reluctance of many passengers to return to India. The ship was moored at Budge Budge near Calcutta at 11 a.m. on September 29. The Government took its stand on a recently enacted Ordinance which empowered it to restrict the liberty of any person coming to India after September 5, 1914. The passengers were ordered to entrain a special train to the Punjab. The restrictive order led to a riot and violence in which firearms were used by both parties and there was loss of lives on both sides. According to official records less than 80 people could be got off in the train that evening. Many, including Gurdit Singh, disappeared. Others were arrested then or later. This account which follows the official version¹⁷ has been challenged by Gurdit Singh.¹⁸

The Komagata Maru incident caused a deep resentment amongst the Indians of the west coast of the U.S.A. and Canada and also their countrymen at home. It strengthened the hands of the revolutionaries, "who were urging Sikhs abroad to return to India and join the mutiny, which they asserted, was about to begin".¹⁹ It may be added here that while Japan and China had succeeded in securing concessions for their nationals immigrating to Canada nothing was done by the Government of India. Under the circumstances individual petitions were of no avail. The situation aggravated the anti-British sentiments of the Indian immigrants. The Canadian Immigration Laws were, of themselves, considered humiliating. Now an incident had been touched off in Canada followed by more humiliation for the Indians on their way back till the climax had been reached at Budge Budge. A few years before this incident, an Indian administrator is reported to have told the Vancouver newspaper reporters, "Both races (Canadians and Indians) revere the same flag. Do not aid the cause of the disloyal agitator in India."²⁰ This is exactly what had been done.

IMMIGRATION AND THE USA

It has been seen that the problems of Indian immigration to Canada and of that to the United States were interlinked. It is quite likely that some Indians crossed into the U.S. from Canada

Long before this, the entry of Indians in the United States was for the first time registered in the official records of 1859. The number was 2, followed by 5 and 6 in 1860 and 1861 respectively.²¹ From 1820 to June 30, 1910, 27,918,992 immigrants were admitted to the United States. Of this number 92.3 per cent came from the European countries (including Turkey in Asia).²² During the same period immigrants coming from India numbered 5,409.²³ The total number of Asian immigrants was 613,236 as against 25,421,929 coming from Europe. The rest of the grand total came from other parts of the world. For various reasons into which it is not necessary to go, the U.S. Immigration Commission made in 1910 the recommendation that "an understanding should be reached with the British Government whereby East Indian labourers would be effectively prevented from coming to the United States. . . . In asking for an agreement of this kind, our Government would merely request the British Government to do for United States what it has done for one of its dependencies."²⁴ This was followed by a bill in 1914 for the exclusion of the Indians from America²⁵ and had its logical climax in the "Barred Zone Immigration Act" of 1917 which stopped labour immigration from India.²⁶

INDIAN NATIONALISM IN THE USA

The total number of Indians living in Canada and the United States could hardly have exceeded about 10,000 on the eve of the war. Since many had left some time after arrival, the number was likely to be less.²⁷ Quite a few of the Pacific Coast Indians had become rich by taking to farming and business. The Indians lived as a fairly compact group. Many were politically conscious because of the stirrings back at home and also because of the environment in America. A few years of stay in the United States exposed them to the ideas of freedom and democracy. They could analyse the reasons for the differential treatment between them and the Japanese or the Chinese by the American Government. The humiliation and resentment were deeper in Canada. But the climate of the United States was more congenial to the organization of an anti-British agitation. Thus San Francisco became a centre, first of agitational and subsequently of conspiratorial activity.

San Francisco was not, however, the first centre of pro-Indian political agitation. In America the cause of India seems to have been first advocated with some success by Taraknath Das of Bengal

and the sympathizers with his cause. They published as early as 1908, the *Free Hindustan* which seems to have been the "first regular South Asian propaganda sheet" in that country. First published from Vancouver in Canada in March 1908 for a few months the journal was subsequently brought out from Seattle, Washington. It is interesting to note that the *Gaelic American* in its issue of December 25, 1909, had a leaderette on 'Indian Revolutionary Papers'. After referring to the *Indian Sociologist* of London, the *Gaelic American* said; "The next paper to appear was the *Free Hindustan*, which was first published at Seattle, Washington, and latterly at New York. The last number had on its first page the reproduction from a photograph of a number of famine victims, piled for cremation under the heading 'British Rule in India'....."²⁸ Das had this monthly magazine printed and distributed from New York, "with the collaboration of a leading Irish American publisher who worked for the independence of Ireland and sympathized with the Indian cause. For nearly three years Das' publication flourished. Tolstoy and Hyndman, the British socialist, took an interest in his writings." Later, at the instance of the British the American authorities stopped *Free Hindustan*.²⁹

Das had been a political suspect in India. A few more like him took refuge in America. A very distinguished of these was Har Dayal, a native of Delhi, who was educated at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and in Lahore. Har Dayal proceeded to England after obtaining his Master's degree in Lahore in 1905. He was awarded a State scholarship for three years and joined St. John's College, Oxford. He surrendered his scholarship after some time because, "he disapproved of the English system of education in India",³⁰ came back to Lahore in 1908 where he preached "passive resistance and boycott, thus, anticipating Gandhi by ten years".³¹ He returned to London and at the invitation of Krishnavarma went to Paris about September, 1909, to become editor of the *Bande Mataram*, a monthly organ of Indian independence, published from Geneva.³² The two had their differences and within a year Har Dayal left Paris. He had failed to persuade Krishnavarma "to adopt violent methods in the furtherance of political ends" and, "determined to transfer the centre of his activities to America".³³ It is difficult to say how far his belief in passive resistance was genuine. It may be interesting to recall, however, that Har Dayal died a pacifist in 1939. And by then many of his views had undergone striking changes.

Har Dayal may have returned to India for a while²⁴, but in 1911 we find him in California after having travelled through Honolulu, Martinique and the Philippines. He received an appointment at Stanford University as Lecturer in Sanskrit and Indian Philosophy—a position which he held for a year only—for he was dismissed in the spring of 1912 for “overplaying his relationship to the University”.²⁵ The reason is rather vague. It is likely that he had to quit for his radical views. It may be noted that Har Dayal became Secretary of the San Francisco Radical Club and founded the Bakunin Institute of California.²⁶

THE GADAR FOUNDED

The records of the San Francisco and the Lahore Conspiracy trials and the Indian Sedition Committee Report (1918) devote considerable attention to Har Dayal as the arch organizer and preacher of sedition in America till March 1914 and then during the war in Berlin. He undoubtedly played a major role and mentally prepared the Pacific Coast Indians for a major conflict between England and Germany. More than six months before the outbreak of the war, Har Dayal at a meeting at Sacramento told the audience of a coming war between the Powers and asked the audience to be ready to go to India for the coming revolution.²⁷ Many such meetings were held before and after this particular one, and in one of these, perhaps in the spring of 1913, in Oregon, was organized the Pacific Coast Hindustani Association. Its objects were primarily political, the most important being the expulsion of the British from India. The meeting decided to have a press and a weekly newspaper. The newspaper was called ‘Gadar’ which in Arabic means revolution or mutiny. The Seventh Report on Un-American Activities in California published in 1953 most curiously says that the word means traitor !²⁸ The first issue of the *Gadar* was published in Urdu on November 1, 1913 with Har Dayal as editor, and contained the following paragraph :

“A new epoch in the history of India opens today, the 1st November, 1913, because today there begins in foreign lands, but in our country’s language, a war against the English Raj. What is our name ? Mutiny. What is our work ? Mutiny. Where will mutiny break out ? In India. When ? In a few years. Why ? Because the people can no longer bear the oppression and tyranny practiced under British rule, and are ready to fight and die for

freedom. The whole world is waiting to see when these brave men will rise and destroy the English. Serve your country with body, mind and wealth. Give this advice to all, and follow it yourselves. The time is soon to come when rifle and blood will take the place of pen and ink. Brave men and worthy sons of India, be ready with bullets and swords. Soon the fate of the tyrant will be decided on the battle-field."¹⁰

1. Krishnavarma, a native of Kathiawar near Bombay was educated at Oxford. After being called to the Bar he returned to India, worked in responsible positions in several Indian feudal states and then went back to England. See : Indulal Yajnik, *Shyamaji Krishnavarma*, Bombay, 1950.

2. *Indian Sedition Committee Report*, 1918, p. 5.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

4. Rajani Kanta Das, *Hindustan Workers on the Pacific Coast* (Berlin : Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1923), p. 3. This study was undertaken by Das as the special agent of the Bureau of Labour Statistics of the Department of Labour, U.S. Government in 1921-22.

5. M. W. Smith and H. W. Boulter, 'Sikh Settlers in Canada', *Asia and the Americans*, August, 1944.

6. Das, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7 ; Gurdial Singh, 'East Indians in the United States,' *Sociology and Social Research*—30 (Jan.-Feb., 1946); Theodore Fieldbrave, 'East Indians in the United States,' *Missionary Review*, June, 1934.

"The investigation by the Deputy Minister of Labour (W. L. Mackenzie King) showed that most of the immigration had been induced by the activity of certain steamship companies and their agents, by the distribution of literature throughout some of the rural districts of India from which most of the labourers came, exaggerating the opportunities of fortune making in the province of British Columbia, and by the representatives of a few individuals in British Columbia who had induced a number to work for hire." Harry A. Mills, 'East Indian Immigration to British Columbia and the Pacific Coast States'. *American Economic Review*, 1 March 1911.

The Bombay Consul reported that these North American Companies placed their advertisements as far South as Bombay. E. R. Schmidt, *American relations with South Asia, 1900-1940* (doctoral dissertation for the University of Pennsylvania, 1955), p. 278.

7. For an assessment of the situation, see St. Nihal Singh, 'Indians in America', *The Modern Review*, Calcutta, March 1908.

8. Article by Elizabeth S. Kite, *The Modern Review*, February 1927, p. 169.

9. *The New York Times*. December 19, 1915, sec. 6, 1 : 1.

10. St. Nihal Singh, *op. cit.*

11. Quoted by Das from official Canadian records, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-6.

12. Reports of the Immigration Commission, vol. 2, Washington, Government Printing Office 1911, p. 629. Harry A. Mills, *op. cit.*

In the previous years (1901 to 1905) the British Columbia Immigration Act and similar legislation had been disallowed by Canada's Governor-General, Earl Minto.

13. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, vol. 1. p. 49.

14. *Sedition Committee Report*, 1918, p. 146.

15. The number of passengers varies in the different accounts. The accounts are conflicting also. According to the *Sedition Committee Report* there were 351 Sikhs and 21 Punjabi Muhammadans on board the ship when it reached Vancouver (p. 147). O'Dwyer in his *India As I Knew It* puts the number at 'some four hundred Sikhs and sixty Muhammadans', when the ship came back to Hooghly. (p. 192).

Sitaramayya puts the number at 600. (pp. 49-50). According to R. K. Das Singh brought 375 Hindustances to Vancouver. ((*op. cit.*, p. 112).

16. Das, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

17. *Sedition Committee Report*, pp. 146-48.

18. R. C. Majumdar, *The History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol. II pp. 463-67. Majumdar refers to a book by Baba Gurdit Singh (which the former does not name) and a subsequent memorandum in which Singh refutes the contention of the Government. According to Singh, he and the party complied with every provision of the Immigration Law and it was because of British instruction that the passengers were not allowed to disembark in Canada. Singh challenges the accusation that the passengers used firearms at Budge Budge, since as he maintains, they were searched several times and their luggage was taken away by the police. It is inconceivable how after so much of vigilance the passengers had 'American revolvers' with them. Singh calls the Budge Budge incident a cruel massacre.

Gurdit Singh was a fugitive for 7 or 8 years after this incident, wandering through various parts of India. In 1918, he went to Bombay and became manager of a Ship Building Co., somewhere outside the city under the name Valdaraja. In his exile, he saw Gandhiji in November 1921, and surrendered to the Government under his advice. Sitaramayya, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

19. *Sedition Committee Report*, pp. 148-49.

20. *The New York Times*, *op. cit.*

21. Reports of the Immigration Commission, Vol. 1 (Washington, 1911), p. 79.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

24. Harry A. Mills, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

25. For a statement of the Indian case, see the *Modern Review* for June 1914, pp. 624-28.

26. The 'barred zone' consisted of India, Siam, Indo-China, parts of Siberia, most of the islands of the Malaya Archipelago, Afghanistan and Arabia with an estimated population of five hundred million people. An exception was made in favour of travellers, officials and students.

27. Majumdar exaggerates the number when he says, "By 1910 there were about thirty thousand Indian workers between Vancouver and San Francisco....." *op. cit.*, p. 389. John W. Preston U.S. District Attorney in the San Francisco Trial refers to "..... the 8,000 population of Hindus that live up and down this coast." United States of America vs. Franz Bopp et al. Reporter's transcript. (hereafter to be called 'Trial Records', pp. 6874-75).

The author is indebted to Prof. Robert C. North of Stanford University and the Asian Studies Centre, University of California, Berkeley, for permission to use the microfilmed copies of selected pages of the Trial records.

28. Quoted in Yajnik, *op. cit.* p. 279.

29. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, 298; 'G. B. Lal, Dr. Taraknath Das in Free India', *Modern Review*, July, 1952; P. C. Mukerji, 'Demise of a Great Patriot', *Modern Review*, January, 1959.

Taraknath Das left India to evade imprisonment in 1905 and eventually reached Tokyo to study at the University there. His pro-Indian activity in Japan was objected to by the British Ambassador and fearing extradition, Das crossed over to Seattle, Washington in 1906. He had literally to work his way up till as the result of a competitive examination, Das was appointed an interpreter at Vancouver U. S. Immigration station. Das got his B. A. in Political Science and Economics from the University of Washington, Seattle in 1910 and his M. A. next year. He then secured a fellowship at the University of California for his Ph.D. Dangerous politics interrupted his studies, and he had to wait for his Ph.D. till 1924. Meanwhile, however, Das was admitted to U.S. citizenship on January 5, 1914.

It should be conceded, however, that in his agitational work in America Taraknath Das was anticipated (though with less success) by a few others. The Pan-Aryan Association of New York (1906) established by Maulvi Barkatulla and S. L. Joshi appears to be the earliest Indian organization with some political purpose. It did not survive Barkatulla's departure for Japan early in 1909. Mention should also be made of New York's Indo-American National Association, founded in 1907. Ramnath Furi started his Urdu weekly, the Circular of

Freedom, from California in 1907. It became defunct within a year. The Committee for the Management of Sikh Diwans and Temples of Vanduver with branches elsewhere in Canada and the USA was also an early organisation.

For a detailed discussion see Arun Coomer Bose, 'Indian Nationalist Agitations in the USA. and Canada till the arrival of Har Dayal in 1911', *Journal of Indian History*, April 1965.

30. *Sedition Committee Report*, pp. 143-44.

31. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, *India As I Knew it*, p. 185. The author ignores Gandhi's experiments in South Africa.

32. Yajnik, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

33. Har Dayal, *Fortyfour Months in Germany and Turkey*, p. 19, quoted in Majumdar, p. 392.

34. O'Dwyer, p. 185.

35. Giles T. Brown, 'The Hindu Conspiracy, 1914-1917', *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XVII 1948, p. 300.

36. John W. Spellman, 'The International Extension of Political Conspiracy as illustrated by the Gadar Party', *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. 37, 1959.

37. *Sedition Committee Report*, pp. 145-46.

In reply to a question from Mr McGowan, a defence lawyer, Mr Preston, the U.S. District Attorney said, "We have six or eight of these papers that make similar references to the forthcoming trouble between England and Germany." *Trial Records*, p. 15.

38. Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities to the 1953 Regular California Legislature, Sacramento, 1953, p. 213.

This state document is full of factual errors, and the narration of many incidents of the Gadar Movement in America, or, of other events with some bearing on the Indian Independence Struggle is historically inaccurate.

39. *Trial Records*, p. 13.

2 | From Propaganda To Revolution

GADAR : EARLY PHASE

The name Gadar was subsequently modified to Hindustan Gadar to make it clear that the organization and its weekly organ did not advocate revolution in the United States.¹ That country had provided the Gadar organizers with a safe area to work in. They had now to be in touch with the revolutionaries in India and Indian revolutionaries elsewhere, and wait for favourable opportunities. In the meanwhile the Gadar organization had taken shape in San Francisco where was founded the Yugantar Ashram, named presumably after the revolutionary group and their journal published in Calcutta.² Har Dayal was not destined to be in the United States for long. Exception was taken to his speeches and he was arrested on March 16, 1914 by the Immigration Department of the Department of Labour "and held as an anarchist for deportation". He gave a bond under that proceeding but jumped bail and absconded to Switzerland.³

Early in the previous month Har Dayal had been appointed by the Indian Community of San Francisco along with two others, Dr. Sudhindra Bose of the State University of Iowa and Dr. Bishan Singh to proceed to Washington to make representations to the U.S. Government and legislature on the issue of the Asiatic Exclusion Bill. But, whatever the reasons, it seems that Har Dayal did not proceed with the other two and took no part in the delegation.⁴

The San Francisco group started fairly well. It had an organization and its own organ. Funds were raised from time to time and the response of the people to the exhortations of the local leaders was encouraging. The staff of the Hindustan Gadar were a devoted band of workers. Some of them lived at the Ashram and were practically wholetime workers receiving free food and a monthly allowance of only two dollars.⁵ Although the majority of the settlers on the Pacific coast were Sikhs, the Gadar in its early years, was a broadbased organization having within its fold the Hindus and the Sikhs and the Moslems, and, "originally cut across

religious lines and for a time gathered virtually all East Indians into a common structure".⁶ To start with, the Gadar movement was a non-communal, non-sectarian, democratic and revolutionary enterprise thinking in terms of Freedom and India.⁷ Ram Chandra Bhardwaj was not a Sikh. A Hindu from Peshawar, in the extreme northwest corner of undivided India, Ram Chandra was about 25 years of age, when he became the virtual leader of the Gadar organization in San Francisco.⁸ Like some other Indian patriots in the United States, Chandra was a young man with political antecedents. One of the founders of the first Congress Committee in Peshawar in 1907, he also joined the Bharat Mata Society of Lahore and was prosecuted by the Government for sedition. Between 1907 and 1910, Ram Chandra edited the *Aftab* and the *Akash*, two nationalist newspapers of Delhi.⁹ He and his young wife eluded the vigilance of the Police, left India in 1911, and with several aliases, finally came to San Francisco via Hongkong and Japan in 1913. It is no wonder that with his background and abilities Ram Chandra succeeded Har Dayal as leader of the Gadar movement in San Francisco.

EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE U.S. OPINION

It is quite likely that but for the developing international situation the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States would have continued primarily on the emotional and propaganda plane coupled with fund-raising efforts for the benefit of their compatriots at home. This would have been very much like the efforts of the Irishmen on the American soil. It should be made clear, however, that the anti-British propaganda was meant not only to instigate Indians to revolt but also to inform public opinion in America about the situation in India and to neutralize British propaganda in the U.S.A. and elsewhere. Even after the outbreak of the War considerable attention was paid to this propaganda work. Ram Chandra who became the leader of the Gadar organization in San Francisco and edited the weekly paper after Har Dayal's departure from America, also contributed to the columns of the *New York Times* and other American papers on the issue of India's freedom or in defence of the work of the Gadar organization. He also challenged in the columns of the American Press the views of the apologists of the British Indian administration on the real situation in India. The *New York Times* published several of his letters prominently and his pamphlets on the Indian

question were circulated in the country where he had chosen to work. Chandra also started a news agency for the circulation of Indian news in the United States. There were a few others who tried to educate American public opinion on behalf of other groups or in their individual capacity. The most notable amongst them was Lala Lajpat Rai. He could not return home in 1914 because of the Government's repressive policy in India and had to be in the United States till about the end of 1919. During his stay there Lajpat Rai published several books including *Young India*, started a monthly organ of the same name and also organized the India Home Rule League in America. Lajpat Rai described himself as "an Indian Nationalist Ambassador to America". He refuted the suggestion made in the British House of Commons that his book 'Young India' had been published with German money and that he was subsidised by the German Imperial Government. On one occasion he said, "The Liberal and Radical Press of the country has been extremely generous and considerate to me. Even the *New York Times* allowed me much space at first, but when the war dragged on it dropped me and would not even let me contradict things said against me in its columns. At this stage it was Mr. Villard (of *New York Evening Post*) who with his innate sense of fair play and justice came to my rescue."¹⁰

It is worth while to remember that Lajpat Rai used his influence in favour of the Indian revolutionists and nationalists when deportation proceedings were undertaken against them by the U.S. Government some time after the San Francisco Trial.

WAR AND ITS IMPACT

To return to our story. The outbreak of the war enlarged the scope and the nature of the work of the Indian revolutionaries at home, in the United States and elsewhere. The Indian patriots had pinned their faith on the principle that England's adversity would be their opportunity. In America, Gadar leaders like Ram Chandra, Barkatulla and Bhagwan Singh¹¹ exhorted their compatriots to go back to India to take part in the revolt, and about four hundred of them left in the autumn of 1914.¹² In the early years of the war, the revolutionary impulses and aspirations were organized on a level higher than mere intrigue and propaganda, and assumed, in the opinion of an American scholar, the character of an international conspiracy.¹³

The people who might speak with some authority on the major

details of their revolutionary project were the organisers of the conspiracy itself. Despite the difference in the emphasis, or, a subjective treatment of the story of its development, they would be the persons in the know of things. Unfortunately, most of these are in their graves. Besides, since a secret organization and movement does not always have its chroniclers or historians, we have to search for important details of this plot-making adventure story from other sources like the records of the court trials, the findings of the investigating committees, and the reports of the different agencies that had been trying to keep a vigilance over the activities of some of these revolutionaries.

Those bits of information, when pieced together, give one the impression of a far-flung conspiracy in which the main trouble spots were Berlin, San Francisco and New York, Bengal and the Punjab in India; and the other areas involved were Japan, China, Siam, Batavia, Singapore, Burma, Afghanistan and Turkey. As the story emerges one gets the impression that initially the Indian patriots were not mere puppets in the hands of Germany although both in the matter of the arms supply and finance they banked almost exclusively on German support. It will appear, however, that with the passage of time and the inflow of more and more of German money central direction passed into the hands of the financial patrons.

1. Mark Naidis, 'Propaganda of the Gadar Party', *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XX, No. 3, August 1951, p. 251.

2. John W. Spellman, 'The International Extension of Political Conspiracy as Illustrated by the Gadar Party', *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. 37, 1959 pp. 28.

The Yugantar began its publication in 1906, faced Government prosecution, and finally disappeared in 1910—*Indian Sedition Committee Report*, 1918, pp. 193-94. The political group continued to function for decades to come.

The following conversation between Mr Preston, the U.S. District Attorney and Nawab Khan, a Government witness at the San Francisco Trial is worthy of note. Preston : Was there any use made of the words "Yugantar Ashram" in connection with this paper (*Gadar*) ? Nawab Khan :—Yes. Q. What was it ? A. There was a paper being published in India by the name of *Yugantar* and it was decided to start another paper at this place for the purpose of disseminating the revolutionary ideas. (*Trial Records*, p. 1221).

3. *Trial Records*, p. 13; *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 146.

4. *The Modern Review*, Calcutta, May, 1914, pp. 571-72.

5. Spellman, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

6. Harold S. Jacoby, *A Half-Century Appraisal of East Indians in the United States*. (The Sixth Annual College of the Pacific Faculty Research Lecture), p. 25.

7. A book in Hindi—*Gadar Partika Itihas* by Pritham Singh Panohchi (Atmanam and Sons, Delhi), though unauthenticated, is interesting at points.

8. The author had the privilege of meeting Mrs. Padmavati Ram Chandra, the widow of Ram Chandra and their second daughter Lila at Berkeley, California and getting some information about Ram Chandra from them.

9. *The Frontier Mail*, 15th August, 1960.

10. *Young India*, February, 1920.

11. Muhammad Barkatulla, a distinguished revolutionary from the Bhopal State was for some time Professor of Hindustani at Tokyo where he edited a bitter anti-British paper called *The Islamic Fraternity*. The paper was suppressed by the Japanese authorities. Early in 1914, Barkatulla was deprived of his teaching job and then came to San Francisco to join the Gadar movement. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 178. Also see f.n. 29 of Chapter 1.

Mrs. Ram Chandra told me that her husband met Bhagwan Singh in Hongkong in 1911 and the latter was invited to join the Gadar Organization later.

12. *Trial Records*, p. 15. The situation has some parallel with the stand taken by the Chinese Students' Monthly—organ of the Chinese Students' Alliance in the USA, which in one of its editorials in the March issue 1915, said, ".... China now needs capable men more than anything else.... Our duty is, therefore, plain : Go home." Quoted in Chow tse tung—*The May Fourth Movement*, p. 26. The editorial was a sequel to the publication of the news of the Twentyone demands on China.

13. Spellman, *op. cit.*, p. 23. "I think that India gives the first major example of what has now become practically a *sine qua non* of revolutions—international conspiracy. Hitherto, the existence of terrorist conspiracies had not assumed either the importance or the extensions in political theory that it has since."

2 | Revolution With German Aid

In a technical sense, the name Gadar has some particular reference to the Indian revolutionaries of the west coast of America and their Indian agents working elsewhere. Not all the persons we have so far named in the context of the Gadar movement, or we shall name hereafter, were formally members of the Gadar party or organization. This organization represented a compact group. Thanks to the distribution of its inflammatory literature and the publicity given it by the British Indian administrators who apprehended a rebellion in the country, the organization was taken particular note of by the Indo-British political and administrative circles. Somehow, the whole process and scheme of revolutionary plots and conspiracies during 1914-1916 in and out of India with a view to creating unrest and insurrection in the Indian sub-continent came to assume a collective name—the Gadar movement. They were all parts of a general scheme of organizing mutiny and insurrection. As such, the name is justified. But they were not, in all cases, organized by the California group.

These observations are made not to underrate the importance of the Gadar organization. During the San Francisco Trial it became some sort of a central theme. But for a proper understanding of the nature and the scope of the Indo-German Conspiracy Movement, it is also necessary to remember that the Gadar, though perhaps the largest single unit, was not the only unit working abroad for India's independence on dangerous lines. Besides, as we proceed, we shall have occasions to see that even within the Gadar organization there developed factions weakening the bigger movement.

We may now pass on to a discussion of the methods and strategy by which the revolutionaries hoped to achieve their objective. The story, in all its aspects, is not easy of construction. It is possible, to some extent, to relate the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States to those of their compatriots in Germany, with the Germans and some Americans, very naturally, playing important roles. At certain points the links with the

revolutionists in India are unmistakable and close. Then there are the attempts made to further the anti-British cause in and from Afghanistan, Egypt and Turkey and efforts to foment insurrection in India from Siam and Burma and Singapore.

It is no easy task to bring the stories of all these splinter actions within the framework of a central theme. There was perhaps, some sort of a loose central direction, at least for some time. If one reads the testimony of the witnesses in the conspiracy trials in India, the United States and elsewhere, or, reads the depositions made by the arrested persons to responsible officials, one is really struck by the wide ramifications of the conspiracy and its international character. John W. Preston in his opening address analyses the objective of the conspiracy and emphasizes its worldwide nature. He goes to the length of saying that the conspiracy "permeated and encircled the entire globe". Discussing some of its specific aims, the prosecution lawyer suggests that in the East the proposition was to seize the Suez Canal and reach the west border of India through Persia and Afghanistan, and "...so far as we are concerned," he said, "they (the conspirators) were to go in from San Francisco and use Manila and China and Japan—and Siam, in here,—as intermediate base for the purpose of attacking India through Burma, and also on the coast of Bengal, particularly around Calcutta."¹

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In the context of the deepening international crisis the relationship between the fighters for Indian independence and the German Government was naturally getting closer. The Indian revolutionists in the United States and their counterparts in Germany, would, by the very nature of things try to act in consultation. Two circumstances came to their aid. First, the growing animosity between England and Germany; secondly, the anticipated isolation and neutrality of the United States in the event of a war between the other two Powers. Much of the planning and strategy of the Indian revolutionists working in different parts of the world and of their German helpers was based on these assumptions. Both before and during the war these were discussed in various quarters. In August 1915 the French Police reported a general belief in Indian revolutionary circles in Europe of the likelihood of a rebellion breaking out in India within a short time. It was expected that Germany would give adequate support to the movement.²

F. Von Bernhardi, one time General of the German army, referred to the possibility of revolutions breaking out in India and Egypt if England's forces were long occupied with a European war.⁸ In another context Bernhardi more specifically said, "England, so far, in accordance with the principle of *divide et impera*, has attempted to play off the Mohammedan against the Hindu population. But now that a pronounced revolutionary and nationalist tendency shows itself amongst these latter, the danger is imminent that Pan-Islamism, thoroughly roused, should unite with the revolutionary elements of Bengal. The co-operation of these elements might create a very grave danger, capable of shaking the foundations of England's high position in the world."⁴ Ominous references were also made in an article published early in March 1914, in the *Berliner Tageblatt* under the title "England's Indian Trouble" in which there was a reference to the fact that secret societies in India received help from outside.⁵

GADAR GROUP ACTIVE

As has been stated earlier, nearly six months before the outbreak of the war the Indian leaders on the Pacific coast of America were talking of the impending war between England and Germany and exhorting their countrymen to get ready to fight the battles of freedom. This idea and programme were popularized, along with the anti-British propaganda, through the columns of the *Hindustan Gadar*. This was corroborated by Preston when rather early during the San Francisco Trial, in reply to a question from McGowan, a defence lawyer, he said, "we have six or eight of these papers that make similar references to the forthcoming trouble between England and Germany."⁶

BENGAL REVOLUTIONARIES AT WORK

That the Indian revolutionists, at home and abroad, and also some foreign nationals were getting more and more involved in a common enterprise against the background of a worsening international situation is clear from the findings of the Sedition Committee Report. Early in 1915 some Bengali revolutionaries decided to organize and put the entire business of raising a rebellion in India with the help of the Germans upon a proper footing. Among other things, they decided to work in cooperation with the revolutionaries in Siam and other places, to get in touch with the Germans, and to raise funds by dacoities. Bholanath Chatterji had already

been sent to Bangkok to get in touch with the conspirators there. It may be presumed that Jitendra Nath Lahiri had undertaken his visit to Europe to establish firsthand contacts with fellow revolutionists and the German helpers.⁷ This is borne out by M. N. Roy whom we quote below. "By the end of 1914, the news reached us in India that the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin had obtained from the German Government the promise of arms and money. . . . A messenger went to Berlin, with the proposal that the Germans should deliver the arms to us in a neutral country nearest to India. We chose the Dutch East Indies, and before the end of 1914 I left for Java—my first trip out of the country." Roy returned within two months with some money but no arms. He left India on a similar mission early next year but did not return home until some sixteen years later.⁸

THE GROUP IN BERLIN

In Germany there was already in existence a hard core of Indian revolutionists before the war had actually started. Har Dayal had left California for Switzerland in March 1914 and M. N. Roy lived on the campus of the Stanford University near San Francisco, and then in New York for some time. He was one of the many Indian revolutionists rounded up by the police immediately after the U.S.A.'s entry into the war, but fled to Mexico. In the San Francisco Trial frequent references were made to him. He subsequently joined his compatriots in Berlin. A few more were to join them from the United States. Others would be sent out on special missions to Berlin. As the story develops we shall see Indian conspirators in the United States being sent for by the Berlin group for consultations and instructions. M. N. Roy who was led by the circumstances away from the main current of the Indo-German Conspiracy was, at one stage, advised by the German Ambassador in China to contact the 'High Command', i.e., the Teutonic war lords in Berlin.⁹

REPUBLIC OF INDIA

We are told that a young Keralan, Champakraman Pillai, established in Berlin in October 1914 the Indian National Party. The organisation was attached to the German General Staff and included among its members were Har Dayal, Taraknath Das, Barkatulla, Chandra K. Chakravarti and Heramba Lal Gupta.¹⁰ From the judgment given in the Third Lahore Conspiracy case

by the Punjab Tribunal we learn that the German Consul-General in New York was forwarding Indian revolutionaries to Germany to help in such ways as they could. According to the evidence of a witness in this case who reached Berlin in March 1915, there was an Indian Revolutionary Society in Berlin. The aim of the Society was to establish a Republic in India. It held frequent meetings, "attended by Turks, Egyptians, German officials, German ex-Professors and missionaries.... Har Dayal and Chattopadhyay were in daily communication with the German Foreign office. To carry out the revolution in India, there was an Oriental Bureau for translating and disseminating inflammatory literature to the Indian prisoners of war in Germany." The witness was sent back to America where the German Consul put him in communication with Gupta and one, Wehde, "whose particular mission was to convey 20,000 dollars of German money to the revolutionaries in India". He also met other Germans.¹¹

M. N. Roy describes Virendranath Chattopadhyay, a brother of Sarojini Naidu, as the live-wire of the Indian group in Berlin. Like Har Dayal, Chattopadhyay and Bhupendranath Dutta a brother of Swami Vivekananda, had political antecedents and were known to the revolutionaries in India. The Indian revolutionists in Berlin seem to have acquired "in Berlin the status of the representatives of a belligerent power, so as to enlist the support of the German Government for India's struggle against British Imperialism. It seemed that the Committee proposed to function as a provisional government in exile, and believed that it was recognised as such by the German Government."¹² This was the situation, at least, in the early phase of the movement. It may not be out of place here to mention that there has been no mention of any document or evidence which goes to suggest that the Indian revolutionists were trying to substitute British rule over India by the German. It is very likely that the Germans were viewing the entire scheme of Indo-German conspiracy in the perspective of an all-out war with England. Their primary concern was to foment unrest in India and thereby keep the British Government and the army busy and harried. Their objective was in the nature of things, limited. At the same time, it should be remembered, that no one at any stage of the conspiracy movement suggested that there was any secret deal between the leaders of the Indian group and the German Foreign Office. The aim of the Indian Revolutionary Society in Berlin was, as indicated before, to set up a

Republic of India. The San Francisco Gadar literature did not even imply at any time that German rule was preferable to British rule. According to Bhupendranath Dutta who played an important role in the conspiracy movement, some of the Indian revolutionaries in Germany decided to approach the German Government for a national financial loan which was to be repaid on India's securing freedom.¹³ This finds an echo in the reply of Dr. C. K. Chakravarty, Berlin's nominee in America during the concluding phase of the Indo-German conspiracy, to questions put to him in the course of the San Francisco Trial.¹⁴

The independent position of the Indian revolutionaries in the initial stage with respect to their relationship with the German aiders is also borne out by John W. Preston's observations on the occasion of his opening address at the San Francisco Trial. Preston says that Von Brincken of Germany "immediately called together the Hindus, or at least, the more prominent ones and asked them for their assistance, or tender their co-operation with them in their work; he met this man Taraknath Das among the very first men in the proposition, and also Ram Chandra. The proposition then was not only to send men back to India, but to dispatch men to Germany."¹⁵ In another place the prosecuting attorney makes it clear that "the moment that war was declared between England and Germany the consuls of at least 12 or 15 different places were ready, able, willing, and anxious, and actually at the work of assisting the Indian revolution."¹⁶

CO-ORDINATION ESSENTIAL

A reference to the Berlin India Society has already been made. It may be reasonably concluded that the need was felt for a co-ordinating organization that would co-ordinate the activities of the revolutionaries in different areas, formulate plans and exercise some supervisory control over the movement as a whole. With the increasingly important role of Germany as the most effective paymaster, the organization had to be in close touch with the German Foreign office. Thus came into being the Berlin India Committee. The first Committee consisted of Har Dayal, Chattopadhyay, Barkatulla, Dr. Hafiz, Bhupendranath Dutta, Champakraman Pillai and Prabhakar.¹⁷ Virendranath Chattopadhyay regarded as "the most active of the Hindu revolutionaries in Europe,"¹⁸ was the President of the Committee. It is significant that there was no German on the Committee.

This goes to support our view that the Indian revolutionary group enjoyed a considerable amount of freedom and was treated, at least at this stage, by the Germans with respect and deference.

The precise nature of the work of the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin is difficult to ascertain. It is reasonable to conclude, however, that after the conspiracy movement had got started, the Indian group in Berlin, since it was right on the spot, had a share in formulating policies. But much depended on the response and the ability of the California Indians. The execution of a plan was largely in their hands. Their own funds were being supplemented by German finance. They were many times stronger in man power. More important than these, perhaps, was the fact that they could exploit the neutrality of the United States for the furtherance of their cause. Much depended on the ability of the groups working in America, the effectiveness of their propaganda and organization, and the strength of the links they might be able to forge with the Indian revolutionists elsewhere and at home. Secrecy, timing, the capacity to deliver the goods, the readiness of the revolutionists in India to strike at the right moment—all these were necessary for the success of the ambitious movement.

PROPOSAL FOR INDIAN VOLUNTEER FORCE

The Sedition Committee Report and the records of the conspiracy trials in India have much more to say about the revolutionary preparations in America than in Germany. The reasons are obvious. England was at war with Germany. Even before the outbreak of the war the relations between the two were far from cordial. The United States was not only neutral till the beginning of April 1917, but was pliable to British suggestions as has been maintained by some and indicated by us before. The following account¹⁹ may be found interesting. As soon as the war broke out Bhupendranath Dutta and a few other Indian revolutionaries in the United States made a proposal to the German Ambassador to that country suggesting that a Volunteer Force of Indian soldiers with an ambulance corps be organized. The proposers felt that this would show their enmity towards the British and friendship for the Germans, thus countering the English claim to and publicity of India's loyalty. The Ambassador reacted favourably and communicated the proposal to Berlin. He agreed to bear the expenses and make transportation arrangements. The sponsors

of the move then wrote to Ram Chandra at San Francisco requesting him to recruit volunteer soldiers. Ram Chandra turned down the proposal, for he thought that the soldiers should rather be sent to India. The Gadar Party was already committed to the programme of sending fighters back to India, and arrangements to this end had already started.

Some time after this, a few Indian revolutionaries in Germany decided to approach the German Government with some proposals. First, they asked for a national loan from the German Government which would be repaid on India's achieving independence. Secondly, they sought arms and German assistance for Indian revolutionaries working in different countries. They also urged the declaration of a *jihad* by the Sultan of Turkey against the allies as an encouragement for the Indian Muslims fighting against the British. A meeting between Virendra Chattopadhyay and Baron Von Wertheim of the German Foreign Office was arranged. Chattopadhyay then had a meeting with Baron Oppenheim. The whole thing took shape early in September 1914, and a committee—the German Union of Friendly India—was formed. Herr Albercht, President of the Hamburg American Steamer Co. was elected President with Baron Oppenheim and Sukhthankar as Vice-Presidents, and Dhiren Sarkar as Secretary. There were seventeen other Indian members on the committee. When Sukhthankar left for India Chattopadhyay succeeded him as Vice-President. Sarkar was sent to America and Dr. Mueller took his place. The Committee arranged to train people in the manufacture of explosives in a camp at Spandau near Berlin and to familiarize them with modern weapons. Besides, some members were taken to the prisoners' camp to carry on anti-British propaganda. The problem of conveying weapons to the Indian coast was discussed with the naval officers.

NO REVOLUTION BUT PROPAGANDA

Other specific items of work undertaken by the German Union of Friendly India included the dispatch of some Indian revolutionaries back to India and the bringing in of some from the United States and elsewhere to Berlin. Arrangements were also made with the California Gadar Party to carry on the revolutionary work jointly. The old Committee was thoroughly modified by the middle of 1915. It was given an exclusively Indian complexion and came to be called the Indian Independence Committee.

At first, Mr. Mansur was elected President.¹⁰ Later, the office was abolished and the Committee functioned collectively.¹¹ The 'Indianization' of the Committee was not without significance. The Committee tried to organize the revolutionaries in India and abroad and formulate a common plan of action. Agents were sent to several of the eastern countries with this end in view. There was talk of sending ships with arms and German military personnel to India. But the plans were not implemented. Some Indian revolutionaries when arrested turned approvers. Subsequently, the Committee despaired of a rebellion in India and from after 1917 became more interested in propaganda work "so that India's case might be considered at the time of the Peace Treaty".

1. *Trial Records*, p. 17.
2. *Sedition Committee Report*, 1918, p. 120.
3. F. Von Bernhardt, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 150.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
5. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 119.
6. *Trial Records*, p. 15.
7. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 121.
8. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, pp. 3-4.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
10. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 119.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
12. M. N. Roy. *op. cit.*, p. 286.
13. Majumdar, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol. 2, p. 405. Majumdar quotes extensively from Bhupendranath Dutta's—*Aprakasita Rajnaitik Itihas* (in Bengali), 2 vols.
14. Earl E. Sperry, *German Plots and Intrigues in the United States during the period of Our Neutrality*, Red, White and Blue Series, No. 10, Edition of July, 1918. Issued by the Committee on Public Information, pp. 42-43.

Q. Have you received any money from Wolf V. Igel ?

A. Yes, through Dr. Sekunna.

Q. How much have you received ?

A. About \$ 60,000.

In a supplemental statement on the next day, Dr. Chakravarty was asked: Do you know whether this \$ 60,000 which you received from Von Igel was furnished by the German Government ?

A. It was loaned to the Indian Nationalist Party, and the Indian Nationalist Party transmitted the money.

Q. And the loan was made by the German Government ?

A. Yes.

15. *Trial Records*, p. 16.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

18. *San Francisco Examiner*, November 23, 1917, 1 : 1.

M. N. Roy's *Memoirs* have a brief section on Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin (sec. 39). He gives us the following information. Chattopadhyay, as a student in England, was a member of the revolutionary group to which Savarkar belonged. After the assassination of Curzon Wylie he found asylum in France, and then on the outbreak of the war, moved to Berlin. He and a few Indians studying in Germany formed the Indian Revolutionary Committee. The original Committee had as its President Mohammad Mansoor who was a Government of India scholar. Because of the alliance with Turkey, the Germans were inclined

to give prominence to Muslims in their relation with India. Eventually he was pushed to the background.

19. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-409. Majumdar gives a summary of a "fairly comprehensive account given by Bhupendranath Dutta in his *Aprakasita Rajnaitik Itihas* (in Bengali)."

20. This is corroborated by M. N. Roy although he calls the Committee by a slightly different name.

According to Preston, Chattopadhyay "was the President of it, I think". Preston calls it the Berlin India Committee. This must be the same as the Indian Independence Committee. *Trial Records*, pp. 16-17.

4 | Shipping Men And Arms To India

THE GADAR INITIATIVE

The California revolutionaries started their work quite enthusiastically almost as soon as the war between England and Germany broke out. Finance became less of a problem. "We don't need to beg of our countrymen," Ram Chandra said, "because I have a good treasurer and I can get as much money as I want from the Germans."¹ A group of 62 people was got ready to leave for India. With Jawalla Singh as the leader, the party sailed on the steamship *Korea* from San Francisco on August 29, 1914. According to the testimony of Nawab Khan, an important Government witness in the San Francisco Trial,⁶¹ of these belonged to the Gadar Party.² More recruits were collected at various ports of call before it reached Calcutta. At Hongkong the party numbered more than three hundred. There, with the sanction of the authorities, some of the Indians were put on another ship and the two vessels sailed for Calcutta,³ where many of the men were apprehended. Subsequently, 100 were imprisoned, 6 hanged, 2 sentenced in conspiracy cases and 6 more were later arrested. Two of the leaders became approvers.⁴

The debacle of the *Korea* 'expedition' was one of several that simply miscarried. The Gadar organization sent out groups of Indians from America and elsewhere, sometimes accompanied with promises of arms. The programme, on the whole, was badly planned; adequate secrecy was not maintained, and, by and large, everything ended in a fiasco. It is interesting to note that in the autumn of 1914 groups of Indians left America at different times. Some were active members of the conspiracy. A large number was, perhaps, just keen to get back home now that a big war had begun. The *Korea*, we have already seen, sailed with 62. On September 5, the *Siberia* sailed with two Hindus. A week later, the *Chinyo Maru* left with three, followed by eleven on the *China* on September 19. The *Manchuria* had twenty-four Indians on board on September 26. The *Tenyo Maru* carried 109 Indians on

October 21. Three days later the *Mongolia* had a still larger number of Indians—141. The *Shinyo Maru* sailed on October 31 with six Indians on board.*

The ship *Tosa Maru* arrived at Calcutta with 173 passengers on October 29, 1914. They were mostly Sikhs from America, Manila, Shanghai and Hongkong. News reached the Government of India that the passengers had talked openly of starting a rebellion on arriving in India. According to Nawab Khan's testimony in a trial in India, one of the resolutions passed on the *Tosa Maru* was to the effect that the Punjabis of substance loyal to the Government should be looted.* The majority of these potential rebels were interned in jail. Some were subsequently hanged, or, otherwise convicted on various counts. "Of all the October, November and December shiploads of returning emigrants, the *Tosa Maru* was the most dangerous."†

GOVERNMENT AGENTS AT WORK

Later, in the San Francisco Trial, Nawab Khan's bona fides were questioned. Mr. Roche, a defence lawyer, asked Nawab Khan, "Now, getting back to Canada, before leaving Vancouver to come to the U.S., did you know a man by the name of Inspector Hopkins?" Khan said he knew Hopkins and admitted that the latter was a British Secret Service man. After the lawyer had asked Khan a few more questions to find out if he was a friend of the British Secret Service man, and a discussion had started, the Court wanted to know if it was Mr. Roche's theory "that the witness was never a bona fide member of the organization (Gadar), but merely was an agent of the Government in this cause".

Mr. Roche : I don't know as to that, your Honor; that may be so.

The Court : Because otherwise I don't see the connection.

Mr. Healey : That is the theory of these Hindu defendants.*

Later, Healey wanted to question Khan with respect to his relations with Hopkins.

Court : I cannot allow counsel to multiply on the same question.*

Much more interesting and significant was the flaw that the defence had pinpointed in Nawab Khan's testimony regarding the itinerary of the ship *Korea*. Khan is reported to have received from the German Consul at Canton a guarantee of safety from attacks by German warships that were in the neighbourhood. Very strangely, Canton was not initially mentioned at all by

Khan as one of the places touched by him.¹⁰ And to a question from the defence lawyer Khan had said that he had seen the German Consul at Hongkong.¹¹ Roche pounced on this important omission and a palpable impossibility.

Q. What was the date upon which the *Korea* left Hongkong, approximately ?

A. The 28th of September or the 29th of September.

Q. That was about two months after the war had started between Germany and Great Britain ?

Q. Hongkong is a British city, is it not ?

A. Yes, held by the British Government.

Q. You testified here yesterday that you and some of your associates went to the office of a man that you characterized as a German Consul.

A. It was at Canton

Roche : The record clearly shows that the witness referred to Hongkong.

The Court : The record is all right, but that is not what the witness meant.¹²

FLAWS IN THE GADAR PROGRAMME

Even if the Gadar members on the *Korea*, the *Tosa Maru* and other ships had succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the Government in India, they might not have succeeded in their mission. Many of them were of an excitable temper and secrecy was not a strong point with them. Their objective was limited. By and large, they thought that they would find India seething with discontent and ripe for a revolution.¹³ That, however, was too optimistic a view of the situation. A revolution, as the Gadar people in and out of India conceived of it, needed arms. Not many of these were going around the country. The issue of the Gadar dated January 13, 1914 had advised Indians to learn rifle-making abroad, bring the rifles to the Punjab and, "rain over the province a sweet shower of guns."¹⁴ But that was, more or less, wishful thinking. The restricted supply of arms in the country which the revolutionaries might use had made the situation less explosive for the rulers. The revolutionaries obtained arms enough to provide for isolated outrages only. "... There is evidence that the groups (revolutionary) were not above planning the theft of pistols from one another." In the event of an ample and separate supply of arms for every revolutionary group, "we think that the

conspiracies might have produced, especially in the event of a rising in some other parts of India such as was planned for February, 1915, a calamity of a terrible character in Bengal.¹⁴

THE PLOT TO SHIP ARMS

The Indian revolutionists did plan, however, with the active support of the Germans to send supplies of arms and ammunition to India. One episode, in particular, deserves attention. Towards the close of 1914, Capt. Franz Von Papen, military attache of the German Embassy, asked Hans Tauscher of the Krupp Agency in New York to buy arms and ammunition for aiding revolution in India. It may be interesting to recall that Tauscher had married Madame Gadaski, the well-known opera star.¹⁵ A word about Papen since he played a conspicuous role in the history of Germany in the subsequent decades. The discovery of a mislaid brief case revealed his part in espionage and sabotage plots and led the U. S. Government to request his recall (1915). In 1932 Papen became Germany's Chancellor for some months and had a hand in bringing Hitler to power in whose Cabinet he served as Vice-Chancellor. Papen was acquitted by the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal in 1946. But we are anticipating events. Tauscher was instructed to ship the arms and ammunition to San Diego in California.¹⁷ Ten carloads of freight containing eight thousand rifles and four million cartridges were made ready in January 1915. The Germans financed the Gadar party to buy two ships, the *Annie Larsen* from Martinez and Company in San Diego, and the *Maverick*, an oil tanker from one of the Standard Oil Companies at a total cost of \$ 212,853. E. H. Von Schack, the German Vice-Consul in San Francisco arranged with J. Clyde Hizar, City Attorney for Coronado (a little town across the bay from San Diego) for placing the cargo on the *Annie Larsen*. Hizar was paid \$14,000 for his services. "Hizar posed as a representative of the Carranza faction in the Mexican Civil War and word was passed along the waterfront that the *Annie Larsen* was to sail for Mexico." Neither the British agents nor anybody else questioned this move because there was no embargo on shipping arms to Mexico. Loaded with arms, the *Annie Larsen* sailed ostensibly for a Mexican port on March 8, 1915. The real destination was the island of Socorro, about 300 miles to the south of California.

The deal in respect of the *Maverick* was made in Los Angeles

by a German, Fred Jebson, with the help of an American attorney, Ray Howard. The *Maverick* was to clear from San Pedro empty and the two ships were to meet at Socorro in the South Seas, and there the munitions were to be transferred to an empty oil tank of the *Maverick*, and kept dry. The arms were to be stored in another tank. The *Maverick* was to proceed towards India. The other vessel was to return to the American waters unless intercepted by enemy warships in which case it was to be sunk.¹⁸ The *Maverick* sailed from San Pedro on April 23, 1915 with a young American, John B. Starr-Hunt, as the super cargo and five Hindus who had been recruited by Ram Chandra. It also had on board a large bulk of revolutionary literature written by him and his colleagues. The munitions and the literature were to be delivered to fishing boats near Karachi. The account is generally supplemented by that in the Sedition Committee Report.¹⁹ The sequel to it may be gleaned from what seems reasonable to conclude from a telegram that was passed between two parties involved in the programme²⁰ and from some other documents of the San Francisco Trial which will be taken up a little later. •

THE SHIPS DID NOT MEET

The *Annie Larsen-Maverick* meeting did not take place. After a long wait of about four weeks the *Maverick* sailed north and the captain of the ship secretly contacted the German Consulate of San Francisco from San Diego. He was instructed to take the tanker to Hilo, Hawaii. From there the *Maverick* was directed to proceed to the Johnston island in the mid-Pacific and await the arrival of the *Annie Larsen*. Since there was no sign of the vessel, the *Maverick* proceeded under instruction to Anjer in Batavia. Theodore Helfferich, a German national, was informed of the *Maverick's* arrival without any arms. Before he could decide anything about the tanker, the Dutch seized it. The vessel was flying the American flag, and the Dutch Government did not know what to do to the people on board. Taking advantage of the situation Starr-Hunt and four of the Indians escaped in another ship. They were, however, captured by the British cruiser *Cadmus* and taken off to Singapore where the American narrated his story to the British authorities.²¹ All the five were condemned to death and the Indians were executed. On the intercession of his relations with the U. S. Department of Justice, Starr-Hunt was returned to his country and he became a Government witness at the San Francisco

Trial. • His testimony enabled the Government to unravel much of the mystery of the *Maverick*.²⁸ M. N. Roy puts the sailing of the tanker from the South Californian port of San Diego in 1916. Towards the end of 1915 he met this American, "living in a luxury hotel at Batavia, still in the confidence of the German Secret Service". Roy probably is not quite sure of the dates. But his hunch that Starr-Hunt was a member of the American Secret Service may not be lightly dismissed.²⁹ This may provide us with a cue for answering a pertinent question that has been raised—Why did not the *Maverick* sail until 46 days after the *Annie Larsen*?³⁰

The *Annie Larsen* sailed from San Diego on March 8, 1915. Ten days later she arrived at the Socorro Island, but the *Maverick* was not there. By the end of the month the scarcity of drinking water forced the captain of the vessel to sail to Acapulco where the Mexican officials did not prove too inquisitive. But the *Annie Larsen* now faced a new trouble in the form of a minor mutiny of some members of the crew. The situation was eased at the intervention of the commanding officer of an American Gunboat, the *Turktown*, who was not aware that the schooner was carrying contraband. After replenishing its stock of water and other supplies the *Annie Larsen* left Acapulco. Then for another three weeks the captain tried to come back to the Socorro Island, but adverse winds stood in the way. Once again provisions ran short. Finally, the schooner sought shelter in the port of Hoquiam, Washington, where it was seized by the Customs officials. It was then that the nature of its cargo was discovered. Bernstorff, German Ambassador to the United States, claimed that the arms were intended for shipment to German East Africa.³¹

THE ARMS DEAL : A PLAUSIBLE RECONSTRUCTION

A reference has been made to M. N. Roy's role in this arms shipment to India programme (Footnotes 19 & 20). The young Bengali was not yet then the international revolutionary M. N. Roy. For as Roy himself says, "M. N. Roy was born in the campus of Stanford University,"³² not far from San Francisco. That was in the summer of 1916 after he had "spent a year and a half wandering through Malay, Indonesia, Indo-China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea and China....." Although Roy makes a reference to his two visits to Java as an emissary of the Bengal revolutionaries to establish contacts with the Germans

there and receive arms and money from them, he dismisses the whole episode in a few lines. He was disappointed in his mission and, decades later, reflecting on this adventure of his youth, called it a "wild-goose chase".²⁷ It may not be unrewarding, however, to try to reconstruct the story of this venture from other sources. True, the venture failed. But it was not without its excitement, and had its repercussions on the Indian revolutionists at home and abroad.

ARMS FOR BENGAL

Kumud Nath Mookerjee, a Bengali lawyer of Siam, who was arrested at Singapore²⁸ deposed at the San Francisco Trial²⁹ that he was commissioned to deliver a message at 62 Beniatola Street, Calcutta to the effect that the *Maverick* would arrive in Calcutta on the 13th of July, 1915 and that the ammunition and the rifles should be carried to places previously arranged. Then follows an account of a meeting some time in June 1915 at Kidderpore in Calcutta at which Bohlin (Bholanath) Chatterji, the witness, Martin and Payne³⁰ were present. It was at this stage that the District Attorney, Preston pointed out, "we expect to show that the one referred to as Martin is referred to in the indictment as Manabendra Nath Roy, known as Charles Martin, and several other names, who married a Stanford girl and is now in Mexico".³¹

The name of M. N. Roy, who had eluded the U. S. police after his arrest in New York quite some time before the San Francisco Trial had begun, crops up again and again in the course of the trial. Mookerjee deposed that Martin had asked him to tell Helfferich that they needed about \$ 100,000. The witness was told that "this money would be needed to pay the Indian soldiers for two months' pay in advance and they would join them in the revolution in India." During his visit to Java Roy is reported to have received 25,000 guilders.³² The reader may read with interest the following description of Roy contained in the note (dated July 12, 1916) of Joseph C. Laurent, an employee of William A. Mundell, International Detective Agency; "6 feet 1½ inches, very slender, Van Dyke beard, medium color, wore glasses, was dressed in a slate colored suit, Panama hat, slate colored hose, low cut tan shoes, and carried a silver mounted walking stick."³³ Roy was being shadowed by Laurent in San Francisco.

To return to the story of the *Maverick*. Preston read out a newspaper report from the Penang "*Gazette and Straits Chronicle*" dated July 31, 1915, saying, "A '*Sumatra Post*' cable from Java of 27 July says : The mysterious American ship '*Maverick*' is still lying outside Tandjong Prick, Batavia Harbour, and is under Government observation.... Another paper states that the ship, although flying the American flag, has a German captain and a crew of Germans who affirm themselves to be naturalized Americans. This, however, they cannot prove by documentary evidence."⁸⁴ Thus, the *Maverick* had belied the expectations of the Indian revolutionaries. Pramatha Nath Mukherji, who was called for the United States, testified that he had left India on January 21, 1916 for Shanghai and wanted to contact Martin in Batavia only to find that the latter had left.⁸⁵ Mukherji's testimony also goes to show that the Bengal revolutionaries were banking on the arms supply through Java. They had anxiously waited for some tangible developments to follow Martin's mission in that area. They were evidently worried about Martin and one of the distinguished living Bengal revolutionaries, Jadu Gopal Mukerji had provided Pramatha Mukherji with funds for going to Batavia, meeting Martin and following up the latter's work. When Pramatha Mukherji enquired about arms and money of Helfferich the latter assured him that there was enough of them, "but how are you going to ship them, how are you going to take them over there ?" It is clear that the scheme had misfired. Martin, frustrated in his mission in the East, had departed for more distant areas and was not to return to India until some sixteen years later.

It appears that the Bengal revolutionaries had succeeded in their negotiations with the German agents in Java through their emissary Naren Bhattacharya (Martin) in persuading the Germans to agree to their suggestion, viz, to direct the *Maverick* to Bengal rather than send it to Karachi as originally planned, and then to deliver the cargo in the Sunderbans.⁸⁶ The conclusion may not be wrong that one group of revolutionaries in India was trying to steal a march over the other groups, although it is very likely that, had the munitions been really delivered in Bengal, the revolution would have had better prospects there than in any other area.⁸⁷ The crux of the matter, however, was that there were no munitions to deliver !

The Government was, however, very alert. Acting on some clues, a large number of front-ranking revolutionaries were rounded

up in Bengal." One such clue may be mentioned. On December 27, 1915 one B. Chatterton sent the following telegram from Goa to Martin in Batavia: "How doing—no news; very anxious." On enquiry two Bengalees were found in Goa, one of them being Bholanath Chatterji whom we have mentioned before. Chatterji committed suicide in the Poona jail on January 27, 1916."

Another schooner the *Henry S* adds to the story of unfulfilled objectives with respect to shipping of arms to India. The general intention of this schooner which had on board two German-Americans, Wehde and Boehm, seems to have been that the vessel should go to Bangkok and land some of its arms. These were to be concealed in a tunnel at Pakoh on the Siam-Burma frontier. They were to be used after Boehm had trained Indians on the frontier for the invasion of Burma. The scheme failed. Boehm was arrested in Singapore on his way from Batavia. Boehm had joined the *Henry S* at Manila under instructions received from Heramba Lal Gupta in Chicago, about whom we shall hear later.

1. Spellman, *op. cit.*, p. 31
2. *Trial Records*, p. 1234.
3. Spellman, pp. 32-33.
4. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 150.
5. Spellman, p. 32.
6. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 151.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
8. *Trial Records* pp. 1263-1265.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 1271.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 1234:
 - Q. to Khan : You sailed on what day ?
 - A. The 29th of August, 1914.
 - Q. And you sailed on the *Korea* ?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. What was the first place you touched ?
 - A. Philadelphia.
 - Q. What was the next place ?
 - A. Yokohama.
 - Q. What was the next place ?
 - A. Kobe.
 - Q. What was the next place ?
 - A. Nagasaki.
 - Q. What was the next place ?
 - A. Manila.
 - Q. And the next place ?
 - A. Hongkong.
 - Q. What was the next place ?
 - A. Singapore.
 - Q. And the next place ?
 - A. Penang.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 1241.
 - Q. Before you left Hongkong, did you call on the German Consul ?
 - A. Yes.

Ibid., p. 1251

Q. What next point did you touch ? (after Penang)

A. Rangoon.

Ibid., p. 1268

Roche : Didn't you testify yesterday that the German Consul whom you and your associates visited was at Hongkong ?

A. No, not Hongkong.

Q. Where was it ?

A. Canton.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 1266-1268.

13. "In the middle of December, the Punjab Government reported to the Government of India that the doings of the returned Sikh emigrants had more than anything else engaged official attention, that the majority of them had returned expecting to find India in a state of acute unrest and meaning to convert this unrest into revolution."—*Sedition Committee Report*, p. 150.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

16. *The New York Times*, July 8, 1917., 1, 4 : 1.

17. Sperry, *op. cit.* pp. 43-44. Tauscher's signed statement dated Feb. 8, 1916 reads : In order to make this shipment as secretly as possible I decided to ship the arms and ammunition in the name of my forwarding agent, Walter C. Hughes, who also acted as the receiver of the shipment in San Diego, Cal.... All expenses involved in this transaction were paid by me, and I was reimbursed by Captain Von Papen by check.

Later on, after the shipment had failed to reach its destination and was landed at the port of Hoquiam, Washington, Captain Von Papen informed me that he had told the State Department in Washington that this shipment of arms and ammunition was ultimately destined for German South African Colonies....

18. Giles T. Brown, "The Hindu Conspiracy, 1914-1917, *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XVII, 1948; Spellman, *op. cit.* *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 19, 1918; *San Francisco Examiner*, January 24, 1918.

19. *Sedition Committee Report*, pp. 121-124.

Jitendra Nath Lahiri brought to the Bengal revolutionaries (in March) offers of German help and invited them to send an agent to Batavia to cooperate.... Naren Bhattacharji was sent to Batavia to discuss plans with the Germans there. He started in April and adopted the pseudonym of C. Martin.... In the same month the S.S. *Maverick*.... started on a voyage from San Pedro in California. On his arrival at Batavia Martin was told by the German Consul that a cargo of arms and ammunition was on its way to Karachi to assist the Indians in a revolution.

20. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

Sperry does not indicate any date. The date of the telegram as known from the Trial Records (p. 1873) was Oct. 25, 1916. The identity of the receiver and the sender has not been established. The message runs as follows : Recent information from India that our groundwork all over India of our plan in connection with Germany is thriving. Lahiri, Mukherjee, Sanya, Kirtikar have done good work. Lahiri sent Mana Ben Roy, known as Martin, and Narendra Bhattacharji, P. E. Chakrabarti, to arrange the delivery and distribution of arms. They came to Java and the German Consul at Batavia directed them to see Thomas Helfferich.

21. Sperry, *op. cit.* p. 47. When Starr-Hunt met Theodore and Emil Helfferich in Batavia the latter "said that he had waited for the *Maverick* for three weeks in the Sunda straits.... and said that their arrangements on this side were excellent and complete and they were only awaiting the arrival of the cargo when they could have easily put their whole scheme through. They observed that the people in India were all ready and prepared and had only been waiting for the arms to turn up...."

22. *San Francisco Examiner*, January 31, 1918.

23. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, pp. 25-26. "Evidently, the clandestine activities of the German propagandists and Indian revolutionaries associated with them were not unknown to the American Secret Service. Indeed, American Secret

Service agents were in the 'conspiracy', I have reason to believe that Starr-Hunt was one of them."

24. Giles, *op. cit.* p. 304.

25. Count Bernstorff, *My Three Years in America*, pp. 121-122.

"It was asserted . . . that a cargo of arms and ammunition on board the small schooner *Annie Larsen*, and destined for our forces in German East Africa, was, in reality, dispatched to India via Java and Siam; but no proof was brought forward in support of this statement. . . Besides, even if it be admitted that the schooner in question was actually sent by the Indian Nationalists with her cargo of arms, it is absurd to regard the dispatch of this small supply of war materials as a crime, and gloss over the fact that whole arsenals and ammunition columns were being shipped every day to France. " It may be pointed out that Von Papen is reported to have told Washington that the shipment was ultimately destined for German South African Colonies. (Footnote 17).

26. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, p. 22.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

28. *Trial Records*, p. 243.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 211.

30. Phani Chakravarti or Pain was arrested at Shanghai. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

31. *Trial Records*, p. 214.

In his *Memoirs* Roy does not mention Evelyn, "who was not only his wife, but an important help in his work until their separation in 1925."—Overstreet and Windmiller, *Communism in India*, p. 22.

32. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

33. *Trial Records*, p. 1744.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 2162-2170.

36. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 121.

37. *Trial Records*, pp. 1874-1875.

38. *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 123.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

5 | Indo-German Conspiracy : Change in Leadership

The Gadar programme to ship men and arms to India, on the eve of the war in aid of the revolutionists, could not be adequately executed and thus failed in its objective. Some men, we have seen, were shipped to India only to be arrested. Late in 1914 arrangements were started in America by the German agents and the Gadar leaders with the help of their American friends to ship arms to India. This venture also, as we know, produced no result although its futility was not fully revealed before the year 1915 had run part of its course. It appears, however, that the leaders of the Indo-German Conspiracy in Germany had been thinking of reshuffling the organizational set-up in the United States for some time past.

GUPTA : BERLIN'S NEW NOMINEE IN U. S.

This is evident from the contents of a coded cable No. 449, sent on December 27, 1914 by Zimmermann, Germany's Foreign Secretary, to Count Von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador in Washington.¹ It said, "A confidential agent of the Berlin Committee, Heramba Lal Gupta, is shortly leaving for America in order to organize the importation of arms and the conveyance of Indians (plotters) now resident in the United States to India. He is provided with definite instructions. You should place at his disposal the sum which he requires for the purpose in America, Shanghai and Batavia, viz, 150,000 marks..." A subsequent cable dated December 31, 1914 directed Bernstorff to take steps in conjunction with Gupta to have such Indians as are suitable for this purpose instructed in the use of explosives by some suitable person. It is clear from the first cable that the representatives of the German Government and the Berlin India Committee wanted a nominee of theirs to guide the conspiracy from America. His main responsibility was to send arms and men to India.

Gupta had already lived for some time in Berlin prior to this development. He was, according to newspaper reports, about 28 years'old when called upon to play an important role in the

Indo-German Conspiracy movement late in 1914. M. N. Roy puts him at about 40.³ Gupta received considerable financial help from German Government officials in New York. His primary purpose was to buy arms from China and Japan. The Indian leader first tried his luck with the Chinese Government. Negotiations were started in San Francisco with James Deitrick, who held power of attorney for Sun-Yat-Sen. But the Germans did not approve of it.³ Subsequently, Gupta left for Japan to try to get assistance there. It appears that before leaving for Japan he frequently visited a building on Wall Street. This was the building in which Captain Von Papen, German Military Attache and 'plot pay master' in America held his offices. Gupta was reported to have received between \$40,000 and \$50,000 to defray the expenses of his work. As indicated earlier, his principal mission in Japan was to have guns and ammunition sent from there to India.⁴

FRUITLESS MISSION TO JAPAN

Gupta arrived in Japan during the Japanese Coronation festivities early in the winter of 1915, and was met there by many Indians, "all of them said to have been prominent in the organization known as the Indian National Society, through which Germany has worked in efforts to start a rebellion in India". But his mission did not thrive in the land of the Rising Sun. It did not take the Japanese Secret Service long to get scent of the Indian revolutionary. He ran the risk of being deported to India. Gupta and another Indian managed to escape to the house of a friend, where they hid from November 1915 to May 1916—"during which period they never once left the house". The house was once searched but they hid in a secret room. They were somehow smuggled out of the country, got to Honolulu and eventually came back to the U. S.⁵

PLAN TO SPREAD DISAFFECTION

Some more information about Heramba Lal Gupta may be gleaned from a newspaper report⁶ of a trial of some conspirators at Chicago. One Sukumar Chatterji, presumably a Government witness, deposed that he had come to the U. S. A. in 1912 to study journalism, but later was induced to take part in the alleged plot by Gupta, one of the defendants in this (Chicago) trial. He told of meetings in San Francisco in 1915 at which "revolutionary

plans were discussed and of going to Manila with the men named as conspirators". Chatterji was arrested at Bangkok and made a statement to Brigadier-General Dudley Ridout, who commanded the British troops in the Straits Settlements. Chatterji met Gupta who had just come from Germany, at Sacramento in California. Gupta told Chatterji that Bhupendra Nath Dutt had been sent to Egypt in connection with the revolutionary work and that there were people doing propaganda work in Persia and Afghanistan. Chatterji agreed "to go to Siam and aid in the revolution, and was provided with \$700 by a confederate of Gupta named Sanyal. . . ." He also deposed that the Gadar party had its emissaries working in China, the Shan States, Siam, Java, Sumatra and other places and "the minds of the people were being carefully poisoned". Sanyal informed Chatterji that a shipload of munitions had already been sent to Bangkok where it was arranged that these two and a German called Boehm should proceed. Chatterji came to Bangkok towards the end of June 1915 having sailed from San Francisco to Manila on the 23rd of May.⁷

Capt. Thomas J. Tunney of the Neutrality Bureau of Investigation of the New York Police Department testified that Heramba Lal Gupta had told him in New York on March 10, 1917 that Captain Von Papen paid him between \$15,000 and \$16,000, in six or seven instalments, in a suite of offices in lower Broadway and that "it was to be used in making a trip to the Orient". According to Tunney's testimony Gupta went to China and Japan and purchased firearms and ammunition for use in the revolution in India. "Gupta told me that Von Papen said he would buy additional firearms and ammunition in the United States and ship it to the Orient by way of the South Seas. Gupta told me he returned to this country in June 1916, after having been followed by detectives all over China and Japan."

Tunney's testimony which was corroborated by George C. Barnet, a New York Detective Sergeant, is in general agreement with the story of Gupta which has already been collected from the March issues of the *New York Times*. It should be pointed out that on March 10, 1917, Gupta, "a young Hindu student at Columbia University, is one of those taken to Headquarters. He lives in Livingston Hall, a Columbia dormitory."⁸ The *New York Times* in its issue of March 8, 1917 while giving additional information on two arrests made on March 6, said that according to Government sources a third arrest in the plot might be made within

the next 24 hours, and that he might prove to be "one of the most important persons concerned in the conspiracy". One is tempted to conclude that the Government sources had Gupta in view. We shall refer to the other two arrests later.

M. N. ROY ON H. L. GUPTA

One of the persons that Gupta met in Japan was Naren Bhattacharyya, better known as M. N. Roy subsequently. According to Roy, Gupta "called himself representative of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin," and lived in secret with the distinguished revolutionary leader Rash Behari Bose. Roy's account of Gupta written years after their meetings in 1915-1916 is generally in agreement with the information gleaned by us. Roy confirms that the Japanese Government was unsympathetic to H. L. Gupta and his mission. While in Japan, Gupta had told Roy that without him (Gupta) nothing could be done in America and that his recommendation would be required by any Indian wishing to see the German Ambassador in Washington. The situation had certainly changed when some months later Roy met Gupta in New York. By then Gupta had been removed by the Berlin Committee from his position of authority in the United States and he felt sore about it.⁹

It may be recalled here that an important American newspaper in a news item issued from Washington on March 7, 1917 said, "It was learned today that the chief Indian conspirator in America had left the country. Officials declined to divulge his name."¹⁰ This brief notice read along with Roy's account of his own arrest "in the campus of the Columbia University while returning one evening from a meeting addressed by Lala Lajpat Rai" almost simultaneously with the two arrests of March 6 (to which we have already referred) and the account of his flight to Mexico, leads to a very plausible inference.¹¹ "The chief Indian conspirator" who had fled the United States was M. N. Roy.

GUPTA OUSTED : FEBRUARY 1916

To return to the main current of the story. It may be reasonably concluded that the failure of Heramba Lal Gupta's mission in Japan went against the continuance of his leadership. Intrigues within the Berlin Committee and misunderstandings with his colleagues in the United States may also have contributed to Gupta's eclipse. Anyway, that Gupta's leadership was disowned

by the Germans and the Berlin Committee when he was away on his arms mission is proved by the following cable dated Berlin, 4th February, 1916, from Zimmermann to the German Embassy, Washington : In future all Indian affairs are to be handled through the Committee to be formed by Dr. Chakravarty. Dharendra Sarkar and Heramba Lal Gupta, who has meanwhile been expelled from Japan, will cease to be independent representatives of the Indian Independence Committee existing here.¹² Additional information about the impending changes may be had from an unsigned letter to R. Sachse, Rotterdam, dated January 21, 1916. "Dr. Chakravarty will return to the United States to form a new American Committee, which will include Ram Chandra and himself. He has agreed to send an agent to the West Indies, where there are 100,000 West Indians, and also to British Guiana, Java and Sumatra, and to conduct secret propaganda in America. It is also proposed to send a mission to Japan. Dr. Chakravarty will get safe conduct."

This change in leadership was commented upon by Preston, the District Attorney at the San Francisco Trial. "We will show you," he said, "this man Sarkar and Gupta held the reins together with Ram Chandra, until some time in the year 1916, when the matter not coming out to the satisfaction of the Berlin Committee, they requested Dr. Chakravarty to come to Berlin to receive his formal instructions as to how this matter should be carried on." The District Attorney then proceeds to tell us that Chakravarty sailed under the name of Reza Vager, a Persian merchant and subsequently "adopted a code system of communication between himself and the Berlin Foreign Office through this Committee" (Berlin Committee).¹³

CHAKRAVARTY : BERLIN'S NEW FIND

Dr. Chandra Kanta Chakravarty who thus came to be the accredited nominee of the Berlin Committee (which by that time was unmistakably brought under the control of the German Foreign Office), had been in the United States for several years with the exception of a few months in 1916, when presumably he had visited Berlin.¹⁴ Chakravarty who was a chemist was born in Calcutta, and arrived in the U. S. A. on the steamship *Adriatic* about February 25, 1910. He was about 31 years old when he assumed his new responsibility. The revolutionist weighed less than 90 pounds and was 5ft. and 2 inches tall.¹⁵ During his visit to Berlin,

he conferred, among others, with the Foreign Minister, Zimmermann.¹⁰ Chakravarty who was a school teacher and journalist in India, had three warrants issued against his name when he left for the United States.

The new leader was faced with an uneasy situation. The programme of aiding the revolution in India tangibly and materially from America had failed. The revolutionary organization in the United States was not as well-knit as it should have been. We have enough indication to assume that cracks in the organization had appeared. Team work had suffered considerably. There were rifts in the ranks of the revolutionaries themselves. The circumstances demanded that the new leader should be a man of consummate ability and tact and of absolute integrity. It was necessary that he should be on good terms with Ram Chandra and the Gadar Organization of San Francisco, and be able to satisfy the expectations of the Berlin India Committee and the German financiers. Chakravarty was saddled with a heavy responsibility. Moreover, the Germans were worried about the leakage of information to the British. This is borne out by the following letter dated March 21, 1916 of one Haniel of the German Embassy at Washington to Ambassador Von Bernstorff and Von Igel, head of the Military Information Bureau maintained by Germany in New York. "The Imperial German Consul at Manila writes me, 'the English are thoroughly informed of all individual movements and the whereabouts at various times of the Hindu revolutionists'. Please inform Chakravarty."¹¹

The information that may be culled from the not too adequate materials in our hand does not give a satisfying picture of the revolutionary organization that was set up in America for the cause of India. Somehow or other, things did not move satisfactorily, and even genuine and honest efforts did not produce the expected results. We hear of complaints that sufficient funds were not forthcoming ; and it appears that whatever money was available was not properly and wisely utilized. Preston produced a letter sent in "a cipher message which purports to be incomplete that was found in the basement of Chakravarty's house, our contention being that it was a draft of a letter to the Berlin Committee after he had been appointed by Zimmermann. Sent some time in May 1916,"¹² the message runs as follows : "I believe you have received seven consecutive reports sent through Embassy. If you have not,

please inform in duplicate. Everything well organized now except two members from Pacific Coast... Rutgers sent to Japan and Armu Adam to Trinidad. He has sent from there four score men to India. Forty are ready... We arranged everything to control Japanese dailies for fourscore thousand dollars, but Embassy says no money..." The message is a little incoherent and the concluding part provides an anticlimax.

That Chakravarty was not in an enviable position will be evident from another letter¹⁹ dated August 16, 1916, "contended to be the work of Dr. Chakravarty". It was sent per the S. S. "*Oscar 11*" and addressed to a man named H. Eisenhut, Stationsvej 5, Gentofte, pr. Copenhagen. The letter contained the following message—Received your note and valuable instructions. We usually send you reports every week. Sorry you do not get them in full and regularly. Request Foreign Office to (tell) their Consulate here to accelerate service.

The correspondent then mentions the members of the Committee in the United States and gives the heartening news that "Ram Chandra is willing to conform to our party policy, he and any of his nominees". The writer also proposes to go to California "this week". The rest of the letter is painful reading. It reveals the dissensions within the organization that were coming up on the surface. The references to some of the well-known revolutionists are far from complimentary.²⁰ The organization was in a bad shape, the leadership was being questioned and the prospects of success grew dimmer.

HINDUSTANI REPUBLIC IN USA ?

The conclusion becomes almost irresistible from a perusal of these and some other messages that Chakravarty was finding himself unequal to the task. We are told that among others, the new leader had agreed to send an agent to the West India Islands with a view to organizing the despatch to India, of as many as possible, of "nearly one hundred thousand Indians" who lived in these islands—all the more because it was considered easier to send Indians back home from there than from the United States. Chakravarty was also required to send an agent to British Guiana with the same object, to despatch a reliable person to Java and Sumatra, and to conduct a vigorous propaganda on behalf of the cause of India with literature that was to be printed secretly in America and circulated from there. Besides, it was also Chakra-

varty's responsibility to make an effort to carry out the plan of the secret Oriental Mission to Japan.²¹ This evidently was to be a continuation of Gupta's attempts in that area. If the contents of the message of May 1916 are any indication, very little success in these respects had been gained. We are further told that in a message from Berlin to Chakravarty dated July 13, the latter was told "that the primary objective was to produce revolution in India during the war". It was also suggested that attempts might be made to set up an "Independent Hindustani Republic" provided that did not jeopardize work in India.²² This finds a near confirmation in Lajpat Rai's contention that he received through one of his countrymen, "very large and tempting offers... to sign the proclamation of Indian Independence which was proposed to be thrown from aeroplanes into the ranks of Indian Expeditionary forces in France. I declined to do that"²³

Circumstances compelled Chakravarty to lean more on the San Francisco Gadar group and its powerful leader Ram Chandra. The co-operation of the latter was eagerly sought. Ram Chandra agreed to work with the new Committee, but with certain reservations. This is borne out by the contents of a telegram from Chakravarty dated September 5, 1916. It says, "Saw Ram Chandra. He is willing to work with the Committee and is ready to do so without party mandates, except to change the name of Gadar to National in his publications". The weakness in Ram Chandra's position and the disruption within the Gadar Organization are then analyzed. "He (Ram Chandra) has no intellectuals with himself, except one Govind Behari Lal, but he also lacks reflective judgment and serious temperament.

"The Gadar Party is also in the process of breaking up, as Gurudwara, a Sikh religious organization, bribed by the British is trying to discredit Gadar. Notwithstanding this, Gadar has been receiving one thousand dollars monthly from the local Consulate..."²⁴ Anyway, outwardly, there was no appreciable change in the working of the revolutionary programme. Misunderstandings and differences grew apace. Consequently, the scope of the revolutionary work also became more restricted than before. These developments will be treated in the next chapter.

1. Landau, *op. cit.*, p. 29 ff.
2. M. N. Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
3. Giles T. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 301.
4. *The New York Times*, March 12, 1917. 2: 5.

5. *Ibid.*, March 13, 1917, 4 : 6.
6. *Ibid.*, October 19, 1917, 13 : 3.
7. Sperry, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.
8. *The New York Times*, March 11, 1917, 2 : 2.
9. M. N. Roy *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31. "He was fed up with intrigues and accused the Berlin Committee of having let him down when he was risking his life in the front lines of the Far East. Gupta pleaded inability to help me. On my enquiry as to who had taken his place in the revolutionary organization, he had shrugged his shoulders and, apparently with no relevance, made some disparaging remarks about one Dr. Chakravarty."
10. *The New York Times*, March 8, 1917, 2 : 7.
11. M. N. Roy, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-44.
12. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 42
13. *The New York Times*, February 28, 1918, 3 : 3
14. *Trial Records*, p. 19.
15. *The New York Times*, March 8, 1917, 1 : 4.
16. *Ibid.*, March 9, 1917, 2 : 7.
17. *Ibid.*, March 7, 1917, 1 : 1.
18. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 12, 1917, p. 11.
19. *Trial Records*, pp. 1842-1843; Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
20. *Trial Records*, pp. 1843-1844.
21. *Trial Records*, p. 1844: "Gupta is back and we were eager to take him, but he had adopted a reprehensible policy. He in conjunction with Freeman and Lala Lajpat Rai made statements before the German Consulate ; that Harish Chandra and Tarak Nath Das are suspicious characters, come from London and [are] intimate with Arjun Sing, a spy ; and that Harish Chandra took from Freeman's hand last year four thousand dollars ; and that Tarak Nath Das asked from Switzerland and received from Von Brincken eight hundred dollars ; and [that] he is a fraud and heads this class ; [that] I was proved to be crazy. Of course, we defend both of them. Now this is [the] very method by which enmity has been made.
22. "We shall keep Harish Chandra here until your further instructions. Every helper has hesitated [a] good deal after such an incident".
23. Spellman, *op. cit.*, p. 40
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Young India*, February 1920, p. 37.
26. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 52 ; *Trial Records*, p. 6550.

Indo-German Conspiracy Dissension to the Fore

INADEQUATE RESULTS

The differences and misunderstandings among the members of the Indian revolutionary groups in America are further borne out by the contents of some messages that were produced at the San Francisco Trial as Court exhibits. True, revolutionary work was not at a standstill. But the results were not satisfactory. Some of these messages may be quoted at length to show that the high expectations of these revolutionists in the U. S. A. were far from being realised. Moreover, although the messages are definite proofs of the widespread character of the Conspiracy, it may be mentioned here that in many cases, the ambitious plans could not be carried out. In others they were thwarted. Some of these untoward developments have already been narrated and analyzed. It is hardly necessary to point out that by the time these messages had been compiled (most likely for the information of the Berlin Group) several items in the plans had miscarried. It may not be out of place, however, to reproduce these messages. They are an indication of the working of the mind of Chakravarty and his associates with respect to the Indo-German Conspiracy.

The decipherment of a message, dated October 25, 1916 (Government's Exhibit No. 72)¹ reads as follows :

"Recent information from India is that our groundwork all over India of our plan in connection with Germany is thriving. Lahiri, Mukherjee, Sanya, Kirtekar have done good work. Lahiri sent Mana Ben Roy, known as Martin, and Narendra Chattacharje, P. E. Chakraberti, to arrange the delivery and distribution of arms. They came to Java and the German Consul at Batavia directed them to see Thomas Helffereich. He gave them help and promised that he would give two ships with arms as soon as he would hear they had arranged for it, and for arrangement 25,000 guilders to Roy, known as Martin, and later 20,000; 6,000 Eastern Bank B. M. Harry Son and Bengalese firm first, 1,000 Shanghai Bank to S. Ramajib Samabay. At Shanghai \$40,000 was given to Ras En Bahiri Bose who is now in Japan,

known as Thakur, of which \$ 10,000 have been seized with Shanji Mukerjee at Singapore and \$40,000 given to Weide at Manila to charter steamer. Henry could not secure any arms and was caught near Celebes. Gupta got \$28,000 and is getting \$100 monthly and Gadar 32,000 and monthly uncertain."

Further down, the message assesses the success of the programme and admits that "Taken as a whole the sum is big and the result shown is poor (and) questionable. . . ." This sense of inadequacy is also reflected in a subsequent message (Government Exhibit No. 73), dated November 2nd, 1916 which says, "We have not succeeded to smuggle more than two hundred pistols and nearly three thousand shots during the last six months through the Pacific". The message of October 25, 1916, to which a reference has already been made, also expresses the dissatisfaction of the Indian revolutionists with the attitude of Japan while appreciating the friendliness of the Germans of New York and Washington. This portion of the message which we quote below has besides, an unsavoury reference to the erstwhile Indian revolutionary leader in the U. S. —Heramba Lal Gupta. "The attitude of Japan is vacillation; our relations with New York and Washington are friendly, appreciated and respectful, though they were annoyed with Gupta's behaviour at the Golden Gate and Shanghai—disrespectful and unpleasant."

We shall presently refer to another message in detail in support of our view that several months before the Indian revolutionists were rounded up in the U. S. A. the organization had been weakened by internal feuds. Besides, the revolutionary programme in Bengal had suffered a set-back. A reference to a letter, dated November 2nd, 1916 has been made earlier. This gives a list of Bengal revolutionaries who had been arrested at home."

Anyway, Chakravarty proceeded with his work the nature of which is explained by a message, dated 29th November, 1916. The programme of helping the revolution in India and elsewhere against the British Empire is continued by smuggling two thousand pistols and ten thousand bullets and by having organized the West Indians for revolution. The second part of the programme appears to be much too vague. What follows in the message is a little more concrete in character although one gets the impression that the nature of the work was getting less revolutionary and its scope was being restricted. "Gadar has come into our hands and a permanent basis of work has been established : And if I get

by January, fifteen to twenty thousand dollars at my disposal everything would be arranged in such way as a permanent national center and work in future could go in under all conditions.”⁴

GUPTA-CHAKRAVARTY FEUD

Chakravarty's letter, dated December 21, 1916 (which is quoted below) still further highlights the growing feud between him and Gupta. If one reads this letter one cannot but feel distressed at the mutual mudslinging and bickerings within the conspiratorial group. There was also some show of physical violence in this intraparty quarrel and at one stage “Chakravarty received a blow on the head landing him in the hospital for a while.”⁵ The Berlin nominee was worried about the preservation of the good reputation of the revolutionary group in the U. S. A. and tried, in an indirect manner though, to establish his own sincerity and integrity. But while assessing his own work for the revolutionary cause all that he could claim to have done was to have organized a Pan-Asiatic League and Oriental Society. An organ of the Society was in the offing.⁶

The conclusion is almost irresistible that Chakravarty was preparing more for propaganda and publicity than for active revolution. Circumstances may have forced his hands. But there is no denying the fact that the scope and the objective of the work of the Indian revolutionaries in America had become considerably restricted. The emphasis on propaganda and pamphleteering is also brought home by the programme of the revolutionary group as explained in its messages. A secret understanding had been brought about with the Japanese and the Chinese Governments, whereby, “an atmosphere of more than passive sympathy” could be expected in the future. Other items of work indicated in one such message were first, that two hundred and eighty thousand copies of nine different pamphlets had been distributed and eighty thousand reserved for future use (evidently in different parts of the British Empire and among the Indian troops), and, secondly, that an immigration law unfavourable to the Indians had been criticized.⁷

Certain other messages seem to be some sort of a commentary on the Gupta-Chakravarty feud. Sometimes Chakravarty defends the other against harsh criticism. Chakravarty was reasonably worried over what the Germans might think of the Indian revolutionists in the U.S. He was naturally perturbed by signs of disintegration and disunity in the party. But

nonetheless he felt that the availability of adequate funds would set everything right. He also talked of the 'new plan'.⁸ It is very likely that this new plan was related to this scheme of organizing a Pan-Asiatic League and Oriental Society.

Heramba Lal Gupta was arrested on March 10, 1917. He faced trial in Chicago. Gupta, Jacobsen, Wehde and Boehm were found guilty of conspiracy and of violating the Neutrality of the United States. On October 20, 1917 judgment was pronounced on all the four accused. Gupta was sentenced to imprisonment for one year and six months and a fine of \$100 on both indictments.⁹

CHAKRAVARTY AND M. N. ROY

Another young Indian revolutionary who had contacts with Dr. Chakravarty and who subsequently became a celebrity was M. N. Roy. In his Memoirs Roy has hardly a word of praise for Chakravarty. Roy devotes very little space to Chakravarty, and not much space either to his own doings in the U. S. in his book of more than 600 pages. He has, however, very emphatically refuted Chakravarty's claim that he was negotiating with the captain of the famous German cargo submarine Deutschland to take Roy to Germany. According to Chakravarty, "Roy was arrested" while these negotiations were on, "on a complaint telegraphed to New York by Evelyn's father. According to Chakravarty, Evelyn defied her father, married Roy in the jail, and the two were released."¹⁰

Not all of Chakravarty's statements could be corroborated by facts. He claimed, without being able to produce any evidence whatsoever, that Rabindranath Tagore was involved in the Indo-German Conspiracy.¹¹ We do not feel competent to express any definite views on the Deutschland business. It may be pointed out that Roy gives a different account of his experience of American justice.¹² He says that the District Attorney indicted him "for violating the Immigration Law of the U. S. A." The Grand Jury endorsed the indictment. He was then released pending the trial and told that he would be summoned again. M. N. Roy escaped. This account does not tally with Chakravarty's statement before the Court—"Roy appeared before the Grand Jury and was discharged. He could not be connected in any possible way with the Conspiracy."¹³ It is just possible that in the confusion of their arrests and the tensions of the subsequent days Chakravarty

did not have correct and accurate information about the whereabouts of M. N. Roy.

What is of importance, however, is the fact that whatever impression one might get from M. N. Roy's Memoirs, his association in the U. S. A. with Chakravarty and the Indo-German Conspiracy was not just superficial. This is borne out by several documents produced at the San Francisco Trial. It may be recalled that in the cipher message, dated October 25, 1916¹⁴ Roy was reported to have received 25,000 guilders from an agent in Java. The message appears to be a report from Chandra Chakravarty to the German Foreign Secretary, Zimmermann.¹⁵ Roy's activity mentioned here took place before his arrival in the U. S. A. His involvement in the Indo-German Conspiracy with Chakravarty as the Berlin Committee's nominee in America is further confirmed by the following two receipts from the former : "received from Dr. C. Chakravarty \$275 for passage from the west and personal expenses. M. N. Roy. November 1916." "Received one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) on behalf of Sailendra Ghose, for his passage expenses from San Francisco to New York. M. N. Roy. Feb. 10, 1917."¹⁶ Roy says that he met Chakravarty for the first time in New York.¹⁷ But Chakravarty in the course of the San Francisco Trial said that he had met Roy at Palo Alto (seat of Stanford University) near San Francisco.¹⁸ This most likely happened before Roy came over to New York. Did Chakravarty fail to impress him and Roy did not remember him when the latter came to New York, or, did he deliberately ignore Chakravarty when decades later Roy wrote his Memoirs ?

We quote below some excerpts from the *Trial Records* in support of our contention that M. N. Roy had a fairly intimate connection with Chandra Chakravarty in the Conspiracy venture :

Mr. Preston : Here is a message addressed to Dr. Chakravarty, 364 West 120th Street, New York, signed by Roy, Hotel Leighton, Los Angeles. The message is undated. It reads "Waiting here, please send three hundred dollars by telegraph. Will start for middle west on receipt. How long will you take to arrange business. I am all earnest for that. Let us know details in the meantime if possible. Roy."

Preston : On Sept. 6, 1915 there is record of a transfer of one hundred dollars to this man Roy at the Hotel Leighton, Los Angeles.

Preston : Here is a telegram to Mr. Chakravarty from Surendra

Karr, also referring to Roy. It is dated Jan. 8, 1917 : "To Doctor C. Chakravarty, 364 West 120th Street, New York.

"Ghose is with me. He has urgently to meet you before February 15. Before further particulars ask M. N. Roy, Daly Avenue, New York, to whom details have been written. Short of funds. Immediately wire three hundred dollars to meet his outfit expenses and passage money to New York. Surendra Karr."¹⁸

It may be safely concluded from the above documents that M. N. Roy received money on several occasions from Chandra Chakravarty in the U. S. A., presumably for the furtherance of revolutionary activity. The messages we have quoted in this connexion are, however, colourless and do not enable us to know what the two revolutionists thought of each other while in the United States. We have indicated, however, that in later years when they were no longer in the same camp their mutual assessment was anything but happy. This is particularly true of Roy's assessment of Chakravarty.

A word about Chakravarty's relations with Ram Chandra, the leader of the California members of the Gadar party. Towards the closing stages of the San Francisco Trial Chakravarty revealed for the first time "the cause of the animus existing between Ram Chandra and himself" when he told the jury that he had been sent by the Berlin Foreign Office to "call off" Chandra's "violent publications". The Berlin Committee's nominee further said that he tried to induce Chandra to discontinue the publication of the *Gadar*. "When he refused I parted company with him and his methods of aiding our countrymen."²⁰ A natural sequel to this was to restrict the scope and objective of Indian revolutionary activity in America. This may be explained in the words of Dr. Chakravarty himself : "Personally I did not attempt to put on foot a military enterprise. . . . But I did spread our propaganda and expended thousands of dollars doing it in the name of patriotism."²¹

1. *Trial Records*, pp. 1873-74.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 1875.

3. The letter refers to the arrests (among others) of Hari Kumar Chakravarti, Makhan Lal Chakravarty, Sham Sundar Bose, Bholanath Chattopadhyay, Amarendra Chattopadhyay, Jatindra Nath Mukerji (?), Chittapriya Roy Choudhury, Manoranjan Sen Gupta, Satyendra Mitra of Noakhali, Rajah Narajole (interned), Jadugopal Mukerji, Charu Roy, Indra Nandi.

Many of these revolutionists had already made their mark or, were destined to play significant roles in India's struggle for freedom.

4. *Trial Records*, p. 1877.

5. Spellman, *op.*, *cit.*, p. 42.

6. *Trial Records*, p. 1876. "We have been for some time under an embarrassing situation. When Gupta returned from Japan we told him many things in order to utilize him and take him in the Committee but when we found he secretly went to the Consulate and Embassy and complained against me that I was a crank and was in the lunatic asylum and have mismanaged everything, and (that) my associates are Das, a spy, likewise Harish Chandra, we had to drop him out. Since then (he has been) almost like a howling maniac ; he has been trying every means to harm the cause and strain our respectful relations. Of course the Embassy regard him as a jealous and disappointed backbiter. They have every confidence in us, but who knows what they think of the Hindoos when told that the Berlin Committee consists of money-making criminals and (that) I am in this game. And when everything failed he went so far as to use physical violence against me. I have done my best as loyally and devotedly I could under the circumstances. Have organized (a) Pan-Asiatic League and Oriental Society, and its organ *Oriental Review*, is in the process of crystallization." See Appendix II for this and other relevant developments.

7. *Spellman, op. cit.*, p. 42.

8. *Trial Records*, p. 6543: "Gupta is back in New York and has seen me but has not submitted any report. We need 15,000 dollars more for next six months to carry out the new plan."

P. 6550: "Gupta is here but unwilling to work with the Committee ; is angry. Consulate was perturbed at this attitude, but I assured them that Gupta's patriotism and sincerity are unquestionable, and he got twenty thousand dollars.

"Please let me know what to do in order to keep the respect and admiration of German authority, which we need if we cannot accomplish our objects during the war. More so for the future our party should have a union, earnest and dignified."

9. *Sperry, op. cit.*, p. 51.

10. Overstreet and Windmiller, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

11. For a discussion on this, see R. C. Majumdar's paper in the *Modern Review* of June 1963, and the author's paper in the same journal of July, 1964.

12. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, pp. 37-44.

13. *Trial Records*, p. 885.

14. See footnote 1.

15. Overstreet and Windmiller, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

16. *Trial Records*, p. 882.

17. M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, p. 32. Roy describes how he went for the first time to meet Dr. Chakravarty at his residence in New York and enquired of a gentleman "if Dr. Chakravarty lived in the premises" the gentleman grinned and said, "Sit down. I have been expecting you."

18. *Trial Records*, p. 1059.

Q. Did you know this man Roy when he lived at Palo Alto?

A. While he was at Palo Alto I met him twice.

Q. What name was he going under?

A. Roy.

Q. Going under Roy?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he go under the name of Martin?

A. Not that I know of.

Q. Which name did you know him by then?

A. Roy was the only name I knew him by while he was here.

Q. I thought you said you knew him by Medez.

A. That was not here ; that was while he was in New York.

Q. After you had known him here?

A. Yes.

Q. How did you learn of it?

A. He wrote to me and said he was using that name.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 1710.

20. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 18, 1918, p. 11.

21. *Ibid.*

7 | Collapse of the Plot in America

CHAKRAVARTY'S ARREST

While referring to the arrest of Heramba Lal Gupta on March 10, 1917 we mentioned two arrests made four days earlier.¹ One of these was that of Chandra Chakravarty himself and the other was that of Ernest Sekunna, a German subject who called himself "Doctor". The arrests were made shortly after midnight at 364 East 120th Street in Hoboken (New York) "a house they had bought, according to the Government agents, from which to direct their anti-British plots". They were reported to have bought a second house in West Seventy-seventh Street and contemplated changing their headquarters to that house within a few days. The second house was to have been used as a combination headquarters and club for Indians in sympathy with the German scheme for the disruption of the Indian Empire. The police had been shadowing them for several weeks and located the headquarters building several weeks ago by "trailing a German banker" who was seen on various occasions conferring with Chakravarty and Sekunna. According to the Federal authorities, the arrests were likely to be a prelude to a countrywide round up of "aliens of various nationalities who have taken advantage of American neutrality to plot on American soil against the allies".²

United States Commissioner S. M. Hitchcock fixed bail for each man in the sum of \$ 25,000 which after some hesitation they promptly furnished. In a safety box in a downtown bank, held in the name of Chakravarty, the police found cash and securities to the value of \$ 30,000.³ It is beyond doubt, therefore, that the accused had considerable funds under their control.

Even before formal proceedings had started and the San Francisco Trial had taken shape, interesting information about the Indian revolutionary and his German accomplice was given out by the newspaper press. It was reported that these two took out on February 28, trade name certificates to do business as 'The Oriental Society', 'The Oriental Kitchen', and 'The Oriental Review'. The Review was to be a monthly magazine devoted to "arts, science and the affairs in the Far East, particularly,

Japan, India, China and Persia". The place of publication was given as 170 West Seventy-seventh Street, a house that the two had bought some time back. It was also reported that Sekunna had bought an isolated farm of about 200 acres in the New York state in response to an advertisement in the New York papers on February, 17.⁴

The simultaneous arrest of an Indian and a German and the fragments of the admissions and the disclosures (reported to have been made by them) that reached the press provided the American newspapers with exciting and interesting materials on the character and sweep of the German sponsored conspiracies on the neutral soil of the United States. Prominence was given to the relevant reports and Chakravarty's arrest and its sequel were highlighted. As indicated already, some other arrests were also made at about the same time.

To turn to Chandra Chakravarty. Accompanied by their defence counsel, the prisoners were taken into the office of John C. Knox, Assistant United States District Attorney. In the course of the interrogations, they were reported to "have made important admissions and it was rumoured in the Federal Building that they had agreed to make a full and complete statement to the Government of all they knew concerning German activities in the U. S."⁵ Chakravarty did make some admissions and the relevant document in support of the Government's contention was produced at the San Francisco Trial.⁶ The prisoners admitted receiving \$60,000 from Von Igel, "but this is believed to be only a small part of the total turned over to them". He was the German paymaster in the Indian Conspiracy and "according to a statement made yesterday always paid the money to Sekunna." The authorities were of the view that the Sekunna-Chakravarty case was "only one single of the German Conspiracy system" in the U.S.⁷

THE NEW YORK TIMES' EDITORIAL

Besides rousing public curiosity about the sweep of a conspiracy project that had been foiled, a natural sequel to the developments, some of which we have referred to earlier, was a long editorial in *The New York Times* under the title—The German Plots. The Indian revolutionary activity finds no specific mention here. But as the brief extracts reproduced below will show, it was also in the editor's mind.⁸

"Every day some new German activity, conspiracy or espionage in the United States, or directed against the U. S. from its terri-

tory, comes to light. For more than two years acts of war against the Entente Powers have been planned on American soil, acts of violence and of destruction against American industry and commerce have been attempted or perpetrated."

"The hospitality of the country has been and is being abused to its damage and its danger."

"The Government has been long patient, too patient, of German aggressions, German crimes committed or plotted in the U. S."

"It is right that the nation should know in full the transactions of the representatives and agents in this country."

We have deviated from the Chakravarty-Sekunna story. Chakravarty appears to be a bundle (to an excess) of contradictions—of courage and timidity, truth and falsehood, patriotism and personal considerations, firm determination and strange indecision. His disclosures almost immediately after arrest made the work of the American Police and the British agents easier. In the Court room "both (Chakravarty and Sekunna) had the appearance of men suffering from fright".⁸ Chakravarty's subsequent behaviour during the trial was by and large one of toughness and defiance. But there were occasions when he behaved irresponsibly earning the disapprobation of his colleagues.⁹ His mishandling of the cause of the Indian revolution was resented by his co-workers towards the end of the trial. Despite his bombastic sixteen minute address to the Jury¹¹ in which he said that he had expended thousands of dollars "doing it in the name of patriotism . . ." his German accomplices questioned his bona fides. After the Court had adjourned Franz Bopp asked Chakravarty, "You say you were inspired by patriotism?" To Chakravarty's answer "Yes", the German commented, "Patriotism and \$60,000" and turned away red of face.¹²

M. N. Roy, whose association with Chakravarty, we have discussed in the last chapter says that a New York newspaper announced the arrest of Chakravarty with the headline: "Oily leader of the Oily Revolution locked up in Tomb".¹³ Roy objects to the word qualifying 'revolution', but agrees with the characterization of the leader and maintains that "a revolution supposed to be led by such men could not be taken seriously". The picture that Roy gives of this man borders on ridicule and contempt. If the assessment of Roy is fairly correct, one is left wondering how Chakravarty was put in such a position of confidence and responsibility.¹⁴

Chakravarty alone was not responsible for the ultimate fizzling out of the revolutionary conspiracy. But it may be inferred that he did not take up his formidable responsibility with the seriousness it deserved. It seems that he primarily emphasized the propaganda aspect of the revolution and was a bad organizer of a political group. With the progress of the trial his imperfections as a revolutionary leader were exposed. His German accomplices were dissatisfied with the manner of his handling of the funds. The Indian colleagues were startled by the disclosures he had made and were seized with a sense of frustration. With Chakravarty the revolutionary effort was at most half-hearted. The annoyance of his colleagues with the 'leader' became unmistakable towards the close of the trial. It appears that the annoyance was general and not personal. It could, therefore, be mellowed by a sense of humour as will be proved by the following news item. "Recently the Hindu defendants confined in the County jail knitted a silk medal, which they facetiously conferred upon Dr. Chakravarty as the emblem of 'The Order of the Yellow Streak and Double Cross'.¹⁵

It has been said already that Sekunna and Chakravarty furnished bail of \$25,000 each. Subsequently, however, the bail was refused because both of them were surrendered by the National Security Company on March 8 since the matter was one "with which the Company did not care to be involved", and the Company decided that it "would not in the future furnish bonds for persons arrested for un-American activities". Both, therefore, were sent to the Tombs. We are also told that as soon as Chakravarty got out of the clutches of the Federal officials on March 7 he "went to the County Naturalization Bureau and declared intention to become a citizen of the U. S." This, however, could not happen. For, "he cannot be naturalized for two years, and not then if he is deemed undesirable".¹⁶

Chakravarty had some real difficulty in the matter of his release on bail. On March 10, he managed to give \$25,000 bail, but at night, "the United States Casualty and Fidelity Company which had furnished the security, decided that he was not a good risk, and turned him back to the authorities".¹⁷ Later, however, in order to make things easier for him and Sekunna the bail was reduced to \$5,000. Meanwhile, the German also was reported to have made important admissions to the Government.¹⁸

These few days in March saw a few important arrests. The

American press was full of news of them and the newspapers gave out whatever information they could collect from official sources about a conspiracy that had potentialities, but had become virtually abortive. According to these sources is the big Indian uprising which was planned was a carefully worked-out plot "which had its origin in Berlin and which missed by only a narrow margin provoking one of the most serious outbreaks India had known since the Sepoy rebellion."¹⁹ Startling disclosures re : sensational plots were expected—plots in which Germany hoped to send bona fide American citizens to England to get information which would, "among other things, aid Germany in her submarine warfare against allied and neutral merchant ships."²⁰ It was also said that the U. S. Secret Service agents had with them the names of several hundred persons engaged in instigating rebellion against British rule in India. Such persons were, according to the reports, in all parts of the United States, Hawaii, Philippines, Japan, China and India. "In directing this big plot, as was disclosed in an official paper yesterday, 'Capt. Franz von Papen, the dismissed German Military Attache, played an important' role".²¹

A distinguished American who because of his public views figured in the newspaper press during Chakravarty's arrest and interrogation, and also on other occasions, was William Jennings Bryan who was three times a candidate for the Presidency. Bryan made a trip around the world in the course of which he stayed in India for some time, and on his return published a pamphlet on British Rule in India (1906). Chakravarty and other Indian revolutionaries made good use of Bryan's views in their propaganda literature. Not very long after his arrest Chakravarty, with reference to the literature that the Indian revolutionaries had prepared, was asked if what Bryan had said about British rule in India was complimentary. "Not very" replied the Indian.²² At one time a ban was put by the U. S. Postal department on a pamphlet being sent from the United States to India. The pamphlet which was made up of translated extracts from British Rule in India was banned at the request of the British Government.²³ On April 13, 1918 or thereabouts during the San Francisco Trial, Ram Chandra, the Gadar Party leader "demanded that William Jennings Bryan be brought to this city to testify....."²⁴

Chakravarty's arrest and the newspaper reports gleaned from the official sources exposed the alliance between the Indian revolutionaries and the German agents. Not that every patriotic

Indian was happy at this turn of events. Lala Lajpat Rai who was in the U. S. at this time virtually as a political exile from India and was engaged in his mission of propagating the cause of India in America came out with a public statement denouncing the plot in unambiguous language and condemning Chakravarty for his complicity in it.²⁵

CHAKRAVARTY'S SERVICE

The New York Times brought out an editorial under the title—Chakravarty's Service—in which besides questioning, though mildly, Chakravarty's competence for the job, it castigated the conduct of the 'friendly' Government of Germany. The editorial says—"It may turn out a fortunate thing that there was a non-German implicated in the latest plot. There has been a constant procession of plots on American soil since the war broke out, beginning with the almost forgotten exploits of Fay and von Horn. But as each plot has been unearthed and the plotters captured, they have kept their own counsel and we have learned nothing about the source of this interminable, steady flowing stream of conspiracies. They were Germans and well trained.

"This time a Hindu is among those in the net. He is not so well trained, and promptly admits that before coming to America to put his plot in motion he talked with the Foreign Office functionaries in Berlin. It may be that we are on the track now, and that before long we shall be able to give up the assumption on which, through international courtesy, we have been proceeding with increasing difficulty for two years and a half. That assumption has been that these endless plots originated in the individual enthusiasm of solitary cranks and that the 'friendly' Government at Berlin was ignorant of them."²⁶ If the expectations and the basic assumptions of these observations were deemed to be fairly correct then Chakravarty certainly rendered great service to the American Government although he had failed in his primary objective.

1. Chapter V.

2. *The New York Times*, March 7, 1917, 1 : 1.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, March 8, 1917, 1 : 4.

5. *Ibid.*, March 10. 1 : 1 ; 2 : 5.

6. *San Francisco Examiner*, December 13, 1917, p. 13. The newspaper report purported to say that the Government produced (yesterday) testimony showing that Chakravarty had made a complete written confession of all the transactions between the German Government and the Indian plotters. The confession was made to Secretary of State, Lansing on condition that it would

not be used against Chakravarty in Court. The text of it was not divulged by the State Department.

After the interview with Tunney (of the Neutrality Bureau of Investigation of the New York Police Department) Chakravarty made the confession to the Secretary of State on the condition that the document should be made confidential.

7. *The New York Times*, March 10, 1917; 2 : 5.

8. *Ibid.*, March 13, 1917, 10 : 3.

9. *Ibid.*, March 7, 1917, 4 : 5. This finds corroboration in the District Attorney's observations during the San Francisco Trial. "Chakravarty is a man of little fortitude. As soon as he was caught in New York, when officer Tunney and these police officials had him down there, and a British agent, or whoever it was, was behind the screen, he began to turn up his toes and he said, 'Yes, I will tell the Government everything.'" *Trial Records*, p. 6906.

It is interesting to note that a British agent was behind the screen.

10. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 13, 1917; p. 11. "You are spoiling the whole case." With flushed face and clenched fists Franz Bopp, former German Consul-General in San Francisco hurled this reproach at Dr. C. K. Chakravarty.

"To the dark scowls of his countrymen Chakravarty responded with a broad grin."

11. *Ibid.*, April 18; 1918; p. 11.

In part Chakravarty said, "I had not the right to violate the neutrality laws of the United States. Why did I accept German gold? Because internal organization without external aid is impossible in our predicament—and Germany offered the best way out. We in India are endeavouring to do just as America did in 1776. While Washington was struggling at home Benjamin Franklin was seeking aid in France. While my countrymen are struggling at home I sought aid in Berlin..." "Personally I did not attempt to put on foot a military enterprise... But I did spread our propaganda and expended thousands of dollars doing it in the name of patriotism."

12. *Ibid.*

13. M. N. Roy *op. cit.*, p. 41.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 34. "The fact is that he had nothing whatsoever to do with any revolution. Nor was he a villain. He was rather a crank and could be flattered to do objectionable things. His German counterpart was the devil of the drama. Undoubtedly he was engaged in espionage and somehow managed to raise his friend to the position he was not qualified to occupy either by record or by merit. How the Berlin Committee trusted him remained a mystery. After all, they did have little to say about it. The last word belonged to the head of the German Secret Service in America. He wanted a dummy, and a buffoon could just fill the role."

15. *San Francisco Call and Post*, April, 24, 1918.

16. *The New York Times*, March 9; 1917, 2 : 7.

17. *Ibid.*, March 11; 1917 2, : 3.

18. *Ibid.*; March 13; 1917, 4 : 6; March 12; 1917, 2 : 5.

19. *Ibid.*; March 10; 1917, 1 : 1.

20. *Ibid.*, 2 : 5.

21. *Ibid.*; March 13; 1917 4, : 5.

22. *Ibid.*; March 10; 1917, 2 : 5. The following extract from Bryan's *British Rule in India* is quoted from J. T. Sunderland's *India in Bondage*, pp. 50-51.

"I have met in India some of the leading English Officers (the Viceroy and the chief executives of the Province of Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oude; and the Presidency of Bombay, the three largest Indian states) and a number of officials in subordinate positions; I have talked with educated Indians—Hindus; Mohammedans and Parsis; have seen the people rich and poor in the cities and in the country and have examined statistics and read speeches, reports, petitions and other literature that does not find its way to the United States; and British rule in India is far worse; far more burdensome to the people and far more unjust than I had supposed. The trouble is that England acquired India for England's advantage; not for India's; she holds India for England's benefit; not for India's and she administers India with an eye to England's interests; not to India's."

23. *The New York Times*, November, 10; 1915, 2 : 5.

24. *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 23; 1918 (5 p. m. Edition). Ram Chandra "also sent messages to Secretary of State, Robert Lansing and President Wilson asking for an investigation of the alleged efforts of Great Britain to wipe out the Hindu Revolutionary Party in America."

25. *The New York Times*, March 9; 1917, 2 : 7. "If Mr. Chakravarty has confessed to fomenting a revolt in India at the instance of the Germans, I can only say that I am sorry for him and his patriotism. I am a Hindu Nationalist working for the attainment of Self-Government by India, but I do not believe it will be worth our while to achieve that end by foreign military aid. What we want is Self-Government and not the change of masters. . . If any Hindu in the country is conspiring with the Germans to harm the United States he is not only an idiot but a traitor. . . and no Hindu will spare any tears for him if he meets his due."

26. *The New York Times*, March 11; 1917; II, 2 : 3



INDIA AGAINST BRITAIN

BY

Ram Chandra

Editor

Hindustan Gadar

San Francisco

California

U. S. A.

A REPLY TO

*Austin
Chamberlain*

Secretary of State for India

*Lord
Hardinge*

Former Viceroy of India

*Lord
Islington*

Under Secretary of State
for India

AND OTHERS

WITH

Illustrations

ভারতবর্ষে

ইংরেজ-শাসন

আমেরিকার যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের

ভূতদূর শেফেটরী

সভাপতির সদপ্রার্থী

মাননীয় উইলিয়াম জেনিংস্‌ ব্রায়ান

লিখিত ইংরেজী প্রবন্ধের

বঙ্গানুবাদ

হিন্দুস্থান গদর আফিস হইতে প্রকাশিত

১৩২৪ ভাদ্রমাসিয়া শ্রীচৈ-

মানপ্রানসিকো, আমেরিকা

Sonderabdruck aus der "India"
vom 20. Juli 1906



Die Britische Herrschaft in Indien

Von William Jennings Bryan
zeitweiligen Kandidaten für die
Präsidentschaft der Ver. Staaten
und Staatssekretär a. B. der Union



Herausgegeben von

R a m C h a n d r a

Redakteur

"Hindustan Cedar"

San Francisco

**Exclusion of Hindus
from America
Due to British
Influence**



= BY =
RAM CHANDRA

Editor
"Hindustan Gadar"

San Francisco, Cal.
U. S. A.

8 | Conspirators in the Dock

AMERICAN NEUTRALITY ENDS

From our survey and analysis of the events till March 1917 it is clear that the U. S. Government were in possession of very vital information about the course of the Conspiracy. The net was being drawn. Important people were arrested. The pressure of the British Government was bearing fruit. Then, rather quickly the situation developed in such a manner that the advantages of American neutrality in the war were denied to the Indian revolutionaries and their accomplices. On March 18, 1917 the news came that German submarines had torpedoed three American ships. Two days later the Cabinet advised the President to ask Congress for a declaration of war. On April 2 President Wilson delivered his war message to Congress : "It is a fearful thing," he said, "to lead this great peaceful people into war. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest to our hearts—for democracy.for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace.and make the world itself at last free." On the 6th Congress passed the war declaration and the President signed it. The neutrality of the U. S. A. was at an end.

RAM CHANDRA APPREHENDED

Quite a few of the remaining members of the Conspiracy were subsequently rounded up. A message from San Francisco, dated April 7 1917 in the columns of *The New York Times*¹ says that Ram Chandra, editor of the *Hindustan Gadar* regarded by the Federal authorities "as the leader of the Hindu revolutionaries" in the United States was arrested on that day after the arrests of twelve other Hindus. "The Government was reported to have obtained evidence showing that he had sent 1, 500 men to India within the previous two months to start 'the revolution'. 1,500 men in two months at a time when the Government had virtually backed the

revolution appears to be a fantastic figure. But it is an index of the uneasy state of mind of the preservers of law and order.

The message also says, "Franz Bopp, former German Consul General here, surrendered to Federal authorities on his return from St. Helena, Cal." and was taken to Fort McDowell on Angel Island. Bopp and two other Germans had been at liberty under bonds since their recent conviction of neutrality violations.

Law then took its own course. The Federal authorities decided to concentrate prosecution in San Francisco. 105 indictments were returned on July 7 by a Federal Grand Jury in the city. Har Dayal's name appeared on this list of 105. Evidently he and some others, being away were not on trial.² The defendants were accused of violating the neutrality of the United States. The trial opened on November 20. At the outset all the defendants pleaded not guilty. About a fortnight later, Lt. Wilhelm von Brincken, former military attache of the German Consulate in San Francisco indicated in his room in the United States Disciplinary barracks at Alcatraz island that he and some of his German colleagues intended to plead guilty to indictments charging violation of the neutrality laws of the United States.³ On December 5, 1917 Brincken, George Roedick, former German Consul General at Honolulu and H. R. Schroeder, former Secretary of the Honolulu Consulate pleaded guilty.⁴ On December 4 the District Attorney named ten defendants to testify for the U.S. They were Leopold Michels, San Francisco importer, M. Martinez; San Diego broker, Ray Howard, Los Angeles Attorney, Capt. Ralph Russ, U. S. A., John B. Starr-Hunt, super cargo on the steamer *Maverick*, Ernest Sekunna of New York, Walter C. Hughes, New York Transferman, Dowes Dekker, Dutch revolutionist, Harcharan Das, Tehl Singh.⁵

DEKKER'S BETRAYAL

From the same news item we learn that Dekker was a defendant but was not on trial. It was said that the charge against him would be formally dismissed before he formally took the witness stand as a Government witness. Dekker, according to Federal officials, was a political fugitive from Batavia. He came to San Francisco more than three years before the trial on his way to India. He was reported to have had several meetings with Ram Chandra and other defendants. He was arrested by the British in Calcutta. Subsequently sentenced to death, Dekker's life was

spared on the insistence of a political party in the East Indies. The Dutch Government intervened and offered to imprison him on the island of Timor for the British. While the negotiations were in progress, the U. S. over Gmment made a request for his extradition which was granted.

Dekker, who was summoned to Berlin by the noted Indian revolutionist Barkatullah,⁶ was in league with the Berlin India Committee and was its paid agent receiving £500 a month, and "had undertaken to spread doctored German war news and propaganda throughout India".⁷ He was given the code of the Berlin Foreign Office in Amsterdam by Champakraman Pillai. He asserted that he had placed it in the hands of the British as far back as 1915. This is believed to have furnished the explanation for hundreds of arrests of German agents in all parts of the world made by England and her allies.

"Throughout the trial the Indians were a constant source of confusion" remarked an American scholar.⁸ There was something more. The Indians suspected that justice, under English pressure, would be uneven. The American police was cautioned by the British agencies against Indian attempts at coercion and intimidation of the prosecution witnesses. There were rifts among the German defendants : all of them did not plead guilty. There were sharp differences among the Indian defendants behind the scenes, leading, as we shall describe later, to the court room murder of a very prominent Indian revolutionary leader by a colleague. And that again when the trial had almost come to a close.

Right from the second day of the trial all of the Indian defendants were searched for weapons. "This action will be continued daily in view of a warning given to the Government by Officials of the British Consulate that attempts might be made to harm Hindoo witnesses testifying for the prosecution.". On November 21 again, in view of the warning from the British Government U. S. attorney Preston and his assistant, Annette Adams refused "to disclose the identity of witnesses to be called today (November 22). One hundred and fifty subpoenas have been issued by Preston bringing witnesses from all parts of the world." The important witnesses were quartered in a downtown hotel where they were under the protection of the Federal agents since their arrival in San Francisco."

Some of the Indian witnesses could not express themselves

adequately in English. An interpreter had to be appointed. The Indian defendants charged the Government interpreter with translating incorrectly. "Have justice—this is farce—give us justice" cried the Indians when the interpreter W. B. Gould translated one of the witness' answers. Judge Van Fleet assured them "Your Counsel will protect your rights."

On the heels of this outburst from the Indian defendants and the assurance from the judge, Preston demanded that the alleged Indian conspirators be ordered into custody for the remainder of the trial. The Prosecution asserted that Government witnesses had been approached and annoyed, that attempts had been made to bribe the employees of the Whitcomb hotel where the witnesses were stopping "to reveal the time they appeared on the streets". Preston further maintained that Bhagwan Singh was printing a newspaper in which articles about the trial appeared "which should not be printed".¹⁰

APPEAL TO PRESIDENT WILSON

As the trial progressed a few of the Indian defendants particularly Ram Chandra, continued their political propaganda. On February 26, 1918 Ram Chandra addressed a plea for Indian Freedom to President Wilson. In closing his appeal Ram Chandra said, "India, Ireland, Egypt, Persia, Morocco, Malaya—these are all subject states. They should be represented in the peace conference, not by the Governments which dominate them, but by representatives of their own selection. Let not this war be ended, Mr. President, until their freedom has been achieved. For this they will be grateful to you. If you accomplish this your name will shine for ever, and with the luster that is now reserved for Abraham Lincon among the galaxy of immortals."¹¹

The defence of the Indian conspirators and of a few others was opened on February 28, 1918 by Attorney George A. McGowan. "We intend to show," he said, "that the Government of Great Britain has broken every promise it has made to them. We expect to show that the U. S. refused to deport them, after they had been hounded to this country from Canada and elsewhere." Ireland, McGowan pointed out, "has 100 votes in the British Parliament. India, with her 300,000,000 inhabitants, has not one single vote in that body." McGowan produced copies of the *Gadar* quoting liberty appeals by Patrick Henry, George Washington, Lincoln and President Wilson. He asserted that the whole case was being

tried at the initiation of the British Government. McGowan's denunciation of the British Government's rule in India brought Preston to his feet who maintained that the former's invectives were "scurrilous, unpatriotic and almost treasonable". He demanded that the entire motion be struck off the record. The court overruled him.¹² Incidentally, chief Counsel for the Indian revolutionaries was Theodore Roche.

COURT ROOM KILLINGS

Excitement and tension kept up the liveliness of the trial which went on for a little over five months. A sensational climax was furnished on April 23, 1918 when a ghastly tragedy took place in the court room itself. It happened just at the lunch break. District Attorney Preston had finished his closing argument. Judge William C. Van Fleet announced that he would charge the jury in the afternoon. He then left the Bench and entered the chambers. The lawyers and the spectators arose to leave the room. Ram Chandra got up and started across the room. Ram Singh, another accused, also arose, raised his revolver and fired. Ram Chandra staggered forward and fell dead before the witness chair "with a bullet in his heart and two others in his body". Almost simultaneously, Ram Singh too was shot and killed by United States Marshal James B. Holohan who fired across the room over the heads of the attorneys. Holohan's shot broke Ram Singh's neck.¹³ The court room drama was a poignant tragedy. It raised the pitch of excitement very high. It was also a sad and unsavoury end to the story of an unsuccessful bid to foment revolution in India from abroad during the First World War.

Next day, in the course of an editorial *The New York Times* commenting on the San Francisco court murders said, "to be sure the reckless villain in this week's romance was of foreign, not of native growth and of a race from which nothing at all is expected in the way of rapid and accurate pistol practice. . . ."

The motives that prompted Ram Singh to indulge in this vile act—an indulgence which cost him his own life—are shrouded in mystery. The assassin was dead and could not explain his conduct. "The Hindus themselves held to their own counsel." They said nothing.¹⁴ The authorities either could not, or, would not unravel the mystery. Judge Van Fleet began an investigation which suggested that Ram Singh had obtained his weapon in the course of a brief recess in the morning session, when he had wandered out

in the corridor for a moment. Santokh Singh, a defendant was isolated from the others and interrogated.¹⁵ Sunder Singh Galli, another defendant, said he had seen Santokh hand over the revolver to Ram Singh. Santokh denied the charge.¹⁶ One development out of all this was a postponement of the sentencing of Galli by Judge Van Fleet at the request of Preston. He was wanted as a witness in the Grand Jury probe of the murder of Ram Chandra.¹⁷ The story of the actual probe and its findings are not known to me. In any case, the actual cause and motives of the murder were not unearthed, or, they were not made public. Under the circumstances, the scope for speculation was widened, and Ram Chandra, the intrepid leader of the Gadar Party in the U.S.A. became a controversial figure in the history of Indian revolutionary activity in that country.

Investigations by the police and the Federal authorities on April 24 established the fact that the court room murder of Ram Chandra had been plotted as early as April 4. On that date Ram Singh purchased the revolver with which he committed the murder at the pawn shop of William Schnaiz, 219 Kearny Street. "Comparison of the signatures of the murderer, together with the description given by employees of the pawn shop, definitely established the fact."¹⁸

That factiousness and jealousies within the ranks of the Indian revolutionary groups were an important contributory factor leading to the failure of their programme is incontestable. This has been amply borne out. It is not unlikely that Ram Chandra was a victim of this group factionalism heightened by the stories of failure which were brought out in the course of the trial. H.L. Gupta and Dr. C. K. Chakravarty had got themselves involved in an unseemly quarrel long before the trial began. Chakravarty and Ram Chandra had disagreed over the general programme of the Conspiracy. The latter's propaganda technique and the expenses it involved had been frowned upon by the German paymasters. But factionalism among the California Gadars was at its worst towards the close of the conspiracy. We shall take it up a little later.

THE FACTOR OF MONEY

Much has been made of the factor of money by way of explaining the factiousness and the court room murder. The Prosecution lawyer Preston said, "As I understand it the evidence shows, and

it certainly warrants the belief if it does not absolutely demonstrate it, that these men fell out with Ram Chandra because he squandered the German funds."¹⁹ Preston, as we see, believes. He has no conclusive evidence to fall back upon. In the earlier part of the trial proceedings, he says, "We will show you that Ram Chandra has \$ 9,000 out in a house, No. 5 Wood Street, in this city (San Francisco)". But he also says, "Mr. Chakravarty got \$80,000 out of these boys, \$40,000 he still has. Mr. Sarkar has \$3,000 of German money in his jeans which he has never accounted for. In other words, there was a large element of graft in this proposition, as there is in nearly all other propositions of this kind. This story will have its love and sentimental side before it is over."²⁰

Even if we assume that the grouse of his colleagues against Ram Chandra regarding the misappropriation and misuse of the conspiracy funds had some basis, it passes one's comprehension why Ram Chandra was singled out. He was neither the only nor the worst offender in this respect. Some of his colleagues, as is clear, had larger funds at their disposal when they were arrested. But much evidently was made of the unsubstantiated charge against him. For some time past before the arrests and the trial, there seems to have been a concerted drive against Ram Chandra. Chakravarty appointed Harish Chandra "to become an auditor to look over the German accounts of Ram Chandra. And he rendered two decisions, one that he had stolen the money and another that he had not stolen the money."²¹ A very revealing probe indeed: And that again by a man whose own integrity was highly questionable.

Ram Chandra dead could not reply to the insinuations made against him. The hostile faction sought to build up a case against him. The insinuations, under the circumstances, could not be refuted. The end of the trial and the changed situation coupled with the sorry failure of the revolutionary programme, as a whole, divested the entire episode of its excitement and interest. No serious attempt was made to solve the mystery of the court room murder.

FACTIONALISM, FRUSTRATION AND COMMUNALISM

The intrepid Hindu revolutionary from Peshawar had succeeded Har Dayal as the organizer and leader of the Gadar movement in San Francisco. There is hardly any room for doubt that his pro-

paganda technique had failed to produce the desired results. Large sums of money had been spent on it and the Berlin India Committee had disapproved of it. But Ram Chandra continued to be too important to be ignored. He was strong-willed, occasionally imperious and uncompromising, and excited the jealousy of his colleagues. Internal feud and rivalry weakened his position. It may not be a wild conjecture to suggest that towards the end communal considerations weighed with the California group of revolutionaries. As the trial went on stories of energies wasted and money misspent, of schemes going awry and sacrifices ending in futility and frustration, of inefficient organization and inadequate leadership mounted up. Frustration clouds one's vision. It is not unlikely that some of the Indian defendants were enraged because nothing had come out of the conspiracy.

Ram Chandra added to their annoyance by his independent line of thinking, disregard of the necessity of prior consultation and his inexhaustible power to fight on. Take, for instance, the following extracts from a news item in a San Francisco newspaper. "When Ram Chandra addressed a letter to Judge Van Fleet two weeks ago asking for the Court's help in securing important witnesses from other parts of the country and declaring the willingness of the Hindu defendants to die for their cause, several countrymen took him to task for the action." Then again, "Chandra incurred the enmity of Ram Singh, Bhagwan Singh and others by taking the initiative in several matters important to the defense without consulting his attorney or associates."²²

The split within the Gadar ranks was older than the trial. Prior to the split, Ram Singh, the assassin, was a strong supporter of Ram Chandra and in 1915 "toured China, Japan and the Philippines islands in the interest of the revolt conspiracy, Ram Chandra supplying the funds". Prior to that he is said to have made a small fortune in Vancouver in Canada. The split saw him join the faction headed by Bhagwan Singh.²³

GADAR BREAKS INTO TWO

In March 1917, Ram Chandra published an article in the *Gadar* denouncing Bhagwan Singh, Ram Singh and Santokh Singh. The article said in part : "Bhagwan Singh, Santokh Singh and Ram Singh, who in Canada fleeced the poor of thousands of dollars and spent it on pleasure, mingled themselves with the crowd of

undesirables of the same kidney as themselves, and they got permission of an entire machine through our kindness, which they used to write against the Brethern, and, worst of all, at this unpropitious moment, when America was about to declare war on Germany. They left nothing undone to bring criticism and blame on the editor and ourselves. In the end, driven to desperation, we expelled Bhagwan Singh, Santokh Singh, Ram Singh from the Asram, and, as before, so now we are doing our work conscientiously and lovingly."²⁴ Thus the California Gadar organization finally broke into two factions. They split up. "They have two papers going on here now."²⁵

That the differences between the two factions persisted even when they were facing the trial is beyond doubt. Ram Chandra was accused by the members of the opposing faction of using the German money to further his own particular purposes. On several occasions Bhagwan Singh "so-called leader of the reactionary Hindu revolutionary party" reproached him. Disregarding his protests, the Hindu editor continued his work.²⁶

If by the accusation of furthering "his own particular purposes" Ram Chandra's critics meant his expensive but not very fruitful propaganda methods, his pamphleteering and running of the News Service—the fact of his being in the limelight and catching the public eye—then the charges are understandable. Though vague and indefinite they were born out of a spirit of rivalry and jealousy. One is prepared to concede that Ram Chandra with all his patriotism and qualities of leadership was, perhaps unwise in his choice of methods for furthering the cause of revolution. But to insinuate and conclude without adequate evidence that the idealist revolutionary leader had used the funds for his own personal benefit is to do him grave injustice. A revolutionary lives and dies for a cause. Even if his mission fails he wants his reputation for honesty and integrity to go untarnished. The ill-fated Ram Chandra did not live to defend himself against the calumny that was spread against him. It is time that a serious attempt was made to unravel the mystery of his murder.

Earlier, we have quoted a newspaper report which again, had quoted an article written by Ram Chandra in which some members of the Gadar organization were charged with squandering money on pleasure. An independent assessment of one of them by M. N. Roy agrees well with Ram Chandra's description of this colleague of his. Roy had accidentally met Bhagwan Singh when

the latter was on his way back to America after his unsuccessful "mission to go to Burma and incite the Indian troops stationed there to mutiny". Roy met him on board a German gunboat lying midstream on the river between Nanking and Pukow. Roy describes Bhagwan Singh as a disagreeable companion, "who had picked many vulgarities of the American 'He-man' without losing any of the equally objectionable native characteristics". "Roy found the company of his fellow stowaway "rather disgusting" and managed to part company with him at the Kobe harbour."²⁷ But moral scruples apart, Bhagwan Singh was, in the estimate of John Preston, "the brains of the whole enterprise He is a shrewd man. He is a dangerous man though. We have him here with just six false names in this record. At the time he was arrested he was making across the border; he said he was an English Jew going over to see an American girl."²⁸ Whatever that might be, the story gained some currency that Ram Chandra "had left Bhagwan, the poet, without funds even for his own defense when the trial came".²⁹

RAM CHANDRA LIVED IN POVERTY

One may reasonably ask—is the charge of misappropriation of public funds by Ram Chandra for personal benefit really true? Where is the conclusive evidence? The stories circulated by interested groups should be accepted with a good deal of caution. On the other hand, impartial evidence not only gives the much-maligned Ram Chandra the benefit of the doubt but almost exonerates him of the accusation. Here is a news item from a San Francisco newspaper. "Within an hour after Ram Chandra, editor of the *Hindoostan Gadar* had been arrested in San Francisco, together with twelve associates, on a charge of fomenting a revolution in India, wealthy Mohammedan Indians in this city began preparations to provide bail money for their leader as soon as the amount was fixed."³⁰ The American reporter may have mistaken the bearded Sikhs for Moslems. Or, in the absence of the co-operation of the Sikhs, the Moslems may have come to the rescue of the Hindu Ram Chandra in his hour of crisis. What we should take note of is the fact that Ram Chandra failed to secure the bail money himself. Chandra Chakravarty, it may be remembered, had no difficulty in providing the bail money himself. If Ram Chandra was really in funds would he not have furnished the bail money himself? There appears, therefore,

a lot of sense in what another news item said. "Declaring first of all his devotion to the cause of freeing India, Chandra, who was on bail, continued to live in poverty with a young wife and two children in a bare one room apartment in the south San Francisco section while he continued to fight the charges of prosecution."³¹

• We may still remain unconvinced. The District Attorney's reference to a sum of \$9,000 being with Ram Chandra at the time of his arrest has raised many eyebrows. It has also been implied that this money was the principal cause of the murder. I raised the rather delicate point of this money in a letter to Mrs. Ram Chandra. In her reply she said, "The District Attorney's statement re : Ram Chandra's having \$ 9,000 with him at the time of arrest is untrue. The money was in a safe deposit vault in the names of Harish Chandra, Sundar Singh Galli and my husband. Harish Chandra absconded with the money after the trial began."³² Ram Chandra, I was told, envisioned a centre for Indian Studies in San Francisco on the attainment of the objective of the Gadar organization. It is possible that the money in question was reserved for the purpose. I also gathered that the young widow with her children had to live on funds provided by a municipal organization in San Francisco. It is difficult to believe that the money was the principal cause of the murder. Factionalism seems to have been the main cause.

THE TRIAL ENDS

Let us turn back to the trial itself. Here are its outstanding dates :

July 7, 1917—Indictments returned

July 30—Defendants arraigned for trial

November 21—Jury secured

November 22—Trial opens to take testimony

April 17, 1918—Arguments begin

April 23—Arguments close; case goes to the Jury.³³

Of the original 105 defendants, 29 were convicted, 3 had changed their pleas to guilty, 1 was found not guilty, 2 were dead, 1 had been adjudged insane,³⁴ and the remainder either had fled the country or become Government witnesses.³⁵

Finally, on April 30, 1918 Federal Judge Van Fleet pronounced his judgement as indicated below.³⁶

1. Franz Bopp—2 years at Mcneil island and a fine of \$10,000

2. E. H. Von Shack—same as Bopp
3. Robert Capelle—15 months at Mcneil island and a fine of \$7,500
4. Joseph L. Blay—15 months at Mcneil island and a fine of \$5,000
5. Henry W. Kauffmann—\$5,000 or six months in the county jail.
6. Louis Hengstler—\$5,000 fine
7. Charles Lattendorff—One year at the Alameda County jail
8. Walter Sanarbach—12 months in the Alameda County jail and a fine of \$2,000
9. Harry J. Hart—Six months in the Alameda County jail and a fine of \$5,000
10. J. Clyde Hizar—1 year in the Alameda County jail and a fine of \$5,000
11. Lt. William von Brincken— 2 years at Mcneil island, to run concurrently with neutrality sentence of 2 years
12. Bernard Manning—9 months in Alameda County jail and a fine of \$1,000
13. Edward Deinet—10 months in Alameda County jail and a fine of \$1,500
14. Heinrich Eelbo—6 months in Alameda County jail and a fine of \$1,000
15. Moritz Stack von Goitzheim—6 months in Alameda County jail and a fine of \$1,000
16. Bhagwan Singh—18 months at Mcneil island.
17. Dr. C. K. Chakravarty—30 days in Alameda County jail and a fine of \$5,000.³⁷
18. Godha Ram—11 months in Alameda County jail
19. Taraknath Das—22 months at Mcneil island.³⁸
20. Munshi Ram—60 days in San Francisco County jail
21. Imam Din—4 months in the same jail
22. Naranjan Das—6 months in the same jail
23. Bishan Singh Hindi—9 months in Alameda County jail
24. Santokh Singh—21 months at Mcneil island
25. Gopal Sing—One year and one day in Alameda County jail
26. Nidhan Singh—4 months in the same jail
27. Mahadeo Abaji Nandekar—3 months in San Francisco County jail
28. Gobind Behari Lal—10 months in the same jail
29. Dharendra Sarkar—4 months in the same jail

Federal Judge Van Fleet also warned the Indian defendants against carrying on their propaganda any longer through their publications. "The public is in a frame of mind not to further tolerate propaganda against the allies of the United States. Where the Government does not take steps to stop propaganda directed at its allies, the people are liable to take the law into their own hands. There have been instances of this kind. I would advise all of you to discontinue your propaganda when you are again at liberty."³⁹

Thus ended the attempt of the Indian revolutionists to foment a revolution in India from abroad. Despite Van Fleet's warning, however, the agitation in favour of Indian Independence was started afresh by the Indian nationalists and the American sympathisers of the Indian cause some time after the end of the war. The Indian struggle for emancipation under the auspices of the Congress and the leadership of Gandhiji got an increasingly favourable press in the United States. Indian nationalists resident in America changed their technique in accordance with new political thinking in the home country. This is brought out by Lajpat Rai in a letter he wrote to Gandhiji "You will be pleased to learn", it says, "that most of the young Indians in this country have a deep sentiment of reverence for you. One of them at one time a faithful follower of Har Dayal writes: "what we need now are leaders of the type of Mahatma Gandhi. We do not want armed resistance. The crying need of India is leaders of the type of Gandhi, staunch in their principles, which can be applied to almost every part of the world."⁴⁰ An analysis of this new development in the erstwhile Indian revolutionary circles in America is, however, outside the scope of this study.

1. *The New York Times*, April 8, 1917, 1, 20 : 4.

A news item in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, dated April 8, 1917, (p. 32) says, "Ram Chandra has been under surveillance of detectives of the W. A. Mundell Agency for two months. Mundell is in the employ of the British Government." Evidently the British Governmental agencies were making themselves more and more pronounced. This finds corroboration in Robert Morss Lovett's *All Our Years* (p. 157). "Das (Taraknath) told me later how his apartment had been searched without a warrant, by Sir George Denham, head of the British Police at Calcutta, with the complicity of local authorities."

2. *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 8, 1917. The highly displayed news item also says that nine Hindus, Baron Kurt von Reisswitz, former German Consul at Chicago, Gustav H. Jacobsen, real estate dealer ; Albert M. Wehde, art dealer and George Paul Boehm had been indicted by Federal Grand Jury in Chicago prior to the decision to centralize the prosecutions in San Francisco.

3. *Ibid.*, December 5, 1917, p. 1. "I think we can serve our country best by pleading guilty and avoiding further exposures in court proceedings", he said, "Every nation at war is bound to be involved in conspiracies, and the less said about these cases the better it will be for Germany. But if we don't plead guilty tomorrow I believe we never will." Brincken was son-in-law of George A. McGowan, a Defence Counsel.—*San Francisco Examiner*, December 7, 1917, p. 11.

4. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 6.
5. *Ibid.*, December 5, p. 11.
6. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 6, 1917.
7. *Ibid.*, December 7, 1917, p. 12.
8. Giles T. Brown, *op. cit.*
9. *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 22, 1917, p. 3.
10. *Ibid.*, December 6, 1917, p. 1. Bhagwan Singh was an important member of the Gadar organization.
11. *Ibid.*, February 27, 1918, p. 9.
12. *The New York Times*, March 1, 1918, 4; 5.
13. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1918, 1 : 2.
14. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 24, 1918, p. 1.
15. *The New York Times*, April 24, 1918, 1 : 2.
16. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 25, 1918, p. 9.
17. *Ibid.*, May 1, 1918, p. 5.
18. *Ibid.*, April 25, 1918, p. 9.
19. *Trial Records*, p. 6875.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 6879.
22. *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 23, 1918 (5 p. m. edition).
23. Mrs. Ram Chandra told the author that her husband met Bhagwan Singh for the first time in 1911 in Hongkong. Ram Chandra sent for him early in 1915 and because he was an effective speaker Singh was sent on several missions outside the U. S. They were not successful and Singh was recalled to San Francisco. It was after this that disputes over leadership arose and eventually led to a break between the two friends.
24. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 25, 1918, p. 9.
25. *Trial Records*, p. 6875.
26. *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 23, 1918 (5 p. m. edition)
27. M. N. Roy, *op. cit.* pp. 15-17
28. *Trial Records*, p. 6892.
29. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 24, 1918, p. 1.
30. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 8, 1918, p. 32
31. *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 23, 1918 (5 p. m. edition)
32. The letter written from Berkeley, California is dated September 15, 1964.
33. *San Francisco Examiner*, April 24, 1918, p. 1.
34. *San Francisco Examiner*, February 23, 1918, p. 2. An appeal has been made to the President of the United States by the Pacific Hindustan Association, representing the Hindu nationalists of the Pacific Coast, to investigate the case of Jodh Singh, who has been confined to the Alameda County jail for the past three months, while Federal Judge Van Fleet determined whether he would permit him to withdraw his plea of guilty to the Hindu Conspiracy indictment.

Pending the judgment of the Court Jodh Singh has become insane, his fellow-countrymen claim, from being subjected to solitary confinement.

The Hindu was brought to this country from India.

35. Giles T. Brown, *op. cit.*
36. *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1, 1918, p. 1. The judgment was not delivered on April 23 as indicated in Majumdar's *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. 1. p. 420. It came a week later.

37. 30 days according to *San Francisco Examiner* and *San Francisco Call and Post*—two other local newspapers. Another newspaper makes it 60 days. This finds corroboration in the following statement. "Chakravarty, because of the assistance he finally gave the prosecution escaped with a sentence of 60 days." Landau, *op. cit.* p. 33

38. Preston was merciless in his denunciation of Das, particularly because Das who had become an American citizen was so much involved in the conspiracy. "I believe he is the pronounced figure of the war for infamy and treachery. I don't believe the entire war, in this country at least, has shown a greater criminal and a greater enemy and a more dangerous character to our peace and welfare than that man." *Trial Records.* p. 6908.

39. *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1, 1918, p. 5.

40. *Young India.* July, 1919, p. 146.

A detailed analysis of the causes of the failure of the Indo-German conspiracy on the American soil and elsewhere during the First World War may interest a historian having access to relevant record in the U.S.A., Germany and India and also such documents pertaining to the British Secret Service. That, I presume, will be a worth-while study and may also enable one to apportion blame for the failure between the parties. It may also provide an acceptable answer to the question—Did the scheme of fomenting a revolution in India from abroad have any reasonable chance of success, or, was it only a make-believe? The author does not have the competence to undertake the task. For our purpose, therefore it will be enough to say that not all the conspirators were men of proven experience and merit. Neither was the German handling of the situation perfect and unexceptionable. This would apply not only to the international aspect of the Indo-German conspiracy but also to the Gadar movement and other revolutionary groups in the U. S. A. The British Secret Service and through them the American Government, even though neutral during the first phase of the war, kept a watchful eye on the doings of the Gadar members and other Indian revolutionaries in the U. S. The following news item published in *The New York Times* dated March 8, 1917, is revealing : Responsible, officials let it be known today that the Government knew of the existence in the U.S. and in other countries of German intrigues to induce a revolt against British rule in India.¹ This is corroborated by a very important authority in India who had first-hand knowledge of the Indian unrest during the war.²

The expenses incurred by the British to keep track of the Indian revolutionaries in America and by the U. S. Government to run the State trial at San Francisco (as distinct from the other trial at Chicago) for a period of about six months (November 22, 1917 to April 24, 1918), were quite considerable. The cost to the British Government must have been close to \$1,000,000. The real expense was probably twice that amount. Two hundred members

of the British Secret Service' were in San Francisco for more than two years working on Indian cases. The evidence of conspiracy was provided by a group of Indians especially imported under military guard. "U. S. District Attorney, John W. Preston believed that the case will have cost the Government \$450,000 at the very least." The transcript of testimony runs into more than 6,000 pages. A single copy of the transcript costs \$3,600. "Witnesses have been summoned from every corner of the globe at a tremendous outlay."³

The financial aspect apart, the Indo-German Conspiracy Trial proceedings were of importance and significance otherwise also. They revealed the international character of the conspiracy organized by the Gadar group on the American soil. Some have also questioned the fairness and impartiality of the trial. Exception has been taken to the uncalled-for interference by the agents of the British Government at different stages of the trial. An American Professor has even gone to the length of castigating the San Francisco Trial as "one of the most disgraceful episodes in our judicial history". He maintains that the trial was conducted by the U. S. District Attorney under the direction of George Denham, Chief of the C. I. D. of the Government of India, "who actively aided the prosecution throughout the trial".⁴ The professor cites other cases of British interference and assistance relating to the trial. He quotes Taraknath Das as saying that when the American police came to search his apartment without a warrant Denham was with them. Mr. Das is also said to have informed the Professor that, "in his address to the jury the District Attorney leaned heavily on patriotic duty to our Allies".⁵ Dr. C. K. Chakravarty, a leading accused in the trial, objected at the early stage of the trial, to any British agency handling the messages and other evidence for the trial. "If the American Government alone handled this evidence, I have no objection to its becoming a part of the record," he stated.⁶ The British interest in the trial and the concomitant implications were not refuted by Preston when he conceded to Mr. Roche, a defence lawyer cross-examining Otto O. Orr, (who was in the employ of William A. Mundell International Detective Agency), "...if you want an admission that Mundell is employed by the British Government I am perfectly willing to say that it is my understanding that it is true."⁷ McGowan, a defence lawyer declared that the whole case "is being tried at the initiation of the British Government. The United States Government has never

found anything seditious in the writings of these defendants.”⁸ Some time after the trial, an official representative of American Justice, a woman district attorney (who was associated with the San Francisco Trial) was feted by the British Empire Society in New York.⁹

An appreciation of the part played by the British Secret Service agents is necessary to understand the comparative ease with which many of the conspirators were put under arrest on the American soil quite some time before the entry of the United States into the war. They kept a vigilance on the activities of the revolutionaries and patriots working in that country and supplied the relevant information to appropriate quarters in the United States. Such vigilance was also maintained on the Indian suspects in other countries friendly to Britain. The Conspiracy trials that were held in India and Burma and the information that could be gathered from the witnesses in these trials, or, from some of those arrested under suspicion, also gave the British valuable information. The Anglo-American accord worked satisfactorily in this respect. The news of the arrest of Indians, Germans and Americans on the American soil made headlines in the American Press. It was full of stories of conspiracies that had been hatched on the U. S. soil. Reports of the Lahore Conspiracy trials in India and of the Burma Conspiracy trial which had some bearing on the plots in America also received publicity. *The New York Times* devoted editorials to the Indo-German plot. The San Francisco newspapers published pictures of the accused and also of the court scenes. “The trial was one of the most picturesque ever conducted in an American court. The turbaned Hindus lent an oriental atmosphere. Among the evidence were publications in six Indian dialects, also coded messages, all of which called for constant translation by interpreters and cryptographers. Witness after witness recited his amazing story of adventure. The action shifted quickly between the three focal points, Berlin, the United States and India, with intermediate scenes laid in Japan, China, Afghanistan and the South Seas.”¹⁰

In his opening address the U. S. District Attorney, John W. Preston fathered on the Indo-German conspirators a very ambitious project in which, “the object and purpose of this conspiracy reached the entire world, (and) was to engage the assistance of every Hindu and every sympathizer in every neutral country practically in the world.” “We will show you,” he said, “that

they had for their further object seducing from their loyalty to the British Government the troops¹¹ that were in operation on the British fronts and on the French fronts.¹²

1. *The New York Times*, March 8, 1917 : 1 : 4. The news item was dated Washington, March 7.
2. Dewitt Mackenzie, *India Through the Eyes of an American Journalist*, p. 121 : "The schemes all miscarried hopelessly ; remittances had a way of getting intercepted by the wrong people ; ships on secret German errands kept knocking up against the Allied warships and most of the plots were promptly reported to us by our own agents." These were the words of Sir Charles Cleveland, Director of Criminal Intelligence for India to Mackenzie in October, 1916.
3. *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 22, 1918, p. 9.
- Robert Morss Lovett, 'The United States and India : A Footnote to Recent History', *New Republic*, April 1, 1931.
4. Robert Morss Lovett, *All Our Years*, an autobiography, pp.157-60- "Apart from personal reasons, however, I have been more deeply irritated by the treatment of the Indians in the United States by British Agents, acting through our authorities, than by any other instance of foreign interference in our affairs. I have spoken of this interference to Englishmen whom I have met in this country, to H. G. Wells, to H. L. Brailsford and Lord Robert Cecil and S. K. Ratchiffe. From all I received in effect the same answer—nothing doing."
- M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, p. 64. "The Chief of the British-Indian C. I. D Denham, had come to San Francisco to conduct the 'Hindu-German Conspiracy' case."
5. *New Republic*, *op. cit.*
6. *The New York Times*, December 19, 1917, 4 : 3.
7. *Trial Records*, pp. 1725-27. Roche's question to Orr was : "Don't you know that at that time (1916) the work which you were doing for Mr. Mundell was being paid for by A. Carnegie Ross, the local British Consul?"
8. *The New York Times*, March 1, 1918.
9. Robert Morss Lovett, *op. cit.*, p. 157. Lovett refers to the following interesting case as well. Proceedings were drawn up against some Indians in New York in 1918. A British Secret Service man named Nathan was allowed a quasi-judicial status in questioning Americans who sympathized with these alien refugees. P. N. Sinha was brought before the officers of the Military Intelligence Department, charged with trading with the enemy because he had warned his countrymen in Mexico of their danger of arrest. When Nathan's presence at Sinha's trial was challenged the American head of the local bureau admitted that he had brought him in as "an expert on Indian names". *New Republic*, *op. cit.*
10. Capt. Henry Landau, *The Enemy Within : The Inside Story of German Sabotage in America*. (1937), pp. 28-33.
11. Indian troops, as was made clear in an answer to a question from the Court.
12. *Trial Records*, p. 17.

HAR DAYAL AND RAM CHANDRA

An Assessment of two Gadar Leaders

The most outstanding of the early founders of the Gadar organization was Har Dayal. When circumstances forced him to leave the American soil a few months before the start of the world war the Indian nationalists in California had been brought together under an extremist programme with an organ to advocate it. When the World War broke out, Ram Chandra had charge of the Gadar propaganda machinery and was, in effect, the leader of the organization. He was a handsome young man with large penetrating eyes. His face had the stamp of a dignified personality and resolution.¹ An ardent patriot with a commendable record of political work back at home Ram Chandra was conscious of his abilities. That intellectually he was far above most of his compatriots of the Gadar party is beyond question. Uncompromising and subjective in his attitude at times, he appears to have been eager for publicity and had a taste for power and authority. That was a perfectly normal instinct all the more because of his qualities. Ram Chandra as has been described, died a controversial figure, shot fatally in the court room by a Sikh co-accused during the San Francisco Trial, and was denied the opportunity of defending himself against the insinuations that have been whispered since then.

It was not difficult for Ram Chandra to make himself an effective figure and a power amongst the Indian revolutionaries in the United States. By the time he was assassinated "Ram Chandra was perhaps the most widely known Hindu in America after the departure of his associate, Har Dayal. . . ."² He gained this eminence through the handling of the party newspaper the *Hindustan Gadar*, the organization of an Indian News Service, the publication of several pamphlets furthering the Indian Cause, and by contributing letters to the American newspaper press on different aspects of British rule in India. We reproduce below a few extracts from a letter that was published in *The New York Times* with a double column headline on the editorial page. These extracts and his other publications reveal the working of the Indian agitator's mind. The title of the letter in question is—What

Young India Has in Mind.³ The letter was a rejoinder to Lord Hardinge's statement on the political situation in India given to the London correspondent of *The New York Times*. Ram Chandra writes, "I repudiate in the most emphatic terms that the 'Young India Party' whose organ, Hardinge says our paper is, can in any sense be called 'anarchistic',⁴ We are not anarchistic but republicans. . . . Our plan is constructive, first and last. We aim at nothing less than the establishment in India of a republic, a Government of the people, by the people, for the people in India."

"In support of my contention that the Gadar Party is not anarchical, I submit a quotation from the opening speech of Bevan Petman, the Crown Prosecutor at the trial of some men of the Young India (Gadar) party before the Lahore Special Tribunal, (April 26, 1915):

"The aim and object of this formidable conspiracy was to wage war on his Majesty, the King Emperor, to overthrow by force the Government as by law established in India, to expel the British and to establish 'Swadeshi' or independent national Government in the country.' "

In several such letters to the American Press and through his pamphlets in English, Ram Chandra sought to draw American attention to the Indian problem. He also wrote against the U.S. Government's Immigration policy towards the Indians. The propaganda in English was primarily aimed at capturing American public opinion.⁵ Through the medium of the weekly *Hindustan Gadar*, Ram Chandra kept up the anti-British tirade.⁶ Till the rift in the ranks of the party the *Hindustan Gadar* was the official organ of the organization. Early in 1917 Bhagwan Singh started his own paper in collaboration with a few other Sikh Gadar workers.⁷ Even after the advent of this rival the paper edited by the Hindu patriot from Peshawar continued to be the more important and popular one. During the early stage of the war Ram Chandra had practically the sole charge of issuing the propaganda materials to be distributed in India and elsewhere amongst resident Indians or Indian soldiers and prisoners of war.⁸ As the leader and most powerful man in the Gadar organization he was in close touch with the German Consul General in San Francisco. Like several others in the conspiratorial group he also was a recipient of German money. He had a large hand in recruiting Sikhs and others for despatch to India for purposes of insurrectionary activity

at home. At a later stage, his propaganda activities were frowned upon by certain quarters since they were not producing the desired results. The action committee in the United States was reconstituted more than once at the instance of the Berlin India Committee, whereby Ram Chandra's position was a little weakened, but he could not be sidetracked. Ram Chandra continued to be a power to reckon with in the internal set-up of the Indo-German conspiracy till his death.

The importance of Ram Chandra in the history of the Indo-German conspiracy movement, specially in its early phase, is also brought out from the following reference to Douwes Dekker, Dutch revolutionist, in an issue of the San Francisco Chronicle. In 1915 Dekker was a paid agent of the Berlin India Committee, receiving 500 pounds a month and had undertaken to spread doctored German war news and propaganda throughout India. He passed through San Francisco some time before December, 1915 on his way to India, and is said to have numerous conferences both in San Francisco and Oakland with Ram Chandra and others. It may be mentioned here that Dekker became a Government witness at the San Francisco Trial.

To come back to Har Dayal. A fervent patriot and idealist, Har Dayal had already had the experience of propaganda work in India, England and France before he came to America. He could not be in the United States for long. But before he fled the country in March 1914, he had lent dignity to the Gadar organization. It is doubtful if with all the money and the enthusiasm any other of the Pacific Coast Indians could have attained so much of success as Har Dayal had done. It is interesting to recall, however, that during his brief stay in India before he came over to the United States Har Dayal advocated passive resistance as a means to the attainment of India's freedom. As an organizer of the Gadar movement in America he prescribed violence. This would, very easily, leave one guessing. Was his interest in passive resistance just a passing phase? Was it a camouflage to bluff the Indian Government since by refusing to utilize the State scholarship, he had made himself a marked man? Did he really believe in violence right from the very beginning of his political career? These and similar other questions with respect to his eventful career pose themselves. It is also interesting to note that years later, in 1939, Har Dayal died a pacifist while engaged in a lecture tour in the United States. Besides, one is tempted to ask,

in the context of the Indo-German conspiracy, what was his specific role in that movement, and, how far was his leadership constructive and effective? We shall try to meet these questions even on the basis of the meagre materials in hand.

It has been mentioned already that Har Dayal, even though he had been appointed to a three-member delegation to represent before the U. S. Government and legislature in Washington on the issue of the Asiatic Exclusion Bill, took no part in it. The Khalsa Diwan Society of Stockton (California) undertook to meet the expenses in this connection. Anyway, Har Dayal does not appear to have been with the delegation in Washington.

It is difficult to say when exactly Har Dayal came to Berlin from Switzerland whither he had gone from the United States. Mrs. Sarangadhar Das, a Swiss lady called for the United States, in her testimony before the court said that when she sailed for America on August 28, 1914, she carried a few letters at the insistence of Har Dayal (one to Ram Chandra and another to Munshi Ram) written in Hindi or Urdu which she could not read. But she destroyed them and informed Har Dayal about their fate.¹⁰ In a letter, dated Geneva, January 8, 1915 to Mrs. Das who was then in the United States, Har Dayal writes, "I am all right and busy now. Work for India is also being done successfully in many directions. Good results are expected to follow. Let us wait. There are too many hindering circumstances though."¹¹ Mrs. Das knew Har Dayal at Stanford University in 1912.¹²

In a letter to this lady, dated, Berlin, February 19, 1915, Taraknath Das says, "...X is here about a month". Mrs. Das said that X referred to Har Dayal.¹³ It appears, therefore, that Har Dayal was not one of the 'on the spot' Berlin conspirators till January, 1915. The letters which Mrs. Das carried may have contained only his own personal views rather than the agreed opinions of the Berlin Committee. That everything was not going on well and that Har Dayal may not have wielded consequential influence tend to be borne out by some evidence that came up during the Conspiracy trial. This may be discussed later. In another letter, dated February 10, 1915 to this Swiss lady again Taraknath Das says, "From a long talk with Har Dayal, among other things I understand that some time before you left Switzerland he gave you several letters to be delivered to his friends. For some reason unknown to Har Dayal you did not deliver them to the proper parties. In the meantime some of Har Dayal's friends of San

Francisco writes to him that his letters were given to Ire or to me. It has been also reported and the general impression here is that you a simple and innocent lady in confidence gave me those letters to be delivered to the parties and I in mere spite against Har Dayal or owing to some party feeling destroyed them. Others hold the view that as a young and frivolous girl, you were influenced by me and were induced to destroy Har Dayal's letters to create disadvantages for him etc. In the meantime Har Dayal has got a letter from you that you yourself destroyed the letters but did not mention any reasons in it. . . . I must say that I have been unjustly put in a position of a mean contemptible conspirator . . ."¹⁴ In the other letter of February, 19, to which a reference has already been made, Taraknath Das says, "Here there was a great row when Ramsay¹⁵ of San Francisco sent news that I had destroyed the letters which Har Dayal gave you or you acted as my cat's paw."

Nothing has been known about the contents of the letters. It may not be unreasonable to conclude, however, from the little information that may be gleaned from the other letters that Har Dayal was not in a position to direct the Indian conspirators in America from Europe, and that internal squabbles and differences were coming up.¹⁶ It may be pointed out here that Chattopadhyay and Pillai were the two most intrepid members of the Indian group in Berlin, and Chattopadhyay was the President of the Independence Committee.

Besides, it appears that Har Dayal's suggestions were not always acted upon by the Indian revolutionists in the United States. Jodh Singh who figured in the Chicago trial (not to be mixed up with the more important San Francisco Trial), was instructed by Har Dayal in Berlin to "stay in San Francisco and help around in the revolutionary movement. . . ."¹⁷ He was also told that the German Government was willing to give financial help and do everything for the starting of a revolution in India. "I finally sailed for New York using a false passport where I met H. L. Gupta. He told me that I should go with the Siam expedition and not remain in San Francisco. I objected, he insisted." Singh then went to Chicago where he met George Boehm and Sterneck. They were to go with the expedition.¹⁸ It is clear that H. L. Gupta who happened to be the leader of the Indian revolutionary group in the United States when Jodh Singh saw him acted contrary to the wishes of Har Dayal.

The differences with Har Dayal are also expressed by Dr. C. K. Chakravarty who was put in charge of the Indian conspiracy in America in its concluding phase. Answering a question put by the court, Chakravarty said, "I might say this that the last two years I knew Har Dayal, he was advocating a degree of violence in which I emphatically disagreed with him, and I had many bitter discussions with him, and I told him finally we were so far apart on this question that there was absolutely no object of our having any further discussions in regard to it."¹⁹ If Chakravarty really meant what he said, the only sensible interpretation is that Har Dayal's counsel was not always respected. It is also significant that Ernest J. Euphrat, a New York oilman said that he had met Von Wisendonk (who was secretary in charge of the Indian section of the German Foreign Office) and V. Chattopadhyay at Berlin. He does not mention any other Indian. Euphrat agreed to carry two verbal messages to the United States. One was for Dr. Ernest Sekunna, who was subsequently arrested along with Dr. Chakravarty, asking him to notify the Berlin Committee whether Chakravarty was dead or alive. The other message was to notify Ram Chandra "to stop his propaganda as it was expensive and of no use to the Committee". Euphrat was instructed to communicate to Chandra through the German Consulate in New York.²⁰

It is reasonable to infer that Har Dayal did not come to Berlin before January 1915. From the foregoing analysis, it seems that his was not the deciding voice with respect to the programme of revolution in general, or the movements of the individual revolutionists. But in October 1915, Har Dayal had written two letters to Alexander Berkman who, along with Emma Goldman was subsequently sentenced to imprisonment for "their conspiracy to interfere with the draft". Har Dayal who wrote under the assumed name of 'Israel Aaronson' urged Berkman to send "some earnest and sincere comrades" to help the Indian Revolutionary Party. Berkman was asked by the Indian revolutionist to communicate with him by code telegrams in care of Madame Kercher, whose address was given as 116 Oude Scheveningerweg, Scheveningen, Holland. In the second letter Berkman was asked to send "real fighters, I. W. W's"²¹ and anarchists". He was assured that 'our Indian party' would make all necessary arrangements.²²

It is difficult to make a correct appraisal of Har Dayal's moves as indicated by the letters. He does not refer to Berlin but talks of a new conspiracy centre in Amsterdam. He does not approach

Alexander Berkman through the German Consulate but writes directly to him. His suggestions regarding the nature of the revolutionary work are vague. In the second letter he says, "Can you send me some earnest and sincere comrades, men and women, who would like to help our Indian revolutionary movement in some way or the other? I need the co-operation of very earnest comrades. Perhaps you can find them at New York or Paterson. They should be real fighters, I.W.W's or anarchists." What sort of people did he really want and for what purpose? How did he secure the finances? Did the plan of action he had in mind, have the approval of any revolutionary committee, or, was he proceeding on his own? Was he acting on behalf of a group, or, in his individual capacity? These are some of the questions that have no ready answers. They shroud Har Dayal with an element of mystery and do not help us to arrive at a correct assessment of his role in the revolutionary movement now that he was in Europe. The assessment made by Bhupendra Nath Datta who had worked with him and from whose book (in Bengali)—*Aprakasha Rajnaitik Itihas* (2 vols.)—R. C. Majumdar draws some materials—is unequivocal. Datta does not ascribe any important role to Har Dayal. "On the other hand, Datta has made many deprecatory remarks against him. He is charged with attempts to create dissensions within the Berlin Committee in order that he himself might prove as the only representative of Indian revolution before the German Government. He was expelled from the Committee for his intrigues, but received constant help from the German Government for carrying on his individual activities from Holland, Vienna and Sweden during 1915-18. Yet, in his book, *Four Years in Germany*, Har Dayal wrote that the German Government virtually kept him a prisoner, and did not allow him to freely move out of Germany. After mentioning all this Bhupendra Nath Datta categorically asserts that Har Dayal's book is a tissue of lies."²³

Har Dayal made a public recantation of his political views in the pages of *The New Statesman* of England.²⁴ The articles were reproduced at considerable length by *The New York Times*.²⁵ In a biographical note the Editor of *The New Statesman* says, "In December, 1914, the German Government invited him to come to Berlin, where for 12 months he devoted himself to the development of plans for a rebellion in India". This fits in with our suggestion, confirmed by the trial records that he came to Berlin from Switzerland some time in January, next year and had no direct share in

the formulation of the revolutionary programme in Germany in the early months. In October we see him corresponding, most probably in his personal capacity, with Alexander Berkman. "His experience, however, of German methods," the Editor continues, "especially in Turkey and Asia Minor, changed his views." We are then told that Har Dayal did not conceal the change and wanted to leave Germany. This was not allowed, "and for two and a half years he was practically interned". This, of course, is a repetition of Har Dayal's own version. In October, 1918, he was permitted to go to Stockholm.

According to *The New York Times*, Har Dayal proceeded to Constantinople from Berlin as the representative of the Berlin India Committee "to stir up discontent, mutiny and trouble generally among the British Indian troops then operating in Palestine and other parts of the Near East". In the two articles the noted revolutionist explained why his attitude changed from that of one of Great Britain's bitterest enemies to a supporter of British control in India and other eastern countries under the British charge. A profound change indeed. Har Dayal was writing off his entire political past.

Har Dayal said that the breaking up of the British Empire in Asia would lead "only to change of masters for the peoples of India and Egypt". Coming to the question of the German ambitions Har Dayal said, "A German Empire in Asia was wellnigh 'within the range of practical politics. . . . The cry 'Berlin—Baghdad' was ominous in our ears. . . ." Har Dayal then chooses between the evils. "Imperialism is always an evil", he says, "but British and French imperialism in its worst forms is a thousand times preferable to German or Japanese imperialism." Looking into the future, Har Dayal says, ". . . it is the part of wisdom for us not to tempt fate but to stay under the protection of the British fleet and army in our quiet, sunny home of Hindustan, and to make the best of our position in the Empire" He visualizes an empire with India as a part of it which "is rich enough for all, and we need not exploit one another. . . . Thus, the British Empire of to-day will be converted into the British-Oriental-African Commonwealth of the future. And that is our goal indeed." Har Dayal waxes eloquent over the quality and the blessings of English literature. "No Oriental nation would be loser if it forgot its own tongue and learned English instead." To him a primer of English history "is worth more than all the histories of Asia".²⁶

Such views expressed by a stormy petrel like Har Dayal surprised many. They were nothing short of a repudiation by himself of his own political past. Moreover, it was not a slow and painful change of faith and philosophy, but a hurried and easy one. The biographer of Shyamaji Krishnavarma tells us that the latter must have been deeply wounded in his heart when a friend in Berlin sent him the "astounding 'Confession of Faith'—sarcastically called 'the Confession of a Thug'." The author categorically observes that "Har Dayal purchased the safety of his earthly existence at the base price of this shameful avowal and insured his immunity from the dire fate which befell some of the noblest of his erstwhile revolutionary disciples."²⁷ The judgement is undoubtedly harsh. But these controversial views of Har Dayal undoubtedly represent a very big and unexpected change of front on the part of the founder of the Gadar Organization on the Pacific Coast of America. They seem, however, to be in keeping with his shifting interest in political ideas and revolutionary programmes, and, tend to confirm our belief that his role in Europe vis-a-vis the Indo-German Conspiracy has been exaggerated.²⁸

1. His pictures were published in the San Francisco newspapers, Besides, I saw a few of his photographs preserved by the members of his family in the United States.

2. *The New York Times*, April 24, 1918 1: 2.

3. *Ibid.*, July 8, 1916, 8 : 7.

4. Hardinge had said, "The Gadar Party, so called because of the paper of that name, which is printed abroad and introduced secretly, is frankly anarchistic".

5. Mark Naidis, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-259.

6. "The theme of all these issues (of the Gadar) is the same, namely 'to go to India and stir up Ghadr to defeat the English and take the Government of the country from them,' Seditious Committee Report, p. 168.

7. Spellman, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

8. Preston in the course of his closing address said, "We have Von Brincken (who was military attache of the German Consulate in San Francisco) out in the night time taking literature out of this place for the purpose of taking it over to be scattered by aeroplanes behind the lines in order to produce mutiny among the Indian soldiers on the battlefield." *Trial Records*, p. 6876.

That a considerable number of copies (of *Gadar*) were reaching Burma might fairly be inferred from the fact that as soon as censorship was introduced for postal communications, large quantities were seized. As many as 104 covers containing copies of the *Gadar*, published on the 24th January 1915, were intercepted. —*Seditious Committee Report*, p. 169.

It may be reasonably concluded that the *Gadar* reached many of the countries with a sizable Indian population.

9. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 5, 1916, p. 11. Also *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1917, p. 12.

10. *Trial Records*, pp. 1322-1324.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 1339.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 1317.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 1345.
14. *Trial Records*, pp. 1343-44.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 1345. The Court : Q. Who is Ramsay ? A. Ram Chandra.
16. This is corroborated by the contents of the copy of a letter which the writer chanced to find in a box containing *Gadar* pamphlets etc. which was very kindly lent by Dr. Jacoby of Asia Studies Centre, Berkeley, California. In the letter in question, Taraknath Das writes to Surendra Karr from Washington D. C. on May 29, 1920, "... it is absolutely necessary to correct the wrong impression you have in your mind 'that all the leaders of the *Gadar Party*', were against me. I had the closest friendly relation and co-operation with mostly all of the principal workers of the party except Har Dayal, Ram Chandra and Kashi Ram."
17. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
18. *San Francisco Examiner*, December 9, 1917, New Section 2, p. 1.
19. *Trial Records*, p. 1059.
20. *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 10, 1918, p. 9.
21. International Workers of the World, a left wing organization in the U. S. A.
22. *The New York Times*, February 25, 1918, 1 : 2, and *Trial Records*, pp. 1336-39. Both the letters (contained in envelopes) were addressed to Alexander Berkman, care of Mother Earth Office, West 125th Street, near Sixth Avenue, New York. The first was postmarked Amsterdam, Oct. 24, 1915 and dated October 20, 1915. The second was postmarked October 26, 1915.
- In the first letter Har Dayal says, "This is a great opportunity for our party. . . Several of our comrades have come from India with encouraging news and messages. . .
- "Kindly also send me names and addresses of the prominent anarchist comrades in Spain, Denmark, France, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Austria and other European countries."
- In the second letter Har Dayal says, "If some comrades wish to come, they should come to Holland. We have a centre in Amsterdam, and Dutch comrades are working with us." Then further down, "all financial arrangements will be made by our party. News from India is good."
- It is inexplicable why Har Dayal says that news from India is good, specially after the collapse of the 1915 February insurrection. Michael O'Dwyer's assessment has a different note. "By August 1915, that is within nine months of the first outbreak, we had crushed the Ghadr rebellion. Nearly all the leaders and many of their most active adherents were in our hands awaiting trial or were brought to justice later, internal order was restored, and, above all, the Sikh Community had again proved its staunch loyalty."—O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
23. *Majumdar, op. cit.*, p. 410. To the author Mrs. Ram Chandra said, "I am inclined to agree that his (Har Dayal's) role in the Indo-German plots was exaggerated, but I have no information. He did not take an active interest in the S.F. *Gadar Party* after leaving the U. S."
24. Har Dayal, *The Future of the British Empire in Asia*, *The New Statesman*, March 22, and 29, 1919.
25. *The New York Times*, June 8, 1919, Sec. 2, 3 : 1.
26. These views of Har Dayal were not liked by many. In a letter to *The New Statesman* of April 5, 1919, an Indian says, "It is not, sir, by suppressing the spiritual heritage of a people that you can make it a worthy member of the British Commonwealth of Nations."
- "As to the charge of cowardice which Mr. Har Dayal levels against us, it does us no harm and him no honour."
27. Yajnik, *op. cit.*, p. 318.
28. The following excerpts from *Young India*, the monthly organ of the India Home Rule League of America may be quoted in proof of the inconstancy of Har Dayal's views: "There is a swing of the pendulum in the opinions of Lala Har Dayal. It reminds us of the remarks made by Mr. Lajpat Rai about him in his book *Young India*. Writing of his reported views on anarchism and the use of violence for political ends, Mr. Rai said, 'Nobody however knows what changes are yet to take place in his (Har Dayal's) views. He is a quite uncertain item. He is an idealist of a strange type.' . . ."

"The expected has happened. From one pledged to the destruction of the British Empire by all means, fair or foul, Har Dayal changed into not only an admirer, but even an enthusiastic upholder of the same."

"He brands the Indians as incapable of military leadership....He desires the introduction and encouragement of Greek, in Indian schools and colleges. While Oxford and Cambridge in England and Harvard and Princeton in America are discarding Greek, Mr. Har Dayal advocates instruction in Greek in Indian schools and colleges."—*Young India*, May 1919, p. 104.

APPENDIX II

RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND THE SAN FRANCISCO TRIAL

The *Modern Review* for June, 1918 had a fairly long note¹ on the German-Indian Conspiracy Trial held in San Francisco from November, 1917 to April, 1918.² Resenting the intriguers' efforts—“to connect Sir Rabindranath Tagore's name with the conspiracy” and the insinuation made by the *Madras Mail*, the *Modern Review* characterized the German lies and the *Madras Mail*'s insinuation as “too contemptible and ridiculous to deserve any serious refutation”. The *Madras Mail* suggested that Tagore should offer an explanation to enable the Government to say whether they are satisfied with it. The alleged complicity of the poet was sought to be established by certain documents which were produced in the course of the trial.

One of the documents was a telegram from Herambalal Gupta of New York to Ram Chandra of San Francisco (both prominent Indian accused in the Conspiracy Trial), dated October 13, 1916. The telegram said, “Received reports about Tagore. Read your fine articles. Send all his speeches specially on national questions. Have not found them here. Consider very important.” In reply to a defence counsel's question, “Tagore is not one of the defendants?” the prosecution attorney Mr. Preston said, “No, he is not. We overlooked him in our haste.”³ The other document is a letter addressed to one Olifiers of Amsterdam. The letter is postmarked Washington, dated November 21, 1916 and the decipherment is as follows : “Rabindranath Tagore has come at our suggestion and saw Count Okuma, Baron Shrimpei Goto, Masaburo Suzuki, Marquis Yamanouchi, Count Terauchi and others; Terauchi is favourable, and others are sympathetic.”⁴

While reporting the proceedings of the San Francisco Trial the *New York Times* published prominently the news of Tagore's alleged complicity.⁵ The news item was published under the heading—Link Tagore's Name With German Plots. The report said, “secret papers introduced by the Government purported to show that Sir Rabindranath Tagore... had enlisted the interest of Counts Okuma and Terauchi, former Japanese Premier and present Premier respectively, in the movement to establish an independent

Government in IndiaThe name of Wu Ting-Fang, former Chinese minister to the United States, also was mentioned in the document as one of the persons with whom Tagore had obtained a friendly interview."

Tagore, it has been pointed out, was not a defendant. The authorship of the letter dragging the poet's name could not be established by the court. Dr. R. C. Majumdar who raises the question of the poet's alleged association with the Indian revolutionaries in the United States has no conclusive evidence to offer. Dr. Chandra K. Chakravarty, another prominent accused in the San Francisco Trial told him that, "the statement was true, but could not furnish any corroborative evidence". Dr. Majumdar's suggestion that it is, "worth consideration that Rabindranath never formally contradicted such a serious allegation published in *The New York Times*"⁶ is, however, misleading. Neither is it warranted.

For, the poet did formally and emphatically contradict what he considered a 'lying calumny'. When the newspaper report in which he had figured reached him some months later, he immediately wired to President Wilson : Newspapers received concerning Conspiracy trial San Francisco wherein prosecution counsel implicated me. I claim from you and your country protection against such lying calumny.—The wire was sent from Santiniketan. The cable was received in Washington on May 13, 1918.⁷ It was followed by a strongly worded letter to the American President, dated May 9, 1918, in which the poet said, "Though I feel certain that my friends in America and my readers there who have studied my writings at all carefully can never believe such an audacious piece of fabrication, yet the indignity of my name being dragged into the mire of such calumny has given me great pain. It is needless to tell you that I do not believe in patriotism which can ride roughshod over higher ideals of humanity, and I consider it to be an act of impiety against one's own country when any service is offered to her which is loaded with secret lies and dishonest deeds of violence. I have been outspoken enough in my utterances when my country needed them, and I have taken upon myself the risk of telling unwelcome truths to my own countrymen, as well as, to the rulers of my country. But I despise those tortuous methods adopted whether by some Government or other groups of individuals, in which the devil is taken into partnership in the name of duty. I have received great kindness from the hands of

your countrymen, and I entertain great admiration for yourself who are not afraid of incurring the charge of anachronism for introducing idealism in the domain of politics, and therefore I owe it to myself and to you and your people to make this avowal of my faith and to assure your countrymen that their hospitality was not bestowed upon one who was ready to accept it while wallowing in the sub-soil sewerage of treason.”⁸

The letter was received on July 31, 1918. This was followed by an exchange of notes between the Department of Justice and the Department of State. On August 3 of the same year Leland Harrison of the Department of State wrote to Charles Storey of the Department of Justice asking for his “opinion as to how the letter (Tagore’s letter to Wilson) should be answered”. Storey’s reply of August 9 ran as follows :

My dear Mr. Harrison,

I am in receipt of your letter of August 3, 1918 enclosing copy of a letter from Rabindranath Tagore to the President. This suggestion may possibly appeal to you.

If you approve, we will write to Preston in San Francisco asking him to submit copies of the transcript of record in every instance where Tagore’s name is mentioned and if it appears that the newspaper articles which Tagore saw are not borne out by the record we might be able to convince Tagore that the Government was not responsible for the calumny to which he was subjected.

When Preston was on here he told me that Tagore was not in any way implicated in the plot and I think that probably the record in the case will bear out this statement.

Very truly yours,
Charles M. Storey.

Harrison agreed with the suggestion in his reply on August 14. A sequel to this correspondence was the following letter of September 5, 1918, from La Rue Brown, Assistant Attorney General (who signed for the Attorney General) to the Secretary of State, Washington, D. C. (Attention of Mr. Leland Harrison) :

Sir,

Referring to previous correspondence relating to certain references to Sir Rabindranath Tagore during the course of the so-called Hindu trial, I enclose to you herewith photographic copies

of portions of the transcript of that trial in which Tagore's name appears.

Mr. Preston, who tried the case, states in the accompanying letter that his remarks appearing in the colloquy with Mr. Healy, one of the counsels for the defendants, which appears in connection with the introduction of exhibit no. 140, was intended to be facetious and should not have been recorded by the reporter. He adds that it did not become the subject of a press comment. The Department is further advised by Mr. Preston that no evidence implicating Sir Rabindranath Tagore in the Hindu Conspiracy has at any time come to his attention.

By an irony of fate, however, Tagore's cable and letter remained unanswered. There is no iota of doubt that the poet had been cleared of the vile charge. But the exoneration unfortunately, was confined to the files, and neither the aggrieved party nor the public were informed of these findings. This lapse on the part of the U. S. Department of State can be best explained in the words of Stephen Hay. "Brown went on to reprove Harrison for communicating with Storey instead of with the Attorney General, thus creating 'the danger of difficulty arising from papers going astray in the File Room'. (State Department Index No. 862. 20211/1448.) Brown was apparently so perturbed at Harrison's failure to follow prescribed channels that he forgot to enclose the transcript. Harrison, perhaps piqued at Brown's rebuke, decided to give Brown a taste of his own medicine, and wrote the Department of State's Diplomatic Bureau asking them to remind Brown to send the papers. This was done on September 19 by William Phillips, the Assistant Secretary of State, in a letter to the Attorney General. Brown, again somewhat absent-mindedly, addressed his reply to the Secretary of State, omitting to add... 'Attention of Mr. Leland Harrison'. "The correspondence between the Justice and State Departments ended here apparently because the Secretary of State's office did not know for whom the transcript of the trial was intended. Brown's covering letter does not seem to have reached Harrison, and after one official had pencilled 'So' on it and two others had added check marks, it was marked 'File' and on October 29 was so disposed of. In any case, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire had asked for an armistice on October 4, 1918, and from that time onward the highest officers of the State Department had turned their full attention to the all important problem of ending the war in Europe."

Readers may be interested to know that the baseless allegation against Tagore had its repercussions even before it was made public in the course of the San Francisco Trial. In 1917 Tagore expressed his desire to dedicate his new book 'Nationalism' to President Wilson. George P. Brett, President of the Macmillan Company, in a letter to the American President, dated March 9, wrote, "We have a cable from Sir Rabindranath Tagore requesting permission to dedicate his forthcoming work entitled 'Nationalism' to His Excellency, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States.

"We are sending you a set of proof sheets of this work and we should be much grateful if you would kindly give your permission to have this done."

The President referred the matter to Colonel House who in his letter of April 6, 1917 to Wilson said, "Wiseman has investigated the Tagore matter and advises that you decline to have his book dedicated to you. His reason is that when Tagore was here he got tangled up in some way with the Indian plotters and Wiseman thinks that it may embarrass you if these things should come out publicly about the time the book is issued."¹⁰ Sir William Wiseman was Britain's special liaison agent in the United States.

The *Modern Review* tried to controvert the vile insinuation against the poet as early as June, 1918. It quoted from some papers of the west coast of the United States to prove that he was no *persona grata* with the Indian conspirators in that country. The author may be permitted to add another newspaper report which will be in harmony with the views of this esteemed journal.

" 'Sir Rabindranath Tagore is not and has not been since his arrival here in any danger of assassination by Hindus of the Gadar Party.' This statement was made today by Ram Chandra, editor of the *Hindustan Gadar* and head of the party, in reply to the charge made to the local police yesterday that there existed a plot here to murder the Bengali poet and a Nobel Prize winner.

"Whether the poet's fears are real or imaginary, they served to drive the venerable man from San Francisco to Santa Barbara last night, after he had cancelled one of his lecture engagements here."¹¹

Even after the excitement over the Hindu Conspiracy Trial had abated, Tagore, because of the bureaucratic inefficiency in the matter of issuing a public and official exoneration, continued to be the victim of a lying calumny. This is evident from the uncharitable and defamatory reference that a first-rate newspaper in

America made in December 1920, when under Topics of the Times it said, "As a matter of fact, such products of British rule as he"¹² including the more eminent Rabindranath Tagore, are a strangely ungrateful lot, and in themselves the best proof that the British, instead of being too harsh as masters, have been unwisely kind."¹³

We do not know if our distinguished countryman was ever told that the U. S. Government were satisfied that the allegation against him was unfounded and that the sentiments expressed by the poet in his letter to President Wilson had been vindicated. But posterity should know without any shred of doubt, that the calumny to which he was subjected had no basis.

1. *Modern Review* for June, 1918, pp. 674-675.
2. The trial was held to bring to book the Indian revolutionaries in the U. S. A. and their German, American and other accomplices who were conspiring to overthrow British rule in India.
3. Volume 20, 1711 (U. S. Exhibit 140) in the *Trial Records*.
4. Vol. 43, 3783 (Exhibit 318). The author is indebted to Prof. Stephen Hay of the University of Chicago who kindly lent him photostat copies of these two documents and also of others used in this article for which the source has not been indicated.
5. *The New York Times*, February 28, 1918, 3 : 3.
6. Majumdar. *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol. II, p. 546. For a later view see Majumdar's paper in the *Modern Review* of June, 1963.
7. Quoted by Stephen Hay in his paper *Rabindranath Tagore in America*, *American Quarterly*, Fall 1962, p. 451.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 541. Photostat copies of the other letters quoted at length by the author were kindly lent by Prof. Hay.
9. Stephen Hay, *op. cit.*, p. 452.
10. Copies of these two letters were kindly lent to the author by Prof. Hay.
11. *San Francisco Call*, October 6, 1916, p. 18.
12. Sailendra Nath Ghose, who after a brilliant career at the University of Calcutta evaded the Police, went over to the United States and championed the cause of India's independence. He was incarcerated. Years later Ghose came back to India and was for some time Education officer, Calcutta Corporation and Principal of two big non-official colleges in undivided Bengal. *The New York Times'* comments were made in connection with the deliberations of the first annual convention of the *Friends of Freedom for India* held on December 5, 1920 in New York.
13. *The New York Times*, December 7, 1920, 12 : 6.

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