

BHAGAT SINGH

A REVOLUTIONARY TO THE CORE

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On the intervening night of March 23-24, 1931, while the ruthless executioners of the three valiant sons of our motherland were clandestinely trying to dispose off their mortal remains on the wild banks of Sutlej, nothing could have been farther from their minds than the notion of leaving India for good, the very decision they had to make, that too within less than two decades. Distantly viewed, it was pathetic to witness the presumptuous sovereigns of the Empire spread over the best parts of the globe upon which the sun never set virtually in the role of criminals!

Bhagat Singh, in his last meeting with his comrade Jaidev Kapoor in Lahore Central Jail a few days prior to his martyrdom, had said, "I had visualised that if by sacrificing my life, I am able to spread the slogan '*Inqulab Zindabad*' all over the country, I shall consider myself to be fully rewarded.... Today, I can very well hear crores of my countrymen shouting the slogan, which, even while I am confined behind the thick walls of my death cell.... I trust it would continue to inspire our freedom struggle against imperialism till its doom."

But then, this '*Inqulab*' 'Revolution', according to Bhagat Singh and his comrades, was not the act of bombs and pistols as propagated by their detractors: "By 'Revolution' we mean the supremacy of workers prevail over the present order of things and the world federation redeems the humanity at large from the clutches of exploitive capitalism and misery of imperialist wars."

"This is our ideal and with this ideology as our inspiration, we shall welcome any suffering to which we may be condemned. At the altar of this 'Revolution', we have brought our youth as incense, for no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause."

Despite their having spelled out their approach to political issues, a lot of hue and cry was, and perhaps continues, to be raised as to whether they were 'terrorists'. For the discerning observers, there should be no confusion on the issue since a revolutionary relies primarily on the masses for changing the existing order of things, whereas the terrorist believes in the power of the gun and bombs to overawe the ruling class to yield power to the people.

This is all the more pitiable since none else than the Lahore High Court Judge, Mr Eforde, while dismissing his/their appeal in the Delhi bomb case chose to observe, "That Bhagat Singh is a sincere revolutionary I have no doubt, that is to say that he is sincere in his illusion that the world can be improved by destroying the social structure as it now stands and substituting the rule of law by the unrestrained will of the individual."

Almost identical is the finding of the Special Tribunal which sentenced him, Sukhdev and Raj Guru for Saunders' murder vide the concluding para of the individual judgment on Bhagat Singh.... "To sum up, Bhagat Singh was a leader of the revolutionary party which was formed at Delhi in September 1928 and had already taken part in revolutionary activities before that party was formed..."

Bhagat Singh, in his letter addressed to the Punjab Governor written on March 20 on his own and on behalf of his two associates awaiting execution demanding that they be shot by a firing squad instead of being hanged since they have been found guilty of waging war against the King, also affirmed: "The days of capitalist and imperialist exploitation are numbered. The war (against this system) neither began with us nor is going to end with our lives..." thereby leaving behind a rich legacy of defiance against the mightiest!

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