

THE LAHORE CONSPIRACY CASE*

The Khalsa Advocate

Amritsar, June 26, 1915

As we have announced elsewhere, the Special Tribunal delivered on the 13 instant their judgement in the Lahore Conspiracy Case which had taken them over 4 months together to hear. Of the 61 accused 24 have been sentenced to death 27 to transportation for life, and 6 to various terms of imprisonment while four have been acquitted. The offences the convicted accused have been charged with (under section 121, 121A and 124 A. I.P.C.) are certainly the most horrible and heinous — viz. (a) the seduction of Indian Troops (b) the massacre of all loyal subjects and officials (c) the setting up of a revolutionary flag (d) the breaking of Jails (e) the looting of treasuries (f) the seduction of youths (g) the propagation of seditious literature (h) union with foreign enemies (i) the commission of dacoities (j) the procuring of arms (k) the manufacture of bombs (l) the foundation of secret societies (m) the looting of *thanas* (n) the destruction of railways and telegraphs, and (o) the seduction of villagers! Now if these *cannibals* had succeeded in any of (even if not in all) of their infernal designs, the loss of lives consequent thereupon and the universal consternation and horror it would have caused, can better be imagined than described! But thanks to the Omniscient *Waheguru*, the bubble of the evil burst and the secret leaked out only a couple of days or so before the date (22nd February 1915) fixed for the general rising. And this testifies to the benign British Government being acceptable to the *Creator Who* is always the most particular about the safety of His creatures. The Press (Indian as well as Anglo-Indian) is unanimous in condemning, in the strongest possible terms, this most contemptible movement ever witnessed in India, as well as in agreeing to the *appropriateness of the sentenced awarded*, though some (particularly the *Panjabi* and the *Bengalee*) have recommended mercy as best suiting the magnanimity of the humane British Raj. But that some of the prominent conspirators have also been recommended to mercy, proves that the *conscientious commissioners* have not erred on this side.

As the list given elsewhere shows, majority of the convicted persons bear Sikh names — a feature, which we are afraid, is sure to mislead the uncritical reader so as to think that a batch of Sikhs has been the prime founder, organizer and promoter of this hateful movement, though among the conspirators there were also Hindus and Muhammadans. But if it were known that all of these ruffians

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are as *un-Sikhs* as their dark deeds, most of them having their heads and chins shaved clean. It is a well-known fact that almost all the inhabitants (Hindus, Moslems and even Sweepers) of the part of the country to which the conspirators mostly belong, wear long hair on their heads and tie their long beards, but generally smokers and given to criminality as they are, they can never be called members of the peaceful and law abiding Sikh nation, which is most averse to smoking and such like others evils. For instance, the very devil incarnate, the wretched Bhagwan Singh, who has played so great a part in inciting these *stupid jats* living in Canada as well as elsewhere out of India is said to be an apostate from Sikhism — a non-haired as well as a smoker! To conclude, therefore, from the bare and mere name that the ringleader Bhagwan Singh and his accused followers who bear 'Singh' after their followers of the 10 Gurus, is to commit the greatest blunder in presence of facts and reality! This is why the just and conscientious commissioners have not refrained from remarking that it was an isolated attempt and that the majority is ultra loyal to the crown. But as all the people concerned and the world at large are not expected to go through the 300 printed pages of the judgement and search this single remark, *it is quite in the fitness of things and absolutely necessary for the satisfaction and further encouragement in duty of the loyal Sikh nation, that the Panjab Government issue a Press Communiqué to this effect, and we fervently hope that our present wide awake Lieutenant Governor (Sir Michael O' Dwyer) will not fail to do so.*

The Commissioners have rightly observed that some have been mere tools in the hands of others. And this is true and absolutely true. A crafty and clever person can easily induce a simpleton to murder another person, holding out to him many promise, however, unrealizable and impossible. Similarly those arch *anarchists, Hardyal and Bhai Parmanand, could easily misguide the uneducated Jats, who were accustomed to pick up quarrels and commit murders on matters trivial and insignificant.* That one of the two has met his deserts, while a similar end awaits the other, we mean the hateful Hardayal, is just what every peaceful and loyal mind would be pleased to know. And it is not out of place to assert here that those unfortunate men that have acted upto their fiendish instructions *have conducted themselves against what the Singh Sabha propaganda has been so particularly and loudly preaching for the past 40 year!* The Singh Sabha set it forth as a formulae (basing it on the religio loyal teachings of the Sat Gurus) *that whosoever disobeys the 10 Gurus and misbehaves himself in any way against the blessed British Government, is not a Sikh.* The enormous literature so far published by the late Khalsa Diwan, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, the present leading and representative body of the Panth, the Khalsa Tract Society, the Sikh Educational Conference and the so many Singh Sabhas, Associations and Diwans, contains nothing but expositions and expostulations of this veery formulae.

And it is those that under the influence of non-Sikh (un-Sikh or anti-Sikh rather) political vagabonds, deviated from this purely and proverbially Sikh principle, that have been so condemned without deserving any the least mercy. We say the ringleaders don't deserve mercy and say it without the least fear of contradiction. Pray imagine what treatment will you accord to the wretch, who attempts at burning your houses as well as harvest and murdering you and your family! What treatment other than pelting to death, causing to be torn by dogs or tigers or trampled upon by elephants would have been meted out to these miscreants, had they appeared in the Mughal times? Is their still a room for doubt or denial that these internal incendiaries proposed extirpating the long and firm established British Empire putting to fire and the sword the Government buildings and innocent subjects respectively, looting the public and private houses, seducing the faithful armies, and what not? If not, why then to show any the least sign of regret at the sentences awarded to such enemies of mankind and humanity? The devil Hardyal is away from the British territory, eking his miserable existence somewhere under the support of Germany, or else he would have seen and tasted the bitter fruit of his hellish endeavours and meet the fate of his lieutenant, Bhai Parma Nand. An infernal being, he has been supported and fed by able very blessed British Government against which he led his accursed conspiracy and caused the ruin and death of those that followed him. It is true as the *Punjabee* has remarked, that India has never seen such a tremendous trial resulting in death sentences being awarded to so many. But this also is equally true that never before this there has been such a deliberate elaborate *shararat*, with such fiendish aims and objects. And so far as the loyal Sikh nation is concerned, these arch anarchists have left no stone unturned to sully its reputation and popularity, though, by God's grace and thanks to the *conscientiousness of the wide awake Government authorities*, it is still as unimpeachable as ever. Nay it is rather more than ever, and the dark hearted incendiaries, who tried to throw dust into the eyes of the officers and the public by making a tool of a set of un-Sikh adventurers bearing the Sikh names — are there, rotting in the Jail, awaiting their well deserved ends, while the, devoted *Khalsa* is still ass willing to devote his all to his beloved Sovereign as his brothers of the 47th, 14th, 15th, and other renowned regiments have done in the Front!

Thus though the Government may not refrain from doing mercy by commuting the sentences in all or some certain cases; but there can be no doubt in the thoroughness of the trail and appropriateness of sentences. In that case we would most respectfully suggest that preference be given, to those who acted as mere tools, over the instigators. Verily it is a good lesson for those that still stagger on the path of loyalty, to learn!