

**The Genesis of Akali Dal's Politics in Eighties.
(A Historical Overview With Special
Reference to Akali Politics in
1966—1979).**

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INTRODUCTION

The situation in Punjab has been quiet alarming as well as disturbing. It has shaken the entire country and has attracted world-wide attention. Thus Punjab has become an important area of study, which in turn explains my interest in the area.

The extremists supported and aided by U.S. imperialism, its allies and satellites have been predominating. Their basic aim has been to create communal polarization and to force the Hindus to Leave Punjab and lay the basis for a separate state of the Sikhs and now they have been killing not only the Hindus but also the Sikhs who have been opposing them. And the various factions of the Akali Dal because of factional fights and narrow outlook have not been able to take clear stand vis-a-vis the extremists and their activities.

It must be pointed that the growth and consolidation of the separatist forces and the extremists and terrorists working for them has not been sudden. It was the outcome of undoings of both the central govt. and the Akali Dal.

In the beginning of 1980's the Akali Dal launched one morcha after another for certain, democratic, class and religious demands. The failure of the central govt. to

provide solutions to some of the major secular and democratic demands led to the growth of the Akali movement and the activities of the terrorists, *on the one hand,*

The communalisation of various demands by the Akali *on the other hand,* leaders gave an impetus to the separatist forces and the extremists, and terrorists working for them to exploit the situation and carry on their activities. Besides ^arising religious demands, they put forward the non religious demands as the demands of the Sikhs. As a result, though the Akalis did not stand for a separate state, but their manifestations and gestures which were marked with communal overtones brought them into equation with the separatist forces and the extremists and terrorists working for them.

This and the fact that the Akalis did not condemn the activities of the extremists, complicated the situation, prevented the government from providing any solution at proper time (though the central government had its own reasons also in not finding a solution at proper time), and also led to the building of their base, especially among the unemployed youth Sikhs. Thus instead of playing an important role in national construction and politics they fell prey to the designs of the separatist forces.

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They kept on collecting arms and amunitions in the historic Gurudwara, Golden temple Both the central government and the Akali Dal had full knowledge about this but they kept silent and allowed the exteremists to carry on their activities. Only later the government resorted to operation Blue star to flush out the extremists from the Golden temple, which hurt the religious sentiments of the Sikhs. The Akali Dal and the extremists took full use of this to inculcate communal feelings in the mind of the Sikhs.

And then came the ~~assas~~ assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi which inturn was followed by mass killings of the Sikhs by Lumpen elements backed by some politicians, particularly in Delhi, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. This particular event completely alienated the Sikh masses and gave set back to secular and national elements amongst Sikhs.

Then came the new Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi and 1985 elections. The Congress (I) swept the polls because of sympathy wave. And later he came to and understanding with the organizational leader of the Akali Dal Sant Longowal on Punjab. Out of this emerged Punjab accord which defined the acceptance of each and every demand and it was a time bound accord. The accord was welcomed by the various political parties and by the people in Punjab and India.

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The extremists, who were not satisfied with the development did not sit back and assassinated Sant Longowal. And this particular/^{event}aroused the anger of the masses. This became evident when the people in Punjab voted for the Akali Dal in 1985 state assembly elections. For the first time the Akali Dal came to political power without any alliance in Punjab,

The ministry was headed by Surjit Singh Barnala. However in the process none of the major demands could be fulfilled. And this period was also marked by factional fights within the Akali Dal. And the resultant situation gave a chance to the extremists to exploit the situation. And they engaged themselves in killings. The Barnala ministry was dismissed by the Central Government, since it could not control the activities of the extremists. And on the other the Panthic Committee of the Golden Temple installed by the extremists excommunicated Barnala for he refused to toe their lines.

With the dissolution of the Punjab assembly, Punjab was placed under President's rule and since then Punjab has been under President's rule. And once again the extremists have been predominating. One reason for this has been that because of factional fights, the Akali

leaders have not been able to take a clear stand vis-a-vis the separatist forces. They have been vacillating and taking contradictory stands.

It must be pointed that the foreign powers have been ^aplaying a significant role in instigating the separatist forces. The British Imperialism played an important role in the pre-independence period in sowing the seeds of separatism among the section of Indians. They backed revivalistic and reactionary forces in the pre-independence period. In short they followed the policy of divide the masses and rule. They implemented in their minds religion as the basis of nation states. As a result these forces became active in the pre-independence period and remained active even after independence. Thus when the British Left India, they were able to divide India and were also able to sow the seeds of separatism.

And now similar role is being played by U.S. imperialism. Since India's independence the aim of U.S. imperialism has been to weaken India, because it chose the path of independent path of development ^{through on Capitalist basis.} And has been following the foreign policy of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and world peace. The existence of camps to train the extremists in U.S., Canada, and Pakistan had become an open secret.

The extremists have played an important role in Punjab. But the Akali factor has been an important factor in determining the Punjab problem, since the movement was initiated by the Akalis. And we are concerned with the Akali factor in the study. The question with which one is concerned is how the situation in the beginning of 1980's came.

The movement has taken place in a state which has been one of the most developed and prosperous region in India, with highest percapita income. This particular fact has made the Akali movement a peculiar movement. The question that arise is why discontentment among the Akalis? This movement has proved that Lack of development of deprivation of certain regions in terms of development is not the only source of discontentment. Movements of discontentment can arise and grow even in developed states, like it has grown in Punjab.

Thus the task of this work is to examine what has gone into the making of the Akali movement. In order to understand this, I have concentrated on a specific period i.e from the linguistic re-organisation of the state in 1966 till 1979. This period has been consciously selected. As I feel this period is an important period in Punjab. The happenings in this period culminated in 1980's in the form of a movement. In 1966

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punjab was organised linguistically, and this reorganisation was accompanied by Green Revolution. And from this, politics in Punjab made a break, from the politics that existed prior to re-organisation. That is why I started from the re-organisation of Punjab. I stopped at 1979, because the Akalis started their movement in 1980's. However this work does not examine the changes and twists that have taken place in the movement, since it started. Though a panoramic view of the events in 1980's has also been given in the last chapter, in one section.

because of time

I have taken a specific period also/constraint and demands for M.Phil work itself. Though I have concentrated on a specific period, I have also studied the Akali politics historically. The first chapter/dissertation which is divided into ^{two} sections deals with the Akali politics in the pre-independence period and the period following partition till 1966. The second chapter analyses the Akali politics from 1966 till 1971. The third chapter from 1971 till 1979. The fourth chapter deals with certain problems and issues. The fifth and the Last chapter concludes the work.

The study is thus, confined only to Akalis their problems and the politics that emerges from those problems, and not with the extremists and their activities.

VIII

Though some passing references have been made about them. similarly, the role of the external factor ie. the role of the foreign powers has also been excluded from the study though reference about them have also, been made at various places in ^{is}the work.

The study has made use of various well known books on Indian and Punjab politics, Punjab economy, besides articles in leading journals, government documents and news paper reports.

I am grateful to my teacher and supervisor Dr. Kiran Saxena, for her inspiration, guidance and valuable suggestions. Besides her my gratitude to all those who have helped in their own ways at various stages in M.Phil, particularly V.C. Ganesh, Krishna Menon, Ranjana Sabharwal and Neeta Jain. Kishore Chandra Dash has taught me to stand on my own. This lesson would remain in my mind as an indelible mark for ever. I am indebted to my mother and father who have always inspired me in all my undertakings.

CHAPTER - ONE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF AKALI POLITICS (FROM THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD TILL THE LINGUISTIC REORGANISATION OF THE STATE IN 1966).

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section I deals with the pre-independence period and Section - II with the period after the partition of Punjab till the Linguistic reorganisation of the state in 1966.

SECTION - I

The Sikhism was established by Guru Nanak (1464-1539) in the 15th and 16th century. However ambiguity still exists whether it was an attempt to create new religion or merely a reformist movement among the Hindus. It grew in the wake of impact of Islam as a result of conflict with the Mughal rulers¹ and it acquired militant postures from the tenth and the last Guru Gobind Singh (1675-1789) in 1679. To emphasise their importance as a separate, cohesive group, Guru Gobind Singh established a baptismal ceremony and required all the Sikhs to wear the five external symbols of Sikhism. And all baptized Sikhs were to recognise Guru Gobind Singh as their father and receive the surname of Singh. And also declared that Guru's living presence will be in the 'Panth'². Thus came the Sikh identity.

1. Baldev Raj Nayyar, "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State Politics in India, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, p. 435.

2. *Ibid.*

It was after a tough struggle against the Mughal rulers, the Sikhs established a state of their own in 1704 under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. During this period the Hindus and Sikhs intermixed Socially. There were common customs, frequent Hindu-Sikh marriages and the reading of Sikh scriptures in the Hindu families.³ Though the Hindus and Sikhs inter-mixed Socially, Sikh Identity clearly existed. And it existed even after the annexation of Punjab by the British in 1849. And this was the result of various revivalistic movements in Punjab among the Sikhs.

The first attempt to restore separate identity of the Sikhs was made by the Singh Sabha Movement in 1870's at a time when similar identity reformation and revivalistic movements were taking place among the Hindus and Muslims.

The Singh Sabha movement was the first to promote Self-consciousness among the Sikhs. The aim of this movement was to restore Sikhism to its pristine purity; to edit and publish Sikh historical and religious books using Punjabi in Gurmukhi script.⁴ And a political body was created called chief Khalsa Diwan to undertake such functions.

3. Prakash Tandon, Punjabi Century, New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963, p. 10-11.

4. A.S. Narang, Storm Over Sutlej - The Akali Politics, Delhi, Gitanjali, 1983, p. 44-45.

The revivalistic movements developed not only for the purpose of maintaining separate identity of the Sikhs but also because of fear from other religious organisations particularly Hindu. The key factor in the development of this fear was the role of Arya Samaj in Punjab which was founded in 1875 in Gujarat and was introduced in Punjab in 1877-78, as a fountain head of the Hindu cultural aspirations. It developed as a powerful religious, educational, cultural and political force within the Hindu community of Punjab.. It founded schools, colleges promoting Sanskrit and Western education. And its presses issued books, periodicals, pamphlets promoting Hindu religious and Communal Consciousness.

The activities of Arya Samaj in Punjab emphasised upon education and religious reform and proselytization. Its proselytizing activities among low castes groups whose religious ideologies were indefinite brought Arya Samaj into conflict with religious ideologies and organisations of the Sikhs and Muslims. Although Arya Samaj and Singh Sabha Leaders co-operated in Punjab but the activities of Arya Samaj Leaders created a fear of absorption of the Sikhs by the Hindu community. And their activities also tried to promote a sharp and antagonistic differentiation between the Hindus and Muslims.⁵

5. Paul R. Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in North India, Delhi, Vikas, p. 327-328.

Thus Sikh Identity clearly existed much before 1947⁶ which was the result of revivalistic movements. But the communal consciousness among the Sikhs developed and grew only with the annexation of Punjab by the British. Thus a distinction should be made between revivalistic and communal movements. Both should not be regarded as synonymous. But the point that needs to be emphasized is that communal leaders often make use of revivalistic movements as they spread religious orthodoxy, religious self-consciousness that is the consciousness of being the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims. Bipin Chandra rightly points that revivalistic movements are not Communal in themselves but they make the masses more susceptible to communal propaganda.⁷

The communal consciousness was developed by the British in India. The British who ruled India till 1947 did all that they could be keep the Indian people divided, as so to prevent unified anti-imperialist struggle, in order to sustain their rule. They made persistent efforts to implant in the minds of the masses concept of religion as the basis of nation-state, the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh etc. They introduced separate electorate on the basis of religion. All this strengthened separatist ideas among

6. Paul Wallace, "Religions and Secular Politics in Punjab" in Paul Wallace and Surendra Chopra eds., Political Dynamics of Punjab, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev Univ. Press, 1981.

7. Bipin Chandra, Communalism in Modern India, India, Vikash, 1984, p. 179.

the masses. And when they left India they were able to partition India and were able to sow the seeds of communal consciousness among the Sikhs too, so much so that even the Akali Dal Leadership started demanding a separate state on the verge of independence.

Thus the growth of communal consciousness among the Sikhs in the pre-independence period was the product of British policies but it got strengthened in the manner in which anti-imperialist struggles developed in Punjab and the failure of the secular forces in Punjab i.e. the Congress and the Left parties in checking this kind of development.⁸

In the rest of this section we will talk about the various anti-imperialist struggles in Punjab and the manner in which they developed; the failure of the Indian National Congress in checking this kind of development and how this contributed in the growth of communal consciousness among the Sikhs. And how on the basis of this consciousness, the Akali Leadership on the verge of independence raised the demand for a separate state of the Sikhs. That is different this demand was motivated by the Muslim League's demand for a separate state of the Muslims.

8. *I have borrowed this view point from Harkishan Singh Surjeet's Lesson of Punjab, New Delhi, National Book Centre, 1986.*

The British annexed Punjab after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1849. Punjab was of great importance for the British Imperialism. The British built a well knit irrigation system over the strip of fertile as well as barren land in West Punjab so that on one hand raw material for industries in Britain could be created, on the other market for British goods. By 1936-47, 47 per cent of total sown area in Punjab was irrigated and it became the granary of India and was exporting wheat, cotton, and oilseeds to Britain. Layallpura, Montgomery and Sheikhpura were the districts which were developed by the British. The British also introduced land-tenure system where Landlords had their sway. In Central Punjab peasant proprietors were allowed to continue except for a few big jagirs. And in the princely states, big landlords dominated. And the British protected the interest of the Princes and the Landlords as their stooges and allies.

The British also kept Punjab as a reserve for army recruitment.

After one year of first war of independence (1857), in 1858 first anti-imperialist movement took place in Punjab. This was the Kooka movement.⁹ The British rulers had

9. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics, op. cit, p. 42-43.

disbanded thousands of soldiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Sikh army these soliders returned to the villages and started farming as they had no alternative. One of the soldier organised all the solidiers. This developed into a movement and it came to be called as Kooka movement. And it began in 1858 in April at Bhaini Sahib. It started as a social and religious reform movement but later developed into a powerful anti-imperialist movement and advanced slogans which even the Indian National Congress a body of Liberals at that time could not raise. But the movement was confined only to the Sikhs. They faced tremendous repression at the hands of the British rulers, but continued to play an important role in the freedom struggle till the end.

Another movement which was launched by the Sikhs was against the colonisation bill introduced by the British. The beginning of the twentieth century had witnessed serious economic depression. Because of the small land holdings which could not provide living to the farmers, lot of emigration took place from central Punjab to U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand etc. It was at this stage that the British adopted a new colonisation bill which imposed restrictions on the masses. A big movement of the peasantry developed against the bill with Lyallpur as its centre and finally the British rulers were forced to withdraw the bill.

Further many of those who had emigrated to U.S.A., Canada, etc. had to undergo hardships and had to face racial discrimination. For the first time these people mainly farmers understood the meaning of freedom. In 1913, they formed a Ghaddar party¹⁰ and all its members dedicated their lives for the freedom of the country. This movement was a secular movement, and too an extent played an important role in radicalising national movement in Punjab. Some of them came to India and tried to organise revolts in the army. The British rulers came down heavily on them, many were prosecuted, hanged or killed.

Another very important movement in the history of the Sikhs was the Akali movement of 1920's. The movement was anti-imperialist in character but religious in form. The present Sikh religious and political institutions i.e. the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Akali Dal evolved from this movement.

This movement was launched against the Mahants who controlled the Gurudwaras around 260 in number. These Mahants besides being the supporters of the British rulers were hereditary and did not conform to the outward symbols of Sikhism. As the Gurudwaras were vested with properties

10. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics
op. cit., p.47.

and incomes which were supplemented by huge offerings from the devotees, the Mahants who controlled these shrines got the properties and incomes transferred in their own names with the help of the British.

The Sikhs who came forward to Launch a struggle against the Mahants came to be called as 'Akalis'¹¹ which means deathless or immortal. The Dal of the Akalis, the Akali Dal was established as a Central Organisation to undertake the unification of Local Akali Jathas. This movement threw upon an organisation which later developed into a political party.

The Gurudwara reform movement succeeded after a tough struggle of five years and all the Gurudwaras were placed under the administrative control of an administrative body called as Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, (SGPC)¹², under the Sikh Gurudwara act of 1925. The SGPC and the Akali Dal emerged as two important institutions expressing Sikh religious and political concerns. Further

11. *The term 'Akalis' was used by Guru Gobind Singh for his those followers who came forward to fight against the Mughal rulers, for the sake of their panth and faith. They were known for their purity of character and sincerity of conviction and commanded great respect from the sikh community. Thus all those who advocated reform in the sikh shrines and were prepared to suffer like the old Akalis to achieve their object came to be called Akalis. See Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, Delhi; Macmillan 1978 and also the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics Vol. II, New York Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955.*

12. *Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, p. 88 has called the inauguration of SGPC as the single most important event in the institutionalisation of Sikh politics.*

the leadership of both came from the same class. The Akali Dal came to control the SGPC and had been controlling since then. The entire movement for the reform of the Gurudwaras had been termed as the Akali movement.

The leadership of the Akali movement consisted of educated elements i.e. Professors, School teachers, Lawyers etc. (Master Tara Singh, Baba Kharak Singh, Mehtab Singh, Sardul Singh, Mangal Singh, Master Sunder Singh, Lyallpur etc. came from this section).¹³ But the ideological lead was provided by the bourgeoisie. However it does not mean that the feudal elements were not there, feudal elements were certainly there and formed part of the Akali Leadership, and also came in conflict with the main leadership by trying to confine the movement to the gurudwara reforms only. And they stood for cooperation with the British rulers. However due to the dominance of the nationalists (bourgeoisie) within the movement the communal (feudal) elements got subdued for a while.

Since the Akali movement was anti-imperialist in character and coalesced with the non-cooperation movement in the twenties, brought the Punjab peasants mostly the Sikhs in the Central Punjab into the mainstream national politics. But the rest of the sections of Punjab remained outside the freedom movement. Through out the anti-imperialist Akali movement the Sikhs were mobilised in the name of religious appeals, gloryfying Sikh traditions. And through

13. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab, op. cit, p. 8-9.

out the struggle the Dal was operating from the premises of the Gurudwaras and its Central headquarters right from the beginning was the Golden temple. Thus politics got mixed up in religion. No clear demarcation could be made between the two. As a result of which the anti-imperialist remained confined only to the Sikhs. The entire population of Punjab could not be encompassed into a single anti-imperialist movement.

Thus Punjab witnessed various anti-imperialist struggles in the form of movements i.e. the Kooka movement, movement of the peasantry against the colonisation bill, the Ghaddar movement in 1913-18, and then the Akali movement of 1920's. But all these movements were confined mainly or only to the Sikhs. Similarly other movements developed in Punjab but they too were confined to a particular section i.e. the khilafat movement which was confined only to the Muslims. All this led to a situation where a movement which could unite Punjabis or the people of Punjab could not emerge.

The National Consciousness which could transcend religious barriers did not evolve. The consciousness that evolved from these movements was the consciousness based upon religion, of belonging to a particular community and fighting against the British Imperialism.

The Secular parties i.e. the Congress, and the Left failed to penetrate in this kind of situation. Generally

and broadly speaking the Indian National movement launched by the Indian National Congress was itself based upon a separatist understandings. Through out the struggle for independence masses were mobilised on the basis of religious appeals, gloryfying past. Sometimes this was done unitentionally, and sometimes intentionally, intentionally because this was the easily available category like other categories for the mobilisation of the masses against British Imperialism. As Bipin Chandra pointed "nationalism could be imparted to the masses not by appealing to the old consciousness of religion but by exposing the masses to the economic contradictions and distortions created by Colonial rule. The nationalism had to base itself on a correct understanding of the basic central contradiction between colonialism and the Indian people"¹⁴ Further, as he rightly pointed that lazyness of the national leadership in looking at this aspect lay in the mechanical understanding of the situation that with the overthrow of British Imperialism all this would diffuse automatically and national consciousness would emerge. But instead of getting diffused all these identities became sharp and charged to be used to any time. Even the freedom had not been won that certain sections of the population of

14. *Bipin Chandra, Communalism in Modern India, op. cit., p. 123-131.*

India specifically referring to the Akali Dal speaking on behalf of the Sikhs started demanding a separate state.

Coming to the specific reason, as why the congress could not make much impact on the population of Punjab or could not evolve national consciousness, was that it failed to mobilise the peasantry which constituted around 85% of the total population. Because the leadership of the Congress was in the hands of the commercial bourgeoisie which was exploiting the peasantry not only through trade but also usury.¹⁵

The British rulers had imposed high rates of revenue on land and charges on water. Because of this the peasantry had to depend upon money lenders for the payment of revenues. By 1891, four million acres of land stood mortgaged for about 80 million rupees. The interest rate was so high that it would double a loan in two or three years. Thus the lands were rapidly passing from the hands of the small and middle peasants into the hands of the money lenders. Even the rich peasants were not free from indebtedness. "From 1866 to 1874 land sales averaged about 88,000 acres a year. In following quinquennial period the acres sold

15. *Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab, op. cit., p. 5;*
A.S. Narang, Stormover Sutlej - The Akali Politics, op.cit, p.62.

averaged 93,000; 160,000; 310,000; and 338,000 a year. And mortgages included 143,000 acres a year in the first period and 212,000; 296,000; 590,000 and 554,000 acres a year in the succeeding quinquennial period".¹⁶ Further only 7 per cent of the proprietors of land in Punjab were free from debt and the average debt was no less than Rs.463 or twelve times of the amount of the land revenue".¹⁷

Although a land alienation act was brought into force in 1901 to prevent non-agriculturists from acquiring land, it neither eliminated usurious money lenders nor indebtedness.¹⁸ The money-lenders began to make benami transactions and thus a class of agricultural moneylenders also emerged.

Thus the congress failed to mobilise the entire peasantry which constituted 85% of the total population of Punjab, because its leadership was in the hands of commercial classes. And peasants hatred was mostly directed against this class. The Muslim peasants who were concentrating in West Punjab remained out of the national movement and same was the case with the Hindu peasants concentrating in East Punjab except in few pockets. The peasants in both these areas remained under the influence of the Unionist party which was pro-British.

16. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics, op.cit.,p.46

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*,p.47

Only the Sikh peasantry in Punjab was mobilised in the national movement and that also under the religious garb of the Akali movement.

And it was the Unionist party which won 1937 elections in Punjab Province.¹⁹ Though the Congress won in other six provinces but it was defeated in Punjab. The reason was the same that it could not mobilise the peasantry which constituted 85% of the total population. And it did not take up any issue in the election concerning peasants indebtedness because of the fear that it might lose the support of the traders cum usurers.

The outcome of the manner in which the anti-imperialist struggles developed in Punjab was that the identity based upon religion become active and sharp. It is very important to keep this development in mind because it had immediate impact in Punjab in terms of growth of Communal Consciousness among the Sikhs. And its assertion in the form of a separate state of the Sikhs. No doubt the Akali Leadership was motivated by the Muslim League in raising this demand.

19. A.S. Narang, Storm Over Sutlej - The Akali Politics,
op. cit., p.62.

The Akali Leadership it must be pointed was pre-dominated by the communal elements on the verge of independence. Many nationalists Akalis had joined the Congress or the Left. And similarly many Left oriented Akalis under the impact of the Russian Revolution had joined the communists.²⁰ This way the communal elements came to predominate. And rest of the nationalists in the Akali Leadership also began moving towards the communal trend²¹. Reference can be made to Master Tara Singh who had taken a strong nationalist stand during the Gurudwara reform movement in terms of Liberating the country from British Imperialism began moving towards the communal trend Later.

The communalists acquired this predominance not suddenly but after a long and acute struggle with the nationalists. For instance in the 1937 elections to Punjab province the nationalists within the Akali Leadership favoured an alliance with the Congress on the other hand the communalists with the Chief Khalsa Diwan. That is a different point the nationalists won at that time. And similarly after the failure of the cripps Mission in India when the British failed to get the co-operation of the

20. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab, op. cit., p.16

21. *Ibid.*

Indian National Congress they tried to consolidate the support of the reactionary forces. And the Akali - Unionist pact emerged from this understanding.

Now the question that arise is why some of the nationalists who had earlier taken strong nationalist stand during the Gurudwāra Reform Movement began moving towards the communal trend Later. After the Gurudwara reform movement it must be pointed these Akali Leaders developed a vested interest in keeping their control over huge amounts of Land, properties and income. Infact they had become owner of big landowner trusts, and in course of time their interests got linked with feudalism. And further these Gurudwaras got huge offerings from the upper classes and from this developed the increasing support of the Sikh rulers and feudalists. Thus control over the Gurudwaras became imoportant for the fulfilment of their aspirations, with tremendous resources at their disposal and a large number of cadres paid out of Gurudwara funds. And this control over the Gurudwaras could be maintain only by raising religious appeals and communal issues.²²

22. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab, op. cit., p.16

The Akali leadership in order to preserve its own interests thus gave the voice for a separate state of the Sikhs. This demand was made in line with the demand for a separate state of Pakistan by the Muslim League. With the passage of time, Muslim Landlords and peasants started leaving the Unionist party and started rallying behind the Muslim League.

The Muslim League gave two nations theory, that the Hindus and Muslims were two separate communities and therefore were entitled to have separate nations. Thus religion became the basis of this demand and it started mobilising the Muslims in the name of religion and on the ground they were a separate and a minority community and after independence would come under the complete domination of the Hindus.

But the Muslim League's Leadership consisting of the middle classes had its own vested interest in asking for a separate state. The leadership was afraid that its interests would be constrained in Independent India since trade commerce and administration were dominated by the Hindus. Because due to numerous social and historical reasons education, trade and industry could not make much headway among certain sections of the population which coincided with the Muslims and Sikhs.²³

23. *Bipin Chandra, Communalism in Modern India, op. cit., p. 180.*

Therefore the leadership started demanding a separate state where it could pursue its own interest.

The Muslim League's demand thus gave an impetus to the Akali leadership to ask for a separate state. The leadership started using Linguistic, historical and religious symbols to mobilise the Sikh masses to show that they were a separate community.²⁴ According to Paul Brass underlying basis for Sikh political aspirations had been a sense of group identity based upon 3 sets of symbols i.e. historical, linguistic and religious.²⁵

The leadership held that if the Sikhs were not granted a separate state they would be submerged in the ocean of the Hindu majority. They argued that if the Muslims were submerged in Independent India, Islam would still survive on the earth. But if Sikhism disappeared from India then it would be completely wiped out from the earth. This feeling got strengthened by the fact that Sikhism had no geographical base apart from Punjab and even within this area there was not a single area which the Sikhs could call their own.²⁶ This was because Punjab in the pre-independence period was a Muslim dominated area where the Muslims constituted

24. Paul Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in North India, op.cit., p.275-278.

25. *Ibid*

26. M.J. Akbar, India : The Siege Within , Great Britain, Richard Clay Ltd., p. 144.

51%, the Hindus , 31% and the Sikhs 12% of the total population.²⁷

The demand for a separate state first came in the form of 'Azad Punjab'.²⁸ This scheme involved the detachment of the Muslim majority districts from Punjab. The idea was to concentrate the Sikh population by merging the princely states of Patiala, Kapurthala, Jind, Khalsia, so that the geographical contiguous areas could be identified with the Sikh homeland. In this 'Azad Punjab' scheme the Akali leadership held, the Muslims would constitute 40%, the Hindus 40% and Sikhs 20% and would serve the balance by aligning with either the Muslims or the Sikhs.

The Akali Dal scheme took the form of a independent Sikh state when it became more and more clear that settlement between the Indian National Congress and the League would have to be reached on the basis of some form of Pakistan²⁹. The Akali leadership began to press more and more

27. *Paul Wallace, "Religious and Secular Politics in Punjab", in Paul Wallace and Surendra Chopra ed. Political Dynamics of Punjab, op. cit, p.5.*

28. *UNI Backgrounder, "The Akali Movement I" No. 29, July 21, 1983, p.5.*

29. *Ibid.*

for a separate state, which would act as a buffer state between Pakistan and India. Otherwise they preferred a United India, because partition meant, dispersion of the Sikh population. The Implication was that the Sikhs stood for a United India but if Pakistan was conceded they would assert their right to independent status.

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The British rulers recognised the importance of the Sikhs as a separate community but it became difficult for them to concede the demand since no where in Punjab Sikhs were in majority.³⁰ They were scattered in the entire area : the western districts were dominated by the Muslims, the eastern by the Hindus and the population in the Central districts was equally divided among the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Further the cabinet Mission really aimed at a settlement between the Muslim League and Congress.

The idea of a separate state was altogether rejected by the Indian National Congress. But the Congress gave the assurance of re-organisation of all the states on a linguistic basis after independence. And also assured



30. Baldev Raj Nayyar, Minority Politics in an Indian State, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, 1966, p. 90.

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the Sikhs that it would give all possible support to them and would secure adequate safeguards for protecting their interests.³¹

SECTION - II

With the partition of India in 1947, Punjab was partitioned between India and Pakistan. The Western districts which were dominated by the Muslims went to Pakistan and the eastern districts were retained by India. The East Punjab inherited 34% of the total area and 40% of the total population of Punjab and it was this area which came to be called Punjab.³² The word Punjab which means the Land of five rivers became a misnomer after the partition, for Punjab retained only three rivers i.e. the Sutlej, Ravi and Beas.

The partition was followed by mass migration of the Hindus and Sikhs to the eastern districts as a result of which the Sikhs became heavily concentrated in the north-west districts of new Punjab and princely states of Patiala, Faridkot, Nabha etc. And these princely states were grouped together into a new political unit

31. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics op.cit., p.70

32. Census of India, 1961 (Punjab Series 17) Part II - A, General Population Tables, Vol. 13, p.9.

called PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab states Union) in 1948 and on 1st November 1957 PEPSU was merged in Punjab.³³

The Hindus dominated in Punjab in the period following partition and continued to dominate till 1966, constituting about 62.3% of the population of Punjab and were mainly concentrating in the Urban areas. The Sikhs were constituting about 35% of the total population and were mainly concentrating in the rural areas. Thus rural/urban distinction was reinforcing the distinction between the two major communities in Punjab. And the other religious groups were constituting about 2.7% of the total population of Punjab.³⁴

The Congress party after independence came to political power at the Centre and states. It came to political power in Punjab also. Afraid of losing its entity (because most of the following of the Akali Dal had been dislocated and scattered after partition of India), the Akali party joined the Congress in the period following partition. But left after some time when it felt that it had no say in political matters and decisions.

33. Factsheet on Punjab - Election Commission Report

34. Baldev Raj Nayyar, Minority Politics in an Indian State, op.cit., p.13.

The most important issue which dominated the politics of PUnjab in the period following partition was the re-organisation of state boundaries. The Indian National Congress had committed itself to the re-organisation of states on Linguistic basis. Within two years of independence Master Tara Singh raised the question of re-organisation of the state boundaries. Once again he raised the question of re-organisation on communal lines. The communalising of the issue of re-organisation of the State boundaries led to communal polarisation of the masses in the state. The Hindus afraid of second partition under the influence of Arya Samaj and RSS began renouncing the PUnjabi Language, and started claiming that Punjab was a bilingual state where the Sikhs spoke Punjabi and Hindus Hindi. In the 1951 Census ³⁵, Hindu leaders belonging to communal organisations such as Arya Samaj and the Jan Sangh with its cadres of RSS workers urged the Hindus who spoke Punjabi to register Hindi as their language. And also put forward their own demand for a Maha Punjab which would include the territories of Punjab,

35. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab; op. cit. p.17.

PEPSU, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and some districts of U.P. Hence when the agitation^{pa} territorial re-organisation of Punjab was launched by Master Tara Singh communal polarisation was complete.

The states re-organisation commission rejected the demand for the territorial re-organisation of Punjab on the ground that the demand posed by the Akali Dal was on communal basis; two that there was no clear Punjabi speaking area because the Hindus who spoke Punjabi had registered Hindi as their language.

The Congress came to power in Punjab in 1952. It fought the State assembly elections on the issue of economic programmes and appealed to the voters to vote for the cause of national re-construction and openly opposed the demand for a separate state on the basis of religion. The Akali Dal on the other hand fought elections in Punjab and PEPSU on the slogan of a separate state on communal basis.

The congress won a clear majority in Punjab, 126 seats out of 186 total seats and 34.8% of votes were polled in its favour. On the other hand the Akali Dal got 33 seats and 14.7% of votes were polled in its favour³⁶
(See Appendix I)

36. See Slection Commission Report, Report on the First General Elections in India 1951-52, Vol. II (New Delhi, Manager of Publications, 1955).

Though the Congress emerged victorious in Punjab, but it was the weakest Congress organisation in any of the 15 states in India with 34.8% of votes polled.³⁷

The communal situation eased to an extent when the Congress and the Akali Dal entered into an agreement in 1956.³⁸ According to this agreement a regional formula was offered, by which PEPSU was merged with Punjab and then the compact Punjab was divided into two regions - Punjabi and Hindi speaking regions and two regional committees were established, under the overall supervision of state Legislature. With this understanding the Akali Dal joined the Punjab Congress in 1957 elections. The Hindi speaking districts according to this agreement constituted the hill districts of Kangra, Lahaul, Spiti and dryplains of south-east districts commonly known by the name 'Haryana' which constituted Gurgaon, Mohindergarh, Hissar, Sangrur, Karnal and Ambala. The Hindus in the Hindi speaking region constituted about 88% and the Sikhs 10% of the total population in the Hindi speaking region. The Sikhs were in majority in the Punjabi speaking

37. Paul R. Brass, "Ethnic Cleavages in the Punjab Party System 1952-1977" in Myron Weiner and Osgood Field eds., Studies in Electoral Politics in the Indian States, Vol. IV, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1975, p. 17.

38. Balder R. Nayar, Minority Politics in an Indian State; op. cit., p. 272.

region, constituted about 52 to 55% and the Hindus from 42 to 45% of the total population living in Punjabi speaking area.³⁹

According to 1956 settlement 126 Akalis fought on the Congress ticket. As Master Tara Singh was dissatisfied by the Congress on the number of candidates accommodated by the Congress he put up his own candidates 15 in number called as Panthic Candidates. The Congress won in the election (See Table ^{Appendix} II), it got 71 seats out of 120 and 47.5% of votes were polled in its favour⁴⁰. In this election correlation of the Congress with the Sikh votes was positive (because the Congress had conceded a REgional formula), where as with the Hindus it was negative. Whereas in the 1952 elections it was just the opposite.⁴¹ This is also visible from the percentage increase in the share of the Jan Sangh votes in the 1957 elections as compared to the 1952 elections. In 1957 the Jan Sangh got 9 seats as compared to 6 in the 1952 elections and its percentage of votes increased from 5.0%

39. Baldev R. Nayyar, Minority Politics in an Indian State, op. cit., p. 15.

40. Election Commission Report, "Report on the Second General Elections in India 1957", Vol. II, Delhi : Manager Publications 1958.

41. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics, op.cit., p.132.

in 1952 to 9.7% in 1957 election.

The understanding between the Congress and Akali Dal, which they had arrived at before the 1957 elections did not last long. The Akali Dal began to feel that it had no say in the political affairs and all political decisions were taken by the Congress Leadership. The Akali Dal split into two. The ministerial wing remained with the Congress and the other with Master Tara Singh.

After leaving the congress Master Tara Singh once again raised the demand for a separate state with Communal overtones. The split in the Akali Dal was so wide that it lost control over the SGPC in 1958 elections.

But in 1960 Gurudwara elections the Akali Dal established it hold over SGPC once again. Strengthened by this victory Master Tara Singh launched a morcha for a separate state on communal lines. And the Hindus once again under the influence of communal organisations in Punjab countered it in the 1961 census by declaring Hindi as their language.⁴² In order to make his morcha a

42. *Harikishan Singh Surjeet, Lesson of Punjab, op. cit. p. 18.*

success, Master Tara Singh went on a fast unto death. He gave up the fast when his health deteriorated on the appeal of Maharaja of Patiala. The Sikh masses felt this a betrayal and started criticising the leader. It was at this time Sant Fateh Singh came on the scene and assumed the Leadership of the Akali Dal. Sant Fateh Singh was a Jat Sikh and enjoyed considerable support among the rural jats.

It must be mentioned that the communist party of India was supporting the demand for re-organisation of Punjab on Linguistic basis. But was criticising the communal orientation given to it by the Akali Dal.⁴³

The Akali Dal fought the 1962 elections on the issue of a separate state and secured only 19 seats out of 150, could not even win majority in the Punjabi speaking region got only 19 seats. The Congress on the other hand secured 90 seats out of 150, won 49 seats in the Punjabi speaking region.⁴⁴ Thus the Congress as the election results revealed had more say in the Punjabi speaking region. And the results also revealed that the Sikhs

43. *Baldev Raj Nayyar, "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State politics in India, op. cit., p.451.*

44. *Election Commission report, Report on the Third General Election in India, 1962, Part II Statistical (Delhi : Manager Publications, 1963).*

were not much moved by communal issues.

The Communist party around this time had launched a big campaign against communalising the issue of re-organisation of Punjab and it began organising the people of Haryana , behind the struggle for a Hindi speaking state.⁴⁵

Because of the campaign launched by the Communist party against communalising the issue of re-organisation of the state, and the downfall of Master Tara Singh because of his communal appeals, Sant Fateh Singh realised that the movement for re-organisation of Punjab could not succeed if it was based on sectarian communal grounds. He moved away from this sectarian communal platform and declared that the demand for 'Punjabi Suba' was a democratic demand of all Punjabi's irrespective of religious affiliations. He spoke in terms of Punjabi nationality and made no reference to Sikh majority or domination in the state. All this was supported by the Communist party and other progressive sections.

45. *Harikishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab op. cit., p. 19 also see, Baldev Raj Nayyar, "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State Politics in India, op. cit. p. 449-457.*

It was because of Secular stand taken by Sant Fateh Singh that split in the Akali Dal became inevitable, and the Akali Dal split into two - one led by Master Tara Singh and the other by Sant Fateh Singh. The former one could be called 'extremist' because of its extreme posture, i.e. in terms of communal ideology, and the latter one could be called 'moderate'. Further the Master Tara Singh (Akali Dal) had been urban based, dominated by non Jat Sikhs and the Sant Fateh Singh (Akali Dal) rural based, dominated by rural Jat Sikhs. And it is the latter which had been predominating in PUnjab, and had been controlling the SGPC since then.

The demand for re-organisation of the state on linguistic basis got indirect support from Haryana region which was basically Hindi speaking region on the ground that the culture of South-east districts of Punjab was different from north-east districts and that Punjabi speaking region was exploiting Haryana region economically.⁴⁶

46. Baldev R. Nayyar, Minority Politics in an Indian State; *op. cit.*, p.34. also see Baldev R. Nayyar "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State Politics in India, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

The demand got further support from the hill districts of Kangra, Kulu, Spiti for merger with the hill districts of Himachal Pradesh again on two grounds - one that it was predominantly Hindi speaking area; two that Punjab government dominated by the people of plains neglected the development of the area and merger with Himachal Pradesh would be to their advantage in terms of development.⁴⁷

However the demand also met with opposition, it was opposed by the Hindus under the influence of the communal organisations in the Punjabi speaking region. They argued that the demand made by the Akali Dal for Punjabi Suba though on Linguistic basis was an attempt to establish a Sikh theocratic state, and hence some of them even denied that Punjabi was their language.⁴⁸

In this opposition to Punjabi Suba the Hindus of the Punjabi speaking region were joined by the Harijans both (Hindu and Sikh) on the ground that the creation of Punjabi Suba would place them under complete domination

47. B.R. Nayar, "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State Politics in India, op.cit., p.450.

48. *Ibid.*

of a particular class which in their view already dominated the economic scene.⁴⁹

Sant Fateh Singh launched a morcha on the demand. When it gained momentum, the Indian government was forced to appoint a committee under the chairmanship of the then Lok Sabha Speaker S. Hukum Singh to go into the issue. Under the pressure of the morcha, which coincided with the Indo-Pak, war of 1965, the central government appointed the Shah Commission to re-organise the state on the basis of distorted census of 1961. (as majority of the Hindus had registered Hindi as their language). On the basis of this distorted census Shah Commission gave big chunks of Punjabi speaking territory to Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.⁵⁰ Even Chandigarh which was built by vacating Punjabi speaking villages was given to Haryana. As there was lot of opposition to this by various political parties in Punjab, Chandigarh was made the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana. In 1970 an agitation was launched by the Akali Dal for the

49. B.R. Nayyar, "Punjab" in Myron Weiner ed. State Politics in India, op. cit., p. 450.

50. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Lessons of Punjab, op. cit., p.20.

inclusion of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas to Punjab. The government gave an award according to which Chandigarh was to be given to Punjab after a period of time in lieu of Abohar and Fazilka until then it was to act as a Union-territory.

Thus the issue of Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas emerged from the re-organisation of the state boundaries. We will come to the details of this in the second chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

AKALI POLITICS (1966-1971)

After re-organisation on Linguistic basis, Punjab became a Sikh majority state, yet 40% of the population continues to be Hindu.¹ Straight forward demographic analysis would suggest that the Muslims dominated in the pre-independence period, the Hindus, in the period following partition, and the Sikhs after re-organisation of Punjab in 1966.

The re-organisation of boundaries on Linguistic basis was accompanied by Green Revolution. Thus the years of morchas for Punjabi Suba were also the years of beginning of capitalist development in Punjab.² The ground for

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1. *Census of India, 1971 (Punjab Series 17), Part - II-C(2) and part V - A "Distribution of Population by religion and Scheduled Caste", p.12-13.*
 2. See Sucha Singh Gill's paper, "Capitalism in Punjab agriculture" in *R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna ed., Studies in Punjab Economy.* (Amrisar Guru Nanak Dev Univ., Press, 1983). In this paper S.S. Gill examined the extent of capitalist development in Punjab in relation to various indicators of capitalist development i.e. property relations; Wage Labour; accumulation and re-investment of capital. In relation to property relations the study showed that 10% of the farmers owned more than 37% of land and regarding capital accumulation it revealed that all the categories of farmers had invested in productive forces. But the top 10% accounted for 68.75% of tractors. 24.72% of threshers and 42.86% of Land purchased. Thus the study revealed that capital accumulation and property relations had strong connection. In relation to agricultural Labour the study showed that number of agricultural labour had increased and that of cultivators had fallen down. The percentage of agricultural labour increased from 17.3% to 32.1% between 1961 and 1971 (and to 38.26% in 1981). Pure tenants were the first to fall into this category and they were accompanied by rural artisans. And the majority of the agricultural labour had been employed in all the farms; but hired labour kept on increasing with the increase in the farm size. Thus Punjab fulfilled all the major conditions of the capitalist development. But the big farmers had not become totally dependent on wage labour.

Green Revolution had been prepared much earlier through technological and Institutional changes after independence.³ These changes were undertaken by the Indian government personally in order to cater to the immediate economic needs of the dominant section among the ruling classes. Because besides solving the food problem in India, the agrarian sector could become the biggest supplier of raw material to the Industrial sector, and the biggest consumer of industrial products in the form of tractors, threshers, pumps etc.

Thus certain productive areas were selected and from within these areas big and medium landlords. The institutional changes involved the consolidation of holdings of the farmers, they obtained one or two consolidated block of land in exchange for previous fragmented and dispersed holdings. All this facilitated spread of irrigation, improvement of village communications and technological innovations by individual farmers. The other major institutional changes included the elimination of intermediaries between the cultivator and the state, and development of well developed structure of agriculture and extension services.

The most significant technological changes included the spread of irrigation. By 1965-66, 64.1% of the total

3. K.S. Gill, "Agricultural development in Punjab", in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy op.cit, p.1.

cropped area was brought under irrigation, whereas the all-India average was only 21 percent and by 1978-79, the total cropped area under irrigation increased to 83.8 percent. Irrigation made possible the extensive use of fertilizers. In the period (1965-66) to (1978-79) consumption of nitrogen fertilizers increased from 43,000 to 419,000 tonnes; of phosphatic fertilizers from 3,000 tonnes to 155,000 tonnes and of potassic fertilizers from a negligible quantity to 29,000 tonnes. The level of fertilizers began to be compared to that in the U.S.A.

Greatest impact of technological and institutional changes was felt on wheat and rice.⁴ In the period (1965-66) to (1971-72), production of wheat increased from 1.9 to 5.9 million tonnes, production of rice from 0.29 to 0.92 million tonnes, production of cereals from 3.022 to 7.6 million tonnes.

There was a relative stagnation in the output in the period between (1971-72) and (1974-75).

During the period between (1974-75) and (1979-80) wheat output showed a steady upward trend, from 5.3 to 7.9 million tonnes, rice experienced a substantially higher rate of growth from 1.2 to 3.1 million tonnes and the total output of cereals rose from 7.70 to 11.90 million tonnes.

4. K.S. Gill. *Agriculture development in Punjab* in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna ed. Studies in Punjab Economy. op.cit, p. 2.

Cotton and potatoes showed large increase in output between (1965-66) and (1979-80).⁵ The output of cotton increased from 775 to 1,213 thousand bales and of potatoes from 233 to 787 thousand bales.

Similarly the output of oilseeds rose from 222 to 295 thousand tonnes in the period between (1965-66) and (1973-74).⁶ There was a setback after that for instance, the production of oil seeds was only 177 thousand tonnes in 1978-1979. Likewise the production of pulses declined from 389 to 313 thousand tonnes in the period between (1975-76) and 1978-79). In both the cases the decline was explained in terms of shrinkage in area. Because of greater profitability in wheat and rice, area under oil seeds and cotton was diverted to them.

Besides the factors like institutional and technological changes, growth in the agricultural output was also due to increase in the net sown area and the improvements in the cropping intensity. (Table IX)

Thus with the Green Revolution Punjab became the mainstay of country's procurement system. It contributed 56 percent of total all India foodgrains in 1978-79,

5. K.S. Gill, "Agricultural development in Punjab" in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna ed. Studies in Punjab Economy op.cit. p. 2.

6. K.S. Gill, "Agriculture development in Punjab" in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy op.cit., p.2.

TABLE IX

Percentage of Area sown more than once to Net
Area Sown and Cropping Intensity

| Year | Percentage | Cropping Intensity |
|---------|------------|--------------------|
| 1965-66 | 28.56 | 128.56 |
| 1971-72 | 40.43 | 140.43 |
| 1979-80 | 56.26* | 155.26* |
| 1980-81 | 61.37 | 161.37 |

* Provisional

* Revised.

Source : Pramod Kumar and Others, Punjab Crisis context and Trends, Chandigarh, Man and Dev. Press, 1984 p. 105.

around .6.2 million tonnes out of 11.1 million tonnes.⁷
It became a show piece for the success of Green Revolution. The success of Green Revolution was marginal in other areas despite the fact that similar technological changes were made available in other areas having similar soil and climatic conditions. The success of Green Revolution in

7. K.S.Gill, "Agriculture development in Punjan" in R.S.Johar and J.S. Khanna, eds Studies in Punjab Economy op. cit. p. 2.

Punjab was justified on the ground that Punjab's peasantry had been more enterprising than its counterpart. In Punjab it had been held that human initiative played an equally important role as infrastructure inputs.⁸

The achievements of Green Revolution were not uniform all over Punjab. The success of Green Revolution was maximum in Ludhiana, Jullunder and Amritsar; marginal in Ropar, Hoshiarpur, and Gurdaspur districts and moderate in rest of the districts.⁹

As far as the future prospects of Green Revolution were concerned it had been held that the agrarian sector would not be able to spearhead Punjab's economy, because it had reached a saturation point where there was no scope for further increase in the net sown area and cropping intensity also had been too high. And further investment in the agrarian sector would not give increasing results in output unless there was a major technological break through.¹⁰

8. Jasbir Singh, The Green Revolution in Punjab : How Green it is? India, 1974.

9. T.R. Sharma, " Political Implications of the Green Revolution" in Wallace and Chopra eds. Political Dynamic of Punjab op.cit. p. 270. And also see R.S. Johar and P.S. Raikhy, "Agricultural productivity in Punjab - An analysis of inter-district Variations" in R.S. Johar & J.S. Khanna eds. studies in Punjab Economy. op.cit.

10. For this kind of an agreement see K.S. Gill. "Agricultural development in Punjab" p. 6-8, R.S. Johar, J.S. Khanna and P.S. Raikhy, "Industrial development of Punjab", p. 156; also see, J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh "Industrial development in Punjab - Some feature" in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy op.cit.

An important social consequence of the Green Revolution was that it led to the creation of two most important classes in Punjab, the capitalist farmers, happening to be Jat Sikhs and the agricultural labour consisting of migratory labour from U.P., Bihar etc. and the local labour. (The Sikh agricultural labour had been called as Mazahibi Sikhs).

The achievements of Green Revolution though went to all sections but they were mainly accrued by the big and medium farmers.

The Jat Sikh capitalist farmers after the re-organisation on political and economic basis, felt the need of coming to political power in the secular political system in Punjab, in order to enhance^{and}/sustain the economic revolution in the agrarian Sector. They thought by operating through a Sikh regional political party they would be able to raise grievances against the Central government, which favoured the dominant section among the ruling classes than the other sections and the regional ruling classes. And after coming to political power, they would be able to put an end to policies which did not favour them i.e. land reforms, ceilings on land, foodzones etc. and support which favoured them i.e. Central governments support for Capital inputs for further agricultural development etc. Thus the changed social, political and economic structure compelled the Jat Sikh

capitalist farmers to join the Sant Akali Dal.¹¹

Earlier these Jat Landlords operated through the Congress because before the re-organisation, Punjab was a Hindu majority state therefore the Akali Dal did not have the capacity to come to political power on its own. And further the Congress was in power at the Centre and the states in the period following independence. It was following the policies of national reconstruction at national and state level, therefore could give them benefits for the fulfilment of their aspirations at the same time maintaining its own economic interests i.e. in terms of solving food problem in India and with it maintaining the interest of the big bourgeoisie. Because the agrarian sector could become the biggest supplier of raw material to the industrial sector and consumer of the industrial products. And the Congress could also serve its own political interests by aligning with the landlords, through Patron-client relationships. Thus the alliance of the Jat Landlords with the Congress could serve the interests of the both. In other words it was a kind of mutual relationship of give and take.

The Jat Sikh capitalist farmers joined the Sant (Akali Dal), and its reins fell into their hands after the re-organization of Punjab on political and economic

11. Harish K. Puri, "Akali Politics - Emerging Compulsions" in Wallace and Chopra eds. Political Dynamics of Punjab, op.cit.

basis.¹²

However coming to political power required giving up total allegiance on religion and adopting a broad secular approach; which in turn meant electoral alliance or collaboration with political parties or party. This was because the Akali Dal did not have the capacity to come to political power on its own, despite the fact that the Sikhs were in majority after the re-organization of Punjab. Because the Sikhs no doubt bound^{by} common ethnic ties, like any other community had allegiance to number of political parties, for instance the Mazahibi Sikhs the local agricultural labour, who had been quiet a few in number, had been voting either for the Left parties or the Congress.

In the 1967 and 1969-70 elections, the Sant Akali, because of compulsions of electoral politics entered into an alliance with the non-congress political parties and came to political power with them. The dominance of the Congress was broken in 1967 elections not only in Punjab but in various states in India.

It must be pointed that the period before 1967 election was a period of series of crises - two wars had drained the country's resources; the death of Nehru and Shastri in quick succession and the crises that followed, two droughts and the hardships that flowed in the form of high prices and scarcity of subsistence goods; devaluation of

12. For the shift in the allegiance of the rural Jat Sikhs from the

currency.¹³ All the factors converged together, and the situation culminated in the 1967 elections.

In the 1967 election right wing national parties and regional parties came to political power.

The growth and consolidation of the above political parties in the period 1967-70 were not only conditioned by the above mentioned immediate factors but also by the general working of the Indian political system on unitary lines which was facilitated by more or less uninterrupted rule of the Congress both at the Centre and states since independence. And it was by Centralising political power at the Centre the Congress had been maintaining the interest of the dominant section¹⁴ of the ruling coalition viz-a-viz other sections of the ruling coalition. And it was this centralisation of political power at the centre which was acting as a direct constraint in the interest of the other sections of the ruling coalition and the regional ruling classes.¹⁵

Congress to Akali Dal see A.S. Narang : Storm over Sutlej-The Akali Politics. op.cit p. 162 to 166.

13. Rajni Kothari, Politics in India, (Delhi, Orient Longman Press, 1970).
14. The generally accepted view among the Marxists had been that the ruling coalition in India, consisted of the big bourgeoisie, indigenous, comprador; the landlords, rich peasants, ex-princes etc. And it had been held that the leadership to the ruling coalition had been provided by the big bourgeoisie.
15. Javeed Alaam, " Class Political and National Dimensions

All this can help to explain in class terms the two important phases (1967-69) and (1977-79) in Indian politics.¹⁶ In both the phases with the exception of two or three states, the parties that came to power were right wing political parties including the regional parties, representing in interests of the ruling classes. In the (1967-69) phase, the defeat of the Congress was partial, in the sense that it retained power at the centre though with a reduced majority. But its dominance was broken in many states.

Where as in (1977-79) phase, the defeat of the Congress was complete. The Congress was replaced from the Centre by the Janata party, a conglomeration of erstwhile right wing political parties.

The Sant Akali Dal in 1967 elections in Punjab fought along with the Leftist parties on the basis of a nine point programme. The programme included, "the introduction of urgent land reforms, state trading in food grains and fighting for nationalization of Banks, aid and foreign trade and curbing monopolies."¹⁷

of the State Autonomy Movements in India". Social Scientist, vol. 10, August 1982,

16. *Ibid*, p.18

17. A.S. Narang, Punjan Accord and Elections, Retrosspect and prospect, A study in Development Democracy and Distortion, Delhi Quality printers, 1986, p. 65.

However in its own manifesto to the Akali Dal did not offer any clear programme.

Whereas as Master Tara Singh (Akali Dal) contested the 1967 elections purely on religious issues.¹⁸ It raised communal demands such as the 'self-determined' status for the Sikhs. In spite of its religious appeals it won two seats with only 4.5 percent of votes. Whereas, the Sant (Akali Dal) got 24 seats and 20.46 percent of votes were polled in its favour. The Congress got 48 seats and 37.6 percent of votes. And the Jan Sangh got 9 seats and 9.85 percent votes were polled in its favour. See Table IV.

As no single political party had a clear majority in the assembly elections the Sant (Akali Dal) negotiated with other political parties. Before the elections the right wing opposition parties had declined to join the Sant (Akali Dal), but after the elections all the non-Congress political parties - the Master (Akali Dal) the CPI, the CPI(M), the Jan Sangh, the Republican party and Independents formed a United Front under the Leadership of Gurnam Singh.

18. *Ibid.* p. 66.

TABLE IV

Party position in Punjab Vidhan Sabha
1967 and 1969 Elections.

| Party | 1967 seats won | 1967 vptes polled | 1969 seats won | 1969 votes polled |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Congress | 48 | 37.6 | 38 | 39.2 |
| Sant (Akali Dal) | 24 | 20.46 | 43 | 29.6 |
| Master (Akali Dal) | 2 | 4.23 | - | - |
| Jan Sangh | 9 | 9.85 | 8 | 8.8 |
| CPI | 5 | 5.16 | 3 | 4.5 |
| Republic Party | 3 | 1.79 | 0 | 1.1 |
| Praja Socialist Party | 0 | 0.51 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Swatantra | 0 | 0.50 | 1 | 1.7 |
| Janata* | - | - | 1 | 1.7 |
| Independents | 9 | 16.10 | 4 | 10.8 |

* founed by Lachman Singh Gill after defecting

Source : A.S. Narang, Punjab Accord and Elections - Retrospect and Prospect. A study in the Development Democracy and distortion, op.cit. p.

The first non-congress ministry in Punjab included all the political parties other than the Congress. The CPM did not join the ministry but remained an active constituent of the United Front. Thus the first non-congress ministry in Punjab was headed by Gurnam Singh and was formed on 8th March 1967.

The first non-congress ministry in Punjab, was 'cocktail of various ideologies', united with one common aim i.e. to replace the congress from power.

After coming to political power the Akali Dal exempted all Land holdings upto 5 acres from payment of land revenues. Though it did not help the farmers much but it was taken as a good gesture. The United front also accepted in principle the demand for abolition of betterment fee levied on areas irrigated by Bhakra canals. Further, instead of the then fixed procurement prices the states government introduced the producers guaranteed price which was to include reasonable and realistic profit on the cost of production besides incentives. And the Chief Minister also criticised the Union budget for proposing taxes on agricultural

wealth , power driven pumps, lubricants, oil and fertilizers.¹⁹

Besides this, it had number of ambitious schemes for improving agricultural productions. Like it secured a world bank loan of 39 million \$ to boost farm production. Out of it 25.3 million \$ was marked for the purchase of tractors. But only those farmers were eligible for the allotment of tractors who could use it for 1000 hours in a year.²⁰

The government also asked for the ammendment of Hindu Succession act 1956, and also asked to entitle married women to get a share in the property of the inlaws than fathers. This was vociferously demanded by the Akali Dal on the plea that the existing laws were leading to the fragmentation of land holdings.²¹

19. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej - The Akali Politics, op.cit. p. 195.

20. *Ibid.* p. 195

21. A.S. Narang, Storm over Sutlej : The Akali Politics, op.cit P. 182. Also see for a discussion on coalition ministries in Punjab from 1967-70, J.C. Anand, "The Punjab, Akalis in the Coalition" in K.P. Karunakaran; ed. Coalition governments in India: problems and Prospects Simla, Indian Institute of Advanced study, 1975.

On the whole the programme of the Akali Dal emphasised upon making agriculture more profitable.

The first non-Congress ministry fell after 8 months on 22nd November 1967, more because of the internal differences within the Akali Dal, than among the coalitional partners.

The personal differences among the individual members of the Akali Dal were on the question of power and position in the new ministry. Lachman Singh Gill, member of the Sant Akali Dal, was dissatisfied with his own position and the position of his supporters. L.S. Gill had longer standing in the Akali Dal than either Gurnam Singh or Harcharan Singh Hudiara, but while Gurnam Singh became the chief minister of United Front ministry and Hudiara was elected the Resident of the Sant Akali Dal, L.S. Gill was left with a ministerial post of Cabinet rank. Thus L.S. Gill defected with his followers. It is held that L.S. Gill was instigated by the Congress. And later on formed the ministry with the help of the Congress support.

The differences among the coalitional partners had also arisen on the question of language, on policies con-

cerning Schedule castes and labour agitation.²²

The Republican party leaders expressed dissatisfaction on the govt. policy towards Schedule castes. And on the other hand, the line followed by the CPI did not appeal the Akali Dal and the Jan Sangh. In fact the inclusion of the CPI was considered to be a problem for the Akali Dal and the Jan Sangh. The then Punjab food minister Satyapal Dang was accused of fomenting labour agitation and strikes in Punjab. Thus the relations of the Jan Sangh and the Akali Dal on the one hand and the CPI on the other remained strained.

The relations between the Akali Dal and the Jan Sangh also did not remain cordial, differences arose on the language issue. It is believed that the Jan Sangh and joined the United front on the basis of an agreement between the Akali Dal and itself. The agreement (1) concerning the safeguards of Hindi inspite of Punjab being a Unilingual state ; (2) privately managed schools should continue to teach both Punjabi and Hindi (3) Hindi being the national lanaguage should replace English as the link language.²³ Thus because of the

22. *Ibid*

23. J.C. Anand, "Punjab Politics of Retreating Communalism" in Iqbal Narain ed. State politics in India, Meerut, Meenakshi Publication, 1975, p. 275

compulsions of coalition politics i.e. interms of saving the coalition the Akali Dal allowed the 'Sachar formula' to continue.²⁴ This formula was given after independence during the Congress rule in Punjab by the Congress which recognised the bilingual character of the state. The formula provided for a notional division of the province into two zones, a Punjabi Speaking zone and a Hindi speaking zone. In the Punjabi zone the medium of instruction was to be Punjabi in Gurmukhi Script and in the Hindi zone, Hindi in Devanagari script. And in order to retain the bilingual character of the province it provided for a compulsory learning of both languages in each zone.²⁵

The tension was diffused for sometime, but the language issue emerged again in the L.S. Gill's ministry, who denied the bilingual character of the state. All these contradictions arose because of communal pressures on both the parties.

24. A.S. Narang, storm over Sutlej : The Akali politics, op.cit., p. 199.

25. *Ibid*, p. 88

Apart from their differences on the language issue which resulted because of communal pressures on both the parties, differences also arose on economic issue which resulted from class pressures on the both. The Akali Dal representing the interests of the and the Jan Sangh representing the interest of the trading class farming class. For instance the Akali Dal's decisions to eliminate some traders from the wheat trade and to impose ceilings on urban properties without curbing the interests of the farming classes antagonised the urban propertied classes.²⁶

However Gurnam Singh's ministry fell more due to internal conflicts within the Akali Dal, than among the coalitional partners. L.S. Gill defected front with 17 members of Legislative assembly. And he formed a minority government with the support of the Congress, under the banner of the 'Janata party'. It was a minority government for its strength never exceeded 21 members.²⁷ He formed the ministry on 25th November 1967 and it fell on August 1968 when the Congress withdrew its support. And Presidents rule was proclaimed from 23 August 1968 to Febraury 1969.²⁸

26. A.S. Narang, Punjab Accord and Elections - Retrospect and Prospect. A study in the development Democracy and distortion, Op.Cit, p. 79

27. J.C. Anand, "The Punjab Akali in the coalition" in K.P. KarunaKaran ed. Coalition Governments in India : Problems and Prospects, op.cit, p. 237

28. The Tribune, 24 August 1968.

a provided suitable conditions for the holding of mid-term elections.

In the mid-term polls in 1969 both the Master (Akali Dal) and the Sant (Akali Dal) United and formed an alliance with the Jan Sangh only, because it felt that it had more in common with the Jan Sangh than with the left parties.

The Akali-Jan Sangh coalition won a clear majority.²⁹ See Table (IV)). The United Akali Dal emerged as a single largest party with 43 seats and 29.6% of votes polled. On the other hand the congress got 38 seats and 39.2 percent of votes were polled in its favours. And the Jan Sangh got 8 seats and 8.8 percent of votes were polled in it favour. The new ministry was once again headed by Gurnam Singh.

The coalition ministry began well but differences arose later over the language policy. The extremist section of the Akali Dal and the Jan Sangh criticised the two coalitional partners for their conciliatory approach towards each other. The major point of difference between the two partners arose over the declaration of new policy by the government on July 1969. The

29. The Tribune, 12 February 1969.

'Sachar formula' which had been regulating the educational policy of the government was scrapped and was replaced by a 'Three language' formula according to which Punjabi was to be recognised as the 1st compulsory language and the medium of instruction at all stages in government schools. Hindi was to be recognised as second language from the 4th class and English was to be recognised as the third language from the 6th standards. And the Akali Dal favoured a uniform policy for both the government schools and government aided private schools.

The Jan Sangh threatened to quit the ministry unless the govt. aided private schools were given an option to adopt any language as the medium of instruction, according to the choice of the parents of the pupils.

The Akali Dal agreed to the Jan Sangh demand in order to save the coalition. However inspite of this the relations between the two remained strained.

However the ministry faced the most severe challenge when Dr. Jagjit Singh a former minister in Gills ministry who had been elected President of almost defunct 'Janata Party' on 18th May 1969, raised the issue of Chandigarh to embarass the Sant. It is held

that some Congress men also supported the move.³⁰ He persuaded Darshan Singh Pherumon a man of determination to fast unto death and accomplish the task which had been left incomplete by Sant, despite of the religious vows taken by him in 1966. Pherumon started fasting with an aim in mind to die unless Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas were included in Punjab. And he began his fast on 15th August 1969 and died after 74 days of continuous fasting, on 27th October 1969. When Pherumon died after fasting Sant Fateh Singh embarrassed by the development took up a fast unto death for the inclusion of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas to Punjab. He went on a fast on 26th January 1970, and on 29th January 1970 the government of India gave an award. It must be pointed that an additional complication had arisen when the government of Haryana also claimed Chandigarh.

The award accommodated the demands of both Punjab and Haryana. According to this award

1. Chandigarh was to remain a Union territory for some time, at the end of which it was to be transferred to Punjab.

³⁰ J.C. Anand, " Punjab Politics of Retreating Communalism" in Iqbal Narain ed. State Politics in India, op.cit, p. 283.

2. And it was to be given in lieu of Fazilka and Abohar along with 104 villages in the two tehsils a rich cotton part to Haryana.

The Haryana government accepted the award. The Sant and the Akali Dal also welcomed the award in the beginning and broke the fast. But later second thoughts developed, exchange of Fazilka and Abohar a rich cotton belt was considered to be a bad bargain for Chandigarh. And the Akali Dal opposed the award not only because of this but also because, the proposal of government was not based on Linguistic principle, but on communal considerations.³¹ All the political parties of Punjab rejected the proposal of the government because it was not based upon Linguistic principle.

The second Gurnam Singh's ministry fell when majority group of the Sant Akali Dal under the leadership of Prakash Singh Badal defected. His supporters included 44 Akalis, 7 from the Jan Sangh and 2 other MLAs and the CPM promised to vote with Badal's group on all crucial occasions.³² Badal formed his ministry on 27th March 1970. Gurnam Singh organised his own party called Akali Dal; Giani Bhupinder Singh a rebel Akali Leader revised Master (Akali Dal).

31. Harikishan Singh Surjeet, "Lessons of Punjab", *op.cit.* p. 21.

32. J.C. Anand, "Punjab Politics of Retreating communalism" in Iqbal Narain ed, State Politics in India, *op.cit.* p. 285.

Thus there were three Akali Dals at that time the Akali Dal (Sant), the Akali Dal (Gurnam Singh) and the Akali Dal (Master).³³

Badals ministry (27th March 1970 to 14th June 1971) was a coalition of the Sant (Akali Dal) and the Jan Sangh. But on 30th June 1970, the Jan Sangh withdrew its support from the ministry and preferred to sit on the opposition benches. Badal's ministry was reduced to a minority but it continued to hold office after arriving at an understanding with the Congress.

Relations between the Sant (Akali Dal) and the Jan Sangh deteriorated almost immediately after the formation of the ministry. Both the parties were once again under the pressure from the extremist section of their co-religions. The major demand of the Jan Sangh was that the ministry should honour the commitment made earlier to set up a university at Jullunder and to revise its stand on the jurisdiction of the new Guru Nanak University established at Amritsar.³⁴

33. *Ibid*

34. J.C. Anand, "Punjab Politics of Retreating Communalism", in Iqbal Narain ed. State Politics in India op.cit, p. 286.

And it also wanted the ministry to prevent the reported decision of the Punjabi University at Patiala to exclude the use of Hindi in the University not only as a medium of instruction but also as a compulsory subject.³⁵ The entire controversy surrounded around the language problem in the state. The Jan Sangh's other charges were that the ministry had been reluctant in implementating decisions accepted by both the coalitional partners. And that promotions and changes were made on communal and partisian basis.³⁶

The Jan Sangh under the pressure of Arya Samaj, could not stay in the ministry without getting its major demands conceded.³⁷ Thus it withdrew its support on 30th June 1970. In the meantime there were defections from Badal's group of Legislator's also.

The Sant (Akali Dal) was in minority, it tried to win over the Jan Sangh to rejoin the Coalition. An attempt was also made to bring back Gurnam Singh's (Akali party). But all these attempts did not succeed. And then a major effort was made to win over the congress.

35. *Ibid*

36. *Ibid*

37. J.C. Anand, "Punjab politics of retreating communalism." in Iqbal Narain ed, State Politics in India, op.cit., p. 286.

The congress insisted that the Akali Dal must follow a secular outlook and the economic programme of the Cong. (R). Both the parties also arrived at an understanding over the next elections in Punjab

The statement on 'policy and programme' committed the Akali Dal (Sant) to land Reforsm, state trading in food grains, taxation on richer sections of society, support to weaker section of the community. No reference was made to the status of Hindi or to the educational policy of Punjab government.³⁸

38. J.C. Anand, "Punjab Politics of retreating communalism", in Iqbal Narain ed, State Politics in India, op.cit., p. 287

CHAPTER - THREE

AKALI POLITICS (1971 - 1979)

Despite the fact that the 1970 award could not be implemented, in the 1971 parliamentary and State assembly elections the Congress came to an agreement with the Sant (Skali Dal). It decided to follow Congress(R)'s economic programme, and the two allotted seats among themselves. The Sant (Akali Dal) decided to contest not more than 4 parliamentary seats out of total 13 from Punjab and decided to support the Congress from other 9 parliamentary constituencies.

But when the elections came, the Akalis went back, and decided to contest 7 seats and hoped to win 9 if there was no arrangement between the Akalis and the Congress. The Congress thus had to look towards the CPI for an arrangement. The two parties decided to support each other in the elections. Thus the Sant (Akali Dal) went in for the polls all alone.

The Congress fought the 1971 elections at the national and regional level with the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' and 'Socialism'. It must be remembered that since the Congress was out of power in most of the States in 1967 elections and had come to political power

at the Centre with much reduced majority, it tried to reverse the situation by adopting radical postures. It nationalised 14 banks, abolished privy purses and took anti monopoly measures and gave populist slogans like Garibi Hatao, Socialism etc. And forced the Congress to split, and presented the split as a split between the rightist and the leftist within the party. And the Congress (R) representing the Leftist forces. Mrs. Gandhi adopted the same strategy which was adopted by Prime Minister Nehru after 1952 elections at Awadi Session. The Congress came back to power with a 2/3rd majority at the Centre, and the state assembly elections further established its dominance.

The Congress came back to power in Punjab also. The Sant (Akali Dal) lost, both in the parliamentary and state assembly elections. In the parliamentary elections it lost 11 of the 12 seats it contested but its share of votes seemed to have increased from 27.03% in 1967 to 30.83% in 1971¹. However this increase in the percentage was not a real increase, its share increased because it contested 12 seats in 1971 instead of 8 in 1967.

 1. The Tribune , 12 March, 1971.

Thus the Sant (Akali Dal) did not seem to have made serious inroads as far as its support among the Sikhs was concerned.

On the other hand, the Congress(R) also could not make serious impact on the Sikhs. The additional support that it got in Punjab in 1971 Parliamentary elections was from the Hindus. The loss of the Jan Sangh votes was almost equal to the increase in the Congress(R) vote from 37.41% in 1967 to 45.99% in 1971.² As Balraj Puri pointed out that Hindu vote in Punjab was neither pro-congress nor pro-Jan Sangh but was anti-Akali. In the 1967 elections, the Hindus were sore with the Congress for conceding the Punjabi Suba and therefore supported the Jan Sangh. And formed governments with the Akali Dal which was representing the Sikh religious and farming class interest from 1967 to 1971, with a view that they would represent Hindu religious and trading class interest. Though the coalitions did symbolise the Hindu-Sikh unity for a while, but differences emerged between the two over language and class interests. Therefore, the Hindu supporters of the

2. *Balraj Puri, "Hindu Black Lash caused Akali Rout" Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.6 No.13, 27 March 1971, p. 209.*

the Jan Sangh voted for the Congress(R) in a bid to defeat the Akalis, in 1971 elections.

In the state assembly elections also the Congress(R) came back to power with the support of the Hindus. It exploited the government instability in between 1967-71 and gave the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' and Socialism. It won 66 seats out of 88 contested and secured 42.84% of votes, while the Akali percentage fell to 27.65% against 29.46% and won 24 seats out of 72 contested.³ Thus in both the Parliamentary and state assembly elections it was basically the shift in the Hindu support which tilted the balance in favour of the Congress(R). (See Table V).

The new ministry was headed by Giani Zail Singh.

The Akali Dal got frustrated after its defeat. The election results revealed once again that the Akali Dal did not had much support among the Sikhs. It began to think of various ways and means in order to make serious inroads into the Sikhs in order to fight back the Congress. Therefore it began making communal appeals in order to mobilise the Sikh masses.

3. The Tribune, 15 March 1972.

TABLE-V
PARTY POSITION IN THE 1972 ASSEMBLY ELECTION
IN PUNJAB

| Party | No. of Seats contested | No. of seats won | Percentage of votes won |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Congress(R) | 88 | 66* | 42.84 |
| Akali Dal(Sant) | 72 | 24 | 27.65 |
| CPI | 13 | 10 | 6.65 |
| CPM | 17 | 1 | 3.15 |
| Jan Sangh | 33 | - | 4.97 |
| Congress(O) | 8 | - | 0.24 |
| R.P.I. | 1 | - | 0.24 |
| Independent & Others | 233 | 3 | 14.54 |

* Including one candidate who was elected unopposed.

SOURCE: Paul Brass, Religions, Language and Politics in North India,
Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1975.

Out of these circumstances arose the much talked about Anandpur Sahib Resolution (APSR). Any analysis of the APSR must take into account the circumstances which gave birth to APSR. The resolution was adopted by the Sant (Akali Dal) committee, when it was out of power in 1973. There had been three versions of APSR.⁴

A careful analysis of all the versions would suggest there had ^{been} certain themes which had ^{been} common to all. One, that all the versions had ^{been} based upon the theme that the Sikhs were a separate religious community, historically and internationally recognised; ^{two} they were entitled to have a separate state within the Indian Union; three, all the versions ^{had been} speaking in terms of establishing a truly federal form of govt., where the regions would possess all the powers except foreign relations, defence, communications and currency which would be retained by the Central Government.

The third version of APSR presented by Giani Ajmer Singh ^{requires} a detailed analysis because besides speaking about establishing a federal form of Government and a separate state for the Sikhs within the Indian Union it gave a detailed picture of economic and religious goals to be realised by the Akali Dal.

4. Pramod Kumar and others, The Punjab Crisis - Context and trends, (Chandigarh, Man & Dev. Press, 1984) p.124-137.

This version of the APSR has been quoted from Giani Ajmer Singh (1.8.77). The draft of the new policy programme of the Shironmani Akali Dal, published by Sardar Gurdharan Singh, Secretary, Shiromani Akali Dal, Amritsar. All the versions of APSR have been discussed together with a view to have a proper understanding. For all the versions see the pages (142-163) of the dissertation.

The religious goals of this version included propogation of Sikhism, preservation of separate identity of the Sikhs, incalcation: of religious fervour among the Sikhs, belief in Sikh code of conduct, generating feelings of respect for Sikh intellectuals writers, preachers etc., publication and recitation of Gurbani, enactment of all India Gurudwara act and bringing all the Gurudwaras all over the World under single administration.

The Economic programme of the resolution held that economic power had been in the hands of monopolists, andbig traders, who along with the economic power had been wiedling political power. In order to establish social justice, the Akali Dal would stand for breaking up this monopoly of economic and political power. Further the resolution held that the Akali Dal would stand for Land Reforms, which would envisage a ceiling on Land above 30 acres. And the excess land would be distributed among the landless. It also held that it would stand

for modernization of agrarian sector and would make arrangements to enable the middle classes and the poor farmers to seek loans. And would work for the fixation of the prices of the agricultural produce on the basis of the return of the middle-class farmers, and for complete nationalisation of the trade in food grains. And the resolution also opposed the demarcation of food zones or restrictions on the movement of foodgrains.

About the industrial sector, the resolution held that all the key industries should be brought under the Public Sector and the basic consumer industries should be nationalised in order to stabilise the prices of the consumers with a view to help the poor. And that it would strive for the establishment of agro-based industries.

Now the question that arise is what could be the implications of APSR? What could be the implications of providing religious, political and economic goals ? (It must be remembered that the economic goals were added only latter with a change in times and circumstances. But have been discussed together since they form part of the APSR).

The APSR not only gave religious goals i.e. propagation of Sikhism etc., but also emotionally charged phrases like---'The brute majority in India... have imposed constitutional arrangements which denude the Sikhs of their..... liquidating the Sikhs politically.... and

exposing them to spiritual decay.... into the saltish Waters of inchoate Hinduism...' "Sikhs are determined by all legitimate means to extricate and free themselves from this degrading and death dealing situation."

The implications of giving religious goals were to mobilise the Sikh masses. This was because the election results had revealed that the Akali Dal did not have much support among the Sikhs. As Paul Brass pointed while commenting at the victory of the Congress(R) at 1972 state assembly elections in Punjab that the Akali Dal thereafter had two options - either the option of adopting a communal approach, or the option of adopting a secular stand i.e. in terms of coalescing with other political parties and seeking power.⁵ In 1973 Harish K. Puri pointed, the Akali Dal seemed to have chosen the first alternative.⁶

Similarly the APSR emphasised upon political goals i.e. of establishing a separate state for the Sikhs within the Indian Union, and also upon the establishment of a truly federal form of government with maximum state autonomy to the federating units.

It must be pointed out that APSR had been emphasising

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5. Paul Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in North India, op. cit. P. 433-34.
6. Harish K. Puri "Akali Politics - Emerging Compulsions", in Wallace and Chopra, ed Political Dynamics of Punjab op.cit.P.42.

upon a separate state within the Indian Union on religious basis. And not for a separate independent state on religious basis outside the Indian Union. Further it must be pointed that the idea of establishing a truly federal form of government and the idea of state autonomy are not merely political or constitutional questions. All these questions have certain implications and are relational. Relational to the rising economic aspirations, which can be fulfilled in a truly federal set up. Thus what one wants to point is that the idea of establishing a truly federal form of government or autonomy to the units also arises as a counter tendency towards centralisation which acts as a direct constraint in the interest of the regional ruling classes.

An analysis of the Economic aspect of the resolution would bring out glaring opposition between the Akali Dal's slogan (a) of establishing justice in the society by reducing inequalities between the rich and poor; (b) and the actual interests to be served by various demands.⁷

For instance the demand for cheap inputs and modernization of the agrarian sector would serve the interests of the middle and rich farmers.

The demand for India to be considered a single food zone would benefit those possessing surplus for sale and having access to those

7. *For an analysis of the economic aspect of the resolution see Pramod Kumar and others - Punjab Crisis: Context and trends, OP. CIT. P.73-74.*

means which would help them to store and transport their crops from one area to another and at the same time fetch higher prices. All this would benefit big and small farmers.

And the demand that the prices of agricultural produce should be fixed on the basis of the returns of the middle class farmers would benefit the middle class and big farmers because their per-capita input expenditure would be lower and they would have a large marketable surplus.

Similarly the demand for higher remunerative prices of agricultural produce would ensure benefit to those having a marketable surplus. No doubt, this would bring stability to the return of the small farmers, but it is the rich and small farmers having large marketable surplus would capitalise on this measure. Further such a movement in prices would be disadvantageous to poor consumers, landless, petty and marginal farmers who will have to spend greater portion of their income on food.

Again the establishment of agro-based industries would benefit those having surplus marketable capital.

The analysis of the economic aspect of the resolution would lead us to conclude that the demands are relating to making agriculture more profitable, and they do not ensure distributive justice at all. As S.P. Dang pointed, that these demands had been the demands of a particular class, but the religious demands were added in order to mobilise

the Sikh masses.⁸ To conclude this particular aspect of the resolution, most of the demands in APSR could be seen in terms of making agriculture more profitable and similarly the demand for state autonomy in the context of Punjab could also be seen in terms of growth of the economic interests.

Thus on the whole, the APSR's emphasised upon two aspects - One on religious, given with a view to mobilise the Sikh masses; two on the economic aspect, and the political aspect which could be seen in relation to the economic aspect.

However it must be mentioned that, in the beginning and mid of 1970's APSR could not become a rallying point, due to discontentment among the masses against the policies of the Congress and due to exposure of various slogans of Mrs. Gandhi i.e. Garibi Hadao.

Thus APSR should be read in a context, and not in isolation. It was the product of the given situation in Punjab and the general developments in the Indian Society.

The beginning and mid of 70's was a period of centralisation of political power in the centre. The party

8. S.P. Dang, "Class Basis of Akali Demands", Mainstream, vol.21, No.30, 26 March 1980.

organisation and institutions were undermined. There was a general decay of the institutions and power came to be more and more concentrated in the executive. Besides, this the economy was under stagnation. There were people's movements, railway strikes etc.

A movement started in Gujarat against the then Chief Minister Chiman Bhai Patel, who was charged of corruption. Similar movement started in Bihar by Jai Prakash Narayan. The Akalis in Punjab too joined the movement. Thus the Akali party became a part of the anti-congress national mainstream.

Then came the Allahabad High Court verdict in the May 1975, which quashed Mrs. Gandhi election to Lok Sabha. The opposition parties used it as a powerful weapon against the Congress party and started demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister from her office and resume it only when Supreme Court gave judgement in her favor. The Prime Minister took it as a serious challenge and was not sure whether Supreme Court would give a judgement in her favour. It was at this time Jai Prakash Narayan talked of bringing 'Total Revolution'.

Afraid of vacating office temporarily, Mrs. Gandhi after bypassing parliament and her cabinet declared Emergency and "transferred overnight the decaying parlia-

mentary democracy into a Centralised authoritarian regime."⁹

The Akalis with other political parties right and left criticised Emergency. The resolution adopted by party's executive in Amritsar on 28-30 June 1975 unanimously criticised the Emergency as an "onslaught on the civil liberties, freedom of press, and freedom of speech, a rape on democracy and a great step towards dictatorship."¹⁰

A 'Save democracy Morcha' began on 9th July with the five high ranking Akalis courting arrest. The movement continued until elections were announced in January 1977. It is estimated that over 40,000 Akalis were arrested or under detention including the President of the Akali Dal and eighteen members of the Punjab Assembly. Pro-Akali newspapers were closed or penalized. In addition to demonstrating on regular basis, special occasions such as Diwali and Baisakhi marked extra special protests.¹¹ Living in jails during the emergency period with other political parties helped in secularization of their political perceptions and priorities. And this was visible in the 1977 elections to Punjab Parliamentary and State Assembly elections, when they decided to form a

9. Sanjeeb Mukherjee, "A Schematic View of Centralising and Federalising Tendencies in the Indian polity since the Mid 1980's", in Tarun Bose ed. *Indian Federation*, Calcutta K.P. Bagchi & Company, 1987.

10. A.S. Narang, *The Spokesman*, Vol.27, No.19. 2 January, 1978, p.6-7.

11. *Ibid.*

coalition with the Janata party despite the fact that the Akali Dal had majority in the elections.

During the Emergency, Mrs. Gandhi took series of measures further liberalising the economy. The dominant section of the ruling coalition supported the emergency. With the absence of political movement during the Emergency, and with growth in the Economy, Congress became complacent.⁽¹²⁾ In order to legitimise her position Mrs. Gandhi declared elections ^{to} parliament.

This provided a golden opportunity to the political representatives of the other sections of the ruling coalition to unite and defeat the congress. The different all-India political parties representing these sections i.e. the Congress (O), the BLD, the Jan Sangh, the socialist party and the congress (for democracy) merged together to form the Janata Party.

The Janata party won a massive victory in March 1977 elections to parliament. This combination routed the congress almost all over India except Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Assam, Congress could win only 154 seats and the same pattern was repeated in the state assemblies. It was for the first time that the Congress suffered a complete defeat

12. Sanjeeb Mukherjee, "A Schematic View of the Centralising and Federalising Tendencies in the Indian Party since the Mid 1980's", in Tarun Bose ed. op.cit.

The Akali Dal in Punjab won a resounding victory in the elections, both to the parliament and the state assembly elections. Got 58 seats out of 70 contested votes were polled in its favour. Where as the Congress could manage to get only 17 seats but 37.7% votes were polled in its favour. It got more per cent of votes because it had consted 26 more seats as compared to the Akali Dal.¹³ (See Table - VI). An article in Economic and Political weekly¹⁴ emphasized upon the Akali Dal's resistance to emergency as the source of its victory in the 1977 elections. "The Akali triumph was due to :

1. the party's sustained agitation against the emergency and restrictions on meeting etc. at Amritsar where an Akali Jatha appeared almost everyday to flout the orders;
2. the strong resentment against oppressive Congress rule ;
3. the unpopularity of state Congress Leaders who have Lost credibility."

13. See *Election Commission Report, 1977 Vol.1, Delhi, 1979* also *Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.12, No.25, 18 June 1977 p. 1000-1001.*

14. *Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.12, No.13, 26 March 1977, p. 532.*

TABLE - VI
 PARTY POSITION AFTER THE 1977 STATE
 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN PUNJAB

| Party | Seats contested | Seats won | Percentage of vote |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Congress | 96 | 17 | 38.07 |
| Akali Dal | 70 | 58 | 31.41 |
| Janata | 41 | 22 | 14.99 |
| CPI | 18 | 7 | 6.10 |
| CPM | 8 | 8 | 3.50 |
| Independent & Others | 449 | 2 | 9.93 |

SOURCE:

*India, Election Commission, Report on the
 General Election to Legislative Assemblies
 1977-78 and Presidential Elections, 1977
 Vol. 1, Delhi, 1979.*

Though the Akali Dal won a clear majority in the state assembly elections it decided to form a coalition with the Janta Party. Thus a marked change in the politics of the Akali Dal was visible. In other words once again 'coalition-accomodative' politics emerged.

On the other hand this particular election gave a lesson to the Congress, as in its perception it could displace the Akali Dal and capture power in the state by befriending the non-sikh population and backward classes, who according to the 1981 census constitute 47% of the total population.

The Akali Dal formed a coalition with Janta Party in June 1977. The coalition was headed by Prakash Singh Badal. Further in December 1977, in two bye-elections, the Akali Dal and the Jana Singh Cooperated and each defeated a Congress rival.¹⁵

It has been held that cooperation between the rural oriented Akali Dal, and Hindu Urban based Janta

15. The Spokesman, Vol. 27, NO.18, 26 December 1977, p.1.

party was impressive during the first two years. Explosive issues which could cause internal divisions in the two parties were handled with moderation and skill. An article in the Sikh weekly drew a picture of Akali - Janta relations in the 1977 coalition : ".....there is perfect understanding, cooperation and unanimity in the Akali Dal and the government.... The Janta Party leaders in Punjab - who belonged to the erstwhile Jan Sangh - have now completely identified themselves with the interests of the state instead of with the interest of any particular section of state's people on communal basis. The same can be said of Akali leaders who have shown no communal bias or anti-bias." The article also contrasts this harmony with a past record of 'factionalism' and 'groupism' in the Sikh community, the Akali Dal and with the government.¹⁶

For instance, the explosive situation, when Mahant Sewa took a fast into death in March 1978 for the inclusion of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking

16. The Spokesman, Vol. 27, No.4, 12 September 1977, p. 10

areas into PUnjab, was diffused by major Akali Leaders. The Akali Dal organisational Leader Jagdev Singh Talwandi agreed with the stand of the religious leader but at the same time stated firmly that he opposed disturbing (Hindu-Sikh) harmony. Similarly the SGPC President Gurcharan Singh Tohra held that all issues would be solved through peaceful negotiations.¹⁷

However the Sikh demands continued to be made but on the basis of negotiations than through agitation. The demands could be categorised in two - one relating to discrimination against Punjab and the other discrimination against the Sikhs. The state wide demands focussed on increased state autonomy, the need for more major projects for PUnjab such as delayed Thein Dam, and higher procurement prices for agricultural products.¹⁸ The demands relating to discrimination against the Sikhs included reduction in the recruitment of the Sikhs in the armed forces from 11% to 3%, the Punjabi Language 'had not received its proper status', and that Sikhs in other states suffer discrimination.¹⁹

17. The Spokesman, Vol.27, No.28, 6 March 1978, p. 1.

18. The Spokesman, Vol.27, No.12, 1977 p.1 & Vol.27, No.7 10 October 1977, p.1

19. The Spokesman, Vol.27, No.7, 10 Oct. 1977, p.11 and also See Indian Express 25 September, 1980.

Thus during this phase, the demands continued to be made during the Akali-Janta party coalition in Punjab, but more on the basis of negotiations, than through disruptive tactics. Perhaps, because they were in power in Punjab Legislative assembly with the Janata Party and 2 out of 9 elected Akalis in the Parliamentary elections in Punjab were in the Union Council of Ministers.

On the whole, the two years of Akali-Janata Coalition showed perfect harmony.

The problem arose when the Janata Party at the Centre could not contain its heterogeneous elements. Charan Singh formed the Janata(S) and subsequently the Lok Dal which resulted in the Collapse of the Janata party at the Centre. One issue that led to the breakdown of the Janata Party at the Centre was the role of the RSS and the Jan Sangh elements within the Janata Party. Thus charges of Hindu Communalism were laid.

The Punjab organizational Leader of the Akali Dal Jagdev Singh Talwandi²⁰ responded successfully by

20. *Sant Fateh Singh organisation head of the Akali Dal was succeeded by Jathedar Mohan Singh Tur, he in turn was succeeded by Jagdev Singh Talwandi.*

ending the Akali-Janata alliance. His group characterised it as the "Janata dominated by RSS".²¹ Thus the 26th month old coalition ended on 3 September 1979.

On the other hand, Prakash Singh Badal ministerial head fought against terminating the alliance. He wanted the alliance to continue till the next election in January 1980.

The differences of opinion led to the creation of two factions, one led by organisational head of the Akali Dal i.e. Jagdev Singh Talwandi, and the other by ministerial head of the Akali Dal i.e. Prakash Singh Badal. And the presidentship of the latter group of the Akali Dal fell into the hands of Sant Harchand Singh Longowal when in the March 1980 elections to Akali Dal executive, Talwandi was defeated and he and the Akali Dal executive were replaced by a seven man committee.²²

Thus not only inter-party conflict took place, but also intra-party conflict occurred. And all this

21. The Hindu, 4 September, 1979

22. Sunday Standard, 2 March 1980; The Tribune 3 March 1980

aided Congress(I) to come back to power in Punjab in 1980, both parliamentary and State assembly elections.

In the parliamentary elections to Punjab Congress(I) swept 12 of the 13 seats.²³ In the May 1980 state Assembly elections Congress(I) got 63 seats out of 117 total seats, whereas the Akali Dal (Longowal) got 37 seats as against 70 in the last elections. Whereas the Akali Dal's former alliance which split into three could manage only 1 seat i.e. (BJP - with Jan Sangh support base, rump Janata, and Janata(S) - subsequently Lok Dal). The Congress(I) secured 45.19% of valid votes, against 38.07% in 1977 elections, whereas the Akali Dal (Longowal) secured 26.92% of valid votes, against 31.41% polled in the 1977 elections.²⁴ (see Appendix-I).

It must be pointed that after the split, the dominant Akali Dal, consisted of prominent leaders like Sant Harchand Singh Longowal - the President of the

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23. See Paul Wallace, "Prebiscatory Politics in India's 1980, Parliamentary Elections : Punjab and Haryana", Asian Survey Vol.20, No.6, June 1980. Also see Fact sheet on Punjab prepared by Election Commission, Delhi.
24. For the State Assembly results, and percentage of votes See The Fact Sheet on Punjab prepared by Election Commission, Delhi.

Akali Dal after Talwandi, former Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal, and SGPC President Gurcharan Singh Tohra. This group became moderate, moderate in the process than in relation to the issues.²⁵

Whereas the other minority group, started emphasising the goal of an autonomous state.²⁶ And delineated the Centre-state relations at a press conference in New Delhi on 13 October 1980. According to it Centre was supposed to have control over only four subjects, defence, communication, currency and external affairs. And he threatened at the press conference to launch an agitation if his demands were not accepted.²⁷ Thus Jagdev Singh Talwandi who was for moderation and Hindu-Sikh harmony and Hindu-Sikh unity in 1979, changed dramatically after 1979.

Another phenomena that developed in late 1970's was that of Bhinderwale. After the Akali party had

25. P.D. Mohindra, The Tribune, 20 October, 1980.

26. The Tribune, 15 September 1980.

27. The Tribune, 14 October 1980.

fought the Emergency the Congress party began boosting religious fundamentalist Sant Jarnail Singh Binderwale in a bid to build an alternative leadership to the Akali Dal.

Mrs. Gandhi unleashed such forces which became difficult to be leashed later on.

CHAPTER - FOUR
PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Besides the developments mentioned in the previous chapters, I would focus on another important development because the resultant situation gave rise to a number of demands and problems.¹

1. For this kind of an argument see -
 - a) Pramod Kumar and others, Punjabi Crisis : Context and Trends, op. cit.
 - b) Javeed Alaam, "Political Implications of the Economic contradictions in Punjab" Social Scientist, Vol. 15, NO.10, October, 1986.
 - c) S.P. Dang, "Punjab Pre and Post Accord Developments" in Kalim Bahadur ed., South Asia in Transition : Conflicts and Tensions, New Delhi, Patriot, 1986
 - d) Harish K. Puri, "Analysis of the Socio-Economic basis of the protest", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 18, No.4, 22 January 1983.
 - e) I.K. Gujral, "The Economic Dimension" in Dr. Abida Samiuddin ed. The Punjab Crisis, Challenges and Response, New Delhi, Mittal, 1985.
 - f) Ibid, "Punjab's Anguish", Mainstream, Vol. 20, No. 50, 14 August 1982.

The Green Revolution was at its height in the beginning and middle of 1970 decade. One of the important Social consequence of Green Rev. had been that it led to the creation of capitalist farmers happening to be Jat Sikhs. But in the Late 1970's Green Revolution started petering off. And further investment stopped showing increasing, results at increasing rate which it had been showing in the past. This development had been because of the fact that agrarian sector had reached a saturation point in terms of investment. further cropping intensity and net sown area had also reached their maximum point.² (see Table IX). Thus with this emerged the question of maintaining rapid growth of Punjab economy.

Wrapped with the growth of Punjab economy had also been the question of satisfying the rising aspirations of the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers. Such aspirations it must be pointed had been the natural outcome of thorough going capitalisation of Punjab agriculture. The capitalist

2. See (a) K.S. Gill, "Agricultural development in Punjab", p. 6-9.

(b) R.S. Johar, J.S. Khanna and P.S. Raikhy, "Industrial development of Punjab:", p. 16.

in R.S. Hohar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, op.cit.

development in agrarian sector gave rise to a large amount of capital and it was successfully invested. And this capital multiplied also, but it stopped multiplying later.

It must be pointed that the Logic of capital is that it cannot remain static whether it is in the hands of the Industrial bourgeoisie or the capitalist farmers. It must grow or multiply whether in one sector or other sectors. In other words it does not perceive boundaries. And when it cannot grow in one sector or in the given boundary lines it tries to encompass other areas. It sweeps away what ever comes in its way, or the bearer of capital comes in conflict with the forces which as a restraint.

We find the same situation in Punjab, where capital had been looking for various ways and means to go out of agrarian sector because of its complete saturation. We will also see how the bearer of capital came in conflict with the force that had been coming in its way.

And we will see later how the bearer of the agrarian capital came in conflict with the forces that were coming in its way i.e. the Central government, the Hindu traders, industrialists and merchants and the Bhaba Sikhs (the junior partners of the Hindu traders, industrialists).

What had been suggested for sustaining the rapid growth of Punjab economy and for satisfying the rising aspirations of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers had been diversification of agrarian capital whether in money form or surplus agricultural products into other sectors of the economy i.e. industry, trade, commerce.

A brief look at the Industrial sector in Punjab would show that the Industrial sector could provide an outlet for diversification of agrarian capital because of limited Industrialisation.

A survey of the Punjab economy would show that Punjab had been lacking in terms of industrial development. And that Punjab had been contributing the highest per-capita income in the country but it was being contributed mainly by the agrarian sector and not by the industrial sector. For instance the rate of growth over the period

1960-61 to 1976-79 was 3.45% in India but in Punjab it was 5.05%³. And it was mainly contributed by the agrarian sector.

A brief review of the Industrial sector in Punjab would suggest that within limited industrialisation, small scale industries had been preponderating inspite of the fact that large and medium industries had grown slowly from 122 to 203 units from 1973 to 1980 and that too with a capital intensive base.⁴ (See Table - X). In 1973 the share of large and medium industries was 40.9% but it increased to 48.6% and in 1979-80 the production from large and medium industries exceeded from the small-scale industries, when it accounted for 51.6 per cent of the total industrial production in the state.⁵

And these large and medium industries had been concentrating at Ludhiana, Amritsar, although Patiala and Ropar districts were also emerging as new centres of growth.⁶ (See Table - XI).

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3. Pramod Kumar and others, Punjab Crisis : Context and Trends, op.cit. p. 55.
4. J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, "Industrial development in Punjab- Some features", in R.S. Johar & J.S. Khanna, eds. Studies in Punjab Economy op. cit. p. 141.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

TABLE -X
Number of Small Scale Units, Production, Investment and Employment in Punjab
1973-74 to 1979-80

(Production and Investment at current prices)

| Item | Years | | | | | | | Average annual rate of growth (simple) |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| | 1973-74 | 1974-75 | 1975-76 | 1976-77 | 1977-78 | 1978-79 | 1979-80 | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | |
| A. Small Scale Sector | | | | | | | | |
| 1. No. of Working Units (No.) | 30,691 | 32,938 | 34,776 | 36,737 | 38,652 | 42,233 | 47,437 | 9.09 |
| 2. Value of Production (Rs. crores) | 408.25 | 476.54 | 538.66 | 568.95 | 658.59 | 751.26 | 888.19 | 19.59 |
| 3. Employment (No.) | 233660 | 249939 | 254456 | 262776 | 275727 | 298925 | 333,090 | 7.09 |
| 4. Fixed Investment (Rs. crores) | — | — | — | 184.84 | 231.54 | 271.13 | 340.00 | |
| 5. Production per unit (Rs lakhs) | 1.33 | 1.45 | 1.55 | 1.55 | 1.70 | 1.78 | 1.87 | 6.76 |
| 6. Output per worker (Rs) | 17,472 | 19,066 | 21,169 | 21,652 | 23,886 | 25,132 | 26,665 | 8.77 |
| 7. Per unit fixed investment (Rs. lakhs) | x | x | x | 50.317 | 59,903 | 64,199 | 71.674 | |
| 8. Per unit employment (No.) | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 7.0 | |
| B. Large and Medium | | | | | | | | |
| 1. No. of units (No.) | 122 | 132 | 144 | 160 | 175 | 188 | 203 | |
| 2. Fixed Investment (Rs. crores) | 73.69 | 108.81 | 195.93 | 257.31 | 309.93 | 378.65 | 716.00 | |
| 3. Production (Rs. crores) | 282.83 | 308.00 | 384.91 | 471.72 | 607.49 | 710.85 | 945.99 | |
| 4. Employment (No.) | 56,537 | 57,891 | 63,291 | 69,942 | 77,071 | 91,551 | 98,876 | |
| 5. Production per unit (Rs crores) | 2.32 | 2.33 | 2.67 | 2.95 | 3.47 | 3.78 | 4.66 | |
| 6. Out-put per worker (Rs) | 50,026 | 53,203 | 60,816 | 67,444 | 77,912 | 77,645 | 96,160 | |
| 7. Per unit fixed investment (Rs. lakhs) | 60.40 | 82.43 | 137.00 | 160.82 | 177.10 | 201.41 | 352.71 | |

Production and Investment is at current prices (D.I.'s data)

SOURCE: R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. *Studies in Punjab Economy*
 Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 1983, p.141.

TABLE - XI

DISTRICT WISE NUMBER OF LARGE/MEDIUM UNITS WITH
EMPLOYMENT IN PUNJAB DURING THE YEAR 1978-79

| Districts | No. of Units | Employ- ment | Per Unit employment |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Gurdaspur | 7 | 5511 | 787 |
| Amritsar | 28 | 12261 | 438 |
| Kapurthala | 7 | 9764 | 1395 |
| Jalandhar | 14 | 6512 | 465 |
| Hoshiarpur | 8 | 6646 | 831 |
| Rupnagar | 20 | 9406 | 470 |
| Ludhiana | 57 | 20949 | 368 |
| Ferozepur | 4 | 3594 | 898 |
| Faridkot | 7 | 2001 | 286 |
| Bhatinda | 6 | 1683 | 281 |
| Sangrur | 4 | 1101 | 278 |
| Patiala | 26 | 12123 | 466 |
| T O T A L | 188 | 91551 | |

SOURCE :

J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, " Industrial development in Punjab - Some features" in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev, University Press, 1983, p. 149.

Inspite of the increase in the number of large and medium scale industries, small scale industries had been preponderating and had been occupying a major position in Punjab.⁷ And these industries had been producing mainly woollen textile, hoisery, cycles, cycle parts, small agricultural implements machine tools, steel re-rolling, sports goods.⁸ And like the large and medium scale industries, had been preponderating in Ludhiana, Amritsar and Jullunder. That is out of 42,000 units in 1980, 67.7% had been concentrating in these districts.⁹ (See Table - XII). And industries in these districts had been providing employment to 73.6% of total labour in this sector.

Another important feature of industrial sector industries in Punjab had been that those small scale/had been growing which had been depending for supply of raw

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7. J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, "Industrial Development in Punjab - Some features" in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, p. 139.
 8. J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, "Industrial development in Punjab" in R.S. JOhar and J.S. KHanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, op. cit., p. 139.
 9. *Ibid.*

TABLE - XII
 NUMBER OF WORKING SMALL SCALE UNITS REGISTERED
 WITH INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT, PUNJAB AS ON
 MARCH 31ST, 1979.

| Sr. No. | District | No. of Units | No. of persons employed | Employed per unit |
|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |
| 1. | Gurdaspur | 1849 | 15893 | 8.6 |
| 2. | Amritsar | 9297 | 50161 | 5.4 |
| 3. | Kapurthala | 935 | 7390 | 7.9 |
| 4. | Jalandhar | 7871 | 51820 | 6.6 |
| 5. | Hoshiarpur | 1297 | 4559 | 3.5 |
| 6. | Rupnagar | 651 | 4589 | 5.5 |
| 7. | Ludhaiana | 11423 | 118148 | 10.3 |
| 8. | Ferozpur | 1805 | 9841 | 5.5 |
| 9. | Faridkot | 1218 | 8315 | 6.8 |
| 10. | Bhatinda | 923 | 4588 | 5.0 |
| 11. | Sangrur | 3209 | 12463 | 3.9 |
| 12. | Patiala | 1755 | 12158 | 6.9 |
| | TOTAL | 42233 | 298925 | 7.1 |

SOURCE:

J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, "Industrial development of Punjab - Some features", in R.S. Johar and J.C. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev Univ. Press, 1983, p. 147.

material from outside the state and the demand as well as for the bulk of their products from outside the state.¹⁰ For instance tractor which had been widely used in Punjab had been made outside Punjab but number of its accessories had been made in Punjab and sold to firms outside. Thus these linkages had been weak in Punjab but in traditionally industrialised states these linkages had been strong.

Thirdly industries based on processing agricultural raw material had been weak in Punjab.¹¹ Although such agricultural inputs had been in abundance.

Another important feature relating to industrialisation had been that majority of the industries had been under the control of the Hindus and non-Jat Sikhs called Bhapas in Punjab.¹² The Bhapas had been the junior partner of the Hindu industrialists traders etc.

Thus agrarian-industrial, rural-urban distinctions had been coinciding with the two major communities in Punjab.

10. J.S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh "Industrial development in Punjab - same features", in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds. Studies in Punjab Economy, op. cit., p. 193.

11. *Ibid.* p. 139.

12. Pramod Kumar and others, Punjab Crises : Content and trends, op. cit., p. 55.

Thus there had been a 'disjunction' between agriculture and Industry in Punjab. And this had been inherited from the Colonial rule. The British rulers industrialised few areas in India to serve their interests. And after independence the industries got further localised and concentrated in the already industrialised areas. And Punjab suffered from this historical coincidence where the industries could not develop. But its agrarian sector was developed by the British so that it could supply raw material to the rising industries in Britain.

Thus Punjab entered into the arena of independence with 'disjointed' agrarian and industrial sector, which *had been* continuing even after independence.

If the industrial sector could provide an outlet for diversification of agrarian capital, the question that arise is what constraints the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers had been facing in the process ?

It must be pointed that though Punjab had been lacking in natural resources particularly mineral resources but its lack had not been posing any problem in terms of industrial development. This is because Punjab had been possessing the real potential for

developing large and medium industries which could be seen from the fact that it had been possessing the highest percapita income, skilled and semi-skilled labour, and developed infrastructure base.¹³

An important reason acting as a constraint had been the location policy of both private and public sector. In other words the big industrialists outside Punjab and the Central Government could play an important role in developing industrial sector.

The role of the Central government in industrial development had been minimum. In the case of agrarian Sector the Indian government went all the way to develop capitalism but when it came to industry it did not support the local ruling class, at the cost of the monopoly ruling class. Thus the combination of the local ruling class from the agrarian sector with the assistance of the Central government could float the agrarian capital outside the agrarian sector. Thus the

13. *R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds.,
Studies in Punjab Economy, op. cit., p.IV.*

Jat Sikh capitalist farmers had been potentially capable of growing big industry but it had not been becoming so.

Another factor acting as a constraint had been the nature of industrial licensing system, which by 1950-51 act had been under the control of the Central government.¹⁴ And this had been an important aspect of Centralisation of political power at the Centre to look after the needs of the dominant section of the ruling coalition. (the monopoly ruling class).

Thus centralisation of political power generally, and specifically in the form of restricted licencing and taxation policies and a general bias of the Central government against the regional ruling class had been acting as a constraint in the rising aspirations of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers. And this could be termed as a first constraint. We will talk about others later. And for a moment we will concentrate on the implications of this constraint.

14. *Promod Kumar and others, op. cit., p. 61*

It must be pointed that it was at this crucial juncture Punjab needed adequate attention which the Central government failed to give and this gave rise to a number of grievances against the Central Government. And these grievances assumed the form of "discrimination against the Sikhs"¹⁵ For instance the Akalis had been clamouring that Punjab had been discriminated against by the Central government. They had been holding that their savings from the agrarian sector had been channelled out of the state through banking network. As G.S. Bhalla and G.K. Chadha pointed, that the large farmers, rich peasants and Landlords were using only a fraction of their surplus for capital formation in agriculture. There was little evidence of what was happening to the huge surpluses nor any evidence of large-scale house construction or investments.¹⁶

I.K. Gujral pointing at the same aspect held that about 2/3rd of Punjab's bank deposits were invested outside Punjab. And these bank deposits included

15. S.P. Dang, "Sikhs is their Discrimination" Mainstream, Vol. 20, No.27, 6 March, 1982.

16. G.S. Bhalla and G.K. Chadha, "Green Revolution and Small peasants - A study of income distribution in Punjab Agriculture", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 17, No.21, 15 and 22 May 1982.

agricultural savings, remittances from abroad (because of Punjabi migration to U.K., America, Canada etc.) and remittances from within India. These deposits were not invested in Punjab but in other regions not to the backward, but to the already industrially developed states.¹⁷ But the demands of the Akalis were dismissed on the ground that Punjab was already developed.

Similarly other references could be made concerning protests of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers forming the core of the Akali Dal¹⁸. For instance the Akalis had been saying - "We produce paddy why should our paddy be sent to other states? We should have our own shelter to mill paddy and then sell rice at the highest possible price in international market". Similarly "We produce wheat and have large marketable surplus. We should have the right to sell the same in the international market at the highest available price... why should the government of India give us less than it pays for the wheat imports? Why should we be forced to supply our

17. I.K. Gujral, "Punjab's Anguish", Mainstream, Vol. 20, No. 50, 14 August, 1982.

18. S.P. Dang, "Class Basis of Akali Demands", Mainstream, Vol.21, No.30, 26 March 1980.

wheat to Bihar etc. When we can sell it at much higher prices in other countries.. or let them pay us at higher price." Further -- "there should be more cotton textile mills in Punjab. That will help us to get better prices for cotton". Similarly there should be more sugar mills.

These demands of the Akalis had been for profit-eering emerging out of class needs and class compulsions. In other words these demands had been for the fulfilment of the aspirations of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers.

The aspirations of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers came in conflict not only with the Central government but also with the Hindu industrialists, traders and merchants who had been dominating and controlling the industries trade and commerce in Punjab.¹⁹

Thus the entry of Jat Sikh capitalist farmers got blocked from two sides. The issue had been an economic issue or an intra-class problem but it acquired communal overtones. The question assumed the form of the Hindus and Sikhs in the minds of the masses. It was here correct perception of the

19. For this aspect see Pramod Kumar and others, Punjab Crisis : Context and Trends, op. cit, p.61; and also see by the same author, "Communalisation of Hindu in Punjab". Secular Democracy, vol. 11, No.9, November, 1982.

objective reality was required, but the situation got deflected and distorted into communal overtones, with the help of the communal organisations and parties representing the interests of the two different classes and communities. Not only correct perception of the objective reality was required but also subjective intervention of the secular forces particularly by the left so as to Unmask the objective elity, that it was an intra-class conflict which was being presented as communal conflict. The intra-class issue acquired communal overtones because two different communities had been controlling two different sectors of the economy. Javeed Alaam pointing at this aspect, has written that in other states like Andhra Pradesh where both the emergent capitalists farmers and traders or merchants had been the Hindus the clash between the two forms of capital had been a straight forward economic one.²⁰

20. Javeed Alaam, "Political Implications of the Economic contradictions in Punjab", *op. cit.*, p. 12

The communal overtones got stretched to other matters also for instance the case of electricity.²¹ The demand for electricity grew with the growth of Punjab economy which necessitated rationing between agriculture and industry. Whenever there was more than normal cut, in the agriculture sector the cry was that it was to favour the Hindu communalists. And when the Shortage of electricity became acute for industry and Hindu traders, industrialists held that it was to favour the Sikhs because of their agitational tactics.

It must be pointed that there had been five extremist Hindu Communal groups.²² The Hindu Suraksha Samiti, the Hindu Shiv Sena of Jagdish Tangri in Ludhiana, the Hindu Rashtriya Sangathan of Surinder Billa, the Brahman Sabha of Pandit Kishore Chand in Amritsar and the Hindu frontiers of Kalicharan of Ludhiana. These groups were formed in response to the activities of the Dal Khalsa, the Babbar Khalsa and other Sikh extremists groups and organisations and because of the

21. *Ibid.* p. 13.

22. *Pramod Kumar and Others, Punjab crisis : Context and trends, op. cit., p. 87-88.*

overtures of the Akali Dal itself. These groups had been active in some of the urban areas of Punjab, and did not have any affiliation with national organisations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Hindu Manch etc. All these Hindu organisations developed base in Punjab representing Hindu interests.

Thus the Hindu and Sikh communalists distorted the reality and presented the conflict between the Hindu traders, merchants and industrialists and Jat Sikh capitalist farmers as the conflict between the two communities.

Once this is seen, it must be pointed that it was not much due to economic radicalism that the Akali Dal pleaded for complete nationalisation of certain key sectors of the non-agricultural economy.²³ For instance the APSR held - "The Shriomani Akali Dal strongly advocates that all key industries should be brought under the public sector". Further "It is

23. *I have borrowed this idea from Javeed Alaam, "Political Implications of the Economic Contradictions in Punjab," op. cit., p. 11 and also see the footnote (15)*

of the opinion that basic consumer industries should be immediately nationalised to stabilise the prices of the consumer goods and to save the poor consumer from exploitation at the hands of industrialists and the middle men". Similarly - "Every industrial unit beyond worth one crore assets should be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal stands for progressive nationalisation of transport!"²⁴

And further the class character of the Akali Dal as the Spokesman of the capitalist farmers could be seen/when it argued for an increase in land ceilings from 17 acres to 30 acres. And from - "The Shiromani Akali Dal shall try to fix the prices of the agricultural produce on the basis of the returns of the middle class farmers. Such prices would be notified well before the sowing season and only the state governments could be empowered to fix such prices".

However the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers came in conflict not only with the Hindu industrialists,

24. See APSR, the One released by Giani Ajmer Singh (See Appendix).

traders, merchants but also with the non - Jat Sikhs commonly known as Bhapas, who had been the junior partners of the Hindus industrialists, traders and merchants in Industry trade and commerce. Besides the conflict of the Jat Sikhs with the Bhapas on the economic issue, the Bhapas in turn also came in conflict with the Jat Sikh over the question of political power, as they had been out of power since the early sixties, when Master Tara Singh an urbanite and spokesman of the Bhapas was replaced by Sant Fateh Singh a ruralite and a representative of the Jat peasantry.²⁵ Since the creation of the Punjabi Suba the credit of which went to Sant Fateh Singh and the Akali Dal, the Urban Sikhs had been out of power within the Dal and the SGPC. The control of the Jats over these two political and religious organisations, with enormous financial resources, had been almost absolute thus rendering the Bhapas helpless in the game of power. And because of this helplessness they had been adopting an extreme approach and financing organisations

-25. Dr. Gopal Singh, "Socio-Economic basis of the Punjab Crisis," Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 19, No.1, 7 January 1984.

like the Dal Khalsa. And further in order to come to political power they had been and encouraging seccionist slogans killing and communal violence. And had been acting in collusion with the Dal Khalsa, the National Council of Khalistan, AISSF and Bhinderwale.

What one wants to point is that there had been internal contradictions among the Sikhs themselves. In other words the Sikh politics itself had not been homogenous which had been complicating the situation.

Thus the Jat Sikhs came in conflict with the Hindu industrialists, traders, merchants; the Central government; and the Bhapa Sikhs.

And the issue had been a purely and a straight forward economic issue, but it got deflected and distorted into disruptive channels. And created explosive situation. The grievances against the Central government assumed the form of discrimination against the Sikhs. And conflict with the Hindu industrialists, traders, merchants acquired communal overtones. Which in a way helped the extremists - the religious fundamentalists to give separatist slogans. It was precisely the

communalisation of the issue and other various issue which build a strong base for the extremists.

One would come to two conclusions from this chapter - One that there had been serious flaw, the way the Akalis posed their problems. Two, the problem would have remained at a particular level i.e. within the levels of state politics if certain amount of attention and autonomy to deal with their problems had been given to them. The centralisation of political power at the was a key factor in the explosion of the problem. It is through the Centralisation of political power the Indian state had been serving the interests of the dominant section among the ruling classes. Which in turn had been acting as a direct constraint in the interests of other ruling classes including regional. And this thus explains the rise of state autonomy movements from the ruling classes supported by right wing political parties national or regional. And this on the other hand clearly brings out difference between state autonomy movements led by right wing and the left political parties. The latter it must be pointed stands for democratic economy and polity, which directly questions the Indian state. Whereas the former does not question the nature of the Indian state.

It merely asks for accommodation of the interests of other ruling classes.²⁶

SECTION - II

Another important issue calling for attention had been concerning the agricultural labour i.e. migrant labour from U.P., Bihar etc., and the Sikh agricultural labour. The agricultural labour has been consciously divided in the above two categories, so as to understand the issues the issues of conflict between the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers and the agricultural labour properly.

The agricultural labour in Punjab increased with the Green Revolution. Like the percentage increased from 17.3% to 32.1% between 1961 and 1971, and now it is 38.26%, by 1981 census.²⁷

The Sikh agricultural Labour had been called Mazhabi Sikhs. They had been essentially labourers but not necessarily landless, classified in government

26. See Javeed Alaam, "Class Political and National Dimension of State Autonomy Movements in India", Social Scientist, Vol. 10, No.18, August 1982.

27. Such Singh Gill, "Capitalism in Punjab Agriculture in R.S. Johar and J.S. Khanna eds., Studies in Punjab Economy, Op.cit., p. 73-75.

documents as marginal and poor peasants. Therefore demands relating to agriculture had been equally important for this section who had been traditionally hostile to the Akalis. It must be pointed that this section had been voting either for the left parties or the Congress(I) because had been identifying the Akali Dal with the party of landlords and rich peasants.

Therefore the need to keep this section united was important for the Akali Dal. Only on one economic demand this section could be united with the Akalis, it had been the canal water which is a cheap input almost equally useful for all the sections of the peasantry. The rest of the economic slogans had been of no use for this section. The entire peasantry could be united not only on the above mentioned economic slogan but also ^{on} religious slogans could fulfill two goals at the same time, one all this could unite the peasantry; all this could keep the real conflict between Jat Sikh capitalist farmers and agricultural labour into background. (We will talk about the religious goals etc. in the next chapter).

Now the question that arise is what is this river water dispute?²⁸ The five rivers which gave Punjab its name were split between Pakistan and India in 1947. India retained Sutlej, Ravi and Beas, and the other two went to Pakistan i.e. Jhelum and Chenab. As Ravi and Beas flowed into Pakistan part of Punjab also, Pakistan claimed its share. On the other hand India wanted this entire water on the ground that it was needed not only for Punjab but also for Rajasthan. An agreement between the then Punjab and Rajasthan governments fixing their share was arrived in 1955. Later on with the help of the World Bank, Pakistan was persuaded to give up its share in return of Rs.100 crores paid to it by the government of India. The dispute arose about the division of erstwhile Punjab's share amongst the present Punjab and Haryana when the separate state of Haryana was formed in 1966. However till 1982 no one ever raised the raised the question about this. In 1982 the Akali leaders began questioning the right of Rajasthan and even of Haryana to any water.

28. See for the river water dispute *UNI, backgrounder "The Akali Movement. II", No. 30, July 29, 1983 Vol. VIII, p. 7-8.*

In order to keep the Sikh peasantry united and keep the real conflict between the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers and the agricultural labour, the Akali leadership also created sectarian ambiguity about migrant labour from outside. And posed the question in terms of the Hindus and Sikhs. And asked for the disenfranchisement of migrant labour. Whereas the extremists sections who had been openly advocating 'Khalistan', asked for the ouster of the migrant labour. Manmohan Sharma²⁹ conducted a survey which examined the perceptions of middle peasants, rich peasants and of local labour towards migratory labour.

According to middle peasants migratory labour for Punjabi farmer was indispensable. The demand for the ouster of migratory middle peasants held was absurd - "We will not side with the Akalis if they ever happen to raise the demand". No agriculture was possible middle peasants held, without the help of migrant labourers.

29. Manmohan Sharma "*Migratory Labour and it's Impact on Rural Economy of Punjab*", *Man and Development*, Vol. IV, No.3, September, 1982.

The rich peasants were of the view that given the level of mechanization Punjab's farmer would continue to rely upon outside labour for quiet some time. The operations like paddy transplanting cotton picking would continue to be labour intensive. And held that Punjab's agriculture developed but it was not due to migratory labour. Infact the outside labour did not play direct role in increasing productivity. But it had certainly lowered the cost of production in terms of providing cheap labour. Therefore they were very important for the agricultural economy as a whole. And the demand for the ouster of migratory would be strongly opposed.

On the other hand the survey revealed the hostility of local labour towards migratory labour. They did not view the influx of migratory labour favourably. They complained that migration had rendered them jobless and homeless. They considered the migrants as their competitors who limited their job employment opportunities and depressed their daily/monthly/annual wage rates. And they held that the migrants had replaced the local female labourers. On the whole the survey revealed that the local agriculture labourers were full of resentment towards the migrants. They stated : "If

the Akalis raise the demand for the ouster of migrant labourers we will definitely side with them and support them".

The survey also revealed that a section of the 'Khalistan' protagonists advocated the ouster of migrants and were of the following opinion : "Migrant Labourers and Hindus, from which it necessarily follows that they are Sikh leaders and will never side with us to achieve our goals. They have no sympathy for our cause. Therefore, they should not be allowed to come to Punjab".

Thus the basic idea behind raising the issue of migrant labourers and asking for their disenfranchisement was to unite the local agricultural labour (Mazhabi Sikhs) with them on religious grounds, to diffuse the real conflict between the agricultural labour (local and Migratory) and the capitalist farmers by dividing the agricultural labour on sectarian grounds.

The local Sikh labour could be united not only on the river water issue and on the above mentioned issue but also by raising religious and communal issues.

CHAPTER - FIVE

SECTION I

A Panormic view of the Events in 1980's

In the begining of the 1980's the official Akali Leadership along with the Left forces organised joint action regarding irrigation water, water rates, electricity changes, prices of inputs, remunerative prices for agricultural produce and the river water issue.

While the official leadership was organising struggles, the Jagdev Singh talwandi group was organising a morcah in Delhi for the total acceptance of APSR. When two of his aides were arrested Bhinderwale shifted his headquarters to the Golden Temple and announced a morcha for their release.

The official leadership fearing that the initiative might pass into the hands of Bhinderwale called a convention of the sikhs in Amritsar and put forward 45 demands including acceptance of APSR, and declared a ' Dharam Yudh ' . These included - sharing of Ravi and Beas waters, issue of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas; the religious demands included enactment of all India Gurudwara act, declaration of Amritsar as a holy city, ban on sale of tobacco and Liquor in the city, relay of Gurbani from the Golden Temple through all India radio, Jullunder, use of Kirpan by Sikhs as a religious symbol at all times ; the economic demands included - right to dispose of surplus wheat and paddy

in the international market at highest available price and the Central government should not have right to procure the surplus at prices fixed by it, there should be more cotton textile mills so that cotton produced by Punjab get better price, there should be more sugar mills and maintenance of proper quota for the Sikhs in the armed forces.⁵

It must be pointed that the left forces after the first joint struggle with the Akalis did not join the Akali morchas because instead of plainly raising the democratic issues the Akalis began wrapping the issues in religious and communal tones. That is instead of fighting in the name of Punjab or peasantry it started organising struggles in the name of religion or the Sikhs.

Finding the 'Dharam Yudh' a golden opportunity Bhinderwale and Jagdev Singh Talwandi gave up their morchas and joined the Akali morcha in the name of need for panthic unity.

Before launching the morcha, the Akali leadership reduced the number of demands from 45 to 10. These demands included - restoration of Chandigarh and the

5. UNI, *Backgrounder, "The Akali Movement II"* op.cit., p. 7-10.

other Punjabi speaking areas to Punjab, river water issue, grant of second language status to Punjabi in the adjoining states, an end to forcible eviction of Sikh peasants from the states of U.P., Rajasthan, and Haryana, due share to Punjab from the Central pool, recruitment to the army on the basis of merit, enactment of all India Gurdwara act and an end to government interference in religious matters, grant of holy city status to Amritsar, recitation of Gurbani from AIR, and an end to the ruthless repression against the youth and unconditional release of those who were being tortured in jail.⁶

If the Central government wanted it could have analysed the religious demands and could have fulfilled genuine demands as and when they arose on the basis of principle of secularism followed by the Indian government and written in the Indian constitution- that the government would treat all religions alike. In other words no religious community in India would be discriminated against or favoured. Thus the Indian Constitution follows the principle of impartiality towards all religions. And articles 25 to 28 of the Indian constitution, deal with this.⁷ For instance

 6. UNI, *Backgrounder, "The Akali Movement II"*, p. 11 -12

7. Durga Dass Basu, *Introduction to the Constitution of India*
Eight edition, N. Delhi, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.,
 1980, p. 108.

The fact that the Central government did not make any effort gave an excuse to the extremists and the religious fundamentalists to come up and exploit the situation and build a base among the Sikhs. And similarly it gave a hand to the Akalis to continue with their struggles and distort the picture.

The assertion is that the genuine religious could be fulfilled as and when arose. And by doing so the government could have isolated religious demands from democratic and class demands.

Coming to the democratic issues (the issue of river water, Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas and some others,) the government could have made an attempt to resolve these issues, according to their merits and in consultation with the opposition parties and the other states involved in these issues.

By isolating the religious and democratic issues from the class issues the government could have made an attempt at putting a halt ~~to~~ to the growth of the movement. And also could have stopped the parallel movement

of the extremists and religious fundamentalist from making serious inroads into the Sikhs particularly the youths, majority of them unemployed. This is because the Akali movement was basically thriving on the democratic and more important religious demands and issues. Further, the government by providing solutions to the problems and issues incorporating the Sikh masses could have also stopped the interferences of the imperialist powers and Pakistan who had been encouraging the extremists and the religious fundamentalists to ask for a separate state.

The failure of the government to do certain things led to the creation of adverse conditions which became difficult to be leashed.

And lastly, even the class demands could have been diffused if the government had given a rethinking to the issue of central-state relations and restructured the centre-state relations. In other words, if the Central government had given certain degree of power or autonomy ^{to} the states.

The non-fulfilment of some of the demands led ^{the} to the building of the Akali movement on one hand and of the extremists on the other. And at a particular point both got mixed up as we have seen, and the latter

acquired predominance later, And slowly and
and time
slowly after the passage of important events, the demands
kept on increasing.

However, it does not mean that the solutions were not arrived at. Solutions were arrived at thrice in 1983 and 1984 and were acceptable both to the Akalis and central government, but each time the central government went back and followed a policy of drift. Thus, it became quiet clear that the government was not interested in finding a solution as 1984 general elections were approaching. As it wanted to utilise the Punjab problem to make an appeal to the electorate at the pretext of national unity and win elections without giving due considerations to the damage this approach would do to the country.

Amrik Singh⁸ in "An approach to the problem" and D.L.Sheth and A.S. Narang⁹ in "The Electoral Angel" also observed the same conclusions. Amrik Singh in this article showed how the Congress used the Punjab problem for narrow party gains and how Mrs. Indira Gandhi in the need for fighting the 1984 elections declared the entire Sikh politics as sessionist. And by doing

8. Amritk Singh, "An Approach to the problem" in Amrik Singh ed. Punjab in Indian Politics - Issues and trends, N. Delhi, Ajanta, 1985.

9. D.L. Sheth, A.S. Narang, "The Electoral Angel", in Amrik Singh ed. *op.cit.*

so erased the distinction between the extremists and others. In other words, it would be correct to say that she created ambiguity about manifestations of the Akalis and their problems.

The Congress government's policy of drift in terms of not finding solutions benefitted the extremists the most. They kept on accumulating arms and amunitions in the Golden temple, making it a fortress. And the government had full knowledge of the happening. And later it restarted to operation Blue star on June 5, 1984 to flush out the extremists from the Golden temple. As we said the elections were nearing and by performing this operation at that time Mrs. Gandhi wanted to create an image in the minds of the masses. But at what cost? All this led to the alienation of the Sikh masses. Then came the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, which in turn was followed by mass killings of the Sikhs all over India particularly in Delhi, Bokaro, Patna, by Lumpen elements supported by some politicians. And this completely alienated the Sikh masses.



The situation became difficult to be controlled, because after these events demands of the Akalis further increased for instance enquiry into the riots. And this also led to the consolidation of the base of the extremists.

The post assassination situation was utilised by the new Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who came out with the slogan of national unity and advocated against the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Because of the sympathy wave the entire nation responded and enabled the Congress to come back to political power.

Punjab was handed over to the army during this period and the extremists were building their base aided by imperialists. Around this time because of the pressure of the masses in India Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi felt the need of some sort of settlement with the Akali Dal. Therefore the negotiations began and ultimately in July 1985 the Rajiv-Longowal agreement was signed. It was a time bound, which defined the acceptance of every demand on clear terms. The accord got wide support from the people of the state and in the entire country as well as from various political parties. This accord indicated the isolation and defeat of the extremists.

Even Prakash Singh Badal and Tohra who had in the beginning opposed the accord had to fall in line because of the pressure of the masses. Sant Longowal and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi won admiration of the people. The extremists on the other hand were not

happy with the accord and they did not sit back. And then came the assassination of Sant Longowal which aroused the anger of the Sikh masses against the extremists. And this became evident when the people of Punjab did not come under their influence and voted for the Akali Dal in the 1985 State assembly elections. The Akali Dal won a massive majority and for the first time the Akalis came to political power without any alliance. The ministry was headed by Surjit Singh Barnala. However in the process none of the important demands could be fulfilled. Even the Supreme Court which had appointed four judges for the various implementation of the accords did not adhere to the terms of reference but went beyond it, openly violating the accord. This once again aroused the anger of the Akalis. And this situation was used by the extremists. On the other hand because of the factional fights within the Akali Dal, Prakash Singh Badal took up the question of entry of the army into the Golden Temple when the Panthic Committee had declared 'Khalistan' its goals.

This was a time when the extremists were killing masses in Punjab. And the Chief Minister of Punjab Surjit Singh Barnala was asked to vacate the office because of increase in the killings. On the other hand

the Head Priest of the Akal Takhat excommunicated Barnala as he refused to toe their line,

With the dissolution of the Punjab assembly, Punjab was placed under Presidents rule. And since then Punjab had been under Presidents rule.

Thus this section shows that the situation kept on changing and taking new turns.

SECTION - II

CONCLUSION

So what do we conclude from the study? In the work we have tried to examine the Akali politics i.e. from 1966 to 1979 with a view to understand the Akali movement of 1980's. The first chapter which is divided into two sections gave a panoramic view of Akali politics in the Pre-independence period and the period following partition till the re-organisation of the state on Linguistic basis in 1966.

Section I of the first chapter basically talked about the growth of separatist feelings among the Sikhs which were triggered by the British policies in India, the manner in which anti-imperialist struggle developed in Punjab and the failure of the secular forces in checking this kind of development. All these developments led to a situation where the feelings based upon religion became strong, active and charged to be used at any time. The Akali Leadership which was predominated by communal elements in the wake of independence raised the demand for a separate state. The demand was made in line with the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, which gave two nations that the Hindus and Muslims were separate communities and therefore were entitled to have separate nations. Therefore the

Muslim League's demand gave an impetus to the Akali leadership to ask for a separate for the Sikhs, on the ground that they too were a separate community. However the demand of the Akalis could not be fulfilled by the Cabinet Mission since they basically aimed at arriving at a settlements between the Muslim League and Congress. The demand was altogether rejected by the Indian National Congress, but it gave the assurance of protecting the interests of the Sikhs after independence and reorganising all the states on linguistic basis.

Section II of the first chapter showed that the major issue which dominated the politics of the state was the issue of reorganisation of the state boundaries. The demand was first raised on communal basis, which led to the communal polarization of the masses because the Hindus who spoke Panjabi under the influence of Hindu communal bodies declared Hindi as their language in 1951 and 1961 census. The communalisation of the just demand complicated the situation and thus re-organisation of Punjab got delayed. And the states re-organisation rejected the demand on the ground that the demand was based on communal grounds and there was no clear cut Punjabi speaking area since the Hindus who spoke Punjabi had registered Hindi as their Language. It was only later when Sant Fateh Singh

presented the demand on secular grounds and started a morcha that the states reorganisation committee reorganised Punjab on the distorted census of 1961.

We come to two broad conclusions from this chapter. One, that the issue of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas emerged from the reorganisation of Punjab, which was re-organised on the basis of distorted census of 1961. Two, that the Akali politics in the pre-independence period and the period following partition till 1966 revolved around Socio-religious issues broadly.

The second chapter analysed the Green Revolution in Punjab and its social and political implications. The social implications in terms of the emergence of capitalist farmers, happening to be Jat Sikhs and agricultural labourers. On the other hand, political implications in terms of the need to come to political power in a secular political system of Punjab, in order to enhance the economic revolution by supporting the policies favouring them. And this necessitated alliances and giving up total allegiance to religion.

The Akali Leadership understood the compulsionsⁿ of Green Revolution, and entered into alliances with non-

Congress political parties in Punjab from 1967 till 1970. The major coalitional partner of the Akali Dal was the Jan Sangh. In all the coalition ministeries, as we have seen, there were conflicts between the two, one because of class pressures on both, the Akalis representing the interests of Capitalist farmers and Landlords and the Jan Sangh representing the interests of the Hindu trading class. Besides the class pressures more important were the communal pressure from their co-religionists. The Akali representing the Sikhs and the Jan Sangh representing the Hindus. Because of these differences both the parties could not come to an understanding in the 1971 and 1972 Lok Sabha and State assembly elections.

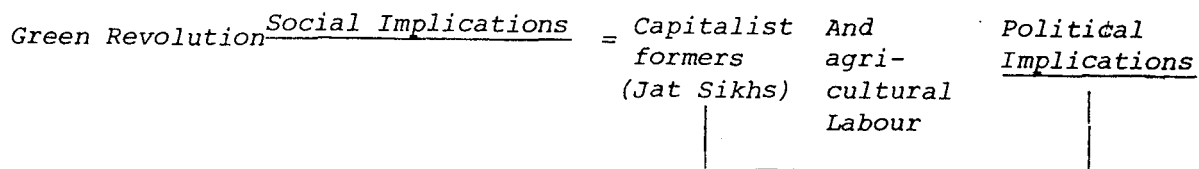
The third chapter analysed the Akali politics in the 1970 decade vis-a-vis the national politics. Because of the differences, both ^{the} Akali Dal and Jan Sangh fought the 1971 and 1972 elections as individual parties and lost to the Congress. And out of this frustration arose the APSR with emotionally charged and communal phrases. Which was basically given with the view to mobilise the Sikh masses on communal and religious lines. The chapter also talked about the APSR presented by Giani Ajmer Singh, a revised version of the APSR presented in 1977; and discussed in detail the political and

economic implications of APSR, and also showed how both were relational. However the APSR formulated in 1973 remained in the background untill 1980's because of general anti-congress wave in the entire country in the form of movements, strikes etc. at that time.

All this ^{was} followed by Emergency in 1975, and once again the Akali Dal came in the mainstream national politics and joined the anti-congress, anti-authoritarian anti-emergency movement.

Falling of the Akali party into mainstream politics became further evident when inspite of having won majority in 1977 state assembly elections it decided to form coalition government with the Janata Party.

We come to certain important conclusions from second and third chapters. One, the first chapter revealed that there had been causal explanation, in terms of one event causing another due to the impact of Green Revolution. Like



Of coming to political power in a secular political system of Punjab

alliances with non-Congress political parties which in turn meant giving up total allegiance on religion

the study revealed Two, that the Akali Dal did not had the capacity to come to political power on its own which was revealed by (1967-1970) phase and 1972 State Assembly elections. Because Sikhs like any other community no matter bound by ethnic ties had allegiance to number of political parties. No doubt the exceptions were certainly there i.e. 1977 State-assembly elections and the 1985 State assembly election. (Though this does not fall within the purview of the period selected by me (see Appendix). But in both the cases there were exceptional circumstances, before 1977, emergency, which created such conditions that it led to total defeat of the Congress in parliamentary and state assembly elections in India. And similarly before 1985 there were chain of events i.e. operation Blue Star by which the Sikh community was humiliated, assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, followed by mass killings of the Sikhs in India which in turn led to complete alienation of the Sikh community and hence united the Sikhs, Punjab accord and then the elections. Thus in both the two exceptional situations ^{there} were exceptional circumstances.

Three, the obvious conclusion, that secularisation of Akali politics was basically related to the compulsions of coming to political power. And whenever

it was out of power i.e. after 1972 elections, the rationale of politics turned towards Communal and religious issues; references can be made to APSR, the circumstances during which it was formulated.

Four, that the economic issues, became more important than the religious issues after reorganisation of the state. Religious and Communal/ issues acquired predominance only when the Akali Dal went out of power. Thus a clear demarcation can be made between the period before the reorganisation of the state and after its re-organisation. And this break was made by the Green Revolution in Punjab. And similar conclusion could be drawn from the fourth chapter also.

The Fourth chapter talked about the/rising aspirations of the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers on one hand and saturation of the agrarian sector on the other in terms of satisfying their aspirations. Which in turn necessitated diversification of money capital or in any other form in ^{to} other sectors of the economy. But in the process the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers forming the core of the Akali Dal came in conflict with the Central government, Hindu Industrialists, Traders Merchants and Bhatia Sikhs.

Thus the entire issue had been purely a class issue affecting only a particular section of the Sikhs and it would have remained so if other things had not coalesced with it.

Besides, ; this issue, the Akali Leadership also raised certain democratic issues i.e. concerning the entire population like the issue of Chandigarh and other Punjabi speaking areas, river water etc. All this coalesced with the real issue concerning the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers and thus the Akali movement came to incorporate democratic issues besides the class issues. Thus the democratic issues went as a second layer into the Akali movement. Thus first layer was concerning the rising aspirations of the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers which I feel determined the Akali movement.

The third layer which went into the making of the Akali movement had been concerning the religious issues. The Communalisation of various issues and the raising of religious demands could play the role of uniting the Sikh masses. In other words religion or religious issues could be used to bridge the gap between the Sikh masses. And it could be used especially in a situation when religious ideology and observances considered to be very important for the Sikhs had weakend (We will have a look at the

religious demands or issues raised by the Akali Leadership in the next section). The harm of communalising the issues and, of raising religious issues and demands could be seen from the fact that, it is precisely from this that the religious fundamentalists got a feed. And stood for a separate state of the Sikhs.

Thus if the first layer determined the problem, then the third layer overdetermined the determined problem. It must be emphasised that religion really played and had been playing a very important role in the development of the movement. I am in this context reminded of a statement made by Engels in a letter to J.Bloch.¹ In this letter Engels talked about the dialectical relationship between the base and superstructure, where the super-structure was not merely a residual category, in the sense of being determined by the base, on the other hand it also played an important role in determining the historical situation. "The economic factor is the basis, but the various elements of the super-structure ... also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggle and in many cases pre-ponderate in determining their from."

1. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *'Selected Works,*
Volume Three Progress Publishers Moscow, p. 487.

It had been held that if certain degree of .
 autonomy² had been given to the states then all these
 layers would not have coalesced and would have remained
 parallel layers at the state level. The coming together
 of all these layers . created problem.

If certain degree of autonomy had been given
 to the states, to deal with their problems, for effective
 policy formulation, economic decision making, then the
 question of declining profit with the petering off of
 the Green Revolution in Punjab would not have been
 communalised, would not have achieved the form of dis-
 crimination against the sikhs and would not have coalesced
 with the religious issues. And all this would not have
 provided a social base for the religious fundamentalists,
 and Separatist forces.

It is therefore important as had been held by
 Javeed Alaam to distinguish between manifestations and
 causalities.³ In others manifestations of the Akalis
 should not be confused with the causes of the movement.

 2. Javeed Alaam, *Political Implications of the Economic*
op.cit. p. 16

3. Javeed Alaam, *Political Implications of the Economic*
contradictions in Punjab.

Thus the problem in Punjab is not a simple case of Communalism and regionalism, but it is a mixture of both conditioned by the political parties and state power in India.

Thus, where does the problem lie—in the history or in the contemporary developments in Punjab specifically. I believe that the problem is rooted in the contemporary developments in Punjab, which should be viewed vis-a-vis the state power structure in India. I feel like mentioning this point because quite a few writings on Punjab problem have gone into the history of Punjab in order to trace its roots. For instance the work of Rajiv A. Kapur (1986, London).⁴ He thinks that the present Akali problem is the problem of separatism which has deep social and historical roots. Therefore, he goes into the history to trace the roots of the present problem. He comes to the conclusion that the demand for a separate state was raised by the Akali Dal in the pre-independence period in line with the Muslim League's demand for a separate state, on the basis of religion, then in the period following partition and then again in 1980', and that also with lot of force. Therefore each and every phase in Sikh politics " is a continuation and

4. Rajiv A. Kapur, Sikh Separatism : The Politics of Faith, London Allen & Unwin, 1986.

enlargement over the previous one," according to him.

Rajiv A. Kapur is right in saying that Sikh separatism has historical roots in the sense that the idea of separatism originated in the pre-independence period. And the first chapter of my work threw light on this aspect. But the question that Is the Akali movement of 1980's the movement for a separate state? It is precisely here that I find a flaw in Rajiv's argument which is the result of the fact that he has not taken into account the developments in Punjab. The context of the movement of the Akalis in 1980's is certainly different from that in the pre-independence period. As I said before the manifestations have been confused with the causes. Although the book is very well researched, but it is strongly reductionist.

Thus any analysis of the Akali movement of 1980's should taken into account the developments in Punjab.

TABLE - I

PERCENTAGE OF SEATS AND VOTES POLLED BY
POLITICAL PARTIES IN 1952 - PUNJAB & PEPSU

| Political Party | Total Seats in Vidhan Sabha (Combined Punjab and PEPSU) | % of Votes | Seats in Punjabi Speaking Region | % of Votes in Punjabi Speaking Region |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|---|---|
| Congress | 122 | 34.8 | 60 | 31.3 |
| Akali Dal | 33 | 14.7 | 31 | 24.0 |
| Communist Party | 6 | 5.3 | 6 | 6.1 |
| Jan Sangh | 6 | 5.0 | - | 4.0 |
| Others & Independents | 21 | 40.2 | 13 | 34.6 |

SOURCE :

*Compiled from India, Election Commission,
Report on the First General Elections in
India 1951-52 Vol-2 (New Delhi).*

TABLE - II

PARTY POSITION IN PUNJAB : 1957 ELECTIONS

| Party | Seats in Punjab | Percentage of votes in Punjab | Seats in Punjabi Region | Percentage of Votes in Punjabi Region |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Congress | 120 | 47.5 | 71 | 48.6 |
| Jan Sangh | 9 | 8.6 | 5 | 7.2 |
| Communist | 6 | 13.6 | 3 | 17.7 |
| Others & Independents | 29 | 13.3 | 7 | 26.5 |

SOURCE :

Compiled from India, Election Commission, Report on the Second General Elections in India 1957, Vol. II (Delhi).

TABLE - III
PARTY POSITION IN THE 1962 ELECTIONS

| Party | No. of seats in Punjab | Percent vote in Punjab | No. of seats in Punjabi Region | Percent votes in Punjabi Region |
|--------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| Congress | 90 | 43.7 | 49 | 45.7 |
| CPI | 9 | 7.1 | 9 | 10.3 |
| Akali Dal | 19 | 11.9 | 19 | 20.7 |
| Jan Sangh | 8 | 9.7 | 4 | 7.6 |
| Swatantra | - | 2.4 | - | 2.4 |
| Republican | - | 2.2 | - | 2.8 |
| PSP | 0 | 0.9 | - | 0.7 |
| Independents | 25 | 20.6 | 5 | 10.3 |

SOURCE:

*Report on the Third General Election in India
1962, Part II Statistical (Election Commission,
Delhi, 1963).*

TABLE - VII

PARTY POSITION IN THE PUNJAB ASSEMBLY
AFTER THE 1980 ELECTIONS

| Party | Seats contested | Seats won | Percentage of votes polled |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Congress | 117 | 63 | 48.0 |
| Akali Dal | 73 | 37 | 26.9 |
| CPI | 18 | 9 | 6.5 |
| CPM | 13 | 5 | 4.1 |
| BJP | 41 | 1 | 5.4 |
| Janata Splinters | 62 | - | 4.7 |
| Independents & others | 398 | 2 | 4.6 |

SOURCE:

The Tribune, 13 June 1980.

TABLE - VIII

PARTY POSITION IN PUNJAB 1985 PARLIAMENTARY
AND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

| Party | LOKSABHA | | | ASSEMBLY | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | Seats Contes- ted | Seats won | % of Votes | Seats contes- ted | Seats won | % of Votes |
| Congress | 13 | 6 | 41.23 | 115 | 32 | 37.8 |
| Akali Dal | 11 | 7 | 36.9 ^(a) | 100 | 73 | 38.54 ^(b) |
| BJP | 4 | - | | 24 | 4 | 3.84 |
| CPI | 3 | - | | 37 | 1 | 4.50 |
| CPI(M) | 3 | - | | 28 | - | 1.80 |
| Janata | 2 | - | | 4 | 1 | |
| Congress(s) | - | | | 1 | - | |
| Independents & Others | 38 | | | 523 | 4 | |
| TOTAL | 74 | 13 | | 832 | 115* | |

* Elections for two seats were countermanded because of death of independent candidates.

(a) 43.65% for 11 seats actually contested.

(b) 44% for 100 seats actually contested.

SOURCE :

Newspaper Reports.

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION

There are three versions of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution—one adopted by the Akali Dal (Talwandi), another identified with Kapur Singh and the third printed and circulated by Giani Ajmer Singh, Secretary of the Shiromani Akali Dal. The following is the first version :

Talwandi Dal's
Anandpur Sahib Resolution

1. WHEREAS The Sikhs of India are a historically recognised politically recognised political Nation ever since the inauguration of the Order of the Khalsa in the concluding year of the 17th Century (1699) and whereas, this status of the Sikh Nation has been Internationally Recognised and accepted by the major powers of Europe and Asia, to wit, France, England, Italy Russia, China and Tibet, Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal and the East India Company, Bhadur, Fort William, Calcutta, till the middle of the 19th Century and again by the outgoing British and the Hindu Congress Party and the Muslim League of Indian in the middle of the 20th century and

WHEREAS, the brute majority in India, in 1950 have imposed consitutional arrangements in India which denude the Sikhs of their political Identity, and sub-

ordinate them as cultural particularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically by depriving the Sikhs of the control of their own history and exposing them to spiritual decay calculated to submerge and dissolve them into the saltish sea waters of inchoate Hinduism, and

WHEREAS the Sikhs have been thus shackled and enslaved in unethical and cynical repudiation of solemn and bidding commitments and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs by the Hindus, while the Sikh representatives in the Indian Constituent Assembly in 1950, refused to become a consenting party to these devious and loaded arrangements and they declined to affix their signatures to the official copy of the Indian Constitution Act, thus promulgated; the Shiromani Akali Dal, in the name, and on behalf of the Sikhs.

PROCLAIMS that the Sikhs are determined by all LEGITIMATE MEANS to extricate and free themselves from this degarding and death dealing situation so as to ensure finally their honourable survival and salvage their inherent dignity and their birth right to influence meaningfully the main stream of the World History.

The Sikhs therefore

DEMAND, Firstly, that an Autonomous Region in the North of India should be set up forthwith wherein Sikh interests are constitutionally recognised as of primary

and special importance as The Public and Fundamental State Policy, Secondly, that this Autonomous Region should include the present Indian Punjab, Karnal and Ambala Districts of Haryana, inclusive of Kangra District and Kulu valley of Himachal Pradesh comprised in Paonta Sahib, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, Dalhousie, Dehra Doon Valley, Nalagarh Desh, Sirsa, Guhla and Rattia Areas Areas and Ganganagar District of Rajasthan and Tarai Region of the U.P. recently reclaimed and colonised by the Sikhs out of thousand of thousand of years' old virgin and dangerously infested forests, thus bringing the main contiguous Sikh population and Traditional & Natural Sikh hapitats still parts of and included in India, within this Autonomous Sikh Region, as a Region of the Union of India, and

THIRDLY, this Sikh Autonomous Region may be conceded and declared as entitled to frame its own constitution on the basis of having all powers to and for itself except, Foreign Relations, Defence, and communications to remain as subjects with the Federal Indian Government.

MAY THE GOD OF HISTORY THE
RIDER OF BLUE HORSE HELP US

II

Another version of the Resolution:

WHEREAS the Sikhs of Inda are a historically recognised political nation ever since the inauguration of the order of the Khalsa in the concluding years of the 17th century, and

WHEREAS, this status of the Sikh National has been internationally recognised and accepted by the major Powers of Europe and Asia to wit, France, England, Italy, Russia, China, Tibet, Persia (now Iran), Afghanistan, Nepal, and the Company Bahadur, Fort William, Calcutta, till the middle of the 19th century, and, again by the outgoing British and the Hindu Congress and the Muslim League of India in the middle of the 20th century and

WHEREAS, the brute majority in India, in 1950, have imposed a constitutional arrangement in India which denudes the Sikhs of their political identity and cultural particularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to spiritual

death and cultural decay leading inevitably to their submergence and dissolution into the saltish sea-waters of incoherent Hinduism, and

WHEREAS, the Sikhs have been thus shackled and enslaved in unethical and cynical repudiation of solemn and binding commitments and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs, while the Sikh representatives in the Indian Constituent Assembly, in 1950 refused to affix their signatures to the official copy of the Constituent Act., thus promulgated, the Shiromani Akali Dal in the name, and on behalf of the Sikhs,

PROCLAIMS that the Sikhs are determined, by all legitimate means, to extricate and free themselves from this degrading and death-dealing situation so as to ensure firmly their honourable survival and salvage their inherent dignity in India, and their birth right to influence meaningfully the mainstream of world, history the Sikhs therefore,

DEMAND firstly, that an autonomous region in the north of India should be set up forthwith wherein the Sikh interests are constitutionally recognised as of primary and special importance as the fundamental state policy.

SECONDLY, that this autonomous region include the present Punjab, Karnal and Ambala Districts of Haryana inclusive of Kangra Districts of Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, Dalhousie, Nalagarh Desh, Sirsa, Guhla and Rattia areas and Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, thus bringing main contiguous Sikh population and traditional Sikh habitats within this autonomous Sikh region as an integral part of the Union of India and

THIRDLY, this Sikh autonomous region may be declared as entitled to frame its own internal constitution on the basis of having all powers to and for itself except, Foreign Relations, Defence, Currency and General Communication to remain as subject within jurisdiction of the Federal Indian Government.

MAY THE RIDER OF THE BLUE HORSEHELP US

III

Basic Postulates of the Shiromani Akali Dal*

as adopted by the working committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal at its meeting held at Sri Anandpur Sahib Anandpur Sahib on 16-17 October, 1973.

(A) Postulates

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is the very embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the Sikh Nation and aspirations of the Sikh Nation and as such is fully entitled to its representation. The basic postulates of this organization are Human Co-existence, Human progress and ultimate unity of all Human beings with the Spiritual Soul.
2. These postulates are based upon the three great principles of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, namely, a Meditation on God's Name, dignity of labour and sharing of fruits of this Labour. (Nam Japo, Kirat Karo, Wand Chhako)

(B) Purposes

The Shiromani Akali Dal Shall ever strive to achieve the following aims

1. Propagation of Sikhism and its code of conduct denunciation of atheism.
2. To preserve and keep alive the concept of distinct and independent identity of the Panth and to create

an environment in which national sentiments and aspirations of the Sikh Panth will find full expression, satisfaction and growth.

3. Eradication of Poverty and Starvation, by increased production and more equitable distribution of wealth and the establishment of a just social order sans any exploitation.
4. Vacation of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed or illiteracy in keeping basic principles of Sikhism.
5. Striving for removal of diseases and ill-health, denouncement of use of intoxicants and enlargement of facilities for physical wellbeing to prepare and enthuse the Nation for the National defence.

FIRST PART

The Shiromani Akali Dal considers it its primary duty to inculcate among the Sikhs, religious fervour and a pride in their rich religious heritage for which it proposes to pursue the following programme :

- (a) Reiteration of the concept of the unicity (Oneness) of God, meditation on His Name, recitation of Gurbani, renewal of faith in the ten Holy Sikh Gurus and the Holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib and other appropriate measures for such a purpose.
- (b) Grooming accomplished preachers, Ragis, Dhadis, and poets in the Sikhs Missionary College for a more effective propagation of Sikhism, Sikh Philosophy, belief in Sikh code of conduct and Kirtan etc., at home and abroad, in schools and colleges in villages and in cities as indeed at every place.
- (c) Baptising the Sikhs (Amrit Parchar) on a vast scale, with particular emphasis on schools and colleges of which the teachers and the taught shall be enthused through regular study circles.
- (d) Reinculcate the religious practice of "DASWAND" among the Sikhs. (Giving one tenth of one's earnings for the welfare of the community).
- (e) Generating feelings of respect for the Sikh intellectuals, writers, Preachers, Granthis etc., who also in turn, would be enthused to

improve upon their accomplishments while conforming to the basic Sikh tenets and traditions.

- (f) Streamlining the Gurdwaras administration by giving better training to their workers. Appropriate steps would also be taken to maintain Gurdwara buildings in proper condition. For such a purpose, the party representatives in the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and local Committees would be directed time to time to pull their weight.
- (g) Making appropriate arrangements for the error-free publication of Gurbani; promoting research work in the ancient and modern Sikh history as also its publication; rendering Gurbani in other languages and producing first rate literature on Sikhism.
- (h) Taking appropriate steps for the enactment of an All India Gurdwara Act with a view to introduce improvements in the administration of the Gurdwaras throughout the Country and to reintegrate the traditional preaching sects of Sikhism like Udasis and Nirmalas with the mainstream of Sikhism without

in any way encroaching on the properties of their respective individual 'maths'.

- (i) Taking such steps as may be necessary to bring the Sikh Gurdwaras all over the world under a single system of administration with a view to run them according to the basic Sikh norms and to pool their sources for the dissemination of Sikhism on a wider and more impressive scale.
- (j) Striving for free access to all those holy Sikh Shrines, including Nankana Sahib from which the Sikh Panth has been separated, for pilgrimage and proper upkeep.

POLITICAL GOAL

The political goal of the Panth, without doubt, is enshrined in the commandments of the Tenth Lord, in the pages of the Sikh history and in the very heart of the Khalsa Panth, the ultimate objective of which is the pre-eminence of the Khalsa.

The fundamental policy of the Shiromani Akali Dal is to seek the realization of this birth right of the Khalsa through creation of congenial environment and a political set up.

FOR ATTAINMENT OF THE AIM

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is determined to strive by all possible means to :

- (a) Have all those Punjabi speaking areas, deliberately kept out of Punjab, such as : Dalhousie in Gurdaspur District; Chandigarh; Pinjore-Lalka and Ambala Saddar etc., in Ambala District; the entire Una tehsil of Hoshiarpur District; the 'Desh' area of Balagarh; Shahbad and Gulha blocks of Karnal District; Tohana Sub-Tehsil, Rattia block and Sirsa tehsil of Hissar District and six tehsils of Ganganagar District in Rajasthan; merged with Punjab to constitute a single administrative unit where the interests of Sikhs and Sikhism are specifically protected.
- (b) In this new Punjab and in other States the centre's interference would be restricted to Defence. Foreign relations, currency and general communication; all other departments would be in the jurisdiction of Punjab (and other states) which would be fully entitled to frame own laws on these Subjects for administration. For the above departments

of the Centre, Punjab and other States contribute in proportion to representation in the Parliament.

(c) The Sikhs and other religious minorities living out of Punjab should be adequately protected against any kind of discrimination.

2. The Shiromani Akali Dal would endeavour to have the Indian Constitution recast on real federal principles, with equal representation at the centre for all the states.
3. The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly denounces the foreign policy of India framed by the Congress party. It is worthless, hopeless and highly detrimental to the interest of the Country, the Nation and the Mankind at large. Shiromani Akali Dal shall extend its support only to that foreign policy of India which is based on the principles of peace and National interests. It strongly advocates a policy of peace with all neighbouring countries especially those inhabited by the Sikhs and their sacred shrines. The Akali Dal is of the firm view that our foreign policy should in no case play second fiddle to that of any other country.

4. The Shiromani Akali Dal shall raise its firm voice against any discrimination against any Sikh (or even other) employees of the central or state Governments. The Shiromani Akali Dal shall also endeavour to maintain the traditional position of the Sikhs in all the wings of the defence department and the Panth would pay particular attention to the needs of the Sikh Armymen. The Shiromani Akali Dal would also see that 'Kirpan' is accepted as an integral part of the uniform of the Sikhs in Army,
5. It shall be the primary duty of the Shiromani Akali Dal to help rehabilitate the ex-servicemen of the Defence Department in the Civil life and or such a purpose it would extend them every help to enable them to organize themselves so that they are able to raise their voice in an effective way for gaining adequate concessions and proper safeguards for a life of self-respect and dignity.
6. The Shiromani Akali Dal is of the firm opinion that all those persons-males or females- who have not been convicted of any criminal offence by a court of law should be at liberty to possess all types of small arms, like, revolvers, guns, pistols, rifles, carbines etc., without any license, the only obligation being their registration.

7. The Shiromani Akali Dal seeks ban on the sale of liquor and other intoxicants and shall press for prohibition on the consumption of intoxicants and smoking on public places.

THE ECONOMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMME OF
THE SHIROMANI AKALI DAL

as adopted by its Working Committee on 17th October, 1973 at its meeting held at Sri Anandput Sahib :

Although the mainstay of the Indian economy is agriculture and all those political powers who claim to raise social structure on the basis of justice cannot afford to ignore this fact, yet this a hard fact that the levers of economic powers, continue to be in the hands of big traders, capitalists and monopolists. Some marginal benefits might have accrued to other classes, but the real benefits of economic growth have been reaped by these categories during the last 26 years after Independence. The political power has also been misappropriated by these classes which are wielding the same for their own benefits. As such, any peaceful attempt to usher in a new era of social justice would have to break the economic and political strongholds of these categories of people.

The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly advocates that the growing gulf between the rich and poor, in the urban and rural areas both should be abridged but, it is of the firm opinion that, for such a purpose, the first assault would have to be made on the classes who have assumed all the reins of economic power in their hands. In rural areas the Akali Dal determined to help the weaker classes, like the scheduled castes, backward classes, landless tenants, ordinary labourers, poor and middle class farmers. For such a purpose, it stands for meaningful land reforms which envisage a ceiling of 30 standard acres and the distribution of excess land among the poor farmers.

The motto of Shiromani Akali Dal is to provide employment for all, requisite food and clothing for all, a house to live in, suitable transport and to create means to fulfil all those necessities of a civilized life without which life appears incomplete.

As such, the economic policy of the Shiromani Akali Dal shall endeavour to achieve the following objectives :

AGRICULTURE SECTOR

During recent years the agriculture sector has witnessed land reforms and green revolution. The Shiromani Akali Dal undertakes to enrich the green revolution by an

in yield per acre. It shall also ensure perceptible improvement in the standard of living of all rural classes, more particularly of the poor and the middle class farmers, as also the landless labourers. For such a purpose it plans to work on the following lines:

- (a) Introducing land reforms and measures for increasing agricultural production with a view to remove the growing gap between the rich and the poor. For such a purpose the existing legislation on land ceiling would have to be revised and a firm ceiling of 30 standard acres per family would have to be enforced with proprietary rights to the actual tillers. The excess land would be distributed among the landless tenants and poor farmers, while the cultivable government land lying unused shall be distributed among the landless classes especially the scheduled castes and tribes. While distributing such lands the interests of Harijans and Landless labourers would be particularly taken care of. The Akali Dal would also consider the possibilities of allowing the tenants to service loan by mortgaging land under their plough, as also prohibiting the scheduled castes tribes and backward classes from mortgaging the land distributed among them.

- (b) The Shiromani Akali Dal shall work for the modernization of farming and would also try to enable the middle class and poor farmers to seek loans and inputs made available by different agencies.
- (c) The Shiromani Akali Dal shall try to fix the prices of the agricultural produce on the basis of the returns of the middle class farmers. Such prices would notified well before the sowing season and only the State governments would be empowered to fix such prices..
- (d) The Shiromani Akali Dal stands for complete nationalization of the trade in foodgrains and as such, shall endeavour to nationalize the wholesale trade in foodgrains through the establishment of state agencies.
- (e) The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly oppose the demarcation of food zones and the attendant restrictions on the movements of foodgrains. The whole country should be the Single food zone.

The party shall make special efforts to bring the Thein Dam and the Bhatinda Thermal plant to a speedy completion so that increased and cheaper power and irrigation facilities are available. Decsure efforts would be made for the establishment of an Atomic power station in the state.

Co-operative societies would be set up in the rural areas. In all those areas where canal water is not available small irrigation projects would be taken in hand.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly advocates that all Key industries should be brought under the public sector.

It is of the opinion that basic consumer industries should be immediately nationalized to stabilize the prices of the consumer goods and to save the poor consumer from exploitation at the hands of the industrialists and the middleman.

The public Sector industries should be established in such a way that the imbalance between different states is removed.

A planned effort to establish agro-industries in the rural areas should be made to relieve the growing population pressure in the urban areas. The industrial management should be democratized by enabling the workers to have a say in the management and by fair distribution of profits between the Industrialists and the workers. The credit agencies, especially the nationalized banks, should be

directed to invest a fixed ratio of their deposits in the rural areas. Every industrial unit beyond worth one crore assets should be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal stands for progressive nationalization of Transport.

The public sector units should be fully autonomous and manned by competent young executive drawn from a central pool of talent.

ECONOMIC POLICY

The Shiromani Akali Dal demands that the whole tax structure be revised in such a way that the evasion of taxes and the flow of black money is completely eradicated. It stands for a simple and straight-forward system of taxation. The present infra-structure of taxation, weighs heavily against the poor and enables the rich to by pass it. The party stands for a more realistic policy in this respect so that the black money running a parallel economy may be usefully employed.

WORKERS, MIDDLE CLASS EMPLOYEES AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

For their benefits the Shiromani Akali Dal would try its best :

1. To fix need based wages for industrial workers.
2. To bring progressive improvement in the standard of living of government employees.
3. To re-assess the minimum wages of agricultural labour and to effect necessary improvements, if any when necessary.
4. To remove the lacunae in the Labour law to ensure a fair standard of living for them.
5. To take necessary steps to provide roofed accommodation for the rural and urban poor.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The Shiromani Akali Dal stands for full employment in the country. For such a purpose it is of the firm opinion that the Government must provide immediate employment to the educated and trained persons, otherwise reasonable unemployment allowance should be paid to them. This amount should be shared by the centre and the state government.

The minimum rates of such an allowance should be as under :

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Matric and or trained hands | Rs. 50/- per month |
| 2. B.A | Rs. 75/- " " |
| 3. M.A | Rs. 100/- " " |
| 4. Engineers and Sectors | Rs. 150/- " " |

*5. Other trained Labour Rs.50/- per month

All persons above the age of 65 should be given old age pension.

WEAKER SECTION AND BACKWARD CLASSES

The Shiromani Akali Dal shall try to improve the economic condition of the backward classes and weaker sections of Society by extending them facilities for education, employment and other concessions, to enable them to come at par with other sections of society. Foodgrains at cheaper rates would be made available to them.

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