



THE NATURE AND HISTORY OF SELL-OUT POLITICS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR FROM 1846 TO 1939

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Abstract: *Sell out is to give up or yield in exchange for value or payment.¹ One who betrays a cause for personal progress?² It is a common natural sneering expression for the compromising of a personal integrity, morality, authenticity or Ideology in exchange for individual gains. In political movement a “sell out” is a person or group claims to adhere to one ideology, only to follow these claims up with actions contradicting them, such as a revolutionary group claiming to fight for a particular cause but failing to continue this upon obtaining power.³ In Jammu and Kashmir sell-out has an elongated history. Sell-out in Kashmir started in 1846 when “The deal of worth Seventy Five lakhs was signed, accepted and Patented by none other than British. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was created by the British Raj for its own imperial ends. From then Sell-out remains a continuous process in Kashmir. It made people slaves of their rulers from then.⁴*

Keywords: *Treaty of Amritsar, Jammu and Kashmir, Muslim Conference, Sell-out etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Jammu and Kashmir Region

Jammu and Kashmir absolutely spelled Cashmere north western region of south Asia. Jammu and Kashmir state has been particular political entity for over a hundred years, it cannot be denied that geographically, ethnically, culturally and historically, it is composed of five separate homogeneous regions, namely Jammu, Kashmir (both sides) Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit.⁵(Figure 1)

Set up of sell-out in Jammu and Kashmir

Text of the treaty: English translation of the Persian text treaty signed at Leh on second of Asuj 1899 Bikrami (September 1842 AD) between the government of Maharaja Gulab Singh and government of Tibet. Where as we the officers of the Lhasa country, viz, firstly, Kalon Surkhan, and secondly, Fepon Pishi, commander of the forces of the Empire of China, on the one hand and Dewan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratanu on behalf of Maharaja Gulab Singh

,on other, agree together and swear before God that the friendship between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the Emperor of China and Lama Guru Sahib Lassawalla will kept and observed till eternity; no disregard will be shown to anything agreed upon in the presence of God; and will respect the boundary of Ladakh and the countries bordering on it as fixed since old times we will carry on the trade in Shawl, Pashmina and tea before by the way of Ladakh; and if any one of the Shri Maharaja enemies comes to our territories and says anything against the Raja we will not listen to him and will not allow him remain in our country, and whatever traders come from Ladakh sell experience no difficulty from our side.⁶



Figure 1: Map of Kashmir

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/south_asia/2002/india_pakis

Treaty of Lahore became the road map for treaty of Amritsar

Treaty between the British government and the State of Lahore concluded at Lahore on March 9, 1846 between Sir Henry Hardinge and Maharaja Dalip Singh Bahadur. Article III of the Lahore Treaty states that the Maharaja ceded to the honorable company in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories and rights in the Doab and Country, hills and plains situate between rivers Beas and Satluj. Article IV of the Lahore Treaty states that the British government having demanded from the Lahore state, an indemnification for the expense of the war, in addition to the cession of territory described in Article III, payment of a one and



a half crore of rupees; and the Lahore government being unable to pay the whole of this sum at this time or to give security satisfactory to the British government for its eventual payment; the Maharaja cedes to the honorable company, in perpetual sovereignty, as equivalent for one crore of rupees all his forts, territories rights and interests in the hill countries which are situated between the rivers Beas and Indus including the province of Kashmir and Hazari. Article IX the control of the rivers Beas and Sutlej with continuation of the later river, commonly called the Ghara and Panjnad to the confluence of the Indus from Mithankot, and the control of the Indus from Mithankot to the borders of Balochistan, shall in respect to tools and ferries, rest with the British government.⁷

Article XII of the Lahore Treaty states that in consideration of this service rendered by Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu to the Lahore state, toward procuring the restoration of relations of amity between the Lahore and the British governments the Raja Gulab Singh, in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Raja Gulab Singh by separate agreement between himself and the British government, with the dependencies thereof, which may have been in the Rajas possession since the time of the Late Maharaja Kharak Singh; and the British government in consideration of the good conduct of Raja Gulab Singh, also agrees to recognize his independence in such territories and to admit him to be privileges of a separate treaty with the British government. Article XIII of Lahore Treaty states that in event of any dispute or difference arising between the Lahore state and Raja Gulab Singh, the same shall be referred to the arbitration of the British Government, and by its decision the Maharaja engage to abide.⁸

Kashmir was sold in 1846 by the British to Gulab Singh a Dogra Rajput. The Maharajas Ranjit Singh conquest of Kashmir in 1819 was in no small degree due to the valuable service rendered by Gulab Singh in person. He became most important chiefs of Lahore Darbar. In 1822 he was made the Raja of Jammu which the Maharaja Ranjit Singh had conquered during 1808-09.⁹ When anarchy regained in the Punjab after the Maharaja passed away and murders and intrigues became order of the day, Dhian Singh his son Hera Singh Singh and Suehet Singh fell victims to them. Raja Gulab Singh was however saved by the evidences from this turmoil to play a significant role in the first Anglo-Sikh war which broke out in 1845. This war came to an end by the treaty of Lahore dated 9th march 1846 A.D. which brought to the British from the Lahore Darbar the hilly territories lying between the rivers



Bias and Indus including the provinces of Kashmir and Hazara. The British in their term sold out Kashmir to Gulab Singh against the payment of 75 Lakhs of rupees. Through treaty known as Treaty of Amritsar concluded on 16th March 1846 corresponding with the seventeenth day Rabi-ul-Awwal 1264, Hijri and Raja Gulab Singh were further honored with the title of Maharaja Gulab Singh in person.¹⁰ He was already the master of Jammu, Ladakh and Baltistan had also been earlier conquered for him by General Zorawar Singh (1835-40). After taking the possession of Kashmir, Maharaja Gulab Singh occupied Gilgit as well. Thus he founded the state of Jammu and Kashmir with the help of sell-out concluded by British Government.¹¹ This Treaty consisting of the 10 Articles, Article III of the Amritsar treaty states that in consideration of transfer made to him and his heirs ... Maharaja Gulab Singh will have to pay the United Kingdom Government the sum of seventy five Lakh of Rupees (Nanakshahi), fifty lakhs to be paid for the ratification of this Treaty and Twenty-five lakh on or before 1 October of the current year 1846 AD.¹² Imam din decided, in the third week of August to leave for Lahore after handing over possession to the agents of Gulab Singh.¹³ The sum of rupees 50 lakhs was to be paid on the ratification of the treaty and the remaining 25 lakhs by 1st October 1846. Actually what happened was that sometimes after the signing of the treaty at Amritsar, Gulab Singh came forward with the claim that a sum of rupees 15 lakhs which the British government had recovered before the treaty from Ferozepur, belong to his brother Suchet Singh and should be adjusted against his payment. It was accepted.¹⁴

The first installment of rupees fifty lakhs, fell due on 30th March, 1846 and remained rupees twenty five lakhs, stipulated amount was paid in 42 installments. The balance due on 22nd August, 1848 - more than two years of sale, was rupees seven lakhs, forty seven thousands, eight hundred and thirteen. There are at least five installments of rupees ten thousand each. The last installment was paid on 14th March 1850, exactly four years after signing of infamous treaty and amount to rupees one thousand, three hundred thirty seven.¹⁵ A perusal of the details shows that all types of currency were used in payment including the Muhammad



Nanakshahi coins

Source: Shri Pratab Singh Museum, Srinagar



Shahi (Mughal) ashrafis as well as coins from Oudh.¹⁶

Sikhs used to farm out Kashmir valley, for rupees sixty eight lakhs a year; that makes an income of rupees two crore, seventy-two lakhs in four years from Kashmir alone. It is acknowledged that while the Sikhs had taxed heavily, Gulab Singh sucked the very life-blood out of them. Imagine what it must have then meant in terms of money? By the time the sale –price had been fully paid, the vendee may have already realized corers of rupees and thus on 14th March 1850 when he paid the final installment, he must have satisfaction of having already tons of money from the slave-deal.¹⁷

VIEWS OF PEOPLE ON THIS SELL OUT

“Affairs in Kashmir are only growing worse and worse, That Government is a disgrace.”¹⁸

-Arthur Brinkman 1867

“Three-fourth of India is directly under the slavery of the British and one-fourth is indirectly under them. Kashmir forms part of this unlucky region, in which ten crore people lead a life of slaves. We the forty lakh people of the state are suffering under the yoke of the Dogra Rule.”¹⁹

-Sheikh Abdullah-1946

“For seventy five lakhs of rupees, the unfortunate Kashmiris were handed over to the tender mercies of the most thorough ruffian that ever was created- a villain from a kingdom down to half penny.”²⁰

-Knight

“Lakhs of hungry naked and suffering Kashmiris are breathing their last. Deprived of the necessities of life, clothing and food they are covering their life-span rather nearing their death under extreme oppression, degradation and atrocities.”²¹

-Sardar Buddh Singh 1946

“Villages, streams, meadows have been sold; Whole nation has been sold, at what a Low cost.”²²

-Iqbal

“Valley, mountains, forests, rivers, fruits, flowers and grain...cattle ,sheep, humans and their work and labor...all traditions inherited by us from our forefathers...look at the sale deed, everything is in black and white... Ownership of the country bought for seventy five lakhs...confiscated all this booty in seventy five lakhs, Be it cattle or humans to be bought, all for sale...their sons, daughters and progeny all for sale...None can ever be free, all are up for sale...Homeless till doomsday, ruined, forever on sale, Sold is Kashmir’s paradise for seventy five lakh”²³

Hafeez Jalandhari



SUPPRESSION AND FORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

It was on every body's lips that Dogras meant the pillage of the nation.²⁴ Dogras rule was characterized as despotic, tyrannical and sectarian. Khawaja Gulam Hassan Nizami, a prominent Punjabi Muslim various times met Pratab Singh describes pratab orthodox Hindu. He did not like face of any Muslim from morning to evening, even not tolerated Muslim shade on drinking water, was punishing or imprisoning Muslim if their shade felt on him.²⁵ Hathi killing cows was crime; slaughters were dealt with serve punishments. E.F. KNIGHT in 1891 visited Kashmir says killing of cows was punished with death, after a long time it changed into life sentence imprisonment.²⁶ Mosques, shrines were converted into store houses for grains and ammunition.

Muslim leaders demand by a memorandum submitted to Lord Reading in 1924, that all religious places to be freed from government possession and should be protected from future encroachment by non Muslims. From the 106 years of Dogra rule 28 prime ministers took charge none among them was Muslim. Glancy commission which put it on record that there were 12 graduates and 133 matriculates in Kashmir. Gulam Rasool presented a written statement to riots enquiry committee in 1931 the principal of efficiency is merely a smoke, two non Muslims deputy director of sericulture department had studied up to entrance, six senior assistants three non Muslims had no qualification. To loot the peasants was no sin; society did not disapprove of it.²⁷

According to Maulana Mohammad Saeed Masoodi the decision to form a party and name it Muslim Conference was taken in central jail Srinagar in course of discussion he had with Sheikh Abdullah. All India Kashmir committee was largely responsible for its decision. Committee was therefore set up to convene the conference. It drafted a constitution and decided to name the organization as the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. The inaugural session was held on the 14th, 15th and 16th of October 1932AD, in the historical pather Masjid Srinagar under the Presidentship of sheikh Abdullah. It was a unique gathering, especially in the sense that all Muslims, irrespective of their religious differences or social distinctions sat shoulder to shoulder on the same platform with the common objective of providing Muslims with a single political platform²⁸. The flag hoisting ceremony was performed on 14th by Walliullah-Zain-ul-Abedin, a representative of the All India Kashmir committee. Khawaja Gulam Ahmad Ashai read the address of welcome on 15th



October. Sheikh Abdullah's presidential address reads as our movement is not directed against the minorities. I assure all my countrymen are they Hindus or Sikhs that we shall always try to redress their grievances but they must also respect our just right, our collective work is to get rid of from the oppression and autocratic rule of Maharajas.²⁹

ACHIEVEMENTS OF MUSLIM CONFERENCE

Property rights in land, concessions in connection with the use of forests, abolition of taxes on cattle and nazarana, freedom of press and platform, right to form association and establishment of assembly and district and municipal boards. Glancy commission report was published in May 1932. Whose reforms were accepted by all Muslims as well as non Muslims?³⁰

Sheikh spoke in favour of conversion of Muslim conference into Notational conference. On June 24 1938 Sheikh placed the resolution before working committee. On 28th June, 1938 the working committee of the Muslim Conference met in Srinagar to consider the question of changing the name of the party. After marathon discussions lasted for five days and spread over fifty two hours. Chaudri Gulam Abbas, Maulvi Abdullah Vakil and Ahmad –ud – din Banihali opposed the resolution and voted against it. Chaudri Gulam Abbas khan and his colleges had an apprehension that the conversion weakens the movement because non Muslims would not participate in national conference sincerely but the safeguard of their vested interests. Rivals Muslim conference would launch a disinformation campaign against the new party in the name of religion and government would get an opportunity to root the movement.³¹

A special session of All Jammu and Muslim conference was held at Srinagar on 10th, 11th of June, 1939 under the Presidentship of Gulam Mohd Sadiq, reception committee chairman Masoodi introduced some resolutions, it approved to change the name of Muslim Conference to National conference and bring the necessary amendments in the constitution. This conference therefore decided to bring All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference into power. This session was attended by 176 delegates of all districts. On this occasion the president Gulam Mohd Sadiq said, that it is essential that the struggle for establishing a responsible government, every citizen of state, irrespective of his religion or race should be able to participate, make their contributions towards freedom movement from Dogras.³² . Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah Young Muslims leader declared the conversion of



Muslim Conference into National Conference as a SELL OUT of Muslim state.³³ Jinnah too disapproved of the sheikh's conversion of the Muslim Conference to National conference of 1939.³⁴

CONCLUSION

The sell-out politics has done mess of the state in all walks of life; Kashmir lost its unique identity, fraternity and homogeneity. People of state lost faith in democratic set-up. People of the state were not treated better than animals due to sell-outs. As Gulab Singh treated, they purchased property. The most injustice people feel is, that they are never taken in to consideration. When Amritsar treaty took place, Kashmir who constitute majority Muslims were not even made aware of it. People of Kashmir have suffered due to the arrogance of Leaders at different times and on different sell-outs.

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