

- Paradise of the Pacific Press, 1909), 136; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (hereafter abbreviated *PCA*), 9 April 1864.
27. *PCA*, 21 January 1864; *Hawai'ian Gazette*, 27 June 1877, quoted in Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawai'ian Kingdom: The Kalaukaua Dynasty 1874-1893*, vol. 3 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1967), 47.
 28. William Henry Taylor, "The Hawai'ian Sugar Industry," unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1935, 6, 7; Lawrence H. Fuchs, *Hawai'i Pono: A Social History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961), 251, 258.
 29. Damon, *Koamahu*, 19; *Royal Hawai'ian Agricultural Society Transactions* 1, no. 1 (February 1852): 6.
 30. *PCA*, 9 June 1877.
 31. Taylor, "Hawai'ian Sugar Industry," 19-20, 170; Fuchs, *Hawai'i Pono*, 259; Damon, *Koamahu*, 857-858.
 32. Taylor, "Hawai'ian Sugar Industry," 66, 166; *Hawai'ian Annual for 1904* (Honolulu: Thrum, 1903), 31; *Hawai'ian Annual for 1921* (Honolulu: Thrum, 1920), 24; J. A. Mollett, *Capital in Hawai'ian Sugar: Its Formation and Relation to Labor Output, 1870-1957* (Honolulu: Hawai'ian Agricultural Experiment Station, 1961), 13, 16, 27, 28.
 33. Taylor, "Hawai'ian Sugar Industry," 66; Fuchs, *Hawai'i Pono*, 259; Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawai'ian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1977), 312.
 34. Commissioner of Labor, quoted in Ray Stannard Baker, "How King Sugar Rules," *American Magazine* 73 (November 1911): 28; Baker, *ibid.*

THE GADAR PARTY

POLITICAL EXPRESSION IN

AN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

Jane Singh

First-generation immigrants have typically been intimately involved with the politics of their former homeland. When the homeland happened either to be under colonial domination, or its people subjugated by repressive governments, this involvement often resulted in revolutionary organizational activities. Examples of such organizations include Chinese national organizations, e.g., the Reform Party and the Patriotic Rising Society in San Francisco, the Korean National Association, which sought to plan and finance resistance activities against Japan and even tried to provide military training for participants in the independence movement, and the remarkably similar Gadar (Rebellion) movement among the Asian Indians. The Gadar Party, being very much in the tradition of overseas-based nationalist movements, was dependent on the leadership of particular highly educated individuals for its vitality and impact. When these leaders, often political exiles, left the scene, the rank and file members found it difficult to maintain their political activism. The actual contribution of the Gadar to the Indian nationalist movement, though recognized, has been seen as peripheral, primarily due to their espousal of violence, which was rejected by the mainstream nationalist movement under the leadership of M. K. Gandhi. In the immigrant community, however, particularly among those in the agricultural sectors in California, the Gadar movement is seen as an important part of the Asian Indian heritage, and martyrs of the Gadar uprisings are still commemorated annually.

The first community organizations in North America formed by the Asian Indians were established in 1906 and 1907. These included Gurudwaras in British Columbia in 1906; Sikh centers of worship; ethnic societies such as the United India League in Vancouver, which sought to protect the rights of Indian workers; and nationalist organizations such as the India Independence League, formed in

San Francisco to provide political education for Indian immigrants in the area (Singh 1966: 14; Bose 1971: 48–49). Early in 1907, an Urdu periodical *Circular-i-Azadi* (Circular of Freedom) was published from San Francisco and was openly critical of British rule in India (Ker 1973: 228).

Although a series of similar organizations and periodicals followed that were concerned with immigration rights and the economic and social welfare of the Asian Indian, the anticolonialist sentiment remained an underlying theme in many of these activities. This trend contributed to the development of the Gadar Party in 1913. This militant nationalist movement evolved out of the loosely organized Hindustanee Association, which had branches from Vancouver, British Columbia, to the Imperial Valley on the southern border of California. In 1913, the charismatic Indian expatriate Har Dayal unified the community by clarifying the political objectives of the immigrants and by establishing a central headquarters for the Gadar Party in San Francisco. A printing press was set up and the first issue of the Gadar weekly newspaper was printed in November 1913. By the end of the year, the periodical was being regularly printed in two Indian languages.

In 1915 hundreds of Gadar-inspired immigrants from Canada and the United States returned to India to participate in an attempt to overthrow the British colonial government. In 1917 the U.S. government prosecuted a large number of Gadar leaders on grounds that they had violated American neutrality laws by plotting against the British while in U.S. territory. The intricacy and complexity of the Gadar organization and activities were revealed in a dramatic trial held in San Francisco. Indian, German, and American co-conspirators were tried and sentenced for attempting to smuggle arms, ammunition, and propaganda to revolutionaries inside India. The conviction and sentencing of a number of Gadar participants took the momentum out of the movement, although the Gadar Party continued to receive support from the immigrant community. The Gadar Party continued to print anticolonialist pamphlets and journals, host visiting Indian nationalists, and support revolutionary ventures until 1948, when India gained its independence. Thereafter Asian Indian community support persisted until a memorial hall and library was built on the Gadar premises at 5 Wood Street in San Francisco.

A number of factors led to the politicizing of the Asian Indian community in North America. Three major reasons for the rising political sentiments among the immigrants whose primary goals had been economic were: (1) growing unrest in their home province of Punjab, where widespread disturbances in 1907 over government repression and tax increases resulted in the arrest and deportation of two popular Punjabi leaders, Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh (Sharma 1971: 48); (2) the presence in North America of expatriate nationalists who though few in number were among the more educated and took charge of ethnic periodicals or became spokesmen for the larger community; and (3) dissatisfaction with the British Indian government for not having supported their challenges to the increasing immigration restrictions being imposed by the United States and Canada. A large number of the Asian Indians in North America who had served their government as soldiers and policemen protested the British imperial government's lack of commitment to its own citizens, and found that they had even fewer rights to immigrate to the United States and Canada than other Asian nationals. The British Indian govern-

ment refused to negotiate or make any agreement on behalf of those of its citizens who wished to migrate to North America.

It was also a precarious time for the Asian Indian immigrant. In 1907 the Japanese-Korean Exclusion League of San Francisco expanded to become the Asiatic Exclusion League so that Indians could also be targeted in their protests. The League became increasingly active and lobbied successfully for stricter immigration regulations to curb the number of Asians entering the United States (Das 1923: 16). Also in 1907, Canadian and U.S. labor elements were considered responsible for anti-Asiatic riots in Vancouver in which much of the Asian section of the city was destroyed. Indians were assaulted in a series of attacks on their work camps in the towns of Bellingham and Tacoma, Washington, and Astoria, Oregon (Misrow 1971: 30–31). In 1908 a Canadian Order-in-Council also effected a regulation that seriously curtailed Indian immigration: it required that immigrants come directly from their country of origin in a continuous journey (Singh 1966: 12). Most Indians had been coming from East Asian ports, since there were no direct lines operating between India and Canada at that time.

As their presence in North America was being severely challenged, Asian Indians formed a variety of organizations to bolster their position under inhospitable conditions. The Gadar movement grew out of the immigrant community's tendency toward collective activism. Since 1907 Asian Indians had conducted numerous protests and made repeated representations to the Canadian, U.S. and British governments in regard to immigration restrictions that limited their entry to North America. The Hindustanee Association had been formed to present a united front against the oppressive restrictions. This organization regularly dealt with both immigration and nationalist issues (Bose 1971: 53–54). While the immediate concerns of the Indians were their rights to immigrate, to own property, and to gain citizenship and enfranchisement, there was an increasing antipathy toward India's colonial status. Although many of those who migrated to North America had served in the British Indian armed forces, the subservient position of the motherland made a more acute impression on them as they viewed their country from abroad. The seasoned nationalists found willing, if not long-term, support for their anti-British activities among these immigrants.

Har Dayal, a Punjabi Hindu, had come to California with a long career of political activism in India and Europe behind him. He had heard of the rising nationalist consciousness among Indian immigrants on the Pacific west coast (Dharmavira 1970: 145–146). Har Dayal reached California in June 1911, and while he did meet with his fellow Punjabis, he spent most of his time in intellectual circles at the University of California-Berkeley, Stanford University, and San Francisco. He was a lecturer in philosophy at Stanford for several months and actively participated in a number of radical American political groups in the San Francisco bay area. In spite of his diverse activities, Har Dayal was apparently making an impact on the local Indian community. In the summer of 1912, a group of six Indian students arrived at U. C. Berkeley on scholarships sponsored by a successful Sikh farmer, Jawala Singh from Stockton, California. The fellowship program had been designed by Har Dayal to bring dedicated and politically sensitive young men to the United States for higher education. The program came to an abrupt halt when

Jawala Singh's crops failed, but the prospect of politically motivating this new group of students captured Har Dayal's imagination and brought him closer to the Indian student community at Berkeley (Brown 1975: 128). By the end of 1912, Har Dayal was spending more time circulating among the various Indian communities along the Pacific west coast. Indians were concentrated in clusters or groups in major agricultural areas in California such as the Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Imperial Valleys. In Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia the majority worked in major centers of the lumber industry. Har Dayal traveled from community to community with other nationalists, students, and immigrant activists. He and his associates lectured to gatherings of Indians, and when the opportunity arose, he would address American audiences as well, describing India and its condition under British rule. In Astoria, Oregon, where approximately 200 Indians worked in lumber yards, Har Dayal told an American audience that India was being economically drained by the British. In describing the unprecedented poverty in India as a result of colonial rule, he referred to the "British Vampire" instead of the British Empire (quoted in Ker 1973: 235).

In the spring of 1913, a large number of Indians met in Portland, Oregon. Delegates from various communities in the United States and Canada decided to combine the different Hindustanee Associations into one central organization with specific goals and activities. The delegates agreed that funds should be raised to establish a central office and to publish a revolutionary newspaper (Bose 1971: 58; Brown 1975: 140-141). Several Indian leaders were elected officers of the new Hindustanee Association of the Pacific Coast. Har Dayal became the general Secretary. Taking charge, he established the organization's headquarters in San Francisco in November 1913. The Association's name was changed to the Gadar Party (Party of Rebellion), and the first issue of the Gadar weekly was published on November 1.

San Francisco became the center for Gadar activities because Har Dayal had many contacts in the area with local universities and radical political groups. The Indian population in California was growing because immigrants were attracted from northern areas by the state's favorable climate and farming opportunities. Most of the Indian immigrants in North America had come from an agricultural background in Punjab, and many of them were drawn to California's rich farmlands. Finally, San Francisco was a relatively safe place to carry on overt nationalist agitation. Vancouver, Canada had been a center for political activity in earlier days, but critics of the British Empire had to be cautious when speaking out in a commonwealth country.

The initial focus of the Gadar Party was to disseminate the revolutionary message through the weekly newspaper *Gadar*. It was printed in Urdu, a major language in North India, and in Gurumukhi, the script of the Punjabi language. It was sent throughout Indian immigrant communities in North, Central, and South America, Europe, and East and Southeast Asia. The *Gadar* was also sent in large numbers to India, but because it was soon banned by the colonial government, it had to be smuggled into the country. The second major Gadar activity was for representatives to circulate throughout the Indian community presenting political lectures and programs and installing local units of the party which could hold regular meetings

and raise funds. The third part of the Gadar program was to develop an international network of individuals and organized units working for the overthrow of the British government in India.

The Gadar Party functioned under a set of rigid rules that emphasized secrecy and confidentiality in all operations (Brown 1975: 143). In the first several months after the Gadar was established, clandestine activities consisted mainly of sending messengers and Gadar publications to immigrant communities and nationalist centers throughout the world. Those privy to secret operations of the organization formed an inner circle of the Gadar structure. These individuals included most of the "full-time" nationalists, such as Taraknath Das and Pandurang Khankhoje, who had been active in the Hindustanee Associations and were committed to the Indian freedom movement. Others were close associates of Har Dayal such as Ram Chandra, Gobind Bihari Lal, and Kartar Singh Sarabha, the latter two students at U. C. Berkeley. Barkatullah and Bhagwan Singh had been politically active in East Asia and became important members of the Gadar organization. The inner circle was made up mainly of educated Indians, many of whom were neither Sikh nor Punjabi. The outer circle of Gadar volunteers comprised mostly average Indian immigrants who gave up their work in lumber mills, farms, and other such enterprises to devote themselves to the cause. The third component of the Gadar structure was the membership, immigrants who paid subscriptions and belonged to local chapters of the Gadar Party. Friction between the educated and the noneducated Indians had arisen in earlier community organizations and was evident in the Gadar Party as well (Singh 1966: 17; Brown 1975: 140-141). Because of the collective enthusiasm for this revolutionary movement, however, these differences did not surface until after the organization was well established.

The Gadar movement quickly gained support among the mainstream of the Asian Indian immigrants on the Pacific west coast. In December 1913 Har Dayal reported to a friend that "they had raised \$2,000 among Hindu laborers in California and Canada," which enabled them to establish a center and publication program (quoted in Brown 1975: 143). British intelligence reports noted, with much alarm, that Vancouver was also a center for antigovernment agitation. At a meeting held at a Sikh Gurudwara on December 27, 1913, several militant speeches were delivered and a patriotic poem from the *Gadar* weekly was recited (Ker 1973: 236). A British undercover agent, William Hopkinson, fluent in Indian languages, had kept close watch on the Asian Indian community in Canada for years. On January 8, 1913 he reached San Francisco on special assignment to investigate anti-British activities in California. With the help of the local British consul, Hopkinson was able to enlist the cooperation of U.S. immigration officials and the U.S. Department of Justice to help him make a case against Indian revolutionaries (Brown 1975: 131-132). He focused his attention on several speeches delivered by Har Dayal in 1913, and formulated a case against the Indian. As a result of Hopkinson's presentation, Har Dayal was arrested by U.S. authorities on March 26, 1914 on charges that he, an alien, was a revolutionary who had associations with anarchist organizations (Ker 1973: 237). Released on bail, Har Dayal used the opportunity to present his case in the *Gadar* newspaper as well as the local press. Citing British influence as the cause for his arrest, he stated in his characteristic manner, "It is

the despicable pro-British subservience of the U.S. that is responsible for my arrest. The Democratic administration is licking the boots of England" (quoted in Ker 1973: 238; Brown 1975: 162–163). Although lawyers retained by the Gadar Party were preparing his defense, Har Dayal left the country while he was free on bail to avoid the risk of deportation to India.

Gadar headquarters continued to function as usual after Har Dayal's departure. In January he had turned over editorship of the *Gadar* to Ram Chandra, a Punjabi journalist who had accompanied him throughout the 1913 lecture circuit. The press cranked out Urdu and Gurumukhi materials regularly, and added translations in other vernacular Indian languages when volunteers were available to prepare the copy. From the first issues of the *Gadar* printed in November 1913, Gadar publicists wrote of the coming revolution in India and exhorted their readers to be prepared to devote themselves to the cause. At a meeting in Sacramento on December 31, 1913 Har Dayal had said that Germany would soon be at war with Britain and that Indians should be prepared to return home to launch the revolution in such an event (Sed. Com. Report 1918: 146). This rhetoric of preparedness was continued in Gadar publications after Har Dayal left the country, and increased toward the summer of 1914 as war between Germany and Britain appeared imminent. There is no evidence, however, that an actual plan of revolution had been devised by the middle of 1914. There is an account that in November 1914 Indian nationalists were trying to secure a loan from Germany to support a Gadar-directed insurgency in India (Sareen 1979: 121). During the year, Gadarites, as members of the organization have been popularly called, had also made contact with Chinese nationalists in the United States. Many of the tactics discussed and proposed for the prospective Indian revolt were laid out through consultations with Chinese revolutionaries. Gadar activist Pandurang Khankhoje described the jointly devised "plan of action" as follows:

It was decided to cut communications, by mobbing railway stations and cutting telegraph lines, then destroying the Police Chowkis (police stations), disorganizing the military camps and checkposts, etc. . . . the second step was to establish revolutionary camps in jungles, and border areas, in the hills and valleys, and then to start harassing the English administration and the armies. . . . It was not possible for us to purchase and procure arms and weapons by any other means except by guerrilla raids on army bases of the English. (Quoted in Brown 1975: 151–152)

While Gadar leaders were formulating their revolutionary strategy, two events hastened the departure of immigrants for India. On April 14, 1914 a chartered Japanese ship, the *Komagata Maru*, sailed from Hong Kong with 372 Punjabi passengers on board. The ship, bound for Vancouver, had been chartered by a Sikh contractor from Singapore (Sed. Com. Report 1918: 147). The trip was undertaken to test and challenge the Canadian Order-in-Council that had stipulated that immigrants must purchase their tickets and travel directly from their country of origin. The ordinance was so effective that Indian immigration to Canada dropped from 2,623 in 1908 to 6 in 1909 (Das 1923: 4–5). The *Komagata Maru* reached Vancouver harbor on May 23, 1914. The Canadian government remained firm in its determina-

tion to uphold the restrictions, and the passengers were forced to remain on board ship for two months while Asian Indians residing in Vancouver tried to negotiate an arrangement to allow their compatriots to disembark. They made representations to the Dominion government in Ottawa and the British India Office in London, but received no support from either. The immigrant community tried to challenge the legality of the exclusionary regulations, but in a test case the court decision went against them.

The *Komagata Maru* incident generated considerable public debate and excitement. Canadian newspapers covered the developments assiduously and were replete with racist arguments for maintaining a bar against Asian Indians. "Two themes dominated the cries of the nativists: fear of inundation by hordes of Asian immigrants and concern for the unassimilable nature of the Indian" (Ward 1978: 90). Typical press statements included: "The question before the people of Canada is whether the country is to be thrown open to all the people of India or closed to all," and "each race is better off in its own natural environment . . . the unrestrained mixing of the races on this Coast would lead to economic disaster and ethical demoralization" (quoted in Ward 1978: 90–91).

After the court decision the authorities ordered the captain of the *Komagata Maru* to remove the ship from the harbor. When the passengers took over the vessel to prevent the departure, a police unit was sent in by tugboat to enforce the orders. The passengers forced the police to retreat by bombarding them with a hail of coal and any other missile they could find on the ship. The Indians were then given a small concession—an opportunity to meet with a cabinet official, to whom they gave their statement. The passengers agreed to leave and arrangements were made for the return journey. A warship, the HMCS *Rainbow*, was brought in to ensure there were no further incidents as the *Komagata Maru* left Vancouver harbor on July 23, 1914.

The trials of the *Komagata Maru* passengers were not over, however. They were not allowed to return to Hong Kong, nor to disembark at any other port along the way. They reached Budge Budge Harbor near Calcutta on the east coast of India on September 29, 1914 and were received by a police unit that was ordered to escort them back to Punjab by special trains. Concerned about the fate that awaited them once they were returned to Punjab, they resisted; in the ensuing confrontation twenty passengers, two European officers, two Punjabi police officers, and two bystanders were killed (Report of K. M. Com. 1914: 15–17).

The *Komagata Maru* affair had been closely followed by Asian Indians in the United States as well as Canada. Protests expressed through the Gadar reflected the indignation felt by the Indians for the ill treatment of their compatriots. Within a few weeks after the *Komagata Maru* had left Vancouver, war broke out in Europe. Meetings were called throughout the Indian community at which speakers declared that the time had come to return to India to fight in the "Gadar" (rebellion) (Ker 1973: 245). The mood had thus been set by a series of events: Har Dayal's arrest and departure, the *Komagata Maru* incident, and Britain's entry into war with Germany. Britain's distraction by war was of course the long-awaited Gadar opportunity. Hundreds of Indians began returning to India in groups, trying to evade the authorities by entering at different ports. The exodus of Indians from North

America and other parts of the world was well known to the British, and many of the returning immigrants were arrested at ports under the Ingress into India Ordinance (Sed. Com. Report 1918: 148). The Ordinance had been passed in September 1914 to restrict the movements of the *Komagata Maru* passengers once they had landed in India. The regulation conveniently applied to Gadarites who were steadily returning home through the end of 1914 and into 1915.

Most of the prominent Gadar leaders who slipped through the ports and found their way to Punjab were soon tracked down and arrested by British agents (Singh 1966: 37). Those Gadarites who escaped arrest spread the revolutionary message in villages and military cantonments. Gadar pamphlets and newspapers were distributed widely (Sed. Com. Report 1918: 159). Gadarites made contacts with local dissidents and planned a general rebellion of Indian troops on February 21, 1915. The revolt was undermined, however, by the infiltration of a government spy into the Gadar ranks. This led to the immediate arrest of several revolutionaries and their military sympathizers. The imperial government was particularly alarmed by the attempt to subvert the loyalty of the troops, since 40 percent of all Indian army recruits were from Punjab. Since the Gadar movement was a potential threat to the military as well as the political system, the government took every measure to contain the activities of this group. The Imperial Legislative Council passed the Defense of India Act on March 18, 1915 in order to avert the Gadar threat by speeding up the judicial proceedings against those arrested. Special tribunals were appointed to try Gadar cases (Sed. Com. Report 1918: 156). A series of three trials, the Lahore Conspiracy Tribunals, were held during 1915, and 291 persons were prosecuted. As a result of these trials, 42 individuals were sentenced to death and hanged, 114 were sentenced to life imprisonment, and 93 were given prison terms of varying lengths (Singh 1966: 45). The majority of those tried and convicted in these tribunals were Gadarites who had returned from abroad.

Although the failure of the 1915 revolution was a strategic and psychological setback, the Gadar Party continued to be active. By 1915 there were branches of the organization established in China, Malaysia, Bangkok, and South and Central America. There were several Gadar activists in Europe who became members of the India Committee in Berlin. The Berlin Committee, as it was called, was made up of twenty-five expatriates who, with German support, planned and implemented a variety of programs designed to destabilize the colonial government in India. The failure of the February revolt was largely due to a lack of finances, arms, and equipment to organize and launch a substantial attack against government forces. Recognizing this, members of the Berlin Committee arranged to secure a loan from Germany to carry out their activities. The money, given to Indian revolutionaries through German consular offices in different parts of the world, was to be repaid when India regained its freedom (Sareen 1979: 120). With German cooperation and financial assistance, the Berlin Committee and the Gadar Party devised an elaborate plan to purchase and ship arms and ammunition to India. Working with the Germans, Indians in the United States attempted to ship 8,080 Springfield rifles, 2,400 carbines, 410 repeating rifles, 3,759 cases of cartridges, 5,000 cartridge belts and 500 Colt revolvers to India by chartered ships. The plan failed when the two chartered vessels were unable to make contact in the Pacific Ocean. In mid-

1915 the ship carrying these supplies returned to the United States and was seized at Hoquiam Port in the state of Washington (Sareen 1979: 131–132; Bose 1971: 127–130).

The Gadar Party was also involved in a plan to attack India from Southeast Asia. Party members were active in Bangkok, Rangoon, and Singapore. A mutiny among Indian troops in Singapore on February 15, 1915 was inspired by Gadar propagandists. During 1915 many Gadarites were sent from San Francisco to Southeast Asia. In August 1915 several members of the Gadar Party were arrested in Bangkok, and from October 1915 on Indians were not allowed to move about freely in Thailand. Efforts continued, however, in Japan, Korea, and China to secure arms and ship them to India. Gadar emissaries such as Bhagwan Singh spent most of 1915 in East Asia and joined other Indian nationalists in Tokyo in October 1915.¹ They tried to buy arms in Japan, but due to increased British surveillance and lack of accessibility to Thailand, no large shipments were ever smuggled into India (Bose 1971: 152–153). Attempts to deliver necessary equipment to India from East Asia continued in 1916. Taraknath Das went from Germany to China and Japan to explore sources for procuring and shipping arms. Despite several months of trying, Das did not find the means to carry out his mission (Bose 1971: 155–156).

Gadar headquarters in San Francisco remained active during this period. Business continued as usual even though the organization's overall unity had been weakened by its inability to gain a substantial fighting foothold in India. Many Gadar supporters from the Stockton and Sacramento areas were particularly disappointed by the failure of the 1915 revolt, which had sacrificed the lives and freedom of many of their fellow immigrants. They blamed the local leaders for prematurely sending hundreds of their compatriots back to Punjab without adequate preparation and equipment. At a Stockton meeting in August 1915, *Gadar* editor Ras Chandra was turned away without any donations for the Gadar Party (Ker 1973: 257). Bhagwan Singh became the leader of the opposition party when he returned to California from Asia in the middle of 1916. Tension between Singh and Chandra resulted in the two factions setting up different presses and publishing two separate weekly newspapers beginning in February 1917.

The intraparty friction diminished in April 1917 when the United States entered World War I and the local American press began to criticize the Gadar Party for its collusion with Germany against Britain (Ker 1973: 258). Representatives of the Berlin India Committee in New York were arrested in March 1917; a few months later, Gadar Party members on the west coast were taken into custody. They were charged with violating U.S. neutrality by conspiring against the British on American territory. A historic trial was held in San Francisco from November 1917 to April 1918. All but one of the Indian defendants were found guilty, sentenced to prison, and fined (Singh 1966: 52). The internal conflicts within the Gadar Party were dramatically reflected in the courtroom on the last day of the trial when Ram Chandra was shot to death by another Indian, who in turn was killed by a guard.

The abortive revolution in Punjab in 1915 and the trial and conviction of Indian activists in 1918 were the overt manifestations of the Gadar Party's inability to carry out an organized revolt against the British in India. The impact of the movement on the colonial government was nevertheless important. The Gadar Party had gained

its momentum from the large numbers of immigrant supporters. The politicizing of a large group of individuals from the Indian mainstream was itself a threat to the colonial government. Even when the organization was weakened from internal conflicts among the leaders, the grassroots membership did not withdraw its support, instead shifting allegiance to different factions. This backing allowed the Gadar activities to continue in one way or another for many years, though many of the leaders and members were periodically dislocated and incarcerated.

Britain's position in India showed signs of destabilization after the Gadar-related disturbances in Punjab. Police officers' firing on a large unarmed crowd in the city of Amritsar in 1919 illustrated that the government had lost its sense of control over the province. The Jallianwala Bagh incident² was a political as well as a moral disaster for the government, and won many more converts to the nationalist cause in India and abroad. Revolutionary activities among Punjabi youth increased after the 1915 revolt and the 1919 police firings. The young patriot Bhagat Singh, who was hanged in 1929 with his associates for terrorist activities against the colonial government, stated that he had been inspired by the sacrifices of the Gadarites who returned to India in 1915.

When those convicted in the San Francisco conspiracy case were released, Gadar activities slowly resumed. An English-language monthly, *The Independent Hindustan*, was published by the Gadar Party in 1920–21 with the cooperation of a New York-based society called the Friends of Freedom for India. After serving their respective sentences, Taraknath Das went to New York to establish the latter group while Santokh Singh was one of the individuals who returned to Gadar headquarters to take charge of local operations. Some expatriate activists dropped out of political life after their incarceration in 1918; others, fearing continued persecution in the United States, moved to different parts of the world. This left the control of the Gadar Party largely with immigrant constituents, the Punjabi Sikhs.

In the 1920s many of the Gadarites who had remained in India after 1915 joined the Akali movement, a Sikh insurgency in Punjab against government control over their institutions. The clashes between the Sikhs and the government were well covered in the Gadar periodical ("Who Are the Alkalis?" *U.S. of India*, 1924: 4–7). The Gadar network throughout North America collected funds to support the Akali cause. Another fund established by the Gadar organization was used to get up the Desh Bhagat Parivar Sahayik Committee (Committee to Aid the Families of Patriots) in India, which provided financial assistance to families of Gadarites and Alkalis who had been killed or imprisoned. This committee continued to help dissidents' families until after Indian independence in 1948.

In 1918 several members of the Berlin India Committee went to Russia to explore the possibility of getting Soviet support for the Indian freedom movement (Sareen 1979: 220). Since the Russian revolution in 1917 Indian nationalists had become very interested in the newly liberated nation. In 1922 Santokh Singh and Rattan Singh from the San Francisco Gadar office attended the Fourth Congress of the Third International in Moscow. Thereafter a number of Gadar workers were sent to the University for the Toilers of the East in Moscow to learn the theory and practice of revolution. Santokh Singh went to India in 1923 but was put under

house arrest and detained in his village in Punjab until 1925. Once freed he went to Amritsar, where he and two other Gadarites established the periodical *Kirti* (Worker) (Josh 1977–78: 223).

The *Kirti* monthly, supported by the Gadar Party, became the official organ for a peasant-worker movement in Punjab. Many of the 76 Gadarites who returned to India via Moscow joined the new movement, as did the majority of the Gadar veterans of the 1915 and Akali revolts. These "Babas" (grandfathers, old men), as they were called because of their advanced age, were released from jails during the 1920s and 1930s after serving their sentences. It was many of these "Babas" who formed the vanguard of the peasant and subsequent socialist movement in Punjab (Singh 1945: 29; Josh 1977–78: 330–332).

Gadar activities in San Francisco after 1920 concentrated mainly on its publications and on financing special movements in India. The *Gadar* was published irregularly and was circulated among the dwindling population of Asian Indian immigrants through the 1930s. Many of the earlier Gadar pamphlets were reprinted during this time. Publications and programs became increasingly irregular during the 1930s, but some level of activity was maintained until 1948. Gadar Party headquarters remained open at 5 Wood Street in San Francisco until 1959 as a meeting place, particularly for old-timers or Indians passing through the city who had no other place to stay. In 1975 the Asian Indian community and the Government of India, in cooperation, built a memorial hall and library where the old Gadar building once stood.

In addition to its political impact in India, the Gadar movement is an important part of the history of the Asian Indian immigrant experience in North America. It illustrates how an immigrant community can unify under adverse circumstances and mobilize itself for action within a relatively short period of time. In 1907, within a year after the first large number of Indians entered the United States and Canada, they established a variety of ethnic organizations that fulfilled various religious, social, and political needs. Six years later the Gadar Party was founded, and within months a revolutionary ideology and organization emerged that was subscribed to by the majority of Indian immigrants in the region. There have been few attempts to understand how and why a complex political network developed in a loosely-knit community at a time when communications, travel, and financial resources were relatively limited. The cultural homogeneity of the early immigrant group, the absence of family life, their tenuous position in North America and therefore their greater vested interest in their homeland, are all factors that may have contributed to the popular support of the Gadar movement. It is remarkable nonetheless to observe the politicizing of the Asian Indian immigrant in America and note the readiness with which the radical Gadar ideology was embraced.

NOTES

1. Herambalal Gupta, Lajpat Rai, Rash Behari Bose.
2. Jallianwala Bagh, an enclosed garden with limited exits, was the site of the police firing.