IX

COLLAPSE OF THE MOVEMENT

The Babbar Akali Movement had shaken the foundation of the British administration in the Punjab and its tremor was felt even in the British Parliament. The Punjab administration regarded the movement as a conflict between criminal elements and the forces of law and order.\textsuperscript{1} It failed to perceive its political character. The Babbers aimed at subverting the British rule in India by spreading disaffection and bringing about a revolution. The people were incited against the government and the loyalists were terrorised to such an extent that they were gradually withdrawing their support to it.\textsuperscript{2} The Punjab Government, though not complacent, realised the gravity of the situation and immediately deployed troops to crush the movement. Though the movement became popular in the Doaba yet it was obliterated within a couple of years.

There were several factors that led to its collapse but organisational weakness was the foremost of them. The movement was not the result of a well-thought-out plan. Though

\textsuperscript{1} Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 13\(\textsuperscript{h}/II/123, p.75.
\textsuperscript{2} Paper Book Babar Akali conspiracy case, p.842.
it was inspired by the speeches of Master Nesta Singh yet he was nothing more than an adviser. No doubt his heart lay with the Babbar Akalis but he confined himself to deliver inciting speeches alone. He was arrested in June 1922, when the Babbar Jatha had not been even formally launched. Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, who was the spirit and soul of the movement, was an ex-soldier. He was Secretary of the Akali Dal from April, 1921 to June 1921. After the failure of the plan to murder the officials responsible for the Nankana Carnage, he became a fugitive from justice and formed the 'Chakaryarti Jatha' in November, 1921. This Jatha continued to work separately till S. Kishan Singh came into contact with S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur. Both the Jathas merged and adopted the nomenclature of 'Babbar'. Kishan Singh was elected its president. S. Karam Singh 'Editor' was appointed member of the executive committee. Master Dalip Singh of Gussal and Karam Singh of Jhinger were secretaries. It was strange that three of the four top-leaders were arrested in January-February, 1923, at a time, when the Babbar Akalis had emerged as a force to reckon with. The relatives and confidents had begun to play havoc with the Babbar Akali movement.

The inclusion of those, in the inner circle, who were once tried and found unreliable such as Amar Singh of Kot Barra

Khan, Sant Kartar Singh and new entrants like Anup Singh delivered the movement a catastrophic blow and showed the utter organisational weakness of the movement. The greatest defect in the organisation lay in its non-democratic character. The leaders paid little heed to the warnings of its members. Though Kishan Singh was warned about Kabul Singh; Karan Singh about Anup Singh; Santa Singh about the activities of Sant Kartar Singh and Dhanna Singh about Jawala Singh but none of them paid any heed to these warnings. Probably, they failed to realise the veracity of the age old dictum that to be fore-warned is to be fore-armed. What a price they had to pay for brushing aside the timely warnings!

The greatest harm came to the movement from the insiders. The story of the betrayals is too sordid to be narrated in full. The props and pillars of the movement fell with the first touch as if moth-eaten. Sant Kartar Singh was the person on whom Jathedar Kishan Singh depended the most. It was he who helped Kishan Singh to take refuge at Mastuana in June, 1921. But the same person became a double-dealer in March, 1922 after his arrest warrants under section 291 I.P.C. were issued. He got an assurance of the withdrawal of the warrants if he helped in getting the top-leaders arrested. But he could not do so. On June 27, 1922 he was again arrested.

5. Buja Singh, one of the Babbar veterans, referred to this in his interview with the writer on 20.11.1982.
and was imprisoned for one year by the Magistrate Mr. Abdul Fatta. Again he was let off on the promise of helping the arrest of the Babbaro. Since then, his conduct became perfidious. He tried to get Kishan Singh arrested on January 24, 1923 while he lay asleep in Bela Singh Pragpuri's Haveli. He is alleged to have confessed that he would not be able to withstand the third degree methods of the police. But Kishan Singh laughed off at it. It never occurred to him that he would stoop too low to save himself from the police. It is a fact that Sant Kartar Singh had once expressed openly his desire to get Kishan Singh arrested and receive the award himself. Again he, in league with the police, got Babu Santa Singh arrested from Taps railway station on June 20, 1923. Babu Santa Singh, though warned by Maluk Singh of Plahi that it was in the air that Sant Kartar Singh was in liaison with C.I.D., turned a deaf ear to the warning. He expressed the view that the people had been talking about him since long and asserted that even if he was in league with C.I.D., he would not play treachery with him. He was also responsible for the arrest of Assa Singh

8. Milhka Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh (MEK.),Ch.1.
   He mentioned it on the authority of E. Balwant Singh, nephew of Joginder Singh Ahuradpur who was a relative and a close associated of S.Kishan Singh Gargaj.
of Phakrudi from Kiratpur. Curbachan Singh alleged that Sant Kartar Singh did it for the sake of Rs. 250 only. In fact, he had become an informer and an agent of the police. Such men were snakes in the sleeve. 11 Again, Kishan Singh Gargaj could not see through the game of the so-called sympathisers under his very nose. Bhan Singh of Birring had acted as an agent of the government, during the Budge Budge incident and by way of reward was made the Police Sub Inspector. He had left service now. Having won Kishan Singh's confidence he again carried on his nefarious activities. He once, saved Maulavi Qumur-ud-Din from the wrath of the Babbars. Qumur-Ud-Din was a C.I.D. official who lived near Birring. He was ostensibly planted there to spy on Kishan Singh. Bhan Singh brought Quran from Dakoha and asked the Maulvi to swear by it. It was a gimmick to throw dust in the eyes of Babbars to allay their fears. Later on, Bhan Singh made Kabul Singh of Birring, his accomplice. Kabul Singh not only won the confidence of Kishan Singh but also convinced him of the miraculous powers of the Maulvi. On 25th February, 1923 Kishan Singh was taken to Masit (Mosque) Khaki Shah, a desolate and secluded place between Pindori Mahal and Dhadda Fateh Singh. Kabul Singh and his father-in-law Labh Singh of Dhadda, Maulvi Qumur-ud-Din and Bhan Singh laid

the trap so artfully that Kishan Singh was arrested on 26th February, 1923 in the early hours. 12

An other insider was Anup Singh. He was arrested for keeping 3 feet long kirpan and was convicted on 28th June, 1922. He was released on 27th January, 1923. 13 He became a member of the Babbar Jatha in March, 1923. He was one of those seven members who announced their names for the reformation of Talla and Ditta of Kaulgarh in a leaflet on May 17, 1923. 14 S. Karam Singh was warned by Dhanna Singh about Anup Singh but the former paid no heed to it. 15 As a result, Babbar carnage took place on September 1, 1923, in which four Babbars were killed including Karam Singh who was the leader of the movement, then. With his death the Babbar movement became leaderless and rudderless.

In the beginning of the year 1923 Karam Singh of Jhingar and Master Dalip Singh of Gossal were got arrested by Karam Singh's brother Kehar Singh. When blood relations play false what one can expect of others? Dhanna Singh Behbalpuri's

confidant Javala Singh first got arrested Dalipa of Dhamian and later on got Dharma Singh arrested at Mannanhana. Waryam Singh of Dhugga, last of the Babbar stalwarts also fell a prey to the treachery of his maternal uncle Dalel Singh and his son-in-law at Chak No.54. Thus all the leaders were either got arrested or killed by the betrayal and treachery of their relatives, confidants and insiders in whom they confided. It is paradoxical and ironical that the organisation which could flourish only secretly, was knocked out of its base by those who knew their secrets. The blame must rest on the leaders who failed to judge their confidants and followers. But then, human beings must confide in some one. Only the most faithful would have had the constant access required to carry out the mission and these were the men who proved most dangerous.

The organisation was rendered ineffective by the inability of the members to remain secretive. The Panjab C.I.D. did not have much difficulty in infiltrating their inner circle. It was Sadhu Singh, a C.I.D. agent, who wormed into the 'Akali' office at Lahore and won the confidence of the extremists like Bijla Singh of Gharuan and smashed the bid to murder the government officials after Nankana tragedy. Again, overwhelming number of the Babbars turning approvers

and near relatives appearing as witnesses and colleagues levelling allegations did no credit to the Babbar Akalis. 13

A large number of the witnesses in the Babbar Akali Case amply prove this contention to the hilt. Ranjit Singh alias Ajit Singh of Dhaia Kalan, who was responsible for the arrest of Amar Singh Kot Barre Khan (then a resident of Kot Patuhi) narrated how he succeeded in getting himself enlisted in the Jatha on the recommendation of Kartar Singh S/O Deva Singh Canadian of Pindori Nijjaran. Ajit Singh and Kartar Singh's uncle, Munsha Singh, were well-acquainted with each other because they lived together in Canada. Ajit Singh became the member of the Jatha and passed on the information about the Babbars to Mir Izaal Imam, D.S.P, C.I.D. 19 posted at Jullundur.

The Babbar Akali movement lacked that unity and cohesion which was necessary for its success. There were differences among the Babbars about the strategy and operational techniques. Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, a close associate of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, disclosed that differences of Kishan Singh Gargaj and Babu Santa remained till last. 20

20. Vide Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik, p.114(MS)
differences of Karan Singh Daulatpur and Kishan Singh Gargaj first surfaced in December 1922. When Hari Singh Jallandhri was writing article after article in the 'Akali-To-Pardesi' against the Babar Akalis, Kishan Singh Gargaj invited Hari Singh through the pages of the 'Babar Akali Doaba' to sort out the differences as both were well-wishers of the 'Panth'. When the leaders of the Babbar Jatha were going from Jassowal to Mehargarwal, Karan Singh on the instigation of Baba Janta questioned the decision of Kishan Singh of inviting Hari Singh without consulting him as he was the de jure editor of the 'Babar Akali Doaba'. Karan Singh was satisfied only when Kishan Singh clarified that he did so in the capacity of the leader of the Jatha. This incident showed that there was lack of confidence among the Babbaras. It also showed that there was lack of unity among them so vital for the democratic bodies.²¹ It has been alleged that in January 1923, even Dhanna Singh Behbalpuri, who was top-ranking leader of the Babbaras, was hobnobbing with the police to get Kishan Singh and other Babbar Akalis arrested to seek pardon²² for himself. Fortunately, the scheme fell through. Though the allegation might be untrue, yet the spreading of such rumours was fatal to the solidarity of the movement.

²¹ Loc. cit.

²² Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, (statement of Kabul Singh Sub Inspector, Police District Ambala as well as Statement of Kartar Singh S/O Jawala Singh Burro Barrian who along with Jawala Singh of Zian contacted Sub-Inspector Kabul Singh then at Mahal Pur to seek pardon for Dhanna Singh, p.60).
Assa Singh of Phakrudi never sincerely followed the line given by the Babbar leadership. He dissented with Karam Singh. Again he was very critical about Kishan Singh. His derogatory and uncomplimentary remarks about the latter exposed his inner self. Kishan Singh’s maternal uncle Bhagwan Singh Zaildar of Haripur and his cousin Gajja Singh, who appeared as witnesses against Kishan Singh did little credit to the leader whose relatives were supporters of the police. The confessional statements of important leaders were also detrimental to the success of the movement. These confessions resulting out of timidity, pride, repentance, despair or inexperience caused the movement an in-calcuable hurt.

Twenty two of the Babbar Akalis turned approvers and this put the movement in doldrums. The confessional statement of Babu Santa Singh and long statement of Kishan Singh Gargaj further weakened the movement. With these cracks the movement crashed. Even Rattan Singh of Rakkar was put in the police net by the avarice of his paternal aunt’s son-in-law.

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The might of the British Empire was too great for the Babhars to withstand the police onslaught. They were no match for a government which had limitless resources in men, money, material and arms. The Babhars had neither weapons nor money nor could they look for assistance to any native state while the government had troops and guns. The hold of the government on Zamindars, Lumbardars and Safedposhs hindered the cooperation of the people with the Babhars. In some cases, the people of the villages even chased the Babhars and helped the police. Kishan Singh had a narrow escape while his two companions Arjan Singh and Sunder Singh were arrested at Sundh on 11 May, 1923. The lure of big rewards turned many a weakling into traitors. Banta Singh of Dhamian was chased by the villagers of Nandaehaur. In this struggle he killed a mendicant, a Rajput boy and cut off the arms of another youngman of Chamarari leading to his death. He escaped the mob narrowly and it was with great difficulty that he reached his village.

The coercive and repressive policy of the government, too, broke the backbone of the movement. Indiscriminate arrests unparalleled atrocities on innocent Akalis and their relatives crippled the movement. Since November, 1922 the Panjab Government took strong measures to crush the movement. It announced rewards to affect arrest of the Babbar Akalis on November 30, 1922; April 25, 1923 and finally on 8th August, 1923. A special staff

under Khan Sahib Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Superintendent of Police, C.I.D. Panjab, was appointed to deal with the movement. It conducted raids in 39 villages which were considered strongholds of the Babbar. 30

The Babbar Akali Jatha was declared an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. Units of Cavalry and infantry were stationed at strategic points and the joint force of military and special police started operations against those members who had taken shelter in the Sivalik Hills. 31 Bi-weekly flights of aeroplanes scattering propaganda leaflets have had a reassuring effect on the loyal population. 32

The government followed a policy of repression so brutally that indiscriminate arrests were made and innocent persons who had no connection with the Babbar Akali movement were also hauled up. It showed not only hostility but also arrested or threatened to arrest the members of the Enquiry Committees appointed by the Indian National Congress and the C.G.P.C. to enquire into the Doaba excesses. Maulvi Lal Husain, on behalf of the Provincial Congress Committee, conducted an enquiry into the Doaba killing and police excesses. He brought to light such facts which made hair stand on an end. 33

32. Ibid., p. 39.
33. The Akali-Te-Pardesi, June 7, 1923.
After that every effort to enquire into the police excesses had to face opposition of the government. Even the proposed visit of Mr. T.A.K. Sherwani of Aligarh to Jullundur was viewed suspiciously and to prevent his entry, the seditious Meeting Acts was considered. The C.G.P.C., too, was not allowed to investigate. It sent the first enquiry committee on 7th July and the second on 6th September, 1923. The members of the last one were arrested on 11th September, 1923. The atrocities, to which the arrested persons were subjected by the police, were inhuman. The statement of Chhaja Singh s/o Mihan Singh of Massanian refers to the third degree methods used by the police. He says: "My hands were used to be put on stones under the legs of the bed. Buta Ram used to sit on the top of the bed and catch hold of my 'Keshas' and Shah Hakim Singh, Thandar, used to fist and kick me. They also threatened that Hugga water would be put unless I signed the statement." This was not a solitary case.

There was no end to police excesses. It crushed the movement by surrounding the Babbar at Sabeli on September 1, 1923; at Mannanhana on 25th October and at Wunder on December 12, 1923. By that time the Babbar leaders were either had been arrested or

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3. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1723, p.15, letter No.8350-FS from Mr. H.D. Craik, Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab to J. Creyar, Secretary to Government of India, 5th June, 1923.
35. Ibid., pp.92-93.
were killed in the fake encounters. The Punitive Police Posts were set up in the villages and cumulative fines were imposed to terrorise the people of the Doab. It used the press and propaganda to denounce the Babbar; by spreading lies and branding them dacoits. The court witnesses in certain cases were dacoits and had nothing to do with the Babbar Akalis. But the government was bent on maligning them and to certain extent it succeeded in weaning away the general public from the Babbar Akalis. This led to the situation in which the Babbars were not given any quarter and there started a race of the traitors to snatch the first possible opportunity to betray the patriots.

Again, the Babbars were handicapped by the paucity of resources. They had to resort to robberies to get money to purchase weapons. They were certainly no more successful than the Ghadrites in securing arms. In the third week of December 1922, they failed to purchase 150 pistols simply for want of Rs. 750/- and for this they even failed to borrow money from well-off contractors like Brahma Singh Sandham who were their sympathisers. As a result they had to resort to dacoities and robberies at Jadla, Jamser and Dhogri railway stations and many other places. These affairs brought them less

40. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.95.
Another snag in the movement was its regional character. It did not cut much ice outside the Doaba. The Babbar Jatha was an isolated one with a very limited base and was broken by the government repression. Though individual and sporadic actions took place here and there, before and after the executions of 1926 and 1927, yet it failed to gather momentum as a mass movement. A movement to be effective must be wide in its operation and deep in its intensity. Its leaders like Master Mota Singh, Jathedar Kishan Singh and S. Karam Singh belonged to the Doaba and it was there that they succeeded to any extent. The arrest of the first two delivered a deadly blow to the movement. This led Karam Singh and others to resort to plunder and murder. Mr. Bull, Committing Judge, observed on April 17, 1924, that the conspiracy of murder and plunder collapsed as it was begun before time. The Babbar leaders possessed all the peculiarities of the Punjabi character. They planned hastily and failed to consider the pros and cons. The volcanic eruption of the movement was immature. With the high spirited and adventurous Sikhs, the interval between thought and action is short. This observation, of Indian Sedition Committee, was equally applicable to the Babbars.

42. The Akali, April 10, 1924.
The Malwa region of the Punjab remained oblivious of its operations though it was at Mastuana that Kishan Singh launched first salvo against the foreign rulers. The number of the participants in the movement outside the Doaba was very insignificant and that too came through army. Army personnel helped in an individual capacity. Neither the army nor the peasantry, as a whole, was involved in the movement. The regional character is evident from the Babbar Akali case in which except 15 participants all belonged to Hoshiarpur and Jullundur Districts. While 10 belonged to Kapurthala State, one each belonged to Ludhiana, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Amritsar. These figures don't materially change, if we take into account the involvement of all the persons who participated in the movement. The movement remained confined to one particular region. Teja Singh of Bhuchar gave a false hope of resurrection in the Majha and Bijla Singh in the Malwa, but none raised a finger when the time came. With the arrest of some of its leaders and the death of others in the encounters with the police, the enthusiasm of the people melted away.

With the government repression, the Babbars failed to get new converts. This led to the thinning of the Babbar ranks. Such movements can succeed only if they are well-entrenched in the masses. The Babbar Akali movement definitely was devoid of

44. The Babbar Akali Case Judgement, 1725, p.141.
45. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tayarih Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.35.
mass character. It was the Akali Movement which really kindled the spirit of the masses. As Babbar were a group of the Akalis wedded to the policy of violence, they were under the illusion that the people all over the Panjab would support them. This was not so and this could not be. Even the Akali Dal and the I.C.P.C. did not acclaim them openly. The movement remained confined to the ex-soldiers who hailed mainly from the Doaba. Even whole of the Doaba - its Hindu and Muslim population - did not support it. The movement remained confined mainly to Jat Sikhs and that also to the Akalis. It was surprising that none from the upper middle classes and educated sections of the people actively participated in the movement. It was confined to rural areas alone.

Dr. Kamlesh Mohan on the authority of Dr. Hari Singh of Behbalpur stated that they distrusted the educated classes. The fact, on the other hand, is that the movement failed to evoke any active response from the well-off educated classes.

The movement also suffered heavily when it adopted one point programme of murders of the toadies. This action was doomed to failure and no step was taken to keep it secret.

Sometimes, the Babbar themselves advertised whenever a jholchuck was murdered.\textsuperscript{46} \textbf{I}: was strange secret organisation, advertising its activities and bringing it to the notice of the government. They seem to have little knowledge of either the nature or

\textsuperscript{46} Home Political, 13/2/1923, p.55. Also vide Paper Book Babbar Conspiracy Case, p.767.
modus operandi of secret bodies. They also lacked any training in the guerrilla methods of warfare. Peace-Councils came into conflict with the Babbars. It was at Sangowal diwan in 1922 that the Babbars felt compelled to give a tilt to their programme. Since then the reform of the jholi grapes received priority. Now, the movement drifted into a programme of murders and dacoities. The programme of murders brought notoriety to the movement. All the relatives of the toadies were not pro-government. But the murders of the toadies antagonized their relatives too. This deprived the Babbers of their sympathy.

The measures of the Panjab Government to isolate the Babbar Akalis decidedly contributed to its failure. The S.G.P.C. and the Indian National Congress as well as the Sikh League were all opposed to the Babbar policy of violence. As there was little distinction between the Akalis and the Babbars in their uniform, daily regimen and aims, the government in the beginning failed to make any distinction. But later on, it succeeded in separating the Akalis from the Babbar Akalis. The Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. were prevailed upon to issue appeals and pass resolutions, warning the Sikh masses to keep aloof from the Babbar Akalis. In November 1922,

S.O.P.C. and the Shiromani Akali Dal warned the Akali Jathas to
eschew violence. Again, in its Declaration No.494, dated April 24, 1923, it issued appeal to the people to beware of
the literature which preached violence and advised their
misguided brethren to remain peaceful and non-violent according
to the tradition of the Khalsa. Thus the S.O.P.C. entirely
dissociated itself from the Babbar sems and firmly reiterated
that Akalis did not hold forth the Babbar as fine heroes. Again, on May 29-30, 1923, the S.O.P.C. once again warned the
Sikhs to keep themselves aloof from those who advocated violence.
Even the Akali-Te-Pardesi criticised the Babbar Akalis in its
various issues. The Sikh league too did not lag behind. The native states, especially Patiala Darbar was the foremost
in curbing the Babbar. It actually helped to arrest some of
the Babbar. Some were won over while others were influenced
through power and pelf. It tried to influence Master Mota Singh,
persuading him to confine his activities exclusively to
religious work. Through its trusted agents it also
continued to influence him with a view to preventing him from
breaking into violence. Whether it succeeded or not, it
certainly created misgiving among the Akalis and that also

47. Partap Singh, Curdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.257.
49. The Tribune, Lahore, September 27, 1923. Also vide Akali
Leader's conspiracy case, from 8.11.1923 to 18.6.1926,
p.747 (MS.) and pp.946,47 (printed), statement of S.B.Mehtab
Singh.
51. The Khalsa Advocate, June 27,1923.
52. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement
op.cit., p.187.
proved baneful to the movement. Even later, Master Mota Singh was approached through Sir, Daya Kishen Kaul to issue a statement against the Babbar Akalis though he squarely rejected the move. Patiala Darbar also won over Bijla Singh, who participated in the First Akali Conspiracy. He surrendered himself to Patiala Darbar and his whole party was brought under complete control. This step secured the Malwa and the Sikh states against the Babbar outburst. Even Bhai Kishan Singh was approached. He was interviewed by Bhai Ram Singh in Jullundur Jail and Patiala Darbar claimed to have secured from him the promise of disclosure of the facts of the Babbar Akali movement.

The spreading of such reports certainly harmed the movement, irrespective of the falsity of the reports or otherwise. Again it was through the efforts of Patiala men that Babu Santa Singh was arrested at Tapa railway station on June 20, 1923. Patiala Darbar helped the Imperial interests in rounding up the Babbar gang, besides keeping 3.5 lakhs of the Sikh population of the Phulkian States under control and preventing them from harbouring or sheltering the Babbars, a practice which was then, very common because of every Sikh feeling duty bound to do so.

By October 12, 1923 it had broken the bone of the Babbar

55. Loc. cit.
58. Loc. cit.
59. Ibid., p. 183.
60. Ibid., p. 184.
By October 12, 1923, it had broken the bone of the Babbar Akali movement. Some were killed and others were put behind the bars. The S.G.P.C., which had deprecated the Babbar activities, was also not spared. Like the Babbar Jatha, the S.G.P.C. and the Shiromani Akali Dal were also declared unlawful associations and 59 of its members were arrested on October 13, 1923. The second batch of 62 members of the S.G.P.C. was arrested on January 7, 1924. The third batch of the Akalis arrested on October 1, 1924, included 6 members of the S.G.P.C. The moderate leaders who remained outside the jail controlled the S.G.P.C. and were under the influence of the government. It is strange that at the time of the decision of the Babbar Trial No. II on February 28, 1925 there were about 33 members of the S.G.P.C. who were being tried whereas the Babbars were being tried 9/121 whereas the Babbars were being tried 9/120. The Government in its anxiety to curb the Babbars and to create dissatisfaction put conditions for the release of the prisoners. The long struggle had wearied many among the moderates. On January 21, 1926 two members of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh group - Kisaider Samud Singh and Ranjodh Singh accepted conditional release. On 25th January, 1926 Bawa Barkishan Singh, too, accepted the conditions to secure his release. Had the Akalis remained united, it would have resulted in the release of all, including the Babbar Akalis. Bhai Kishan Singh sensed the danger and

sent Labh Singh Jassowal who conveyed Kishan Singh's message penetrating the cell to Hari Singh Jullunduri but 19 out of 33 members of the S.C.P.C. had already got conditional release. This put the government on a strong footing and it dealt with the Babbars in the most barbaric manner. The Babbar Akali movement failed to achieve its goal because it faced a colossal. The antipathy of the Indian National Congress and the S.C.P.C. as well as the opposition of the native states helped curb the Babbar movement. Besides these extraneous factors, its local character, failure to keep secrecy, avariciousness of the compatriots and paucity of the funds leading to dacoities and murders also did incalculable harm to the movement. No doubt, the Babbars had great excitement but lack of resources, poor planning and organisational weaknesses for doomed its failure.

It is fundamentally true that violence can not appeal to the masses for a long time. Its utility as a measure of an exigency is there but it can not bring success if it becomes single-point programme. Extremism and violence are born out of frustration. It can succeed only if it has the tacit backing of the majority of the people. In the case of the Babbars it had not. The policy of murders, certainly, put the movement off

64. Sarvari, P.D., The History of Struggle for Indian Independence, op.cit., p.79.
the track and unnecessarily, increased the enemies of the movement. The movement failed as the entire programme was less practical and more sentimental.\(^6^5\)

But it must be remembered that no movement is a total failure. The Babbar Akali Movement also became a significant part of the under-currents of the national struggle for Independence of India and had its impact to a considerable extent on the contemporary and subsequent movements.

\(^{65}\) The Preet Lari, Preet Nagar, August, 1980.