ROLE OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE
(1939-1947)
V. ROLE OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE (1939-1947)

It is really a revolution and nobody can stop it.
G. M. Sadiq

All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference had played a significant role in the freedom movement of Kashmir. The present chapter shall attempt to examine the role of the Conference during the second phase of freedom struggle.

a. Aims and Objectives:

(i) As a secular organisation National Conference was aimed at the emancipation and welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir State irrespective of their caste and creed.

(ii) The membership of the Conference was open to every person of the State irrespective of his caste, creed and sex.

(iii) The Conference was aimed at the realisation of a responsible government in the State, in which the administration would be responsible to a National Assembly of the State, which would be elected by the people on the basis of universal adult franchise and in which the policies and decisions of the Government would be determined by the people.¹

b. Political Role:

The first annual session of National Conference was called at Sarnal Anantnag from September 30 to October 1, 1939. This session was an important event in the political annals of the State, because it was for the first time that the foundation of a joint platform of various communities was formally laid, in order to

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give a sustained fight to the Dogra autocracy. It was on the invitation of Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg that the Conference called its first session at Anantnag and Kh. Gh. Muhammad Bakshi was appointed as the convenor of this historical session. In his welcome address Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg extended wholehearted thanks to S. M. Abdullah for taking over as the President of National Conference and expressed hope that by shouldering this great responsibility he would come up to the expectations of the people and get their grievances redressed. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg in his welcome address said that “Sarnal is the source of a spring which irrigates the maximum lands of Anantnag district. It is a matter of good fortune that from the platform will flow the Ganges of freedom which will satiate the forty lakh people of the State”. The slogan that dominated the scene of the session was Sher-i-Kashmir-Ka-Kiya irshad? Hindu Muslim Sikh itihad.

In his Presidential address S.M.Abdullah congratulated the Muslims Hindus and Sikhs for joining their hands in the formation of a common platform. Speaking on the subject of unity S.M.Abdullah observed:

We wish the unity of purpose among all the sufferers irrespective of their creed, for we know that the usurper will never take the side of the sufferers. All our sufferings are the result of the prevailing irresponsible government and its will come to an end with the achievement of the responsible government.

We are proud that among the people of 561 Princely States, have prepared a new formula of responsible government, which has become popular in other states also.

In support to his demand for responsible government S. M. Abdullah quoted the speech of Indian Viceroy Lord Linlithgow which the latter had made before the Princes at Delhi on March 13, 1939:

I cannot deny the fact that for the betterment of the people of the States the time has come for bringing about changes in their system of Government. In my opinion, the
redressal of the grievances of the people is the need of the hour. It is beyond doubt that in the prevailing circumstances there is a need for such a system in which the grievances of the subjects might reach to the rulers in order to get a sincere response.

S. M. Abdullah cautioned the leaders of the Princely States against their approach of seeking consultations in all matters from the leaders of British India. He denounced this approach as an inferiority complex. According to him by doing so these leaders were substantiating the claim of the state rulers who had made a propaganda that “the people of the states have not yet advanced politically and were not worth to seek reforms”. He also suggested the state leaders to stand united under the umbrella of All India States Peoples Conference. S.M.Abdullah called the idea of common platform as scientific and an alliance of oppressed and unprivileged masses. He lashed out on the elements opposed to the idea of common platform and declared them the agents of the vested interests. He also spoke on the causes leading to the conversion of Muslim Conference into National Conference. S. M. Abdullah in his Presidential address made a critical evaluation of the Government reforms implemented on February 11, 1939 and declared them nominal and a betrayal with the people of the State. While referring to Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs of the Princely States S.M.Abdullah said:

The political consciousness of the people living in the states proves beyond doubt that in future they do not want to live in a state of negligence and carelessness but would like to be the masters of their own destiny.

Criticizing the Act of 1935 which provided for Indian Federation S.M.Abdullah observed.

The act of 1935 which stands for the proposed Federation has treated the State Subjects like beasts. A scheme is being prepared and thrust upon them without their consent which would only strengthen the chains of their slavery. We have always opposed this proposal and demanded that a new scheme of Federation should be
prepared along democratic lines. The proposed scheme of Federation satisfied neither the subjects of the state, nor those of the Indian provinces. It is neither acceptable to Indian National Congress nor to All India Muslim League. The All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has already decided that it cannot accept any such Federation which would not be prepared in consultation with the peoples representatives and before whose implementation the reforms demanded in the manifesto of National demand would not be introduced.

Several resolutions were passed in the session most important being the ratification of the National demand\textsuperscript{15}. One of the resolutions pertained to the appreciation of the intentions underlying the Statement issued by the Indian National Congress against the policy of the British towards the political aspirations of the Indian people\textsuperscript{16}. The session also decided that the flag of National Conference would be of red colour bearing a symbol of plough, with white colour in its centre. The red colour represented the political revolution, whereas the plough depicted the peasants of the State, who form majority\textsuperscript{17}. The President of the Conference announced the names of the Working Committee members which include\textsuperscript{18}.

1. Chaudri Abdullah Bhali  
2. Chaudri Ghulam Abbas Khan.
5. Maulana Muhammad Syed Masoodi.  
6. Mian Ahmad Yar Khan.
7. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg.  
8. Pandit Jai Lal Kilam
11. Raja Muhammad Akbar Khan  
12. Sardar Budh Singh

Pandit P.N.Bazaz red out a message before the audience which carried the remarks of outstanding Congress leaders on the formation of a nationalist organisation in the State. The Congress leaders who had sent the message of their
appreciation include Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Profil Chander Gosh, Mr. M.N.Roy, Dr. Ashraf, Lala Doni Chand, Sardar Manghal Singh, Mr. Noor-ud-Din Bihari, Shanti Dhan and some other leaders of All India States Peoples Conference. The resolutions adopted in the session include the cancellation of the proposed Federation and the recruitment of the people of various communities in armed forces irrespective of their caste and creed. While concluding his speech S.M. Abdullah suggested three guiding principles for the people in order to strengthen the basis of National Conference:

a. To ensure unity and integrity among different communities of the State.
b. To ensure that National Conference was the organization of the people of the State
c. To ensure that National Conference was an organization with a programme and manifesto for the welfare of the people of the State.

The Dogra Government represented by its premier Gopal Swami Ayyengar foresaw the implications of the joint platform upon its autocratic rule. Gopal Swami Ayyengar wanted to eradicate the freedom struggle in the State and for the achievement of this objective, he applied all the energies of his mind and soul. In order to create dissensions in the ranks of the nationalist leaders, he suggested the Maharaja to pass an Arms Act by which the Hindu Rajputs were exclusively entitled to keep fire arms under the garb of religious ritual and worship. He also proposed to introduce Devnagri script in addition to Persian script already prevalent in the Government offices and institutions.

A meeting of the Working Committee of National Conference was held at Mirpur on December 28, 1939. A resolution was adopted in which the Committee
"strongly resented exclusion of the recognised court language of the State viz. Hindustani from the list of both compulsory and optional subjects prescribed for the Kashmir Civil Services Examinations" and "strongly urged its inclusion as one of the compulsory subjects, facility to be given to the candidates to use either Persian or Devnagri script as they like".

In order to prepare a ground for the introduction of the double script the Government appointed a committee in order to seek favourable recommendations. The committee consisted of the following members:

1. Kh. Ghulam Sayedain (Director Education)
2. Dr. Zakir Hussain
3. Mr. Tyndal Biscoe
4. Mr. Ram Chander Mehdi Rata (Inspector Schools, Jammu)
5. Qazi Muhammad Ishaq (Inspector Schools, Kashmir)
6. Pandit Nandlal Katroo (Headmaster S. P. School, Srinagar)

Contrary to Government expectations the committee decided otherwise. In its recommendations it suggested to retain Persian script and rejected the introduction of Devnagri as double script. But the controversy on script issue complicated the political atmosphere in Kashmir. The National Conference displayed its inclination towards the adoption of Hindustani written in both Persian and Devnagri scripts. It gave an opportunity of opposition to the rival forces of National Conference who had launched a campaign of opposition against the conversion of Muslim Conference into National Conference. These forces criticized National Conference for identifying itself with a Hindu body (Indian National Congress)
because during the script controversy in British India the latter had suggested *Hindustani* as language and *Devnagri* as the script.\(^{30}\)

Inspite of the opposition of different organisations the Government issued the following orders related to the script issue on October 21, 1940.\(^{31}\)

a. The common language should be easy Urdu, but for the purpose of reading and writing, both the *Devnagri* and Persian scripts be given equal status. The books which are used for various subjects, should be the same but printed in the aforesaid two scripts.

b. In those schools, where the number of the students opting for both the scripts be as far as the required number or the possibility of having a fixed number of students, there it would be necessary for the teachers to know both the scripts. The minimum number of the students should be 15% of the total enrolled students.

c. The students should be entitled to opt for any of the two scripts for reading and writing.

d. It shall be necessary for the school teachers to know both the scripts. If they do not know one of the two scripts, it will be their duty to learn the other scripts to a satisfactory standard within one year. Henceforth, no one will be appointed in the aforesaid schools until he is acquainted with both the scripts.

The Government orders were resented by the opposite forces of National Conference.\(^{32}\) No doubt the orders were in accordance with the Working Committee decision of National Conference but it was under the pressure of public opinion that National Conference was forced to change its views on the issue and to oppose the introduction of the double script.\(^{33}\) The unqualified condemnation of the Government orders by National Conference leadership alienated Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz who resigned from the Conference on November 28, 1940.\(^{34}\)

The Working Committee of National Conference declared the orders in connection with the introduction of double script 'ill conceived, mischievous and
anti-national” in its meeting held on November 24 and 25, 1940 and suggested the Government to cancel the orders. The Working Committee resolved:35

We are against any such proposal aimed at creating wedge between the two communities, Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, the Government orders which provide that one community should adopt Devnagri and the other Persian script is not only full of economic and administrative difficulties but harmful to the growth of nationalism. It is but natural that one community after adopting a particular script shall remain ignorant about the literary achievements of the other community. This division unfortunately shall divide Hindus and Muslims and would prove detrimental to their composite culture. No doubt some sections of Hindu society demand that Hindi has got a close relation with their religion. Therefore, the Hindu students should be provided the facility of learning Hindi. We are in favour of this demand and recommend that it should be taught as an additional subject from 3rd Primary onwards. Likewise the students belonging to other communities should be provided the facility of learning different subjects related to their religion, art and culture as additional subjects.

Inspite of the protest demonstrations, presentation of the memorials and the adoption of the resolutions by the National Conference, the Dogra Government with the support of its nominated members passed a bill in the State Legislature on October 29, 1940,36 which provided:37

The gun worship is prevalent among the Hindu Rajputs and placing legal restrictions on any thing used in religious ceremonies is interference in religion. On this sound plea the Hindu Rajputs of Jammu will be permitted to keep guns, fire arms and gun powder without any license.

On January 14, 1941 National Conference observed a statewide protest day against the Government order related to the introduction of double script. S.M. Abdulah addressed a public meeting attended by about thirty thousand people at Pathar Masjid, Srinagar38. In the same month National Conference Working Committee met at Jammu in which the resignation of Prem Nath Bazaz was accepted. The Committee also considered the correspondence that had taken place between the
President of National Conference Sardar Budh Singh and the State Premier related to script controversy and the Arm Act².

National Conference mobilized public opinion against the policy of the Government aimed at creating communal division in the State. Expressing his views about the Arms Act S.M. Abdullah observed.⁴⁰

National Conference is of the opinion that the Arms Act will create a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims of the State. This unjust discrimination has already resulted into bitterness and suspicion.

Under the pressure of strong public opinion in opposition to the introduction of double script the Government lost its courage and did not implement the orders. However, it replaced Persian script with Devnagri and used Sanskrit terms instead of Urdu, only in Government documents like affidavits, stamps, summons and the recordings of Praja Sabha (Legislative Assembly).⁴¹

After the first annual session, the leaders of National Conference started an extensive tour of the State in order to mobilize the public opinion in favour of the new organisation. S.M. Abdullah along with his colleagues Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg, Maulana Masoodi, Kh. Ghulam Muhammad Sadiq and P.N. Bazaz left for Jammu where Sardar Budh Singh, Maulvi Abdullah, Lal Giyanchand and some other leaders had arranged a mass meeting on December 29, 1939 in their honour. While appealing the people of Jammu to join National Conference these leaders lashed out at Hindu Maha Sabha and All India Muslim League. In their appeal these leaders stressed upon the people that in order to maintain the unity and integrity of the different regions of the State it was necessary to follow the path of nationalism. But their appeal went in vain and the people of Jammu gave no credence to their
invitation. They passed sarcastic remarks against the new organisation and its leadership.42

It was during its Lahore session of March 22, 1940 that All India Muslim League organised *All India States Muslim League*43 on the pattern of All India States Peoples Conference44 to keep an eye on the political affairs of Indian States. It was during these days that a separate meeting of All India States Muslim League was called at Lahore under the Presidentship of Aurangzeb Khan a barrister of N.W.F.P. Nawab Yar Jung was unanimously elected as the President of All India States Muslim League for life time45. The session adopted a resolution related to the establishment of responsible government in Princely State.46 In his speech Nawab Yar Jung proposed the exclusion of Hyderabad while demanding the establishment of responsible government in Indian states.47 Most of the foresighted people present in the session declared the idea of the Nawab ridiculous and some of the speakers openly criticized it48. From Jammu and Kashmir Muhammad Ishaq and Ab. Aziz had participated in the session. Later on, in July 1941 Chaudri Ghulam Abbas was nominated as the Working Committee member of All India States Muslim League.49

S.M.Abdullah participated in All India States Muslim League session in the capacity of a visitor and had a chance to listen to the speeches of various leaders during the course of the session.50 On his return to valley he made a series of speeches in different public meetings at Srinagar in which he criticized the ideas put forward by different speakers especially Nawab Yar Jung in All India State Muslim League session51. He also adopted a moderate tune in his speeches and assured
Maharaja that the Kashmiris would not like to overthrow his Raj but they wanted the establishment of a responsible government under his auspices.

These speeches earned S.M. Abdullah the enmity of Muslim League and its press and the popularity of Congress and its press. S.M. Abdullah gave a statement before a representative of the associated press of India which represents his ideas and perceptions during 1940, when All India Muslim League in its historical Lahore session had passed a resolution in favour of the partition of India. In his statement S.M. Abdullah observed:

Even though Kashmir is not included in the proposed scheme of partition which was passed by Muslim League in its recent session but as an Indian I would not like to see India divided. This scheme could not serve any purpose other than widening the gulf of communal suspicion, intrigue and hatred and thus prolong the life of British imperialism. The partition of India is impossible. I suggest the Indian Muslims to strengthen Indian National Congress - the single largest organisation struggling for the freedom of India. The freedom of the country should not amount to its division. I am extremely happy that the progressive Muslim leaders who met recently at Delhi and organised Azad Muslim Conference have prepared a manifesto for the proper representation of their co-religionists.

It was during his stay at Lahore that S.M. Abdullah personally invited Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to visit Kashmir and the latter readily accepted it. It was decided that Pandit Nehru would visit the valley on May 30, 1940. Accordingly a meeting of the National Conference Working Committee was held on April 28, 1940 in order to constitute a Reception Committee in connection with the visit of Pandit Nehru. In the beginning of the meeting Pandit Kishap Bandhu asked S. M. Abdullah as who had authorised him to invite Pandit Nehru to Kashmir and demanded an explanation from him. It offended S. M. Abdullah which resulted in the disruption of the meeting because of the heated exchange of arguments. A Reception Committee was constituted under the leadership of Pandit Kishap Bandhu but it
could not seek the approval of S.M.Abdullah$^{58}$ and ultimately a new Reception Committee which consisted of 60 persons was set up under the Presidentship of Sardar Budh Singh$^{59}$. It was after this meeting that Pandit Jai Lal Kilam and Pandit Kishap Bandhu tendered their resignation from National Conference. Their resignation was followed by some other workers and basic members of National Conference belonging to Pandit Community$^{60}$. But the Sikh leaders and workers extended their wholehearted co-operation in making the reception of the Congress leaders a success$^{61}$. The issue of the invitation of Pandit Nehru was the immediate cause for the resignation of the Hindu leaders and the underlying causes have already been mentioned in the preceding chapter$^{62}$.

Pandit Nehru along with Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Muhammad Yunis and Mr. Padiya reached Chattabal, Srinagar on May 30, 1940, where the MLA’s of National Conference and the members of Reception Committee were introduced to him$^{63}$. The Congress leaders were taken through a river procession from Chattabal to Amirakadal. The supporters of Muslim Conference pelted stones on the procession between Zainakadal and Maharaj Gung and raised banners expressing their displeasure over the entry of Congress leaders in the Valley of Kashmir$^{64}$. In addition to it the agitationists displayed unfair, indecent and immoral methods by putting off their cloths and resorting to nude dance in order to ventilate their anger and resentment$^{65}$. Next day Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah expressed his displeasure against the incident by declaring it inhuman and un-Islamic$^{66}$.

On May 31, 1940 a was called at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar, to welcome the Congress leaders. S.M.Abdullah while presenting the address called Pandit Nehru as an illustrious son of the Valley of Kashmir. He also referred to the forces who
called Kashmir movement communal and were bent on jeopardizing its secular character. In his address S.M. Abdullah used the term *anjinab* in the honour of Pandit Nehru. Chaudri Abbas took an exception for using this term and made it an excuse of resignation from National Conference.

In his speech Pandit Nehru recalled his first visit to the Valley in 1916. He cautioned the Kashmiri leaders against the raising of emotional slogans by saying that in present circumstances there was no place for such slogans. He also said that the people who think that by raising such slogans in present circumstances would be able to bring any change were living in fools paradise. Most probably it was a reference towards the supporters of Muslim Conference who had demonstrated against the visit of the Congress leaders to the Valley of Kashmir. Pandit Nehru congratulated to the leadership and people of Kashmir on the formation of National Conference and did not made any patent comments on the internal political synario of the State. The mention of the sacrifices made in the welcome address received a critical reply from Pandit Nehru. In response to it he observed:

> While giving the account of sacrifices you are resorting to exaggeration. In fact sacrifice is the life. Shall we not pay sacrifices and opt for the life of ordinary creatures? The source of the power is people. When this power comes forward, to bring out a revolution only then the nations are revived. Looking at you and your bright faces I feel that you are my companions.

Among other Congress leaders who spoke on the occasion was Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. In his specific Pathan style and in the noise of cheers Khan Abdul Gaffar said.

> I am staying in Kashmir for the last two days and had an opportunity to see the people of all classes. After the observation of the conditions I felt happy as well as sad. The cause of my sadness is that in a beautiful land like Kashmir I found the men, women and children dressed in wretched rags and are the worst hit of poverty. The
reason of my pleasure is the recent awakening which I had not seen in the past. If Pandit Nehru has the relation of ancestry with you, but I am your immediate neighbour. I foresee the future of India very bright after observing your spirit of nationalism. The revolution is coming, will come and will demand its cost from the nations. That cost is the sacrifice. The nations who will pay this cost shall be rewarded with the blessings of the revolution. If you want to be benefited, you shall have to stand united and give up your mutual differences. The goals are achieved through sincerity, love and morality. If you would have produced youngmen aimed at the service of mankind and above from vested interests, certainly you shall achieve your goal.

Pandit Nehru and Abdul Gaffar Khan had a ten days tour of the Valley. They visited Pahalgam and National Conference arranged a public meeting in their honour at Sherbagh, Anantnag, on June 10, 1940. It was on the same day that Durgah Prasad Dhar, Pandit Sham Lal Saraf and S.M. Abdullah accompanied these leaders to Jammu in order to see them off, while Jammu Congress had arranged a public meeting in their honour. On reaching Jammu the Congress leaders were taken on horse backs through a procession and on evening there was a public meeting at Rani Talab.

During his stay in the Valley Pandit Nehru did not speak anything related to the establishment of responsible government in the State. Therefore, the leaders of Muslim Conference, Kashmiri Pandits and influential officials raised this issue which took the form of a propaganda. It pricked the conscience of Pandit Nehru and in his farewell speech after making the mention of the beauties of Kashmir he spoke in favour of the establishment of responsible government in the State. He also advised the Kashmiri Pandits to join National Conference.

The visit of Pandit Nehru proved an event of far-reaching consequences in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir. It would not be out of place to have a glimpses on the immediate results of this visit.
The adoption of the resolution on the partition of India by Muslim League in its Lahore session of March 21, 1940, witnessed a revolutionary change in the outlook of the people of the Indian subcontinent. This revolutionary change in the politics of India did not leave the State of Jammu and Kashmir unaffected. The young Muslim leaders who had been offended with the conversion of Muslim Conference into National Conference were united\textsuperscript{79} and revived the Muslim Conference under the leadership of Muhammad Yousuf Qureshi.

The visit of Pandit Nehru as a guest of National Conference provided an opportunity to these young men to propagate that the National Conference had entirely identified itself with a 'Hindu body' - Indian National Congress\textsuperscript{80}. This complaint became wide-spread which made the National Conference leadership desperate for a certain period. Thus the visit of Pandit Nehru added to the polarization of the political forces in the State and their division in two different hostile camps of nationalists and anti-nationalists.

The visit of Pandit Nehru witnessed a tremendous demonstration of public enthusiasm particularly among the Hindus in which the adverse effects of the resignation of the two Kashmiri Pandit leaders of National Conference were drowned. It also rehabilitated the lost prestige of the National Conference among the Hindus to a considerable extent.\textsuperscript{81}

The visit of Jawahar Lal Nehru proved a turning point in the political career of S.M. Abdullah as well as in the history of freedom struggle. The grand reception contemplated needed funds and most of the funds were supplied by the Hindus particularly the prosperous Punjabi traders. Within a few days no less than
25 thousand rupees were collected, a sum never collected so speedily from the people at a time in the one decade old history of the Kashmir movement\textsuperscript{82}. Pandit Nehru toured the different parts of the Valley for ten days. His speeches, his interviews and his activities in general received the widest publicity in the press outside the State. Leading Congress journals had sent special representatives to cover the tour. For the first time in his life S.M.Abdullah and the National Conference came into limelight and got publicity not only in the subcontinent but even beyond its shores\textsuperscript{83}. These two events opened the eyes of S.M.Abdullah as to what Congressmen could do for him if he could in any way enlist their sympathies. He decided to go whole hog with the Congress\textsuperscript{84}.

It was during the same year that National Conference decided to hold its second annual session at Baramullah. Under the guidance of Sofi Muhammad Akbar a Reception Committee was constituted which comprised of the following office bearers:\textsuperscript{85}

- President: Saif-ullah Shah
- Secretary: Babu Jagdesh Ram, Advocate
- Joint Secretary: Sardar Autar Singh
- Treasurer: Pandit Damudhar

Invitation cards were despatched to the eminent Congress leaders for their participation in the session but they could not participate because during this period the freedom struggle of India was passing through a crucial and sensitive phase.\textsuperscript{86} The second annual session of National Conference was accordingly held on 27, 28 and 29 November, 1940 at Baramullah\textsuperscript{87}. In his seventy page long presidential
address Sardar Budh Singh after making a mention of the beautiful landscape of Jammu and Kashmir spoke on the Nationalist services and achievements. He spoke at length on the subjects like caste systems, corruption, market rise, cow-slaughter, peoples awakening, freedom struggle, communalism, Hindu-Muslim unity and the Government services and declared the establishment of a responsible government as the only solution for all the problems. It was during the presidential address that a heavy rainfall started which disrupted the proceedings and Sardar Budh Singh had to conclude the address by reading out its main extracts. In his speech S.M. Abdullah stressed upon the establishment of responsible government in the State. While declaring the formation of National Conference a right measure, he said:

In the beginning of the movement the achievement of the Government services was deemed to be a remedy of peoples grievances and anxieties because during those times the Government service was not less than a reward and blessing. Therefore, its importance was accordingly realized and pleaded by the leadership. But the time has proved that there is no difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim Wazir-i-Wazarat (Deputy Commissioner) as far as their attitudes vis-a-vis the subjects are concerned. After an experience of years together, we came to the point that it would not be in the interests of people to revolve the movement round the Government services. We also realized that until the whole administration is handed over to the people's representatives, poverty cannot be removed. It was with this aim and objective that National Conference was formed. The people who claim that S. M. Abdullah had taken an anti-Muslim step should keep in mind that he knows Islam very well. Islam had made no discrimination between Muslims and non Muslims while struggling for the emancipation of the oppressed.

After the Baramullah session National Conference leaders visited Jammu where a meeting of the Nationalist workers was held at the office of Diwan Narsing - editor Chand with the purpose of organising the Conference in Jammu province. It was resolved in the meeting that a member of Indian National Congress can become the member of National Conference without resigning from the former.
membership. But the National Conference could not establish its cadres in the Jammu province to a satisfactory level\textsuperscript{91}.

In the beginning of the year 1941 Gopalswami Ayyengar while replying to a query in Legislative Assembly related to the poor representation of the State Muslims in government services issued a statement quite contrary to Glancy Commission recommendations\textsuperscript{92}. Mr. Ayyengar said that the poor representation of the State Muslims in government services was on account of their educational backwardness and was therefore, genuine and justified\textsuperscript{93}. If the State Premier would have issued such a statement prior to 1930, perhaps nobody would have objected to it. But it was 1941, when there were hundreds of Muslim youngmen unemployed with B.A and M.A degrees\textsuperscript{94}. And when in 1932 Glancy Commission had recommended special concessions for the State Muslims in government services\textsuperscript{95}. The State Muslims complained that after the formation of National Conference S.M. Abdullah and his colleagues deprived them even from the concessions of the Glancy Commission (1932)\textsuperscript{96}.

In order to mobilize the public opinion in its favour the Working Committee of National Conference decided to protest against the Government on certain issues like the introduction of double script, abolition of \textit{kahcharai} (grazing tax), repeal of the Arms Act and the policy of unfair distribution of government services among different communities\textsuperscript{97} by suggesting its MLA's to tender their resignation\textsuperscript{98}. Accordingly under the directions of the party high command these MLA's forwarded their resignations to Mian Ahmad Yar Khan, the leader of National Conference in the State Legislature on April 15, 1941.\textsuperscript{99}
On the first day of the Assembly session, National Conference MLA's presented a bill on the reduction of \( \frac{1}{2} \) of the land revenue in Shikargah's (remote rural areas). But the Government managed to reject the bill with the support of its nominated members which resulted into bitterness between National Conference and the Government. Protesting against the rejection of the bill, the National Conference MLA's made a walk out and boycotted the Assembly session. After the consideration of the Working Committee in its meeting held on June 23, 1941 the resignations of National Conference MLA's were forwarded to the Prime Minister through Mian Ahmad Yar Khan.\(^{100}\)

The party high command explained the decision of the Working Committee which stated:\(^{101}\)

The National Conference, despite having declared the 1939 constitution as wholly unsatisfactory and reactionary, had cooperated with the Government in order to give it a fair trial, as in its opinion, there were some provisions which were somehow useful and needed a trial. But, unfortunately the Government has, of late, enacted laws which have destroyed even the faint hope of reaping any benefit from the said constitution. Acting on the policy of divide and rule, it enacted the Arms Act which exempted Hindu Rajputs on the false pretense of religious duties although in British India, Hindu Rajputs have never demanded exemption from the Arms Act on this ground. The Government then introduced a double script, although the Education Reforms Committee which included such eminent educationists as Dr. Zakir Hussain had expressed the opinion that it will divide Hindus and Muslims. Again, the Glancy recommendations with regard to the services have been ignored. The Conference is therefore, of the opinion that the Government is deliberately resorting to measures that are bound to result in increasing the communal tension. The National Conference, Assembly Members walked out of the Assembly in protest against these dangerous moves and submitted a report to the parliamentary sub-committee. After due consideration, the working committee has decided to call upon its Assembly Members to resign from their seats as the party does not deem it proper to take any drastic action, for the time being, in view of the internal situation.

The National Conference Working Committee through a resolution passed in its meeting held on August 9 and 10, 1941 asked its MLA's to submit their
resignations afresh, but none of them acted upon this decision. Malik Ghulam Hassan and Ghulam Hassan Khan particularly opposed the Working Committee decision which amounted to their expulsion from the Conference. Forced by the circumstances the leaders of the National Conference started a dialogue with the Government and ultimately resolved that the concerned MLA’s would continue to represent their respective constituencies. It is to be noted that these MLA’s were nominated under the special orders of the Maharaja. However, the Conference demanded that Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg and Kh. G.M. Sadiq be nominated for its seats from Anantnag and Amirakadal instead of Mr. Ghulam Hassan Malik and Mr. Ghulam Hassan Khan. The demand was acceded by the Maharaja.

The decision of National Conference evoked a severe resentment and criticism among the people and it was alleged that the leaders of the Conference had compromised with the Government. The issue was particularly highlighted by the leaders of Muslim Conference. But National Conference defended its case by saying that it sought the opinion of the resigned MLA’s and confirmed that their resignation was aimed at registering their protest and not at the boycott of the Assembly.

National Conference held its third annual session on 22, 23 and 24 August, 1941 at Srinagar. It was presided over by Sardar Budh Singh. The Conference had decided to hold this session at Mirpur but that could not mature because of unfavourable weather conditions. On August 23, 1941 a big procession was organized under the leadership of Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, Maulana Muhammad Syed Masoodi, G. M. Sadiq, Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg, Maulana Baihaqi and Sardar Sant Singh in the honour of Sardar Budh Singh, President of the
Sardar Budh Singh was accompanied by S.M. Abdullah in an open car and the latter shouted full throughted slogans in order to boost the morale of the workers. The procession had a round of the city and stopped at Mujahid Manzil at 9 p.m. where the Conference had to convene its session.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan who had been invited specially, was requested by S.M. Abdullah to inaugurate the session. It was in an atmosphere of slogan shouting that Badshah Khan completed his speech. In his brief address he appreciated the political awakening of Kashmir and attributed the same to the sincere efforts and sacrifices of S.M. Abdullah. He voiced his concern for Kashmiris on the basis of close neighbourhood between N.W.F.P and Kashmir. In the concluding words of his speech Khan Abdul Gaffar appealed the people of Kashmir to extend their wholehearted support and co-operation to S.M. Abdullah.

Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad delivered his speech in the capacity of President Reception Committee. In his speech Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad made a passionate appeal to Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs of the Princely States for establishing responsible governments in their respective states without further delay. In his presidential address Sardar Budh Singh reminded the British Government its decision of September 3, 1939 by which the latter had declared the participation of the Indians in the World war II. While making an evaluation of one century old British rule and throwing light on the recent meetings and the discussion between the viceroy and the Indian leadership Sardar Budh Singh reminded the British Government that it had declared the participation of the Indians in the war without seeking their opinion. But he observed that if it wants to get wholehearted support and co-operation of the Indian people in this connection, it
should declare the independence of India. Such a type of decision shall only acknowledge the claim of the British Government that the war was waged for the sake of democracy\textsuperscript{116}.

Speaking on the attitude of the British towards the freedom movement of India Sardar Budh Singh observed\textsuperscript{117}:

At this critical stage when the British dignitaries are not leaving any stone unturned to safeguard the freedom of their own country, they are not ready even to give an assurance for the freedom of forty crore Indians. Contrary to it the outstanding leaders of Indian National Congress like Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Raj Gopal Achariya, Sardar Patali and others were put behind the bars. Britain, thus provided an opportunity to its rivals to say that she was waging a war of imperialism.

Sardar Budh Singh in his address referred to British Premier Mr. Chirchal and Mr. Emray (minister incharge of Indian affairs) and said that they should give up the policy of excuses in order to end the political impasse of India. He also suggested them to declare the freedom of India in order to see the dream of their victory realized with the active support and cooperation of the Indian people\textsuperscript{118}.

While reacting to the statement of Maharaja Hari Singh that 'we are ready to save the freedom and democracy of the world against the onslaught of German Nazism' Sardar Budh Singh said\textsuperscript{119}:

The subjects of the Princely States did never avail that freedom of which their Nawabs and Maharajas claim to defend across the sea shores by participating in the war and declaring to pay physical and material sacrifices. What is the condition of the States? Once I have told that if India is like a prison, the Princely States are its dark cells. There are such taboos and restrictions on the social life of the Princely States which one cannot expect and imagine even in the forests of Africa.

Sardar Budh Singh referred to Maharaja Hari Singh's declarations of February 11, 1939; December 2, 1939 and October 17, 1934 wherein he had promised his subjects the establishment of an Assembly not only for their
participation in the governance of the State but to ensure an efficient administration. But the functioning of that Assembly had exposed these fake claims and assurances. About the hypocritic role of the nominated Assembly Members Sardar Budh Singh said.120

The high hopes raised with the establishment of the Assembly, both by the ruler as well as ruled were dashed to the ground by the people with vested interests. At many times it happened that the majority of the nominated members took an undue advantage of the minority of the elected members and did not allow to pass any such bill aimed at the welfare of general masses. If any bill related to the reduction of kahcharai (grazing tax) or the land revenue in backward areas was somehow passed in the lower house, it was amended by the council (upper house) in such a way that it lost its significance.

By declaring it a so-called Assembly Sardar Budh Singh said.121

The present cabinet at the backing of the nominated members changed the rules and regulations of the Assembly in such a way that the Prime Minister was equipped with the powers like that of a dictator. No member in the House can ask questions or even make suggestions against his wishes. The speaker has been empowered to dismiss a member for a particular period or for the whole term. The introduction of double script, passage of the Arms Act and the resignation of National Conference MLA's were the best examples of the authoritarian approach of the nominated Assembly Members.

For redressing the socio-economic grievances of the people of Jammu and Kashmir State, spread over 84 thousand square miles, with a population of 40 lakh people, Maharaja Hari Singh should have direct contact with his subjects.

National Conference MLA's were hailed for submitting their resignations in the interest of the people and party discipline122. It was also resolved that the next annual session of the Conference will be held at Mirpur. Sardar Budh Singh announced the names of the members which constituted the new Working Committee of National Conference. These include:123

1. Maulana Muhammad Syed Masoodi (Gen. Secretary)
2. Gh. Muhammad Sadiq (Treasurer)
It was in the beginning of March, 1942 that Japan joined the World War II against the Allied Powers. It destroyed the armed power of Britain and after the occupation of Burma it began to knock the doors of the British empire in India. Subash Chander Bose tried to hoist the Indian flag on the historical red fort with the aid and assistance of Japanese. All these developments gave a blow to the prestige of Britain. It was in these circumstances that the British Government sent Sir Cripps to Delhi with a mission about the political future of India. The mission assured the liberation of India at the end of world war. In connection with his proposals Sir Cripps contacted the political and semi-political parties of India. But the mission was silent in its policy towards the nine crore population of Princely States.

As soon as it became clear that the mission had ignored the aspirations of the nine crore State people, National Conference was activated and contacted Punjab State Praja Mandal, National Conference Hyderabad, National Congress,
Mysore and some other organizations and motivated them to persuade the representatives of the Chamber of Princes to establish complete responsible governments in the Princely States. The States Peoples Conference declared to observe April 20, 1942 as the States Demand Day. On April 20, 1942 National Conference called a public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar which was presided over by Sardar Budh Singh, the President of National Conference. It was in this mass meeting that the Conference resolved:

The rulers have no right to represent the people of the Indian States and it is exclusively the right of their popular leaders and organisations. It is the duty of the State people to fight against a constitution which discriminates between the State and non-State subjects (people of British India) in their fundamental rights. The people of the States are not bound to such treaties which would tell upon their freedom and progress.

The State leaders issued a joint statement in which they declared that the agreements made between the East India Company and the state rulers were not acceptable to nine crore people of the Princely States. The statement added that it was the right of peoples representatives and not that of the rulers to speak on behalf of the State masses. National Conference did not keep its eyes closed to the changing political synario of India. The Working Committee of the Conference called a meeting on May 16, 17 and 18, 1942 to discuss the national and international situation. In a statement issued to press the Working Committee observed:

The Working Committee regrets deeply the present attitude of the British War Cabinet towards the problems of the people living in Princely States. The recent partial step taken by the British Government in the shape of the Cripps scheme in which the downtrodden millions of people living in the Indian States were entirely left out of the picture, lends support to the State peoples apprehensions that the British Government is not serious about the future of the state masses.
At that stage Maharaja Hari Singh had posed himself as a freedom lover and had issued a statement in favour of Indian freedom movement. In reaction to his double standards S.M. Abdullah said:

His Highness expressed good wishes for the freedom of India. But has kept his eyes closed to the despotic and oppressive system under which his subjects are suffering.

An important condition for the implementation of Cripps plan was its acceptance by the main political parties of India, particularly Indian National Congress and All India Muslim League. This condition was not fulfilled and the mission returned unsuccessful. But the publication of the plan strengthened the position of the Muslim League and its leader Mr. Jinnah among the Muslims. Pakistan no more remained a visionary fantastic dream and a political absurdity. Sensible people felt that sooner or later it was bound to come into existence. If that was so, the place of Kashmir which is overwhelmingly Muslim in its population could be nowhere except in the Islamic State of Pakistan. That thought became galling to the National Conference leadership. However the failure of the mission provided an opportunity for them to have a sigh of relief.

As a result of this abrupt change in the political synario of India the National Conference leaders developed a novel policy of espousing League ideology inside the State and advocating the Congress secularism outside it. The common accusation against the National Conference leaderships that they are Nationalists in India and communalists at home is not entirely unfounded.

After rejecting Cripps Mission, Indian National Congress launched Quit India Movement on August 8, 1942. On August 9, 1942 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested alongwith other Congress leaders and the movement was ruthlessly crushed.
National Conference displayed its solidarity with the Congress leaders and made an appeal of *hartal* on August 23, 1942 which received an overwhelming response. The Working Committee of National Conference met on August 26, 1942 at Mujahid Manzil, Srinagar and passed the following resolution:

The Working Committee of the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has considered the resolution of the Indian National Congress in which the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. have demanded immediate independence. It has also considered the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders and the events following.

In the opinion of the Working Committee if the Indian Government had not precipitated matters by arresting the leaders of the Indian National Congress the chance did exist of the situation improving. The Congress would have sent its resolution to the British Government and the Governments of the Allied Countries, and watched their reactions. Gandhiji had also decided to meet the Viceroy and explain the demand and its object. It is obvious that, if the arrests had not begun, the chances of a via media were bright, following which the clash between the Congress and the Government would have been averted. But the unstatesman like and precipitate policy of the Government made the situation worse. The Working Committee demands the British Government the immediate release of Gandhiji and other Congress leaders.

By the year 1942 National Conference with the efforts of its leadership began to gain ground in the valley very fastly and its branches were opened in far flung areas. Mirwaiz Mohammed Yousuf Shah had returned to politics and his return was no less than a challenge for National Conference. The revival of Muslim Conference had again resulted in a bitterness between S. M. Abdullah and Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah. But it took a serious turn from October, 1942, at the arrival of Shaikh Usman Doo to Srinagar.

Shaikh Usman Doo a Chinese visitor in a public meeting at Islamia High school, Srinagar, held under the auspices of Muslim Conference claimed that he was the leader of 20 crore Chinese Muslims and had come to India in order to
express his sympathy and solidarity with the Indian Muslims.\textsuperscript{141} He had a meeting with S.M. Abdullah at Mujahid Manzil, Srinagar and in the course of their discussion Usman revealed that he had desired to meet S.M. Abdullah earlier but was told that the latter along with his colleagues were under detention. It sent a wave of indignation among National Conference ranks and they believed that Usman was disinfomed by the leaders of Muslim Conference\textsuperscript{142}. Thus the event resulted in \textit{sher}\textsuperscript{143} \textit{bakra}\textsuperscript{144} clashes afresh,\textsuperscript{145} which continued for more than 30 years even after 1947. S.M. Abdullah declared Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf an agent of imperialism\textsuperscript{146} and the later called the National Conference leaders as \textit{kafirs}\textsuperscript{147} aimed at jeopardizing Islam\textsuperscript{148}.

In order to impair the Mirwaiz group National Conference leadership imposed \textit{jazia} (a kind of tribute) against the \textit{Wazas} (professional cooks especially called for services on marriage and other kinds of ceremonies) of Waz Pora, Srinagar, who were believed to be the most powerful corps of Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah\textsuperscript{149}. In this connection a secret letter was issued to the workers of National Conference from Mujahid Manzil (Headquarters of N.C) in which they were forbade to utilize the services of these people until they seek a certificate from the Conference assuring that the concerned person had not been involved in any kind of clash.\textsuperscript{150} Such certificates were issued from Mujahid Manzil after the payment of a tribute according to the material strength of a person. The leader incharge of the job was Maulana Masoodi, General Secretary of the National Conference\textsuperscript{151}. A number of complaints were lodged in police stations by these people but the Ayyengar administration paid no heed to these complaints. The ultimate result was that these people began to disassociate themselves with Mirwaiz group\textsuperscript{152}.
The fourth annual session of National Conference was held on April 9, 10, and 11, 1943 at Mirpur under the Presidentship of S.M. Abdullah. In 1943 the World War II was at its climax and its destructions had resulted in chaos all over Europe. The participation of Russia in the war on the side of Allied Countries had enabled the latter to gain the sympathies of the socialists all over the world. Therefore, the concern for Russia and democratic forces formed an important subject of National Conference deliberations during the session. In addition to other speakers the President of the session voiced his concern with the democratic forces and pleaded the cause of Russia. He exposed the tricks of British imperialism aimed at dividing the Indians in order to prolong their rule. While making an appeal for maintaining peace all over India, S.M. Abdullah observed that some clever people with vested interests were raising the slogans of Islam in danger. According to Shaikh the roots of the problems in India were lying with the economic rather than religious factor. He declared the complete freedom of India as the only solution for all the problems. Without naming Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan S.M. Abdullah in his Presidential address said:

In the capacity of a Muslim, I would like to say that it is the obligation of a Muslim belonging to this country to have full faith in being an Indian. India is his homeland, he is born on the Indian soil with which he had to merge lastly. Islam has come to Sind some thirteen hundred years back whereas in remaining parts of the subcontinent it has the life of six hundred and fifty years. The bodies of our forefathers have merged with Indian soil and today every particle of this soil is carrying our blood. From Kashmir to Raskumari and from Khyber pass to Nepal there is no region wherein we do not find the Muslim monuments, their localities, their mosques, their shrines and the unfallable remnants of their achievements in the field of learning. Either Srirangapatnum or Srinagar both are ours. In these circumstances we cannot surrender any part of the country. Now our rights have become permanent and everlasting on this soil. Finally, India is our nation and shall remain so in future. It is our obligation to liberate our nation against the domination of the foreigners and all of us have to come forward and to take a lead in this connection.
In the concluding part of his address S.M. Abdullah invited all those people and parties aimed at the achievement of responsible government to join the Nationalist movement. He appealed them to stand united in order to disseminate political consciousness and root out the communal hatred\(^{161}\). In his address S.M. Abdullah stressed upon the five guiding principles for the leaders and workers of National Conference:\(^{162}\)

a. To organise National Conference in the length and breadth of the State.
b. To obtain deliverance from the British rule.
c. To mitigate the effects of the war by self-help.
d. To keep up the morale of the people.
e. To ensure the unity of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

It was in June, 1943, that Pandit Jai Lal Kilam and Shiv Narain Fatedar began to attend the meetings of National Conference Working Committee as special guests. Lateron they declared their return in National Conference. Pandit Kishap Bandhu also returned to National Conference and took over as the editor of *khidmat* (the official organ of National Conference) on the advice of S.M. Abdullah\(^{163}\).

In order to divert the attention of the people from the rising tide of freedom struggle Maharaja Hari Singh instituted a Royal Commission on July 12, 1943 under the chairmanship of Ganga Nath, Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir\(^{164}\). It consisted of 12 members all of whom were nominated and majority of them belonged to vested interests. Most of them were pensionaries, *Jagirdars* and other reactionary elements\(^{165}\). National Conference was also given representation and it nominated Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg and Kh. Ghulam Muhammad Sadiq to participate in the Commission\(^{166}\). Soon it became clear that the main aim of the
commission was to safeguard the rule of the Maharaja after the withdrawal of British from India\textsuperscript{167}. The Commission had its value in so far as it showed the willingness of the Government to enquire into the abuses of state administration but in its day to day working it proved unsatisfactory and ultimately the National Conference called upon its members to resign\textsuperscript{168}. In reaction to the failure of Commission, National Conference decided to prepare a constitution for the future of the State, according to its policy and programme, which came to be called as \textit{Naya Kzashmir Manifesto}\textsuperscript{169}. The document was prepared with the purpose of its submission to Maharaja for implementation and to educate the people of the State about the future plans of National Conference\textsuperscript{170}.

With the co-operation of the workers of different regions of the State, a long list of their grievances and demands was prepared by Maulana Muhammad Syed Masoodi. It was due to the efforts of B.P.L. Bedi that this document was given the shape of a memorandum as well as manifesto\textsuperscript{171}. It was developed in a booklet with English language. Lateron it was translated in Urdu by Maulana Masoodi in the interest of common readers. It is this document which came to be called as the \textit{Political Bible} of National Conference leadership\textsuperscript{172}.

Most part of this document was prepared in Delhi. Hotel Anar Kali, Lahore and the Model Town, Lahore, at the residence of B.P.L. Bedi. Some others who contributed in the publication of this document include:\textsuperscript{173}

1. Muhammad-ud-din Taseer
2. Hafiz Jalandari
3. Daniyal Latifi (Senior Advocate supreme court of India)
4. Farida Bedi and
5. Pandit Jai Lal Kilam.
Naya Kashmir Manifesto

The Naya Kashmir Manifesto is a political document containing aims and objectives of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, with respect to the future constitutional framework, economic planning, agricultural and industrial growth and socio-educational uplift of the State. The manifesto remains the Political Bible of the National Conference till all the objectives contained in it are not achieved. The preamble of the Naya Kashmir manifesto reads as under:

We the People of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Frontier Districts, Illaqs of Poonch, Chinani, commonly known as the residents of the Jammu and Kashmir State, in order to perfect our union in the atmosphere of full equality and self determination to raise ourselves and our children for ever, from the ays of oppression, poverty, ignorance, degradation and superstition of the dark ago into the sunlit valley of peace and plenty ruled by freedom, science and honest toil, to participate in the historic resurgence of the people of the East and the working masses of the world and destined, to make our dear homeland Kashmir, a dazzling diamond on the snowy forehead of Asia, do hereby propose, propound and endorse the following constitution of our State.

The Naya Kashmir proposes a constitution in which:

1. A single citizenship is established for all citizens of Jammu. Kashmir, Ladakh and the Frontier Regions, including the Poonch and Chinani Ilqaqs. The equality of the rights of all citizens, irrespective of their Nationality, religion, race or birth, in all spheres of National life economic, political, cultural and social shall be an irrevocable law.

2. Freedom of conscience and of worship shall be guaranteed for all citizens.

3. In conformity with the interests of the people, for the purpose of promoting political awakening and strengthening the National resurgence, all citizens shall be guaranteed by law:
   - Freedom of speech.
   - Freedom of the press.
   - Freedom of assembly and meetings
   - Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.
4. In conformity with the interests of the people and for the purpose of developing self expression through the organization of political activity of the masses of the people, all citizens shall be ensured the right of combining in public organizations: trade unions, co-operative societies, women’s and youth organizations, sport and self-defence organizations, political parties and cultural, scientific and technical societies.

5. Inviolability of the person shall be ensured to all citizens.

6. The privacy of the homes and secrecy of correspondence of citizens shall not be violated except in accordance with law.

7. The defence of the Motherland is the supreme and sacred duty of all citizens. Treason to the Motherland—violation of oath, desertion to enemies of the Motherland, impairing the military power of the State, espionage—shall be punishable with the full severity of the Law and the gravest crime. Universal compulsory military service shall be established by law.

8. All citizens have the right to work, subject to a basic minimum and maximum wage established by law. In the absence of the provision of employment, citizens are entitled to security of the necessaries of decent existence for themselves and their families by universal social insurance.

9. All citizens shall have the right to rest.

10. All citizens shall have the right to material security in old age as well as in the event of sickness and loss of capacity to work.

11. All citizens shall have the right to education.

12. Women citizens shall be accorded equal rights with men in all fields of National life, economic, cultural, political, and in the state services.

13. All citizens born in the State shall be ensured equality of opportunity irrespective of accidents of birth and parentage.

14. All citizens shall be secured protection by the laws and recourse to the courts through administration of justice which shall be quick, cheap and impartial.

15. The right of personal property of citizens, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law within the limits of the planned economy of the State.
16 Work in the State of Jammu and Kashmir shall be an obligation and a matter of honour to all citizens capable of work.

17. The State of Jammu and Kashmir shall grant the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the masses, for their scientific activity, or for their struggle for National liberation.

The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* proposes the establishment of the National Assembly on the following lines:

The highest legislature of the State, National Assembly, shall be elected by citizens of the State by electoral districts on the basis of one deputy per 40,000 population, for a period of five years.

The jurisdiction of the National Assembly shall include:

a) representation of the State in exterior relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other States;

b) approval of alterations of the boundaries of the State;

c) organisation of the Defence of the State and the direction of its armed forces;

d) foreign trade upon the basis of State monopoly;

e) protection of State security;

f) establishment of the National Economic Plan of the State;

g) approval of the State Budget.

h) administration of banks, industrial and agricultural establishments and enterprises as well as trading enterprises;

i) administration of transport and means of communication;

j) regulation of currency and the direction of the monetary credit system;

k) organisation of State insurance;
1) contracting and granting loans;

m) establishment of the fundamental principles for the use of land as well as the exploitation of deposits, forests and waters;

n) establishment of the fundamental principles in the field of education and protection of public life;

o) organisation of a united system of National economic accounting;

p) establishment of the principles of labour laws;

q) laws on the citizenship of the State and the rights of foreigners;

r) legislation on legal procedure, court establishments, criminal and civil codes;

s) organisation and control of the radio broadcasting system;

t) legislation for the protection and development of Nationalities;

u) organisation for an archaeological survey, legislation for the protection and rehabilitation of monuments;

v) legislation in furtherance of this constitution upon all aspects of National life.

Deputies to the National Assembly as well as to the people's panchayats shall be selected by the electors upon the basis of universal equal direct suffrage by secret ballot.

Every deputy shall be obliged to render from time to time a report to his constituency regarding his work and the work of the body to which he was elected, he may at any time would be recalled by his constituency in the manner established by law.

The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* envisages the constitution of the Council of Ministers on the following basis:

The Council of Ministers of the State shall be responsible to the National Assembly. Ministers of the State shall direct the branches of the State
administration which come within the jurisdiction of the National Assembly. Ministers of the State shall issue within the jurisdiction of their respective departments orders and instructions on the basis and in fulfillment of existing laws as well as of decisions and orders of the council of Ministers and verify their execution.

The organs of State power in Districts, Tehsils, Cities and villages shall be the people's Panchayats. The people's panchayats shall direct the activities of the organs of administration subordinated to them, ensure the maintenance of State order observance of laws and the protection of the rights of citizens, direct local economic and cultural development in fulfillment of the National Plan and the local budget.

The people's Panchayats shall adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by law.

The Nay Kashmir Manifesto includes the Charter of women which guarantees the following rights to them:

1. Right to vote and contest elections.
2. Right to be consulted on all legislation or decisions with regard to women.
3. Right to employment.
4. Establishment of a department to look into their grievances.
5. Right to equal pay for equal work along with men.
6. Right to choose any profession.
7. Right to insurance of all kinds.
8. Right to absence from work at night.
9. Right to lighter work load during maternity.
10. Right to perform the duties of motherhood.
11. Maternity aid and care.
15. Maternity leave on full pay six months before and six months after delivery.
16. Nursery schools attached to all factories and industrial complexes, where more than seven women work.
17. Right to half an hour’s break for a mother who has to nurse a child.
18. Mother having more children would have the right to a family allowance.
19. Legal protection (free legal advice and defence).
20. Abolition of immoral traffic.
21. A woman’s right to choose her husband.
22. Abolition of the dowry system.
23. Right to divorce.
25. Right to decent treatment for a woman under detention.
26. Right to free education; mobile schools for boat women and Gujjar ladies.
27. Special scholarships for technical education.
28. Segregated education system for women, except when they choose co-education.
29. Right of participation in meetings of bodies which frame courses of study.
30. Provision for the 3R’s to all adult women.
31. Encouragement of women for scholastic pursuits.
32. Participation of women in cultural and literary activities.
33. Their participation in the development of the mother tongue, and
34. Their cultural renaissance.
The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* proposes to establish a National Education Council, vested with the task of preparing schemes for the development and improvement of education on the following guidelines:

1. Establishment of a National university.
2. Organizing of research.
3. Provision for technical education.
4. Establishment of statistical institutes.
5. Establishment of Industrial institutes.
6. Establishment of a State institute to provide knowledge, about their own culture, language and history to the people of the State.
7. Establishment of one college in each district.
8. Establishment of nursery, primary, secondary, high and higher secondary schools.
9. Mother tongue to be the medium of education in all schools.
11. Propagation of Basic Education; and
12. Provision of facilities to women for all kinds of education.\(^{176}\)

The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* envisages the establishment of an organization for cultural and social upliftment. It lays down that in order to encourage a common and composite culture in the State, it is imperative to establish a cultural and social council with the following programme:

1. Establishment of a radio station.
2. Establishment of a National Film Industry.
3. Institution of sports clubs and stadiums.
4. Opening of recreation clubs.
5. Protection of archives and ancient monuments, and
6. Establishment of an organization to preserve art and culture.
According to the *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* of the National Conference, one of the fundamental duties of the State is to look after the health of all its citizens. In order to achieve this objective a National Health Council is to be established. It has to act according to the following guidelines:

1. Every fifteen hundred citizens should have one doctor.
2. Every village should have one doctor and one first-aid centre.
3. Every district is to have one Indoor Patient Hospital, under the supervision of provincial hospitals.
4. Doctors, hakeems, nurses, compounders, medical assistants and related personnel would be trained in the State Medical College.
5. Eradication of diseases.
6. Educating people about matters connected with hygiene and sanitation.
7. Maternity aid for women.
8. Children's health to be looked after.
9. Medical research on modern scientific lines.
10. Encouraging Unani and Ayurvedic systems of medicine.
11. Promotion of sports and physical culture.
12. Training of women for medical professions.
13. Ambulances for people living in far flung areas, and
14. Village and city sanitation.¹⁷⁷

The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* envisages the establishment of a National Communication Council, for improvement of transportation on the following lines:

1. Connecting of Jammu and Srinagar cities with other cities, towns and villages in the State.
2. Connecting a village with its surrounding areas.
3. Rivers, lakes and other waterways to have the most modern water transport system.

4. Bridges of vital importance would be constructed.

5. Travellers and visitors to have adequate travel facilities.

6. Adequate arrangement of buses.

7. Adequate arrangement for the carriage of goods and transport for hilly areas.

The *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* envisages establishment of an Agricultural Council for agricultural planning of the State. The object of agricultural plan would be the creation of congenial conditions for self-sufficiency in the State. The following measures have been proposed to achieve the above ends:

1. Establishment of an organization to facilitate agricultural planning.

2. provision of hybrid seeds to the peasants.

3. Establishment of drug research laboratories, and growing of herbs required in them.

4. Improvement of available cultivable land by supplying fertilizers.

5. Stepping up of agricultural research.

6. Cultivation of fallow land and its transfer in the name of cultivators preferably the land is intended to be distributed on the basis of the commune system.

7. Improving cattle-breeding.

8. Improvement of the living conditions of the Gujjar community.

9. Improvement in fruit industry and canning and supply of insecticides and pesticides.

10. Encouragement of bee keeping industry.

11. Encouragement of silk industry.


13. Provision of timber to the peasantry and improvement of grazing lands.
The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference claims that its objective is to create a classless society in which every individual shall have complete right to develop himself and enjoy a good standard of living by eradicating all means of exploitation and providing equal opportunities for all. It wants the State of Jammu and Kashmir to have everything within democracy and in accordance with planned economy. The State Planning Commission would aim at greater production, improvement in the standard of life and creation of capacity for National defence. For this purpose, production, consumption, commerce and revenue is to be controlled on cooperative basis. The representatives of the people have to determine guidelines for future economic and social development of the State. The main aim of economic planning is to bring forth such a social order, in which equality prevails in all walks of life.\textsuperscript{179}

The objectives of the economic planning are laid down in the \textit{Naya Kashmir Manifesto} as under:


2. Improvement in the standard of living within the framework of reconstruction programme. The standard being the same for all, it would not only be applicable to necessaries of life like food, housing and shelter but to all matters relating to public service.

On the basis of a planned economic system, the National Conference seeks to ensure:

1. Employment to all adult citizens.

2. Right to work according to the capacity of the individual (both physical and mental).

3. Right to life and protection for children.
4. Respect for women in the context of their domestic, and social life.
5. Removal of exploitation on the basis of superiority of intellect.\textsuperscript{180}

In conformity with the Indian National Planning, the National Conference envisages to adopt measures and methods which would assure a decent standard life for all its citizens, irrespective of their caste, colour or creed. Accordingly, it is the duty of the State to ensure a decent standard of living by providing:

a) Nutrition; a suitable diet with full complement of vitamins of two thousand and four calorific units.

b) Residential quarters; suitable for both winter and summer seasons. Each citizen is to be provided with a hundred square feet of living space, whether residing in a village or in town.

c) Proper clothing; thirty yards of cloth for each citizen yearly, plus woolen clothes for winter.

d) Water supply; easy availability of clean drinking water of 25 gallons per consumer per day.

e) Lighting; adequate for a family in respect of cooking and heating.

f) Education for all as planned.

g) One hotel and restaurant for every thousand persons, with all possible amenities.

h) All areas (villages, towns, cities and hill areas) to be linked with the State Capital with telephonic and telegraph systems.

i) Insurance of a comprehensive nature for all citizens.

j) One bank for every twenty thousand people, and

k) Free medical aid.\textsuperscript{181}

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference declares to bring about a green revolution in the State by introducing the most modern methods of agriculture, cattle and sheep breeding, poultry and dairy farming. The \textit{Naya Kashmir Manifesto} advocates socialization of all instruments of production and reorganization of
property relationships. It declares that the land belongs to tiller and the landlord has no right over the land or the peasant. Declaring the State as an agricultural country, it believes in:

a) abolition of *Chakdari* and absentee landlordism.
b) distribution of all lands among the peasantry.
c) farming and marketing of agricultural produce through co-operatives.
d) prohibition on export of food grains.
e) vesting control of forests in panchayats.

The rights of the peasants and tillers of lands guaranteed by the *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* are listed below:

1. Right to piece of land, or in its absence, some alternative arrangement.
2. Right to own such land which at the time of enforcement of the new law was still the property of the landlords.
3. Right to all necessaries of life, either from village or commune productions, or, otherwise suppliable by the Government.
4. Abolition of all levies received by *Jagirdars* in lieu of their *jagirs*.
5. Right to abolition of *sahukari* debts.
6. Right to insurance and the benefits thereof.
7. Right to protection against floods, hailstorms, crop diseases, fire and damage to cattle.
8. Right to receive modern technical advice on the following:
   a) Gradation of crops,
   b) Soil,
   c) Fertilizers and irrigation,
   d) Drought and remedies for it,
e) Eradication of malaria,
f) Agricultural implements,
g) Protection of crops,
h) Godowns,
i) Poultry,
j) Fodder and animal husbandry,
k) Sanitation.

9. Right to proper transportation of food grains.
10. Right to use of forests.
11. Right to free medical aid.
12. Right to sanitary fitted housing and clean villages.
13. Right to co-operative life and its amenities.
14. Right to education.\(^{182}\)

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference believes in raising the standard of living by industrial production. But it does not want a man to be the slave of a machine. According to the *Naya Kashmir Manifesto*, a machine would be a friend of man if it is owned by the State, so that it is used for the benefit of all its citizens. Thus the manifesto envisages the Nationalization of all existing industries and establishment of new ones in the public sector. It requires the State to ensure:

i) Abolition of industrial monopoly;

ii) All big and basic industries shall be owned by the State;

iii) Confiscation of all individual monopoly, whether formal or informal, by the State;

iv) All industries related to forests to be owned by the State;

v) Investment in small industries would be encouraged within the framework of the State Industrial Planning and under the State Industrial council.
It was in October, 1943 that some Punjabi leaders of All India Muslim League like Nawab Mamdaut, Mian Mumtaz Daultana and Raja Gazanfar Ali Khan visited Srinagar as tourists. During their stay in the valley, they held secret meetings with National Conference leaders wherein long discussions were held on the political fabric of Indian subcontinent. Those among the National Conference leaders who participated in these meetings were S. M. Abdullah, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, G. M. Sadiq and Maulana Syed Masoodi. In these meetings it was resolved that the majority community of the State should develop its relations with the minority in such a way that the latter should feel itself safe and secure. National Conference leadership decided to seek the ratification of this proposal by Ali Muhammad Jinah, the President of All India Muslim League. Accordingly G.M.Sadiq and G.M.Bakshi were deputed to Lahore in order to discuss the matter with the League President. On reaching Lahore Mr. Sadiq suffered from a kidney trouble and had to take bed rest at least for a week. Maulana Masoodi alone went to Delhi to meet A.M. Jinah. Both the leaders met at the residence of Liyakat Ali Khan and their meeting lasted for three hours.

The year 1944 was of great historical significance. In subcontinent itself, the All India Muslim League had moved from strength to strength. The demand for Pakistan had fired the imagination of the Muslims of all classes and resulted in bringing about an unprecedented awareness of their National identity. While there was no doubt that the subcontinents freedom was no longer a distant dream it had also become clear that whatever the scheme for its freedom, Muslim League’s prior agreement was going to be a pre-condition.
In such a changing political scenario of the country we cannot rule out the desire of National Conference to shift its loyalties from Congress to Muslim League. S.M.Abdullah in his autobiography admits that in past he had criticized the League ideology which had resulted in bitterness between the National Conference and the League. But he did not want to continue it and had written a letter of good wishes to Mr. Jinnah. In response to it A.M. Jinnah invited him to Delhi.

Evaluating the changing profile of National Conference P.N. Bazaz writes:

In this changed political climate the Nationalist leaders of Kashmir quite baffled about the future, decided to make friends with the Muslim League and accept the overlordship of A.M. Jinnah. They however adopted a wrong method of approach which frustrated their plan.

It was a time when Muslim Conference and National Conference were at daggers drawn particularly in Srinagar city. We cannot therefore, rule out the possibility that National Conference would have invited the League leader, in order to put an end to the rivalry between the two parties and to forge a united front by asking him to exercise his influence. It is to be noted that National Conference alone did not invite Mr. Jinnah but the Muslim Conference had also requested him to visit the State.

After the return of Maulana Masoodi and G.M. Sadiq National Conference called a meeting of the Working Committee on February 6 and 7, 1944 in connection with the invitation of Mr. Jinnah. The venue of the meeting was Hotel Metro, Jammu. It was resolved in the meeting that S.M. Abdullah and G.M. Bakshi would go to Delhi in order to invite the League President. Accordingly S.M. Abdullah along with G.M. Bakshi went to Delhi and met Mr. Jinnah on February 18 at his residence on Aurangabad and invited him formally to visit the State. The
Invitation was accepted. On hearing the news of Mr. Jinah's visit the State Premier also dispatched an invitation card to the League President and requested him to be the State guest for two weeks during his visit to the State. The invitation of the State Government was also entertained.

While inviting him to visit the State, a meeting of two hours took place between S.M. Abdullah, G.M. Bakshi and the League President. S.M. Abdullah acquainted A. M. Jinah about the ups and downs of the Kashmir freedom struggle and its future objectives. Explaining his political outlook to Mr. Jinah S.M. Abdullah observed:

First, the State of Jammu and Kashmir from the population point of view is a Muslim dominated State, where the population of Muslims is about 80%. Therefore, their political outlook is that of a majority and not minority. In comparison to me, you are representing a minority community of India (Indian Muslims) who are striving for the safeguard of their rights.

Second, on the basis of experience I have reached the conclusion that the grievances of the people are rooted in economic rather than religious factor. And my movement is not aimed against the persons but against a given system.

Third, the demand for a separate homeland on the basis of religion would divide India into pieces.

In response to his observations Mr. Jinah replied:

To you I am fatherly and my hair has turned white during the course of my long career in politics. My experience is that a Hindu is not trustworthy. They can never become your friends. I tried to own them throughout my life but failed to win their confidence. A time will come when you will remind my words and feel sorry.

As per schedule Mr. Jinah had to reach Srinagar on May 9, 1944. But during his journey between Jammu to Banihal he was received by a number of public processions so much so that he had to put up at Banihal for the night. Muslim
Conference and the National Conference had made separate arrangements to receive the League President at Qazigund, Anantnag. A scuffle took place between the workers of the two parties at Qazigund and National Conference workers attacked Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah and Meerak Shah Indrabi and damaged their vehicle. But the situation was controlled immediately with the intervention of Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad.

People had assembled on the roadside between Banihal and Khanabal to receive the League leader. He had a halt at Dack Banglow, Khanabal. Anantnag, where he took a cup of tea. Among the leaders of Jammu and Kashmir those present on the spot were Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad, Chaudri Ghulam Abbas Khan and the President of Srinagar City Muslim Conference, Advocate Ghulam Muhammad Wani. On his way from Khanabal to Srinagar Mr. Jinah was received by a large number of people organized in processions at Bijbihara, Awantipora, Lethpora, Pampor, Athwajan, Batwara and Sonawar. On reaching Srinagar Mr. Jinah was straight a way taken to Partab Park on the platform of National Conference where he was received by a gathering of about sixty thousand people.

The Srinagar District National Conference had decorated the Partab Park in a fascinating way and Mr. Jinah accompanied by Chaudri Abbas and G.M.Bakshi entered the park from western gate. S.M.Abdullah and other Nationalist leaders who were on the platform received the League President warmly. The people who had reached there in advance to listen Mr. Jinah raised the slogans like Qaid-i-Azam Zindabad, League Congress Eak hoo, Jinah Gandhi Eak hoo, National Conference zindabad, Nar-i-takbir, Sher-i-Kashmir, zindabad.
It is to be noted that the Partab Park public meeting was participated by the people from all the communities whereas in Jammu the non-Muslims had not shown any interest in the welcome of the League President.

The proceedings started with the singing of a national song of Allama Iqbal *Hindustani* by comrade Pran Nath Jalali. S.M. Abdullah presented a welcome address in which he extended wholehearted thanks to Mr. Jinah for visiting the State. Pandit Jai Lal Kilam presented an address in English language in which he stressed upon the establishment of a responsible government in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. He also highlighted the bright aspects of the Nationalist politics and expressed his hope of favour from the freedom lover forces all over the subcontinent. His speech was later on interpreted in Urdu by S.M. Abdullah in the interest of general audience who could not understand the English language. In response to it A.M. Jinah said:

Mr. Shaikh Abdullah and others, I have no appropriate words to thank you. This large gathering participated by the people of different communities and all those crowds who received me during the course of journey is itself a kind of reward on which even an emperor shall feel pleasure and proud. I was received with all enthusiasm and love for which I extend my wholehearted thanks to all of you. You have received me as the President of All India Muslim League and I shall carry the message of your good wishes to the ten crore Indian Muslims to whom I represent. I assure you their support and sympathy in your struggle for freedom.

Mr. Jinah was yet to complete his speech when the Pandit leaders including Jai Lal Kilam and others left the dice with an objection that the former declared himself the leader of ten crore Indian Muslims only. At the end of Nationalist reception at Partab Park Mr. Jinah was taken in a procession to Dalgate where a separate platform had been prepared by Muslim Conference to welcome the
League President\textsuperscript{219}. Mr. M. A. Sagar presented a welcome address\textsuperscript{220} and in response to it Mr. Jinah said\textsuperscript{221}.

Kashmir is a Muslim majority state inhabited by thirty five lakh Muslims whose God is one, Kaba one and above all the Quran is one. Therefore, they should merge in a single organization in order to struggle for their freedom. The sympathies of ten crore Indian Muslims are with you. I pray for the success of your noble cause.

The League President stayed at Nishat, Srinagar, in a private house of Amjad Ali. It was immediately after that a discussion began between A. M. Jinah and S. M. Abdullah in connection with a joint platform of the Kashmir Muslims.\textsuperscript{222} The dialogue between S. M. Abdullah and A. M. Jinah continued, when a few days later National Conference Advisory Council began to criticize the League ideology.\textsuperscript{223} Thus the expectations of the leaders who had made their efforts for the unity of Muslim Conference and the National Conference were dashed to the ground.\textsuperscript{224}

In order to break the ice A. M. Jinah suggested a meeting between S. M. Abdullah and Chaudri Ghulam Abbas in order to end the mutual differences through a cordial and meaningful dialogue.\textsuperscript{225} Accordingly a meeting of the two leaders took place at Soura, the residence of S. M. Abdullah. About this meeting Chaudri Gh. Abbas in his autobiography writes: \textsuperscript{226}

Qaid-i-Azam sent a message to S. M. Abdullah for having a meeting between him and me. The meeting was held on the next day after receiving the invitation. After having some discussion I took up the basic subject but S. M. Abdullah was already influenced by Congress ideology. Maulvi Muhammad Syed - the political lieutenant of S. M. Abdullah was present there unfortunately. He intervened unnecessarily. S. M. Abdullah while repeating his words told me outrightly that he knew my political faith very well and I too was aware about his political convictions. In his opinion there was no scope for any change in it. I told S. M. Abdullah to have a dialogue on the subject and if he could convince me I was ready to change my path provided he would respond accordingly. In reply to it S. M. Abdullah told me that we had parted our ways and therefore he was not ready for any discussion.
On May 19, 1944 Chaudri Abbas in a speech at Jamai Masjid, Srinagar told the audience as why he had met S.M. Abdullah. He said that sometimes it becomes necessary in politics to meet even ones enemies. He declared Kashmiri Pandits and National Conference as the enemies of Muslim Conference. Chaudri Abbas added that National Conference was surviving only with the Government support. The bitter language used by Chaudri Abbas against National Conference ended even the remotest possibilities of unity between National Conference and Muslim Conference.

S.M. Abdullah in his autobiography writes that during his meeting with A.M. Jinah at Delhi, they had resolved that a list of the leaders associated with Kashmir movement since 1931 would be prepared by Chaudri Abbas, President of Muslim Conference, with the purpose of seeking opinion from them that whether they want to continue Muslim Conference or National Conference. He had reminded A.M. Jinah about their earlier decision when he was at Nishat. But, he hesitated to follow the proposal. S.M. Abdullah also writes that Chaudri Ghulam Abbas had no doubt prepared a list of the leaders associated with Kashmir movement since 1931 and had marked a tick against the name of Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf and told Mr. Jinah that barring him (Mirwaiz) all the leaders would favour S.M. Abdullah. But it is an exaggeration because it was the year 1944 and a group of senior leaders associated with Kashmir freedom movement since 1931 had parted their ways with National Conference and Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah was not an exception to oppose the ideology and view point of National Conference.
S.M. Abdullah claims that contrary to their earlier decision A.M. Jinah suggested that the matter should be resolved between him (S. Abdullah) and Chaudri Ghulam Abbas. But he raised an objection that it would be the violation of their earlier decision and an injustice with the leaders who had paid sacrifices during the freedom struggle of Kashmir. But Mr. Jinah took no cognizance of Shaikh's objection. In reaction to it S.M. Abdullah told Mr. Jinah that he was the leader of the Indian Muslims beyond Kohala and the supporter of the Maharaja after crossing Kohala to Kashmir. It would be better if he would not interfere in the political matters of Kashmir.

A.M. Jinah stayed in Srinagar for more than two months and he did not give any verdict in haste. He gave a patient hearing to the prominent leaders of both the parties including S.M. Abdullah, G.M. Sadiq, Muhammad Syed Masoodi, Mirza Afzal Beg, Mian Ahmad Yar Khan, Chaudri Ghulam Abbas, Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf and others. He also met some public men including Hindu politicians, outside the ranks of the leaders of the two parties.

A.M. Jinah finally gave his verdict at midnight on June, 17, 1944 in a speech which he delivered to a big Muslim audience. While taking an advantage of Mr. Jinah's presence in the Valley, Muslim Conference had called its annual session on 16th and 17th June, 1944 at Muslim Park outside the Jamia Masjid, Srinagar. At the end of the session certain Muslim organisations presented a joint address to the League leader. In reply to it Mr. Jinah made the following pronouncements.

I have patiently heard the arguments of the Muslim leaders of the National Conference. It is not for me to bring any pressure upon them because the State politics is different from the politics of British India. But as a Muslim I must say whatever I feel is the right way for the Muslims. As far as I have been able to
understand the view point of the Muslim leaders of the National Conference, I do not think that they can succeed.

The Muslim League leader did not want to leave the State Muslims in doubt about the particular organisation he recommended. Thus he concluded his speech by saying:243

Ninety nine percent of the Muslims who met me are of the opinion that Muslim Conference alone is the representative organisation of the State Muslims.

In order to make up the loss and to mobilize the public opinion which had gone in favour of Muslim Conference as a result of the verdict of the League President,244 National Conference leaders launched a vigorous campaign245. They called a series of mass meetings at Srinagar in which they lashed out at Mr. Jinah by saying that he had made an unnecessary intervention in the political matters of Jammu and Kashmir246. They added that by intervening in the State politics and favouring a particular party Mr. Jinah did not maintain the standard of being an outstanding leader of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent247. S.M.Abdullah was the chief speaker in all these meetings which the National Conference called at Srinagar just after the speech of A.M.Jinah in the annual session of Muslim Conference. In one of his speeches made on June 20, 1944 at Khanyar, Srinagar, he warned Mr. Jinah to leave Kashmir. To quote S.M.Abdullah:248

If Jinah does not give up the method of interfering in our politics, it will be difficult for him to go back in an honourable manner.

Mr. Jinah left the Valley on July 24 via Jehlum Valley Road. It was on July 25, 1944 that the Muslim Conference, Baramullah, presented him an address in a
largely participated public meeting. There a National Conference worker Muhammad Maqbool Sheerwani, attempted to kick up a row but with the intervention of the police the function ended without any untoward incident. On reaching Muzafarabad Mr. Jinnah was accorded a grand reception in a function attended by thousands of men and women.

On July 23, 1944, Maharaja Hari Singh returned from Europe where he had been touring for some time. The leading political parties of the State National Conference as well as Muslim Conference organized processions to welcome the Maharaja on his return. They tried their best to make their processions successful against each other in order to display their sentiments of loyalty to Maharaja. The event did not pass off peacefully. There were scuffles between the followers of the two organizations before and after the procession in which S.M. Abdullah also participated. There was a warm reception on behalf of the National Conference when the procession of Maharaja passed through Mujahid Manzil. S.M. Abdullah wore a garland to Maharaja and the other prominent leaders of National Conference presented him bouquets. Flowers were showered upon Maharaja and S.M. Abdullah on behalf of the National Conference submitted him the manifesto of *Naya Kashmir* as a memorandum.

The 5th annual session of National Conference was held at Srinagar on 28th, 29th and 30th of September, 1944 at Mujahid Manzil under the Presidentship of S.M. Abdullah. It was in this session that National Conference adopted *Naya Kashmir* as its political, economic and social programme. The session deliberated upon the importance and scope of *Naya Kashmir Manifesto*. It also extended the term of S.M. Abdullah as the President of National Conference by one year. In his
Presidential address S.M. Abdullah stressed upon the audience for reading and understanding the document of *Naya Kashmir* programme\(^2\)\(^6\). Explaining the importance of the *Naya Kashmir Manifesto* S.M. Abdullah said:\(^2\)\(^6\)

I would like to declare from this platform that all the opposition and criticism to *Naya Kashmir* shall prove false and will die of natural death. *Naya Kashmir* is not a past story but the programme of future. A new season is advancing with a particular climate and that climate shall allow only the plant of *Naya Kashmir* to grow and develop. The World War Second has taught some lessons to mankind. The most important lesson is that in future only those governments shall prove successful who have their foundations on the principles of economic democracy. The political democracy alone cannot redress the grievances of the people. The importance of economic democracy is that it is aimed at the end of every kind of unnatural discrimination. Thus the foundations of *Naya Kashmir* programme have been laid on the ruins of nepotism and discrimination. The end of discrimination is the only way by which the castle of humanism and equality can be raised and every type of exploitation rooted out.

S.M. Abdullah made a stirring appeal for the unity of the people under the umbrella of National Conference, for only through unity could they achieve the *Naya Kashmir* which was their goal\(^2\)\(^6\). He also declared the independence of India pre-requisite for the freedom of Princely States. Speaking on Hindu-Muslim unity and the freedom of Princely States S.M. Abdullah observed:\(^2\)\(^6\)

The All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has always championed the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and at all times we have emphasized that the biggest obstacle in the way of India's freedom is the differences and distrust between the two large communities. Therefore, we consider every attempt aimed at the unity, auspicious. We want the unity of the Hindus and Muslims of India from the core of our hearts. To settle their disputes is the job of the Congress and the Muslim League. The independence of India is essential for the freedom of Princely States.

The meteoric rise of Jinah and the growing popularity among the Muslims of his two nation theory as well as of the demand for partition of the subcontinent made Congress leaders in British India worried over the future of
Kashmir. Sir Tej Bahadur Supru on whom Maharaja Hari Singh relied most for advice in constitutional and political matters was very close to Congress circles. On the advice of Congress leaders he desired to bring National Conference and the Dogra Government closer to each other and become friends to defend the State against the rising tide of Pan-Islamism on the one hand and the democratic forces on the other.

A plan of diarchy was therefore prepared and suddenly announced on October, 2, 1944 according to which two of the posts of ministers one a Hindu and another a Muslim were to be given to such persons who could command the confidence of the State Legislature. In that Legislature, 35 out of 75 members were nominated by the Maharaja. Out of 40 elected members 7 were chosen by the landlords and Government pensionaries and 11 were elected by Hindu and Sikh constituencies. There were only 8 members of the National Conference, all Muslims. The other Muslim members either belonged to Muslim Conference or were independents. There was thus not a ghost of chance for a candidate of either the Muslim Conference or National Conference to be chosen as a minister unless he had the fullest backing of the Government. The Legislative Assembly elected a panel of six members who were recommended for the two posts of ministers. Out of the panel of six members Maharaja Hari Singh appointed on October 19, 1944 Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg of National Conference and Ganga Ram an ultra loyalist Dogra politician as his Public Works and Home minister respectively.

S.M. Abdullah in his autobiography writes that no doubt the participation of National Conference in the cabinet was contradictory to its demand for the establishment of responsible government but this measure was taken only to
assess the sincerity of the invitation of Maharaja in connection with the appointment of a "popular" minister. But P.N.Bazaz while criticizing the National Conference decision writes that "the Nationalists were amply recommended for their loyalty or perhaps it would be more appropriate to say, for their treachery to freedom movement".

During his tenure of office as Public Works Minister Mr. Beg could not do anything concrete for the welfare of the State and its people because of his limited authority. He reported to National Conference Working Committee his helplessness to do something in the interest of public welfare. It was under the directions of the Working Committee that Mr. Beg resigned on March 17, 1946. After the resignation of Mr. Beg National Conference issued a statement to the press. The press note runs as:

The 17th of March 1946 will always remain a red letter day in the history of our movement. On this day Mr. M.A. Beg resigned and with his resignation ended a futile experiment in the revolutionary march of our people. A year and six months ago our movement called a temporary halt, we sought a short-out. We sent Mr. Beg in the Council. We hoped against hope that we would fight reaction and tyranny from within. But our hopes belied, the short cut proved a long road.

He has come back among his people. This is a signal for the people to reset their pace to the revolutionary tune of New Kashmir, to fight tyranny by force of our organisation, to end exploitation by force of our unity and to banish hunger and disease by force of our determination, onward to New Kashmir! Onward to revolution! Rest not till the goal is achieved.

It was in July 1945 that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and other members of the Congress Working Committee were released. His daughter Indira and grandsons were holidaying at Pahalgam. Pandit Nehru came almost straight to Kashmir, partly for reasons of health and partly to be with his daughter and grandsons. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Mr. Aasif Ali,
Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din and a host of other Congress leaders also flocked to Srinagar\textsuperscript{289}. Ostensibly they all came for reasons of health\textsuperscript{290} but there was a method even in madness\textsuperscript{291}.

Pandit Nehru reached Srinagar on July 19, 1945 and drove straight to the residence of Pandit Brijlal Nehru\textsuperscript{292}. The same evening he drove to Pahalgam where he addressed a public meeting on the next day and lavishly praised S.M.Abdullah\textsuperscript{293}. A few days later he went to Gulmarg where Maulana Azad and Mr. Aasif Ali were staying together\textsuperscript{294}.

On the evening of August 1, 1945 National Conference called a public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar in the honour of the Congress leaders\textsuperscript{295}. In the capacity of President National Conference S. M. Abdullah presented an address in which he referred to Maulana Azad’s visit to the valley during 1931\textsuperscript{296}, his own arrest and imprisonment in Hari Parbat fort for the first time and recalled some other historical occasions of fourteen years old Kashmir freedom movement\textsuperscript{297}. While paying tribute of honour to Maulana Azad, S.M.Abdullah called him the representative of Asian civilization and a source of enlightenment\textsuperscript{298}. The address also highlighted the subjects like the freedom of India, differences between the League and Congress, impact of Indian freedom struggle on the polity of the States and the right of self-determination\textsuperscript{299}. It stressed upon the need of unity between the various communities of India and pressed upon the Congress leaders to accommodate the genuine demands and aspirations of the Muslim League for the sake of unity and freedom of India\textsuperscript{300}. Speaking on the issues of Hindu-Muslim unity and the relations of Kashmir and Indian freedom movement S.M.Abdullah observed: \textsuperscript{301}
Our future and our fate is connected with the freedom struggle of India. We feel perturbed when we see that efforts to unite Indians in this struggle do not bear fruit. When Muslims feel apprehensive of the majority and this problem can be solved by accepting the principles of self-determination for all communities, not only in respect of creed but in the vast meaning of culture and this understanding has been given prominence in the programme of *Naya Kashmir*.

In response to the welcome address Maulana Azad said.\(^{302}\)

God has bestowed this country a worthy leader. S.M.Abdullah and his colleagues have led you to right path. I would like to tell you that you should repose trust in S.M.Abdullah and his colleagues and to follow them. If you would remain determined on his leadership, you will achieve freedom in near future. You will not have to strive for victory but the victory shall itself kiss your feet.

In his brief speech Pandit Nehru said that during the course of welcome address he was called as guest, contrary to his expectations as he was proud of being a Kashmiri by origin.\(^{303}\)

The fifth annual session of National Conference was held on August 3, 4, and 5, 1945 at Sopore under the Presidentship of S.M.Abdullah\(^{304}\). As mentioned earlier National Conference had invited the Congress leaders for their participation in the session. Among the prominent luminaries of Congress who participated in the session include Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Mr. Aasif Ali, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Jai Naraian (General Secretary Peoples Conference), Mr. Shakir Ali and Achal Ishwar Prasad\(^{305}\). Maulana Azad retired to Gulmarg and did not attend any function\(^{306}\) in the State other than Hazuri Bagh public meeting of August 1, 1945. A number of correspondents of various news papers and the representatives of different news agencies all over India had flocked to the valley in order to give coverage to National Conference annual session\(^{307}\). All India Radio announced the deliberations of different meetings of the session\(^{308}\). A Reception Committee had already been set up in a meeting of the workers of Baramullah district two months
earlier with Sofi Muhammad Akbar as chairman and Muhammad Yousuf Saraf General Secretary.

The Sopore annual session of National Conference had an extraordinary importance in the annals of the freedom struggle of Jammu and Kashmir for two reasons. First, it was attended by the outstanding Nationalists of India. Second among all the Nationalist organizations of the Indian subcontinent National Conference was the first to pass a resolution in favour of self-determination. It may not be out of place to note that All India Congress Committee passed the resolution of self-determination after the Sopore session of National Conference (1945).

The proceedings of the session started with the welcome address presented by Sofi Muhammad Akbar. The session proved to be a grand show and not less than twenty thousand people attending it. It was for the first time that the National Conference session was enthusiastically attended by the delegates all over the State irrespective of their creed. The camping ground of the delegates had been given the name of Hurriyat Nagar. It was on the request of Maulana Masoodi that Abdul Gaffar Khan started his speech. In his speech Abdul Gaffar Khan expressed his displeasure on the incident of August 1, and denounced it un-Islamic and against the moral values of the Muslims. By declaring S.M. Abdullah as the harbringer of Kashmir awakening Abdul Gaffar Khan observed:

For Kashmiris S. M. Abdullah is the gift of God. If you do not follow him, you will be humiliated.

In his Presidential address S.M. Abdullah after focusing on some past crucial stages of Kashmir freedom movement said that National Conference was the
only path towards the liberation of forty lakh people of the State\textsuperscript{321}. Referring to different stages of the Indian freedom movement in the perspective of World War II, S.M. Abdullah declared a far-reaching political and economic revolution a means to get rid of impoverishment and subjugation\textsuperscript{322}. He also stressed upon the need for cooperation between Muslim League and Congress in order to lead the freedom struggle of India to its logical conclusion.\textsuperscript{323}

While explaining the importance of the \textit{Naya Kashmir} S.M. Abdullah stated:\textsuperscript{324}

\textit{Naya Kashmir} programme has won the heart of everybody. This type of feeling is always the result of the strength and success of any movement. \textit{Naya Kashmir} programme is against the vested interests of the jagirdars, usurers and the capitalists.

It was during the course of the session that National Conference constituted a new Working Committee and S.M. Abdullah announced the names of its office bearers and members which include:\textsuperscript{325}

\begin{itemize}
  \item President \quad S.M. Abdullah
  \item General Secretary \quad Maulana Masoodi.
  \item Treasurer \quad Sham Lal Saraf.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Members:}

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Sardar Budh Singh,
  \item Raja Muhammad Akbar Khan.
  \item Mian Ahmad Yar Khan
  \item Master Abdul Aziz.
  \item Ghulam Mohi-ud din Qara.
  \item Pandit Girdari Lal Dogra.
  \item Kh. Ghulam Nabi Vakil.
  \item Kh. Ghulam Qadir Banday.
\end{enumerate}

Pandit Nehru in his speech while calling Kashmiri as his ancestral language expressed regret for not being familiar with it. He made it clear that his
friendship with S.M. Abdullah was ten years old and expressed his pleasure on participating in the annual session of National Conference for the first time. Pandit Nehru said that because of the large scale participation of the people in the public meetings it was impossible to ascertain their affiliations. But on the basis of his personal experience he asserted that S.M. Abdullah was the most popular leader of the State. He also added that the people of the State were fortunate enough to have such a type of leader. Pandit Nehru lashed out at Kashmiri Pandits for their narrow minded approach and suggested them to join National Conference in order to liberate their homeland.

Kashmiri Pandits invited Pandit Nehru separately at Shitalnag, Srinagar, in a public meeting called under the auspices of Yuvak Sabha. Pandit Jai Lal Kilam presented an address to Pandit Nehru in Hindi language in which he highlighted the glorious past of Hinduism. In response to it Pandit Nehru stressed upon the Kashmiri Pandits to understand the pulse of changing times. He was critical to the approach of Kashmiri Pandits for highlighting their past by calling it an outdated story. Pandit Nehru observed that being the slaves of an autocratic regime it did not suit them to highlight their past glory. He told the Kashmiri Pandits that their politics revolved round government services. In reaction to his critical remarks majority of the audience expressed their resentment against Pandit Nehru and alleged him to be anti-Hindu.

Soon after 1946 elections of British India, the British Government with the approval of the Parliament sent a mission to India consisting of three cabinet members namely Sir Pethic Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander to workout a solution to the problem by consulting the leaders of different shades of
After the resounding victory achieved by Muslim League at the polls it was not possible for any responsible member of the British Government to ignore the demand for Pakistan. Moreover the pronouncements of the British leaders and the activities of the Cabinet Mission left little doubt in the minds of far-seeing people that India was to be divided. Where the Kashmir will go? It became a serious matter for all political parties of the State in general and to that for National Conference in particular.

With the arrival of Cabinet Mission to India it became clear that after the partition of India and the emergence of Pakistan, the princes would have to decide that to which country they would like to join. Since the relations between R.C.Kak and National Conference were not harmonious and therefore, S.M.Abdullah decided to meet Maharaja personally at Bombay in order to discuss the future of the State. But the Maharaja Hari Singh refused to grant an interview to S.M.Abdullah. It was on April 19, 1946 when Cabinet Mission visited Srinagar an S.M.Abdullah was still in plains. The Mission returned from Srinagar on April 24, 1946. It was from Lahore that Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah despatched a telegram to the mission which runs as follows:

Today the national demand of the people of Kashmir is not merely the establishment of a responsible government but their right to absolute freedom from the autocratic rule of the Dogra House. Nearly a hundred years ago the people of Kashmir became the victims of a commercial deal by the covetous agents of the East India Company. For the paltry consideration of 75 lakh of Sikh currency rupees the people of Kashmir, the land and its potential wealth were sold to Maharaja Gulab Singh, the Dogra Vassal of the Sikh empire.

We challenge the moral and political validity of this sale deed to which the people of Kashmir were never a party and which has since 1846 been the document of their bondage.

At this movement, the future of the inhabitants of India is on the anvil, and the constitutional pattern of the future is being hammered out by the British Cabinet
Mission. The question of the treaty rights of the princes has become a moot point between the peoples of the States, the princely order and the paramount power. For us in Kashmir the re-examination of this relationship in its historical context is a vital matter.

The crux of our contention is this that the sale-deed which brought Kashmir under the rule of the Dogra House confers no privileges equivalent to those claimed by States governed by the so-called treaty rights. As such the case of Kashmir itself stands on a unique footing, and the people of Kashmir draw the attention of the Cabinet Mission to their just claims to freedom on the withdrawal of British power. The sale-deed of 1846 misnamed the Treaty of Amritsar makes the matter quite clear.

No sale-deed, however sacrosanct, can condemn more than four million men and women to the servitude of an autocrat when the will to live under his rule is no longer there. We, the people of Kashmir, are determined to mould our own destiny and we appeal to the members of the Cabinet Mission to recognize the justice and the strength of our cause.

Kashmir is not merely a geographical expression, in the North West of the vast subcontinent of India, famed for its beauty and natural wealth, but it is a land strategically situated, the meeting point of India, China and Russia, and as such has an international significance. Our home is the cradle of the Kashmiri nation which by virtue of the homogeneity of language, culture and tradition and its common history of suffering is today one of the rare places in India where all communities are backing up a united national demand.

S.M. Abdullah returned to Valley on May 3, 1946. It was just after his return that he launched Quit Kashmir movement. He made the beginning of the movement in a historical public meeting at Maisuma, Srinagar, on May 15, 1946. It was there that S.M. Abdullah said:

In 1846, Gulab Singh committed a detestable treachery and now in 1946, it was ordained that I should raise protest against it. Every Indian, upto the last man will condemn Gulab Singh for this treachery. We do not want to become victims of the pleasures of Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs. We wish to rid ourselves from slavery. A time will come when even the dead would emerge from graves raising slogans like Kashmir ko chood do (Quit Kashmir).

In one of the speeches delivered at Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar, S.M. Abdullah said that the people of our State shall collect rupee one, per head and return the Maharaja Hari Singh the sum of seventy five lakh rupees in lieu of which
Maharaja Gulab Singh had purchased the State in 1846. These speeches developed a volcanic fervour of enthusiasm among the masses. The Quit Kashmir movement was a landmark in the freedom struggle of the State. It spread like wild fire in different parts of the State and created a bitter reaction against the Maharaja Hari Singh. The echoes of the slogans like Dogora Raj Murdabad (death to Dogra rule), Hari Sing hun buol, khudayan goul (may God perish the progeny of Hari Singh), Ram Hoonun mool zin badal zoul (Ram Chandra kaks father be burnt as fuel) were heard around the mountainous valley of Kashmir particularly in urban centres. It was the final assault on the Dogra rule and after it the days of the autocracy became numbered.

On May 18, 1946 there was a minor clash between Hindus and Muslims at Amirakadal while a group of National Conference workers was raising anti Hari Singh slogans. On May 19, 1946 S.M. Abdullah called off the Quit Kashmir perhaps to ensure that the Government was not able to bring about Hindu-Muslim clashes and thus sabotage the objectives of the movement. On May 19 and 20, 1946 he held a series of meetings with his senior colleagues particularly Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg, Ghulam Muhammad Bakshi, Maulana Syed Masoodi, G.M. Sadiq and Kh. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Qara.

As a result of these deliberations, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad and Kh. Ghulam Muhammad Sadiq escaped to Lahore incognito, Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg went to Anantnag to spearhead the movement there and Kh. Mohi-ud-Din Qara went underground. S. M. Abdullah left by car for the plains with the announced object of consultations with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. A superintendent of police armed with a warrant under provisions of the defence rules followed him.
and before he could cross the small town of Garhi Dopatta, a distance of 99 miles, he was arrested and in the darkness of the approaching night, removed to Badami Bagh cantonment and lodged there.

The same night, Dogra army was dispatched under the cover of darkness to all strategic points in Srinagar and the other important towns and villages all over Kashmir Valley. When the news of Shaikh's arrest became known, business was suspended all over the Valley and processions were taken out to protest against his arrest and the people demanded the end of the Dogra rule. Agitational platforms were setup in Khanqah-i-Maula and Hazratbal, Srinagar and at other places where people would gather in the evening to hear and applaud the leaders and workers who came forward to offer themselves for arrest. Within twenty four hours of his arrest, printed posters and hand bills appeared announcing the setting up of a war council with Kh. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Qara as its General Dictator. There were several clashes between the Dogra army and the demonstrators especially in Srinagar, Anantnag and Pampore. According to official figures, twenty Muslims were killed and hundreds wounded as a result of the military firing. The number of those arrested exceeded three thousand. The non-Muslim leaders who had been arrested include Pandit Kishap Bandhu, Pandit Sham Lal Saraf, Sardar Budh Singh, Mr. Janki Nath Zutshi, Mr. D.P.Dhar and Comrade Sanat Singh. Among these leaders it were only Sham Lal Saraf, Sant Singh and D.P.Dhar who actively participated in the movement and others were rounded off merely as a precautionary measure.

It is to be noted that the Congress leadership except Pandit Nehru opposed the Quit Kashmir movement. The President of Indian National Congress
Achariya Kriplani also opposed the movement of *Quit Kashmir*. Leading Congress organs *Hindustan Times, Amrit Bazar Patrika, Times of India, Hindu, Free Press Journal* and *Tribune* played down the movement. Pandit Nehru however, was the only Congress leader who took a different attitude and condemned the repressive policy of the Dogra Government. In a statement from Delhi on May 27, 1946 he said, "Srinagar had become a city of dead" and that "a wall of Jamia Masjid had been demolished". Some correspondence passed on between Pandit Nehru and Maharaja Hari Singh. In addition to telegrams exchanged by them which were later released to the press, Pandit Nehru also sent a letter through a personal messenger. In all these telegrams Pandit Nehru impressed upon the State Government the absolute necessity of releasing S.M. Abdullah forthwith and when it was refused, he informed the Maharaja by a telegram dated June 15, 1946 that he was reaching Srinagar on the 19th June, alongwith a number of lawyers who were to defend S. M. Abdullah. Maharaja and his protagonists in the State left no stone unturned in persuading Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patail for not extending their favour and support to *Quit Kashmir* movement. In this connection R. C. Kak went to Bombay in order to meet Sardar Patail personally.

Accompanied by some eminent lawyers Pandit Nehru started from Rawalpindi on June 20, 1946 followed by about three hundred Congress workers. In addition to having posted a sizeable contingent of soldiers at Kohala, to prevent his ingress, the Government had also arranged to stage an anti-Nehru demonstration by interested quarters. The Kashmiri Pandits led by Shiv Narain Fotedar, workers of Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah and the workers of Dogra Sabha, Jammu had reached Kohala to demonstrate against the entry of Pandit Nehru in the
Valley\(^{383}\). The demonstrators carrying black banners in their hands raised slogans \textit{Nehru wapas Jau} (Nehru go back)\(^{384}\).

Under the orders of Maharaja Krishan Dhar, the Governor of Kashmir Pandit Nehru was arrested along with some of his colleagues and lodged in Uri Dakbanglow.\(^{385}\) Keeping a vehicle outside the Banglow he was told by the Government that he can return whenever he liked. Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad sent a message to Pandit Nehru for his immediate return to Delhi. In their message these leaders urged upon Pandit Nehru the importance of his presence in the capital particularly in connection with the visit of British Cabinet Mission. Nehru accepted the suggestion and returned\(^{386}\).

Pandit Nehru returned to Srinagar on July 24, 1946\(^{387}\). The Congress Working Committee had actually prevailed upon the Kashmir Government to allow Pandit Nehru to visit the State\(^{388}\). On reaching Srinagar Pandit Nehru had a long meeting with S.M.Abdullah at Badami Bagh Cantonment and called on his residence at Soura, Srinagar, where he spent some time with Begum Abdullah\(^{389}\). Pandit Nehru supported \textit{Quit Kashmir} movement and denounced the State repression in order to express his solidarity with S.M.Abdullah for political reasons\(^{390}\). He should be credited with the knowledge, more than any other leader of British India, of the picture that the future had in store\(^{391}\). He realized the importance of S.M.Abdullah as a popular leader in a geographically vital Muslim majority area and was wise enough to think that it was in the interests of Congress that he should be on its side\(^{392}\). It was also for this reason that Pandit Nehru cost himself in the role of a friend and supporter of S.M.Abdullah\(^{393}\).
On July 30, 1947 there was a meeting at Barla House where Mahatma Gandhi was stationed. It was attended by Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patail and Lord Mountbatton. On August 1, Gandhiji reached Srinagar via Rawalpindi. He stayed at the residence of Saith Kishwari Lal located at Baghat-i-Barzullah, Srinagar. Maharani Tara Devi called on Gandhiji and offered him a cup of milk but he refused to take it by telling that he would not take the milk of a Maharaja whose praJA (subjects) were in grief. Gandhiji had a meeting with the Maharaja. He had also expressed his desire to meet S.M. Abdullah but it could not become possible because the latter was lodged in a mountainous area away from Srinagar. Gandhiji called on the residence of S. M. Abdullah, Soura, Srinagar and spent some time with Mrs. Abdullah. He returned to Delhi via Jammu on August 3, 1947. On his return Gandhiji declared the Treaty of Amritsar as Bakri Peetar which stood expired. He also added that the time had come when the right of rule shall shift to Kashmiri people.

On August 11, 1947 General Genak Singh took over as the premier of the State. It was during these days that the Maharaja Hari Singh and his bureaucrats began to receive messages about the movement of tribals. To protect the State against the forthcoming aggression they thought it advisable to release S.M. Abdullah. He was accordingly shifted from Badarwah jail to Badami Bagh Contonment, where he had a meeting with the Maharaja. S. M. Abdullah told Maharaja that some vested interests were creating a suspicion in his mind that the Muslim subjects were his enemies. But such elements were only aimed at creating misunderstanding and ill will. He assured Maharaja that nobody wanted to depose him. But, the people of the State strive to run the system of their State on
S.M. Abdullah was released on September 29, 1947 and instead of three years, he was kept behind the bars for one year, four months and eleven days.

The release of S.M. Abdullah was followed by the release of other leaders and workers of National Conference. S.M. Abdullah started to reorganise the cadres of National Conference and its headquarters were shifted from Mujahid Manzil to Amirakadal because of changing circumstances. It was because of the apprehensions of the tribal raid that National Conference re-organized its volunteer corps in order to look after the lives, honour and property of the people. In a mass meeting held at Khanqah-i-Maula S.M. Abdullah appealed the people to join the volunteer corps irrespective of their caste and creed. The corps later on played a dynamic role in keeping up the morale of the people particularly during the times when Maharaja Hari Singh fled to Jammu leaving his subjects in Kashmir at the mercy of chaos and confusion. It also played a significant role in maintaining the communal harmony in the valley of Kashmir. It is to be noted that the partition of the subcontinent resulted in the break out of a wild fire of communal riots across the Kashmir boarders and the East and West Punjab were the worst hit of it. But the valley of Kashmir continued to be a centre of peace and communal harmony. Maharaja desired to maintain the relations of his State both with India as well as Pakistan, through a Standstill Agreement but from the Indian side there was no response, perhaps because there was no direct contact between India and Kashmir. With regard to telegraph an agreement between Maharaja and Pakistan was made and this department had virtually started to work under the Pakistan Telegraph Department. On August 14, 1947, the independence day of Pakistan, Pakistan flag
was hoisted on the post office building, Srinagar. But the State Premier General Genak Singh had immediately issued the orders to pull down it.

A representative of Pakistan called upon the Maharaja to persuade him to have the accession of the State with Pakistan but the latter turned down the offer. In reaction to Maharaja's denial Pakistan Government stopped its supplies to the State. The branch of Imperial Bank in Kashmir got defunct when the money was stopped from Pakistan. No doubt the Government of the Maharaja was agitated against the Pakistan reaction but the conditions went on deteriorating. Pakistan Government deputed two representatives to Srinagar in order to persuade S.M. Abdullah to have the accession of the State with Pakistan. These were Dr. Muhammad Din Taseer and Shaikh Sadiq. But the attempt proved a failure and S. M. Abdullah rejected the offer. In July 1947 Lord Mountbatten suggested Maharaja to accede to India but the latter rejected the suggestion with the purpose of remaining independent.

S.M. Abdullah left for Delhi on October 15, 1947 in order to meet Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Pandit Nehru received S.M. Abdullah at airport in the capacity of the Prime Minister of India. He was presented Guard of honour and was stationed at Prime Ministers residence as a special guest. It was during this visit that S.M. Abdullah in a press Conference said:

The people of Kashmir want to decide their future in a peaceful atmosphere and without any external intervention. If any decision was forcibly thrust upon us, we shall revolt. It is the right of Kashmiri masses and not that of Maharaja to decide their future. But they cannot decide anything till their freedom is restored.

By the middle of October, 1947 the movement of the tribals began to increase in the border areas of Muzaffarabad. Maharaja had a small army of 13,000
and it was already stationed at various fronts. Mass meetings began to be called at Poonch and Mirpur wherein the resolutions favouring the accession of Kashmir with Pakistan were adopted. Maharaja accompanied by his Chief of the Army Staff General Scott made an on the spot visit of Poonch. The people of Poonch especially from Plindri region had a long tradition of the army services. These people had served both the State as well as Indian army and this region was considered a fertile region for the army recruitment. The people of Poonch unfortunately received the Maharaja after wearing the army uniforms and it offended the latter very deeply. On his return Maharaja despatched his troops to suppress the people of Poonch. The Dogra armies struck a terror in Poonch. They put the houses on fire and molested the women. National Conference sent its representatives to Poonch who on their return submitted a report to the party High Command which was full of heart rending stories. On October 21, 1947, when the tribals had advanced near Muzafarabad, S.M. Abdullah who was in Delhi issued a press statement in which he laid the responsibility for the deterioration of the conditions at Poonch on the Maharaja.

Maharaja Hari Sing saw the power and the crown tumbling down before his eyes. So to save himself and the moveable wealth in his palace, he loaded at midnight of October 25, 1947, about a hundred motor lorries with precious goods and left Kashmir for Jammu, his native town. According to Campbell Johnson, the author of the Mission with Mountbatten, Maharaja had been advised to leave the Valley by V.P. Menon, Secretary of the States, Ministry of the Government of India. It is interesting to note that the Maharaja managed to carry the idol of his family temple, Gadadhar, with him. Seated safely at Jammu, Maharaja Hari Singh...
approached for help the dominion of India. In his letter of October, 26, 1947, addressed to Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General, the Maharaja stated in an obliging tone:

Naturally they (the Indian Government) cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the instrument of accession for acceptance by your government.

The instrument of accession handed over the control of the three subjects - defence, foreign affairs and transport to the Government of India. The document was received and forwarded by Maharaja through V.P. Menon who had come from Delhi on October 26, 1947 and returned at the same day. On the return of V.P. Menon the instrument of accession was also signed by S.M. Abdullah on behalf of National Conference who was present in Delhi at the residence of Pandit J.L. Nehru. Mehar Chand Mahajan who had taken over as the Premier of Jammu and Kashmir by replacing General Genak Singh on October 15, 1947 had also proceeded to Delhi in order to receive the armed aid against the tribal intrusion. was also present on the occasion and signed the document of accession. But it is to be noted that the instrument of accession was conditional and temporary in nature. Thus, the Government of India despatched its armies by air and by land on October 26, 1947, to the aid of Kashmir Government. S.M. Abdullah was sworn as the Chief Administrator of the State on October 27, 1947 at Jammu.

c. Economic Role:

National Conference had a concrete economic programme for the welfare and development of the people of the State. In this sub-chapter we shall endeavour to examine the economic role of National Conference from 1939 to 1947.
It is to be noted that the valley of Kashmir with the loss of its political freedom in 1586, as a result of Mughal occupation, had served as a colony of different neighbouring powers for centuries together. The political subjugation had paved way for the economic exploitation and ultimately resulted in subversion of the indigenous economic structure. The policy of exorbitant taxation followed with the purpose of the drain of wealth had broken the back of Kashmiri masses in general and those of the working classes in particular. During its struggle of nine years (1939-47) against the Dogra autocracy, National Conference took up the cause of the working classes and pressed upon the Maharaja and his administration to introduce different measures for their economic welfare.

In his welcome address delivered in the first annual session of National Conference on September 30, 1939. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg drew the attention of National Conference leadership towards the extreme poverty and pitiable condition of the peasantry of district Anantnag. While mentioning the agonies of poverty in his address, Mr. Beg observed:

It has been observed in Anantnag, which is considered to be the model district of Kashmir, that a peasant keeps the arms and legs of his grown up children tied with a rope, so that they may not be forced by hunger to cut even a spikelet of paddy plant from his mortgaged farms. How a peasant can concentrate on farming in such circumstances? No concession is provided to them in the payment of revenues even during the times of famine, flood, price rise, drought and other kinds of natural calamities. This is why that they are forced to wander in the far off Indian cities in search of livelihood.

S.M. Abdullah in his presidential address declared the establishment of responsible government as the only means to end the economic grievances of the people. Several resolutions were passed in the session and one of them demanded the recruitment in armed services irrespective of caste and creed. Most of the
resolutions were related to the economic welfare of the State. A need for floating limited joint stock companies, export promotion of fruit, dry and fresh, and handicrafts on a large scale, was underlined. It was realized that assistance was needed for the revival of all local handicrafts. As for the agriculture sector, emphasis was laid on providing the peasantry with better seed, fertilizers, and assistance in raising livestock and starting large scale poultry farming. Local party units were instructed to assist the people in avoiding litigation and in settling minor disputes through mediation.

The second annual session not only focussed on the economic sufferings of the people but in addition to it several resolutions were passed which demanded the redressal of economic grievances. In his presidential address Sardar Budh Singh spoke at length on the menace of corruption prevailing in different branches of administration and its implications on the working classes of the State. He also spoke against the oppression and harassment of the peasantry and other working classes by the corrupt officialdom. Sardar Budh Singh in his address expressed serious concern against the market rise and its consequences upon the poor sections of the society. In the concluding words of his speech he stressed upon the need for the establishment of responsible government in order to end the hunger and poverty.

Several resolutions of economic nature were also adopted in the session. Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz moved a resolution pleading for land to tiller because in some categories of land like chak, jagir and maufi the peasants did not enjoy the proprietary rights. The resolution was seconded by Sardar Budh Singh. Another resolution presented by P.N.Bazaz related to the cancellation of all such
debts whose interest equaled the gross amount. It was seconded by Sofi Muhammad Akbar. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg moved a resolution which pleaded for the assessment of land revenue on the basis of income so that its burden was to be shared by the rich and poor accordingly. Mian Ahmad Yar Khan presented a resolution which pleaded for the abolition of kacharai (grazing tax). He criticized the policy of the Government vis-a-vis this demand during the past seven years. In favour of it Maulana Ghulam Mustafa delivered a forceful speech in which he declared the irresponsible government as the main cause of misery. All the resolutions were passed unanimously.

The year 1941 was a disastrous year which shook the economic basis of the State. There were two important reasons behind this economic upheaval. First, the World War II disturbed the equilibrium of the world economy which resulted in an abrupt rise of the market. The State of Jammu and Kashmir with a feudal type of economy was the worst hit of this economic distress. Second, during the same year a devastating flood occurred in the valley of Kashmir and it washed down the crops. It also washed out some localities in rural areas along with domestic cattle. As a result of these catastrophies a terrible famine broke out in the State. Forced by the circumstances the people in urban centres took to streets in order to press upon the Government to make necessary arrangements against the food scarcity. In the capacity of a largest political organisation National Conference came forward to provide the lead. It stressed upon the Government to utilize its resources in order to put an end to the food crisis in the State.

The people of Poonch launched a vigorous movement against the Raja of Poonch for his negligence towards the chaotic conditions created by the famine. In
reaction to it the Raja of Poonch arrested two public leaders Kh. Ghulam Ahmad Bhat and Ghulam Qadir Banday. National Conference condemned the arrests and issued statements that urged upon the Raja of Poonch to make necessary arrangements against the famine. The Conference constituted Food Relief Committees in different parts of the State. It was due to the organised lead that the Conference provided to the agitation that Maharaja Hari Singh on his 47th birth anniversary sanctioned twenty thousand rupees in order to purchase food grams from the neighbouring province of Punjab.

It was in these circumstances that National Conference called its third annual session. In his presidential address Sardar Budh Singh expressed a serious concern against the Government apathy in redressing the economic grievances of its subjects. He requested Maharaja to have direct contact with his subjects so that their conditions were improved. He attributed the poverty and unemployment of the people to autocratic and jagiridari system of government and demanded its replacement by a responsible system of government. Sardar Budh Singh in his address reminded the Maharaja his past assurance about the establishment of an Assembly, with the purpose of ensuring accountability in the State administration. He dismissed the assurances of Maharaja as false and fake while referring to the functioning of the State Legislature during the eight years of its life. Sardar Budh Singh said that the nominated members did not allow to pass any such bill aimed at the economic welfare of the people. While examining the role of the State Legislature in the context of economic welfare Sardar Budh Singh observed:

Even if any bill related to the abolition of kahcharai or the reduction of land revenue in shikargaha's (remote areas adjacent to forests) was some how passed in the Lower
House, it was amended by the Upper House in a way that it lost its spirit and significance.

Sardar Budh Singh applauded the sincerity of National Conference Assembly members who had tendered their resignation on April 15, 1941 in the interests of the people. As mentioned earlier that these Assembly members had resigned in protest against the negligence of Government towards the demands of National Conference like the repeal of the Arms Act, abolition of *kahcharai* (grazing tax) and the cancellation of double script. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg moved a resolution pleading for the immediate end of the famine in the State. Mian Ahmad Yar Khan moved another resolution related to the amendment of *kahcharai* law of 1937. It was seconded by Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg. In his resolution Raja Muhammad Akbar Khan suggested the appointment of a commission against the co-operative department.

The Working Committee of National Conference called a meeting at Jammu on 14 and 15 January, 1942 under the presidency of Sardar Budh Singh. The Committee noted with deep concern the aggravating war situation accompanied by the deepening food crisis in the State. It demanded from the State Government a closer association of popular democratic elements in ensuring equitable, efficient and incorruptible distribution of food grains and rations among the people. It was on May 10, 1942 that National Conference held a Food Conference. Delegates from the seven Tehsils of the valley and the city of Srinagar participated in the Conference. The Conference resolved that the scarcity of food and fuel was not solely due to shortage, but the responsibility for it lay partly on the inefficiency of a corrupt administration and partly on the *jagirdars*, hoarders, profiteers and black
marketers\textsuperscript{491}. It also demanded the acquisition of grain stocks from jagirdars and merchants, the purchase of standing crops by the State, the introduction of rationing and control\textsuperscript{492}, the opening of State depots, the rigid regulation and control of fuel storage and distribution\textsuperscript{493}.

It was on the persistent demand of National Conference that during the year 1942 - 1943 non-official members were associated with the purpose of fair and equitable distribution of fuel and \textit{shali} among the dwellers of Srinagar city\textsuperscript{494}. Two different committees were setup in this connection i.e. Fuel Committee and Shali Committee and each of them included two non-official members representing two large communities Hindus as well as Muslims\textsuperscript{495}. Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad an important leader* of National Conference was nominated by the Government to represent the Muslims in Fuel Committee\textsuperscript{496}. The Committee had been authorised to advice the concerned authorities in the proper distribution of fuel.\textsuperscript{497} Later on, it was alleged that the Nationalist leader adopted partisan attitude vis-a-vis the loyalists of Muslim Conference because of political rivalry\textsuperscript{498}. In this connection P.N.Bazaz a contemporary historian writes:\textsuperscript{499}

Within a few days of the functioning of the Fuel Committee there was hue and cry from large numbers of people who had been plainly told that they could get no fuel because they were the supporters of Muslim Conference or followers of Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah. Crises were raised on all sides and innumerable complaints were addressed to the Government but to no purpose. When people strongly protested against the partisan attitude of the National Conference representatives, they were insulted, abused and beaten... Similarly the Committee appointed to revise the \textit{shali} (paddy) ration cards created a havoc by either canceling the cards of those who opposed the Nationalist politics or by reducing the number of their family members shown in the cards without any reason.

As mentioned earlier that the depression of world war II resulted in the spontaneous rise in the market and in Jammu and Kashmir the conditions went from
bad to worse due to famine\textsuperscript{500}. It was in August, 1943 that the Jammu province became the worst hit of food scarcity. The Government was ill advised to close down cheap food shops with the result that the Mahajans began stocking wheat and selling it in the black market\textsuperscript{501}. \textit{Atta} was sold at rupees sixteen per maund\textsuperscript{502}. By 23rd of September, the public agitation assumed dangerous proportions. The Government enforced Defence Rule 50 and prohibited the holding of meetings and carrying out processions\textsuperscript{503}. Instead of looking into the matter seriously and finding out a solution to the problem the Government arrested Jammu Raj Sabha leaders Gopal Dutt and Vaishnu Gupt\textsuperscript{504}. On September 24, the masses staged a dharna in front of the police station\textsuperscript{505}. The police resorted to firing which resulted in seven deaths and a number of injuries.\textsuperscript{506} National Conference sent Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg and Kh. Ghulam Muhammad Sadiq to Jammu in order to take stock of the situation and convey its solidarity and sympathies with the people of Jammu\textsuperscript{507}. Moreover, the Conference issued statements in which it expressed serious concern over the incident of indiscriminate firing on the mob and demanded an immediate probe into the matter.\textsuperscript{508}

In its 4th annual session National Conference deliberated upon the chaotic conditions created by the food scarcity. In his presidential address S.M. Abdulah stressed upon the mitigation of the effects of the war by self-help\textsuperscript{509}. In addition to press upon the Government to make necessary arrangements for food supply, the Conference made an appeal to the masses to follow its programme started for the relief of the extremely poor people against the price rise and the scarcity of the essential food commodities.\textsuperscript{510} In order to have an in-depth study of the economic conditions it would be pertinent to have a focus on the average income of the
different districts of the State during the course of our study. According to the statement made by Abdul Wahid editor *Al Islah*, Srinagar, before the Royal Enquiry Commission (1943-44), the average daily income as per census of 1941 in different districts was as under: 511

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Income (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jammu District</td>
<td>2.00 to 3.50 per month per head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathua</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasi</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirpur</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramullah</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>2.50 to 4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladakh and Askardu</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kargil</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The economic condition of the people was deteriorating due to the rising cost of living and the absence of employment opportunities 512. As mentioned earlier food was very scarce all over the State and same was the case with fuel, in urban areas especially in Srinagar 513 Rationing was introduced in important towns but the supply was irregular, besides being much below the requirement per head 514. Black market therefore, thrived and the Government took no steps to punish the hoarders and black marketers 515. The Maharaja started a poor fund with a personal donation of two lacs which was used to provide employment to 8,000 labourers who normally went to Punjab for seasonal employment in winter and partly to help the needy and the distressed 516. But this measure proved inadequate to meet the growing unemployment 517. In 1942-43 the State income, according to the administrative report.
was three crore, thirteen lakh and eighty five thousand rupees. The main items of revenue were as under:\textsuperscript{518}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forests</td>
<td>Rs. 83,64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>Rs. 67,30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land revenue</td>
<td>Rs. 55,69,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk Department</td>
<td>Rs. 41,91,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the statement of income and expenditure placed before the State Assembly in 1947, the income for the year 1944-45 was rupees four crore, twenty lakh and fifty four thousand\textsuperscript{519}. The total expenditure on, Public Works Department, Education, Medical, Agriculture, Veterinary, Co-operatives, Panchayats and village uplift was only rupees eight lakh and twenty seven thousand which came to 20.8 percent of the total income\textsuperscript{520}. It clearly indicates that the Government was not interested in removing the poverty as it spent little amount of its income on public welfare.

It was in these circumstances that National Conference issued its \textit{New Kashmir Manifesto}. As mentioned in the preceding pages that \textit{New Kashmir Manifesto} was a document of progressive nature and had taken full care of the economic aspirations of the people of the State\textsuperscript{521}. The sentiments expressed by S.M.Abdullah, the High Command of National Conference, in the foreword of \textit{New Kashmir Manifesto} makes it abundantly clear that the document was aimed at the economic reconstruction of the State. In its foreword Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah said:\textsuperscript{522}

\begin{quote}
In our Kashmir we shall build again the men and women of our State who have been dwarfed by centuries of servitude and create a people worthy of our glorious mother land.
\end{quote}
Here we do not need to reproduce the whole manifesto because we have already recast it in the preceding pages. It is to be noted that the document claimed for the establishment of a classless society in the State. It aspires for a planned economy and the establishment of economic democracy. The document stands against the exploitation and guarantees economic freedom and the employment for all the citizens of the State. It also stands for the abolition of landlordism, the distribution of all the lands among peasantry, abolition of sahukari debts, protection against the floods, hailstorms, crop diseases, fire, damage of cattle and the abolition of industrial monopoly. On his return from England on May 18, 1944, Maharaja at the request of different socio-political organisations including National Conference had a round of the Srinagar city on May 31, in order to receive a public avation. When the procession passed via Mujahid Manzil, S.M.Abdullah submitted Naya Kashmir Manifesto to Maharaja Hari Singh as a memorandum on behalf of National Conference.

In April, 1945, the people of Srinagar city started an agitation and demanded an increase in their monthly rations. They received 4 traks of Paddy per head monthly which did not fulfill their need and they demanded 6 traks instead of four. A joint front of political and semi-political parties was organised to lead this agitation in which National Conference played a significant role. A number of mass meetings were organised in which the resolutions were passed stressing upon the Government to adhere to its commitments.

In his welcome address presented to the sixth annual session of National Conference Sofi Muhammad Akbar dilated mostly on his own district, its rich resources and potentialities. He contrasted these with the endemic food...
shortage in the district, the lack of infrastructure for development, economic stagnation, paucity of educational and medical facilities. Speaking on the economic programme of National Conference S.M. Abdullah in his Presidential address reminded the audience about some past measures of National Conference. He recalled the annual session of 1940, held at Baramullah, where the Conference promised to struggle for the abolition of landlordism and the distribution of land among the peasantry. He also recalled the deliberations of 1941 annual session where, in addition to the abolition of landlordism the Conference had committed itself to strive for adequate educational and medical facilities. Evaluating the commitment of the Conference in connection with the economic emancipation he referred to the year 1944 in which the Conference came forward with a concrete economic programme in its manifesto of Naya Kashmir.

No doubt we have to discuss the role of National Conference only upto 1947 but in order to avoid curiosity about the economic measures of the Conference after assuming to power, it seems pertinent to note some revolutionary measures of the Conference from 1947 onwards.

The first and foremost measure of economic emancipation that the Conference took in connection with the economic welfare of agricultural labour was the abolition of chakdari and jagirdari by passing the Big Landed Estates Act of 1950. The National Conference Government resumed all the jagirs and maufies with effect from April 13, 1948 and compensated the maufidars and jagirdars by grant of life time maintenance allowances in their favour. Under the Big Landed Estates Act an individual was not allowed to possess land beyond 182 kanals. It amounted to the abolition of 396 big jagirs. About 4.50 lakh acre land was
confiscated from nine thousand owners which benefited about 2.50 lakh tillers who were rewarded with the right of ownership. However, the orchards were exempted from the act.

No doubt the abolition of landlordism was the greatest achievement of National Conference after its coming to power. But the exemption of orchard lands which were commonly held by the bureaucracy, evoked a strong criticism from the progressive ideological groups of the State. The leaders of Kisan Mazdoor Conference criticized National Conference for exempting orchards from the Big Landed Estates Act and called it a betrayal of the Conference with its promise of 'land to tiller'. In this connection they compared the commercial benefits of paddy lands and orchard lands and the labour involved in the maintenance of both the categories of land. It is to be noted that the orchards yielded cash crops which had a quick market in comparison to paddy. Moreover, the orchard lands involved less labour in comparison to paddy lands. The Kisan leaders argued that by exempting orchards against the Big Landed Estates Act, National Conference maintained the statuesque and safeguarded the interests of the upper classes and bureaucracy. These leaders added that the National Conference Government exempted the orchard lands from the purview of the act because most of the National Conference leaders were themselves in possession of the big holdings of orchard lands.

Poor sections of the society both in rural as well as in urban areas were the worst hit of indebtedness. The money lender classes as referred to in preceding chapters were called as Sahukarks and Waddars had exacted the life blood of the working classes. By canceling the debts, National Conference rooted out the institutions of Waddari and Sahukari. In this connection a Debt Reconciliation
Board was constituted and its discretion was kept above the law courts\textsuperscript{552}. A debtor who had paid more than one half of the gross amount either in cash or kind, his debts stood cancelled\textsuperscript{553}.

d. Social Role:

The continuous subjugation of the Kashmiris had not only resulted in their economic despondency, but had also given rise to a number of unnecessary customs, rituals and superstitions. In order to struggle for political and economic amelioration, National Conference had also a programme of social welfare to its credit. The present sub-chapter shall examine the social role played by the Conference during the course of our study.

In his welcome address delivered to the first annual session of National Conference on September 30, 1939, Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg made a critical evaluation of the medical facilities available in the district hospital of Anantnag. Mr. Beg said:\textsuperscript{554}

The Anantnag District Hospital which is considered to be the best hospital of the State has an annual budget of rupees eight hundred. This budget is meant for the purchase of medicine as well as medical equipments. It is out of this meagre amount that one lakh and fifty thousand patients are treated annually. There is no arrangement for the separate hospitals for women and children. Numerous pregnant ladies and children are perishing for the want of medicine and the non-availability of the doctors.

The concern of National Conference for the social upliftment of the State masses was amply clear when during its first annual session at Anantnag local party units were instructed to assist the people in avoiding the litigation and in settling minor disputes through mediation\textsuperscript{555}. It was during this session that the Conference adopted a resolution embodying the National Demand proclamation
issued earlier on 29th August, 1938. In his presidential address S.M. Abdullah gave a stirring call for unifying all communities under one flag and to forget about the bitterness of the past. The crowds of people from the town and the villages near by who attended the Conference made it abundantly clear that they regarded the function as their own. Special references were made to the aggressive imperialist war which Hitler had unleashed on the first of September, 1939.

The presidential address delivered to the second annual session of National Conference by Sardar Budh Singh on September 29, 1940, focussed on certain social evils and desired their eradication. He spoke at length on corruption, caste system and communalism. He also highlighted the negative bearings of these social evils on the growth and development of the composite culture of Kashmir. A passionate appeal was made to the audience to give up communal hatred and caste prejudices.

The leaders of National Conference openly displayed their faith in socialism when they adopted the resolutions like the land to tiller, cancellation of debts, exemption from exorbitant taxation and the appropriation of the land revenue on the basis of income during the Baramullah session of 1940. All these resolutions were aimed at ameliorating the conditions of the hapless peasantry whose lives had turned miserable because of centuries of constant exploitation. It is obvious from the speeches delivered from National Conference platform from time to time that the poverty and indebtedness of the masses definitely haunted the minds of National Conference leadership. It is also evident from the echoes reverberated from the Praja Sabha.
The leaders of the Conference opposed all such moves of the Government aimed at divide and rule. By opposing the Arms Act and the introduction of double script, they fought against racial discrimination and safeguarded the composite culture of Kashmir. It is clear from a resolution of the Working Committee meeting of National Conference held on November 24 and 25, 1940. The resolution said:

We shall oppose any such move which is aimed at creating a wedge between the two major communities that is Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, the Government proposal which provides that one community shall adopt Devnagri and the other Persian script is a bottleneck against the spirit of nationalism. It is natural that one community after adopting a particular script shall remain ignorant about the literary achievements of another community. It will also create a gulf between the two communities and thus harm the composite culture of Kashmir.

In the wake of the threat of Red Communist Armies of Mawaizay Tung in November, 1941 about four thousand Kazakis were driven out of their homeland. They crossed the border and entered the State of Jammu and Kashmir via Ladakh with the purpose of seeking refuge. The leaders of this carven were Muhammad Ilyas and Usman Pasha. Under the orders of the Dogra Government the advance of these Kazakis was stopped at Leh by the State armies. They were permitted to move ahead in late November, when the snowfall had started in the mountainous region of the Ladakh. While crossing the Zogila pass which is situated at a very high altitude, these refugees faced severe physical losses and a number of their cattle perished while crossing the pass. According to a National Conference Working Committee resolution dozens of their men and hundreds of their cattle perished while crossing the Zogila pass.

On their entry to the Valley these Kazaki refugees were encamped near Muzaffarabad in January, 1942, under a strict police supervision till they were
permitted by the British Indian Government to enter its borders in May, 1942. Some of them stayed in Kashmir upto 1949. It was in 1949 when all these Kazakis were provided a permanent refuge by the Government of Turkey. It is to be noted that these Kazakis were nomadic people and therefore, carried some ordinary arms with the sole purpose of self-defence. It unnerved the Dogra Government unnecessarily with the fear that they might not join the Kashmiris in their struggle for freedom.

National Conference called a series of mass meetings wherein the attitude of the Government vis-a-vis Kazaki refugees was vehemently criticized. While displaying their sympathies with the Kazaki refugees Maulana Masoodi, Master Abdul Aziz, Muhammad Ji, Maulana Muhammad Ishaq (Mirwaiz Jamia mosque Aabit-abad) and Sardar Sanat Singh delivered fiery speeches at Muzaffarabad, against the harsh attitude of the Government towards these people. These leaders were arrested and a case was registered against them under section 32/28 of Defence Rules of Jammu and Kashmir in the court of Sub-judge Muzaffarabad. Similarly another enthusiastic leader of National Conference Muhammad Maqbool Sheerwani assailed the Government for its policy towards the Kazaki refugees. He too was arrested. S.M. Abdullah and Maulana Masoodi visited Delhi and held talks with the Government of India for the relief and rehabilitation of these refugees. As a result of their efforts the Government of India released a grant of three lakh rupees for their immediate relief. In addition to it National Conference set up a Relief Committee in Srinagar with Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad as its Chairman. S.M. Abdullah and Maulana Masoodi visited the Kazaki camp at Khadanyar and Muzaffarabad. One of their visits to Muzaffarabad
took place on February 5, 1942 when they brought truck loads of relief articles to the refugee camp.\textsuperscript{780}

National Conference stood behind the people of the State during the times of famine that the State witnessed during the early nineteen forties as a result of the devastating floods and the world wide economic depression caused by the world war II\textsuperscript{581}. The Conference not only pressed upon the Government to ensure the food supply by utilizing its resources but it also set up relief committees and upheld the morale of the people during the odd hours of food crisis\textsuperscript{582}. The Conference also sent its leaders to Jammu in order to take stock of the situation and convey its sympathies to the people of Jammu where the police had resorted to indiscriminate firing on the mob which was protesting against the negligence of the Government vis-a-vis food scarcity\textsuperscript{583}.

The \textit{New Kashmir Manifesto} proved it beyond doubt that the ideological foundations of National Conference were based on socialism and nationalism\textsuperscript{584}. In addition to its progressive political and economic aspects the document of \textit{Naya Kashmir} is not only aimed at the preservation of composites culture of the State, but the document guarantees the opportunities of social upliftment for the women by assuring abolition of various types of social evils\textsuperscript{585}. The manifesto includes the charter of women which guarantees different rights to women folk\textsuperscript{586}. In the preceding pages we have reproduced the \textit{New Kashmir Manifesto} and here we shall have only a glimpse of the programme of National Conference as reflected in this historical document in connection with the preservation and development of the composite culture and the welfare of the women folk. Related to
the preservation and development of the composite culture of the State, the document of *New Kashmir* has laid down the following programme:\(^{587}\)

a) Establishment of a State Institute to provide knowledge about their own culture, language and history to the people of the State.

b) Mother tongue to be the medium of education in all schools.

c) Establishment of a Radio station.

d) Establishment of National Film Industry.

e) Protection of Archives and ancient monuments.

f) Establishment of an organisation to preserve art and culture.

About the welfare of the women folk the manifesto of *New Kashmir* provides for:\(^{588}\)

a) The facilities to women for all kinds of education.

b) The right to lighter workload during maternity

c) The right to perform the duties of motherhood.

d) The right to maternity aid and care.

e) The right to hospitalization during confinement.

f) The right to legal protection (free legal advice and defence)

g) The abolition of immoral traffic.

h) The abolition of the dowry system.

i) The right to decent treatment for a woman under detention

j) The right to mobile schools for boatmen and Gujjar ladies.

In their speeches the National Conference leaders guided the masses about the proper planning of their income and expenditure\(^{589}\). We find that there existed the fashion of wearing ornaments even in rural areas where the masses in general were extremely poor\(^{590}\). The changing fashions of life style have always remained a source of attraction for the masses in general and the middle classes in
The middle class people used to purchase ornaments after lending money from the Sahukars. National Conference leadership not only criticized the trend but it educated the people about its bearings upon their overall development. It is to be noted that these people were often cheated while purchasing or selling out these ornaments to gold smiths. Moreover, the Conference stressed upon the masses to give up wasteful expenditure on marriage and other kinds of ceremonies. It also emphasized to give-up evil habits and customs like smoking, snuff taking and alcohol drinking.

The Conference strived for infusing an awakening among the innocent working classes by making them to realize the exploitation of the parasite classes of the society. Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg one among the founding fathers of National Conference, in one of his speeches observed:

They (peasants) are managing their business during the eleven months of the year very thoughtfully and carefully. But in the twelfth month that is the month of harvesting, they loose their wits and wisdom, when they share their produce with the idlers like buglers, musicians and other types of parasite classes.
REFERENCES


3. Welcome address delivered by Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg in the first annual session of National Conference on September 30, 1939.


5. An interview with Pir Abdul Ghani, resident of Anantnag town, age 75 years, February 2, 1999. The slogan means that “what is the saying of S. M. Abdullah? It is the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh unity”.

6. Presidential address delivered by S.M. Abdullah in the first annual session of National Conference on October 1, 1939.


13. Presidential address delivered by S.M. Abdullah to the first annual session of National Conference, October 1, 1939.

15. *All India States Peoples Conference papers, File No. 92, p. 29.*


17. *Ibid. p. 30.*


35. National Conference Working Committee resolution, November 25, 1940.


37. While the possession of fire arms “at the rate of one fire arm for each Hindu Rajput family” was legalized, the Muslim Rajuts families were debarred from this Privilege; *Arms Rules*, 1998 (Samval Era).


51. Based on the theme of the speeches delivered by S.M.Abdullah in different public meetings at Srinagar on his return from Lahore (1940).


54. Statement of S. M. Abdullah before a representation of the Associated Press of India.


59. Ibid.

60. M.Y.Saraf, Kashmiris Fight for Freedom, p. 543; Taseer, Tahrik-i-Hurriyat-i-Kashmir, p. 99. According to Taseer Pandit Kishap Bandhu resigned by saying that in the meeting of the Working Committee S.M.Abdullah in response to a query said that he was a Muslim for the first and the last. He is also substantiated by P.N.Bazaz.


62. See supra, Chapter-IV.


65. Ibid.


67. Address presented to Congress leaders by S.M.Abdullah in a public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar on May 31, 1940.

68. *Anjinab* is a term which is used while referring to a highly respectable man. It is an Urdu word and bigot Muslims would hardly prefer to use this term while calling a non-Muslim. In his autobiography Kashmakash Chaudri Abbas writes that by this time S.M.Abdullah had himself completely associated with Indian National Congress and had accepted Pandit Nehru as his political *guru* (teacher). *Kashmakash* an autobiography of Chaudri Ghulam Abbas Khan, pp. 212-216.


70. Ibid.
71. Speech of Pandit Nehru delivered in response to the welcome address presented by S.M.Abdullah in a public meeting at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar, on May 31, 1940.

72. Speech of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan delivered in the public meeting called by National Conference to welcome the Congress leaders at Hazuri Bagh on May 31, 1940.

73. An interview with Pir Abdul Ghani resident of Anantnag town, age 75 years, February 23, 1999.


75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid. pp. 107-108.

78. Statesmen issued to the press by Pandit Nehru after the completion of his visit to Jammu and Kashmir in June, 1940.


80. Bazaz, *Op. Cit*; p. 184. It is to be noted that these youngmen started a weekly, *paigham* under Muhammad Yousuf Qureshi and Nizam-ud-Din Chesti in which they launched a vigorous campaign against National Conference and declared its leadership as the blind follower of Indian National Congress. For details see Taseer, *Op. Cit*; p. 93.


82. Ibid. pp. 181-182.


86. *Ibid*.


88. Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the second annual session of National Conference at Baramullah, November 29, 1940.


90. Speech of S.M. Abdullah delivered in the second annual session of National Conference at Baramullah.


92. *Ibid*.

93. *Ibid*.

94. *Ibid*.


100. *Ibid*.


It is to be noted that the seats of these two members had already fallen vacant according to the prevailing law on their arrest and imprisonment during the agitation of 1938, aimed at the implementation of the National Demand.


Speech of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan delivered in the 3rd annual session of National Conference at Mujahid Manzil, Srinagar, August 23, 1941.

Welcome address delivered by Kh. Ghulam Muhammad Bakshi in the III annual session of National Conference at Mujahid Manzil, Srinagar, August 23, 1941.

Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the III annual session of National Conference, August 24, 1941.
118. Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the III annual session of National Conference at Muhahid Manzil, Srinagar, on August 24, 1941.

119. Ibid.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.


123. Ibid.


126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.


129. Resolution passed in a mass meeting called by the National Conference at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar, April 20, 1942.


135. Ibid.


143. The supporters of S.M. Abdullah were known as *shers*.

144. The supporters of Mirwaiz Muhammad Yousuf Shah were called *bakras*.

145. For *sher* and *bakra* clashes see P.N. Bazaz *Op. Cit*; pp. 190-191.


147. *Kafir* is one who renounces his former belief (apostate).


155. Presidential address delivered by S.M.Abdullah to the 4th annual session of National Conference on April 11, 1943, at Mirpur.

156. *Ibid*.


158. *Ibid*.

159. *Ibid*.

160. *Ibid*.

161. *Ibid*.

162. *Ibid*.


169. *Ibid*.


174. *Introduction to the Naya Kashmir Manifesto*, Published in 1944.


184. *Ibid*.

185. *Ibid*.

186. *Ibid*.


193. P.N.Bazaz writes that one after another, emissaries of National Conference went during the month of March and April 1944, from Srinagar to Delhi to wait upon Jinnah with the prayer that he may arbitrate in the issue between the two parties of Kashmiri Muslims - the National Conferencites and the Muslim Confrrencites. For details see Bazaz *Op. Cit*; p. 208; Saraf, *Op. Cit*; p. 618.

194. *Ibid*.


197. *Ibid*.


200. *Ibid*.


203. *Ibid*.


212. *Hamdard,* daily, Srinagar, June 12, 1944.


216. *Hamdard,* Srinagar, June 12, 1944.


221. *Khidmat,* Srinagar, May 12, 1944.


228. *Ibid*.


230. *Ibid*.

231. *Ibid*.

232. Among the senior leaders of Kashmir freedom movement who had been associated with the struggle since 1931, there was of course a group of the leaders who because of the one or other reason had parted their ways with National Conference. The prominent among these leaders were Agha Syed Hussain Shah Jalali, Maulvi Abdullah Vakil, Syed Meerak Shah Indrabi and Kh. Ghulam Nabi Gilkar.


234. *Ibid*.

235. *Ibid*.

236. *Ibid*.


238. *Ibid*.


243. *Ibid*.


246. *Ibid*.

247. *Ibid*.


251. Javid, Jammu, July 26, 1944.


254. *Ibid*.


256. *Ibid*.


259. *Ibid*. 
According to P.N.Bazaz, "it was an interesting though thoughtlessly drafted document envisaging the establishment of a socialist state, yet, opportunistically enough it guaranteed the perpetuation of the alien Dogra rule in Kashmir and gave the Maharaja Solemn assurance that he would continue to exercise the right of general control over the administration of the State". For details see Bazaz, *Op. Cit*; pp. 220-221.

261. *Khidmat*, Srinagar, October 1, 1944.

262. *Ibid*.

263. Presidential address delivered by S.M.Abdullah to the 5th annual session of National Conference on September 30, 1944, at Mujahid Manzil Srinagar.

264. *Ibid*.

265. *Ibid*.

266. *Ibid*.

267. *Ibid*.

268. *Ibid*.


270. *Ibid*.

271. *Ibid*.


275. Ibid.


277. Ibid.


280. Ibid.


283. Ibid.

284. Ibid.


286. S. M. Abdullah, Op. Cit; pp. 329-330; M.Y. Saraf, Op. Cit; p. 647; P. N. Bazaz, Op. Cit; p. 224. Abdul Rashid Taseer writes that National Conference invited the Congress leaders specially to attend the annual session of the conference in order to impair the verdict of Mr. Jinah which he had given in favour of Muslim Conference during its annual session at Muslim Park, Srinagar, on June 17, 1944.


288. Ibid.


290. Ibid.


296. Welcome address presented by S.M.Abdullah in a public meeting called by National Conference at Hazuri Bagh in the honour of Congress leaders on August, 1, 1945 vide *Hamdard*, Srinagar, August, 5, 1945.


300. *Al-Islah*, Srinagar, August 7, 1945

301. Welcome address presented by S. M. Abdullah in Hazuri Bagh public meeting of the National Conference, August 1, 1945.


319. Taseer, *Op. Cit:* pp. 420-421. It is to be noted that the supporters of the Muslim Conference had made hostile demonstrations against the river procession which had been organized by the National Conference in the honour of the Congress leaders on August 1, 1945.


321. Presidential address delivered by S.M. Abdullah in the 5th annual session of National Conference held at Sopore on August 5, 1945.


324. Ibid.
325. Ibid.
326. Khidmat, Srinagar, August 6, 7, 1945.
327. Ibid, August, 15, 1945.
329. Ibid.
330. Martand, Srinagar August, 16, 1945
331. Ibid.
336. Ibid.
337. Without “imagining that what developments were in store in Indian politics the National Conference leaders had broken with Mr. Jinah in 1944. They had displeased him. It was widely known that Mr. Jinah was not the man to easily forgive and forget so for as political humiliation was concerned. With their opponents gaining ground in Kashmir and league becoming supreme in Muslim politics the National Conference leadership was highly perturbed” see P.N.Bazaz, Op. Cit; p. 251.


343. Telegram from S.M.Abdullah to Cabinet Mission vide *Khidmat* April 25, 1946.


358. Ibid.

359. Ibid.

360. The mention of these platforms had been made by the Maharaja Hari Singh in a letter which he had sent to his friend Mr. Victor on June 1, 1946.


363. Ibid.

364. Ibid.


367. During 1946 Congress pleaded for the establishment of responsible government in the States but not the abolition of the princely order. The goal of the All India States Peoples Conference of which Shaikh Abdullah had been made top ranking leader was the achievement of the popular governments in the States under the aegis of the State rulers. Thus the slogan of the *Quit Kashmir* was not in consonance with the Congress policy. For the opposition of Congress leaders to *Quit Kashmir* see Bazaz. *Op. Cit*; pp. 257-258; S.M. Abdullah, *Op. Cit*; p. 363.


371. P.N. Bazaz, *Op. Cit*; p. 260. The demolition of a wall of Jamia Masjid was not a fact and it was immediately refuted by Chaudri Hamidullah, the vice President of the Muslim Conference through a statement issued to press.

373. *Ibid*.

374. *Ibid*.

375. *Ibid*.


378. *Ibid*.


380. *Ibid*.

381. *Ibid*.


383. *Ibid*.


391. Ibid.

392. Ibid.

393. Ibid.


396. Before leaving for Kashmir Mahatma Gandhi declared that he had no political mission to the State and he was visiting the State to fulfill an old promise which he had made to the late Maharaja Partab Singh in 1919 at _Kumbmela_ where the Maharaja had invited him to visit his State. But Gandiji had certainly a mission of forging cordial relations between Maharaja and the National Conference. For details see, P.N. Bazaz, _Op. Cit_; pp. 373-374.


398. Ibid.

399. Ibid. p. 383.


403. Ibid.


405. Ibid.

406. S.M. Abdullah writes that in addition to the tribal raid which unnerved the Kashmir Government, the persuasion of Maharaja by Mahatma Gandhi played


423. Ibid.


430. Ibid.


435. Ibid.


439. Ibid.


442. Ibid. p. 417.

443. Ibid. p. 418.


447. Ibid. p. 335.

448. Welcome address delivered by Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg in the first annual session of National Conference, September 30, 1939.

449. Presidential address delivered by S.M. Abdullah in the 1st annual session of National Conference, October 2, 1939.

450. Ibid.


452. Ibid.


454. Ibid.

455. Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the second annual session of National Conference, September 29, 1940.

456. Ibid.

457. Ibid.

458. Ibid.
459. *Hamdard*, Srinagar, October 1st, 1940.


463. *Ranbir*, Jammu, October 10, 1940.


468. An interview with Pir Ab. Ghani, freedom fighter, resident of Anantnag town.


471. An interview with pir Abdul Ghani, freedom fighter, resident of Anantnag town.


474. Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the III annual session of National Conference, August 24, 1941.

476. Ibid.

477. Ibid.

478. Ibid.

479. Ibid.

480. Ibid.

481. Ibid.

482. See Supra, *Political Role of National Conference*.


484. Ibid.

485. Ibid.


487. Ibid.

488. Ibid.

489. Ibid. p. 8.

490. Ibid.

491. Ibid.

492. Ibid.

493. Ibid.

495. Ranbir, Jammu, January 15, 1942.


497. Hamdard, Srinagar, December, 17, 1942.

498. Ibid.


501. Ibid.


505. Ibid.

506. Javid, Jammu, August 26, 1943.


508. Ibid.

509. Presidential address delivered by S.M.Abdullah to the 4th annual session of National Conference, April 11, 1943.

510. Ibid.


513  Ibid.

514  Ibid.

515  Ibid.

516  Ibid.

517  Ibid.


520  Ibid.

521  See Supra, Naya Kashmir Manifesto.

522  Our Path to Freedom and New Kashmir, p. 4.

523  See Supra, Naya Kashmir Manifesto.

524  Ibid.

525  Ibid.

526  Ibid.

527  See Supra, Political Role of National Conference.

528  Ranbir, Jammu, June 2, 1944.


530  Ibid.

531  Khidmat, Srinagar, April 20, 1945.
532. Ibid.


534. Ibid.


537. Ibid.

538. Ibid.

539. Ibid.


543. Ibid.


546. Based on the survey of land records.


548. Ibid.
549. Ibid.

550. Ibid.


552. Ibid.

553. Ibid.

554. Welcome address delivered by Mirza Muhammad Afzal Beg to the first annual session of National Conference at Sarnal, Anantnag, September 30, 1939.


557. Presidential address delivered by S.M. Abdullah to the 1st annual session of National Conference, October 2, 1939.


559. Ibid.

560. Presidential address delivered by Sardar Budh Singh to the 2nd annual session of National Conference, September 29, 1940.

561. Ibid.

562. Ibid.

563. Ibid.

564. *Hamdard*, August, 26, 1940.

565. Ibid.
566. For details about the Arms act and the introduction of the double script See, Supra, Political Role of National Conference.

567. Working Committee Resolution of November 25, 1940.


572. Ibid.


575. Ibid.

576. Ibid.

577. Ibid.


579. Ibid.

580. Ibid.

581. For details see Supra, Economic Role of National Conference.

582. Ibid.

583. Ibid.
584. For details see Supra New Kashmir Manifesto.

585. Ibid.

586. Ibid.


588. Ibid.


590. Ibid.

591. Ibid.

592. Ibid.

593. Ibid.

594. Ibid.