

Emergence of Swarajists, Socialist Ideas, Revolutionary Activities and Other New Forces

Swarajists and No-Changers

■ Genesis of Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party

After Gandhi's arrest (March 1922), there was disintegration, disorganisation and demoralisation among nationalist ranks. A debate started among Congressmen on what to do during the transition period, i.e., the passive phase of the movement.

One section led by C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru and Ajmal Khan wanted an end to the boycott of legislative councils so that the nationalists could enter them to expose the basic weaknesses of these assemblies and use these councils as an arena of political struggle to arouse popular enthusiasm. They wanted, in other words, to 'end or mend' these councils, i.e., if the government did not respond to the nationalists' demands, then they would obstruct the working of these councils.

Those advocating entry into legislative councils came to be known as the 'Swarajists', while the other school of

thought led by C. Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and M.A. Ansari came to be known as the 'No-changers'. The 'No-changers' opposed council entry, advocated concentration on constructive work, and continuation of boycott and non-cooperation, and quiet preparation for resumption of the suspended civil disobedience programme.

The differences over the question of council entry between the two schools of thought resulted in the defeat of the Swarajists' proposal of 'ending or mending' the councils at the Gaya session of the Congress (December 1922). C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru resigned from the presidentship and secretaryship respectively of the Congress and announced the formation of **Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party** or simply Swarajist Party, with C.R. Das as the president and Motilal Nehru as one of the secretaries.

■ Swarajists' Arguments

The Swarajists had their reasons for advocating the entry into the councils.

- Entering the councils would not negate the non-cooperation programme; in fact, it would be like carrying on the movement through other means—opening a new front.
- In a time of political vacuum, council work would serve to enthuse the masses and keep up their morale. Entry of nationalists would deter the government from stuffing the councils with undesirable elements who may be used to provide legitimacy to government measures.
- The councils could be used as an arena of political struggle; there was no intention to use the councils as organs for gradual transformation of colonial rule.

■ No-Changers' Arguments

The No-Changers argued that parliamentary work would lead to neglect of constructive work, loss of revolutionary zeal and to political corruption. Constructive work would prepare everyone for the next phase of civil disobedience.

■ Agree to Disagree

Both sides, however, wanted to avoid a 1907-type split and kept in touch with Gandhi who was in jail. Both sides also realised the significance of putting up a united front to get a mass movement to force the government to introduce reforms, and both sides accepted the necessity of Gandhi's leadership of a united nationalist front. Keeping these factors in mind, a compromise was reached at a meeting in Delhi in September 1923.

The Swarajists were allowed to contest elections as a group within the Congress. The Swarajists accepted the Congress programme with only one difference—that they would join legislative councils. The elections to the newly constituted Central Legislative Assembly and to provincial assemblies were to be held in November 1923.

■ The Swarajist Manifesto for Elections

Released in October 1923, the Swarajist manifesto took a strong anti-imperialist line. The points put forward were as follows.

- The guiding motive of the British in governing India lay in selfish interests of their own country;
- The so-called reforms were only a blind to further the said interests under the pretence of granting a responsible government, the real objective being to continue exploitation of the unlimited resources of the country by keeping Indians permanently in a subservient position to Britain;
- The Swarajists would present the nationalist demand of self-government in councils;
- If this demand was rejected, they would adopt a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction within the councils to make governance through councils impossible;
- Councils would thus be wrecked from within by creating deadlocks on every measure.

■ Gandhi's Attitude

Gandhi was initially opposed to the Swarajist proposal of council entry. But after his release from prison on health grounds in February 1924, he gradually moved towards a reconciliation with the Swarajists.

- He felt public opposition to the programme of council entry would be counter-productive.

- In the November 1923 elections, the Swarajists had managed to win 42 out of 141 elected seats and a clear majority in the provincial assembly of Central Provinces. In legislatures, in cooperation with the Liberals and the independents like Jinnah and Malaviya, they won a majority. The courageous and uncompromising manner in which the Swarajists functioned convinced him that they would not become just another limb of colonial administration.

- There was a government crackdown on revolutionary terrorists and the Swarajists towards the end of 1924; this angered Gandhi and he expressed his solidarity with the Swarajists by surrendering to their wishes.

Both sides came to an agreement in 1924 (endorsed at the Belgaum session of the Congress in December 1924 over which Gandhi—the only time—presided over the Congress session) that the Swarajists would work in the councils as an integral part of the Congress.

■ Swarajist Activity in Councils

Gradually, the Swarajist position had weakened because of widespread communal riots, and a split among Swarajists themselves on communal and Responsivist-Non-responsivist lines. The government strategy of dividing the Swarajists—the more militant from the moderate, the Hindus from the Muslims—was successful. The Swarajists lost the support of many Muslims when the party did not support the tenants' cause against the zamindars in Bengal (most of the tenants were Muslims). Communal interests also entered the party. The death of C.R. Das in 1925 weakened it further.

The **Responsivists** among Swarajists—Lala Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and N.C. Kelkar—advocated cooperation with the government and holding of office wherever possible. Besides they also wanted to protect the so-called Hindu interests. The communal elements accused leaders like Motilal Nehru, who did not favour joining the council, of being anti-Hindu even as Muslim communalists called the Swarajists anti-Muslim.

Thus, the main leadership of the Swarajist Party reiterated faith in mass civil disobedience and withdrew from legislatures in March 1926, while another section of Swarajists went into the 1926 elections as a party in disarray, and did not fare well on the whole. They won 40 seats in the Centre and some seats in Madras but were routed in the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Punjab.

In 1930, the Swarajists finally walked out as a result of the Lahore Congress resolution on *purna swaraj* and the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Achievements

(i) With coalition partners, they out-voted the government several times, even on matters relating to budgetary grants, and passed adjournment motions.

(ii) They agitated through powerful speeches on self-government, civil liberties and industrialisation.

(iii) Vithalbhai Patel was elected speaker of Central Legislative Assembly in 1925.

(iv) A noteworthy achievement was the defeat of the Public Safety Bill in 1928 which was aimed at empowering the Government to deport undesirable and subversive foreigners (because the Government was alarmed by the spread of socialist and communist ideas and believed that a crucial role was being played by the British and other foreign activists being sent by the Comintern).

(v) By their activities, they filled the political vacuum at a time when the national movement was recouping its strength.

(vi) They exposed the hollowness of the Montford scheme.

(vii) They demonstrated that the councils could be used creatively.

Drawbacks

(i) The Swarajists lacked a policy to coordinate their militancy inside legislatures with the mass struggle outside. They relied totally on newspaper reporting to communicate with the public.

(ii) An obstructionist strategy had its limitations.

(iii) They could not carry on with their coalition partners very far because of conflicting ideas, which further limited their effectiveness.

(iv) They failed to resist the perks and privileges of power and office.

(v) They failed to support the peasants' cause in Bengal and lost support among Muslim members who were pro-peasant.

■ Constructive Work by No-Changers

The No-Changers devoted themselves to constructive work that connected them to the different sections of the masses.

(i) Ashrams sprang up where young men and women worked among tribals and lower castes (especially in Kheda and Bardoli areas of Gujarat), and popularised the use of charkha and khadi.

(ii) National schools and colleges were set up where students were trained in a non-colonial ideological framework.

(iii) Significant work was done for Hindu-Muslim unity, removing untouchability, boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, and for flood relief.

(iv) The constructive workers served as the backbone of civil disobedience as active organisers.

A Critique of Constructive Work

National education benefited the urban lower middle classes and the rich peasants only. Enthusiasm for national education

surfaced in the excitement of the movement only. In passivity, the lure of degrees and jobs took the students to official schools and colleges.

Popularisation of khadi was an uphill task since it was costlier than the imported cloth.

While campaigning about the social aspect of untouchability, no emphasis was laid on the economic grievances of the landless and agricultural labourers comprising mostly the untouchables.

Although the Swarajists and the No-changers worked in their separate ways, they kept on best of terms with one another and were able to unite whenever the time was ripe for a new political struggle.

Emergence of New Forces: Socialistic Ideas, Youth Power, Trade Unionism

The third decade of the twentieth century is a watershed in modern Indian history in more ways than one. While, on the one hand, this period marked the entry of Indian masses into the national movement, on the other hand, this period saw the basic crystallisation of the main political currents on the national scene. These diverse political currents owed their origin partly to the coming on the scene of the Gandhian philosophy of satyagraha based on truth and non-violence, as they embodied a positive or negative reaction to it. The international influence on Indian political thinkers during this phase was also more pronounced than before.

The new forces to emerge during the 1920s included the following.

■ Spread of Marxist and Socialist Ideas

Ideas of Marx and Socialist thinkers inspired many groups to come into existence as socialists and communists. These ideas also resulted in the rise of a left wing within the Congress, represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash

Chandra Bose. These young nationalists, inspired by the Soviet Revolution and dissatisfied with Gandhian ideas and political programme, began advocating radical solutions for economic, political and social ills of the country. These younger nationalists—

- were critical of both Swarajists and No-Changers;
- advocated a more consistent anti-imperialist line in the form of a slogan for *purna swarajya* (complete independence);
- were influenced by an awareness, though still vague, of international currents;
- stressed the need to combine nationalism and anti-imperialism with social justice and simultaneously raised the question of internal class oppression by capitalists and landlords.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) was formed in 1920 in Tashkent (now, the capital of Uzbekistan) by M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherji and others after the second Congress of Comintern. M.N. Roy was also the first to be elected to the leadership of Comintern.

In 1924, many communists—S.A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaikat Usmani, Nalini Gupta—were jailed in the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case.

In 1925, the Indian Communist Conference at Kanpur formalised the foundation of the CPI.

In 1929, the government crackdown on communists resulted in the arrest and trial of 31 leading communists, trade unionists and left-wing leaders; they were tried at Meerut in the famous **Meerut conspiracy case**.

Workers' and peasants' parties were organised all over the country and they propagated Marxist and communist ideas.

All these communist groups and workers' and peasants' parties remained an integral part of the national movement and worked along with the Congress.

■ Activism of Indian Youth

All over, students' leagues were being established and students' conferences were being held. In 1928, Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the All Bengal Students' Conference.

■ Peasants' Agitations

In the United Provinces peasant agitations were for revision of tenancy laws, lower rents, protection against eviction and relief from indebtedness. Similar peasant agitations took place in the Rampa region of Andhra, in Rajasthan, in ryotwari areas of Bombay and Madras. In Gujarat, the Bardoli Satyagraha was led by Vallabhbhai Patel (1928).

■ Growth of Trade Unionism

The trade union movement was led by All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) founded in 1920. Lala Lajpat Rai was its first president and Dewan Chaman Lal its general secretary. Tilak was also one of the moving spirits. The major strikes during the 1920s included those in Kharagpur Railway Workshops, Tata Iron and Steel Works (Jamshedpur), Bombay Textile Mills (this involved 1,50,000 workers and went on for 5 months), and Buckingham Carnatic Mills. In 1928, there were a number of strikes involving 5 lakh workers. In 1923, the first May Day was celebrated in India in Madras.

■ Caste Movements

As in earlier periods, the varied contradictions of the Indian society found expression in caste associations and movements. These movements could be divisive, conservative and at times potentially radical, and included:

- Justice Party (Madras)
- Self-respect movement (1925) under "Periyar"—E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Madras)
- Satyashodhak activists in Satara (Maharashtra)
- Bhaskar Rao Jadhav (Maharashtra)
- Mahars under Ambedkar (Maharashtra)
- Radical Ezhavas under K. Aiyappan and C. Kesavan in Kerala

- Yadavs in Bihar for improvement in social status
- Unionist Party under Fazl-i-Hussain (Punjab).

■ **Revolutionary Activity with a Turn towards Socialism**

This line was adopted by those dissatisfied with the nationalist strategy of the political struggle with its emphasis on non-violence. Here, too, two strands developed—

- Hindustan Republican Association (H.R.A.)—in Punjab-UP-Bihar
- *Yugantar*, Anushilan groups and later Chittagong Revolt Group under Surya Sen—in Bengal

Revolutionary Activity During the 1920s

■ **Why Attraction for Revolutionary Activity after Non-Cooperation Movement**

The revolutionaries had faced severe repression during the First World War. But in early 1920, many were released by the government under a general amnesty to create a harmonious environment for the Montford Reforms to work. Soon, Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation Movement. Under the persuasion of Gandhi and C.R. Das, many revolutionary groups either agreed to join the non-cooperation programme or suspended their activities to give the non-violent Non-Cooperation Movement a chance.

The sudden withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement, however, left many of them disillusioned; they began to question the basic strategy of nationalist leadership and its emphasis on non-violence and began to look for alternatives. But since these younger nationalists were not attracted to the parliamentary work of the Swarajists or to the patient, undramatic, constructive work of the No-changers,

they were drawn to the idea that violent methods alone would free India. Thus, revolutionary activity was revived.

Nearly all major leaders of revolutionary policies had been enthusiastic participants in the Non-Cooperation Movement and included Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, Surya Sen, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Chandrasekhar Azad, Shiv Verma, Bhagwaticharan Vohra, Jaidev Kapur and Jatin Das. Two separate strands of revolutionary groups emerged during this period—one operating in Punjab-UP-Bihar and the other in Bengal.

■ Major Influences

(i) Upsurge of working class trade unionism after the War; the revolutionaries wanted to harness the revolutionary potential of the new emergent class for nationalist revolution.

(ii) Russian Revolution (1917) and the success of the young Soviet state in consolidating itself.

(iii) Newly sprouting communist groups with their emphasis on Marxism, socialism and the proletariat.

(iv) Journals publishing memoirs and articles extolling the self-sacrifice of revolutionaries, such as *Atmasakti*, *Sarathi* and *Bijoli*.

(v) Novels and books such as *Bandi Jiwan* by Sachin Sanyal and *Pather Dabi* by Sharatchandra Chatterjee (a government ban only enhanced its popularity).

■ In Punjab-United Provinces-Bihar

The revolutionary activity in this region was dominated by the **Hindustan Republican Association/Army** or HRA (later renamed **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association** or HSRA). The HRA was founded in October 1924 in Kanpur by Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee and Sachin Sanyal, with an aim to organise an armed revolution to overthrow the colonial government and establish in its place the Federal Republic of United States of India whose basic principle would be adult franchise.

Kakori Robbery (August 1925)

The most important action of the HRA was the Kakori robbery. The men held up the 8-Down train at Kakori, an obscure village near Lucknow, and looted its official railway cash. Government crackdown after the Kakori robbery led to arrests of many, of whom 17 were jailed, four transported for life and four—Bismil, Ashfaqullah, Roshan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri—were hanged. Kakori proved to be a setback.

The HSRA

Determined to overcome the Kakori setback, the younger revolutionaries, inspired by socialist ideas, set out to reorganise Hindustan Republic Association at a historic meeting in the ruins of Ferozshah Kotla in Delhi (September 1928). Under the leadership of Chandra Shekhar Azad, the name of HRA was changed to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). The participants included Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Bhagwaticharan Vohra from Punjab and Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Verma and Jaidev Kapur from the United Provinces. The HSRA decided to work under a collective leadership and adopted socialism as its official goal.

Saunders' Murder (Lahore, December 1928)

Just when the HSRA revolutionaries had begun to move away from individual heroic action, the death of Sher-i-Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai due to lathi blows received during a lathi-charge on an anti-Simon Commission procession (October 1928) led them once again to take to individual assassination. Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru shot dead Saunders, the police official responsible for the lathicharge in Lahore. The assassination was justified with these words: "The murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police officer...was an insult to the nation. It was the bounden duty of young men of India to efface it... We regret to have had to kill a person but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed."

Bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly (April 1929)

The HSRA leadership now decided to let the people know about its changed objectives and the need for a revolution by the masses. Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt were asked to throw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929 to protest against the passage of the Public Safety Bill and Trade Disputes Bill aimed at curtailing civil liberties of citizens in general and workers in particular. The bombs had been deliberately made harmless and were aimed at making 'the deaf hear'. The objective was to get arrested and to use the trial court as a forum for propaganda so that people would become familiar with their movement and ideology.

Action against the Revolutionaries

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were tried in the Lahore conspiracy case. Many other revolutionaries were tried in a series of other cases. In jail, these revolutionaries protested against the horrible conditions through fasting, and demanded honourable and decent treatment as political prisoners. Jatin Das became the first martyr on the 64th day of his fast. The defence of these young revolutionaries was organised by Congress leaders. Bhagat Singh became a household name.

Azad was involved in a bid to blow up Viceroy Irwin's train near Delhi in December 1929. During 1930 there were a series of violent actions in Punjab and towns of United Provinces (26 incidents in 1930 in Punjab alone).

Azad died in a police encounter in a park in Allahabad in February 1931. Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged on March 23, 1931.

■ In Bengal

During the 1920s many revolutionary groups reorganised their underground activities, while many continued working under the Congress, thus getting access to the masses and providing an organisational base to the Congress in towns and villages. Many cooperated with C.R. Das in his Swarajist

work. After Das's death (1925), the Bengal Congress broke up into two factions—one led by J.M. Sengupta (Anushilan group joined forces with him) and the other led by Subhash Bose (Yugantar group backed him).

The actions of the reorganised groups included an assassination attempt on the notorious Calcutta Police Commissioner, Charles Tegart (another man named Day got killed) by Gopinath Saha in 1924. The government, armed with a new ordinance, came down heavily on revolutionaries. Many including Subhash Bose were arrested. Gopinath Saha was hanged.

Because of government repression and factionalism among the revolutionaries, revolutionary activity suffered a setback, but soon many of revolutionaries started regrouping. Among the new 'Revolt Groups', the most active and famous was the Chittagong group under Surya Sen.

Chittagong Armoury Raid (April 1930)

Surya Sen had participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement and had become a teacher in the national school in Chittagong. He was imprisoned from 1926 to 1928 for revolutionary activity and afterwards continued working in the Congress. He was the secretary of the Chittagong District Congress Committee. He used to say "Humanism is a special virtue of a revolutionary." He was a lover of poetry and an admirer of Tagore and Qazi Nazrul Islam.

Surya Sen decided to organise an armed rebellion along with his associates—Anant Singh, Ganesh Ghosh and Lokenath Baul—to show that it was possible to challenge the armed might of the mighty British Empire. They had planned to occupy two main armouries in Chittagong to seize and supply arms to the revolutionaries to destroy telephone and telegraph lines and to dislocate the railway link of Chittagong with the rest of Bengal. The raid was conducted in April 1930 and involved 65 activists under the banner of **Indian Republican Army—Chittagong Branch**. The raid was quite successful;

Sen hoisted the national flag, took salute and proclaimed a provisional revolutionary government. Later, they dispersed into neighbouring villages and raided government targets.

Surya Sen was arrested in February 1933 and hanged in January 1934, but the Chittagong raid fired the imagination of the revolutionary-minded youth and recruits poured into the revolutionary groups in a steady stream.

Aspects of the New Phase of Revolutionary Movement in Bengal

Some noteworthy aspects were as follows.

- There was a large-scale participation of young women especially under Surya Sen. These women provided shelter, carried messages and fought with guns in hand. Prominent women revolutionaries in Bengal during this phase included **Pritilata Waddedar**, who died conducting a raid; **Kalpana Dutt** who was arrested and tried along with Surya Sen and given a life sentence; **Santi Ghosh** and **Suniti Chandheri**, school girls of Comilla, who shot dead the district magistrate. (December 1931); and **Bina Das** who fired point blank at the governor while receiving her degree at the convocation (February 1932).

- There was an emphasis on group action aimed at organs of the colonial State, instead of individual action. The objective was to set an example before the youth and to demoralise the bureaucracy.

- Some of the earlier tendency towards Hindu religiosity was shed, and there were no more rituals like oath-taking, and this facilitated participation by Muslims. Surya Sen had Muslims such as Satar, Mir Ahmed, Fakir Ahmed Mian and Tunu Mian in his group.

There were some drawbacks too:

- The movement retained some conservative elements.
- It failed to evolve broader socio-economic goals.
- Those working with Swarajists failed to support the cause of Muslim peasantry against zamindars in Bengal.

■ Official Reaction

There was panic at first and then severe government repression. Armed with 20 repressive Acts, the government let loose the police on the revolutionaries. In Chittagong, several villages were burned and punitive fines imposed on many others. In 1933, Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested for sedition and given two years' sentence because he had condemned imperialism and praised the heroism of the revolutionaries.

■ Ideological Rethinking

A real breakthrough was made by Bhagat Singh and his comrades in terms of revolutionary ideology, forms of revolutionary struggle and the goals of revolution. The rethinking had begun in the mid-1920s. The Founding Council of HRA had decided to preach revolutionary and communist principles, and the HRA Manifesto (1925) declared that the "HRA stood for abolition of all systems which made exploitation of man by man possible". The HRA's main organ *Revolutionary* had proposed nationalisation of railways and other means of transport and of heavy industries such as ship building and steel. The HRA had also decided to start labour and peasant organisations and work for an "organised and armed revolution". During their last days (late 1920s), these revolutionaries had started moving away from individual heroic action and violence towards mass politics.

Bismil, during his last days, appealed to the youth to give up pistols and revolvers, not to work in revolutionary conspiracies and instead work in an open movement. He urged the youth to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity, unite all political groups under the leadership of the Congress. Bismil affirmed faith in communism and the principle that "every human being has equal rights over the products of nature".

The famous statement of the revolutionary position is contained in the book *The Philosophy of the Bomb* written by Bhagwaticharan Vohra.

Even before his arrest, Bhagat Singh had moved away

from a belief in violent and individual heroic action to Marxism and the belief that a popular broad-based movement alone could lead to a successful revolution. In other words, revolution could only be “by the masses, for the masses”. That is why Bhagat Singh helped establish the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha (1926) as an open wing of revolutionaries to carry out political work among the youth, peasants and workers, and it was to open branches in villages.

Bhagat and Sukhdev also organised the Lahore Students’ Union for open, legal work among students. Bhagat and his comrades also realised that a revolution meant organisation and development of a mass movement of the exploited and the suppressed sections by the revolutionary intelligentsia. Bhagat used to say, “...real revolutionary armies are in villages and factories.”

What then was the need for individual heroic action? Firstly, effective acquisition of new ideology is a prolonged and historical process whereas the need of the time was a quick change in the way of thinking. Secondly, these young intellectuals faced the classic dilemma of how to mobilise people and recruit them. Here, they decided to opt for propaganda by deed, i.e., through individual heroic action and by using courts as a forum for revolutionary propaganda.

Redefining Revolution

Revolution was no longer equated with militancy and violence. Its objective was to be national liberation—imperialism was to be overthrown but beyond that a new socialist order was to be achieved, ending “exploitation of man by man”. As Bhagat Singh said in the court, “Revolution does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife, nor is there a place in it for personal vendetta. It is not the cult of bomb and pistol. By revolution we mean the present order of things, which is based on manifest injustice, must change.”

Bhagat fully accepted Marxism and the class approach to society—“Peasants have to free themselves not only from

the foreign yoke, but also from the yoke of landlords and capitalists.” He also said, “The struggle in India will continue, so long as a handful of exploiters continue to exploit labour of common people to further their own interests. It matters little whether these exploiters are British capitalists, British and Indian capitalists in alliance, or even purely Indians.” He defined socialism scientifically as abolition of capitalism and class domination.

Bhagat was fully and consciously secular—two of the six rules drafted by Bhagat for the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha were that its members would have nothing to do with communal bodies and that they would propagate a general feeling of tolerance among people, considering religion to be a matter of personal belief. Bhagat Singh also saw the importance of freeing people from the mental bondage of religion and superstition—“to be a revolutionary, one required immense moral strength, but one also required criticism and independent thinking”.

Summary

- **Swarajists and No-Changers**

Swarajists advocated council entry after withdrawal of Non-Cooperation Movement with an aim to end or mend the councils.

No-changers advocated constructive work during transition period.

- **Emergence of New Forces during 1920s**

1. Spread of Marxism and socialist ideas
2. Activism of Indian youth
3. Peasants' agitations
4. Growth of trade unionism
5. Caste movements
6. Revolutionary terrorism with a tilt towards socialism

- **Activities of HRA/HSRA**

Established—1924

Kakori robbery—1925
Reorganised—1928
Saunders' murder—1928
Bomb in Central Legislative Assembly—1929
Bid to blow up viceroy's train—1929
Azad killed in police encounter—1931
Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev hanged—1931

● **Broadened View of HSRA**

In later years, ideology moved away from individual action towards socialistic ideals.

● **Revolutionaries in Bengal**

Attempt on life of Calcutta police commissioner—1924
Surya Sen's Chittagong Revolt Group and Chittagong robberies—
1930