THE SIKHS OF VANCOUVER:
A Case Study In Minority-Host Relations
by
MICHAEL GRAEME CAMPBELL
B.A., University of British Columbia, 1973

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Political Science)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
September, 1977

 Michael Graeme Campbell, 1977
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Political Science

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date September 29, 1977
This thesis is concerned with the relationship between the Sikhs of Vancouver and the host society. Although the political, cultural and economic aspects of the relationship are examined, the emphasis is on their political interaction. This study contends that the Sikhs were isolated from the host society until 1972, when a substantial increase in East Indian immigrants forced a change in the Sikhs' relationship with the host society by necessitating an end to the Sikhs' isolation. The working hypothesis of this thesis focuses on the effects of government sponsored institutions versus ethnic institutions on the host-minority relationship.

The principal data for this thesis were gathered from three main sources, (1) government publications concerned with immigration, (2) a questionnaire administered to members of the East Indian community who were selected randomly from the pages of The Telephone Directory of the East Indian Community and (3) interviews conducted with eighteen leaders of the Sikh community and six officials of Vancouver's municipal government.

The principal findings of this thesis indicate that the politics of both the ethnic community and the host society's policies relating to immigrants have a direct impact on minority-host relations. Interviews with Sikh
leaders reveal that there is a deep division within the community which greatly influences their ability to effect cohesive action in the host society. On the other hand, the policies of the federal government do little to encourage the harmonious interaction of the minorities and the majority in Canada. However, as a direct result of the increasing numbers of racial incidents in South Vancouver, the municipal government has established a number of programs that are designed to encourage concordant social and cultural interaction between East Indians and the host society. Sikh leaders and municipal politicians agree that these programs have contributed a great deal in easing the tensions between the Sikhs and the host society. It is the conclusion of this thesis that if harmonious relations are to exist between Canada's minorities such as the Sikhs, and majority, then both the ethnic community and federal and municipal governments must take an active role in encouraging their positive interaction.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I. The East Indians of Canada: The Origins of Isolation.............page 1

Chapter II. Host-Minority Contact: The Impact of Immigration.............page 45

Chapter III. Vancouver Sikh Politics: Internal Divisions and External Relations.........................page 74

Chapter IV. Conclusions.................................page 102

Bibliography .............................................page 107

Appendix I ..............................................page 114

Appendix II .............................................page 115

Appendix III .............................................page 122
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table I</td>
<td>East Indians Immigration to Canada, 1900-1969</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table II</td>
<td>East Indian Entrants to Canada by Broad Age and Sex Categories, 1921-1942</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table III</td>
<td>Canada: Immigration Statistics, 1945-1974</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table IV</td>
<td>Proportional Ethnic Group Representation in the G.V.R.D., 1951-71 (% of total population)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table V</td>
<td>Intended Occupations of Immigrant East Indians and Chinese, 1968-1974</td>
<td>54-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table VI</td>
<td>Vancouver City: Age Distribution among Selected Asian Origins</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table VII</td>
<td>Vancouver City: Selected Asian Origins, 1971</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table VIII</td>
<td>Canadian Attitudes to Immigration by Education, 1965 and 1975, Surveys Compared</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Graph I  Post War Immigration of East Indians into Canada, 1946-1969...............page 35

Graph II  Number of Immigrants Coming into Vancouver, British Columbia, by Country of Last Permanent Residence, 1964-1974......................page 48
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the people who facilitated the preparation of this thesis. Survey research requires the co-operation of many people, not the least of whom are the informants who spared the time to answer questions. The hospitality and assistance of Vancouver's Sikh community was overwhelming. I am especially grateful to the leaders of the community who went out of their way to make it easier for me to gather the necessary information.

I am very appreciative of the practical assistance and advice, at every stage of research, of my advisor, Professor John R. Wood of the Political Science Department. The help of Allen Froese, an associate in the Anthropology Department, in gathering and sifting the available government data on East Indians was invaluable. I should also like to thank the other members of my committee, Professors Stephen Milne and Paul Tennant of the Department of Political Science for their helpful suggestions. I am also indebted to my mother, Mrs. Margaret Campbell for typing the thesis, and to Dr. Ian Slater, for editing it. Needless to say, none of those whose assistance is hereby gladly acknowledged is in any way responsible for this thesis or the views expressed in it, least of all for its errors and deficiencies.

Michael Graeme Campbell
CHAPTER I

The East Indians of Canada: The Origins of Isolation

This thesis examines the relationship of the Sikh community to the host society in Vancouver, British Columbia. Specifically, the current Sikh-host community relationships in the political, cultural and economic spheres will be examined and placed in an historical and theoretical context to determine if any change in the Sikh-host community relationship has occurred. It is the contention of this study that rapid growth of the immigrant community within the host society tends to break down the isolation of the immigrant from the host society. It is argued that the rapid influx of immigrants into concentrated areas has complicated assimilative processes in both the immigrant and host communities. Finally, this thesis contends that the assimilation of the immigrant into the host society depends upon the strength of institutions and attitudes which encourage or discourage his participation in the host society. Similarly, the balance of forces emanating from the ethnic institutions which encourage or discourage the immigrant's participation in his own community will determine whether or not the immigrant will assimilate within that community.
In 1967 Canada removed those restrictions on immigration which were based on race, religion or ethnic background.\(^1\) The liberalization of Canadian immigration laws led to an unprecedented surge of non-white immigrants from Third World Countries. Newspaper articles, interviews with host society and immigrant leaders, and public opinion polls reflect the fact that this influx of non-white immigrants has altered Canadian attitudes towards immigration. These sources also suggest that the influx has severely strained the relationship between some immigrant minorities and the host Canadian society.

The results of two nationwide Gallup polls conducted in 1969-70 and 1970-71 reflect a changing public attitude towards immigration. Whereas in the former study 42\% of those questioned "felt that immigration is good for Canada"; in the latter only 30\% of those questioned felt the same way.\(^2\) The results of a 1976 Canadian Television Network study reveal a continuation of this trend. Seventy-four percent of all Canadians questioned favoured changes in Canada's immigration policy. Significantly 60\% of the population favoured restrictions being placed on Third World immigrants.\(^3\)

Nowhere was the influx of immigrants as acutely felt as in Canada's major urban centers, Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. As early as 1974, Mayor Art Phillips of Vancouver pointed out that Canada's immigration policy
makes "our crowded spaces more crowded." Over the next year Mayor Phillips continued to press for a review of Canada's immigration policies. On March 5, 1975 he suggested: "Our most recent racial problems have revolved around the East Indian community... All parties who are familiar with the situation agree on one thing - that tensions are increased if the rate of immigration of any group from a dramatically different cultural background is too great for the community to absorb." Finally, to lend credence to his presentation before the Special Joint Committee on Immigration Policy at its hearings in Vancouver on May 25, 1975, Phillips claimed: "I believe that we should cut the immigration flow in half... I have received hundreds of phone calls and letters in my office and I would say fully 98% of those responses have been favourable to my position." If immigrant-host society relationships are to be harmonious in the Canadian context, it is important that we begin to grasp the fundamental causes of immigrant-host society conflict.

The Sikhs provide an excellent opportunity to examine immigrant-host society relationships for a number of reasons. First, their physical appearance and distinctive cultural customs make them an easily identifiable target to the host society members who do not favour Asian immigration. Second, until 1961 Vancouver was the center of the
the Canadian Sikh community. Until that time over 90% of all Sikhs in Canada lived in British Columbia, with the vast majority of the British Columbia Sikh population being found in Vancouver. Since then, there are indications that British Columbia has been the intended destination of just under one half of the Sikhs in Canada, with most of the others going to Ontario. Vancouver and Toronto have the largest Sikh communities in Canada. This creates a larger interface for contact between the immigrant society and the host society and therefore creates a more fertile field for study.

In spite of the suitability of the Sikh community for extended study, there has been a noticeable lack of research on the Canadian Sikhs. This dearth of significant research has prompted Professor Gary Hess to refer to the East Indians of North America as the "Forgotten Asians." The lack of cumulative research or extensive written material on East Indians has two profound effects on any attempt to study this group. The first is that virtually all research must start with primary demographic and sociological questions before proceeding to political inquiries. The second is that most of the political data must be gathered first hand, through interviews with community members.

Chapter One of this thesis will discuss concepts and examine some prominent theories which attempt to account
for the isolation of minorities. In addition, historical events that have direct bearing on the current relationship between the host and Sikh community are examined. The historical material is gathered from the few scholarly works that are available and from the files of Vancouver newspapers.

The second chapter concentrates upon the effect of East Indian immigration in the seventies on the Sikhs' economic and cultural relationship with the host society. The chapter is divided into four main sections in order to determine the nature of reasons for the current relationship: (1) a description of the Sikh community in Vancouver, (2) the institutions of the Sikh community, (3) the reaction of the host community to the East Indian immigration, and (4) the response of the government.

The description of the Sikh community includes an occupational, age and generational breakdown of the community, as well as a description of their settlement patterns. The data for this section are taken from government publications on immigration, namely the "Green Paper" and related studies, 1971 Census of Canada data and statistics supplied by the Social Planning Department of Vancouver City Hall. Where possible these data have been supplemented by the results of a survey I conducted in the summer of 1976. Fifty East Indian families, including twenty-six Sikh families were
randomly selected from The Telephone Directory of the East Indian Community. The informants had to have immigrated within the last ten years to be included in the sample. This provided an up-to-date perspective on the Sikh community.

The description of the institutions of the Sikh community was gathered through interviews with prominent members of the Sikh organizations, as well as from information gathered in the summer survey of 1976. A list of these organizations was obtained through the Immigrant Services Society on Seymour Street. Interviews were then carried out with the heads of these organizations. Each respondent was asked to outline the functions of his organization and estimate participation in the organization by the community. They were also asked to compare the current extent of Sikh participation with that of past years.

The data presented on host society attitudes to immigration and East Indians is drawn from the few studies available. These studies were obtained from Dr. Jack Kehoe of the Secretary of State Department's regional office in Vancouver.

The information on the government sponsored institutions and programs concerned primarily with immigrants was gathered through interviews with members of the municipal government. The main sources were former Vancouver Mayor
Art Phillips, Aldermen Harry Rankin and Darlene Marzari, City Manager, Fritz Bowers, Doug Purdy of the Social Planning Department of Vancouver and former Executive Assistant to the Mayor, Gordon Campbell.

Chapter three of the thesis centers on the internal politics of, and divisions within the Sikh community and their effect upon the Sikhs' political relationship with the host society. Although individual political participation is mentioned, the chapter deals primarily with the Sikhs' interaction with the host society on a group level. This information was gathered through interviews with six municipal officials and eighteen prominent members of the Sikh community. The municipal officials were chosen on the basis of their reputations for being concerned with the condition and well being of minorities, as well as for their positions of power. The Sikhs were chosen because of their noticeably active participation in the affairs of the Sikh community. By consulting the files of the local and ethnic newspapers, as well as knowledgeable people in the community, a list of prominent Sikhs was drawn up. Each informant was asked two important questions. Firstly, they were asked to describe the background to the political events and divisions within the community which occurred in the seventies. Secondly, they were asked to describe the current political activities of the Sikh community in the host society.
From Isolation to Assimilation: Some Theoretical Considerations

There is no attempt made here to undertake a critique of the vast theoretical literature on minority-host relations. Instead the discussion is meant to provide some theoretical background to the central inquiries of this study. The two main concepts discussed are a minority's isolation and the reasons for it and the minority's assimilation and the factors that affect it. The lack of secondary sources on East Indians necessitates that many of the theoretical observations be drawn, albeit cautiously, from minority studies dealing with other groups.

Louis Wirth introduced the concept of "minority" groups by defining them as

a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. The existence of a minority in a society implies the existence of a corresponding dominant group with higher social status and greater privileges. Minority status carries with it the exclusion from full participation in the life of a society. 9

Wirth's definition includes two important characteristics of the minority's relationship with the host society. The first is the discriminatory treatment accorded the minority. The second is the exclusion from certain aspects of life in the host society. Why a particular ethnic group is singled out for discriminatory treatment is in part a
a psychological question and is better answered by psychologists. However, certain non-psychological factors can be identified as contributing to discrimination against a minority and to the exclusion of the minority from the host society.

Isolation of a group simply denotes the state of living apart from other groups. Isolation is of course not an absolute term but a relative one. It is therefore impossible to measure precisely the degree to which a group is isolated. It is possible however, to assess a minority's isolation from the host community relative to its own past and thereby assess any change in the relationship with the host society.

Wirth's definition implies that the isolation of a minority is solely the product of the actions and wishes of the dominant group. This ignores the possibility that the minority may want to isolate itself. Isolation can also be brought about either voluntarily or by force. The term "forced isolation" denotes a state of isolation imposed by the dominant society. It can be brought about either by formal legal restrictions or informal social ones. Currently, the best example of forced isolation is found in South Africa, where the non-white population is prohibited from participating in most aspects of the social system of the dominant group by the government's official policy of apartheid. Informally forced isolation is
exemplified by the isolation of the Harijans, (untouchables) in India.

Members of the dominant group will support measures to bring about the isolation of the minority if they perceive the minority as a threat to their own economic, social, cultural or political positions. The point at which members of the host community perceive the size of a minority as a threat, is often referred to as the "saturation point". J.L. Moreno introduces the concept of a racial "saturation point" by stating that, "a given population may be saturated with a certain minority group at a given time. If an excess of members of the minority group move into a community from the outside in numbers exceeding this point - the racial saturation point - frictions and various disturbances break out." The concept is defined in terms of the host society's attitudes towards the immigrant group. When there is a sharp rise in hostility to new immigrants, then the saturation point has been reached.

A number of related factors have been identified which contribute to the rise of hostile reactions within the host community towards an immigrant group. An increase in the concentration of an immigrant minority in a particular area can create tension. In addition, the larger the number of obvious physical distinctions which can be made between a member of the host society and the immigrant
the larger the possibility of conflict arising. Dessai found this to be true in studying East Indian immigration to Britain where the visible cultural differences of the East Indians were a major source of the conflict with the host society.

Typically hostile reaction to the immigrant society focuses on the sphere of interaction where the host society feels most insecure. The competition of the immigrant group is most resented in areas where there is a scarcity of resources. For example, John Rex and Robert Moore, in their study of Birmingham, England, conclude that housing shortages accounted for much of the hostility towards immigrant groups. Similarly, Tienhaara concludes, in studying post-second world war Gallop Polls, that hostile reactions towards immigrants are far more prevalent among blue-collar workers because they are more vulnerable to unemployment problems created when immigrants enter the labour market.

These variables provide a guide for examining the attitudes of Vancouver's host society towards East Indians. By assessing Sikh settlement patterns and occupational tendencies, by examining the economic and social conditions of the city, and by interviewing elected officials and leaders of the Sikh community, it is possible to evaluate the relevance of these factors in explaining the host society's
reaction to the Sikhs in Vancouver.

Voluntary isolation from the host society may also occur when the minority feels threatened. Discriminatory treatment by members of the dominant group may discourage the minority from interacting with the host society and encourage it to set up a parallel society. For instance, in the later nineteenth century the Irish of the urban centers of the northeastern United States, were "unable to participate in the normal associational affairs of the community... and felt obliged to erect a society within a society, to act together in their own way." As shall be seen later, such was also the case with Vancouver's Sikhs before they received full citizenship rights in 1948.

A minority may also seek isolation for the sake of its cultural or religious preservation. If the minority perceives a threat to its cultural or religious identity, then it seeks to preserve that identity through isolating itself from the influences of the host society. In the case of the Sikhs it is important to assess the degree to which the leaders of the community seek to preserve their religious and cultural heritage and the effect that their policies have on their relations with the host society.

The process which changes the host-minority relationship from one of isolation to full participation of the minority in society is most often referred to as "assimi-
Milton M. Gordon in his book, *Assimilation in American Life*, sees assimilation as a process with eight identifiable stages. He characterizes these as (1) isolation, (2) acculturation, whereby the minority changes its cultural patterns to those of the host society, (3) structural assimilation, whereby the minority participates in the host society's institutions on a personal level, (4) marital assimilation and (5) identification on the part of the minority group, followed by (6) attitude reception (7) behavior reception and (8) civic assimilation on the part of the host society.

In the case of Vancouver's Sikhs only the stages of isolation and acculturation are applicable. "Cultural assimilation or acculturation is likely to be the first of the types of assimilation to occur when a minority group arrives on the scene." It is important to look at these stages on what I will call the elite and mass levels of the Sikh community. The mass level refers to the degree to which the Sikh community as a whole has been assimilated. The elite level refers to the degree to which the leaders of the Sikh community have been assimilated.

Studies on race relations show that contact is the catalyst in the process of assimilation. Contact does not mean simply encountering the other group, but rather, implies that interaction of a political, social, economic or
cultural nature is taking place. Contact need not always be positive to initiate assimilation, if in spite of the negative experience the contact is continued. In those instances where contact leads to conflict and violence is deemed to be an unacceptable method of solving minority-host problems, the relationship can evolve in two different directions. In each case the host society government can play an important role. The government may institute measures to limit the contact between the minority and host society thereby forcing the minority's isolation, as was the case with British Columbia's Sikhs before 1947. Or conversely the government may encourage through its institutions, harmonious contact and accommodation of the minority, thereby leading to assimilation.27

Political contact can take many forms depending upon the degree of political organization within the community. At one extreme there is individual contact, where each member of the community acts as an individual unconcerned with the actions of other minority members. At the other extreme, the minority organizes and actively seeks control of government. Between these two extremes lie a variety of organizational types. Minority political action may take the form of local chapters associated with host political organizations or the minority may form an interest group with no political affiliations.

Economic assimilation is dependent upon the extent of occupational diversification of the minority within the host community. Cultural interaction denotes the extent to which there is social and cultural contact on a personal level.
Although Gordon's main concern is with the contact and assimilation of minorities into the host community, he does identify an alternative. He recognizes the fact that the new immigrant may be assimilated by his own ethnic community instead of the host community. Raymond Breton feels that "the integration of the immigrant should not be seen from a purely assimilationist point of view in which integration is said to have taken place when the immigrant is absorbed in the receiving society." He instead suggests that the immigrant can be assimilated into either the host community or the immigrant community.

It stands to reason that as the minority population increases the likelihood of contact with the host society increases proportionally. However, the community with which the immigrant chooses to make and retain contact to a large extent depends upon the forces encouraging and discouraging the immigrant to participate in a particular community. These forces are exhibited in the attitudinal and institutional orientation of the host society and ethnic community towards the immigrant. Therefore, the question needs to be asked, to what extent do the attitudes and institutions of the host society and ethnic community encourage the immigrant to make contact with either group? In answering this question, the discussion will be restricted to examining only the government sponsored institutions designed to serve the immigrants, as well as the attitudes of the host
society towards East Indians. In addition, the institutions of the Sikh community and attitudes of its leaders will be examined.

The goals of assimilation that government establishes for the immigrants, determine to a large extent the acceptability of certain immigrant groups and the kind of institutions established by the host society, to deal with these groups. Historically in North America three main theories or goal-systems of assimilation have emerged. Various localized forces have modified these three concepts of assimilation yet the central themes have persisted. These may be referred to as the theory of "Anglo-conformity", the theory of the "melting pot" and the theory of "cultural pluralism". Briefly, the central theme of each of these goal-systems of assimilation is as follows. Anglo-conformity requires the complete renunciation of the immigrant's culture in favour of the behavior and mores of the dominant Anglo-Saxon core group. The idea of the melting pot gained a great deal of popularity in the United States in the twentieth century. Theoretically, America was envisaged as the "melting pot" of all races, whereby through the inter-marriage of Anglo-Saxon and other minorities a blending of their respective cultures would result in a new indigenous American type. Cultural pluralism is in vogue presently and is prominent in studies of immigration and ethnicity today. Cultural pluralism advocates the maintenance of one's
cultural heritage and customs in the context of citizenship and political and economic integration into the host society.

All of the theories share one central aim, that of maintaining the primacy of English institutions, language and mores. Nevertheless, despite their common aim, the different theories can have different effects on the type of immigrants allowed in the country. For example, in the 1950's, Canada's policy favoured Anglo-conformity and the immigrants were selected accordingly, as this quote from the Immigration Minister illustrates.

We try to select as immigrants those who will have to change their ways least in order to adapt themselves to Canadian life and to contribute to the development of the Canadian nation. That is why entry into Canada is virtually free to citizens of the United Kingdom, the United States, and France. 31

Cultural pluralists on the other hand, do not oppose any group as long as the immigrants adopt the political and economic standards of the host community.

The different theories can also have an effect on the types of government sponsored institutions established to deal with new immigrants. Under the influence of the Anglo-conformity or the melting-pot theories, the government is more likely to establish institutions that encourage the immigrant to adopt Canadian social and cultural standards. Under cultural pluralism there is usually little
attempt made to encourage the immigrant to adopt such standards. In fact, the immigrant is encouraged to maintain his cultural identity.

In Canada today, the federal government has a policy of cultural pluralism which is called "multiculturalism". This policy has influenced the approach of the provincial and municipal governments in dealing with immigrant minorities. Its effect on minority-host relations will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The attitudes of the minority group and their institutions also have profound effects on its assimilation into and relations with the host society. Raymond Breton, in his Montreal-based study of thirty-one ethnic groups, concludes that the single most important factor determining the immigrant's direction of assimilation is institutional completeness of the ethnic community, that is, the extent to which the institutions of the ethnic group can act as substitutes for the institutions of the host society.  

"Within the ethnic group there develops a network of organization and informal social relationships which permits and encourages the members of the ethnic group to remain within the confines of the group for all of their primary relationships and some of their secondary relationships throughout all the stages of the life cycle." This network of organization at times so completely substitutes for the institution of the host society that the immigrant
need not make contact with the society at large. For example, there are numerous cases of immigrants who having lived in their ethnic community in New York for decades are still unable to speak English.\textsuperscript{34}

The level of institutional completeness of an ethnic community stretches from one extreme where there are only personal affiliations and no formal institutions to one where functions such as education, work, consumer needs, medical care, social assistance, newspapers, radio, films and religion are provided. Raymond Breton in his article "Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Groups" has attempted a rough ordering of the importance of certain institutions in maintaining the isolation of the community. Breton states that the single most important institution for maintaining a group's ethnic solidarity is the church. The church is not only the religious center but is the center of much of the community's social life in which the people become involved and as a result become tied together in a cohesive interpersonal network.\textsuperscript{35}

The existence of ethnic churches reinforces the minority's isolation and retards assimilation only in those instances where the religious tradition practised in the church is a major source of cultural distinctions. Such is the case with the Sikhs in Vancouver. Many of their visible cultural differences are based on religious tradition and hence the church tends to reinforce those distinc-
The second most important factor assuring that members of the ethnic group associate primarily inside their own community is the availability of entertainment and informational facilities. The existence of entertainment facilities such as theatres, movies or community halls as well as radio and newspapers can help to reinforce the immigrant's ethnic identity. However, Breton does not allow for the possibility that such facilities may decentralize the community's institutions, thereby diffusing the latter's influence and attraction on the minority members.

The attitude of the immigrant group towards assimilation is largely determined by its religious or cultural background. Many immigrant groups are fiercely proud of their culture. The pride may be founded on religion or nationality. Some ethnic groups feel that in order to perpetuate their traditional beliefs and customs, it is necessary to maintain a state of isolation and so not sink to the cultural level of North America. In addition, their religion may preach that spiritual purity rests in their ability to remain apart from the mainstream of the host society. As the historical discussion will illustrate, such is the case with Vancouver's Sikhs.

The concepts and analytical approaches discussed
above serve as a guide in answering the central question of this study: What are the factors that sustain, increase or diminish the isolated relationship between the Sikhs and the host society? The working hypothesis is that the isolation or assimilation of an ethnic group like the Sikhs is determined by the strength of ethnic versus host society institutions which attract or repel the immigrant to and from the different communities. In addition, it is argued here that the assimilation of a minority does not take place simultaneously in all aspects of the minority's interaction with the host community, but rather in each sphere of interaction independently.

The working hypothesis gives rise to two main empirical questions which have guided the research and provided a framework for the discussion that follows.

1. What is the institutional make-up of the minority community and what is its effect on the assimilation of the minority? In order to discuss this question it is important to describe the institutional completeness of the Sikh community, and the extent to which these institutions encourage the members to participate in the activities of the Sikh community. The effect of the attitudes of the Sikh leaders on the disposition of the institutions to encourage or discourage the Sikhs' interaction with the host society are also examined.
2. What government sponsored institutions encourage or discourage the assimilation of the ethnic group? In this regard the assimilation policies of the municipal and federal governments will be discussed. The attitude of both Vancouver's political leaders and general population will be examined in order to give insight into the reasons for the kind and function of the government sponsored institutions.
The Historical Origins of Isolation

The history of the Sikhs in British Columbia can be divided into three main periods - pre-1948, 1948 - 1967 and post - 1967. These periods correspond with Canada's changing attitudes and policies toward Asian immigrants. It has been argued that the essential nature of the "immigrant experience" of East Indians coming to Canada has remained basically the same throughout. According to Ames, "three main principles have governed Canadian immigration policy since the beginning: free enterprise, racism and cultural uniformitarianism". This may be an accurate description of Canada's immigration policy before 1967 but since that time the issue has become increasingly complex. Since 1967, Canada's immigration policy has reflected the change in philosophy regarding the goals of assimilation set down by the Liberal government. The Liberal's policy has shifted from the traditional emphasis on Anglo-conformity to cultural pluralism. However, until 1967, Canada's immigration policy reflected the popular prejudice and bigotry which permeated all aspects of the minority-host relationship.

From the outset, the East Indians of British Columbia were isolated from the host society. Although there is evidence to suggest that East Indians arrived in Canada as...
early as 1897, official statistics of East Indian immigration begin in 1904. Table I demonstrates the rapid rise of immigration during 1906-1907. Practically no discrimination against the Sikhs existed in the first two years of immigration. However, with their participation in the economic sector increasing, they soon met with anti-Asian sentiment. Moreover, resentment and conflict had arisen earlier over the use of Chinese immigrants as strike-breakers or "scabs", and suspicions were extended against all Asiatic labourers. Anti-Asian riots occurred in Vancouver in 1907 over unemployment problems in the city. According to Jain, by the summer of 1907 "some 700 (East Indians) were unemployed, joined by another 800 the next winter, and all of them staying in British Columbia." Alexander S. Monroe, Dominion Immigration Agent at Vancouver summed up the perceived economic threat of the Sikhs in Vancouver in a report to the Superintendent of Immigration.

As competitors of white labour they are the most dangerous we have, as they practically engage in the same class of work as the white labourers do, viz: mill work and street work. They will not engage in domestic labour, gardening or agricultural work that whitemen leave untouched, but seek the same lines of employment usually followed by the white labourers. As far as the host population was concerned the "racial saturation point" had been reached. The white population of British Columbia was determined to prohibit further East Indian immigration. This sentiment was echoed by the Premier of British Columbia, Richard MacBride, when he
TABLE I
East Indian Immigration
to Canada, 1900-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-01</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-02</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-03</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>1,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-04</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>2,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-05</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>3,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-06</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>4,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-07</td>
<td>2,124</td>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>5,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>2,623</td>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>4,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-09</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>7,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909-10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-10</td>
<td>5,195</td>
<td>1930-40</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1960-69</td>
<td>30,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1931-40</td>
<td></td>
<td>1900-69</td>
<td>39,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912-13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-17</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1946-47</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-18</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1947-48</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-19</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1948-49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919-20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-20</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1940-50</td>
<td>390</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1941-51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>172</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1953-54</td>
<td>177</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1954-55</td>
<td>249</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1955-56</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1956-57</td>
<td>334</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1957-58</td>
<td>459</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1958-59</td>
<td>741</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>691</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-30</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>1950-60</td>
<td>3,394</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

stated categorically that "to admit Orientals in large numbers would mean in the end the extinction of white peoples and we have always in mind the necessity of keeping this a white man's country." 

In 1908 the various levels of government undertook steps to limit the flow of East Indian immigration. The act that virtually eliminated East Indian immigration was the "continuous passage" Act. Under it, a person was permitted entry into Canada only by taking a boat directly from his homeland. This regulation assured the elimination of East Indian immigration as there were no ships that sailed directly from India.

The discriminatory intention of this legislation was clearly demonstrated in 1914 with the "Komagata Maru incident". A Sikh named Gurdit Singh chartered the ship Komagata Maru and sailed on a continuous passage from India to Vancouver. All other requirements of the immigration regulations were met by the passengers. However, the passengers were forbidden to land. While Gurdit Singh's lawyers argued the case unsuccessfully in the courts, the conditions aboard the ship became increasingly intolerable. After a two month wait the ship was boarded on July 26, 1914 by members of the Canadian cruiser H.M.C.S. "Rainbow" and was forced to depart from Vancouver harbour. The incident has left a bitter memory for the East Indian com-
community that exists to this day. For Sikhs, it exemplifies the unjust and discriminatory treatment they experienced in Canada before 1947–1948, when they received the full political and social rights accorded the white majority.

The economic and social threat that was caused by Asian immigration was still in evidence in 1923 when the federal government debated the issue of extending the franchise to the East Indians. Mr. J. McBride, the member for the Cariboo, epitomized the views of those not in favour of extending the franchise when he stated:

> We in British Columbia want no more Hindus... we have on the coast of British Columbia Chinamen and Japs running our stores. They are running the white people out. We have Greeks there running our hotels and we have the Jews running our second-hand stores, and now some people want to bring in the Hindus to run our mills ... If this country wants to cast British Columbia adrift then let her cast it adrift before more Orientals come in. If they do, we white people out on the Pacific will prevent any more Orientals coming to British Columbia. 45

The restrictions placed on East Indian immigration were not only rationalized on economic and social grounds but on cultural ones as well. One of the more prevalent rationales for restricting Asian immigration was based on what was believed to be their inability to assimilate into the rest of the society. A statement from the
Christian Western Methodist Recorder, is typical of this rationale.

The economic aspect of the Oriental question is serious enough because it means unequal competition - labour and some lines of business - by men of different standards and ideals; but the social and moral aspects are much more serious to contemplate. It is not merely unreasoned prejudice that influences Western feeling, it is that they are different, so different that the two races are incompatible, and as such an attempt to fuse them as common people is useless and would inevitably result in a lowered standard of civilization which would hardly look attractive even to the most ardent advocate of Hindu rights to unrestricted immigration on the plea of brotherhood of man and fellow British citizenship. Surely it is utter nonsense to argue race is not better off in its own natural environment, and when, too the unrestrained mixing of the races on this coast would lead to economic disaster and ethnical demoralization. 461

The isolation of the Sikhs in British Columbia extended to their social, religious and political relations with the host white community. Further, because of the immigration restrictions, the community was also isolated from India. From 1908 to 1947, only a limited few entered Canada. Those Sikhs who were in British Columbia were treated as second-class citizens. They were denied the vote in federal, provincial and municipal elections. "They could not carry out such public responsibilities as serving on juries. They could not hold property in some parts of the city of Vancouver
and they could not enter professions such as law or medicine because they did not have full rights of citizens. The policies of the various levels of government toward immigration were guided by their basic desire for and beliefs in Anglo-conformity, and as such the East Indians were unwelcome immigrants.

It is important to understand that the East Indians' isolation was also a product of their own attitudes. From the outset the majority of the East Indian immigrants were male Punjabi Sikh farmers who hoped to make enough money to return to India and live in comfort off their earnings. It is evident that the motive behind their immigration was primarily economic. Since most of the Sikhs did not intend to live in Canada permanently they did not make much effort to assimilate. The Sikhs had neither the time nor the inclination to participate fully in the life of the host society.

The religious traditions and history of Sikhism hold an important key to understanding the voluntary isolation of the community. Sikhism was founded in the Punjab in the fifteenth century by Guru Nanak. Sikhism was developed during the reign of the Moslem rulers in India. The Moslems were intolerant of other religions and as a result persecuted the Sikhs. This persecution produced numerous martyrs and helped unite the Sikhs. The persecution had two profound effects on Sikhism that persist to
this day. Firstly, the need for unity was encouraged through community organization. Secondly, it was insisted that every Sikh be readily identifiable by following the five Kakkas. The adherence to the Kakkas dictated that every Sikh would be identified by keeping his hair and beard uncut, (hence the wearing of a turban), wearing a bracelet on his left wrist, keeping a dagger and comb on his person at all times and wearing a special make of undershorts.

The nature of the religious group itself further encourages a sense of exclusiveness. As with all religions, Sikhism purports to embody the "truth". Any mixing with other religions or philosophies may result in a distortion of that "truth". For the religious fanatic, there can be no change in the religious beliefs or traditions, for that may also lead to a distortion of the truth. Since Sikhism is not only a religion but a way of life, contact with other cultural, religious or social groups is seen as a threat to their religious beliefs. Contact with other groups inevitably leads to change, and to the fervent believer, change is a road to the distortion of the "Truth".

Being a minority group fearing the encroachment of Hinduism has also added to the Sikhs' emphasis on exclusiveness. Also, their minority status in India and the overseas communities increase their desire to remain isolated. Thus, the isolation of the community is taken as a religious matter by many Sikhs.
Vancouver's Sikhs established their own institutions which further slowed their social, cultural and political contact with the host society. They began in 1907 with the formation of the Khalsa Diwan Society. The objectives of the Society were initially religious, educational and philanthropic, but it soon became the center of East Indian political activity.\textsuperscript{49} The following year the Committee for the Management of Sikh Diwans and Temples was formed and claimed to speak for the majority of East Indians in British Columbia. The next few years saw the appearance of several Sikh sponsored newspapers in both English and Punjabi. These papers tended to reinforce ethnocentric values, while at the same time meeting the needs of the non-English speakers. The formation of their own institutions and newspapers virtually assured the isolation of the Sikh community, for there was no reason to make cultural, religious or social contact with the host community.

It is hardly surprising that the Sikhs showed little interest in the politics of the host community considering that they were barred from running for public office and denied the vote. They did however, try to influence the government's immigration policy and attempted to get the franchise extended. Between 1908-1947 those were the only areas in which the Indians tried to influence government policy.

The Sikhs did invest a great deal of energy in power
struggles within their own community. The leadership struggles occurred between the educated and uneducated Sikhs. On the one side, the educated Sikhs were more exposed to British culture and values and felt that the present leadership comprised of uneducated Punjabi farmers was not doing enough to better the life of the Sikhs in British Columbia. The older, uneducated Sikhs felt there was no need to better their relations with the host community and government. The leadership of the Sikh community soon became dominated by the better educated and more aggressive Sikhs, who worked hard to gain political and social rights. The members of the Sikh community also had great interest in the politics of the Punjab, and actively supported the Ghadr Movement, which sought the removal of the British from India.

By 1940, nearly 70% of the East Indian population had returned to India. As few women had immigrated, there was no extensive natural increase in the population. (See Table II). This fact had a profound effect on the assimilation of the East Indians, for there were no succeeding generations for whom assimilation became easier.

However, in the years preceding 1947, a number of factors contributed to changing the attitudes of the Canadian people and government toward East Indians. The experience of the Second World War had proven the Sikhs to be courageous fighters and loyal subjects of the British Empire. In
### TABLE II
East Indian Entrants to Canada
by Broad Age and Sex Categories, 1921-42.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year ending March 31, 19--</th>
<th>Adult Males</th>
<th>Adult Females</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1921</strong></td>
<td>7 (70)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>5 (38)</td>
<td>4 (31)</td>
<td>4 (31)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>12 (52)</td>
<td>5 (25)</td>
<td>4 (23)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>25 (63)</td>
<td>11 (27)</td>
<td>4 (10)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>21 (46)</td>
<td>14 (30)</td>
<td>11 (24)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>6 (9)</td>
<td>18 (29)</td>
<td>39 (62)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>6 (9)</td>
<td>19 (31)</td>
<td>37 (60)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>2 (3)</td>
<td>25 (45)</td>
<td>29 (52)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>4 (8)</td>
<td>25 (47)</td>
<td>24 (45)</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>21 (36)</td>
<td>35 (60)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>6 (7)</td>
<td>28 (35)</td>
<td>46 (58)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>4 (8)</td>
<td>9 (19)</td>
<td>34 (72)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>7 (11)</td>
<td>8 (13)</td>
<td>48 (76)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>6 (18)</td>
<td>9 (27)</td>
<td>18 (55)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>12 (36)</td>
<td>19 (58)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1 (5)</td>
<td>4 (19)</td>
<td>16 (76)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (31)</td>
<td>9 (69)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (43)</td>
<td>8 (57)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (43)</td>
<td>8 (57)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6 (54)</td>
<td>5 (46)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (67)</td>
<td>2 (33)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3(100)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals from 1906</strong></td>
<td>5,392</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>6,071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*NOTE - Percentages are given in brackets.*
addition, India had gained her independence in 1947 and Canada and India were experiencing a period of extremely cordial relations. These factors were directly responsible for Canada changing her immigration policy towards the East Indians as well as for the different levels of government extending the franchise to them.

In 1951, restrictions were relaxed for those immigrants coming from India, Pakistan and Ceylon. A quota system was established for immigrants from these countries whereby 150 nationals from India, 100 from Pakistan and 50 from Ceylon were to be admitted annually. In 1956, the allowable numbers were raised to 300, 100, and 50 respectively. The quota of immigrants was filled primarily by the relatives of those East Indians already in Canada. Between 1946 and 1955 some 1,865 Indians immigrated to Canada. Since that time immigration has increased steadily. (See Graphs I and II).

Even the major revisions instituted in 1962 comprised only a small change in immigration policy, since the Act still favoured a particular class of immigrant. The new immigration regulations "removed (except for a group of specified relatives who could be sponsored) the emphasis upon country of origin as a major selection criterion...; instead, those acquired characteristics which were desired in immigrants were set out in general terms, and the ability of immigrants to establish themselves continued to be
GRAPH 1: Post war immigration of East Indians (i.e., from India and Pakistan) into Canada, 1946-1969

stressed. Explicitly sought were persons who by reason of their education, training and skills or other special qualifications were likely to establish themselves successfully in Canada." The new qualifications unquestionably favoured immigrants from Europe.

During the period between World War II and 1967 the East Indian population of Vancouver increased steadily. However, British Columbia did not receive the same proportion of East Indian immigrants entering Canada as before, for now at least 50% of the new immigrants were going to Ontario. The number of East Indians entering Vancouver was increasing but not at such a rate as to cause the host community to feel threatened. In addition, the economic growth and prosperity in British Columbia was such as to easily accommodate the new immigrants without forcing them into competition with members of the established community for jobs. Even though all legal restrictions had been removed during this period, the Sikhs remained religiously and culturally isolated from the host community. Politically the Sikhs were free to participate but they limited their political activities to petitioning the federal government to remove all restrictions on East Indian immigration. Together with their own sense of exclusiveness one of the principal reasons for the Sikhs' lack of social, cultural and political interaction with the host community was the fact that the host community did little to actively en-
courage Sikh participation in its affairs.

Thus, until 1967, the historical relationship between the Sikhs and Canadians can be described as one of mutual isolation. Neither group did anything to encourage interaction. In terms of Gordon's stages of assimilation, there are signs that some individuals had begun acculturating but on the whole, the East Indians had not. In fact, after 1947, they were largely ignored by the host society. Therein lies an important difference between the immigrants that had arrived before 1947 and those that have come since. For the first immigrants were met with institutionalized discrimination and were treated as second-class citizens. This treatment at the hands of the host society tended to reinforce their desire for isolation. The second wave of immigrants on the other hand, entered a society that largely ignored them. They were allowed to remain in their own ethnic community but were not forced to do so. The ambivalence of the host society toward the East Indians tended to encourage reciprocal feelings on the part of the Sikhs. These different reactions on the part of the host society to the two waves of immigration tended to instill different attitudes toward assimilation in the two groups of Sikh immigrants. This division had important repercussions for the future of the relationship between the Sikhs and the host society.

The different reactions towards the immigrants of the two periods were due mainly to the fact that in the first
instance the racial saturation point was reached, while in the second it was not. As Tienhaara and Breton have pointed out the saturation point is reached when the host society perceives the minority as posing a threat to its political, social or economic position. In the case of the Sikhs two factors had direct influence on those perceived feelings of threat in the first immigration and the lack of them in the second. The first factor is the economic condition of the host society. The first immigrants entered an unstable economic environment and were forced to compete for jobs with established members of the host community. On the other hand, the second group of immigrants entered a highly industrial society capable of easily absorbing them in the expanding economic sector.

The second factor affecting the host community's feelings of threat is the number of immigrants that settled into distinct geographical areas in Vancouver. With the huge immigration of 1906-1907, the increased concentration of Sikhs in Vancouver directly increased the host society's feeling of being threatened. However, in the second period of immigration, the numbers arriving were controlled and comparatively small. The host society had no cause for fear, and in fact as pointed out, virtually ignored the new East Indian immigrants.

In 1967, however, the immigration laws again changed and had a significant effect on the size and make-up of
East Indian immigration. As was the case in the early 1900's, East Indian immigration again rose sharply, with settlement being concentrated in a few main centers. Similarly, Canada's economy was unstable with unemployment rising. The next chapter will examine the reaction of the Canadian public and government to this new wave of immigration, and study its effect on the economic and social relationship between the Sikhs and the host community of Vancouver.


14. It is interesting to note that when Hartley and Mintz tested their techniques for measuring the relative saturation points of thirty different ethnic groups on a sample of one hundred college students in New York, the "Hindus" ranked as the least desirable.


29. For a more in-depth discussion of these three ideologies of assimilation goals see, Milton M. Gordon, *op. cit.*, Ch. 4, 5 and 6.


33. Milton M. Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 34.


49. For a detailed discussion of the politics of the East Indian community of Vancouver before 1947 see Brij Lal, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-87.
50. ibid., p. 55.

51. ibid., pp. 55-56.


55. ibid., p. 7.
CHAPTER II.

Host-Minority Contact: The Impact of Immigration.

In the 1960's, the Liberal government's shift from traditional policy favouring Anglo-conformity to cultural pluralism resulted in changes in the regulations governing immigration. No longer were the applicants screened for their ability to adapt socially and culturally to Canadian society. The essential qualification was their ability to establish themselves economically. All restrictions based on race, religion or country of origin were removed. In addition, two other major changes in the Immigration Act took place that had a significant effect on the number of immigrants entering Canada. The right to apply for landed immigrant status while in Canada was reinstated and the Immigration Appeal Board was established.

These changes, together with the tightening of immigration regulations in other countries such as Britain, Australia and New Zealand resulted in an unprecedented influx of immigrants and an almost complete loss of control by the Canadian authorities. As Table III illustrates, the percentage of immigrants increased enormously from 1967 - 1974. And although Toronto surpasses Vancouver as the largest receiving center for immigrants, Vancouver's pro-
### TABLE III

Canada: Immigration Statistics, 1945-1974
Distribution by Country of Last Permanent Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasia</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other North &amp; Central America</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania and Others</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NUMBERS PER ANNUM: (average)**

|                  | 132,802    | 183,974  | 161,531  | 147,713  | 121,900  | 122,006  | 184,200  | 218,465 |

Source: Department of Manpower and Immigration: Annual Statistical Reports.
portion of East Indian and other Asian groups remains higher. By all accounts Vancouver's Sikh population has more than doubled since 1967. (See Graph II). The effect of this increase on the relationship between the Sikhs and the host Vancouver community provides the focus for the remainder of this thesis.

The Sikh Community of Vancouver

As has been stated earlier this section will discuss important factors which influence the reaction of the host society to the Vancouver Sikhs. The increases in number and concentration of the Sikhs in Vancouver, the Sikh community's economic make-up, as well as the age and generational breakdown of the community will be examined.

The 1971 census showed that there were 6,615 persons of Indo-Pakistani origin living in Vancouver and 10,640 living in the Greater Vancouver Regional District. However, this is considered to be a gross underenumeration by many local authorities and by the East Indians themselves. Quite apart from the numbers being suspect, it is not clear as to what constitutes an Indo-Pakistani. Does Indo-Pakistani refer to someone who was born in India or whose parents were born in India? Or does this category include East Indians who come from other parts of the globe, such as Fiji?
GRAPH II: Number of Immigrants Coming to Vancouver, B.C.,
By Country of Last Permanent Residence,

KEY

- All Asians (Including Burma, China, India, Hong Kong,
  Indonesia, Japan, Malay,
  Pakistan, Ceylon, Taiwan and
  other Asians)
- India and Pakistan
- China and Hong Kong (including
  Formosa/Taiwan, after 1968)

1964  '65   '66   '67   '68   '69   '70   '71   '72   '73   '74

Source: Vancouver City Hall, Social Planning Dept.
With the large number of Ugandan refugees entering Canada since 1972 it has also become important to know whether the immigration figures concerning East Indians issued by Statistics Canada and the Department of Manpower and Immigration, include immigrants from Africa of East Indian origin as Indo-Pakistanis. When questioned, officials of these organizations say that they believe that the figures do not include Africans of East Indian origin in this category but they can not be sure.

Up to 1972, the government figures for East Indians refer primarily to Sikhs. Although according to Immigration officials, the proportion of Sikhs comprising immigrants from India has dropped in the last decade, still about 60% of the immigrants arriving in Canada from India are from the Punjab. It is impossible to state accurately the exact number of Sikhs in Vancouver but recent trends in immigration and estimates from various concerned organizations make it possible to place the number of Sikhs in Vancouver proper at about 12,000. In the Greater Vancouver Regional District there may be as many as 20,000 Sikhs.

**TABLE IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europeans</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>530,728</td>
<td>790,165</td>
<td>1,028,335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Canada, 1971, Supplied by Vancouver City Hall's Social Planning Department.
In the years since the 1971 Census the proportion of Asians has grown even more markedly. Although B.C. now contains a smaller proportion of the total number of East Indian immigrants than in the past, it still contains the largest concentration in relation to the host society. The number of East Indians coming to Vancouver has also increased steadily. In addition to the large number of immigrants from India and Pakistan, large increases from Fiji and Uganda raised Vancouver's East Indian population even higher. The overall East Indian population of Greater Vancouver is currently estimated to be about 40,000.

The immigration of other people of East Indian origin has a significant effect on the Sikh community's relations with the host society. Canadians who do not favour Asian immigration do not make fine distinctions between members of the various groups: they are all "Hindus", "Sikhs" or "East Indians" to them, in the same sense that some members of the host society do not make distinctions between any Asian groups. The host society's failure to distinguish the various groups has the effect of intensifying the feelings of threat on the part of the host population. For many, Vancouver has been experiencing an Asian invasion in the seventies.

For the most part the Chinese have not been an open target for those opposed to Asian immigration. One possible
reason is that they are much more established in Vancouver. A large Chinese community has existed in Vancouver for decades and second and third generation Chinese are well established socially and economically. Over one half of the East Indians on the other hand, have arrived since 1970 and have few ties to the host community. The East Indians are not only identifiable targets but safe ones as well, for there can be little economic or political retaliation from a minority, not well established in the host society.

The actual number of East Indians entering Vancouver is not as crucial in their relations with the host community as is the concentration of East Indians in specific geographical areas. This observation is substantiated by interviews with the mayor and aldermen of Vancouver. Former Vancouver Mayor, Art Phillips, stated that the sudden change in the ethnic and cultural characteristics of certain neighbourhoods caused by the settlement of East Indians into concentrated areas was one of the major causes of racial tensions in Vancouver from 1973 to 1975.

By 1959, Vancouver's East Indians were concentrated in two main areas. The first and older Vancouver settlement was in the Fairview-Mount Pleasant area. Newer immigrants tended to settle in the Sunset and Victoria-Fraserview area of South Vancouver. The trend of settlement in the South Vancouver area has continued due to the proximity of the
mills and lumber yards of the Fraser River, where many of the Sikhs work. Presently, the proximity of the Khalsa Diwan Temple is also a factor influencing settlement of new immigrants. The settlement pattern of the Sikhs has not been consistent enough to produce a ghetto-like isolation from the rest of the population. Nevertheless, the trend has been strong enough to make a section of the city easily identifiable as "heavily East Indian". This area provides new East Indian immigrants with a section of the city which can satisfy all their social, cultural and economic needs, thus limiting the necessity for contact outside the specific area.

The 1971 Census and the 1976 summer survey indicate that while many of the new immigrants from the Punjab have shown a tendency to move to the south of Vancouver, the established Sikhs have started to move to other areas of the city. The expansion of the established Sikh community to other areas of the city such as Shaughnessy and Renfrew-Collingwood as well as to the suburbs of Surrey, Delta and Richmond reflects their growing occupational and economic diversity. It also underlines the occupational and economic gaps arising between old and new immigrants. These gaps have important consequences for the unity of the Sikh community.

Since 1971, there have been indications that the new East Indian immigrants have proven to be atypical when com-
pared to immigrants from other countries. In 1974, the authors of the Green Paper summarized recent immigration in part by noting that more immigrants were settling in B.C. with identifiable occupational trends:

"-the continuing strong growth in the proportion of the managerial and professional category;"

"-the sharp declines since the 1950's in the labouring, service and recreation (blue-collar) categories;"

"-the gradual shift from blue-collar to white-collar occupations."

During the past decade, East Indians have been entering the Canadian labour force in increasing numbers, especially since 1972. However, as Table V illustrates, the proportion of East Indians entering the labour force as white-collar workers has fallen markedly. Of the Sikhs interviewed that had arrived within the last decade, 70.37% were employed in blue-collar jobs. Of those, 50.8% were employed in unskilled manual labour, while 18.52% were involved in skilled manual labour. While these percentages are higher than those provided by the Immigration Department, the trend is the same. The difference may be explained in part by the fact that some immigrants are unable to obtain a job in the field in which they were trained before immigrating.

The East Indian community's occupational make-up has important consequences for their relations with the host society. The concentration of the East Indian immigrants
## TABLE V

Intended Occupations of Immigrant East Indians and Chinese, 1968-74: Number and (Percentage).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1968</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,033 (78)</td>
<td>285 (22)</td>
<td>1,318 (41)</td>
<td>1,911 (59)</td>
<td>3,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>2,085 (76)</td>
<td>661 (24)</td>
<td>2,746 (33)</td>
<td>5,636 (67)</td>
<td>8,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1969</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,958 (74)</td>
<td>673 (26)</td>
<td>2,631</td>
<td>2,764 (51)</td>
<td>5,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>2,032 (62)</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>3,259 (39)</td>
<td>5,013 (61)</td>
<td>8,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1970</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,557 (61)</td>
<td>1,009 (39)</td>
<td>2,566 (45)</td>
<td>3,104 (55)</td>
<td>5,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>1,370 (63)</td>
<td>802 (37)</td>
<td>2,172 (40)</td>
<td>3,205 (60)</td>
<td>5,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1971</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,328 (50)</td>
<td>1,313 (50)</td>
<td>2,641 (50)</td>
<td>2,672 (50)</td>
<td>5,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>1,397 (62)</td>
<td>870 (38)</td>
<td>2,267 (45)</td>
<td>2,742 (55)</td>
<td>5,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1972</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,220 (55)</td>
<td>995 (45)</td>
<td>2,215 (44)</td>
<td>2,834 (56)</td>
<td>5,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>1,673 (61)</td>
<td>1,081 (39)</td>
<td>2,754 (44)</td>
<td>3,543 (56)</td>
<td>6,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1973</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>2,164 (44)</td>
<td>2,802 (56)</td>
<td>4,966 (54)</td>
<td>4,237 (46)</td>
<td>9,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>2,634 (54)</td>
<td>2,282 (46)</td>
<td>4,916 (34)</td>
<td>9,746 (66)</td>
<td>14,662</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table V (contd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>1,717 (30)</td>
<td>3,930 (70)</td>
<td>5,647 (44)</td>
<td>7,221 (56)</td>
<td>12,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>2,673 (56)</td>
<td>2,093 (44)</td>
<td>4,766 (38)</td>
<td>7,938 (62)</td>
<td>12,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL 1969-1974</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. India</td>
<td>10,977 (50)</td>
<td>11,007 (50)</td>
<td>21,984 (47)</td>
<td>24,743 (53)</td>
<td>46,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>8,377 (60)</td>
<td>6,326 (40)</td>
<td>14,703 (38)</td>
<td>23,969 (62)</td>
<td>38,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Total</td>
<td>20,873 (49)</td>
<td>21,224 (51)</td>
<td>42,297 (45)</td>
<td>51,462 (55)</td>
<td>93,759</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

into one area of employment, the blue-collar occupations, intensifies the economic threat perceived by the host due to the immigrants' competition for jobs.

The age distribution of the Sikh community may also explain much of the host community's hostility based on economic frustrations. Nearly 50% of the East Indians in Vancouver belong to the "most employable" age bracket of 20 - 44 years. Thus, nearly half of the East Indian population finds itself in direct competition with the white community for jobs. This fact, combined with Canada's economic troubles, may account for some of the problems that the minority has in its relations with the host community.

**TABLE VI**

Vancouver City: Age Distribution Among Selected Asian Origins
(1) by ethnic group and (2) by mother tongue spoken; 1971
Number and (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Ethnic Groups</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>East Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 19</td>
<td></td>
<td>14,245 (39)</td>
<td>4,450 (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 44</td>
<td></td>
<td>13,520 (37)</td>
<td>5,225 (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 64</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,800 (15)</td>
<td>815 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 plus</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,340 (9)</td>
<td>150 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>36,405 (100)</td>
<td>10,640 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Mother Tongues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Indo-Pakistani</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 19</td>
<td>10,135 (35)</td>
<td>2,750 (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 44</td>
<td>11,185 (39)</td>
<td>3,755 (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 - 64</td>
<td>4,435 (15)</td>
<td>600 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 plus</td>
<td>3,225 (11)</td>
<td>130 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>28,985 (100)</td>
<td>7,230 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Canada, 1971. Supplied by Vancouver City Hall's Social Planning Department.
Another factor influencing the acceptance of an ethnic minority by the host group is the extent to which the minority is first generation or succeeding generational. The isolation of an ethnic group is difficult to maintain as succeeding generations grow up and come in contact with primary agents of socialization such as the host society's schools and their playgrounds. They learn to speak English well, and are exposed to western ideas and customs. The western economic attitudes are introduced in the school and reinforced in the home, for according to our survey over 70% of the Sikhs interviewed immigrated to Canada for economic reasons. This situation encourages at least some degree of conformity with western standards of behavior. The result is that through these children the contacts with the host community increase and acculturation begins. Inherent in this interaction is the potential clash of values of the old and new systems. This clash is at the root of many of the family problems in Sikh homes and indeed is the cause of the division within the community itself.

**TABLE VII**

Vancouver City, Selected Asian Origins, 1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>China/India born</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Balance</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese ethnic origins</td>
<td>30,780</td>
<td>15,065</td>
<td>(51.0)</td>
<td>15,715</td>
<td>(49.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Indian ethnic</td>
<td>6,615</td>
<td>3,925</td>
<td>(59.3)</td>
<td>2,690</td>
<td>(40.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Canada, 1971, Supplied by Vancouver City Hall's Social Planning Department.
Table VII shows that the East Indian community of Vancouver has a significant number of first generationals compared with Canadian born. Since the new immigration has increased the size of the Sikh population so dramatically, a rise in the number of first generationals should be expected, probably in the order of 80%.

The Pull of the Sikh Community on the Immigrants

The pattern of contacts made in the new country which determines the community into which the immigrant assimilates is influenced by two main factors, the immigrant's motivation for immigrating to a particular location and the institutions that are set up by the various communities to attract the immigrant. Although the majority of Sikhs immigrated to Canada for economic reasons, the principal reason for settling in Vancouver was to join family or friends. In fact over 90% of the Sikhs interviewed stated that they had come to Vancouver for that reason. It is not surprising then that upon their arrival 66.67% stayed with family and an additional 18.52% stayed with friends. As a result of making first contact with family or friends, the new immigrants tend to follow the pattern of adaptation to Canadian life that is set by their relatives. This in turn tends to reinforce the existing attitudes towards their own and the host community, for this pattern is based on
and tends to support the bias of his family or friends.

A result of making first contact with a relative or friend is that it minimizes the role that institutions in any of the communities will play. The family becomes a substitute institution. For example, among surveyed immigrants requiring assistance of any kind upon arrival in Canada, 87% received it from their families. Functions that used to be carried out by the temple or government institutions are now more likely to be carried out by the family. Of the new immigrants interviewed 37% stated that they had not made contact with any of their ethnic community institutions. Although there are no comparable figures for earlier decades, leaders from the Sikh community feel that this figure represents a great drop in the importance of the ethnic institutions.5

Even so the temple is still the most important institution in the Sikh community. Yet its functions too have been reduced over the past decade. It used to act as the social, cultural and religious center of the community. Other organizations within the community now perform some of those functions. With the influx of East Indian immigrants it has now become profitable for Sikh businessmen to sponsor many social and cultural events in the host community. Ten years ago in Vancouver there was only one weekly showing of Punjabi films. There are now at least five theatres in the Vancouver area showing films in Punjabi
regularly - the Raj, The Real, the York, the Olympia and the Metro.

There is also a growing number of publications in the Vancouver area that cater to the Sikh readership. Two of these, the *Lokta* and the *Watno Dur* publish exclusively in Punjabi and are concerned mainly with the local community and Punjabi literature. *Sikh Samarchar* publishes in both Punjabi and English and is primarily a religious magazine sponsored by the Gurdwara Society. The other three - the *Parivertan*, the *Ranjeet* and the *Indo-Canadian Magazine* publish in English and are concerned mainly with news from India. This fact has telling consequences for the political involvement of the Sikhs in Canada.

The newspapers as well as the growth of local radio and television shows directed at the Sikh audience helps to instill and reinforce a sense of identity within the community. This sense of belonging to the Sikh community is also reinforced at the temples, not just by the religious services but also in the Punjabi lessons given there. These institutions exert tremendous pressure on the immigrant to maintain his ties with the ethnic community. The institutions of the Sikhs are extensive enough to substitute for those of the host community in the areas of religion, entertainment and information. Of the Sikhs interviewed, 62% had made contact with organizations within their own ethnic com-
munity, 41% made contact to fulfill more than one need. That is, they looked to the ethnic institutions to fulfill more than just a religious or social need but a combination of many needs. This figure suggests the likelihood of isolation from the host community. The greater the substitution of services in the ethnic community the less likely contact with the host community becomes.

The fact that 41% of the Sikh population looks to their ethnic institutions to fulfill more than a single need is felt to be a surprising drop by leaders of the Sikh community. According to them, the figure would have been much higher in the 1950's and 1960's, but now many Sikhs' needs are being fulfilled elsewhere. As the survey revealed, part of this need is being met by the families of the new immigrants but significantly part of the need is being met by the host community. As the more established immigrants settle and the second generation comes of age, they have a tendency to increase their contacts with the host society. They no longer need the security of their own community. As their needs in the ethnic community decrease, their community's pull on them decreases as well.
The host community responds to the new immigrants on two levels. The primary level is the individual response of members of the host community. The secondary level is the governmental response. If, on the individual level, the attitudes and responses are discriminatory, the immigrant is, of course, more likely to avoid interaction. The government's response may, as was the case with the Sikhs before 1947, reinforce the minority's isolation. On the other hand, the government may try to lessen the differences between the groups by encouraging interaction through its institutions. To establish interaction, however, this encouragement must be active and involve the East Indians not only economically but socially, culturally and politically as well. George C. Homans has pointed out that in those situations where a state of isolation has developed, both minority and majority members of society will choose to remain isolated unless substantial encouragement or rewards is afforded by one of the groups. Homans' statement seems applicable to Vancouver's Sikhs. In their case it was not enough for the government to simply remove all restrictions on minority participation as it did in 1948, for the precedent of non-participation had been established for five decades.

There are few studies available that are concerned
directly with Canadian attitudes towards East Indians. However, there are several indicators that suggest that the host society has an unfavourable overall attitude. Although not concerned specifically with East Indians, it is important to note that nation-wide Gallup Polls indicate a drop in the number of people in favour of immigration between 1965 and 1975. "The promotional view of immigration has fallen for all educational levels and is now supported by only 10% of the adult population. In contrast a restrictionist position is now supported by 39% compared with only 7% in 1965." As Table VIII indicates, attitudes tend to be less favourable the lower the respondents' level of education and occupation. The principal reason is that "lower income groups, unskilled occupational positions, (and) uneducated persons (are) all more vulnerable to unemployment problems than those on the opposite end of each continuum." This tendency has important consequences for the Sikhs' relationship with the host society, for as already pointed out, the highest concentration of Sikhs is to be found in blue-collar occupation. Thus, the majority of Sikhs are employed in jobs where the general attitudes of their Canadian co-workers towards immigration is negative. This attitude is not likely to encourage social interaction between the groups.
TABLE VIII

Canadian Attitudes to Immigration by Education  
1965 and 1975 Surveys Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Status Quo</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictionist</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Studies have also been carried out in schools throughout British Columbia on students' attitudes towards East Indians. The responses show a definite pattern of discrimination. For example, when grade eight and eleven students were asked whether "there should be a law to prevent a church being built in a residential area", 22.5% responded affirmatively if the church was Anglican, 33.3% said "yes" if the church was Jehovah Witness, while over 47% responded in the affirmative if the church was "Hindu". When asked if all qualified teachers applying for jobs in the school system should be given equal opportunity, the responses again discriminated against East Indians. Over 91% of the respondents felt there should be equal opportunity given to all graduates, while only 62.34% felt that equal opportunity should include immigrants, and this percentage dropped to
58.8% when considering East Indian applicants. These attitudes were prevalent not only in areas of religion and employment but extended to questions about the use of public facilities as well. When asked if the manager of a public facility should be allowed to restrict the time certain groups were permitted to use the facilities, 19.5% agreed that he should be able to in the case of women, 25.0% agreed in the case of teenagers and over 31% agreed with the right to make restrictions in the case of East Indians. In each case the East Indians were discriminated against more than other groups.

The East Indians are also discriminated against more than other Asian groups. In a survey conducted in the Richmond school system, grade five, six and seven students were asked to compare the Japanese with the East Indians. Both ethnic groups live in Richmond in large numbers, with the Japanese having a larger concentration. The children marked the degree to which they felt each group was good-bad, beautiful-ugly, sweet-sour, clean-dirty, kind-cruel, nice-awful, honest-dishonest, and fair-unfair. In every category the East Indians compared unfavourably with the Japanese. Both surveys indicate that the East Indians are held in low esteem by the school children interviewed. The extent to which these attitudes are a reflection of their parents' is debatable but the trend is not. East Indians are perceived negatively by many members of the host society.
Another indicator of the negative reaction of the host society towards East Indians is found in the Vancouver newspapers. (See Appendix I). For this discussion it is not essential to discuss the extent to which the newspapers create or report the host community's negative reactions. It is important however, to note that in analyzing the content of the Vancouver newspapers from their post-1946 files, there has been a decline in items which can be categorized as "positive" towards the East Indians, while "negative" articles have increased sharply. The relationship between the East Indians and the host society has increasingly been characterized as hostile. The rise in the total number of articles pertaining to the East Indian could also indicate a growing awareness of the East Indians by the host community.

Another indicator of the worsening relationship between the East Indians and host society was the increase of racial incidents in the south of Vancouver between 1972 and 1975. Although it is impossible to determine the exact number of and motivation for the incidents, the problem was serious enough to prompt the municipal government to introduce a new system of policing for the area in 1973. A forerunner of the "team policing" concept was initiated. Under it a group of twenty-five officers are assigned to patrol a particular area of the city. In that way, the
officers become familiar with the problems of the area and the residents become familiar with the officers. This approach has proven to be successful in reducing tensions in South Vancouver.

Although, it is difficult to be conclusive about the host society's perception of the East Indians, the surveys, newspapers and the need of the introduction of "team policing" suggest an overall negative response. The negative response and increased coverage in the newspapers not only indicates a rise in the host society's awareness of the East Indians, but may also be an indicator of increased East Indian contact with the host society.

Until recently, the different levels of government did little to encourage cultural or social interaction between minorities and the host society. However, with the surge of non-white immigrants into Vancouver in the 1970's and the accompanying hostile reaction from many members of the host community, the municipal government was forced to act. The increase of East Indian immigrants with no concurrent increase in the services provided by their ethnic community forced many of the new immigrants into seeking out government institutions to help them settle in and adapt to Canadian society. To this end, the government has initiated a number of programs designed to increase the social and cultural contacts between the Sikhs and host community. Although the programs are in part sponsored by the federal
and provincial governments, the impetus has come from the municipal level.

The goal of many of the programs has been to introduce East Indians to Canadian ways of living and thereby aid in their adjustment. Significantly, the programs are almost entirely oriented towards the East Indian community. There have been few attempts by any level of government to facilitate a change in attitudes on the part of the host society. The aim is that the East Indian community will change, or to some extent adjust to Canada.

The most successful of the government sponsored programs in Vancouver has been the Immigrant Services Centre on Main Street in Vancouver. This organization provides a primary link with the host community's other services. It was designed to encourage the immigrant to make contact with the host community. The centre provides English language classes, translation, health and counselling services. One of its objectives is to provide "a comprehensive program of orientation to Canadian life" for the immigrant. It encourages the interaction of immigrant mothers and children with Canadians in order to promote better cultural understanding. The second phase of the centre's activities goes past the service stage to "include counselling with regards to the elusive and intangible attitudinal changes the immigrant is expected to make."
The centre has been designed mainly to encourage contacts between the East Indian and host community by way of government services. The rate of increase in contacts made with the centre has been startling in the past year. In 1975, the centre aided 2,921 immigrants, while in 1976, the figure increased 70% to 5,104. Of those making contact with the centre in 1976, 84% or 4,328 were East Indian, and according to the workers at the centre most were Sikhs. These figures not only illustrate the increasing contacts made between the Sikhs and host community but go some way in accounting for the decline in the contacts made with their own ethnic institutions.

Other programs financed by the three levels of government and under the guidance of the Social Planning Department of the city have similar goals. The Sunset community school has a program designed to encourage social interaction between the East Indians and the host society. It encourages the immigrant and host communities to improve communication and helps the immigrant to "develop positive characteristics." Although the project report does not elaborate on its goal to "develop positive characteristics", taken in the context of the report it becomes obvious that the reference is to adaptation of the immigrant to acceptable social norms of behavior. The Vancouver School Board sponsors classes taught in Punjabi at
Moberly School where the immigrant children are introduced through their mother tongue to the English language and to Canadian customs as well. Similar programs of cultural adjustment and social interaction are going on throughout the city.

Many of the programs initiated by the municipal government are designed to change those cultural attitudes and behavioral patterns that prove to be most incompatible with Canadian standards. This is a departure from the federal government's policy of multi-culturalism. Under it the government believes that all groups should be encouraged to maintain their cultural heritage. The municipal government however, is actively seeking to lessen the cultural differences in order to facilitate peaceful relations between the host society and immigrant minorities.

The municipal government's immigrant-oriented programs seem to indicate that the government recognizes the need to actively encourage the minority's participation in society. This is further evidenced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Program currently being debated at Vancouver City Hall. Although many of the recommendations of the report are being attacked, the recommendation for the need to actively recruit minorities for employment position, is agreed upon by all. In the past, passive acceptance of equal employment opportunities for minorities
has not been adequate in assuring their participation in the civic government, therefore aggressive encouragement is now needed.

The statistics of the Immigrant Services Centre, the proliferation of similar programs in the city, combined with the drop in the Sikhs' contact with their own institutions suggest an increasing social and cultural interaction with the host community. This increased interaction indicates that the social cultural and economic isolation of a small but increasing proportion of the Sikh community is breaking down.
CHAPTER II - FOOTNOTES

1. Interview with Harold Winch, June 12, 1976; Interview with Lorna Ashley, July 8, 1976; Interview with Kehar Sekhon, August 3, 1977.


7. ibid.

8. Interview with Lorna Ashley, July 8, 1976.


CHAPTER III.

Vancouver Sikh Politics: Internal Divisions and External Relations.

As Chapter II explains, the social, cultural and economic barriers between the Sikhs and the host society of Vancouver are breaking down. Chapter III discusses the internal politics of the Sikh community and its effect on the Sikhs' political relationship with the host society. In examining the Sikhs' political relationship with the host society, the emphasis will be on those activities of the community as a whole that are concerned with influencing the policies and decisions of the government.

Intra-Communal Politics: The Basis of Division.

Members of the host society, including social scientists, have wondered why there has not been more extensive effort on the part of the East Indians to influence the attitudes of the government and society. There are many reasons for the apparent lack of cohesive and co-ordinated political action. The fact is that there are political rifts within the Sikh community which prevent a united front from forming and advancing the interests of the community.

Religion is the focal point around which both the unity
and divisions of the community revolve. Their religion gives the Sikhs a common heritage and culture. At the same time, the main division within the community is based on differing interpretations of the religion. Specifically, the issue is whether to allow those Sikhs who do not adhere to the five Kakkas, pattit Sikhs, to be on the management committee of the temple. This issue takes many forms within the community but essentially it is a division between the orthodox and unorthodox Sikhs. It is a division that has divided the community at least since 1952.

Of course, the religious division within the Sikh community has social and political ramifications. For the orthodox group there is only one way "to be a Sikh" and that is to follow all the tenets of Sikhism. There is no room or justification for compromise. In order to remain religiously pure, the orthodox group is quite willing to maintain its social and cultural isolation from the host society. It wholly supports the federal government's policy of multiculturalism, for under it the Sikhs are assured that they will be allowed to maintain their religious and cultural distinctions without government interference. The unorthodox group on the other hand, favours at least partial assimilation into the host society. This group does not want to sacrifice the principles of Sikhism but does feel that it is necessary to do away with some of the "ritualistic traditions" which set them apart from Canadian society.
Therein lies the crucial issue: to what extent should the community do away with the religious traditions that make them stand out in Canadian society? There are a number of factors which influence the members of the Sikh community in choosing whether to follow the lead of orthodox or unorthodox leadership. The interviews with the supporters of each group show that the two most important factors are the period of immigration in which the Sikh arrived in Canada, and the extent to which the Sikh is economically established in the host community. When the isolation and discrimination of the early days is considered it is not surprising to find that the pioneer Sikhs support the orthodox group. Their experience in British Columbia has been one of exclusion from the host society and their desire to preserve the Sikh traditions. The most recent Sikh immigrants have also been discriminated against. In addition, new arrivals have not had enough contact with Canadian society to encourage the adaptation of their religious beliefs to Canadian norms.

The unorthodox group is primarily supported by those Sikhs who arrived in the second period of immigration. Their contact with the host society was also primarily economic and on the whole they were not treated badly. They, more than the other two groups of immigrants, are established in the host society and have the most to lose from poor relations with it. Thus, they encourage interaction with
the host society in order to better the Sikh community's relations. The orthodox group on the other hand, does not have the same extent of social and economic interests in Canada and are more concerned with Sikhism than their relationship with the host society.

The division within the Sikh community most often manifests itself in the politics of the temples. Being the center of community life, it is not surprising that the struggle for control of the temple is the focus of political action. The first open division among the Sikhs in Vancouver occurred in 1952. The issue centered on the acceptance of the candidacy of pattit Sikhs for election to the managing committee of the Khalsa Diwan Temple. Many of the older immigrants did not approve of allowing such persons to run for office in the temple. Younger immigrants and some second generation Sikhs favoured permitting pattit Sikhs to be considered for candidacy. Up to that point, the temple committee had invariably been controlled by the older orthodox members of the temple. The younger immigrants and Canadian born Sikhs wanted to participate in the management of the temple, but were at first refused because many of them had dispensed with their beard and turban. The younger Sikhs carried the vote and established the precedent of permitting pattit Sikhs to run for office in the temple. Some of those Sikhs who felt that this was sacrilegious and contrary to Sikh ideals broke away from the
Khalsa Diwan Society to form their own temple, the Akali Singh Temple on Eleventh Avenue. Other orthodox members of the community remained at Khalsa Diwan to continue the fight. The division within the community was opened and institutionalized.

This event not only reflected the religious division within the community but also the different attitudes towards assimilation into Canadian society. The younger Sikhs saw no threat in doing away with what they felt were unnecessary and inconsequential traditions, while the older immigrants felt that this was the first step to losing their cultural identity.

All respondents agreed that the sixties were calm years for politics within the temples, for much of the dissension within the community had ended with the formation of the Akali Singh Temple. The stance of each temple was well known and members of the community attended the temple that suited their particular beliefs.

New immigrants kept arriving in Canada during the sixties. Their experiences and background tended to be like those of the other immigrants of the fifties and early sixties. The membership of the Khalsa Diwan grew with the new immigrant influx until that temple represented the majority of the Sikh population in Vancouver. The increased support and use of the temple necessitated the building of
a larger facility. In 1970, the largest Sikh temple outside of India was built on Ross Street in the south of Vancouver at an estimated cost of $500,000. This entire cost was met by donations from the Sikh community.  

Since 1972, the new temple has been the scene of conflicts and dissension among the membership of the temple. Once again the symbolic issue is religious. (See Appendix II). The orthodox group feels that all those who enter the temple should do so with their heads covered. In addition, they feel that the pattit Sikhs should not be permitted to serve on the management committee. The unorthodox group feels that it should not force the people to cover their heads, and believes that any Sikh should be allowed to serve on the management committee.

Intra-Communal Politics: The Struggle for Control

Most of the eighteen Sikh leaders interviewed emphasized the fact that there was no officially organized or elected leadership in the groups vying for control of the Khalsa Diwan's managing committee. However, when asked to name the most prominent men of the opposing groups, they admit their support for certain principles rather than for specific leaders may be the result of the influence of their religion. Like most religions Sikhism does not condone the formation of personality cults, and emphasizes that following the principle
is more important than following the man.

Molla Singh and Jagir Singh are widely identified with the orthodox group. Both are blue-collar workers who have been in Canada for nearly twenty years. It is a direct reflection of their relative failure to participate in Canadian life that neither of the men speaks English fluently. For the kind of contact they have with the host society, principally economic, it is not necessary. Neither man was politically active in India before immigrating to Canada. They are involved now because they feel their religious beliefs and traditions are being threatened by some temple members.

Molla Singh, Jagir Singh and other supporters of the orthodox group associate two prominent men with the opposing point of view, Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill and Kehar Sekhon. Dr. Gill was the first East Indian medical doctor to graduate from the University of British Columbia. Mr. Sekhon is a teacher with the Vancouver School Board. Both men are well established in the host community and have been active in the affairs of the Sikh community for many years. Many people feel that without Dr. Gill the Ross Street temple would never have been built. He was instrumental in its planning and financing. Both men immigrated to Canada in the fifties and neither had a background in the politics of the Punjab. However, both men are active politically with the New Democratic Party
in British Columbia.

The orthodox group is more organized than the unorthodox group. Through the Shiromani Akali Dal Association, of which Molla Singh is president, the leadership actively encourages the support of the Sikh community in their struggle to restore "true" Sikh traditions in the temple.

The open verbal attacks of the orthodox group on those members of the community who were pattit Sikhs polarized the conflict into a power struggle for control of the temple's managing committee. The first open split in temple membership since 1952 took place in 1973. The dispute arose over the voting procedure to be followed in electing the new management committee. Traditionally the vote had been taken by a show of hands but on the day of the election, January 7, 1973, the temple was very crowded and fist fights broke out between supporters of the opposing groups. The disruptions and the overcrowded temple made it impossible to proceed in an orderly manner and count the hands. The president of the managing committee, Mr. Kernal Singh Johal, a supporter of the unorthodox group, declared that the election would be postponed. The new election was to be carried out according to the registered constitution. The orthodox group refused to participate and elected their own managing committee, with Molla Singh as president. The temple elections went ahead on January
26, with the orthodox group refusing to participate. Bakshish Singh Johal was elected president with the support of the unorthodox group.

The procedural differences can be stated simply. The orthodox group favours open membership and a show of hands for the voting. The unorthodox group, on the other hand, favours a secret ballot with only those members who have paid a membership fee, as outlined in the constitution, being permitted to vote. Although the restriction placed on those persons who had not paid a membership fee had also been enforced in 1952 and 1953, it had not been in effect since that time.

Several incidents occurred at the temple in 1973 that prompted the Vancouver City Police to enter into the dispute. They arbitrated several meetings between the two groups in the hopes of finding a compromise to the voting procedure problem. Several meetings took place but no compromise was reached. However, in the 1974 election no restrictions were placed on non-paying members and a secret ballot was not used.

For the sake of the unity of the Sikh community a compromise candidate was elected president. Gurdial Singh Neel was acceptable to the orthodox group because he had recently arrived from India and followed all the Sikh tenets. He was acceptable to the unorthodox group because he was a respected man of learning.
Conflict at the Khalsa Diwan Society again erupted in April of 1974 when Harbhajan Yogi, the self-proclaimed leader of Sikhism in North America, came to visit the Sikh temple from Los Angeles. He was shocked that members were allowed to enter the temple without their heads being covered and claimed that he and his followers would force them to do so. Fighting ensued and polarization of the temple membership increased.

During this time a third group entered the politics of the community. The Maoists under the leadership of Hardial Bains supported the orthodox point of view. Their sole purpose was to gain a foothold in the community. Their methods were violent. Members of both the unorthodox and orthodox groups agree that the communists were the cause of many of the violent confrontations that followed in 1975.

In 1975, the election for the management committee again took place without secret ballot or restrictions being placed on non-paying members. The unorthodox group won by a small margin and Surgit Singh Gill was elected president. The election was significant in that despite their narrow defeat, it gave concrete proof to the orthodox group of their solid support within the temple.

The orthodox group claimed that the election was not valid because the votes had been counted unfairly and that
it should be held again. This was refused and the conflict continued. Violence erupted in the temple on March 30, 1975. Both groups agree that the violence was precipitated by the Maoists. A number of people were beaten including the secretary of Khalsa Diwan, Budha Singh. A number of court cases ensued but only one communist was convicted, Mr. H.R. Durha.

Once again on April 20, 1975, the communists tried to disrupt temple proceedings. A number of fights and stabblings followed. Although these disturbances received only limited treatment by the local media, they contributed to the "poor image" of the Sikh community in the press. After this incident members of the Khalsa Diwan and Akali Singh Temples joined together and condemned Bains and his followers. Hardial Bains left town and the Maoists have never played a significant role in temple politics since. Members of the Sikh community feel that the orthodox group was hurt by the participation of the communists. Since the communists directed their attacks against the unorthodox group, many temple members felt that the orthodox group must be associated with the Maoists. Although it is impossible to prove this link existed, the perceived association between the two groups has hurt the credibility of the orthodox group.

In the last two years the elections for the management
committee have followed the procedures set out in the constitution. The orthodox group has taken the case to the courts but the constitution was upheld. The orthodox group has not contested the election of the management committee in the last two years. As a result, two moderates, who have received the support of the unorthodox group, were elected president. Avtar Gossal, a wealthy businessman, was elected in 1976 and Kesar Singh Bhatti, an engineer with British Columbia Telephone, was elected in 1977.

The last two years have been considerably calmer in the temple, but the same debate still goes on. The religious group does not seem to have the support necessary to force the issue any more. The incidents fomented by Hardial Bains have moved many temple members to seek reconciliation. Hardial Singh Johal, the editor of *Sikh Samarchar* believes that many of the orthodox members of the Khalsa Diwan have chosen to attend the Akali Singh Temple instead. One indication of this trend is reflected in the annual budget of the Akali Singh Temple. In 1972, the budget for the temple was $40,000; in 1976 it was $114,000. The Akali Singh Temple management now feels that its facilities are too small and is planning to build a new Temple at an estimated cost of $2,000,000.

Such divisions within the community can obviously affect the policies and interests pursued by the Sikhs in
the host society. Given that the effect of an interest
group on the policies of the host community is largely
determined by the numerical strength of that group, the
divisions within the community have seriously weakened the
political power of the Sikhs.

Now the first priority of the politically motivated
Sikhs is to enlist the support of their own community. To
do so they must help the community overcome its internal
divisions and convince the Sikhs of their common needs and
thus common need for political action.

The Sikhs' Political Relations with the Host Society:
Interest Group Action

The range of political activity and relationship of
a minority with the host society is wide. This discussion
is primarily concerned with those political actions by the
Sikh community as a whole that are concerned with in-
fluencing the political decisions of the host government.
The political activities of certain prominent men in the
Sikh community will also be mentioned. In addition, the
extent to which the municipal politicians and government
encourage the participation of the Sikhs in host society
politics will also be examined.

The interviews with the Sikh leaders and members of
the community reveal that interest groups are the most common type of organizations designed to exert pressure on the political system of the host society. No attempt to form or associate the Sikh community with a particular party has met with wide-spread support. In fact, the summer survey reveals that under 5% of the Sikhs interviewed belonged to a political party.

Given the divisions within the Sikh community, it is surprising that the community has any organization that claims to speak for all the Sikhs. The East Indian Canadian Citizen's Welfare Association is the body which enjoys the support of the temples in British Columbia. It was formed in 1952 after the inauguration of the Akali Singh Temple. It was organized to give the Sikhs one voice in approaching the various levels of government. The prime concern of the Association has centered on immigration matters. The easing of immigration restrictions was the one goal that had unanimous support in the community. All members wanted to see a more open policy without restrictions based on race or ethnicity.

For this reason the East Indian Canadian Citizen's Welfare Association has been actively supported by both temples, yet they do not try to directly influence the issues and policies pursued by the Association. Although members of both temples serve in the Association, the temples do not involve themselves directly with its opera-
tion. The Association is an organization serving only the interests of the East Indian community. The Association has traditionally been Sikh dominated, mainly because of their overwhelming numerical strength in British Columbia.

The potential effect that the Welfare Association can have on the government is of course directly related to the support it can muster within the community. In the 1950's and early 1960's the potential of the Association was limited by the small size of the East Indian community, for it was unable to reward or punish a particular candidate or party at election time. The support of the Association was further weakened by internal disputes. Jagat Uppal felt that one such dispute permanently limited the effectiveness of the Association. In 1962, a man named Amar Singh Khalsa sued the Welfare Association for libel. Khalsa claimed to be receiving visions from God. He gained a great deal of support in the host community and was accepting monetary contributions from the general public. The Welfare Association made a number of statements condemning him as a fraud and in return Khalsa sued. The case went to court and Khalsa was supported by the Akali Singh Temple in his suit against the Association. The split between the Khalsa Diwan Society and Akali Singh Temple members in the Welfare Association was bitter. The Welfare
Association, without the support of the Akali Singh, won the case but at a cost of $10,000 in legal fees and its claim to speak for the whole community was severely damaged. After some time the Akali Singh Temple returned to the Welfare Association but the organization never returned to its former level of effectiveness.

In the last several years the Welfare Association has not had the support of the new East Indian immigrant groups in the city. With the immigration of the Ismalias and Fijians, the membership of the Association no longer accurately reflects the religious divisions within the East Indian population. And it can no longer claim the support of the entire East Indian population. Further, the Association is divided by the same issues that affect the Sikh community as a whole. Recently it has become dominated by the unorthodox members of the East Indian community and it can not enlist the support of the religious element.

In addition, for the past seven years, the political focus of community members has been on the Khalsa Diwan Society elections and support for the Welfare Association has waned.

Nevertheless the Welfare Association is the only recognized body acting on behalf of the East Indians of British Columbia, for the temples are totally unconcerned with the politics of the host society. The reasons for the lack of political involvement of the Sikhs center on the characteristics of the community itself and the lack of
effort made by the host society's institutions and politicians to attract Sikh political participation. In interviewing many of the elected officials of the municipal government, most had made little effort in their election bids to actively enlist the support of the Sikhs. There have been some politicians, such as Harold Winch and Grace McGuiness, who have made concerted efforts to act on behalf of and enlist the support of the Sikh community, but they seemed to be the exception to the rule. Of the politicians and bureaucrats interviewed, no one knew of any effort by the municipal government to specifically encourage the political participation of minorities.

The fact that the elected officials of the community do not make a concerted effort to enlist the support of the Sikhs reflects the lack of political influence city politicians perceive the group to have. It also illustrates the lack of cohesive action by the East Indians despite the fact that with a population of 25,000 inside the city they certainly could have an effect on elections if they voted as a bloc. Many Sikhs feel that the leaders and members of the community do not yet recognize their potential for political action. This lack of recognition may reflect their lack of interest in politics outside the community, but may also show their limited appreciation of the change of size of the community in the last five years and
of the accompanying rise in potential for political influence. This view is illustrated by the thoughts of Sadhu Singh Dhaesi, chairman of the Akali Singh Temple, who feels that the community and the temple do not support a particular candidate because they do not have enough Sikhs in a particular area to affect the outcome. Surely, this would not be the case in Vancouver South where there is an estimated East Indian population of 15,000.

The Sikhs' lack of interest in the politics of the host society may also be a result of some characteristics of the Sikh community itself. More than 25% of the Sikh population have arrived in Canada within the last three years and hence do not have the right to vote either provincially or federally. Furthermore, as many as 80% of the Sikhs are first-generation and tend not to have developed an interest in Canadian politics. The more recently arrived immigrants are understandably concerned primarily about establishing themselves economically. These facts explain in part why among Sikhs interviewed who were eligible to vote in federal and provincial elections, only 44% did so. All Sikhs are eligible to vote in municipal elections because they are British subjects. However, only 28% of those interviewed exercised their right. Although these figures are not substantially lower than the average voter turnout, they illustrate the inability of the host society's politicians to interest and enlist the support of Vancouver's
Sikhs. Some of the reasons for the politicians' inability to attract Sikh participation are no doubt similar to those reasons explaining the apathy of the population as a whole, but certainly the Sikhs' brevity of residence in Canada compounds the problem.

Leaders of both the Sikh community and municipal government identify discrimination as the most important issue that concerns the Sikhs. The Sikhs are concerned with the hostile reaction of the host community and their image in Canadian society. Significantly, however, according to members of the city's Social Planning Department, the East Indian community has not proposed any specific programs designed to ease the problem. This may again relate to the lack of political organization within the East Indian community. No single group can claim to speak for the community as a whole and as a result only concerned individuals approach the government. Former Mayor Art Phillips pointed to the problems within the Khalsa Diwan Society as impeding the possibility of cohesive action. Indeed, he stated that the attention of the Sikh community as a whole being focused on internal disputes allows little time for their becoming involved in the politics of the host society.

Aldermen Marzari and Rankin identify a common strategy used by those Sikhs trying to generate political action. The strategy is directly related to those used in India.
The Sikhs prefer to approach the politicians they perceive to be powerful. Alderman Harry Rankin feels that this is one of the main reasons that East Indians approach him so often. The East Indians feel that his position as a lawyer and alderman can benefit their various needs and interests.

Another political link associated with the East Indians is former alderman Setty Pendakur. The Sikh community considers Pendakur to have connections in the municipal government and to be sympathetic to their needs. Currently Pendakur, who is not a Sikh, is chairman of the Akali Singh Building Committee. The committee, through Pendakur, has approached the municipal government and secured some land on which they are going to construct their new temple. It is interesting to note however, that when Pendakur ran for alderman in 1972 and 1974 there was no indication that he received any organized support from any existing organizations in the East Indian community. Pendakur was welcomed to speak at both of Vancouver's Sikh temples, as any person is permitted to address the members, but he did not receive the endorsement of either the Akali Singh Temple or the Khalsa Diwan Society. Although Pendakur did receive more support in the southeast part of the city, there are no data available which show the degree of support he received from the voters in the East Indian community. The reason for the Sikhs' limited support of
Pendakur may again be due to the East Indians' tendency to be issue-oriented as opposed to leader-oriented. However, it is probably also due to the aforementioned reasons contributing to the Sikhs' lack of interest in host society politics.

In addition to Pendakur, many others of East Indian origin are active in Canadian politics. However, none act as representatives of the East Indian community. Harkipal Sara and Malkit Prahar are active within the Liberal Party, Sabu Singh, Avtar Gossal and Avtar Berar within the Social Credit Party and Kehar Sekhon and Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill are involved with the New Democratic Party. The interviews revealed that these men may at times serve as the liaison between a party and the community but no official or even widely recognized relationship exists.

The orientation of the Vancouver Sikhs to issues and not men or parties is particularly suited to interest group politics. The first national organization representing East Indians illustrates this point. The National Association of Canadians of Origins in India, (NACOI), was conceived in October, 1975 and the founding conference was held in August, 1976. NACOI can be viewed as the response of established East Indians to the host society's hostile reaction to the influx of immigrants in the seventies. Canadian attitudes are seen as threatening the economic and social position of the established East Indians. The goals
of the organization reflect the desire to protect the East Indian Community. NACOI is dedicated to improving the image of East Indians in Canadian society. In order to do so, it strives to have the contribution of the East Indians in Canadian society recognized. Furthermore, NACOI will encourage Canadians of East Indian origin to participate fully in Canadian life. (See Appendix III, Part A, for the draft constitution of NACOI).

The leaders of NACOI appreciate that one of the most important factors contributing to the poor relations between the East Indians and the host society is the minority's isolation. NACOI hopes that increased communication and interaction between the groups will help remedy the situation. Although NACOI does not have affiliations with any political party, the leadership sees its primary role as giving the East Indian community a united political voice. At the second annual conference of NACOI, held in Vancouver in August, 1977, numerous speakers emphasized the need for an effective political organization if the East Indians' image and rights were to be protected in Canada. NACOI will pressure the three levels of government to encourage harmonious interaction between the host society and East Indians. Thus, NACOI will encourage at least the partial assimilation of the East Indians into Canadian society.

The potential success of the organization rests on its ability to gain support within the East Indian community.
This will prove an onerous task given the ethnic, cultural and religious differences between the various groups within the community, as well as the divisions within the groups themselves. There can be little doubt, however, that NACOI is a product of the East Indian experience in Canada. Whereas in India the different religious groups would have little in common, discrimination against all of them in Canadian society provides a common bond and creates a common need for action.

This need for action is of course most strongly felt by those East Indians who have the most to lose in terms of their economic and social position in Canada and so, it is not surprising to find that the most active members of NACOI are those East Indians who are well established in the host society. The current membership in NACOI is almost entirely made up of East Indian lawyers, doctors, professors, and successful businessmen. One can only wonder how successful such men will be in convincing the average East Indian that NACOI can also serve their needs, for the majority of East Indians may feel that they have very little economic or social position to protect.

NACOI is already experiencing difficulties gaining the support of other East Indian organizations in Canada. One of the main complaints voiced by some East Indians is that they perceive that NACOI has a closed leadership and not all the East Indian organizations were encouraged to parti-
cipate. Thus, its detractors feel that NACOI can not accurately claim to represent the entire East Indian community. (See Appendix III, Part B). Personal observation of the Vancouver chapter's organizational meetings for the second annual NACOI conference would lead one to believe that any oversight in informing all East Indian associations was accidental and was due to disorganization on the part of the conference's organizing committee.

NACOI has already suffered from the internal problems that divide the Sikh community. The Shiromani Akali Dal Association of Canada resents the association of Sikhs with other cultural and religious groups. In an open letter to the Honourable John Roberts of the State Department, the Shiromani Akali Dal Association states "that the effect of this new group, NACOI, is to give importance to non-Sikh people, of Indian origin, such as Hindus, Fijians, West-Indians, and the like. Sikhs naturally would not be interested in such a group, because Sikhs have a strong culture, religion and philosophy and society of their own." (See Appendix III, Part C). Thus, the leadership of the orthodox group is content to remain isolated from other East Indian groups. Any association with other cultures or religions is unacceptable.

The political interaction between the host society and the Sikhs is in an embryonic state. The limited Sikh participation in the host community's politics results, in part,
from the host community's disinterest in the Sikhs as a political force. John Fraser, Member of Parliament for Vancouver South showed little interest in actively attracting East Indian support. His attitude was reiterated by many municipal politicians as well.

The lack of concerted effort by the host society's politicians to attract East Indian support reflects the limited political power they perceive the Sikhs to have. This attitude is based on the fact that the East Indians have shown very little ability to act as a cohesive political unit. Many East Indian leaders interviewed concur with this assessment of the situation. Thus, they believe they must organize before their position in Canadian society will be protected. NACOI is the product of this belief.

One reason for the lack of political organization in the Sikh community may be that before the new immigrants arrived, the minority community was satisfied with its relations with the host society. However, the host society's hostile reaction to the new immigrants threatened the Sikhs' economic and social position in Canada. Thus, a need for political action arose. It is interesting to note that the other time period in which the Sikhs organized politically was between 1904 and 1917, when the host society's reaction to a sharp increase in immigration again created a need.
Beyond this the political focus of the Sikh community has been on the struggle for power in the Khalsa Diwan Society. The leaders of the community have encouraged the participation of the Sikhs in the internal disputes. And we have seen how the struggle for control of the temple not only distracts the community's attention from external political activity, but also exacerbates the divisions within the community. On the other hand, Vancouver's municipal politicians or government have done little to show the Sikhs that their needs can be served by the municipal government.

The lack of studies dealing with the voting activity of individual Sikhs makes it impossible to evaluate precisely whether the degree of individual participation is changing. However, as indicated by the establishment of NACOI it would seem that on a group level, involvement is increasing. More members of the Vancouver Sikh community are active in NACOI than any preceding Sikh organization designed to exert influence on political decisions made in the host society. NACOI is the first East Indian organization whose primary concern is to encourage an end to the East Indians' isolation in Canada.
CHAPTER III - FOOTNOTES

1. Interview with Molla Singh, August 21, 1977.
2. Interview with Kehar Sekhon, August 3, 1977.
3. Interview with Jagat Uppal, August 18, 1977.
4. Interview with Blanche Dillon, August 10, 1977.
6. The following account of the 1952 split in the Khalsa Diwan Society is drawn from interviews with Sadhu Singh Dhaesi, August 6, 1977; Kesar Singh Bhatti, July 29, 1977; Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill, August 24, 1977 and Molla Singh, August 21, 1977.
10. The following description of the conflicts within the Khalsa Diwan society is drawn primarily from interviews with Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill, Kehar Sekhon, Hardial Singh Johal, August 7, 1977; Kera Singh Bains, July 20, 1977 and Molla Singh.
12. See Vancouver Sun, April 3, 1975, p. 40 or Vancouver Sun, April 21, 1975, p. 1.
15. Interview with Jagat Uppal, August 18, 1977.
18. The respondents were Art Phillips, Fritz Bowers, Harry Rankin, Darlene Marzari and Gordon Campbell.


20. Interview with Malkit Prahar, July 17, 1977; Interview with Dr. S.L. Khanna, August 26, 1977.


22. Interview with Doug Purdy, August 5, 1977.


25. The heads of each Sikh organization were asked if their organization had actively or even openly supported Pendakur and every response was in the negative.


27. Interview with Ranjit Hall, August 26, 1977.

28. Most of the information on N.A.C.O.I. was obtained by attending and interviewing delegates at the second annual N.A.C.O.I. conference held in Vancouver, August 26 - 28, 1977, as well as attending meetings of the Vancouver chapter of N.A.C.O.I.


30. Interview with John Fraser, April 16, 1977.


32. Interviews with Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill, Blanche Dillon, Kehar Sekhon and Dr. S.L. Khanna.
CHAPTER IV

Conclusions

The evidence suggests that the Sikhs are interacting more with the host society than in the past. The increased interaction is mainly the result of the sharp rise in the Sikh population of Vancouver and the programs established by the municipal government to encourage interaction.

The sharp increase in the minority population had the effect of precipitating hostile reaction on the part of the host society. Furthermore, the increase in East Indian population was so great as to make it impossible for the ethnic institutions to absorb the new immigrants. As a result, many immigrants only made contact with their families. In addition, the statistics of the Immigrant Services Centre indicate that increased contact was also made with the host society institutions.

The hostile reaction of the host society was due not only to the influx of immigrants per se, but to the housing and job shortages in the city which many host community members believed would be made worse by the incoming immigrants. The interviews with municipal officials and Sikh leaders reveal that the rise in host society hostilities
are directly related to the Sikhs' competition for these scarce resources. The case of the Sikhs in Vancouver supports the racial saturation point approach to host society hostilities.

The case of the Vancouver Sikhs suggest that the degree to which the increased interaction between the minority and host society is positive and encourages assimilation, depends largely upon the host society's institutions established to aid in the adaptation of the minority. In response to the hostile reaction of the host society, the municipal government of Vancouver established a number of programs designed to encourage positive social, economic and cultural interaction between the Sikhs and the host society. According to municipal officials and minority leaders, these programs are in a large way responsible for the improvement in relations between the two groups. At the same time, it is important to note that the institutions of the Sikhs reinforce their social and cultural isolation by only encouraging social and cultural interaction within the Sikh community.

The increased contact with the host society's institutions as well as the decrease in racial hostilities would indicate that in the case of the Sikhs, the working hypothesis is tenable. The available data and the limits set do not permit the study to be conclusive, but at this point it seems that the isolation or assimilation of a
minority is determined by the strength with which ethnic versus host society institutions attract or repel the immigrant to and from the different communities. Further research regarding minority attitudes towards host society institutions and vice versa is needed before the hypothesis can be proved conclusively.

The fact that the Sikhs seem to be more economically and culturally than politically assimilated, indicates that the assimilation of the immigrant does not take place simultaneously in the cultural, social, economic or political spheres of interaction as Milton Gordon suggests. Instead, the immigrant's assimilation can take place in each sphere of interaction independently, as determined by the strength of attraction or repulsion of each sphere in either community. For example, the host society may provide encouragement for the immigrant's economic assimilation, but this does not assure his cultural or political assimilation. The case of the Sikhs suggests that these spheres are interrelated but not necessarily interdependent. An examination of the Sikh leadership shows that assimilation in one sphere does not necessarily mean that the immigrant is assimilated in any other sphere.

Insofar as social and cultural interaction between the host and minority communities are essential if racial tensions are to be avoided, the federal government's policy of multiculturalism, as it is presently implemented, is...
unsuitable. Although in theory it does encourage cultural groups to share their heritage with other Canadians, in practice, multiculturalism as implemented has had a tendency to reinforce the isolation of the ethnic groups. The chief mechanism through which the federal government encourages the different groups to share their culture with the rest of Canada is by the awarding of financial grants to soliciting groups. This policy is designed for those groups with enough initiative and organization to apply for the money. The onus is put upon the ethnic group to apply, the federal government does little to encourage their application. In the case of an isolated minority like the Sikhs, it is not enough for the government to only encourage cultural interaction in theory. The implementation of this theory must actively encourage the minority participation in the host society.

The situation in Vancouver South forced the municipal government to take a more active role in encouraging positive interaction between the minority and host society. The approaches of the federal and municipal government are not totally incompatible, yet the passive approach of the federal government towards the assimilation of immigrants proved to be inadequate. The federal and provincial governments do insist on maintaining the official languages and institutions of the dominant society but these policies do
little to aid in the immigrants' adaptation and creation of harmonious relations with the host society.

The political experience of Canadian ethnic minorities does not parallel the experience of minorities in the United States, who are fighting for political power within the dominant society. The Canadian problem is the limited participation by minorities in Canadian politics. To this point, the host society has done little to attract the participation of the immigrants. If this condition is not rectified, poor understanding between the visible immigrant groups and host society will remain and racial violence will be a constant threat. The absence of minority participation in the political process leaves unused one of the most effective channels of communication. This lack of communication was partially to blame for the government's not realizing the effect of its immigration policy on the minorities' relations with society. If this situation is not rectified through affirmative action on the part of the government, and on the part of the Sikhs, the result could prove costly in terms of social, economic and political losses.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dobell, Peter and d' Aquino, Susan, "The Special Joint Committee on Immigration Policy, 1975: an exercise in participatory democracy." *Behind the Headlines*, (Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Toronto).


------------------ Aspects of the Absorption and Adaptation of Immigrants. Ottawa: Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1974.


**INTERVIEWS**

Ashley, Lorna. Co-ordinator, Immigrant Services Centre.

Bains, Keva Singh.

Bhatti, Kesar Singh. President, Khalsa Diwan Society.

Bowers, Fritz. City Manager, Vancouver.


Dhaesi, Sadhu Singh. Chairman, Akali Singh Temple


Dillon, Blanche. Executive, Vancouver Chapter of NACOI.

Fraser, John. Member of Parliament, Vancouver South.

Gill, Gurder Singh. Former President, Khalsa Diwan Society.

Hall, Ranjit. Former President, NACOI.

Johal, Hardial Singh. Editor, Sikh Samarchar.

Khanna, S.L. Executive, Vancouver Chapter of NACOI.

Marzari, Darlene. Alderman, Vancouver.

Phillips, Art. Former Mayor, Vancouver.

Prahar, Malkit. Former Publisher, India News and Views; Founder local East Indian Radio Programs on K.E.R.I., 104 F.M. and K.L.Y.W., 106 F.M.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purdy, Doug.</td>
<td>Social Planning Department, Vancouver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rankin, Harry.</td>
<td>Alderman, Vancouver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambhi, Harhijan Singh.</td>
<td>Executive, Akali Singh Temple; Executive, Sikh Youth Federation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh, Gurdit.</td>
<td>Employee, Immigrant Services Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh, Mohinder.</td>
<td>Full-time service at the Khalsa Diwan Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh, Molla.</td>
<td>Former executive, Khalsa Diwan Society; President, Shiromani Akali Dal Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh, Prem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uppal, Jagat.</td>
<td>Former President, Khalsa Diwan Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winch, Harold.</td>
<td>Former Member of Parliament, Former Co-ordinator Immigrant Services Society.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE I

Breakdown of News Items Specifically Pertaining to East Indians in B.C.,
1944-75: Number and (Percentage).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944-1969</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25(46)</td>
<td>23(43)</td>
<td>17(31)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>4(7)</td>
<td>1(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1975</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>14(11)</td>
<td>30(24)</td>
<td>54(44)</td>
<td>30(24)</td>
<td>20(16)</td>
<td>45(36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Vancouver Sun, 1944 - 75.

* Column A: Total number of individual news items
* Column B: "Human interest" stories, often informative or educational, about East Indians; their cultural events or practices portrayed in a positive (if "exotic") light; and reports illustrating "intracommunal" cooperation and solidarity.
* Column C: Articles by newspaper staffers or freelancers indicating positive editorial comment, advocating East Indians' rights, and/or condemning discrimination against East Indians; reports illustrating "inter-communal" cooperation; and references to positive Government action or assistance toward this ethnic group.
* Column D: News items covering incidents or anti-East Indian discrimination, prejudice or bigotry; and blatantly inflammatory articles, indicating negative editorial comment.
* Column E: Reports of incidents (or threats) of "inter-communal" violence or conflict.
* Column F: Reports of incidents (or threats) of "intra-communal" discord/or violence.
* Column G: Reports of illegal immigration and other East Indian crimes.

NOTES: These categories are not always mutually exclusive; i.e., some news items fit into two or three columns. Therefore, percentages will total more than 100 due to multiple entries, as well as statistical rounding.
The President,  
Khalsa Diwan Society,  
Sikh Temple  
8000 Ross Street,  
VANCOUVER, BC  

Dear Sir,  

We the undersigned members of Khalsa Diwan Society,  
8000 Ross Street, Vancouver, B.C. and the sikh sangat of  
lower mainland wish to bring it to your attention that the  
sacrilege actions are taking place during the religious  
congregations in the temple (Gurdwara). The following  
undisciplined and sacrilege actions were noticed by the  
congregations:-  

(a) Addressing to the congregation, in the presence  
of Siri Guru Granth Sahib ji, without covering of heads  
by some speakers.  
(b) Distribution of Holy Dog (Parsad) by a non-  
baptised sikh.  
(c) Taking of donations in the prayer hall by members  
of the Society without covering their heads.  
(d) Sacrilege speeches and commentaries made by members  
of the executive of the Society and by some members of  
the Society, from the Holy stage of congregation, in the  
presence of Holy Siri Guru Granth Sahib.  
(e) Interference to sacrilege the continuous recital  
of Holy Akhand Path of Siri Guru Granth Sahib, by holding  
other functions at the same time.  
(f) Notices of adherent of sikh discipline, before  
entering the main prayer hall of the temple, are not dis­  
played.  
(g) On Saturday May 7th, 1977, Bhai Jiwan Singh & Jatha,  
preachers from Patna Sahib (one of the five high places  
of authorities of sikhs), was reciting the Holy Keertan.  
Bhai Sahib requested the congregation to adhere to the  
discipline required by the sikh dharma, before entering  
to the prayer hall. It is regretted that some of the  
members of Khalsa Diwan Society purposly entered in the  
main prayer hall under the influence of alcohol and also  
without covering their heads. According to the sikh  
faith it is absolutely forbidden to enter into the temple  
whilst under influence of Alcohol, tobacco, with shoes  
and without covering of heads. This mischievous,unruly  

May 12th, 1977.
an undisciplined behaviour of these members disrupted the heavenly spiritual assembly of the congregation. We now understand that Bhai Sahib Jiwan Singh & Jatha, under these unfortunate circumstances, will not recite their divine Keertan ceremonies. This loss of Keertan is painfully felt by the dedicated sikhs of lower mainland.

We would appreciate if guidance for performance of religious ceremonies be taken and observed in accordance with the "REHAT MARYADA" rules set by the high authorities of the sikhs.

ADMINISTRATION:

It is appreciated that the Society is running a Punjabi School in the temple (Gurdwara). However at the same time we do not understand what has it to do with the East Indian Canadians Citizens' Welfare Association. It is noticed from the Directory of the Department of Secretary of State that the school has been run by the so called welfare association.

It has also been noticed that the management of Sikh temple is allowing the East Indians Canadian Citizens' Welfare Association to hold their meetings at the premises of the temple. We are of the opinion that either such meetings should not be allowed in the temple or the management of the temple should also permit other societies to hold their meetings in the temple as well.

On Baisakhi Day celebration, some of the sikh sangat got parking tickets as they could not find suitable place for parking of their cars. Due to lack of sufficient parking space around the temple, we would appreciate if the adjacent property to the temple be converted into proper parking area.

Finally, in order to encourage the congregation assemblies of sikhs of lower mainland and also to avoid mishaps and unnecessary tensions in the temple, it will help if proper attention is paid to the suggestions listed in this letter.

We would appreciate your detailed and prompt reply to our request letter.

...
Thanking you,

Yours truly,

MEMBERS: & SIKH SANGAT -
KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

signed by 374 persons
(Members of Sikh Sangat)

c.c. The Registrar of Companies
Victoria, B.C.

c.c. The Office of the Attorney General,
Victoria, B.C.

c.c. The Office of the Mayor,
Vancouver, B.C.

c.c. The Office of the Secretary of State,
Ottawa, Ont.

c.c. Sikh Temples in B.C. and abroad.

c.c. The President,
S. G. P. C., Amritsar, India.
KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY
SIKH TEMPLE
8000 Ross Street at Marine Drive
Vancouver, B.C. V5X 4C5
TELEPHONE: 324-2010

Dated: 1st Aug'1977

AN OPEN LETTER IN RESPONSE TO TWO LETTERS
SENT BY REGISTERED MAIL TO THE PRESIDENT
OF KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY BY SOME MEMBERS
OF THE SIKH COMMUNITY

Dear concerned members of Sikh Community,
Sat Siri Akal.

I received your registered letters on June 28, 1977, I regret the delay in answering them. There is a reason for that. I will explain.

Most of you are well aware that certain individuals have been carrying on a steady propaganda campaign against the Management at Ross Street Temple. Their objective is to discredit the Khalsa Diwan Society in the eyes of public. By doing this they hope to change the management at the Temple. There is nothing wrong with this idea except their approach and means they adopt to achieve this.

We have not responded to this hate campaign. Neither have we thought fit to defend ourselves against such vilification. Indulgence in such undignified tactics is unbecoming of a Sikh. Further more it would not serve the cause of the Community. Intensification of hostilities would cause great harm and unpleasantness in the community. We have had enough of that. We wanted to move away from that, however, these individuals don't leave us alone. Their continuous condemnation of Sahej Dhari Sikhs and the Temple compels us to inform the public for what they are.

They claim themselves to be 'Singhs' of Guru Gobind Singh and defenders of Sikh faith. A very egotistic assumption to say the least. A Singh of Guru Gobind Singh is a Saint Soldier. He is willing to sacrifice everything, even his life, for the preservation and protection of the poor, the weak and the defenceless. He is never a conquerer. He is not vindictive. He fights only to protect
others, never to solidify or enhance his own position. In other words, he is a Saint first and then a soldier. Without saintliness, a warrior is nothing more than a professional soldier who is trained to fight and kill. A true Singh is full of humility, compassion, love and forgiveness. These virtues were best exemplified by Bhai Ghaniya. All of us fall short of these virtues-including the 'Singhs' who have failed to set a good example for others to follow.

From my personal observation and discussion with these few 'Singhs' - not all are included here, obviously a lot of you are good singhs - I have come to the conclusion that they are neither genuinely interested in the propogation of Sikh ideas to the younger generation of Canadians nor are they interested in the general wellfare of the Sikh Community. All they aspire to is control the Management at the Temple.

They don't feel at east in Canada, always look to Punjab as their home; import bad politics from there into temples and our homes. In the name of religion they want to sanctify their political beliefs which have no relevance in Canada. They live in the past and do not want to face the future in Canada, otherwise they would be more constructive with their criticism, not destructive as they are now. I would suggest they adopt to the Canadian situation here and leave Punjab or India's politics alone. Sikhism has much to give to the Western World and we have failed even to impart it to our own children. Whose fault is it? You answer that question yourself. I suggest the dedicated Sikhs come forward and set good example for our children to follow.

For the sake of the community I beg these people to stop these divisive and antagonistic activities. Our community has suffered enough. Our image had become tarnished. It's time to heal the wounds caused by rift and dissension. Let us also not take our problems outside the community. The management of the temple has not been perfect but there has been improvement over the last couple of years. We are continuing this task of reconstruction and restoration of mutual faith and respect. Much remains to be done. It will take time. Let us show patience and restraint and not make unreasonable and unrealistic demands on management.

All of you have the right to become members of the Society by November of this year. Then you can take part in the election of next year's committee. This is the right you must exercise. You can elect whom you consider most suitable to carry out responsibilities in accordance with...
Sikh Rehat and Maryada. This is the only acceptable and rational way to bring about a change in the management. If you fail to exercise that right and responsibility then there is no point in blaming others.

No one individual can claim to be the protector of Sikh Religion. God and our Gurus do not require our protection. They can stand on their own. It is us who require protection. Similarly the honour of GURU GRANTH SAHIB is not protected by any individual. An individual who in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib displays violence in the protection or rejection of Maryada, in my opinion, shows complete lack of understanding and disregard for what Guru Granth Sahib embodies. Let us pay more attention to what is written in the Holy Book rather than idol worship.

Now I would like to answer your specific questions or complaints.

MEMBERSHIP. I. Separate receipts books, and not different ones, are kept for membership only. The receipt Nos reserved for membership are not used for general donations. 
2. Membership cards shall be mailed starting in Sept.

REHAT MARYADA.
We encourage everybody to cover his or her head before entering the Temple. However we do not believe in using coercion. It must be voluntary. You can't force religion on people. It has to follow from within. Therefore we leave Sevadars in the temple to their own conscience, whether to cover their heads or not. We do encourage that they should cover them. Under the present circumstances we do not feel anything will be gained by taking a hard stand on the issue. Given more time it will resolve itself.

The situation that arose during Kirtan of Bhai Jiwan was created by him. We had invited him to the Temple hoping that perhaps he would inculcate, through his Kirtan and exposition of Gurbani, much deeper appreciation of Gurbani to the Sangat even nonbelievers, but he failed to do so. His constant condemnation of 'Pattit Sikhs' made them uncomfortable in the Temple. Some of the Singhss acted in a very undignified manner in the temple. Of course the reaction was undesirable. It was most unfortunate incident and I am not proud of what happened on that day; only I may tell you a lot worse could have happened but did not. Let us all forget that and all of us must try to avoid recurrence of such unpleasant incidents in the Temple.

To answer your other questions;
(a) East Indian Canadian Welfare Association (EICCWA) does not run Punjabi School in the temple. Your information is not correct.
(b) There is no harm in having meetings, lectures, or classes in the temple, as long as these meetings or lectures (i) are not of political nature; (ii) are done for the general benefit of the Sikh Community; (iii) do not go against the spirit and tenets of Sikhism; (iv) are conducted peacefully and quietly and efficiently and do not interfere the regular temple activities.
(c) With the funds in hand we are trying to do as many improvements as possible on priority basis. Parking is next on our list.

This explains the position of my Committee.

We welcome your constructive suggestions for further discussion.

Sincerely Yours

(KESAR SINGH BHATTI)
ARTICLE I  
NAME:  
The Association shall be known as National Association of Canadians of Origins in India (NACOI).

Interpretations: "Canadians" includes landed immigrants to Canada, of origins in India. "Origins in India" applies to all persons who have their origin in India by birth, marriage or ancestry.

ARTICLE II  
DEFINITIONS:  
The Association shall be a non-profit charitable corporation as defined under the Federal Internal Revenue Act.

ARTICLE III  
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:  
1. To encourage Canadians of origins in India to fully participate in Canadian Society.
2. To provide a national voice to Canadians of origins in India.
3. To provide a forum for exchange of ideas, issues and common concerns.
4. To facilitate communication within and with other organizations.
5. To assure and protect the rights of Canadians of origins in India.
6. To assist in the orientation and adaptation of Canadians of origins in India to the Canadian milieu and to bring about a better understanding of Canada and other Canadians.
7. To formulate guidelines for improving the collective image of Canadians of origins in India.
8. To assure due recognition of the contributions of Canadians of origins in India to Canada.
ARTICLE IV

HEADQUARTERS:
The national Head Office shall be located in the National Capital Region (Ottawa-Hull) at a place therein where the business of the Association shall from time to time be conducted.

In addition to the National Head office, the Association may establish other offices and regional headquarters anywhere in Canada as the Board of Directors may deem expedient by resolution.
AN OPEN LETTER

5361 Wallace Street,  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6N 2A1  

August 18, 1977.

The Honourable Ron Basford  
Minister of Justice and  
Attorney General of Canada,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Basford:

In an earlier letter I have already explained to you why our East Indian Canadian community at large is exasperated and unhappy at this farcical organization called NACOI (National Association of Canadians of Origins in India). The decision of the Honourable Secretary of State to dole away five thousand dollars of the taxpayers' money to NACOI, which is not a representative group, has heightened the disappointment and anger of our people. Please advise the Honourable Secretary of State to cancel this unjustified grant to NACOI so that our Liberal Government is saved from public censure and disgrace.

For your knowledge allow me to sum up the objections of our people in a more specific manner:

1. Why did the promoters of NACOI in Ottawa not approach all organizations of East Indian Canadian community in British Columbia?
2. Why did these conveners in Ottawa choose to invite only two organizations from B.C., namely, East Indian Canadians Welfare Association and Hindu Wishva Parishad, for an organizational meeting in Ottawa nearly a year and a half ago? Why did they ignore and overlook the oldest and largest segment, that is, the Sikhs of British Columbia who have over twenty Sikh temples in this province and who constitute almost eighty per cent of the overall East Indian community in B.C.?
3. Why were those individuals who are active in community work and in political parties kept in dark all along?
4. Why did those four or five persons who attended the Ottawa meeting, who now sit on the executive and ad hoc committee of the B.C. Chapter of NACOI, choose to remain silent for a year and a half? Why did they not on their return from Ottawa inform the community about the founding of NACOI? Why were they afraid of the democratic process? How can they now ask the people to approve the NACOI constitution, whose draft was never shown to the people?

5. Why did the president of NACOI, one Ranjit Hall, who is a civil servant, make no attempt to meet the community at large when he visited Vancouver about two months ago? The bureaucratic position of the president is also objectionable and cannot be conducive to the formation of a national organization of our East Indian community.

6. The bureaucrats in the Dept. of Secretary of State and in the Dept. of Immigration should not try to push for a national organization of our community. Our community does not need guidance and spoonfeeding from the bureaucrats, some of whom seem keen on superimposing on Canadian Sikhs an artificial organization like NACOI. The Canadian Sikh community can look after its needs, as it always has since 1904.

Regards.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Harkirpal Singh Sara,
President, Marpole Liberal Association.

Copy to: The Right Hon. P.E. Trudeau, Prime Minister
The Hon. Secretary of State
The Hon. R.J. Perrault, Senator
The Hon. J.P. Gunn,
The President, Shiromani Akali Dal Ass'n of Canada.
SHIROMANI AKALI DAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

P.O. Box 67605
Postal Station "O"
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada, V5W 3V1

2421, East 49th avenue,
Vancouver, B.C. V5S 1J3

23rd August, 1977

The Honourable John Roberts, P.C., M.P.
Secretary of State of Canada,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Our organization is the historical and traditional organization of Sikhs that has been responsible for fighting for Sikh causes for over two centuries, since the Khalsa (Sikh) confederation of baptized Sikhs was established by our last and Tenth Prophet Sri Guru Gobind Singh, in A.D. 1699.

However, there are numerous Sikh organizations all across Canada today. These are doing good work, in their fields, be those cultural, religious, literary or other. They go under various names in many of our Canadian provinces.

Yet, we are now given to understand that some civil-servant initiated organization by the name of "National Association of Canadians of Origins in India" is being currently promoted, on the assumption that a national organization of so-called "East-Indians" is necessary.

As far as the SIKHS are concerned the description "East-Indian" is not only a mis-nomer, but also highly prejudicial to Sikhs to whom it is mutatis mutandis applied— for administrative convenience, if for no other reason.

Sikhs would be happy if they are not generally termed "East-Indians". We would be content to be just SIKHS.

Sikhs are not only members of a Sikh faith, but are also members of a Sikh nation. Sikhs were sovereign and ruled the Kingdom of the Punjab, until it fell to the British in A.D. 1846. We are proud to be Canadian Sikhs now.
We go on record as being opposed to the inclusion of Sikhs in the new, and spurious organization being peddled as NACOI aforesaid. None of the Sikh organizations would surrender their entities to it, and we believe only one or two out of scores of Canadian Sikh organizations have even consented to participate in its forthcoming meeting later this month at SFU.

On behalf of Sikhs of Canada, we take the position that the above move is a distinct manoeuvre to break the Sikh position in Canada, because Sikhs are numerically in majority, and have been the pioneer immigrant people settling in Canada since the turn of the century.

We cannot stop new organizations coming into being. However, we would strongly object to any if these are calculated to short-circuit, so to speak, genuine and majority people, the Sikhs of Canada. We submit, that the effect of this new group, NACOI, is to give importance to non-Sikh people, of Indian origin, such as Hindus, Figians, West-Indians, and the like. Sikhs naturally would not be interested in such a group, because Sikhs have a strong culture, religion and philosophy and society of their own. We do not wish to be lumped with some peoples of "Origins in India". There are Muslims who had once origins in India. They have their own distinct culture and religion and are a separate people, same as are the Sikhs.

We feel that the Government of Canada ought to be made aware of the implications of the presence of different races and people in Canada—of which Sikhs are an important factor.

Should Sikhs feel that they are not being given a fair shake, so to speak, in representation in Canadian government and our national affairs, perhaps the Canadian Sikhs might think it urgent then to establish a national front or body of their own as would represent, at least in token, the various active and individual associations and societies of Canadian Sikhs all across the country. This might become necessary, if, especially we are not meted out a fair share we deserve in this country where we have made history in a number of ways already.

We expect the national government to be vigilant in these matters.

Sikhs feel that our national government should have within the past 10 years appointed our people to deserving positions in the government of the country,
such as the bench. We have participated in the political field in Canada, but have not been successful as yet in having a candidate nominated to contest federal elections. Our strength is in British Columbia, but we have our people settled within the last 10 years in most other provinces of Canada, and in almost every walk of life. We regretfully have to acknowledge that the federal government could have done better with regards to our legitimate position and rights as an important minority group of Canada. However, we are not despondent, and certainly look forward to a speedy action at this day and age on the part of the national government.

We do hope that this brief would better state our position as Canadian Sikhs, and the government will not fall into error in dealing with questions whenever the question of so-called "East-Indians" or "Origins in India" comes up. Even our "origins" go farther than "India", since our people are composed of the Indo-Scythian stock that settled in northern India since 1st century A.D.

With our good wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

(signed) Molla Singh, Président.