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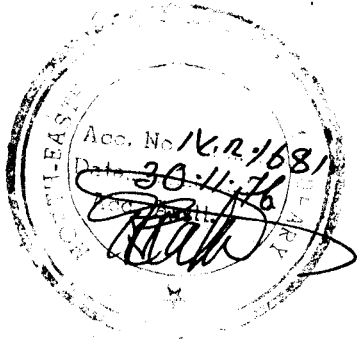
HIMACHAL PRADESH

ITS PROPER SHAPE AND STATUS

by

Dr. Y. S. Parmar,
Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh.

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HIMACHAL PRADESH

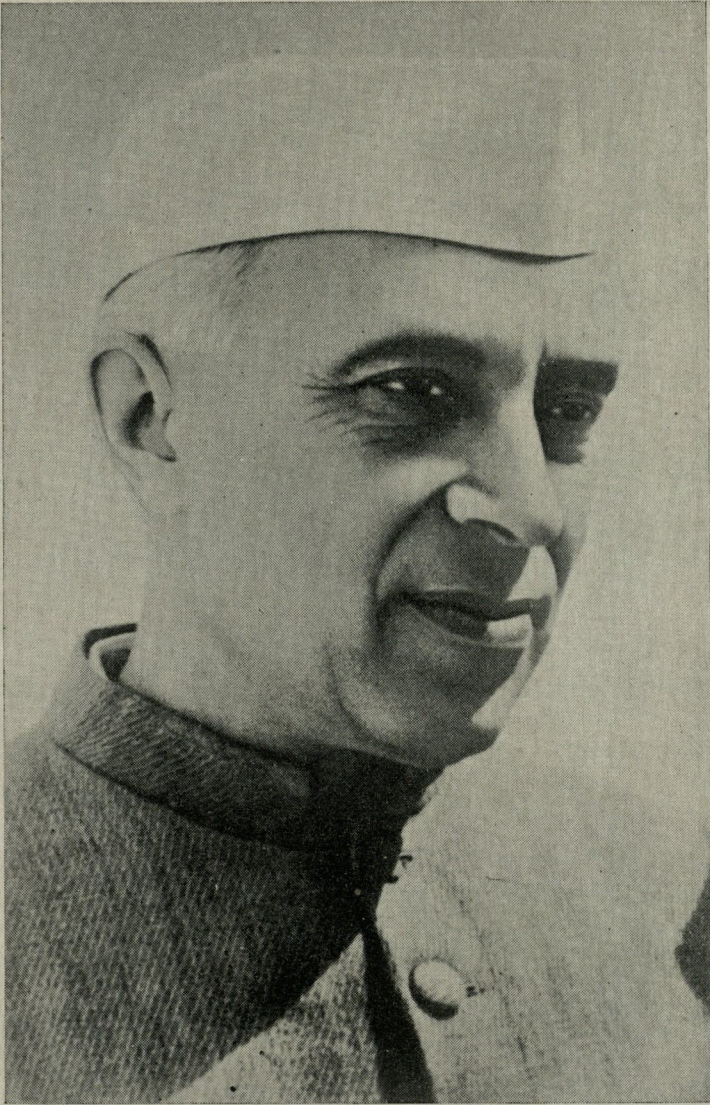
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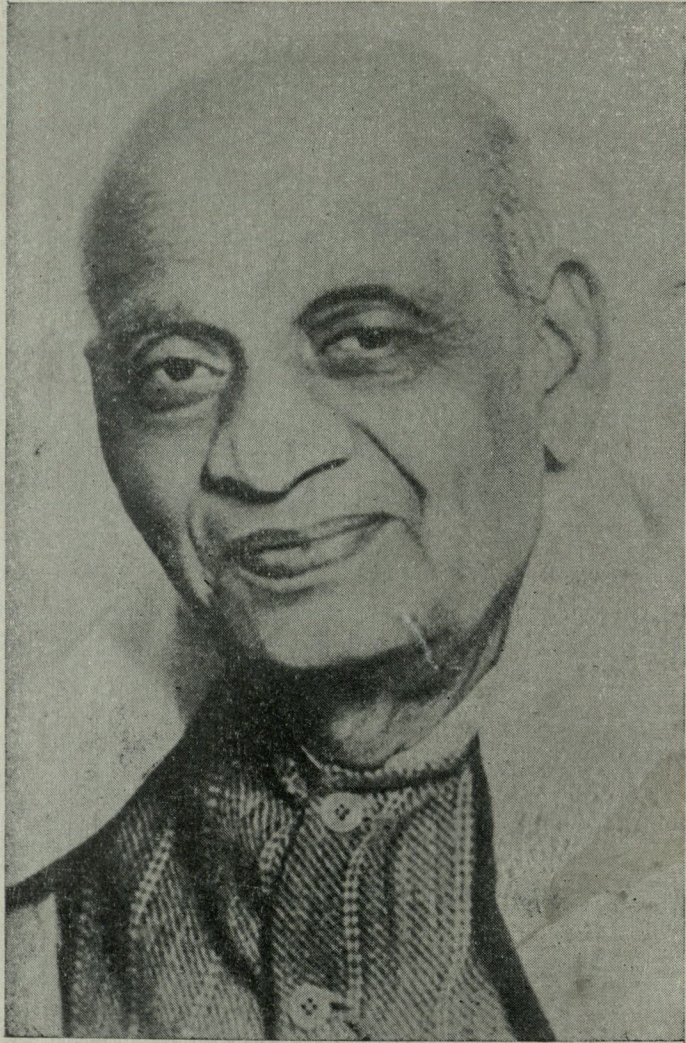
*Dr. Y. S. Parmar,
Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh.*

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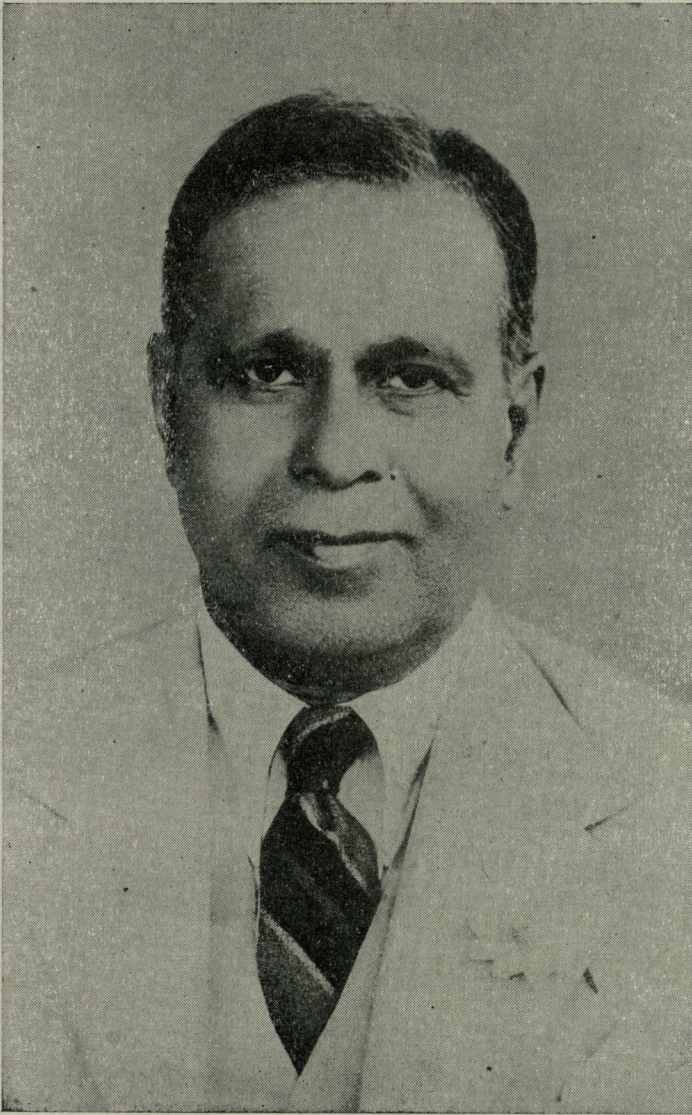


He took keen interest in Himachal's development and prosperity and once said "There is no question of merger of Himachal with Punjab....."



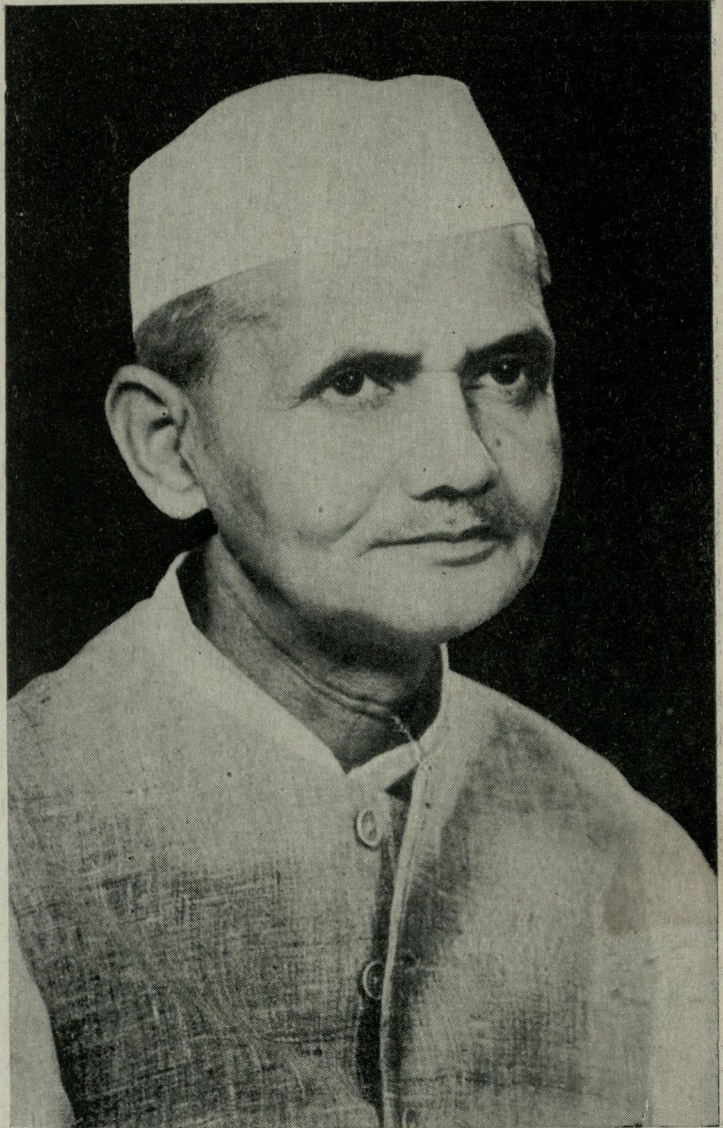
*"The ultimate object is to enable this area to attain the position
of an autonomous province of India...."*

—Sardar Patel on Himachal.



“In small States the administration will be more accessible to the people ; and there will be livelier sense of local needs”

—Shri Fazal Ali in his Dissenting Note on
Himachal Pradesh in S.R.C. Report.



“It is better not to take half-hearted steps and half-hearted measures. It is better to delegate whatever power we want to delegate to them at a stretch and give the power to the representatives of the people to run their own government.”

—Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri in Parliament about restoration of democratic set up in Himachal Pradesh.

PREFACE

THE proper shape and status of Himachal Pradesh is uppermost in the mind of every thinking Himachali. The Himachal Pradesh Government has had clear and definite views on the subject. Given in the pages that follow, these were very briefly but clearly placed before the late Sir Fazal Ali, Chairman, States Reorganisation Commission, for the consideration of the Commission. In his momentous note, appended to the States Reorganisation Commission Report, the Chairman strongly recommending the separate retention of the unit said: "Himachal Pradesh is a typical instance where the arguments in favour of small units outlined in paragraph 212 of this report can be applied with advantage"*. Much has happened since then, but the words ring true as ever.

As a result of the States Reorganisation Act, Himachal Pradesh was saved as a separate unit but at a very heavy cost indeed; for its Legislature was abolished and a Territorial Council was substituted putting the clock of democracy back. All efforts for the restoration of a democratic set-up failed till Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri took over as Home Minister and made his historic statement in Parliament. He said: "I feel it is better not to take half-hearted steps or half-hearted measures. It is better to delegate whatever power we want to delegate to them at a stretch and give the power to the representatives of the people to run their own Government". There were, however, great obstacles in his way—and hopes tended to verge on disillusionment—till, with the approval of late Pandit Nehru, he was able to introduce a Bill providing for the democratic set-up for Himachal Pradesh and some other Union territories. The people of Himachal Pradesh are naturally deeply grateful to him, for they realise that it was ultimately his personal efforts which alone restored democracy to this Pradesh.

The resources of this Pradesh have developed considerably over the years. However, the Himachal Pradesh Government is sincerely and strenuously trying to develop them to the utmost, more particularly, by an imaginative and bold programme of afforestation and hydel-power generation, so as to enable the Pradesh to attain 'the final stage' in its development envisaged by the late Sardar Patel. In that event, will be seen fulfilled the solemn pledge: "...after this area is sufficiently developed in its resources

*S.R.C. Report page 243.

and administration, it is proposed that its constitution shall be similar to that of any other province”.

For the dawn of that great day, the people of Himachal Pradesh have been eagerly and longingly waiting†.

Y. S. PARMAR.

†P.S. Since going to the press, a very important development has taken place and that is the reconsideration of the demand for a Punjabi Suba on linguistic basis. The Union Government has formed a Cabinet Committee and a Parliamentary Committee to go into the whole matter so that a co-operative solution to the vexed question could be found. As such, the situation has greatly changed. In case a redistribution of the Punjab is decided upon by the Union Government, the people of the Punjab Hills will find it difficult either to join the Punjab State or Haryana and they will naturally insist on joining their brethren with the same language, culture, customs, way of living and problems. In that case the districts of Kangra, Kulu, Simla and Lahaul-Spiti; Tehsil of Pathankot of Gurdaspur District, Tehsil Una of Hoshiarpur District, Tehsil Kalka of Ambala District, Nalagarh sub-division and Morni of Naraingarh sub-division of Ambala District, will have to be integrated with Himachal Pradesh to form a State of these hills. This view-point has already been submitted to the Prime Minister, Members of the Cabinet Committee and Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee. The Executive of the Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee, has also passed a resolution to this effect. The Cabinet Committee and the Parliamentary Committee will surely give their serious and considerate thought to this aspect of the matter and the Union Government will meet this very legitimate demand of the people of these hills. That will bring cheer to their hearts as the realization of their long-felt aspirations. As frontier guards on the borders of our great country, it will enthuse them all the more to safe-guard the integrity and independence of our country and stand as a rock against any invasion from that quarter.

SIMLA:

October 11, 1965.

Y. S. PARMAR.

HIMACHAL PRADESH—ITS PROPER SHAPE AND STATUS

Letter dated April 23, 1954 from Dr. Y. S. Parmar to late Shri Fazal Ali, Chairman, States Reorganization Commission.

The Commission is no doubt faced with a gigantic task. The Prime Minister, however, has entrusted this task to a team of personalities with foresight, ability and imagination who are bound to find a solution to one of the most complicated problems and the team, therefore, deserves the active co-operation and support of all responsible sections of the country.

2. In the matter of re-organisation of States, two important matters deserve particular attention. One is the integration of the old Indian States, which was brought about within a very short period, but which was naturally based, to a large extent, on the old patterns which existed before Independence. Pockets or enclaves were created by this integration which naturally created a lot of inconvenience to people and administrative difficulties to the Government.

UNITY AND SECURITY OF INDIA

3. First, the rationalisation of the enclaves had to wait till things got settled down and the administration also was consolidated. Second, in the case of what used to be British India, the great regional languages could not find a proper place and, with the attainment of Independence, therefore, a demand has grown for the formation of certain States on a linguistic basis. That has, unfortunately, become too aggressive at times and taken the shape of expansionism. Small States, which had come into being as a result of historical developments and bonds of common language, culture and traditions, have been attempted to be bullied by their neighbours, for an idea has grown that small units have no right to exist and, whether they like it or not, they will be absorbed in some bigger unit. While financial and economic considerations are very important, the welfare of the people of each constituent unit is far more important, as laid down in the resolution of the Government of India. The people of such areas, if democracy has any meaning, must have the right to decide for themselves and should not be forcibly tagged on to any other State, especially, where there may be no common ties of language, culture or traditions between the two. One of the greatest dangers to the present security of the country lies in such an approach, whereby the sentiments or feelings of the smaller numbers are tried to be crushed by sheer