

**TRIBUTE TO
SHEIKH MUJIB
FIFTH DEATH
ANNIVERSARY**

17 March 1920-15 August 1975



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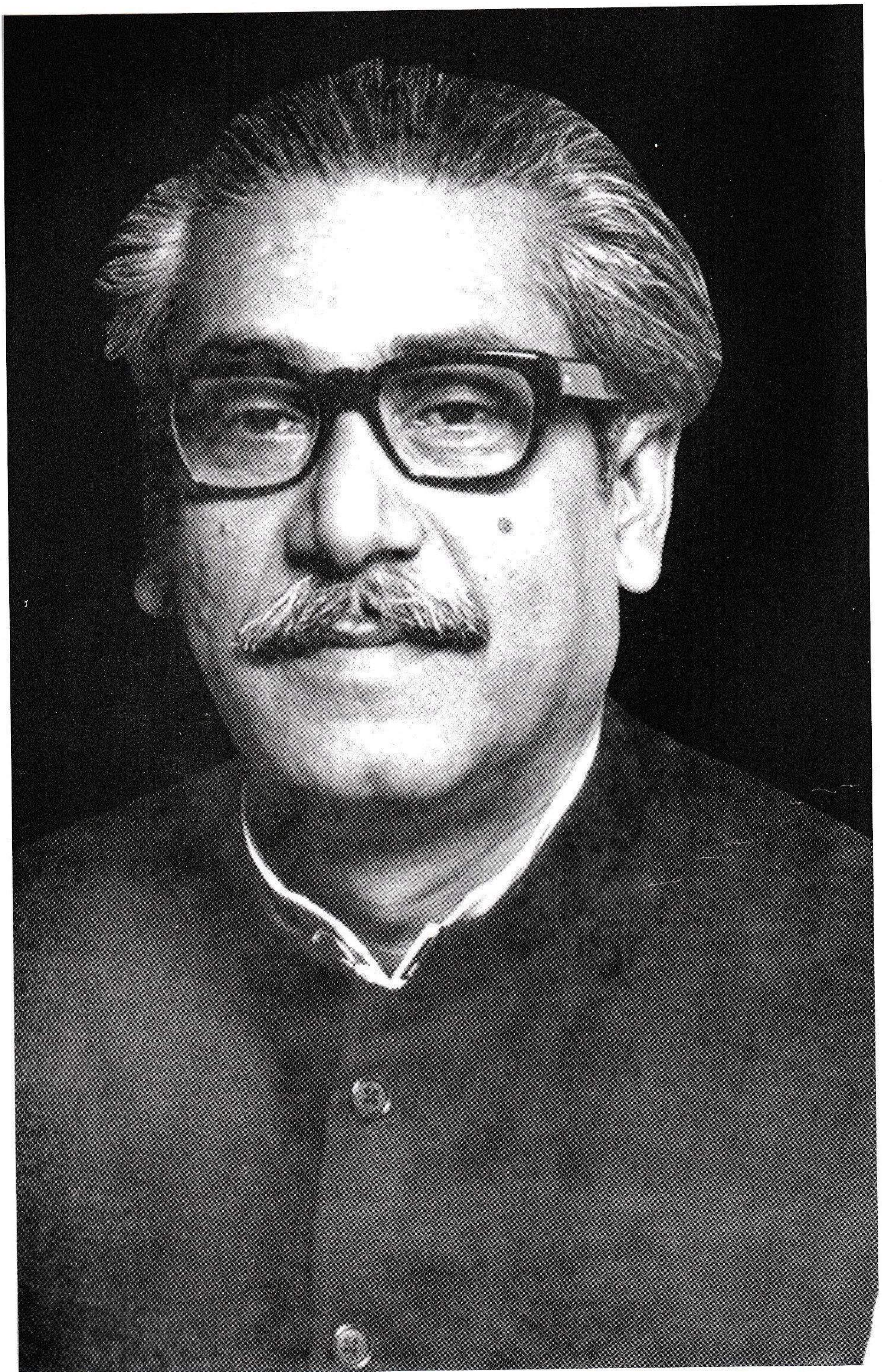
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Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

MESSAGES

The following messages were received on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's fifth death anniversary on 15 August 1980.

From Sheikh Hasina, Patron, Bangabandhu Society

"I am very pleased that the Bangabandhu Society has decided to bring out this small anthology in memory of my father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman". It will, I hope, help to keep alive not only his name but also the ideals for which he stood and fought so valiantly during his lifetime. My father's vision was of a Bangladesh free of religious bigotry, socially emancipated, politically mature. That dream, when transformed into reality, will be his most enduring monument.

I wish the Society every success in its efforts".

-London, 25 July 1980

From The Rt. Hon. Anthony Wedgewood Benn, MP

"I am happy to send this message in memory of the great leadership offered by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh.

His leadership will never be forgotten and there are millions all over the world who still respect his memory and hope that it will continue to influence the younger generation".

-House of Commons, 25 July 1980

From The Rt. Hon. Michael Foot, MP

"My good wishes to your project. I certainly think that the fifth anniversary of Sheikh Rahman's death should be properly celebrated".

-House of Commons, 17 July 1980

From Lord Brockway

"Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the father and founder of the independence of Bangladesh. He inherited overwhelming difficulties, but by his character and statemanship achieved a wonderful result. He will be remembered for all time not only by the people of Bangladesh but by those who recognised its emancipation".

-Fenner Brockway, 18 July 1980

From Mr James Lamond, JP, MP

"It is very fitting that this book should be published to mark the fifth anniversary of the murder of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, since it serves both as a reminder of a great leader and as an inspiration to all of us who support his political ideals and actions. Bangladesh's loss in 1975 was a loss to all the world.

I am sure that the history would have been very different had Sheikh Mujib been able to lead his nation in the last five years. Those of us who met him will never forget him."

-House of Commons, 16 July 1980

From Julius Silverman, MP

"I welcome the publication of this booklet on the Bangabandhu which will record on the Fifth Anniversary of his death his enormous contribution to the Liberation of Bangladesh. He was the father of his people and his memory will live in Bangladesh forever."

-House of Commons, 21 July 1980

From The Rt. Hon. Edward Heath, MBE, MP

"When Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was released from prison he flew straight to London to see me as Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street. Together we discussed the future and how Britain could best help the troubled sub-continent and his own country in particular. I am glad that we have been able to do so."

-House of Commons, 23 July 1980

From Stan Newens, MP

"The bitter struggle to establish Bangladesh, of which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the inspiration and the symbol, was supported by peoples throughout the world in the hope that it would bring an end to appalling oppression and murder and pave the way for a regime based on freedom, democracy and real respect for human values.

It is a cruel irony that Sheikh Mujib, his family and closest co-operators should themselves have been the victims of a foul and despicable coup after the achievement of independence.

The ideals for which they stood, however, did not die and they will triumph in the end, despite the betrayal and the repression.

All who believe in human liberty and progress must sustain and give succour to those brave Bengalees who today are striving in the face of many odds to achieve that triumph, for in the fullness of time victory will be theirs".

-House of Commons, July 1980

From John Hunt, MP

"I welcome this opportunity to contribute a short message for the booklet which is to mark the fifth anniversary of the tragic and untimely death of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. His name will always be remembered and respected, not only in Bangladesh, but by all those who followed his distinguished career.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's long fight for a Bengalee State began in 1948 when he founded the East Pakistan Students' League and then, with the declaration of the independent Republic of Bangladesh, we watched his efforts, first as Prime Minister and latterly as President, to grapple with the immense problems of reconstruction and rehabilitation following the ravages both of war and of natural disaster.

I pay tribute to his memory and am glad to know that the ideals for which he stood are being maintained by the Bangabandhu Society".

-House of Commons, 22 July 1980

From Mr Michael Barnes, Vice-Chairman
Bangabandhu Society

"The ideals for which Bangabandhu stood embodied the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people throughout the Third World. By publishing this booklet the Bangabandhu Society is performing an important service in helping to keep those ideals alive in men's hearts."

-London, 13 July 1980

From The Rt. Hon. Arthur Bottomley, OBE, MP

"It was my privilege to know Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and to be closely associated with him at the time of the birth of Bangladesh.

His premature death deprived his country of a wise leader and the Commonwealth of a good friend".

-House of Commons, 16 July 1980

FOREWORD

The purpose of this book is two-fold.

It is a book of remembrance. Those who read it will learn about, or remember as they read, the record of a great man's life—how he lived and why he died in the way he did. His is the story of a man of great vision with the courage to work and fight to make his mission come true. In a single life-time he inspired millions of his fellow countrymen to share his vision and to be prepared also to lay down their lives to bring Bangladesh into being.

Those who knew Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will have written in this book of the man they knew. They write of his great gift and of his great bravery, of his fortitude in adversity, and of his magnanimity in victory, and above all, of his unquenchable love of his country and his faith in his people.

It is right that those who knew him should speak of the man and his work so that the world should be reminded that though he died tragically before his vision was wholly fulfilled, the vision is not dead but lives still in the lives of those who share it.

For this book has a two-fold purpose and this is its second aim—to inspire those who share his dream of "golden Bengal" to carry to its full fruition, the vision for which he lived and died.

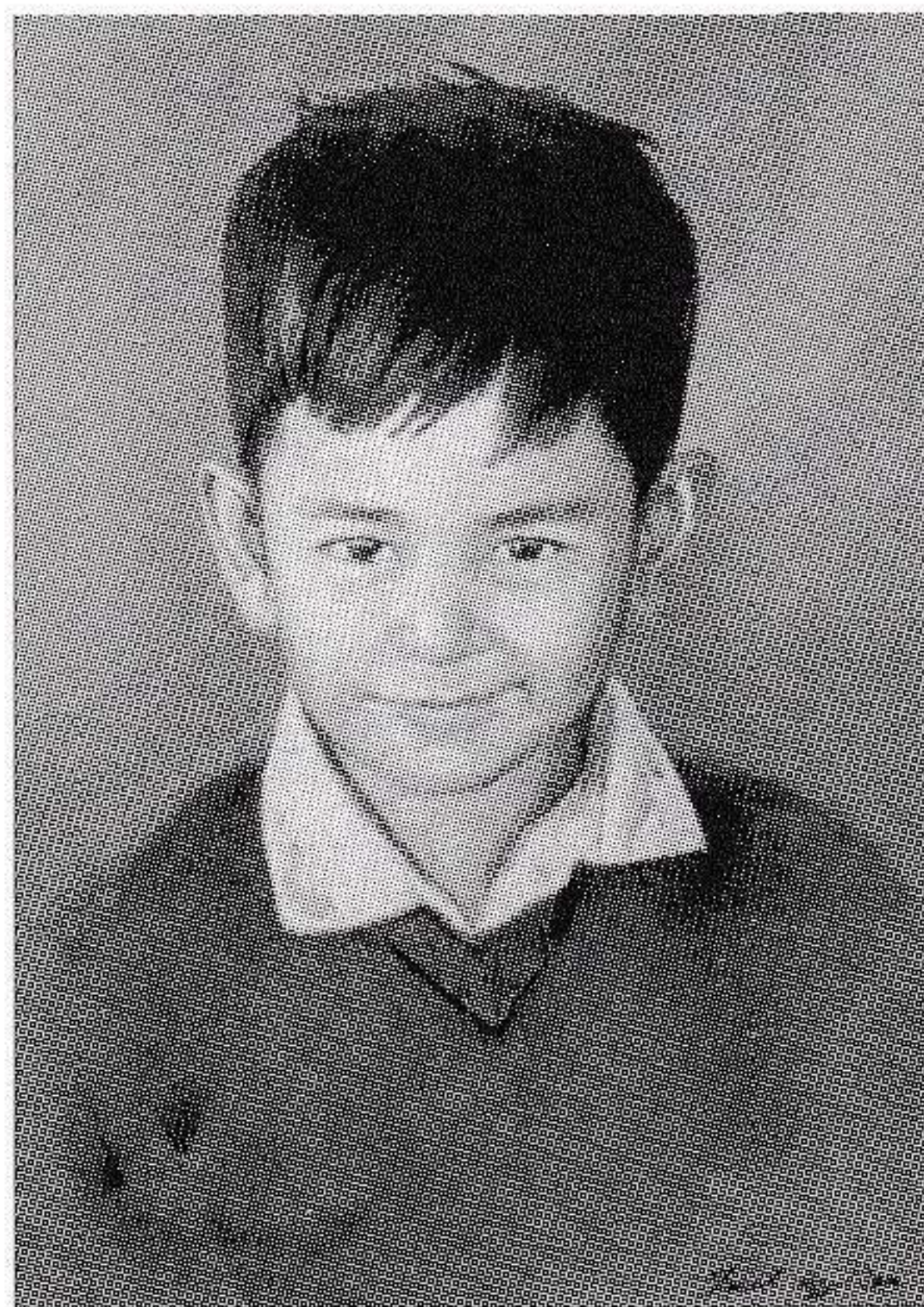
Those who have written this book have done well to remind us how the nation of Bangladesh came to be born through the faith and fortitude of the man who justly carries the title Bangabandhu, the friend of his nation. We who read the book will do well to remember that there is still work to be done if the mission to which his faith gave birth is to be nurtured and grow strong.

It was Mujib's belief that what he had begun would never be destroyed; that Bangladesh would live. That belief has been handed down through his death to those who have written in this book. Such faith can not die.

Sir Thomas Williams, QC, MP
Chairman, Bangabandhu Society



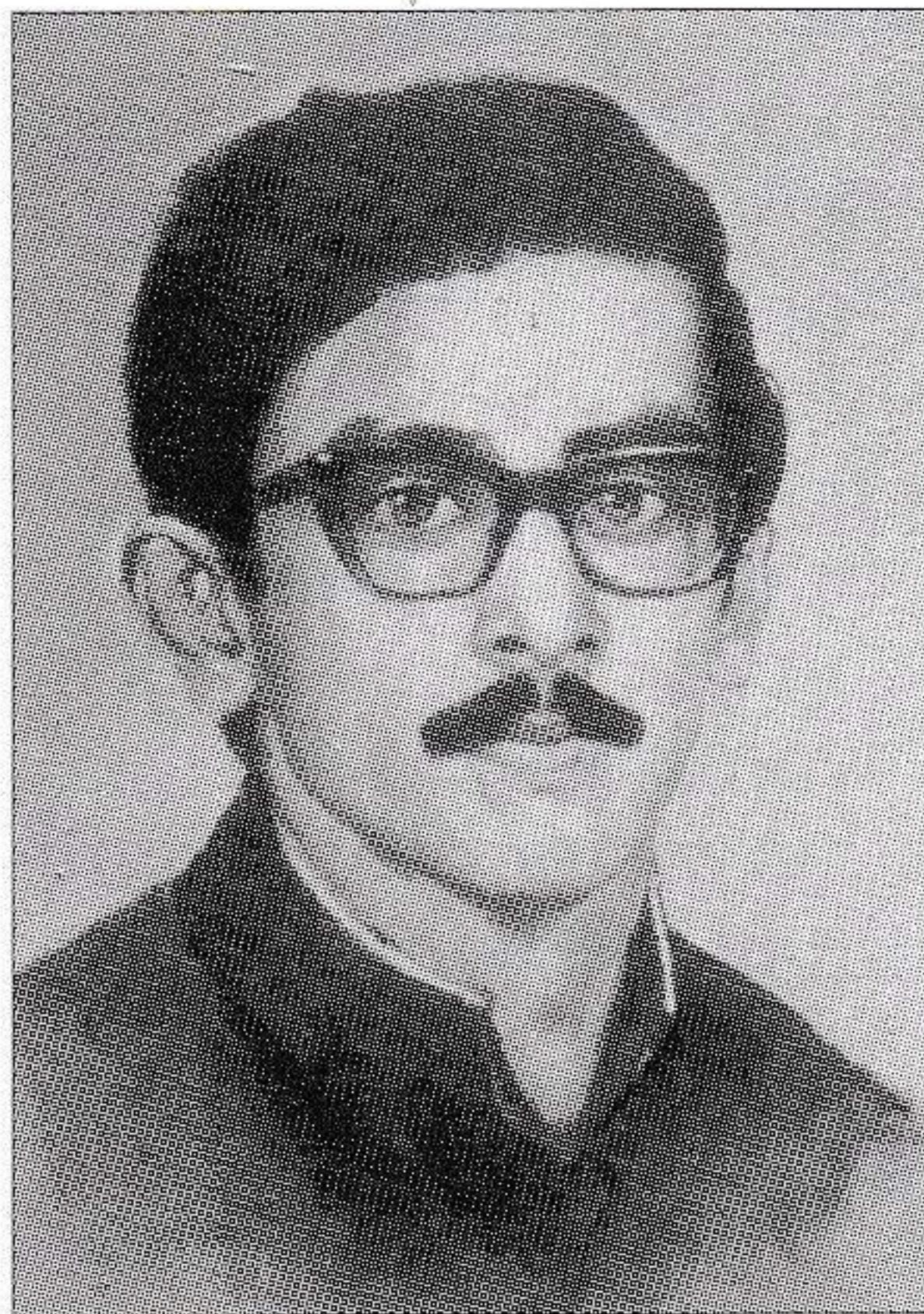
Fazilatunnesa Mujib



Sheikh Russel



Sheikh Abu Naser



Sheikh Kamal



Sultana Kamal



Sheikh Jamal



Parvin Jamal Rosy

NOTE

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was not merely a name, but an ideal. Without a leader like him, it is doubtful if Bangladesh could have emerged as an independent nation-state in relatively so short a time.

The people of Bangladesh fought resolutely under Bangabandhu's leadership for the realisation of the four basic principles—Nationalism, Democracy, Secularism and Socialism—first initiated by him. The most lasting tribute we can pay Bangabandhu's memory is to work ardently for the promotion of these principles; to see that they become a permanent feature of Bangladesh society and political life.

Bangabandhu Society[☆] is grateful to all those who took part in the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room to mark Sheikh Mujib's birth anniversary on 17 March 1980. We take pleasure in publishing some of the speeches made on that occasion together with a number of other contributions.

The Society renews its pledge to keep alive the memory and achievements of Sheikh Mujib and the principles for which he fought steadfastly throughout his political life and for which he made the supreme sacrifice.

M. Selim

Secretary-General

Bangabandhu Society

[☆] The followers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, now resident in Europe, have set up the Society at a meeting held in London's Conway Hall on 16 September 1979

Sheikh Mujib Man And Leader

DR PREMEN ADDY

Like the vast majority of his countrymen, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was born of humble Muslim parents in a Bengalee village in the district of Faridpur on 17 March 1920.

His boyhood was unremarkable. He passed his Matriculation examination in 1942 and went to Calcutta, the cultural centre of perhaps the most politically conscious province of British India, where he took his degree from the Islamia College. The young Mujib was deeply influenced by the passion and turbulence of life around him, with its fascinating array of charismatic Subash Chandra Bose to the astute Oxford-educated lawyer, H.S. Suhrawardhy. The latter who had become luminary of the Muslim League and Chief Minister of Bengal during the period of the terrible famine and the Quit India movement, became Mujib's political mentor. It was Suhrawardhy's guiding hand plus the popular pressures generated by the Hindu-Muslim sectarian conflict of the time that prompted the Sheikh to throw in his lot with the League.

On 14 August 1947 amid bloodshed and popular rejoicing the new state of Pakistan came into being. While it was from its birth a geographical anomaly consisting of two separate parts divided by a thousand miles of alien territory, its political deformation, springing from a sectarian interpretation of Islam, rejected the non-Muslim history and culture of the Indian sub-continent on the ground of religious incompatibility. Thus within months of Pakistan's creation its rulers determined that their country should have only one state language-Urdu. A product of the Indo-Persian cultural encounter in northern India, Urdu had become the *lingua franca* of the Muslim aristocracy and an associated Hindu elite: its Islamic pedigree was considered impeccable.

For much the same reason the allegedly non-Islamic roots of the Bengali language and the fact that its modern development owed most to a Hindu intelligentsia made it suspect in the eyes of Pakistan's leaders.

Yet the Bengalee Muslims, who were in the overall majority in the new state, spoke little Urdu, and while fervently loyal to Islam, remained tenaciously devoted to their own language and culture.

It was over the Pakistan Government's cultural imperialism that Mujib first distinguished himself as a student activist. As the popular Bengalee resistance grew, so did Mujib's stature. Freeing himself of the sectarian shackles of his earlier life, he gradually developed into a secular nationalist. His pride in his Bengalee cultural heritage deepened, as the movement of which he was now an integral part swelled in volume and intensity. The cycle of Government repression and mass upsurge quickened the momentum of political life, and between 1948 and 1954, Mujib was constantly in and out of gaol. New opposition groups were being formed, one of which, the Awami League, elected him as its Joint Secretary. In March 1954 elections were held; and the Muslim League, the party responsible for Pakistan's creation and thereby enjoying great prestige, was routed. Such was the magnitude of its defeat that of the 309 seats contested, it won a paltry ten, with the Chief Minister Nurul Amin, losing to a young Law Student.

This was a massive triumph; a watershed in the Bengalee people's struggle against Pakistani imperialism. It ushered in a new United Front Government led by A.K. Fazlul Huq, with Sheikh Mujib as its youngest member. However, the life of this Ministry was cut short in 1955 'when it was peremptorily dismissed from office. Three years later, a military coup put Ayub Khan in power and all political parties were effectively banned. As soon as the ban was lifted in 1963, Mujib revived the Awami League. The old stalwarts had passed on and he was now in sole charge. For the rest of the decade he kept alight one of the very few candles for democracy in Pakistan, while at the

very few candles for democracy in Pakistan, while at the same time holding afloat the banner of Bengalee political and economic rights. These were lonely but stirring years and brought out the steel in Sheikh Mujib. Ayub Khan was at the height of his international popularity; lionised by President Johnson, he was also courted by Chairman Mao. Within the country, and this included Pakistan's former eastern province of Bengal, the forces of the Islamic Right closed ranks behind him; they were soon joined by the Maoist Left who saw in his friendship for China an act of holy communion with the self-proclaimed Caliph of World Revolution. Hatred of India, with its strong undertones of anti-Hindu sectarianism, was the cementing factor in this seemingly strange Mullah-Maoist alliance.

True to himself and his secular nationalist vision, Mujib stood firm against this seductive demagogy. Nor did the entreaties and blandishments of the Ayub junta deflect him from his purpose. In 1966, he publicly announced in Lahore, one of the principal cities of the then West Pakistan, his Six-Point Programme for an autonomous East Pakistan, which became the initial rallying cry of the Bangladesh liberation struggle. Ayub's reaction was predictable. He said that if the Six-Point Programme were implemented, a "united Bengal" would eventually emerge and, therefore, the threat would have to be met with arms.

Exasperated by Mujib's unyielding stubbornness, the Pakistani rulers falsely arraigned him as an Indian agent in the infamous Agartala Conspiracy Case. Their failure to destroy popular confidence in his integrity can best be measured in his massive general election victory in December 1970. In March 1971, Yahya Khan made an attempt to reverse this verdict with the aid of bayonets. Although devoted to non-violent methods, Mujib responded reluctantly with a call to arms. Much blood was shed, a war fought and Bangladesh set free. A tumultuous welcome awaited the Sheikh on his return to Dacca in January 1972, the capital of the newly liberated state of Bangladesh. It set the seal to his crowning triumph.

Once in power, Sheikh Mujib's problems were truly formidable. The country had been bled white by Pakistani economic exploitation and military brutality. His treasury was empty and the new social order he envisaged remained a tender plant, unable to break through the dense undergrowth of religious and economic reaction. His instruments for social change were largely untried. His enemies who lay low initially reared their heads, blaming him for every natural or man-made calamity which struck the country. In this they were encouraged by the hostile attitude of the United States and China, the two newly weds, who never forgave him for dismembering and fatally weakening their protege, Pakistan.

Much of the calumny heaped upon Sheikh Mujib has, subsequently come from domestic opponents most opposed to his vision of a secular, emancipated Bangladesh. In an area of the world traditionally torn by sectarian strife, this was a noble, healing vision whose ultimate victory could be his greatest monument. Sheikh Mujib's murder at the hands of religious fanatics provide, a cruel irony: the founding father of Bangladesh became his country's first true martyr.

Sheikh Mujib'S Quality Of Leadership

DR KAMAL HOSSAIN

Former Foreign Minister of Bangladesh

Given the love that Bangabandhu had for the people of Bangladesh and they for him, it can be said that on 15 August 1975 it was not only his two surviving daughters, Hasina and Rehana who felt orphan, but it was the 75 million people of Bangladesh, who felt that they had that day lost someone whom they revered as their father.

Looking back, I think there are three qualities of his which would stand out, which gave to his leadership its unique character, and which united a nation of 75 million as one people. I was struck by Sir Thomas singling out on the basis of his own association with Bangabandhu, one of the three qualities that I had singled out in my mind, and that is, of course courage, unparalleled courage. The second quality that stands out, as one looks back, was an intense nationalism, and the third was a total commitment to and deep love of the people. In talking about these three qualities I would like to recount three episodes, illustrating how these qualities were expressed.

Courage—I want to recount the episode with which our Chairman, Sir Thomas, is personally associated and where we were very close witnesses to the events about which I will talk. You will recall the so-called conspiracy case in which Bangabandhu was the principal accused. You will also recall the great Movement of 1969 which was surging ahead at the time. The Government of the day sought to contain the Movement by calling a Round Table Conference of political leaders. The question had arisen of participation by Bangabandhu. Pressure was brought to him while he was still an accused in the so-called trial that he should agree to attend the conference. Mr Abdus Salam Khan, one of the lawyers who was appearing for him, had conveyed messages of this kind to him.

It was at that time that I remember receiving a message from Bangabandhu to come and see him in the court.

When I met him, he said, " I want you to know that I can only go to any Round Table Conference when I and all those who are with me in the dock would be free men. There is no question of our participating in any deliberations except on the basis that we are free men, and any pressure that may be brought upon me must be resisted."

I remember that was the time when we took up the threads of something that Sir Thomas had left behind, which was a constitutional challenge to the case in the High Court questioning the fundamental legality of the whole trial. We assured him that we would renew our endeavours in order to have the case quashed by the High Court. The Movement itself was gaining strength day after day. We were quite confident that if Bangabandhu were to go-he would go to the Round Table, as a free man or not at all. It is difficult to recreate the atmosphere of those days, when there was Martial Law in the country, pressure was being put, threats were held out that if he did not go to the Round Table Conference, he may be killed at any moment. Thus, while the trial was, proceeding, pressure was mounted, that if he did not go to the conference, the so-called hawks in the military would take over and they would gun everyone down. It was, I think, 15 February, while our legal efforts were going on, that Sergeant Zahurul Huq was actually gunned down in custody. He was one of the four accused-he was gunned down. Sergeant Fazlul Huq was injured. This was an actual cold blooded gunning within the area where the Agartala Case under-trial prisoners were kept in custody within the cantonment. This could only be taken to be a measure of intimidation.

Those of us who were seeing Bangabandhu everyday during those days remember that he did not flinch for a moment. He said: "Yes, our chest is always there to take any bullets that might come; but if the people of Bangladesh have to sit, if the Bengalee people are to sit in any Round Table Conference, its leader can

only represent them as a free man:' The rest is history. I remember the drama that was built up, the suggestion that he should go on bail or on parole. These suggestions were summarily rejected, although threats were held out that if he did not go, the Conference would breakdown and the hawks would take over. Everyday this was the refrain. Throughout all of this, his nerves held out in a way which was difficult to convey. He never for one moment considered that on an issue which to him was an issue of principle, there could be any question of compromise.

Finally the announcement came that the case was being withdrawn as it was unconstitutional (The ground they look was, of course, one which has been raised in the petition which had been moved in the High Court by Sir Thomas)' This was in fact the result of the united people's movement and can be counted as one of its victories! Bangabandhu came out as a free man.

On coming out he said: "Before I go to the Round Table Conference I must first meet my people and take their mandate." It was in the historic meeting held at the Race Course, where those present can recall the feelings, the profound sense of nationalism that suffused the people on that day, when over a million people had assembled to give Bangabandhu his mandate. It was at that meeting that the title of "Bangabamdhru" was conferred by the people who they had got him out of custody from the so-called Agartala Conspiracy Trial. This was not a title conferred by any individual, but by the millions of people assembled in that meeting the day after he came out from the Agartala Conspiracy Case.

The second quality that comes to mind is his intense nationalism. Of course, to talk of his intense nationalism, his role in giving to the Bengalee people the sense of being a nation, would mean talking for hours and filling volumes in print. I would, however, like to illustrate this by a specific episode in the early days of Bangladesh, while we were still passing through most difficult days immediately after liberation—when over 10 million people

had to be rehabilitated after 9 months of the ravages of the liberation war, with millions of people killed; millions up-rooted from their homes, seeking rehabilitation; and the economy disrupted, with roads, rail, ports bearing the marks of industrial destruction. Thus, when the country was in a state of economic vulnerability, the representatives of donors, led by the World Bank, had arrived and taken up the position that if Bangladesh did not take over a "share" of the liabilities of former Pakistan, the donors would find it difficult to extend any assistance to Bangladesh. I remember we met together to appraise the situation—the need for assistance was acute. But there was here an issue of principle. How could the question of division of liabilities arise without first considering the question of division of assets. Indeed, by our estimate that if assets and liabilities were to be assessed, Bangladesh should be entitled to a net transfer, so that there could be no question of liabilities being taken over by Bangladesh, as was being proposed. We took the view after due consideration that this was an illegitimate form of pressure that was being put on Bangladesh, at a time when Bangladesh was vulnerable. After we discussed this matter with Bangabandhu he took up the firm position that on an issue of principle, Bangladesh, as a sovereign nation, could not be imposed upon even though it might be in a moment of vulnerability. We had 75 million people, each one of them had two hands, we had land and water; we would eke out our sustenance from this land. Bangabandhu said that if the donors persisted in their position, they could leave tomorrow and we would not take aid. We would not accept aid on those conditions. That was nationalism in its most palpable form.

We went back, and faced an array of the donors' representatives, led by a Vice-President of the World Bank. The Finance Minister, Mr Tajuddin Ahmed, myself and Dr Nurul Islam, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, said that we had given this matter due consideration. In our view, the position that they were taking was not warranted in principle or in law. It seemed to be a form of putting pressure on us at a moment of economic vulnerability. The Prime Minister had taken the position that we

would stand on our own two feet and we will do without aid, if they would seek to impose upon us a condition which we thought was illegitimate. I remember the sense of disbelief on the faces of the representatives of the donors. They had not expected this. But they had not known Bangabandhu and the quality of the leader that Bangladesh had. The Vice-President of the World Bank went on to call on the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, Bangabandhu, was much more brief. He said: "It has been reported to me that you have said you have to impose upon us a condition regarding 'liabilities' before you can give aid. If that is your condition, gentleman, we do not accept your aid. Our people have won the independence of this country through their blood; if this country's sovereignty has to be protected, if its independence has to be protected, if we are to survive, it is the same strength of the people through which we will survive and we will do without your aid."

Three weeks later we got a letter from the Bank saying that they had re-considered the position and found that the position taken by Bangladesh was not without substance. They proposed a resumption of discussions. These things deserve to be better known, deserve to be better known to the people of Bangladesh. They merit wider dissemination throughout the Third World. We have read today of Tanzania and the kind of conditions that are being imposed on them by I.M.F. We have read of other countries, Jamaica, which is today under pressure because they are in an economically vulnerable situation. It was Sri Lanka the day before-yesterday, but there is an example in our own history of what leadership, which has got the strength of a united people behind it, can stand up and if it can stand up, it can make the mighty and the powerful bend down. This is a part of history. It is all in the records.

I will conclude with an episode about the third quality of Bangabandhu -- that is his total commitment to the people and his deep love for the people. I remember in one of the earliest interviews which I had with the foreign Press in 1972, I was asked, "What do you think is Bangabandhu's greatest strength?"

I said, His love of the people". They said. "What is his greatest weakness?" and I said, "That also is his total love of the people". It was something which I had said spontaneously, but now looking back, I think that this was a sound perception. How was it a weakness? It was weakness in the way in which he forgave so many who did not deserve his forgiveness. How is it a weakness? A weakness in the total lack of any arrangements for personal security. Many remember his saying that there was no one in Bangladesh who could ever raise a hand against him, not knowing that there could be some criminals, that there could be those who although Bengalee by appearance, were really in the hands of some other force. This weakness, his love of the people, was of course his great strength. There was never any compromise so far as his love and commitment for the people was concerned. And people by which he meant the masses of the people. The image of the people that came up to him was that of the day-labourer, the boatman on the river, the landless peasant. These were the vast multitudes that make-up Bangladesh. Through his love he tried to seek a change, a transformation of society in a peaceful way, carrying all the people with him; but one thing was clear, if there was to be any conflict between the interests of the elite, between the interests of the vested interests and the interests of the masses—the landless peasant, the day-labourer, the ordinary people—his commitment would remain to the broad masses of the people with whom he identified. This is what underlay his great vision of a fundamental economic and social transformation. This is what animated him in the days when he was thinking in terms of a fundamental change in the villages that make up Bangladesh. What made the dominant and central part of that vision was the transformation of life in the villages of Bangladesh.

I think I have said enough today. I can only say that Bangabandhu will continue to inspire (as Sir Thomas has said) not only those of us who knew him closely, but future generations, who I know will be inspired to realise his ideals and some day to realise in Bangladesh his vision of Sonar Bangla, a society free from exploitation. ☆

☆ Edited speech given at the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room on 17 March 1980.

Sheikh Mujib The Nation Builder

MICHAEL BARNES
Vice-President, Bangabandhu Society

The first time that I met Bangabandhu was in February 1972; in fact it was only a matter of weeks after Bangladesh had become independent and Sheikh Mujib had himself returned from Pakistan. The British Parliament sent at that time a very small—there were just two of us, the Conservative Member, Mr Hugh Fraser, and myself—a small two-men Parliamentary Delegation to carry the good wishes of the British Parliament to the newly independent nation of Bangladesh. I think meeting him at that time, at the beginning of the life of Bangladesh as an independent nation, my feeling was that his great achievement was to give such a positive identity to the new country right at the beginning and to give its people such a sense of identity, such a sense of nationalism. He was able, I think, to give the country such a positive sense of identity primarily because of his stature as a world statesman, which he was, but also, I think because of his personal qualities, especially his charisma that Torn Williams has referred to-night. Charisma is perhaps a word that is over-worked in politics. One is always being told that such-and-such a leader is very charismatic, but in the case of Bangabandhu it was exactly the right word. If any one had charisma, he had charisma and I think you could see that in the affection he evoked among his people. For example, as I remember at that time in February 1972, the numbers of people who were sitting and waiting for hours, days, in fact, outside his house and one could see it in the confidence that they had that he would be able to solve their problems. I felt that may be no man could run a nation, lift a nation up from the crisis Bangladesh was in at that time, and at the same time personally solve the problems of hundreds and thousands of people of that nation. But this was the confidence, this was the belief that the people of Bangladesh felt, and they felt it because of this tremendous charisma that the man had.

The second time that I met him, and this brings out for me to be associate with him so much, was another Parliamentary Delegation which went from this Parliament in November 1973. At that time, of course, we were able to travel extensively throughout Bangladesh and see a great deal of the reconstruction which had taken place which had not been possible in February 1972 on the first visit, because at that time so many of the bridges and roads had been destroyed and communication by land was very difficult. But in 1973 we were able to see the work of Sheikh Mujib's Government during the time since independence and I remember a vivid example of his kindness, another quality, as I say, which I associate with him. The leader of our delegation at that time was the Conservative Member of Parliament, David Crouch, and he happened to mention to Sheikh Mujib, when we were seeing him, that during the Second World War, he, David Crouch, had been stationed for a short period at Cox's Bazar. As soon as Sheikh Mujib heard this, nothing would do but that he must make his personal helicopter available so that the delegation and David Crouch in particular could visit this place where he had been during the Second World War and for which he had special memories. This, I felt, was a very characteristic gesture and we were also, of course, able to see en route, many of the other things that we had wanted to see in Bangladesh, which but for this kindness might not have been possible.

So I was very glad, very, very pleased and happy when I heard that this Society was to be set up because it seemed such a fitting thing to have a Society like this to publicise and build on the ideals which Sheikh Mujib himself stood for. I do hope that the Society will be able to go from strength to strength from this beginning to-night, this seminar to night, and I hope that we may be able to have during the next year, so this lecture, perhaps the first annual memorial lecture, which as we heard to-night it is possible that Sir Harold Wilson may give. Thank you very much Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to speak and I would like to wish the Bangabandhu Society well and success." ☆

☆ Speech given at the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room on 17 March 1980.

Sheikh Mujib
Patriot and Architect of Bangladesh

GAUS KHAN ☆
President, U.K. Awami League

It is not possible for me in such a short time to reflect on the long struggling political life of Bangabandhu which spread over him which is upper most in my mind. Bangabandhu entered politics while he was a student. His politics was people-oriented. His crusade was against injustice, exploitation, oppression and all types of anti-people activities. In short, he was deeply involved in all the important political movements that took place in our part of the world. But his most Promethean struggle was against the tyranny of Central Government of the then Pakistan for the emancipation of the people of Bangladesh. To Bangabandhu, Bangladesh was the breath of his life. He lived for Bangladesh, he died for Bangladesh. Nothing could tempt Bangabandhu on the question of Bengalee's interests. The black night, the massacre of 15 August 1975, could only remove our beloved leader from this earthly life, but the magic of his name will remain eternally enshrined in the heart of the Bengalee people.

Mr Chairman, in this connection I venture to say this: Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was also a major figure in the Third World and the Non-Aligned Movement. His sense of internationalism was well evident in his policy of friendship towards all and malice towards none.

In conclusion, I would like to say, Mr Chairman, that we could best observe the birthday of this great man if we, in our words and deeds, kept faith with his ideas, so that Bangladesh can fulfil its promise as a truly sovereign and independent nation. ☆

☆ Mr Khan died in London on 20 May 1980.

Bangabandhu Democrat And Humanist

JULIUS SILVERMAN, MP
Chairman, The India League

Tom, it is not entirely correct that I got to know Bangabandhu from my visits on my delegation because in fact, the only time I met him was here in London. I, of course, with many of my colleagues, participated in the campaign here for the independence of Bangladesh during the war and in 1972/73 I was in India and there I met my colleague, Tarapada Basu, who was there at the same time. I was there with my wife and he said, "you must go to Bangladesh". I and my wife went to Bangladesh and we went there immediately within about two or three days after war was over. In fact, I was in Delhi with Tara when the Bangabandhu received his triumphal and tumultous reception at Delhi Airport on his way back to Dacca. When we went there I, met all the Ministers: I met Kamal Hossain there and several of the Ministers at a party for the newly formed Cabinet of Ministers: most of these unfortunately have been assassinated since. We were entertained in the Presidential palace by Mr. Choudhury, the former justice, who was then the first President of Bangladesh. Unfortunately, we were not able then to see the Bangabandhu—it was like Hamlet without the Prince, because his spirit pervaded the whole of Dacca and the whole of Bangladesh at that particular time. I met him at Claridges sometime afterwards when he came for medical treatment.

My impression of him tallies entirely with what Dr Kamal Hossain has told us to-night. He was the father of his people. He was proud of his people. He trusted his people implicitly and perhaps as Kamal Hossain has said, his trust was so great and so embracing, but sometimes so naive, it was also a source of weakness. It never occurred to him that anyone would raise their hands against him. He was the son of the Bengalee people and the father of the Bengalee people and he loved them.

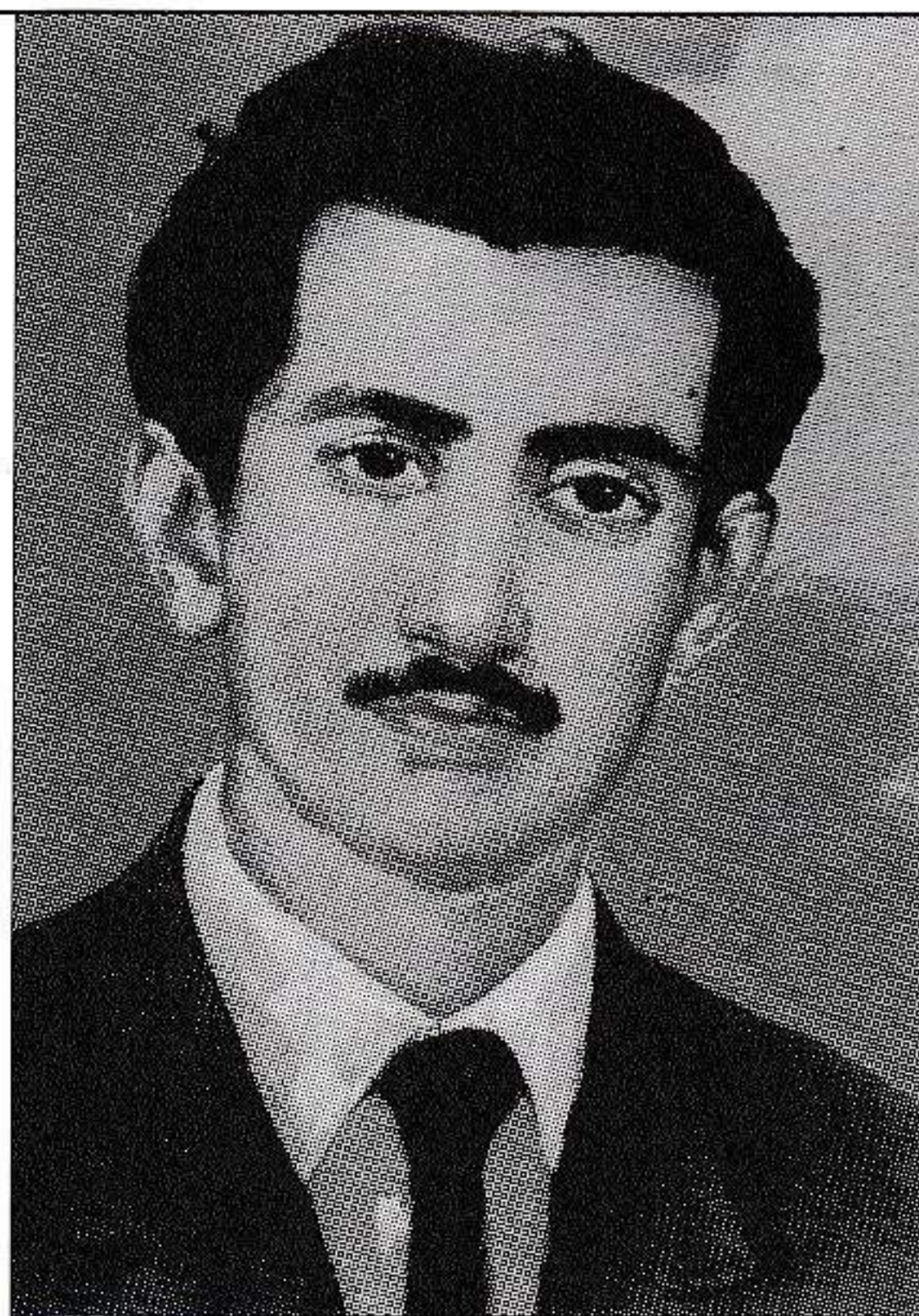
His brand of socialism was a brand that he imbibed from Professor Laski and other British socialists. The humanitarianism and his philosophy of humanism and humanitarianism again he inherited from Tagore, a poet of whom he was extremely proud as a poet and son of the people and who I think expressed the sort of philosophy which he himself so richly adopted. I would say this was quite obvious to me during the comparatively short occasion on which I met him.

He is dead. But his spirit and beliefs will live on. One day, not too far away, Bangladesh will be free again: inspired by the memory, by the spirit, and by the philosophy of Sheikh Mujib, the Bangabandhu. I will welcome that day as much as all of you when it arrives. ☆

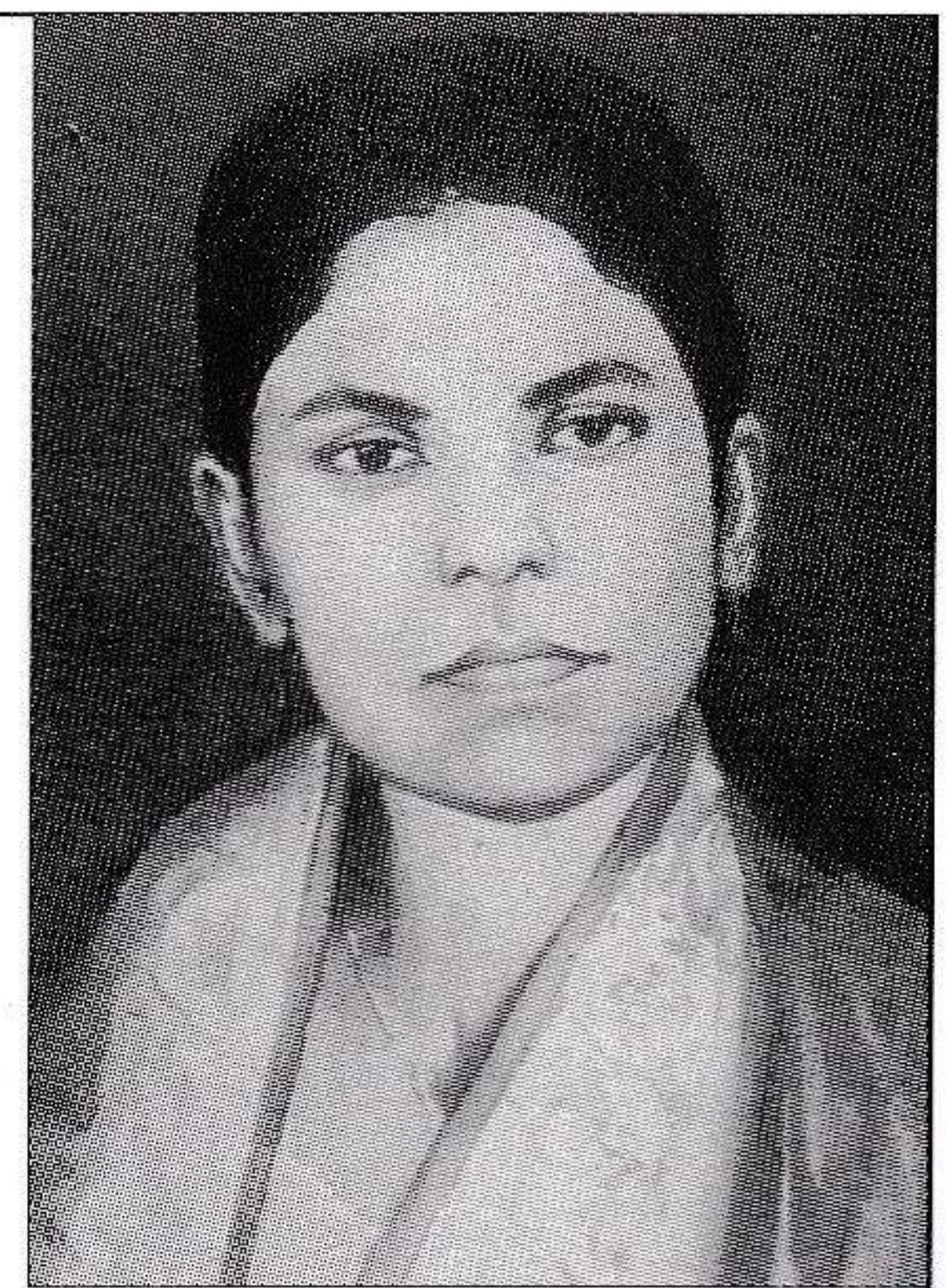
☆ Speech given at the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room on 17 March 1980.



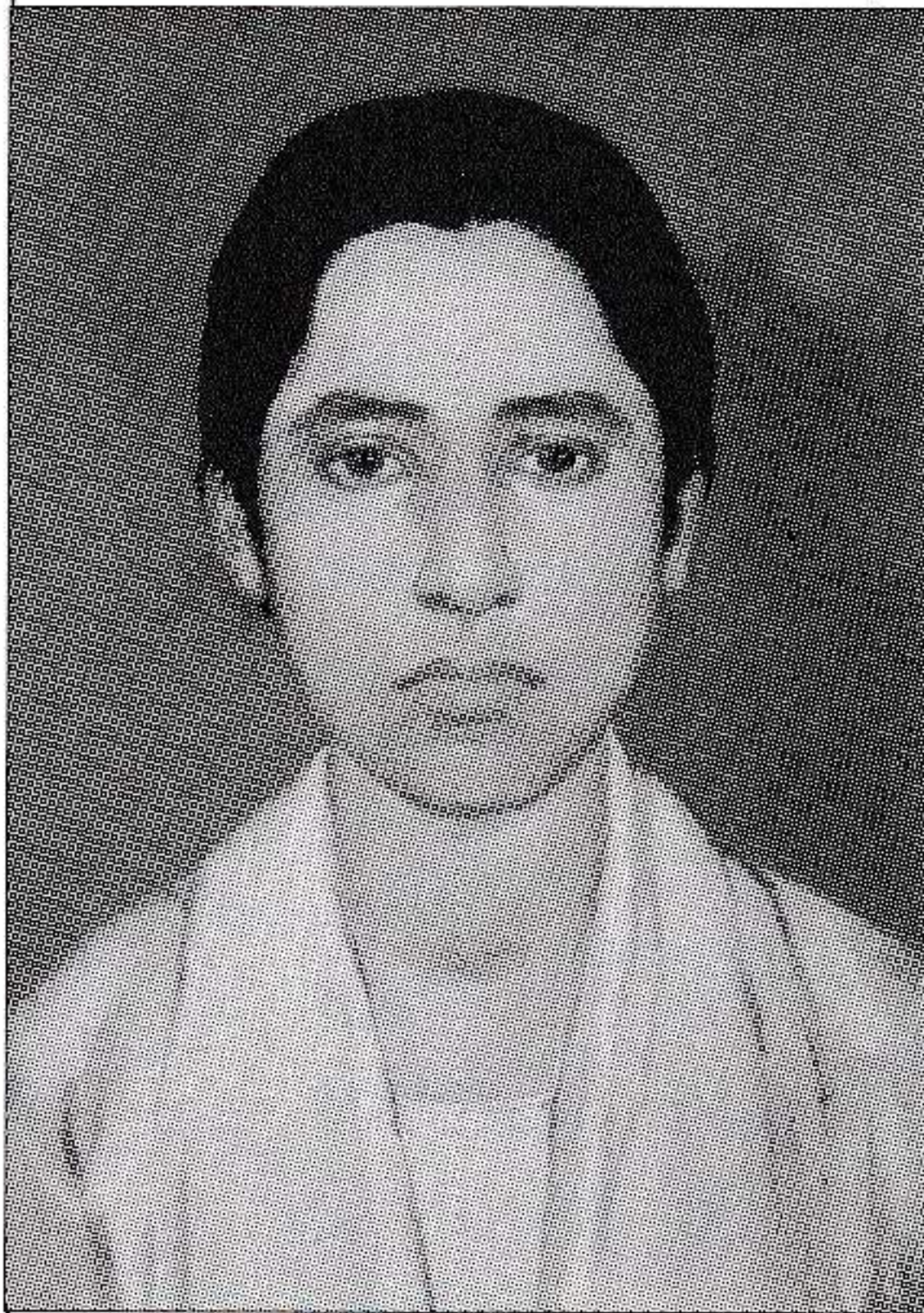
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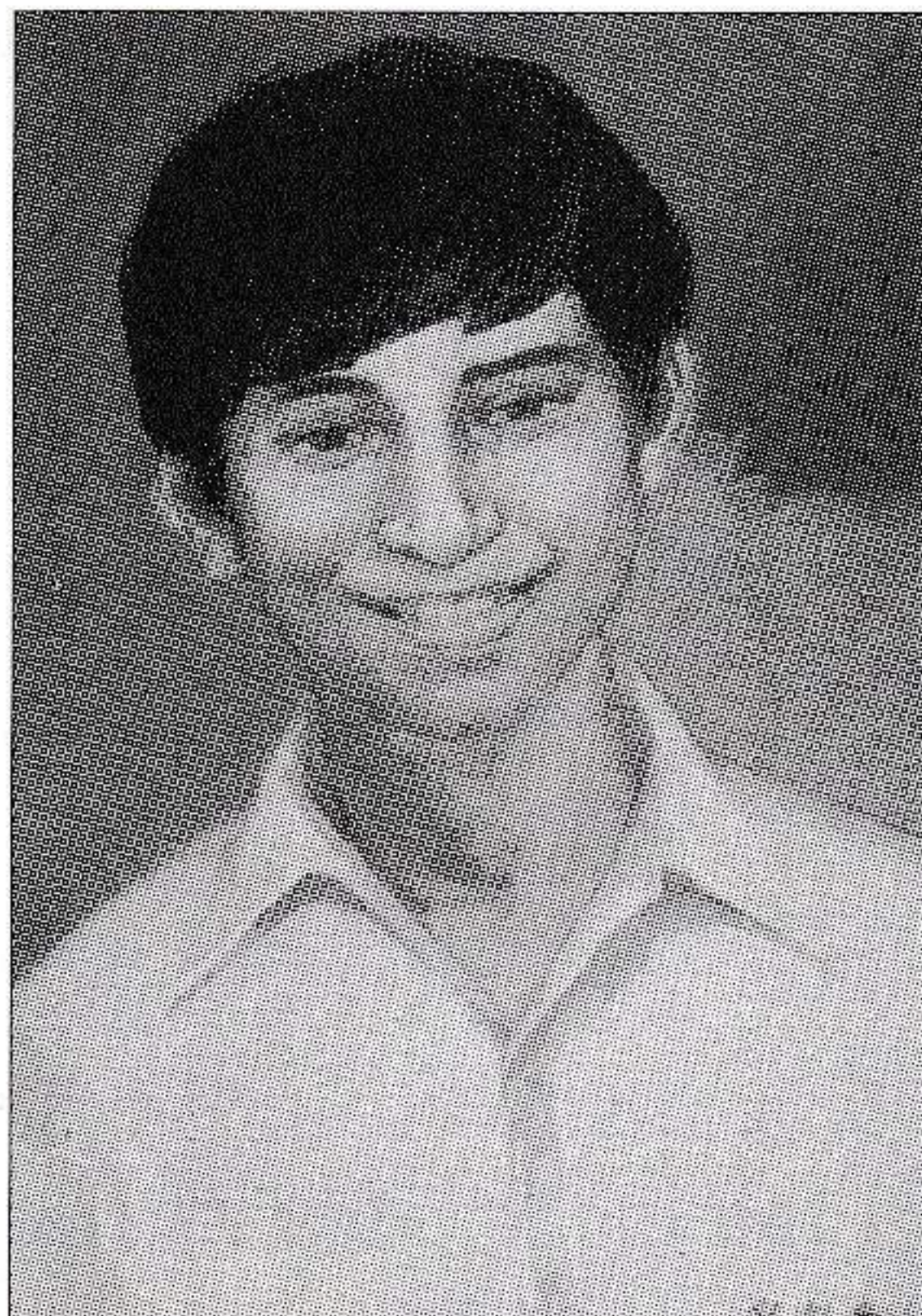
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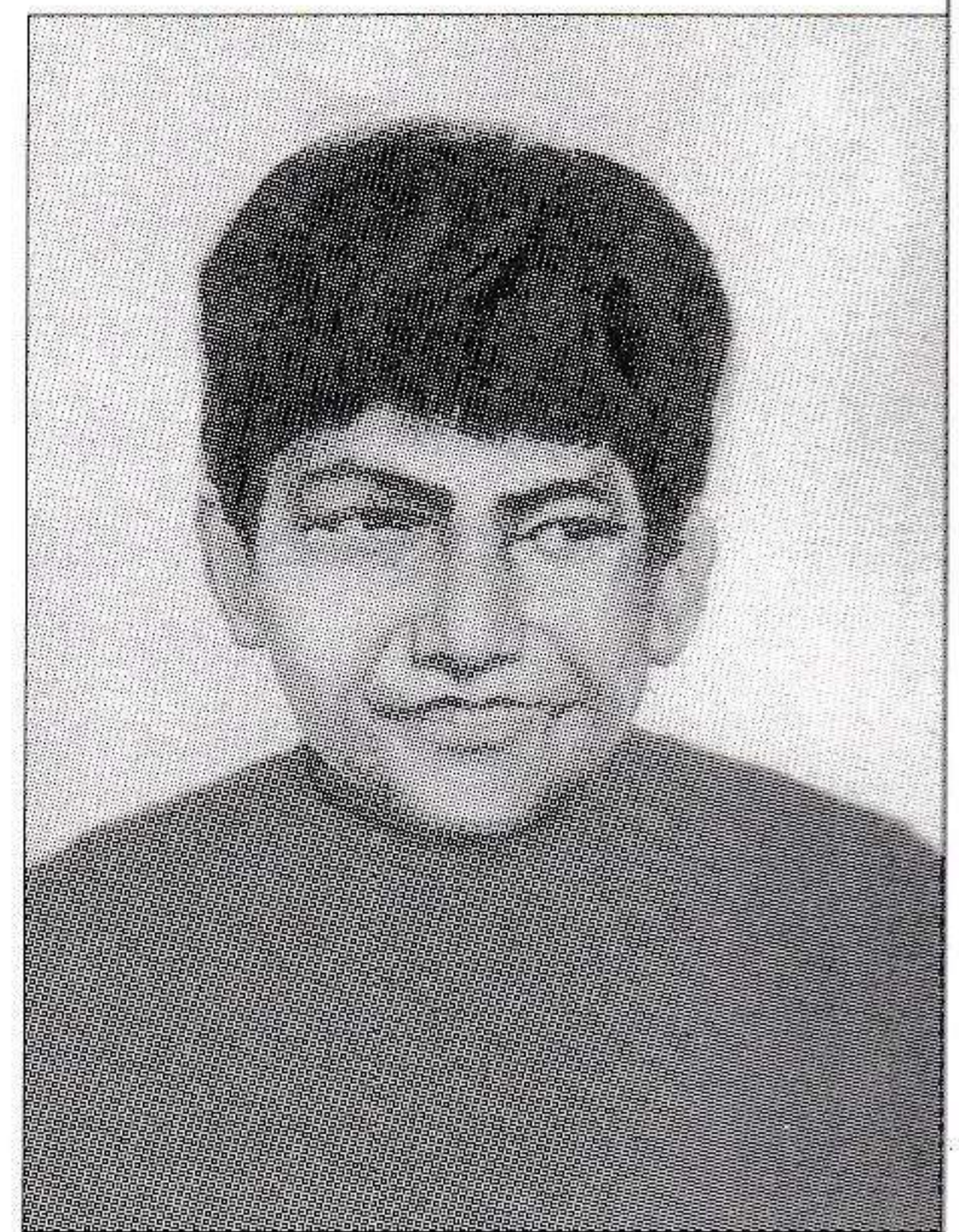
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Arif Serniabat



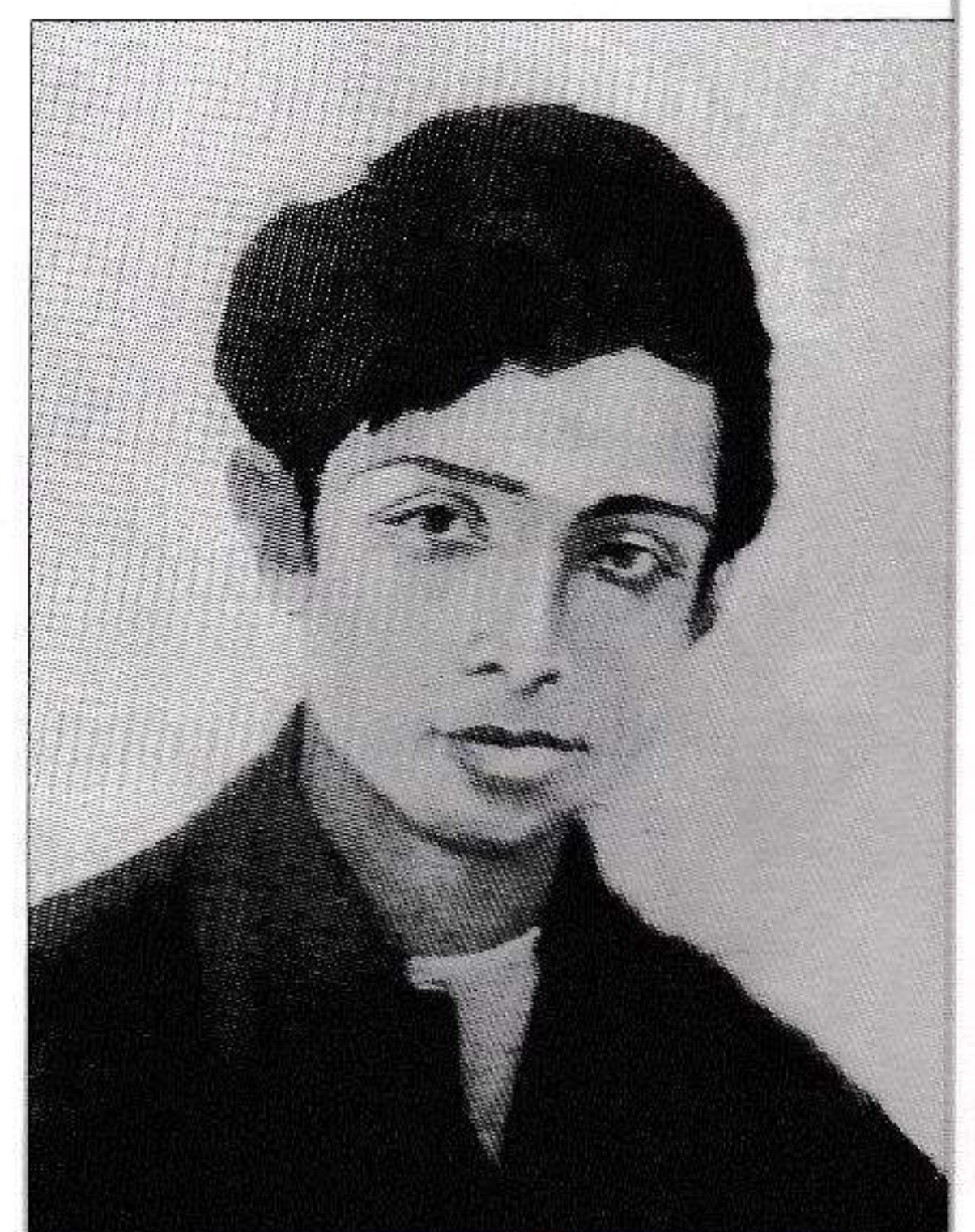
Sukanto Abdullah



Col. Jamiluddin Ahmed



Shahid Serniabat



Abdul Naim Khan Rintu

Sheikh Mujib: A Personal Recollection

DR TARAPADA BASU
General Secretary, The India League

Mr Chairman...and friends, may I confine my humble contribution on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to two aspects of history. First of all, I see many young faces at this meeting. They may not know that in the late thirties and early forties, Mr Julius Silverman and we of the India League, and many others from this country and from what today is called the Indian sub-continent, were working in Britain for the independence of undivided India. In this campaign for India's independence, there were many from what is now Bangladesh. They, too, played a significant role in the liberation movement of the whole sub-continent.

Mujib, younger than me, was in Calcutta where we had our college education and was involved in the student movement for independence. Later, in the early fifties I met him along with the late Moulana Bhasani at my modest flat in Hampstead. I discovered in him a rising politician and became aware of his intense love for the Bengali language, around which grew Bengalee nationalism in the East Wing of the then Pakistan.

I also recall that when Mujib was in prison during the Agartala Conspiracy Case, I received a long list of prisoners in East Bengal (or East Pakistan) from my friends in Calcutta. An independent international agency took up the list and started questioning the Pakistan Government in Karachi about these prisoners. Then with our knowledge, a letter was published about Mujib and other prisoners in a responsible journal in London. These, in my view, ignited the movement in London for the fair trial of Mujib and others. Consequently, Sir Thomas Williams, QC was sent by the movement for Mujib's defence. You have all heard from Sir Thomas and Dr Kamal Hossain that followed.

Mujib and many of his fellow prisoners were released. Mujib and many of his fellow prisoners were released.

Secondly, the Bangladesh Liberation movement got its true inspiration from the leadership of Mujib. However, the genesis of this movement can be traced to the earlier freedom movement of united India. Eventually, East Pakistan became a free and sovereign Bangladesh under Sheikh Mujib's leadership.

When I visited Dacca in 1972, Prime Minister Mujib told me that his goal was principally one of economic stability through national development and regional co-operation within the sub-continent. This, he felt, was the only way to lasting peace and prosperity.

Having known Mujib personally, and with warm feelings for the welfare of Bangladesh, I can assure the Bangabandhu Society of London, of the India League's fullest co-operation in the tasks ahead.

The present situation in Bangladesh, it seems to me, is a temporary phase. We are friends of Bangladesh. The greatest tribute we can pay to the memory of Bangabandhu today is to work for the re-emergence of true democracy, secularism, socialism and non-alignment in Bangladesh, for which Mujib struggled and died.' ☆

☆ Edited speech given at the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room on 17 March 1980.

In Sheikh Mujib's Footsteps

ANIL DASGUPTA

Vice-Chairman, Bangabandhu Society

Sheikh Mujib, in whose memory we have assembled today, was born into a humble Faridpur family. His early upbringing amid the rural setting of East Bengal was responsible for his common touch; his feelings of compassion and sense of fellowship with the downtrodden masses of his country. Indeed, for two decades and more, he incarnated the aspirations of his countrymen; as a student he had in 1948 given the first halting utterances to a new spirit of Bengalee self-assertion; twenty years later in 1971, he spoke with the awakened voice of a prophet. The early political stirrings, first formulated in the Bengali language movement, had become in these intervening years, a mighty groundswell which set Bangladesh free of its Pakistani fetters.

During this time, Sheikh Mujib's personal trials and tribulations, from his repeated imprisonment by the Pakistani dictators to the frame-up of the Agartala Conspiracy Case, were a reflection of the political and social traumas suffered by his people; rarely has there been such inner harmony between a people and its leader.

Bangabandhu fought, and taught us all to fight, for a free and independent Bangladesh—but a Bangladesh built on democratic and secular values. He died a martyr for the cause he had espoused most of his working life. A Bangladesh free of this cursed military dictatorship will be his greatest monument. ☆

☆ Edited speech given at the seminar held in the House of Commons Committee Room, on 17 March 1980.

The Final Tribute

SIR THOMAS WILLIAMS QC, MP
Chairman, Bangabandhu Society

Sir Thomas, who chaired the meeting in the House of Commons Committee Room on 17 March 1980, summed up the proceedings :

If you have felt as I have felt that this meeting has been worthwhile, gave us an opportunity of paying tribute and remembering a great and good man, then indeed the meeting has been worthwhile. I am very proud that you thought it right to honour me to be made the Chairman of your new Society. Anything I can do to serve the Society, I will do gladly and proudly. I like to believe and I do believe that Sheikh Mujib was my friend. I was proud to know him, proud to work for him, proud to work with him and I am glad to think that when I was in East Pakistan, as it then was, I made many friends who were with me in the Agartala Conspiracy Case and that we were in the beginning of the country that was to become Bangladesh.

When I started this evening I said to you that Sheikh Mujib told me when I first met him that he did not believe that he would die until his work was done. This may not have been entirely fulfilled, but, of course, it is true to say he will never die so long as Bangladesh lives and Bangladesh is now part of the history of the world. His physical death meant tragedy for his own family, bitter sorrow for his friends, but, of course, it was a sorrow and a tragedy for Bangladesh that was plunged by his death into great troubles; but troubles are the part of a nation's growing up, and there is a sense in which it is true to say of Bangabandhu that the seed of the martyrs, the blood of the martyrs, was the seed of the movement that he began. I think he will never die because when Bangladesh rises again, through its present troubles, to the full flower of its nationhood, his spirit would turn to us and say:

"If you want my Memorial look around you."

We came to-night to pay tribute to a great and good man. We have paid our tribute and in the years that lie ahead his memory will live with us and inspire us all, I hope, to make sure that the vision he had of Bangladesh, strong and free, will never die.

May I just finish by telling you that there were a number of Members of Parliament of great distinction who would have wished to be here to night but were prevented from coming because of the shortness of the notice. They do, however want us to know that they wish this Society and its work well. They are: The Rt. Hon. Edward Heath, former Prime Minister, Mr Allen Beith, Chief Whip of the Liberal Party, The Rt. Hon. Joe Grimond, the former leader of the Liberal Party and Mr John Hunt, the leader of one of the delegations to Bangladesh.

Appendix 1

Falsehood As Weapon Against Sheikh Mujib

Ample evidence is now available to show that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was murdered by domestic reactionaries in alliance with the forces of international reaction. Yet, the Zia clique in Dacca and his minions have been trying their best to portray the assassins of Bangabandhu as some kind of saviours of the nation.

It is now crystal clear that the madly ambitious Majors of the Bangladesh Army were cunning enough to take advantage of the atmosphere of hatred and suspicion caused by an incessant propaganda against the Mujib regime by the Maoist-Mullah alliance and anti-Indian elements in the country. The nature and purpose of this propaganda would have done credit to Goebbels, the propaganda chief of Nazi Germany.

What was truly curious about these concocted allegations against the Mujib regime is that they were spread by a section of the Western media without investigation. Certain Bangladesh politicians like Moulana Bhasani¹ who gave full vent to his anti-Indian phobia soon after his return from India on 22 January 1972, joined the anti-Mujib campaign² for reasons not difficult to discern.

Not long after the liberation of Bangladesh, Moulana Bhasani claimed: "The present Awami League Government is nothing but a dupe in the hands of the Indian leaders and that it is merely acting on the dictates of India. He even challenged the four guiding principles of Sheikh Mujib's state policy (viz. nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism) and demanded that the constitution of Bangladesh must be based on the Holy Quran, Sunnah and Hadith³ Let us examine some of the canards in order to establish the motives of those responsible for

the murder of democracy and absence of human rights in Bangladesh.

The 1974 Famine

It has been alleged that the Mujib Government had caused the 1974 famine in Bangladesh. Early in 1975, The *Guardian* (London) published a fantastic story dealing with the "causes" of the famine. According to this story, the huge quantities of food grains donated by foreign countries for the famine-stricken people were used as cattle-feed by the Bangladesh Red Cross chief Gazi Ghulam Mustafa, a leading member of the ruling Awami League. But he was neither a ranchowner nor a cattle-feed merchant. Nevertheless, the story sounded authentic to the newspaper. So it was prominently displayed in the centre-page of the paper.

The real cause of the famine has been divulged in a study published in the January 1976 issue of the Council of Foreign Relations (New York) journal *Foreign Affairs*. This shows how the USA used its food export policy to undermine the Government of Sheikh Mujib.

In her study entitled *Food Politics*, Emma Rothschild says: "There is no doctrine more deceptive than the new idea that food is power. According to the doctrine, the United States has new power in the world by virtue of its position as the largest producer and exporter of food: in particular, over the developing countries, from the most destitute states to the richest oil-exporting countries, which import American food".

The Central Intelligence Agency's Office of Political Research, looking recently at the future of food, concluded: "As custodian of the bulk of the world's exportable grain, the United States might regain the primacy in world affairs that it held in the immediate post-war period⁴.

The study gives the following account of the origins of the 1974 famine in Bangladesh:

"Bangladesh, in 1973 and 1974, bought American food in commercial markets. The circumstances of the 1974 famine illustrate the consequence of chaos, where food policy is made inadvertently, and in the market-place. Early in 1974, the Bangladesh Government contracted to buy grain to meet its import needs from Canada, Australia and the United States. These purchases, at current high market prices, were to be financed with short-term commercial credit. In the summer of 1974, the Bangladesh Government, desperately short of foreign exchange was unable to obtain the credit. Two large sales by American grain companies, for delivery in the autumn, were therefore cancelled Bangladesh was not able to obtain U.S. Government credit. Meanwhile, U.S. agreements to supply food as aid under the PL 480 programme were also delayed, mainly because officials were negotiating in secret as to whether Bangladesh was disqualified from receiving aid because it had sold jute to Cuba earlier in the year. (A Treasury official suggested afterwards that, 'at least at the Treasury', officials also considered triage-like ideas as to where the prevention of famine would be most useful.) By the time the American food arrived in Bangladesh, in December 1974, the autumn famine was over".

Counterfeit Currency Notes

Immediately after the independence of Bangladesh, Moulana Bhasani cut off his relationship with the revolutionary Government led by Sheikh Mujib and plunged into his traditional Opposition politics. He revived his faction of the National Awami Party and sponsored a Bengali weekly, *Hak-Katha*, edited by an alleged collaborator with the Pakistan Military authorities, during the liberation struggle. This virulently anti-Indian weekly regularly carried reports which conformed to the pro-Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami propaganda line. The source of these so-called reports were traced to pamphlets distributed clandestinely in the streets of Dacca. One of these reports alleged that India had secretly released in the market a huge amount of counterfeit currency notes to undermine the Bangladesh economy.

A foreign visitor to Bangladesh was told by the Maoists and ultra-Left elements in Dacca that the Indian Government had printed Bangladesh currency notes in duplicate which were clandestinely released with a view to damage the financial strength of the new state. The visitor was shown two ten-rupee notes having the same serial number.

In order to counteract the harmful effect of counterfeit currency, the Government of Bangladesh demonitised all currency notes of taka 100, taka 10 and taka 5 denominations printed in India without watermarks and allowed circulation of only those which were printed in England. At the expiry of the last date (31 May 1973) for withdrawal of notes printed in India, it was found that the total deposits of such notes fell short by taka 5,354,840 from what was originally issued by the Bangladesh Bank. Total notes printed in India were taka 4,215,950,000. The Government had carefully looked into allegations made against India and found no cases of duplicate note, printed in India. As on 31 May 1973, figures released at a Press conference by Bangladesh Finance Minister, Mr Tajuddin Ahmed, showed that of all the currency notes printed in India, the Bangladesh Bank had released taka 2,707,549,000 and the notes exchanged till 31 May 1973 amounted to taka 2,702,100,660. Indian printed notes on that date still in the stock of Bangladesh Bank totalled taka 1,207,200,500.

Mr Ahmed told the Press conference that the Bangladesh Government had to seek India's assistance to secure new currency notes as no other foreign country was able to supply these in less than six month's time. In view of the urgency, the Government had placed order with the Security Printing Press of India for new currency notes on 29 December 1972. India was rather reluctant to accept the order as it was not possible for them to put watermark on the notes within such a short time. But the other two security marks-thread and fibre-were there. Currency notes which were subsequently printed in some of the foreign countries did not also carry all the security marks because of the paucity of time.

Missing Industrial Machinery

Fomented by Maoists and pro-Pakistan elements, the anti-Indian madness in Bangladesh reached such heights within the first few months of liberation that the urban middle-class eschewed all moral compunction in order to assert that the Indian Armed Forces, who had entered Bangladesh with the Bengalee liberation forces, had literally stripped the industrial establishments of their machinery and carried them away. That was supposed to be the reason for the low industrial productivity all over the country. It showed clearly that the Maoists and Mullahs were prepared to peddle anything, if it would lead to anti-Indian hatred. It did not occur to them that there could not be any production of commodities without the machinery.

A survey conducted by the Bangladesh Government showed that about taka 7,850 million in plant and machinery, bank balances and cash had been transferred by West Pakistani industrialists and big business houses to West Pakistan on the eve of the liberation of Bangladesh. In many cases, the West Pakistani industrialists dismantled whole plants and machinery and transferred them to their "sanctuaries" in West Pakistan with the active help of the military rulers of Pakistan. Many industries in Bangladesh were left crippled. Most of the Pakistani industrialists and big business houses also took out huge overdrafts from the commercial banks in the then East Pakistan and transferred entire amounts to West Pakistan.

Missing Motor Vehicles

Moulana Bhasani's paper also alleged that Calcutta streets were filled with Bangladesh motor vehicles with East Pakistan number plates and that these were all taken by the Indian troops from Bangladesh. But the plain truth was that soon after the Pakistan Army's crackdown, people from Bangladesh escaped to India, taking with them their cash savings, transportable properties and, in some cases, their cars. The cars belonging to the Ministers and officials of the Bangladesh Government-in-exile were given a distinct registration number (WJB) by the Calcutta Police. Within a few days of the liberation of Bangladesh, all such cars disappeared from the streets of Calcutta as the refugee Ministers, officials and others started returning to their country.

distinct registration number (WJB) by the Calcutta Police. Within a few days of the liberation of Bangladesh, all such cars disappeared from the streets of Calcutta as the refugee Ministers, officials and others started returning to their country.

Secret Treaty With India

The unscrupulous Maoist-Mullah elements also claimed that Sheikh Mujib had bartered away the sovereignty of Bangladesh by signing a 25-year Treaty of Friendship with India on 18 March 1972. They also claimed that "secret clauses" to the Treaty had reduced the status of the country to that of a colony of India.

In spite of veciferous demands from the Maoist Mullahs and pro-Pakistan elements to abrogate the Treaty or disclose the "secret clauses", the Zia clique did nothing about it, precisely because the allegation is absolutely false.

The full text of the 12-clause Treaty, published by the Bengali weekly *Khabor* (Dacca) on 16 December 1979, shows that none of its provision militates against the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

1. *Sunrise** Vol. I No. 5, December 1976.
2. Jyoti Sen Gupta, a reputed Indian journalist, gives a detailed account of the anti-Mujib propaganda in his book *History of Freedom Movement in Bangladesh*, published by Naya Prakash, 206 Bidhan Sarani, Calcutta-6, India, price US\$ 8, £3.00.
3. *Morning News*, Dacca, 8 October 1972.
4. U.S Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence: Office of Political Research, *Potential of Trends in World Population, Food Production and Climate* (OPR401), August 1974.

☆ *Sunrise* is published by Radical Books, 317 Seely Road, London SW 17 9RB.

Appendix 11

The Indo-Bangladesh Economic Relationship

by A Special Correspondent

The economic relationship between India and Bangladesh remains a matter of critical importance not only for determining the possible areas of future co-operation between the two countries but also for a clear understanding of the growth of anti-Indian feeling in Bangladesh during the Mujib era.

The economy of Bangladesh was closely integrated with the economy of undivided India prior to 1947. The importance of the trade links between East Pakistan and India continued to decline until 1965 when the Indo Pakistan war led to the complete stoppage of trade between India and Pakistan. It was generally believed that the disruption of trade links between Pakistan and India had narrowed the world market for the export crops of East Pakistan more than those of West Pakistan. This had encouraged India to expand the cultivation of jute and become the largest grower of raw jute in the world prior to 1971. Public opinion in East Pakistan was in favour of resumption of trade links between India and Pakistan so that the market for raw jute in India could be regained and East Pakistan could export fish and other perishable items to India and import certain items like coal from it at a cheaper rate. In other words, resumption of trade and economic links were expected to prove to be mutually beneficial. Therefore, in the 1970 election manifesto the Awami League promised to normalise the economic and trade relationship between India and Pakistan if elected to power.

The liberation war and the emergence of independent Bangladesh not only led to a resumption of trade links between Bangladesh and India but had also paved the way for forging

close economic ties between the two countries in a number of areas.

Pakistan has also renewed her trade links with India and is now trying to take advantage of the large Indian market. In the case of Bangladesh, however, many people have come to regard the flow of goods between India and Bangladesh as a major cause of the economic crisis in Bangladesh during 1972-75. The sale of Bangladesh goods to India under normal commercial arrangements were not very large. This belied the hopes of those who expected a tremendous boost in Bangladesh exports to India after the resumption of trade links. The urban educated elite came to accept the view that Bangladesh exports to India were in fact very large but that most of these were conducted through unofficial channels, i.e. through smuggling. The Awami League Government is alleged to have encouraged such smuggling to gain personal advantage for itself and satisfy its Indian masters.

Unsubstantiated Charges

The nature of the economic relationship between Bangladesh and India during the Mujib era has caused much controversy since the assassination of Sheikh Mujib and his political colleagues. Anti-Mujib and anti-Indian elements in Bangladesh and their friends abroad, who still continue to portray Sheikh Mujib and the Awami League Government as Indian stooges, are finding it increasingly difficult to substantiate their charges and justify the killings and the reversal of Bangladesh policies towards India. Bangladesh membership of the U. N., Commonwealth, Islamic and the neutralist blocs, as well as repeated and continuous attempts to establish diplomatic ties even with such avowed friends of Pakistan as Saudi Arabia and China, can hardly be interpreted as attempts to toe the Indian "line". They have also failed to find evidence of largescale corruption by Awami League leaders and Sheikh Mujib and his family that would stand up to an independent judicial scrutiny. Having failed to prove that Sheikh Mujib's foreign policy followed the dictates of India or that he deliberately adopted policies in the domestic front to

serve Indian political interests, the present regime and their supporters had to turn to the economic relations of the two countries for "evidence" of Indian exploitation and "Indian hegemonism" so as to explain the economic collapse of Bangladesh. The new rulers of Bangladesh have refused to accept any further economic aid from India on the plea that Bangladesh could not accept assistance from a poor country like India, yet "gifts" of a few tons of rice and an old Boeing 707 were accepted from Pakistan with thanks. Obviously, Dacca believes that even economic aid from India might lead to the exploitation of Bangladesh.

Economic Exploitation

The economic exploitation of East Pakistan by the West Pakistanis was a major issue during the nineteen sixties. The East Pakistani economists were able to analyse the manner in which their country was being exploited. Various estimates were made concerning the transference of resources from East to West Pakistan, and the East Pakistani political leaders were able to confront West Pakistan with those figures. While disagreements between East and West Pakistani economists and officials remained on matters concerning the magnitude of resource transfers and the extent of the "denial" of East Pakistan's rightful share of foreign aid, these could be discussed publicly in scientific terms. Informed debates could be conducted in a manner designed to broaden public understanding of the issues involved. But the present regime has refused to allow a serious discussion of the extent of resource transfers between India and Bangladesh during the Mujib era. Their assertion that six thousand crores (60,000 million) of takas worth of goods have been transferred from Bangladesh to India apparently needs no examination because anyone who questions these figures can be branded a traitor. As far as the general public were concerned the inflationary spiral of price rises during 1972-75, sharp reduction in the blackmarket value of the taka and unceasing publicity about large-scale smuggling across the border were sufficient evidence of resource transfers from Bangladesh to India.

In actual fact, the available figures show that official transactions have resulted in substantial resource transfers from India to Bangladesh. The World Bank's economic report on Bangladesh for 1976 shows that during the period January 1972 to June 1975, more than \$235 millionworth of economic aid was received by Bangladesh from India. The figures of aid commitment are naturally higher than the above which represent actual disbursements. These do not, however, include various kinds of military assistance.

Indian Aid To Bangladesh

(In millions of dollars)

Nature of aid	Year				Total
	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	
Food grants	89,494	10,506	-	-	100,000
Non-project grants	66,101	1,712	-	-	67,813
Project grants	-	-	0,125	0,063	0,188
Cash grants	-	-		0063	0,063
Non-project loan	-	-	9,246	10,418	19,664
Project loan	6,900	27,518	3,684	9,517	47,619
				Grant Total	235,347

Extent Of Smuggling

As the official transactions reveal that Bangladesh has been at the receiving end in her economic relationship with India, the ruling circles have had to explain the "losses to Bangladesh" in terms of unofficial transactions or smuggling. The difficulty with smuggling arises from the fact that if it is a two-way traffic then the "losses" from unofficial exports are compensated by gains from unofficial imports. Naturally, the anti-Indian elements have had to claim that smuggling is a one-way traffic in Bangladesh. In their view large quantities of rice and jute went out between 1972-75 and nothing much was received in return. Dr A.M.A. Rahim, Economic Adviser to the Bangladesh Bank and a former C.S.P. officer wrote a paper in 1975 analysing the causes, impact and extent of smuggling. In it, he has clearly shown that Bangladesh was able to reap considerable gains from smuggling, because certain critical items for the economy brought from India could not otherwise have been obtained through normal import. It is impossible to determine the truth of this statement from available information. However, another study prepared by Prof. W.B. Reddaway, of Cambridge University, has shown that the scale of such smuggling could not have been unduly large. How then did the present rulers in Dacca come to the conclusion that the smuggling was extensive and that India was aiding the economic ruination of Bangladesh? Even if it is accepted for the sake of argument that large quantities of goods were being smuggled out of the country it would only mean that some Bengalee citizens had decided to transfer their capital abroad and were holding Indian currency instead of Bangladesh takas. If the illgotten fortunes of the many blackmarketeers held in pounds and dollars in British and American banks do not prove that the British and Americans were actively engaged in destroying the Bangladesh economy, how then does it follow that the rupee accounts with Indian banks meant that India was deliberately trying to do just that?

Untenable Economic Arguments

The fall in the prices of rice, jute and a few other commodities from the middle of 1975 is being hailed by Dacca ruling circles as the direct result of their preventive measures against smuggling. Yet prices of most other consumer items including fish, meat, edible oil, etc. have continued to rise. Indeed, for ordinary urban dwellers who depend on rationed commodities the cost of living has risen since 1975. The blackmarket value of the taka has declined further. How can one explain these contradictory phenomena? The impact of the exceptionally favourable weather for crops during 1975-76 and 1976-77 can hardly be denied. Even India has succeeded in storing nearly 20 million tons of foodgrains in 1976. Is the fall in the price of foodgrains only true of Bangladesh or is it a worldwide phenomenon? If the present regime is to justify their anti-Indian stance they must do so in political terms and not on untenable economic arguments. If the Bengalees are to be denied the opportunity of taking advantage of the large Indian market, its technology and whatever other resources Indians are able to provide, then the rulers of Bangladesh must invent other excuses. Fallacious economic reasoning will not help them much longer.☆

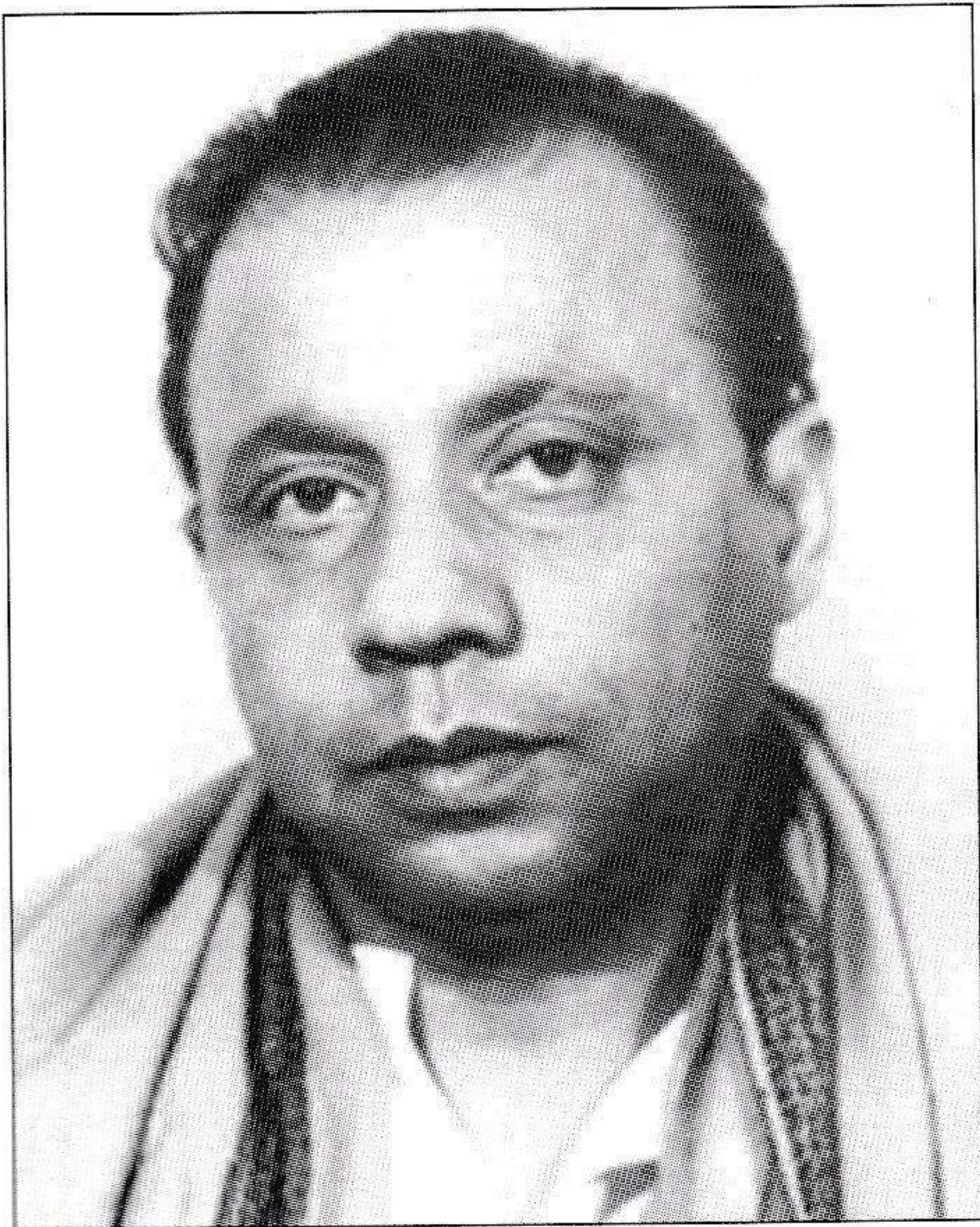
☆ Reproduced from *Sunrise* Vol. 2 Nos. 1-2 August-September 1977.



Syed Nazrul Islam



Tajuddin Ahmed



A.H.M. Qamruzzaman



M. Mansoor Ali

Appendix 111

Assassination In Dacca Central Jail

During the night of 2-3 November 1975 the same gang of killers, who had previously assassinated Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, entered the Dacca Central jail and murdered in cold blood four of the most important leaders of the Bangladesh liberation struggle.

The victims of this atrocity were Syed Nazrul Islam, the former Vice-President; Mr Tajuddin Ahmed, the first Prime Minister; Mr Mansoor Ali, the former Prime Minister and General Secretary of the Central Committee of BAKSAL, and Mr A.H.M. Qamruzzaman, the former Minister for Commerce. These leaders, apart from being the most trusted colleagues of Sheikh Mujib, were members of the 5-member Revolutionary Government of Bangladesh set up during the liberation struggle. Immediately after the 15 August 1975 coup, they were arrested and kept in detention in the Dacca Central Jail.

The group of Army officers ("The Majors") who had killed Sheikh Mujib on 15 August 1975, had also given orders for the murder of the four imprisoned leaders, according to *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*; "The Majors" were themselves overthrown on 3 November 1975 by a bloodless coup led by, Brigadier Khalid Musharaf, Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army.

In Bangkok, Lt.Col. Farouk asserted that the leaders of the 15 August coup had been responsible for the murder of the four men, who were "the possible civilian challengers to the new military rulers" (vide: *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, p. 27521 col. 2 dated 16 January 1976).

Keesing's Contemporary Archives also recorded that Dacca Radio made its first indirect reference to the second coup on 4

November when it announced that Brigadier Musharaf had been appointed Chief of Army Staff in place of Ziaur Rahman. In the evening the Radio announced that President Mushtaq Ahmed had appointed a Commission of three judges to inquire into the "occurrence" and also into "the circumstances in which some miscreants ("The Majors") were given safe passage to leave the country".

"The discovery of the murders;" according to *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, "aroused intense indignation in Bangladesh. A general strike took place in Dacca on 5 November and 5,000 students marched through the streets demanding President Mushtaq's resignation and the punishment of those responsible for the murder of President Mujib and the four Ministers. In the country, similar demonstrations were reported to have taken place at Rajshahi, where Mr Qamruzzaman's body was taken for burial, and in Chittagong and Sylhet."

It is known that Brigadier Musharaf had refused a request by Khondakar Mushtaq Ahmed, Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman and Air Vice-Marshal Tawab to leave the country along with The Majors".

Keesing's Contemporary Archives reveal that on 9 November 1975, Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman" dissolved the judicial commission set up to inquire into the murder of the four Ministers" (vide: p. 27522 col. 2 dated 10 January 1975). ☆

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