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The Soft Heart of the British Empire: Indian Radicals in Edwardian London

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Past & Present, Volume 220, Issue 1, 1 August 2013, Pages 143–184,

<https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtt006>

Published: 18 July 2013

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In 1908 several of the principal leaders of the Indian nationalist movement migrated to London. Of the three leading ‘extremist’ politicians, ‘Lal, Pal and Bal’, the two still at liberty, Lal and Pal, had left India in the hope of escaping police harassment. ‘My life is a constant misery on account of the

close espionage kept on me', wrote Lal (Lala Lajpat Rai, leader of the Arya Samaj, Punjab).¹ Bipin Chandra Pal (leader of the swadeshi and anti-partition movements in Bengal) had also arrived to alert the British public to the repression now under way in India.² The third leader, Bal Gangadhar Tilak (journalist and leading political activist, Poona), had been sentenced to six years' transportation for sedition, but his lieutenants G. S. Khaparde and Vishnu Karandikar moved to London in September 1908 to lobby for his early release. Other...

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