

"GANDHI AND NEHRU : MASTER-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP : A CRITIQUE"

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Preface

As conspicuous strategists of the 20th century Indian history, who can doubt the contributions of Gandhi and Nehru in shaping Indian's destiny! Though during the first half of the 20th century there were equally able other prominent personalities whose contributions are no less significant in India's struggle for freedom, in front of Gandhi and Jawaharlal they do not look much impressive. In fact, these two leaders like a giant colossus simply overshadowed all other contemporary bigwigs. Therefore, a systematic comparative study of Gandhi and Jawaharlal acquires special importance.

True, much has been written on Gandhi and Jawaharlal, and it is not unlikely much more might be written. Yet in spite of all that might be spoken in future it has been decided by me to write this analytical account comparing these two personalities so that the works and deeds of these two historical beings could be reviewed afresh.

It has almost become a custom with the people to praise and highlight only the good points of the leaders after their death. What attributes were not in them, what they themselves had never claimed to be in them, are attributed to them. In fact, most of writers are no exception to this tendency. However, exceptions do exist.

The differences between Gandhi and Nehru are well known, even when Gandhi was alive Nehru tried to flout much that Gandhi had stood for or professed. Sometime it seemed there was no meeting ground between these two people, yet in the past, it seems no systematic analysis of their differences have been attempted by

anybody, though there appears in the writings of a few authors a smattering of references on the comparative aspect of Gandhi and Nehru. Covering only one or the other aspect makes the entire writing lop-sided, because such writings fail to project the actual picture. Every personality is always multi – faceted, hence care must be taken to deal with almost all the aspects as far as practicable in order to be able to project a clear picture. Hence this attempt! I have tried to study the relation between Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru absolutely in a new light. In fact, my attempt here is to find out the reasons that kept these two people together despite vast differences from ideological viewpoint.

The writings and spoken works of Gandhi and Nehru are so vast that their published works, I feel, are only a tip of the iceberg, because they kept on speaking and writing all through their lives. Moreover, there are limitless literatures on them written by indigenous and foreign writers from different angles and standpoints. To name one is as good as to belittle the others, therefore, I decided to refrain from making a review of one or the other works. In fact, it is difficult also in view of their massive character. Out of curiosity, once I tried to count the names of the books written on Gandhi and Nehru on different aspects in the National Library, Kolkata for days on end taking leave from time to time from my work place but finally, I felt exhausted and gave up. Indeed it was an extremely difficult exercise. It is not unlikely because of their greatness that no writer of little repute could contain his or her temptation to try out his or her hand on this or that aspect of these two people.

While browsing Internet to search for written materials on Gandhi and Nehru under www.Google.com search gear, I found mind-boggling number of entries. Under Gandhi there are about 15,20,000

and Nehru 12,10,000 entries, and clicking on each entry, such as, 'Nehru memorial Museum and Library,' New Delhi opens floodgates of information for the researchers.

In course of my research I came across countless unpublished papers, but to select the relevant materials suitable for my work was indeed a Herculean task. Hence, it took me almost five years to produce this work. Collection of materials from Internet and elsewhere from museums and libraries consumed most of my time, however arrangement of materials chapter- wise, to cut short my time, I carried out simultaneously.

I tried my level best to base my writing on primary source, secondary source materials were too brought into use but they were used sparingly when it has become absolutely essential to substantiate certain standpoints in course of my writing.

I quoted from the speeches and writings of Gandhi and Nehru only with a view to projecting what they actually have to say on the issues in question and also to save myself from any blame of misinterpretations. They were not only great people but leaders of world class as well as eminent intellectual and scholars of repute. Therefore, as a precaution whether I wrote in favour or disfavour on any particular issue related to them I tried to corroborate my arguments quoting their own words as far as practicable. Then finally I drew up my own conclusion whenever and wherever required.

In fact, a work of this kind requires years of research. My work too began more than a decade ago in the form of collection of materials whenever I found time, though my attempt started seriously on this line sometime five years back. In course of my search for materials I received help from many quarters. To begin with, I received substantial

help from library staffs of District Library Coochbehar. On my request, they never hesitated to place before me papers and books of my need from prima facie irretrievable heaps of books and papers. Though cataloguing of all the books and papers have been done much later, in those days when I was posted in Coochbehar cataloguing works were yet to be started. Therefore, to retrieve anything of interest was a hard nut to crack. I am highly grateful to these staff members of Coochbehar District Library.

At my next posting in the district of Dakhin Dinajpur I received immense help from the District Librarian Mr. Anup Kumar Mandal. Whenever I expressed my desire for some or the other books over phone, he was always ready to reach me those books to my office in no time. I feel highly obliged to him for his benevolent attitude in terms of arrangement of books of my requirement. Never will I forget his help! Similarly, I also put on record the help I received from Professor Kamalesh Das of the Department of History of Balurghat College on many counts.

Similarly, I received a lot of help from the librarian of St. Joseph's College as well as from the Principal Loreto College, Darjeeling. The lady herself took me to the librarian and issued instructions to provide me with books of my requirement whenever I go to her with such need. I am highly grateful to her for her generous gesture.

I also express my gratitude to Mr. Haren Ale erstwhile District Library Officer, District Library, Darjeeling for his help in making available the books of my necessity.

Last but not the least I acknowledge with respect the contribution of my guide Professor (Dr.) Ratna Sanyal (nee Roy) of the

Department of History University of North Bengal for providing me guidance as well as help with books and materials from her own collection whenever I got stuck up with the need of some materials to substantiate my writings. Also I received books of my requirement which could not be had from elsewhere obtained from the library of the University of North Bengal.

Finally, I would also like to put on record the moral support I received from my family members to complete my research work.



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Chapter-I

CHAPTER – I

Introduction

Gandhi, while describing his differences with Nehru to Durga Das, once remarked, "Jawahar wants Englishmen to go but Angreziat (English ways and culture) to stay, I want Angreziat to go and Englishmen to stay as our friends."¹ Therefore, a question has always stirred the minds of all and sundry : whether Nehru being one of the closest among the followers of Gandhi pursued the course showed by the Mahatma or shaped his own path independently?

Amongst those who made history in modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru stood in a class by himself as a political force as well as a personality. As a political force he defied assessment, as a personality he challenged analysis. In India, his personality glowed next to none save Gandhi and then outside India, his reputation far exceeded that of Gandhi. Unlike that of most other contemporary Congress leaders, his popularity was not confined to his own province but he was a favourite of all and gathered admiration of multitudes wherever he went. If on the one hand, he impressed the intellectuals with his writings, and then on the other he intoxicated the crowd with his heart-stirring gift of the gab. All classes of people, the poor as well as the rich, pinned their hopes on him that he would fulfill their aspiration – even the revolutionaries, who wanted to achieve the goal of independence pursuing a different path, would highly applaud his fiery eloquence. Even to the ladies of the then fashionable society, he was an object of adoration because of his handsome appearance as well as his cultured conversation.

This was Nehru, a genius par excellence, but a genius like him could never be expected to pursue a path paved by another man. Nehru's pride of intellect could not permit him to speak another man's language. His mental make-up could never allow him to be shadow of someone else howsoever respectful he may be. In clear term Nehru advocated no blindfold pursuance of Gandhi's objectives. He encouraged honest criticism and public discussion of all problems as far as possible. But Nehru accepted that Gandhi's dominating position to some extent prevented such discussion because there was always a tendency to rely on him and to leave the decision on Gandhi, Nehru considered such tendency as wrong because, in his opinion, the nation could only advance by reasoned acceptance of objectives and methods, and a cooperation and discipline based on them and not on blind obedience of Gandhi. In his opinion, no one, however, great he might be, should be above criticism.

Like his other contemporaries, Nehru would also have been forgotten or simply relegated to an insignificant place in history but for his these distinctive qualities.

But the trouble lies there, when Nehru repeatedly harped that he obeyed Gandhi's mandate and would continue to lead India along the way Gandhi led her but all the while he framed his course differently.

It was Gandhi's intention to rid India of the Western culture, which he considered an imposition on the country. But, surprisingly, Nehru thoughtfully kept himself aloof from this thought of the Mahatma. In fact, he was an Indian in garb but in his heart's sanctum always appreciated English culture. When Nehru's 'Autobiography' was published, an English newspaper "The Statesman", published from Calcutta, complimented it as the writing of an Englishman. Gandhi, too,

had complimented Nehru, more or less, in a similar way. Although Gandhi knew that Jawaharlal was implacably opposed to imperialism in any shape or form, he still accepted that he was a friend of the English people. Even Gandhi commented that the latter was more English than Indian in his thought and make up.

The Mahatma was always conscious of his differences with Nehru, in spite of that he could not give up his fond conviction which he pinned on Nehru. Even he made a prediction that when he was gone, Nehru would shed his differences, which he often declared he had with the Mahatma.

Gandhi and Nehru were brought up in different environments with completely dissimilar approach towards life. Gandhi's father was a man with no education save that of experience. He had read, at best, up to the fifth Gujrati standard. On the other hand, Motilal Nehru (Jawaharlal's father) was a man with considerable learning and an eminent lawyer of Allahabad High Court. Gandhi's home had an inclination towards puritan living and strict observance of rituals, Nehru's Anand Bhawan echoed with modernity and aristocracy. According to Gandhi, no man could live without religion. However, to Nehru, religion seemed to be only 'a women's affairs'. Even his father Motilal treated the question related to religion humourously and refused to take it seriously. The rituals performed by his mother left little impression upon Nehru's mind. To Gandhi, all this was unthinkable. Gandhi's student life in England was one of restraint bound by the oath he had pledged before his mother. Nehru had no such inhibition. Different situation in which they grew up were bound to have their influence on these two souls differently.

Unlike Gandhi, Nehru was no enigma to the European; moreover there was nothing uncanny about his personality. His was not the mysterious east, which baffled the West. But Gandhi was unpredictable. Although Gandhi's personality could fascinate a European time and again, but he always felt ill at ease in the former's presence. But Nehru's ways were easily decipherable, and his idealism was always familiar to the European. His was the faith considered secular, the values ethical and the thoughts rational. Gandhi was a saint in the garb of a politician; renunciation was part and parcel of his nature. But to Nehru, he had never consciously renounced anything, which he had really valued.

Gandhi openly declared in public that his heart was in the village. He knew there lived in the village men in stark poverty and ignorance – even tilling hard for the entire day it was difficult for them to arrange for two square meals. To him, this was the picture of real India. He consistently told his followers to forget for a moment Swaraj and even also to forget 'haves' whose presence was always oppressive. He insisted upon them to take up the humble village work, which would be necessary even after the goal of Swaraj had been achieved. In fact, for him, if the village work became successful, then it would automatically take India nearer the goal. Even Gandhi shifted from Wardha to Sevagram to commence his village work in accordance to this pledge.

Following the mandate 'go to the villages', Nehru too accepted the Gandhian ideal of village work. While working in the villages Nehru tried his best to be one with the village people like Gandhi, but he miserably failed. What prevented him to reconcile with their ways was his intellectual constitution and aggressive self-consciousness. His love for the village folk prompted him to trust them and to go straight to them. Even he tried to feel at home in the dust and discomfort, the

pushing and jostling of large gatherings and in trudging miles in order to visit distant villages. This way he took to the crowd and the crowd took him, and yet he never lost himself in it. Nehru always wondered, how did he manage to obtain goodwill and confidence from the people, who were so different from him in terms of their habits, desires, and mental and spiritual outlook. This was so because people adored Gandhi, and in Nehru they sought to see the former's image. Nehru was not blind to this fact either. And yet Nehru could not get rid of the idea that their affection was not meant for him as he was but for some fanciful image of him that they had formed.

A continual stream of disagreements existed between them but Gandhi tried to negate them always by declaring in the public that they did not affect their personal relations in any way. Nehru adored and revered Gandhi for his greatness and services to India in spite of differences, and felt himself to be personally indebted to Gandhi on many issues. Politically he used to consider himself entirely Gandhi-made and on the other hand the master also extended his love and blessing on the disciple always. There are plenty of instances of favour and love displayed by Gandhi for Nehru. At the open Congress in Madras though Nehru supported Subhas Bose's amendment to Gandhi's resolution but notwithstanding the difference Gandhi recommended Nehru's name for Congress presidency for the following year and even justified his action by declaring that the battle of the future had to be fought by younger men and women since older men had already completed their innings.

After Nehru's return from Europe in 1936 he had been pushed into the role of leading the Congress, but he was hemmed in on all sides by the vociferous opposition of the rightist members of the working committee for his socialistic views, at times which made him

feel unnerved. Pitted against the opposition Nehru offered to resign and wrote to Gandhi.

Gandhi immediately consoled Nehru that the latter was in the office by virtue of the unanimous choice of working committee and not by any other consideration and hence the whole affair had to be treated simply as a tragic-comedy by him and nothing more.

Once in December 1927, Nehru was in Madras for attending the Congress session. Dr. Ansari was happened to be the president of the session. Here a number of resolutions were passed at the instance of Nehru. Gandhi could not spare time to attend this session. But when he read the resolutions adopted at this session, in which socialistic intonations were prominent, Gandhi immediately wrote a letter to Nehru expressing his displeasure but rather in a subdued tone. Even he went on the record to say that he did not mind these acts of Nehru so much as he minded the latter's encouraging mischief-makers and hooligans.

Gandhi's differences with Nehru sometime in 1928 had reached its bitterest level, which is reflected in Gandhi's letter of 17 January 1928 to Nehru, "The differences between you and me appear to me to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us."

Immediately after this Gandhi left for Meerut to meet the accused persons of the Meerut case. Here, it seems, Gandhi forgot every grudge against Nehru because later on, it was observed, this Meerut case had become one of the important national issues.

It appears that both Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru had attached high hopes with Salt Satyagraha movement. However, their high hopes were dashed to the ground when the movement ended with Gandhi-

Irwin Pact. Nehru felt extremely depressed and great emptiness as if something precious gone, almost beyond recall:

“This is the way the world ends,

Nothing with a bang, but a whimper.”

Gandhi learnt of this distress of Nehru and went to appease the latter. At Karachi convention of the Congress, Gandhi made his whole-hearted attempt to clear up the proposals framed by Nehru. About the proposal Vallabhbhai Patel had his reservations considering them to be untimely. In fact, in order to get his proposals passed, Nehru had given an ultimatum to Gandhi either to accept this or to face his opposition on the Delhi Pact issue. Gandhi had no option than to accept it as a sop to Nehru, and forwarded it down on a tired subjects committee and Congress on the concluding day.

Nehru made very clear in his ‘Autobiography’ that there were basic differences between Gandhi’s ideals and his socialistic objectives.

Once again in 1936, Nehru was elected to lead the Congress. This was due to the blessing of Gandhi because Sardar Patel was also a contender for this post. In fact, Gandhi had objected to Sardar’s candidature. It was also Patel’s contention that most of the Congressmen did not have faith in the socialistic principles advocated by Nehru. But Gandhi did not agree to this and expressed his full support in favour of Nehru.

It was a fact that in the Congress Working Committee most of the members did not subscribe to socialism and it was also a fact that Nehru was aware of this reality. However, for Nehru socialism was not merely an economic doctrine, which he favoured but it was a vital

creed, which he held with all his head and heart. Even Nehru liked the Congress to become a socialist organization and to join hands with the other forces in the world that were working for the new civilization.

Gandhi had always cherished a special favour for Nehru and which fact was known then to almost all in the Congress. A letter sent from Austria by Subhas Chandra Bose to Nehru before the Lucknow Convention also substantiated this.

".....Your position is unique and I think that even Mahatma Gandhi will be more accommodating towards you than towards anybody else."²

In one place Frank Moraes writes, "It was whispered that the gulf between the Mahatma and Nehru was widening, and Gandhi was alleged to have said, 'My life work is being ruined by Jawaharlal's utterances.'³

Perhaps Gandhi had come to know about this whisper and thus immediately after he contradicted it in an article 'Are We Rivals' published in 'Harijan'.

Even at the beginning of the Second World War difference in opinion persisted in between Gandhi and Nehru, but in spite of the differences Gandhi never made his feelings public. He wanted to settle the differences mutually. A letter he wrote to Nehru, ~~in which he wrote~~, evidences this, "I see no good in entering into a guerilla warfare when the American and Chinese forces enter India."⁴

The constitution of human mind is very peculiar, and its ways are difficult to comprehend. Thoughts and norms change gradually with the change in circumstances. But in every case realization is important.

Nehru was no exception. His mind too fluctuated in respect of his stand on certain principles, especially 'Ahimsa'.

The history of Congress in the fourth decade of the 20th century is remarkable for gradual conversion of Nehru to the views and practices of Gandhi. Nehru himself used to comment on Gandhi that 'ideologically he was sometimes amazingly backward' and again much that he said seemed to fit in with a medieval Christian saint and not at all with modern psychological experience and method.

The change in him was an enigma, but Nehru himself furnished the answer that though he did not agree with Gandhi's philosophy of life or even with many of his ideals and often he did not understand him, the action proposed by Gandhi was something tangible.

When the Cripps Mission failed, the British government resorted to the coercive measures in order to suppress all opposition. As a sequel to this policy, the Congress AICC office at Allahabad was also raided and certain papers were seized. From these papers one very important point came to the light – that of Nehru's subscription to Gandhi's faith in the matter of non-violence as the only possible defence against any invasion and as only method left to the people.

The subsequent chapters will try to arrive at certain assessment whether Nehru in subsequent years remained the true follower of Gandhi or paved his own path deviating from the Gandhian ideologies.

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2. A Bunch of Old Letters, Jawaharlal Nehru, Asia Publishing House, 1958, p.172.
3. Jawaharlal Nehru – A Biography, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1956, p.259.
4. A Bunch of Old Letters, op. cit., p. 480.

Chapter-II

CHAPTER – II

Economic Inclination : Retrogressive or Progressive

Gandhi was no economist, nor did he study much economics on his own. But he shaped and honed his economic ideas by his own practical experiences and intensive reading the works of John Ruskin, Leo Tolstoy as well as the religions literatures such as the Gita, the Bible etc. His outlook on economics and economic problems was totally different. In fact, it was based on spiritualism. He gave insistence on the moral and spiritual development of a human being. He used to say morality and economics should walk together. That economics is not true which disregards the moral values.¹ True economics always stands for social justice and promotes the good of all.² To him, true economics never goes against the highest ethical standard and if any economic concept inculcates mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak then that concept “is a false and dismal science.”³ He said with a strong conviction, “I do not draw a sharp line or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurts the moral well-being of an individual or a nation is immoral, and therefore sinful.”⁴ Even he went one step further to say, “The economics that permits one country to prey upon another is immoral.”⁵ He considered true economics as indispensable in order to lead a decent life.⁶ Gandhi gave a spiritual touch to human history. He drew a line of demarcation between man and the brute. He said, man “can respond to the call of spirit in him, can rise superior to the possessions that he owns in common with the brute.”⁷ To him, human history is simply the political history but the predominant factor is the spiritual and moral progress made by man in course of time, and in

future, they will be the determining factor in shaping the human destiny. He out-rightly observed that he did not "believe in the existence of class-struggle,"⁸ and considered class-war as "foreign to the essential genius of India."⁹ He cautioned Indians not to be swayed by the catch-words and seductive slogans imported from the West, but rather to have implicit faith in eastern tradition, "Which promises an escape from the vicious circle of violence and exploitation."¹⁰ He could not make himself to accept the contemporary concept that the western socialism and communism were the last words on the question of mass poverty.¹¹

Let us try to understand further what Gandhi meant by "true economics". According to him, "true economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as well true ethics to be worth its name, must at the same time be also good economics."¹² After Gandhi, true economics stands for social justice promoting the good of all including the weakest. The strong plea for ethical values is the first brick on which the whole edifice of entire Gandhian economy rests.

To him, primacy of man, his well-being, growth and unfoldment has to be the primary object of the economy in all its aspects, the 'end' and 'means' and also the 'measure' of the productive efforts and results.

When India won independence, Gandhi called it complete independence. "So at one hand you have the political independence, at the other the economic."¹³ However, the same Gandhi, three days before his death, regretted, though the Congress won political freedom, it had yet to win economic freedom, social freedom, and the moral freedom. He was committed to economic freedom throughout his life. His economic thoughts were not based on any copy book maxims, but

displayed his own experiences gathered over the years. The remedies he suggested were based on ground realities. Spratt commented rightly, "His social and economic proposals have to be understood in relation to circumstances."¹⁴

Gandhi stood for an ideal of 'simple living and high thinking.' "Craze for multiplicity of goods is destructive of contentment, peace and tranquility."¹⁵ Satisfaction could not be achieved and welfare could not be maximized unless number of wants could be reduced to the minimum. Welfare has to be compromised and pain ensues, if wants grow in number, since all wants cannot be satisfied. However, he did not advocate, unnecessary reduction in wants. But he also did not desire wants should become an end in themselves. They are good so long as they cater to the human welfare, but they deserve to be discarded if they become a burden. "A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness."¹⁶ He did not believe that "multiplication of wants and machinery contrived to supply them" took the world a single step nearer its goal.¹⁷ He concluded that the western nations, in fact, were groaning under heel of the monster, i.e., God of materialism. "Their moral growth has become stunted... ours will only be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self."¹⁸

Long before independence, Gandhi said that independent India could only discharge her duty towards a groaning world by adopting a

simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottages and living at peace with the world. "High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by mammon worship."¹⁹ He prescribed, man would fall from the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he desired to multiply his daily wants.²⁰ To him, human body is only meant for service, never for any kind of indulgence. Renunciation is the secret of a happy life. If life stood for renunciation, then death for indulgence.²¹

To quote Gandhi's own elaboration, "We notice that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passion, the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition.... Observing all this, our ancestors dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life-corroding competition.... It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibres. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet."²²

Gandhi had given importance on physical labour for everybody. If everyone laboured physically for his bread, then the poet, doctors, lawyers and others should consider it their duty to use those talents gratis for the service of humanity. Only then will their output be all better and richer for their selfless devotion to duty.²³ He gave his verdict, "God created man to work for his food and said that those who ate without work were thieves."²⁴ Bread labour should be the prime

duty of every member of society,²⁵ and he who idles away a single minute without any labour simply becomes a burden upon his neighbours to that extent, and to do so deliberately is as good as “to commit a breach of the very first lesson of Ahimsa.”²⁶ He insisted that labour must be a productive one,²⁷ and everyone should perform some manual labour in order to earn his bread. Commitment to bread labour, he reckoned, would be capable of bringing about a steady and silent revolution in society.²⁸

He said that bread labour must be spontaneous and there should not be any iota of ignorance or compulsion. To him, “Compulsory obedience to a master is a state of slavery, willing obedience to one’s father is the glory of the sonship.”²⁹ He maintained that if on the one hand the compulsory obedience to the law of bread labour breeds poverty, disease and discontent, then on the other the same bread labour willingly done is capable of bringing contentment and health.³⁰

Although he emphasized on the need of physical labour and its compulsive necessity in everybody’s life, he did not negate the importance of intellectual work. But again, he pointed out, the quality of intellectual output could improve only with physical labour.³¹

Gandhi considered ‘man’ as the micro-unit of the socio-economic system and whose welfare is totally depended on morality and ethics. To him, primacy of man, his well-being, growth and unfoldment, has to be the primary objective of the economy in all its aspects, the ‘end’ and ‘means’, and the measure of the productive efforts and results. “Everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized if the means of production of the elementary

necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust.”³² He applied this concept on the use of machinery. He said that machinery is for man, and not man for machinery, which is the cardinal principle of mechanical production. He opined that the industrialization instead of generating employment would displace the labour and take work and bread away from them.

He knew, the driving social urge behind industrialization is the craving for excessive consumption. Industrialization, which involves mass production, depends on centralization of initiatives, policy decision and power. For Gandhi, a time would come, when industrialization would prove to be a curse for mankind since it “depends entirely on the capacity to exploit others.”³³ He could not support mechanization of the West, since he could not see “a single good point in connection with machinery.”³⁴ He thought industrialization was not essential in Indian context, since her ideal of ‘high thinking’ was inconsistent with European ideal of complicated material life based on mammon worship. In fact, Gandhi was not against the use of machinery as such, but he was opposed to the craze for having devices which ultimately plunged millions of people into abyss of enforced idleness and unemployment. He said:

“I entertain no fads in this regard. All that I desire it that every able-bodied citizen of India should be provided with gainful employment. If electricity or even atomic energy could be used without displacing human labour and creating unemployment, I will not raise my little finger against it. I am, however, still to be convinced that this would be possible in a country like India, where capital is scarce and labour abundant.”³⁵

Gandhi condemned industrialization because he thought it as the root cause of materialism and moral corruption. To him industrialization and exploitation go hand in hand. However, he accepted that he had no quarrel with steamship and telegraph and, thus, they could stay but without the support of materialism it connoted.³⁶

But he knew social evils of industrialization were germane to the very fundamentals of the modern system of production, therefore, could not be removed once and for all. Hence he suggested to give up industrialization altogether, looking upon it 'as an evil.'³⁷ He advocated a complete change in moral values in order to change our perception of social needs and to put limit to social consumption.

Though he said that he prized 'every invention of science made for the benefit of all,'³⁸ at the same time he was categorical in his assertion that he would not tolerate such machines which might result in displacement of labour and the centralization of wealth.³⁹ Since Gandhi knew industrialization involved mass production therefore it has to depend on centralization of initiatives, policy decision and power. To him, concentration of authority in the economy as a whole is undesirable and thus has to be reduced to the minimum. Whenever the pace of industrialization quickens, the consumption pattern also seeps down to the villages and consequently a paradigm shift in the production model takes place there. This eventually leads to unemployment and poverty in the villages. Gandhi detested this paradigm shift which amounted to exploitation as a derivative of industrialization.

"Industrialization of a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition

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and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use."⁴⁰

The mere socialization of industries, as advocated by Nehru, Gandhi observed, would not, in any way, alter the process of exploitation. "Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that evils are inherent in industrialism, and no amount of socialization can eradicate them."⁴¹

Industrialization, in real sense of the term, increases the gap between 'haves' and 'have-nots', and which, in course of time, becomes unbridgeable and exploitation persists because of the increasing concentration of economic and political power in the hands of the 'haves'. Gandhi wanted to avoid this and insisted upon promotion and realization of decentralization. He conceived of a scheme for this purpose. In his scheme, decentralization process would gradually develop in agro-industrial economy consisting of small communities in which agriculture and small industries would develop in terms of real need and resources; where emphasis would be on the maximum utilization of labour force amounting to self-sufficiency. Here small producers would stand for economic and social democracy, reduction of inequalities and decentralized initiative.

Gandhi's economic doctrine concentrated upon investment in human capital. This conclusion could easily be arrived at from his voluminous writings and speeches on multifarious subjects, such as, health, education and training, technological progress, economic and social development etc.⁴²

"I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace hand labour by the introduction

of power driven spindles unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupations in their houses.”⁴³

To Gandhi, all wars in future would be the result of economic exploitation. The only antidote to economic exploitation and violence is to pursue with all efforts the policy of decentralization through the organization of largely self-sufficient village communities. ‘Man is much self-dependent as interdependent; when dependence becomes necessary in order to keep society in good order, it is no longer dependence, but becomes cooperation where each is equal to the other.’ He repeatedly harped, ‘the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.’ The lawyer’s work has the same value as the barber’s. An individual personality could develop only when centralization exists for centralization leads to domination and idleness.

To him, when labour is not done only for oneself but for others then only could it become ‘yagna’ or sacrifice. The spirit behind this: is labour of love. He said, “..... men will, no doubt, do many things either through their body or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love, for the common good.”⁴⁴ He advised, “If we cultivate this habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and will make not only for our own happiness, but that of the world at large.”⁴⁵

About his own country India he writes, “I have indeed wept to see the stark poverty and unemployment in our country, but I confess our own negligence and ignorance are largely responsible for it, we do not know the dignity of labour as such.”⁴⁶ He preached ‘swadeshi’ (indigenously) for achieving independence and eliminating imperialism. In fact, in the case of modern imperialism morality and politics are subordinating factors vis-à-vis economic consideration.

Therefore, his concept of 'economic freedom was composite one: partly economic, partly moral and spiritual.'⁴⁷

To Gandhi, history simply records the march of man from 'violence' to 'non-violence', from cannibalism to the present stage. To quote him, "If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards 'Ahimsa' (non-violence), it followed that it has to progress towards it still further."⁴⁸ Indeed Gandhi had a deep understanding of the currents of history. His economic views were structured on the concept of non-violence. Therefore, he insisted on purity of means for attainment of any goal, be it economic, political or anything. To him, end did not justify means, but on the contrary means justified end.

Further, his economic ideals were also based on the concept of equality. He wanted everybody should have enough to take care of his or her needs. He abhorred economic inequality of any kind, be it in wages or opportunities. Even he went on to the extent of propounding a scheme, according to which, 'all the doctors, lawyers, teachers and others would get the same wages for all honest day's work.'⁴⁹ He further contends, "Let no one try to justify the glaring difference between the classes and the masses, the prince and the pauper, because the former needed more, will be idle sophistry and travesty of my argument."⁵⁰

Here let Gandhi should not be misunderstood that he was against wealth. He was never against wealth, but against inequality and mal-distribution. "My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see it is not to be realized. I, therefore, work for equal distribution." (Gandhi).⁵¹

It is true, Gandhi argued, every human being has a right to live, to feed, to cloth himself etc., but not by dispossessing those who have

possessions, it is to be done by pursuing the ideal of non-possession or 'aparigraha' (in Sanskrit). He expected voluntary relinquishment and retaining only that much what is actually needed to fulfill one's requirement. So here 'non-possession' has wider import in Gandhi's parlance. He put forward a very easy solution for eradicating poverty from the world, "If only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more there would be no pauperism in the world"⁵² Gandhi's insistence upon not overlooking human values, amidst material progress and emphasizing on limiting one's wants 'deserve deeper understanding and appreciation'.⁵³

Gandhi favoured rural economy for India.⁵⁴ He wanted village to be the basic unit of economic system, which is to be self-contained and self-sufficing. He defined the concept of self-contained thus: "The self-contained unit will constitute an area covered by a radius of about five miles. Each unit shall have a definite pattern of consumption and a well-integrated system of production. The consumption pattern will depend upon the geographical situation of the locality, the temperament of the people, the traditional regulation, and economic pattern and upon the educational and cultural attainment of the people."⁵⁵

Gandhi wanted his self-sufficient village should be capable to produce all that is necessary for the consumption of its own people. Contrary to the concept that the village is being used as a dumping ground for the manufactured goods of the cities, he wanted the cities should serve as emporia for village products.⁵⁶ He emphasized on the constitution of several independent village units or vaguely called republics capable of managing their own affairs with the least governmental help and outside interference. To quote his own words, "Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a

republic of panchayat having full powers.... Whose centre will be the individual.”⁵⁷

Gandhi was always worried about man-days lost due to mechanization. “Mechanization is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India.... The problem is how to utilize their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months in the year.... spinning and weaving mills have deprived the villagers of a substantial means of livelihood. It is no answer in reply to say that they turn out cheaper, better cloth, if they do so at all. For, if they have displaced thousands of workers, the cheapest mill cloth is dearer than the dearest Khadi woven in the villages.”⁵⁸

In the Indian context, Gandhi saw infeasibility of heavy industrialization because of an abundance of underemployed labour and agro-based economy. In one place he confessed, “I have no partiality for return to the primitive methods of grinding and husking for the sake of them. I suggest the return, because there is no other way of giving employment to the millions of villagers who are living in idleness”.⁵⁹

Here comes out Gandhi in open support for Khadi with a view to making every village self-supporting for its food and clothing. He projected Khadi as a universal industry,⁶⁰ and said only through Khadi could the proper utilization of human labour be ensured.⁶¹ Khadi is the true economic proposition in terms of the millions of villagers⁶² since in them hope would be raised instead of despair.⁶³ However, he did not design Khadi as an elixir for every time to come, but he said, until such times ‘when a better system of supplying work and adequate system of

wages for every able-bodied person is found for his field, cottage or even factory in everyone of the villages of India'⁶⁴ Even he went to the extent of projecting Khadi's capability in transforming the vices inherent in human nature into public virtues. Let us see below how does he elaborate.

"I am always reminded of one thing which the well-known British economist Adam Smith has said in his famous treatise 'The Wealth of Nations'. In it he has described some economic laws as universal and absolute. Then he described certain situations which may be an obstacle to the operation of these laws. These disturbing factors are the human nature, the human temperament or altruism inherent in it. Now the economics of Khadi is just the opposite of it. Benevolence which is inherent in nature is ^{the} very foundation of the economics of Khadi. What Adam Smith has described as pure economic activity based merely on the calculations of profit and loss is a selfish attitude and it is an obstacle to the development of Khadi; and it is the function of a champion of Khadi to counteract this tendency."⁶⁵

In Gandhi's khadi industry there is no room for surplus or the profit, rent or interest. Being in the hands of spinners, it will be very much sustainable with the increasing population. Khadi is capable of binding rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the pauper.⁶⁶ He wanted khadi spinning an objective of compulsion for every able-bodied man, for it symbolized economic freedom and equality because of its capability to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, inexpensive and business like manners. Commenting in 'Gandhi Marg' on khadi, Philip Zealey held, "Of all the nonviolent weapons forged by Gandhi, Khadi was the nearest moral equivalent of the infantryman's rifle. It was conducive to national solidarity."⁶⁷

Gandhi identified khadi as a technique, which could bridge the gap between the elites and the illiterates, by prompting them to give up, westernized dress and opening before their eyes the dignity of labour. About Gandhi's khadi, G.D.N. Cole, a well-known British economist commented that it "was not mere a fad of a romantic eager to revive the past, but a practical attempt to relieve poverty and uplift the standard of Indian village."⁶⁸

Besides, khadi provides sustenance to some village industries, such as, hand-grinding, tanning, hand-pounding, soap-making, oil-pressing etc. Without khadi, they could never have their independent existence. Therefore, Gandhi said 'Khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of'.⁶⁹

Though he insisted upon the practical necessity of khadi in India, at the same time he wanted to put forward his moral base before the masses about his such insistence.

"If I could do it, I would most assuredly destroy or radically change much that goes under the name of moral civilization. But that is an old story of life. The attempt is undoubtedly there. Its success depends upon God. But the attempt to revive and encourage the remunerative village industries is not part of such an attempt, except in so far as every one of my activities, including the propagation of non-violence, can be described as such an attempt."⁷⁰

He went on further to say that our duty is to investigate the possibilities of keeping in existence the village wheel, the village crusher and the village pounder and by advertising their products, discovering their qualities, ascertaining the condition of the workers and the number displaced by the power-driven machinery and

discovering the methods of improving them, while retaining their village character to enable them to stand the competition of the mills.⁷¹

Gandhi perceived that poverty, especially in India, was primarily due to negligence in rural economy and enforced unemployment. This visible unemployment, in Indian context, was not associated with a deficiency of aggregate demand as in industrialized countries, however it was structural in nature and thus needed to be dealt with by the restructuring of the economy. To him, "... the participation of this vast force (of uncompleted) in economic development calls for a new approach and exploration outside the bounds of Western or Soviet models...."⁷²

In fact, the Gandhian concept of economic development related to man as a whole and not just to the 'economic man', since it sought to avoid distortions in the relationship between man and his environment, between man and machine, between labour and capital, and between village and town.⁷³

Khadi or hand-spun or hand woven cloth was for Gandhi a measure of economic relief for the poverty-stricken masses of India. He knew from the beginning spinning could not enter into any competition with any industry, it could merely provide a substitute occupation for India's peasantry during their six months of unemployment. Therefore, the remuneration earned through spinning could not be compared with the wages earned through regular alternative employment, since spinning he meant could be a supplementary industry. Gandhi said, "The sole claim on its behalf is that it alone offers an immediate, practicable, and permanent solution of problems which confront India – namely, the enforced idleness for nearly six months in the year of an overwhelming majority of India's population, owing to lack of a suitable

occupation supplementary to agriculture, and the chronic starvation of the masses that result thereby. There would be no place for the spinning wheel in the national life of India, comparatively small as the remuneration that can be derived from it, if, these two factors were not there.”

Though Gandhi was no economist, he was a realist par excellence. He knew, next to food, there is always a need for cloth, and hence yarn for clothing must always command a good market and that spinning was also not restricted by local weather conditions while solving the problem of partial employment. No special intelligence is required to run a ‘charkha’ (spinning wheel), while raw materials are easily available and it would bring work to the doorstep of the peasantry. Thus through Khadi Gandhi evolved a practical philosophy. Gandhi’s movement for introduction of Khadi in Indian soil gathered momentum and popularity since the time when in the nineteen twenties he introduced spinning to the inmates of Sabarmati Ashram. To some extent Khadi is the index of his power and popularity with the Indian masses. Effectively Gandhi proved the usefulness of the ‘charkha’ as a measure of famine relief in securing immediate employment for those in need, and more than ever it was found invaluable in the task of rehabilitating the destitute of Bengal after the 1943 famine. As written above Gandhi was not against machinery except it ousted and impoverished the handicraftsman. He knew that there is always a place and need for heavy industry in India, but as long as famine and unemployment exist it is necessary to safeguard cottage industries to supplement the agriculturist’s earnings. The “Buy Swadeshi” movement instituted by Gandhi though gave the necessary encouragement to mills, Khadi safeguarded exploitation and profiteering by the mills, since no longer was the emphasis on mill-made cloth but had shifted to

hand spinning. But on the question of what to do with the mill-cloth and also to avoid mill-cloth from coming into competition with Khadi, Gandhi had a ready made answer, "Our mills may export their manufactures".⁷⁴

To conclude, Gandhi never nurtured a myopic view vis-à-vis the economic health of the nation. He knew a nation could not keep itself aloof and isolated from changes that were taking place in the world in the field of economic approach. Though he tried to adapt his thoughts accordingly, he always advocated a return to simplicity and plainness of nature. In *Young India* he wrote, "Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Exploitation of one nation by another cannot go on for all time. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and less everyday for England that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was but a flea-bite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialization. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations – as it must if it becomes industrialized – will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrializing India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation viz., that we can find work for our 300 millions un-employed, but England can find none for its three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellects of England. The future of industrialism is dark. England has got successful competitors in America, Japan, France, Germany If the future of industrialism is dark for the West, would it not be darker still for Indian?"⁷⁵

This was the view of Gandhi on industrialism sometime in the early thirties of the 20th century. Later on, we find, the same Gandhi, appreciating the realities, proposed a reconciliation of large and small-

scale industries. Even he went to the extent of advocating nationalization of key-industries in order to safeguard the greater interests of the Indian villages.⁷⁶ To quote him,

“At the same time I believe that some key-industries are necessary. I do not believe in arm-chair or armed socialism. I believe in action according to my belief, without waiting for whole-sale conversion. Hence, without having to enumerate key-industries, I would have state ownership, where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour, whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the state. But as I can conceive such a state only based on non-violence, I would not dispossess moneyed men by force but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to state ownership. There are no pariahs of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers.”⁷⁷

On the whole, though Gandhi's economic principles were rural based, he was not a complete ruralist in actuality because he did not advocate an unqualified return to village Arcadianism.

II

Gandhi and Nehru both thought deeply on the possibilities of removing the poverty of the masses and each of them looked on the problem from his own standpoint. Gandhi wanted the villages to be self-sufficient with the sincere effort of the villagers themselves. Every man according to his need was his slogan. Whereas as Jawaharlal Nehru thought the use of modern science and technology in the development process indispensable. In his view the evil effects of modern industrialism was removable only through implementing a socialist pattern of distribution. This concept of Nehru was the beginning of the planning process in India as early as in the nineteen thirties. Indeed it was Nehru's initial contribution to the process of economic development of the country.

Nehru's effort to draw up a plan for India's development amidst his preoccupations prior to independence highlights his absolute devotion to the concept of planning. India is greatly indebted to Nehru for his commitment to planning and for taking an all out initiative to initially start the process.

It seems Nehru was impressed by the Soviet Russia's concept of Five Year Plan. His initial impression by the Five Year Plan hypothesis of the Soviet Union can be described thus in his own words,

"The Five Year Plan of Soviet Russia was a colossal undertaking. It was really a number of big revolutions tacked on together, especially an agricultural revolution which substituted large-scale collective and mechanized farming for the old fashioned small-scale methods, and an industrial revolution which industrialized Russia at a tremendous pace. But the most interesting feature of the Plan was the spirit that lay behind it, for this was a new spirit in politics and

industry. This spirit was the spirit of science, an attempt to apply a thought-out scientific method to the building up of society. No such thing had been done before in any country, even the most advanced ones, and it is this application of the methods of science to human and social affairs that is the outstanding feature of Soviet planning. It is because of this that all the world is talking of planning now.....”⁷⁸

Once started planning is still continues to be revered as a concept essential to development with justice, though it had to overcome many pitfalls from time to time. Despite these many hurdles and pitfalls, the concept of Five Year Plan is still going strong in India.

Nehru writes, “Towards the end of 1938. National Planning Committee was constituted at the instance of the Congress. It consisted of fifteen members plus representatives of provincial governments and such Indian states as chose to collaborate with us. Among the members were well-known industrialists, financiers, economists, professors, scientists, as well as representatives of the Trade Union Congress and the Village Industries Association... It was a strange assortment of different types and it was not clear how such an odd mixture would work. I accepted the chairmanship of the committee not without hesitation and misgiving; and the work was after my own heart and I could not keep out of it.”⁷⁹

But Nehru had a misconception about the success of this motley group, and also from the side of the government hardly was there any help. Thus it became obvious to Nehru that the success of any comprehensive planning could take place only “under a free national government, strong enough and popular enough to be in a position to introduce fundamental changes in the social and economic structure.”⁸⁰

Gandhi was a visionary, but Nehru's outlook and thought were always pragmatic. Thus planning in India was Nehru's brainchild. Long before India's independence Nehru had formed a clear-cut idea of what a national plan should constitute and aim at. Nehru writes that the original idea behind the constitution of the Planning Committee then had been to further industrialization. He concluded that the problems of poverty and un-employment, of defence and of economic regeneration could not be solved without industrialization.

To quote him, "As a step towards such industrialization, a comprehensive scheme of national planning should be formulated. This scheme should provide for the development of heavy key industries, medium scale industries, and cottage industries.... But no plan could possibly ignore agriculture, which was the mainstay of the people; equally important were the social services. So one thing led to another and it was impossible to isolate anything or to progress in one direction without corresponding progress in another."⁸¹

Nehru knew India possessed vast natural resources and substantial manpower potentials – which are the basic ingredients in order to create a strong industrial base. He had a clear-cut idea that India's economic development could not be achieved without resorting to the process of industrialization. But simultaneously he insisted upon the development of agriculture and small-scale industries as well. By emphasising on the development of small-scale industries Nehru displayed his true Gandhian spirit. However, Nehru could think more than anybody could by underscoring that man is the key figure of the Plan. He could say this with his keen perception, "of course other resources are necessary. But the trained human being is the basic thing in a country. We see countries, which have been devastated in war, being built up in a short time, because of this trained human being

and hard work put by those groups of human beings. And training is a thing which takes time - especially the training of the specific individuals who have to perform trained works. Looking at it from that point of view, the most important thing becomes education at all grades and at all stages.”⁸²

Yet in the beginning of plan efforts not such emphasis was given on the necessity to improve man's understanding and make the plan understandable to him. He continued to press home, “that requires a certain background in the country, preparation of the people to do it, and resources and all that. In the final analysis, I believe, in any country the only basic resource is the trained human being. Almost everything follows from that.”⁸³

Why could not we get along? Why could not we achieve what we expected in the early stages of the planning period? What impeded the success? Surely the remedy provided by Nehru to all these ills was : Train the people. The planners had not been able to build up thinking on the basis of his standpoint is obvious from Nehru's speech. This was the self-defeating draw back of the Plan. However, the situation has changed now. Of late the planners have realized that man has to be trained. The establishment of Human Resource Development Ministry is a step ahead in that direction, “Better late than never”

Introduction of Panchayati Raj system in the country is another step towards teaching the village people in self-governance village-level planning.

Nehru knew agriculture is a vital part of Indian economy, and therefore its development vis-à-vis the development of industry could not be minimized. Rather he concluded that the success of industry depended on the surplus of agricultural production. He said, “I am for

all industry, I am all for steel plants, heavy industries and all that, but I do say agriculture is far more important than industry, because, it is out of the success of agriculture that industry comes. If you fail in agriculture, you have a little to stand upon. Where do you get the wherewithal to have industry? It is out of the surplus from agricultural production that you build your industries and therefore it has become of the utmost importance that agriculture should flourish and should produce the goods and surplus needed for industrial growth.”⁸⁴

On the pursuance of aims and objectives while formulating a national plan Nehru writes, “The idea of planning and a planned society is accepted now in varying degrees by almost everyone. But planning by itself has little meaning and need not necessarily lead to good results. Everything depends on the objectives of the planned on the controlling authority, as well as, of course, the government behind it. Does the plan aim definitely at the well – being and advancement of the people as a whole, at the opening out of opportunity to all and the growth of freedom and methods of co-operative organization and action? Increase of production is essential, but obviously by itself it does not take us far and may even add to the complexity of our problems. An attempt to preserve old-established privileges and vested interests cut at the very root of planning. Real planning must recognize that no such special interests can be allowed to come in the way of any scheme designed to further the well-being of the community as a whole.”⁸⁵

The objectives of the First Plan (1951–56) were based on the economic situation existing then. Population was fast increasing. There had been a very little change in the occupational pattern in spite of the development of industries since 1925. There was sown area person on decline. Industries provided employment hardly to more than 2.4

million. Pressure on land was steadily increasing. Despite the rising incomes in terms of money, the economic condition of the people were probably worse off than in the pre-war years.

The immediate need, thus, was to find enough of food, clothing and housing for the people and accordingly priorities were fixed. Therefore in the First Plan we do not find any condition, which aimed at the rapid industrialization of the country. The First Plan accorded the highest priority to agriculture. The First Plan mentioned, "we are convinced that without a substantial increase in the production of food and raw materials needed for industry it would be impossible to sustain a higher tempo of industrial developmnt."^{85A} The Plan made an allocation of Rs. 861crores, i.e., 44 per cent of the total outlay for this purpose. The purpose of the plan was to improve yield in agriculture with a view to generating an agricultural surplus fundamental to economic development. Any way it was a need based plan introduced as a tentative measure, as a sort of a new experiment, by the Nehru Government.

Nehru could look at every-thing from practical stand point and amend his views and policies accordingly. It was his contention that the development of other sectors of the Indian economy were directly associated with the development of modern heavy industries and application of science and technology. He was not in favour of the development of employment-oriented small sector vis-à-vis the large-scale industries in the private as well as public sector, though he laid emphasis on food, clothing and housing. To Nehru, the demand of the spirit of the age was industrialization and 'without it, not only would the basic economic problems of poverty remain unsolved, but even the political foundations of independent nationhood would be threatened.'⁸⁶

Nehru says that Gandhi's attitude to the use of machinery underwent a gradual change. The latter objected to 'the craze for machinery, not machinery as such.' "He even came to accept the necessity of many kinds of heavy industries and large-scale key industries and public utilities, provided they were state-owned."⁸⁷ 'Economic equality' was the key slogan of Gandhi.⁸⁸

With these arguments Nehru wanted to testify that though Gandhi was an advocate of cottage and small-scale industries, he recognized the necessity and inevitability of big-scale industry.⁸⁹

But to Nehru the argument related to define the relative merits of small-scale and large-scale industry is irrelevant in the present day situation because "when the world, and the dominating facts of the situation that confront it, have decided in favour of the latter."⁹⁰ However, Nehru admitted that industrialization was an expensive job to begin with since in the beginning it swallowed up money without any return for sometime. Though it might result in poverty and distress till such time industry began to work and make money, plenty of money had to be made available either by loan or otherwise through other sources. But to England arrangement for money was not at all a problem because it "was extra-ordinarily fortunate in getting these vast sums of money from India just when she wanted them most for her developing industries and factories. In spite of these contradictions, however, the capitalist from of civilization taught many a useful lesson. It taught organization for the big industries and large-scale industry require a great deal of organizations before they can function. It taught cooperation in large undertakings. It taught efficiency and punctuality. It is not possible to run big factories or a railway system unless these qualities are present."⁹¹

But in no way was Nehru averse to the development of private sector in Indian economy, for he knew that the organized part of the private industry turned out an average of 80 per cent of the gross total of industrial consumer goods. Therefore, he proposed the simultaneous development of both public and private sector and advocated a positive role especially for the latter within the framework of the rules prescribed in the Industrial Policy Resolution. He said, "I do not see any harm at all – in fact I see a lot of good in the private sector functioning."⁹² He expected that the India's Plan would take an unexpected turn for the better if functioning of the private sector is regulated by means of departmental control. He explained his point of view, "The private sector is a coordinated part of the plans in India, and it is to be controlled at strategic points. It has to be related to and brought into the pattern of the national plan. It may be encouraged but it should always function within the pattern."⁹³

On the whole, from Nehru's stand-point in the socio-economic field, we understand that the state was proposed seriously to take on heavy responsibilities as the principal agency speaking for and acting on behalf of the community as a whole. "No modern nation, however, can retain its freedom without the help of large-scale industries which should be state-owned and state-control led."⁹⁴

It was assumed, public undertakings would secure more far-sighted long-term benefits, because they would be keyed up to that end. Whereas private enterprise possibly confines itself to short-term ventures as it would not appreciate long-term projects where the limited resources might freeze or take long time to bear rewards. However, in terms of all development works the need of long term investment was believed to be of paramount importance. It was concluded that until now private enterprise came only as a matter of a necessity but from

now on it would have to come as a matter of choice or judgement, not dominated by the speculations of profit. Enough of knowledge of its modus operandum was considered meaningful. Semi-public and semi-private corporations were being developed to project them as guides to the new lines on which the future enterprise should work with an objective that the share of profits of any undertaking in the community should be equally distributed between the private enterprise and the public. This was the ideal of welfare economy as contemplated by Nehru where marginal net profit would be at par with the marginal public net product.

The then finance minister in the Nehru's cabinet V.T. Krishnamachari declared, "All government-owned industries in India would have to be converted into joint-stock companies and on a commercial basis in order to infuse a sense of efficiency and incentive in the management."⁹⁵ This relates to the gradual realization of the functional value of profit by the Planning Commission.

For Nehru, as we know, 'the development of heavy industries was synonymous with industrialization'. In one place he stated, that the development of a number of textile mills in Ahmedabad or Bombay or Kanpur could not be called industrialization, it was merely a playing with it. He said, "I do not object to textile-mills – we need them – but our idea of industrialization will be limited, cribbed, cabined and confined by thinking of these ordinary textile mills and calling industrialization. Industrialization produces steel it produces power, they are the base. Once you have got the base, it is easy to build".⁹⁶

The strategy, he emphasized, governing planning in India is to industrialize giving the first place to basic industries. To Nehru, industrialization in India implied development of heavy industries, which

could build machines.⁹⁷ He was critical of those who preferred the development of light industries instead of the heavy ones. "There are some who argue that we must not go in for heavy industry but for lighter ones. Of course, we have to have light industries also but it is not possible to industrialize the nation rapidly without concentrating on the basic industries which produce industrial machines which are utilized in industrial development".⁹⁸

Long before India became independent Nehru had already outlined some fundamental requirements, if India had to develop industrially.

"The three fundamental requirements of India, if she is to develop industrially and otherwise, are a heavy engineering and machine – making industry, scientific research institutes, and electric power. These must be the foundations of all the planning ..."⁹⁹

The First Plan (1951-56) was no plan, though in it were incorporated a few projects which were already in operation or were about to be taken in hand. Similarly there was no strategy of development as such in it, yet development of agriculture and transportation and communication were given a higher priority. It was only with the Second Plan could we come across a clear enunciation of the strategy of development by Indian planners. The Second Plan was based on the Russian experience and inducted a precise strategy of development. This time Nehru was extremely candid in pointing out that industrialization meant development of heavy industries. The Plan frame of the Second Plan reiterated Nehru's stance in unmistakable terms. It states:

"In the long run, the rate of industrialization and the growth of the national economy would depend upon the increasing production of

coal, electricity, iron and steel, heavy machinery, heavy chemicals and heavy industries generally – which would increase the capacity for capital formation. One important aim is to make India independent as quickly as possible of foreign imports of producer goods so that the accumulation of capital would not be hampered by difficulties in securing supplies of essential producer goods from other countries. The heavy industry must, therefore, be expanded with all possible speed”.¹⁰⁰

Once brought in motion the subsequent three plans, i.e., up to the Fifth Plan, also aimed at rapid industrialization through heavy investment on heavy, basic and machine – building industries.

But it does not mean consumer sector was lost sight of, rather in the Nehru – Mahalanobis model, there was an active encouragement on development of cottage industries producing consumer goods. In the Second Five-Year Plan framework it was categorically stated: “The greater the marketable surplus of consumer goods in the household or hand industries, the greater will be the possibilities of investments in heavy industries without any fear of inflation”.¹⁰¹

Nehru gave due importance to small-scale industries and agriculture because he knew they were the sources of consumer goods. He states, “The test of a country’s advance in industrialization is heavy industry – not the small industries that may be put up. That does not mean that small industries should be ignored. They are highly important in themselves for production and for employment.”¹⁰²

The framework of the Second Five-Year Plan reiterates the Nehru’s statement:

“The strategy requires all-out efforts for the maximum utilization of capacity in existing industries and for the development of additional production in the capital light or small sector of industries.”¹⁰³

In fact, for keeping balance in the economy, self-sufficiency has to be promoted and for that and also simultaneously for the provision of work and employment, village and cottage industries are of paramount importance.¹⁰⁴ But it is also a fact, small industries could never vie with large industries in terms of country's progress but they do help in accelerating production and creating employment opportunities. In order to realize his goal of a democratic socialist society in India, Nehru considered essential to activate the base of the Indian social structure comprised of millions and millions of villagers, millions of workers and small earners, unemployed people and people on land.¹⁰⁵

On the question of giving a boost to agriculture production, Nehru opines,

“We shall find that this industrial progress be achieved without agricultural advance and progress... Everyone knows that unless we are self-sufficient in agriculture we cannot have the wherewithal to advance in industries. If we have to import food, then we are doomed so far as progress is concerned. We cannot import both food and machinery”.¹⁰⁶

Self-sufficiency in agricultural production was targeted in every plan coupled with the objective to develop heavy industries simultaneously. But the calculation went wrong when with the success in the First Five-Year Plan it was thought that India had achieved self-sufficiency in agriculture. Therefore, with the Second Plan onward we find a marked shift in strategy. Emphasis had now been placed on industries compared to agriculture. From 1965-66 the country began to

feel inadequacy in the supply of food grains. But Nehru cannot be squarely blamed for this insufficiency in food grains it was the planners who could not foresee that population pressure could mount and one-time self-sufficiency could prove inadequate also in successive plan period. Nehru was always categorical with regard to agriculture. He writes, "We shall find that this industrial progress cannot be achieved without agricultural advance and progress. The fact is that the two cannot be separated. They are intimately connected because agricultural progress is not possible without industry, without tools, without new methods and techniques."¹⁰⁷ Nehru knew that failure to develop agriculture would act as a constraint on 'industrial progress'.

As a matter of fact, Nehru was no economist. He could simply ventilate his ideas, but it was up to his planners that how far they could exert themselves to materialize these ideas into practice.

Nehru model of growth based on heavy industries exhibited many shortfalls with the passage of time. In spite of five decades of planning it failed to achieve a national minimum level of living. There has not been much improvement in the level of poverty. Unemployment and under-employment figure is constantly on the rise. Inequalities of wealth and income have further worsened. Economic power is still concentrated in the hands of a few. Land reform measures are yet to be rigorously implemented. Dissatisfaction is mounting in rural areas despite introduction of one or the other poverty alleviation schemes. The country's economy is still in an inflationary spiral of wage and price increases. There is always a shortage of one or the other item in the country. Since independence never has there been self-sufficiency at any level.

Keeping in view this economic imbroglio, some people advocate the implementation of the so-called 'Gandhian model of economic growth'.

Though Gandhi was also no economist, he did develop certain policies in connection with the development of agriculture, industries etc. 'Gandhian Plan' was brought out by Acharya S.N. Agarwala sometime in 1944, and reaffirmed it in 1948. These publications are the basis of 'Gandhian model of growth'.

The Gandhian plan aimed at raising the material as well as the cultural level of Indian masses to a minimum standard of life within a period of ten years, concentrating primarily on improving the economic conditions of the five lakh plus villages of India by giving a focus on the scientific development of agriculture and cottage industries.

Nehru gave prime importance to heavy industries. During 1950s and 1960s, Nehru's model of development was the only suitable model. Through the development of heavy industries Nehru wanted to build a strong foundation so that the economy could do away with the dependence on foreign aid as well as develop a strong defence. In fact, without strong defence, the question of economic development of a country becomes irrelevant. It was due to Nehru's strategy of development, India became the tenth most industrialized nation in the world. The draft Sixth Plan reviews the over-all achievements of planning vis-à-vis the first five plans, "It is a course of national pride that over this period, a stagnant and dependent economy has been modernized and made more self-reliant."¹⁰⁸

Having achieved a strong economic foundation for self-sustained growth, emphasis now could easily be shifted from heavy industries to capital-light consumer goods industries of the small-scale

and cottage industries category. With a strong economic base, implementation of the Gandhian model of growth becomes no difficult. Although small-scale and cottage industries have a very significant role to play in India in view of production and employment, it would not be very prudent if the development of heavy industry is neglected. Rather it would be suicidal for the country if investment in heavy industry is neglected or curtailed. As written above, Gandhi was also not against the development of certain types of large-scale industries, such as, power, iron and steel, machinery and machine tools, heavy engineering and heavy chemicals. Gandhi knew their importance in terms of the country's economy, but he stood by the principle always that machinery could be good till it operated in the interests of all; it became evil when it served the interests of the few. The Gandhian Plan aimed at the development of agriculture and industries side by side, however, for increasing production and creating employment the development of handicrafts and cottage industries were emphasized.

Nobody thought of the Gandhian Plan when India became independent. Instead, the Russian experience was adopted as a model to introduce the planning system in India. The Nehru-Mahalanobis model simply neglected the small-scale and cottage industries. However, the economic crisis between 1973 and 1975 acted as an eye-opener and the Gandhian Plan was thought as possible alternative. The Industrial Policy Statement of 1977 clearly demonstrated this standpoint :

"The emphasis of industrial policy so far has been mainly on large industries, neglecting the cottage industries completely relegating small industries to a minor role The main thrust of the new industrial policy will be on effective promotion of cottage and small industries widely dispersed in rural areas and small towns. It is the policy of the

Government that whatever can be produced by small and cottage industries must only be so produced."¹⁰⁹

In fact, India cannot afford to neglect one or the other model of development, that is, neither the Gandhian model nor the Nehruvian model. Ignoring the development of heavy industry and putting all the emphasis on agriculture and the small-scale sector will prove counter-productive to India's economic health. Similarly the country also could not afford to neglect the agriculture and the small-scale sector keeping in view the mounting poverty and unemployment. In actuality, the possible course open for India is to adopt the best of both, i.e., the Gandhian and the Nehruvian models of economic development.

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Chapter-III

CHAPTER - III

Socialism versus Equality : Did they disagree?

True, Gandhi was not an academician, but no doubt was a thinker as well as a man of action par excellence. He was a 'Karmayogi' in real sense of the term. His concept of socialism did not evolve out of his reading of Marx, but it was an outcome of his deep faith in religion.

Marx advocated violent revolution to put an end to an inequitable, unjust and anti-social order. Gandhi also believed in a real revolution to end the tyranny and oppression of the weak but not through violent means but through the pursuance of the principles of truth and non-violence. Marx aimed at establishing in society equality, liberty and brotherhood.

No doubt, these aims are highly humanitarian in character, but he found that economics was at the root of every change in all departments of life. Even he did not segregate religion and culture from economics. He advocated class war between those who controlled the means of production ('haves') and those who did not ('have-nots') in order to bring change into the society. He aimed to establish a classless society by liquidating the capitalists through class war and the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. This dictatorship, he hoped, will afterward establish democracy, and subsequently the existence of the state will wither away. With the non existence of any independent sovereign State in the world complete peace will be established since there will remain no need for proletariat of one country to fight against

the proletariat of another country because of their close affinity in interests.

Gandhi could not reconcile to the perception of Marx that all human values and institutions were the result of the operationalisation of economic forces, though he did endeavour throughout his life to achieve the same humanitarian ideals, as Marx, of equality, freedom, brotherhood and democracy. Nor did he have faith in the concept that dictatorship evolved out of violence could ever spontaneously develop into democracy. Since he had a staunch faith in truth and non-violence, he could not conceive of any other form of government except democracy. However, like Marx, he did express his faith in a stateless democracy, but his intonation was different. He said that in his stateless democracy social life would be so developed that it would become self-regulated. He wrote, "Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so regulated, no representation is necessary" In such an ideal society, he wrote, "everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state."

Gandhi had deep suspicion on the functioning of the state. He said, "The state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul but the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned away from violence to which it owes its very existence." He had a great fear on the trusteeship power of the state vis-à-vis private property.

"I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear, because while apparently doing good by minimizing

exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress. We know of so many cases when men have adopted trusteeship, but none where the state has really lived for the poor.”

Though he talked like Marx one day the State would wither away, like a practical politician he did not give a time limit when this concept would fructify. He wrote in 1929, “we do not know our distant goal. It will be determined not by our definitions but by our acts, voluntary or involuntary. If we are wise, we will take care of the present and the future will take care of itself.” He refused to assume what would be the shape of a non-violent government in future. He wrote, “I cannot say in advance what the Government based wholly on non-violence will be like.”

However, Gandhi was a realist and he admitted, a completely non-violent and stateless society might never be established, because he apprehended everyone in society might never reach the requisite level of moral development. Therefore, in one place he wrote, “A government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent because it represents all the people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society.”

To Gandhi, unquestionably non-violence was a means and not an end. Man was the end but not segregated from his material, mental, moral well-being and growth. He wrote, “The supreme consideration is man, the end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth.” However, happiness and moral growth were not possible without freedom and equal opportunity for all. But he admitted that this was not ideally possible unless both man and society

were non-violent. Though the well being of the individual was the prime concern, the well being of society could not be overlooked, since both were inter-dependent. Society could not grow at the cost of the individual and vice versa. He disapproved 'unrestricted individualism' as 'the law of the beast of the jungle'. He wanted the individual to be of service and benefit to his fellowmen and the community at large and also stressed in no case should his freedom infringe upon the freedom of others. He wrote, "Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and society of which one is a member." With regard to the duties of the society towards the individual, Gandhi emphasized that it should ceaselessly work for the well being of the individual, according full respect to his rights as a human being.

Gandhi's vision of social transformation was based on the principles of non-violence and trusteeship. Contrary to the communist's belief on conflict, Gandhi gave more stress on compromise and cooperation. He knew life comes to be dominated by violence and exploitation if economic motive is given priority. In fact, the western theory of socialism had itself born in an atmosphere full of violence. Truth and non-violence are impracticable concepts to western socialists. However, to Gandhi only could non-violence bring justice all around in every department of life.¹ Gandhi's socialism was on the whole based on human values. He remarked, "In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In terms of religion there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity. Looking at society all over the world there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence. This man is high, that one is low, that is a Hindu, that is a Muslim, third is Christian, fourth is a Parsi, fifth is a Sikh, sixth is a Jew. Even among

these there are sub-divisions. In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs. In order to reach this state we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing over life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the same when it comes our way. This is socialism." He concludes that only would truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists be able to establish a socialist society in India and the world.

Gandhi had envisioned that the future world society would be made up of 'ever-widening, never-ascending circles' of communities. He wrote that the world society of men "will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual, always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units". In nutshell, all this would be possible, if the people were 'a law unto themselves' and automatically did the right thing. If at all any government exists in such a situation, then that government will govern the least.

In order to bring about these revolutionary changes conceived by him, Gandhi tried to change the existing values, which had so far gained currency among the peoples of the world in the political as well as in the international field. A glaring example of his effort could be seen in India, where he tried to restructure the national freedom movement, in consonance with the new values. The concept of social morality coined by him after years of mental exercise, he desired not only should it manifest in the field of internal politics but it should also regulate international politics, where, he felt, it had never found any recognition so far. Thus he thought, in order to realize the humanitarian

aims, the means employed must be in consonance with the ends aimed at. In actuality, Gandhi made no distinction between ends and means, considering them inconvertible terms. If at any time, the means adopted neglect or violate the required moral stipulations, then certainly the ends would not be that what were intended or worked for, howsoever good they might look *prima facie* in the beginning.

In his practical life also we mark, Gandhi conducted his campaign against the British rule on the principles of truth and non-violence. This was unique in the world history. Never did anybody try out this method against his opponent. It was a mere fundamental revolution than that of the Marxists. Gandhi wanted to change the behaviour by changing the heart and not otherwise. Gandhi applied non-violent and peaceful methods of resistance in order to gain freedom for India from the foreign yoke. Though the then prevailing world situation also helped Gandhi, it must be admitted without an iota of doubt that peaceful methods of struggle was the main cause which made the Britons to quit India. When the Englishmen left India they did not carry in their heart either any ill-feeling or animosity, for this the entire credit goes to Gandhi. In fact, the two nations, India and England, parted company like two old friends.

Gandhi had a strong belief in Karl Marx's famous saying, "Each according to his ability and each according to his need."² But at the same time, he said that our ancestors taught us that all land belongs to Gopal (God)^{2A}. The sublime socialists' goals of equality, liberty and fraternity could be realized only through love for the humanity at large and not through other means. He wanted the socialists to be truthful and pure hearted. He wrote, "... the prince and the peasants will not be equalized by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize employee and the employed."^{2B}

The glaring difference between the classes and the masses was not beyond Gandhi's notice. He observed, "The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight the poor villagers produce the food and go hungry. They produce milk and their children have to go without it."³

Gandhi believed that class struggle is going on all over the world in one form or other. Having conflicting interests the minds of the people were clouded with enmity, fear, mistrust and cruelty. He concluded until a non-exploitative society could be established; no good of the world would ever come. Though he admitted the existence of class antagonism in India, he considered class war "foreign to the essential genius of India."⁴ Gandhi had developed his own fantastic idea about class struggle. He made his own prescription on the method to put an end to the concept of class struggle. He said, "It could be ended if the capitalists voluntarily renounces their rule and become labours. The other was to realize that labour was real capital, in fact, the maker of capital. What the two hands of the labourer could achieve, the capitalists would never get with all his gold and silver! Could any one live on gold! But labour had to be made conscious of its strength. It had to have in one hand truth and in the other non-violence, and it would be invincible."⁵

To Gandhi 'truth and non-violence' were the panacea for all the evils in the society. Although Marx and Gandhi pursued the same objective of establishing a class-less society, they were poles apart in their approaches and application of methods. In one place Gandhi wrote, "Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the leveling down of the few rich in whose hands concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and the leveling up the semi-starved naked millions on

the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry million persists. The contrast between the places of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring classes nearby cannot last one day in the free India in which the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land”.

Equality, to Gandhi, did not mean everyone should possess the same amount, but he clarified that everybody should have enough to fulfill his or her needs. In fact, Gandhi knew never is it possible for every one to possess an equal amount of worldly goods. However, he clarified his concept of equal distribution by elaborating further that every one should have enough wherewithals at his disposal 'to supply all his natural needs and no more'.

In his 'Constructive Programme' Gandhi wrote "Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means leveling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and leveling of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists”.

Though he remarked, "I shall bring about economic equality through non-violence, by converting the people to my point of view by harnessing the force of love against hatred", he was not fully aware of the basic characteristics of the exploitative society. Admittedly, his ideals were lofty, but they could not be called effective in the present context because the nature of the society with the passage of time is becoming more and more complex. Had Gandhi been alive today, he would have definitely refined his approach further.

According to Gandhi, class struggle was not a new phenomenon; it had always been there. "It could be ended if the capitalists voluntarily renounces their rule and become labours. The other was to realize that labour was real capital, in fact, the maker of capital. What the two hands of the labourer could achieve, the capitalists would never get with all his gold and silver! Could any one live on gold! But labour had to be made conscious of its strength. It had to have in one hand truth and in the other non-violence, and it would be invincible."⁶

Gandhi wanted to bring about economic equality through non-violence by converting the people's mind replacing hatred by love. But his way of approach was totally unconventional. He wanted to introduce change in himself first before he settled down to convert the whole society to his point of view. He accepted that the process of non-violence was slow but he considered it the only and the surest way.⁷

To Gandhi, the individualistic propensity to acquire wealth is the root cause of all evil. He contended, if the rich men recognized the immanence of God in all creatures and took initiative in dispossession then there would definitely come contentment in society. God could never be on the side of those who covet the wealth of others. Hankering after riches will force one to resort to exploitation in some form or the other.⁸ He believed only could a truthful, non-violent and a pure-hearted socialist establish socialism in India as well as in the world, thus socialism should be imbued with truth and non-violence 'Sarvodaya'.

About his concept of 'Sarvodaya', Gandhi elaborates further, "Our socialism or communism should proceed by establishing friendly relations between labour and capital, peasants and landlords by

pursuing non-violent policy.”⁹ On the whole, he emphasized on individual purification through moral regeneration, because he sincerely believed that divinity was inherent in every man's nature. Like the Buddha he believed that an enemy could be converted into a colleague and helper through love and non-violent approach. Even during the Second World War, he went on to the extent of believing that the active non-violence of the Jews would melt the pitiless Germans. But, history tells us never did this approach of the Jews liquefy the stony German hearts.

Gandhi's approach was always individualistic. He writes, “The first step towards it (equal distribution) is for him who has made necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with the new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.”¹⁰

This is simply an ideal dream and if beaten on the anvil of realism, it will absolutely prove impractical.

There are umpteen instances in history which unequivocally testify to the fact that seldom does an exploiter renounce his authority voluntarily. If we conclude that Gandhi was not aware of these realities of history, then it will be tantamount to belittle the ability of Gandhi to comprehend. But he always emphasized strongly on adopting purity of means in the struggle to achieve a better society. In spite of the fact that Gandhi wanted that the means of production of elementary necessities of life should be in the control of the masses and

advocated an exploitation-free society but rarely did he believe in revolutionary emancipation of the working classes like the communists.

Gandhi was a strong believer in constitutional methods to bring about change in society, but he knew its limitations. He himself realized that when a moment of crisis approached, his appeal to reason to masses simply did not cut much ice. Constitutional solutions just went into the backstage and the masses took refuge in direct action of some kind or other. Thus, we see, in course of time, his outlook on the concept of social change somewhat evinced some change. It was one of the greatest qualities in Gandhi to learn from his critics. When an impasse arose in talks in South Africa, he suddenly realized that the time had come for the Indian community to resist, but stressed on adoption of pure non-violent means. In no situation did Gandhi ever deviate from his principle of non-violence. Here lies his superiority over his contemporaries.

He wrote, “ Up to the year 1906, I simply relied on appeal to reason. I was a very industrious reformer. I was a good draftsman, as I always had a close grip of facts, which in its turn was the necessary result of my meticulous regard for truth. But I found that reason failed to produce an impression when the critical moment arrived in South Africa. My people were excited; even a worm will and does sometimes turn – and there was talk of wreaking vengeance. I had then to choose between allaying myself to violence or finding out some other method of meeting the crisis and stopping the rot and it came to me that we should refuse to obey legislation that was degrading and let them put us in jail if they liked. Thus came into being the moral equivalent of war.”¹¹

Gandhi accepted non-violence as a means and as well as an end in all individual and social ideas. It was the core of his sociological thought. Gandhi's concept of non-violence and suffering are inter-related and inseparable. Gandhi had tried to assert, "The conviction has been growing in me that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal to reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword."¹²

In the late 1930s when the war clouds began to hover over the world's sky, Gandhi tasted the human endurance. Though he knew Hitler and Mussolini represented extremes of violence, still he hoped their heart could be made relent through love, truth and non-violent resistance (i.e. Satyagraha). But it was a difficult assumption to implement in such a situation. To melt someone's heart with love it is not that easy, if there is no direct accessibility. Hitler and Mussolini were not directly accessible to anybody. The second factor was that they were not ready to accept any logic except war in case of resistance because at that point of time they had a notion that their military might was invincible. In such a situation, how far Gandhi's non-violent resistance could have proved successful to win over the heart of

Hitler and Mussolini is a matter of debate and conjecture. Hence any success of non-violent resistance movement depends on the nature of the existing situation.

True, Gandhi's Satyagraha is not applicable to all situations, but it is a direction of movement to extricate men from falling into the trap of vicious circle of violence. Mutual respect and co-operation are the preconditions of true Satyagraha, asserted Gandhi. Gandhi himself admitted that Satyagraha is not a technique to be applicable to all miscellaneous acts but a way of life, which arises spontaneously out of the deepest human attitudes. Non-violence meant to him more than non-killing. Not to hurt any living thing is only a partial expression of non-violence, but its full expression lies in boundless love that knows no boundaries and frontiers. "To me," Gandhi said, "Ahimsa has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by it, non-killing. Ahimsa really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy... I do not say 'whom you consider to be your enemy,' but 'who may consider himself to be your enemy? For one who follows the doctrine of Ahimsa, there is no room for an enemy... If we return blow for blow we depart from Ahimsa.'"

To Gandhi, love of nonviolence is like a waxing moon, which is always expanding its horizon and never reaching its end. In fact, it has no end as such. But it does not mean tolerating the evildoer by passive acquiescence. There is a difference in approach. In Ahimsa, one is required to resist the wrongdoer, without any ill feeling or hatred, by dissociating one-self from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. Meek submission to the will of the evildoer is no Ahimsa, but cowardice. Non-violence implies conscious suffering.

There is no word 'cowardice' as such in the dictionary of Gandhi. He considered cowardice as an unpardonable offence. If one has to make choice between cowardice and violence, Gandhi maintained, he would advise violence. In non-violence self-suffering requires courage.

“Thus the student of Satyagraha is brought to recognize how in leading his fellow-country-men in a movement for the voluntary taking upon them, non-violently, of suffering on behalf of others we have to learn afresh that he meant us to take upon ourselves, of our own free will, privation, suffering, even death itself, in the manner in which he was taking these things upon himself. That is, we must do it redemptively – for the sake of saving mankind from sin and wrong – and non-violently, without hatred for the prosecutor and the wrongdoer, without trying to pay him back in his own coin. Above all, we must do it humbly, patiently in the spirit of friendship and good will.” (John S. Hoyland)¹³

Gandhi declared Satyagraha as an inherent birthright of a person.¹⁴ It on the one hand it is a sacred right of an individual, and then on the other it is his sacred duty also. If any government fails to honour the will of the people and extends support to dishonesty and terrorism, then it should be disobeyed without any hesitation. Vindication of one's right also amounts to be in readiness to bear all kinds of sufferings. One can take recourse to Satyagraha whenever he comes face to face with injustice and untruth, be it one's family or the state.

Gandhi's Satyagrahi knows no disobedience to the laws of the state. In fact, he obeys the laws of the state spontaneously and willingly. He writes, “A Satyagrahi obeys the laws of the society intelligently and of his own free will, because he considers it to be his

sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just, and which unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him of the civil disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances."¹⁵

On the whole, the Gandhian concept of Satyagraha is far more comprehensive than the passive resistance contemplated in India in 1906-1908. It had limited application in the form of boycott or disobedience if certain laws were found unjust. As Gandhi himself explained, "Satyagraha differs from Passive Resistance as the North Pole from the South, the latter has conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; where as the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form."^{15 A} However, the Gandhian theory of Satyagraha was explained as a philosophy of life and politics. It advocates mass action, in case of necessity, against a despotic government, but the precondition is without harbouring ill will or bitterness. "A Satyagrahi", Gandhi says, "will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, violence by non-violence. There is no other way purging the world of evil. Therefore, a person who claims to be a Satyagrahi always tries, by close and prayerful introspection and self-analysis to find out whether he is himself completely free from the taint of anger, ill will and such other human infirmities, whether he is not himself capable of these very evils against which he is out to lead a crusade. In self-purification and penance lies half the victory of a Satyagrahi."¹⁶

To sum up in Gandhi's own word what does Satyagraha stand for, "Satyagraha is the law of love, the way of love for all. It eschews

violence absolutely as a matter of principle, at all stages and in all forms. It can never go hand in hand with any kind of violent activity involving injury to person or property. The idea behind it is not to destroy or harass the opponent, but to convert him or win him over by sympathy, patience and self-suffering. Whilst Satyagrahi hates all evil and would never compromise with it, it approaches the evildoer through love. The Satyagrahi has infinite trust in human nature and in its inherent goodness."¹⁷

Gandhi argued that since 'capital' and 'labour' represent power and are essential for production; hence they are mutually dependent on each other. Though there is no natural antagonism between them, their mutual relationship is subject to change.¹⁸ To Gandhi if on the one hand the bossism of capitalists over labour was immoral, then on the other he was not in favour of dispossessing the capitalists.

Sometime in 1934, before the U.P. landlords, he clarified his stand on this issue, "I shall be no party to dispossessing the propertied classes of their property without just cause. My objective is to reach your hearts and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare. The Ram Rajya of my dream ensures the rights alike of prince and pauper. You may be sure that I shall throw the whole weight of my influence in preventing a class war."¹⁹

Instead of class war, Gandhi called for class collaboration. He wanted both the capitalists and the labours should aim at the welfare of the whole community giving up the myopic respective class interests.

Although Gandhi always emphasized on the principle of equality, he was never in favour of forced deprivation. He expressed his full solidarity with the capitalists, if they were ever deprived of their

property by force. He said, "Supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property you will find me fighting on your side.... Our socialism or communism should be based on non-violence, and on the harmonious cooperation of labour and capital, the landlord and tenant."²⁰

He totally disapproved the grabbing of surplus by the capitalists. Even he was alive to the perpetration of exploitation by the capitalists. But at the same time he accepted workers were numerically for greater in number than the capitalists. However, he lamented despite this numerical strength the labourers were not organized like the capitalists. He wanted the labourers to learn the secret of their unity. Only then would it be possible for the labourers to exert their will upon the capitalists. Gandhi submitted the sooner the worker realizes his strength, the sooner he would be 'in a position to be a co-sharer with the capitalists instead of remaining his slave'.²¹

Gandhi contented that all wealth is socially produced, hence must be equally divided among all those who contributed in producing it. In 1927 Gandhi wrote in a letter to the British Communist MP Shapurji Saklatvala, "I hold their coordination to be perfectly possible." Elsewhere he again maintained, "I would not dispossess moneyed men by force, but would invite their cooperation in process of conversion to state ownership."²²

Gandhi did not hold any rigid views on anything. One of the greatest qualities of Gandhi was to modify his views from time to time according to turn in situations. He was always ready to learn from his critics.

Gandhi wrote in 'Young India', "According to me the economic constitution of India, and for that matter of the world, should be such

that no one under it should suffer from want of food or clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. They should be available free to all as God's air and water are or ought to be Their monopolization by any country, nation or groups of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but in other parts of the world too."²³

Gandhi called on the capitalists to think them to be trustees of what they owned. He requested them to use for themselves only that minimum which would be actually required to maintain their families and no more. He considered the possession of inordinate wealth by individuals as a crime against humanity. He could not understand why a mill owner, a lawyer, a doctor, a factory worker, or a scavenger should not get the same wages for an honest day's work.²⁴

Gandhi was not against wealth, but against inequality.²⁵ Gandhi suggested an alternative in the form of equitable distribution if for some reason ideal of equal distribution becomes difficult to implement.

What was his ideal of equal distribution Gandhi himself explained, "The first step towards it (equal distribution) is for him who has made necessary change in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free from dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with the new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he

be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours."²⁶

He used to hammer upon the rich time and again that they should earn crores by all means but all the wealth did not belong to them, it belonged to the people. To Gandhi, the owners of the capitalist enterprises are mere 'trustees' for the working class.

Gandhi floated the idea of trusteeship as a solution to counteract the evil of both capitalism and communism. "His was essentially the standpoint of the humanist; he hated privilege and monopoly, but he also hated the regimentation and suppression of individual liberty. Through his 'trusteeship' theory, he sought an escape from the dilemma: 'Make men free and they become unequal; make them equal and they cease to be free'."²⁷

The theory trusteeship propounded by Gandhi was not quite decipherable to many; Nehru was no exception. The latter commented at one speech, "The new theory of trusteeship, which some (here he meant Gandhi) advocate, is equally barren. For trusteeship means that the power for good or evil remains with the self-appointed trustee and he may exercise it as he wills".²⁸

Gandhi was no doubt a great social thinker, but he seldom bothered whether the socialistic theories propounded by him were palatable to anybody or not. Like any great thinker he wrote for self-satisfaction and presented before the people what he thought to be his best standpoint. But at times, in national interest, when he thought his is the best solution to solve any crisis he never hesitated to put his life at risk even to press home his point of view without thinking for a moment who is interpreting in what manner his approach to the problem. But on other occasions, he was very mild and even regretted

his failure. He once wrote, "I am not ashamed to own that many capitalists are friendly towards me and do not fear me."²⁹

On many occasions Nehru expressed his doubts on the usefulness of Gandhi's concepts on different issues. Even sometimes Nehru went further to admit that he was unable to understand what Gandhi's objective was. Even on some occasions Nehru felt skeptic whether Gandhi him-self knew his objective. To quote Nehru's own words, "In spite of closest association with him (i.e. Gandhi) for many years, I am not clear in my own mind about his objective. I doubt if he is clear himself. One step is enough for me, he says, and he does not try to keep into the future or to have a clearly conceived end before him. Look after the means and the end will take care of itself, he is never tired of repeating. Be good in your personal individual lives, all else will follow...what is goodness? Is it merely an individual affair or a social affair? Gandhiji lays all stress on character and attaches little importance to intellectual training and development. Intellect without character is likely to be dangerous, but what is character without intellect? How, indeed, does character develop?"³⁰

Nehru poses questions after questions, but he knows he is unlikely to get any answer to his queries. Therefore, he writes, "Gandhiji has been compared with the medieval Christian saints, and much that he says seems to fit in with this. It does not fit at all with modern psychological experience and method."³¹

On many counts Gandhi failed to influence his detractors through his arguments. Even those who were considered to be his friends failed to appreciate Gandhi's ways. His capitalist friends such as G.D. Birla and others hardly deviated from their pursued outlook and changed their attitude towards wealth and workers. He visioned in

1942 that with the end of the Second World War the end of capitalism would occur had never happened. The world became more capitalism oriented.

Gandhi being a votary of non-violence could never dream of application of force at any time to change the existing social structure. He could simply coax, but could never force anybody to support his stand. He believed that there was something inherently divine in man's nature and hence, he hoped, psychological regeneration in man's attitude is bound to take place, no matter what time does it take. Gandhi was a great optimist.

His goal to achieve an egalitarian society based on mutual active love and harmony is bound to be realized one day, though transformation might be slow due to the fragilities of human nature. Violence can never be successful forever, because man by nature loves peace and harmony, be it in his home front or outside. Gandhi himself admitted that no enduring good could be built on violence. On the whole, Gandhi's concept of socialism is based on humanism.

One thing was certain with Gandhi that "With all his belief in love, persuasion, and non-violence he would have never reconciled himself to the cynical and greedy exploitation of the poor by the rich, he would have always continued to stand by the poor against the rich, but in his own way."³²

II

Socialism was a no new concept to Jawaharlal Nehru. While a student in London, he was attracted to the ideas of Fabian socialists. The Fabians were a small group of intellectuals, such as George Bernard Shaw, Beatrice, and Sidney Webb, whose aim was to establish socialism gradually and democratically in England. But their influence on Nehru was vague and not of any significance. But during succeeding years his thoughts gradually became matured. He started to long that Indian society needed reconstruction on socialist lines. Political liberation of India became his goal.

In 1926, Nehru came to be associated with some radical thinkers in U.P., but their demands were not exhaustive. They wanted some relief for the oppressed farmers from zamindars and taluqdars. Their movement was simply against the local feudal elements. But a great change could be marked in him after his visit to Soviet Russia in November 1927.

This visit opened before his eyes the great achievements made by Russia in the field of education, female emancipation, the betterment of the conditions of the peasants etc. at the hands of the socialists.³³ He began to read Marx seriously. The influence of Marx and Lenin upon him was tremendous. Nehru himself confesses:

A study of Marx and Lenin produced a powerful effect on his mind and helped him to see history and current affairs in a new light. The long chain of history and of social development appeared to have some meaning, some sequence, and the future lost some of its obscurity for him. "The practical achievements of the Soviet Union were also tremendously impressive. Often I disliked or did not understand some development there and it seemed to me to be too closely

concerned with the opportunism of the moment or the power politics of the day. But despite all these developments and possible distortions of the original passion for human betterment, I had no doubt that the Soviet Revolution had advanced human society by a great leap and had lit a bright flame which could not be smothered, and that it had laid the foundations for that new civilization towards which the world could advance. I am too much of an individualist and believer in personal freedom to like overmuch regimentation. Yet it seemed to me obvious that in a complex social structure individual freedom had to be limited, and perhaps the only way to reach personal freedom was through some such limitation in the social sphere. The lesser liberties may often need limitation in the interest of the larger freedom."³⁴

Though Nehru thought Russia could come forward to present some solutions to the world's problems, he considered the happenings there simply as manifestation of human energy.³⁵ But he accepts that leave alone Russia, the theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many a dark corner of his mind.³⁶ He says that the Marxist interpretation threw a flood of light on it, and it became an unfolding drama with some order and purpose, however unconscious, behind it. "In spite of the appalling waste and misery of the past and the present, the future was bright with hope, though many dangers intervened. It was the essential freedom from the dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism that appealed to me."³⁷ Nehru felt that the Marxism alone offered a real solution to the great world crisis and slump of the 1930s, 'while all other systems and theories were groping about in the dark.'³⁸

Elsewhere Nehru writes that he had long been drawn to socialism and communism, and Russia had appealed to him, though he disliked the ruthless suppression of all contradictory opinion, the wholesale regimentation, the unnecessary violence in carrying out

various policies.³⁹ But Nehru is careful enough not to condemn communism. On the contrary, he tries to display some kind of solidarity with Russia by belittling capitalism. He says, "But there was no lack of violence and suppression in the capitalist world".⁴⁰

Nehru is not satisfied with his little display of support for Russia, he further records his appreciation, "Violence was common in both places, but the violence of the capitalist order seemed inherent in it; whilst the violence of Russia, bad though it was, aimed at a new order based on peace and co-operation and real freedom for the masses. With all her blunders, Soviet Russia had triumphed over enormous difficulties and taken great strides towards this new order. While the rest of the world was in the grip of the depression and backward in some ways, in the Soviet Country a great new world was being build up before our eyes."⁴¹

Nehru has all praise for Lenin. He says that following 'the great' Lenin, Soviet Russia could look into the future and thought only of what was to be. On the other hand, other countries lay numbed under the dead hand of the past and exhausted their energy in preserving the useless relics of a bygone era. Even Nehru felt highly impressed by the reports of the great progress made by the backward regions of central Asia under the Soviet regime. In the balance, therefore, Nehru was "all in favour of Russia, and the presence and example of the Soviets was a bright and heartening phenomenon in a dark and dismal world."⁴²

Nehru elucidates his faith in the soundness of the theory of communism further by stating that Soviet Russia's success or failure affects little the base on which the communist philosophy stands. "The Bolsheviks may blunder or even fail because of national or international reasons, and yet the communist theory maybe correct."⁴³

Nehru's appreciation for the achievements of Soviet Russia under communist regime and his open support and display of staunch faith on communist theory clearly brings into focus a pertinent question: Was Nehru going red at that point of time or was it simply an outburst of a young mind?

Whatever be the merit of the question, Nehru's standpoint on communism was a clear deviation from what Gandhi stood for. Nehru maintained that "India, or any other country, could profit by the triumphs as well as the inevitable mistakes of the Bolsheviks".⁴⁴

When Nehru returned to India, he was drawn towards freedom struggle and developed close affinity with Gandhi. He tried to understand the situation in rural India, where half-starved people lived and worked to provide succour to the people who lived in towns and cities. On his tour Nehru saw poverty and misery everywhere under the British rule. The more he moved about in villages, the more he felt the solution to the Indian situation was socialism. In 1936, at the Lucknow Congress, Nehru reiterated his faith in socialism. He even urged the Congress to change itself into a socialist organization. Again in 1937 at the Faizpur Congress also, in the capacity as Congress President, Nehru repeated almost the same views but in different vein, "The logic of events would lead to socialism for that seems to be the only remedy for India's economic ills".

On the other hand, about Gandhi Nehru comments, "He suspects also socialism, and particularly Marxism, because of their association with violence. The very words 'class war' breathe conflict and violence are repugnant to him". Even he goes further to be critical to Gandhi's stand, "He has no desire to raise the standards of the masses beyond a certain very modest competence, for higher

standards and leisure may lead to self-indulgence and sin.”⁴⁵ Nehru thinks that Gandhi is not amenable to any new idea, since he has had a fixed basis for all his ideas, and “his mind is hardly an open mind ... He is so firmly anchored to some ideas that everything else seems unimportant”.⁴⁶

To Nehru, Gandhi’s outlook was far removed either from the socialistic or the capitalistic. Nehru writes, “To say that science and industry technique today can demonstrably feed, clothe and house everybody and raise their standards of living very greatly, if vested interests did not intervene, does not interest him much, for he is not keen on those results, beyond a certain limit. The promise of socialism, therefore, holds no attraction for him, and capitalism only partly tolerable because it circumscribes the evil. He dislikes both, but puts up with the latter for the present as a lesser evil and as something which exists and of which he has to take cognizance”.⁴⁷

But Nehru feels that perhaps he is wrong in imputing these ideas to Gandhi, yet he confesses that there are paradoxes and confusions in the utterances of Gandhi. Nehru maintains that Gandhi “does not want people to make an ideal of over-increasing comfort and leisure, but to think of moral life, give up their bad habits, to indulge themselves less and less, and thus to develop themselves individually and spiritually”.⁴⁸

To Nehru this argument and outlook of Gandhi will not be acceptable to any modern democrat, capitalist or socialist. Besides Nehru considers indecent and improper to cut himself and other of his ilk off from the masses and flaunt luxury and far higher standards in the faces of the vast majority of those who lack the barest necessities.⁴⁹ Being critical of Gandhian approach to social change it did not mean

Nehru professed violence. Like Gandhi he supported peaceful application of force. He wrote, "Our ultimate goal can be nothing but establishment of a classless society in which all people get economic justice with equal opportunities. Such an organized and planned society will ensure cultural and economic development of mankind. In such a society there will be encouragement of cooperation, selfless service, love, sympathy and good work. In the end such a system could be established in the whole world. Any obstacle in the way of achieving this goal will have to be removed by peaceful methods of force."⁵⁰

Nehru was against fascist philosophy. On the emergence of fascism Nehru says, "Fascism thus appears when the class conflicts between an advancing socialism and an entrenched capitalism can use the machinery of democratic institutions to hold power and keep down labour, democracy is allowed to flourish. When this is not possible, then capitalism discards democracy and adopts the open fascist method of violence and terror."⁵¹

He felt fascism, apart from its other aspects, does not even offer to solve the economic troubles that afflict the world. By its intense and aggressive nationalism it goes against the world tendency towards inter-dependence, aggravates the problems that the decline of capitalism has created, and adds to national friction, which often leads to war.⁵²

Nehru was convinced only could socialism be the panacea for the world as well as India's problems. He advocated social, political and economic equality through democratic methods and wanted India should oppose both imperialism and capitalism and go for socialism. He considered violence unnecessary for any change in the social, economic and political structure of society. Here Nehru deviates from

the application of violent methodology upheld by the communist, though Nehru firmly believed that socialism is the only remedy against poverty, unemployment and other social problems. At Bombay, on 19th May, 1936, he made it clear to one and all that what kind of a future social structure he contemplated for India, "We have to construct a new social system in which all are assured of equal opportunities for development, in which there will be no exploitation, in which there will not only be political democracy, but also economic democracy in the form of economic equality."

In socialism professed by Nehru, we find anti-feudal and anti-capitalist reflections. He supported the cause of the working class and participated in the trade union movement. In 1929, he was elected president of the All India Trade Union Congress. Though time and again Nehru confessed that he was a socialist, never did he once tell he was a communist. Rather he was critical of communist philosophy, "I have faith in the socialist thinking and methodology. I am not a communist because I am against the tendency of communists to consider the communist doctrine as sacred."⁵³ At no point of time did Nehru ever favour communism as appropriate in Indian context.

Even his Marxism was not of Russian or communist variety. "It does not have the doctrinal rigidity that is associated with the rules of Moscow or Peking. It subscribes neither to the communist dogmatism in ideas nor to its brutality in action. Nehru's Marxism is, rather, of a democratic and mildly socialist nature. It is closer to that of the British Labour Party and the West European Social Democrats than to Red Chinese or Soviet doctrines."⁵⁴

Nehru thinks that whatever happened in history had its roots in economic inequality. World War I, he explains, was due to economic

greed of imperialists and industrialists. "It was a rich man's game played with the lives of the people, and mostly of the young."⁵⁵

Gandhi however, could never reconcile to the Marxian theory of economic interpretation of history. Contrary to Gandhian approach, Nehru was always pragmatic. Nehru felt that social ills, being economically interpreted, must be economically remedied. Hence, any reform conceived must be economic in nature. In order to eliminate inequality and injustice from society, he felt that the whole economic system must be transformed.

Even Nehru had a reservation in Gandhian stand that moral exhortations could convert a wicked. To quote him, "Some people think that if good people would but get together they could convert the wicked by moral exhortations and pointing out to them the error of their ways. This is a misleading idea, for the fault does not lie with individuals, but with a wrong system".⁵⁶

Nehru was a spokesman of humanity. He lent support to individualistic approach. He said the state should never subordinate the individual, rather the state itself had the obligation to be infinitely inventive in trying to serve him and ennoble him. In the Indian context, he maintained despite all its complexities and difficulties still it was possible to have a progressive society without taking individuality away from the individual.⁵⁷ He argues that he is socialist because he thinks only socialism has potential to release individuals from economic and cultural bondage. "I suppose I am temperamentally and by training an individualist, and intellectually a socialist ... I hope that socialism does not kill or suppress individuality; indeed I am attracted to it because it will release innumerable individuals from economic and cultural bondage".^{57 A}

If we could rightly assess, Nehru had no interest in mere dogma or theory. He had fascination for socialism only because of its humane aspect. He thought in a different angle than other socialists of the country, though he extended full support to the Congress Socialist Party formed under the leadership of Jaya Prakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev, Acharya Kripalani, Minu Masani and others. In 1934, when Nehru was invited to lead this newly formed organization, he refused, yet he had fully endorsed the goal of socialism and displayed no faith in factionalism and sectarianism.⁵⁸ Gandhi had all support for Nehru because the former had faith in the latter's ability to bridge the growing disparity between socialism and Gandhism.⁵⁹ When the old guards of the Congress tendered their resignations in protest against Nehru's standpoint on socialism, it was Gandhi who interfered and resolved the crisis.

Nehru wanted social and economic reform in India's feudalistic society not through exercise of brutality but through gradual and non-violent methods. The only solution to economic disparity contemplated by Nehru was introduction of Five Year Plan process after Russian model in India. Development was aimed at both in private and public sectors simultaneously. Though India has long distance to cover in the field of economic upliftment and progress, the achievement made in this direction so far is no small through Five Year Plans.

Whatever be the outpourings made against Gandhi sometime or other, Nehru had profound kinship with the former on the theory of means and ends. Once in 1951 Nehru put on record, "We must not appease evil, but we must also remember that evil is not surmounted by wrong methods that themselves produce more evil. I have felt more and more that the basic lesson Gandhi taught was right, that means should not be subordinated to ends.... I am not a moralist or even a

very good politician. I have dabbled in various things because they interest me. The politician has to compromise. That is what makes him a politician. But it may make a difference if he at least begins with certain convictions or principles. Anyway, I think Gandhi was right about ends and means and about violence. I hope to come as close as I can to making this a working philosophy".⁶⁰

Between the 1920s and the 1930s, Nehru advocated radical social changes in Indian society. Even he disagreed with Gandhi on this count. In a letter to Gandhi on September 13, 1933, Nehru wrote, "But it is obvious that the divesting is bound to cause loss to the classes or groups which enjoy special privileges at the expense of the masses. It is also obvious that the progress of divesting must be as speedy as possible to bring relief to the masses whose condition, as you know, is as bad as it can well be".⁶¹ But this zeal of Nehru was short lived, because of the different pressure groups he had to deal with within the Indian National Congress. Obviously Nehru was not the sole person to take the decision or lead the Congress single handed. He gradually grew a reformist. Moreover he had to analyze every change prior to its implementation in Indian context.

A complete change in Nehru's outlook could be marked in his remark made in 1936, "I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation, and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vested interests in land and industry as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian state system. That means the ending of private property, except in a present profit system by a higher ideal of cooperative system".

Though Nehru's policy was at variance with the class character of socialism, he could not proceed in this line independently because he was motivated by the desire to retain unity in the Congress, since priority before the party was independence and not socialism. Nehru said, "I believe that through socialism alone can we solve our economic problems, but socialism can only function when India is politically free".⁶²

Nehru realized without achieving independence the lot of the working masses could never be improved. Hence, his priority shifted to struggle for independence. He thought the goal to achieve social changes could wait, but the goal to achieve independence could never be postponed. Therefore, he tried to maintain the unity of the party at every cost for he knew division of any kind in the party cadre could simply weaken the struggle for independence, which would never be good for India's future. The more the unity amongst the people, the more intense would be the struggle and the earlier would be the emancipation of India from foreign domination. Here we find Nehru's objective coincided with Gandhi, who always gave priority on independence and kept socialism on background.

Though Gandhi wrote in Harijan in 1947, "I accepted the theory of socialism even while I was in South Africa", he was no socialist at all in the real sense of the term for he only pleaded for social change always. The matter of the fact is: he wanted to resolve all antagonism by bringing all men round to a common action to attain common good.

Nehru changed his priority from socialism to independence, but from the late 1930s he changed his views even on the ideals of socialism. His conception of socialism became devoid of its actual social meaning. In his speeches at later dates, we find, he has started

giving focus only on realization of certain high objectives but on the need for application of means he observes silence. It is time, he is aware of the feudal exploitation and existence of class contradictions in Indian society but not a single word does he mention on the measures to overcome these disparities, though earlier he was vocal on adoption of socialistic means in his speeches. His radio address on September 7, 1946 highlights his casual approach to socialism, "I have not said anything about our domestic policy, nor at this stage do I wish to do so. But that policy will inevitably have to be governed by the principles by which we have stood all these years. We shall look to the common and forgotten man in India and seek to bring him relief and raise his standard of living. We shall continue our fight against the curse of untouchability and other forms of enforced inequality and shall especially try to help those who are economically or otherwise backward".⁶³ Though Nehru was instrumental in formulating the Objectives Resolution, which was a key policy-making document of the country before the adoption of its constitution, there were hardly any references to socialism in it. However, he tried to justify this omission in a speech made prior to the submission of the Objectives Resolution before the Constituent Assembly, "Well, I stand for socialism and, I hope, India will stand for socialism and Indian will go towards the constitution of Socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. What form of socialism it should be, again, is another matter for your consideration? But the main thing is that in such a Resolution, if in accordance with my own desire, I had put in that we wanted Socialist State, we would have to put in something which might be agreeable to many and might not be agreeable to some and we wanted this Resolution not to be controversial in regard to such matters."⁶⁴

It has been enjoined in the sacred literature that everybody must get food according to his hunger, while he who seizes more than he needs is stealing the society and is punishable.⁶⁵ This is no doubt as good as the modern concept of equality and fairness and very much close to the Marxian doctrine because of its insistence upon punishing those who crave for more.

True, the desire for equality is the root cause of all dissensions and political revolutions, but human equality should be admitted with the specific reservation that there is a limit to equality. "Complete equality in economic status is just a vague indignation against present inequalities and an undefined hope of a better relationship".⁶⁶

Let us see what was Nehru's concept of equality. He writes,

"The spirit of the age is in favour of equality, though practice denies it almost everywhere. In India, at any rate, we must aim at equality. That does not and cannot mean that everybody is physically or intellectually or spiritually equal or can be made so. But it does mean equal opportunities for all and no political, economic, or social barrier in the way of any individual or group. It means a faith in humanity and a belief that there is no race or group that cannot advance and make good in its own way, given the chance to do so. It means a realization of the fact that the backwardness or degradation of any group is not due to inherent failings in it, but principally lack of opportunities and long suppression by other groups... Any such attempt to open the doors of opportunity to all in India will release enormous energy and ability and transform the country with amazing speed".⁶⁷

Nehru did aim at equality, however not through expropriation of the existing wealth, but through the growth of production adopting planned methodology. He came to believe, only through the growth of

production could the living standard of the populace be raised, social contradictions be resolved and a more equitable system be established. Scientific planning in India was Nehru's brainchild. Nehru said, "Scientific planning enables us to increase our production, and socialism comes in when we plan to distribute production evenly."⁶⁸

Late in 1938 a National Planning Committee was constituted with Nehru as its chairman. Nehru knew without attaining national freedom and eliminating foreign control introduction of fundamental changes in the social and economic structure of the country is impossible. He wrote, "Thus the attainment of national freedom and the elimination of foreign control became an essential pre-requisite for planning Planning thus was not so much for the present, as for an unascertained future, and there was an air of unreality about it. Yet it had to be based on the present and we hoped that this future was not a distant one."⁶⁹ Nehru believed, if socialism had to grow then it had to be built up anew in Indian context.

Nehru emphasized again and again that the term socialism should not be interpreted only from political angle. Even, when asked, he declined to define socialism; in fact Nehru was not the type to remain attached to any ideology for very long. He maintained, " I do not see why I should be asked to define socialism in precise, rigid terms."⁷⁰ To be precise, Nehru was not wedded to any particular 'ism'. A leader of Nehru's stature can never be expected to follow any ideology blind-folded. They do listen to everybody notwithstanding, people of his type pave their own path. From time to time he modified his own ideas in consonance with the experiences gained by him and developed his own concept of socialism. " Whatever the method may be, the method which delivers the goods and brings about the necessary change and gives satisfaction to the masses will justify itself and give hope. That

method need not necessarily be an extreme method belonging to either of these two rival ideologies (capitalist and socialist). It may be something in between. In fact, you find in most countries of the world that there is an attempt to find other ways which certainly are completely divorced from old-style capitalism and which go towards what is normally called socialism. They are fast approaching it. It may be that in India also we may be able to find some way more suited to the conditions of our people, some middle way."⁷¹

As early as 1938, Nehru endorsed his commitment to the Gandhian technique of non-violence and appreciated its successful implementation in India. He was a convinced socialist and believed in democracy and at the same time accepted whole-heartedly peaceful technique of non-violent action, which Gandhi has practised successfully during the last twenty years.⁷²

A huge task before Nehru was to synthesize various trends of thoughts present in the Indian society, such as revivalism, particularly religious, nationalism, Gandhism, socialism the doctrine pursued by the Indian socialists etc. and to raise them at the level of an ideal.⁷³ At the same time he had to shake off his own anti-imperialist and pro-Soviet stand before he found out a suitable middle course. Besides, he had to cope with feudalism, large-scale poverty of the Indian masses together with their servile attitude, traditionalism and superstition.

Having kept in view both negative and positive trends in Indian context, Nehru came to a conclusion that India needed an equation between liberties and planned economic order. Thus a new socialistic concept came into being assimilating the ideals of democracy on the one hand and the betterment of the masses on the other. Some people christened this new socialistic concept of Nehru as 'democratic

socialism'.⁷⁴ "I have mentioned the two ways that have moved me. These are nationalism as the political freedom as represented by the Congress and social freedom as represented by socialism," Nehru himself summed up.⁷⁵ As early as December 1950, Nehru had himself affirmed that some kind of democratic socialism was developing in the world. To set in motion his goal of democratic socialism in India, he launched economic planning in 1951.

The First Five Year Plan document envisaged, "Whether one thinks of the problems of capital formation or the introduction of new techniques or the extension of social services, or the overall realignment of productive forces and class relationships within society, one comes inevitably to the conclusion that a rapid expansion of the economic and social responsibilities of the state will alone be capable of satisfying the legitimate expectations of the people. This need not involve complete nationalization of the means of production or elimination of private agencies in agriculture or business or industry. It does mean, however, a progressive widening of the public sector and a reorientation of the private sector to the needs of a planned economy."⁷⁶

However, the private sector was not allowed to operate freely with the implementation of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act in 1951. Under this 'Act', every private sector operator had to obtain a licence from the government before starting a new project. In this way, only partial freedom was allowed to the private sector to operate, a sword of Damocles was always hanging over them. Let us see what Nehru has to say, "I do not want State socialism of that extreme kind in which the State is all powerful and governs practically all activities. The State is very powerful politically. If you were going to make it very powerful economically, it would also

become a mere conglomeration of authority. I should, therefore, like decentralization of power."⁷⁷

By this statement, could we conclude that Nehru actually meant decentralization of power in the real sense of the term or was it eyewash to satisfy his detractors? It was neither. Nehru believed in the theory of moderation. He never believed in extremes of any concept. Let us see, how does he justify the existence of public enterprise. He said, "There is no country in the world where some middle way between the extremes has not been or is not being found. In the USA, which is said to have a highly developed form of modern capitalism and private enterprise, there are more public enterprises than in most countries which apparently have a different objective and ideal."⁷⁸

Nehru's liberal views with regard to the development of private sector vis-à-vis public sector prove his commitment to theory and practice of mixed economy concept. His Five-Year Plans further proved his acceptance of this concept.

At Nehru's insistence, the Indian National Congress accepted and formalized in the documents the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society at the Avadi session in January 1955. In his speech at Avadi, he emphasized on three points: (a) social ownership or control of the principle means of production, (b) acceleration of national production, and (c) the equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation. When some of the Congressmen tried to draw a line of distinction between socialism and socialistic pattern of society, Nehru rebutted such arguments and clarified, "We want a socialistic pattern of society. That is a phrase, which means, in one word, socialism. Do not imagine it means anything other than socialism. A socialistic pattern is socialism."⁷⁹ Though an urge towards social justice has prompted

Nehru to lean on socialism, he could not deviate from the path of democracy, which was another ideal. Therefore, Nehru was neither out and out a rigid socialist nor a Gandhian. In a reply to a letter to Gandhi, once he wrote, "the whole question is how to achieve this (equitable) society and what it contents should be. I do not understand why a village should necessarily embody truth and non-violence. A village, normally speaking, is backward intellectually and culturally and no progress can be made from a backward environment."⁸⁰ On the other, no doubt he wanted social millennium in India, but only through the application of democratic means. Nehru's concept of socialism was thus an amalgam of both socialism on the one hand and democracy on the other. It was democratic socialism as pointed out above.

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Chapter-IV

CHAPTER - IV

Secular or Religious

Was Gandhi a Hindu? His critics called him he was a devout Hindu. True Gandhi was a Hindu, since he was born Hindu. He belonged to a Vaishnava family. His mother, Gandhi says, was deeply religious. About his father, Gandhi writes, "Of religious training he had very little but he had that kind of religious culture which frequent visits to temples and listening to religious discourses make available to many Hindus"¹

His childhood was spent accompanying his mother to Haveli, the Vaishnava temple. She was a devout woman and followed the rituals of Hinduism with utmost devotion and fervour. All this certainly made its first impression on his mind, and which he carried on throughout his life. There were other situations also in his home, which too made their impressions upon him and made him liberal in outlook. His father very often used to invite learned people of other faiths and discussed with them nuances of other religions. To quote Gandhi, "He had, besides, Masalman and Parsi friends, who would listen to them always with respect, and often with interest. Being his nurse, I often had a chance to be present at these talks. These many things combined to inculcate in me a toleration for all faiths."^{1A} About the influence his mother made upon him, Gandhi says, "the outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness."² About the other quality of his mother, Gandhi writes, "she would take the hardest vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them."³

Gandhi's mother was raised in 'pranami' sect, which was recognized for its latitudinarianism vis-à-vis Islamic doctrines. The temple his mother used to take him had no idol in it. The headmaster of the school was a Zoroastrian. One of the closest friends of Gandhi in his school days was a Muslim. These were the non-Hindu influences which also played their some role in giving a shape to his mental and spiritual outlook.

About his early influences, Gandhi has different story to narrate. He writes in his 'Autobiography', "Being born in the Vaishnava faith, I had often to go to the Haveli. But it never appealed to me. I did not like its glitter and pomp. Also I heard rumours of immorality practised there, and lost all interest in it. Hence I could gain nothing from the Haveli."⁴

Though he learnt 'Ramanama' from his nurse Rambha, he used to repeat 'Ramanama' only to quell his fear of ghosts and spirits. "...At a tender age I began repeating 'Ramanama' to cure my fear of ghosts and spirits,"⁵ Gandhi wrote. However, in the same spirit he confesses, "This was of course short-lived, but the good seed sown in childhood was not sown in vain, I think it is due to the seed sown by that good woman Rambha that today Ramanama is an infallible remedy for me."⁶

In his boyhood, the reading of the Ramanama before his father created a deep impression in him. Gandhi would simply be in rapt adoration when he used to hear one Ladha Maharaj reciting the Ramayana. About Ladha Maharaj, he says, 'was a great devotee of Rama'. Gandhi was little more than thirteen, when his father had taken to bed. At this juncture, Ladha Maharaj would come and read out of Tulsidas's Ramayana before the elder Gandhi in his melodious voice, which enthralled Gandhi. That bred in him a deep devotion to the Ramayana, which lasted him till his death. Gandhi appreciates, "Today

I regard the Ramayana of Tulsidas as the greatest book in all devotional literature.”⁷

Gandhi confesses that though he developed toleration for other religions in his early childhood, Christianity remained an exception with him. He developed a sort of a dislike for it because he had noticed, while going to school, Christian missionaries in their discourse, beside his school, hurling abuses on Hindus and their gods, Gandhi could not swallow this insult though it was a chance experience for him. Gandhi gives further explanation for his dislike for Christianity in his ‘Autobiography’, “About the same time I heard of a well known Hindu having been converted to Christianity. It was talk of the town that, when he was baptized he had to eat beef and drink liquor, that he also had to change his clothes, and that thenceforth he began to go about in European costume including a hat. These things got on my nerves, Surely, thought I, a religion that compelled one to eat beef, drink liquor, and change one’s own clothes did not deserve the name. I also heard that the new convert had already begun abusing the religion of his ancestors, their customs and their country. All these things created in me a dislike for Christianity.”⁸

In fact, these were the outpourings of an immature mind, gradually with gaining more and more experiences, Gandhi changed his standpoint on Christianity. In those days, though Gandhi was tolerant to other religions, he did not have much faith in God. “But the *fact* that I had learnt to be tolerant to other religions did not mean that I had any living faith in God.”⁹ Even his encounter with ‘Manusmriti’¹⁰ was not very pleasant. Gandhi was a votary of ‘ahimsa’ or non-violence, but he found the teachings in ‘Manusmriti’ contrary to his point of view. ‘Manusmriti’ at any rate did not then teach me ‘ahimsa’. I have told the story of my meat eating. ‘Manusmriti’ seemed to support it.”¹¹ In reality,

the doctrines of 'Manusmriti' turned him 'somewhat towards atheism'. Gandhi recalls later as early as at the age of twelve he began to feel his growing disbelief in the practice of untouchability. There was scavenger named Uka who used to serve in their house. Gandhi was asked to perform the ablutions whenever he accidentally touched Uka. Though he obeyed such command of his elders, he did not do it without protesting that untouchability was not sanctioned by religion. He had heard in the Ramayana that one low-caste boatman had ferried Rama, the hero in the epic, across the Ganges. As he grew up, Gandhi developed a close affinity, rapport and fellow feeling with so-called untouchables.

Even without bothering the verdict of the caste council to forgo his pre-planned journey, he left for England. The ritual aspects of Hinduism had no attraction for Gandhi. In fact, Gandhi found extremely hard to understand how untouchability, cruel orthodoxy and superstitions could be associated with the high ideals of Hinduism. He concluded there was something seriously wrong, but he was unable to anatomize due to his inexperience. Gandhi could never reconcile himself to untouchability. He regarded it as an excrescence. On many evil practices of Hinduism, Gandhi writes, "It was true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. . . I should be ashamed to think that dedication of girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism, yet Hindus in many parts of India practise it. I consider it positive irreligion to sacrifice goats to kali and do not consider it a part of Hinduism ...Untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity or love. A religion (Hinduism) that establishes the worship of the cow cannot positively countenance or warrant a cruel or inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the

suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it, if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than the life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing."^{11A} Even Gandhi called untouchability a device of Satan and the supporters of the practice of untouchability, who quote scriptures, devils. He expresses his serious anguish against those people who despise scavengers, "There is neither nobility nor bravery in treating the great and uncomplaining scavengers of the nation as worse than dogs to be despised and spat upon."^{11B}

Yet, in the face of this seesaw of religious attractions and revulsions, Gandhi paved his own path of morality based on truth. "But one thing took deep root in me –the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality. Truth became my sole objective. It began to grow in magnitude everyday, and my definition of it also has been ever widening."¹²

His acquaintance with 'Bhagavada Gita', the other great book of Hindu religion, came much later. In fact, in the company of the two theosophists brothers in England, he began to read the 'Gita'. He read the original in Sanskrit as well as its English version, rendered into English by Sir Edwin Arnold. The reading of the 'Gita' left an indelible mark on his mind. About the impression left on his mind by the reading of the 'Bhagvadagita', Gandhi writes, "the book struck me as one of priceless worth. The impression has ever since been growing on me with the result that I regard it today as the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth. It has afforded me invaluable help in my moments of gloom."¹³

Gandhi gathered further from the 'Gita' that reward or punishment should not be predicted beforehand while one is performing his rightful duties. Let there be suffering but the same should be neglected in course of one's action. He says, "This is the unmistakable teaching of the Gita. He who gives up action falls. He who gives up only the reward rises. But renunciation of fruit is no way means indifference to the result. In regard to every action, one must know the result that is expected to follow, the means thereto and the capacity for it. He, who being thus equipped, is without desire for the result and is yet wholly engrossed in due fulfillment of the task before him is said to have renounced the fruits of his action."^{13A}

In England, he began seriously to read about religion. He read Sir Arnold's 'The light of the Asia', written in the context of the Buddha. His reading of Madame Blavatsky's 'Key to Theosophy' stimulated in him a desire to read more books on Hinduism. This reading has disabused Gandhi of "the notion fostered by the missionaries that Hinduism was rife with superstition."¹⁴

About the same time, he met one Christian from Manchester, under whose company Gandhi's doubt was dispelled that Christianity supports meat eating and drinking. On the advice of the Christian gentleman, Gandhi began to read the Bible, though the reading of Old Testament induced his sleep. Whereas the reading of New Testament, especially the reading of the Sermon on the Mount, produced a different impression, it went straight to his heart and he began to compare it with the teachings of the 'Gita'. On the similarities found in between them, he elaborates thus, "I have not been able to see any difference between Sermon on the Mount and the Bhagvadgita, what the Sermon describes in a graphic manner, and the Bhagvadgita reduces it to a scientific formula. It may not be a scientific book in the

accepted sense of term, but it has argued out the law of love –the law of abandon as I call it –in a scientific manner. The Sermon on the Mount gives the same law in the wonderful language. Today, supposing, I was deprived of the Gita and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the Sermon, I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the Gita.”^{14A} He further speaks without hesitation, “My young mind tried to unify the teachings of the Gita, the Light of the Asia and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly.”¹⁵ On the recommendation of a friend, Gandhi also read the chapter ‘The Prophet’ in Carlyle’s ‘Hero and Hero-worship’ and “learnt of the Prophet’s greatness and bravery and austere living.”¹⁶ Jains pursuit for realization of ultimate truth beyond the senses and take a non-injury to any living thing had also left its lasting impression upon Gandhi in his early childhood. Here the concept of ‘ahimsa’ or non-violence had its initial beginning in the immature mind of Gandhi. In his later life, Gandhi became a downright votary of this concept of ‘ahimsa’. “Jains search for ultimate truth beyond the senses and take a vow of non-injury to avoid harm to all living things, including micro-organisms. This pledge of personal non-violence in ahimsa, found also in Buddhism and Hinduism is a virtue of the man who renounces the world. Under different influences Gandhiji later interpreted and expanded this principle to include temporal and collective as well as spiritual and individual matters.”^{16A}

After his return from England during his short stay at Bombay in the house of Dr. Mehta, who was his old acquaintance in England, Gandhi was introduced to a poet named Raja Chandra or Raychand Bhai, who was also a well-known businessman and a connoisseur of gems. Though this man himself was only 25 and Gandhi hardly 21, he made a deep impression upon the latter’s mind by his pursuit for self

realisation. He used to mutter always: "I shall think myself blessed only when I see Him in every one of my daily acts."¹⁷ Gandhi writes about Raychandbhai's influence upon him, "The thing that did cast its spell over me I came to know afterwards. This was his wide knowledge of the scriptures, his spotless character, and his burning passion for self-realisation."¹⁸ Though this man was a busy businessman, Gandhi marked, in the midst of his busy business transactions, he was always absorbed in godly pursuits. "But all these things were not the centre round which his life revolved. That centre was the passion to see God face to face."¹⁹ Raychandbhai by his advice and guidance dispelled the problems and doubts of Gandhi on religious matters and steered him on towards the correct path. "In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge."²⁰ But never did Gandhi enthrone him as his 'Guru'. Gandhi has acknowledged that three moderns have left lasting impressions on his life and captivated him; "Raychandbhai by his living contact; Tolstoy by his book, 'The Kingdom of God is within you'; and Ruskin by his 'Unto the Last'."²¹

Gandhi's early days in South Africa proved to be disturbed. He came in touch with certain Christian friends, who never became tired in their efforts to convert him. He could not reconcile himself to the idea of needing a mediator who could only mediate between man and God. He could not convince himself that Jesus was the only incarnate Son of God "and that only he who believed in Him, would have everlasting life."²² Gandhi argued, "If God could have sons; all of us were his sons. If Jesus was like God, or God himself, then all men were like God and could be God Himself," though Gandhi accepted Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice, and a divine teacher, but not as the most perfect man ever born.²³ Even "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" philosophy of the Old Testament did not appeal him. He could not

accept the basic principles of the Bible that unless one was Christian he could not be redeemed.

Gandhi writes, "Thus I could not accept Christianity either as a perfect, or the greatest religion, neither was I then convinced of Hinduism being such. Hindu defects were pressingly visible to me. If untouchability could be a rotten part of Hinduism, it could but be a rotten part or an excrescence. I could not understand the *raison d'être* of a multiple of sects and castes. What was the meaning of saying the Vedas were the inspired Word of God? If they were inspired, why not also the Bible and the Koran?"²⁴

As his Christian friends were endeavouring their level best to convert him, his Muslim friends were no less anxious. Though he left no stone unturned to familiarize himself with the Prophet and the ethics of Islam, he became never tempted to adopt the faith. He also read a book called the "Sayings of the Zarathustra" and concluded that there were lot of things common in most religious philosophies.

Gandhi from his early youth associated himself with all faiths and beliefs. But his approach at no point of time was biased with any preconceived belief, he made his access simply with an open mind with an anxiety to find out the truth. He writes, "Thus I gained more knowledge of the different religions. The study stimulated my self-introspection and fostered in me the habit of putting into practice whatever appealed to me in my studies."²⁵

"By religion I do not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker," Gandhi defines his assessment of religion.²⁶ To Gandhi there is always an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. Though he felt, he never saw it. It is this unseen Power,

which makes itself felt, however there is no proof to define it. Since "it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses."²⁷ He spells out in the same vein, "I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power or spirit is God." To him God is Life, Truth, Light and Love personified as well as Supreme Good.²⁸ But still he holds that God's existence "is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within. Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself."^{28A}

He states that no man can live without religion, though he accepts that there are some people who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. Yet these people, they may be rankest agnostics or atheists, do acknowledge sometime or other, the need of a moral principle and associate something good with its observance and something bad with its non-observance. Any joy, which emanates as an aftermath of some good works, is not at all worldly, but it brings out of his communion with the divine. Thus verbal disowning does not preclude a man from religion. Gandhi projects his unflinching faith in God, "I can tell you this –that I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes that will not kill me. But blast my belief in God and I am dead."^{28B} Gandhi was true believer of traditional Hinduism and customs associated with it. "I have asserted my claim to being a Sanatani Hindu."²⁹ In support of my assertion, Gandhi writes,

"My religion is Hinduism, which for me, is the religion of humanity and includes the best of all the religions known to me." Therefore, it will be incorrect to judge that the influences of the New Testament and other scriptures on him as secondary. Consequently he could boldly declare, "My Hinduism is not sectarian." He adds further, "In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary imperceptible character. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith or dharma, or it lives at peace with all the religions."³⁰ Gandhi could never reconcile to any such idea, which interpreted that one religion would be enough for the earth. Gandhi said never would that be possible. Though there is one God, there are different interpretations of Him. Moreover, no two persons could maintain the same identical conception of God. "Therefore, there will, perhaps, always be different religions answering to different temperaments and climatic conditions."^{30A} Gandhi adds further, "I do not share the belief that can be or will be on earth one religion. I am striving, therefore, to find common factor and to induce mutual tolerance."^{30B}

His conviction in Hinduism leads him to believe that all religions are more or less true and all proceed from the same God. "My Hindu instinct tells me that all religions are more or less true. All proceed from the same God, but all are imperfect because they have come down to us through imperfect human instrumentality."³¹ To Gandhi, paths may be different but the goal of every religion is the same. God is one, though we call Him by different names. "The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of the Christians and Isvara of Hindus. Even as there are numerous names of God in Hinduism, there are many names of God in

Islam. The names do not indicate individuality but attributes, and little man has tried in his humble way to describe mighty God by giving Him attributes. Indescribable, Immeasurable. Living faith in this God means equal respect for all religions. It would be the height of intolerance –and intolerance is a species of violence –to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith.”³² Gandhi tried his best in his own way to secularise the Hindu mind by teaching that all religions are equal. This is the chief ingredient of a democratic secular society. To Gandhi, religion was the personal matter of an individual. On 25th April, 1925, he had written to Nehru, “But religion is after all a matter for each individual and too a matter of heart,” Nehru had subscribed to this view of Gandhi, “... if I were a dictator, religion and state would be separate. I swear by religion, I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The state has nothing to do with it. The state would look after your secular welfare, health, communication, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody’s personal concern.”^{32A}

Gandhi could never reconcile to the idea of conversion. “It is impossible for me to reconcile myself to the idea of conversion after the style that goes on in India and elsewhere today.” He questioned, “Why should a Christian want to convert a Hindu to Christianity and vice versa? Why should he not be satisfied if the Hindu is a good or godly man? If the morals of a man are a matter of no concern, the form of worship in a particular manner in a church, a mosque or a temple is an empty formula.”³³

There was a story in the English Press that Miss Slade, better known in the Ashram as Mirabai, has embraced Hinduism. Gandhi has vehemently denied this story and said that never was she asked to embrace Hinduism. The name adopted by Miss Slade was not a Hindu

name but an Indian name. Gandhi elaborates, "I have had the privilege of having under me Mussalman, Parsi and Christian minors. Never was Hinduism put before them for their acceptance. They were encouraged and induced to respect and read their own scriptures ... No proselytizing is practised or permitted."³⁴ Gandhi had a fixed mission in life that was to realize 'moksha' or final beatitude. He wanted to free his soul from the bondage of flesh. He considered himself a humble seeker after truth. But he was a practical seeker, who never believed in taking shelter of cave to realize 'moksha'. Gandhi knew road to salvation lies in rendering incessant service to country and there through to humanity. He observed, "I have no desire for the perishable Kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven, which is 'moksha'. To attain my end it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of a cave. The cave dweller who hovers round the world on the wings of thought has no peace. For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity."³⁵

Gandhi's religion was based on the concept of humanity, though he called himself a Hindu. 'Service to man is service to God', was his fundamental standpoint. He elucidates, "The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavours, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it."³⁶ Gandhi knew in a secluded place like the Himalayan cave, he would never be able to realize God because he had conviction that God could not be set apart from humanity.

"Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, all his activities – social, political, religious – have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. ... I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from rest of the humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so inert that I must

concentrate myself on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity.”³⁷

Gandhi was critical of Hindus’ fetish for outward observances. He said Hindus would be doomed if they attached undue importance to the spiritual effects of foods and human contacts. He writes, “Before the throne of the Almighty we shall be judged, not by what we have eaten nor by whom we have been touched by but whom we have served and how. Inasmuch as we serve a single human being in distress, we shall find favour in the sight of God. Bad and stimulating or dirty foods we must avoid as we must avoid bad contact. But let us not give these observances a place out of all proportion to their importance. We dare not use abstinence from certain foods as a cover for fraud, hypocrisy and worse vices. We dare not refuse to serve a fallen or dirty brother lest his contact should injure our spiritual growth.”³⁸

Gandhi maintained that man is a part of whole and wholeness is enfolded within him. He has an underlying unity not only with all the other fellow human beings but also with everything else that exists, such as the animals, the plants and beyond the earth with the whole universe. A great man like Gandhi could never think within a particular limit nor could he confine his thoughts within anything which he thought to be limited. He loved humanity without any precondition; caste, creed, religion etc. were simply secondary factors to him. He used to reiterate, “I am part and parcel of the whole,” or “I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity.”³⁹ “Whatever life exists in this world, is the abode of the lord,” Gandhi has a special fascination for the couplet from the Ishavasyopanishad.⁴⁰ Even he found inspiration in the following couplets from the Gita:

“The eternal Brahma has hands and feet, eyes, heads, mouths and ears everywhere. It pervades the entire universe.”⁴¹

Or,

“Whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that am I. There is nothing in this sentient or insentient world which is bereft of me.”⁴²

Being not satisfied with the repressive measures adopted to suppress the Civil Disobedience Movement, the then British Government tried another tact to divide the Hindus on communal ground by announcing the communal Award, which sought to confer on the scheduled castes reserved seats, like the Muslims, in the proposed central assembly and legislatures by separate electorates.

At the Second Round Table Conference in London, Gandhi opposed every move of the British Government to create a separate electorate for the depressed classes. Even he did not entertain Ambedkar’s proposal for reservation of a certain number of seats in the legislatures for them based on common electorate for Hindus.⁴³ It is said, in one of his speeches in the conference, Gandhi had uttered, “If I was the only person to resist this thing, I will resist with my life.”⁴⁴

However, on 17 August 1932, the Communal Award of Ramsay MacDonald, the British Premier, was announced. What Gandhi had feared so long was confirmed. Gandhi immediately wrote to Ramsay MacDonald to revise the decision, but in vain. On the contrary, he defended the decision of the government. The British Premier failed to appreciate Gandhi’s emotional and religious approach. It is needless to add here, the news of Gandhi’s proposed fast unto death stirred the whole of India. Even it had produced some commotion in England. A special prayer was held throughout the country to save Gandhi’s life.

Gandhi could never tolerate the division of his beloved countrymen into caste and communal lines.

Greatly perturbed at the news of Gandhi's resorting to 'fast unto death', Tagore sent a telegram to Gandhi on 19 September 1932:

"It is worth sacrificing precious life for the sake of India's unity and her social integrity. Though we cannot anticipate what effect it may have upon our rulers who may not understand its immense importance for our people, we feel certain that the supreme appeal of such self-offering to the conscience of our own countrymen will not be in vain. I fervently hope that we will not callously allow such national tragedy to reach its extreme length. Our sorrowing hearts will follow your sublime penance with reverence and love."

Gandhi commenced his fast on September 20, 1932 at Yeravda Jail. The British ministers failed to find any logic behind this Gandhi's action. It was beyond their comprehension how could Gandhi draw a parallel between 'fasting' and 'political action' and hold the British government to ransom,' Gandhi's action to put life at stake touched every Indian's heart. What could not he achieved for ages through sermons of the great saints of the past in India, was achieved by Gandhi at one stroke. Wells, public places and the gates of the temples were thrown open to the untouchables being overwhelmed by emotion. For the first time in Allahabad twelve temples, in Calcutta Kalighat temple and in Benaras Ram Mandir followed suit. In Delhi the Hindus and the Harijans fraternized in the street. Gandhi's fast brought a religious transformation and a psychological revolution in the annals of Indian history. However, Nehru and other Congress leaders felt this to be too big a gesture by Gandhi over too small an issue. They thought that there was no point in dying for anything less than freedom.⁴⁵ But

these opinions made no impact on the people. Gandhi went on with his fast.

Ultimately the British government did not find any suitable alternative that to accede to the demand of Gandhi. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya called a conference to find a solution to this imbroglio, wherein Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the most prominent leader of the Depressed Classes, was invited to join in. A settlement was finally arrived at on 25 September, which is better known in history as the Poona Pact. A common electorate of all the Hindus was accepted, and Dr. Ambedkar did away with his demand of separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. This was the triumph of Gandhi. The British government accepted the new electorate arrangement of the Poona Pact. By accepting the clauses of the Poona Pact, Dr. Ambedkar showed a great regard for Gandhi. "There was the life of the greatest man of India to be saved, and on the other side, the interests of my people." Gandhi broke his fast on 26 September 1932 with the limejuice prepared by Kamala Nehru in the presence of Rabindranath Tagore. Though with the settlement the seat reserved for the Depressed Classes were increased in the provincial and central legislatures, it prevented vivisection of Hindus on caste line. On the whole, Gandhi's fast was successful in doing away with separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. Tagore commented, "We know in the Upanishads, God who ever dwells in the hearts of all men has been mentioned as Mahatma. The epithet is rightly given to a man of God whom we are honouring today, for his dwelling is not within the narrow enclosure of individual consciousness, his dwelling is in the heart of untold multitudes who are yet to come."⁴⁶

However, it seems Nehru was not at all impressed by Gandhi's achievement. He writes, "I felt annoyed with him for choosing a side

issue for his final sacrifice. What would be the result on our freedom movement? Would not the larger issues fade into background, for the time being at least? And, if he attained his immediate object and got a joint electorate for the depressed classes, would not that result in a reaction and a feeling that something had been achieved and nothing more need be done for a while? And was not his action a recognition, and in part an acceptance, of the communal award and the general scheme of things as sponsored by the Government? Was this consistent with non-cooperation and civil disobedience? After so much sacrifice and brave endeavour, was our movement to tail off into something insignificant?

“I felt angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question, and his frequent references to God in connection with it. He even seemed to suggest that God had indicated the very date of the fast. What a terrible example to set!”⁴⁷

Admittedly, Nehru did not support Gandhi's method of undertaking fast as the panacea of all problems, but he was awe-struck at the overwhelming response of the people at Gandhi's diktat. He has to admit, “Again I watched the emotional upheaval of the country during the fast, and I wondered more and more if this was the right method in politics. It seemed to be sheer revivalism, and clear thinking had not a ghost of chance against it. All India, or most of it, stared reverently at the Mahatma and expected him to perform miracle after miracle and to put an end to untouchability and to get swaraj and so on –and did precious little itself! And Gandhiji did not encourage others to think; his insistence was on purity and sacrifice,”⁴⁸

Gandhi coined the word ‘Harijans’, i.e., children of God to identify the untouchables.

Gandhi always repudiated the prevailing spirit in Indian society of inequality and superiority connected with caste system and prohibition made thereof on inter-caste contacts. Therefore, to remove inequality and stigma attached to untouchables Gandhi insisted on allowing their entry into Hindu temples. "Temple entry is the one spiritual act that would constitute the message of freedom to the 'untouchables' and assure them that they are not outcasts before God." Elsewhere he writes, "I don't want to be reborn, but if I have to be reborn, I should be untouchable so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings and affronts levelled at them in order that I may endeavour to free them from their miserable condition."⁴⁹ Even Gandhi considered the practice of untouchability as a hindrance to the achievement of Swaraj. "Swaraj is as unattainable without the removal of the sin of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim unity."⁵⁰

Soon after his release from jail, Gandhi embarked upon a long tour and covered almost 12,500 miles. His object was to bring home to the Hindus the evil of untouchability. He called upon the Harijans to get rid of their vices of consuming intoxicating stuffs, such as liquor etc. to enable them to join the main stream of Hindu society. Gandhi's Harijan tour, no doubt, proved highly successful, though occasionally he had to face opposition from the orthodox Hindus, who could not digest Gandhi's mission. Even in one place a bomb was thrown at his brigade though Gandhi remained unhurt, a couple of others were injured.

Gandhi established an organization, the Harijan Sevak Sangh with an objective to remove all their disabilities; and which continued to function even after independence. Even Gandhi brought a Harijan family to live in the Ashram and created a precedent.

All these efforts of Gandhi did not go in vain. After independence, the practice of untouchability has been made a penal offence under law. True, no social evils of long standing can be removed through legislation at one go, but Gandhi has set the ball in motion. It is hoped, one day this practice of untouchability along with other social evils, such as child marriage etc. will definitely be vanished from the Indian society forever. Gandhi never accepted that caste system has any base in religion. He testifies it only to be a custom. "Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth."⁵¹

Gandhi always emphasized that politics could not be divorced from religion. He had his own concept of secularism, which he did not want to compromise with its modern definition. "There could not be any politics without religion and that he entered politics because he was primarily a religious man," it was his oft-repeated expression.^{51A} Even he said that he entered politics because it would develop the religious faculty in him. "I certainly do introduce religion into politics. It is my humble view that not a single activity in the world should be independent of religion,"⁵² he had announced as early as 1921. Gandhi was a religious man, yet he was drawn into politics only because of his concern for humanity. He wanted to go close to more and more people, yet it was not possible, if he had not entered into politics. Therefore, he declared, "Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul."⁵³

Gandhi advocated politics had to be based on morality, thus it had to be moral. Religion to him had its origin in morality. Morality, to sum up, is the focal point of both politics and religion. Therefore,

politics and religion are closely related to each other. : "I still hold the view that I cannot conceive politics as divorced from religion,"⁵⁴ Gandhi emphasized. Elsewhere, he wrote, "... political action is nothing worth, if it is not backed by sound grounding in religion by which is not meant sectional or sectional belief."⁵⁵

He opined that politicians could be on the safe ground, if their politics is based on certain moral values, such as, humanity, tolerance, forgiveness, love, unselfishness etc. that are intrinsic to every religion. "For me there is no politics without religion –not the religion of the superstitions and the blind, religion that hates and fights, but the universal Religion of Toleration. Politics without morality is to be avoided,"⁵⁶ Gandhi writes. He further maintains that if in politics there is no religion then that politics deserves to be boycotted. "Politics bereft of religion are absolute dirt ever to be shunned."⁵⁷ Gandhi's position can safely be called utopian politics. He unhesitatingly stated, "... in politics also we have to establish the Kingdom of Heaven."⁵⁸ Gandhi's every activity, be it political, or otherwise, had been inspired by his profound religious commitment. His religious predisposition, Gandhi writes, "... in other words, a seeker after God and Truth." To him there is no other God than Truth. He received his sense of discretion from religion.

"To see the universal and all pervading spirit of truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."⁵⁹

Gandhi was in South India leading a movement against untouchability, when a terrible earthquake devastated Bihar on January 15, 1934. About this earthquake Nehru writes, "It was the afternoon of the 15th January, 1934. I was standing in the verandah of our house in Allahabad addressing a group of peasants. Suddenly I become unsteady on my feet and could hardly keep my balance ... Doors started hanging and rumbling noise came from the adjoining Swaraj Bhawan, where many of the tiles were sliding down the roof. ... I did not take the earthquake seriously ... We did not know then, nor could we guess, what those two to three minutes had meant to millions in Bihar and elsewhere."⁶⁰

Nehru did not realise then what a cataclysmic catastrophe befell Bihar! Later he writes, "The ruins were an impressive and terrifying sight. The survivors were thoroughly shaken-up and cowed by their nerve-racking experience."⁶¹ The destruction was thorough. Thousands died.

Though the reaction of Gandhi was instantaneous, the reason he assigned to this devastation was fantastic. He said that the earthquake in Bihar was a divine chastisement imposed by God against the sin of untouchability. He wrote in 'Harijan', "The cause of Bihar earthquake was the sin of our society for untouchability."

A man like Tagore, who nurtured a great respect for Gandhi and his works, could not swallow this unscientific explanation of Gandhi given against a natural phenomenon. "It has caused me painful surprise to find Mahatma Gandhi accusing those who blindly follow their own social custom of untouchability of having brought down God's vengeance upon certain parts of Bihar, evidently specially selected for His desolating displeasure. It is all the more unfortunate because this

kind of unscientific view of phenomenon is too readily accepted by a large section of our countrymen.... What is truly tragic about it is the fact the kind of argument that Mahatmaji used by exploiting an event of cosmic disturbance far better suits the psychology of his opponents than his own, and it would not have surprised me if they had taken this opportunity of holding him and his followers responsible for the visitation of divine anger.”⁶² Nehru was equally critical of Gandhi’s outlandish comment; “...I read with great shock Gandhiji’s statement to the effect that the earthquake had been a punishment for the sin of untouchability. This was a staggering remark and I welcomed and wholly agreed with Rabindranath Tagore’s answer to it. Anything more opposed to the unscientific outlook it would be difficult to imagine. Perhaps even science will not be absolutely dogmatic today about the effect of emotional states and psychic occurrences on matter. A mental shock may result in indigestion or something worse to the person concerned. But to suggest that a human custom or failing had its reactions on the movements of the earth’s crust is an astounding thing. The idea of sin and divine wrath and man’s relative importance in the affairs of the universe –they take us back a few hundred years, when Inquisition flourished in Europe and burned Giordano Bruno for his unscientific heresy and sent many a witch to the stake! Even in the eighteenth century in America leading Boston divines attributed earthquake in Massachusetts to the impiety of lightening rods.”⁶³ Quoting an unscientific reason against a simple natural incident by Gandhi was too much for Nehru. He places several questions before Gandhi elsewhere, “And if the earthquake was a divine punishment for sin, how are we to discover for which sin we are being punished? ... that would be nearer the mark than to suggest that the more or less innocent people of Bihar were being made to suffer vicariously for the sins of untouchability of the people of South India. Why did not the

earthquake visit the land of untouchability itself? Or the British Government might call the calamity a divine punishment for civil disobedience, for, as a matter of fact, North Bihar, which suffered most from the earthquake took a leading part in the freedom movement.”^{63A}

Even some of the leading dailies were critical of Gandhi's conclusion,⁶⁴ but Gandhi stuck to his theory. He writes, “We do not know all the laws of God nor their working. Knowledge of the tallest scientist or the spiritualist is like a particle of dust ... I cannot prove the connection of the sin of untouchability with the Bihar visitation even though the connection is instinctively felt by me.”⁶⁵ But these words prove that ultimately Gandhi relented a bit in his stand.

Gandhi fought tooth and nail against communalism throughout his life. He wanted Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian and Jew should learn to respect each other's religion and live as one nation. As early as 1930, he has written, “In the Congress we must cease to be exclusive Hindus or Mussalmans or Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews. Whilst we may staunchly adhere to our respective faiths, we must be in the Congress Indians first and Indians last.”⁶⁶

Though his parting message to Indians in South Africa was whether you are Hindus or Muslims, Parsis or Christians, work unitedly, in India he clearly perceived Hindu-Muslim cleavage was a retarding factor vis-à-vis national unity and integration. This factor was being misutilised by the British to perpetuate their own rule.

In 1925, Gandhi returned to India and traveled extensively to gain a first hand knowledge of India's situation. He realized that India was full of diversity in terms of religion and language. He observed that the Hindus and Muslims looked each other with prejudice, mutual fear and suspicion, and the British were fanning this disharmony. But prior

to the British rule, this situation was not there in India, there was mutual respect for each other –a total harmony and peace prevailed amongst them. Gandhi analyzed the existing situation and noted that the main culprit to divide these communities was politics. Gandhi knew communal unity was essential prerequisite to achieve India's freedom and growth.

• Though there were both Hindu and Muslim members in the Congress, before the advent of Gandhi into Indian politics, they were identified either as a Hindu or a Muslim.⁶⁷ But with the entry of Gandhi, the situation changed. He made the people to take a vow, "With God as witness we Hindus and Mohamedans declare that we shall behave towards one another as children of the same parents, that we shall have no differences, that the sorrows of each other and that each shall help the other in removing them. We shall respect each other's religion and religious feelings and shall not stand in the way of our respective religious practices. We shall always refrain from violence to each other in the name of religion."⁶⁸

It was Gandhi's intention not to embarrass the British during the First World War, but he interpreted the arrest of Ali Brothers and Ajad in 1915-16 as unjust and protested. Even he attended the annual session of the Muslim League in December 1916. For the first time in Indian politics an attempt was made on such a large scale to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity.

The concept of Hindu-Muslim unity reached its pinnacle in 1919-20, when Gandhi launched his non-cooperation campaign against the government. This was an expression of his solidarity with the Muslims on the Khilafat issue. Gandhi's speech at the Khilafat Conference on 24-11-1919 succinctly clarifies his objective;

“When it is said that the Hindus join the Muslims in regard to the question some people express surprise, but I say that, if Hindus and Muslims are brothers, it is their duty to share one another’s sorrow. There can be but only one question and it is whether the Muslims are in the right and their cause is just. If it is legitimate, then every child of the soil must sympathise with them as a matter of duty. We must not say that the question of Khilafat is exclusively for the Muslims to grieve over. No it belongs to all Indian.”⁶⁹

But he confesses that to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity would be no mean achievement, “To bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims will be no mean achievement. That eight crores of people live in genuine amity with twenty-two crores of another community is a consummation greatly to be desired. It is certain too that for either to live suppressed by the other will do no good. We have therefore to promote mutual affection by living in equality and independence. The Khilafat movement alone provides the opportunity for this.”⁷⁰

As a vigorous protest against the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, the Khilafat agitation started all over India on October 17, 1919. But the agitation did not melt the British government; rather it continued to adhere to its decision of implementing the principle of national self-determination in respect of Turkey.⁷¹

It was a shock to Gandhi. In frustration he stated, “Khilafat question has now become a question of questions.” By raising the issue of restoration of Khalifa’s power, and also thereby making an appeal to their religious sentiments, Gandhi attempted to bring the Muslim masses into the fold of the anti-British national movement. But this proved counter-productive when the agitation fizzled out. The magic spell created for a short period simply vanished into thin air.

Rather the endeavour to mix up a partisan religious goal with the broad national issue simply created the ground for the emergence of religious fundamentalism at a later date.

It was the greatest mistake of Gandhi's career to take up the Khilafat agitation on behalf of the Sultan of Turkey.⁷² True, the Khilafat became a popular movement because of its religious connotation, but it could never become a people's movement. "... the mass of Muslims who took active part in the Khilafat Movement remained unacquainted with modern anti-imperialist ideology or the modern principles of political organization such as secularism and democracy. Instead, the intrusion of religious outlook into politics or political problem was legitimized and perpetuated. When Khilafat Movement was withdrawn, hardly any residue was left. At the most a handful of sturdy secular nationalists like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad emerged."⁷³

Certainly the Khilafat agitation was a failure, but for the first time the two communities moved together against a foreign rule under the leadership of Gandhi. Lasting amity between Hindu and Muslim could not be achieved by upholding the Khilafat issue, but it could not be denied that Gandhi all along stood against communalism. In true sense, Gandhi was an apostle of peace and amity amongst different communities. He was undoubtedly a secularist, though his concept of 'Ramarajya' was misunderstood very often. Sometimes towards the end of the 1920s when some people tried to misinterpret that by 'Ramarajya' Gandhi meant Hindu Raj, Gandhi immediately retorted, "By 'Ramarajya' I do not mean Hindu Raj. I mean by 'Ramarajya' Divine Raj, the Kingdom of God. For me Rama and Rahim are one and the same deity. I acknowledge no other God but the one God of Truth and righteousness."⁷⁴ Elsewhere he explained the expression 'Ramarajya' further, "It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the

meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier Province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai Raj, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the Kingdom of God on earth."⁷⁵ But here Gandhi was proved wrong in his use of pseudo-religious terminology. His explanation of 'Ramarajya' was simply not being heeded, the way Gandhi wanted to be heard. It was misinterpreted, as subsequent history unfolds, by some elements to play with the mass psyche of the Muslim masses in order to alienate them from the main stream of the pre-independence Indian society.

When some people blamed Gandhi that he was communal and sought only to establish the Hindu superiority over the Muslim masses, they did it with a view to belittle Gandhi's popularity. These handful of people knew that Gandhi had the greatest power over the masses in India, and thus if any political gain had to be made out against him then that had to be done playing the false card of communalism against Gandhi. Least did Gandhi and the Congress realise that other elements might try to misutilise the ignorance of the gullible Muslim masses to gain their own selfish ends and would do a great harm to future generation. These people not for a single moment tried to look at the role of Gandhi in the Khilafat agitation, his friendship with the Ali brothers, his reverence and appreciation for Hakim Ajmal Khan and his profound confidence in Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; they simply tried to project Gandhi as a Hindu. These people simply forgot that it was Gandhi who gave his consent to the Communal Award of Ramsay MacDonald in 1933 and paved the way for separate electorates, though the Indian National Congress was in favour of joint electorates as a whole. This Gandhi did with a sole purpose to safeguard the Muslim representation, yet he knew if wrongly played it

might be highly harmful. Gandhi had full confidence on himself that his Muslim brothers would never betray him.

He was partially right. True, Gandhi had a strong mass base, but in order to keep the Hindu-Muslim amity intact, he had to face the two challenges simultaneously –one that of vested elements and the other of the government itself. With a view to perpetuate its rule in India, the then minority British government had all along tried to play the communal card. To quote his own words:

“... I venture to suggest that a real desire for peace between Hindus and Mussalmans is wholly inconsistent with the desire to retain British rule in India by force of arms. When British officials begin the work of peace between these two branches of Indian family, they will have begun to live in India on sufferance. After all, the discovery that India is governed by 'divide and rule' policy was made, in the first instance not by an Indian, but, if I am not mistaken by an Englishman. It was either the late Allen Octavius Hume or George Yule who taught us to believe that the empire was based upon a policy of divide and rule.”⁷⁶

On many counts Gandhi failed to apply his two formidable weapons: non-violence and satyagraha to ease the Hindu-Muslim tensions. In fact, he did not know how to apply them, and surrendered himself to the situation and expected divine interference, which never came.

“... I do not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands, and has been transferred to God's hands alone ... Let us ask the help of God, the All Powerful and tell Him and that we His tiny creatures failed to do what we ought to do ... Let us ask God in all humility to give us sense, to give us wisdom,”⁷⁷ these

were the words spoken in sheer frustration by Gandhi when he failed to restore amity between Hindus and Muslims.

Sometimes he passed out such comments, which seemed to be ridiculous, "Hindus and Muslims are going more and more away from each other. But this thing does not disturb me. Somehow or other I feel that separation is growing in order only to bring them all closer later on."⁷⁸ Sometimes people felt sympathetic, when they saw the helplessness of Gandhi to bring about unity among Hindus and Muslims. "I sincerely want unity among Hindus and Muslims, but I do not know how it is to be brought about."⁷⁹

Gandhi was not sure as to what was the exact cause of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Sometimes he pinpointed the cause as unequal economic relations at the other moment he concluded that the reason was the ignorance of each other's scriptures. But whatever be the cause or reason, Gandhi did not have any practical remedies in his coffer to ease the knot.

"Of certain things which I hold as dear as life itself Hindu-Muslim unity, i.e., unity among all the races in India, is one, and as I did some years ago in Delhi I should be prepared, given the occasion and the inspiration, to take my life again for the same cause. My life is one individual whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind. Seeking to realise oneness in life in practice, I cannot be happy if I see communities quarrelling with one another or men suppressing fellowmen."⁸⁰

Gandhi was always against the partition of the country on communal ground. He put forth his argument, "Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent such

doctrine is for me a denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that God of the Koran is also the God of Gita.”⁸¹ He could never swallow the theory of the Muslim League that ‘Hindus and Muslims of India are two nations. Even he had faith in God that man could never be able to divide.

But Gandhi has failed to read between the lines. He even expressed his faith on Mountbatten that the latter was against the idea of India’s partition. When the Mountbatten Plan was announced on June 3, 1947, it narrated a different story. It prescribed for the partition of the country.

The League readily accepted the Plan of Mountbatten. Patel and Nehru, who were practical politicians, accepted the partition as inevitable. On June 15, 1947, All-India Congress Committee passed a resolution which accepted the Mountbatten Plan. The vivisection of the country on communal line was sealed. A person like Gandhi, who called the demand for Pakistan of the Muslim League as ‘unislamic’ and ‘sinful’, could ultimately relent is not understandable and beyond wildest of imagination. Even he had once said, “ They cut me to pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong.”⁸²

When the final phase of negotiation for the transfer of power was going on, Gandhi was not in the picture, the leadership of the Congress was in the hands of Patel and Nehru. To Patel Pakistan was a ‘diseased limb’,⁸³ and he wanted it to be removed in the greater interest of future generation. Gandhi simply felt lonely and segregated.

The British also betrayed Gandhi. He knew no Pakistan was possible unless the British government acceded to the demand of the League. The partition was the culmination of the British policy of ‘divide

and rule'. They divided and quitted. An irreparable tragedy had befallen the Indian sub-continent. What transpired after the partition is not hidden from anybody. This tragedy could have been averted had the independence been not hurried because the 'Father of Pakistan' Muhammad Ali Jinnah had not many years at his disposal to be on this earth.⁸⁴

Nobody tried to listen to Gandhi. His lonely voice simply vanished into the cacophony of jubilation. Gandhi took partition as his personal tragedy. He declared publicly that he would not participate in the celebration of 15th August 1947. He left for Calcutta on 9th August 1947 to stand beside the riot stricken people in the city. Within a couple days of his presence, normalcy was restored in Calcutta. From Calcutta to Noakhali or from Bihar to Delhi, Gandhi's moral strength remained undaunted. He won; the riotists had no option than to surrender. It was not the victory of any physical might, but the triumph of Gandhi's spiritual ability. On 30th January 1948, Gandhi was shot. A life ended for espousing the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, it was a task which Gandhi took it as a mission of his life in South Africa continued till he breathed his last.⁸⁵

II

Jawaharlal Nehru was born at Allahabad on November 14, 1889 to prosperous parents. Since he was an only child for almost eleven years, Nehru received much affection, care and attention from all of his family members. His father Motilal Nehru was very fond of English way of life. To quote Nehru, "... he admired Englishmen and their way,"⁸⁶ To look after his son, Motilal engaged English nurses. Though Nehru claims that his childhood was a sheltered and uneventful one,⁸⁷ it is not correct, Nehru was gradually becoming accustomed to the Westernized way of life. However, he has confessed elsewhere, "And gradually our ways became more and more Westernized."⁸⁸

Nehru's father was quite a respectable person in Allahabad. Because of his law profession, he was known to a lot of Englishmen. Occasionally these Englishmen used to visit him, who were introduced as friends. In his heart, gradually Nehru started admiring the English.⁸⁹

Nehru writes that one of his early confidants was a Munshi of his father, Munshi Mubarak Ali. To him, Nehru used to take refuge whenever unhappy or in trouble. From his mother and aunt he heard stories from the old Hindu mythology, from the epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Regarding his impression on religion in his childhood, Nehru writes, "Of religion I had very hazy notions. It seemed to be a woman's affair. Father and my older cousins treated the question humorously and refused to take it seriously. The women of the family indulged in various ceremonies and pujas from time to time ... Sometimes I accompanied my mother or aunt to the Ganges for a dip, sometimes we visited temples in Allahabad itself or in Benares or elsewhere, or

went to see a sanyasi reputed to be very holy. But all this left little impression on my mind."⁹⁰

Nehru's father was an extremely bold person, who had the courage to defy the orders of the orthodox members of his community to perform the rituals of purification ceremony after his trip to Europe. Nehru writes, "He refused to perform any prayashchit or purification ceremony on his return."⁹¹ To Nehru himself this kind of ceremony was absolutely farce, and was not related to religion since it "merely signified an outward conformity and submission to the group will."⁹²

But gradually with the frequent visits of a large number of Kashmiri young men and girls to Europe or America for their studies, the rituals of performing purification ceremony was simply not imposed. Even there were no food restrictions "except in the case of a handful of orthodox people, chiefly old ladies, and interdining with non-Kashmiris, Muslims and non-Indians" was common. Purdah system had disappeared among Kashmiris. Even both of the sisters of Nehru married non-Kashmiris and one young member of his family married a Hungarian girl.

On the whole, Motilal Nehru's way of life, his disregard for religious discipline, his close association with Christians and Muslims, his love and admiration for English language, manners and ways of life, the modern outlook of young Kashmiris and the boldness of his sisters to marry non-Kashmiris – all these had left a deep impression upon Jawaharlal's mind.

As late as 1933, Nehru commented on his attitude towards religion, "Religion is not familiar ground for me, and as I have grown older I have definitely drifted away from it.... I have grown to rely

entirely on the workings of the mind. Perhaps they are weak supports to rely upon, but search as I will, I can see no better ones."^{92A}

Never in his life Nehru seemed to be attracted towards any religion. His approach towards everything was scientific. He judged every concept vis-à-vis the scientific standpoint. If on analysis he found that any philosophical concept did not fit into the litmus test of science, he simply ignored the same. Religion was no exception.

He writes, "Religion, as I saw it practised, and accepted even by thinking minds, whether it was Hinduism or Islam or Buddhism or Christianity, did not attract me. It seemed to be closely associated with superstitious practices and dogmatic beliefs, and behind it lay a method of approach to life's problems, which was certainly not that of science. There was an element of magic about it, an uncritical credulousness, a reliance on the supernatural."⁹³

Nehru could never think of anything beyond the world. What will happen after death never bothered Nehru, nor was he even interested to know. "Essentially, I am interested in this world, in this life, not in some other world or a future life. Whether there is such a thing or a soul, or there is survival after death or not, I do not know; and, important as these questions are, they do not trouble me in the least. The environment in which I have grown up takes the soul (or rather the ātma) and a future life, the Karma theory of cause and effect, and reincarnation for granted. I have been affected by this and so, in a sense, I am favourably disposed towards these assumptions. There might be a soul which survives the physical death of the body, and a theory of cause and effect governing life's actions seems reasonable, though it leads to obvious difficulties when one thinks of the ultimate

cause. Presuming a soul, there appears to be some logic also in the theory of reincarnation.

“But I do not believe in any of these or other theories and assumptions as a matter of religious faith. They are just intellectual speculations in an unknown region about which we know next to nothing. They do not affect my life, and whether they were proved right or wrong subsequently, they would make little difference to me,” Nehru admits.⁹⁴

Elsewhere also Nehru speaks in the same vein, “I am afraid the next world does not interest me. My mind is full of what I should do in this world, and if I see my way clearly here, I am content. If my duty here is clear to me, I do not trouble myself about any other world.”⁹⁵

These utterances of Nehru are very much close to the philosophy of the Bhagvadgita, which says, “Do your assigned duty without thinking of the fruit that accrues.” Similarly, Gandhi had also insisted on the refinement of one’s means. Nehru was a down to earth person, though his views on religion identify him as an agnostic.

Nehru reiterated time and again that religion simply kept the people in the dark, made them narrow-minded, cruel and intolerant of others. Religion was used as a tool by the rulers of all times to keep the masses in check in order to perpetuate their governance. Even crimes against humanity had been vindicated and millions of people had been killed in the name of religion by the people in power since time immemorial. “The old religions have a way of covering and regulating every aspect of our day-to-day lives.... In other words, they lay down a complete structure for society and try to perpetuate this by giving it religious sanction and authority... This religious perpetuation of a social structure makes change difficult,” Nehru supports his stand.⁹⁶

Nehru was deadly against use of religion in political activity. He could never accept the Gandhian approach of mixing of religion with politics, though he admitted that religion did give a set of values to human life, and some of them continued to remain the foundation of morality and ethics. To quote Nehru, "... religion may be all right when applied to ethics and morals, but if it enters the political sphere it has a minus effect on morals."⁹⁷ He also acknowledges the inner association of religion and morality. "Hence religion and morality are, for me, synonymous terms."⁹⁸

Nehru was always worried at the entrance of religious elements into Hindu and Muslim politics. "I used to be troubled sometimes at the growth of this religious elements in our politics, both on the Hindus and Muslim side. I did not like it all. Much that Moulvies and Maulanas and Swamis and the like said in their public addresses seemed to me most unfortunate. Their history and sociology and economics appeared to me all wrong, and the religious twist that was given to everything prevented all clear thinking."⁹⁹

Nehru continues in the same note, "The old religions have a way of covering and regulating every aspect of our day-to-day lives. Thus Hinduism and Islam, quite apart from their purely religious teachings, lay down social codes and rules about marriage, inheritance, civil and criminal law, political organization, and indeed almost everything else. In other words, they lay down a complete structure for society and try to perpetuate this by giving it religious sanction and authority ... This religious perpetuation of a social structure makes change difficult."¹⁰⁰ Nehru never liked the idea that our life and politics are regulated by religion. Rather he upheld the view that religion is totally separate from the social structure and institutions.¹⁰¹

True, Nehru always said that he had no faith either in religion or in God, yet he might not be an irreligious man. He disliked the association of dogma or rituals with religion. In his opinion the spirit of dogma has affected badly the religious quest and made both minds and practices conform too rigidly.^{101A} But he confesses, "Whether religion is necessary or not, a certain faith in a worthwhile ideal is essential to give substance to our lives and to hold us together."¹⁰²

Elsewhere he reiterates in the same vein, "Yet it was obvious that religion had supplied some deeply felt inner need of human nature, and that the vast majority of people all over the world could not do without some form of religious belief."¹⁰³

He maintains that if religion is freed from its attachment with dogmas and ceremonials and raised to deal with only higher things of life, then it will have no conflict with science. Even Nehru goes a step further and states, "Religion not in the conventional but in the broadest sense helps me to have a glimpse of the Divine essence."¹⁰⁴ In one place, Nehru says that life is a spark of the Divine.

It seems odd if we call Nehru a religious man, because of his contradictory statements. Yet, he was a religious man with different character, because his religion had no name. "Speaking for myself, my religion is tolerance of all religions, creeds and philosophies," Nehru clarifies.¹⁰⁵ Gandhi also felt that in spite of Nehru's claim that he did not profess any religion, he was a religious man. "While Jawaharlal always says that he does not believe in God, he is nearer God than many who profess to be His worshippers."

Nehru always denies his any attachment with the term God, though he finds this world mysterious. "Often, as I look at this world, I

have a sense of mysteries of unknown depths.” But he admits, “What the mysterious is I do not know.” Even then he does not want to characterise this phenomenon as God. “I do not call it God because God has come to mean much that I do not believe in. I find myself incapable of thinking of a deity or of unknown supreme power in anthropomorphic terms, and the fact that many people think so is continually a source of surprise to me. Any idea of a personal God seems very odd to me.”¹⁰⁶ In no way could Nehru be convinced on the existence of God.

He further tries to open his mind on this issue, “Intellectually, I can appreciate to some extent the conception of monism, and I have been attracted towards the Advaita (non-dualist) philosophy of the Vedanta, though I do not presume to understand it in all its depth and intricacy, and I realise that merely an intellectual appreciation of such matters does not carry me far. At the same time the Vedanta as well as other similar approaches, rather frighten me with their vague, formless incursions into infinity. The diversity and fullness of nature stir me and produce a harmony of the spirit, and I can imagine myself feeling at home in the old Indian or Greek pagan and pantheistic atmosphere, but minus the conception of God or Gods that was attached to it.”¹⁰⁷ Nehru is not the person to accept under any situation the wonderment that is called God by the common people. He can throw arguments at length, but when the question of conclusion comes, he is impervious.

Nehru was highly critical of spiritualism. To him it is an “absurd and impertinent way of investigating psychic phenomena and the mysteries of the after-life.” He argues, “Usually it is something worse, and is an exploitation of the emotions of some over-credulous people who seek relief or escape from mental trouble.”¹⁰⁸

Nehru is convinced one-day science will demystify the purpose of life, which is so far ensconced in mystery. "It is now widening its boundaries and it may invade the so-called invisible world before long and help us to understand this purpose of life in its widest sense, or at least give us some glimpses which illumine the problem of human existence."¹⁰⁹

To Nehru science has revolutionized human life more than anything else and its methods and approach have opened doors and avenues further "leading up to the very portals of what has long been considered the unknown... its invasion of many problems which have so far been the monopoly of philosophy is becoming more pronounced. Space-time and quantum theory utterly changed the picture of the physical world. More recent researches into the nature of matter, the structure of the atom, the transmutation of the elements, and the transformation of electricity and light, either into the other, have carried human knowledge much further. Man no longer sees nature as something apart and distinct from himself. Human destiny appears to become a part of nature's rhythmic energy."¹¹⁰

Nehru goes further to substantiate the superiority of science in unfolding the mysteries of nature considered inaccessible so far. He puts forth his arguments, "All this upheaval of thought, due to the advance of science, has led scientists into a new region, verging on the metaphysical... 'Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they are achieving; his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collection of atoms.' And yet the latest developments in physics have gone a long way to demonstrate a fundamental unity in a nature..."

“Old as this belief is in Asia and Europe, it is interesting to compare some of the latest conclusions of science with the fundamental ideas underlying the Advaita Vedanic theory. These ideas were that the universe is made of one substance whose form is perpetually changing, and further that the sum-total of energies remains always the same. Also that “the explanations of things are to be found within their own nature, and that no external beings or existences are required to explain what is going on in the universe,” with its corollary of a self-evolving universe.”¹¹¹

Nehru is undaunted. What he considers to be right scientifically, he stands by that. Neither does he relent, nor does he go back from his standpoint, no matter whoever is his detractor. Nehru never deviates, never flatters, he is categorical in his opinion. He speaks with open mind, “It does not very much matter to science what these vague speculations lead to, for meanwhile it forges ahead in experimental way of observation, widening the bounds of the charted region of knowledge, changing human life in the process. Science may be on the verge of discovering vital mysteries, which yet may elude it. Still it will go on along its appointed path, for there is no end to its journeying. Ignoring for the moment the ‘why?’ of philosophy, science will go on asking ‘how?’, and as it finds this out it gives greater context and meaning to life, and perhaps takes us some way to answering the ‘why?’.”¹¹²

Science is always in search of truth and new knowledge. It refuses to accept anything on its face value without testing and trial. It has got the capacity to modify previous conclusions in the face of new evidence since it relies on observed fact and not on any pre-conceived theory. But religion applies quite an opposite method. “Concerned as it is principally with the regions beyond the reach of objective inquiry, it

relies on emotion and intuition. And then it applies this method to everything in life, even to those things which are capable of intellectual inquiry and observation: Organized religion, alloying itself to theology and often more concerned with its vested interests than with things of the spirit, encourages a temper which is very opposite to that of science. It produces narrowness and intolerance, credulity and superstition, emotionalism and irrationalism. It tends to close and limit the minds of man, and to produce a temper of a dependent, unfree person."¹¹³

Nehru says, with advancement in knowledge, the domain of religion shrinks. The more the man understands life and nature, the less he goes to look for supernatural causes. Whatever he can understand and control ceases to be a mystery to him. The process of agriculture, the food, the clothes, social relations which were once upon a time under the domain of religion and its high priests, gradually passed out of its control and became 'subjects for scientific study.'¹¹⁴

About India, Nehru has got a specific prescription, "But for countries like India different emphasis is necessary, for we have too much of the past about us and have ignored the present. We have to get rid of that narrowing religious outlook, the obsession with the supernatural and metaphysical speculations, that loosening of the minds discipline in religious ceremonial and mystical emotionalism, which come in the way of our understanding ourselves and the world. We have to come to grips with present, this life, this world, this nature which surrenders us in its variety."¹¹⁵

He is critical both of Hindus and Muslims, "Some Hindus talk of going back to the Vedas; some Muslim dream of an Islamic theocracy. Idle fancies, for there are no going back to the past; there is no turning

back even if this was thought desirable. There is only one way traffic in Time."¹¹⁶

He feels, India must lessen her religiosity and turn its interest to science. He wants, she must get rid of the exclusiveness in thought and social habit, which has made life a prism to her, stunted her spirit and prevented her growth so long.

Though Nehru was critical of Gandhi making frequent reference to Rama Raj as a golden age, which was to return, he considers himself powerless to intervene. However, he admits the religion of Gandhi was not dogmatic, "His religion was not dogmatic, but it did mean a definite religious outlook on life, and the whole movement was strongly influenced by this and took a revivalist character so far as the masses were concerned." Nehru consoled himself with the thought that Gandhi used the words because they were well known and understood by the masses. For Nehru the latter had an amazing knack of reaching the heart of the people.¹¹⁷

But to him Gandhi was a difficult person to understand and his language to a modern almost incomprehensible. Even then he calls Gandhi a great and unique man. "He was a difficult person to understand, sometimes his language was almost incomprehensible to an average modern. But we felt that we knew him quite well enough to realise that he was a great and unique man and a glorious leader, and having put our faith in him we gave him almost a blank cheque, for the time being at least."¹¹⁸

Nehru's opinion about Gandhi on the latter's religious outlook is not always static. Sometime he is critical but at the other moment he heaps all praise. Gandhi's laying all stress on character building and attaching little importance to intellectual training and development was

not just to Nehru's liking. "Intellect without character is likely to be dangerous, but what is character with intellect? How, indeed, does character develop? Gandhiji has been compared to the medieval Christian saints, and much that he says seems to fit in with this. It does not fit in at all with modern psychological experience and method."¹¹⁹

But when the Pope had refused to grant an interview to Gandhi when he was returning from the Round Table Conference in December 1931, Nehru called it an affront to India. The attitude of the Pope seemed to Nehru intentional, though not thought of before.

Nehru has some accumulated irritation against religion and the religious outlook. He holds it an enemy to clearness of thought and fixity of purpose because he thinks it is based on emotion and passion. "Presuming to be spiritual, how far removed it was from real spirituality and things of the spirit. Thinking in terms of some other world, it had little conception of human values and social values and social justice. With its preconceived notions it deliberately shut its eyes to reality for fear that this might not fit in with them. It based itself on truth, and yet to sure was it of having discovered it, and the whole of it, that it did not take the trouble to search for it; all that concerned it was to tell others of it. The will to truth was not the same thing as the will to believe. It talked of peace and yet supported systems and organizations that could not exist but for violence that comes quietly and often in peaceful garb and starves and kills; or worse still, without doing any physical injury, outrages the mind and crushes the spirit and breaks the heart?"¹²⁰

For the origin of all this irritative feeling in him against religion and religious belief, Nehru blames Gandhi, "And then I thought of him again who was the cause of this commotion within me."¹²¹

But immediately after this comment, Nehru backtracks and heaps praise upon Gandhi, "What a wonderful man was Gandhiji after all, with his amazing and irresistible charm and subtle power over people. His writings and sayings conveyed little enough impression of the man behind; his personality was far bigger than they would lead one to think. And his services to India, how vast they had been. He had instilled courage and manhood in her people, and discipline and endurance, and the power of joyful sacrifice for a cause, and, with all his humility and pride. Courage is the one sure foundation of character, he had said, without courage there is no morality, no religion, no love."¹²²

From this statement of Nehru, it seems, he is trying to camouflage the damage he caused upon the personality of Gandhi with his hasty comment. At the same time, it can also be concluded that Nehru was aware what a colossus figure Gandhi was in the then Indian political scene, hence it suddenly dawned upon him to try to belittle Gandhi was as good as to belittle himself. Nehru had the capacity to realize his mistake immediately.

But Nehru was wrong in his opinion on Gandhi. In fact, Gandhi considered religion as the personal matter of an individual. "But religion is after all a matter for each individual and then too a matter of the heart," Gandhi had written to Nehru on 25 April 1925.

Not satisfied, elsewhere Nehru tries to explain Gandhi's point of view on Hinduism. He writes, "Gandhi was essentially a man of religion, a Hindu to the innermost depths of his being, and yet his conception of religion had nothing to do with any dogma or custom or ritual. It was basically concerned with his firm belief in the moral law, which he calls the law of truth or love... claiming to understand the

spirit of Hinduism, he rejects every text or practice which does not fit in with his idealist interpretation of what it should be, calling it an interpolation or a subsequent accretion."¹²³

Nehru tried to fuse science with morality. "He meant by spirituality something deeper and broader than mere religion. "It is a part of religion, but in a deeper and broader part of it. I think these two are essential, if the modern world should survive, and progress."¹²⁴

About his concept on Hinduism, Nehru has a different thing to say. He says that though he was born a Hindu, he did not know how far he was justified in calling himself one or speaking on behalf of Hindus. But he thinks birth still counts in India.¹²⁵

Nehru says that the word 'Hindu' does not occur in any ancient literature of India. "The first reference to it in an Indian book is, I am told, in a Tantrik work of the eighth century A.C., where 'Hindu' means a people and not the followers of a particular religion. But it is clear that the word is a very old one, as it occurs in the Avesta and in Old Persian. It was used then and for a thousand years or more later by the peoples of western and central Asia for India, or rather for the people living on the other side of the Indus river ... The use of the word 'Hindu' in connection with a particular religion is of very late occurrence."¹²⁶

He goes further to state, "Hinduism, as a faith, is vague, amorphous, many-sided, all things to all men. It is hardly possible to define it, or indeed to say definitely whether it is a religion or not, in the usual sense of the word. In its present form, and even in the past, it embraces many beliefs and practices, or contradicting each other. Its essential spirit seems to be to live and let live."¹²⁷

Nehru says that to Gandhi : Hinduism implied 'relentless pursuit after truth' and 'Hinduism is the religion of truth?' In fact, Gandhi did not give any definition either of Hindu or 'Hinduism'. Even he went on to describe that a man might not believe in God but still he could call himself a Hindu if he is a votary of truth and non-violence.^{127A}

Nehru substantiates this argument of Gandhi and goes a step further to portray that 'Hindu' or 'Hinduism' is not related to Indian culture, even with reference to the distant past, though he admits that these expressions were used frequently in ancient writings. "Much more is it incorrect to use those terms, in that sense, today... A Christian or a Moslem could, and often did, adapt himself to the Indian way of life and culture, and yet remained in faith an orthodox Christian or Moslem. He had Indianised himself and become an Indian without changing his religion... The correct word for 'Indian', as applied to country or culture or the historical continuity of our varying traditions, is 'Hindu', from 'Hind', a shortened form of Hindustan... 'Hindu' has nothing to do with religion ... Unfortunately, the word 'Hindu' has become associated in India with a particular script –the devanagri script of Sanskrit –and so it has become difficult to use in its larger and more natural significance."¹²⁸

Synthesis, Nehru adds, was the dominant feature of Indian cultural and racial development. "Each incursion of foreign elements was a challenge to this culture, but it was met successfully by a new synthesis and a process of absorption. This was also a process of rejuvenation and new blooms of culture arose out of it, the background and essential basis, however, remaining much the same."¹²⁹

Nehru did not like to read the books of religion because of the totalitarian claims made in them. The outward practices associated with

them rather discouraged him further to go to their original sources. But he did not want to remain ignorant of their contents so he tried to read them in spite of the fact that they did not arise much interest in him. He also did not like the idea of claim made by votaries of various religions as their religious scriptures a revealed one, since their criticism and analysis with a view to project them as a human document could have offended them. Thus he found he was left with no other options than to keep mum on such issues. Nevertheless, he felt that some of them did powerfully influence humanity "and anything that could have done so must have some inherent power and virtue in it, some vital source of energy," but he could not make himself to accept the Holy Writ enshrined in them. "I could not approach these books, or any book as Holy Writ which must be accepted in their totality without challenge or demur. Indeed, this approach of Holy Writ usually resulted in my mind being closed to what they contained. I was much more friendly and open to them when I could consider them as having been written by human beings, very wise and farseeing, but nevertheless ordinary mortals, and not incarnations or mouthpieces of a divinity, about whom I had no knowledge or surety whatever," Nehru writes.¹³⁰

He further elucidates his point of view, "It has always seemed to me a much more magnificent and impressive thing that a human being should rise to a great heights, mentally and spiritually, and should then seek to raise others up, rather than that he should be the mouthpiece of a divine or supreme power. Some of the founders of religions were astonishing individuals, but all their glory vanishes in my eyes when I cease to think of them as human beings. What impresses me and gives me hope is the growth of the mind and spirit of man, and not his being used as an agent to convey a message."¹³¹

True, Nehru always tries to drive home his belief that he did not have faith either in the entity of God or in the existence of any supernatural being as a “mouthpiece of a divine or superior power” but it is tantamount to accepting the existence of a superior power indirectly. Nehru was not totally an agnostic as he claims to be always, but his religion had also no name either. To Nehru ignorance and bigotry degraded the value of true religion. In 1923, he addressed his colleagues, “I think it is time for persons who wish to regard religion as something good and sacred, and the exercise of rational thought as essential for human progress to protest with all their might against all kinds of bigotry and superstition.”¹³² Giving instance of professing true religion is a clear indication of Nehru's predisposition to something divine or some Divine Power. Elsewhere also in his writings the same attitude towards the existence of something supernatural is reflected but not very explicitly, “The old Hindu idea that there is a divine essence in the world and every individual possesses something of it and can develop it, appeals to me in terms of a life force. I do not happen to be a religious man, but I do believe in something –call it religion or anything you like, which raises man above his normal level and gives the human personality a new dimension of spiritual quality and moral depth. Now whatever helps to raise man above himself, be it some god or even a stone image, is good, obviously it is a good thing and must not be discouraged.”¹³³

Nehru also did not like Gandhi's mixing religion with social issues and rendering them a personal touch. “Gandhiji is always thinking in terms of personal salvation and of sin, while most of us have society's welfare uppermost in our minds. I find it difficult to grasp the idea of sin, and perhaps it is because of this that I cannot appreciate Gandhi's general outlook.”¹³⁴

Gandhi had certain reservations in terms of husband – wife relations. According to him, marriage implies spiritual union through the physical but not indulgence in sensuality. To him, marital relation is only a stepping-stone to reach the divine; therefore he called sensual attraction between husband and wife unnatural. Gandhi did not recognize the validity or necessity of the sexual act at any time except for the sake of children. He also refused to acknowledge any natural sexual attraction between man and woman.

Even he maintained once “undefiled love between husband and wife takes one nearer to God than any other love.”¹³⁵ Therefore, for its realization, Gandhi prescribed that husband and wife should behave like brother and sister.

Gandhi considered adoption of artificial means by couples for birth control as sin, he thus advised control instead. He says, “For years I have contemplated with satisfaction the prospect of suspending procreation by voluntary self-denial.”¹³⁶

Nehru says that if Gandhi’s standpoint on this is “appreciated then one begins to understand a little Gandhiji’s attitude to sex, extraordinary as that seems to the average person today. For him ‘any union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent,’ and ‘the adoption of artificial methods must result in imbecility and nervous prostration.’ It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one’s acts... It is bad for him to indulge his appetite and then escape the consequences by taking tonics or other medicines. It is still worse for a person to indulge his animal passion and escape the consequences of his acts.”¹³⁷

Nehru thinks this attitude of Gandhi unnatural and shocking and the latter’s argument of not recognizing the validity or the necessity of

the sexual act any time except for the sake of children and refusing any natural sex attraction between man and woman as unacceptable.¹³⁸

To quote Gandhi again, "But I am told that this is an impossible ideal, that I do not take account of the natural attraction between man and woman. I refuse to believe that the sexual affinity, referred to here, can be at all regarded as natural; in that case the deluge would soon be over us. The natural affinity between man and woman is the attraction between brother and sister, mother and son, or father and daughter. It is this natural attraction that sustains the world No I must declare with all the power I can command that sensual attraction, even between husband and wife, is unnatural."¹³⁹

Let us observe what Nehru has to say on this attitude of Gandhi, "For my part I think Gandhiji is absolutely wrong in this matter. His advice may fit in with some cases, but as a general policy it can only lead to frustration, inhibition, neurosis and all manner of physical and nervous ills. Sexual restraint is certainly desirable, but I doubt if Gandhiji's doctrine is likely to result in this to any widespread extent. It is too extreme, and most people decide that it is beyond their capacity and go their usual ways, or there is friction between husband and wife. Evidently Gandhiji thinks that birth control methods necessarily mean inordinate indulgence in the sex act, and that if the sexual affinity between man and woman is admitted, every man will run after every woman and vice versa. Neither inference is justified, and I do not know why he is so obsessed by this problem of sex, important as it is. For him it is a 'soot or whitewash' question, there are no intermediate shades. It either end he takes up an extreme position which seems to me most abnormal and unnatural. Perhaps this is a reaction from the deluge of literature on sexology that is descending on us in these days. I presume I am a normal individual and sex has played its part in my

life, but it has not obsessed me or diverted me from my other activities. It has been a subordinate part."¹⁴⁰

There is obviously marked difference in Gandhi and Nehru in terms of their outlook on sex and husband and wife relationship. Gandhi's extreme continence is not acceptable to Nehru, though the latter also advocates restraint, but only in a moderate scale. To Gandhi either it was summit or retreat, he wanted to project godly qualities in a man, but Nehru accepted human pitfalls, he knew 'to err is human'. Therefore, Nehru adopted the path of moderation, and it is, in fact, a down to earth policy. Though application of moderate continence in regard to sexual relationship between husband and wife is good, to keep them separated and to expect no attraction will take place between them is absurd. Sex is a strong bond. Not to allow sex between them is as good as to make them unrestricted and free, which will simply make the necessity of marriage inessential. If that situation ever comes, though it is most unlikely, social life will be a hell and no woman will be safe. Here Gandhi failed and Nehru won. To quote Nehru's comment, "Essentially, his attitude is that of an ascetic who has turned his back to the world and its ways, who denies life and considers it evil. For an ascetic that is natural, but it seems far, fetched to apply it to men and women of the world who accept life and try to make the most of it. And in avoiding one evil he puts up with many other and graver evils."¹⁴¹

Gandhi developed guilt complex regarding sex perhaps because of his own over-indulgence in sex at his early age. One day at late night having relieved of his ailing father by his uncle, he went straight to his bedroom and woke up his wife. In a few minutes he was informed that his father had expired. Gandhi felt extremely ashamed that on account of his carnal desire he could not remain beside his father at

that critical hour. "I felt deeply ashamed and miserable. I ran to my father's room. I saw that, if animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments... It was a blot I have never been able to efface or forget, and I have always thought that, although my devotion to parents knew no bounds and I would have given up anything for it, yet it was weighed and found unpardonable wanting because my mind was at the same moment in the grip of lust."¹⁴² Even Gandhi's wife was also in an advanced stage of pregnancy at this time, and soon after father's demise the child was born dead. Again Gandhi was filled with a sense of remorse for his lust.¹⁴³

Like Gandhi, Nehru's instinct was also clear about sex. Never did he keep his feeling on sex hidden from the public. Writes he further, "Most of us were strongly attracted by sex and I doubt if any of us attached any idea of sin to it. Certainly I did not; there was no religious inhibition. We talked of its being amoral, neither moral nor immoral. Yet in spite of all this certain shyness kept me away, as well as distaste for the usual methods adopted. For I was in those days definitely a shy lad, because of my lonely childhood.

"Not having the religious temper and disliking the repressions of religion, it was natural for me to seek some other standard. I was superficial and did not go deep down into anything. And so the aesthetic side of life appealed to me, and the idea of going through life worthily, not indulging it in the vulgar way, but still making the most of it and living a full and many-sided life attracted me. I enjoyed life and I refused to see why I should consider it a thing of sin."¹⁴⁴

Nehru developed his concept of secularism from his home environment initially. His father Motilal's friends comprised of Hindu,

Muslim and British. Nehru learnt to be tolerant of all regions from his childhood days. Later on his education at Harrow and Cambridge made him more broad-minded. Particularly at Cambridge he chose Muslim friends "to immunize him for a life time against the infection of any trace of communal feelings. He could not tolerate religious or racial prejudices and, therefore, had an ingrained and passionate realization that India must be rooted in the idea of a secular state".¹⁴⁵ It was this composite environment shaped his later attitude to the Muslim in particular and the communal problem in general."¹⁴⁶

Nehru was extremely critical of Gandhi's mixing political issues with religion and God. "I feel angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question, and his frequent references to God in connection with it."¹⁴⁷

As a theist tries to interpret every happening be it temporal or social in the light of theological symbols, similarly an agnostic explains every phenomenon from practical point of view, for him no situation is abnormal or beyond explanation. Therefore, for such a person to be secular in outlook nothing unusual. Nehru was never involved in any religious disputations or arguments. He exhibited no concern for *truths and advocated non-intervention in religious* religious matters by the state.

He says that since time immemorial, different authorities at different times have used the name of God and religion to fool their subjects and increase their own powers.

Nehru was extremely critical of men of religion who very often thrust themselves upon others, tried to force down their own views on them with a belief that they were doing a public service. In the name of God these people murdered and killed and did not hesitate to reduce

the mortal body to ashes and boasted that they have saved the 'immortal soul'. He writes, "The record of religion is very bad."

"India had never known in the whole course of her long history the religious strife that has soaked Europe in blood. The whole background of Indian religion, culture and philosophy was one of tolerance, and even encouragement of other beliefs. Some conflict arose when Islam came, but even that was far more political than religious side. It was the conflict between the conquerors and the conquered. In spite of recent developments, I cannot easily envisage religious conflict in India on any substantial scale. The communalism of today is essentially political, economic and middle class... It is a fact that one must never forget that communalism in India is a later-day phenomenon, which has grown up before our eyes. That does not lessen its significance and we may not ignore it, for it is at present a tremendous obstacle in our way and is likely to interfere with our future progress. And yet I think it is overrated and over-emphasized; it does not fundamentally affect the masses although sometimes their passions are roused."¹⁴⁸

He admits that though there is communal conflict in India and Hindus and Muslims fight each other and kill each other, that happens only occasionally and in some pockets, yet "mostly we live in peace and friendship, for our real interests are one." He opines; "It is shameful thing for any Hindu or Muslim to fight his brother in the name of religion. We must put an end to it; we will of course do so. But what is important is to get out of that complex ideology of custom, convention and superstition which, under the guise of religion enchains us."¹⁴⁹

To Nehru, secularism did not mean negation of religion, but existence of freedom of religion and conscience and also freedom for

those who professed no religion. It also amounted free-play for all religions but subjected to non-interference with each other.¹⁵⁰

Nehru believed that the state should be secular honouring all faiths equally and according them equal opportunities however allowing it not to be attached to one faith or religion. He pleaded for adoption of the principle of secularism for India. "In any country like India, with many faiths and religions no nationalism can be built up except on the basis of secularity."¹⁵¹

Sometimes Nehru felt that communalism in the real sense of the term has nothing to do with religion; the real issue is the economic factor which kept the division intact. He wrote in 1931 "the real thing to my mind is the economic factor,"¹⁵² and "religion, in any real sense of the word, has played little part in Indian political conflicts, though the word is often enough used and exploited."¹⁵³

Nehru blames both Hindu and Muslim leaders for keeping alive the communal question. He calls them political reactionaries who have sided with the British imperialism in vital matters and have given their approval to the suppression of civil liberty. These people have sought to gain narrow profit for their group at the expense of the larger cause of freedom. He says, "With them there can be no cooperation, for that would mean cooperation with reaction."¹⁵⁴

Long back in 1940, Nehru had anticipated, "So long as British imperialism functions in India, it will be exceedingly difficult to arrive at a real communal settlement. The bid of British Government can always be higher than of the other party, and barter away national freedom for apparent communal gains."¹⁵⁵

What Nehru had anticipated proved right but only after the damage was done. The matter of the fact was that he had failed to read the writings on the wall and exerted less on solving the communal issue in the nick of time. Though there were other people also at the decision making level, the role of Nehru carried its own gravity. How he thought the communal issue not so important is self-evident from his own words, "I am afraid I cannot get excited over (the) communal issue, important as it is temporarily. It is after all, a side issue, and it can have no real importance in the larger scheme of things. Those who think of it as the major issue in terms of British imperialism continuing permanently in this country. Without that basis of thought, they would not attach so much importance to one of its inevitable offshoots. I have no such fear, so my vision of a future India contains neither imperialism nor communalism."¹⁵⁶

Even the Congress Party, manned by the stalwarts like Gandhi and Nehru, kept the goal of independence on its priority and the communal and other issues in the background. "The Congress always put independence first and other questions, including the communal one, second, and refused to allow any of those other questions to take pride of place."¹⁵⁷

However, the ground reality presented a different picture: Hindu and Muslim antagonism was taking an ugly turn. The line of exclusivism and separatism adopted by the leaders of the Aligarh movement was gradually culminating into the two-nation theory of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. But all along Nehru was constantly hopeful that adjustment would take between the two communities, but he was apprehensive also that with power concentrated in foreign hands, anything might happen.¹⁵⁸

Nehru presents the same proposition elsewhere also, "Our communal or minority problem would have been settled long ago if a third party had not been always there to play it up and holding all manner of political gifts in its hands. So long as British imperialism functions in India, it will be exceedingly difficult to arrive at a real communal settlement. The bid of the British Government can always be higher than that of the other party, and the reactionary groups take advantage of this fact and barter away national freedom for apparent communal gains."¹⁵⁹

Even Nehru went on record to state that the concept of 'Muslim nation' as politically absurd, economically fantastic and, therefore, hardly worth-considering, and called it a figment of imagination and had expected, "And even if many people believed in it, it would still vanish at the touch of reality."¹⁶⁰

But that was not to be, a new beginning was in the offing for India in the form of two nations: India and Pakistan. Nehru conceded defeat. On the issue of why did he accept the Mountbatten Plan, Nehru opened his mind to Leonard Mosley, "The truth is that we were tired men, and we were getting on in years too. Few of us could stand the prospect of going to prison again –and if we had stood out for a united India as we wished it, prison obviously awaited us. We saw the fires burning in the Punjab and heard everyday of the killings. The plan for partition offered way out and we took it."¹⁶¹

On the eve of independence, Nehru gave a message to the press, "All of us, to whatever religion we may belong, are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action."¹⁶²

True Nehru could not keep the undivided India intact, but he was not the sole destiny maker, yet he cautioned Indians to be careful in future with communalism, "The communal poison, which has brought disaster upon us, will put an end to our freedom also if we are not vigilant and if we do not take action in time."¹⁶³

Nehru promised to the people of India that India would proceed on secular and national lines in keeping with the powerful trends towards internationalism. Whatever confusion the present might contain, in the future, India would be a land, as in the past, of many faiths equally honoured and respected but of one national outlook.¹⁶⁴

The whole idea of secularism is enshrined in the Constitution of India and incorporated in Articles, 14, 15(1) and (2), 16(1) and (2), 17, 25(1), 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30. The Preamble to the Constitution declares India a Secular State and speaks loudly and clearly of the liberty of all citizens in relation to various important matters that include faith, belief and worship. The Constitution of India speaks volumes about Nehru's mind and his standpoint.

In a broadcast to the nation from New Delhi on 2nd October 1948, Nehru declared firmly and succinctly, "We will not tolerate any communalism in this country and that we are building a free, secular State, where every religion and belief has full freedom and equal honour, where every citizen has equal liberty and equal opportunity."

If we read Nehru's will, written on 21st June, 1954, we can get a glimpse of what Nehru stood for throughout his life. He writes, "I wish to declare with all earnestness that I do not want any religious ceremonies performed for me after my death. I do not believe in any such ceremonies and submit to them, even as a matter of form, would be hypocrisy and an attempt to delude ourselves and others... When I

die, I should like my body to be cremated... A small handful of these ashes should be thrown into the Ganga... My desire to have a handful of my ashes thrown into the Ganga at Allahabad has no religious significance, so far as I am concerned. I have no religious sentiment in the matter. I have been attached to the Ganga and the Jamuna rivers in Allahabad ever since my childhood and, as I have grown older, this attachment has also grown ... And though I have discarded much of past tradition and custom, and am anxious that India should get rid herself of all shackles that bind and constrain her and divide her people, and suppress vast numbers of them and prevent the free development of the body and spirit..."

Nehru followed what he preached. He was secular in thought, remained committed to secularism throughout his life and proved even after his death that he was a true secularist.

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 - 127A. Perhaps Gandhi was semantic as regards the word 'Religion'. In fact, he did not find an exact equivalent for the Sanskrit word 'Dharma' in the English language. Therefore he refrained from conceptualizing any definition of the word 'Religion'. When talking to Indian audiences he liberally used the word 'Dharma', the meaning of which was easily decipherable to them. The word 'Dharma' actually implies duty with justice; might be this was the reason Gandhi tried to project the word 'Religion' in that context. It would have been better had Gandhi used the word 'Dharma' in his English writings.
 128. The Discovery of India, J. Nehru, pp. 75-76
 129. Ibid., p.76.
 130. Ibid., p. 78.
 131. Ibid.
 132. Presidential Speech for a UP Conference, 13 Oct. 1923. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (I), Vol. 2, p. 211.
 133. The Mind of Mr. Nehru, R. K. Karanjia, p. 33
 134. An Autobiography, J. Nehru, p. 511.
 135. Gandhi Gabeshana, Pannalal Dasgupta, Calcutta, 1986, p. 290.
 136. Mahatma, D. G. Tendulkar, vol-II, p. 362.
 137. Autobiography, J. Nehru, p. 512.
 138. Ibid.
 139. Quoted by Nehru in his 'Autobiography', p. 513.
 140. Ibid.
 141. Ibid.
 142. An Autobiography, M.K. Gandhi, Part-I, Chapter-IX.
 143. Ibid.
 144. An Autobiography, J. Nehru, London, 1947, p. 20.
 145. Panditji: A Portrait of Jawaharlal Nehru, Marie Seton, Rupa, p. 31.

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146. Nehru: Political Biography, Michael Brecher, OUP, 1959, p. 28.
 147. An Autobiography, J. Nehru, op.cit. p. 370.
 148. A Bunch of Old Letters, Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 148.
 149. Glimpses of World History, J. Nehru.
 150. An Anthology, Jawaharlal Nehru, OUP, 1983, p. 327.
 151. An Anthology, op.cit., p. 330.
 152. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol. 5, p. 203.
 153. The Discovery of India, op.cit., p. 382.
 154. From the Presidential Address to the Indian National Congress (1936).
 155. Essay in 'Unity of India', J. Nehru, 6.1.1940.
 156. Toward Freedom, Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 410 (From the Presidential Address at Lucknow Congress Session – April, 1936)
 157. Ibid., p. 409.
 158. The Discovery of India, op.cit., p. 530.
 159. Essay in 'Unity of India' (6th January, 1940).
 160. An Autobiography, J. Nehru, op.cit. p. 469.
 161. Last Days of the British Raj, Leonard Mosley, p. 285.
 162. Message to the Press (15th August 1947).
 163. Speech at Allahabad, 12th February 1948.
 164. Address to the Convocation of the Muslim University of Aligarh, 24th January, 1948.

Chapter-V

CHAPTER - V

Peace and Humanity in International Concept : Betrayed or Went Awry!

“Man's ultimate aim,” said Gandhi in 1936, “is the realization of God, all his activities –social, political, religious –have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to seek Him in His Creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity.”

Though Gandhi's ultimate aim was to realize God, beyond human being he could not conceive of God's existence. His path to God realization was through man, i.e., by rendering service to His creature. He could not stand suffering among humanity. It was in his nature to be beside every needy and downtrodden. Gandhi's love for humanity knew no boundary. He stood for fundamental unity of humanity. His love for man impelled him to be both a nationalist and internationalist.¹

Gandhi said that his religion has no geographical limit. He confessed, “If I have living faith in it (religion), it will transcend my love for India.”² Gandhi has identified truth with God, though he kept his concept of truth intact, yet he changed his concept of god. He fought against deprivation, injustice, hypocrisy and untruth throughout his life and also raised his voice and extended moral support wherever and

whenever he found there was breach of one of these principles in any part of the world, leave alone India.

Though he was a deeply religious man, he identified himself with the whole of mankind. "I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind," Gandhi used to say. Never did he accept the frontiers made by men. To him, "God never made these frontiers."³ He felt that our first duty is towards our immediate neighbours and thus "to serve one's neighbour is to serve the world."⁴

The road to salvation, in Gandhi's opinion, lies through incessant toil in the service of India and there through of humanity. He wanted to identify himself with everything that lived. He also wanted to live at peace with both friend and foe, though he might be despised and hated by a Muslim or Christian or a Hindu.⁵ His love for country was the guide to universal brotherhood. He said, "For me, patriotism is the same as humanity, I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive, I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India ... A patriot is so much less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian ... It is important for one to be an internationalist without being a nationalist."⁶

Though Gandhi's contemporaries condemned the First World War, Gandhi, being an apostle of non-violence, was recruiting for the British Indian Army in Gujarat. He always looked into the greater interests of the country. He could never work within a limit, because he knew India's interests could be safeguarded only if it involves itself into the affairs outside. Long back, the Indian National Congress had realized that the problems faced by India could not be segregated from the problem of the world, and thus concluded the solutions, which were

applicable to the countries of the west, were equally applicable to India. "Gandhi is not operating at all with the problematic of nationalism. His solution too is meant to be universal, applicable as much to the countries of the West as to nations such as India."⁷ Therefore, again and again he reiterated that his concept of National movement was not meant for India alone. In the year 1921, the Indian National Congress adopted certain resolutions on the matters related to the international affairs. "As early as 1921, it passed a resolution on the foreign policy of India assuring our neighbouring countries of our friendship for them. As the war danger developed, the Congress expressed itself clearly and declared that India would be no party to imperialist war. We are interested in the fate of Ethiopia; we protest against Japanese aggression in China, we sided whole-heartedly with the Spanish Government in its heroic fight against foreign invasion and domestic rebellion. The problem of India is an essential part of the world problem."⁸

To Gandhi, the world is real but he admits it is not free from blemishes. On man he bestowed all his faith and hoped that he would be encouraged to make it flawless. There are both good and evil in this world, which is its basic nature, and cannot be altered by anybody however holy he might be. An eternal conflict between the right and wrong is always going on. Though sometimes it appears that the wrong is in the ascendant, in the end right always emerges triumphant. Right is synonymous with truth, he maintained, therefore, it never dies. "The good are never destroyed for Right –which is Truth –cannot perish." More or less similar views he expresses elsewhere also, "The world rests on the bedrock of satya or truth. Asatya, meaning untruth, also means non-existent, and satya, or truth means 'that which is'. If untruth

does not so much as exist, its victory is out of question. And truth is being 'that which is' can never be destroyed."⁹

Subjecting people to cruelty and displaying love to God, who is unseen –Gandhi could never come to terms with these contradictory behaviour. He called himself a reformer through and through. "I recognize no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognize His presence: I do. And I worship the God that is Truth, or Truth which is God, through the service of these millions."¹⁰

Gandhi aimed at the moral regeration of human society as a whole through application of the principle of non-violence. It was not a principle only, but a religion to him. In fact, it was his 'dharma'. The word 'dharma' has wider connotation –it is in real sense of the term implies one's assigned rightful duty or it can be interpreted as a right standard of conduct, which incorporates ethics, virtue, merit etc. Gandhi used the word religion for the people who were not accustomed to the exact meaning of the word 'dharma'. His problem with the word 'religion' was semantic. As a matter of fact, the word 'religion' cannot be exact equivalent of the Sanskrit word 'dharma'. For his Indian audiences or when he wrote in Indian languages, he, of course, used the word 'dharma'. Gandhi wanted to replace selfishness, rivalry and cruelty with mutual forbearance and fraternal cooperation. "I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind," wrote he.¹¹

Non-violence is simply a means to realise the Truth, which stipulates identifying oneself with all that exists and universal love. The observance of the principle of non-violence in letter and spirit effaces the feeling of self from one's consciousness, which is the first criterion

towards God's realization. "... one has to learn to efface self or the ego voluntarily and as a sacrifice in order to find God... He resides in our hearts, but if we install self or ego there, we dethrone 'poor' God. I have here used the epithet 'poor' advisedly. For although He is the King of kings, most High, Almighty, yet He is at the beck and call of anyone who has reduced himself to zero and turns to Him in uttermost humility of spirit. Let us, then become poor in spirit and find Him within ourselves."¹²

A non-violent person respects all living creatures. To him all human beings belong to one family irrespective of any difference in sex, colour, race, community or nation. Gandhi tried his level best to free Indian from the narrow concept of jingoistic nationalism. He said that all activity act and react upon one another,¹³ and "the world has shrunk to a pinhead, on which the slightest movement on one spot affects the whole."¹⁴

Gandhi insisted on the perfect equality of men and also he did not support any exploitation for personal gain by anybody. His love for humanity made him "to love the meanest of creation as oneself."¹⁵

Gandhi was not ready to divide the man's activities into different watertight compartments. He considered human activities as an indivisible whole. "The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of 'sound and fury signifying nothing.'¹⁶ Elsewhere he expressed his similar view, "I claim that human mind or human activity

is not divided into watertight compartments called social, political and religious.”¹⁷

About his own life, Gandhi held that it was an indivisible whole and all his activities emanated from his insatiable love of mankind. In his personal life, he sought no redress for any wrong done to him. He felt any problem between nation and nation could be resolved with the use of non-violent means.

Though Gandhi had deep faith in the Indian traditions of non-violence, he deviated a little and developed his own concept. He supported worldly involvement for attainment of salvation, whereas the Hinduism maintains total detachment for a ‘sanyasi’ from worldly affairs. For Gandhi ahimsa did not mean only non-injury or non-killing, he says, it should be born out of compassion. “Where there is no compassion, there is no ahimsa.”¹⁸ The term ‘non-violence’ cannot be the exact equivalent for the Sanskrit word ‘ahimsa’, for it only connotes non-injury, which is a negative term. Therefore, Gandhi preferred to use the word ‘ahimsa’ in his English writings, instead of using its English equivalent. To quote Gandhi, “In its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity.”¹⁹

Gandhi tries to draw a parallel between scientific phenomenon of cohesive force and the concept of love, “Scientists tell us that without the pressure of the cohesive force amongst the atoms that comprise this globe of ours, it would crumble to pieces and we cease to exist; and even as there is cohesive force among animate beings is Love. We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives, and in the use of it consists our knowledge of God.”²⁰

Gandhi selected a virgin path to travel. "Our non-violence is an unworthy thing," says he. He presented to the world on a platter his concept of non-violence as a panacea for all ills afflicting human society. To Gandhi, 'ahimsa' is one of the greatest principles and invincible; and it provided him with his daily nutrient. Its applicability is universal and thus can be applied against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens and even against the whole world."²¹

It is true, Gandhi did not invent the principle of 'ahimsa', it existed as a moral tenet in India for centuries, but he reaffirmed it. "Human society is a ceaseless growth, an unfolding in terms of spirituality. If we turn our eye to the time of which history has any record down to our time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards 'ahimsa'.Had it been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species disappeared."²²

Ahimsa, Gandhi explains, is not non-resistance, but fearlessness and "a conscious, deliberate restraint upon one's desire for vengeance."²³ The desire for vengeance is an outcome of fear of harm, imaginary or real. "A man who fears no one on earth would consider it troublesome even to summon up anger against one who is vainly trying to injure him."²⁴ Hence, forgiveness is a main prerequisite for being non-violent. But Gandhi puts forth a pre-condition, "Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is a power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature."²⁵ Even he takes a step further to add that when there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, he would advise violence. "I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless victim to her dishonour. But I believe that

non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment."²⁶

But Gandhi clarifies that physical capacity should not be misunderstood for strength. "It comes from an indomitable will."²⁷ In the same spirit he further elaborates his standpoint, "Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or regeneration."²⁸

But Nehru admits that the National Congress as a whole was not impressed by the non-violent method of Gandhi. He says that non-violence "could not be, a religion or an unchangeable creed or dogma. It could only be a policy and a method promising certain results, and by those results it would have to be finally judged. Individuals might make of it a religion or incontrovertible creed. But no political organization, so long as it remained political, could do so."²⁹

Just before the 1934 Civil Disobedience movement began, Gandhi had appealed to his supporters that the movement should not be abandoned because of the occurrence of sporadic acts of violence. On this appeal of Gandhi, Nehru comments, "If the non-violent method of struggle could not function because of such almost inevitable happenings, then it was obvious that it was not an ideal method for all occasions, and this he was not prepared to admit. For him the method, being the right method, should suit all circumstances and should be able to function, at any rate in a restricted way, even in a hostile atmosphere. Whether this interpretation, which widened the scope of

non-violent action, represented an evolution in his own mind or not I do not know.”³⁰

Gandhi tried to prove through his words and deeds that moral force is far stronger than physical force. The correctness of the statement is disputable. He maintains that anybody who sows violence cannot expect to reap peace. He modified “turning the other cheek” doctrine of Christ and added that one should also resist the evil which is being inflicted upon him ^{the application of physical force but through} not through his moral courage. He advocated love for the wrongdoer but meant no submission in his act. “But it does not mean helping the wrong-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of ‘ahimsa’, requires you to resist the wrongdoer...”³¹ So non-violence is an expression of love for Gandhi, and its observance is ultimately, stands for selfless service to humanity.

To put in a nutshell, non-violence or ‘ahimsa’ is a soul force to Gandhi, which is capable of eradicating all the evils in the world and simultaneously which is also a ‘conditio sine qua non’ for establishing peace, progress and prosperity. When Gandhi implemented the policy of ahimsa into action, it became ‘Satyagraha’, which was his key to thinking and action. In his ‘Autobiography’ Gandhi describes the circumstances which led him to coin the term, “Events were so shaping themselves in Johannesburg as to make this self-purification on my part as it were to ‘Satyagraha’. I can now see that all the principal events of my life, culminating in the vow of ‘brahmacharya’, were secretly preparing me for it. The principle called ‘Satyagraha’ came into being before that name was invented. Indeed when it was born, I myself could not say what it was. In Gujarati also we used the English phrase ‘passive resistance’ to describe it. When in a meeting of Europeans I found that the term ‘passive resistance’ was too narrowly

construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, I had to demur to all these statements and to explain the real nature of the Indian movement. It was clear that a new word must be coined by the Indians to designate their struggle."³²

However, it is observed that Gandhi did not use the term 'Satyagraha' until he returned to India and joined the mainstream of the Indian national movement. He identified 'Satyagraha' with direct action, though he maintained that 'Satyagraha' implies firm and fearless adherence to truth even in the face of death and not to embarrass the wrong-doer.³³ On the one hand Gandhi says, "Never has anything been done on this earth without direct action,"³⁴ then on the other he cautions his followers, "The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The satyagrahai's object is to convert, not to coerce the wrong doers."³⁵

Gandhi emphasized on the transformation in the individual through courtesy and patience and by refusing to consider the opponents as enemies."³⁶ He gives insistence on strengthening the reason by suffering and he hopes that only can suffering open the eyes of understanding.³⁷

Gandhi's approach is in sharp contrast to those of Marx. The latter's clarion call to the workers of the world to unite and to overthrow the capitalist class smacks of violence. Even the modern capitalist system has not been fully able to do away with the class antagonisms. Here comes Gandhi with the solution. His methodology to apply the soul-force in the form of self-suffering concurrently manifesting love and respect for the opponent as a means to achieve justice rather than coercion is a classic gift left behind by Gandhi not only for the people of

India but for the world. However, he admits, although non-violence means conscious suffering, "it does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer," rather "it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant."³⁸

Gandhi had total commitment to the principle of non-violence and he had such a faith that he used to say that it would never fail in its endeavour to overcome all violence, "Non-violence carries within it its own sanction. It is not a mechanical thing. You do not become non-violent by merely saying 'I shall not use force.' It must be felt in the heart, there must be within you an upwelling of love and pity towards the wrong-doer. When there is that feeling, it will express itself through some action. It may be a sign, a glance, even silence. But such as it is, it will melt the heart of wrong-doer and check the wrong."³⁹

It seems Nehru has changed his stand on the concept of Gandhi's 'non-violent resistance', because in his later writings he admits 'Satyagraha' as the right policy in the backdrop of India's background and traditions. He writes, "What I admired was the moral and ethical side of our movement and of 'Satyagraha'."⁴⁰

Gandhi sought to apply 'Satyagraha' to almost all contemporary international situations. During the Czech crisis of 1937-38 Gandhi advised the Czechs against an armed resistance to invasion by the German forces, though he was against imperialistic expansionism of Germany, however he feels deeply sympathetic to the cause of Czechs, "I want to speak to the Czechs because their plight moved me to the point of physical and mental distress ..."⁴¹

Gandhi says that small nations must either come or be ready to come under the protection of the dictators, because in spite of all the goodwill in the world England and France could not save the

Czechoslovakia from being invaded and occupied by Germany. He feels, had there been armed intervention, there would have been only bloodshed and destruction. He is totally against use of arms. "The Czech could not have done anything else, when they found themselves deserted by the two powerful allies. And yet I have the hardihood to say that if they had known the use of non-violence as a weapon for the defence of national honour, they would have faced the whole might of Germany with that of Italy thrown in."⁴²

Gandhi was aware that Hitler might not relent to non-violent resistance or might remain unaffected by the suffering, but he still insisted, "But as a believer in non-violence, I may not limit its possibilities. Hitherto he and his likes have built upon the invariable experience that men yield to force."⁴³ Still he believed unarmed men, women and children offering resistance without any bitterness in them would be a novel experience for the Germans. Gandhi was not the person to accept the failure of the principle of the non-violence ever. "Who dare say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul that I have."⁴⁴

Elsewhere on the potency of 'Satyagraha' Gandhi says; "It is such a potent force that, once set in motion, it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor, in the community in which it is brought into play, and it spreads, no government can neglect it."⁴⁵

Gandhi believed in the superiority of the non-violent method in resolving the conflicts. He was emphatic on the power of love. "Love is a rose herb that makes a friend even of a sworn enemy and this herb grows out of non-violence. What in a dormant state is non-violence becomes love in the waking state. Love destroys ill will."⁴⁶

Let us see what Nehru has to say on the issue of Czechoslovakia crisis. Though he was greatly distressed at the miserable defeat of Czechoslovakia at the hands of Germany, he did not advocate non-violent resistance against Germany as prescribed by Gandhi, rather he pleaded for taking revenge.⁴⁷ He writes, "Czechoslovakia, with all her armed might and undoubted courage, succumbed without a fight. True, she did so because her friends, betrayed her ... Poland was utterly vanquished in three weeks of struggle ... The way of violence and armed might is only feasible today, even in the narrowest interpretation of immediate success, when the armed forces are superior or equal to those opposed to them."⁴⁸ But Gandhi supported only non-violent struggle. He said that the capitulation of Czechoslovakia before the might of Germany could not be avoided even if violent resistance had been offered. He ruled out application of violent resistance by the Czechs against the Germans. Thus, he concludes non-violent resistance as "the best method under all conceivable circumstances."⁴⁹

Gandhi had seen both the World Wars. The Second World War had wide ramifications than the First, and it was more destructive. He outrightly condemned Fascism and Nazism, but he did not support imperialism either. Fascism interpreted the state as the supreme institution and glorified war condemning democracy and pacifism. Nazism, on the other, preached the supremacy of the German race and expansionism.

Taking advantage of disunity of democratic forces in Europe, Hitler captured power in Germany in January 1933. He started rearming Germany and rebuilding lost German power. In March, he simply repudiated the humiliating clauses of the Treaty of Versailles related to disarming Germany. He proclaimed conscription to enhance

military might. England and France at this juncture pursued appeasement policy, which was not desirable to the existing situation. Emboldened, Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland in 1936, sought to redraw the map of Europe by naked display of his military power. The Fascist Italy under the dictatorship of Mussolini occupied Abyssinia. Though Gandhi asserted that he could not be indifferent about the war that Italy was waging against Abyssinia, he advised them not to offer, armed resistance of any kind.⁵⁰

True, Gandhi did not subscribe to the principles preached by the Fascists, but he did not support armed opposition against them either. Unique was he, Gandhi believed that since man has not been given the power to create, he does not possess the right to destroy the meanest of living creatures. "The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the creator of all that lives." He was insistent that modern international gangsterdom, howsoever dangerous that might be, should be dealt with applying the method of non-violence. Eventually force, however justifiably used, will lead into the same morass as the force of Hitler and Mussolini.

Therefore, Gandhi had all praise for the French surrender in 1940. He applauded it as a mark of brave statesmanship. "I think French statesmen have shown rare courage in bowing to the inevitable and refusing to be party to senseless mutual slaughter." Though he acknowledged the bravery of the French soldier, he maintained that the greater bravery of the French statesmen lie in suing for peace.

Since war is contrary to the principle of non-violence, it was unjustified in the eyes of Gandhi. When he arrived in South Africa and observed racial discrimination, he was put into a dilemma in respect of adoption of a right course of action –he had to choose either violence

or to find out an alternative *modus operandi*. There he developed a firm conviction that "suffering is the fundamental conclusion ... suffering is the badge of human race, not the sword."⁵¹ Gandhi had experimented non-violent way of protest at first in South Africa with a commendable success. This was the beginning of the use of the principle of non-violence in politics by Gandhi and he did not look back after that.

Though Gandhi stood for complete peace, he expressed his support to the Allies in the Second World War against Fascism and Nazism. But in order to remove misconception lest his support might be interpreted wrongly, he clarified, "My sympathy does not mean endorsement in any shape or form of the doctrine of the sword."⁵² Even during the First World War Gandhi said that the Indians were duty-bound to support the British in their war-effort. However, on being questioned, he gave a categorical statement that he hated violence in every form and his association with the war was from different angle, "I myself could not shoot, but could nurse the wounded. I might even get German to nurse. I could nurse them without any partisan spirit. That would be no violation of the spirit of compassion then."⁵³

Undoubtedly, Gandhi condemned aggressive nationalism pursued by Nazi and Fascist powers, but simultaneously he was no less disfavoured to imperialism of the Allies. If he decried aggression on the one hand, then on the other he censured exploitation of small nations by big powers. "I see no difference between the Fascist and the Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count as dust before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic ... They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else, unless they have washed their hands

clean of the pollution... Then, but not till then will they be fighting for a new order."⁵⁴

Gandhi, in his writings and speeches, always re-asserted his faith in non-violence again and again. 'Hate the evil not the evil-doer' was what he insisted upon all along. Even the Indian National Congress had resolved then, "We have no quarrel with the German people, or the Japanese people or any other people, but with the system which deny freedom and are based on violence and aggression."⁵⁵ Gandhi knew Germany had to face injustice and humiliation at the hands of the victorious powers after the First World War, although the professed aim during the course of the War was to restore democracy and assure the freedom of small nations. But after the War, all these tall objectives were simply shelved and realization of colonial interests was given prominence. Therefore, Gandhi wrote, "... the Nazi power had arisen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races."⁵⁶

Persecution of the Jews under the Nazi regime is the culmination of invulnerability of totalitarianism to any kind of moral pressure. Gandhi was not unaware of the violence let loose upon the Jews by Adolph Hitler in the name of purging the German nation of impurities by expelling the Jews, but he was not in favour of restoring Palestine to the Jews. He felt that cry for a national home provides a plea to Germany to expel the Jews. Though he was highly sympathetic to the Jews, he tried to provide a solution to their problem from a broader angle, "The nobler course would be to insist on a just treatment of the Jews, wherever they are born and bred. The Jews born in France are French in precisely the same sense that the Christians born in France are French. If the Jews have no home but Palestine, will they relish the idea of being forced to leave the other

parts of the world in which they are settled? Or do they want double home where they can remain at will? This cry for the national home affords a colourable justification for the German expulsion of the Jews."⁵⁷

Gandhi condemned Nazism and Fascism because they professed the theory of force and were against the principles of international brotherhood, equality and the dignity of man. To quote him, "Germany is showing to the world how efficiently violence can be worked, when it is not hampered by any hypocrisy of weakness masquerading as humanitarianism. It is also showing how hideous, terrible and terrifying it looks in its nakedness."⁵⁸

Seeing the extreme inhuman persecution of the Jews, Gandhi one time begins to dream of a war against Germany in the name of restoration of humanity, but he immediately retracts his words and says that he does not believe in war himself. "But the German persecution of the Jews seems to have no parallel in history. The tyrants of old never went so mad as Hitler seems to have gone ... The crime of an obviously mad but intrepid youth is being visited upon his whole race with unbelievable ferocity. If there could be a justifiable war in the name of and humanity, a war against Germany, to prevent the wanton persecution of the whole race, would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war."⁵⁹

Therefore, in 1938, Gandhi advised the Jews to take shelter of 'Satyagraha' against the Nazi's persecution. "Can the Jews resist this organized and shameless persecution? Is there a way to preserve their respect and not to feel helpless, neglected and forlorn? I submit there is. No person who has faith in a living God need feel helpless or forlorn." Now, he elaborates his prescription, "If I were a Jew and born

in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home, even as the tallest gentile German might, and challenge him to shoot me or cast me in the dungeon; I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminating treatment ... If one Jew or all the Jews were to accept the prescription here offered, he or they cannot be worse off than now. And suffering voluntarily undergone will bring them an inner strength and joy, which no number of resolutions of sympathy passed in the world outside Germany can." Even he stresses that "... even if Britain, France and America were to declare hostilities against Germany, they can bring no inner joy, no inner strength. The calculated violence of Hitler may even result in a general massacre of the Jews by way of his first answer to the declaration of such hostilities. But if the Jewish mind could be prepared for voluntary suffering, even the massacre I have imagined could be turned into a day of thanksgiving and joy that Jehovah had wrought deliverance of the race even at the hands of the tyrant. For the god-fearing, death has no terror. It is a joyful sleep to be followed by a waking that would be all the more refreshing for the long sleep."⁶⁰ Perhaps here Gandhi went wrong. It seems, he tries to look at the situation in Germany from the Indian point of view. Even he endeavours to draw a parallel between the Indians in South Africa with the Jews in Germany. Here also perhaps he missed out the actual situation. True, there were unjustified racial laws in South Africa, but there was independent judiciary and freedom of expression. These two things were absent in Hitler's Germany and over and above there was no constitutional government. In such a hostile situation the Jews could never expect fair treatment or sympathy.

But Gandhi was not the type to stop at anything. He knows how to drive home his argument. He says, "There too the Indians were

consigned to ghettos, described as locations. The other disabilities were almost of the same type as those of the Jews in Germany. The Indians, a mere handful, resorted to satyagraha without any backing from the world outside or the Indian Government."⁶¹ About the Jews of Germany, he writes that they "can offer satyagraha under infinitely better auspices than Indian of South Africa. The Jews are a compact and homogeneous community in Germany. They are far more gifted than the Indians of South Africa ... I am convinced that if someone with courage and vision can arise among them in non-violent action, the winter of their despair can in the twinkling of an eye be turned into summer of hope. And what has today become a degrading man-hunt, can be turned into a calm and determined stand offered by the unarmed men and women, possessing the strength of suffering given to them by Jehovah. It will be then a truly religious resistance offered against the godless fury of dehumanized man. The German Jews will score a lasting victory over the German gentiles in the sense that they will have converted the latter to an appreciation of human dignity."⁶²

Here again, it seems, Gandhi is expecting some miracle; in fact, it was never going to happen, because the political situation in Europe then was totally different from the Indian political situation. Though he admits his ignorance of European politics, he argues that to commend his prescription to the Jews for removal of their many ills, he does not need to have an accurate knowledge of European politics.⁶³

It will not be out of place here to quote from the rejoinder of a famous Jewish intellectual Martin Buber written in response to Gandhi's appeal to the German Jews to adopt the policy of non-violent satyagraha in his article in *Hariajn* on 26 November 1938, "Do you not know what has gone up in flames of the sacred and in part ancient community property. (in Germany) ... But do you or don't you know,

Mahatma what a concentration camp is and what happens there, what the tortures of the concentration camp is and what its methods of slow and quick killing?"⁶⁴

In the same letter Buber wrote, "In the five years which I myself spent under the present regime, I observed many instances of genuine satyagraha among the Jews, instances showing a strength of spirit wherein there was no question of bartering their rights or of being bowed down, and where neither force nor cunning was used to escape the consequences of their behaviour. Such actions, however, exerted apparently not the slightest influence on their opponents .. An effective stand may be taken in the form of non-violence against unfeeling human beings in the hope of gradually bringing them thereby to their senses; but a diabolic universal steamroller cannot thus be withstood. There is a certain situation in which from the 'Satyagraha' of the strength of the spirit no 'Satyagraha' of the power of truth can result."

Admittedly, a single prescription could not fit into all the situations. A new prescription is required to be written for every new illness. No doubt 'non-violent resistance' is a great and noble step to fight injustice, but its modus operandi is required to be changed with the occurrence of every new situation. What is good from an Indian point of view may not be appropriate elsewhere and in a different condition. Moreover, there cannot be a second Gandhi. True, Gandhi can bring about miracle single handed, but to expect the same qualification in every ordinary mortal is like searching a needle in a haystack. Therefore, Gandhi's statement that if a single Jew performs true 'satyagraha' could be the saviour of the other Jews can be construed as a gross exaggeration and extremely distant from reality. In spite of the fact that the Jews remained non-violent all the while, but still they were massacred in thousands by Hitler's Gestapo in different

concentration camps. In favour of Gandhi this much can be said that perhaps the then existing situation might have helped Hitler to continue his persecution against the Jews. The nations which were at war with Germany hardly had time to give serious thought to the Jew's problems, for all of them were busy to devise their defence strategies against the Axis Powers.

On September 1, 1939, The Nazi Germany attacked Poland ignoring all the international objections. Gandhi spoke forcibly against the Nazi's aggression. He expressed his deep sympathy for the Polish people and gave a message to the Polish President, "Their cause is just and their victory certain. For God is always the upholder of justice."⁶⁵ Never could it have been possible for the Polish people to be restored to their normal self so easily, had the Germans not lost the Second World War. Similarly when Hitler occupied Norway and Denmark, Gandhi communicated that there was hardly any Indian who did not feel the same sympathy for Norway and Denmark for loosing their freedom overnight.⁶⁶

If Gandhi's sense of morality and justice made him to speak that the Second World War was due to the betrayal of the cause of Germans on the one hand, then on the other his unselfish love for mankind impelled him to write to Hitler to prevent war, "It is clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state. Must you pay the price for an object, however worthy it may appear to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Anyway, I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you."⁶⁷

As was obvious, Gandhi received no reply from Hitler. Gandhi was extremely critical of Hitler's ways, he remarked that no tyrants of age gone by went so mad to the extent Hitler had gone and was doing it with religious zeal. "For he is propounding a new religion of exclusive and militant nationalism in the name of which any inhumanity becomes an act of humanity to be rewarded here and hereafter. The crime of an obviously mad but intrepid youth is being visited upon his whole race with unbelievable ferocity."⁶⁸

When the Munich Pact was signed, Gandhi became apprehensive of its future consequences. He writes, "One must feel that the danger of war has been averted for the time being. Is the price paid likely to be too great? Is it likely that honour has been sold? Is it a triumph of organized violence? Has Herr Hitler discovered a new technique of organizing violence which enables him to gain his end without shedding blood?" He draws his own conclusion of the event, "Europe has sold her soul for the sake of a seven days existence. The peace that Europe gained at Munich is a triumph of violence; it is also its defeat."⁶⁹

For this 'peace without honour', Gandhi does not want to blame either Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Daladier, because these two leaders had no other option to avoid war. Moreover, they were not independent like Hitler or Mussolini; they had to keep their parliaments and chambers in good humour.

"Democracy dreads to spill blood.", however, with the dictators nobody could dare either to question their word or deed. Similarly in Germany or Italy, there was none to cross the path of either Hitler or Mussolini. Their word was law. Therefore, they were ever ready for war, Gandhi concludes, "The science of war leads to one dictatorship

pure and simple. The science of non-violence can alone lead one to pure democracy. England, France and America have to make their choices. That is the challenge of the two dictators."⁷⁰

True, Gandhi condemned Nazism and Fascism, yet his absolute faith in morality pegged him to assume that Hitler and Mussolini could not be beyond redemption. "Hitler is not a bad man," Gandhi wrote to Lord Linlithgow in 1940. Even in 1934, he had certified that the Italians are not unhappy under Fascism. Leave alone Hitler, Italy was certainly better off than before under Mussolini. Standard of living improved. Some of the public works undertaken deserved commendation.

Gandhi never lost faith in the power of the people. "Unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare to say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul that I have."⁷¹ He hopes the people of Germany would be instrumental in leading the peace movement as well as in bringing about the progress of the world through the application of their marvelous energy. He writes, "Germans are a great and brave people, their industry, their scholarship and their bravery command the admiration of the world ... Hitler is one man, enjoying no more than average span of life. He would be a spent force if he had not the backing of the people ... I refuse to believe Germans as a nation have no heart or markedly less than the other nations of the world."⁷²

Gandhi had reservation about the Russian Government on two counts: if on the one hand it was a dictatorial form of government, then on the other, it was based on violence. "Russia has a dictator who dreams of peace and thinks he will wade to it through a sea of blood. No one can say what Russian dictatorship means to the world," said

Gandhi.⁷³ The life in Russia did not appeal Gandhi, because it did not fit into his conception of an ideal state. "I want every individual to become a full-blooded, fully developed member of society."⁷⁴ He did not like any citizen of a country to lose his individuality and become a mere clog in the machine, though he hoped the sacrifice of Lenin and others during the Russian Revolution might purify the system of Government in Russia in future.

Gandhi abhorred violence and forcible appropriation of private property. He doubted on the implementation of the ideal of equality in Russia. Writes Gandhi, "But from what I know of Bolshevism, it not only does not preclude the use of force, but freely sanctions it for the appropriation of private property and maintaining the collective state ownership of the same. And that if that is so, I have no hesitation in saying that the Boshevik Government in its present form cannot last long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence."⁷⁵ To Gandhi, under dictatorship no economic justice could be expected for the poor. He maintains, "Some say that there is ruthlessness in Russia. ... For me it has very little good in it. Some day this ruthlessness will create an anarchy, worse than we have ever seen."⁷⁶

Gandhi could never come to terms with the Soviet system of government because of his strict adherence to the ideal of non-violence. "I do not know whether it is for the good of Russia in the long run. But I do know that in so far as it is based on violence and denial of God, it repels me. I do not believe in short violent cuts to success ... I am uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes. There is, therefore, really no meeting ground between the school of violence and myself."⁷⁷

When Gandhi comments, "that the Bolshevik Government in its present form cannot last for long"⁷⁸ he has kept in view the mass non-violent resistance. It was his conviction that nothing enduring could be built on violence. In fact, the subsequent history of Russia proved his prediction true.

Gandhi's sense of justice and fair play did not allow him to outrightly condemn Hitler and Mussolini. It was his impression that these two people were not so indifferent to the appeal of the world opinion, but it was difficult for them to come to terms for certain past injustice inflicted upon their people. "Today these dictators feel satisfaction in defying the world opinion because none of the so-called Great Powers can come to them with clean hands, and they have a ranking sense of injustice done to their people by the Great Powers in the past."

Therefore, Gandhi opined, "Peace will never come until the Great Powers courageously decide to disarm themselves. It seems to me that the recent events must force that belief on the Great Powers. I have an implicit faith –a faith today burns brighter than ever, after half a century's experience of unbroken practice of non-violence –that mankind can only be saved through non-violence."⁷⁹

All this shows Gandhi's great dislike for war, rather he hated war like anything. In 1940 he appealed to the British people, "I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may be now, to accept the method of non-violence instead of that of war for the adjustment of relations between nations and other matters ... I appeal for the cessation of hostilities, not because you are too exhausted to fight, but because war is bad in essence ... I want you to fight Nazism without arms, or, if I am to retain the military terminology, with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay

down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Her Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your souls, nor your ^{minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your} homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you a free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them."⁸⁰

It was the pious desire of a saint obviously, never was it acceptable to the British Government. They were firmly resolved to prosecute the war to a victorious conclusion.⁸¹ It was sheer greatness of Gandhi that even he did not want to annoy his adversary when the latter was in trouble. He felt highly sympathetic to Britain when it was constantly being bombed by German air force, "We must remove hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than ever I was."⁸² He urged Indians not to get provoked and resort to any violence when Britain was passing through crisis. Even he declared publicly, "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin."⁸³

Even as late as 1944, feeling extremely hurt at the rampant man-slaughter in the name of fighting for the dignity of one's own country, Gandhi commented, "I cannot look at this butchery going on in the world with the indifference. I have the unchangeable faith that it is beneath the dignity of men to resort to mutual slaughter."⁸⁴

When China was attacked by Japan, Gandhi condemned this and advised the Chinese people to resist the Japanese taking recourse to the principle of non-violence. He expected that this attitude of China

would bring Japan on its knee and the latter would become China's slave. But it was not to be so, China tried to repel the Japanese aggression by using Japan's own violent method. "Her putting up a valiant defence against Japan is proof enough that China was never intentionally non-violent ... According to the accepted standards, China's behaviour is correct. But when the position is examined in terms of non-violence, I must say it is unbecoming for a nation of 400 millions, a nation as cultured as Japan to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan's own methods. If the Chinese had non-violence of my conception, there would be no use left for the latest machinery for destruction, which Japan possesses. The Chinese would say to Japan, 'Bring all your machinery. We present half of our population to you. But the remaining two hundred millions will not bend their knee to you.' If the Chinese did that, Japan would become China's slave."⁸⁵

On being questioned, how could non-violence combat aerial warfare since in such a case there would be no personal contacts, Gandhi's reply is very simple, "... behind that steel is the human heart that sets the hand in motion."⁸⁶ But against the Japanese, he bears no ill will, yet he confesses that he intensely disliked their attack upon China. He expresses his strong displeasure, "It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of that ambition. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism."⁸⁷

Gandhi's assessment of the Soviet Union took a U-turn, when Hitler invaded the latter in June 1941. The unique display of courage and heroism by Russia and China in extremely adverse situation to repulse the invaders earned high appreciation from Gandhi. "My

sympathies are undoubtedly in favour of China and Russia, “ declared Gandhi in May 1942.⁸⁸

When Rangoon had fallen in early 1942, the spectre of the sudden Japanese invasion loomed large in the Indian horizon. Gandhi fixed up his strategy of non-violent resistance in the event of the Japanese invasion. He said, “...Non-violent resisters would refuse them any help, even water, for it is no part of their duty to help anyone to steal their country. But if a Japanese had missed his way and was dying of thirst and sought help as a human being, a non-violent resister, who may not regard anyone his enemy, would give water to the thirsty one. Suppose the Japanese compel resisters to give them water, the resisters must die in the act of resistance. It is conceivable that they will exterminate all resisters. The underlying belief in such non-violent resistance is that the aggressor will in time be mentally and even physically tired of killing non-violent resisters. He will begin to search what this new (for him) force is which refuses co-operation without seeking to hurt, and will probably desist from further slaughter. But the resisters may find that the Japanese utterly heartless and that they do not care how many they kill. The non-violent resisters will have won the day, inasmuch as they will have preferred extermination to submission.”⁸⁹

Gandhi's outlook was always international, though he was intensely attached to India. He used to say quite often that his nationalism was intense internationalism. He never entertained any difference between man and man. Gandhi had close affinity with the people of the world; his commitment to mankind knew no boundary. His mission was not merely freedom of India but through its realization he hoped to realise and carry on the mission of brotherhood of man. India was his medium, the world was his goal. He wished for “not

absolutely independent states warring one against another, but a federation of independent states expecting our readiness for universal independence."⁹⁰ His outlook was so broad that he could not even think of duping an invader. He insisted, "There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water ... Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice as its root meaning implies presupposes purity."⁹¹ In the same tone he asserts, "In its positive form ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa, I must love my enemy ... Ahimsa truly understood, is in my humble opinion, a panacea for all evils mundane and extra-mundane."⁹² Stanley Jones points out, "the concept of Satyagraha is one of the greatest contributions of Gandhi to the world."⁹³ Even Gandhi had expressed his deep anguish when the U.S.A. had jumped into the war after sudden attack of the Japanese on the Pearl Harbour and had declared that the U.S.A. could have served the cause of peace in actuality by "offering a non-violent contribution to the world."

True, 'Satyagraha' is one of the greatest contributions, yet it cannot be a panacea for all evils. Man is a complex machine, his thoughts too are complex. Similarly the causes of war are too many –it is too a complex phenomenon like man. Therefore, the applicability of 'Satyagraha' differs from situation to situation; it's success, as a matter of fact, depends, in actuality, on the human power of endurance and complete fearlessness. Little bit of fickle mindedness and the concept of 'Satyagraha' is blown away with the wind. There are umpteen instances in world history when frustration has turned a man violent, though in the beginning he was a votary of non-violence.

The first criterion for the success of the principle of non-violence is the development of the power of endurance and the second is

vigorous training. Only could total dedication to its cause make one a true 'Satyagrahi'. Though discipline and fortitude are two primary requirements, Hart apprehends, "human instincts such as fear, anger and selfishness could all too easily wreck its prospects."⁹⁴

But whatever the human frailties are, Gandhi demonstrated to the world effectively the power of non-violence as a practical political tactic. Though he was a nationalist in essence, he called upon the people to enter with him into the suffering of the whole world.⁹⁵ Gandhi wanted his dream of one world was realized in his lifetime. He did not hesitate to say, " I would not like to live in this world if it is not to be one world."⁹⁶ His creed was service of God and therefore humanity and service meant pure love to him. His love for mankind made him to speak, in his 'Autobiography', "We are all tarred with the same brush, and the children of one and the same Creator." The relevance of Gandhi will never die so long this world remains and he is more relevant today as never before in this terrorism-infected world. To quote Ronald Regan, "All problems could be peacefully resolved if adversaries talked to each other on the basis of love and truth. All through history, the way of truth and love has always won. This was the belief and vision of Mahatma Gandhi and his vision remains good and true even today."⁹⁷

II

Jawaharlal Nehru, an outstanding personality of twentieth century India and an eminent leader of India's independence movement, had outlined his foreign policy principles as early as 1920s. He spelled out that India would seek to combine idealism with national interest while pursuing her foreign policy.⁹⁸ Safeguarding the national interests was his primary goal, therefore, he tried to view internationalism through the magic eye of nationalism. Gandhi rightly pointed out that Nehru's nationalism was equal to his internationalism.⁹⁹

Nehru viewed India's future development on democratic lines, having direct representation of the collectives and cooperatives in the land and in industry, would be in tune with political and economic internationalism. Breeding no conflicts with other nations, Nehru thought, would be a powerful factor for peace in Asia and the world. "it would help in the realization of that one world towards which we are inevitably being driven ... The Indian people, freed from the terrible sense of oppression and frustration, will grow in stature again and lose their narrow nationalism and exclusiveness. Proud of their Indian heritage, they will open their minds and hearts to other peoples and other nations, and become citizens of this wide and fascinating world."¹⁰⁰

Nehru regarded the world as one integrated entity having close link of one region with another. Therefore, Nehru advocated for the world peace, and he wanted to develop India's foreign policy in that line. Seen in this light, Nehru's attitude during Nehru-Liaquat Pact of 1950 looks to be a strange mixture of complexities. At one time he declares that India cannot remain calm when there is great danger to

minorities in Pakistan, then at next moment he advocates in favour of Pakistan, "Ultimate protection in Pakistan can be given by Pakistan."¹⁰¹ It seems Nehru did not want to complicate the matter or to put it in another way perhaps he was fearful of "world complications". Nehru clearly indicated his stand in the Parliament when he assumed government, "There had been a talk of war in the country. Possibly the people who indulged in such talk did not realise what it meant."¹⁰²

Nehru's point of view vis-à-vis Nehru-Liaquat Pact was in sharp contrast to his outlook on the Munich Pact. He writes, "Before Munich I met some of the members of the British Cabinet and other prominent politicians of England, and ventured to express my anti-fascist and anti-Nazi views before them. I found that my views were not welcomed and I was told that there were many other considerations to be borne in mind."¹⁰³

Nehru's dissatisfaction and frustration with the attitude of the Allied powers during the Czechoslovak crisis become further distinct, "During the Czechoslovak crisis, what I saw of Franco-British statesmanship in Prague and in the Sudetenland, in London and Paris, and in Geneva where the League Assembly was then sitting, amazed and disgusted me. Appeasement seemed to be a feeble word for it. There was behind it not only a fear of Hitler, but a sneaking admiration for him."¹⁰⁴

It is indeed very difficult to assess Nehru's fluctuating wave of thought concerning war and peace. A person who vindicated world peace throughout after assuming the post of Prime Ministership of India could be found to be justifying war in 1930s. "For long years before the war my mind was full of the war that was coming. I thought

of it, and spoke of it, and wrote about it, and prepared myself mentally for it," wrote he.¹⁰⁵

Be that as it may, India's foreign policy under Nehru is definitely built on the foundation of peace and "preserved by the methods of peace."¹⁰⁶ Nehru's development of foreign policy concept was gradual. As early as 1885, with its constitution, the Congress Party began to show interest in foreign affairs. In the beginning, its interest was limited, but gradually it acquired wider dimensions with the broadening of its field of operations in domestic politics. In 1927, the Congress first declared its policy in regard to international relation and it was Nehru, who was instrumental in making the Congress to think that Indian struggle for freedom, in actuality, was, a part of global struggle.¹⁰⁷ After Nehru's participation in the Congress of oppressed Nationalities at Brussels in the same year, hardly was there any problem of international importance for which the Congress did not offer a solution. Nehru played a key role in drafting such resolution on behalf of the Congress on international events and problems. In fact, he wanted that Congress should be associated with the global affairs. After his becoming Prime Minister of India, it was quite natural for Nehru to be guided by the trend of thinking developed by the Congress prior to independence to condition his stand on foreign policy. Therefore, on being questioned he persistently asserted that India's foreign policy has nothing to do with his personal opinions or obsessions, but it has its origin in the mind and heart of India.¹⁰⁸

True, Nehru took inspiration from the past, yet a man of his personality could not be expected to follow any trend blindly, wherever or whenever it became imperative he charted his own path, though he never ignored the traditions developed in course of the nationalist movement. Rather he adapted them, as a master craftsman, in such a

way so that they could fulfill the timely needs of the nation. Therefore, he did not like that his mind should be probed to ascertain what is there in India's mind, but still some people mistakenly believed that "Nehru is India ... his prejudices, biases and pre-disposition are mirrored in India's attitude to national and world affairs."¹⁰⁹

With the mounting tempo of the nationalist movement in India, the people began to think in terms of freedom from the British rule. Even a vague structure of the nature of future relationship with the nations of the world began to take shape. In the event of India becoming independent it was assumed India would pursue its own independent course without aligning itself with any big power, though definitely it would seek international co-operation. To quote Nehru, "We thought of close relation with our neighbours, countries in the East and the West, with China, Afghanistan, Iran and the Soviet Union. Even with distant America we wanted close relation, for we could learn much from the United States as also from ^{the} Soviet Union. There was a feeling that we had exhausted our capacity for learning anything more from England, and in any event we could only profit by contact with each other after breaking the unhealthy bond that tied us and by meeting on equal terms."¹¹⁰ Even a conception began to emerge: if it should happen that India achieved independence then it would sever all the bonds that tied her to England and her empire. The emergence of this feeling was due to pressure of the racial discrimination and treatment of Indians in some of the British dominions and colonies. Though the independent India would act at its own discretion, it would not act in isolation, but with full world cooperation. However, Nehru made it loud and clear that India would agree to limit its independence, "in common with other nations, within some international framework. That framework should preferably cover the world or as large a part of it as

possible, or be regional.”¹¹¹ In this configuration, Nehru opined, the British Commonwealth would not fit in any of these conceptions, “though it could be a part of the larger framework.”¹¹²

Nehru admits that though India grew internationally minded, it maintained its intense nationalism all along. He feels proud that no other nationalist movement of a subject country came anywhere near India on this aspect, rather “the general tendency in such other countries was to keep clear of international commitments.”¹¹³ This fusion of nationalism with internationalism was a great contribution of Nehru to India’s cause.

As early as 1928, in a letter to Indira, his daughter, Nehru had written “as Indians we have to live in India and work for India.” But Indians should not forget that they belong to the larger family of the world and the people living in other countries are after all their cousins. “It would be such an excellent thing if all the people in the world were happy and contented.” India should, therefore, try to make the whole world a happier place to live in.¹¹⁴

But he winds up with a forecast that in the event of a contest between nationalism and internationalism nationalism would win for internationalism could only develop in a free country. This is because all the thought and energy of a subject country are directed towards the achievement of its own freedom.¹¹⁵

Nehru was a champion of world peace, because for him it was an indispensable precondition for solving domestic problems.

After the Second World War, the world was divided into two warring camps posing a threat of global catastrophe. Another major world war seemed imminent. Nehru became extremely concerned. He

prioritised foreign policy over domestic policy. He declared, "How can we solve our problems if peace itself is in danger? So our primary consideration is peace."¹¹⁶ He did not know how to ward off this impending danger of nuclear holocaust. but he knew restraint would come on its own amongst those who possess the nuclear weapons, for it will sound death-knell for them also who dare to unleash it. "That itself is a restraining factor. Whether aggression takes place in a small country or a big one, it tends to upset the unstable balance in the world and is therefore likely to lead to war."¹¹⁷ Only through the application of the principles of cooperation and mutual understanding, Nehru opined, could the target of a really lasting and reliable peace be achieved.

A protagonist of peace, Nehru always demonstrated that the war is futile for mankind. "Two tragic wars have demonstrated the futility of warfare. Victory without the will to peace achieves no lasting result and victor and vanquished alike suffer from deep and grievous wounds and a common fear of the future."¹¹⁸ Being a lover of mankind, he always asserted in his speech that the way to serve or protect mankind is not to destroy the house in which it lives and all it contains.¹¹⁹ In fact, the way_^^{of} peace is always the better and, in the long run, the shorter way, the way of war is no way at all, for it solves nothing.¹²⁰

It is said that a good negotiator will never rely for success of his mission either on bad faith or on promises that he cannot execute.¹²¹ Nehru was always sanguine what he has to do and what he has to achieve regardless of what others have to say about his mission. He longed for peace at nobody's price. It was his faith that what is good for all would be equally good in the context of India as well. To quote him, "We cannot take the world on our shoulders and remodel it according to our heart's desire; but we can help in creating a climate of peace which is so essential for the realization of our objectives."¹²² While

pursuing his 'mission peace' Nehru never forgot his country's interest for a moment, "Peace is not only an absolute necessity for us in India in order to progress and develop but is also of paramount importance to the world. How can that peace be preserved? Not by surrendering to aggression, not by compromising with evil or injustice but also not by talking and preparing for war."¹²³

Nehru acknowledged quite often that he was guided by Gandhi's guidance and tried to follow the methods of peace pursued by Gandhi. Gandhi used to say that he was a man of peace believed in peace but he did want the peace which one finds embedded in human breast, "which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world, but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God." Nehru maintains more or less this similar attitude, "Under Gandhi's guidance, we tried to follow the methods of peace and were friendly even to those who tried to crush us."¹²⁴

Nehru cautioned the people of the world that no good would come either to them or to their country through war. It would simply convulse the whole world, bringing not only infinite destruction in its train but also corrupting the souls of those who survive. "We are thus facing a great challenge to our civilization and to such culture as we possess."¹²⁵

In order to fight out this great challenge, Nehru placed before the world Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence as a befitting solution. Nehru says that Gandhi "taught us the doctrine of non-violence, not as a passive submission to evil, but as an active and positive instrument for the peaceful solution of international differences. He showed us that the human spirit is more powerful; than the mightiest of armaments." He admits that Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence is an outstanding

contribution not only to the freedom of India but to that of world peace.¹²⁶

According to Nehru, defeat of the enemy is not by itself an objective but rather the removal of an obstruction towards the attainment of the objective. If that objective is not attained by the victorious power, then that victory over the enemy brings only negative relief and indeed is not a real victory. Therefore, he says that if lasting peace is sought for then the root causes of war must be attacked and not merely the symptoms. He outlines three underlying causes of war in the modern world:

- a) Domination of one country by another or an attempt to dominate.
- b) The problem of racial relations.
- c) The misery and want of millions of people in many countries and, in particular, in Asia and Africa.¹²⁷

Though Nehru was a protagonist of Gandhian principle of non-violence, he did not ignore the necessity for maintenance of armed forces in view of existing world order then. In this context, his reply to debate on Goa in Parliament is worthy of noting, "As far as I can conceive, under the existing circumstances, no Government can be pledged to non-violence. If we were pledged to non-violence, surely we would not keep any Army, Navy or Air Force –and possibly not even a police force."¹²⁸

After the Second World War, the world was divided into two power blocs. Though Nehru was an internationalist, he was aware of the danger of joining any power bloc. Joining of any such bloc was tantamount to lose an independent position in world affairs. He said,

“By aligning ourselves with any one Power, you surrender your opinion, give up the policy you would normally pursue because somebody else wants you to pursue another policy. I do not think that it would be a right policy for us to adopt. If we did align ourselves we would only fall between two stools.”¹²⁹

However, Nehru admits that the world has become internationalized, production is international, markets are international and transport is international. Industrialization has broken down national boundaries and it has made each nation, howsoever powerful it may be, dependent on other countries. Under this new dispensation “no nation is really independent, they are all interdependent.”¹³⁰

There is no real defence against nuclear weapons since in the event of a nuclear conflagration it will destroy both the belligerents and the non-belligerents. “Then the only way out is to prevent war, to avoid it. There is no other way.”¹³¹ Thus a peaceful world order is indispensable and indisputable. “We wish for peace. We do not want to fight any nation if we can help it. The real objective that we, in common with other nations, can have is the objective of cooperating in building up some kind of world structure, call it one world, call it what you like ... Now, if we think of that structure and our co-operation with other countries in achieving it, where does the question come of our being tied up with this group of nations or that group?”¹³²

On the issue governing inter-state relations Nehru's stress was on freedom, equality and justice. When Albania was captured Nehru became extremely apprehensive of impending danger of Second World War and commented, “Who dare says that the thin thread that holds back these forces will not snap and un^elash destruction and doom on hapless mankind? Peace, so-called peace, holds today; what of

tomorrow or the day after?"¹³³ Within months of this forecast, the Second World War broke out. Peace was Nehru's objective from the very beginning and enlargement of human freedom was his goal.¹³⁴

Nehru was against Fascism and Nazism in principle, and exhibited his dislike to these anti-democratic forces openly whenever he found an opportunity. It was not merely the physical acts of aggression which Fascism and Nazism indulged in, but their vulgarity and brutality which they imposed on mankind and the principles on which they stood along with the theories of life on which they tried to fashion themselves, had badly shaken Nehru. His displeasure against them was so intense that he refused to meet Mussolini and Hitler despite invitations. To quote Nehru, "I remember how I refused a pressing invitation from Signor Mussolini to see him in early days of March, 1936. Many of Britain's leading statesmen, who spoke harshly of Fascist Duce in later years when Italy became belligerent, referred to him tenderly and admiringly in those days, and praised his regime and methods.

"^wTo years later, in the summer before Munich, I was invited on behalf of the Nazi government, to visit Germany, an invitation to which was added the remark that they knew my opposition to Nazism and yet they wanted me to see Germany for myself. I could go as their guest or privately, in my own name or incognito, as I desired, and I would have perfect freedom to go where I liked. Again I declined with thanks, instead I went to Czechoslovakia, that 'faraway country' about which England's then Prime Minister knew so little."¹³⁵

Nehru was also critical of Japan's aggression on China. The rape of Abyssinia, the betrayal of Czechoslovakia and the fall of Republican Spain had been a tragedy and a personal sorrow for

Nehru.¹³⁶ He had to side with so-called democratic forces, though they were also engaged in war, since he could not think of any other better option. Being a subject citizen of a colony, Nehru's prime target was to achieve independence for his country.

Nehru had always felt a necessity of complete disarmament through the removal of social, political and economic inequalities both in national and international society. "The question of complete disarmament thus becomes tied up with fundamental political and economic changes in the world. It could not be tackled, much less solved, by itself," said he.¹³⁷

He was a pioneer of non-alignment movement, but non-alignment, as a matter of fact, had become a historical necessity for survival for those countries that were erstwhile colonies. Most of these countries on principle declined to join any power bloc and formed their own group and tried to maintain their own separate identity, coining a term 'non-aligned'.

Non-alignment had its genesis in Nehru's conviction that the division of the world into two warring power-blocs would sure lead to a Third World War if nothing substantial done to ease the tension. His ideal of non-alignment aimed at peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations and engaging in military alliance with none, but making an effort to bring closer the two opposite camps of power blocks, representing one by the U. S .A. and the other by the Soviet Russia, by way of mediation. Thus his policy of non-alignment pursued dual objectives: one to keep India aloof from the cold war of the power blocs and second to keep abreast of all the happenings in the world around him and to keep India engaged in the role of a mediator to settle problems of the world. He thought joining any power bloc would

amount to curtail India's capability to function as a mediator in restoring peace in the world.

Nehru's sense of pride could never allow him to make India a follower of any one of the two power blocs. Long before independence he "had spoken about a free India working for world peace and the end of imperialism and the need for a new Asian unity including China."¹³⁸ To quote Nehru, "The twin policies which have guided us since independence are, broadly democratic planning for development at home and externally a policy which has come to be named, rather inadequately, 'non-alignment'. Like the basic policies of most countries, these are not the product of any inspiration or arbitrary choice, but have their roots in our past history and way of thinking as well as in fundamental national exigencies."¹³⁹

To overcome India's economic weakness was Nehru's one of the priorities. Being non-aligned mean India could receive aid from any donor nation irrespective of the power blocs. This was an added advantage for a developing country like India. Moreover, peace was since qua non at the international level for the economic development and progress of the countries newly acquired independence.

Nehru's abhorrence to join any power blocs is reflected on one of his speeches as early as 1943, "I do not think anything could be more injurious to us from any point of views –certainly from an idealistic high moral point of view, but equally so from the point of view of opportunism and national interest in the narrowest sense of the word – than for us to give upon politics that we have pursued, namely, those of standing up for certain ideals in ourselves with this great power or that and becoming its camp followers in the hope that some crumbs might fall from their table."¹⁴⁰

After the Second World War a new phenomenon has emerged in the international situation, one country after another became independent. Their priority was economic development, but it was independent of the patterns followed by the power blocs. Most of these countries were erstwhile colonies. Therefore there is a vague correlation between decolonisation and the emergence of non-alignment. Post-independence reconstruction of these countries was not possible without prioritizing the peace effort. Apart from pursuing peace, these nations also made an effort to fetch freedom for those Asian and African countries, which were still under foreign yoke. Similarly from Nehru's point of view also non-alignment movement stood for peace and against colonialism.

Peace Nehru did try to restore in the world, but not through condemnation of the power blocs but through display of tolerance and forbearance. "It is not by condemnation or mutual recrimination that we shall achieve this goal. We must forget past conflicts and past grievances and decide to make a new approach to each other in a spirit of tolerance and forbearance ..."¹⁴¹ Being a closest follower of Gandhi, Nehru does not seem to deviate an inch from Gandhian principle of non-violence in pursuance of his foreign policy. "Friendship toward all nations" was Nehru's policy in international arena. In leading non-aligned movement in the world Nehru's role was that of a leader. Nehru admits that India has influenced the thinking of a large number of countries to some extent in the cause of world peace.¹⁴²

Though Nehru mediated in international affairs of his own volition whenever and wherever he felt that the peace in the world was in danger, it is wrong to call him a "professional mediator". This is absolutely unfair to Nehru. He himself clarifies his position; "Well I have no desire, nor my Government, to sit on a perch and to moralise

anybody because we are conscious of our own failings in our own country.”¹⁴³ But at the same time elsewhere he confesses that India cannot shed her responsibilities that go with a great country if a situation arises in the world, which might require some kind of initiative or association in any particular decision.¹⁴⁴

India being friendly to China since time immemorial, having no legacy of conflict with Russia, easily befriended the West. Notwithstanding its military and economic weakness, it could deftly play its role as a balancer between two conflicting power blocs. Nehru was acceptable to both the east and the west because of his neutral stand. He sided with neither but he had the confidence of both. It was only possible to a personality like Nehru.

Nehru was proud that India's history and geography had compelled it to play a crucial role in Asia. He says, "India's pivotal position between Western Asia, South East Asia and Far East made it the crossroads of that part of the world. India is the central point of the Asian picture." But he admits that India's role of leadership might not be palatable to others, yet it cannot escape that responsibility.¹⁴⁵ This sense of superiority in Nehru was in actuality acceptable to others or not is a matter for discussion and also for the later events to judge. If it is conjectured whether Nehru meant to say India had to show a big brother attitude to smaller nations then on this and similar other questions, he has only one answer, "We have to approach every problem in a spirit of sweet reasonableness and co-operation."¹⁴⁶ His role was always that of a conciliator, Nehru's neutralism was motivated by India's national interest. Non-alignment was the best policy pursued by him in the changing concept of international relations vis-à-vis the diplomatic clash between the super powers. Nehru was a matured politician, he knew which course of action is suitable in India's context.

“Whatever policy you may lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. We may talk about international goodwill and mean what to say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what to say. But in the ultimate analysis, a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything, which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country.

“We propose to keep on the closest terms of friendship with other countries unless they themselves create difficulties. We intend co-operating with the United States of America and we intend co-operating fully with the Soviet Union.”

“At the present moment no country, including the big Powers with their long traditions in foreign affairs, has anything which could be called a precise and definite foreign policy because the world itself is in a fluid condition”,¹⁴⁷ Nehru opens his mind thus.

We do get a smell of sheer opportunism in the above speech of Nehru, yet he could never be expected to compromise at the cost of India's self respect.¹⁴⁸ He also knew in order to make India's foreign policy effective a national consensus is a prerequisite. Since in a country like India there always exist some divisive elements amongst the elite groups who could be sympathizers of either this or the other block of powers, Nehru had therefore followed a middle course in his foreign policy aligning with none. He did not want to create any difficulty for himself within India. As a true democrat, he had a respect for every dissenting view. Non-alignment was the best course open before him to obtain consensus. Only through peace at home and abroad could Nehru think of marching India towards the goal of

economic development and self-reliance. It is true, non-violence is a great principle but only a politician of Nehru's quality could think of moulding that principle to one's own country's advantage.

The Bandung Conference (April 1955) of Afro-Asian countries was a landmark in the history of non-aligned movement. It was in the previous year at Bogor meeting the Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan had settled for Bandung Conference under their joint sponsorship. Invitations were sent to almost thirty independent countries of Asia and Africa, comprising about two thirds of the then population of the world. This conference took place at a time when the war was at its peak. It demonstrated the solidarity of the Afro-Asian and Latin American countries, which were previous colonies and had faced frontal exploitation at the hands of the imperialist powers. The Bandung Conference made a declaration on maintaining world peace and cooperation between nations based on the ten principles of peaceful co-existence. In fact, it was an elaboration of the Panchashila or the five principles of peaceful co-existence. These five principles were:

- (i) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;
- (ii) Non-aggression;
- (iii) No-interference in one another's internal affairs;
- (iv) Equality and mutual advantage; and
- (v) Peaceful co-operation and economic co-operation.

To Nehru the Bandung Conference had been a historic event. He states, "If it only met, the meeting itself would have been a great

achievement, as it would have represented the emergence of a new Asia and Africa, of new nations who are on the march towards the fulfillment of their independence and of their sense of their role in the world. Bandung proclaimed the political emergence in world affairs of over half the world's population. It presented no unfriendly challenge or hostility to any one but proclaimed a new and rich contribution.

"The Bandung conference attracted world attention. In the beginning it invited ridicule and perhaps hostility. This turned to curiosity, expectation and, I am happy to say, later to a measure of goodwill and friendship."¹⁴⁹

From the above statement, it appears that Nehru had high hopes with the outcome of Bandung Conference, but in reality he could not achieve what he had hoped for. On many counts he had to sacrifice his views "in order to secure the maximum harmony" and he could assert himself only "when the proceedings threatened to get out of hand."¹⁵⁰

Even B.K. Nehru, who has accompanied Nehru and Indira Gandhi to Bandung did not mince words to comment that the importance of the Bandung Conference "did not lie in what it did; what was important was that it was held at all"¹⁵¹ In spite of its failure to achieve anything substantial, the Bandung Conference marked the birth of non-aligned movement (NAM) in world politics. It was an unprecedented impression left behind by this conference for the posterity to take note of. Indeed from this angle, it was an achievement of sorts.

To remove misconception about India that it had any desire for aggrandizement, Nehru always repeated in his speeches whether in India or abroad that India had no ambitions against any other country

or people. He said that India wished well for all and was anxious that freedom and social and economic progress should come to all countries. Wherever this freedom was denied the evil tree of conflict and war originated.¹⁵²

Nehru always ruled out war as a means of redress. He said "The only alternative we are left with is the diplomatic method and we are pursuing it."¹⁵³ In November 1957 he urged the U.S.A. and the Soviet Russia to stop nuclear weapon testing forthwith and take recourse to disarmament. Therefore, the treaty amongst the USA, the Soviet Russia and Great Britain in 1963 on the partial prohibition of nuclear testing was welcome to Nehru. He was against proliferation of all kinds of nuclear weapons for he felt that could create further mistrust between the two power blocs and drag the world at the doorway of another war. Long back in Parliament he had spelled out India's standpoint on making of nuclear weapons in unambiguous terms, "We have declared quite clearly that we are not interested in making atom bombs, even if we have the capacity to do so, and that in no event will we use atomic energy for destructive purposes."¹⁵⁴

Nehru had always given stress on the principle of co-existence. In order to resolve the cold-war crisis war was no solution. In the event of war, none would be able to dismiss the other, he knew, for the two were equally powerful. Therefore, he appealed to both the USA and the Soviet Russia, "... Then you have to co-exist, you have to understand, you have to be restrained and you have to deal with each other. If you reject co-existence, the alternative is war and mutual destruction."¹⁵⁵

India, under Nehru's initiative, played key role in easing international tension during the period following the Second World War. Had India not taken initiative hardly had it been possible for the other

non-aligned countries to impose their desire for peace in the world, though it is also true their moral support to India imparted further momentum to international peace process. Wherever Nehru achieved success to relax tension in the international arena, it was no doubt the triumph of the objective of non-aligned movement.

During the Korean crisis, India played a key role to pull back the world from the drop-step of another major conflagration. It was after much persuasion of Nehru channels of communication opened between the adversaries and they agreed to sort out their differences across the table. Though it was an achievement of some consequence for India, Nehru did not want to accept this honour. He said, "Why did we go to Korea? Was it to gain honour, glory and prestige? We went to Korea because, if we had not gone, there would have been no truce and no cease-fire and the war would have gone on with a danger of its expansion. I cannot speak with a prophet's certainty of what would have happened if we had not gone there. But as we saw the problem at the time – and subsequent events have justified it – the only way first of all to get the United Nations to adopt that resolution and subsequently to see that there was agreement between the two Commands was for India to fill a gap that no other country could fill. I am not claiming any virtue for India. But it is a factual statement that no other country was willing to fill that particular gap. Without that gap being filled, there would have been no agreement. If there had been no agreement, then the cease-fire would not have taken place and the terrible war would have gone on. We had to face the problem with utmost reluctance"¹⁵⁶ While taking initiative to resolve any world crisis, Nehru's primary concern was always India's interest.

Again during the Indo-China crisis in 1954, Nehru played a significant role to ease further development of conflict through initiating

the process of negotiated settlement. On India's role, he comments; "whether in Indo-China or elsewhere, peace can only come if we endeavor to establish a climate of peace."¹⁵⁷

In order to find a solution on Indo-China deadlock, Nehru presented a six-point formula to be discussed at the conference of the foreign ministers. His priority on the list was to limit the conflict and to have a cease-fire. Also on the agenda was to agree on non-intervention in Indo-China. Nehru's proposals received concurrence at the conference of the South-East Asian Prime Ministers' meet in *on May 2, 1954 on behalf of the powers met at Colombo* Colombo. Nehru appealed for a cease-fire in Indo-China in order to find a solution.

When unrest and disorder erupted in Congo in 1961, India sent a detachment of troops there in compliance with the request of Hammarskjöld, the U.N. Secretary General, not to fight but to restore peace and normalcy.

Nehru justified all his actions in terms of his commitment to the cause of world peace. India responded to the call of the U.N.O., for Nehru the latter was an important instrument of peace. He was well aware of the limitations of the non-aligned countries and he believed without their participating in international forums, such as the United Nations, they would not be in a position to resolve any major world issues on their own. Despite its weakness and failures, Nehru displayed his absolute faith on the U.N.O. for he had the impression that it was the only world body whose very existence represented peace in the world, therefore to think of its abolition any time would be tantamount to jeopardize the very cause of peace. To quote Nehru, "I have believed and I do believe that the United Nations, in spite of its many faults, in spite of its having deviated from its aims somewhat, is,

nevertheless, a basic and fundamental thing in the structure of the world today. Not to have it or to do away with it would be a tragedy for the world.¹⁵⁸

Though he professed non-alignment and kept India away from aligning with any of the two power blocks, Nehru could not think of remaining out of the United Nations anytime. "The fact is that isolation in the past has weakened us very greatly and left us rather in the lurch when the world has advanced in terms of science or other developments. We cannot be isolated; in fact, no country can be. Therefore, to talk of getting out of the United Nations or of otherwise, keeping apart from all these problems is not to take cognizance of the realities of the situation... if a country does that, I have no doubt that it is that country which will suffer more than the organization."¹⁵⁹

True, India has a glorious past of pulling along individually because it was strong enough to thwart any threat to its sovereignty, but the existing scenario was different. India was beset with a lot of internal problems which were sapping its energy all along, yet Nehru always asserted that India's foreign policy was always a policy of fearlessness.¹⁶⁰ "We are not citizens of a weak or mean country and I think it is foolish for us to get frightened, even from a military point of view, of the greatest of the powers today."¹⁶¹ In fact, he was resting on his laurels. In diplomacy, true fearlessness comes with military might. It gives encouragement to his countrymen, "Therefore, let us not be frightened too much of the military might of this or that group. I am not frightened and I want to tell the world on behalf of this country that we are not frightened of the military might of this Power or that... our general policy has been to avoid entering into anybody's quarrels."¹⁶² But Nehru had no solution if India was dragged into quarrels forcibly by some power militarily stronger than India. Nehru says. "From the very

outset our policy, both at home and abroad, has been to solve our problems peacefully. If we ourselves act against that policy we would be regarded as deceitful hypocrite."¹⁶³ Hostility cannot be conquered by humility always: when this reality dawned upon Nehru, it was too late as subsequent history of India unfolds. He always quoted Gandhi whenever he has to drive home some of his specific point of views before the public such as India's foreign policy, "We can never forget the teaching of our Master that the ends do not justify the means. Perhaps most of the trouble in the world today is due to the fact that people have forgotten this basic doctrine and are prepared to justify any means in order to attain their objectives. And so, in the defence of democracy or in the name of liberation, an atmosphere is created which suffocates democracy and stifles freedom and may ultimately kill both."¹⁶⁴ Even as early as 1949, Nehru had admitted that he grew up under Mahatma Gandhi's inspiration and sheltering care who always laid stress on moral values and warned never to subordinate means to ends.¹⁶⁵

Perhaps Nehru's concept of non-alignment received its inspiration from the Gandhian concept of balancing ends and means, and the principle of co-existence was simply one of the offshoots of non-alignment. Major objective of Nehru behind professing the principle of co-existence in the world was his concern for India's security. He wrote, "Therefore, we propose to look after India's interests in the context of world co-operation and world peace, in so far as world peace can be preserved."¹⁶⁶ On the issue of maintenance of an army by a country for its security Nehru has his own observation, "Security can be obtained in many ways. The normal idea is that armies protect security. That is only partly true; it is equally true that security is protected by policies."¹⁶⁷

Admittedly, policies do play their role in providing some security to a country, but they are not enough if not backed by a strong army. One of the glaring examples of the effectiveness of this security related formula is India's debacle at the hands of the Chinese in 1962. Nehru readily admits that due to his other preoccupations related to eradication of poverty of his countrymen and other similar issues he could not give much attention to defence needs. He writes "In the past our preoccupation with the human problems of poverty and illiteracy was such that we were content to assign a relatively low priority to defence requirements in the conventional sense. We will have to clearly give considerably more attention to strengthening our armed forces and to the production within the country, to the extent possible, of all weapons and equipment needed by them."¹⁶⁸

'Peaceful co-existence' could be a noble objective, but for restoration of peace everything cannot and should not be surrendered. Peace could be an end but means has to be and must be varied including making oneself strong enough to counter if some one or other tries to disturb peace. Though as early as 1954 Nehru had stated that "In international affairs one never be dead certain, and the friends of today might be enemies of tomorrow. This may be so. Are we then to begin with enmity and suspicion and not give any other approach a chance? Surely, it is better with nations as with individuals to hope and expect for the best, but at the same time be prepared for any eventuality."¹⁶⁹ It is not understood how he failed to read in between the lines and did not prepare India "for any eventuality" before 1962.

Nehru's belief that China would never be any security threat to India was also absolutely wrong. When China occupied Tibet, Nehru did not consider it a danger. He simply went on to insist that India and China are friends and the future of Asia and to some extent of the

world depends on this friendship.¹⁷⁰ India befriended China through a Sino-Indian agreement on the five principles of international diplomacy in 1954. Sarvepalli Gopal comments that Nehru's assessment of China's attitude to India was naïve.¹⁷¹

China continued to build road in all parts of Tibet. By 1958 China completed its link with Tibet through arterial highways from northeast, east and west. The Himalayas for centuries, which had remained a natural boundary for India, was infiltrated, but Nehru had never anticipated that the Chinese would ever mount an offensive from those remote mountains.¹⁷²

True, war as an instrument of foreign policy was repugnant to Nehru all along, but he explained that the word neutrality was not a correct word to describe India's policy. He wrote. "We wish to judge every issue on its merits and circumstances then prevailing then decide what we consider best in terms of world peace or our other objectives."¹⁷³ It was, therefore, no wrong on the part of Nehru to make an appeal to all heads of state on October 27, 1962, to extend immediate diplomatic and material support to India. Though it was an expected move on the part of Nehru when India's sovereignty was put in jeopardy, it was a late realization. He regrets, "It is a matter of deep regret that the Chinese in their relations with India have paid back evil for good. Friendly and peaceful relations with China have been our basic policy ever since India became independent. We have consistently followed this policy and gone out of our way to support China's case in the council of the world. We regret that in their relations with India, China has not merely shown a hostile attitude, but has also resorted to dissimulation. Even the pre-meditated and massive attack on our defence forces on October 20 has been represented by China as an attack by Indian forces on China's border guards. That this

assertion is completely false is clear from the weight and intensity of the Chinese attack, which is not confined to the Eastern Sector but includes other sectors of the India – China border. No self-respecting country, and certainly not India with her care of freedom, can submit to such aggression, whatever may be the consequences. Nor can India allow China's occupation of Indian Territory to be used as a bargaining counter for dictating to India a settlement of the differences regarding boundary on China's terms."¹⁷⁴

India did not have the requisite strength to dictate its terms. A nation's survival depends on its ability to defend its frontiers. World peace could be an ideal, but one's country's defence should be equally kept strong. Since independence days India championed the cause of peace and non-violence in the world but its showing little defence awareness in home front simultaneously could not be justified. The concept of co-existence is indeed a great ideal for a country to live with, but it only suits that country which has a backing of strong defence. For the powerless nothing is attainable, this is the truth, and India failed to imbibe this truth in time, hence the defeat on the Nyamkachu front at the hands of the Chinese. India's defence budget was only 15 percent of its national revenue in 1961-62, though in 1950-51 it was 30 percent. It was again raised to 31 percent only in 1963,¹⁷⁵ when it dawned that India's defence could no longer be neglected.

Though defeat at Nyamkachu is not of much significance from the military point of view, Nehru felt highly distressed because he was betrayed and his policy of friendship and goodwill with China was shattered to smithereens at one stroke. This marked a turning point in Nehru's foreign policy outlook. He woke up and realized that defence and development were parts of the same process.¹⁷⁶ India should always be ready to face the evil with the application of force in future if

required; once betrayed Nehru did not want to take any chance in defence related matters. To quote him, "Our preparations will continue even if the war stops. We have been deceived once; we are not going to be taken in again. The Chinese invasion had served one purpose. It has united the Indian people. We must get over this crisis and profit by it. You rest assured that the aggressors will be thrown out of India. I do not think the Chinese will again come back but if they dare do so, they will be met stoutly. We shall defend our country to the last."¹⁷⁷ Even Nehru declared at Tezpur at a Press Conference on December 6, 1962 that if the Chinese did not withdraw completely from Indian territory then India would force them out.¹⁷⁸

The Chinese invasion had made a deep impact on Nehru. To some extent he felt demoralized since what he stood for so long and professed crumbled like a house of cards in no time and was forced by the sudden development of events "to adopt a militaristic outlook which he did not like."¹⁷⁹ At the change of events, there was a call from some circle to end the policy of non-alignment and to align with the West but Nehru remained firm to his commitment. "It is true that because of the Chinese aggression we have developed closer bonds with some countries which helped us. That was natural, but that does not mean that we have weakened in our desire to adhere to non-alignment," he said in the Lok Sabha on September 3, 1963.¹⁸⁰ But Nehru accepted long back to Brecher that in a democracy no policy could go very far if it was quite divorced from the people's thinking. "However, in the final analysis all foreign policy concerns itself chiefly with the national interest of the country concerned."¹⁸¹ Therefore, he admitted, "Although our foreign policy is a continuation of the stand we took during our struggle for independence, we are, some times, constrained to vary it according to circumstances."¹⁸²

Though Jawaharlal Nehru is a history today, his message of one world is still relevant rather it is the only solution to all the evils besetting the world. No one can claim he is safe today either at home or abroad. It there is no immediate fear of nuclear warfare, the fear of sudden terrorist strike is always there in the vicinity. Though he loved his country, he was an internationalist from inside. Nehru was essentially a world citizen. To quote his own observation:

“We talk of World Government and one world and millions yearn for it. Earnest efforts continue to be made to realize this ideal of the human race, which has become so imperative today. And yet those efforts have thus far proved ineffective, even though it becomes ever clearer that if there is to be no world order then there might be no order at all left in the world. Wars are fought and won or lost, and the victors suffer almost as much as the vanquished. Surely, there must be something wrong about our approach to this vital problem of the age, something essential lacking... I have no doubt in my mind that the World Government must and will come, for there is no other remedy for the world's sickness.¹⁸³

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Chapter-VI

CHAPTER – VI

Personality : Politics: Objective: Did they differ ?

Although the British refused in one voice to accept India as a nation, they endeavoured to develop an organization of loyal Indian intellectuals who would be of help to perpetuate their rule in India. The birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was the brainchild of the British imperialism and A.O. Hume was instrumental.

While in service Hume came into possession of certain evidence which showed widespread feelings of dissatisfaction and discontent in the country among Indians. "The costly and ineffectual legal system, introduced by the British, totally unsuited to Indian temperament and incapable of meeting needs, the corrupt and oppressive policy, the rigid, unsympathetic revenue system, and the galling administration of the Forest Act and the Arms Act had given rise to complaints 'not loud but deep' all around by the multitude."¹

Having witnessed the 1857 Rising, Hume was convinced that the British people were in extreme danger of a most terrible revolution. His biographer² writes, "The evidence that convinced him of the imminence of the danger was contained in "seven large... volumes containing a vast number of entries... from over thirty thousand different reporters"... all going to show that these poor men were pervaded with a sense of the hopelessness of the existing state of affairs; that they were convinced that they would starve and die, and that they wanted to do something... and that some-thing meant violence."³

Hence Hume wrote, "A safety-valve for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action, was urgently needed and no more efficacious safety-valve than... Congress movement could possibly be devised."⁴

It was the basis for the foundation of the Indian National Congress. This is a proof that before the establishment of the Congress, there was serious discontent in the country against the foreign rule, and people were getting united gradually once again. "Some of the religious heads who had come in contact with Hume told him, that unless men like him who had access to Government could do something to remove the general feeling of despair, the ominous unrest, which pervaded even the lowest strata population throughout the country would lead to some outbreak."⁵

In 1883, Hume appealed to the graduates of the Calcutta University to give him fifty men in order to form a body dedicated to the task of moral, social and political regeneration of India, but the real objective was otherwise. He wanted to wrest the leadership of the country from the hands of the discontented elements and transfer the same to those who had no animosity towards the British rule.

Accordingly in 1884, the Indian National Union was formed. "A preliminary report issued to the members stated that the Union was 'absolutely unanimous in insisting that unswerving loyalty to the British Crown shall be the key-note of the institution', and that it was prepared 'when necessary to oppose, by all constitutional methods, all authorities, high or low, here or in England, whose acts or omissions are opposed to those principles of the Government of India laid down from time to time by the British Parliament and endorsed by the British

Sovereign.”⁶ These were the people for whom the British rule was a divine gift.

Though from its very inception the Congress maintained its secular character by representing all classes and sections of the people, it was never anti-government in the beginning, since its objective was only social reform. However, gradually nationalist urges began to make inroads into the life of the Congress; and with it the Government also began to segregate itself from the activities of the Congress. Even the Government prohibited its officials to visit any of the meetings of the Congress, leave alone taking part in its proceedings.⁷

The British saw in the constitution of the Indian National Congress a machinery of loyal Indians who would be pro to the theory of ‘Save the British Empire’, because for them India was never a political name but simply a geographical expression like Europe or Africa. “It does not mark the territory of a nation and a language, but the territory of many nations and many languages.”⁸ For them never was there any sort of unity either physical, social, political or religious: no Indian nation and no people of India.⁹

The early Congressmen were the loyal Indians who never challenged the British Empire. They belonged to the upper strata of the middle class and were an educated lot. They were the friends of the British, who only believed in making humble appeals nurturing a hope that the British statesmen would ultimately respond.¹⁰ This apart, for these people the English constitution was the best bulwark of popular liberties and the English Parliament the mother of democracy all over.¹¹ They did not hesitate to declare, ‘We are the citizens of a great and free Empire and we live under the protecting shadow of one of the

noblest constitutions the world has ever seen. The rights of Englishmen are ours, their privileges are ours, their constitution is ours. But we are excluded from them.¹² Still they continued to display their full faith in the British sense of justice and fair play.

However, situation changed as it was bound to happen, the Congress also could not keep aloof from the nationalist urges. Entered into the fray Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. The Congress came to be guided by both the moderates and the extremists, though it launched Swadeshi and Boycott Movement in 1905. But nothing substantial achieved. The Government was with the loyalists. Pyarelal writes, 'Everybody who was anybody in public life was shadowed, his mail was censored and his correspondence was liable to be intercepted. Nobody dared speak or breathe freely. The atmosphere was choked with suspicion and distrust. People were afraid of their own shadow. Nobody knew who was who; every stranger was looked upon as a Government spy.'¹³

Being harassed by the British Intelligence Department, Lala Lajpat Rai took shelter in the U.S.A. Tilak was sentenced to six years' of rigorous imprisonment on the charge of seditious writings and was deported to Mandalay in Burma. Arbindo Ghosh had become a recluse. B.C. Pal was totally fused. Arbindo observes, 'No man seemed to know which way to move, and from all sides came the question, 'What shall we do next? What is there that we can do?''¹⁴ In 1911 the Seditious Meetings Act was passed by the Government. The nationalist movement had fizzled out.

The First World War began with no sign of change in the British attitude. The brute force was let loose and there was no sign of relief in sight. Admittedly, it was a period of darkness in nationalist movement.

People awaited eagerly for the dawn to arrive. The harbinger of dawn in India's freedom movement was no other person than Mohandas Karam-Chand Gandhi, 'The author and the hero of the South African Satyagraha struggle'.¹⁵

A dangerous revolutionary in the eyes of the British became a supreme physician of the Indians overnight. Gandhi emerged to guide when extreme repression took precedence over reform. Though people were at a loss to find out a way to protest, there was no established political party or a leader then to show them the right way. Here appears Gandhi as a messiah with an innocent looking tool of non-cooperation to challenge the mighty British Empire. The British, not for an iota of a second, thought then that 'a half naked fakir' would one day prove invincible for them. Though Gandhi's predominance in the Congress was felt as early as its Amritsar session in December 1919, his call for non-cooperation with the Government was accepted at its special session in September 1920 and then finally adopted at its regular session in December 1920.

For Gandhi's whirlwind appearance in Indian politics, it seems, Nehru is awestruck, 'He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition.'¹⁶ But Nehru's statement in respect of Gandhi is no exaggeration, the latter had all the attributes of great men. Hegel sums up, "They are great men, because they willed and accomplished something great; not

a mere fancy, a mere intention, but that which met the case and fell in with the needs of the age.¹⁷

Jawaharlal Nehru was almost a non-entity during this period. He had heard about Gandhi's exploits in South Africa and his leading about 2,300 civil resisters to Natal to disobey the prohibitory order of the Government. Though Gandhi had not tried out these methods in India, Nehru was deeply impressed by this methodology.

Nehru had first seen Gandhi at Lucknow Congress in 1916, but it seems, he was not much impressed. But gradually Gandhi gained sway over him. "My first meeting with Gandhiji was about the time of the Lucknow Congress... All of us admired him for his heroic fight in South Africa, but he seemed very distant and different and apolitical to many of us young men. He refused to take part in Congress or national politics then and confined himself to the South African Indian question. Soon afterwards his adventures and victory in Champaran, on behalf of the tenants of the planters, filled us with enthusiasm", writes Nehru.¹⁸

The First World War was on. Lala Lazpat Rai urged the Indians from America to help the British Government. In fact, he wanted the Indian youths to obtain training in fighting. Tilak and Gandhi too came out in the open to support the British in its war efforts. In spite of this show of loyalty, the people had little sympathy with the British.¹⁹

The revolutionary movement began in India in 1912 under the leadership of Rash Behari Bose. Even as far as in America Gadhari Party was formed. A bomb was thrown at the procession of Lord Hardinge and also an attempt was made to cause revolt in the Indian army. Though all these attempts failed to produce any substantial result, it did cause flutter in the minds of the British bureaucracy. The Government of India constituted a committee under Justice Rowlett to

enquire into the causes and extent of the revolutionary activities and to find out ways and means for their eradication.

The reports submitted by Rowlett proposed draconian measures to curb these activities. There was widespread resentment in the country because the Government was going to assume immense powers to deal with the revolutionaries summarily without resorting to the normal practice of law. This was too much for Gandhi to swallow. He came forward with an offer of satyagraha in the event of the recommendations of Rowlett becoming law.

The crisis of leadership in the Congress after the demise of Gokhle in 1915 was over with the emergence of Gandhi. Thus began the Gandhian phase in the history of freedom movement in India. 'All great movements wait for their God-sent leader, the willing channel of force, and only when he comes, move forward triumphantly to their fulfilment.'²⁰

Nehru sums up the situation in India under the British at the time of the advent of Gandhi as follows, "...the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear – pervasive, oppressive, strangling fear; fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of laws meant to suppress and of prison; fear of the landlord's agent; fear of the moneylender; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on threshold. It was against this all – pervading fear that Gandhi's quiet and determined voice was raised : Be not afraid."²¹

Though Nehru admits that Gandhi influenced millions of people in India, he expresses his doubts whether removal of fear could be so simple as promised by Gandhi. However, he provides his own answer, 'So, suddenly, as it were, that black pall of fear was lifted from the

people's shoulders, not wholly of course, but to an amazing degree. As fear is close companion to falsehood, so truth follows fearlessness. The Indian people did not become much truthful than they were, nor did they change their essential nature overnight; nevertheless a sea-change was visible as the need for falsehood and furtive behaviour lessened. It was a psychological change, almost as if some expert in psychoanalytical methods had probed deep into the patient's past, found out the origins of his complexes, exposed them to his view, and thus rid him of that burden.'²²

Truth and non-violence are high experiences of man; and these two were deeply embedded in Gandhi. 'I do not know of any person who holds to the truth as Gandhi does', writes Nehru.²³

On Rowlett Bills, Nehru's reaction is worth-noting, 'Today, fifteen years later, we have any number of laws on the statute book, functioning from day to day, which are far harsher than the Rowlett Bills were. Compared to these new laws and ordinances, under which we now enjoy the blessings of the British rule the Rowlett Bills might almost be considered a charter of liberty.'²⁴ This remark of Nehru should not be construed as belittling of Gandhi's action against Rowlett Bills. In fact, the Rowlett Bills were the beginning. At a later stage, we find harsher acts were operationalised by the British, therefore, vis-à-vis the later acts the Rowlett Bills were almost 'charter of liberty'. Perhaps, Nehru meant they were of lesser consequence.

Gandhi's appeal to the Viceroy not to pass the bills went unheeded. There was no option left before Gandhi than to declare his satyagraha immediately. The bugle of satyagraha was blown on 6th April 1919 in Bombay. The response was wonderful all over India. This was the beginning of Gandhi's career as an all-India political leader.

This also marked the beginning of the application of the technique of satyagraha in India's struggle for freedom. Though the technique achieved success in South Africa, it was by no account an easy task in India to implement because it was absolutely a new concept and the people who were supposed to bring it into operation were not actually accustomed to it. It was a principle not purely political for it incorporated certain mystical and ethical elements also into it.

Gandhi addressed the gathering, 'No country has even risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice, and we are trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in shape or form. This is satyagraha... When we have acquired habits of discipline, self control, qualities of leadership and obedience, we shall be better able to offer collective civil disobedience, but until we have developed these qualities, I have advised that we should select for disobedience only such laws as can be disobeyed by individuals. It is therefore necessary for us till we are sufficiently disciplined and till the spirit of satyagraha has permeated large bodies of men and women to obey regulations regarding processions and gatherings. Whilst we disobey certain selected laws, it is incumbent on us to show our law-abiding character by respecting all other laws. And when we have reached the necessary standard of knowledge and discipline, we shall find that machine guns and all other weapons, even the plague of airplanes will cease to afflict us.'²⁵

It was indeed a great expectation from those who never had a taste of it before. Though the response was overwhelming initially, disturbances had broken out he helter-skelter. It was a test of Gandhi's leadership. But at no cost could he compromise with violence, not even at the cost of his leadership. This was possible only with Gandhi. He openly recounted the misdeeds of the people in a meeting on 14th April,

1919, 'I have said times without number that satyagraha admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiaries, and still in the name of satyagraha we burnt down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people and plundered shops and private shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison house or the scaffold, I should not like to be saved.'²⁶

Gandhi suspended the civil disobedience movement. He realised unless properly trained, any future satyagraha was bound to be violent. Therefore, he decided to raise a band of properly trained volunteers before taking any decision on this line.

In the beginning, it seems, Nehru was highly enthusiastic towards Gandhi's civil disobedience methodology. He was ready 'to join the Satyagraha Sabha immediately'²⁷, since, he thought, it was the only way out when the entire country was passing through the phase of political indecision. But suddenly it dawned upon him that all this was no smooth sailing when he thought of its consequences with cool head. Even he thought, "What good would the gaol-going of a number of individuals do, what pressure could it bring on the Government?"²⁸

Though for his father Motilal also the idea of going to prison was "preposterous", both the father and the son tried to sleep on the floor to find out what it was like if they went to prison.

After suspending the civil disobedience movement he did not take respite for a moment but continued his effort to educate the people for future movement of bigger dimension. Gandhi writes, "It is my perception of the law of satyagraha which impels me to suggest the suspension. I am sorry, when I embarked upon a mass movement I understated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how

best to meet the situation." But he admits, his attitude towards the Rowlett Legislation remained unchanged.²⁹

Gandhi was invited by Gokhale to return to India. In fact, he wanted to strengthen the Congress. In South Africa, Gandhi had virtually brought the British Government in the dock by his satyagraha, which fact was known to Gokhale. Though Gandhi was a pacifist, he knew no submission "to fate or anything that he considered evil."³⁰ He was willing to undergo pain and suffering to any length for a right cause. He inherited this quality from his forefathers like Dewan Uttam Chand.³¹

This apart, Kasturba his wife, also played an important role in grooming him. Later Gandhi also admitted this fact, 'She was a woman always of a very strong will, which in our early days I used to mistake for obstinacy. But that strong will enabled her to become, quite unwittingly, my teacher in the art and practice of nonviolent non-cooperation.'³²

Being a man of self-respect and pride, he never hesitated to confess any truth whatever be the situation. When in London, at regular Sunday dinner in the house of an aged widow, one girl tried to develop intimacy with him. Gandhi immediately became alert and did not think for a moment to intimate, "I assure you I have taken no improper liberties with the young lady you were good enough to introduce to me. I knew my limits. You, not knowing that I was married, naturally desired that we should be engaged. In order that things should not go beyond the present stage, I must tell you the truth."³³

Because of these qualities, Gandhi in political field won the respect of both friends and foes. He was the most appropriate person to fulfill the vacuum during that period of leadership crisis. Gandhi

adopted total newness in guiding national movement. His application of satyagraha in Indian political scenario was absolutely a new concept. It did not subscribe to any existing methodology. He realized in any violent struggle in the world there had never been any involvement of the larger section of people; the same was true with India till his advent into Indian politics. For the first time in Indian political history, the freedom struggle in India received mass base because Gandhi spoke in people's language.

Gandhi's non-violent struggle initially involved the following course of actions:

- a) Renouncing of titles and honorary positions;
- b) Boycott of legislatures;
- c) Withdrawal of children from government schools;
- d) Giving up practice by lawyers and helping people to settle their civil disputes among themselves;
- e) Polite refusal to attend to government functions, parties etc. and citing non-cooperation as the sole reason for doing so.³⁴

"The non-cooperation I have suggested is a mild way of boycotting. Total boycott is the ultimate stage in non-cooperation,"
Gandhi said this on the eve of the non-cooperation
movement that was to start from 1st August 1920.³⁵

This way Gandhi provided a democratic touch to his approach. The technique of non-violent non-cooperation movement involved into its ambit almost all sections of people either directly or indirectly.³⁶ From 1920 onwards, the Indian National Congress ceased to remain a party of elites and educated rather it metamorphosed into, in true

sense, a national party – people of all sections joined into its fold, and the movement it launched under Gandhi's leadership, in actuality, assumed mass character.

Nehru writes that the older generation of the Congress leaders, having born in different tradition, did not take easily the new ways of Gandhi, even they felt disturbed by the upsurge of the masses. "Yet so powerful was the wave of feeling and sentiment that swept through the country, that some of this intoxication filled them also."³⁷

On Gandhi's potential to sway the masses Nehru elaborates further, "He has been a demon of energy and action, a hustler, and a man who not only drives himself but drives others. He has done more than anyone I know to fight and change the quietism of the Indian people... He sent us to the villages, and the countryside hemmed with the activity of innumerable messengers of the new gospel of action. The peasant was shaken up and he began to emerge from his quiescent shell. The effect on us was different but equally far-reaching, for we saw, for the first time as it were, the villager in the intimacy of his mud-hut, and with the stark shadow of hunger always pursuing him."³⁸

Gandhi had an extraordinary organizational ability. The effect of his non-violent non-cooperation movement was massive in 1921. Joining in the fray leaving their lucrative legal practice were Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Vallabhbhai Patel, Vithalbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad. Others in the line who followed suit were important contemporary Muslim leaders of the country, such as, Ali Brothers, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan. More than forty-lac volunteers were recruited to launch country –wide movement, for the first time in the country such an enthusiasm was ever witnessed amongst the people. Decision was taken to boycott the

visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught. Gandhi expressed his apology, in all humility, for this boycott to the Duke, "His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught will be soon in our midst. It is a matter of great sorrow to me that I should have to advise a complete boycott of all public function held in his honour. He is personally an amiable English gentleman. But in my humble opinion, public interest demands this official visit should be strictly ignored. His Royal Highness comes to sustain a corrupt system of government; he comes to whitewash an irresponsible bureaucracy, he comes to make us forget the unforgettable, he comes not to heal the wounds inflicted upon us but to mock us by flinging deceptive reforms at us. To welcome His Royal Highness is to associate with him in promoting our dishonour."³⁹

The response to Gandhi's call to non-violent non-cooperation movement was overwhelming. The movement of 1921-22 was biggest of its kind in the history of India. Gandhi declared, 'By non-violent non-cooperation we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and their supporters. We must love them and pray god that they might have wisdom to see what appears to us to be their errors.'⁴⁰ For him civil disobedience was rebellion but without an element of violence in it and civil resister would simply ignore the authority of the state. He compared a body of civil registers to an army, who are subjected to all the discipline of a soldier but deprived of any excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. He emphasized that non-cooperation is an offshoot of love not hatred.⁴¹

But Gandhi's calculation was going wrong. His teaching 'to love our enemies' was gradually dying in the din of enthusiasm. News of sporadic incidents of violence reached Gandhi from different corners of India. A violent clash between the police and a crowd of people at

Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district of U.P. was the last straw on the camel's back. Here the police had fired on the crowd killing several demonstrators on the spot. The demonstrators retaliated, set the police station on fire. Around twenty policemen were burnt alive. This incident took place on 5 February 1922 and immediately after that Gandhi took the unilateral decision to suspend the movement. Gandhi's reaction to Chauri Chaura episode is worth noting here, 'God has been abundantly kind to me the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, willful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.'⁴²

Most of the Congress leaders were shocked at this sudden suspension of movement. They expressed their serious dissatisfaction, and amongst them were Motilal and Jawaharlal. Gandhi tries to explain, "...I sympathies with you, and my heart goes out to Father. I can picture to myself the agony through which he must have passed, but I also feel that this letter is unnecessary because I know the first shock must have been followed by a true understanding of the situation... the brutal murder of the constables by an infuriated crowd which was in sympathy with non-cooperation cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that it was a politically minded crowd. It would have been criminal not to heed to such a clear warning... I assure you that if the thing had not been suspended we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle but essentially a violent struggle... The cause will prosper by this retreat.'⁴³

About his immediate reaction, Nehru writes at a later date in his 'Autobiography', "The sudden suspension of our movement after the Chauri Chaura incident was resented, I think by almost all the

prominent Congress leaders, other than Gandhiji of course. My father (who was in goal at the time) was much upset by it. The younger people were naturally even more agitated. Our mounting hopes tumbled to the ground, and this mental reaction was to be expected. What troubled us even more were the reasons given for this suspension and the consequences that seemed to flow from them... If this was the sole condition of its function, then the non-violent method of resistance would always fail."⁴⁴

But Nehru immediately retracts, perhaps he realizes that he is wrong, 'We had accepted this method, the Congress had made that method its own, because of a belief in its effectiveness. Gandhiji had placed it before the country not only as the right method but also as the most effective one for our purpose. In spite of its negative name it was a dynamic method, the very opposite of a meek submission to a tyrant's will. It was not a coward's refuge from action, but the brave man's defiance of evil and national subjection.'⁴⁵

In fact, the suspension of the movement at that point of time was the only course left for Gandhi, he had no other option. Subsequent developments in India's struggle for freedom proved it to be the best course 'If I had deliberately continued the struggle, the nation would have been crushed. As a result of the postponement of the struggle the nation has made progress, though at a slow rate, its thinking power has increased and the awakening that followed in its wake has been stabilized,' admitted Gandhi on 10.11.1929.⁴⁶

Though the abrupt halt of the non-violent non-cooperation movement and criticism by some Congressmen led the British Government to assess that the influence of Gandhi on his countrymen was on the wane, in reality it was the beginning of the manifestation of

his popularity, which with the passage of time went on becoming stronger and stronger. This fact dawned upon the British Government much later when it was too late. Because of his high ideals and saintly character, Gandhi not only earned respect of his countrymen but his detractors also.

Gandhi was immediately arrested and put to trial. The Sessions Judge, Mr. Bloomfield, who tried Gandhi and sentenced him to six years of simple imprisonment, heaped all praise upon Gandhi in the open court, 'Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only... It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law... a sentence of six years in all, which I feel it my duty to pass upon you. And I should like to say in doing so, that if the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.'⁴⁷

Henceforth, we find Gandhi dominated the Indian political setting like a colossus. He was now almost alone in the leadership and remained sole authority of the Congress,⁴⁸ though he had relinquished his leadership for almost seven years. During this period, the country again plunged into leadership crisis since Gandhi was not in the picture. In fact, Gandhi had himself retired into the background with an objective to fulfill his social obligations to the country. He tried his level best to keep himself away from the then political wrangles. Gandhi took up constructive activities, such as rejuvenating khadi and village

industries, making campaign for removal of untouchability and working towards national integrity. In fact, the objective of Gandhi during this period of lull was to groom the people towards self-sufficiency and unity, and prepare them towards realizing a greater goal of national liberation. He wrote, 'Whilst it is perfectly true that the country as a whole has made remarkable progress in the cultivation of a non-violent spirit it can - not be denied that there is still room for the improvement...' ⁴⁹

Gandhi's methodology of non-violent non-cooperation was an only alternative to constitutional agitation and terrorism, because both of them had so long "failed to make a real dent on the imperialist structure in India."⁵⁰ It was during this period of Gandhi's absence it was realized that Gandhi was the sole leader who had carried mass prestige and could control and direct the masses the way he liked. None of his colleagues was equal to Gandhi and none could claim such power and influence. He was trusted more than anybody else despite his leanings on spiritualism and morality. He could feel the psyche of the people as none else and people understood him more than any of his contemporaries because he suffered equally when they suffered.

Gandhi was recalled again to take up the leadership at the Calcutta Congress in 1928. It was at the Lahore Congress under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru it was decided to observe the 26th of January 1930 as the day of 'Purna Swaraj' or complete independence. Here Gandhi was instrumental in getting this Nehru Report accepted, however, in the Report the word Dominion Status was incorporated. Gandhi explains, 'For the Congress, Dominion Status means complete independence plus voluntary partnership with Britain... Complete independence of the Congress is no menace to a single legitimate

foreign interest or the presence of a single Englishman who will live as a friend willing to submit to the rules applicable to the whole of Independent India."⁵¹ The British people were no enemy to Gandhi. He expected in them there would be a real change of heart and they would see India a free and self-respecting nation. "... That means substitution of the steel bayonet by that of the goodwill of the people."⁵² Now Gandhi was once more at the helm of affairs.

An ultimatum was sent to the British Government either to implement the Nehru Report by December 1929 or he would launch civil disobedience movement on a larger scale than before. Under the leadership of Gandhi the Congress now became the sole spokesman of the people.

Came January 1st, 1930, for the first time in India the national flag was unfurled. Excitement and enthusiasm amongst the people knew no bounds. On 26 January^{am} independence pledge was taken en masse all over India. To quote Nehru, "Independence Day came, January 26th, 1930, and it revealed to us, as in a flash, the earnest and enthusiastic mood of the country. There was something vastly impressive about the great gatherings everywhere, peacefully and solemnly taking the pledge of independence without any speeches of exhortation. This celebration gave the necessary impetus to Gandhiji, and he felt, with his sure touch on the pulse of the people, that the time was ripe for action."⁵³

The pledge declared, "We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary

association with the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swaraj.”⁵⁴

This pledge, in its entirety, is nothing but manifestation of total commitment of the Congress to the Gandhian principle of nonviolence. Complete independence has become the goal as well as the firm determination of the leaders as of the masses. Gandhi was entrusted with full powers to start the civil disobedience movement by the Congress at its Working Committee meeting on February 14-16, 1930 at Sabarmati. It declared at its resolution:

“In the opinion of the Working Committee, Civil Disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving Purna Swaraj, as an article of faith, and as the Congress contains in its organisation not merely such men and women but also those who accept non-violence as a policy essential in the existing circumstances in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorizes him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent above indicated, to start Civil Disobedience as and when they desire and in the manner and to the extent they decide.”⁵⁵

Gandhi called civil disobedience “a complete, effective and bloodless substitute of armed revolt” and the last stage of the most drastic form of non-cooperation. The country as a whole pledged itself to the non-violence doctrine of Gandhi.

Gandhi's appeal to the Viceroy had fallen into deaf ears, the latter refused to see him. In sheer disappointment, Gandhi sent a rejoinder on 2 March, 1930, "On bended knees I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English Nation responds only to force, and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. The only public peace the Nation knows is the peace of the public prison... Civil disobedience alone can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime, since there is a party of violence in the country, which will not listen to speeches, resolutions or conferences but believes only, in direct action."⁵⁶ Gandhi called this civil disobedience a non-violent revolution, which to him not a programme of 'seizure of power', but a programme of transformation of relationships.⁵⁷

Gandhi had no option left; there could not be any retreat now. He has to go ahead irrespective of the consequences, and ahead he went. In fact, Gandhi knew beforehand that there would be lukewarm response from the side of the British Government to his appeal, therefore he had already issued instructions to his followers to be followed should he be arrested, 'This time on my arrest there is to be no mute, passive non-violence, but non-violence of the activist type should be set in motion, so that not a single believer in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of achieving India's goal should find himself free or alive at the end of the effort to submit any longer to the existing slavery... When the beginning is truly made, I expect the response from all over the country. It will be the duty then of everyone who wants to make the movement a success to keep it nonviolent and under discipline... whilst, therefore, every effort imaginable and possible should be made to restrain the forces of violence, civil disobedience once begun this time cannot be stopped and must not be stopped as long as there is a single resister left free or alive.'⁵⁸

The historic Dandi march began on 12 March 1930 with seventy-eight followers to break the prohibition of making salt. "The fire of a great resolve is in him and surpassing love of his miserable countrymen. And love of truth that scorches and love of freedom that inspire", wrote Nehru.⁵⁹ Covering 241 miles Gandhi reached Dandi on April 5, 1930. Next day he went to the beach picked up a lump of salt and technically violated the Salt Act. In fact, this symbolic gesture of Gandhi was to stir the whole nation and he did it with success. Nehru comments, "It seemed as though a spring had been suddenly released; and all over the country, in town and village, salt manufacture was the topic of the day, and many curious expedients were adopted to produce salt... As we saw the bounding enthusiasm of the people and the salt-making was spreading like a prairie fire, we felt a little abashed and ashamed for having questioned the efficacy of this method when it was first proposed by Gandhiji. And we marvelled at the amazing knack of the man to impress the multitude and make it act in an organised way"⁶⁰

Thus began the non-violent civil disobedience movement throughout India. Millions of Indians joined. Only could Gandhi do this, and he did it and the world felt awe-struck. This was Gandhi an unparalleled leader of the Indian sub-continent. The movement was blow right across the face of the British Government. All kinds of terror was let loose on the unarmed non-violent agitators. Though Gandhi was arrested, the movement continued unabated. Thousands were arrested and put behind the bars. People braved the blows of lathis without protest. This was the spell of Gandhi. His words were as good as command of a general, none of his followers even for a single moment thought to go against it.

The Government felt the mood of the people. Despite unprecedented repression, the tempo of the movement was rising every day. The Government was eager to come to terms. Gandhi and the members of the Congress Working Committee were released on January 26, 1931. Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. Though no demands of the Congress were conceded, the very fact that the all powerful British Government had to bow down to sign a pact with the leader of the people of India was in itself an achievement of sorts for the Indian people. The civil disobedience movement was suspended temporarily to pave the way for the Second Round Table Conference. True, nothing substantial achieved as a result of the civil disobedience movement, it reflected for the first time before the world the power of truth and non-violence. To quote Louis Fisher, "The British beat the Indian with batons and rifle butts. The Indians neither cringed nor retreated. That made England powerless and India invincible."⁶¹ This apart, the salt satyagraha which received such an unprecedented response shook for the first time in Indian history the very foundation of the British Empire. This was indirectly a victory of Gandhi's leadership.

Gandhi left for London as per his agreement with Irwin to attend the Second Round Table Conference from September to December in 1931. The Conference was totally a failure. Gandhi returned on December 28, 1931. He was immediately put to arrest on the plea that on his way back at Rome he had given a press statement that he would restart the civil disobedience movement. The British Government, it appeared, was simply playing with time. Worst kind of repression was imposed. The Congress organization was proscribed. Under new ordinance anybody could be arrested under suspicion. Gandhi restarted the civil disobedience movement.

On the issue of the Communal Award, Gandhi took fast unto death. He was released from the jail on May 8, 1933. He took the decision to suspend the mass civil disobedience movement with immediate effect quoting the ground that the Congress had not in actuality accepted the non-violent methodology. But Gandhi admitted, "It has raised Indian from the slough of despond and has brought her prestige which nothing else could have. I make bold to say that, if the non-violence offered had not been adulterated, its effect would have been still more visible."⁶² Withdrawing himself totally from the movement Gandhi turned his attention towards the untouchable problem. Gandhi was not only a political reformer but a social reformer too. During this period of retirement from active politics Gandhi took up the mission as a revivalist.

Though Gandhi had withdrawn from active politics, he was all along a guiding force behind the scene. The Second World War came. Once again the Congress felt the leadership crisis because Gandhi was not making direct interference into its day-to-day activities. When India was declared as a belligerent country by the British Government the Congress in its resolution in September 1939, seriously resented this attitude since the consent of the Indian people was not obtained.⁶³

During this period once again the significance of Gandhi to lead the Congress was seriously felt imperative. Gandhi assumed the leadership. In fact, the Congress turned to Gandhi after the Viceroy made his phoney "August offer", which promised to concede nothing but only sought co-operation from the Congress in an advisory capacity. A resolution adopted by the All India Congress Committee on September 16, 1940 clearly stated, "The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom, the All India Congress Committee, therefore,

requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken.”⁶⁴

Gandhi was again in the forefront. It was the intention of the Congress to restart the passive resistance applying non-violent methods. But Gandhi was against such intention of the Congress. He did not want to embarrass the British Government. He declared, “We do not seek our independence out of Britain’s ruin. That is not the way of non-violence.”⁶⁵ He further elaborated, “At a time when the British people are fighting for their existence and are risking their lives and their all, no satyagrahi will ask ‘Are you going to give us Swaraj now or not?’ He will remain quiet. He will say, ‘Why fight against an opponent in trouble?’ We cannot start the battle of Swaraj now on the assumption that they will give us nothing after they have won the war. It is not the way of satyagrahis to take advantage of the opponent’s weak position to wrest political power from him. We have to wrest power with our own strength. We, therefore, tell them: ‘At this hour of trial we do not wish to harass you.’⁶⁶ Gandhi had full confidence in himself that he could lead the masses the way he liked, and at the same his concept of non-violence did not teach him to take advantage at the cost of opponent’s weakness, though his colleagues did not like this idea including Jawaharlal Nehru. Even Nehru had remarked in October 1940, “It is perfectly true that Gandhiji is very disturbing occasionally. There is no question of blind faith, so far as I am concerned or many others.” However, Nehru’s statement on May 20, 1940, was curious, “Launching a civil disobedience campaign at a time when Britain is engaged in life and death struggle would be an act derogatory to India’s honour” In fact, the situation in India was such at that time that Nehru, like his other colleagues in the Congress, was at a loss, though in his heart’s sanctum he had full support for Gandhi. Maulana Azad

comments that the then leaders of the Congress though not fully convinced were contented to follow Gandhi. "They rarely tried to judge things on their own, and in case they were accustomed to subordinate their judgment to Gandhiji... After all our discussions, the only thing they could say was that we must have faith in Gandhiji. They held that if we trusted him he would find some way out."⁶⁷ Gandhi's leadership in the Congress was unquestionable.

It was a rare quality in Gandhi that he never doubted his opponent. He was always confident that good sense would prevail in the British statesmen, though Churchill's statement that he would "never move a yard" disillusioned him.

On the one hand if Gandhi discouraged mass civil disobedience movement in such a situation then on the other he made a call for individual satyagraha, but he only encouraged those to join who would be able to maintain the non-violent pledge. Gandhi explained the power of individual satyagraha, "In every great cause it is not the number of fighters that counts, but it is the quality of which they are made that becomes the deciding factor. The greatest men of the world have always stood alone. Take the great prophets, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad – they all stood alone like many others whom I can name."⁶⁸

The individual satyagraha, as a matter of fact, was a propaganda against the war, though ostensibly it was launched to restore the freedom of speech. Gandhi selected individuals to go from place to place to propagate not to help the British in war efforts, Gandhi's trusted lieutenant, Vinoba Bhave, was chosen to start this propagation. He went from village to village and delivered speech

against war, but he could not continue his effort for long, he was arrested just within a few days.

The individual satyagraha gradually witnessed the involvement of the rank and file members of the Congress. The individual satyagraha was slowly taking the character of mass movement. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Brahma Dutta were put behind the bar. The British Government became panicky because it was difficult for the Government to tackle both the internal and external situations simultaneously. The debacle at the Pearl Harbour was the last straw on the camel's back. On December 3, 1941 the Government issued official communiqué with an intention to somehow patch up with the Congress, "The government of India, confident in the determination of all responsible opinion in India to support the war effort until the victory is secured, have reached the conclusion that the civil disobedience prisoners whose offences have been formal or symbolic in character can be set free including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad."⁶⁹

The British Government was determined to fuse the individual satyagraha which had already taking the shape of mass character and to woo the Congress to join the war effort. The aggression upon Russia by Germany developed positive feeling in favour of war against the Imperialist adventure. At the Bardoli conference of the Congress Working Committee on December 23, 1941 it declared in favour of "armed resistance to the Axis as an ally of the United Nations provided India could mobilize under a National Government." Gandhi gave up the leadership post in order "to lead the Congress in the struggle for resistance to the war efforts on grounds in which non-violence was not indispensable."⁷⁰ Gandhi's offer of constructive programme together with a civil disobedience movement against anti-war activities was

ignored, though he was assured that the policy for the attainment of swaraj would continue. This was the death-knell on the Gandhian mode of individual satyagraha. Gandhi once again withdrew from active politics.

After the fall of Rangoon on March 8, 1942 the British Government became panicky and on March 11th it announced that Sir Stafford Cripps would visit India with certain terms of settlement between India and Great Britain. Cripps arrived at Delhi on March 23, 1942 with certain premeditated vague proposals, they were as phoney as the August offer. Again Gandhi had to be called out of his retirement to examine the contents of the offer. This proves Gandhi's indispensability to the Congress and the people of India. The Congress rejected the offer on two counts: a) the control and direction of the Defence of India were not going to be transferred to the representatives of the people; and b) rejection of the Congress' demand to establish a national government at the centre. The Muslim League rejected the offer since it did not concede the principle of Pakistan.⁷¹ In fact, the Congress wanted quick transfer of power because the Japanese were knocking at the doors, and hence there was no question of acceptance of the Cripps' offer. In reality, the Cripps' offer was simply ^{an}eyewash to please Roosevelt; it was never the intention of Churchill to concede anything substantial to India. To Gandhi the Cripps' offer was a post-dated cheque.

The failure of the Cripps' Mission has stunned the people. The Congress, under the leadership of Gandhi, was left with no option than to demand the exit of the British from India for good. Gandhi told the Congress sternly to maintain utmost discipline if they chose to follow him. The British propaganda machinery was trying to represent Gandhi as the tool of Japan, but the people were not that gullible to be misled.

America being champion to the cause of freedom for India found only a few people in support. Gandhi's slogan was "to throw the chains" of the British.⁷² Conferring full powers on Gandhi, the All-India Congress Committee passed the historic 'Quit India Resolution' on August 7th and 8th 1942 meeting at Bombay.

"The A. I. C.C. therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principle parties and groups in the country. ...Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with its Allied Powers... The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhi and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken... The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman,

who is participating in this movement, must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued."

After the All-India Congress Committee adopted the resolution, Gandhi advised the people, "Here is a mantra, a short one that I give you, and you may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The mantra is Do or Die"⁷³

Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy seeking an interview, but being frightened by the historic decision of the Congress the British Government arrested all its prominent leaders in the morning of August 9, 1942. The decision of the Government to nip the movement in the bud went haywire. The masses have become decontrolled, since there was no leader in the open to keep the people on a leash. There developed a feeling of intense bitterness and a mad fury engulfed the people. What Gandhi had deplored so long had come to happen. The rudderless people slowly drifted away from the path of non-violence. Jawaharlal Nehru writes, "The sudden unorganized demonstrations and outbreaks on the part of the people, culminating in violent conflicts and destruction, and continued against overwhelming and powerful armed forces, were a measure of the intensity of their feelings. Those feelings had been there even before the arrest of their leaders, but the arrests, and the frequent firings that followed them roused the people to anger, and to the only course that an enraged mob can follow... The people forgot the lesson of non-violence which had been dinned into their ears for more than twenty years..."⁷⁴

There were violent demonstrations almost all over India, but Gandhi is not to be blamed for all these happenings because he was not in the picture then. Being leaderless people behaved on their own way which they thought to be the best. Nobody knew what to do to

force the British "Quit India". In fact, before any course of action could be drawn up, all the leaders of eminence were taken into custody. The Government's action was preemptive in nature.

Frank Moraes draws a graphic picture of 1942 movement:

"There were peaceful hartals (strikes) and protest meetings, but there ^{were} also outbreaks of mob violence, arson, murder and sabotage. Students and workers were prominent in those demonstrations, which were sometimes dispersed by tear gas and baton charges and sometimes fired upon. In Ballia in the United Provinces crowds were machine – gunned from the air. According to the Government of India's own figures for the period from August to December, 1942, the police and military had opened fire on demonstrating crowds, some of them violent, as many as 538 times, killing 940 and wounding 1,630 persons. Nehru", who thought these figures grossly underestimated, later put the number of those who killed at about 10,000. By the end of 1942 over 60,000 had been arrested.

"The initial damage and destruction done by the violent mobs were considerable. Official statements for this period give the following statistics : 250 railway stations damaged or destroyed ; 550 post offices attacked; 50 post offices burned; 200 post offices damaged; telegram and telephone wires were cut at 3,500 places; 70 police stations burned and 85 other government buildings destroyed. In addition the military casualties were 11 dead and 7 wounded, while the number of police killed was 31, the total of those injured being destroyed as "very large".

"The public reaction was undoubtedly strong, widespread, and in many places violent."⁷⁵

The Government's action in suppressing the movement was brutal in nature; however, the movement gave a terrible jolt to its very foundation in India. The British Government had been made to rethink once again on the continuation of its rule in India. The "Quit India" movement, on the whole, demonstrated before the world "India's irrepressible will to be free." "All sections of Indian opinion may be said to be at one in support of the demand for the immediate transference of power and the establishment of a national Government," reported the then Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government on September 2, 1942.⁷⁶ Even public opinion in England was in favour of acceding independence to India.

It is a fact 1942 movement deviated from the path of non-violence in most of the places, but it happened due to over-enthusiasm, and at the same time Gandhi's unexpected arrest had also infuriated the people against the Government. However, it is claimed that those engaged in sabotage activity had "conscientiously striven to avoid personal injury to anyone in carrying out their programmes."⁷⁷ Wherever the people contained themselves to cross the limit, it was due to indirect influence of Gandhi's appeal.

In order to justify its act of the arrest of the leaders, the British Government took shelter of disinformation and accused Gandhi and the Congress of "premeditated violence." Gandhi undertook 21 days of marathon fast in protest against this accusation and also to lodge his protest against the rising trend of violence. Even Field – Marshal Smuts, Gandhi's erstwhile opponent for almost twenty years in South Africa, could not contain his indignation, "It is sheer nonsense to talk of Gandhi as a fifth-columnist... He is one of the great men of the world and he the last person to be placed in that category. He is dominated by high spiritual ideals... Whether those ideals are always practicable

in our difficult world may be questioned, but that Gandhi is a great patriot, a great man and a great spiritual leader who can doubt?"⁷⁸

Gandhi was released on June 29, 1944. Hopes were raised that now something substantial would happen. It is true there was no leader of his magnitude in India, but he did not want to take this credit. He called every Congressman his own leader and competent enough to take his own decision within the parameters of truth and non-violence.⁷⁹

On Gandhi's faculty as a leader, Nehru writes, "To the vast majority of India's people he is the symbol of India determined to be free, of militant nationalism, of a refusal to submit to arrogant might, of never agreeing to anything involving national dishonour. Though many people in India may disagree with him on a hundred matters, though they may criticize him or even part company from him on some particular issue, at a time of action and struggle when India's freedom is at stake they flock to him again and look up to him as their inevitable leader."⁸⁰

Gandhi relied too much on the capacity of the people to stick to his principle of non-violence, there his assessment went wrong. Gandhi also realised and admitted this fact when his appeal could not contain violence, "The people do not have my ahimsa. And therefore I have to take a risk, if I cannot curb their violence... Violence, which is due to the weakness of human nature, is bound to be there. Crores of people in the country have no weapons... However, we shall try our best to prevent violence."⁸¹

When Gandhi was in prison, the Muslim League was gradually strengthening itself and propagating the concept of Pakistan. He tried his level best to come to a compromise with Jinnah but failed.

The war was over and the British were eager to leave power. Partition of India became inevitable with the Mountbatten Declaration in 1947. 'In order to preserve the country's unity, Gandhi was often prepared to give concessions to the Muslim League beyond what his colleagues would concede.'⁸² But he could not prevent the vivisection of the country. Though he was a frustrated man, Gandhi left no stone unturned to save the communal carnage, which was the result of the Muslim League's Direct Action Day declaration at Calcutta on August 16, 1946.

A couple of weeks before the Independence Day in 1947, an emissary of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabh Patel went to meet Gandhi at Calcutta. There Gandhi was busy maintaining peace and harmony among the Hindus and the Muslims. Gandhi was handed over a letter in which it was written, "Bapu", you are the Father of the Nation, Fifteenth of August will be the first Independence Day in 1947 and we want you to come to Delhi and give us your blessings." Gandhi replied, "How stupid! When Bengal is burning, Hindus and Muslims are killing each other and I hear the cries of their agony in the darkness of Calcutta, how can I go to Delhi which will be glittering with the lights ? I have to live here for the establishment of peace in Bengal and if need be, I have to give up my life ensuring that there is harmony and peace."⁸³

Gandhi fought throughout his life as a crusader to uphold the principles of Truth and Non-violence. He was unparalleled as a leader and the cynosure of eyes of all the Indians. He applied his love force to establish peace and harmony and resist hatred. To sum up:

“There is no parallel in human history of one individual staking his own life for upholding what he believed to be true and trying to fight hatred with love and compassion in his heart.”⁸⁴

II

“An only son of prosperous parents is apt to be spoilt, especially so in India. And when that son happens to have been an only child for the first eleven years of his existence there is little hope for him to escape this spoiling” – these are the starting sentences of Nehru’s autobiography. True, Jawaharlal Nehru was the most pampered child, but he would be spoilt, it did not fit into his personality. He was one of the destiny makers of India side by side with Gandhi, though the period between 1919 and 1947 was the age of Gandhi but after 1947 till 1964 it was Nehru who was the domineering figure in the history of India.

Born in an aristocratic family Jawaharlal had all the comforts at home. Accessibility to English education at home and abroad introduced him to English ways of life and thoughts. Humanitarian and liberal tradition of the nineteenth century too left their impression upon him. Though Jawaharlal claims that his childhood days were “sheltered and uneventful”,⁸⁵ this statement is partially true. His father Motilal’s close affinity with Englishmen did not leave Jawaharlal untouched, rather he began to admire the English.⁸⁶ Similarly his seven years’ stay at Britain and his taste of English literature and social life, Jawaharlal admits at a later stage that he had become “a queer mixture of the East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere.”⁸⁷ Such was Jawaharlal in the beginning not knowing where he would be fitted, ‘I am a stranger and alien in the West, I cannot be of it. But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile’s feeling.’⁸⁸

Nehru’s first encounter with Gandhi in 1916 was not that significant, but later Gandhi became his rival father figure.⁸⁹ Although the non-cooperation movement was abruptly withdrawn by Gandhi, it received a tremendous response from the masses and for the first time

Nehru also received an opportunity to have a glimpse of the nature of the national movement. He writes, "A new picture of India seemed to rise before me, naked, starving, crushed and miserable."⁹⁰ This sight has filled Nehru with a new sense of responsibility.

Nehru began to believe that non-cooperation was the only political way in view of the ineffectiveness of earlier strategies. He wrote, "I am an ardent believer in non cooperation with all that implies and I am firmly convinced that non-cooperation and no other course will bring us victory."⁹¹

Nehru felt highly enthusiastic and it was his desire to join the satyagraha movement immediately irrespective of the consequences. "I was afire with enthusiasm and wanted to join the Satyagraha Sabha immediately. I hardly thought of the consequences law – breaking, jail-going, etc. – and if I thought of them I did not care."⁹² Henceforth, we find, Nehru became the ardent supporter of Gandhi and tried to keep his political activities within the Gandhian dictates.

On the impact of satyagraha on the people Nehru writes, "Of course these movements exercised tremendous pressure on the British Government and shook the government machinery. But their real importance, to my mind, lay in the effect they had on our people, and especially the village masses... Non-cooperation dragged them out of this mire and gave them self-respect and self-reliance; they developed the habit of co-operative action; they acted courageously and did not submit so easily to unjust oppression; their outlook widened and they began to think a little in terms of India as a whole; they discussed political and economic questions (crudely no doubt) in their bazaars and meeting places. The lower middle classes were affected in the same way but the change in the masses was the most significant. It

was a remarkable transformation and the Congress, under Gandhiji's leadership, must have the credit for it."⁹³

This is the beginning of the role of Gandhi as a political mentor of young Nehru. It seems Gandhi's ideology of non-violence non-cooperation has stirred deeply the young mind of Nehru, though sometime he felt skeptic at its effectiveness, but it appeared to him a sound practical politics. "What I admired was the moral and ethical side of our movement and of satyagraha. I did not give an absolute allegiance to the doctrine of non-violence or accept it for ever, but it attracted me more and more, and the belief grew upon me that, situated as were in India and with our background and traditions it was the right policy for us."⁹⁴

In fact, it offered to him what he desired, that is the goal of national freedom. With its application he wanted to put an end to the exploitation of the underdog. If on the one hand it gave him a sense of personal freedom then on the other a fulfillment to his moral sense. "So great was this personal satisfaction that even a possibility of failure did not count for much, for such failure could only be temporary"⁹⁵

Initially Gandhi's concept of satyagraha did not find much favour with Anand Bhawan, but the news of the Amritsar massacre accomplished that what could not be achieved by Gandhi's long persuasion. The passage of the Rowlett Act drove the last nail-Motilal Nehru, the father of Jawaharlal took a decision to voluntarily give up both his luxurious way of life and his lucrative profession as a lawyer to join the Gandhian bandwagon of satyagrahi. Jawaharlal too decided to join. The Gandhian spell both on the father and the son was complete. The son also gave up his legal profession. "Jallianwala Bagh was a

turning point... This is when the family came much closer to Mahatma Gandhi and our whole way of life changed."⁹⁶

In 1920 Jawaharlal was totally ignorant of labour conditions in Indian factories or fields. His political outlook was also bourgeois, though he was aware of the existence of terrible poverty and misery. Therefore, he felt that his first aim was to achieve a politically free India in order to tackle this problem of poverty. He had also started paying a little more attention to the peasant problem since Gandhi's agrarian movement. This new interest played an important part in his later years in life. 'I got entangled in the kisan (peasant) movement. That entanglement grew in later years and influenced my mental outlook greatly..."⁹⁷

Nehru was now gradually being groomed to be a matured politician. He writes, "These peasants took away the shyness from me and taught me to speak in public. Till then I hardly spoke at a public gathering...Perhaps many of them could not understand a great deal of what I said. My language or my thought was simple enough for them. Many did not hear me when the gathering was very large for my voice did not carry far. But all this did not matter much to them when once they had given their confidence and faith to a person."⁹⁸

"Go to the villages" was Gandhi's slogan. Nehru trudged many miles across fields and visited distant villages. He took to the crowd and the crowd accepted him, but still he felt apart from them. He wonders that despite his being different in every way from those thousands who surrounded him, different in habits, in desires, in mental and spiritual outlook, had managed to gain goodwill and a measure of confidence from these people. He questions, "Was it because they took me for something other than I was ?" In fact, he was right in his doubt.

The people tried to see in him Gandhi's image. Nehru missed out the point that he was representing Gandhi, his mentor. However, this fact was true only in the beginning of Nehru's political career, but gradually he could build up his own image and identify himself in the crowd.

Motilal accepted non-violence not as a principle but as a timely necessity. Jawaharlal also could not accept it wholly as a principle, but he was fascinated by its elevating qualities and its spellbinding effect on the people. However, sometime he doubted whether the empires founded on the principle of violence could be shaken by non-violence. But he tried to keep his doubts at bay when he observed massive popular response. It proves Jawaharlal was a follower of Gandhi, but a blind follower. He accepted the non-violent methodology wholeheartedly as the only practical programme which the Congress could prepare and pursue. The leadership of Gandhi had to be accepted because there was none of Gandhi's genius either inside or outside the Congress whose leadership appealed to the masses.

The year 1927 was a turning point in the history of the Indian National Congress. In this year for the first time, at Nehru's initiative, the Indian National Congress adopted a resolution, which proclaimed loudly complete independence for the people of India. It was quite strange, though Gandhi attended this session, he did not even participate in deliberation. Even later Gandhi called this resolution as passed in haste and thoughtless one.⁹⁹

When the Second Round Table Conference ended on December 1, 1931 without any result, Gandhi decided to launch non-violent non-cooperation movement. The Government was prepared for this eventuality, it took all repressive measures to suppress this mass uprising. All the prominent leaders of the movement were imprisoned.

All of a sudden Gandhi decided to suspend the movement, though there was tremendous response and enthusiasm amongst the people. Gandhi decided to go on a 'fast unto death'¹ in protest against Ramsay Macdonald's grant of a separate electorate to the 'Depressed Classes' in India. Nehru felt extremely annoyed and disappointed with Gandhi, 'And then I felt annoyed with him for choosing a side – issue for his final sacrifice - just a question of electorate. What would be the result on our freedom movement? Would not the larger issues fade into the background, for the time being at least? After so much sacrifice and brave endeavour, was our movement to tail off into something insignificant?'¹⁰⁰ Even he felt angry at Gandhi's religious and sentimental approach to a political question and his frequent references to God in connection with every trifle political issue. The more he thought the more Nehru became confused and angry at his own helplessness because he was unable to do anything at this sudden turn of political event. But he loved Gandhi since he knew Gandhi was the motivating force behind this upheaval.

But suddenly Nehru realized that he was wrong in terms of his assessment of Gandhi's decision. He admits, "Bapu had a curious knack of doing the right thing at the psychological moment, it might be that his action-impossible to justify as it was from my point of view-would lead to great results, not only in the narrow field in which it was confined, but in the wider aspects of our national struggle."¹⁰¹

It seems Nehru has become further awestruck when he finds that at Gandhi's behest the curse of untouchability appears to be vanished from the Hindu society at the drop of a hat:

"Then came news of the tremendous upheaval all over the country, a magic wave of enthusiasm running through Hindu society,

and untouchability appeared to be doomed. What a magician, I thought, was this little man sitting in Yeravda Prison, and how well he knew how to pull the strings that move people's hearts!"¹⁰²

In February 1927, Nehru was authorised by the Congress to represent it at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels. This meeting at Brussels was held under the auspices of the Communist International, which was guided and financed by Russia. While in Brussels, Nehru received an invitation to visit Russia.

Nehru was 37 years old and full of enthusiasm. Moreover, he was the Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee as well. At the Congress Nehru was highly critical of the British rule in India, even he moved a resolution which extended support to the nationalist movement. Besides at his initiative the members at the Congress demanded immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from China.

Long before independence, Nehru was gradually gravitating towards internationalism and had begun to view India against international backdrop. He advocated in favour of a need to unite all colonial and dependant peoples. After his short visit to Moscow in November 1927, he developed an inclination towards the concept of socialism. His four days' stint in the U.S.S.R. had left such a profound impression that he began to call himself a socialist. He said, 'I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican. We must realize that the philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods of advance to its full realization. India will have to go that way, too, if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race.'¹⁰³

1927 was also a crucial year for Jawaharlal. At the Brussels Congress he had been able to present his views forcefully and effectively and his presence felt amongst the members present. He was now recognised as an important spokesman for India. His prestige increased both at home and abroad. He admits that his European sojourn has broadened his outlook and he has been able to see India from a distance. He writes, "Until then I was so involved in Indian affairs that I had little time to think about the broad world or about life's problems in general."¹⁰⁴

The communist philosophy of life gave Nehru comfort and hope.¹⁰⁵ He had a conviction that real swaraj and socialism are interrelated and inseparable. He explains, "The second ideal, of socialism, indeed includes the first (swaraj), and it may be said that real world order and peace will come when socialism is realized on a world scale."¹⁰⁶

Gandhi was aware of Nehru's change in way of thinking and efforts. He warned Nehru, "I feel that you love me too well to resent what I am about to write. In any case, I love you too well to restrain my pen when I feel I must write.

'You are going too fast. You should have taken time to think and become acclimatized.'¹⁰⁷

Gandhi knew this change in Nehru was in consequence of the latter's visit to Moscow. When Nehru wrote about communism and Russia, Gandhi understood what Nehru was pointing at. In frustration he wrote another letter to Nehru, '...I see quite clearly that you must carry an open warfare against my views and me. For, if I am wrong I am evidently doing irreparable harm to the country and it is your duty after having known it to rise in revolt against me. Or, if you have any

doubt as to the correctness of your conclusions, I shall gladly discuss them with you personally, The differences between you and me appear to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us.”¹⁰⁸

In spite of admitting difference with Jawaharlal from time to time, Gandhi pushed Nehru to the forefront in Indian politics. Even Gandhi played a leading role in Nehru getting elected to the chair of the President of the Congress not less than three times and also making him second-in-command in the Congress after him.

True, Gandhi could be vocal in public to criticize Nehru, but in his heart he had profound fondness for the latter; for Gandhi Nehru was an indispensable comrade ‘so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest.”¹⁰⁹ In order to make the Congress more powerful and dynamic Gandhi wanted to rope in the youth force and young Jawaharlal seemed to him the right choice for this task. Therefore, he could not afford to lose Jawaharlal at any cost in spite of the latter’s radical views. Jawaharlal too knew his indispensability, but he also knew that his privileged place in the Congress was only due to Gandhi. Though Gandhi could be critical in public against his disciple, Jawaharlal imposed restraint on himself, he could not even think of breaking away from his guru. Sometimes Jawaharlal showed his extreme submissiveness, “No one has moved me and inspired me more than you and I can never forget your exceeding kindness to me. There can be no question of our personal relations suffering. But in the wider sphere am I not your child in politics, though perhaps a truant and errant child?”¹¹⁰

Jawaharlal never entertained the idea that his letters of discord written to Gandhi should ever be published and made public by

Gandhi. "I do not quite appreciate your suggestion to publish my previous letters and to comment on it. Should you wish it of course you can do so. But it was an entirely personal letter and I do not see why the public should concern itself with it." Even he tried to convince Gandhi that he had no intention either to criticize or defend anything against Gandhi's wishes. He warned Gandhi against believing everything that appeared in the newspapers. "The other day I spoke at Benares at a public meeting I spoke in Hindi and my speech was wholly distorted in the English report and I was made to say something which I had never thought of. This was commented upon by the Tribune of Lahore and may be other papers, and it was made out that I was attacking you. This was a monstrous notion as I had not referred to you or thought of you in that connection. I have sent a contradiction. This is danger of this happening and I would beg of you not to believe such reports and to give me credit for greater sense and courtesy."¹¹¹

Nehru's political activities never exceeded the parameters set up by Gandhi; political exigencies impelled these two leaders to work in tandem. Maintaining unity in Congress ranks was of prime concern to both of them. Nehru was a link between two generations of Congress leadership, one representing the conservative old guard and the other the socialist radicals, yet he carried respect of both.

Nehru was elected President of the Indian National Congress for the second successive term in 1937. In the same year elections to the provincial Legislative Assemblies were held. Nehru's propagation of the ideas of independence, agrarian reforms and socialism won a landslide victory for the Congress. But the victory did not give much benefit since the expectations of the people were many and the Congress had its limitations because for every concession the party had to look at the British Government with begging eyes. Nehru writes, "This

dissatisfaction found expression in the Congress itself and the more advanced elements grew restive. I was myself unhappy at the trend of events as I noticed that our fine fighting organisation was being converted gradually into just an electioneering organization."¹¹²

Nehru had no intention to continue as President of the Congress in such a situation, though there was a rumour afloat that he would be re-elected. To silence such rumourmongers Nehru published anonymously an article in the 'Modern Review' of Calcutta opposing his own re-election.¹¹³ Subhas Chandra Bose was elected President of the Congress instead. Bose could not continue for long despite his being re-elected. His attempt to change the policy of the Congress to demand full independence within six months, if not conceded then to go for civil disobedience did not find favour with Gandhi. At Tripuri Congress in 1939, the rift widened further. Bose could not tolerate insult when he was forced by a resolution to select an executive consulting Gandhi that was also after winning in the election. He tendered his resignation. Though Nehru did not support the rightists, he could not come openly in favour of Bose either, because that would have put the very existence of the Congress in jeopardy. Nehru writes, "He did not approve of any step being taken by the Congress which was anti-Japanese or anti-German or anti-Italian. We passed many resolutions and organized many demonstrations of which he did not approve during the period of his Presidentship... There was a big difference in outlook between him and others in the Congress Executive, both in regard to foreign and internal matters and this led to a break early in 1939."¹¹⁴

Even being in tune with the ethos of Indian nationalism, it was impossible for any variety of leftism acceptable to the Congress except that of Gandhi and Nehru. Though Gandhi set out flexible parameters

both for the rightists and for the leftist to operate, he could not allow them to deviate from the path of non-violence. He who tried to break through this Gandhian cordon, he was lost. Subhas Bose lost only because he wanted to cross the barrier set by Gandhi. Nehru was a shrewd politician. He knew his limits. Though he brought radical changes in the character of the Congress, he was careful enough not to transgress the Gandhian parameters. In the fray all other ultra-socialists lost their ground, but Nehru smoothly sailed on with his socialistic concept.

Though Nehru claimed himself to be a socialist, he never joined the Congress Socialist Party nor did he take the side of M. N. Roy or Subhas Bose. He was the most popular leader next only to Gandhi. Therefore all sought him after: the Gandhians, the Communists, the Socialists, the Royists etc. but he did not identify himself with any of the camps. True, the personality of Gandhi holds a tremendous influence upon him, but he was not a true Gandhian. In fact, the remark made by Nehru in December 1929 evinces his actual intellectual leaning, "I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and am no believer in kings and princes or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even the kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy."¹¹⁵

The proclamation of India at war by the Viceroy on September 3, 1939 automatically made India a belligerent nation, which was not liked by the Congress. The Congress felt that the British took the people of India for a ride. At its Working Committee meeting at Wardha between September 8 and 15, 1939, the Congress issued the following statement: "The British Government have declared India as a belligerent country promulgated Ordinances, passed the Government

of India Act Amending Bill, and taken many other far reaching measures which affect the Indian people vitally, and circumscribe and limit the powers and activities of the provincial governments. This has been done without the consent of the Indian people whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government. The Working Committee must take the gravest view of these developments." This statement was Nehru's draft.

Gandhi's child – like simplicity and deep commitment to the creed of non-violence could never permit him to be a party to the British war policy. Nehru maintained a different view. He disapproved of Fascism and Nazism, but he was not in favour of British imperialism either. His pride could never allow him to make a humble appeal to Hitler, like Gandhi, to desist from war. Nehru wrote, "To condemn Fascism and seek to defend or maintain imperialism is illogical and absurd."¹¹⁶ "Our war resistance policy is of vital importance to us... our anti war policy must therefore be based on freedom and democracy and opposition to Fascism and imperialism."¹¹⁷ The Congress Working Committee demanded equality of status and freedom before it decided on the issue of co-operation with the British. However, it deferred its final decision and made an appeal to the British Government to clearly define its war objectives as well as its future policy towards India. But this appeal of the Congress was not given any importance; rather it was interpreted by the Government as its refusal to co-operate. Even Gandhi's expression of sympathies with the allies failed to influence the Government.¹¹⁸ The Government had no desire to enter into any bargain with the Congress on the war issue. "I am authorized by His Majesty's Government to say that at the end of the war they will be very willing to enter into consultation with representatives of the several communities, parties and interests in India, and with the Indian princes,

with a view to securing their aid and co-operation in the framing of such modifications as might seem desirable,"¹¹⁹ the Viceroy issued the statement on October 17, 1939. This statement was a clear indication that the British Government had simply tried to ignore the very existence of the Congress as a party representing Indians.

Though Gandhi expressed his serious reservation on this declaration, he was not ready to opt for any drastic step. As stated above, Nehru professed a different view. He was ready to extend all possible assistance to Government but, he kept a precondition, provided India became a sovereign nation. For Gandhi it was very simple he would not compromise on his principle of non-violence. The view of Nehru was echoed by the Working Committee, which met again at Wardha on 17 to 20 June 1940. In fact, it was a novel thing in the Congress to differ from Gandhi. Never did such a thing happen before in the history of the Congress.

The failure of the Cripps' mission, and the adoption of 'Quit India' resolution under the leadership of Gandhi led the British Government to ban the All-India Congress Committee and arrest all the prominent leaders including Jawaharlal. By this time Gandhi had already declared Jawaharlal as his legal heir. The British authorities were trying their level best to dismember the country. The "Direct Actions" of the Muslim League and the subsequent attitude of the British Government made the partition inevitable.

Britain won the battle in 1945, but it was after all a Pyrrhic victory. The loss in manpower and economic resources she suffered was colossal in nature. The year 1945 also marked the end of India's struggle for freedom. Clement Attlee's statement on February 10, 1947 virtually fixed up a date for the British to quit. The Mountbatten Plan of

3 June, 1947 presented a scheme of India's partition. Though the All India Congress Committee accepted it in its meeting on June 15, 1947, it expressed its hope "that when present passions subside, India's problems would be viewed in their proper perspective and the false doctrine of two nations would be discredited and discarded by all." This resolution was adopted in the presence of Gandhi. Gandhi who had just on 31 March 1947 said to Maulana. Azad that if the Congress wished to accept partition it would be over his dead body, kept mum.¹²⁰ But it is also a fact that Gandhi was against partition and he remained so till the partition was brought about. The matter of the fact was that in front of Nehru and Patel, Gandhi's voice proved feeble. His trusted lieutenants dominated the Congress and he was sidetracked. Nehru said in 1960, "The truth is that we were tired men and we were getting on in years too. Few of us could stand the prospect of going to prison again and if we had stood out for a united India as we wished it, prison obviously awaited us."¹²¹ This was an unbelievable excuse.

India was proclaimed an independent country on August 15, 1947 with Jawaharlal Nehru becoming the first prime minister. It was no time for Jawaharlal to rejoice because yawning before him were a multitude of problems left behind by the British as a legacy of its misrule of more than one hundred and fifty years. After partition India was now a truncated country, though at the stroke of the midnight hour it awoke to life and freedom. To Nehru, "...a living thing is cut into two, with tremendous loss of blood and loss of all manner of things. Everything is cut up, our army, our postal services, telegraph services, telephone services, irrigation services; all governmental machinery is suddenly cut in two."¹²²

For seventeen long years Nehru continued to remain the prime minister. He was generally outspoken and never kept his objectives

secret. Though Gandhi refused to accept any official post, he continued to remain Nehru's adviser so long as he survived and even after his death Jawaharlal claimed that Gandhi was his source of inspiration whenever he faced any political dilemma. Be that as it may, it was Nehru who tremendously felt the void after Gandhi was gone because there was none of Gandhi's stature to which he could go and seek immediate shelter in case of any serious crisis.

"The light has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. For the light that shone in this country was no ordinary light. The light that has illumined this country for these many years will illumine this country for many more years, and a thousand years later, that light will still be seen in this country and the world will see it and it will give solace to innumerable hearts. For that light represented something more than the immediate present, it represented the living, the eternal truths, reminding us of the right path, drawing us from error, taking this ancient country to freedom.

"All this has ~~happened~~ when there was so much more for him to do. We could never think that he was unnecessary or that he had done his task. But now, particularly, when we are faced with so many difficulties, his not being with us is a blow most terrible to bear."¹²³

So long Gandhi was alive Nehru thought the former's guidance indispensable and during the country's independence movement Gandhi's leadership irreplaceable, because according to Nehru, it was only Gandhi who fully understood the psyche of the Indian masses and has the capacity to sway them at his will.

Sardar Patel was always a competitor of Nehru. Both professed different views – if one was called the rightist then the other leftist, accordingly the Congress was also split into two wings, but both the

leaders were indispensable for the health of the Congress. Gandhi was aware of this fact : he could not afford to lose any one of them, but he had obviously a soft corner for Nehru. Since 1929, Nehru was virtually Gandhi's nominee. Similarly in 1937 and 1946, Gandhi convinced Patel to withdraw his candidature and leave the post of the President of Congress in Nehru's favour.

Nehru was free from any provincial or caste preference or communal prejudice. His English education and taste of English culture had broadened his outlook. He represented the democratic forces in India. He was more acceptable to the masses and enjoyed their support. Whereas with Sardar Patel, it was different. He was popular, but only amongst certain sections of the people. He lacked the cool-headedness of Nehru. Gandhi wanted a successor who could sway the masses but not only the certain sections of the people. Therefore, Gandhi's choice fell on Nehru. Nehru also did not feel unique. He always identified himself with the mass and moved with it. This was Nehru's typicality. But Patel had an iron will, however, Nehru could be swayed by changing situation. For the sake of maintaining unity in the Congress, Gandhi did not want any spit in between Patel and Nehru, since both of them had equal grip over the party. Having feared that after he was gone Patel and Nehru would part ways, Gandhi made Patel to take a vow that he would never split with Nehru. Jawaharlal had all the appreciation for Patel, though the latter misunderstood the former's secularism, ¹²⁴ "It has stressed me beyond measure to read in newspapers and otherwise learn of whisperings about vital differences between Sardar Patel and myself. Of course, there have been for many years past differences between us, temperament and others in regard to many problems. But India at least should know that these differences have been over-shadowed by fundamental agreements

about the most important aspects of our public life and that we have co-operated together for a quarter of a century or more in great undertakings. We have been sharers in joy and sorrow alike. Is it likely that at this crisis in our national destiny either of us should be petty-minded and think of anything but the national good? May I pay my tribute of respect and admiration to Sardar Patel not only for his life-long service to the nation but also for the great work he has done since he and I have served together in the Government of India? He has been a brave captain of our people in war and peace, stouthearted when others might have wavered, and a great organizer. It has been my privilege to have been associated with him for these many years and my affection for him and appreciation of his great qualities have grown with the passing of time."¹²⁵

But Patel's greatness lies in the fact that when Gandhi declared Jawaharlal as his heir and successor, he never expressed his dissatisfaction rather he appreciated the decision of Gandhi and described Nehru as his leader whenever he found an opportunity. On 14 November 1948, it is said that Patel had uttered, "Mahatma Gandhi named Pandit Nehru as his heir and successor. Since Gandhiji's death we have realized that our leader's judgement was correct."¹²⁶

Sardar Patel died late in 1950 and with his demise a rightist leader and a true colleague was gone who was a real challenge to Nehru's authority.

Nehru claimed ^{himself} to be a socialist, and therefore propagated the view that socialism is the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems. He writes, "...When I use this word I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific, economic sense. Socialism is, however, something even more than an economic

doctrine, it is a philosophy of life and as such also it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure... In short, it means a new civilization, radically different from the present capitalist order."¹²⁷

Nehru confessed in his 'Autobiography' that he owed too much to England in make up "ever to feel wholly alien to her." Nehru's ideological evolution began with liberalism. He writes that his roots are embedded in the nineteenth century and he has been too much influenced by the humanist liberal tradition. Then he turned towards Fabian socialism, in which he found many issues in common with liberal philosophy. Subsequently he came in touch with Gandhism and developed a passion for it. But the influence turned into frustration with the failure of the passive resistance movement in 1919-1922, and he sought shelter in scientific socialism based on the Soviet model, though he disliked much "that has happened in Russia."¹²⁸ But about adoption of the Soviet model in the Indian context, he has reservation. "I do not want India to be drilled and forced into a certain position, because the costs of such drilling are too great; it is not worthwhile; it is not desirable from many points of view."¹²⁹ In fact, Nehru was not sure which political standpoint would be suitable in the Indian context. He did not develop any methodology of his own. He could have synthesized two or more philosophies and evolved his own, perhaps he was not sure how to proceed; therefore he simply exhibited a tendency to compromise with one or the other political ideologies. "Nothing is final; we must always learn from circumstances."¹³⁰ This reflects Nehru's lack of firmness in taking any final decision. "I have been and am a convinced socialist and a believer in democracy and have at the

same time accepted whole –heartedly the peaceful technique of non-violent action which Gandhiji has practised so successfully during the past twenty years.”¹³¹ From this interpretation it appears that socialism has been turned into an amorphous philosophy, but Nehru had no option. Soviet path to socialism was not in tune with India's requirements. To quote him, “Coming back to India, communism and socialism seem a far cry, unless the rush of external events force the pace here. We have not to deal with communism but, with the addition of an extra syllable, with communalism. And communally India is in a dark age. Men of action waste their energies on trivial things and intrigue and manoeuvre and try to over reach each other. Few of them are interested in trying to make the world a better, brighter place.”¹³²

The Congress at its Avadi session adopted the goal of the establishment of a “socialistic pattern of society.” Nehru pronounced, “The Congress had always thought in terms of some socialistic pattern, but at Avadi it formally accepted that and put it in its creed.”¹³³ When the resolution was being passed no Congress leader dared to question Nehru's prudence, Nehru had the capability to assert his authority.

On the aspect of economic development, the Avadi Session also laid stress on development of public sector undertakings with an objective to realize the goal of equitable distribution of national wealth. With the adoption of this resolution Nehru became an architect of mixed economy. This happened because if on the one hand his emphasis was on the development of public sector then on the other he had no option than to allow private enterprises also to grow simultaneously. Since Nehru being a firm believer in the democratic set up he could not do away with existing system all of a sudden therefore capitalism was bound to prosper. However, in order to check the

growing inequalities he introduced a series of reforms and a system of planning.

For introducing socialist transformation of the country, Nehru wanted to play a long innings. He knew millions of his countrymen suddenly could not be made to think differently, neither could they be uprooted from a social fabric to which could they have been accustomed to for hundreds of thousands of years. Change would be there, he believed, but the process would be gradual so that he could win over the masses to extend their consent. Convinced was he that the people would give their consent spontaneously to socialistic change, but he was wrong. It seems he did not understand the Indian psyche fully unlike Gandhi. Unless there is a strong organizational structure in the backdrop, it is difficult to mobilize the masses. Perhaps Nehru ignored this fact. Had he been aware of this reality, he would not have spoken of ideology as late as 1964, "We have set before us certain values which belong to what might broadly be called a national ideology. Within the framework of this ideology there exist, of course, difference or rather, shade of differences."¹³⁴

Though Nehru could not realize his dream of socialistic pattern of society in his life time, it mattered little, since he continued to fight a lone battle like Gandhi throughout his life in favour of establishing a classless and casteless society. This was Nehru, a true adamant Nehru.

Nehru had faith in the democratic system of government. For him democracy was synonymous with equality. "Democracy if it means anything, means equality; not merely the equality of possessing a vote, but economic and social equality." About capitalism, he writes in his *Glimpse of World History*, "Capitalism means the very opposite; a few

people holding economic power and using this to their own advantage. They make laws to keep their own privileged position secure, anybody who breaks these laws becomes disturber of law and order whom society must punish. Thus there is no equality under this system, and the liberty allowed is only within the limits of capitalist laws meant to preserve capitalism.”

Nehru had commitment to democracy because he thought it is the right means to achieve ends and because it is a peaceful method. It is also capable to remove the pressures, which other forms of government may impose on the individuals.¹³⁵ He wrote, “...Democracy means to me an attempt at the solution of problems by peaceful methods. If it is not peaceful, then, to my mind, it is not democracy.”¹³⁶

However, Nehru admitted that there is no equality between the pauper who has a vote and the millionaire who has a vote too, but a millionaire can exercise his influence in hundreds of ways whereas a pauper is deprived of this power. In fact, there is no equality between the person who has tremendous educational advantages and the person who has had none. Therefore, Nehru says educationally, economically and otherwise, people differ greatly. “People will, I suppose, differ to some extent. All human beings are not equal in the sense of ability or capacity. But the whole point is that people should have equality of opportunity and that they should be able to go as far as they can go.”¹³⁷ This equality of opportunity can only come with democracy. But Nehru accepts that no democracy can exist for long in the midst of want and poverty and inequality.¹³⁸

Therefore, Nehru switched over to the five-year- plan system in India. His objective was to remove poverty and inequality. Though Nehru failed to achieve fully what he intended to achieve through the

system of five-year plan, his effort was genuine. If ever he went wrong then it was not entirely his fault, but to the greater extent it was the fault of his economic advisers, who failed in their attempt to translate into practice Nehru's vision. Though Nehru was the chairman of the planning commission, he was not apprised fully about its activities. As early as 1953, he wrote to V.T. Krishnamachari, who was the then Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission: "I am almost completely out of touch. Occasionally some paper may come to me. But the real job of planning is to think and discuss vital matters. Either this is done without my knowledge or this is not done at all, because I have no information about it."¹³⁹ Some of his planning advisers, such as Chintamani Deshmukh, maintained a bureaucratic attitude.¹⁴⁰ Nehru found little co-ordination between his aims and their policies.¹⁴¹ Be that as it may, Nehru's contribution to India's economic development cannot be belittled. Nehru played a pioneering role in setting up the Planning Commission and making economic planning an integral part of India's democratic system. Nehru is long dead, but the five-year plan system started by him is still going strong. Being a visionary, Nehru always looked into the future. Every end was not the end in itself but the beginning of a new end for him.

"I am myself a devotee of science and believe that the world will ultimately be saved, if it is to be saved, by the method and approach of science," Nehru said at Allahabad University on December 13, 1947. Nehru played a pivotal role in the development of modern science in India. He admitted that India had vast problems to face and to solve, "such as the problem of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people." He questions, "Who indeed can afford to ignore science

today?” He provides the answer himself, “At every turn we have to seek its aid. The future belongs to science and to those who make friends with science.”¹⁴² He feels that science alone is capable of solving all the problems besetting free India. Nehru was instrumental in establishing about thirty research laboratories all over India and five Indian Institutes of Technology at different centres. It was at Nehru's initiative the Parliament adopted the 'Science Policy Resolution' in 1958. If India of today is a power to be reckoned with in the world in terms of its development in science and technology then it is due to Nehru's initiative.

The British had done little in India to promote the development of science and technology. Nehru considered the scientific development as indispensable in Indian context. He knew India could accelerate its progress, though compared to other countries of the world it has a massive labour force. He started the tradition for the Prime Minister to preside over the annual sessions of the Indian Science Congress. He even periodically multiplied the funds earmarked in the budget for scientific research. Nehru extended his official support to the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, which was established in 1944. Similarly he also constituted the atomic energy commission. Nehru publicly gave his support to the proposal of Homi J. Bhabha to set up an atomic reactor in India. His contribution in the field of science and technology is immense and beyond any parallel in the history of India.

It is a fact, Nehru was in favour of growth of technology, but he was not in favour of compromising with human dignity at any time. “The very things that have brought wealth and prosperity to the entire world, that is, the growth of technology, industrialization and the rest – and may I say, in passing, that I am all in favour of the industrialization of India –

have also brought about the gradual and progressive turning of the human being into a machine. I think that is a very dangerous thing.”¹⁴³

For Nehru it would be a tragedy for humanity in spite of the tremendous growth of civilization in other ways, if the human mind loses its creative faculty and becomes more and more of a machine.¹⁴⁴ He was against any kind of exploitation be it physical or mental. He stood for perfect freedom of an individual. Therefore, it was incorporated in the Directive Principles of State Policy certain objectives, such as, eradication of inequality, a rise in the living standard in social, educational, economic and other spheres, and closing of the gap between various groups and classes in society through providing facilities and opportunities among individuals and groups residing in different areas or engaged in different occupations. When Nehru laid stress on assuring the dignity of the individual, he also simultaneously did not forget to accord prime importance to the unity of the nation as well. By including such rights, like Right to Equality, Right to Freedom, and Rights Against Exploitation in Fundamental Rights, the Government accorded constitutional guarantee to individual liberty. Though Nehru advocated for individual freedom, he did not forget to emphasise on giving due care to the freedom of other individuals also. To quote him “In a democratic society, the concept of individual freedom has to be balanced with social freedom and the relation of the individual with the social group. The individual must not infringe on the freedom of other individuals.”¹⁴⁵ Even he said that no results could be achieved so long as individual interests do not become allied with public interests.¹⁴⁶

Nehru always stressed on the development of the quality of an individual. Simultaneously with making advances in science and technology Nehru wanted the Indian people to remain attached to their

glorious ancient heritage. "We must look to the future and work for it purposely and with vigour, at the same time we must keep our past inheritance and derive sustenance from it. Change is essential, but continuity is also necessary. The future has to be built on the foundations laid in the past and the present. To deny the past and break with it completely is to uproot ourselves and sapless, dry up."¹⁴⁷ While emphasizing on discarding outdated customs and traditions, he did not like to break with the vital and life-giving portion of the past. He wrote, "We can never forget the ideals that have moved our race, the dreams of the Indian people through the ages, the wisdom of the ancients, the buoyant energy and love of life and nature of our forefathers, their spirit of curiosity and mental adventure, the daring of their thought, their splendid achievements in literature, art and culture, their love of truth and beauty and freedom, the basic values that they set up, their understanding of life's mysterious ways, their toleration of other ways than theirs, their capacity to absorb other peoples and their cultural accomplishments, to synthesize them and develop a varied and mixed culture; nor can we forget the myriad experiences which have built up our ancient race and lie embedded in our sub-conscious minds. We will never forget them or cease to take pride in that noble heritage of ours. If India forgets them she will no longer remain India and much that has made her our joy and pride will cease to be."¹⁴⁸ This was the true Nehru howsoever his detractors may try to level charge against him that he was an Englishman in the garb of an Indian. Never did Nehru try to segregate himself from his past root, rather he derived necessary succour from the past to continue the national movement to its final conclusion. Even through delving deep into the past, Nehru understood the capacity of the Indian people to adapt them to modern situation without giving up the basic values, which they acquired through the ages. He took advantage of this fact and led the Indian

masses together with Gandhi to the final goal of achieving freedom from the British domination.

Nehru believed in serving India to the best of his ability rather than calling himself the Prime Minister of India. He said once, "They call me the Prime Minister of India, but it would be appropriate if I were called the first servant of India. In this age, it is not titles and positions that matter but service."¹⁴⁹

India became independent on 15 August 1947. Nehru says that in spite of the long-drawn-out struggle that preceded it, it came in peace and good will. "Suddenly all bitterness of past conflict was forgotten and a new era of peace and friendship began. Our relations with Britain became friendly and we appeared to have no inherited problems and conflicts with any other country."¹⁵⁰

But that was not to be, Nehru went wrong. The long-cherished freedom brought in its wake the Partition followed by mass exodus and killings on both sides of the new frontier unprecedented in the history of world. The atrocities that were committed on the so-called unwanted people on both sides of the borders at the behest of the handfuls of the vested groups by way of forcing them out of their ancestral hearths and homes are beyond words. In fact, it was then thought that transfer of population of this huge dimension across the border was not possible. But this prediction proved absolutely wrong. Transfer did take place but in a most promiscuous manner, undefended and unprotected by any state, Had it been calculated beforehand that migration would take place then a plan could have been drawn up and in that case the loss of at least half-a-million life and unnecessary spilling of blood of either side could have been saved, and even there would have been rehabilitation without much difficulty and with far less cost. In fact,

Nehru had hoped, "...that the Partition of India, which was brought about by agreement, would lead to the creation of two states which would be friendly neighbours and would cooperate with each other. That was natural, as not only geography but a common history and culture and the same language and many other factors common to both would, we thought, inevitably lead to friendly cooperation."¹⁵¹ Nehru's hopes were belied, when realization dawned upon him ultimately, it was too late. He failed to contain man-made Hindu-Muslim antagonism and consequent massacre, though all through his life he hated communal politics and advocated against mixing of religion with politics. When we read Nehru's subsequent self-introspection, one is bound to conclude that Nehru was in a state of indecision and absolutely helpless in that situation not knowing how to prevent the massive exodus and resultant communal frenzy. To quote his own words, "Freedom came to us, our long-sought freedom, and it came with a minimum of violence. But immediately after, we had to wade through oceans of blood and tears. Worse than the blood and tears was the shame and disgrace that accompanied them. Where were our values and standards then, where was our old culture, our humanism and spirituality and all that India has stood for in the past? Suddenly darkness descended upon this land and madness seized the people. Fear and hatred blinded our minds and all the restraints which civilization imposes were swept away. Horror piled on horror and a sudden emptiness seized us at the brute savagery of human beings. The lights seemed to go out; not all, for a few still flickered in the raging tempest. We sorrowed for the dead and the dying and for those whose suffering was greater than death. We sorrowed even more for India, for common mother, for whose freedom we had laboured these long years."¹⁵² These words do not seem to be the words of a prime

minister, but appears to be of a puzzled man who himself was the victim of the holocaust.

The three princely states of Junagad, Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir had not acceded to either India or Pakistan on 15 August 1947. Junagadh's Muslim ruler wanted his predominantly Hindu state to opt for Pakistan, though it had no connection with Pakistan except by sea. Its accession to Pakistan would mean a security threat to India, Hence the Nehru Government decided there could not be any compromise on this issue. In November 1947 Junagadh was merged with India. This task was accomplished by the Indian armed forces, though a plebiscite at a later date also gave its verdict in favour of accession to India. Pakistan pressed its complaint over Junagadh in the Security Council but without any result.

The situation with Hyderabad was different. The Nizam of Hyderabad, once being a faithful ally of the British Crown, was contemplating to declare himself independent. He was even preparing himself for resistance on the strength of his 50,000 army men. Even arms were being smuggled into Hyderabad. His foreign advisers were encouraging him not to surrender. He was also expecting support from Pakistan and Britain if he resisted. It was unthinkable for Nehru to let Hyderabad to become a sovereign state in the very heart of India. However, it was a different issue that the 85% of population of Hyderabad were Hindu and wanted merger with India. Nehru writes, "Popular responsible government in Hyderabad or in any other state or province of India has long been our objective and we are glad to say that it is very near fulfillment all over India, except for the State of Hyderabad. It was inconceivable to us that, in the modern age, and in the heart of India that is pulsating with a new freedom, there should be a territory deprived of this freedom and indefinitely under autocratic

rule... As for accession, it was equally clear to us that a territory like Hyderabad, surrounded on all sides by the Indian Union and with no outlet to the rest of the world, must necessarily be a part of that Indian Union."¹⁵³

When negotiations failed to bear any fruit, India intervened. The Nizam's forces did not last for more than four days. In September 1948 Hyderabad was finally merged with India.

Junagadh and Hyderabad, in fact, were no issues at all, but Kashmir was to give trouble and subsequently turned into an international crisis. This problem is still alive and a constant headache to India.

When the Maharaja of Kashmir was still uncertain on the fate of Kashmir, the Pakistani forces invaded Kashmir in October 1947. Now Maharaja was left with no option than to sign an agreement of the state's accession to India. Though on October 26 the accession of Kashmir was accepted, the raids by the hordes had already started on 22 October 1947. However, the accession agreement provided India with a technical ground to intervene. Indian troops began to arrive in Srinagar on October 27. It is to be noted that when the Maharaja moved for the accession of Kashmir to India, Nehru showed his reluctance to immediately accept this proposal. Rather he put forward a condition that final accession would be decided only after knowing the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Simultaneously Nehru placed another condition that Sheikh Abdullah, an old friend and colleague, be allowed to participate in the Government of the State. Besides, Nehru had his own reason to believe that given the chance to decide the people of Kashmir might not opt for Pakistan.¹⁵⁴ Though India's intervention checked Pakistani aggression, the U.N.O.'s

intervention followed by the ceasefire on 1 January 1947 enabled Pakistan to retain 32,000 square miles of the western and northern regions which they had forcibly occupied. India is in the occupation of the remaining portion of Kashmir, which includes the Srinagar Valley and Jammu.¹⁵⁵

It was Mountbatten who had played the dubious game in persuading Nehru to bring the U.N.O. into the picture, although Patel was not at all in favour of this proposal and even Gandhi too had some reluctance. Interference by the United Nations put an indirect restriction upon India "from making a full-scale effort to drive out the invaders", however "there was no abatement in Pakistan's offensive"¹⁵⁶ Nehru was not in favour of allowing raiders to remain on the land of Kashmir but being duped by Mountbatten he was helpless. To quote Nehru, "Whatever argument one may use about the state's accession to India's or about India's right to have troops in Kashmir there is absolutely no argument, even a flimsy one, to justify Pakistan's action in sending troops there. There is no doubt from any point of view that it was aggression by Pakistan and we were entitled in law and fact to attack Pakistan all over. We were much stronger than Pakistan militarily. But we did not attack them. It was to avoid war with Pakistan that we went to the Security Council."¹⁵⁷ This was a grave political mistake committed by Nehru since the United Nations failed to come out with any specific solution. On the strategic importance of Kashmir V. P. Menon's opinion is worthy to be noted here, "Personally, when I recommended to the Government of India the acceptance of the accession of the Maharaja of Kashmir, I had in mind one consideration and one consideration alone, viz., that the invasion of Kashmir by the raiders was a grave threat to the integrity of India. Even since the time of Mahmud of Ghazni, that is to say, for nearly eight centuries, but with

a brief interval during the Mughal epoch, India had been subjected to periodical invasions from the northwest. Mahmud of Ghazni had led no less than seventeen of these incursions in person. And within less than ten weeks of the establishment of the new state of Pakistan, its very first act was to let loose tribal invasion through the northwest. Srinagar today, Delhi tomorrow. A nation that forgets its history or geography does so at its peril."¹⁵⁸

Kashmir issue is still a bone of contention between India and Pakistan, and a constant headache to India even after sixty years of independence.

Hurried acceptance of the theory of Partition was another serious mistake, because if independence could be delayed by a year Jinnah would have been dead and today instead of a truncated and a problematic India there would have been a united India more powerful, more prosperous and more assertive. Furthermore, religion could never be the right base for creation of a nation has also been amply proved by the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971.

In 1948, the Constituent Assembly appointed a commission of inquiry under the chairmanship of Justice Dhar to go into the details of the question of distribution of provinces on linguistic basis. It opined that the formation of provinces on exclusively or even mainly linguistic considerations was not in the larger interests of the Indian Nation and should not be taken in hand.¹⁵⁹

Keeping aside the Dhar Commission's finding, the Congress Government constituted another committee, manned by three members: Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The committee did not recommend anything new but suggested to postpone the formation of new provinces for a few

years.¹⁶⁰ This strategy was thought to be the best solution for the time being in view of other unsettled issues in the country.

However, Nehru took a decision to appoint a States Reorganization Commission to go into the issues of formation of states afresh. But even before its constitution a new state of Andhra Pradesh was created absolutely on the basis of linguistic consideration. Though Nehru thought that creation of an Andhra province would be a mistake, he agreed that he would not stop the process if the Andhras wanted. But he made an appeal to recognize the creation of Andhra province as an exceptional case and not to form the same as a precedent.¹⁶¹

Being the Prime Minister of India, Nehru was not supposed to be lenient to any sentiment of the people of a particular province. It was an unexpected decision and a grave historical error, Over and above he was making an appeal to the people not to treat it as a precedent – how naïve was Nehru's behavior politically!

The States Reorganization Commission had three members on its roll: Justice Fazal Ali, Dr. H.N. Kunzru and Dr. K.M. Panikkar. Its finding was also somewhat similar to that of the Dhar's Commission, It said:

"After a full consideration of the problem in all its aspects, we have come to the conclusion that its neither possible nor desirable to reorganize states on the basis of the single test of either of language or culture, but a balanced approach to the whole problem is necessary in the interest of national unity..."¹⁶²

As was predictable, the finding of the commission was simply ignored, because the Nehru Government had no choice left once the Pandora's box was opened in the form of creation of Andhra Pradesh

based on the criterion of language. Henceforth, the languages had become the foundation for formation of new states.

Perhaps never did it dawn upon Nehru then that his sentimental approach to a simple question of state formation would generate ever-growing inter-state conflicts and separatist and secessionist tendencies amongst the vested elements in India in future. It was in the fitness of the thing for Nehru then to delay the process of formation of states by a decade or two pretending one plea or the other, then the demand for redistribution of states on linguistic basis would have gradually mellowed and died its natural death. There was no hurry to bow down to unreasonable demands. But who would advise him or extend support in such a situation of dilemma, there was none around, because his best friend and mentor Gandhi was long dead.

Nehru was also not very happy with the development. In the year 1956, he was feeling absolutely dejected and expressed his unwillingness⁶⁴ to consider further changes in the reorganization of western India.¹⁶³

Before we conclude a few words on Nehru's foreign policy will give us a clear assessment of Nehru's faculty as a leader in terms of his foreign relations.

Non-alignment is good, but it is effective only in peaceful situation. In times of crisis it cannot be an effective alternative. India was friendless in 1962, though its defence was in doldrums. The result was : it could not defend its border and a vast chunk of its territory has gone under the occupation of China. N.V. Gadgil, a colleague of Nehru, writes, "Our border defenses were neglected because of the firm conviction of Nehru that since we had no quarrel with anyone, no one would attack us. Our foreign policy, so well conceived from the

standpoint of national security, failed in the end, because of this fatal weakness.”¹⁶⁴

Let us see what a general has to say on India's debacle in Sino-Indian war of 1962, “It must be frankly admitted that the humiliating defeat inflicted by the Chinese demonstrated the failure of our political leadership. Like other democracies in the past, as at Dunkirk or at Pearl Harbour, India paid the price of unpreparedness... The most important lesson of this war was that a Nation's foreign and defence policies cannot grow in isolation of each other; they must be closely dovetailed. In the ultimate analysis, a Nation's survival or its stature in the world is related to its ability to defend its frontiers. Irrespective of its attachments to the ideals of world peace, a Nation cannot afford to neglect its defence or its Defence Forces.”⁷

He writes further, “India achieved Independence through a non-violent revolution and after Independence, played a leading international role as a non-aligned country. With this background of non-violence and non-alignment, the Nation showed little defence awareness.”¹⁶⁵

For defence unpreparedness in 1962, Nehru is not the sole leader to be blamed; it was the Defence Minister, V.K. Krishna Menon who did not heed the warnings of military officers. It was the duty of the Defence Minister to apprise the Cabinet of the developments across the border, whether he carried out this duty faithfully or not, it is doubtful. Once a list of defence requirement was sent to Menon but, writes General Kaul, no response was received from the Defence Minister.

“.... Menon received this letter, but whether he placed it before the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, only would he know. We did

not hear back from him or any of his colleagues. I do not know what happened to this letter.”¹⁶⁶

This was the state of affairs in regard to India's defence on the eve of the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

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13. Mahatma Gandhi : The Early Phase, Pyarelal, Navajivan, 1965, vol. I, P. 163.
14. Ibid., p. 166
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16. The Discovery of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, OUP, 1991, p. 358.
17. The Philosophy of History, GWF Hegel, New York, 1900, p. 31
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19. Ibid., p. 31.
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21. Discovery of India, op. cit., pp. 358-359.
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23. Ibid.
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25. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 15, pp. 186-87.
26. Mahatma Gandhi: The Man and His Mission, Natesan Publications, p. 55.
27. Autobiography, Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit. p. 41.
28. Ibid.
29. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 15, p. 243.
30. The Discovery of India, op. cit. p. 360.
31. Dewan Uttam Chand was Gandhi's grandfather who was serving under the Pore Bunder Rajya. Once he incurred the wrath of the Raj Mata for giving shelter to Kheemji Kothari, the cashier. The Raj Mata (regent) wanted to hang the cashier, but it was not possible because of the Dewan. Being

frustrated, she issued order to blow up the house of the Dewan. But before his house was bombarded, Uttam Chand somehow managed for the cashier to flee the town. Later the Dewan was saved by the British Residency's interference.

32. Gandhi's Letter to Lord Wavell, 9.3.1944.
33. An Autobiography, M.K. Gandhi, Navajivan, 1991, p. 56.
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39. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 19, p. 53.
40. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 21, p. 550.
41. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 491.
42. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 22, p. 415. Gandhi made this statement on 16 February 1922.
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Conclusion

CONCLUSION

Asunder though Together: Were they?

The two most important personalities in India in the twentieth century were Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964). One straddled the first half of the history of India up to 1947 like a colossus, while the other dominated a portion of second half up to 1964 (till his death), calling himself a disciple and follower of the former but often challenging and contradicting the former's ideas and ideologies. While Gandhi represented the traditional values, which are immanent in the history of India since time immemorial, Jawaharlal was an embodiment of western thoughts and culture.

Gandhi was a saint, an honest person to the core and profoundly gentle and a dignified personality, but at the same time he was also a practical man of action with full of enthusiasm and determination to pursue his target to its logical conclusion. Nehru was no less either: he was a visionary and a man with strict principle and fierce sense of perseverance and who knew no respite till he saw his goal coming to fruition. In spite of his strong emotional attachment to Gandhi, ¹ Nehru being perennially a youthful romantic used to feel hurt when he did not understand Gandhi's behavior on many counts and on such occasions he even did not hesitate to express his strong worded displeasure. Nehru writes, "...Gandhiji did not encourage others to think; his insistence was only on purity and sacrifice. I felt that I was drifting further and further away from him mentally, in spite of my strong attachment to him."² These were only temporary emotional outbursts far away from reality. "Are we rivals?" Gandhi asked, and he himself

answered, "I cannot think of myself as a rival to Jawaharlal or him to me."³ Gandhi knew Jawaharlal could never be his rival and the latter also knew his limitations. If Gandhi has assessed that he could never afford to lose Nehru, then the latter has also realised the indispensability of the former in India's struggle for freedom.

Nehru enjoyed life to its full, but Gandhi was extremely cautious. Even in his youth Gandhi lived a restricted life being bounded by the oaths he had taken before his mother before leaving for England, Nehru had no such restrictions. Gandhi was deeply religious, whereas Nehru admitted that religion was a woman's affair,⁴ in fact he had no faith either on religion or on any religious practices. Nehru had an appreciation for western life style and culture, Gandhi could never think of breaking away from Indian traditions. Nehru stood for technological advancement and industrialisation, for Gandhi these things were not in tune with India's past, he was in favour of developing traditional trade to cope up with mounting poverty and unemployment. 'Charkha' and 'Khadi' were Gandhi's pets.

Despite differences, like true soldiers, these two men fought shoulder to shoulder with the British valiantly and with undaunted spirit. It is quite strange that never did these two people take their differences to the public, perhaps they knew reaching any information before public means there would be no going back.

Hardly was there twenty years of age difference between them, but they were poles apart in their outlook, if one represented the primitive then the other modern. Born and brought up in different environment with different family background, they were bound to carry on those childhood mental imprints throughout their lives with them. A votary of the Ramayana and the Gita on the one hand and an agnostic

and an admirer of Oscar Wilde and Walter Pater on the other could never be expected to be the same in nature and approach. It is really strange : how these two people walked together for almost half a century with so many unressembling characteristics ! But they did go together, it is like a jigsaw puzzle to a historian and a perfect nonplus to the common people.

True, these two people had deep ideological differences but their commitment to a single unwavering goal of India's independence was such a strong bond, which kept them cemented to each other for years on end. Gandhi admitted openly, "No doubt there are differences of opinion between us. They were clearly set forth in the letters we exchanged some years ago. But they do not affect our personal relations in any way whatsoever. We remain the same adherents to the Congress goal, that we have ever been."⁵

Gandhi and Nehru met in 1916 for the first time, but it does not seem this meeting left any impression upon the latter, a young man with a university degree from England. Though Jawaharlal was doing recruiting for the Indian Army, he was practically a political non-entity during this period. However, he had heard about Gandhi's exploits in Natal (South Africa) with 2,300 civil resisters and was impressed by this act,⁶ but Gandhi had yet to try out these methods in India.

Motilal Nehru was a prominent figure in the Congress during and after the war. Jawaharlal was yet to open his account in politics. Motilal and Gandhi differed on many counts, yet Motilal developed an attraction for Gandhi not as a saint but as a man. Writes Nehru, " He was attracted by Gandhiji as a man, and no doubt was a factor which influenced him. Nothing could have made him a close associate of a person he disliked, for he was always strong in his likes and dislikes.

But it was a strange combination – the saint, the stoic, the man of religion, one who went through life rejecting what it offers in the way of sensation and physical pleasure, and one who had been a bit of an epicure, who accepted life and welcomed and enjoyed its many sensations, and cared little for what may come in the hereafter. In the language of psychoanalysis it was a meeting of an introvert with an extrovert. Yet there were common bonds, common interests, which drew the two together and kept up, even when, in later years, their politics diverged, a close friendship between them.”⁷

In a nutshell, Jawaharlal combined in himself the characteristics of both of these men. He was an epicurean like his father but at the same time he was also a dedicated soldier of non – violence non-cooperation movement, but like his father he was not ready to accept anything at its face value, unless he himself was convinced that a particular thing was best in country’s interests.

When the Government expressed its determination to pass the Rowlett Act in spite of Gandhi’s strong objection, Gandhi declared ‘Satyagraha’ against it and formed a Satyagraha Committee. Jawaharlal joined this Committee. Motilal and C.R. Das characterised it as a lawless law because once passed, the Act would have empowered the police to arrest any person and punish him without producing him in the court of law merely by declaring him a revolutionary.

When being asked how he would oppose this law, Gandhi said, once the Bills became law, he and the people would resist it by resorting to Satyagraha. Jawaharlal’s reaction to this proposal was in affirmative. “When I first read about this proposal in the newspapers my reaction was one of tremendous relief. Here at last was a way out of

the tangle, a method of action, which was straight and open and possibly effective. I was afire with enthusiasm and wanted to join the Satyagraha Sabha immediately.”⁸

Nehru had a high admiration for non-violent and non-co-operation movement of Gandhiji but he did not express his absolute allegiance to the doctrine of non-violence nor was he ready to accept it forever but he accepted it as a right policy for India in the backdrop of India’s background and tradition. He writes, “What I admired was the moral and ethical side of our movement and of satyagraha. I did not give an absolute allegiance to the doctrine of non-violence or accept it forever, but it attracted me more and more and the belief grew upon me that, situated as we were in India and with our background and tradition, it was the right policy for us. The spiritualisation of politics, using the word not in its narrow religious sense, seemed to me a fine idea. A worthy end should have worthy means leading upto it. That seemed not only a good ethical doctrine but sound, practical politics, for the means that are not good often defeat the end in view and raise new problems and difficulties.”⁹

This was an indication that Jawaharlal was gradually drifting towards Gandhi’s non-violence and non-co-operation movement headlong.

Jawaharlal took an active part in 1921 and 1922 movement with tremendous enthusiasm but when Gandhi suddenly called off the programme of civil disobedience on the ground that the movement had turned violent, Jawaharlal felt totally crestfallen. He writes that his mounting hopes tumbled to the ground with the sudden suspension of the movement.¹⁰ It suddenly dawned upon Nehru that this type of abrupt suspension usually disappoints the people and fuses their zeal,

which is not desirable in the greater interest of freedom movement. Nehru writes, "...but for us and for National Congress as a whole, the non-violent method was not, and could not be, a religion or an unchallengeable creed or dogma. It could only be a policy and the method promising certain results, and by those results it would have to be finally judged."¹¹

Gandhi could not afford to dissatisfy Jawaharlal on any count. He realised that the sudden suspension of civil disobedience movement was not taken lightly, either by the Congressmen or by his disciple Jawaharlal. He amended his standpoint sometime in 1930. Nehru writes, "He (Gandhi) stated that the movement should not be abandoned because of the occurrence of sporadic acts of violence... For him the method, being the right method, should suit all circumstances and should be able to function, at any rate in a restricted way, even in a hostile atmosphere."¹²

Nehru questions himself whether this interpretation given by Gandhi was an indication of an evolution of Gandhi's mind or something else.¹³

Nehru's visit to the Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities and then to the Soviet Union prompted him to draw up a clear-cut goal for the Indian politicians. On his persuasion the Madras Congress passed resolutions in favour of 'complete independence', which did not find favour with Gandhi. Ultimately Nehru had to fall in line with Gandhi's compromise formula of Dominion Status provided the British Government conceded it to the Indians before the end of 1929. Nehru never dared to break away from Gandhi, though sometime or other his hasty acts attracted Gandhi's ire. Whenever Nehru felt that he was going too fast, he immediately retracted. For this

reason he did not come out in support of Subhas Bose's radical views, though he had fascination for them. Subhas Bose wanted to toe an independent line of action away from Gandhi's strategy, but unlike Subhas Nehru wanted to restrict his movement within the ambit of the Gandhian strategy. It was very much known to Nehru that Gandhi's leadership was indispensable for India's independence movement.

On Gandhi's dominating position, Nehru writes, "In trying to analyse the various elements in the Congress, the dominating position of Gandhiji must always be remembered. He dominates to some extent the Congress but far more so he dominates the masses. He does not easily fall in any group and is much bigger than the so-called Gandhian group. Sometimes he is the single-minded revolutionary going like the arrow to his goal and shaking up millions in the process.

"The commanding position he has in the country has nothing to do with any office, and he will retain that dominating place in the hearts of the people so long as he lives, and afterwards."¹⁴

Though on many occasions Nehru could not compromise with Gandhi's views, the former had absolute faith in the latter's ability to organise the masses in the liberation movement. "You know how intensely I have admired you and believed in you as a leader who can lead this country to victory and freedom."¹⁵ Gandhi too knew it would be only Nehru who would speak his language when he would be gone. In fact, Gandhi was on the look out of a young leader who would represent the youths of India, and in Nehru he found this faculty embedded.

Gandhi and Nehru were neither political opponents nor antagonists, their differences were simply ideological and nothing

more. Nehru once asked Gandhi, "Am I not your child in politics, though perhaps a truant and errant child?"

What was the strongest issue between these two people, which kept them together beside other things? This is the frequently asked question. That indissoluble issue was their commitment to the poor people of India, i.e., 'daridranarayan'. Gandhi's concern for the poor people led him to issue a warning to the capitalist class in India as early as 1928. He said that unless these people "help to avert that tragedy by becoming trustees of the welfare of the masses, and by devoting their talents not to amassing wealth for themselves but to the services of masses in an altruistic spirit, they will end either by destroying the masses or being destroyed by them."¹⁶ Gandhi hoped, as trustees the capitalists and the landlords would use the bulk of their earnings not for themselves, but as a trust for the benefit of the society. He wanted the capitalist class to revise their notions of God-given right of all they possess and turn the villages into abodes of peace, health and comfort. "There is no other choice than between voluntary surrender on the part of the capitalist of superfluities and consequent acquisition of the real happiness of all on the one hand, and on the other the impending chaos into which, if the capitalist does not wake up in time, awakened but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country and which not even the armed force that a powerful Government can bring into play can avert."¹⁷ For Gandhi, trusteeship seemed to be the best antidote to uplift the exploited, the oppressed and the down-trodden. However, his entire concept of trusteeship was based on his basic philosophy of truth and non-violence. Besides trusteeship, Gandhi also advocated in favour of wearing khadi to uplift the general condition of the poor people. To quote him, "You need clothes. If you wear khadi worth one rupee, 13 annas will be paid out of

that to the poor people. But if you were to buy foreign cloth that money would go out of the country. The poverty witnessed in this country is not to be found elsewhere in the world, and if you wish to remove it, you should wear khadi."¹⁸

Nehru's objective was the same to remove the poverty, but his approach to the problem was different. To quote Nehru, "You have advocated very eloquently and forcefully the claims of Daridranarayana – the poor in India. I do believe that the remedy you have suggested is very helpful to them and if adopted by them in large numbers will relieve to some extent their misery. But I doubt very much if the fundamental causes of poverty are touched by it. You do not say a word against the semi-feudal zamindari system which prevails in a great part of India or against the capitalist exploitation of both the workers and the consumers."¹⁹ Therefore, Nehru espoused planned system of development and rapid industrialisation for India. But he knew industrialisation would bring in its train capitalism and exploitation. He wanted to put a check to this trend by giving stress on developing public enterprises. Though Nehru claimed that he was a socialist, he did not opt for public enterprises straight away since his was democratic socialism. Consequently, he pleaded for gradual introduction of public enterprises side by side with private enterprises.

Sometimes Gandhi seemed amazingly back ward because he stressed on reduction in wants and simplicity of habits. In fact, these were high ideals and difficult to be implemented. In economics development is need-based. The more the need, the more the production and the more the production means the more the power to consume because with increase in production the power of people to purchase consumer items goes up manifold. Prosperity comes with development because more money flows into the market with a

simultaneous increase in power to purchase. Gandhi missed out this point of economic development, when he talked in terms of removal of poverty. Poverty cannot be reduced by simply asking, the people to reduce their wants. It is not that easy. Nor could we expect to develop the economy by adopting primitive technologies such as charkha and producing khadi. Nehru was very well aware of the fault in the Gandhian concept of economic development. For a hungry man God has no meaning, his first concern is food. Similarly truth and non-violence may not carry any meaning for a starving villager, he too wants food. Gandhi was an idealist, but Nehru was a realist. Nehru analysed every aspect of proposed solution on the anvil of its practicability.

However, Nehru himself justifies the Gandhian ideology and standpoint, "He was a unique personality, and it was impossible to judge him by the usual standards, or even to apply the ordinary canons of logic to him. But because he was a revolutionary at bottom and was pledged to political independence for India, he was bound to play an uncompromising role till that independence was achieved. And in this very process he would release tremendous mass energies and would himself, I half hoped, advance step by step towards the social goal."²⁰

Gandhi was a seer, who could look into the future. He was an idealist, but his ideals were never shallow in nature. He developed his ideals after much contemplation and in the context of its usefulness in future. Nehru could not wait for long for the result, however Gandhi could wait, he was never in a hurry. It is wrong to think Gandhi was against the development of science and technology or against the use of mechanised power to increase production, he was, in actuality, against the craze for machinery and against the labour-saving machinery. He feared if men go on saving labour then thousands would

be without work and thrown on open streets to die of starvation. His supreme consideration was man. He did not want the machine should make atrophied the limbs of man. Therefore, Gandhi was not a ruralist who advocated unconditional return to village. He wrote.

“...I believe that some key industries are necessary”, but like Nehru he favoured state-ownership, “where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour, whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the State... I would not dispossess moneyed men by force but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to State ownership. There are no pariahs of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers.”²¹

Both of them loved humanity., though they differed in their approaches. The delicate string which pulled them together and made their bondage unbreakable was their concern for their poor, semi-starved and half naked countrymen.

Nehru was against casteism and religious prejudice because they were counter-productive and retrogressive to his vision of modernisation, industrialisation and socialism. Gandhi was also against caste-related differences and stood for equality but he wanted to develop every village as a self-sufficient unit. Perhaps Gandhi was wrong on this count. It is difficult to make a village as self-sufficient, because there is hundred and one article, the need of which will be difficult for a village to arrange on its own. Nehru had analysed this fact in depth, therefore he favoured industrialisation. He explains, “It is essential to have heavy industry even for preserving your freedom and independence. It might be said that no country is thoroughly and fully independent today which has to rely on another country for various essential articles, whether for defence or other matters.”²²

To sum up, Gandhi and Nehru were antithetical to each other in the field of economics, science and technology, education and health, and political organisation. "Gandhi did not believe in technological determinism. He was against want-driven technologies and disapproved self-alienating modern modes of production. He stood for production by the masses and not for the masses. He was against massive mechanisation. Moreover, he pleaded for decentralisation rather than centralisation. He favoured popular participation rather than representative political system."²³

The relation between Gandhi and Nehru was more emotional or sentimental rather than either intellectual or ideological. Intellectually and ideologically they professed divergent opinions, it was a fact, but Nehru was always a dear child of Gandhi. Ignoring the claim of every other equally able contemporary Congress leader, Gandhi's choice rested on Nehru. It was known to Gandhi Nehru was going too fast bypassing the former, but still Gandhi thought Nehru would be his true successor and would follow the path shown by him. Was it not a wild hope of Gandhi? Without deep sentimental pull or attachment none would speak in such a language, when one knew the other was defying him in one or the other occasion. Indeed, Nehru was the truant child of Gandhi. Jawaharlal was no less behind in expressing his gratitude to the Mahatma, "Great as this man of God was in his life, he has been greater in his death and I have not the shadow of doubt that by his death he has served the great cause as he served it throughout his life. We mourn him: we shall always mourn him because we are human and cannot forget our beloved Master."²⁴

The sentimental relation between the master and the disciple is unparalleled and the affection that bound these two men is equally

unprecedented. Their attachment to each other was mutual no less no more on either side.

“Oh, the comfort — the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts, nor measure words, but pouring them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together; knowing that a faithful hand will take them — keep what is worth — keeping — and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.” (From ‘Friendship’ Anonymous).

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