

CHAPTER - V

RAMMANOHAR LOHIA'S IDEAS AND THINKING ON SOCIALISM.

5.1 Introduction.

The Nationalist Movement in India which originated as a consequence of the total impact of British rule in India was a part of the world wide reaction against the colonial exploitation. The impact of the British rule on the socio-economic structure of the Indian society and the perceptions of the early Nationalists on this impact provided the political philosophy of the freedom struggle. Any economic and political ideology that developed in Modern India could be studied and analysed against this total background of the Nationalist Movement.¹

The early years of the 20th century witnessed several significant events in human history. The first World War and the Russian revolution marked a turning point in the revolutionary movements in the colonial countries. In India national liberation movement under Gandhi's leadership was gaining new heights and dimensions. Nationalist leaders were of the opinion that poverty and backwardness of the colonial people could be eradicated by removing colonial rule. A section of the nationalist leaders held the belief that the British rule was the root cause of India's poverty and backwardness and so they felt that political independence would solve India's backwardness. They wanted to eliminate British rule and put emphasis on Independence for they believed it would remove poverty, ignorance and miseries of the Indian people. By the end of 1920s and the beginning of 1930s the rising left wing in the congress strongly maintained that political independence without economic independence would not eradicate the miseries and problems of the people.

The emerging left wing in the congress wanted to instil and infuse economic and social content to the freedom struggle so that economic independence could be achieved along with the struggle against the colonial rule, which could fetch, the real freedom to the people. It was in this background that Lohia entered the Nationalist movement and joined the struggle against the British imperialism in 1934 as a congress socialist.²

Lohia's contributions to socialist thought and action are manifold. He wanted to free the individual from ignorance, backwardness and all kinds of superstitions and prejudices. He put maximum emphasis about restoring the dignity and individuality of human being. Lohia highlighted the ideological problems of the socialist movement in India. He wanted to assimilate the fundamental tenets of Marxism with Gandhian ideas. Though he was inspired by Marxism yet he did not blindly accept some of the postulates of Marxism. Lohia was of the opinion that Gandhian ideas and principles should be re-examined and reconsidered in the light of the changes in the socialist and communist movements all over the world. He made it a point to look into the economic problems a country is facing. It should be pointed out that Lohia's ideas and thinking on socialist thought and movement came to be influenced by Gandhian teachings and techniques. One scholar says : "Among those who tried to give a new orientation of Marxist and Gandhian principles. Lohia who tried to work out the doctrinal foundation of socialism occupies the pride of place."³

A democrat by conviction socialism appealed to Lohia as a way of life. He strongly advocated the plea that socialist movement in India should have a distinct Indian character. Lohia championed "the principle of equal irrelevance of capitalism and communism in respect of the creation of a new human civilization." This 'new civilization' is called by Lohia 'socialism.'

5.2 Formative Influences

An individual's perceptions and views are not empty abstraction isolated from the social reality around him. The formative influences on an individual can be explained by taking into account the historic and social conditions in which one is born and grows up.

Rammanohar Lohia was born on 23rd March 1910 at Akbarpur village on Uttar Pradesh in a Marnari family. His father, Hiralal, was a devoted freedom fighter and a follower of Gandhi. Lohia was greatly influenced by his father Haralal and Gandhi. It was from his father that Lohia derived his interest in his early years in the nationalist politics led by Gandhi.

The political interest of Rammanohar Lohia took a radical character during his student life in India. After his primary education in the village he was admitted to a school in Bombay (Marhari Vidyalaya) and passed High School examination from Bombay in 1925. He had his college education in Benaras (1925-1927) and Calcutta (1927-1929), and in August 1929 he went to Europe for higher studies.⁴

Lohia's schooling started in the village of Akbarpur. Later when his father shifted to Bombay, Rammanohar was exposed to the urban environment which might have been conducive for a better interaction with the latest developments in the country.

Rammanohar got himself admitted into the Vidyasagar College in Calcutta for his bachelor degree. In Calcutta he came into contact with nationalistic politics, sentiments and tradition.

The period of his student days in Calcutta was a period of intense political

excitement and national unrest. The period was marked by non-cooperation movement, movement against the Simon Commission, rise of leftism and the demand for complete independence.⁵ The emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics and the introduction of mass politics were landmarks in the freedom struggle at that time. Nationalist leadership were thinking to start a movement against the British imperialism. Gandhiji was instrumental in designing the parameters of a theoretical model for the development of India.

Lohia's education in Berlin was a turning point in his ideological evolution. He took admission in the Berlin University and started his Ph.D. course under the reputed economist Bernhard Zombart. The title of the Ph.D. thesis was 'Salt & Satyagraha.' The intellectual background and political conditions in Germany in that period immensely influenced the thinking of Lohia.⁶

During the turn of the century, Berlin was the cultural capital of Europe. German philosophy tradition enriched by Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche had provided a philosophical background to Berlin. Germany was vibrant with the activities of working class movements during this time. The association of Marx and Engles with some of them had give German politics a distinctiveness. Hegelian influence was still widespread among intellectuals and students.⁷

Lohia had come to know the exploitative nature of capitalism and how the British imperialism was perpetuating exploitation on the Indian people while staying in India. The writings of economic nationalists might had provided Lohia an insight about the economic drainage and its result and effect on the Indian economy. Lohia understood that the root cause of stagnation and under development of Indian economy was the exploitation perpetuated by the British imperialism and he came to know the burgeoning hold of British capitalism. As one writer has put it : "The experience in Berlin Widened his understanding and perception as was evident from his writings in the congress socialist dur-

ing 1934-35 and his critical views in his essay 'Economics after Marx' which was written in 1943."⁸

Therefore, the growth of German nationalism and its reflections in all walks of German life had a deep influence on Lohia. V.K. Arora writes : "It was in and through German language and philosophy that he developed the faculty of original thinking and critical acumen."⁹

Madhu Limaye observes that Lohia was deeply influenced by German philosophical influence. A significant aspect of Lohia's personality is the philosophical bent of his mind as evident from his search for philosophical truth and ultimate reality in most of his writings.¹⁰ R.A. Prasad points out : "His language and philosophical bent of mind had the imprint of German influences. His lofty sense of nationalism was strengthened in the German environment."¹¹

Thus we may say that Marxism, European socialism and liberalism had exerted a tremendous influence on Lohia. He was exposed to the drawbacks of capitalism and a nationalistic feeling enlightened his mental horizon. Lohia came back to India as an anti-imperialist and plunged himself to the struggle for Indian liberation movement under the leadership of Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Rammanohar Lohia was essentially a man of vision. He was a man of vision. He always kept himself abreast with the latest developments in the world of ideas and thoughts. A commentator concedes that Lohia is "a rare intellectual in the socialist movement he had that adequate academic background and training which most of our socialist leaders lack."¹² It should be pointed out that the influence of Gandhi on the evolution of Lohia's ideas and through processes was deep and profound. Lohia wanted to make a synthesis between

Marxism and Gandhian ideas. Though he was influenced and impressed by some of the fundamental tenets of Marxism yet he did not develop any dogmatic affinity with Marxism. He disliked blind adherence to any dogma. He had the temperament of a rebel. He was a champion of freedom and equality. He detested parochialness and religious dogmatism. By temperament and outlook he was social democrat from the very beginning.

5.3 Emergence of Congress Socialism.

By the middle of the twentieth century, Indian thinkers were inspired and impressed by socialism. While they began to be influenced by the thinkers of the west, but they would not like to follow their ideas and thinking unquestioningly. They were not in favour of taking their ideas in toto. Indian thinkers wanted to retain Indian identity and specific distinctiveness and characteristics of Indian society. They sought to apply and introduced the foreign ideas which they felt, would suit Indian culture, conditions and circumstances. Thus, Indianization of socialism became their dominant creed.

In this connection if we seek to study the emergence of congress socialism, we will have to analyse the historical background and the necessary perspectives connected with this trend.

The National and International forces that had began to operate on the Indian political scene from the early nineteen twenties, was pushing the Nationalist Movement in India to new dimensions. The First World War and the Russian Revolution enlightened and enthused the Indian leaders to organise protest movements to end the British rule. The emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics at this juncture is another noteworthy event. Gandhi's insistence on value-based politics and his introduction of mass politics helped immensely to awaken the consciousness of the Indian masses to revolt against colonial rule

and exploitation. The leadership of Gandhi exerted a profound impact on the psyche of the Indian people and gave a fillip and new orientation to the Indian national movement. K. Gopinathan Pillai writes :

"The radicalisation of Indian politics as the result of civil Disobedience Movements and the spread of socialist ideas among the younger generation of congressmen coupled with the strong resentment and disenchantment against the conservative Gandhian leadership of the congress led to the emergence of a left wing inside the congress organisation which assumed an organisational form in 1934 with the birth of All India Congress Socialist Party (AICSP)."¹³

V.K. Arora writes that a section of radical nationalists "who were dissatisfied with the Gandhian ideology as well as the constitutionalism of the Swaraj Party, studied and embraced socialist ideology and began to evolve rival programmes of Indian Independence from the standpoint of the new ideology."¹⁴

Jayaprakash Narayan says : ".... The socialist movement in India must evolve its own picture of socialism in the light of Marxist thought, and of conditions in this country and our historical background There can be no room for dogmatism or fundamentalism in Marxist thought."¹⁵ He says further, "We must be extremely careful in choosing our ways to socialism."¹⁶ (Emphasis added). Rammanohar Lohia also made a very important contribution to evolving a positive ideological content of democratic socialism keeping in view the conditions prevalent in Third World under developed and developing countries, including India. He came forward with the doctrine-'Equal. Irrelevance' of communism and capitalism - to the developing world, including India.

The radicalisation process of the nationalist movement since the Civil Dis-

obedience Movement of 1920s passing through different phases culminated in the emergence of the left wing inside the congress. Among the younger radical leaders of the congress, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose were the precursors of this left wing group. Also M.N. Roy had a very important role to play in organising leftist movements around this time as a communist leader.

Around this time Independence for India League (IIL) was constituted by the radical Nationalists led by Nehru, Bose etc. The basic objective of the League was to step up the propaganda for independence and oppose the rightist Congress leadership.¹⁷ Meantime workers' and Peasants' Party (WPP) was formed and it played a notable role in the freedom struggle. The left wing leaders and the WPP were disheartened with the Motilal Nehru report seeking dominion status. They demanded nothing short of Independence. By this time the Congress Left Wing emerged as an ideologically distinct group and a rift ensued between the left radicals and the rightist leadership led by Gandhi and Motilal Nehru. The left Wing asked the Congress to explain its social and economic goals.

Socialist ideas began to spread among the radical youths. Nehru and Bose launched a big campaign for organising Youth Leagues. The Youth Leagues began to press the demand for independence. The Bombay Provincial Youth League was formed by Jusuf Meherally in 1928. The first congress of the Socialist Youth Congress was held at Calcutta on 27th December 1928 under the Chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru.¹⁸ The growth and expansion of youth organisations and student associations clearly indicated a rapid radicalisation of the nationalist movement in the late 1930s. As one another rightly suggests that "the emerging left wing in the Congress which was growing in influence demanded nothing short of complete independence and wanted to broaden the base of the nationalist movement by incorporating the economic and social grievances of the working class and peasantry."¹⁹

Gandhi was getting too much worried seeing about Nehru's leaning towards left-wing politics. Gandhi wanted to check and contain Nehru's involvement and infatuation with radical left-nationalist movement. "After this inspite of all the rhetoric in the name of socialism, Nehru could never come back into the fold of the Congress Left Wing" observes K S . P Ili²⁰

5:4 Formation of Congress Socialist Party.

The decision to form the Congress Socialist Party was taken by a group of young congressmen who were impressed and inspired by socialist and radical nationalist thinking. They were arrested during the Civil Disobedience Movement and were imprisoned at Nasik Central Jail. (1932-33). Jayaprakash Narayan was the chief architect of this group. He conceived first the necessity of creating such a group within the congress along with other socialists. Minoo Masani writes :

An incipient group of socialists emerged from our discussions in Nasik Prison. Among the main participants in these discussions were Jayaprakash Narayan and myself. Others who joined in were Achyut Patwardhan and Asoka Mehta.²¹

Some of the other Congress leaders who were in the Nasik Prison and were instrumental in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party were : Minoo Masani, Asoka Mehta, Achyut Patwardhan, N.G. Goray and M.L. Dantwala. These leaders, along with Acharya Narendra Deva, Rammanohar Lohia, Yusuf Meherally and S.M. Joshi, constituted the core of the leadership of the socialist movement through most of its phases.²² These socialist leaders planned to work within the Indian National Congress, seeking at the same time to influence the Nationalist Movement in the direction of Socialism. On May, 17, 1934, the first All-India Conference of Socialists was held in Patna under the chaimanship of Acharya Narendra Dev. Rammanohar Lohia Attended the conference.

5.5 Congress Socialist Party : Leadership and Ideological Issues.

The AICSP conference which was held in Bombay on October 21-22, 1934, declared the objective of the party to be the achievement of 'complete independence in the sense of separation from the British Empire and the establishment of socialist society.' It envisaged working within and outside the congress. The Socialist thinkers believed that independence should precede the establishment of the socialist state and therefore, wanted to remain within the Congress. They wanted to influence the policies of the Congress Party remaining within it and to sharpen and spearhead the struggle against British rule. While urging the Congress to adopt socialistic programme, it undertook the task of "Uniting the Socialist and other radical elements within the Indian National Congress, into an organization in order to accelerate the growth of the latter into an anti-imperialist body having the requisite ideological and organisational basis."²³

From the inception, the party leadership was divided among three ideological tendencies of socialism, namely, Marxian socialism, Fabian or Social Democratic Socialism and Socialism tinged with Gandhism, with different leaders espousing each of the three ideological trends. In the early years Jayaprakash Narayan and Narendra Dev had greater say in determining matters related to organization and ideology of the party respectively. But later on because of his contribution to the formation of the party and his unique role in the freedom struggle, Narayan was able to take decisions independently. However, in the early years, the maxists influence was the most dominant in the party. Commenting on the different ideological strands among the socialist stalwarts, Minoo Masani writes : "I was a staunch democrat of the British Labour Party kind and had little sympathy with communist methodology or technique, though I was a rather starry-eyed admirer of the October Revolution in Russia... J.P. on the other hand was a staunch believer in the dictatorship of the

proletariat, whatever that may mean. Marxism was the bedrock of his socialist faith."²⁴ There was a fourth stand which emphasised adherence to India's cultural, historical, political and economic background. The exponents of the first were. Jayaprakash Narayan and Narendra Dev, of the second Minoo Masani and Asoke Mehta and of the third Achyut Patwardhan and Rammanohar Lohia. The fourth strand was represented by Sampurnanand whom the communists contemptuously called "Vedantic Socialists." This ideological division in the party naturally affected the organisation and programme. None of the groups was ready for compromise on doctrinal issues.²⁵

On the formation and objectives of Congress Socialist Party. Sampurnanand remarked : "Interest in Socialism was growing apace and people felt that somehow socialism would provide a break-through from the dead end which congress strategy seemed to have been reached."²⁶

C.P. Bhambri writes, "Ever since their birth as a separate party, the Socialists have been making efforts to have a programme and an ideology distinct from those of both the congress and the Communists. Indianization of Socialism has been another crucial issue with the Socialists."²⁷

5.6 C.S.P. & Rammanohar Lohia.

The independent way of thinking by the Indian socialists intended to constitute the C.S.P. were consciously alive to the need for evolving Indian socialism largely on Marxian lines, but only as a mixture diluted with the Indian conditions. The congress Socialist thinkers urged the necessity to evolve a democratic way of life and build an egalitarian society to ameliorate the miseries and sufferings of the Indian people. Marxism was the chief goal of the congress Socialists, but they were influenced by Gandhian principles of non-

violent means and democratic methods.

Rammanohar Lohia played a very important role in the C.S.P. The first India Socialist Conference which was held at Patna on May 17, 1934 constituted a committee to draft a constitution and programme for C.S.P. Lohia was selected a member of this committee. The C.S.P. started publication of a weekly entitled 'Congress Socialist' from Calcutta in 1934. Lohia was made the editor of the new publication. It is through the columns of this magazine that Lohia brought out many illuminating articles and editorials in this weekly.

At the Lucknow Congress of 1936, the Congress Party opened the Foreign Affairs Department under the initiative of Nehru. Nehru requested Lohia to take the charge of the department. Accordingly, Lohia took up the responsibility of this newly formed Foreign Affairs Department as General Secretary. Lohia rendered commendable service as the chief of the department. Under the auspices of the Department Lohia published a few pamphlets such as 'Fight for Civil Liberties,' 'Indians in Foreign land' and articles like 'The Foreign Policies of the Indian National Congress and British Labour Party' which bears the testimony of his inquisitive mind and scholarship.²⁸

Jawaharlal Nehru was very sympathetic about the formation of C.S.P. Young Socialist thinkers looked to him as their leader and adviser. Minoo Masani states that 'Jawaharlal ... was willing to give us the support we needed.'²⁹ Jawaharlal welcomed "the formation of socialist groups in the Congress to influence the ideology of the Congress and the country."³⁰ In spite of expectations from the Socialist leaders, Jawaharlal did not want to associate himself officially with that group. Jawaharlal's attitude & behaviour in this regard shocked and disheartened the Socialist leaders who wished to project Nehru as their intellectual 'Guru.' Nehru wanted to play the role of a national leader in the national liberation movement. Lohia also was attracted towards the charis-

matic personality and charm of Jawaharlal Nehru. Minoo Masani asserted : "I must soon have become one of Jawaharlal's pet young men' and I shared that distinction with JP, Ram Manohar Lohia and Achyut Patwardhan."³¹ It may be said that Rammanohar Lohia got actively involved into the national movement with the formation of Congress Socialist Party in 1934 and he was regarded as one of the stalwarts of the socialist movement in India.

5:7 Gandhi And Lohia.

The emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics and the introduction of mass politics were landmarks in the freedom struggle. Rammanohar Lohia was deeply influenced by Gandhi. Gandhiji's ideals and principles had a strong impact on Lohia. But Lohia did not succumb completely to Gandhian ideas. He considered many of the views of Gandhi inadequate. Lohia did not blindly accept all the ideas of Gandhi. He was critical about the inconsistencies and drawbacks in Gandhian ideas. Though Lohia was not opposed to Marxism, he endeavoured to strike a synthesis between Marxism and Gandhian ideals and techniques.

Gandhi and the Rightist Leadership of the Congress Party viewed the formation of the Congress Socialist Party with reservation. Gandhiji was sceptical about the role and function of such a group within the Congress. Gandhi did not like the birth of C.S.P. because he thought that another group within the parent organisation might wreck the unity and cohesiveness in the Congress. So Gandhi wanted to contain and alienate Nehru so that he might not formally associate himself with that group. Gandhi observed in a letter written to Minboo Masani on June 14, 1934 :

I welcome the rise of the Socialist Party in the Congress. But I can't say that I like the programme as it appears in the printed pamphlet. It seems to me to ignore Indian conditions and I do

not like the assumption underlying many of its propositions which go to show that there is necessarily antagonism between the classes and the masses or between the labourers and the capitalists such that they can never work for mutual good. My own experience covering a fairly long period is to the contrary.³²

Rammanohar Lohia hailed Gandhism as the great invention of the twentieth century. Lohia sought to combine socialist principles with the four Gandhian ideas, namely, satyagraha, ends and means principle, small machine technology and political decentralization. He cherished the view that Satyagraha is superior to both constitutional and revolutionary methods. Lohia believed that Gandhi's non-violent Satyagraha was an effective method to bring about social change.

Gandhi had emphasised that means are more important than the ends. According to Gandhi, the nature of our achievement would depend on our methods : both are inseparable, they are two sides of the same coin. Following Gandhi, Lohia maintained that truth cannot be achieved on the basis of falsehood.³³

Lohia stood for establishment of a socialist society in India after independence. He thought that democracy and national freedom, together with the need for change, should constitute the goals of Indian socialism. Lohia pleaded that Gandhism alone could provide the proper base for socialism in India. Lohia raised the issue of the doctrinal foundation of Indian Socialism and pleaded for the incorporation of Gandhian techniques in socialist movement. Lohia maintained that the true ideal of socialism could be achieved only through Gandhian method. Thus, we find Lohia's leanings to Gandhian ideas if we thoroughly analyse Lohia's thought processes in general.

5:8 Lohia's Approach to Socialism.

Lohia's ideas and thinking on socialism lay scattered through his writings and speeches. Lohia gave socialism a novel dimension and set new goals. Socialism was to Lohia a broad tendency. He envisioned socialism as a 'new civilisation.' Lohia advanced his concept of Socialism independent of capitalism and communism. His theories and ideas on Socialism can not be discussed separately. They are synchronised and conglomerated into a complete whole. In order to understand and appreciate his views and ideas on Socialism it would be convenient and beneficial to analyse and study Lohia's ideas and theories mentioned below. His social ideas and thoughts also have a great relevance and importance.

5:9 The Doctrinal Foundation of Socialism

Rammanohar Lohia forcefully raised the issue of the doctrinal foundation of Indian Socialism in 1952 at Panachmarhi session of the party. In his famous Presidential address at Panchamari in 1952, Lohia emphasised the need of an independent doctrine of socialism. He espoused the thesis that the Indian society must develop on its own. According to him, the new creed could not be developed on the basis of a borrowed creed. To quote Lohia, "In India it leads to hesitancy in action, to frequent lagging behind the cohorts of capitalism or of communism."³⁴ Rammanohar Lohia observes :

"Socialism is a newer doctrine than capitalism or communism ... There must be adequate doctrinal foundation of consistent logic that gives socialism an autonomous direction in thought and action and saves it from confusions that disperse and scatter. Socialism must ever be a doctrine that grows, but it must also ever seek the principle that hold its various limbs together. Socialism should cease to live on borrowed breath.

Too long has it borrowed from communism its economic aims and from capitalism or the liberal age its non-economic and general aim. An acute disharmony has resulted. To explore once again the economic and the general aims of society and to integrate them into a harmony should be a high endeavour of socialist doctrine."³⁵

Lohia's ideas and perceptions on socialism was highly pragmatic. So it had a distinction from the dogmatic and doctrinaire socialism expounded by the European socialists. Lohia was of the opinion that European socialism lacked a world outlook. Lohia observed : "I missed in European socialism the ethos and the elan so necessary for the final victory of a doctrine ... European socialists are so much taken up with the problems of the moment, the statistical evidence and requirements of their own nation, that they miss the complete view and the world view."³⁷

Lohia was opposed to capitalism and communism. To quote Lohia : "Capitalism cannot even fulfil its primary function of providing capital to mankind ... Communism inherits from capitalism its technique of production; it only seeks to smash the capitalist relations of production. Communism claims to be the continuator and developer of capitalist technology, when capitalism is no longer able to do so."³⁸ According to Lohia, capitalism and communism are but two parts of the single complex of existing civilization, whose main features are the hunger for rising living standards to be achieved by the use of dynamic technology and large-scale production. Capitalism depends upon a free enterprise economy for ever-rising standards of living; communism, upon social ownership of the means of production.³⁹ Lohia observed : "Capitalism and communism share a certain community of economic aims insofar as the latter inherits the former's processes and forces of production and alters only its relations... The new world must go beyond them both, beyond capitalism and beyond communism, if for no other reason than that the techniques of mass produc-

tion are inapplicable to two thirds of the world. Communism alters only the capitalist relations of production and seeks to reproduce its forces; socialism must alter them both."⁴⁰ Lohia stated, "Communism wants to move history backwards and to repair the ravage of capitalism by imitating its ways of mass production. That cannot be done. Socialism must know how to move history forward."⁴¹

Lohia came to the conclusion that communism and European tradition of socialism are irrelevant in the existing socio-economic realities in the third world countries. In this perspective Lohia advanced his theory of socialism. He pointed out that modern concept like capitalism, socialism, equality, liberty, etc. Which have evolved in the context of the European experience, should not be universalised and should not be applied to Indian conditions in toto. Lohia defined socialism as "the best way to achieve equality and prosperity."⁴²

Lohia opined that Marx did not sufficiently take into account the peculiar and specific conditions of the third world. Lohia conceived his socialism as a new civilization which would arise in the backward regions of the present civilization and might ultimately cover the whole world. It was largely influenced by the needs and requirements of the present third world countries.⁴³ V.K. Arora writes : "Disillusioned with Marxism and other traditional socialist doctrines, Lohia formulated his independent philosophy of Socialism, whose focal point was the local Asian Scene."⁴⁴

Lohia did not accept Western liberalism. He regarded freedom as important. Lohia had abiding faith in democracy, freedom and individual liberty. Such a belief repelled him from Communism or Marxism. Lohia socialism is against all types of totalitarian and monolithic society. It can never lead to totalitarianism as it based itself on the moral and integrated individual and not on the fragmented and self-alienated individual of the existing civilization. Lohia was

fully aware that freedom can exist only when there is equality in all the walks of life.⁴⁵

Lohia cherished that Socialism is superior to capitalism because it is not based on the idea of the use or exploitation of other for one's own aggrandizement or enrichment. He agreed with Sampurnanand and Acharya Narendra Dev that sometimes the capitalists go to the extent of sacrificing the freedom of their own country for their own selfish end.⁴⁶

Lohia had firm faith in democracy as a government of the people but he opposed the tendency of democracy to lead on elitism. He agreed with thinkers like Harold Laski who believed that the political democracy has no meaning in the absence of economic democracy.⁴⁷ He put maximum emphasis on production and effective distribution. Lohia was in favour of democratic decentralisation and he talked about adapting it to the peculiar socio-economic conditions of India.

Lohia did not want to accept any foreign creed or dogma uncritically. So he had reservations about Marxism. His concept was that "Socialism need not proclaim itself as Gandhian or Marxist on the one hand and as anti-Gandhian or anti-Marxist on the other..."⁴⁸ To Lohia the talk of being a Marxist or an anti-Marxist is futile and irrelevant.

According to Prakash C. Shastri, Lohia's basic criticism against Marxism is three-fold :

1. Some of Marx's fundamental formulations are incomplete.
2. Marx's postulate of the evolution of capitalism will remain a half truth if it fails to state the basic contradiction capitalism products.
3. As a limb of European economy Marx could not seek beyond the interests of European working class. As a philanthropist he vaguely wanted the whole

world to prosper.⁴⁹

Rammanohar Lohia emphasised that India socialism must develop along its own lines; it should not tilt towards capitalism or communism. According to Lohia, fundamentals of socialism should be clarified and democracy and national freedom, together with the need for change, should constitute that goals of Indian socialism. Lohia pleaded that Gandhism alone could provide the proper base for socialism in India.

5:10 Lohia's vision of a new Socialist Civilisation.

Lohia thought that neither communism nor capitalism would be universally valid principles for the change-Over maximum to total efficiency. Lohia thought that the existing civilisation in its dual aspects of capitalism and communism was irrelevant to create a new world, hence he dreamt of a new socialist civilisation of tranquil activity free from the Asian sloth and European strife. The quintessence of this civilisation is the development of man's total man's total personality through 'outward activity and inward poise.' This new civilization would attempt to achieve approximation of the human race and the overcoming of class and caste and regional shifts of power and prosperity through comparatively equal production all over the world. Lohia visualized the various aspects of the existing civilization in its dual forms of capitalism and communism and exposed its weakness to bring the entire world within its fold.

Lohia identified poverty and unemployment as the fundamental obstacles in the way of socialist transformation of the underdeveloped countries. He noted that the destruction of private property and the nationalization of the means of production following the class struggle are inadequate to achieve socialism in the third world. Lohia observed that a new mode of economic rationalization and appropriate forms of organization and social control will have to be

devised.⁵⁷

Lohia's approach to socialism was characterised by a certain degree of independence and to provide Socialism a new world face. Even while in Berlin in 1932, Lohia realized that "the face of Socialism was blurred and not recognizable." Lohia felt that unless it acquired a clear face, it could not serve humanity. After independence, Lohia was right in his conception that unless Socialism acquired a clear image and became recognizable as capitalism and communism, unless it became cohesive, powerful and mighty, its feature would melt into one or the other system as time and place dictate, Judging from this viewpoint Lohia emphasised the need of an independent doctrine of Socialism.⁵⁰

'Ever since I started thinking, I have been a philosophical liberal,' said Lohia. His philosophical bent of mind was nurtured in the German environment where he went for higher studies. Lohia was a profound nationalist. His uppermost desire was to free his country from the yoke of foreign domination.

In the Presidential address at the special convention of Socialist Party in 1952 at Panchmari, Lohia pleaded for the need of assimilation of Gandhian ideas in socialist thought. Lohia cautioned that neither capitalism nor communism would be suited in India. He maintained that the true ideal of socialism could be achieved only through Gandhian method.

Lohia regarded capitalism and communism as two major expressions of the existing civilization. According to Lohia, both capitalism and communism are parts of a single civilization. 'Modern civilization, Lohia observed, 'cannot be understood in terms of democracy or totalitarianism, private or state property alone.'⁵¹

Lohia had no faith in the automatic development of socialism. His socialism rejects the new production technique of the capitalist and the communist systems for India and underdeveloped countries. Lohian socialism stands for socialization of the means of production.

Lohia says that socialism stands for equality and prosperity. In order to achieve it, it should rely on vote (election), spade (constructive work), and prison (civil disobedience). This new Socialism should principally aim at :

1. maximum attainable equality, towards which nationalization of economy may be one necessary step;
2. a decent standard of living throughout the world, and not increasing standard of living within national frontiers;
3. a world parliament elected on some kind of adult franchise with beginning towards a world government and world army;
4. collective and individual practice of civil disobedience so that the unarmed and helpless little man may acquire the habit to resist tyranny and exploitation civilly;
5. freedom of the individual against unjust encroachments of public authority and safeguarding an area of free speech and association and private life over which no government nor organisation may exercise control; and
6. Evolution of a technology, which would be consistent with these aims and processes.⁵²

Thus Lohia's socialism stood for a new civilization, basically communism. He envisioned a just social order based on equality, decentralisation and individual dignity. It undoubtedly preferred social ownership of communism and parliamentary democracy of capitalism but it was not an attempt simply to combine the two, argues one author.⁵³

5.11 Lohia's Analysis of Capitalist Development.

Lohia understood that economic progress and development of the third world countries could never be achieved by emulating either the capitalist pattern of development or the communist pattern. He therefore preferred for an alternative path of development. Lohia visualised the economic inequality prevalent both within a nation and among nations. Both national and international inequalities are related with each other and hence affect each other. Lohia felt that so far inequality among the nations is not removed, inequality within a nation cannot be completely eliminated.

Lohia in 'Economics after Marx' tried to expose the weaknesses of the then existing economic theories in order to justify the significance of a new approach in the entire economic thinking. He was critical of the economic thinkers of Germany as well as Britain. To Lohia, Marxism is not applicable to India. In a country like India, with the very special characteristics which are not found in all other Asian countries, we cannot think of any policy of direct application of Marxism.⁵⁴

To Lohia, 'the essential core of Marxist doctrine is the analysis of capitalist development,' and 'with the elemental force of this sociological law of capitalism ties up the ultimate picture of society which Marx and Engles drew.' Lohia understood that Marx did not give a consistent theory of capitalist development.⁵⁵

To Lohia, capitalism did arise in west Europe, grew in west Europe and attained its full maturity there, but even while it grew, it took a lot of dynamic out of the territories which came under its imperialist control, but which were not part of west Europe. Lohia felt that in order to understand capitalist development, it will be necessary to think of capitalist economy as consisting not

alone of an internal circle represented by the west European economy but of two circles, an internal west European circle and an external world circle, from which the internal west European circle draws its dynamic, its surplus value, its exploitation, its sucking and so on.⁵⁶

Lohia understood that capitalist development comprised of two circles in which the internal west European circle draws its dynamic from the external world. Lohia therefore came to the conclusion that capitalists 'as a historical entity has produced a greater contradiction between increasing forces of production in the west European capitalist economy and decreasing forces of production in the rest of the world.'⁵⁷

Lenin defined imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. Lohia did not accept this definition of imperialism. According to him imperialism was not the highest stage of capitalism but appeared along with it. They were twins and arose simultaneously. Lohia wrote : "Capitalism and imperialism have been twins. Imperialism has not been the last stage of capitalism ... They were born together, they rose together, they matured together ..."

Lohia wanted to prove that Marx's analysis of capitalist development was incomplete in as much as he considered capitalism as an autocentric development and his position that the road to socialism is through capitalism.

5:12 Lohia's Crusade Against Capitalism and Imperialism.

Rammanohar Lohia presented his theory of twin origin of capitalism and imperialism. Lohia maintained that the development of the world capitalist centres and the under development of the two-thirds of making was the outcome of the same historical process of joint development of capitalism and imperialism.⁵⁸

Lohia rejected Lenin's theory of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. To Lohia, both imperialism and capitalism are interwoven; they have been twins; which born, rose and matured together. To the question whether capitalism is possible without imperialism, Lohia's answer was that 'in history so far there has been no capitalism without imperialism'.⁵⁹

Lohia felt and believed that the perpetration of colonial rule and subjugation and exploitation of the colonial countries of Asia and Africa was the handiwork of the European countries in order to extend and perpetuate their economic and political power. To Lohia, these tendencies and activities were imperialistic. Thus he asserted that imperialism was a twin of capitalism, and they arose simultaneously. He maintained that it was only by exploiting these colonies and territories that west European countries were able to build up their costly productive apparatus, and ultimately they used them as sources of raw materials for their industries, and for other purposes.⁶⁰

Lohia did not agree with Marx that what had happened in European countries earlier would be repeated in Asian and other backward countries later. Lohia upheld the view that 'communism is the latest weapon of Europe against Asia.' Lohia thought that in Afro-Asia.' Lohia thought that in Afro-Asian backward countries the Communist objective was simply to obstruct development along the capitalist lines, and not to replace capitalism by communism. To Lohia, communism appeared as a weapon of Europe against Asia. As one writes points out : 'Here communism was used not to promote Asian interest but to safeguard the interests of one bloc in the great European conflict.'⁶¹

Lohia stated : "No greater disaster could befall socialism than if the historical peculiarities of its career in Europe were sought to be universalised and reproduced in the other two-third of the world. Socialism in Europe has been gradual, constitutional and distributive Socialism henceforth, and in the rest of

the world, must be drastic, unconstitutional, when necessary, and lay the accent on production."⁶²

Lohia pointed out that communism was based on capitalist technology or forces of production as developed by capitalism. Lohia was of the opinion that the third world countries must adopt a new pattern of economic development, avoiding both capitalism and communism. He regarded capitalism and communism as 'equally irrelevant' for the backward countries. As one author succinctly points out :

"The European path was not the panacea for them. They must blaze a new trail. And this new type of development was called socialism by Lohia. This new path, he believed, would usher in a new civilization which might be adopted by the whole world."⁶³

5.13 Lohia's Theory of Equal Irrelevance of Capitalist and Communist Models of Development.

Lohia's critique of Marx's scheme of capitalist development and his theoretical formulation of twin origin of capitalism and imperialism constitute the hallmark of his analysis of the political economy of underdevelopment. Lohia reformulated the Marxian analysis of capitalist development and highlighted its drawbacks and limitations. Lohia's thesis of the equal irrelevance of capitalism and communism arises from his critique of the capitalist technology.⁶⁴

Lohia's thesis of equal irrelevance of capitalist and communist economic models of development in Third World is based on two assumptions. Firstly, since the western industrialisation and economic growth took place under a set of favourable conditions which were historically unique, this model cannot be reproduced in the third world. Secondly, in view of a world approximation

aiming at a higher evolution of human society the economic systems which have endeared the larger part of the world underdeveloped and which do not contain the potentiality to spread its benefits all over the world, cannot bring about the evolution of a just world order.⁶⁵

Lohia said : "World capitalism has, like a knife, run through humanity and cut it up into those generally living north of the thirtieth parallel, beneficiaries of the existing civilization, and those living south of it, the disinherited of the earth... capitalism imposed the peace of death on Asia and Africa and elsewhere, caused their populations to grow and their economic apparatus to decay. The task of capital formation over two-thirds of the world is far too colossal for private capital to accomplish, Capitalism cannot fulfil its primary function of providing capital to mankind."⁶⁶

Lohia stated : "Communism is a doctrine of social ownership and of release of means of production from their relations of private property... Communism inherits from capitalism its technique of production; it only seeks to smash capitalist relations of production. Communism claims to be the continuator and developed of capitalist technology, when capitalism is no longer able to do so In this situation of national and international decay, the doctrine of socialism is becoming the universal profession of the people. The Socialist ideology is, however, beset with traditional forms evolved in Europe and now current throughout the world under the name of socialism."⁶⁷

Lohia asserted : "Adherents of the Atlantic as well as the Soviet camp are deeply hurt by the theory of equal irrelevance. They are correct in diagnosing the virus of the opponent but are singularly blind to their own. Concealment of such viruses denotes grave aerial to mankind. There is no need to keep quiet over the suppressions and tyrannies of communism, the disaster of its economic aims when applied to the underdeveloped areas, and the barren

cruelty that it represents.”⁶⁸

Lohia further stated : “A living civilization prospers or is relegated; it does not change ... Possibilities of change within the framework of the existing civilization are not altogether absent in communism. They come unheralded and without debate.... The two forms of the existing civilization, capitalist and communist, are equally irrelevant to a new creation, but not so the peoples living under them.”⁶⁹

Lohia wanted to give socialism with its preference for social ownership and democratic rights a strong doctrinal foundation and a distinct image of its own. He said in December 1955 : “An ideology of socialism, more universal and valid than the traditional socialism prevailing in Europe ... has been evolving in India for a decade and more. The Socialist Party will engage in this work more earnestly and more massively.”

Lohia forcefully stated : “All forms of colonialism are a shame to mankind and a serious impediment to the growth of an equal world. Political rule of an occupation army and of one nation over another must go... Socialist internationalism must stand behind all struggles against colonialism and render all possible assistance to freedom fighters.” Lohia envisaged that India “must continue unceasing efforts to build up a third system, which adheres to the principle of equal irrelevance between the two camps and refuses to put itself in alternate service of either.”

5:14 Lohia and his Principle of Equi-Distance.

Lohia’s thesis of Equal irrelevance of capitalism and communism and his principle of Equi-distance are not the same as conceived by some scholars. The principle of Equi-distance bears a different meaning. In order to un-

derstand the meaning of this principle we have to study and analyse the historical perspective from which this theory emanates.

In 1953 Jayaprakash Narayan met Nehru for exploring possibilities of co-operation and understanding with the Congress for the Development of the country. The talks yielded no positive results but Rammanohar Lohia did not like the PSP-Congress co-operation. Asoke Mehta, the then General Secretary of the PSP, presented his thesis entitled 'Political compulsions of a Backward Economy' at Betul convention in June 1953, where he advocated his views seeking a broad-based co-operation and understanding with the democratic parties, namely Congress, to accelerate the pace of developmental activities of the country and to carry forward the country towards modernisation and upliftment. He wanted to make the social revolution speedier and strengthened by joining hands with the Congress Party. Lohia was antagonistic to this stance of co-operation with the Congress at this juncture.

Asoke Mehta wanted co-operation with the ruling Congress Party. Asoke Mehta's contention was that "the economic development of a backward country would be difficult to achieve through the democratic process if the democratic parties followed the traditional method of opposing one another." He felt it would pose a hurdle towards the development of the nation. Mehta was in favour of broadening the 'area of agreement' between the Socialist Parties and the Congress Party.

Lohia did not share the views put forward by Mehta in Betul convention. Lohia opposed the move of extending co-operation with the Congress Party. Lohia said : "The Praja Socialist Party is committed to the view that it is as distant from the Congress Party as it is from the Communists and the Communalists." The ideological differences of views between Asoke Mehta & Lohia in the Betul Convention led to internal Bickering and dissensions within the party.

Lohia maintained that his concept of socialism would be independent of capitalism and communism. In this back drop he enunciated his principle of Equi-distance. By this principle Lohia would try to mean that it will not be congenial and conducive to join hands with the Congress and the Communists for the benefit and interest of the nation as he believed that those parties were following the paths of development which would be detrimental to the all round development and prosperity of the country. Lohia, therefore, was in favour of maintaining equal distance with the Congress Party and the Communist Party. Prakash C. Shastri observes : "Dr. Lohia, who had always been a recognized Gandhian in the party, evolved the doctrine of 'equi-distance which meant that the PSP should take up a position with geometrical exactitude between Congress and Communist..."⁷⁰

5:15 Decentralisation of Power : The Four-Pillar State

The principle of decentralisation is central to Lohia's economic and political thinking. To realise the principle of decentralization Lohia stood for a four pillar state. The concept of the four pillar state, which must be the political framework of the future socialist state, as Lohia concedes, has been envisaged as a sure safeguard against the political centralisation, authoritarianism and a guarantee for the practice of real democracy.

Lohia contended that decentralisation will infuse new life into administrative limbs, and allow maximum opportunity for the expression of individual needs and experience.

Lohia's concept of the four pillar state is the manifestation of decentralisation of political and administrative power. It is based on the principle of immediacy in democracy. It means devolution of real power - power

that is often the attribute of sovereignty.

Lohia wanted the doctrine of socialism to be enriched by Gandhi's contribution, he was clear in his mind that superimposition of non-violence on socialism or democracy on socialism would be infructuous. He emphasised that there should be harmony in the socialist integration of its economic and general aims. Lohia stated that socialism in Asia must increasingly become the doctrine of maximum attainable equality through redivision of land and social ownership over industry. Its political structure must arise out of the decentralised state and it must seek its technological framework in the small machine.⁷¹

Lohia wrote : "If the total affairs of a country cannot be simplified so as to achieve the active participation of the common man, they have to be cut up in small and yet smaller quantities. Federalism must go. Sovereign power must not reside alone in centre and federating units. It must be broken up and diffused over the smallest region where a group of men and women live."⁷³ He continued further, "The next great advance in constitution making will be when a country frames its constitution on the basis of the four-pillar state, the village, the district, the province and the centre, being four pillars of equal majesty and dignity."⁷⁴

In this connection Lohia observed : "Democracy can bring warmth to the blood of the common man only when constitutional theory starts practising the state of four limbs, the village, the district, the province and the centre, Organically covered by the flesh and blood of equalities, this constitutional skeleton of the four-pillar state can infuse democracy with joy." Lohia noted : "The central limb of the state must have power enough to maintain the integrity and unity of the state and the rest of it must be fragmented."⁷⁵

Lohia stated : "The four-pillar state is obviously not a mere executive arrangement. It is not as if superior parliaments legislate and the village and district organs are left with the execution of the laws. The four-pillar state is both a legislative and an executive arrangement. It is a way of life and to all spheres of human activity, for instance, production, ownership, administration, planning, education and the like, the four-pillar state provides a structure and a way. The community of a state is to be so organised and sovereign power so diffused of each little community in it lives the way of life that it chooses."⁷⁶

Lohia had made concrete thinking to the concept of four-pillar state and made genuine efforts for its propagation. He highlighted certain policy directions that may be followed in this regard. Lohia opined : "The armed forces of the state may be controlled by the centre, the armed police by the province but all other police may be brought under district and village control. While industries like the railways or iron and steel may be controlled by the centre, the small unit textile industry of the future may be left to district and village ownership as management."

Lohia said, "The four-pillar state will provide some answer to the continuing debate on freedom and planning. Not through the mixed economy of social and private ownership but through spreading social ownership over the four-pillars of the state will it be possible to diffuse economic power and the right to make decisions." Lohia stated further : "The four-pillar state rises above the issues of regionalism and functionalism. It is a structure which gives meaning even to the functionalist agencies of government and society... The concept of the four-pillar state diffuses power also within people's organisations and corporations." K.G. Pillai says : "Lohia hoped that only through such a decentralisation in planning, decision-making, giving freedom to small communities the country can rise above the issues of regionalism and factionalism."

Lohia noted that the primary task of Indian socialism is to create prosperity. He pleads that the four-pillar state which provides the political structure of the future socialist state is supposed to activate every section of the society to a new life.

Lohia is in favour of administrative decentralisation. He suggests that economic decentralization, corresponding to political and administrative decentralisation, may be brought about through maximum utilization of small machines. Lohia hoped that "a state organised like this ... will surely be able to rouse popular enthusiasm and encourage initiative in the social world; it will dispel popular apathy and democratise and purify the administration." N.C. Mehrotra opines : "Through the means of democratic institutions and decentralization Lohia wanted to safeguard the society from the domination of bureaucracy." V.R. Mehta rightly points out : "The most important contribution of Lohia is his development of the concept of political decentralization." Lohia thought that a truly non-violent society can be achieved only on the basis of decentralization. He felt that centralization leads to dictatorship and whimsical exercise of power. Therefore, he came to the conclusion that in a centralised society the human beings are relegated into the background and lose their freedom. Lohia put maximum emphasis on ensuring individual freedom and dignity.

Lohia was deeply influenced and impressed by Gandhian ideals. Gandhi said that state is good which governs the least. To Gandhi, a decentralised polity provides full scope for the development of the capabilities and potentialities of the individuals. Thus Lohia, following Gandhi, suggested that powers and authority should be dispersed and decentralised among villages, districts and provinces. Lohia maintained that the true ideal of socialism could be achieved only through Gandhian method.

5:16 Lohia's Concept of Small Unit Machine.

"The most significant feature of Lohia's socialism was the economy based on small unit machine," as one writer suggests. Lohia wanted India's progress towards modernisation and upliftment. But he did not like the European path of development with emphasis on large-scale industrialisation. He aspired to see India's development and prosperity along the path which would suit Indian needs and conditions. He sought to devise technology which would be congenial and conducive to Indian economy and environment. With this end in view Lohia emphasised to have small-unit machine which would be commensurate to Indian needs, conditions and requirements.

Lohia emulated some principles and ideals of Gandhi. Gandhi's antipathy and denunciation on heavy industrialisation might have influenced Lohia to some extent. Lohia's insistence on small technology may be a pointer in this regard. Drawing heavily from Gandhi, Lohia added an edge about the debate on technology, development nexus a new dimension. Lohia categorically rejected the capitalist as well as communist path of development for India. To Lohia capitalism as well as communism were inadequate in the context of prevailing problems of the world. He dismissed the two models as closed systems. Lohia presented the concept of small unit machine "As an alternative to capitalist and communist mode of rationalisation originated primarily from an underdeveloped country perspective."⁷⁸

In his presidential address at the special convention of Socialist Party in 1952 at Pachmahi, Lohia pleaded for the need of assimilation of Gandhian ideals in socialist thought. He advocated the significance of a decentralised economy and cottage industries. Like Gandhi, Lohia was against big machines and pleaded for incorporation of small machines because of their requirement of less capital and maximum utilisation of labour power in the country.⁷⁹

Lohia thought that to remove and eradicate poverty and unemployment of the Indian masses emphasis should be given on such technology which would act as a panacea. Lohia felt the necessity of widening the scope of employment of the Indian workers. He pointed out that the economy based on small unit machine would provide opportunity for employment of a large number of people. He sought for an economy "that will make an advance upon the existing situation but will not make such crushing demands upon our general economy as to cause dislocations, as to give the benefits of rationalization only to a small sector and to deny it to the rest." Lohia said : "Socialism aims economically at a technology that rationalizes economy, not sector by sector, nor region by region, but, as far as possible, in all sectors and regions at the same time."⁸⁰ Lohia said : "Socialism must devise forms of struggle and organisation which destroy capitalism in both its aspects. Its struggle and organization must correspond with its economic aims ... This immediacy must also characterize its struggle and organization."⁸¹

Lohia put emphasis on a programme of economic decentralization, democratisation and the small-unit machine. He said : "The mind must no longer be clogged by antiquated notions of large scale industry or of cottage industries. A rigorous search must be made to see how far power, whether in the form of oil or electricity or coal, can be used for the propelling of machines that do not need heavy capitalization."⁸²

Though Lohia stressed emphasis on small unit machine yet he did not rule out the importance of heavy industry. He said : "This is not to deny altogether the heavier machine in steel works or in river-training projects, but emphasis must heavily rest on the small unit machine."

According to Lohia, industrialisation by means of the small-unit machine

will have some advantages. Lohia said : "villages and towns of our country have abundant raw material of various kinds. It is being wasted. Its processing and manufacture would be possible only when small machinery is available."⁸³

Lohia is of opinion that Socialism must be decentralized and must evolve on a regional basis through the application of technology and the exercise of political power in response to local conditions. Lohia feels that this is the autonomous direction in which socialism must evolve. In his 'Aspects of Social Policy' Lohia talks of a 'Four Pillar State' in which village, district, province and centre all have defined functions and are integrated in a system of 'functional federalism' in the Gandhian tradition. Lohia thinks that the theory of socialism as depicted will cater for the provision of bread and the achievement of freedom.⁸⁴

Lohia was optimistic that adhering to the principle of small unit machine India will be able to enhance her production capacities and the economy will get strengthened and India will achieve modernisation and prosperity. To quote Lohia : "Perhaps with the small unit tool it would be possible for countries like India to re-equip their economy, to expand their productive equipment. But in order to achieve that condition, what kind of class struggle do we have to wage? Would it be permissible for us to go through all that pathway of deceit and lies? Obviously not."⁸⁵ Lohia pinned his hopes that socialism would have to be constructed on the basis of social ownership and a new type of technology. This 'New Technology' is the other name of 'Small unit Machine' as conceived by Rammanohar Lohia.

5:17 Lohia's Social Ideas and Policies.

Lohia was a thinker par excellence. Like Gandhi, Lohia also had remarkable contributions regarding social ideas and thoughts. It is pertinent here to

mention that Lohia was profoundly influenced and impressed by Gandhi's ideals, values and principles. Lohia wanted to change the society. He aspired to change the heart of the people. He sought to rouse social consciousness and awakening to root out the social ills and problems of Indian society. He sincerely felt that to eradicate social vices and evils the inculcation of social value among the masses was important. His social ideas and policies had remarkable dimensions. Lohia's analysis of the social structure of Indian society is noteworthy and it bears relevance to understand Lohian views regarding social transformation of the Indian society and the social problems with which Indian society is confronted with. Lohia drew attention to the pernicious social maladies and evil designs and put forward remedial measures. Lohia's social thinking and the methods he envisaged and envisioned to refurbish the Indian social life are discussed below.

A. Lohia on Equality, Social Justice and civil Liberties.

Lohia was a pathfinder of equality, social justice and individual freedom and dignity. Madhu Limaye says : "Dr. Lohia was one of those great leaders who not only advocated the need for a fundamental reordering of our social relations but also provided an ideological basis for this revolutionary transformation. Dr. Lohia called this radical transformation seven revolutions or 'Saptakranti.'"⁸⁶

As to 'The Meaning of Equality,' Lohia writes : "Equality is perhaps as high an aim of life as truth or beauty. But this aim has not been investigated in serenity. Its direct and immediate repercussions on day-to-day life, on property and income and the general ordering of society, are deep and many."⁸⁷ Lohia points out that if socialism is to be defined in two words then they are equality and prosperity. He mentions that equality and prosperity are twins. Explaining the principle of Equality Lohia says : "As an abstract concept and

generalization, equality can only mean an atmosphere, an emotion, and perhaps also a wish that all arrangements, political, social, or economic, shall be equal as between one individual and another ... The essential point is that equality, unless it is expressed in concrete terms, is an atmosphere, an emotion, a wish, or a dream." Elaborating the meaning of equality Lohia mentions : "Legal equality is equality before the Law ... Once legal equality was established, the phase of political equality came. Political equality means the equality of the adult vote ... Economic equality in the sense of an increasing standards of living to everybody within national frontiers has become a common element of all ideologies." Lohia, however, warned that "We must beware of how to seek to realize equality in different spheres. For each aspect of material equality, a method should be sought that corresponds to its nature. Otherwise unexpected and contrary results may follow."

Lohia viewed liberty and equality as mutually complementary to each other. He thinks that they can't be separated. Lohia was opposed to any kind of tyranny, oppression and regimentation in society. He was in favour of assuring social justice and economic security to the individuals. He stood against absolute state power and bureaucratic hegemony. He aspired that social equality and justice should be the hallmark of every society. He wanted to have a egalitarian social order where all men will get equal opportunities to develop their capabilities and potentialities.

Lohia drew a nexus between individual liberty and equality. He maintained that individual liberty could not be attained in the absence of equality. He aspired to uphold equality in all walks of life. He wanted to stamp out all kinds of injustice and inequality from our society. Lohia also put emphasis on economic freedom. He plended to raise the standard of living of the people. He laid stress on assuring the dignity of man. He fought throughout his life for making man the centre of socialist concern. He wanted to preserve the worth

of man and to restore the human personality despite all odds and troubles in life.

Lohia was in favour of democratic socialism. His socialism was rooted in equality. He observed that the main pillar of socialism is equality. Lohia greatly emphasised the need of equality as the yardstick for the concept of socialism. Lohia pointed out that socialism must have strong roots in equality.

Lohia was a champion of civil liberties. Explaining the conceptual extent of civil liberties Lohia says : "It embraces the rights of the citizen in regard to security both of his person and of dwellings, to freedom of opinion and assembly, thought and organisation, to equal justice and control over the government and to release from political convictions." Lohia writes : "Civil liberties comparatively smoothen society's march towards progress. Society is being eternally pulled between reaction and progress and, often, degenerates into a state of stagnation." Lohia again states : "The concept of civil liberties is essentially a liberal concept which acts as a shock-absorber of the cruel impact between State tyranny and mass revolts. It enables society's march towards progress to proceed on orderly lines." Lohia questioned : 'How should civil liberties be defended?' He asserts : "The special front of civil liberties maintains the backbone of the people. The spirit of opposition against injustice is kept intact. The individual gets strength from the knowledge that his resistance to police or executive oppression will awaken common interest, ... Such a common interest serves to convulse the conscience of the people against encroachment of their liberties. The people are taught to be vigilant and, so they clear the road to progress." Lohia concludes : "It defines state authority within clear limits. It assigns well defined liberties to the people. The task of the State is to protect these liberties."

B. Abolition Of Caste System.

Caste system plays a very important role in social stratification in India society. According to Lohia, caste is considered as 'the most important single reality of the Indian situation.' Lohia feels that caste system exerts a destructive role in Indian society and Lohia upholds the limitations and drawbacks of caste to socialise the Indian masses to rise against the menace. Lohia stated : "Socialism should act more powerfully with regard to issues of caste and in relation to women. The party of socialism in India and some other underdeveloped territories has indeed resolved to destroy the system of caste and subjection of women, but it generally inert on these issues."⁸⁸

Lohia asserted that without the abolition of caste system, democracy and socialism could not function properly in India. Lohia launched a crusade against the caste system on both social and political aspect in order to rouse the sentiments and feelings of the masses. Lohia said : "To stop talking of caste is to shut one's eyes to the most important single reality of the Indian institution. One does not end caste merely by wishing it away."⁸⁹

Lohia wrote : "Although caste as a mature institution is confined to India, it is universal as essence and incipient beginning. Caste is immobile class. Loosening caste is class. This slow swing between class and caste has so far been a law of human history..."⁹⁰ He continued : "Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts ability. Constricted ability further restricts opportunity. Where caste prevails, opportunity and ability are restricted to ever-narrowing circles of the people India's experience is conclusive proof that caste turns a country into the arid deserts of intellectual inadequacy."

Lohia held the view that in history there had been always a tussle between class and caste. He observed : "All human history hitherto has been an

internal oscillation between class and caste and an internal shift of prosperity and power from one region to another. This external shift and internal oscillation are related to one another.

Lohia was of opinion that castes have stratified Indian society. He perceived a new sociological law that shrinkage and contraction of opportunity and ability is a necessary accompaniment of caste. To remove this Lohia suggested that "the narrowing selection of abilities must be broadened, and that can only be done if for two or three or four decades backward castes and groups are given preferential opportunities." He pleaded that preference will be given to scheduled castes and tribes in the matters of land distribution, employment, and educational opportunities. Lohia stood for abolition of all types of inequalities prevailing in society. Lohia rejected the Marxian view of equality of opportunity because according to him Marx had only knowledge of class, not of caste.

In order to abolish the caste system Lohia wanted to adopt concrete and revolutionary measures. He sought to make a social revolution for uplifting the conditions of the lower and backward classes. Lohia affirmed the faith that until the caste system is totally destroyed and abolished, Indian society could not be reconstructed and rejuvenated. He was emphatic and sincere to change the mental attitude of the people for abolishing the caste system.

C. Overhauling The Indian Educational System And Educational Reforms.

Lohia suggested that the system of education in the country requires drastic changes. Lohia feels that the system of education in India is in doldrums. He therefore pleads that the entire educational system in India needs to be thoroughly changed in order to meet the requirements of the people. Lohia was of the view that the entire educational system in India should be

completely overhauled and reconstructed. He advanced the view that certain educational reforms should be introduced in India so that the pattern of imparting education should be rearranged and refashioned in order to give a new look.

Lohia observed that independent India could not shed off the old colonial system of education introduced by the British Raj. Lohia felt that the direction and the framework of the present educational system in India follows the legacy of the system of education established by the British. He deplored that after independence India was following the pattern of education as envisaged and formulated by our colonial masters. He was hostile and antagonistic that we were not able to sever connections with the British in educational policy and curriculum. It appears 'that Indians could not yet decolonise the educational system from its colonial hangover,' opines one another.⁹²

Lohia says : "There is nothing more important than educational and training programmes, an arm of the Party which has been so badly neglected hitherto.... The Socialist must learn to integrate the economic and the general aims of society."⁹³

Lohia pointed out that the existing educational system has failed to inculcate and indoctrinate proper education. It has failed to infuse and instil real values to the children. It has failed to build that mental attitude of the people which may enable them to fight out the social maladies and superstitions prevalent in our society. Lohia pleads that education must enable to equip people to solve socio-economic ailments of the country and must be fashioned reconstruction and rejuvenation of the Indian society. Lohia draws attention to the present system of education which is barren and incapable to rouse the individual's creativity. To quote Lohia, "It neither trains the person's mind nor equip him for a living."⁹⁴

Lohia put maximum emphasis on eradicating ignorance, illiteracy and superstitions from our society. Lohia believed that unless the entire educational system is completely overhauled, we could not make necessary progress in socio-economic direction. Lohia is of the opinion that the nation must take up the task of spreading literacy and impart proper education to the masses. He believes that "the education up to the Middle standard should be free and compulsory and that educational facilities should be provided free or cheap at higher stages, particularly to the Scheduled Castes, Tribes and other poorer sections of the society. Free or cheap residential facilities should also be provided to these sections."⁹⁵ According to Lohia, the system of education "requires revolutionary overhauling so that it ceases to be expensive, becomes useful and impresses upon the student the need to integrate the mind."⁹⁶

Lohia proposed that primary and secondary instruction must be brought under municipal or local board control. Lohia was opposed to the running of educational institutions for the affluent sections of the population because he thought that these institutes inject a different set of value systems, manner's and behaviour-pattern which differentiates from the middle class people.

Lohia stressed emphasis on technical and vocational education. He wanted that more technical institutes should be opened so that various technical and vocational courses could be introduced which would help to lessen the problem of unemployment. He was also in favour of expansion of agricultural studies. Lohia also insisted that one year course of national service on farm or factory should be made a part of the curriculum for a bachelor's degree.

Lohia emphasised the urgent need of the scientific development of the country. He suggested that the scope of University education and advanced research should accord a top priority. He maintained that the standard of the research work should be high and not superficial. He urged the Indian research-

ers to reject foreign concepts and tools. Lohia detested the system of sending students overseas for receiving training in peripheral subjects. He wanted to stop brain-drain. He insisted on broadening the avenues for scientific education and research for the development and prosperity of the nation.

Thus, we may say that Lohia's views on reforming the educational system of India are remarkable, formidable and socially relevant. Lohia draws attention on the need and importance of education and to extend that amenities and facilities of getting education. He launches a crusade to root out ignorance, illiteracy and social prejudices rampant in Indian society.

D. Removal Of English Language.

Language occupies a very important role in each country. Language is a tool for communication which acts as a bridge between the government and the people. Lohia viewed English as a foreign language and launched a movement to remove the English education in this country. Lohia feels that the English-education people of India constitutes a tiny minority of the whole population and their approach and behaviour is elitist in character and they maintain a distance with the people not knowing English. They belong to the affluent section and upper strata of the society and they control and dominate the government, administration and the bureaucracy. Lohia said, it was being used "as a tool for minority rule," and it was turned into "the most effective instrument of domination by a tiny minority over a huge sea of people." He pleaded that the rich people belonging to the high caste had the opportunity to learn English education, and it had helped to widen the gulf between the common man and the ruling elites belonging to higher starata. Lohia wrote : "The English language had created such a vast full between rich and poor, high and low caste, and educated and uneducated, that India has become a nation of highest inequality."

To Lohia the banishment of English is necessary for the prosperity of the country and for the proper functioning of the democracy. He says that only a tiny minority of one percent of the population is English educated and they take all the facilities and amenities depriving the mass population. Lohia points out that English language has produced a feudalmentality among the ruling class. To this tiny minority, Lohia feels, English is an instrument of domination and exploitation. Lohia stood for a movement to banish English from India, and said that banishment of English is connected with the efforts of establishing democracy and equality in the country.

A language is a carrier having imprint of people's culture, ethos, vision of life, folkways, customs traditions and life-style. Lohia feels that due to the dominance of a foreign language, i.e., English, people of India may lose connection with the old traditions, culture and heritage. He thinks that there should be a nexus between people's language and the development of the country.

Lohia is of opinion that English-knowing people represent the elite class in India. The peasants, workers, agricultural labourers, shop-keepers and the vast majority of ordinary and illiterate masses can not follow the English language. They develop an inferiority-complex, and they can be easily befooled by the rich people. The ordinary masses can be deprived and exploited by the affluent section. This may hinder the constitution and growth of a composite and healthy nation.

Lohia lamented the notion that knowledge could not be imparted through Indian languages. He opined that Indian languages are very rich and Indian students should be acquainted with the Indian languages. He emphasised the need for the growth of Indian regional languages. Lohia tried to make it clear that the banishment of English does not mean the substitution of Hindi. He urged that regional languages should be used in governmental business. Lohia

was not an enemy of the English language but he talked about the development and furtherance of Indian languages. 'It should not usurp the place of Indian languages like Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Urdu or Hindi,' Lohia observed.

We may point out here that Lohia had a mistaken belief that the study of English language could be banished from India and the Indian regional languages could be developed only by imposing restrictions on the study of English language. English language occupies a very important place and it is an international language. Moreover, English language is immensely helpful for advanced research and studies in any discipline. Perhaps Lohia wanted to abolish the dominating tendencies of English-educated people belonging to the elite class. He sought to wipe out the misbehaviour and parochial attitude of the bureaucracy to ensure smooth and good governance for the well being of the people. Lohia did not like the existence of a separate class of English-knowing people because he thought it perpetrates disunity, inequality and discrimination among the people which acts as an obstacle to usher in a 'new civilisation' having the attributes of equality, cohesion and humane social order.

E. Thrust on the Importance and Upliftment of Women in Society.

Lohia highlighted the importance and significance of women in the formation of a healthy society in India. Lohia was in favour of espousing the dignity and freedom of women. He put emphasis on restoring equality between man and woman. He held the view that if the female community remains backward, ignorant and illiterate, then the nation could not develop and prosper. He wanted to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and superstition ingrained in the women community. He struggled hard to free the women from the deprivation, exploitation and subjugation meted out to them by the male community. He was keen to spread political education to the woman. Women, he argued, was a formidable force to reckon with. Lohia wanted to socialise the women about

their importance and strength in society.

Emphasising the need and importance of women in building a healthy society Rammanohar Lohia noted : "A Socialist movement without the active participation of women is like a wedding without the bride. Not only are women ultimately responsible for the health of the race and the growth of the new generation; they are also the chief support of a movement for peaceful resistance." Lohia keenly wanted the involvement of women in the freedom struggle and in the formation of a clean, classless, corruption-free and healthy nation after India attained independence. Lohia tried to seek to root out inequalities and social evils embedded in the social order. He told : "The party of socialism must be brave enough to open a full-scale attack on social evils prevailing among the people." Lohia spoke about 'seven revolutions' devised for the initiation of Indian social revolution, the most significant is the one aimed at achieving equality between man and woman of all injustices, plaguing the earth, those arising out of the inequality between the sexes are perhaps the bedrock. Inequality between man and woman has so become part of human habit and nature that it seeps into everything else."

Lohia stressed emphasis on the emancipation of women in all spheres. N.C. Mehrotra says that after Gandhiji, Lohia was the first political thinker in India to fight for the equal status of woman in every walk of life. Lohia pointed out that the two segregation of caste and women are primarily responsible for the decline of spirit in India. Lohia felt that most of the women's lives are full of sufferings and miseries. He sought to rouse awareness and consciousness in order to mitigate the problems of women in Indian society. Lohia said, "Woman's participation in collective life is exceedingly limited, also in Russia, which boast of heaving achieved equality between the sexes."

Lohia urged that women should be treated equally with men and should

be given more right, if equality was to be established ultimately. Lohia was aware that "certain disadvantages of earlier aging and bodily strength apply to woman and the crust of customs centuries old reduces her to the second sex." Lohia, however, stated : "giving her equal opportunity would not solve the problem of inequality between the sexes. When a group of people is held down by debility, physical or cultural, the only way to bring it up to equality with others is through conferment of preferential opportunities."

Lohia drew attention to the economic dependence of women over men which greatly contribute to her slavery. Lohia lamented that woman's life is wasted in the kitchen. An woman does not get an opportunity to know what is happening outside. She is totally confined to her house and household activities. Moreover, in family life she is underfed and victim of family hardships.

Lohia pointed out that women have always been victims of mortality in Indian society. Regarding sexual scandals women are blamed mostly than men. Lohia emphasised the need for developing an atmosphere conducive to the healthy relationship between man and woman.

Lohia reiterated his stance that women will have equal and independent status in the creation of a new social order. Freedom, he thinks, is essential for the liberation and upliftment of woman in society. Lohia had depicted the pathetic and miserable living conditions of women in our rural villages. Thus, Lohia draws attention to the basic problems, sufferings and miseries of Indian women at the concrete and existential level and pleads for remedial measures for the development and upliftment of women in all spheres in Indian society. He caution that ignoring the ability and strength of women is a folly and no country can move forward and prosper without ascertaining the utilities of female community in a society.

5:18 SUMMING UP

Lohia in his thinking represented an integrated approach on society, Social problems and human civilisation. He wanted to explain socialism considering its inner values. He was opposed to both capitalism and communism. Lohia considered both 'capitalism and communism' irrelevant to the whole of mankind. Lohia suggested an alternative model of development which would be congenial and conducive to the socio-economic conditions of the Indian society and the third-world countries. 'He formulated his socialistic concept with his eyes especially on his own country,'⁹⁷ says one commentator. Lohia visualised socialism in the form of a 'new civilisation' which is based on the attributes of equality, social justice and welfare, individual freedom, an end to exploitation and corruption and egalitarian social order devoid of social disparities and prejudices. He put emphasis on the development of human personality.

Lohia said : "I think the shortest but fully meaningful definition of socialism will be 'the best way to achieve equality and prosperity' ... The idea of achieving both equality and prosperity is socialism."⁹⁸

Lohia stressed the need for a small machine technology. The concept of small-unit machine is aimed at solving the industrialisation problems in the developing and third-world countries. Lohia put forward the principle of 'Four-Pullar State' with a view to decentralise power and authority. He thought that this will make democracy and administration more decentralised, functional and participatory.

Lohia advocated certain measures aimed at reforming the Indian society. He wanted to abolish the rigidity of caste distinctions and conservatism imbedded in the Indian social life. He sought to introduce some social reforms

attempting to end poverty, backwardness and inequalities inherent in Indian society. He put emphasis on educating the Indian masses. Lohia was optimistic about the maintenance and restoration of social unity, cohesion and solidarity.

Lohia's ideas and vision on socialism was a elastic and flexible concept. "He sought to develop socialism into an open and not a closed doctrine so that new ideas and new experiences might be incorporated into it."⁹⁹ Lohia viewed socialism as a driving force tinged with dynamism aimed at curing the social ills and evils paving the way towards rejuvenation and recunation of societies.

In Lohia's ideals and thinking one notices a strong impact of Gandhian principles and ideas. Though Lohia was a disciple of Gandhi, yet he did not unquestioningly or blindly accept all the ideas and principles of Gandhi. Rammanohar Lohia endeavoured to formulate a new approach as a 'New Civilisation' which is the other name of socialism assimilating Gandhian idea and principles.

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