

CHAPTER - 2

While moving the resolution on 'aims and objects', in the Constituent Assembly, Jawaharlal Nehru characterized Gandhi as the 'leader of the people', 'father of the nation';
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'architect of the assembly' .

How far Gandhian Principles were Adopted in the Making of the Indian Constitution?

Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar described Gandhi as the 'architect of India's political destiny'.
⁽²⁾ These plaudits set the initial tone and the pattern of constitution-making in India.

But, as the deliberation of the Constituent Assembly proceeded and gained momentum, and revealed sharp conflicts and contradictions in the ideas and sentiments of the members, it became apparent that Gandhi's worshippers would be out numbered and out spiced by those in different ideas, and Gandhi remained only as a ceremonial object of adulation, an object of worship and ritual celebration, and it was no wonder that the Constitution that finally emerged was such a deviation from his ideas and principles.

I

One of the major causes of deviation from Gandhian principles was the gulf between the professions of Gandhi's disciples and the approach they adopted within the Constituent Assembly. The Congress Party, not wholly wedded to the Gandhian principles, made little efforts to build up a constitution based upon
Gandhi and the Indian National Congress:

them. There had been differences between Gandhi and the Congress on many issues.

Few of the younger generation of intellectuals, whether they were Hindus, Muslims or Parsis, accepted Gandhi's philosophy of life. They gave a qualified allegiance to his economic views. Most of them were rationalists and many of them were inclined to socialism. The wealthy men who contributed lavishly to Congress funds were equally far from his old-world outlook. Only a minority in Congress, insignificant in its numbers, shared Gandhi's pacifism, the deepest of his convictions. Congress had managed to draw up from time to time, by majority decisions, an agreed constructive programme, which was a compromise between Gandhian and an advanced liberal view of social reform, but this was secondary to its real purpose. It was first of all and all the time a nationalist party bent on liberating India from foreign rule. Most of the time, the Congress tried to obey Gandhi but it had never accepted the principle of dictatorship. In fact, Gandhi had several times been defeated over big issues, and some of his chief ideas he had never succeeded in imposing on it at all, notably his hostility to industrial development. His mystical view of non-violence, his philosophy behind non-co-operation, his doctrine of the purity of means appealed only to a minority⁽³⁾. To quote Nehru: "always there has been that inner conflict within him and in our national politics, between Gandhi as a national leader and Gandhi as a man with a

prophetic message, which was not confined to India but was for
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humanity and the world"

So long as his colleagues in the field of politics were able to remain convinced of the practicability of his policy, they continued to support it. But when other problems and concrete situations arose in which Gandhi still believed his non-violent technique was relevant but in which he offered only generalizations, they went their own way and rejected both his
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general policy and its universal ethic .

Gandhi was pre-occupied with his activities in South Africa upto the second decade of the present century. Therefore, till that time, he could not associate himself directly with the Indian struggle for freedom, although he kept up a tenuous relationship with the Congress Organization.

It was at Amritsar in 1919 that Gandhi became a live force in the Congress. ' I must regard my participation in Congress proceedings at Amritsar as my real entrance into the
(6)
Congress politics ', said Gandhi .

In 1920, finally, Gandhi assumed political leadership; upto then he had almost mockingly insisted on declaring himself, a professional political expert only in certain subsidiary jobs like collecting money and drafting resolutions, but now the Congress gave him a mandate to revise the whole organization from setting up party cells in the villages to

redefining the functions of the grand committees. For he was now truly the "only one available" for the political job of anchoring (7) the independence movement in the spirit of the Indian masses .

At the special session in Calcutta, in September 1920, his programme of non-co-operation was approved by the Congress. In the same year, at the Nagpur session, he came out victorious. Older Congress leaders, curious about the new personality, asked themselves and each other, 'who is this man who speaks with such a tone of authority and when did he come? Congress luminaries like Pal, Malaviya and Jinnah, stalwarts like (8) C. R. Das and Lajpat Rai were virtually over-powered .

The Congress before Gandhi's entry was, according to Lala Lajpat Rai, neither inspired by the people nor devised or planned by them. It was a movement not from within. It lacked the essentials of a popular movement. Its leaders were not in touch with the masses. It was not effective, and encouraged 'opportunism' and 'trading' in the name of patriotism. It demanded concessions and not liberty. It was not based on sacrifice. It was rather a distinguished group of intellectuals, which included many able, wealthy and influential men, but without any mass following, for they never knew how to touch the heart of the (9) multitude . The pre-Gandhi Congress was virtually a place where members, mostly from middle-class society, used to assemble and indulge in endless discussions.

Gandhi aroused the emotions of the multitude,

his message reached every nook and corner of the seven lakh villages in India and captivated the hearts of the peasants who constitute the real India. Gandhi's leadership gave the Congress a dynamism and drive it had never known before and the Constitution of 1920, which may be aptly termed 'the Gandhian Constitution', revolutionized the organisation. Instead of remaining a 'three days wonder', it became an organisation humming with activity throughout the year. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Gandhi realised that no nation had risen without suffering; he broke the country's quietism before long and the people found that if they wanted to be free, they must strike the blow themselves. They cheerfully agreed and marched forward. A new era started. Gandhi remained for a long period as the sole spokesman and leader of the Congress, rivalled and disputed by none. This new era gave the nation a new concept of leadership, saw the emergence of a new type of nationalism and a new psychology to the masses.

Therefore, it is to a large extent true that Congress ideology after the First World War was mainly a creation of Gandhi. In 1920-22, he led the non-co-operation movement and it was he who suspended it; in 1930-34 he led the Civil Disobedience Movement, conferred with the Viceroy, represented the Congress at the Round Table Conference, and suspended the movement. In 1940, again, he conducted the Individual satyagraha and in August 1942, the All India Congress Committee formally requested him to take the lead and guide the nation. Yet it is too much to

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say that the Congress was a 'one man show', or that the Congress ideology was identical with the Gandhian principles. On the contrary, there were significant differences between Gandhi and the Congress, revealed in various Congress meetings since 1924. The Congress was never a body of his 'yes men'. It was too vast and heterogeneous. Though Gandhi was its centre of gravity, there were other thought currents which influenced its development .

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On the 18th of March, 1919, the repressive Rowlatt Act was passed. The Amritsar tragedy was the signal for the birth of the non-co-operation movement. This was vigorously challenged by several sections of the Congress. The opposition came from Bengal in two forms: in the form of the Swarajya Party, and in the form of renewed activities of the anarchists. A section of the members of the Congress Party regarded the freedom movement under Gandhi as negation of democracy and 'reversion to an autocracy of the oriental type dominated by priestly influences, and worked especially for the benefit of profiteering banias' .

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The swarajya revolt represented an important phase in the internal struggle of the Congress. The official Congress under the leadership of Gandhi stood as a block of "no-changers". The Swarajists gained strength and prestige gradually till the death of C. R. Das with which the party collapsed.

Other oppositions of lesser significance came in the form of the Responsivist Party; headed by Jayakar and Kelkar in 1925 and the Independent Party, headed by Lala Lajpat Rai and Malaviya in 1926 .
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In the Ahmedabad session, (1921) Gandhi was appointed the sole executive authority of the Congress . But he had a bad time during the A.I.C.C. meeting (1922) in Delhi. On Individual Civil Disobedience he faced a vote of censure . In the Gaya Congress (1922) there was serious conflict, on the issue of 'Council Entry', between those that raised politics to a spiritual level and those that worked politics on the intellectual and the material plane. That the leader (Gandhi) of the former group was not present in flesh and blood made no difference . Ultimately Gandhi had to surrender at the All Parties Conference in Bombay (1924) to C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru on the question of 'Council Entry' and the lifting of the boycott . In the same year, Gandhi wept openly in a meeting of the A.I.C.C. because 70 out of 148 members who voted believed in political murders - a clear indication of the fact that their non-violence was only skindeep. However, at the December 1924 meeting in Belgaum, Gandhi was elected President in a cordial atmosphere. But during the mid-twenties, Gandhi wished not to lead the Congress anymore, kept in the background and allowed the Swaraj Party under the leadership of Das and Motilal to fill the picture, buried himself in his ashram at Sabarmati, for 'Constructive Work', the propagation of khadi, the preaching of non-

violece, communal unity and social reform. Neither the British Government nor the Indian parties took those innocent activities seriously; they tended to regard "the saint of sabarmati" as a spent force .

Again, Gandhi took an active part in the Gauhati Congress (1926) . But in the Lahore Congress (1929) he was not able to carry the House with him , and immediately after that, the first meeting of the A.I.C.C. for the year 1930 was held for the principal purpose of appointing the Working Committee for the new year. There was a split over the procedure adopted by the President (supported by Gandhi) in electing members and as a result, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose announced the formation of a new party in the Congress camp called "The Congress Democratic Party" . Gandhi termed himself a 'spent bullet'.

It was only with the dramatic 'salt' satyagraha in the spring of 1930 that Gandhi once again became a dominant factor in national politics. He was authorised by the Working Committee to conduct Civil Disobedience at his discretion . Salt satyagraha and Dandi march of 18 March 1930, made him the hero of the movement. The Working Committee recorded its appreciation of the lead given by Gandhi (then arrested) and resolved to carry on the struggle with redoubled vigour. Gandhi was appointed the sole representative of the Indian National Congress at the Round Table Conference. His speech at the Conference (1931) was a token of his deep love and attachment for the

Congress. He exhorted them to find a little corner for the frail man, sixty two years gone, and, the organisation that he represented. He said "you distrust that organization though you may seemingly trust me. Do not for one moment differentiate me from the organization of which I am but a drop in the ocean. I am no greater than the organization to which I belong. I am infinitely smaller than that organization ..." ⁽²¹⁾ The Delhi session of the Congress in April 1932 congratulated the nation on its splendid response to Gandhi's call and expressed complete faith in his leadership.

Then came the notorious Communal Award of Ramsay McDonald. Gandhi underwent a fast which ended with the All Parties Conference in Bombay then at Poona.

In 1933 Gandhi suspended mass Civil Disobedience ⁽²⁵⁾ and allowed only Individual Civil Disobedience . Gandhi's decision was not palatable to many Congress leaders. Subhas Bose and Vithalbhai Patel denounced it. They wrote "the latest act of Mahatma Gandhi in suspending Civil Disobedience is a confession of failure. We are of the opinion that the Mahatma as a political leader has failed. The time has now come for a radical reorganization of the Congress on new principles with a new method for which a new leader is essential, as it is unfair to expect the Mahatma to work a programme not consistent with ⁽²⁶⁾ his life long principle" . To many Congressmen, the suspension of the movement in favour of the Harijan work, came as a

shock. They regarded the removal of untouchability as subsidiary
⁽²⁷⁾ to the main struggle in which tens of thousands had suffered .

Gandhi's activities and utterances gave rise to the rumour that he intended to leave the Congress altogether. He confirmed it and gave reasons in a long statement, dated, Wardha September 17, 1934. In this statement, among other reasons, he pointed out his fundamental difference with the Congress Socialist Group, some of whose ideas were distasteful to him, and his differences with the Congress on many policy matters and
⁽²⁸⁾ ideals . In the annual session of the Congress in Bombay in October 26, Gandhi wanted the creed to be changed to "truthful and non-violent" methods in place of "peaceful and legitimate" methods but the A.I.C.C. did not accept it. Finally in October
⁽²⁹⁾ 28 Gandhi severed his official connection with the Congress .

After the session of the Congress in Bombay, though he chose to cease to be a formal member, Gandhi remained as a consultant, and guide to the Congress.

The spirit that prevailed in the Lucknow session (1936) could be judged from the omission of any resolution on the Constructive Programme. Jawaharlal Nehru's presidential address gave the impression of a support for communism. Nehru, with his three lieutenants in his side, formed a solid bloc, and Gandhi with his ten members in the Working Committee
⁽³⁰⁾ formed another .

However, Nehru, in his concluding address,

admitted candidly that they had differed from Gandhi in the past and would probably differ from him in the future about many things. It was right that each one of them should act up to his convictions. But it was Nehru's firm belief that the bonds that held them together were stronger and more vital than the differences. Nehru pointed out that the pledge of independence that they took together still remained to be redeemed and they were waiting again for Gandhi to guide them with his wise council .⁽³¹⁾

Gandhi in the penumbra of retirement was no less a force than Gandhi in the lime light. The younger folks were impatient over the slow progress of the ideas rooted in non-violence. It was in the midst of conflict between violence and non-violence and subdued resentment against the Congress ministers for their slow progress that the Haripura session of the Congress met in February 1938, under the presidency of Subhas Chandra Bose.

In 1939, at the Tripuri session of the Congress, the biggest ever drama was staged. The issue was the Congress Presidential election. Gandhi openly opposed Subhas. When Subhas Chandra Bose was elected, Gandhi came out with the historic statement that the defeat of Subhas's 'rival' was his defeat. Those who had voted for Subhash Chandra Bose, came out with a fresh voting of confidence in Gandhi and Gandhi's leadership. That created an awkward situation. Within a week it looked as though the tables were turned. Because of Gandhi's reaction towards Subhash Bose's election, most of the members of

the Congress Working Committee resigned. Bose found himself isolated and had to resign from the presidency of the Congress. The drama finally ended in Bose resigning from the Congress and forming a new party, the Forward Bloc .
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In 1940 at Ramgarh, simultaneously with the Congress session was held the Anti Compromise Conference. It was Subhas Bose's belief that what had distressed and bewildered the Indian masses during those eventful years was the fact that while strong resolutions were passed and statements were issued by the members of the Working Committee, other remarks were simultaneously made and statements issued by Gandhi or by the top leaders, which had created a totally different impression on the average mind. The result had been that the British Government had ceased to take the Congress seriously and had formed the impression that however much the Congressmen might talk, they would not ultimately come out openly. As such, Bose felt the need of a determined and widespread effort .
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During the second world war, on the issue of co-operation with the British, Gandhi's intention did not find favour. He was sorry to find himself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British, should be given unconditionally. Jawaharlal Nehru's resolution, was supported, which intended to take this as the opportune moment for India's independence. Gandhi's non-violence was not wholly liked by the Working Committee.

At Wardha, the Congress parted from Gandhi. In Delhi, a fortnight earlier, Gandhi drafted a resolution of his own which was replaced by one that was passed⁽³⁴⁾. The A.I.C.C. meeting at Poona, held at the end of July 1940, ratified by ninety five votes to forty seven the resolution passed by the Working Committee at Delhi. The resolution explained how, while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence, it was unable in the present circumstances to declare that the principle should be extended to India's national defence. Gandhi was not even present in Poona this time to tender his advice. President Azad, as the spokesman of the Congress, admitted that non-violence was of secondary importance to the Congress. In the interest of winning freedom, it might surrender non-violence. Gandhi might have to propagate the message of non-violence to the world, but the Congress had to consider its position as the representative of the Indian nation. It was a political organisation pledged to win the political independence of the country. It was not an institution for organising the world peace. Azad said honestly that they could not go as far as Mahatma Gandhi wanted them to go. The Congress admitted that it was a weakness on its part. It had also to recognize the hard fact of Mahatma Gandhi's separation from the Congress.⁽³⁵⁾ The Congress had to bear it bravely. In its eagerness to reach a settlement with the British Government, the Congress organization went to the length of parting ways with its

cherished and well-loved leader".⁽³⁶⁾

But it was quite clear that the Congress leaders after their brief defection had resumed their allegiance to Gandhi. Back to Ramgarh was the note of Azad's opening speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting in Bombay (1940). The time had come to take the "next step". "The offer Great Britain had madeis not worth looking at" said Azad. "These events made us decide to again request Mahatma Gandhi to assume the active leadership of the Congress. I am glad to inform you that he has agreed to do this".⁽³⁷⁾ A year had already passed after the out break of the war. Every effort had been made to avoid conflict with British during her distress. Even Gandhi's leadership was forsaken. It only remained for the prodigal son to return to the father after wasting his talents-empty handed, repentant, trustful and importunate.⁽³⁸⁾ The Working Committee at Bardoli in December 1941 expressed that "the Congress was compelled in order to defend the honour and elementary rights of the people and integrity of the nationalist movement, to request Gandhi to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken".⁽³⁹⁾ But Gandhi found it impossible to lead the country. He stood for complete non-participation in war under all circumstances. In a letter to President Azad he wrote: "In the course of discussion, I discovered that I had committed a grave error in the interpretation of the Bombay resolution. I had interpreted it to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all wars on the ground principally of non-violence. I found to

my astonishment that most members differed from my interpretation and held that the opposition need not be on the ground of non-violence." The Working Committee relieved him of the responsibility laid upon him by the Bombay Resolution .
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The A.I.C.C. met at Bombay in 1942, passed the Quit India resolution, and considering that such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhi, again requested him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken .
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On September 2, 1946, Nehru and his colleagues took charge of the interim government. For Gandhi, it was a day of great significance. In the early hours of the morning he sat down to draft a note for Nehru as to the duty of the members of the new government in this supreme hour. At the appointed hour the ministers arrived at the Bhangi Colony to receive his blessings .
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Again, on the question of partition, it seemed that the Congress was more with the Viceroy than with Gandhi. The Congress Working Committee had practically decided to concede Pakistan. The very idea of vivisection of India made Gandhi shudder. But in that he was left alone. Even Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru thought that Gandhi's reading of the political situation was wrong, and peace was sure to return if partition was agreed upon. Gandhi's view was completely

different. He therefore cautioned that he might not be alive to witness the result, but if the apprehended evil overtook India and her independence was imperilled, "let posterity know what agony this old soul went through thinking of it. Let it not be said that Gandhi was party to India's vivisection" .⁽⁴³⁾ A few weeks later he was lamenting, "who listens to me today? I am being told to retire to the Hamalayas ... Nobody really wants to follow my advice Neither the people nor those in power have any use for me" .⁽⁴⁴⁾

The attainment of Independence further widened the gulf. Gandhi was conscious that the Swaraj that was coming must be far removed from the Swaraj of his dreams. His visionary, idealistic solutions of practical problems were not very helpful to men who had to grapple with the realities. In important matters he was still usually consulted, but not always; his advice was listened to with respect, but not always followed. Already, his advice to reject wholly the Cabinet Mission's constitutional plan had been overruled. Before Independence, the Congress leaders had to accept many of the Gandhian suggestions and ideas, because they were unable to put forward either an alternative plan of action, or an alternative leadership. But, in the post-Independence era, they rejected or side-tracked many of the Gandhian ideas as too lofty, mediaeval and impractical. With the formulation of the interim government, the real direction of Congress policy was passing from him to Nehru and Patel.

and he, as though by a natural instinct, was drifting away from the seats of power, in order to devote himself to direct service of the people. The remaining fifteen months of his life were politically ineffectual though morally that was the crown of his career. The politician gave way to the saint .

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Gandhi did not rejoice over the way India had won her Independence. It was the annihilation of his principles of truth and non-violence. He refused to give a message for the people on that historic day of the transfer of power. He said "there is no message at all, if it is bad, let it be so". Thirty two years of work, Gandhi stated, have come to 'an inglorious end'. Independence brought sadness to the architect of Independence. The 'father of the nation' was disappointed with his country. Mountbatten told the Royal Empire Society on 6 October 1948, that the people paid him homage and rejected his teachings. They held his person holy and desecrated his personality. They glorified the shell and trampled the essence. They believed in him but not in his principles . On his seventy eighth birth-day (October 2, 1947) he asked the congratulators 'would it not be more appropriate to send condolences. There is nothing but an anguish in my heart Today mine is a lone voice. I have lost all desire to live long, let alone 125 years' The Congress Party had accepted Gandhi's leadership as an expedient way to political freedom. As the time finally came, his political associates left him and went their own way .

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after Independence and the moral degradation of the men in the Congress agonised Gandhi; he gave a serious thought to the future of the Congress. Gandhi found his voice sunk in the wilderness. The Congress having come into the power showed signs of giving his constructive programme the go-by . On receipt of a complaint from Shriman Narayan Agarwal that in the Constitution that was being framed, there was no mention of gram panchayat, Gandhi said "we must recognize the fact that the social order of our dreams can not come through the Congress of today. Nobody knows what shape the Constitution will ultimately take ..." (49) (50)

In the Draft Constitution of the Congress which he sketched in the last days (29 January) of his life, Gandhi believed that the Congress, as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine, had outlived its use. India had still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of India's seven hundred thousand villages, as distinguished from cities and towns. The struggle for the ascendancy of civil over military power was bound to take place in India's progress towards its democratic goal. The Congress must be kept out of unhealthy competition with the political parties and communal bodies. For these and other similar reasons, Gandhi suggested the All India Congress Committee to resolve to disband the existing Congress organization and flower into a Lok Sevak Sangh . He then listed the proposed rules and method of organization for the new association. The next day (30 January), Gandhi was no more. His (51)

unfinished revolution remained unfinished. This plan of Gandhi was not accepted by the A.I.C.C. believing that the Congress could neither forego its political role nor become so decentralized.

II

It was not before 1917 that C. R. Das came to the forefront of Nationalist politics. In that year he was invited to preside over the Bengal Provincial Conference held in

Other thought-currents
within the Congress:

(i) C. R. Das.

Calcutta. In course of only eight years (1917-25), he rose to all-India fame by virtue of his

ardent sincerity. In 1920, at a special session of the Congress held in Calcutta under the presidency of Lala Lajpat Rai, Gandhi gave his famous programme of non-co-operation with the government. Das sought some changes in it, but in vain. He, however, had the support of Pal, Malaviya, Jinnah and Mrs. Besant. Three months later, at the Nagpur session, he, however, accepted Gandhi's

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lead .

With the suspension of the non-co-operation movement at the instance of Gandhi following the Chauri Chaura incident, the whole country went into despondency. At this critical hour, Das endeavoured to give a new orientation to Indian politics through his Council Entry programme, i.e., "non-co-operation from within the Council." He however, met with vehement opposition from Gandhi and the "no changers". C.R.Das presided over

the Gaya session of the Congress. A section of the Congress led by C. Rajagopalachari opposed the Council Entry programme. His motion being lost, Das resigned the presidentship and formed the Swarajya Party in collaboration with Motilal Nehru, the Ali brothers, Ajmal Khan, Vithalbhi Patel and others. The Congress was thus divided between no-changers and pro-changers . Inspite of the bitter criticism launched by the "No changers", the Jalpaiguri conference was organized by the Swarajists in 1923. Through the efforts of the Swarajists, Azad was elected, President of the Congress special session at Delhi, where the programme of Council Entry was approved. The programme was later confirmed at the Cocanada session .

Das was a realist. His non-violence was different from its Gandhian prototype. Hence, on 27 June, 1924, at the Ahmedabad meeting of the A.I.C.C. when Gandhi moved the resolution condemning the murder of Mr. Ernest Day by Gopi Nath Saha, Das hotly opposed it .

Motilal Nehru was another founder-leader of the Swaraj Party and a whole time associate of C.R.Das till the

(ii) Motilal Nehru latter's death in 1925. Motilal could never adjust himself wholly with the Gandhian ideals and techniques. Once he spoke bluntly that ".... his (Gandhi) hobbies do not interest me beyond a certain point". Gandhi too could not persuade himself that these political intellectuals were close to him, or that his interests

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were theirs . . .

At first, Motilal Nehru was dead against the idea of non-violent resistance with its law-breaking and jail-going. Jawaharlal's enthusiasm for Satyagraha with its imprisonment possibility was totally incomprehensible to the father . . . (57)

Gandhi was a saint in the guise of a politician, but Das and Motilal Nehru were patriotic statesmen, pure and simple. While Gandhi introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the last two thousand years, Motilal Nehru said, 'religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire, complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy'. (58) Gandhi was an idealist, in his own words 'a practical idealist' (59) but Das and Motilal were patriotic realists. To Motilal Nehru, "pure idealism has no place in politics and is but a happy dream which must sooner or later end in a rude awakening. However high-pitched the ideal may be, and higher the better, the actual work to be done in the pursuit of that ideal must be guided solely by practical considerations" . . . (60) Both Das and Motilal believed in swift action. They had no patience with slow-moving devices like Gandhi's constructive programme. They could enthusiastically take up non-co-operation or Civil Disobedience because there was swift and breathless activity in them, but when non-co-operation was suspended, their way lay not in Constructive Programme but in Council Entry, where they could beard the British lion in his den . . . (61) To quote Gandhi, 'their method is not my method. I am

trying to work from bottom upward..... to an onlooker it is exasperatingly slow work. They are working from top down ward -
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a process much more difficult and complicated than the former'.

The difference of outlook was most glaring in/
their
respective attitudes towards non-violence and non-co-operation.
Motilal spoke of his faith in 'truth, fearlessness and non-vio-
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lence', which had little place for the doctrines of 'change of
heart of enemy' or 'non-embarassment of enemy.'

Subhas Chandra Bose had been deeply disturbed/
grave developments at home. He returned to India in 1921, and

(iii) Subhas Chandra Bose straight went to Gandhi for
guidance who, perceiving the
passion for India's freedom that consumed Subhas, directed him
to C. R. Das who had been at that time the uncrowned king of
Bengal.

Gandhi's salt satyagraha movement (1930)
found Subhas in the thick of the fight, and the government
arrested him and lodged him in jail. When the satyagraha move-
ment was called off in March 1931 upon the conclusion of the
Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Subhas Bose raised his voice in protest
against the Pact and the suspension of the movement, especially
when patriots like Bhagat Singh and his associates had not been
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saved from the gallows .

Gandhi had known him well enough in 1929 at

Lahore when Subhas Bose staged a walkout and formed a new party, the Congress Democratic Party. Again, one of the reasons behind Gandhi's formal retirement from the Congress in 1934 was his knowledge of Bose's rivalry of the first magnitude. In 1933 Bose, with Vithalbhai Patel, had issued a manifesto asserting that Gandhi had failed and that fresh leadership was required.
⁽⁶⁵⁾ In 1934 he expanded this thesis into a book, 'The Indian Struggle'

In connection with the Congress Presidential election in 1939, Bose entered into headlong clash with Gandhi. In fact, this episode (which has already been narrated-note-32) was the turning point of his career. Soon after the Presidential election, the members of the Congress Working Committee resigned and the Congress met at Tripuri under the shadow of a crisis within the Party, as well as internationally." With prophetic foresight Subhas warned that an imperialist war would break out in Europe within six months, demanded that the Congress should deliver a six months' ultimatum to Britain and in the event of its rejection, a country-wide struggle for 'poorna swaraj' should be launched, taking full advantage of Britain's entanglement in the war. His warning and advice, however, went unheeded, and what was worse, the followers of Gandhi sought to curtail his power as Congress President. He resigned his presidency, formed the Forward Bloc and ultimately severed all relations with the Congress Party.
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As already narrated, in 1940, with the Congress

Session (Ramghar), a parallel-Anti Compromise Conference was held under the presidency of Subhas Bose at a place called Kisan Nagar. This session thoroughly opposed Gandhi's policy, pleaded (67) direct struggle and condemned spinning and Constructive Programme..

They represented two diametrically opposite forces. Gandhi was moved by instinct, Subhas Bose was guided by reason. Bose felt that there was a deplorable lack of clarity in the plan which Gandhi had formulated and that he himself did not have clear idea of the successive stages of the campaign which would bring India to her cherished goal of freedom. Subhas's was a life of service and suffering but it was in accordance with the views and convictions of C. R. Das who again (68) differed with Gandhi on the main points of Gandhi's programme ..

Gandhi was a moralist, Bose was an Indian nationalist first and an Indian nationalist last. He had little faith in non-violence and in the doctrine of purity of means. To him, "Gandhism had been found wanting, because it was wedded to (69) non-violence" Gandhi's spiritualism had no attraction for Bose. "... Ascetics and yogies", he said, "have held honoured place in society, but it is not their lead that we shall have to follow if we are to create a new India, at once free, (70) happy and great" . Although Bose was a deeply religious man, he was totally against mixing religion with politics. He often criticised Gandhi for playing the dual role of a political (71) leader and world-teacher with a new doctrine to preach .

Bose regarded Gandhi's habit of putting all his cards on the table, his opposition to the policy of social boycott of political opponents, his hope of a change of heart on the part of the British Government etc., as some of the defects in his leadership .
(72)

On economic issues also, Bose and Gandhi differed radically. Bose deplored the ideas that 'modernisation is bad, large scale production is an evil, wants should not be increased and standard of living should not be raised' . In his opinion, "if India is to attain and maintain her freedom and grow as a modern state, she must have not only a socialist order but also modern arms and modern industries. ... the state will have to be a peoples' state and strong centralised state" .
(73)
Bose wanted the Congress to 'adopt a radical economic programme' , including abolition of land lordism, extension of co-operative movement, a comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state ownership and state control .
(74)
Thus Subhas's place had not been in the ivory tower of a dreamer or idealist but in the hard facts of life - that beset the path of a fighter. As such, while acknowledging the indisputable position of Gandhi in the Indian movement, Bose was irreconcilably opposed to his dogma of non-violence, charka and cottage industries economy, isolationism from foreign influence and, above all, to his reformism, trusteeship theory and class collaboration .
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III

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was ^a/life-long opponent of Gandhi and the Indian National Congress. But inspite of his opposition to Gandhi and the architects of the Indian Constitution:

(i) B. R. Ambedkar

the Congress, which he regarded as dominated by caste Hindus, he was nominated by the Congress to the Constituent Assembly. He was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee to frame the Constitution of India and piloted the Bill successfully, winning encomium from all .

(78)

The accumulated bitterness against Hindus that rankled for centuries in millions of Harijan Breasts found expression in Ambedkar's Himalayan hatred. He preferred British Raj to Hindu Raj . In recognition of his claim as a leader of the Depressed Classes, Ambedkar was nominated as a delegate to the three Round Table Conferences in London (1930-33). Before proceeding for the Round Table Conference Gandhi arranged a meeting with Ambedkar to know his demands. Ambedkar frankly told Gandhi that the Congress did nothing for the upliftment of the untouchables, beyond giving formal recognition to this problem, that the Congress was not sincere about its professions. He asked: "Why should the Congressmen oppose our movement and dub me a traitor?" The interview ended in a grim atmosphere. It sounded the beginning of a war between Gandhi and Ambedkar .

(80)

His demand for separate electorates for the untouchable;

was opposed by Gandhi at the meeting of the Minorities Committee of the Second Round Table Conference (November 1931), as Gandhi felt that it would permanently divide the Hindu society. The Communal Award, announced on 17 August 1932 conceded separate electorates for the untouchables. Gandhi went on fast unto death. (81) Ambedkar called the fast 'a political stunt'. On 24 September, the Poona Pact was signed which provided for reservation of (82) seats for the untouchables in the general constituencies.

Their uneasy relationship reached its height in London during the conferences. Ambedkar in a statement said: "the Mahatma has been claiming that Congress stands for the Depressed Classes, more than I or my colleagues can do. To that claim I can only say that it is one of the false claims which irresponsible people keep on making ..." (83)

About the role that Gandhi played during the Round Table Conference, Ambedkar lamented that the Congress chose Mr. Gandhi as its representative. In his opinion, a worse person could not have been chosen to guide India's destiny, for, as a unifying force, he was a failure. (84) Ambedkar alleged that it was Gandhi's habit to treat the whole non-Congress delegation with contempt. He insulted them whenever an occasion furnished him with an excuse by openly telling them that they did not count, and that he alone, as the delegate of the Congress, represented the country. It was Ambedkar's belief that Gandhi had many platitudes to utter but no views or suggestions of constructive

(84)

character to offer .

Ambedkar, in his book 'What Gandhi and the Congress have done to the Untouchables', brought forward serious charges - that Gandhi and the Congress opposed, inch by inch, upto the very last moment, everyone of their demands for political safeguards. Gandhi was neither earnest, honest and sincere nor a friend of any of untouchables. That Gandhism constituted the doom of the untouchables, because it was simply another form of sanatanism which was the ancient name for militant orthodox Hinduism .

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Gandhi admired his rival's learning, respected the great powers of his brain and mind, and yet showed little sympathy with his policy. Ambedkar acknowledged the great powers of Gandhi and his humanitarian services to the untouchables, but believed that Mahatmas like fleeting phantoms, raised dust, but raised no level. Gandhi thought himself to be the natural guardian of the untouchables whereas Ambedkar considered himself to be the natural leader of the Depressed Classes .

(86)

Their relation had never become normal. Even in 1946, Gandhi, in a letter to Sardar Patel about Harijan seats in the Assemblies, wrote "..... the main thing is about Dr. Ambedkar. I see risk in coming to any sort of understanding with him"

(87)
Dr. Ambedkar, as Chairman of the Drafting

Committee produced the Draft Constitution which did not embody the Gandhian ideals of a state. Dr. Ambedkar believed that Gandhian scheme was not practicable at that moment and would ensure continued oppression of the Harijans by the upper caste communities. As such he had suggested a centralized Parliamentary system. Shri T. Prakasam attributed this lapse to Dr. Ambedkar's non-participation in the Gandhian movement for independence and his antagonism towards Gandhian ideas.

A particular case in point was - the subject matter of Article 40 of the Indian Constitution which did not find a place in his Draft Constitution. When the Draft was published, the absence was noticed and a criticism was levelled that the new Constitution should have been drafted on the ancient Hindu model, and that, instead of incorporating western theories, the new Constitution should have been raised and built upon village panchayats. While introducing the motion on the Draft Constitution on 4 November 1948, Ambedkar felt gratified that the Draft had rightly discarded the village. This attitude of Dr. Ambedkar towards village communities in particular and Gandhi's ideas in general was vehemently criticised by almost all the members participating in the discussion (for detailed discussion please see Chapter VII). Moreover, the memorandum, which he submitted to the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly, did not incorporate any such provision which could be treated as bearing a clear impact or mark of Gandhi's ideas.

In 1916, Maulana Azad was interned by the British Government. After nearly four years when he came out, he took his place immediately among the leaders of the Indian National

(II) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

Congress. Ever since, he had been holding a prominent position in the highest Congress executive, and

looked upon, inspite of his youthful years, as one of the 'elders' of the Congress, whose advice both in regard to the communal and minority questions was highly valued.

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Azad was twice elected President of the Indian National Congress the first time in 1923, and the second time in 1940. He continued as the President of the Congress till 1946. He led the negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission in 1946. In the Constituent Assembly, his role was primarily that of a hero of the freedom movement. He was a member of four committees, Steering, Advisory, States and Union Constitution.

To Maulana Azad, Congress was primarily a political organization. He often differed with Gandhi and his followers on many issues. During the Second World War, Gandhi's idea of non-embarrassment of enemies was not agreeable to him. In a letter to Nehru he wrote: "if our present stand is such that it embarrasses her we are not responsible for it; it lies with the imprudent (92) vanity of the British Government".

For Azad, non-violence was a matter of policy, not of creed. His view was that the Indians had the right to

take the sword if they had no other alternative." He declared openly that the Indian National Congress was not a pacifist organization but one for achieving India's freedom . Under his presidency, the A.I.C.C. at Poona parted ways with Gandhi and left him alone. President Azad observed, "..... the Congress is a political organization pledged to win the political independence of the country. It is not an institution for organizing the world peace. Honestly, we cannot go as far as Mahatma Gandhi wants us to go"⁽⁹³⁾

Azad had, on earlier occasions, differed from Gandhi on some points, but never before had their differences been so complete. The issue was non-violent movement, which Azad did not favour during war-time, and on 5 July, 1942, Gandhi sent him a letter to the effect that Azad's stand was so different from his that they could not work together. If Congress wanted Gandhi to lead the movement, Azad must resign from the presidentship and also withdraw from the Working Committee .⁽⁹⁴⁾

In the debates of the Constituent Assembly, too, Azad was not found to have championed any ideal, the realisation of which was the dream of Gandhi. On the contrary, he chose to acquiesce in Nehru's ideas and wishes.

Another very important figure in the Constituent Assembly was K. M. Munshi who was a member of eight major committees: Rules, Steering, Advisory, Union Subjects, Provincial Constitution, Union Constitution, States and Drafting. He participated in the debates

(III) K. M. Munshi

off and on, and enriched the House with his valuable suggestions.

Munshi's relation with Gandhi can be ascertained from a letter from him to the latter, dated 22 May 1941, ".... since I came to you in 1930, you have been more to me than a political leader, you have been to the whole of our family a father, you have been a beacon for the last ten years lighting me on the path of the little spirituality that I can lay claim to....." (96) Their very cordial relation had been reflected through their series of correspondences especially in 1934 . On the proposed Civil Disobedience Gandhi wrote to Munshi "..... I have set my eyes on you I do not know who else would go (to jail), I do not feel like insisting on anybody's going" (97) When Gandhi proposed to leave the Congress, Munshi wrote ".... the moment your supreme authority is gone, the Congress will meet a terrible fate" (98) .

But Munshi could not remain sincere to Gandhi's concept of non-violence. He felt that non-violence could not be practised for the immediate solution of the problems connected with national defence . Since Gandhi expressed his opinion to the effect that those who favoured violent resistance (by way of self defence) must get out of the Congress, Munshi finally resigned from the Congress in July 1941 . The note on Fundamental Rights submitted by Munshi (101) to the Fundamental Rights

Sub Committee, did not contain any specific mention of Gandhian ideals. On the contrary, he was keen on the Euro-American systems. In the Constituent Assembly Munshi posed the question: "why should the Assembly turn its back on a hundred year-old tradition of parliamentary government in India?"⁽¹⁰³⁾ Munshi did not want to write into the Constitution a clause prohibiting military conscription. He believed that any such prohibition would be very dangerous in time of war.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Gandhi loved Nehru as a son and Nehru loved Gandhi as a father. Nehru never hid the deep difference between

(IV) Jawaharlal Nehru

his outlook and Gandhi's. He spoke and wrote about it frequently. Gandhi welcomed the frankness.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Their affection for one another did not depend on agreement.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Nehru recognized that Gandhi had straightened their backs and stiffened their spines, congratulated Gandhi during salt satyagraha for the success of non-violence.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Gandhi hailed the A.I.C.C. resolution, electing Nehru as the Congress helmsman for the year 1929-30;⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ he wished that Nehru might long remain the jewel of India.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ He declared "..... Jawaharlal will be my successor when I am gone he will speak my language". But instances are not rare when Nehru did not speak his language.

The sharp clash with Gandhi, the first of a series during the next two decades, took place when Nehru moved a resolution on the political objective of the Madras Session (1927). The Congress declared its goal of the Indian people to

be complete national independence. Though it did not alter the party's official creed which, under Gandhi's influence in 1920, had been defined merely as Swaraj (self rule), Nehru's formulation reflected the rumblings of discontent among the impatient nationalist youth. A similar proposal had been raised at every Congress session from 1921-25, but Gandhi's firm opposition had thwarted its sponsors. At this Gandhi was very much disturbed and what pained him most was the tone of Nehru's speeches, his surge to radicalism, and his apparent abandonment of non-violence. It was as if a son had gone astray.

The sense of an imminent break pained Gandhi in 1928. He wrote ".... I see quite clearly that you must carry on open warfare against me and my views. The differences between you and me appear to be so vast and so radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us" .⁽¹¹⁰⁾ The gap widened, reaching its climax at the Calcutta session of the Congress in December 1928. Speaking as a champion of the peasants and urban workers, Nehru called for basic economic and social changes. He criticised the theory of trusteeship and differed with Gandhi on the question of violence. Nehru judged the issue on practical grounds. He thought that ... if the Congress came to the conclusion that methods of violence would rid them of slavery, then he had no doubt that it would adopt them. He considered ends of prior value .⁽¹¹¹⁾

Gandhi's fasts were not understandable to Nehru.

On May 8, 1933, when Civil Disobedience was at its lowest ebb, Gandhi began a twenty-one day-fast for 'self-purification'. Nehru's mind rebelled at the master's strange tactics . Nehru did not like secrecy in political tactics. Gandhi's 'inner voice' was vague to him. Gandhi emphasized the 'constructive activities' of the Congress, notably spinning, the removal of untouchability and communal unity, while Nehru did not even mention them in his programme . Nehru was hurt and angry when Gandhi termed the earthquake in Bihar as a punishment for the sin of untouchability. This mystical outlook widened still more the intellectual gap between them. When, in April 1934, Nehru learnt of Gandhi's decision to terminate all forms of Civil Disobedience primarily because a valued companion of long standing was found reluctant to perform the full prison task, he was appalled, and said that " the whole statement frightened me and oppressed me tremendously ... A vast distance seemed to separate him (Gandhi) from me a bond that I had valued very greatly had snapped" . In the Lucknow session, Nehru pleaded communism and formed a bloc of his own . In a letter to Nehru, dated October 10, 1939, Gandhi wrote that differences in outlook between them were becoming more marked. He felt that Nehru should take full charge and lead the Country, leaving him (Gandhi) free to voice his opinion... In the A.I.C.C. meeting of 1940, Nehru, along with others, defied Gandhi on the crucial issue of violence , and on the question of partition, Gandhi found himself all alone .

Though Nehru was not actively involved in the

debates of the Constituent Assembly, his role was very important because it was he who dominated the early proceedings with his Objective Resolution which defined the principles which constitute the granite foundation of the Constitution. Moreover, Nehru was chairman of three important committees - States, Union Powers and Union Constitution - from the reports of which the Draft was prepared by Ambedkar and his colleagues.

The Congress Experts Committee which was set up by the Congress Working Committee with Nehru as its Chairman, set India on the road to the present Constitution. Discarding the Gandhian plan as conservative and undemocratic, the Committee proposed a liberal democratic, parliamentary system of government with a federation. Nehru envisaged a centralised administration. He liked the new Constitution to place the greatest emphasis on state activities: such as planning, industrial development, relief of unemployment, nationalisation of key industries etc. In course of a long exchange of letters between Gandhi and Nehru in October 1945, Gandhi stressed the need for decentralized political institutions. He voiced his resolve to stand by the system of government envisaged in Hind Swaraj. But the Congress Party and many of the Indian leaders were couching their demands for independence in terms of a parliamentary democracy, and many had participated in the modified forms of representative government which were introduced in British India. According to Nehru, the Congress had 'never considered' the Gandhian view of

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society (as exemplified in Hind Swaraj), 'much less adopted
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it' . There was no mention either of panchayat or of indirect government in the Objective Resolution moved by Nehru.

In fact there was fundamental divergence of views regarding methods and approaches between Gandhi on the one hand and Nehru and many others on the other. To both Gandhi and Nehru, the aim was the same, that is, common good, minimizing the social and economic differences among the people; but while Gandhi believed that the means should be trusteeship, decentralization, etc., Nehru and many others, on the other hand, believed that the means should be "socialism", central planning and a "modern" economy with considerable emphasis on industrialization. Nehru believed that Gandhian schemes were very difficult to work out in practice and any consideration of them would be divorced from reality.

It was in the field of economic ideology that the differences between Gandhi and Nehru were more marked. 'Few of us, I think' wrote Nehru, 'accepted Gandhi's old ideas about machinery and modern civilization.' (124) To Gandhi modern civilization was a disease and machinery represented a great sin. (125) But Nehru had no conflict with machinery provided that machinery is used primarily for absorbing labour and not for creating fresh unemployment. (126)

Both of them aimed at the amelioration of peasantry, but when Gandhi's programme for achieving this end was a

(127) programme of spinning wheel and village industries, of
(128) (129) swadeshi and satyagraha, of trusteeship, and change of
(130) heart on the part of Zamindars, Nehru's programme was a
programme of rent reduction, debt cancellation and abolition of
(131)
land lordism.

Nehru had made his views clear throughout the thirties and expressed them even more plainly to B. N. Rau in November 1945, when he said ' I should also like the new constitution to lay the greatest emphasis on State activities, such as planning, industrial development, relief of unemployment, nationalization of key industries, etc.' How far 'Nehru asked,
(132) (133) 'will this sort of progress fit in with a purely village society?

Therefore, in order to quell internal disturbances, to maintain law and order, and to implement a programme of state planning, it was necessary to establish a centralized political structure, and not a decentralized economy of Gandhi's dream. Accordingly, in a letter to Gandhi on 9 October 1948, Nehru enquired how the political and economic progress of India
(134) could be made to "fit in with a purely village society."

Nehru rejected altogether Gandhi's views on industrialism. He believed in science, technology, large-scale
(135) production, and higher standards of living. Gandhi's views as formulated in the Hind Swaraj seemed to him utterly wrong and harmful doctrine, and impossible of achievement.

Nehru believed that industrialization was inevitable but its evils must be opposed. He thought that if industries were socialized, they would be free from ^{the} evils of capitalism; whereas Gandhi believed that the evils were inherent in industrialism. No amount of socialization could eradicate them. One of the reasons why Gandhi had reservations about scientific socialism, which Nehru repeatedly avowed, was that he believed in the ideal of economic simplicity whereas the advocates of socialism were supporters of large scale production.

In the Second Plan, Nehru insisted that more importance should be given to industry. Soon after the Third Plan was launched the election manifesto of the Congress for Third General Elections held in 1962 was issued. It approvingly referred to the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 which had laid down that, in view of the accepted policy of socialization, the public sector would increasingly expand and play a dominant role for accelerating the industrialization of the country.

Nehru considered that in a country with arrested economic growth, planning was very essential. He believed, only through planned economic progress, socio-economic revolution could be achieved.

Nehru was influenced by all the modern trends and movements which had inspired the intelligentsia of modern India. He sought to combine liberalism with egalitarianism, democracy and individual liberty with socialism and planning. He acknowledged

himself to be a socialist, and was attracted to Marxism though did not give his absolute allegiance to it.

After Independence, the first major pronouncement of the Congress on economic matters was contained in its election manifesto for the First General Elections of 1951-52. This manifesto made it clear that the progress of the country would involve planning of diverse aspects of national life and activity.

In January 1955, when the First Plan was in operation, the Congress at its historic Avadi Session declared that, in order to realize the objectives as laid down in Article I of the Congress Constitution, as also those stated in the Preamble and Directive Principles of State Policy of the Indian Constitution, "planning should take place with a view to the establishment of a socialist pattern of society. Nehru was primarily responsible for the Avadi Resolution.

Therefore, the policy which Nehru followed at this stage was not one of rigid socialism, but was none the less a policy which laid great stress on economic planning. Economic planning was dear to Nehru's heart and the example of planning in Soviet Russia had enthused him greatly.⁽¹³⁶⁾

Ever since Nehru attended the Brussels Conference of Down trodden People of Africa and Asia in 1926, and his visit of the Soviet Union, the establishment of socialism, in the scientific sense in India has been his desire and that too, much

against the wishes of Gandhi. The whole country was then surcharged with socialist slogans. The platform of the Indian National Congress was also utilized to voice the urges of the newly emerging socialist forces. Nehru advocated socialism in (137) 'the scientific economic sense' as 'the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems'. In this session, Gandhi spoke of Swadeshi and left socialism to Nehru. At the Faizpur Congress (December 1936), the same fervour was noticeable. Gandhi was not a believer in scientific socialism. His firm conviction was that nothing enduring could be built on violence. (138) Gandhi had all the praises for socialism if it did not involve violence. 'Gandhian socialism was based on State's ethics rather than on any programme' (139) At one stage, Nehru's views on socialism led to all sorts of rumours and Gandhi in an article in Harijan entitled "Are we Rivals?" had to state that "I can not think of myself as a rival of Jawaharlal or him to me"

Gandhi stood for village industries and decentralized production. He feared that if the state monopolized all the means of production, then that would only lead to concentration of power and the establishment of the dictatorship of a party or (140) a bureaucracy. In fact, Gandhi would have liked India to be a land of only self-sufficient, self-contained villages. He was against industrialization on a mass scale and against the inevitable emphasis of an industrial civilization on urbanization.

Nehru, unlike Gandhi, had no doubt in his mind that big machines and large-scale industrialization had come to stay. "It is true, I think", wrote Nehru in September 1939, "that there are certain inherent dangers in big industry and the big machine. There is a tendency to concentrate power But I can not conceive of the world doing away with big machine. Even if this was possible, this would result in lowering production tremendously and in thus reducing standards of life greatly."⁽¹⁴¹⁾

Nehru had no desire to mix religion with politics. Gandhi's faith was in truth, Nehru's faith was in socialism. "For a hungry man," Nehru said in 1947, "truth has little meaning, he wants food, and India is a hungry, starving country ..."⁽¹⁴²⁾

Nehru's views found support from large section of the Assembly members. The architects of free India's Constitution

V. Gandhi and others sharing Nehru's views favoured modern methods and techniques for tackling problems they were confronted with than those of Gandhian means and methods. Nehru, Patel, Azad and Frasad were the heroes in the Constituent Assembly. This oligarchy was found to have always shared Nehru's views and favoured a centralized constitution. It was reasonably clear, that the Assembly leadership was not contemplating a Gandhian Constitution. In the debate on the Objectives Resolution, members spoke of democracy, socialism etc., but there was no criticism of the omission of panchayati raj.

In view of their long experience with representative government, the bulk of the Assembly members favoured a parlia-

mentary constitution. K. M. Munshi asked: "why should the Assembly turn its back on a hundred-year-old tradition of parliamentary government in India?" Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar also expressed similar views.

To Nehru, Patel and other Congress leaders, the critical question in 1947-49 was how to repair the damage inflicted by the partition, and how to hold together the country. They did not think Gandhi's village-based economy could generate enough resources to end poverty, and make-up the backlog of last centuries. They felt that a strong central government and a highly industrialized economy were essential to safeguard national independence and to rid the country of poverty and backwardness.

"Two men" says Michael Brecher, "ruled India during the critical transition period from 1947 to 1950-Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel. The duumvirs of the new India, mutually co-operated throughout the proceedings of the Assembly in thrashng out the present Constitution. Patel, Presad and Azad were also committed only to effective government. Patel believed that security was the first requirement of any progressive country. Seth Govind Das expressed that, "we should adopt all that the modern world had to give us to fulfil our needs, as also all the inventions of the modern science. We need not have contempt for things European or American." When Nehru indicated that India needed a centralized constitution to protect herself from foreign aggression and to establish stability and unity necessary to the

social revolution, the Assembly readily agreed with him. Many members of the Assembly felt that if the economic problems of the country were to be solved, a centralized political democracy had to be set up. With Nehru, they also felt that a purely decentralized village-based society could neither bring about rapid industrialization nor provide the political framework for undertaking a policy of planning by the state without which the economic problems of India could not be solved. Shri Shankarrao Deo stated: "People expect, alas perhaps wrongly, what they do not deserve. They expect that the Constitution which has been made by the apostles of the great Martyr will breath his breath. But should we not be rational and must not be moved by sentiment. Reason demands that we must be realistic. There is no scope in this world of stern reality for building a Utopia?"⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Shri Nandkishore Das expressed that Gandhiji throughout his life laid repeated emphasis on decentralization of powers but our Constitution had proceeded on the reverse line, namely, over-centralization. Our leaders thought rightly that without a strong centre this infant democracy would be in danger of being destroyed by disintegrating forces from all sides. He (Shri Das) said, "we can not afford the luxury of over-decentralization simply in order to satisfy mere slogans and catchwords"⁽¹⁴⁸⁾

Therefore, the architects stood for strong central government and favoured industrialization and state planning and ultimately the realists who refused to recognize the spinning wheel as the symbol of modern India won.

The Kaira Satyagraha (1918) was the occasion which brought Gandhi and Patel together. It was the beginning of

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Sardar Patel's public life . He
(VI) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. earned the nick name of being Gan-

dhi's 'yes' man. He did not mind that, and even he flaunted it
(150) as a compliment. Gandhi's word had been law to him . Patel

(151)

was accustomed to subordinate his judgement to that of Gandhi . He belonged to Gandhi's inner circle and was very dear to him. In fact, he owed his entire political existence to Gandhi. It was Gandhi who made him a member of the Congress Working Committee. Again, it was because of Gandhi that he became President of the

(152)

Congress in 1931.

All these facts, nevertheless, could not hide their differences, especially in the later period. On every occasion when Congress failed to follow Gandhi's lead, Sardar had been found to take the side of his opponents. Patel issued a statement accepting Gandhi's decision to leave the Congress in 1934. Besides, partition further widened the gulf. Gandhi opposed the plan in the Working Committee meeting. But Nehru and Patel had at least shaken themselves free from Gandhi's leading strings and were their own masters. It was they who were guiding the Working Committee and Patel assured the Viceroy that Gandhi would loyally abide by any decision the Working Committee might take .
(153)
Gandhi lamented to find himself all alone. Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal thought that his reading of the political situation was wrong and peace was sure to return if partition was agreed

(154) upon . After Independence, it hurt Gandhi deeply that even Patel followed a policy which was quite contrary to everything for which he himself stood. Gandhi's fast of 12 January, 1948, was in a sense directed against the attitude of Patel. Patel complained that Gandhi was fasting without any justification and that there was no real reason for such a fast. In view of the fast when Patel was requested by Azad to postpone his visit to Bombay, Patel shouted back "what is the use of my staying, (155) Gandhi is not prepared to listen to me I have no use for him ... When Gandhi was assassinated, men like Jaya Prakash Narayan, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh openly accused Patel telling that he could (156) not escape the responsibility for this assassination .

The cleavage between Nehru and Patel which had come into the open in 1947, was evident long before the coming of Independence, especially on the issue of socialism. By the early thirtees Nehru had emerged as the leader of the 'left' and the protector of the Congress Socialists. Patel was hostile from the outset, and used his influence to thwart all efforts to commit the Congress to a socialist programme. Inspite of that, Nehru had primacy of place in the affections of Gandhi. On three occasions - 1926, 1937 and 1946, Patel had been persuaded to withdraw his candidacy for Congress President in favour of Nehru. Nehru had been designated by Gandhi as his political successor, (157) despite Patel's seniority . Gandhi played a very important (158) role during the most crucial stage of their conflict . Though Gandhi had satisfied the pride of his favourite son by acknowledging Nehru's right as Prime Minister to dismiss any member of the

cabinet, he was 'Bapu' or father to both Nehru and Patel, and in this capacity he, on the last day of his life (30 January, 1948) extracted from Patel a pledge that he would never break with Nehru .

In the Constituent Assembly Sardar Patel played a vital role as Chairman of three important committees - Fundamental Rights, Provincial Constitutions and Minorities. While neither Nehru nor Patel held the centre of the stage in the Assembly, both were involved in all basic decisions in the party caucus. It was inconceivable that anything of more than technical importance could be incorporated without their approval . Patel, though not a member of the Congress Experts Committee, attended many committee meetings and influenced the fate of the present Constitution considerably. He was committed only to effective government, and the Constituent Assembly watched their (Nehru and Patel) mutual co-operation throughout the proceedings of the Assembly , in thrashing out the present Constitution.

Prasad first met Gandhi in Champaran in 1917 during the struggle for the indigo share-croppers . He was entirely the creation of Gandhi.

(VII) Dr. Rajendra Prasad During Gandhi's life time, Prasad rarely tried to judge things on his own, he used to show unqualified faith and loyalty in Gandhi . Prasad was a devout believer in pure non-violence; among all of Gandhi's leading political disciples, he was the most spiritually akin to Gandhi .

In the Gaya Congress, Prasad, with others, opposed C. R. Das and defeated his proposal. After Gandhi's withdrawal from active politics, in the Bombay session of the Congress in October 1934, Prasad spokesman for Gandhi and the rightwing presided. An attempt by the socialists to introduce a radical economic programme was soundly defeated - with Gandhi's full backing. Prasad was Congress President three times, in 1934, 1939 and 1948.

Even Prasad defied Gandhi in November 1947. He allowed himself to be persuaded by Nehru and Patel, and became the Congress President though Gandhi did not like it.

Prasad was the President of the Constituent Assembly. Besides, he was Chairman of two committees, Rules and Steering. He was one of the four chiefs (Nehru, Patel, Azad and Prasad) involved in decision-making in the Assembly. He involved himself least in the debates of the Assembly, but on one occasion, the suggestion of having 'village republics' as the basis of the whole constitution being rejected by the Drafting Committee, Prasad pointed out this omission in May 1948, (nearly two and half months after the publication of the Draft Constitution). He expressed, in a letter to B. N. Rau, his opinion that he liked the Constitution to begin with the village and go up to the centre. 'The village has been and will ever continue to be our unit in the country'. He strongly advocated the idea of utilising the adult franchise only for the village panchayats and making the village

panchayats the electoral college for electing representatives to
the provinces and the centre" . Prasad, therefore, suggested
that necessary articles should be redrafted to put the whole thing
in right perspective. Firmly, but kindly, Rau rejected Prasad's
suggestion.

Besides, in the Constituent Assembly, he was not seen
to have become active to incorporate any Gandhian ideal within
the Constitution. On the contrary, in his concluding speech in
the Assembly on 26 November 1949, he expressed his pleasure and
satisfaction at the newly emerged Constitution . He considered
that it was not his purpose to appraise the value of the work that
the Assembly had done or the merits or demerits of the Constitu-
tion which it had framed. He was content to leave that to others
and to posterity . Moreover, he was sufficiently glad to see
the incorporation of some of the ideals of Gandhi in the chapter
on Directive Principles of State Policy. He stated: ".... in a
world torn with conflicts, in a world which, even after devasta-
tion of two world wars, is still depending on armaments, to estab-
lish peace and goodwill, we are destined to play a great part, if
we prove true to the teachings of the Father of the Nation and
give effect to these directive principles in our Constitution...."

B. N. Rau was appointed as the Constitutional
Adviser to the Constituent Assembly in July 1946. He must be
placed among those important in the
(VIII) Bengal Marhsing
Rau framing of the Indian Constitution.

As Constitutional Adviser, Rau's advice was heard in the Assembly's inner councils, although he was not an Assembly member. A legalist, an eminent advocate and judge, a student of constitutional history, and an able draftsman, one of the more Europeanized intellectuals in the Assembly, Rau looked to Euro-American constitutional precedent perhaps even more than other Assembly members for the devices to be used in India's Constitution .

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He constructed a framework of Constitution based entirely on Euro-American models by suggesting a Parliamentary system of Government with a centralized federation, incorporating Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy etc. He rejected the Gandhian plan and did not incorporate any of his principles.

B. N. Rau politely rejected a request from Rajendra Prasad suggesting change in the Draft Constitution to incorporate village panchayats. Rau, in his reply, said that the Assembly had already decided on direct election of lower houses both at the centre and in the provinces, and that, he was doubtful if the vote could be reversed. He also protested that to write into the Constitution all the details of local government would make it impossibly long and unduly delay its completion.

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When the Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee met for the first time on 27 February 1947, it had before it a draft list of rights prepared among others by B. N. Rau. Rau's draft rights were in addition to the extensive passages on rights in his "Constitutional Precedents" , which were collections of a series of

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pamphlets which he prepared for the use of members of the Constituent Assembly. The provisions contained in these documents, which subsequently influenced the present Constitution, were taken from foreign constitutions and were not at all affected by Gandhi's ideas.

IV

Other forces and factors operating towards a deviation from Gandhian ideals:-

(I) Impact of the Congress Socialist Party -

The Congress Socialist Party, a faction within the Congress, was created in the Spring of 1934 by a group of left nationalists headed by Jaya Prakash Narayan. In order to organize the socialist forces, as also to strengthen the nationalist movement, and to give it a revolutionary, rather than a constitutional character, they formed this party .
⁽¹⁷⁵⁾

Both Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose welcomed the formation of this Party. In his presidential address at the Haripura Congress in 1938, Bose said that though he was not a member of that Party, he was in agreement with its general principles, and he felt that it was desirable for the leftist elements to be consolidated into one party .
⁽¹⁷⁶⁾

Nehru acted as the Congress Socialist Party's godfather and continued to give it his blessing, though he never

associated himself officially with this group. His influence among them was great. His clear enunciation of socialist ideas in 'Whither India' was a model for many of them. Politically he was their main hope to 'capture' the Congress machine. He had come to their defence in August 1934 with a blunt attack on the old guards' contemptuous attitude to socialism. At the Bombay session of the Congress a few months later, the Congress Socialist Party controlled one third of the delegates to the A.I.C.C. Only Gandhi's opposition at that time prevented a change in the party's economic and social programme .⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ Moreover, in 1930, when Nehru was elected Congress President, he appointed three prominent Congress Socialists - Jaya Prakash Narayan, Narendra Deva and Achyut Patwardhan to the Working Committee.

Both Bose and Nehru believed in economic planning. Bose visualized the emergence of a left party which would advocate planning by the state for the reorganization of the agricultural and industrial life of the country .⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ Similarly, Nehru held the view that in a country of arrested economic development, such as India, planning was essential .⁽¹⁷⁹⁾

Referring to this group in the Congress, Gandhi said : "if they gain ascendancy in the Congress, as they well may, I can not remain in the Congress. For, to be in active opposition should be unthinkable" .⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ In fact, the activities of this party were partly responsible for his severing all 'physical connection' with the Congress in 1934. While citing reasons in favour of his decision, Gandhi, in his statement of

September 1934, said that he had fundamental differences with the Congress Socialist Party on the programme published in their authorised pamphlets .
⁽¹⁸¹⁾

In 1938, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Secretary of the All India Congress Socialist Party, addressing a meeting at Patna, said that Gandhi's ideas were too old and should be replaced by new ones .
⁽¹⁸²⁾

But they did not seek to convert the Congress to socialism for they knew that that was not possible, in the circumstances then prevailing; they only wanted to make the Congress a truly anti-imperialist body. Jaya Prakash Narayan admitted that it was not their purpose to convert the whole Congress into a full fledged socialist party. All that they sought to do was to change the content and policy of that organization, so that it would truly represent the masses having the object of emancipating them both from the foreign power and the native system of exploitation .
⁽¹⁸³⁾

The Congress Socialist Party had no faith in the Constituent Assembly that was set up in terms of the Cabinet Mission Plan. They opposed the resolution of the Congress Working Committee, passed in January 1946, in which faith in non-violence was reaffirmed. It said that the Congress leaders had abandoned the path of revolution for that of constitutionalism, and that it was because of this that they had decided to participate in the Constituent Assembly . However, they had changed their
⁽¹⁸⁴⁾

attitude later.

Therefore, the activities and thinking of this Congress socialist Group and Socialist group outside the Congress influenced considerably the task of constitution-making. Further, they published, from time to time, their programmes regarding the future socio-economic pattern of India drawing inspirations from the western concept of socialism and state planning. This intellectual atmosphere prevalent at the time of framing the constitution, found considerable expression in the resolution regarding Aims and Objects of the Constitution moved by Nehru. Under such circumstances, they welcomed the Draft Constitution, deviating from Gandhian ideas, but incorporating many of their cherished provisions borrowed from Western constitutions.

Indians had been associated with local self-government since 1861, and from the 1909 Government of India Act through

(II) Other reasons those of 1919 and 1935, Indians came to play an increasing role in both the executive and legislative sides of provincial and central government. Along with this an increasing number of electorates were also having experience of the parliamentary process. Based on the experience and knowledge gained by Indians in the parliamentary form of government⁽¹⁸⁵⁾, there was more or less universal demand for such a form of government in the new Constitution⁽¹⁸⁶⁾.

Gandhi knew that his message had failed to get home. He lamented " I do not know how many swear by non-

violence or the Charka or, believing in decentralization, regard the village as the nucleus. I know, on the contrary, that many would have India a strong centre and build the whole structure round it".
⁽¹⁸⁷⁾

Furthermore, many influential and powerful members of the Constituent Assembly had become intellectually committed to a liberal democratic tradition of Euro-American type, through their training and education. They had been relentless critics of Gandhian principles.

Equally, the Congress's long-standing affinity with the Irish nationalist movement made the example of constitutional socialism expressed in the Irish 'Directive Principles of Social Policy', especially attractive to a wide range of
⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ Assembly members .

Another reason was that the lawyer members of the Assembly, (who were many) were keen on having a practicable and workable (from legal point of view) Constitution. They wanted that the Constitution, since it was to be interpreted by the judiciary, must not be vague or based on platitudes or utopian ideals. In that case, it may lead to arbitrary powers of the executive.

But the immediate reasons responsible for the deviation were the circumstances under which the Constitution was framed. The interim government, faced with problems like famine,

procurement and proper distribution of food grains, compelled the founding fathers not to think in terms of decentralized 'village republics'. The partition of the country, communal riots, integration of Princely States, Pakistan - inspired invasion in Kashmir forced them to think in terms of a centralized constitution to bring stability and unity in the country. The constitutional experts felt that the socio-economic revolution can only be achieved by a central authority through planning for economic development and by developing modern methods of cultivation, transport and communication, heavy and light industries, electric power and all other aspects of economy on modern lines

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Therefore, the founding fathers regarded the Gandhian Constitution as difficult to work out in practice. Nehru believed, 'any consideration of these questions must keep present facts, forces and the human material we have today in view, otherwise it will be divorced from reality' . . . The whole system of indirect election was found to be undemocratic and politically dangerous. It was felt that highly decentralized administration may not be conducive to the defence of our newly won independence. In Nehru's judgement, 'the scope of the centre, even though limited, inevitably grows, because it cannot exist otherwise' . To Sardar Patel, ".... the first requirement of any progressive country is internal and external security ..." Direct election, they realised, was the pillar to social revolution and the members so elected will have wider contact with the people. The

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system of direct election will cut across groups and factions, based on caste, creed, language and religion, existing in our villages. The system of election as envisaged by Gandhi, it was felt, would make the village a whirlpool of social and economic development. The idealistic appeal to the spirit of service and rejection of sordid payment for public work, the members felt, would leave public affairs, as in the mediaeval times, in the hands of the leisured people and their hirelings or with priests.

v

The cumulative effect of all these, therefore, was the emergence of the present Constitution of India not on the Conclusion lines chalked out by Gandhi, but in unceremonious rejection of his basic ideas and principles.

The foregoing account establishes beyond any shadow of doubt, that the roots of such substantive repudiation of Gandhian ideas lay as basically in the course of political events and the emerging reality of the political process as in the cleavage of personalities and ideologies. The ideological consensus which was based on compromise and accommodation found its institutional realization in a predominantly Anglo-American model of political system interspersed with a sprinkling of Gandhian ideals in Part III and Part IV of the Constitution. This was, not surprising, because, although it was Gandhi, more than anybody else, who, with his charismatic but dynamic and constructive leadership, had given the freedom movement a direction and a purpose, and had

really initiated the process of modernization of a tradition-bound, static society he had, during the last few years of his life, become totally estranged from the mainstream of Indian political life and ideas represented by the emerging political élite of the country.

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