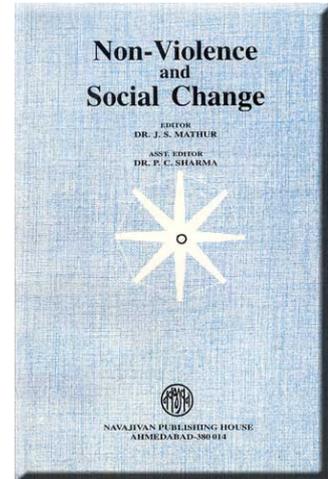


Non-violence and Social Change



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FOREWORD

Social change remains as necessary as ever in the present world of under-developed economics. The ratio between incomes of the "highest" and the "lowest"— tenth of people — measured according to their consumption possibilities has increased, notwithstanding the efforts made to develop. Many schools of thought see no other way out of this terrible contrast than one of violence. Yet violence itself is making for much misery. Mahatma Gandhi has always non-violent social change. India got its political independence without violence. Gandhian thought was not of a passive nature; it did constitute a revolution in thinking. So it seems clear that his thought deserves being spread again. I am happy to recommend one such attempt — this book on Non-violence and Social Change, a product of Professor J. S. Mathur's infatigable work in the University of Allahabad.

Jan Tinbergen

PREFACE

We are happy that papers received for our Seminar on Non-violence and Social Change are being published in the present volume. The Seminar was held from 30th Jan. 1971 to 1st Feb. 1971 and was jointly sponsored by Gandhi Bhawan and Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society. Sri Sumitranandan Pant inaugurated the Seminar. Sri Devendra Kumar Gupta, Secretary, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi delivered the valedictory address. Professor A. B. Lai the then Vice- Chancellor presided over the inaugural session. The Seminar was divided into four discussion groups, viz :

1. Basic Objective of Social Change,
2. Gandhian Aspect of Non-violence,
3. Non-violence and Rapidity of Change,
4. Non-violence and Institutional Change.

The theme of the Seminar evoked keen interest from scholars inside and outside the country as will be evident from the list of contributors.

We are sorry that we were not in a position to record the inspiring addresses of Sri Sumitranandan Pant, Prof. A. B. Lai and Sri Devendra Kumar Gupta. Similarly for reasons beyond our control and limitations under which we worked, we could not take notes of the discussion that took place on the various subjects and papers during the three days' Seminar.

We are happy to put on record that we received a grant of Rs. 9,750/- from the University Grants Commission, Rs. 2,000/- from Gandhi Peace Foundation, Rs. 5000/- from U. P. Govt., and Rs. 2,000/- from Christian Institute for the study of religion and society. But for these grants it would not have been possible to organise the Seminar and to publish papers that were received.

We are thankful to various scholars who very kindly agreed to send us an abridged version of their papers to enable us to manage the publication within our resources. Unabridged version of these papers are available in our library.

We are sorry to observe that in the academic life of our country, adequate interest has not been shown in the study of Gandhiji's ideas and techniques of change with a view to examine their significance and relevance for the solution of problems of contemporary society with particular reference to the socio-economic environment in our country and developing society. While in the developed world large number of institutions devoted to peace research are studying Gandhiji's ideas, we in our country have not even thought of assigning a secondary place to this study. The UGC was expected to give a lead in this connection; large sums have already been invested in the setting up of Gandhi Bhawans. Some of these Bhawans are doing commendable work and the need is to develop them into full-fledged institutes for Gandhian Thought and Peace Studies. We hope that the academic community under the leadership of the University Grants Commission will reconsider their policy of neglecting the study of Gandhiji's ideas which continue to be living force today.

We are thankful to all those who have extended their support to our activities and towards the publication of the present volume – more particularly to Dr. P. C. Sharma, Mr. N. K. Qhosh and Dr. K. M. Pandey, who helped us in editing the volume. Sri Shiv Pratap Singh, Kum. Priti Adaval and Dr. D. N. Dvivedi took considerable pains to translate articles from Hindi to English.

We have no words to express our gratitude to Prof. J. Tinbergen, who very kindly wrote Foreword for our publication and gave us the benefit of his august personality. This is a debt which can never be adequately acknowledged.

We are thankful to the Navajivan Publishing House for bringing out the present volume.

We will feel amply rewarded if the present publication rouses in the academic community a desire to study Gandhiji's ideas in all its ramification.

J. S. Mathur

P C. Sharma

INTRODUCTION

Humanity stands at cross-road today. Several scholars and statesmen are worried about the catastrophe that humanity faces if we do not act with restraint and reason. One of the scholars remarked, "To-day, by the fact that everything seems possible to us, we have a feeling that the worst of all is possible; retrogression, barbarism, decadence." This is just an example of the despondency that has struck the thinking people all over the world. Developments in the international sphere have compelled people to have a new look at the socio-economic and political problems that stare us in the face today. Ecological imbalances, exhaustion of non-renewable resources, proliferation of nuclear power, the division of the world and nations in groups and blocs; the problem of exploitation of nations by nations and even within nations of one section by another is a serious threat to stability and prosperity. There are reasons to doubt and question the concept of growth and development as is widely prevalent today.

The problems of developing countries like ours with mass poverty and unemployment, the demoralisation that poverty leads to and the inadequacy of the accepted techniques of growth and development to solve these problems have compelled people to think in terms of a new approach to these problems. Gandhiji had visualized these problems and in his own way, suggested solutions of the problem that this country is facing so that the process of growth and development enables even the lowliest and humblest to feel the glow, to get deeply involved in the process of growth and development and prevent misuse of the process of growth for sectional and group interests. Some people think that in independent India of today Gandhiji's concrete scheme of production of wealth through decentralized industries had no validity or meaning. This will be true only if the conditions under which Gandhiji formulated his scheme had undergone radical change. This is not so. Even after nearly 30 years of independence and five five-year plans we remain where we were in terms of teeming millions. In the social sphere also there is no perceptible change. The

masses remain largely untouched by our schemes of development and have lost whatever strength they had acquired during the struggle for independence. We look for the solution of our problems in external factors and forces and have been incapacitated to take initiative even in respect of minor matters. Under these circumstances "people and sometimes whole nations come to lose their confidence in peaceful change through democratic and non-violent means and so become desperate and opt to resort to force."

In the western world one comes across a number of movements associated with the problems of peace. These efforts have proved ineffective largely because they do not try to tackle the problem of emergence of non-exploitative society within national boundaries. Gandhiji had realised that in order to be a peaceful nation in the international sphere, we have to be a non-exploitative society inside national borders.

The participants at the Seminar discussed several issues concerning peaceful rapid changes of the existing socio-economic order and held the view that such changes are possible through peaceful methods.

The salient features of a new socio-economic order should be emergence of society which eschews violence and exploitation, encourages cooperation among individuals, groups and nations, brings about greater equality and enables socio-economic changes through the initiative of the people not only through nonviolent means but also with adequate rapidity. In contrast what one notices is a split personality of individuals, groups and nations. On the one hand man cannot live without man and on the other hand he fears the other man. One wants love and truth for oneself; but gives hatred to others. Before Gandhiji made his experiments some sort of vested interest had developed in respect of qualities like truth and non-violence and they were considered the exclusive preserve of the saints. As a consequence while science was progressing, humanity was lagging behind. Love, compassion and kindness were not the concern of the scientist. Gandhiji demonstrated that there is need for radical change in our attitude and the environment.

If we examine the concept of non-violence as advocated by Gandhiji we will realize that his was a prescription not of the weak but of the strong. He proved in his life time that even the unorganized and the weak can perform miracles if they got trained in the art of non-violent techniques of change. Non-violence does not mean, passivity or inaction; but a dynamic living force. His non-violence was an instrument in the struggle for justice and freedom. It is a permanent revolution and therefore it is dynamic.

Gandhiji's technique as manifested in his life is an exemplary struggle of mass truth against degradation. Non-violence as practised by Gandhiji had three basic elements: (i) Creation of a human society involving non-violent methods of resisting exploitation, (ii) education of oppressed to take positive and Constructive steps to resist exploitation and development of good and harmonious relationship between oppressed and oppressor once the struggle was over, (iii) ushering in of a non-exploitative decentralised economic and political institution. According to Gandhiji non-violence is a rule of action, it is the duty. His non-violence is not merely a philosophical principle; it is the rule of life. Many regard it as an abstract idea but it is a simple yet relentless imperative. Non-violence as preached and practised by Gandhiji is not a single virtue or a single quality of life but congeries of qualities or virtues like compassion, selflessness, self-renunciation, to the extent of reducing oneself to zero and fearlessness and therefore to Gandhiji quality matters rather than numbers. He advocated the practice of non-violence in every walk of life—individual, institutional, political, social and economic. He believed that Ahimsa is a weapon of matchless potency even though the results may not be clearly visible. Non-violence works in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society. Non-violence, the greatest force at the disposal of mankind, like charity, must begin at home and those who advocate the use of these weapons must work to ensure a just, social order within. Non-violence is a must for democracy and can make the parliamentary system really effective.

There is a wrong notion amongst people and they seem to favour violent techniques in the false belief that thereby rapid changes can be brought about,

but "we need not be afraid that the method of non-violence is a slow long drawn different process. It is swiftest, the world has seen, for it is surest".

Several instances of non-violent techniques bringing about rapid socio-economic and consequential institutional change having been brought about can be sighted from Indian experience, and the campaigns organised by Gandhiji. He gave a death blow to the system of untouchability—an age-old practice — through his non-violence. His non-violent struggle against the Rowlett bill and his Salt Satyagraha are other examples of the success of this technique. The rapidity with which nonviolent techniques succeeded during the communal disturbances was proved by him during 1946-1947. Lord Mountbatten described him as 'one man force'. Gandhiji himself held the opinion that "the existing structure of economic society will not last for 24 hours if my weapon of Satyagraha can be gripped by the people".

It must, however, be realized that the success of nonviolence depend largely upon the quality of leadership. It was for this reason that Gandhiji laid down a very strict code of discipline at his Ashrams, which were his training schools in the art of non-violent technique. He believed that it may be difficult for the masses to be disciplined and trained in the theory and art of non-violent action. The masses, however, can be made effective soldiers of non-violent army by leaders thoroughly trained in the art of non-violent techniques who can set personal example before the followers; who have identified themselves with the masses through various items of constructive programmes that were suggested by him. That the masses can use these techniques successfully, was very clearly demonstrated during several campaigns organised under his direct leadership as also during campaigns organized by others with his blessings. What Gandhiji said and did were experiments in the use of non-violence. Had he been alive during the post-independent era he might have carried these experiments further. Humanity must steadily march towards the attainments of a socio-economic society based on justice and fair play through non-violence.

We need also mention that a violent change need not be a success, and even rapid. Several examples can be quoted of either the complete failure of these

violent efforts or their snail's pace progress, right from the French revolution to the present-day problems of Vietnam, Korea and Arab-Israel conflict as also of our relationship with Pakistan. A violent revolution creates a violent structure in which after having killed one's enemy it is always easy to kill one's friends for holding opposite views and wrong positions. Therefore the revolution must be based on non-violence. A non-violent revolution does not simply seek the liberation of a class or a nation or a race, but it seeks the liberation of mankind, violence liberates one group and imprisons another, destroys one authoritarian structure but creates another.

Gandhiji believed that a parliamentary system and democratic functioning of institutions is not possible without practice of non-violence. He described the Parliament 'Sterile woman and prostitute'. This he did because he felt that centralised institute as such cannot permit effective participation of the masses. The humblest and the meek cannot feel close to other sections of the society. The rule of law should mean that the weakest member will have his rights upheld against the most powerful. The proponents of non-violence feel that it is only through non-violence that equality before the law can be established.

Gandhiji subscribed to the views that fundamental far-reaching changes can be brought about in an institution and the society through non-violence, campaigns and mass action. Gandhiji wanted to change the present economic and political system, educational and religious institutions to develop a sense of altruism amongst individuals so that the present motto of individual success and security par excellence at social cost may be reduced. Gandhiji demonstrated through his experiments that the practice of truth and non-violence is possible not only by saints but also by ordinary individuals, groups, communities and nations to solve the multifarious problems that arise in everyday life. Gandhiji's technique of truth and non-violence is self-acting and does not depend for its propagation on a material medium. This technique has its own rules which are definite, precise and can be capable of being objectified. The change brought by

Satyagraha transfer power to the masses and make them better organized to resist evil and oppression.

Eminent scholars are now advocating increasing relevance on Gandhian techniques. Professor Toynbee observes: "In this hurricane of annihilating material power mankind will not be able to save itself from self destruction unless we all of us manage to practise non-violence in our relations with our fellow-men." He charged us, our country-men, with the responsibility of spreading his ideas and observed, "You have incurred a rather formidable obligation both to Gandhiji and history...."

J. S. MATHUR

01. SOME BASIC OBJECTIVES FOR SOCIAL CHANGES

By A. S. Mathur

Change is the law of nature. 'The old order changeth giving place to the new lest one good order should corrupt the world' is quoted by everyone. But we must be clear that every change need not be good and desirable. It must also be realized that some changes take place without any conscious or deliberate effort on the part of mankind. In other words we are passive and have no control over events.

This is what is happening to the present-day society. We are in a drift. Erich Framm has described the whole system as, "Indeed means have become ends. Material production, once supposed to be a means for a more dignified, happier life and the aim was clearly the fuller, more dignified, more human life. Today production and consumption have become ends in themselves... But why we want to produce more, why we want this, that, and the other... this is a question which is not asked".¹ Another sociologist remarked: "The greatest need of American Society as a whole is the need for objectives and ideals capable of enabling man to lead significant and satisfying lives. Ours is such a civilisation without a purpose except that there is a general agreement that the good life should be made available to all members of the community. But the problem of what is good life receives little attention. We lack significant social purposes."²

But this drift is certainly not desirable. We must plan in such a manner that changes lead to the attainment of the cherished goal. These goals must be clearly defined. The need for clear perspectives is of greater significance for developing countries. In these countries there is so much of poverty, hunger and lack of fulfillment of minimum human wants that we may be tempted to measure changes only in economic terms. Coupled with this situation of shortages is the demonstration effect of affluent western nations which are trying to invent new wants everyday and whose economic structure is surviving on the multiplication of these wants.

There can be no two opinions that one of the objectives of change should be removal of poverty and the satisfaction of the minimum requirements of every citizen in the shortest possible period. Gandhiji observed, "The poor of India today have lost faith in God... For a person suffering from the pangs of hunger and desiring nothing but to fill his belly, his belly is his God."³ On another occasion he remarked: "Imagine therefore, what a calamity it must be to have 300 million unemployed, several millions becoming degraded everyday for want of employment, devoid of self-respect, devoid of faith in God. I dare not take the message of God. I may as well place before the dog over there the message of God as before those hungry millions who have no luster in their eyes and whose only God is their bread. I can take before them a message of God only by taking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice breakfast and look forward to a nice luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day. To them God can appear only as bread and butter."⁴

Gandhiji realised that poverty can only lead to demoralisation and frustration. At the same time he was equally emphatic that the sole aim of development should not be purely materialistic. He held the view that material prosperity beyond a limit leads to several evils. "If by abundance you mean everyone having plenty to eat and drink and clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated, I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuff in my belly than I can digest and more things than I can ever usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India."⁵

The objective that Gandhiji kept before us was a deliberate and conscious regulation, control and reduction of material wants. "A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore, the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs even the intellectual, needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness."⁶ The ideal that

Gandhiji kept before us was that "our civilization, our culture, our Swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants—self-indulgence, but upon restricting our wants—self-denial."⁷

This idea of keeping the material aspirations of individuals and naturally of groups was suggested because it was clearly realised that too much emphasis on material standards leads to a lop-sided development of human personality and weakens the capacity of the individual to look beyond his narrow personal interest and think in terms of the society and social good. Even this narrow personal interest appears illusory and creates conditions for exploitation, which is another form of violence. This concern only with material welfare leads to centralisation and concentration of power. It must be clearly realised that no community can escape violence and exploitation that does not limit its needs but multiplies them.

The individual has lost his individuality. In fact he does not count. "Obsession with mass and magnitude, and the concern for mass poverty, mass murder and mass deprivation of human rights—these somehow obscure the importance and key-role of the individual person. Man tends to evade personal responsibility and to pass it on to national governments and ultimately to the United Nations."⁸ We have created an environment when the feeling of helplessness and insecurity are increasing every day. While we have achieved a remarkable mastery over nature and we have created a system of production which is capable of producing and satisfying ever and rapidly increasing wants we have created a social system where 'this man-made world has become his master, before whom he bows down, whom he tries to placate or to manipulate as best he can.'

One objective for change should be the re-emergence of the individual. "In modern times it is beneath human dignity to lose one's individuality and become a mere cog in the machine. I want every individual to become a full-blooded and fully developed member of the society."⁹ On another occasion Gandhiji remarked, "If the individual ceases to count, what is left of Society? Individual freedom alone can make man voluntarily surrender himself

completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can be built on a denial of the individual's freedom."¹⁰ Erich Fromm remarks that "there is no higher power than this unique individual self, that man is the centre and purpose of his life; that the growth and realisation of man's individuality is an end that can never be subordinated to purposes which are supposed to have greater dignity."¹¹

When we talk of the development of the human personality or respect of the individual self we do not imply that this development will be something apart from society. Man has to develop as an integral part of society and is to contribute not only to his fuller development but simultaneously to that of the group and the society of which he is a member. This contradiction between individual and social good should end. This dichotomy cannot sustain either the individual or society. "All that matters is that the opportunity for genuine activity be restored to the individual; that the purposes of society and his own become identical, not ideologically but in reality."¹²

But such a change should be brought about by the effort of the individual. He should not be manipulated, guided and controlled by any external authority. The tendency towards greater control and centralisation is there. As life becomes complex and complicated, the capacity of the 'individual to solve his problems and that of the group is being progressively undermined. In order to solve these problems' the role of the State is becoming increasingly important. The State is getting omnipotent. Gandhiji warned, "The State represents violence, in a concentrated and organised form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its existence. ... I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear, because although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress."¹³

It was for this reason that Gandhiji advocated control and regulation of material wants, training of leaders in particular and the masses in general, to a socially responsible and less individualistic and self-centered mode of living

which we may term as ethical and decentralising the economic and socio-political system. "As I was picturing life based on non-violence, I saw that it must be reduced to the simplest terms consistent with high thinking. . . . Society based on non-violence can only consist of group settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence."¹⁴

This may suggest that we are mixing up everything— economics, ethics, politics, etc. We cannot compartmentalize life—the left-hand not knowing what the right-hand does. Gandhiji remarked, "I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurts the moral well-being of an individual or a nation is immoral and therefore, sinful."¹⁵ On another occasion he remarked, "Economics to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced to terms of religion or spirituality."¹⁶ Albert Schweitzer observes, "Entering in the question as to what is the real essential nature of civilization, I come to the pronouncement that this is ultimately ethical."¹⁷

Commenting upon objectives that we should have and that were crystalised by Gandhiji, Acharya Kripalani comments, "By moralising politics and group life on the basis of truth, non-violence and scrupulous regard for means, by adopting Satyagraha as the method of settling disputes, by his constructive programme based on regional economy and the decentralised industry free from exploitation, by a healthy and vigorous local self-government through village Panchayats and above all by an integrated life of the individual and the community engaged in fruitful work Gandhiji proposed to coordinate and synthesise moral, social, economic and political life, establish effective democracy and work for world peace."¹⁸

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1. Erich Framm, *Labour in Free Society*, p. 3
 2. Slichter Simner, H., *Labour in Free Society*, pp. 43-44
 3. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 61
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 143

5. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 507
6. *Ibid.*, p. 583
7. *Ibid.*, p. 527
8. Carlos Ronmlo, *Truth and Non-Violence*, UNESCO Symposium, p. 150
9. *Harijan*, (1939), p. 438
10. Quoted in Bondurant Joan, V., *Conquest of Violence*, p. 30
11. Framm, Erich, *Fear of Freedom*, p. 228
12. Framm, Erich, *Fear of Freedom*, p. 235
13. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 578-79
14. *Ibid.*, p. 595
15. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 529-30
16. *Ibid.*, p. 427
17. *The Decay & Restoration of Civilization*, p. 5
18. *Gandhian Outlook & Technique*, p. 364

02. SOCIAL CHANGE VIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

By B. N. Asthana

Mahatma Gandhi is regarded commonly as a great political leader; few, however, know that he was a great spiritual thinker and an equally great social leader. He earned political freedom for the people of this country. It can likewise be claimed that he also earned social status for them. He brought about the emancipation of the masses from social bondage. It is interesting to note that the *modus operandi* of the Great Mahatma was non-violence whether the situation he was dealing with was political or social in nature. He was opposed to all violent methods. His concept of violence was far-reaching, limited to violence not only in action but extending to violence in word or even in thought.

This social role of Gandhiji is significant in the context of the fact that he was born in a rather orthodox family in a conservative country and brought up in traditionalism. However, very early in life he broke through his inhibiting surroundings and devoted himself to social service and worked tirelessly and with devotion and enthusiasm in a manner that rightly earned for him the title of *Yug Purush*—the Creator of the Age.

His political and social philosophies derived mutual inspiration and effected and were effected considerably by each other. For this reason it is difficult to judge whether he was a greater political or social leader. He had the capacity of making a profound impact upon the masses and the secret of his success was his complete identification with them. He propounded theories of social work and being a pragmatic person he translated them into action. He not only strived to achieve equality and justice for the common man, but also aroused their conscience so that they may achieve for themselves. Thus, they may not remain under the impression that something has been bestowed upon them, but they have secured justice and equality for themselves by dint of their hard work.

While going through the writings and occasional pronouncements of Gandhi one would not fail to be struck by the remarkable identity in his views in matters social and political. The emphasis on either may differ according to the situation— social or political—at hand. To him 'independence' was not a mere political objective, but it had a far more important social objective, the emancipation of the masses from misery and want. For the attainment of his political aim, he aligned himself with the people who were at the lowest rung of the social ladder. He was a man gifted with tremendous vision. He had realised it in the initial stages of the national movement that the essential condition for its success would be the involvement of the vast majority of the people coming from the rural areas and eking out a miserable existence. Therefore, under his able stewardship the struggle for independence identified itself increasingly with the service of the common man, and, naturally, a large mass of the people participating in the movement originated from the rural areas.

The objectives of social change for which Mahatma Gandhi strove have been laid down clearly in his writings and speeches. His views inspired the political and social leaders of the times, who were greatly influenced by his pronouncements. It was, therefore, natural that when the Constitution of India was drafted and subsequently when the Five Year- Plans for the economic development of India were prepared the views of the Mahatma were fully reflected in them. The ideals of Mahatma Gandhi in regard to social change are such that they can be fitted very well within the general framework of his ideals of non-violence and democracy. He believed that it is the duty of society to bring about changes designed to create better conditions and opportunities for the masses. He considered social imbalances as inherited from the past as a result of governmental and social connivance and of unequal opportunity and of the effects of the peculiar economic and legal institutions that are deeply embedded in our social life. He was keen at least to reduce the magnitude of the social imbalances if it was not possible to remove them altogether; but regarding the *modus operandi* the watchword was non-violence. He claimed¹ his ideas of social change coming to him naturally and not emanating from any

books, but from his innate belief in non-violence. He regarded it unfortunate to resort to non-violence for bringing about social change. His ideas are very relevant in the context of today when we find all around us young men and women bent upon violence as a means of social reform.

With the wind of uncertainty all around as to the means of bringing about a social change it is not surprising that a rethinking on the basic objectives and means of the change should have become necessary. The objectives are already enshrined² in the preamble and the directive principles of state policy of our Constitution. In it the concept of equality is emphasised as the chief basis of the social order as envisaged under the Constitution. The idea of equality is comprehensive and far-reaching, and includes justice, equality of opportunity and equality before laws. The first Five Year Plan lays down the objective and the means of social welfare, which is the aim of social change, in the following words: 3

"The object of social welfare is the attainment of social health which implies the realization of such objectives as adequate living standards, the assurance of social justice, opportunities for cultural development through individual and group self-expressions, and readjustment of human relations leading to social harmony. A comprehensive concept of living standards will include the satisfactions of basic needs like food, clothing and shelter as well as normal satisfactions of family life, enjoyment of physical and mental health, opportunities for the expression of skills and recreational abilities, and active and pleasurable social participation. The achievement of social justice demands co-operative and concerted efforts on the part of the state and the people. The objectives are to be achieved mainly by revitalising the nation's life by creating well-organised and active regional communities in rural and urban areas to work co-operatively for national development. Such decentralised community groups will release national energy, extend the scope for leadership, and help to create initiative and organisation extensively in the remotest parts of the country." It is significant to note that the means contemplated by the Planning Commission in the First Five Year Plan to envisage democratic co-operation between the State and the people make no reference to non-violent methods;

probably for the reason, that they are implied and need no special mention in the context of a conscious state policy of social change.

However, soon after adopting the Constitution it was realised that the speed with which the progress towards "a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life" was being made was not adequate and needed to be expedited. With this end in view the concept of social change as envisaged the constitution and the Five Year Plan and as dreamt by the Father of the Nation was given a more concrete shape by adopting the 'Socialistic pattern of society' as the objective of the social and economic policy by the Parliament .in December 1954. The Third Five Year Plan emphasised that the means to be adopted for bringing about social change would not be sudden in their effect; for the State does not aim at any hasty transformation in the economic and social order of India, but in gradual stages by educating the haves and the have-nots; for that would be amenable to the genius of the people a vast majority of whom are still bound by tradition and customs. It is felt that a gradual change would be more effectively assimilable and would give to the people a sense of involvement and participation.

So far as the objectives are concerned many may be laid down as we have seen earlier and it would be difficult to determine the priorities. But an analysis of the objective reduces them ultimately to two. They are: an increase in the national product and a great equality in the distribution of what is produced. Some people may think that the first is an objective of economic change and the second is an objective of social change. But it may be remembered that in the ultimate analysis the economic and social changes are allied to each other.

The two broad objectives outlined above have wide implications. An increase in national productivity can be brought about only if the resources of the nation are adequately exploited and properly harnessed. The distributive aspect must take into account increase in employment opportunities and a better standard of living for the masses.

As the distribution of population between the rural and the urban in India is, any programme of increase in production must give first priority to agriculture. But it does not follow from this that agriculture is to be developed at the cost of industry. As a matter of fact role of the two in the economic and social life of the community must be properly recognised, and the emphasis on them be based accordingly.

In the particular context of an agricultural country like India, the village and small-scale industries have a vital role to play in the growth of national productivity. They can bring about most effectively the decentralization of production and distribution necessities of life- The village industries serve in a most remarkable manner the basic Objectives of social change, viz., increased production and equitable distribution. Besides providing consumer and other goods and creating large-scale employment they offer opportunities for the utilisation of the available human and national resources and tend to bring about a better distribution of wealth and incomes.

For the development of the village and small-scale industries on sound lines a provision of rural services on the following pattern is desirable:

1. Increased facilities for primary and secondary education.
2. Better provision of public health, medical and sanitation services.
3. Extension of transport and communications.
4. Extensive development of rural reconstruction.

Mahatma Gandhi was endowed with a prophetic vision. He had realised that the two-fold objective of increased production and equitable distribution could best be achieved through the rehabilitation and growth of village industries. The formula he evolved was every village to produce and use its necessities and, in addition produce a certain percentage as its contribution to the requirements of the cities.⁴

To the often asked question about mass production his reply was that he did not believe that it would raise the standard of living of the people. He said that without simultaneous distribution on an equally mass scale the production

would result only in a great tragedy. Therefore, he supported the idea of 'production by masses' rather than 'mass production'.⁵

RELEVANCE OF NON-VIOLENCE TO PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Gandhiji believed that the change in the social order which he contemplated through village industries seeking to enhance productivity and bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth and income should be achieved through non-violent methods. The relevance of non-violence to social change is somewhat complicated to conceive of. Gandhiji saw a change in the social order but considered the means as violent that tended to concentrate production and distribution in the hands of the few. Regarding the distribution of wealth by non-violent means, it is interesting to note his views expressed on the draft resolution of Shri Jai Prakash Narayan to be put before the Congress Working Committee session at Ramgarh. One of the clauses of the resolution related to the ruling Princes and ran as follows :⁶

"In the Indian States there shall be complete democratic government established and in accordance with the principles of abolition of social distinction and equality between citizens, there shall not be any titular heads of the States in the persons of Rajas and Nawabs."

While generally endorsing the views of Shri Jai Prakash Narayan, Gandhiji expresses his disagreement with his proposition about the Princes as stated above and regarded it as contrary to the principles of non-violence. Gandhiji said :⁷

"I cannot endorse his proposition about the princes. In law they are independent. It is true that their independence is not worth much, for it is guaranteed by a stronger party. But as against us, they are able to assert their independence. If we come into our own through nonviolent means, as is implied in Shri Jai Prakash's draft proposals, I do not imagine a settlement in which the princes will have effaced themselves. Whatever settlement is arrived at, the nation will have to carry out in full."

In the context of today, Gandhiji's views on a non-violent socialistic order deserve to be noted.

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to lay down the basic objectives of social change and the means of achieving them. With regard to the objectives (namely, increase in production and equitable distribution) there can be no radical difference of opinion, except that some writers might concretise them and state their implications. But, with regard to the means, opinions may differ. Whether village industries are the panacea for all social evils or not, and whether it is possible to maximise social welfare by establishing 'a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life' and whether the ideals of production would not come in conflict with the ideals of distribution, and finally, whether this distribution can be achieved by non-violent means (and, above all, what non-violent means are) would always remain open questions in a dynamic world.

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1. *Harijan*, April 20, 1940, p. 96
 2. "The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life.
"The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing –
 - (a) that the citizens, men and women equally have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;
 - (b) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best subserve the common good;
 - (c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."
 3. Planning commission, *The First Five Year Plan*, (1952), p. 163
 4. Gandhi, M. K., *Constructive Programme* (1941), p. 8
 5. Pyarelal (in the *Harijan*), November 2, 1934, p. 301 *et seq.*
 6. Gandhiji (in the *Harijan*), "Non-violent Social Orders" April 20, 1940, p. 96 *et seq.*
 7. *Ibid.*

03. SOME BASIC OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

By Rishi Kumar Govil

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The most outstanding characteristic of the history of India during the last hundred years has been the emergence of Indian nationalism and nationhood in place of regional "patriotism" and statehood of the past. The unexpressed but vividly felt sense of cultural unity is now transformed into a political unity making itself manifest through the entity called the Indian nation that has emerged in this stage of Indian history. India's political awakening and cultural consciousness had been the twin forces that led to the national movement which resulted in Independence, on August 15, 1947. In the case of modern India, it was supposed by many indigenous as well as foreign investigators that India was modernised by the shedding of many of her social and historical habits which were summarily disposed of as antiquated traditions or noxious superstitions. A deeper study of the personalities and events of the dawn of modern India, however, convinces us of the fact that the break of the present with the past was more apparent than real.

Towards the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the hypnotic spell of foreign civilization began to recede slowly, but steadily, before the rising tide of self-consciousness of the Hindus. Mighty movements of socio-religious reforms sprang up one after another, to resuscitate the ancient culture of India and lead her once more towards a glorious destiny. The Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, Prarthana Samaj of Bombay and Arya Samaj in Northern India particularly in the Punjab led to sweeping changes in social customs, respect for our cultural heritage and a doctrine of synthesis giving a new interpretation and meaning to India's age-long philosophical and religious concepts. Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru have all believed that modern India would benefit from the belief in the sanctity of the individual conscience that had survived in the best minds of the past. They declared the doctrine of unity in diversity. Islam in India has also served as a

unifying force, for it has wedded the heterogeneous elements of the Indian population into a homogeneous whole. "For organic unity of India was the product of a series of forces that converged upon a single-point, and consolidated her seemingly divergent creeds, races, religious class, and castes into a vigorous and enterprising nation".¹ During the past hundred years, the ethos of the Indian nation has been awakened and the Indian Way of life has been evolved, particularly under the cementing genius of Gandhiji. This is the background against which we have to consider the objectives of social change, in free India.

OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN FREE INDIA

The Constitution of India in its Directives uses certain important general terms: 'Welfare' and 'Social Justice'. There is reference in a number of places to the prevention of exploitation. The basic concern shown is with the problem of poverty, i. e., with employment and standard of living. This is emphasized in a number of distinct references such as the (1) right to an adequate means of livelihood, (2) living wage for all workers, (3) raising the level of nutrition and standard of living, (4) securing within limits of economic capacity and development, the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement.

Next to the prevention of exploitation and providing employment and raising the standard of living, the directives emphasize, non-concentration of ownership and control over material resources, and their distribution as best to sub-serve the common good and securing that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. The task before an underdeveloped country is not merely to get better results within the existing framework of economic and social institutions but to mould and refashion these so that they contribute effectively, to the realisation of higher and nobler social values.

These values or basic objectives have recently been summed up in the phrase 'socialist pattern of society'. Essentially, this means that the basic criterion for

determining the lines of advance must not be private profit but social gain, and that the pattern of development and the structure of socio-economic relations should be so planned that they result not only in appreciable increases in national income and employment but also in greater equality incomes and wealth. The Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution had indicated the approach in broad terms; the socialist pattern of society is a more concretised expression of this approach. "Economic policy and institutional changes have to be planned in a manner that would secure economic advance along democratic and egalitarian lines."²

Together with the socialistic pattern of society in India the Indian Constitution also propounds the establishment of a secular democracy in India. Under such a system all classes and sects of society as well as all religions will be treated as equal in the sense that merely the accident of birth in a particular caste or following a pattern of religious beliefs will not mar the fortunes of an individual. The uplift of the Harijans and the untouchables has been a reform measure of our freedom movement and it has brought about certain basic changes in the Hindu social order. But much more is required to bring into being a classless and casteless society so that a homogeneity may prevail in our national policy.

THE PRESENT CRISIS IN INDIA: CAUSES AND REMEDIES

Despite our rich cultural and religious heritage, the emergence of a new idealism, the framing of a democratic constitution, and economic planning for about two decades, we find that the masses in India are not satisfied with their lot materially as well as morally. Poverty of the lowest thirty to forty per cent of the population seems to be the popular issue. Land Reforms have not been fully carried out and the problem of unemployment is as acute (if not more) as it was when the planning process started in India. The condition of the landless and the uneconomic holders has deteriorated as compared to that of the big cultivators with polarization at the rural base, and as new agricultural strategy pushes money into the countryside for the first time in twenty years. The

Naxalite activities and the land grab movement are political offshoots of this basic economic problem.

For two decades, most developing countries including India, have been relentlessly pursuing the task of maximizing their rates of growth of National Income. The growth in National Income was equated falsely with economic development. The emphasis on growth in the initial years of planning had some justification because certain basic and key-industries had to be developed and whatever surplus could be created, was needed for investment to raise future rate of growth. The earlier plans proceeded on the assumption that rapid rate of growth of the National Income would create employment and higher living standards, but the economist in India, as also the Planning Commission, have now realised that growthmanship which results in undivided attention to the maximization of GNP can be dangerous for the results, which almost always culminate in social and political unrest. In a recent work, Dandekar and Rath estimate that 30 to 40% people in rural and urban sectors fall below the poverty line in India.

There is no conscious realisation of a link between economic and political performance which is crucial to our progress as a State and as a people,³ and 'Garibi Hatao' has become more of an empty political slogan. The core of social injustice in India is unemployment and the greater the focus on this single reform measure the more quickly we will be able to move on the path of Socialism. There are, however, certain other non-economic factors which have to be kept in mind. Our educational system has to be more work-oriented as Vinoba recently put it in a nut-shell: Yoga, Udyoga, and Sahayoga. The vulnerable sections of society particularly in certain States of W. Bengal, Orissa, east U. P. and Andhra Pradesh have to be saved from the exploitation and inhuman behaviour of the upper strata of society. There should be proper housing tenements, drinking water facilities in the remote villages which should get top priority in future planning despite all controversies in rural planning. Land system, education and policy towards basic necessities need overhauling immediately in India.

The fundamental question relevant is whether social change; which of course includes economic reforms, cannot be brought about in a peaceful way. Is there an alternative approach to changes in social condition other than the method of violence, using of weapons and force? The Sarvodaya approach to social problems is an answer to this crisis facing Indian society today. Instead of blindly copying Russia, China or any other country let us educate our masses in the true spirit and tradition of India so that a real and stable revolution is brought about in our society based on democratic ideals and well-being of the common man. Our young people should be given initiation into the universal religion of the land in schools and universities. Even the elders and much more the politicians need to give up their parochial self-interests and help develop national character to remove the present crisis of confidence in our social life. "The root cause of all these disturbing developments in recent years seems to be a crisis in our national character. The moral base of public life has been shattered; there is corruption at every level; discipline is conspicuous by its absence; intellectual honesty has become a thing of the past; and our standard of conduct, whatever of it is left, tends to drop steeply."⁴

In fact the present crucial situation demands the utmost from the people, dynamic leadership and intense devotion of the kind that Mahatma Gandhi brought to the struggle for political freedom. "Slums need clearing", says Arnold Toynbee and "Slum clearance needs heroes to take it in hand. But one cannot set one's hand to clearing a slum without a risk of being polluted by its filth... Gandhi's objective was to raise the spiritual level of life in a spiritual slum – the slough of politics. Gandhi waded into the slough, showed how the slough could be purified, and remained personally uncontaminated by his immersion in it. This gives the measure both of Gandhi's own spiritual stature and of the magnitude of his service to mankind at a turning point in human history."⁵

Gandhiji did not minimise the value of economics in the life of the individual or the group. He held that the grinding poverty of the masses of India worked for their degradation. It must be removed. But unlike Marx he did not think that all human values and institutions were the result and the working of economic

forces. "Gandhiji laboured to achieve the same humanitarian aims as Marx, of establishing equality, freedom, brotherhood and democracy. He, however, did not believe that dictatorship based on violence would automatically evolve itself into democracy. With his belief in non-violence, Gandhiji could not advocate any other form of Government except democracy."⁵

The status quo in India should be changed giving concrete shape to our avowed objectives enshrined in the Constitution without delay. The constructive approach to our social problems and the technique of Ahimsa (suffering for others) should not be lost in the cross currents of violence and anti-national activities prevalent in India today particularly in the East and South. Social workers and like-minded people both in the Government and outside have an enormous responsibility at the present crucial hour. Let us all do our bit to bring about the emergence of a new society with respect for the individual and plenty for the common man.

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1. Hamid Raza, *The Cultural Role of India*, p. 125
 2. Report of the Second Five Year Plan, p. 24
 3. Kothari, Rajni, "Political Economy of Garibi Hatao", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Aug., 1972
 4. Munshi, K. M., *Indian Constitutional Documents*, Vol. I, "Pilgrimage to Freedom, 1902-1950," p. 351
 5. Arnold Joseph Toynbee, *A Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi : Hundred Tears*, p. 380
 6. J. B. Kripalani, *Gandhi – His Life and Thought*, p. 416

04. CHANGE IN SOCIAL ORDER –ITS FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES

By B. B. Prasad

It is, indeed, an irony that what man cannot genuinely live without is 'man' and what man is visibly frightened of is 'man'. On the one hand, there are strong bonds of racial harmony, impelling men instinctively to live with each other. On the other, man just fights shy of man for want of a direct communication of hearts. There are veils and walls, – of opaque iron and thick bamboo of community, caste and creed; of faiths, beliefs and actions; of catchwords and shibboleths; of nationality, colour, religion and language, truncating man from man. The indigent is afraid of the affluent; the citizen is alarmed of the soldier. As long as man is scared of man, there can hardly be a proximity of hearts. And, can we conceive of love without proximity? This lamentable co-existence of harmony and distrust underlines the inherent contradictions of the present situation.

Man, looked at from some distance, appears to be a despicable bag of selfishness and ego, bias and prejudice, concupiscence, anger and avarice. Despite his detestable appearance, however, he is a remarkable confluence of truth and love, compassion and composure. No one on this planet likes the brickbats of untruth, contempt and scorn hurled at him by others; but no one, at the same time, is always prepared to proffer the bouquets of truth and love to others.

Man obviously has no illusions that a babool tree would ever condescend to yield juicy mangoes or vice versa. He is convinced, beyond an iota of doubt, of the veracity of the universal law, 'as the roots, so the fruits' in the physical world; in the bigger ethical world, however, his characteristic credulity toward this law is unfortunately missing. He is yet to arrive at the firm conclusion that selfless service is an unalloyed good, always and everywhere.

There are persons who believe that though an unblemished personal conduct is the road to heaven and salvation, one cannot do without blending the good

with the evil and truth with the untruth in social life. Thus the two diagonally opposed norms of individual and social conduct thrive simultaneously in a queer and agonising fashion.

Every human being aware of the human anatomy also knows how a pain emanating from an organ pierces the body as a whole. The restless body politic is groaning under excruciating pain with none, perhaps, standing by to embrace even a fraction thereof.

Stratification of society into castes in the days of yore culminated in monopolisation of virtues, capitalism in the realm of virtues – a novel and ominous brand of capitalism. Virtues like truth and non-violence, becoming as they did the sole preserve of saints and seers, were to be revered and respected but not emulated. It encumbered the emergence of a multi-dimensional, complete and consummate man.

Galloping mechanisation and the consequently rising crescendo of consumption have resulted in a disease of mind and loss of creativity. Man is being gradually bereft of the ingredients – chivalry, agility, the innate inspiration, drive and quest for novelty – that constitute man and his personality.

Living like an imperishable word and exploring kinship with others with a speed as fast as light, man perhaps has failed to imbibe even an iota of the rapidity, intensity and compassion, the undoubted *sine qua non* of such a kinship, in his life.

In the so-called cosmic age of today, the advancing journey of man from one planet to the other is being inhibited by his weakening foothold on his own soil. The virtues like universal brotherhood and friendliness are fading fast.

Man, instinctively boastful of spirituality, aspires for the plethora of affluence, glamour and splendour without making an endeavour for them. He is shattered from within, and that explains the contradictions of the modern age.

Man, in the process of his evolution, evolved the twin institutions, viz., religion and state, to subserve public good which, to a great extent, they did. Their

perpetuation, however, appears to have portents of disaster rather than happy auguries.

Thrusting all the responsibilities for religious rituals on the mighty monks, pundits and bishops, man marked the era of effete faith and evanescent religion. These moribund institutions, virtually ineffective in social conduct, tranquility and peace, lingered like dead wood and enfeebled the social fabric beyond cure.

By installing an institution known as 'State' for public welfare, defence and education, man could manage an easy escape from the challenging activities demanding human adventure. Man, with his dreary life and dampened spirit, tended consequently towards abominable impotence. Groaning and gasping under the weight of an excessively centralised and mechanised political–economic organization, he forfeited the independence of his personality, accepting the diabolical suzerainty of state over his mind and heart. Man was petrified and maimed by this mighty institution, which, too, eventually failed miserably to obliterate disparity and exploitation, repression and injustice. The institutions like the market and the factory acted like accomplices of the state in the sinister task of emasculation of man, the creator.

The market, the most potent creator of a capitalistic society, has converted men into wares bought and sold and undermined the importance of human dignity. Everything, including industry and intellect, art and virtue, is being appraised in terms of money and the art of sales promotion and advertisement has become coterminous with the art of life. Even an ostensibly insignificant slip on a small article in the modern all-pervasive market has overt or covert designs to tamper with the mind and spirit of man.

A small tool in a gigantic machine, man has lost his identity in the humdrum of his own industry. The evolution of 'the press button' economy has usurped human art and boosted up centralisation, wresting humanness from human beings.

Weapons also have impeded, like machinery, the development of the human personality. Weapons formerly used for inculcating chivalry, protection of the

weaker and self-defence, are now primarily designed for brutal aggression. Is dropping a bomb from an aeroplane in the mid-air a feat of chivalry? Moreover, that a protege can never live freely with the patron is an inevitable by-product, palatable or not, of all philosophy of protection. The immense cultural value of weapons having gradually withered away, the world is swiftly heading towards an imminent catastrophe in the mad race for armaments.

Thus far, man was driven towards noble deeds by the twin instincts of fear and temptation—fear of the evil and temptation for the good. The nobility of deeds having been shorn of significance with the efflux of time, the efflorescence of fear and temptation, in their naked forms, has become a glaring phenomenon of the time. Religion has instilled in man the temptation for physical pleasure and fear from the scourge of misery; it has, nonetheless, engendered utter contempt and abhorrence for the body.

In an age with the state tottering, wealth dwindling, weapons bankrupt, science surrendering, is there still a way to save man gasping for life in a dreadful night? Will man be able to live and make his living felt? Will the restoration of the throne to the individual be ever possible? This is the rudimentary problem crying for a solution—a solution history fails to beacon light on, a solution footprints and taped voices fail to furnish. This journey begins where the destination reached by history ends.

To pull society out of this morass what is needed is a process of perpetual change that does not generate, in its wake, a vicious and never-ending chain of reactions. Nothing short of transformation of hearts by education, contemplation and discussion can set in such a process. It is a pity that revolutions aiming at the assurance of maximum physical pleasure to the maximum number have virtually treated food, clothing and shelter as the *summum bonum* of human life. The goal of a real revolution should be the attainment of physical progress by ethical means supported and sustained by spiritual elevation, of all instead of the greatest number only.

An endeavour for the total development of all by the elimination of dualism and disparity, injecting the spirit of universal brotherhood into every nerve of

society, the identification of unity in the multiple diversities, the acceptance of the fundamental unity and purity of all beings, a glimpse of the omnipresent Supreme Power in the entire universe, an objective and dispassionate quest for truth with a stainless heart and utmost humility, the respect for man as man, building a society on the firm foundations of truth and non-violence and free from caste barriers, colour, prejudice, economic discrimination and social exploitation, where the individual and the community have the opportunity to bloom and blossom alike. These are the basic aims of a revolution which can be accomplished only by transformation of heart, self-purification of means, expansion of love and identification with mankind. The primary tasks to accomplish these aims are only three—purification of the social conscience, creation of an atmosphere of love and mutual co-operation stemming from the proximity of hearts among human beings and replacement of the antiquated and worn out values by a new scale of values for social regeneration.

An impure heart is the birth-place of profanity and malaise. Purification of hearts is a *sine qua non* of social change and purification is feasible only by a vigorous observance of *vratas*. With the transformation of these *vratas* initiated originally as individual values into social values, society would spontaneously be heading towards the desideratum. None but the teaching community has the shoulders sturdy enough to undertake the herculean task of social purification, character- building and promotion of independent thinking which alone can provide the sacred soil for the emergence of great souls far ahead of men of common clay.

What are the tasks lying ahead? Annihilating the artificial distance between man and man, strengthening the bonds of family attachment; resuscitating the faith in social life by inculcating the art of living and toiling for neighbours and sharing their joys and sorrows; imbibing the philosophy of *atmopatmya*, i.e., behave as you expect others to, are the tasks. The society of tomorrow is to be the one that strives for the all-round development of all by the endeavours of all, where the vestiges of penury, exploitation, repression and injustice are

obliterated, where eternal life and eternal pleasure are feasible and where conflict of interests yields place to mutual love and ever-growing cooperation.

Nothing can dispel the primitive and brutal value that 'might is right' without faith in the absolute moral values. It is true that the weapon of Satyagraha has exploded this internecine belief, there are questions that need be contemplated on afresh. Will this might establish the supremacy of the last man revolution was meant for? Will the much-vaunted symbols of might conserve the liberty and the happiness he clamours for? He will breathe under the shade of might and it is, of course, the brawns of the mighty and the purse of the wealthy he owes his life too, today.

Let us not derive solace from the illusion that the future behaves, exactly and always, as the past did. Life is a blissful opportunity granted to mortals seeking after eternal truth in the perpetual process of evolution for elevation by their own deeds. That the completion of this process of evolution and consummation of the quest would hardly leave any *raison d'etre* for man, is absolutely in consonance with the modern age of science.

Thus far, chivalry to us meant arms; let us feign a notion of chivalry having nothing to do with arms. Thus far, thievery was a sin punishable under law; let us invent a notion of thievery that covers hoarding beyond need. Let us eliminate the difference between, rather coordinate judiciously, physical and mental work, sanctioned and sanctified by history. Let us replace institution, class and community with the love for family and social consciousness. And can we achieve this all without spiritual science or scientific spiritualism?

Will the world of tomorrow be a citadel of the status quo? Will it be ruled by weapon, wealth and power? Will it be convulsed by violence, with the forces of non-violence and compassion continuing feeble & effete? Will it not mark the end of poverty, starvation and misery, exploitation, repression and injustice? It is to be the world founded on nonviolence. It is not a Utopian proposition. If one individual without a cue from others, can be non-violent, why not many constituting the community? It is only this process that can save humanity from the horror of poverty and the holocaust of war and bloodshed. Such a world will

witness an unshakable faith in truth that is God, thus far unseen and unknown. Let us eliminate the chasm between word and deed, between precepts and practices, marching towards the goal, singing what Emerson sang:

Go put your creed

Into your deed

Not speak with double tongue.

05. GANDHIJI'S CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By E. P. Menon

Man is a bundle of contradictions. In his personal growth as well as that of human society's, violence and non-violence have played significant roles at every stage of history. Men murdered each other in the grip of emotional excitements, in the act of preserving economic interest, in the pursuits of sexual satisfaction, in the process of acquiring power over other human beings, etc. When it comes to groups of people and nations, the resulting conflicts have always reaped disastrous consequences. But all the time the finer and nobler qualities of man have simultaneously played valuable roles in the formulation of new theories and bases upon which social, economic and political structures of society could be built and maintained.

Thus when we analyze we can find that great thinkers like Henry David Thoreau and Count Leo Tolstoy have faced mountains of obstacles on their paths of propagating ideas of non-co-operation with the authorities, non-violent resistance to organised violence and mighty forces, etc. When a ruling power becomes too oppressive on the masses, v, hen unjustified impositions of laws and regulations become a practice of such authorities, it is for the awakened individual to raise up the occasion and organise absolute non-co-operation with such powers in a fearless manner with complete sense of responsibilities, argued Thoreau. Even against the entire Russian empire, against the unchallenged might of the Tsar, that lonely man, Tolstoy, stood up and said: "I cannot be silent", when the unreasonable arm of the law was going to fall on the neck of an ordinary innocent man at the gallows.

By such committed and convinced actions they were not only demonstrating the higher true spirit of man, but also educating the entire society of which both the oppressor and the oppressed were parts.

It fell to the credit of Gandhi to organise and experiment the power of non-violence in various fields of human life and activity with wider dimensions

resulting in far-reaching consequences. Understanding well the nature of man's destructive, exploitative and impulsive characteristics, Gandhi's attempt was always to experiment his ideas with utmost patience and perseverance because effective employment of non-violence very much depended, upon the level of understanding and degree of conviction the individuals possessed.

To him getting rid of the British from Indian soil was not an end in itself. It was one of the major means based on which a new human relationship could be established on a global perspective. Colonialism and exploitation were great evils in the progress of nations and those evils had to be fought and destroyed, no doubt. Conventional arguments demanded India to organize and equip herself with military power to throw away the British. Commonsense will convince anyone that in the nature of things at that time it would have been a physical impossibility for India to face the mighty British Empire on the battlefield.

Gandhi thought that it was not enough to end the colonial injustice of Britain, but it was necessary to educate the oppressor and make him aware of the heaps of injustice he had created and was sitting upon. Once the oppressor understood it work of ending that evil was easy. Simultaneously Gandhi wanted the oppressed to be educated too and made aware of the invisible method of co-operation the oppressor was getting from the oppressed in order to perpetuate his injustice and exploitation. Both those processes were time-consuming and Gandhi never worried of that. It was the system which created and maintained the exploitation and exploiter that had to be exposed and destroyed; it was not the individual Englishman to be slaughtered, he argued.

Therefore, there were three basic elements in the techniques of non-violence Gandhi employed: Creation of a human society involving no violent methods of exploitation by man on man but based upon social equality, economic justice and mutual sharing and love; education of the oppressed to take positive and constructive steps through non-violent non-co- operation with the enemy and thus make it impossible for the enemy to perpetuate the mistakes he had been committing; development of good and harmonious relationships between the

two parties once the struggle was over and objectives achieved. Gandhi didn't want Britain and India to remain permanent enemies in the future; instead he expected India and Britain to co-operate in solving the bigger problems of mankind.

In order to conduct this type of struggle Gandhi needed the support of the whole nation which comprised of a people 80% of whom were absolutely illiterate, poor, suffering, socially disinterested and steeped in superstition and fatalism. They understood no other language but that of bread and butter which the pre-Gandhi national leaders did not realize. Therefore, they had not been able to get into the masses and carry them along. So, it was the barrister Gandhi who went with spinning wheel into the idle millions' villages and demonstrated to them that if they took up the production of their cloths in their own huts, using the simplest technique of the charkha, automatically the mighty mills of Manchester and Birmingham would close down thus inflicting a great economic blow on the British Empire. Non-violent struggle without an alternative nation-building activity continuously to follow, was useless, he had foreseen. To him practice and theory always went hand in hand. Then only the people could have self-confidence.

In this way he invented and employed several methods of economic self-dependence for the people of India. Then he said to them that as long as they were divided into innumerable castes and classes the enemy would take advantage of the situation and they could never achieve their objective—national freedom. Social revolution in various forms thus was accelerated. All those measures were directed towards the achievement of a collective selfishness of India's independence. To the extent, even those who did not believe, in Gandhi's creed of non-violence could come around Gandhi in the struggle for the common purpose.

Gandhi's non-violent methods were at the same time educative as well as agitative. Whenever the rules of law imposed by Britain became too much to bear, he did not hesitate to organise massive non-co-operation movements which exhibited the determination of the people to defy the unjust law. Jails

and sufferings were, voluntarily accepted pattern of the day. People felt a great joy and pride in that. It was possible because of the awakening he had created in the people. Further to win the confidence of the masses he changed his aspects of life in tune with that of the masses, thus establishing total identification with them.

He knew he had to fight the British with the raw material available at hand and that raw material was the poor people. So their absolute solidarity was the first weapon to be organised. In that process he had to face all thunders and storms. Non-violence was the weapon of the courageous only, he proclaimed again and again.

In a capitalistic and imperialistic system of society, violence is inherent in every step of its organisation and therefore Gandhi advocated that a non-violent society pre-determined the nature of economic and political institutions to be non-exploitive as well as decentralised. The theory of trusteeship was therefore expounded by him, according to which no one should be the "owner" of the means of production. Human nature being as it is, whether this theory will ever work or not' is a different matter to be analysed; but Gandhi firmly believed in that and he worked for that. He had already begun to give shape to the future of Indian society according to those firm convictions during the last days of his life.

For Gandhi the concept of non-violence was an integrated idea of personal organisation of things as that of the society as a whole. A great number of moral principles had to be adhered to involving strict disciplines. The ultimate aim of such a scheme was nothing but the general welfare of all human beings, irrespective of certain natural barriers. According to him it was possible only when certain deep-rooted wrong values were changed through non-violent means because violence had become too violent that it defeated its own purpose. It is more relevant in the latter part of this century when nuclear weapons are hanging upon the head of man. One has to wait and see which way the wind blows. Meanwhile let us all work hard with our sincere convictions for the creation of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

06. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

Francis Oforu Quartey

SATYAGRAHA, the philosophy of MAHATMA GANDHI has been given many definitions but for the purposes of this paper I would wish to adopt to the most popular definition which is seeking TRUTH (my caps) through love and non-violence, the motto of my league.

Many people, particularly in Ghana and Africa, continue to doubt whether it is still necessary to study and implement Gandhi's philosophy or concept of non-violence. I personally feel it is necessary for the following reasons:

- a) It is the most original contribution of India to political thought and practice;
- b) Satyagraha was the life long study and practice of Gandhi. To know Gandhi one must know what Satyagraha is;
- c) Satyagraha formed the philosophical background of the struggle for India for Independence. To understand the meaning of the struggle and present institutions of India one must know the meaning, and the body of ideas which constitute Satyagraha.

The evolution of Satyagraha by Mahatma Gandhi has made him the most significant figure in the world. Non-violence in social life is not peculiar to the Indian people. History is replete with leaders who have advocated non-violence. However, India is unique in having a tradition of non-violence and it is India's greatest contribution to world thought. There is in India the belief that "all life is one". If all life is one then there can be no violent action against anything. Gandhi lived in an environment in which non-violence was the norms. Let us examine some of the influences that might have swayed him to the ideas of non-violence.

- a) In the Bhagavadgita, we find a commendation of non-violence. We have,
"When the body is obedient,
When the senses are mastered,
When man knows his

Atman Is the Atman of all creatures,
Then let him act Untainted by action.

b) In Jainism, a religion of India, we have a negative side non-violence in which no life is to be destroyed.

c) In Buddhism, the Buddha taught non-violence. In a famous admonishment to his followers, he pointed out—

"If a man by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of selfishness, will never be free from hatred.

Let a man overcome anger by love. Let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth. For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time, hatred ceases by not-hatred, this is an old rule.

Speak the truth, do not yield to anger, give if thou are asked; by these steps thou wilt become divine. Lead others not by violence, but righteousness and equality."

d) Gandhi was a product of the thoughts of China and Japan. In China, there is a long tradition of non-violence as embodied or found in Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Thus Confucius advocated that men should not do to others as they do not want done to themselves.

e) Tolstoy an advocate of non-violence also influenced Gandhi. Gandhi himself pointed out: "Next to the late Rajachandra, Tolstoy is one of the three moderns who have exerted the greatest spiritual influence on my life, the third being Ruskin."

We have seen that non-violence is not new. However, Gandhi brings a change to the age-old philosophy of Ahimsa. He brought forth the view that non-violence should affect man in all walks of life. Satyagraha, Gandhi believed, is the way to solve the problems of mankind.

The aim of Gandhi was to seek after Truth. In seeking after Truth he wanted to see how he could be of the greatest use to humanity. He pointed out several times that the "greatest good of all" and not the "good of the majority" is to be

sought. To Gandhi the means and ends must be pure. The reason is that because the end grows out of the means. The *Means* may be compared with a seed and the end with the tree. That which is achieved by chicanery, bribery, deceit is transitory. Good means alone, it was the view of Gandhi, can achieve lasting peace and progress. But a question that arises is how can this or the good end be achieved. Gandhi advises:

- a) Self-realisation in which the individual examines himself.
- b) Self purification.
- c) Ethical discipline in which the individual follows certain laid out principles. In 1916, he advocated that moral principles should be observed in the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. These were truth, non-violence, non-possession, celibacy and cardinal restraints. We should take vow with the aim of keeping the principles.

Satyagraha is based on the fact that Truth alone is or can be victorious. To Gandhi, there is no religion higher than Truth. Truth means truth in action, speech and thought. Truth abhors prejudice, evasion, secrecy, deception, exaggeration, suppression or modification of reality. To find truth calls for self-discipline that way why Gandhi advocates the taking of vows. We take vows because truth is not outside ourselves but within us.

Another aspect of Satyagraha is "Ahimsa" or "non-violence". This means positive non-violence or comprehensive love. Ahimsa means larger love, love even for evil-doer. To use violence against any being is to deny spiritual unity with him. Violence is the mark of bestiality while non-violence is the law of love. Even through suffering, the non-violent person is able to change the evil doer. As Gandhi pointed out, "Love does not burn others, it burns itself." Some people argue that those who are non-violent resort to that position out of cowardice. However, Gandhi points-out that nonviolence does not arise out of cowardice, hatred or expediency.

Non-violence knows no defeat. It has no limits and it is applicable to every aspect of life; even no great expenditure of money is required for equipping an army of non-violent resisters. That is why it is always painful and more

incomprehensible for the billions of dollars to be used by the world's great powers to build and pile up ammunitions instead of using it to feed the poor and needy and even solve their unemployment problems which continue to haunt them. These sums of money could as well be conveniently diverted to help developing countries to develop their economies. Gandhi was able to show a sceptical world that truth and non-violence were the greatest weapons on earth.

SATYAGRAHA AS A WAY OF LIFE

Two important offshoots of Satyagraha are non-co-operation and civil disobedience. It is different from passive resistance because it is not the weapon of the weak. In Satyagraha, we win the opponent by love and patient suffering. Of its application Gandhi writes, "It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as communities. It may be used as well as in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and inviolability."

To begin with, there must be non-violence in the private life. Gandhi lived in an atmosphere of non-violence from the Jainist traditions of non-violence, his saintly mother, disciplined father and tolerant wife. "Non-violence begins and ends by turning the searchlight inward." It is this that helps one to develop the inner strength, the soul force necessary for the Satyagraha. "A Satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, Himsa by Ahimsa."

The instruments of the tools that the Satyagrahi should use are persuasion, negotiation and discussion. Thus in South Africa, he entered into negotiation with General Smuts to solve differences. Further, in Travancore in 1939 during the struggle for Independence, he advised negotiations with the authorities to solve differences. However, he advised that there should not be a compromise in things that are fundamental. "My compromises will never be at the cost of the cause or the country." Any compromise on fundamentals is a surrender. The time for compromise can only come when both (parties) are of one mind on

fundamentals." If the negotiation with the opponent calls, the Satyagrahi resorts to voluntary suffering. This is an appeal to the heart of the opponent. The purer the suffering, the greater is the suffering. "No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering. Mother suffers so that her baby may live. The condition of wheat-growing is that seed grain should perish. Life comes of death." Satyagraha affects the adversary unconsciously. However, we should not go out, of our way to court needless suffering. Gandhi points out "Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr, but let no one lust for martyrdom."

A Satyagrahi must have infinite patience, firm resolve, singleness of purpose and confidence in Truth. Gandhi advises fasting.

Fasting can be done by select and qualified individuals. "A Satyagrahi should fast only as a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed."

A Satyagrahi takes years to train. If a person fights physically against overwhelming odds, the conduct may be considered as non-violent. Here it is the motive which is the measure of non-violence.

The view is commonly held that, "Satyagraha demands a stronger self-control, a more enduring solidity of purpose, a greater capacity for passive suffering, a higher ethical development than most human beings have thus far attained." This according to Gandhi is not completely right. For Satyagraha can be undertaken by any normal person. It calls for a moral discipline. Human nature is malleable. Probably, it has to start with childhood in which we should aim at giving the child education in non-violence.

GROUP SATYAGRAHA

Satyagraha fights violence among groups. Because of this it has its techniques or organisation, leadership, discipline, training and strategy. Gandhi points out that, "Anything that millions can do together becomes charged with a unique power." A Satyagraha needs a leader, he is the very soul of mass Satyagraha. The leader should have sterling qualities. The most important of these are:

- a) Sincerity and all-embracing love.
- b) Culture and dignified bearing.
- c) Self-control.
- d) Selflessness and the pursuit of non-possession.
- e) Rootedness in the soil and having the spirit of Swadeshi.
- f) His faith in God which is synonymous with Truth should be unshakable.

The Satyagrahi leader should teach his followers to excel him in non-violence. This can be done in Ashram (retreat). By his life in common living with his followers he creates the right atmosphere of respect, dedication and non-violence. Ashram is a collective religious life.

ORGANISATION

A Satyagrahi mass movement requires also Organisation. Gandhi wished to shape the Indian National Congress to the requirements of Satyagraha. Before Gandhi entered into Indian politics, the Indian National Congress concerned itself with the passing of resolutions, meeting annually and meeting in the big towns. Gandhi within a short time turned it into a revolutionary mass movement. He welcomed groups into the organization of the Satyagrahi. He accepted criticisms but he pointed out that differences should be about details and not about the aim or objective. He accepted the democratic way of majority decision but with due respect for minority views. But he pointed out, "Where there is no principle involved and there is a programme to be carried out, the minority has got to follow the majority." It was his view that if the minority did not believe in the aims or principles of the movement, it should withdraw honourably.

The minority should not oppose by obstruction but by abstention. There is no room for power politics in a nonviolent organisation. However, it should be pointed out that the history of the Congress reveals that there have been many instances of corruption and indiscipline. Yet the Congress was in a large

measure able to follow the teachings of the Mahatma. In the organisation, the Satyagrahi leader should help others to understand the principles of Satyagraha. This should be:

- a) By living example.
- b) Touring on foot. . . .
- c) Demonstrations as his Salt March, the burning of certificates in South Africa and of foreign cloth in India.
- d) Newspapers, e.g., *Indian Opinion*, *Young India*.
- e) Oral news-carrying.
- f) Speeches.
- g) Constructive programme of communal work.
- h) By wearing of Khadi.
- i) Removal of untouchability.
- j) The Satyagrahi had to take a vow, or pledge.

TECHNIQUE

The Satyagrahi does not aim at embarrassing the opponent. The leader decides the time for direct action. The Satyagrahi aims at limited objectives. It is in this vein that we have Gandhi's dictum, "One-step-enough-for-me". Satyagrahi proceeds from open-dealing. He sent always notice to the Government about his contemplated civil disobedience. Secrecy deprives Satyagraha of its dignity. Satyagrahi is against sabotage. Gandhi did not believe in numbers but in quality. He abhors external assistance on the part of Satyagrahi. The important weapons of corporate action are non-co-operation, civil disobedience, fasting, picketing, economic boycott, social ostracism and migration. Satyagraha can be used for objectives which are not purely on the surface non-political. These may be superficially social, religious and economic.

Gandhi points out that "widespread social and economic justice, is a sure index of the undemocratic nature of the State." Gandhi fought against the cordial relationship. He feels the Capitalist must regard himself as a Trustee. Satyagraha made Indians politically conscious. They were made aware of their strength. It attacked untouchability. Women for the first time came from the home and took part in public life.

THE ESSENCE OF NON-VIOLENCE

Having dealt in a nutshell with the Gandhian concept of non-violence I wish now to put the same questions PYARELAL asked some years ago, "Has Gandhi's method and approach any validity today ? Can it provide a solution to the many challenging problems that confront us—or is it only a spent force, an extinct tradition which has outlived its usefulness and has now only historical interest?"

The answers to these questions are not far to fetch. With the continued development and piling up of the Atom and H-Bombs capable of wiping out entire cities and even small nations, man is in the midst of the horrors of yet another war unparalleled in history.

The great powers have a moral obligation to mankind. They must desist from the ignoble role of fanning hatred and jealousy and pandering to the excessive nationalistic sentiments in contending parties.

The developing countries need help to develop their economies to fight hunger, disease, poverty and ignorance not arms for their own decimation.

In view of continued testing of nuclear devices in the sea, the sea is in danger and the very future of mankind.

Science of war leads one to dictatorship pure and simple; while science of non-violence alone can lead one to pure democracy.

In order to save mankind from the horrors of total and complete annihilation from our mundane earth Gandhi's method and approach of Truth and non-

violence should be adopted hook, line and sinker for the settlement of all disputes.

According to the 13th Chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, "Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, or conceited nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other man's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance. Love will never come to an end."

If the scriptures teach that man was created to love his neighbour as himself, then man naturally is his brother's keeper. If so, why the use of violence (without love) for the settlement of disputes? WITHER MAN?

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07. NON-VIOLENCE—SOME PERSPECTIVES

By Geeta Puri

Non-violence is justifiably the most cardinal principle behind Gandhi's theories and practices. As a concept, non-violence has brought about a significant change in the prevalent ideas of social revolution. Further, he endeavoured to build a nonviolent society which would move towards an ideal human situation unscathed by exploitation and violence.

The Gandhian non-violence is a social instrument in the struggle for justice and freedom. The faith in non-violence stems from the feeling of solidarity of the whole mankind against conflict and injustice. Today injustice has assumed various forms and non-violent action is to be directed against it.

The major initiations in non-violence have always come from people who passionately strove towards the freedom of humanity from social injustice. Gandhi also discovered this method when he underwent an agonising ordeal of social segregation in South Africa.

For Gandhi non-violence was not a cursory reference at moments of unease but it was a continuous process and a committed approach towards living and evolving. "To Gandhiji non-violence was never just a mode of public behaviour in occasional crisis. It was a way of thinking and living that went on all the time."¹

The Gandhian non-violence is a permanent revolution. Therefore it is dynamic and admits of varied changes in accordance with changing situations. The non-violent approach demands that its adherents must possess positive values of courage, absence of ill-will against the adversary, self-control and self-abnegation, for non-violence is more powerful than a thousand suns! "Non-violence as a value is higher than life". Non-violence does not flinch in its encounter with violence and emerges victorious in the face of hatred and inhumanity. In other words non-violence is love in action. The follower of non-violence opposes his adversary out of sheer love for him. His aim is not to

defeat and humiliate but to guide the adversary out of his wrong choice of values. Thus it becomes quite apparent that non-violence is not the non-violence of a secluded saint but non-violence to be practised by the people as a whole. Non-violence ripe open the facade of high sounding ideologies behind which one could discern the crumbling of the ideas of justice and equality. The result is that the cornerstone of Gandhian non-violence automatically becomes truth and its pursuit. When the precise nature of the 'wrong' is comprehended, non-violence turns the 'right' into a living reality. Gandhi had a tremendous faith in the spiritual power of non-violence. It is a sure way to win over the adversary. "The hardest iron must melt in the flame of love. No one can convince me otherwise; for such is my experience if anyone else cannot be softened the fire is not hot enough."³

The underlying principle of non-violent resistance is that love and genuine suffering will move the heart of even the strongest assailant. The non-violent activist will strive to produce in the opponent his inherent 'spiritual power', a sense of moral responsibility, and fellow feeling. The non-violent resister inspires cautious confidence in his opponent. For, no "man is wholly evil. Since his methods are based on the love of man, sooner or later he will be capable of touching a vein of morality in every human being."⁴

The isolation of the opponent from his environment is an important objective particularly in the context of objective realities. So, a non-violent action works on the basis of realistic insight into human psychology. The proper working of non-violent activity will depend largely on participation from the erstwhile neutral or hostile masses of the people. The reason behind is that there cannot be an dichotomy between ends and means of non-violence.

In order to evolve non-violence as a social creed, Gandhi put forth the ideal of nonviolent society. Gandhi believed that non-violence as a weapon of resistance cannot gain firm ground unless the attitudes of the people are thoroughly oriented towards non-violence. In the present context one is reminded of Von Clause Witz's well-known observation, "War is but the continuation of the politics of peace by other means and that the social

attitudes of non-violent defence must be a continuation of the social attitude of the society it is defending."⁵

Gandhi's ideal society is based on non-violence, love and the "good of all" or Sarvodaya. Non-violence is the negation of oppression. It promises freedom of the worker from exploitation, of women from the dominance of the male, of untouchables from caste tyranny. Most of the causes which Gandhi fought for ultimately aimed at establishing a non-violent society.

DEMOCRACY AND NON-VIOLENCE

There is a fundamental compatibility between democracy and non-violence. Violence has no relevance in a democratic structure which is essentially based on tolerance and understanding. Democracy must have something to do with people. And if the people refuse to solve their problems at all levels without violence, democracy's cause is lost. The Government must live up to the ideals of democracy which the people created. Otherwise the choice of inevitability will be disastrous. Citizenship is possible in an atmosphere that does not smack of tension. The democratic situation is a potently human activity which includes looking at the other person's point of view. Nonviolence is a powerful way of diminishing differences between the minority and majority communities for the larger interests of the country, democracy or humanity itself. With the larger canvas of human groups and attainments, non-violence assumes a crucial importance "while democracy relies on non-violence for its functioning, progress and fulfillment, non-violence calls upon its votaries to use only democratic methods and rely on the power of love to persuade and convert the opponent."⁶

According to Gandhi, democracy means the "art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all."⁷ For the successful functioning of democracy, he laid emphasis on the moral and spiritual character of the people. Gandhi believed that the "Swaraj of the masses" can

never come through violent means. Thus without non-violence a democratic government cannot function.

NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

Gandhi's theory of non-violence has a relevant bearing on socio-economic changes in this complex world. Non-violence ensures the requisite changes in the social order without sacrificing the cherished values of humanity. As Dr. Martin Luther King observed in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech on 10th December 1964,⁸ "civilisation and violence are antithetical. Negroes of the United States following the people of India have demonstrated that non-Violence is not sterile, passivity, but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation. Sooner or later all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace. ... If this is to be achieved man must evolve for all human conflicts a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation."

Social transformation was the sheet anchor of the Gandhian programme too. In the context of India's development Social change would imply economic equality, raising Social status of the underprivileged and also fostering of humanistic values in the Indian social structure.

It has almost become a cliché to question the results of non-violent action in respect of social change. Vinoba Bhave has tried to bring to action Gandhi's idea of socio-economic equality. The conviction behind such acts, even if they are partially successful, points towards the need of a greater correspondence between the orientation and consciousness of planning and the Indian reality. Growing awareness may prove that Gandhi was right when he preferred voluntary agreement on economic and social equality. Cynical dismissal of non-violence in respect of social change means brushing aside the values in the best Indian or world tradition. What is relevant is what Gandhi had in mind.

Gandhi aimed at an equal distribution of the wealth of the nation and avoidance of concentration of resources. Trusteeship could possibly be taken as

a significant move towards greater economic justice. This might be considered as too ambitious an ideal considering the moral and instinctive limitations of human beings. The state has to intervene as the supreme agent of social transformation. The idea is merely an extension of what Gandhi had in mind. In matters of priority what comes first is the common good beyond the fetters of institutions. The Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in our constitution are in fact a systematisation of Gandhi's programmes regarding his socio-economic values: The point is that intervention is opposed to voluntary action which involves a total transformation in the attitudes and susceptibilities of the people bordering' on a moral and cultural revolution. Gandhi's economics and non-violence have suffered bad turns with the passage of time as impractical attitudes. On the other hand the growing disillusionment with an ineffective state has resulted in pathetic scepticism. The extreme reactions are betrayed by the Naxalites. Violence does not want to recognise an ineffective state that cannot bring about concrete socio-economic changes.

In recent times the theory and practice of non-violence have assumed complex dimensions. Even though non-violence .as a method of resolving disputes has been effective in certain specific situations, there is a genuine scepticism about its universal applicability. A case in point is the effectiveness of non-violence as a political weapon during the British regime in India. Even the partial success of non-violence against the British owed its validity to a certain extent to the enlightened minority public opinion of the contemporary England. On the other hand, the Britishers found it convenient to agree to transfer of power considering the seriousness of intent on the part of the Indians to even resort to arms. It does not necessarily follow that non-violence has been an agent of eradicating socio-economic maladies in free India. As a point of fact the spirit and use of non-violence have not been either properly comprehended or practised. The post-Gandhi leadership has dwindled into a mere lust for power.

Another fact that one has to reckon with is the defence system of modern states which limits the use of non-violence on the international level. Even in

context of survival and internal peace of a country non-violence does not seem to be an effective alternative. Repeated attempts by the pacifists including renowned rationalists of recent times have failed in achieving concrete results in the militaristic world.

The limited success of non-violence is also due to the exigencies of a fast-changing world. Traditional non-violence one must confess, has no adequate answer either to the nuclear threat or to modern totalitarianism or even to revolutionary struggles like the Guerilla warfare of Vietnam.

CONCLUSION

Gandhi has been immensely misinterpreted. The point of non-violence has been pressed so far that it has turned into a myth. Gandhi had a better conception of human psychology than is generally attributed to him. Violence is fundamental in the human situation – at both the scientific and ideational levels. Gandhi knew it too. What he was driving at was a total commitment to humanity which should be on its way to its final perfection. Non-violence is itself profoundly violent in its adherence to truth and humanism.

Among the finite instruments of social change the evolutionary function of non-violence is not to eradicate violence from human society but reduce it to the minimum possible. Gandhi was too practical a person to banish violence from the world altogether. "This world is not entirely governed by logic. Life itself involves some kind of violence—and we have to choose the path of least violence."⁹ Thus the erosion of non-violence can be stopped only if we assume non-violence not as an alternative to violence but as a corrective and a complement to the latter.

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08. "APOSTLE OF AHIMSA"

By Gopal Dutt Kulkarni

The story of Gandhiji's life is the story of Ahimsa and Truth in practice. He set before himself an almost Herculean task which required a Napoleonic will for its execution: The task he set before him is expressed in his own words: "I want to wipe out every tear from every eye." To him '*daya*' (mercy) and Ahimsa are not two different entities. He wrote: "I feel myself saturated with Ahimsa. Ahimsa and Truth are like my two lungs."

During his lifelong experiment with Ahimsa, he never thought to have achieved the final goal. He admitted his limitations and was conscious of having committed 'Himalayan blunders'. He confessed once: "I am not concerned with appearing consistent." He discarded many things which he once held to his heart. But he never let loose his tight hold on Truth and Ahimsa.

It has been his fortune to take world by surprises. He was always a disturbing man, who tried to shake men out of their complacency. He was a practical dreamer who knew the path. The path was straight and narrow like razor's edge; but he strove. He wanted India to practise Ahimsa not because she is weak. He wanted to make India conscious of the strength and power, and then practise it.

Fearlessness is *sine qua non* for the growth of Ahimsa. There is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend an earthly power. 'Shed Fear' was his message. The essence of his non-violence was fearlessness and truth and action. Janaka and Yajnavalka had said, it was the function of the leaders of the people to make them fearless. It was against the all-pervading fear that Gandhiji's quiet and determined voice was raised. "Be unafraid", Truth and Ahimsa followed fearlessness. His words did not turn Indians truthful and non-violent all of a sudden, nevertheless his words made them unafraid.

Gandhiji's non-violence is not the doctrine of inaction, but of the highest action. He preached the Ahimsa of the brave and not of the cowards. To have a

living faith in non-violence requires a living faith in God. He himself had such unshakable faith in God. Ahimsa was his Dharma. "Like a gambler I have staked too great to follow my faith in Ahimsa."

He held non-violence as the soul-force, the manifestation of the God within man. Non-violence is a double-blessing, it blesses the giver as well as the receiver. However his goal was truth. But he looked upon Ahimsa as the only means of realizing truth in human relationships. "Truth' came naturally to me. Ahimsa I acquired after a lifelong struggle". Between violence and cowardice he preferred violence, because nonviolence befits the bravest. The non-violence of his conception was a more active and more real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness." "I contemplate," he wrote, "a mental and moral opposition to immoralities" It is sin to be weak, still greater sin is to be violent." The function of non-violence is to rush into the mouth of violence. He could not hate anybody for his sin. "Hate the sin, and not the sinner" was his faith. His Ahimsa made him love his opponent. Gen. Smuts was once his bitterest opponent, soon afterward they became warmest friends.

Lifelong practice of non-violence made him an expert in it. Non-violence, i.e., love, i.e., Satyagraha has matchless strength and beauty. None can practise non-violence in life unless it pervades his spirit. "I applied Ahimsa in everyday life. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Its spread is my life-mission. If I failed in bringing the kingdom of non-violence that does not mean, non-violence has failed..."

Thoreau wrote: "Love never ceases, its power is incalculable. Love is motive power of all successful social machinery." Gandhiji's concept of Ahimsa was love for all. "It is the law of love that basically rules mankind for if hatred were the basic law, would not the human race have perished to the last man long ago? Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable. Where love is, there God is also. Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resorts, never revenges itself."

He postulated two conditions for success of non-violence: (1) There must be recognition of the existence of the soul apart from the body, and its

permanent-nature, and this recognition must amount to a living faith; and (2) in the last resort this technique does not avail those who do not possess a living faith in the God and love."

The law of non-violence governs the release of spiritual energy. This law is: Even an infinitesimal of an individual when he has realised the ideal of Ahimsa, in thought and deed, becomes a function of non-violence, filled with its power of love-soul-force, truth force. "With Satya combined with Ahimsa you can bring world to your feet." But the precondition stands, one ought to reduce oneself to zero. True practice of Ahimsa calls for the 'keenest intelligence' and 'wide-awake conscience'. The rock-bottom foundation of the technique for the power of non-violence is belief in the essential oneness of all life. He believed, every man is sensitive to the appeal of suffering and sacrifice. He had immense faith in the fundamental goodness of man." "I have equal love for all mankind without exception." It demands no reciprocity. I own no enemy on earth – the golden way is to be friends with the world and to regard whole human family as one." The whole world was his family. He was convinced that all life is one. In Ahimsa he found panacea for all melancholy maladies that ache the world. He wanted non-violence in all walks of life. "You can't order one part of your life according to one scale of values and another according to another set of values.

He once wrote : "In spite of falsehood, truth persists, in spite of evil, good persists." His faith in the ultimate victory of truth and Ahimsa was unshakable. This was because he believed that evolutionary processes were taking man in that direction. He was not unaware of the human urge for violence, for hatred and mutual fear.

The Atom-bomb could not explode his faith in nonviolence. He still hoped, Asia's message of love and truth would conquer the wily war-mongers and the technocrats of terror; and his dream of one world would come true. Behind the death dealer's atom-bomb, there is a human hand that releases it, and behind that still is the human heart that sets the hands in motion. His heart never quaked at the advent of nuclear age. He stood firmly by his conviction that truth must and can be established only through non-violent love. If truth were

to arm and establish itself by physical force, then what is the difference between truth and untruth. Nonviolence must attain the force of the law of God. When he declared non-violence as the supreme weapon of conquest, he was speaking the language of prophet, not of today or yesterday but of tomorrow. It was Jesus who said: "Swords would be beaten into ploughshares."

The root cause of our current miseries and chaos lies in what is known in the "*Nyaya Shastra*" as the '*Matsya-Nyaya*'. It explains the principle of might is right. As the bigger fish swallows up the smaller one, so the stronger groups of individuals subdue the weaker ones in every sphere of life. Gandhiji's non-violence recognizes the right of each living thing to survive. Live and let live.

Ours has been called the psychic age. The gigantic catastrophes that threaten us are psychic events. Wars and similar man-made violence are in their fundamental nature 'Psychic epidemics'. Behind these phenomenon is the individual neurosis that afflicts our age. The final battle for the survival of man has thus to be fought in the psyche of man. Psychic life is a world power that exceeds by many times all the powers of the earth (Jung). If we could control the psychic power and the psyche which manipulates atomic power, it should give us the power to control the psychic power and the psyche which manipulates atomic power, it should give us the power to control the diabolical power, which the runaway science of man threatens to unleash. We all live in this psychic age, so this is not too high an ideal. We must bear in mind the words of Christ: "I come not to destroy, but to fulfill the law." With a certitude, characteristic of him, Gandhiji affirmed, "We are- constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence.... Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will."

Even Darwin's doctrine of 'survival of the fittest' does not mean the survival of the physically strongest not the cunningest. Those only survive who learn to combine and support one another. In the long run the cunningest are eliminated in favour of those who understand the advantage of social life and

mutual support. It is the weak that inherit earth. The Marathi saint Tukaram sings: "The storm uproots tall trees but not the humble bushes." A man who believes in Ahimsa refrains from every act that leads to injury. He, with his exemplary conviction, wrote: "During my half century of experiments, I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless in terms of non-violence. Whenever non-violence seems to have failed, it only means that more of it was needed and of greater purity."

To the sceptics doubtful of effectiveness of non-violence confronted by crude power, Gandhiji replied that non-violence does not depend for its working upon sufferance or good will of the tyrant. It is self-sustained. A non-violent resister depends upon the unfailing assistance of God. His faith makes him indomitable. In its visibility Ahimsa might seem to be ineffective, but in its ultimate result it is the most effective. Violence of a Hitler or a Stalin or a Mao is transitory, but the effects of the Buddha or Christ will definitely grow with years.

Once the Mahatma had set the wheel in motion, his triumphs were at least as remarkable as his failures. When he was very old, he transformed himself into a 'one man-border-force' and wandered almost alone, and did his best to heal the wounds of the partition. These men murdered one another. He offered himself as a simple sacrifice. When he was shot down, he was no longer man but a legend so much larger than life. He taught nothing, he was not prepared to practise himself. His concept of non-violence provides something much more than a new technique for politics; it provides a new fountain for the life of human society.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan writes: "Gandhiji belongs to the race of the prophets who have the courage of the heart, the courtesy of the spirit and the laughter of the unafraid. Through his life and teachings he bears testimony to the values for which India has stood for ages—faith in spirit, respect for its mysteries, the beauty of holiness, the acceptance of life's obligations, the validity of character-values which are neither national nor international, but Universal."

Some dismiss Gandhiji as a professional politician who bungled at the critical moment. No doubt, he was politician conscious of a mission to save his people and inspire them with faith in God and love of humanity.

He believed that a 'brave new world' can be built up where there is no war or woe. The world of tomorrow will be, must be a society based on non-violence. It is no doubt an impossible Utopia but not an unattainable. An individual can adopt non-violent way of life without having to wait for others to do so.

Nehru writes: "Gandhiji was an odd kind of pacifist, for he was an activist full of dynamic energy. ... He was full of resistance though that was non-violent. After the Pearl Harbour debacle, he found himself unable to give up his fundamental principle of non-violence even in regard to an external war. The World War II became a challenge to him. If he failed at his finest hour to practise Ahimsa, it would prove to be not all-embracing and basic principle. He would not give up the faith of his life time. Politicians are a peculiar species of opportunities. They cannot act purely on personal planes... they have got to consider strength and limitation of others. Often they have got to compromise even with truth. Gandhiji, for all his rock-like adherence to Ahimsa and truth had to adopt himself to others' desires. Non-violence was his life-blood; but India's freedom was a dominating and a consuming passion for him. Did the scales incline towards the political freedom? Did it mean that the practical statesman take precedence over the prophet? He had to bend down before the joint-will of the Congress party and was not prepared to apply the principle of non-violence to the World War II.

It cannot be refuted that he dreamt of India becoming a symbol and example of non-violence, and by her example weaning the rest of the world from war and the ways of violence. In the words of Louis Fischer: "His was a philosophy of life that would regenerate India and is relevant to all humanity." His influence is not limited to those who agree with him, it extends to those also who disagree with him. Very few persons in India accept in its entirety his doctrine of non-violence. Yet very many have been influenced by his ideas. In terms of religion he has emphasised the moral approach to political problems as much as to

everyday problems. He had raised politics to higher levels of moral and ethical action.

The misfortune of this 20th century Christ was that he was not followed sincerely by a handful of followers. .Nehru has almost confessed it: "Much that he said we only accepted or sometimes did not accept at all. It is not because of his non-violence that he has become the foremost and most outstanding of India's leader... to vast majority of Indians he is a symbol of militant nationalism."

Acharya Kripalani in his assessment of Gandhiji's mission writes: "*Thus wherever Gandhiji appears a failure, it should be clear that the people failed him; not so much because of their faults as because of the final outcome of such plans was not clear to anyone. When one views Gandhiji's life and thought in the entire context of History and in particular in the setting of India of his time, one will realise that the role he was asked to play, so to speak was beyond the range of even a Mahatma.*"

Tolstoy wrote predicting that the non-violent work Gandhiji was engaged in South Africa was the one in which the whole life of Christian and non-Christian world was bound, one day, to participate. "This man; of God had left us a heritage, a spiritual force that must, in God's good time, prevail over arms and armaments and the dark doctrines of violence."

We the successors of the Mahatma are not competent to judge whether his light of non-violence has failed or would continue like a lonely star in the darkness. We have not yet exploited and tapped all the latent, possibilities of the principle of non-violence- Our contribution to the *non-violence* during the post-Gandhian period (viz. 1948-1972) could be written on the back of a postal stamp. In most cases nonviolence has been proved to be the real antidote of violence. Let the highest violence be met by our highest non-violence. "A mere belief in non-violence would not do. It should be intelligent and creative." Let us shed the ambivalent mood of 'to be non-violent or not', and come out of shell and face the light of non-violence.

The sensible human beings of today see in Gandhiji a hope for the integration of mankind, a guide to human relationship and a gospel for spiritual progress. At this hour when the mankind stands on crossroads, satiated with violence, out of the chaotic boiling pot men have made of his world, they will turn again to Gandhiji's doctrine of non-violence and struggle upwards again to the light. Man was not made in vain in God's image to dwell forever in darkness.

In his life and death we see re-enacted the supreme drama of humanity: that a Mahatma should arise and sacrifice himself so that others may live. He had a mind of great originality and daring, perhaps never before on so grand a scale has any man succeeded in shaping the course of history while using only the weapons of non-violence. To quote from Bhagavadgita: "Very rarely appears a Mahatma like him." The achievement of Gandhiji has been very well summed up in the tragic tribute paid by Nehru on 30th January 1948:

"The light that has illumined this country for these many years will illumine this country for many more years and a thousand years later that light will still be seen in this country and the world will see it and it will give solace to innumerable hearts."

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09. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

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We may begin our discussion by referring to an incident which took place in Bankura town of West Bengal. A group of Naxalites, which was trying to destroy the statue of Mahatma Gandhi, was asked by Shri Shishir Sanyal, the Director of Gandhi Shanti Pratishthan Kendra of the town, "Why are you destroying the statue of the Mahatma?" The Naxalites answered, "If we do not remove the influence of Mahatma Gandhi from our hearts and minds, our revolution will not be successful *Bhudan Yogyā*, 16 November 1970, p. 100). This implies that even the opponents of Gandhi feel that the Mahatma has a place in the Indian heart and mind and so long as we remember Gandhi and his non-violence, violence cannot be successful. Untruth can never defeat truth. Non-violence is more powerful than violence.

The concept of Ahimsa or Non-violence literally means non-injury or non-killing and it has been one of the most dominant features of the Indian Code of Conduct since the Vedic age down to our own days. In Indian Schools of Philosophy we find three main interpretations of Ahimsa. Jainism interprets Ahimsa as the ideal of not killing any form of life for any purpose whatsoever. Manu made Ahimsa elastic. He allowed the killing of animals for sacrifice and food. According to him even the killing of men is justified, if it is in self-defence. The third interpretation of non-violence is a mid-way between these two extremes. In Bhagavadgita Lord Krishna, on the one hand, advises Arjuna to practise the ideal of '*atmavat sarva bhuteshu*' and '*sarva bhuta kite ratah*' and on the other hand Lord Krishna exhorts Arjuna to fight and kill his own kith and kin. Moreover virtues like non-violence, non-anger (*akrodha*), peace, forgiveness, amity (*adrohah*) and compassion to beings (*daya bhuteshu*) are enumerated as essential possessions of a righteous man (The Gita, XVI, 2-3).

The Gandhian concept of non-violence is more or less similar to that of the Gita. Mahatma Gandhi, firmly believes that all living beings are essentially one.

The Vedic assertions like '*Krinvanti visve amritasya putraati*, '*Sarvaah prajaa yatrakam bhavanti* and '*Isha vashyam idam Sarvam*' convey the whole truth for the Mahatma (*Young India*, pp. 1078-1080). The Christian idea of universal brotherhood and Christ's way of life are a few other influences which shaped the life of the father of our nation. The Mahatma realised that non-violence is the only law of life. For him Ahimsa is not a purely negative doctrine, but is essentially a positive and dynamic force. In its positive aspect non-violence means pure love for the entire creation of God, because of realisation of the essential unity of all living beings. Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan*: "The real love is to love them that hate you, to love your neighbour even though you distrust him – of what avail is my love, if it be only so long as I trust my friend? Even thieves do that."

Thus for Gandhi, love is not limited by caste, creed, society and nation. It extends beyond all artificial barriers created by man. It embraces all living beings without any reservation. The whole of nature is governed by love. Nature cannot exist without mutual attraction. It is omnipotent, infinite and synonymous with God. "It is the greatest and the most active force in the world, more positive than electricity, more powerful than ether, a force superior to all the forces put together, the only force in life" (*Harijan*, March 14, 1936).

Gandhi could, however, tolerate certain type of Ahimsa. So far as man is a social being, he cannot avoid Himsa under special circumstances. But it should be spontaneous and must be the lowest minimum. There should be restraint, compassion and detachment at its back (*Y. I.*, p. 771). Himsa with goodwill and detachment will not disqualify a man to become a devotee of non-violence. Killing is not Himsa when life is destroyed for the sake of those whose life is taken.

Gandhi takes this love or Ahimsa as an end and means both. For him means justify the end, i.e., as the means so the end. And with this mighty power of love in hand he comes out to effect a complete social change. Human problems, social, political, religious, economic or else, may be solved, to the

satisfaction of all concerned, through Ahimsa only. The establishment of Ramrajya, a highly prized ideal of the Mahatma, can only be reached through non-violence. For him it is the creed not the polity, the way of life, not expediency. Here Gandhi and Nehru differ. Though Nehru realised that the purity of means justifies the purity of ends but he could not reconcile himself to the position that non-violence is the only way of life. He even hesitated to identify Ahimsa with truth. He writes in his autobiography that "what is truth is an ancient question to which a thousand answers have been given and yet the question remains". Nehru takes non-violence as a practical necessity and not as a creed. He accepted it as an instrument to fight the British because armed rebellion seemed to him out of question. He says that: "We are disarmed, and most of us did not even know the use of arms. Besides, in a contest of violence, the organized power of the British Government, or any state, was far greater than anything that could be raised against it." (*On Gandhi*, pp. 10-11). According to Nehru it is impossible to educate the masses in non-violence.

But for Gandhi, Ahimsa is truth and Satyagraha which means holding on to truth or insistence on truth is the only way which can reform all evils. It is the moral equivalent of war, a technique of solving individual as well as social problems. It is Gandhi's firm belief that satyagraha can bring socialism, end exploitation, remove political subjection and abolish capitalism. He is sure that the prince and the peasant can never be equated by cutting off the prince's head nor can the process of cutting off equate the employer and the employed (*My Socialism*, p. 5). Evil will certainly multiply evil. Violence breeds violence. One cannot reap fruits and flowers by sowing thorns. Gandhi has unshaken faith in the effectiveness of Satyagraha. He considers it to be an infallible means for curing all types of evils. He conveys his unparalleled faith in this technique in the following words: "This I do say, fearlessly and firmly, that every worthy object can be achieved by the use of Satyagraha. It is the highest and most infallible means; the greatest force of Socialism will not be reached by any other means. Satyagraha can rid society of all evils—political, economic and moral." (*Harijan*, 20-7-47) Gandhi believes that the masses can be taught non-violence. It is individual as well as group therapy.

10. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF AHIMSA

By M. P. Christanand Pillai

Ahimsa was the central doctrine of Gandhiji's life and teaching. The concept, which was native to the Indian soil and tradition, was made richer by an infusion of a wealth of meanings given to it by Gandhiji. A single traditional concept was transformed into a triune concept, that is, three concepts united into one. Ahimsa, for Gandhi, meant three things: love (*agape*), self-suffering (*tapasya*), and service (*seva*). *Agape*, *tapasya* and *seva* are three different concepts but all are unified into one and is called Ahimsa by Gandhi.

AHIMSA IS AGAPE

In *Harijan* of March 14th, 1936, Gandhiji wrote, "Ahimsa means love in the Pauline sense, and yet something more than the love defined by St. Paul, although I know St. Paul's beautiful definition is good enough for all practical purposes. Ahimsa includes the whole creation and not only the human."¹ This reference to Pauline love calls for an explanation of its concept in the Christian tradition.

Agape is the Greek word for 'love', A. G. Hebert says, "There can be no; right answer to the question, 'What is Christianity ?' except by a clear view of the real meaning of *agape* of the New Testament."²

In the Old Testament *agape* is shown to be fundamentally a spontaneous feeling, which impels one to self-sacrifice. It is an inexplicable personal force. Its special characteristic consisted in that, although it was addressed both to the people and to the individual, yet the people came first in point of reference.

In the New Testament, Jesus summarized the whole doctrine of salvation-in two sentences: "Thou shalt love God: thou shalt love thy neighbour."³ But he demanded love with such exclusiveness that all other commandments were included in it. It was a wholehearted decision for God. "No servant can be slave

to two masters."⁴ It also meant regarding God as the ground of one's whole existence depending upon him without reserve, leaving all care and final responsibility to Him: "Set your mind on God's kingdom and His justice before everything else and all the rest will come to you as well."⁵ Consequently one must break all other ties, except those with God; dislike and scorn everything which neither serves God nor come from Him.

The second is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This golden rule given in Mathew and Luke⁶ taken by itself might be wrongly understood as mere philanthropy. But the story of the Good Samaritan makes this impossible. The lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus did not reply with a grading of mankind into group ranging from kinsmen or fellow countrymen close at hand to foreigners far away, or from a high caste to a low caste men. His answer was the parable of the Good Samaritan.⁷ Whenever a man is in need, whoever, "by chance"⁸ is nearest to the sufferer, it is his duty to act as neighbour. Thus Jesus destroyed the old centripetal system in which the centre was 'I' and founded a new system in which the centre was 'thou', and he included the enemies also in the word 'neighbour'.

After proclaiming the new demand of love Jesus proclaimed a new world situation in which that love operated, namely a situation in which 'sins were forgiven'. "Her sins which are many are forgiven for she loves much."⁹ God's love, which broke into the world with the birth of Jesus was therefore a *pardoning love*.

Therefore, the main purpose of divine love, is not that we should return love to God only nor that we should attain freedom for our "Own sakes; but he who is called upon should put himself in love and freedom at the service of his neighbour. For the whole of law is fulfilled in one word "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself".¹⁰

That Gandhiji was very much influenced by the Christian concept of *agape* is evidenced from his innumerable statements. He admitted that Christ's Sermon on the Mount left its deep influence on him, as did the writing of Tolstoy, Ruskin and others belonging to a culture rooted in the Christian tradition. As his

experiment with Truth proceeded, Gandhiji evolved a new concept of non-violence, incorporating into it the ideas he had imbibed from his contact with the Christian tradition. He admits this when he says, "Though my views on Ahimsa are a result of my study of most of the faiths of the world, they are now no longer dependent upon the authority of these works. They are a part of my life."¹¹

AHIMSA IS TAPASYA

Ahimsa originated and grew in the Indian cultural milieu where a profound sense of asceticism permeates. Whatever be the path one takes to realise God: whether it be *bhakti* or *jnana* or *karma* all demand from the devotee severe discipline. The concept of sacrifice originating from the Vedic period, began to be evolved into a complex of ritualism and a multitude of self-imposed sufferings. Gandhiji did not leave out this important element of Indian culture from his concept of Ahimsa. He writes, "The test of love is *tapasya* and *tapasya* means self-suffering."¹²

Tapasya is not 'tyaga' (lit. ignoring), which is the quality or virtue of renunciation, dutifully and passively accepted. Ahimsa is also found among the virtues subsumed under the general notion of 'tyaga'. But mostly it is to the sterner aspects of renunciation and austerity, that the term *tapasya* (lit. heat or ardour) refers to in the religious literatures of India. It can be defined as the endurance of pain or the giving up of comforts in order to gain some ends. There are two kinds of *tapasya*: asceticism and austerity. Asceticism is that kind of *tapasya*, whose ends are spiritual, moral or religious: but if the ends are pleasure, or power of some other material gains, then it is known as austerity. In the Vedic times *tapasya* was conceived as a mighty power. It was austerity only and not yet asceticism. Gradually austerity turned into asceticism. The men who showed these characteristics had but one interest, they gave their undivided time and attention to religious exercises. They subjected themselves to severe discipline; fasting, silence, bodily mortifications of all kinds, in order to get what they longed for. They no longer desired wealth, position or plea-

sure, but an emancipated life free from the fruits of action (*karma*), which was the cause of *samsara*. They practised *tapasya* in the belief that by these potent self-inflicted tortures, they would conquer the sensual tendencies of the body and the dense ignorance of the soul, which were the chief hindrances to true knowledge and final release.

For Gandhiji *tapasya* meant, as it did for the Hindu mendicants, the development of the soul force and freeing of the soul from slavery of the body.¹³ He writes: "Suffering injury in one's person is ... of the essence of non-violence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others."¹⁴ To resort to self-sacrifice and voluntary submission to injury is a positive policy and is not merely a last resort. "Satyagraha postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person."¹⁵ For Gandhiji *ahimsa* carried with it the positive meanings of love and good will, and self-suffering (*tapasya*) was required for its completion. "Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence."¹⁶

Therefore, the *tapasya* of Gandhiji connotes certain values in suffering. Suffering is not valued for its own sake, its value lies in the detachment it imparts from the claims of the body and its emphasis is on the superiority over the matter and physique. In the second place it wins the respect of the opponent. It is a meaningful technique which operates not merely in the individual sphere but also within the sphere of social policy. *Tapasya*, which had always characterised the efforts of the devotees withdrawn from social contact, is now drawn back into the social arena and made to serve as a means whereby common social ends might be attained. For Gandhiji, *tapasya* is the 'vital expression of *ahimsa*, because it embodies a resolution to shoulder as far as possible this burden of suffering, instead of attempting to shift it to the opponent. This leads us to the yet another element in the concept of *ahimsa*, namely *seva* (service).

AHIMSA IS SEVA

Ahimsa to Gandhiji meant also dedication to the service of our fellow beings. The goal of *ahimsa*, as he believed is self-purification on the one hand and social well being on the other. This is absolutely essential to the concept of *ahimsa*. He writes, speaking of his religion of truth and non-violence, "To be true to such a religion one has to lose one-self in continuous and continuing service of all life"¹⁷

The idea of *seva* was in the Hindu tradition. Earlier to Mahatma Gandhi, *seva* was service in order to gain merit (*punya*), which would bring release from *samsara*. Modern Hindu religious reformers went back to the ancient tradition to stress the need for the service to mankind on the basis of the statements such as, "the oneness of all men", "worship me in all beings" (Gita), "compassion for being" (Sri Ramkrishna), etc. Gandhiji made service the essential element of his religion. To him religion is 'truth and *ahimsa*' and *ahimsa* is nothing but a means to social service. Service to the group without demand for return, without suggestion of a necessary reciprocity, is central in Gandhian philosophy. It is on the idea of service that he differed from the western movements for non-violence. To Tolstoy, for instance, non-violence meant quite a different thing from the Gandhian *satyagraha*; it meant avoidance of all force in any form. It was in no case a technique for positive constructive action of the people. Gandhiji said, "We should make truth and non-violence not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups and communities and nations."

CONCLUSION

The "*agapeistic*" attitude which Gandhiji shared to the full with the Christians was borne out in practice in his own life and in the meaning he gave to his concept of non-violence. In a conversation with his friend, the Rev. J. J. Doke, a Baptist minister of Johannesburg, Gandhiji said that he got the idea of passive resistance in the spirit of *ahimsa* from the sayings of Jesus, "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil and Love your enemies . . . pray for them. . ." ¹⁸

But true love demands suffering. The cup of suffering is not to be refused but to be drunk without fear. It is better that suffering be inflicted on oneself than that we should willingly be the cause another's suffering. Here, again, he introduces New Testament ideas into the Indian tradition. The teaching of both the New Testament and of Gandhiji's life is that we should bear one another's burdens. In both we find exemplified the belief that it is possible to soften the hardhearted by means of love. "No man is an enemy; all men are brothers."¹⁹ Finally, therefore, he makes service the essential element of his concept of Ahimsa. Only through sacrifice and loving service a just social order can be founded. When Gandhiji spoke, India for the first time heard itself thinking aloud. His dominating idea in Ahimsa had been here for thousands of years; his method of silent protest had always been the traditional expedient of the East for checking tyranny. India has always believed that a saint could by his austerities control the universe; these traditional ideas were gathered; and enriched by pauline love were turned into a powerful political and social weapon by Gandhiji.

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11. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By Nirbhai Singh Soin

The Gandhian concept of non-violence is hard to define. When asked by a friend to write a treatise on the science of non-violence, Gandhiji replied, "To write such a treatise is beyond my power. I am not built for academic writing. Action is my domain. What I understand, according to my lights, to be my duty, and what comes my ways, I do. All my action is actuated by the spirit of service. Let anyone who can systematise Ahimsa into a science do so – if indeed it lends itself to such a treatment. . . . There is no need at present for the treatise in question. Any such during my life-time would necessarily be incomplete. If at all, it could only be written after my death. And when so, let me give the warning that it would fail to give a complete exposition of Ahimsa. No man has ever been able to describe God fully. The same holds true of Ahimsa." This stern warning and challenge to posterity is recorded in his book, *Non-violence in Peace and War*, Vol. II (1949), pp. 44-45.

Pondering over this oft-quoted passage I recall to my mind the picture of Gandhiji sitting on the dais addressing the small prayer-meeting in the evening of Jan. 20, 1948, in the lawns of Birla House, New Delhi. It was a wet, cold and dull evening and comparatively a small audience had turned up to attend the prayer-meeting. Gandhiji was still very weak as a result of the fast and spoke in a feeble, nearly inaudible tone. Behind his back a few feet away a bomb exploded causing considerable damage to the brick-work boundary wall. The culprit was caught by the police on duty. All this caused quite a stir but Gandhiji did not even turn his face. The meeting continued and Dr. Shushila Nayar read out the notes of Gandhiji's speech to the audience at the conclusion. Gandhiji had remained undisturbed by the occurrence. This was eloquent evidence of the stage of non-violence (fearlessness) which he had reached in his life-time.

Again after ten days, I witnessed the martyrdom and I was wonder-struck to see the same serene, unruffled face while lending my shoulder to carry the bullet-

riddled body to a room in the Birla House, where the doctors pronounced him dead after a few minutes of the shooting tragedy. I am submitting this testimony to the perfect picture of Ahimsa as presented by Gandhiji in face of danger and death.

We are now twenty-three years away from the dissolution of his body. I am waiting to learn from someone that an individual or institute has undertaken the task of writing a treatise on the science of Ahimsa, which according to Gandhiji, is an attribute of God. I do hope that someone will enlighten us on this point.

12. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF AHIMSA

By Kunwar Awdhesh Singh

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Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi is such an Indian thinker in the line of Mahabir and Buddha the great, who has easily attracted the humanitarian thinkers of the whole world by adding a new awakening in the evolution of the philosophy of Ahimsa. Truth—Gandhiji used in wide connotation and the term Ahimsa in private as well as in public life in order to realise God. By his experiments, Ahimsa, limited only to an individual in the eyes of traditional thinkers, got a very fair chance to flourish in all aspects of social life. Socialisation of the Theory of Ahimsa is the most valuable gift of Gandhiji to philosophy of Ahimsa.

The only source of evolution of the world civilisation and culture according to Gandhiji is Ahimsa. He believes that the power of love in the world overrides the chances of mutual quarrel and conflicts. Today, we see innumerable villages and cities inhabited in the world. Had the world been based on mutual struggle there would have been no existence of the villages and cities at present. In this way Gandhiji does not conform to the view of western thinker Darwin's Zoological Theory, who considers struggle and violence a must in the process of the evolution of life.

The literal meaning of Ahimsa is not to kill. Negative Ahimsa means not to take the life of or trouble any creature (being) with some evil and selfish intention.

The meaning of Ahimsa in positive form is—the climax of love and generosity. Family or geographical barriers cannot set limits to the observance of love and generosity. Even the enemy is also authorised to receive it, but it does not mean complete submission to injustice. Thus in an active form Ahimsa is good feeling towards all creatures.

It is not only difficult but totally impossible to form a schedule of violent, actions. The violent or non-violent tendency of any individual or association can be understood only with reference to circumstances. Nevertheless in Gandhiji's

view, 'telling lie', 'lack of temperance', 'use of harsh words for any enemy', 'intimidation', etc. are violent actions. The reality is that the due deliberation, with which a man works in the moments of struggle or controversy with his fellow beings, is known as Ahimsa. It is obvious from this that various human tendencies need training so that we can progress gradually but continuously from violent to non-violent tendencies.

'Self-control', 'non-stealing' and 'continence' also stand for Ahimsa. Ahimsa is the very nucleus of Truth. Truth is God for Gandhiji. Therefore explaining the relationship of Truth and Ahimsa he maintained: Truth is positive. Ahimsa is negative. Truth exists, non-truth does not exist. Violence exists, Ahimsa does not exist. Truth is self-evident. Ahimsa is not manifest like Truth.

In training an individual to develop the tendency of Ahimsa his own efforts are sufficient. The non-violent may expect his opponent also to be non-violent but it is not necessary for the Ahimsa to be fully observed. In the same way the nonviolent will use the weapon of Ahimsa in any state of emergency. To become violent and sometimes non-violent according to the need of time is the greatest hindrance in the training of becoming non-violent. But the non-violent cannot come to any reconciliation with the opponent in any state of struggle surrendering all his self-respect, because according to Gandhiji, 'Ahimsa does never bargain with self-respect.'

According to Gandhiji there are three forms of Ahimsa. Ahimsa that is free from the matters of profit and loss and does never yield, even in the most critical moments of struggle. This is the Ahimsa of the brave.

Ahimsa accepted in the form of a policy is the second form of Ahimsa in which man uses Ahimsa in order to avail himself of an opportunity and becomes violent just after he has done so.

The third form of Ahimsa is that which is named Ahimsa by mistake. It is the passive resistance of the coward because in the words of Gandhiji violence is indicative of cowardice... Sword is a weapon of the weak.

In human life it is very difficult to see the best manifestation of the superb nature of Ahimsa. Only God can be the perfect non-killer. Imperfection of non-violence is natural for man because in its ideal stage non-violence works in full negativity. Therefore, Gandhiji is of the opinion that violence to some extent is unavoidable for all creatures. This is why he said, "An observer of non-violence is likely to indulge in the least violence."

In the Gandhian concept of non-violence meat-eating is also excusable. In his words, "Observance of religion and non-violence is a matter of heart. In the purification of the heart it is not imperatively necessary to give up meat-eating. But it does not mean that Gandhiji has completely borne out the habit of meat-eating. He is of the opinion that if man wants to raise human life to sublimity he should refuse to kill and eat the poor and weak creatures.

Many occasions befall human life when violence becomes unavoidable. And in such circumstances Gandhiji admits of violence. He added, "Suppose, my son suffers from the disease caused by dog-biting (hydrophobia) and I have no patent medicine for its cure while the child is groaning with pain, I think it my right duty to put an end to his life."

In the destruction of harmful germs either in the growth of agriculture or the root cause of diseases Gandhiji admits of violence. He maintained, "We have accepted it as a part of religion to destroy poisonous germs by germs-killing* medicines." It is very necessary to annihilate the molesting lions and wolves. Thus he said, "It is also necessary to destroy the germs present in water. In the same way non-violence, does not come to an end only by the non-killing of ants and bugs. This is the lowest stage of non-killing."

Those, presumptuous of the observance of non-violence, unknowingly make a show of their non-violent disposition by feeding ants or by giving something to others. But the Gandhian concept of non-violence does never approve of anybody's free and gratis feeding. At the same time in that very context Gandhiji is strongly in favour of putting a deadline to gratis charity (*sadabrat*). For it causes a nation's downfall, indolence, unemployment, hypocrisy and

encourages committing of crimes. And there is a baseless and false notion in the mind of the donor that he is being pious.

There is no room for cowardice in the Gandhian concept of Ahimsa. He observed plainly, "I would prefer violence to cowardice if a choice is to be made between the two. The doctrine of Ahimsa is not for the weak and the cowards. It is only for the brave and the strong. The bravest is he who never kills but meets his death voluntarily when threatened to be killed."

Various criticisms of the exposition of above-said Gandhian concept of Ahimsa had been made during his lifetime and so it is even today. These criticisms are of two types. One is connected with the experiments of his private life and the second type of criticism deals with the experiment of Ahimsa in public life. A great Indian philosopher has maintained that the experiments of Gandhiji have not been so successful in public life as in private life. Romain Rolland, a western thinker writes, "There is no hope of success in the terribly increasing dictatorial ways of the nations that dominated the world and have left their relentless traces in the exploitation of millions of men. A great and constant need of the experiment of Ahimsa is being experienced in public life. The success of Ahimsa is cock-sure."

Gandhiji admits that the way of Ahimsa is a thorny one. These thorns prick at every step. But the religion of Ahimsa ensues from the radical recognition that in the progress of an individual lies the progress of all and in the downfall of one lies the downfall of all—if we have to recognise this root foundation of the social concept—we have to undergo the hardships. Non-violent experiments must be made in personal and social life constantly for the existence of Ahimsa. Thus it is our duty to give priority to Ahimsa in the life of the millions of people. Constancy of purpose and prayer to God in critical moments—are the two such means that lead to success. Achievement of the object and a great fidelity to the purity of means are indispensable.

Gandhian concept of Ahimsa and a great need of their experiments particularly in public life is obvious in the context of the preparation of atomic weapons and the circumstances arising out of various international controversies.

13. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By K. A. Seethalakshmi

The concept of non-violence is not a newly invented one. It had its origin in ancient times. It existed even from times immemorial and developed gradually until Gandhiji gave the world the utility of that concept or theory by making himself the object of experimentation to prove that utility. He held the torch of this concept so high that it blancheted the world soaked with black violence.

Though the concepts Gandhiji spoke of were as "old as the hills" so was steam, so was coal and all the other raw materials that lay unused on the mother earth for centuries until man discovered it and made use of it. The non-violence that Gandhiji advocated as a way of life was as dynamic in its potential for society as steam and coal and as original as man's quest for salvation. The doctrine so propounded and advocated by Gandhiji was the greatest and the most vital of all the forces.

Although the idea of resisting evil with good is quite old, yet the systematic evolution of fighting injustice with just means is of recent origin. Prahlad was probably the first man who faced all hardships and underwent all the inhuman treatments and ordeals enforced by his father, Hirenya-Kashyapu simply because he refused to deny the fact regarding the omnipotence and omnipresence of God. Prahlad was again the first man to say no to tyranny without the use and collection of weapons or conspiracy. Socrates gulped his hemlock smilingly and is a well-known example of unarmed disobedience to tyranny. Bruno was another Greek scholar who smilingly underwent burning at the stake while proclaiming the Universal Truth that the earth is round. Such examples can be found in innumerable numbers in ancient history. Men of such fame and importance have shown to the world that evil can be conquered by good. Mahatma Gandhi was perhaps the first to formulate action and to provide a suitable name to it. Gandhiji coined the word Satyagraha for it as early as in 1906.

The circumstance that led Gandhiji to evolve the idea of Satyagraha and of the conditions under which it was first applied was on the passing of the Black Act by the South African Government. Gandhiji was at that time leading the struggle of the Indian Settlers in South Africa against racial discrimination. The Asiatic Ordinance of the Transvaal was not only condemned by him. He even termed it as a "crime against humanity".

A mass congregation was held on September 11, 1906 at the old Empire Theatre at Johannesburg to protest against the Black Act. The Empire Theatre was packed to capacity. Gandhiji addressed the meeting and he declared during his historic speech: "There is only one course open to the like of me, to die but not to submit to the law."

The aftermath of this historic speech was that a resolution was passed which recorded, "In the event of the Imperial Authorities' rejecting the humble prayer of the British Indian Community this meeting solemnly and regretfully resolves that, rather than submit to the galling and tyrannous, and un-British requirements laid down in the Ordinance every British Indian shall submit himself to imprisonment and shall continue so to do until relief." Such was the effect and impact of this speech that belligerence gave way to Satyagraha and jingoism was replaced by the spirit of non-violence.

None knew the name to be given to this new movement. Gandhiji termed it as "Passive Resistance". But Gandhiji found "Passive Resistance" too passive. As Frank Moraes observed, "The Mahatma's conception of non-violence or *ahimsa* was never passive." Gandhiji offered a nominal prize through *Indian Opinion* to the reader who made the best suggestion for the movement. A good number of suggestions were received and among them was one by Shri Maganlal Gandhi who suggested the word "Sadagraha" meaning "firmness in Good Cause". Gandhiji changed "Sadagraha" into Satyagraha for its broader connotation. Satyagraha in Sanskrit stands for *satya* meaning truth and *agraha* meaning firmness, which simply means firmness in truth. Since then Gandhiji's movement became known as Satyagraha.

It is of paramount importance at this point to differentiate between “Passive Resistance” and “Satyagraha”. They are not synonymous words as most people have the tendency to think so. The first and foremost difference is that in the case of passive resistance there is some indication of the concept of weakness that is to say if there is no way to defend oneself then one may adopt passive resistance whereas Satyagraha can never be taken as a last resort to defend oneself. A Satyagrahi does not wield this weapon as a last resort: for him it is the be all and end-all for attaining his goals. In a Satyagrahi the idea of strength is well marked. The second main difference is that there is no scope for love in passive resistance whereas hatred has no place in Satyagraha and indulgence in it means breach of its principle. Thirdly in passive resistance there is an indication for the use of force but never in Satyagraha. Fourthly in passive resistance one can take refuge in arms when occasion demands but contrary to this use of arms is forbidden in Satyagraha. Fifthly passive resistance and use of arms can go hand in hand with each other whereas Satyagraha and arms can never. Sixthly Satyagraha may be offered to one’s dearest and nearest but passive resistance cannot be offered to such people until and unless, they have ceased to become the dearest and nearest. And finally in passive resistance there is constantly the idea of harassing the opponent whereas compared to it in Satyagraha there is never the remotest idea of harassing the opponent. On the other hand one goes through all hardships and tries to overpower others by love.

Satyagraha was developed by Gandhiji through his searching and experiments in his personal life and also through his efforts to overcome social evils while building up a better social order.

The very notion that what Gandhiji taught was a technique has led to considerable distortion and error and of course disappointment. Non-violence is not an easy gadget to get what you can get otherwise by violence in the pre-Gandhian days. Gandhiji's technique if one terms it so is the technique of conquering evil with love and truth.

Non-violence does not consist in not taking refuge in a dagger, a pistol or a lathi but it means adherence to the supreme power. When the faith in the Almighty is lost non-violence ceases to exist.

Gandhiji's Satyagraha assumed various names in different times. In 1906 when Satyagraha had its origin it was called Satyagraha. In 1920 when a national agitation was waged against the violent Rowlatt Bills and Jallianwala Bagh tragedy at Amritsar, it was termed as non-violent non-cooperation.

At Ahmedabad, during the mill-workers' strike in 1928 it was called strike. When Gandhiji started his march for Salt- tax in 1930 it was termed as Civil Disobedience. Again in 1940 when Gandhiji started the antiwar policy of the Congress for demanding freedom it was termed as individual disobedience.

Whatever changes it has undergone the components of the concept remains unaltered though it has assumed several names and in the present-day world it may be stated with authority that this concept surpasses all the other forms of resistance hitherto practised. As an outstanding example we may quote the achievement of Gandhiji in having won Swaraj for the masses from foreign yoke and serfdom with a frail body but an impregnable weapon and an indomitable spirit.

The mortal remnants of Gandhiji might have vanished but the tracers of his laudable concept will remain ever-green in the minds of millions over whom he reigned as an epitome of non-violence.

14. GANDHI ON NON-VIOLENCE

By Paripubianand Varma

No word in Sanskrit-Hindi lexicon is so much misunderstood or misused as *Dharma*. It neither means 'religion' in English nor *mazhab* in Urdu. It has a specific derivation with no synonym in any language of the world. *Dharma* signifies a compendium of cardinal, basic principles and duties-of life, the fundamental root of all civilized human behaviour. It is a combination of non-violence, non-thieving (taking nothing belonging to others), truth, honesty, non-accumulation (of wealth) etc. Thus a great harm has been done to our country by those who translated our 'Secular State' as '*Dharama-Nirpeksh Rajya*'—A State which has nothing to do with all these guiding principles of life. We have knocked down, in our ignorance the very base of Indian civilization and culture and we are suffering for this folly.

Gandhi repeatedly used this word *Dharma* when he propounded his theory of non-violence and truth. He warned us not to hate tyrants or oppresors, to love the whole humanity and to have faith in the *Dharma* of life ! Writing in the *Harijan Sewak* on August 10, 1940, he explained:

"Every prophet has more or less denounced violence. They could not do otherwise. The exterior of a man is violent but his soul and his inner self is completely nonviolent. As soon a man begins to realise his soul he cannot believe in violence—either he learns to be non-violent or perishes. All incarnations have taught us truth, unity, brotherhood, discipline, justice, etc. Even great thinkers treat violence as a last resort."

Gandhi was against bloodshed and he advocated peaceful means to fight Hitler but he was not impractical and a day-dreamer. With his consent the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in the first week of August 1940 declaring its firm faith in Ahimsa. But at the same time it granted an army for the defence of the country. He had envisioned a free India in the early forties

and provided for its defence but his main theme, was the heart, the mind. Defend your country but do not hate the aggressor, thus take out the sting from your approach to all problems in life.

NON-VIOLENCE OF THE BRAVE

Only the brave can be non-violent. It is not the job of a coward. This statement of Gandhi was challenged by a friend. Bapu replied (*Harijan Sewak*, Aug., 31, '40) that the success of Satyagraha (civil disobedience) movement has surprised the world and the Congress enjoyed immense respect abroad much more than twenty years ago. A non-violent fighter is never afraid of any consequence. He hates none and suffers only physical pain which is beyond the grasp of any soldier. Those who preach that only those trained in violence can be truly non-violent are indicating that only sinners can become good. An armed man fights with weapons—an unarmed man fights with his soul force. Who is more courageous?

He further elucidated his point by quoting an incident in his paper on September 7, 1940. A young man wanted to commit suicide by laying himself on the track of an in-coming train. Somebody guessed his motive and dragged him away. A fight ensued, blood came out but the rescuer fought till the train had passed away. He enquired from Gandhi whether his action was correct, was it non-violent. The reply was in the affirmative. 'It is good that you did not think of non-violence at that moment. Your act was brave and non-violent. You saved the life of that young man. You are his best friend. You have done the same as a surgeon would do to operate on a painful wound.

How can non-violence be operative in riots, in turmoils, in communal clashes? What is to be done to the goondas, the ruffians who endanger public peace? On the 14th September, the same year Bapu replied in his typical frank vein. He admitted that the Congress has not given due consideration to such peacetime problems. It was only busy with its fight against foreign rule. It should have directed its workers to create such conditions that feuds and riots would not take place. The so-called goondas are also human beings. Congressmen should

have closer contact with them—without hating them and should try to understand them and create good feelings in them. They are the diseased limb of society. The disease need be cured— the limb should not be amputated. Work should start in this direction. It is better to lay down life in such emergencies to restore harmony and peace.

Gandhi went to the extreme in advocating self-annihilation in riots or communal strifes. Rajagopalachari and Bapu left the Congress as they did not agree with him to that extent but Gandhi was firm. He wrote on July 13, 1947: 'How shall we use our weapon of non-violence in anarchy or Hindu-Muslim riots? Should Congressmen answer baton by baton? Or should they surrender their heads to the aggressor and forbear the assault? I shall not go into the intricacies of the question. I would only say that let Congressmen save as many as possible by sacrificing their own lives. The person who dies without raising his hand has discharged his responsibility cent per cent. Do not kill others. But have no malice against the attackers...

There may be fallacies in this dictum—and there are very many loop-holes in the Gandhian concept of non-violence but the man was fanatically clinging to his faith. In the above quoted article he has expressed his grief over the Congress disbelief, led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in his theory of non-violence to the extent that even foreign invasion can be challenged by non-violent deeds. Patel and other believed in a strong army for defence purposes.

A few years after this article the same question was put to him by a friend in London. How can riots and violent demonstrations be controlled by non-violence? The answer was without any prevarication. On 19th May 1946 Gandhi wrote: 'A government wedded to violence cannot control such situations by non-violent methods. But a government devoted to non-violence can. Such a government was of Ashok. We can establish such a government... It is quite possible that a Congress Government may have no such faith in nonviolence as I have. It is possible that such a government shall use brute force to ward off foreign invasion or quell internal rioting. If Congress changes its attitude towards nonviolence, it shall mean that it does not believe in the truth that a

'State' can also be non-violent.... A strong army shall never allow a climate of non-violence.

THE ATOM-AGE AND NON-VIOLENCE

A British Military Officer posed a seemingly difficult question—How can non-violence be effective in atomic age? It was an atom bomb which had finished the war. Bapu was not non-plussed. He maintained his ground. On 19th May 1946 he wrote: 'It is not contained in non-violence that if I cannot stop violence I should be sorry. No man can stop violence. It can be done by God alone. Man is only a vehicle to Him for the purpose... God goes by His rules. Therefore violence shall be stopped under those rules... The Truth of Ahimsa is great. No one can erase it. Thousands of persons like me shall die translating that truth in life but the Truth shall remain.'

But Gandhi had to allow certain latitude in practical nonviolence. On June 7, the same year (1946), he corrected a correspondent's misinterpretation of non-violence in daily life. He conceded that a man-eater tiger shall have to be annihilated, the monkeys or pests who ruin the crops shall be eliminated. Anyone with a body has to do some violent act in his day-to-day life. That is unavoidable. To feed ants when people are starving is no act of non-violence. The service of man must come first.

Reverting to atom bombs he wrote: 'the Americans are sadly mistaken if they feel that non-violence shall emerge from such usage of this terrible weapon. Atomic energy can be put to good use in the service of mankind but Americans and allies are not thinking on those lines. They have won an empty victory and murdered the soul of Japan. But what shall happen to the soul of the murderer is yet to be seen. I am not supporting the bad deeds of Japan but the difference in both the sides is of grade. I admit that Japan's lust was much worse. But that does not concede the right to those whose greed was of a lesser degree to play the demon and annihilate men, women and children of one sector of Japan.... We have learnt from this tragic lesson of the atom bomb that just as violence cannot eliminate violence, one atom bomb shall not

eliminate another. ... Hate can be conquered only by love.'

ADMINISTRATIVE VIOLENCE

Gandhi perceived the events of 'tomorrow'. He was almost aware of the lapses of his camp followers when they came to power. Replying to a friend who wanted elucidation on the administrative responsibilities of Congress ministers who have won Swaraj by non-violent means but use violence for administrative purposes, Bapu wrote on the 4th August 1946 that if everybody acts according to the dictates of his conscience, if 'our sages gave us great precepts and we do not follow them', it is not the fault of the sage. Thus Gandhi admitted that even in his life time his followers had or were giving up his teachings and adopting old traditional rules of government. But he almost forgave them and gave another lease of life to their faltering faith. On the 18th August 1946 he wrote in *Harijan Sewak* that in the modern machine age governments can keep arms but 'even a small community can save itself with weapons against all powers provided it has unity of purpose.' In other words, Gandhi hinted that he would not be averse to maintaining an army provided there exists unity of purpose and its use is only for a noble cause, only self-protection. 'To fight for the cause of the nation's (community's) honour is also non-violence.'

A student of logic would flare up at such a 'convenient' interpretation of non-violence. But Bapu was so inherently sincere and far-seeing that he had to provide an axiom, a cradle for his principles applicable to the newly born free India in the modern world of war-torn countries, miseries and chaos. He was not oblivious of the fact that poor India could not stand in the race of armaments. It must flourish on its own culture of truth, non-violence and brotherhood- Therefore it should discard weapons only to the extent that it could never be used for anything else but self-defence. He was anxious to change the very concept of government—it was not to rule but to serve and no service is rendered by bayonets. On, the 25th August he advised his countrymen, with reference to the Calcutta riots that 'if we want to use British

machine guns and bayonets, then Englishmen shall never leave India. And even if they leave, their place shall be taken by some other foreign power.'

Yet, Gandhi never tolerated cowardice in face of danger. If attacked or molested he would advise self-sacrifice. He allowed the women of Noakhali (February 9, 1947) to commit suicide rather than surrender: 'If I am asked which course is better—to attack the invader or to annihilate oneself – I would prefer the latter.'

A SAD GANDHI

After freedom, that is, after 15th August 1947 Bapu had to face an avalanche of doubts raised from every quarter of the country on account of the massacres in Punjab, etc. Even General Cariappa openly denounced non-violence. He advocated strong military power to meet every emergency in the country. To many Bapu was facing a storm against his beliefs of decades. But the Mahatma did not budge an inch. He stood his ground. On the 16th November 1947 Gandhi repudiated Cariappa in strong terms. He said that a person born and bred in a military atmosphere can never appreciate non-violence. 'How can a man who has become broke by gambling in the share market sing any song in its praise.'

Referring to the Punjab incidents he maintained his original theme of facing violence with non-violence (*Harijan Sewak* December 14, 1947). On the 11th January 1948 he reiterated his implicit faith in non-violence. He said forcefully, 'I am progressing towards non-violence without halting.'

We may agree with Gandhi or not, we may find it difficult to synchronise his theme with the modern world but let us ponder over the calamity which is facing this violent world. Between 1945-1970, there have been more than FIFTY wars in the world. Over four trillion dollars are being spent on armaments and the military by all nations, that is \$ 1000 for every person now living. Over 90 million people have died in major wars in World War II. In the words of UNO Secretary General, U. Thant: 'Now we meet again in a mood of uncertainty and anxiety....' Perhaps we have had enough of the world of violence.

15. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By Ramanikbhai Turakhia

Non-violence practically has been preached and practised in every country and by the people everywhere. It has been taught by many thinkers and founders of great religions that violence cannot be overcome by violence and that evil cannot be overcome by evil.

Non-violence has been deep-rooted in India since a long time. All the important religions in India preach non-violence as the greatest duty, or *dharma*. In Mahabharata it was said that Ahimsa is the highest religion. Ahimsa is the highest penance. Ahimsa is the highest truth from which all *dharma* or duty proceeds.

Ahimsa has been the leading tenet of the Jain philosophy. Right Knowledge, Right Insight and Right Conduct are three means to attain *moksha*. Right conduct consists of five vows (*Vratas*) of which Ahimsa is the first and the other four being truthfulness, non-stealing, non-possession and celibacy. Saints and followers of Jainism have to observe them rigidly as far as they can. Jains lay a great emphasis on Ahimsa.

Killing horrifies because all beings wish to live and not be slain. This stressed that Ahimsa is not something negative. It is another aspect of *daya* (compassion) or *abhayadan* (the giving of protection to all living beings).

Ahimsa of the Jains refuses to take the life of even the smallest creature. This is an extreme application of the negative aspect of Ahimsa. Gandhiji did not agree with this extremeness of the application. He said, "agony of death is more severe than that of life. This assumption is rooted in ignorance and has led to the distortion of the meaning of Ahimsa on account of undue emphasis being placed on the sacredness of sub-human life in preference to human life."

Buddhism avoids extreme view of Ahimsa, as propounded in Jainism. Buddha's teaching begins with purity and ends with love. In the teachings of Buddha emphasis was mostly laid on non-violence in personal relations. Returning love

for hatred, avoiding all violence and cultivating compassion for all life was the doctrine of Buddha's Ahimsa.

Islam, according to Gandhiji, is a religion of peace and the contribution of Quran has been the brotherhood of man.

Christianity teaches the doctrine of the law of love. Jesus and his teachings are the important source of Gandhiji's philosophy of Satyagraha. Gandhiji told that it was the New Testament especially the Sermon on the Mount, which really awakened him to the Tightness and value of Satyagraha. Gita deepened the impression and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* gave it a permanent form.

Gandhiji calls Jesus the Prince of Satyagrahis. He saw no difference between the Sermon and Gita. According to him, "Christianity's particular contribution is that of active love.

No other religion says so firmly that God is love and the New Testament is full of word. Christians, however, as a whole have denied the principle with their wars."

All the religions of the world and the saints and thinkers like Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau and Pacifist thinkers like Roland Hoist, Charles Naine, Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, etc. have preached non-violence in one or the other form.

Gandhiji has, therefore, rightly said, "Truth and nonviolence are as old as the hills." He renovated the age-old philosophy of Ahimsa and demonstrated the possibilities of Ahimsa in all walks of life of both individual and groups. He said, "Non-violence is universal law acting under all -circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction." (*Harijan*, July 15, 1939, p. 201)

NON-VIOLENT STRUGGLES BEFORE GANDHI ERA

Before Gandhiji's entry into the field of non-violent struggles, the people of India were already familiar with certain non-violent methods of resisting injustices and evils. *Dharna* (sitting down or squatting at the door of the oppressor with a firm resolve to die unless the wrong is redressed),

prayopaveshana (fasting unto death), *ajnaabhangaa* (civil disobedience) and *desh-tyaga* (leaving of country) were in practice in the olden times. There have been several instances in recorded history of people taking to these methods to resist injustice and exploitation.

Gandhiji has in his autobiography described as to how his father, then Dewan of Rajkot staged passive resistance successfully. His father had protested against the insult hurled upon by the Assistant Political Agent in Rajkot on the Thakore of Rajkot State. The Agent asked him to apologise but he would not. As a result, he was arrested and detained for some time. The news reached the people of Rajkot. Excitement ran high among the people. Ultimately the Agent had to release Gandhiji's father unconditionally.

Outside India too, many political and social struggles and movements have been launched or fought non-violently. Some of them are : 1. Hungarian Resistance to Austria— 1849-1867; 2. Finish Resistance to Russia—1895-1905; 3. Resistance to Autocracy in Russia—1905-1917; 4. Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain— 1903-1914; 5. British Labour Resistance to war with Russia—1919-1920; and 6. German General Strike 1920. Besides various campaigns like Civil Rights Movements in the United States of America, Campaigns against Nuclear weapons in Britain, have been recently organised.

In Indian tradition and civilization non-violence was not a new thing. But the approach and application of this principle by Gandhiji was certainly a new and of his own. He re-innovated politics, rejuvenated morality and religion by his unique introduction of non-violence in them. Gandhiji applied the theory of Satyagraha not only in politics or for social reforms but in individual and domestic life also.

In his life time Gandhiji organised and conducted several Satyagrahas. These Satyagrahas had special characters of their own. Beginning from his campaign in South Africa Gandhiji was associated till the end of his life in experimenting with his technique of non-violent action in solving not only political but also social problems of the country.

NON-VIOLENCE OF GANDHIAN CONCEPT

It was Gandhiji's faith in non-violence that these campaigns were fought without a show of retaliation by the people even though on numerous occasions brutal violence was resorted to by police and the military. In a few cases, when violence broke out he not only decried but even withdrew such campaigns. Gandhiji even undertook fasts to enforce discipline among his followers and arouse consciousness for upholding the right cause.

In fact from 1919 till his death in 1948, Gandhiji roused the people's fervour on the one hand and restrained their passion by the other. Through the self-suffering by these fasts, Gandhiji controlled his countrymen again and again to a national discipline. Thus in the thickness of battles he remained a man of God.

Sir Winston Churchill referred to him once as the 'nauseating naked fakir' but the fact is that Gandhiji never bore ill-will against his opponents. His was the effort to win the opponents by love. "We do not want our Independence out of Britain's ruin in war" Gandhiji said. "This is not the way of non-violence...." Even General Smuts felt the irresistible attraction of Gandhiji's methods of struggles when he was in South Africa. One of his Secretaries had once said to Gandhiji: "I do not like your people and I do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you. I often wish that you took to violence like the English strikers and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness."

It was indeed this spirit of non-violence that directed Gandhiji to take the 'hazardous long pilgrimage in Noakhali to plant the message of love and courage in a wilderness of hatred and terror' as he himself said.

The positive aspect of non-violence in Gandhiji manifested itself in multifarious forms in his career. Gandhiji knew that to kill a living being is a law of brutality. Yet on occasions he advocated that to take a life of a living being in

agony is Ahimsa. He did support killing of a sick calf when its disease was proved to be incurable and it was struggling with pains. He did advocate catching and in unavoidable circumstances killing of monkeys who destroyed the standing crops in the fields at a time when the people were facing famine. This contention of Gandhiji was very much resented by Jains and Hindus but Gandhiji stood firm in his belief and in the interpretation of the meaning of non-violence.

Gandhiji's letter to Herr Hitler is now a historical document exemplifying Gandhiji's keen desire to save mankind from destruction and establish universal friendship and peace. Gandhiji sought to remould the world by love. In fact he was the first to believe and put to test the theory of love, i.e., non-violence can conquer violence.

Today, in India, the message of non-violence preached and practised by Gandhiji seems to be losing ground. The hope for our countrymen and even the world at large, lies in the use of this method for solving our manifold problems. We, in the land of Gandhiji, must continue our experiments in these methods.

16. NON-VIOLENCE: IT'S CONCEPT & OPERATIONS¹

By Ratan Das

The need for rethinking about man's social conduct is an indispensable necessity today. No doubt human society has grown in knowledge and intelligence, but is not sufficiently grown in virtue and wisdom. But still man is striving to reach the realms of virtue. A human being without truth, love, compassion, pity is nothing more than a beast, a savage and a barbarous being. The rationality of the human being which has appeared in the conduct of civilized man is the only outcome of the human evolution. The modern age is primarily governed by two important philosophies. One is the technological philosophy and the other is the philosophy of human relations. Both are of fundamental importance and are imparting greater influence upon the minds of men. Needless to say that among the virtues that have been cultivated since ages, the concept of non-violence is supreme. And since technology has started using violence as an instrument of total annihilation, non-violence has started gaining momentum in the mind of civilized man.

Gandhiji was not an isolated thinker in this regard. Buddha, Jesus, Tolstoy, Thoreau and the great lights of human form thought about it long before Gandhiji. Since then non-violence was accepted as one of the supreme and purest displays of human conduct. Gandhiji carried this conduct from the stage of personal salvation to a stage of social reformation. He was unique and perhaps the only man that history has ever produced to apply the concept of non-violence as a practical truth which can solve all the problems of the world for all time to come.

He sharply differed from those who advocated that violence is the normal outflow of human conduct and he established non-violence as the spontaneous value of human beings. His whole body and soul was fully saturated with the concept of truth and non-violence. To quote his own words:

"I believe myself to be saturated with Ahimsa—Nonviolence. Ahimsa and Truth are as my two lungs. I cannot live without them. But I see every moment with more and more clearness, the immense power of Ahimsa and the littleness of man. Even the forest-dweller cannot be entirely free from violence." (*Young India*, Oct. 21, 1926)

He has a firm belief that his concept of non-violence is the soul force. He has often said that all injustice and violence can be resisted by soul force alone. He has made non-violence applicable to punish his arch enemies by reforming them and mending them, not by crushing them. This he did only after drawing inferences from his ceaseless experiments of non-violence in his own life. Very often he has mentioned that the concept of non-violence cannot be applied by any man unless he prepares a background for self-purification. A man aspiring for self purification can only give a lead to non-violence into action. He has never accepted non-violence as a dogma and has warned several times against treating it as a mere prophecy. To quote Gandhiji:

"Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of Ahimsa must remain as an empty dream... self-purification, therefore, must mean in all walks of life. And purification being highly infectious purification in oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings."

This was how Gandhiji laid down the process to work out non-violence in one's own life (*The Story of My Experiments with Truth*). Gandhiji had great contempt for those who advocate non-violence as a weapon of the weak, the coward. He strongly held that the most courageous man is the competent authority to practise non-violence in all spheres of life. He has said that non-violence is not impotence nor it is powerless. It is unconquerable power. It is the distinguishing characteristic of an untrammelled spirit. It is at the root of a number of qualities such as discrimination, detachment, defiance, equalities and knowledge.

Again to quote Gandhiji:

"It is the way of the brave, not of shrinkers. Non-violence is not a cover for cowardice but it is the supreme virtue of the brave. Exercise of non-violence requires far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship. Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence. Non-violence, therefore, presupposes ability to strike. It is a conscious, deliberate restraint put upon one's desire for vengeance. But vengeance is any day superior to passive, effeminate, and helpless submission. Forgiveness is higher still. Vengeance too is weakness. The desire for vengeance comes out of fear of harm, imaginary or real. A dog barks and bites when it fears. A man who fears no one on earth would consider it too troublesome even to summon up anger against one who is vainly trying to injure him." (*Young India*, Aug. 12, 1926)

Perhaps Gandhiji was unique in the modern world to operate non-violence in solving political, social and economic problems. He has been influenced by Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau in building up his non-violence to fight out all social evils. The old concepts of war through violence was thrown away by him and he proved by his action that war can be fought and won by non-violence. It was his firm belief that unless some moral substitutes for war could be invented, humanity would probably face worldwide destruction. He had displayed Satyagraha, non-cooperation and civil disobedience as the chief weapons of his war of nonviolence. He believed that it is possible for the common man to be free from all bondages and evils only through nonviolent fight. Accordingly he organised millions of ignorant, illiterate and downtrodden people of India to fight against powerful British rule infusing in them the sense of supreme sacrifice and patriotism. This organisation bore amazing results. It had put miraculous effects on the minds of the young men. Even his terrorist opponents who had strong faith in 'violence rallied round Gandhiji by joining in his war of non-violence. Gandhiji did not wait to build up a creed first and then to take up the fight. But he started application of non-violent resistance with the help of the common man right from the beginning. The passive resistance movement which Gandhiji carried in South Africa with the help of the common people led him to glorious victory. He was confident through these experiments

that Satyagraha can wipe out the greater evils of society and ultimately Satyagraha can ignore the State power when it is at fault. When the community rises against the abuses of the State power it is called a revolution. Satyagraha can be employed to overthrow State power and establish a new order. Instances of employing non-violence on such a gigantic scale have never been practised in the history of mankind before Gandhiji came out victorious in all the Satyagraha movements. First was the All-India Non-violent non-cooperation Movement of 1920, the individual Satyagraha in which Gandhiji selected Vinobaji which paved the way for launching the 'Quit India Movement of 1942'. This concept of Satyagraha became a founded theory, after he came out victorious by ending British Rule in India. Later the modern revolutionaries and the political thinkers of the world such as Bertrand Russell, Martin Luther King, Danilo Dolchi, Rev. Muste and many others applied it to resist the State evil and oppression in their respective spheres. Martin Luther King was perhaps the only heir to Gandhiji in achieving martyrdom by following the Gandhian process of Satyagraha.

Our country is passing through an extremely critical stage. It seems as if we are all helpless creatures caught in the current which is sweeping us into the final abyss, to embrace a philosophy of despair and nihilism. The climate of violence is explosive. Frustration, discontent, unemployment, poverty, paralysed education – all are leading to the adoption of destructive means in all walks of life. The status quo full of injustice and socio-economic inequalities, is responsible for these things. Our present-day politics also has failed to reconstruct the socio-economic life and has only added to confusion and despair. The decline of public spirit in Indian politics after Gandhiji has opened the way for political degeneration. It is often observed that the heroic tradition of the independence struggle has steadily weakened. The cherished national leaders of high integrity have died or are getting old. The present politicians are merely instruments of opportunism, selfishness and parochialism and have very little ideological inhibitions. Politics based on moral values practised by Gandhiji was thrown out after independence. As politics at present is concerned with practical issues, the pressure of vested interests on the

politicians grows stronger, and thereby politics became the gateway to corruption, nepotism and communalism. This state of our country reminds us of Gandhiji who would have shown the right way to do the right things. Unless violence which has come forward under the garb of status quo is remedied by some dynamic, powerful, non-violent and peaceful means, the future of our nation would be dark. Unless such effective non-violent status quo is employed in solving national problems, our younger generation will continue to remain in despair and impatience, and that will lead to increasing their confidence in seeking any means for quick results which are of course self-defeating by nature. The effectiveness of the non-violent strategy can only give to the individual a sense of security and an opportunity for his fulfillment and can remove his helplessness. The strategy of violence to bring about socio-economic revolution is obsolete now, because technology has pushed violence out of human control. Though there have been instances in the history of revolutions that violence was primarily employed to bring about revolutions yet it failed to permanently establish new values. Violence was adopted as an instrument of evolutions because the weapons of violence were within the control of man. Especially in the revolutions of Russia, China and Cuba the conventional weapons were used. But since the invention of atomic weapons, the strategy of violence took a different turn, threatening the human civilization. Humanity is losing faith in the concept of violence, because resistance through the process of violence will automatically annihilate the victors as well as the vanquished and the whole of creation.

The above situation demands non-violence as a means of revolution should be given immediate effect. Gandhiji has always been an eye-opener in this regard. The nation must come forward to reinstate the spirit of Gandhiji ignoring its dogma and thereby save the nation from chaos and darkness.

1 Translated from Hindi by Dr. D. N. Dwivedi.

17. GANDHI'S NON-VIOLENCE

By Mr. Rene Maheu

Every great life is an exemplary struggle. Gandhi's struggle was the struggle of man's truth against the degradation, the denaturing which results from colonial status, on the one hand and from industrial civilization, on the other.

In both cases, the method of preservation and liberation is the same: non-violence, Ahimsa.

Two aspects of Gandhi's conception and practice of nonviolence must be brought out, first and foremost.

The first has to do with the relationship between nonviolence and truth. In that relationship, truth comes first, non-violence second: they are to one another as principle to consequence, as the end to the means. The absolute primacy of truth merges, in Gandhi's case, with his religion, which was his very being. He constantly repeated: "Truth is God." "It is the living embodiment of God". And therefore, he used to say, "It is the only life".

From another aspect, non-violence is the refusal to take part in, to be associated with, any attempt by force to impose as truth that which is not. If violence is the supreme sin against truth, to resist it by an opposing violence is to commit the same sin and to be, likewise, irredeemably lost.

Both aspects clearly reveal the instrumental character of non-violence as compared with the absolute of truth. And here I would quote Gandhi once more: "Ahimsa is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing truth in human relationships except through the practice of Ahimsa".

This is tantamount to saying that non-violence belongs to the world of action. Non-violence is a rule of action; it is a duty. It is the rule of action in the highest sense. Gandhi used to say, "Ahimsa is our supreme duty". For him, it was indeed truth in action.

Gandhi constantly stresses the practical character, the practical virtue of non-violence. Of himself he says: "I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist"; and again "I am indeed a practical dreamer. My dreams are not airy nothings. I want to convey my dreams into realities as far as possible." Indeed, what moralist, what politician in modern times has accomplished so much either within himself or in his country? The fact is, as he said, "the doctrine that has guided my life is not of inaction but of the highest action."

It is, of course, true that the action in question is first and foremost spiritual. But at the same time he is careful to state: "The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the rishis and saints. It is meant for the common people as well."

This is a point of cardinal importance. Herein lie Gandhi's originality and the historic importance of his example. And it is this that makes it legitimate to ask ourselves how relevant the one and the other are to the problems of our time.

Non-violence, which is the rejection of the rule of force over truth, is beyond all doubt a mental withdrawal from the world and from history, for, in fact, force derives from history and dominates the world. That is expressed in the negative prefix of the term: Ahimsa, non-violence. But to think that achievement of this mental withdrawal demands physical withdrawal of the person, is to over-simplify the problem almost to the point of caricature.

Nothing could be further from Gandhi's calling. For him it is in the world and in history that the withdrawal from the historical contamination of the world, constituted by untruth imposed as truth, must take place—and extend to the whole of society and indeed to the whole of humankind.

This idea is of immense significance. From being an individual escape from the world, possible only for the princes and heroes of the spirit—the sages and the saints—Gandhian non-violence affirms the invincible immanence in the world of the multitudes subject to force and bring about in them that awakening of consciousness that opens to them the gates of history.

Everyone knows the extraordinary success achieved by this singular method in which, for once, political skill owed nothing to hypocrisy. It won India's struggle for independence. It alone might have saved her unity by preserving her soul from religious fanaticism. Indeed it was because Gandhi might have accomplished this second liberation – more essential and more admirable than the first, for the nation would thereby have triumphed over its own demons and its own history– that fanaticism struck him down. Occurring twelve days after his last fast had put a stop to the massacres and brought peace back to Delhi, never was martyrdom more worthy to be celebrated as a witness of invincibility.

But what use is this method today?

It is true that men have not changed. Whatever may be said, they are still capable of hearing the same appeals and making the same sacrifices. Martin Luther King followed Gandhi's road to the very end.

But, if men have not changed, the problems of the oppressed although fundamentally of the same nature, are nowadays encountered in substantially different terms. I have in mind colonialism, racialism and above all underdevelopment, which, in Gandhi's lifetime, was not yet apparent in its full extent and complexity. In this instance, oppression results far less from the action taken by other, easily identifiable men than from the effect of pre-existing structures.

Even though Gandhi's ideas and practices do not appear to be applicable to the conditions of action to deal with underdevelopment, which is the great problem of our day, however, it clearly does not follow that those structural changes which, to my mind, are the very essence and purpose of that action must of necessity be brought about by violence.

The limits of the applicability of Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence—if regarded, as the ideas of great men usually are once their authors are dead, as a set of depersonalized formulae available for use by anyone for practically any purpose—become evident, it seems to me, in relation to the main problems facing the developing countries today.

But when Gandhi said, "For me, non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life." he warned us that this principle is above all a style of living and that it has no meaning save for those who are prepared to open their own lives, to surrender their own lives to it.

Nothing could be more artificial, therefore, than to reduce that doctrine to abstract ideas. Gandhi's significance is the reverse of abstract: it is the imperative of an example.

A simple but relentless imperative, so simple that it can scarcely be extracted by words from the depths of life in which it has its being; but radical tolerating nothing less than unconditional acceptance. No one is more demanding than this man who never gave an order.

What is this imperative? In the last analysis, and reduced to the simplest terms, it is the injunction never to assert *at* win one's freedom or- recognition of ones dignity by behaviour that involves coercion or contempt of the man in others, be they oppressed or oppressor.

Thus, however out of touch with contemporary problems— particularly those of the developing countries—his method may appear in some respects, Gandhi remains invincibly present in our most decisive actions and our most serious thoughts, to remind us that history is always concerned society with Man—that is to say, with justice—And that there can be no justice without mutual confidence and respect.

These, ladies and gentlemen, are some of the reflections suggested to me by the thinking of the man we are commemorating this evening. I have no doubt that all those who have consented to take part in the Symposium we are now inaugurating will go on to comment in greater detail on Gandhi's thinking, which has found so many echoes and extensions and which has so much to teach us. I am sure that they will help to spread even wider the impact of the message he bequeathed, and it is in this assurance that I now convey to them my warmest wishes for complete success in their work.

18. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By Prof. Stuart Nelson

In recent years the word non-violence has come into very wide usage but without a clear understanding of its meaning. Indeed, it has been given many meanings. For some years Gene Sharp, former researcher in the Institute for Research in Oslo, laboured on the development of a typology of non-violence. He identified nine types describing them as non-resistance, active reconciliation, moral resistance, selective non-violence, passive resistance, peaceful resistance, non-violent direct action, Satyagraha, and non-violent revolution.¹

A wide lay interpretation of the word, certainly in the Western world, is simply the absence of physical force in personal and group encounters. For many this non-elaborated version is a source of profound doubt concerning, and often in opposition to, the non-violent principle. This is unfortunate.

For Mahatma Gandhi non-violence is not a single virtue or a single quality of life; it is a congeries of qualities or virtues; it is a spirit, a way of life, a religion or, as he would say, the law of one's being. In Gandhi's moral structure, there are two basic pillars—truth and Ahimsa, that is, non-violence or, as he called it, love. Truth is the end; non-violence is the means. But the end and the means are bound irrevocably to each other, for a vision of truth is dependent upon the realization of non-violence. As truth is God, so also love is God. Love, surely, is not a single virtue; it, too, is a way of life. Gandhi considered his life one indivisible whole. "What", he asked, "was the larger 'symbiosis' that Buddha and Christ preached"? It was gentleness and love;² it was non-violence.

Let us now look at certain major qualities of life which compose non-violence as Gandhi defined it. Non-violence relates not simply to the act but to what transpires in thought and speech as well. For Gandhi hate is the subtlest form of violence. He advised, further, that one had better not speak if he cannot do

so in gentleness. He held that there is no truth in one who is unable to control his tongue.

Violence, moreover, does not simply include killing in the physical sense. Gandhi held that a man may be killed by one's deceiving him in a trade or otherwise. A devotee of non-violence cannot properly be non-violent in one of these ways and violent in the other. For Gandhi life is one. All of its modes of expression must meet a common test. For Gandhi this test was non-violence.

Gandhi's non-violence begins in the heart and a pure manifestation of it is compassion. This is a power which enables its possessor not only to see but to feel another's plight and to identify himself with it. Gandhi could understand and describe this quality because he was eminently possessed of it. At midnight of August 14, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking on the occasion of the transfer of power from the British Empire to the people of India, observed that one was not present, the Father of the Nation, who, if he could, would wipe every tear from every eye. This is the power of the heart which drove Gautama Buddha for more than forty years to walk, to preach and minister to the poor; which caused King Asoka, after the battle of Kalinga, to forswear forever the blood-letting role of conqueror.

Nowhere in our time, perhaps over the past thousand years, have men known one with a greater compassion for his fellowmen than Gandhi. When he could not give them the clothes they needed he reduced his own to the barest minimum. When the removal of untouchables' slums was beyond his power, he made his home in one. These untouchables he called Children of God and adopted one of them as his own child. He dedicated his life to the breaking of chains that bound his people to an alien nation. He died a martyr because he dared to fight the cause of a people called enemies by some members of his own religious community. The innocent child and the convict, the harmless beggar at his door and his alien oppressor all alike were the objects of his compassion. Thus he was able to say to others with regard the masses of the people : "We must first come in living touch with them, working with them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and

anticipate their wants. With the pariahs we must be pariahs and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their tables thrown at us...³

The companion of compassion is selflessness, self-renunciation. For to be compassionate one must walk beside the object of his compassion. To renounce a regard for one's body, more- Over, is the one way to make others feel safe with oneself. In fact, the capacity to sacrifice is essential to one's own freedom from fear for "He reckes not if he should lose his land, his health his life."⁴ For Gandhi the recurrent theme was "I must reduce myself to zero." Given the human situation this he achieved in the highest measure possible.

Leading India to freedom was a monumental achievement for Gandhi. If, however, freedom had never been attained leading the people by his own example to sacrifice themselves in the struggle for freedom would also have been an achievement equally great. Following his example, many entered upon the simple life, even the well-to-do. They spun and wore *khadi*,⁵ they forswore intoxicants; they embraced the lowliest, lived among them and died among them; they reduced themselves to zeros. This was selflessness, self-renunciation. This is what Gandhi called the root of non-violence.

Gandhi apologised for the use of the word 'tolerance'. His spirit was however one of deep appreciation for views that differed from his own, especially religious views. All men will never think as one, he said, and truth will always appear in fragments.

For Gandhi all religions are true and all contain some error. He said: "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my "windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible, but I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them. Mine is not a religion of the prison house, it has room for the least among God's creatures, but it is proof against the insolent pride of race, religion or colour."⁶

Here is steadfastness in one's beliefs coupled with open- mindedness to change; loyalty to one's faith without blind orthodoxy; freedom from dogmatism without unbelief.

Fearlessness is also a basic principle of non-violence. Gandhi was moulded in the great tradition of Ahimsa. He recoiled at taking life or injuring the living, even at the lowest level. He had the courage to admit that at this stage of history he saw no answer to the need for killing such insect as flies. He faced no easy decision, therefore, when a calf of his Ashram suffered pitifully from an incurable disease. Despite the horror of his followers, he put a swift end to the calf's existence. When monkeys, held sacred by the faithful, ran amuck in the Ashram grounds, destroying precious food, he offended the faithful by having the animals driven away.

For one who is being beaten by a club, it is difficult for him to understand that he must destroy the system which spawns club wielding but leave the club wielder untouched. Thus, it required for Gandhi to preach that the object of his non-violent movement in India was to destroy the English system of oppression but that not a hair of an Englishman's head should be touched.

Here, however, was a man who never wavered once his heart dictated what to him was right. He lived beyond fear.

This doctrine of fearlessness held equally in the realm of the physical and the moral. Non-violence requires the act of getting killed without killing, of facing bullets without flinching or lifting a little finger in self-defence. None should seek martyrdom, but none should fear it. One should not seek imprisonment out of bravado, but for the innocent the prison should prove a gateway to liberty and honour.

These, then, are basic qualities of Gandhian non-violence: compassion, selflessness, tolerance, fearlessness. These are elements upon which he built his version of the great moral concept of Ahimsa.

The genius of Mr. Gandhi was not simple that he held and preached these views, but that he translated them into a great movement aimed at overcoming social evils in the world. For this aspect of non-violence we use, among other terms, "non-violent resistance". He preferred Satyagraha (soul-or truth-force), for his resistance to evil must be consistent with principles of life which he held

to be basic. Satyagraha on the other hand, has its own laws always consistent; it should be said, with those of non-violence as a way of life.

In urging non-violent resistance, Gandhi very early was confronted with the problem of defining the role of conscience in the presence of the rule of law. Gandhi never discounted the seriousness of his advocacy of lawbreaking and continued throughout his years to justify it. His basic respect for law as expressed in his assurance that if a Satyagrahi appears for the moment to disobey a law and constituted authority, he would in the end prove his regard for both of these. The right to civil disobedience, he held, is born of habitual willing obedience to law, as long as it is bearable. When in conscience it becomes unbearable the citizen not only has the right but is under the obligation to disobey it. Blind obedience to law is never binding upon citizens. If their bodies belong to the State, their minds, wills, and souls "must ever remain free like birds of the air... beyond the reach of the swiftest arrow. One is reminded here of Thoreau's formulation of the principle quoted above⁷ distinguishing between bad laws which must be disobeyed and those which may not.

Mr. Gandhi's position on disobedience of the law is illustrated in his statement before a court in India on March 18, 1922. He said: "Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-cooperation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil, and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal."⁸

Supporters of the right of conscience to defy the law will be encouraged by the view of Harris Wofford, Jr., a former member of the faculties of the Howard University Law School and the University of Notre Dame Law School. He writes: "But I am arguing that under our social contract man is to be free, and that a

free man should look on each law not as a command but as a question, for implicit in each law is the alternative of obedience or of respectful civil disobedience and full acceptance of the consequences. Once men no longer believe that they as good citizens must obey any law passed by the legislatures, no matter how bad, then they must ask themselves of each law? Is this a law that I should obey? Is it a just law? Is it so unjust that it needs to be resisted from the very inception, and cannot wait the slow process of parliamentary reform? This choice we always have to make. It is the choice which makes us free."⁹

Associate Justice William O. Douglas of the United States Supreme Court reminds us of the choice of Socrates to obey the law protecting Athenian youth against "subversive" doctrines or to drink the hemlock; of Antigone's defiance of Creon's order that her brother Polynices should not be buried; of the Puritans' defiance of English sovereigns; and of Thoreau's celebrated view: "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also a prison." Mr. Justice Douglas himself says: "The choice given the individual is not to obey the law or to violate it with impunity, but to obey the law or incur the punishment for disobedience."¹⁰ In this version of the role of conscience in relation to the rule of law the non-violent resister must surely find encouragement.

Success in Satyagraha requires, according to Gandhi, two clear convictions, which at initial reading suggest a contradiction. The first is his firm belief in mass action. For years Indian leaders met, made speeches against British rule, and presented resolutions. The turning point came when Gandhi arrived on the scene and galvanized into action the almost forgotten masses. Inspired by him, thousands of women in India collected contraband salt without ill toward anyone. Thousands of farmers revolted against agrarian evils' without hate. Even when' their belief in non-violence was without intellectual framework, faith in their leaders was genuine.

There were times when the masses resorted to violence. Gandhi commented that it was manipulated by the intellectuals. He believed that the masses

properly trained could exhibit the discipline of the soldier. "My hope lies in the masses", said Gandhi, "as far as the later stages of non-cooperation are concerned."¹¹

Having said this Gandhi urged that in Satyagraha quality mattered rather than numbers. Pointing to Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed he argued that the greatest men of the world stood alone always. "Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid", he said. "The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone."¹² When the Struggle became bitter and victory distant, Gandhi declared that his confidence was unshaken in the power even of one Satyagrahi's ability to bring victory, should be held out to the end. "Indeed", he said, "One PERFECT civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong."¹³

Whatever ambiguity may appear to exist in Gandhi's idea of the importance of individual and mass contribution to successful non-violent resistance, his position on the indispensable role of integrity is crystal clear. "... a passive resister", he wrote, "has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man"¹⁴; and, elsewhere, "Satyagraha struggle is impossible without capital in the shape of character."¹⁵

Among the qualities which Mr. Gandhi regarded as essential to a successful Satyagraha were common honesty among the participants and a readiness to confess error, since it is better to appear untrue before others than to be untrue to oneself. He enjoined the scrupulous avoidance of exaggeration and of the suppression or modification of the truth even at the price of silence. Secrecy has no place in the Satyagrahi's code for his life and plans must be an open book.

Gandhi's code allowed for no compromise on fundamentals. On the other hand, he taught that, while the nonviolent resister should be ever ready to press his cause, he must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace. To fail in negotiations one should not prevent him from seizing upon another opportunity, or even making one. He wrote, "It would not do for a Satyagrahi to argue that the approach must be mutual. That assumes the existence of the spirit of Satyagraha in the authorities, whereas Satyagraha is offered in respect of those

who make no claim to be Satyagrahis. Hence the first and the last work of a satyagrahi is even to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach"¹⁶

The cardinal element in war of other violent methods inflicting injury or redressing wrong is the coercive power of the means employed. With non-violence, the purpose is to correct and not to coerce, to awaken in the wrongdoer a sense of justice. Harassment, embarrassment, or injury of any kind is to be abjured, for Satyagraha is aimed, not at a body or a will to be broken, but at a heart to be moved. The non-violent method, said Gandhi, proceeds on the principle which says, "Love those that despitefully use you."¹⁷ The purpose is not to bring an adversary to his knees, but to lift him up. To employ coercion is to deny not only the cause of non-violence but God himself.

There are times when reason is not sufficient to arouse a sense of justice to win one's rights. The hearts of men must be moved and for this only self-suffering is sufficient. In September of 1906, upon the occasion of Gandhi's first formal non-violent protest against the discriminations visited upon Indians by the South African Government, he declared-."Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I have and I have come to the fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done you must not really satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal to reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword."¹⁸

This, Mr. Gandhi believed, means no meek submission to the evil-doers, but rather the biting of one's whole soul against another's will. With such a spirit one is enabled to defy an unjust empire, to save his own integrity and to lay the ground of that empire's destruction or its regeneration.¹⁹

As the result of such a spirit the British Empire was confronted for years with a steady stream of men and women going to prison, some dying there; with thousands falling unprotesting beneath blows of the lathi²⁰ and the hail of bullets. Not only the British, but members of Gandhi's own religious community were faced with this man's entering upon fasts to the death in protest against

their acts which to him were morally unbearable. In his death he bore the ultimate testimony to his belief in the efficacy, if indeed there had been the need, of self-suffering.

Gandhi made no pretence to the authorship of a rounded philosophy, not to speak of a rounded theology. Like the Christian theologian, however, he professed a doctrine of man basic to which was his belief in the possibility of everyman's redemption. "No man", he wrote, "is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he considers to be wholly evil."²¹ He recounts that from early youth he had met human monsters, but that even these he found were not beyond redemption. With such the problem is to know how to touch the right chord. No one in this world is so fallen as to be beyond conversion by love.

It followed naturally, then, that he taught that evil should be the object of resistance and not the evil doer; that the English system was diabolical but not necessarily the Englishman; that the system must be destroyed at whatever cost, but that the hair of a single Englishman should not be touched.

This philosophy was not without its fruits. One Indian writes of Mahatma Gandhi that "His greatest and noblest achievement lay not in being able to conceive for the Britisher the lesson of Quit India, but in penetrating the soul of Britain and persuading the higher nature of the Britisher to restore to India what had long been hers."²²

General Jan Christian Smuts was responsible for Gandhi's imprisonment at one time during the South African struggle. While in prison, Gandhi made a pair of sandals for the General. At the very least General Smuts was guilty of moral weakness. But Gandhi assumed that he did possess a certain sense of honour. This fact was indeed reflected years later when the General confessed that his was the odium in those earlier years of executing law which lacks the virtue of strong public support. When in 1942 Gandhi was accused by a British authority of partnership in the sabotage of the allied struggle against Japan, General Smuts answered that this was pure nonsense and that Gandhi was one of the great men of the world.

A secretary to General Smuts, speaking to Gandhi, made the following admission: "I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness."²³

Mahatma Gandhi was confronted with the belief on the part of many—a belief still current—that the end justifies the means. With this philosophy, he took issue in spite of the fact that it had obviously shaped a great part of man's history. For him means and the end are convertible terms, and to take care of the means is to guarantee the ultimate achievement of the end.

Gandhi went even further. He said: "They say 'means are after all means'. I would say 'means are after all everything'. As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and "that too very limited) over means, none over the end- Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception."²⁴

The means Gandhi compared to a seed, the end to a tree. The conclusion, of course, is that violent means lead inevitably to a violent end. The obverse has its own reward. He felt, indeed, that it was through non-violent means that true democracy could result and he cited in this connection both the French and Russian revolutions as proofs. In the same vein, he said to me at the time of the peaceful withdrawal of English soldiers from India in 1947 that Indians might well have staged a violent revolution against the British, killing their officers. In the end, however, this would have proved different from the then peaceful transfer of power from Great Britain to India.

In 1947, when rioting between Hindus and Moslems held the city of Calcutta in its grip, the Hindus, having come to power became the aggressors. Gandhi expressed great sorrow that after so many years of his leadership his own religious community had not grasped the truth that genuine non-violence is non-violence of the strong and not of the weak, that even when one possesses

the power to overcome another violently, if he is truly non-violent, he will not use that power. This marks the difference between non-violence as a technique and non-violence as a creed or moral force. This is the distinction between Satyagraha and passive resistance as Gandhi saw and appraised it. "Passive resistance", said Gandhi's disciple Mahadev Desai, "acts negatively and suffers reluctantly and infructuously; Satyagraha acts positively and suffers with cheerfulness because from love, and makes the suffering fruitful".²⁵

In relation to non-violence Mahatma Gandhi was not an absolutist. The perfection which Gandhi taught was the perfection of striving and not of attainment, for he believed perfections to be unattainable. He saw perfect non-violence as impossible as long as we are in a physical state, as only theory like Euclid's point or a straight line. To the very end he was experimenting with truth, and throughout his career he was full of admissions of errors, "Himalayan" errors.

This eloquent and unwearying preacher of non-violence conceded that there were occasions which justified its abandonment. There are times, he said, when the taking of life becomes a duty as when we destroy life to sustain the body or in the interest of health we kill the mosquito or other disease carrier. To dispatch the lunatic who runs amuck killing everyone in his path, when there is no possibility to capturing him alive, is to earn the gratitude of the community. When a man or beast helplessly suffers the torture of slow death, when there is no means available to relieve the agony, Gandhi felt the final remedy would be to take the life.

Gandhi approached this difficult problem from a broad philosophical base, indicating that the line cannot be drawn the same for all. One needs to remember also that in the effort to discriminate at every step between violence and nonviolence there is no place for shame or cowardice. "The poet has said that the road leading up to God is for the brave, never for cowardly."

For Gandhi, decisions to participate in war did not come easily. During the First World War, at the time of the Zulu revolt and the Boer War in South Africa, Gandhi, a staunch believer in non-violence, recruited men either to the British

army or an ambulance corps. Why? Then he considered himself a citizen of the British Empire, which at that time he believed was not wholly bad. Under these circumstances he felt his duty was to offer his services to the country, then in need. He could not himself, as a believer in non-violence, shoulder a gun, but he advised those who believed in war and were under no such moral restriction that their professed loyalty to the government bound them to support it in its hour of difficulty.

These acts, Gandhi confessed, weighed only in the scales of non-violence, would have been indefensible. But, he said, life is governed by many forces, which permit none to pursue a course as if it were subject to one principle only. To practise so noble a doctrine as non-violence in a world tumultuous, passion-ridden and full of conflicting duties is a task of utmost difficulty. Thus, for him men who professed loyalty to their government and enjoyed its privileges and knew nothing of non-violence were guilty of cowardice in failing to defend their homeland by force of arms.

Gandhi went farther. Though a believer in non-violence, he conceived instances when duty would require him to- vote, for the military training of those who had no objections to it. Neither a person nor a society can be made non-violent by compulsion. Having said this and professed painful awareness of his failings, he uttered the following testimony of loyalty to his convictions: "But the light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unlitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. Would that all the acts alleged against me were found wholly indefensible rather than that by any act of mine non-violence was held to be comprised or that I was ever thought to be in favour of violence or untruth in any shape or form. Not violence, not untruth but non-violence. Truth is the law of our being."²⁶

Reference is made frequently to Mr. Gandhi's statements on the relationship of cowardice to non-violence, especially by those who believe these expressions justify the use of armed forces under certain conditions. "Nonviolence and

cowardice go ill together,"²⁷ he said. "I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. Thus when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen me killed or whether he should have used his physical force which he could and wanted to use, to defend me, I told him that it was his duty to defend me even by using violence.... I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour."²⁸

It is clear that here Gandhi does not make the choice of violence easy except in the case of one for whom cowardice appears to be the only alternative. But the choice is never only between cowardice and violence. Non-violence is also always a live option; but non-violence is for the brave. One, then- individual or nation - is justified in refusing to fight only if in his inmost convictions he knows that he would have unafraid otherwise to join battle even unto death. Then let an individual or a nation choose violence as against non-violence and cowardice, if it will, but not under the illusion of moral sanction by the apostle of non-violence.

Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence was subjected to a most searching test in 1947 when Indian troops were sent to Kashmir to repel tribal invaders from Pakistan and Gandhi approved the sending of troops. How, he was asked, could he advise Churchill, Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese to adopt non-violence and condone the use of soldiers by India. His answer lay in a decision reached by him years before, that while a believer in non-violence could not himself resort to violence in defence of anything, he would be justified in presenting no impediments to those whose lives are not governed by non-violence, if justice lies with them. He wrote: "My resistance to war does not carry me to the point of thwarting those who wish to take part in it. I reason with them. I put before them the better way and leave them to make the choice."²⁹ Moreover, he reasoned that when two parties engaged in violence, there can be distinguished a preponderance of justice on one side or the other.

Gandhi believed that whatever the accomplishments of the Indian armed forces in Kashmir, a better way would have been to send unarmed, non-violent men. There, without force of any kind, defending the country against a disciplined army of overwhelming numbers, dying if necessary at their posts, without malice or anger^ they would have, given an exhibition of heroism unknown in history, and Kashmir would have become a holy land.

Gandhi was confronted with the question of the place of non-violence once India became free. He answered that he would urge upon the new India the adoption of non-violence to the extent possible, but that, in view of the presence of so many "martial races" in India, he anticipated an inclination toward militarism of a modified version. He hoped for a strong party in India to represent the non-violent ideal and thus save from failure the years of effort to demonstrate the efficacy of non-violence in his country. He declared that under no circumstances, however, could India give nonviolent resistance a reasonable chance while maintaining complete military efficiency.

To the question as to whether a modern state based on force could resist either internal or external forces non-violently, his answer was no. A state built on non-violence, he said, could offer non-violent resistance to a world fortified with arms. Such a state was King Ashok's, and the example could be repeated.

Gandhi called himself a practical idealist and perhaps nowhere is the accuracy of this description more evident than in his creation of the "constructive programme". He was a social reformer and he saw that preaching virtue and protesting, even fighting, against evil are not enough. He perceived that a struggle for one's own rights alone will not suffice to reform society. The reformers, both leaders and those in the ranks, have themselves ways to mend toward their fellow- men. Gandhi had the courage, therefore, to say to his fellow Hindus that practitioners of untouchability were undeserving of the freedom they demanded of the British for he reasoned that Swaraj was impossible "without an indissoluble union between Hindus and Muslims in India¹".

Gandhi saw, moreover, that a great civil disobedience struggle for freedom required mass discipline. This on the other hand, he felt impossible of acquirement except through some constructive cooperative endeavour such as hand spinning and weaving to counter the buying of foreign-made cloth. Such a programme, requiring great organizing power, brings the masses together and engenders trust between leaders and those whom they lead because of their almost daily touch with each other. Thus, for Gandhi, civil disobedience was only a minor part of Satyagraha. As a loyal and perceptive follower of Gandhi wrote: "...to attempt civil disobedience without a constructive programme would be like a paralyzed hand attempting to lift a spoon".³⁰

The constructive programme organized by Gandhi was a programme of social education aimed to achieve, among other ends, religious unity, the removal of untouchability, the prohibition of strong drinks and drugs, the spread of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth, village sanitation, education through crafts, adult education, the uplift of women, love of the mother tongue, service to the aborigines, the unionization of labour.

This programme mobilized a great army of workers and inspired a dedication which would have to be witnessed to be understood. The high, the low; the poor, the rich; the learned and the illiterate united in labour, self-surrender and abnegation a level which the forces of an empire could neither ignore nor weaken.

This, then, is the story of Gandhi's concept of non-violence* It begins with life which includes not only one's acts but as well one's speech and thoughts and embodies the virtues of compassion, selflessness, forbearance, fearlessness. It dictates a way of struggle against the evil-forces in society which decries violence in any form and its accompaniment of malice. It requires dedication to the removal of society's ills as far as it lies within one's power so to do. These are the ends to which Gandhi dedicated a lifetime, not in precepts alone, nor simply in leadership of others, but in the endless striving himself to achieve what he urged upon other men. Little wonder, then, that Albert Einstein could

say that a thousand years from today men will scarcely believe that such a one as this had ever lived.

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1. *Gandhi Marg*, July, 1960, p. 247
 2. *Young India*, May 12, 1920
 3. *Harijan*, July 21, 1940, p. 214 (*Ibid.*, p. 219)
 4. *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Standard, 1954), p. 218
 5. Hand-spun and hand-woven cloth
 6. *Harijan*, May 14, 1938, p. Ill (Bose, *op. cit.* p. 36)
 7. *Young India*, March 26, 1931, p. 49 (*Ibid.*, p. 156)
 8. *Young India*, March 23, 1922, p. 168 (Bose, *op. cit.* p. 36)
 9. *Harijan*, July 15, 1939, p. 201 (*Ibid.*, p. 160)
 10. Tendulkar, Mahatma, II, 5-8. All Men Are Brothers—UNESCO, p. 104
 10. *Harijan*, August 18, 1940, p. 250. (Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase—II; Ahmedabad, 1958, 503*)
 11. R. R. Diwakar, *Satyagraha : The Power of Truth* (Hinsdale, 1948), p. 42
 12. *Ibid*, November 10, 1921, p. 362 (*Ibid.*, p. 227)
 13. *Harijan*, July, 21, 1940, p. 214 (*Ibid.*, p. 219)
 14. *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Stamford, 1954), p. 218
 15. *Harijan*, June 10, 1939, p. 153. (Gopinath Dhawan, *The Political philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmedabad, 1951), p. 154
 16. *Harijan*, May 14, 1938, p. Ill, (Bose, *op. cit.*, p. 221)
 17. *Young India*, November 5, 1931, (Kalidas Nag, *Gandhi and Tolstoy*, Patna, 1950, p. 48)
 18. *Young India*, August 11, 1920, Tagore, p. 713 (Bose, *op. cit.*, p. 159)
 19. A staff, six to eight feet long, usually made of bamboo and often capped with brass or iron.
 20. *Young India*, March 26, 1931, p. 49 (*Ibid.*, p. 156)
 21. B. Pattabhi Sitaramaiyya in *Gandhi Marg*, July 1960, p. 267

22. M. K. Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa (Stanford, 1954), p. 325
23. Young India, July 17, 1924, p. 236. (Bose, op. cit., p. 36)
24. Harijan, June 25, 1938, p. 164. (Gopinath Dhawan, The Politick Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, (Ahmedabad, 1951) p. 14
25. Young India, September 13, 1928, p. 308 (Bose, op. cit., p. 177)
26. Harijan, July 15, 1939, p. 201 (Ibid., p. 160)
27. Tendulker, Mahatma, II, 5-8 (All Men Are Brothers [Unesco], p. 104)
28. Harijan, August 1940, p. 250. (Pyarelal, Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase [Ahmedabad, 1958, p. 503.]
29. R. R. Diwakar, Satyagraha : The Power of Truth (Hinsdale, 1948, p. 42

19. GANDHIJI'S CONCEPTION OF NON-VIOLENCE

By T. K. Sudarshana

The event is ordinary, but it reflects the origin of Gandhiji's non-violent revolution. In connection with a case he was travelling by a night train in a first class compartment. At Maritz- burg in Natal a white man entered his compartment. Seeing a black man in the compartment he became furious. He got down from the compartment and brought two railway officers with him. The officers ordered him to travel in lower class. Gandhiji showed his first class ticket and pleaded for his rights. The officers, with the help of the police forced him to leave the compartment and threw out his woollen coat and suitcase. The event is ordinary because the English rulers of the time had been treating the black men of Africa and South-East Asia like animals for a long time, and the black people tolerated their tyrannies without any protest.

Gandhiji took the problem seriously. Can a weaponless and physically weak man maintain his existence before the unjust policies and behaviour of power drunk people? Is there no importance of a Man's goodness and justice? If yes, then, how can one maintain one's existence without challenging injustice? Gandhiji pondered over the problem. He stopped his journey and passed the cold night on the platform without his woollen coat and bedding. There was nobody to defend and guide him. But undeterred by the circumstances, he sought the guidance and divine power from the God present in his conscience. In the dark night, through his meditations, he found the light. The difference between the forces of justice and injustice dawned upon him. He realized that a man devowed in ignorance and darkness prefers animal instincts and violence. It is ignorance and cowardice to bow before force and accept it without resistance. Knowledge negates the instinct of violence. Gandhi found the path of duty. It consists in the elimination of the instinct of violence and the realization of knowledge by every human being. It is ignorance to give first place to the trivial and animal force of violence. In every human being there is an invisible unique power, which alone, if realized, can make life significant. Gandhiji

realized the path of life's secret and after that he followed the path throughout his life; and his life became an example of this path. This path is the way of non-violence or love. With the help of this power Gandhi, the young man of twenty-four, inspired people who had deviated from the path of duty to fight for their just rights. Neither weapons nor political manipulations were allowed. Perpetrators of injustice were not taken to be enemies. The dormant inner-power of sleeping people was awakened and thousands of men and women were so much inspired that they became ready to face injustice and tyranny with love and non-violence. Consequently the unjust people had to bow before this great force, and to a large extent the feeling of ill-will changed into the feeling of friendliness.

Non-violence is a personal means which has no visible form. Its force and its whole being is concealed in every man. Man can realize it through meditation. Only man are blessed with its cognition; other creatures are unable to do it. Even the great violent forces of the world taken together are trivial, in its comparison. The power of non-violence cannot harm anyone; but it sustains everyone. Nobody can remain enmical before it; rather it enables us to realize unity in all beings and establishes identity in them.

According to Gandhiji non-violence means not to harm or hurt anybody through one's thought, speech and action, i.e., to save creatures from pain.

Non-violence and love are synonymous words. It is that form of love which is expressed unselfishly and which aims at truth. Non-violence is a means, and its end is truth. Non-violence is the highest duty and truth is the highest end. Means continues to embrace its end. Man can control the means or Non-violence but not the end. Truth can be attained through non-violence. It is very difficult to distinguish the two.

Truth means God. The power which sustains the world and whose laws determine the course of the world is para-Brahma (Absolute). All Jivas are his parts. Our egoism prevents us from realizing it. Consequently, we are unable to recognise the power of the absolute which is invisibly always present in us. This power is the power of the self which is attained through non-violence. Love is

the manifestation of this power. Self is eternal and, therefore, love is also eternal and boundless. Violence limits it. Violence creates a cleavage between man and man and distorts love which results in war, anarchy, unemployment, hunger, etc. in the society.

What is violence? It is the activities which destroy eternal peace. Any attempt to cause pain to others through thought, speech and act is violence. Violence includes ignorance, anger, pride, self-interest, adultery, idleness, exploitation, fear, pain, cruelty, hunger, etc. These are attributes going against nature. These attributes destroy the peace of man which is necessary for a happy life. All these defects are based on forgetting the fact that in every being there is an underlying identity. Even if we are compelled to choose one of these forms of violence with a good motive, we shall find some evil in its consequence. This is why Gandhiji always put emphasis on the goodness of means. Duly good means can bring peace and happiness. Goodness with cruelty, peace by war, equality in the presence of exploitation, equality of distribution with the attitude of possession, love with anger are imaginary and false, not real.

But the society takes what is imaginary to be real and what is false to be true, and deviates from the path of peace. It is a strange situation to prepare for war and talk of world peace. The preparation for war is a manifestation of ignorance, cowardice and lack of self confidence. It is certainly strange and difficult but real to be fearless and trust one's inner power. The society takes it to be unreal because of ignorance. While constructing atomic weapons we seldom think how much suffering is increased and to what extent natural laws are disturbed.

Gandhiji's thinking of non-violence which is called Satyagraha insists on the fact that the power of the self is the absolute power. It requires two main weapons: 'Patience' and 'tolerance'. The two are complements of each other. Through them we forget our sufferings and make our love towards others lasting. It increases inner courage and confidence in us and brings us inner peace. It is impossible to bring external peace without this. Gandhiji maintained his patience, tolerance and self-confidence even in face of the enemical British

Government's unjust policies and the violent and communal tendencies prevalent in the society. Gandhiji always found the actual evidence for his ideas in some form in his own life. When Gandhiji again reached South Africa in 1896 the White people had already completed their plans to kill him. But Gandhiji not only saved himself in the most difficult situation, but having no ill-will for them he made them realize that they were against him because of wrong feelings. His tolerance and forgiveness made his thorny path easy to a great extent.

Haste is against the law of non-violence. The path of self-power is invisible and slow but one who follows it never fails. Non-violence does not lead to the victory won through a war, but it is also safe from the worst sufferings associated with the latter.

Goodness of conduct is the basis of non-violence. We use our inner power on account of it, and this power affects the inner power of others and thereby changes their heart. Violence increases violence. It is an animal instinct, entirely unfit for a man. It is like ignoring a real rose in one's possession and craving for an artificial flower.

For the purity of conduct a man has to fight within oneself. It is impossible to use one's inherent self-power without conquering the forms of violence such as anger, fear, lust, craving, etc. Tolerance, sacrifice, temperance, patience and love in the most difficult circumstances, etc. are expressions of non-violence or self-power which keep us away from ignorance and enlighten the path of reality. This is how a society attains peace and happiness. As a matter of fact history is made by a limited number of persons who have guided the world along the right path and who have played important role in the human history, not by the exhibitionists of physical and mental power. But history seldom recognizes such persons.

A man can identify violence by his mind and test it logically. But it is a sign of egoism (*aham*). Non-violence is a manifestation of the heart. It is not a product of reason, but a power achieved through self-sacrifice. The follower of non-violence does not assign first place to logic or reason. Rather, he has an

unshaken faith in the voice of his conscience and is inspired by it. Gandhiji took all his important decisions in his life on the ground of his inner voice. Being a true follower of non-violence Gandhiji could recognize voice of his conscience.

The central point of research concerning non-violence is man himself. The correct development of economics, politics, social custom, religion, civilization and culture depends on the extension of individual investigations. A believer in non-violence practises it in every act of his life. This is his investigation. He brings a revolutionary change in every aspect of his life such as food, clothing, education, medicine, entertainment, service, etc. This is called non-violent revolution. Gandhiji's 21 years of human service in South Africa and after that 32 years of different activities for human welfare in India were spent in this non-violent revolution.

Gandhiji has drawn our attention towards the coming crisis to the twentieth century. The fast industrialization and the tendency of blindly accepting the western concepts of progress reflect a turning point towards violence. In the present age we are wandering like a deer which seeks the fragrance emanating from itself. The western way of life can never lead to the goal of life. Our traditional culture shows the way towards the eternal truth. Gandhiji has shown us the right way leading to this end. If we ignore the correct prospective and imitate others, we shall annihilate ourselves. For this it is absolutely necessary to practise the ideal of nonviolence – simple life and high thinking – in our life. Only then the society can march towards true welfare and the men of the lowest class can ameliorate their lot.

It is a demand of non-violence that our life be so simple and plain that others may be least hurt by it and benefited most, and the laws of nature are left undisturbed.

Service of the neighbour has a special place in the scheme of non-violence. Man's acts are possible within certain limitations. The idea of serving distressed people of distant places cannot be a real service, but it can serve a particular selfish end. Transgression of one's limits of action is also violence. If every man takes the vow of serving one's miserable neighbour, the humanity as a whole

can achieve happiness. The concept of non-violence fit for an individual is also applicable to the family, society and nation.

20. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF AHIMSA

By V. B. Shah

THE NATURE OF NON-VIOLENCE

For Gandhiji the scope of Ahimsa covers the whole creation, and not only human life. A person who can express Ahimsa in life exercises a force superior to all the forces of brutality.

For Gandhiji Ahimsa can be used as a basis for solving every problem. He said, "I have been practising with scientific precision non-violence and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over fifty years. I have applied it in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political, I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it has seemed sometimes to have failed, I have ascribed it to my imperfections. I claim no perfection for myself. But I do claim to be a passionate seeker after Truth, which is but another name for God."

His vision was that Ahimsa's strength in every walk of life is still going to be slowly unfolded. He said, "Things undreamt of are daily being seen, the impossible is becoming possible. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence." He maintained, "Ahimsa is a science, the word 'failure*' has no place in the vocabulary of science. A failure to obtain the expected result is often the precursor to further discoveries."

And non-violence is a matter of the heart. It does not come to us through any intellectual feat. Everyone has faith in God though everyone does not know it. Everyone has faith in himself and the sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God but we are of God – even as a little drop of water is of the ocean.

One having Ahimsa must possess humility. If one has pride and egoism, there is no non-violence. "Non-violence is impossible without humility. My own experience is that whenever I have acted non-violently I have been led to it and

been sustained in it by the higher promptings of an unseen power. Through my own will I should have miserably failed."¹

It, therefore, works very subtly yet very deeply. "Nonviolence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it embedded in a malignant growth acts continuously, silently, and ceaselessly till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly, even a little of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society."²

The running thread in life is not violence but it is nonviolence. Superficially we are surrounded in life by strife and bloodshed, life living upon life. But some great seer who ages ago penetrated the centre of Truth said: It is not through strife and violence, but through non-violence that man can fulfill his destiny and his duty to his fellow creatures. It is a force which is more positive than electricity and more powerful than even other. At the centre of non-violence is a force which is self-acting.

POWER OF AHIMSA

Non-violence, to be a potent force, must begin with the mind. Non-violence of the mere body without the co-operation of the mind is non-violence of the weak, of the cowardly, and has, therefore, no potency.

Gandhiji believed in Ahimsa as the Law of creation and not of destruction. "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of the humans."³

He insisted that man must have faith in the power of Ahimsa. He said, "But our ignorance must not be made to serve the cause of disbelief in the power of these forces. Rather our ignorance is a cause for greater faith. Non-violence being the mightiest force in the world and also the most elusive in its working, it demands the greatest exercise of faith. Even as we believe in God in faith, so have we to believe in non-violence in faith."⁴

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY Vs. AHIMSA

If Ahimsa should reign Supreme in the life of an individual, it must all the more be supreme in societies. Ahimsa magnifies one's own defects and minimizes those of the opponent. It regards the mote in one's own eye as a beam, and the beam in the opponent's eye as a mote. Ahimsa should be practised both at the individual and society levels.

Gandhiji believed in the individual liberty of every unit of society through truth and non-violence. He said: "Complete independence through truth and non-violence means the independence of every unit, be it the humblest of the nation, without distinction of race, colour or creed. This independence is never exclusive. It is, therefore, wholly compatible with inter-independence within or without. Practice will always fall short of the theory, even as the drawn line falls short of the theoretical line of Euclid. Therefore, complete independence will be complete only to the extent of our approach in practice to truth and non-violence."⁵

Consciously or unconsciously, we are acting non-violently towards one another in daily life. All well-constructed societies are based on the Law of non-violence. "I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and, therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And, if that is the law of life we have to work it out in daily life. Wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love. In this crude manner, I have worked it out in my life. That does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. Only I have found that the Law of Love has answered as the Law of destruction has never done."⁶

Gandhiji had clearly realised the vast possibilities of Ahimsa and undoubtedly accepted it as the basis of all life. "I claim that even now, though the social structure is not based on a conscious acceptance of non-violence, all the world over mankind lives and men retain their possessions on the sufferance of one another. If they had not done so, only the fewest and the most ferocious would have survived. But such is not the case. Families are bound together by ties of

love, and so are groups in the so-called civilised society called nations. Only they do not recognize the supremacy of the Law of Non-violence. It follows, therefore, that they have not investigated its vast possibilities."⁷

However the question remains whether the Government can be completely non-violent. Regarding this he thought : "A Government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all the people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it."⁸ Another question is about the existence of the Government itself. Whether, in an ideal society, there should be any or no Government.' "I do not think we need worry ourselves about this at the moment. If we continue to work for such a society it will slowly come into being to an extent, such that the people can benefit by it. Euclid's line is one without breadth, but no one has so far been able to draw it and never will. All the same, it is only by keeping the ideal line in mind that we have made progress in geometry. This is true of every ideal."⁹

DEMOCRACY AND NON-VIOLENCE

By its very nature, non-violence cannot 'seize' power nor can that be its goal. *But non-violence can do more} it can effectively control and guide power without capturing the machinery of government. That is its beauty.*¹⁰

Gandhiji's ideas on democracy and non-violence, are marvelously clear and bold: "My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence." The Science of Non-violence can alone lead one to pure democracy."¹¹

True democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated Ahimsa.¹²

Democracy and violence can ill go together. The states that are today nominally democratic have either to become frankly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent. It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals.¹³

Difference of opinion is bound with life and hence should be comfortably lived with. Gandhiji said, "Differences of opinion should never mean hostility. If they did, my wife and I should be sworn enemies of one another. I do not know two persons in the world who had no difference of opinion, and as I am a follower of the *Gita*, I have always attempted to regard those who differ from me with the same affection as I have for my nearest and dearest."¹⁴

About rights and responsibilities in Ahimsa-based independence, he said: "In Swaraj based on Ahimsa, people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. There is no duty but creates a corresponding right, and those only are true rights which flow from a due performance of one's duties. Hence rights of true citizenship accrue only to those who serve the State to which they belong."¹⁵

Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society.¹⁶

Talking about police and Ahimsa he said, "Nevertheless, I have conceded that even in a non-violent State a police force may be necessary. This, I admit is a sign of my imperfect Ahimsa. I have not the courage to declare that we can carry on without police force as I have in respect of any army. Of course, I can and do envisage a state where the police will not be necessary. But whether we shall succeed in realizing it, the future alone will show."¹⁷

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Truth and non-violence are both the means and the end and given the right type of men, the legislatures can be means of achieving the concrete pursuit of truth and nonviolence. If they cannot be that, it will be our fault and not

theirs. If we have a real hold on the masses, the legislatures bound to be that and nothing else.¹⁸

PRACTISING NON-VIOLENCE

All through his life Gandhiji practised what he believed. He realised clearly how difficult it is to practise Ahimsa and said : "The way of non-violence and Truth is sharp as the razor's edge. Its practice is more than our daily food. Rightly taken, food sustains the body; rightly practised, non-violence sustains the soul. The body food we can only take in measured quantities and at stated intervals; non-violence, which is the spiritual food, we have to take in continually. I have to be conscious every moment that I am pursuing the goal, and have to examine myself in terms of that goal."¹⁹

Strange as it may appear, the fact remains that people find the easiest of things often times to be the most difficult to follow. The reason, which is responsible for our rooted prejudice that to practise pure Ahimsa is difficult. It is up to us to get rid of this incubus. The first step in this direction is firmly to resolve that all untruth and Himsa shall hereafter be taboo to us, whatever sacrifice it might seem to involve. For, the good these may seem to achieve is in appearance only, but in reality it is deadly poison. If our resolve is firm and our conviction clear, it would mean half the battle won, and the practice of these two qualities would come comparatively easy to us.²⁰

Gandhiji said that faith in God is the first prerequisite to practise Ahimsa: "Practice of non-violence also requires lot of training and faith."... If the method of violence takes plenty of training the method of non-violence takes even more training, and that training is much more difficult than the training for violence. The first essential of that training is a living faith in God. He who has a living faith in God will not do evil deeds with the name of God on his lips. He will not rely on the sword, but will rely solely on God.²¹

He further stated: "The spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on God, the Rock of Ages. If we would seek His

aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart.... We must act, even as the mango tree which droops as it bears fruit. Its grandeur lies in its majestic lowliness.²²

Cowardice, he believed, is the enemy of non-violence. He said, "I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.... But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature."²³ Fearlessness is a prerequisite for a votary on non-violence.

Gandhiji not only accepted the message of Ahimsa but applied it to the fields of social, economic and political reconstruction and demonstrated the efficacy of non-violence.

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1. *Harijan*, 28-1-1939, p. 442
 2. *Ibid.*, 12-11-1938, p. 327
 3. *Harijan*, 20-7-1953, p. 180
 4. *Ibid.*, 7-1-1939, p. 497
 5. *Constructive Programme* (1961), p. 7
 6. *Young India*, 1-10-1931, p. 286
 7. *Harijan*, 22-2-1942, p. 48
 8. *Ibid.*, 9-3-1940, p. 31
 9. *Harijan.*, 15-9-1946, p. 309
 10. *Towards New Horizons* (1959), pp. 91-92
 11. *Young India*, 30-6-1927, p. 82
 12. *Harijan*, 25-5-1931, p. 143
 13. *Ibid.*, 12-11-1938, p. 328
 14. *Young India*, 17-3-1927, p. 82
 15. *Ibid.*, 25-3-1939, p. 64

16. *Harijan*, 18-1-1943, p. 5
17. *Ibid*, 1-9-1940. p. 265
18. *Harijan*, 8-5-1937, pp. 97-98
19. *Ibid.*, 2-4-1938, p. 65
20. *Ibid.*;, 21-7-1940. p 215
21. *Harijan*, 14-5-1938, p. 110
22. *Young India*, 12-1-1921, p. 13
23. *Ibid.*, 11-8-1920, p. 3

21. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

By V. P. Gaur

Gandhian concept of non-violence is a unique contribution to political thought. Non-violence was also preached in the past ages. It is true that whenever there was a violent war, whether in the days of the Mahabharata or in the twentieth century there had been a general feeling of hatred towards it later on.

Gandhiji did not intend to propound a fixed dogma or creed. "There is as yet nothing like Gandhism."¹ says J. B. Kripalani. However, there is a Gandhian way and outlook. His life itself was an experiment with truth. He was a practical man whose idealism was directly related with the real problem of life. He said, "I do not claim to have originated any new principle. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems."²

There is a Gandhian way of life based on certain basic principles and techniques which can solve national and international problems. Love and truth are fundamental to his concept of non-violence. He says, the only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa...³ The idea and practice of Satyagraha constitute the heart and soul of Gandhiji's belief in non-violence. This is the practical side of his non-violence. Gandhiji believed, "Satyagraha to be the greatest means of educating the public and awakening the people".⁴ There is no scope for force and compulsion in his non-violence because it ". . . is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion."⁵

He never compromised with evil and injustice and wherever they existed, he waged an all out war against them. He believed, "There is no such thing as defeat or despair in the dictionary of a man who bases his life on truth and non-violence."⁶ He vehemently but non-violently opposed suppression by the Government and exploitation of the downtrodden by the well-to-do in the society.

In a non-violent struggle success can be achieved only by truthful means. Truth exists while untruth does not. "If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory

is out of the question. And truth being that which can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of Satyagraha in a nutshell."⁷

He interpreted Ahimsa in his own way. He says, "Ahimsa is a science. The word failure has no place in the vocabulary of science."⁸ Ahimsa normally conveys a negative meaning, i.e., absence of killing but it has a positive meaning also under which one loves one's fellow beings.

Ahimsa implies sacrifice, love and kindness of the highest order. If Ahimsa is to be successfully used, there should be faith in God and abundance of love towards others. Gandhiji was sure that the governing force of the whole universe is love because, despite destruction, life continues. Hatred is the greatest factor responsible for destruction.

For Gandhiji the true test of violence is the intention behind it. If the intention is noble, an act appearing to be violent is not so according to him. Thus when some living being is destroyed to bring out his welfare, it is not violence. He said, "Should my child be attacked by rabies and there was no helpful remedy to relieve his agony, I would consider it my duty to take his life."⁹

Non-violence does not mean that one should meekly submit to the will of the evil-doer. It is a confrontation between the will of the non-violent Satyagrahi and that of the tyrant. Gandhiji had great faith in the essential goodness of human nature. The effort of the follower of non-violence is to bring about a feeling or repentance in the evil-doer.

Gandhiji puts non-violence in three categories. The first and the highest category of non-violence is of the brave or the courageous. He says, "... Non-violence and non-cooperation are the two wheels of the chariot. And taken together they require the greatest courage and sacrifice in their votaries."¹⁰ So enlightened non-violence is of the highest category which is followed by one due to firm conviction and also due to one's high moral stature under which the path of violence is completely irrelevant.

In the next category non-violence is followed due to some emergent situation and helplessness or because it is advantageous. Here it is followed due to

expediency. It is the nonviolence of the weak. Under it there is no moral conviction about the efficiency or utility of non-violence but one rejects violence due to weakness. Under this also good results can be obtained to a certain extent if sufficient use of courage is made. Non-violence as a policy fails if it is followed in a cowardly manner.

The third category of non-violence is of the lowest variety. This is followed due to fear and cowardice. Fear and love do not go together and hence, "Cowardice and Ahimsa do not go together any more than water and fire."¹¹ If a choice is to be made between violence and cowardice, "...it is better to be violent."¹² It is impossible to train a person in nonviolence if he fears death and does not know how to resist evil. One must learn to destroy oneself in the face of a very powerful enemy who wants to overwhelm him by great physical force. No weak and cowardly person can be allowed to hide his powerlessness in the name of non-violence.

It was against his creed of non-violence to take advantage of the opponent's difficulties. He believed that the path of non-violence should be pursued in such a way as converts the opponent. To him, "Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good."¹³

He firmly believed that for the success or the possibility of existence of the non-violent system there should be no haves and have-nots in society. He writes, "A non-violent system of Government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists."¹⁴ The rich should practise the habit of gradual dispossession for the benefit of the poor, otherwise as Gandhiji says, "A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power, that riches give..."¹⁵

The pursuit of non-violence requires only the will in a person not to kill and the absence of the feeling of revenge. A truly non-violent person will be highly tolerant of the greatest opposition. He requires greater courage than a soldier fighting on the battle front. Non-violence requires courage of meeting death

without being tempted to kill others. One who cannot follow it must kill and get killed, if necessary.

Non-violence is natural while violence is unnatural. For perfect non-violence, Gandhiji insisted upon a close connection between the means and the ends. He writes, "... As the means so the ends. There is no wall of separation between means and ends, indeed the creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the ends."¹⁶ Both the means and the ends should be pure. He rejects the communist Doctrine that ends justify the means for he says, "...Only change brought about in our political condition by pure means, that is by peaceful and legitimate means can lead us to real progress."¹⁷ He revolutionised politics by emphasising the purity of the means. He maintained an organic unity between the ends and the means. He firmly believed that violence led to greater violence as was amply manifested in the two world wars.

He believed that the state is based upon violence due to its compulsive nature exhibited through a vast network of bureaucratic organization equipped with instruments of oppression and suppression. He thought that the state killed individuality and thus hindered progress. Later on he made some concession by mentioning that if the state was to be there it should be non-violent. His belief that the state is based upon violence cannot be supported wholly. Without an organised state no individual can develop his personality. Gandhiji, like Tolstoy believes that a new civilization is needed from where greed, hatred and lust for power are removed for ever.

Gandhiji held that the non-violent society should be decentralized economically and politically. Centralization of functions and non-violence cannot go together. Centralization involves the use of force and imposition of restrictions on individual liberty. Under a decentralized system, the village communities should be.... independent possessing economic and political power. He wanted to encourage cottage industries by the abolition of large-scale industries. He thought that the centralized industrial system was responsible for a great deal of violence in society. Colonialism, imperialism and international rivalry are the

results of the centralized system. He felt that to introduce the principles of non-violence and Truth in the economic sphere and to do away with exploitation, decentralization of state functions was very necessary.

It is doubtful whether in the present times of advanced science and technology where large-scale production and division of labour are the basic features, cottage industries can be introduced on a large scale. But this is a fact that Gandhiji gave an answer to the baffling problems of the modern world. Gandhiji tried to make the use of non-violence universal. He has shown to humanity that non-violence is the strongest and the most refined weapon, which can be used by anybody. Gandhiji in his concept of non-violence propounded one of the greatest political philosophies. He wrote, "Ahimsa is one of the world's great principles which no power on earth can wipe out. Thousands like myself may die to vindicate the ideal but Ahimsa will never die. And the gospel of "Ahimsa can be spread only through believers dying for the cause".¹⁸

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1. J. B. Kripalani, *The Gandhian Way*, Bombay, 1938, p. 162
 2. M. K. Gandhi, *Hindu Dharma*, Ahmedabad, 1950, p. 3
 3. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Ahmedabad, 1929, p. 370
 4. *Harijan*, October 30, 1949, p. 293
 5. *Ibid.*, July 8, 1939, p. 193
 6. *Young India*, December 31, 1931, p. 426
 7. M. K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Madras, 1928, p. 433
 8. *Harijan*, May 6, 1939, p. 113
 9. *Young India* II, p. 978
 10. M. K. Gandhi, *Non-violence in Peace and War*, Vol. I, Ahmedabad, 1942, p. 545
 11. *Harijan*, November 4, 1939, p. 331
 12. *Ibid.*, October 21, 1939, p. 310
 13. Pyarelal, *A Pilgrimage for Peace*, Ahmedabad, 1950, Appendix, p. 203

14. M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme*, Ahmedabad, 1948, p. 21
15. 15 N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, Ahmedabad, 1948, p. 78
16. *Ibid.*, p. 37
17. M. K. Gandhi, *Gokhale—My Political Guru*, Ahmedabad, 1955, p. 50
18. *Harijan*, May 19, 1946 p. 140

22. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE: SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By V. V. Ramana Murti

The nature of non-violence was repeatedly made clear by Mahatma Gandhi by contrasting it with the familiar modes of social action. For instance, non-action was never the meaning of Gandhian non-violence. As Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* of March 14, 1936, "In spite of the negative particle 'non' it is no negative force."¹ Non-violence was not a negative concept at all. "It is the greatest and the activist force in the world" as Gandhi reiterates.²

If non-violence was not inaction, it was not violent action either. And the technique of violent action, of one kind or another, would not serve the purpose of Gandhi. Referring to the methods of the terrorists who believed in the cult of political violence in the Indian nationalist movement, Gandhi points out that violence would not be able to bring about independence. In the course of a memorable dialogue in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi argued that the attainment of the "Home Rule for India" could not be obtained by "force of arms", and violence would be injurious to the cause of freedom.³

Another cardinal characteristic in Gandhi's non-violence was that it was not to be confined to the domain of the personal ethic alone. Non-violence or its equivalent was not unknown to the prophets and philosophers before Gandhi in the history of mankind, but they mostly limited its pursuit to the individual life in general. It was Gandhi's distinctive contribution to non-violence that he applied it vigorously in the secular realm, and, thereby, extended the scope of non-violent action to cover the political, economic and social regeneration.

Non-violence, as Gandhi visualised it, must emerge as a working law of life, permeating all its aspects. Writing in *Harijan* of February 11, 1939, Gandhi observes:

"I devote my energy to the propagation of non-violence as the law of our life – individual, social, political, national and international."⁴

Among these manifestations of non-violence, the social aspect is decidedly more basic and ultimately much more decisive.

The primacy of society was a pre-eminent value in Gandhi's life-mission of non-violence. Between the state and the society, Gandhi would accept the state as of necessity, but he had held a higher allegiance to the realm of society. What Gandhi was engaged in was a compulsive politics, but what he would choose willingly was social reform. In this respect, the Gandhian view-point had been significantly enshrined in the "testament" of Ernest Barker who stated his greater faith in the working of society, as compared to the state, in his writings.⁵

And Gandhi was interested in social reform long before he was drawn to political work. His epoch-making struggle against the evil of untouchability made John Haynes Holmes of the Community Church, New York, to compare Gandhi with Abraham Lincoln.⁶ Gandhi's characteristic weapon of Satyagraha was inseparable from his ideal social order Sarvodaya. They were both discovered by Gandhi about the same time, and he did not at any time, prefer one to the other. Gandhi always urged that social reform and political struggle must go together. In fact, if Gandhi stressed any one more frequently, it was the imperative of social change. The implications of Gandhian thought on this subject are of fundamental importance, and they need to be discussed in the light of the contemporary social crisis.

NON-VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT

From the view-point of social change, there is no problem that is more basic than of "conflict situation". As Joan Bondurant rightly points out in her preface to the valuable study of Gandhi's non-violent technique, "the problem of human conflict is perhaps the most fundamental problem of all time".⁷ And it has acquired now an element of urgency in view of the increasing dimensions of violence in the nuclear age.

If the question of conflict is of foremost significance to social change, it is of no less relevance to Gandhi, and his very technique and thought. Gandhi was always susceptible to the conflict-situation. What Gandhi always rejected was not conflict, but violence as the only means of resolving it. It will be a complete misnomer if we regard Gandhian nonviolence as naturally disinclined towards conflict. In fact, non-violence and conflict are inseparable in Gandhi's view. Arne Naess describes Gandhi's character aptly when he writes:

"Gandhi always gravitated towards the center of a conflict – A *Karmayogi* does not isolate himself from a struggle; he remains at the very heart of it, immersed in the conflicts of his fellow men as one among men. From the center of the struggle he tries to bring about a general reduction of violence, instead of avoiding it himself."⁸

The technique of Satyagraha was devised by Gandhi for the specific purpose of solving the conflict through the means of non-violence. It was Gandhi's conviction that violence would aggravate the conflict out of all proportions. Non-violence was, therefore, an alternative to violence in resolving the conflict.

The genesis of the Satyagraha movement in South Africa was actually to be found in a fateful encounter of Gandhi with the racial discrimination of the government at Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, in 1893 soon after his arrival from India. Gandhi was pushed out of a first class compartment by a white official at the railway station of Maritzburg on his way from Durban to Pretoria even though he was in possession of a first class ticket. He was forcibly taken to the waiting room where he had to stay under humiliating circumstance. As Gandhi wrote in his *Autobiography* :

"I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults...? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial—only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process."⁹

Thus Gandhi faced the conflict, in the first instance, personally, and subsequently, with the other Indians on a collective scale. His choice was never to escape from conflict or avoid it, but squarely to accept its challenge within the framework of non-violence.'

This was only one of the several alternatives before Gandhi in South Africa. He could have returned to India, but it would mean "cowardice" which he disowned and condemned in no uncertain terms. If he had accepted the insult, it would mean his tolerance of injustice. And this would be contrary to Gandhi's sense of justice and his value of truth. Gandhi also could not remain inactive on any account as inaction was alien to his nature. So, Gandhi distinguished the evil from the evil-doer in a social sense, and he decided to conduct a non-violent movement of Satyagraha against the evil system of racial discrimination in South Africa. When a Christian Missionary, John Mott asked Gandhi in India to name the "most creative experiences" of his life, Gandhi related his experience at the Maritzburg station in 1893.¹⁰ Gandhi added in his reply to Mott that his "active non-violence began from that day."¹¹ What Gandhi was referring to in this connection was "social" or "collective" non-violence that was the basis of Satyagraha.

The theory and practice of Satyagraha represent Gandhi's approach to conflict. His great contribution to the resolution of conflicts consists in his systematic adoption of non-violence as a potential technique of dealing with them. Gandhi never denies the existence of conflict in the social order. His nonviolence is especially conditioned by him to solve all conflicts.

CONFLICT-RESOLUTION AND NON-VIOLENT CREATIVE TENSION

The chief implications, resulting from the interaction between conflict and non-violence, may be examined at this juncture. As Gandhi said repeatedly, non-violence is never to be equated with inaction or violent-action. On the other hand, it emerges in the Gandhian technique as a most dynamic form of action. The most notable feature of this action is manifest in the form of non-violent direct action. It is basically different from either violent action or legal

action. Since non-violence has to project itself as a technique of direct action in relation to the conflict- situation, it must necessarily avoid inaction, and also bring about the resolution of conflict by its own means of direct action. It is the cumulative consideration of these factors that gives rise to, what Martin Luther King calls, "creative tension".

Non-violent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such 'a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.... My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of a nonviolent resister may sound rather shocking.... I am not afraid of the word "tension". I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, non-violent tension which is necessary for growth.¹²

The concept of creative tension is implicit in the nonviolent technique of Gandhi, but it was significantly articulated and evolved by Martin Luther King in his epoch-making application of the Gandhian non-violence to the cause of the American Negroes- In historical retrospect, the non-violent technique of Gandhi could be regarded as containing the genesis of a creative tension. Its distinctive use by Gandhi in the Indian nationalist movement was especially in evidence in the Salt Satyagraha in 1930-31. In this movement, Gandhi chose the 'Salt-tax' as the basic point, around which the civil disobedience campaign centred round. Gandhi's Dandi March and his breaking the Salt-tax laws in a dramatic manner did precipitate a non-violent tension.¹³ And it was remarkably sustained by the following events in the Salt Satyagraha which altogether released an unprecedented degree of national consciousness in India. Creative tension is the most notable dimension of the non-violent technique.

The concept of social change is probably better understood if there is a distinction between *conflict* and *tension*. They are both the sources of group-conflict, but their working is substantially different. A tension, though it involves the genesis of a conflict, is still in its initial stage. The tension becomes a potential conflict if the latent causes of group-conflict within it are not completely resolved. In the language of Ernest Barker, a 'tension' is healthy as it is normal, and it is indispensable for the growth of either the individual

personality or the social groups.¹⁴ Barker even speaks of 'tension' as a 'pull' which is neither complex nor unusual, but wholly a thing of the normal pattern of life.

The Gandhian concept of social change seeks to reduce the 'conflict' to the level of 'tension', where it is more susceptible to a non-violent resolution. By maintaining the conflict- situation within the framework of a tension, Satyagraha turns conflict into a 'creative tension' which is a necessary part of the non-violent technique.¹⁵ The Gandhian theory of social change is especially notable for making non-violence a technique of communication for resolving group-conflicts.

GANDHIAN SOCIAL ORDER

Having stated the main principle of the Gandhian concept of social change, and its chief implications, we may now mention the significant aspects of the non-violent social order as they were propounded by Gandhi. His social ideas were as radical as his political ones, and their relevance to the contemporary scene is equally undeniable.

Social philosophies that usually proclaim the necessity of collectivist endeavour, tend to undermine the significance of the individual. In the process of social reconstruction and its vicarious demands, the individuality is often a casualty. In Gandhi's social order, the individual still remains sovereign. But the 'individual' of which Gandhi is concerned is essentially a moral entity, capable of individual reform as a precondition to all collective progress. The individual-society dilemma is resolved in Gandhi's world-view of non-violence.

Another aspect of great relevance to the Gandhian social re-construction was his incessant stress on the need for constructive work. In Gandhi's view, constructive workers are to serve as a corrective to the political programme of the nation.

They constitute a non-political force, supplementing and sustaining the political core of any great movement. The constructive programme was evolved

by Gandhi as an indispensable basis to enlarge and enrich the given political movement.

All these ideas of the non-violent social change culminate in the central concept of Sarvodaya which Gandhi himself translated as the 'Welfare of All'. This thought of Gandhi, which seeks the 'Welfare of All*', is different from the utilitarian prescription of 'greatest good of the greatest number*'. In a revealing article, "The Greatest Good of All" in *Young India* of December 9, 1926 Gandhi writes :

"The fact is that a votary of Ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realise the ideal.... The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greater number, and therefore, he and the utilitarian will converge at many points in their career but there does come a time when they must part company, and even work in opposite directions."¹⁶

The dogma of numbers, which weighed heavily with the utilitarian philosophers, was alien to Gandhi's non-violence.

Nevertheless, Gandhi's discovery of 'Unto this Last' was of momentous significance in the history of the democratic upsurge of man. Earlier concepts in the political theory, which began with the sovereignty of limited numbers, gradually covered the ever-increasing domain of the many, and many more numbers. The evolution of the numerical notion of democracy was significant in this respect. Thus, the numerical theory which was upheld by Locks in his majoritarian democracy and Bentham in his greatest-number formula in the earlier times, reached its logical culmination in Gandhi who sought the welfare of all.

Finally, the most important basis of Gandhian social order was non-violence. A society based upon violence would threaten all human values. Gandhi would therefore urge upon building the social order on the foundation of non-violence. As Gandhi says, "Ahimsa is a comprehensive principle."¹⁷ Therefore, non-violence must permeate all avenues of life, including the social. The Non-violence of Gandhi is an integral principle, and it is not to be confined to

isolated acts or narrow compartments of human life. Non-violence must, therefore, remain the inevitable foundation of the social order.

CONTEMPORARY REVIEW

Social change by means of violence may be brought about more quickly, and perhaps, more easily too. But it is doubtful if it will last long or solve all the problems. History is replete with enough experience to disprove the futility of violent changes. And violence creates more problems than it solves. Therefore, non-violence remains the only viable alternative to violence as a method of social change.

Contemporary recourse to violence, especially in the Indian context, is more a symptom than a cause. The growing trend of Naxalism at the present juncture needs to be searchingly analysed from the viewpoint of social injustice, economic exploitation and political instability. The larger objectives of Naxalite extremism are not in dispute, but its specific technique of organized violence is subject to doubt. And the effective remedy to this kind of violence is not counter-violence, but renewed non-violence.

Today, the question of social change cannot be isolated from the inescapable developments in the technological order. Recent advancement of nuclear technology has placed before mankind unlimited potentialities of mass destruction. In this context, the problem of 'change' acquires a global dimension in the nuclear age. There is no solution to this universal problem through violence. In the prophetic words of Martin Luther King, whom Luis Fischer hailed as *Gandhi of America*: "Today the choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either non-violence or non-existence."¹⁸

The most relevant issue of social change is thus interrelated to the technique of non-violence. The Gandhian method of social change does fulfill its basic requirements. As Martin Luther King observed in his speech on December 10, 1964, accepting the Nobel Award for Peace:

"Civilization and violence are antithetical concepts. The Negroes of the United States, following the people" of India, have demonstrated that non-violence is... a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation. Sooner or later, all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace... man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation."¹⁹

This is precisely the method of non-violence which Gandhi offers as an enduring alternative for social change.

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1. M. K. Gandhi, *Non-violence in Peace and War*, Vol. I (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1948) p. 113
 2. *Ibid.*
 3. M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Ride*, (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1958), p. 97
 4. M. K. Gandhi, *Non-violence in Peace and War*, Vol. I, p. 199
 5. See Ernest Barker, *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 284
 6. Cited in *My Non-violence in Politics*, (Delhi: Frank Bros., 1958), p. 195
 7. Joan Bondurant, *The Conquest of Violence—The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict*, (Bombay : Oxford University Press, 1959), p. vii
 8. Arne Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, (New Jersey : The Bedminster Press, 1965), p. 39
 9. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments With Truth*, (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1945), p. 141
 10. Cited in Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931). p. 56
 11. See D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma—Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. I, (Bombay :The Times of India Press, 1951), p. 44
 12. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Cdn't Wait*, (New York : The New American Library, 1964), p. 79
 13. See Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 293-94
 14. See Ernest Barker, *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, p. 278
 15. 15 See *Gandhian Outlook and Techniques*, (New Delhi: Government of India, 1958), pp. 58-59

16. 16 See my *Gandhi : Essential Writings*, (New Delhi : Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1970), p. 349
17. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments unth Truth*. (Ahmedabad : Navajivan Publishing House, 1948), p. 427
18. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 201
19. 19 See in Nissim Ezekiel (ed.), *A Martin Luther King Reager*, (Bombay Popular Prakashan, 1969), pp. 163-64.

23. SOCIAL CHANGE AND NON-VIOLENCE

By Yadunath Thatte

Full implications of the word non-violence or Ahimsa are, I am afraid, not taken into consideration, when that word is being used. Ahimsa or non-violence is not non-killing only, however, non-killing may form a part of it. But killing by compassion in exceptional circumstances has been permitted as in the case of a suffering calf in the Gandhi Ashram. Ahimsa implies creativity. One who knows pangs and joy of creation, will always hesitate to destroy. A nation which gives very little or no scope for creativity may talk of non-violence and even adhere to the principle of non-killing but still may not be non-violent nation. A nation that suppresses all forms of creativity either by physical force or by psychological methods is really not non-violent. In UNESCO Courier Special Number on 'Youth 1969', the subject of psychological violence has been specially mentioned and the implications thereof have been clearly pointed out. The society which does not permit creative faculties of its individuals is, one way or the other, a violent society and unfortunately most of the societies in the world in general and the developing nations in particular are violent societies. Such societies are rigid and reluctant to change. Violent movements may put stresses and strains on the rigid frame, but in design the constituents remain unchanged. This is what most of the political parties and systems have been vainly trying.

Gandhiji conceived Ahimsa in a positive way that is a creative way and hence his stress was more on creative side of it, than that on more non-killing. He visualised the whole spectrum of constructive work to give opportunity to the creativity of individuals. He expected every individual to be involved in some creative activity to be non-violent. He knew full well that physical non-killing may end in a static society that is a decaying society. He wanted the society to be dynamic and growing. The growth he visualised was not parasitic, but an organic one. Such organic growth is possible only when each individual cell grows and helps the total growth. External and outwardly change never

satisfied Gandhiji. He has approached the problem of social change in a creative and basic way, a non-violent way.

Let us now try to understand his attitude towards social change. As far as India is concerned the following four sentences could be taken as the four pillars of social change of his concept:

- 1) India dwells in villages.
- 2) Mass contact through constructive work is needed.
- 3) Fulfillment of constructive work is Swaraj.
- 4) I too am a socialist, but my socialism begins with the first convert.

Gandhiji was probably the first Indian leader who clearly understood the full dimensions of what social change in India means. Unless the change is able to sweep the rural population, no change would be a real change, because over three-quarters of Indian population is rural population and the change that doesn't concern itself with the communal-minded fatality oriented, tradition ridden rural population, cannot be called social change in the real sense of the term. The bulk in rural area is negligent of the secular life and hence is unjust. A small group wielding power in rural India is in conspiracy against the common people. Gandhiji wanted the city-clad patriots to understand this state of affairs and then and then only they would be able to work out a plan of social change. Here he differs from the contemporary reformers who touched the fringe of the problem. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, though touched the lower strata of the society, the society was more or less urban one, Maharshi Karve catered the problem of the upper castes. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had roots in rural area, but he limited, or was required to limit his reforms to the untouchables in general and Mahars in particular. The first man who tried to encompass the bulk of rural areas was Mahatma Gandhi! Gandhiji knew the implications of social change, which to him could only be approached in a creative manner. The social change if it took place through violence, he knew, would eat away its own cubs! Violence cannot be the means which a majority of the people will be able to use. If violence is accepted then a small group of people snatches

away the fruits of revolution and a new privileged class comes into existence and as an establishment, opposes all efforts of social change. Gandhiji wanted the social revolution to be effected through the efforts of the bulk of the common men and hence he told the people that India dwells in villages. Thus he was a revolutionary with difference.

Gandhiji knew the limitations of language. Language is very feeble and erring vehicle for communication. The urban people have faith in orations which have been falsified by them through ages. A country where the Mantra—'*Aham Brahmasmi-Tattavamasi*'—of old scriptures, was chanted every day as a routine, could retain untouchability for centuries! A country where people wanted to make the whole world 'Arya' could keep thousands of their aboriginal brethren out of their cultural fold without slightest shame. Due to this state of affairs words have lost all relevance as a medium of deeper and true communication. So Gandhiji wanted the masses to be contacted through some constructive that is creative medium. The words must be deeds, then and then only communication leading to social change could be established. The traditional signs of words could only be decodified through creative work. Constructive work only could recreate faith in the masses, who have been conspired against, through centuries by the upper castes, who were self-chosen 'Mukhas' of the God! Without mass contact through constructive work communication is also not possible, leave alone the social change.

Gandhiji knew very well that the cause of stagnation of our society is some vital shortcomings in the life of -the people. He felt that lust for Swaraj without fulfilling the social obligations, will lead to corrupt life. He wanted the society to realise that one reaps what one sows. If this is realised, fulfillment of social obligations will result in social change, which is freedom for a country in subjugation.

There was a great controversy in Maharashtra about the priorities in national life. Shri Ranade, Gokhale and others wanted social revolution to be given priority over national salvation. They said our bondage is the result of social evils and removal of the social evils will result in Swaraj. Lokmanya Tilak was

advocating political freedom as precondition of social change. Gandhiji synthesised both these viewpoints. He prescribed constructive work as a means of national salvation. His thought of unity of means and ends is responsible for this. Creative approach was the very soul of his thinking.

The socialist take themselves to be the sole contractors of social change. They always speak of social change from the housetops. But they think that power is the only means of bringing about social change. They always think in terms of power. Their faith is unshaken even after the failures of the power machine in their hands. Milovan Djilas, the communist leader and thinker of Yugoslavia, has spoken in so many words, of the shortcomings of the communist or violent revolution, which resulted in a 'new class' in place of a egalitarian society, which was the very purpose of the communist revolution. Gandhiji was frequently asked, whether he was a socialist. Once he told the questioner, "Yes. I too am a socialist, but my socialism begins with the first convert!" The idea of first convert puts him apart from the rest of the socialist revolutionaries, as well as from the traditional saints. The socialist revolutionaries are mentally prepared to succumb to the revolution, but are not prepared to bring about change voluntarily. The talk, without any change whatsoever in their lives, does not create faith in the community, nor do they inspire others to be revolutionaries. When one fails to inspire one conspires! Gandhiji proved his conviction to others by revolutionising his own life. But he was different from the saints, because he did not consider that to be the end, as most of the saints did. He said that revolution in one's own life is the beginning but it will be complete only when the society also changes itself. People mostly overlook this wide implication of his utterance.

I feel, if we take all the four sentences together and try to understand the full implications of it, we may find a right path for non-violent that is creative social change. Though this appears to be a lengthy process, there is no short cut to permanent social change. You cannot sacrifice permanency for rapidity, because what you achieve rapidly is likely to lose its lustre soon.

24. NON-VIOLENCE AND RAPIDITY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

By Dr. G. S. Herbert

INTRODUCTION

Society is a group of individuals living together. Society may be small as a family or big as a nation. Man by instinct is gregarious and seeks the company of his fellowmen. Man by nature is social.

Every individual contributes his share to the structure and functioning of society. Society in turn provides for the individual such requirements as he cannot obtain by himself. As a matter of fact "it is obvious, the full potentialities of a man can only be realized in friendly cooperative contact with his fellows"¹, "Society is necessary to men in order that they may be men."² There are thus interaction and interdependence between the individual and society as a result of which both profit.

SOCIAL CHANGE

Any society undergoes change constantly. No society is stagnant. A static society is a dead society. For example, the 'family' has undergone a lot of transformation and continues to change with regard to its structure and function.

"Human society is a ceaseless growth." Social change is a fact which is necessitated by several factors - economic, political and by the advancement of scientific knowledge. What appears to be just at one period of history would be unjust at another period. When we think of social change, we usually think of getting rid of evil and injustice existing in society. The evils of society are written on the walls. They are admitted by a great many. Yet it does not seem to be an easy task to bring about a change. This is so specially where the evil is rooted deep in the traditions of the society, and may have even a religious sanction. It is hard to break tradition as society itself is a consequence of tradition and is ridden by tradition. However we find that an evil society decays

because of the very evil giving rise to a new order of society. The treatment meted out to the Harijans illustrates this point. "Several such old conditions were borne in patience because the former generations of the poor took them to be more or less preordained and inevitable, and therefore necessary and even just. The modern ideas of justice, equality and the rights of man and the advances of physical sciences and technology have demonstrated that hard conditions of life need not be inevitable or necessary. They are altogether unjust. The old loyalties that made things bearable have broken down."³

METHODS

There are obviously two ways of bringing about social change: (i) by using violence; and (ii) by the method of non-violence.

Mankind is familiar with the method of violence. Violence compels a person to do a particular act and to behave in a particular manner. Violence forces a person to conduct himself according to the dictates which come from a source external to him, and an individual must obey them failing which he would suffer punishment. It is this fear of punishment and fear of society that guide the individual's behaviour when violence is used. But whenever it is possible to escape the notice of society and the punishment, the individual would act in his own way. This is so because the individual is not convinced but compelled to act under the threat of violence.

Non-violence is the method of passive resistance. Gandhi writes, "Passive resistance is an all-sided sword; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood it produces far-reaching results."⁴ The application of this method consists in resisting evil and injustice by non-cooperation. "The scientific use of the nonviolent techniques otherwise called Satyagraha, to establish truth and fight evil and injustice in the affairs of man, is his (Gandhi's) highest contribution to social dynamics."⁵ In the method of non-violence one's conduct is governed by the dictates of one's conscience and convictions. One does not do a wrong thing for it is unjust to do it. The individual may be punished for his conduct. No attempt is made to escape the

punishment. On the other hand punishment is faced and suffered willingly. An individual gets the satisfaction of a martyr in doing so.

Further the method of non-violence has a positive aspect of love for the opponent. "Gandhi's method brings into play the higher and nobler forces of evolving man and works through the constructive powers of love."⁶ A non-violent fighter does not hate the enemy and does not try to defeat him. He loves the enemy and tries to win him over by transforming him. In a non-violent struggle there is no victor and there is no vanquished. "There is no such thing as defeat in non-violence. The end of violence is surest defeat."⁷ The end of a non-violent struggle will find men living together with the bonds of love doing that which is just and eschewing that which is evil. The enemy is won over by transforming his heart. "In the application of the method of non-violence one must believe in the possibility of any person, however depraved, being reformed."⁸ The opponent is changed by love. It is not force or compulsion but love which is at work in the nonviolent method.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND LEGISLATION

Let us consider a few examples. Drinking is an evil. Prohibition is enacted as a law by legislation. In a democratic type of government, leaders of the party in power can make any legislative act by issuing a whip. "The state" according to Gandhi, "represents violence in a concentrated and organized form."⁹ The state after making a law makes use of all its authority and power to enforce it. The state uses force and compels people to observe prohibition. The result is disastrous. People have not given up drinking. The liquor shops have gone underground, and people drink all sorts of stuff secretly. Thus legislation is a failure.

Yet another example of the failure of social legislation is the dowry system. Who does not demand it? Who does not give it? Who does not take it? Some parents think that it is even a matter of prestige to give a dowry. The practical effect of legislation is almost nil.

Any attempt at social reform merely by legislation is a failure for it attempts to enforce the law by a threat of violence. It is the transformation of the individual's heart which is required for the success of social reform. Transformation of society is the result of the transformation of the individuals who constitute the society.

A proper leadership is required to bring about social change. However a team of trained and devoted social workers is also required. They must be properly educated and must know the truth and the facts about the evil which is to be eradicated. They must proceed with the missionary zeal that arises out of conviction. They must be burning with love for all. As a result of the work of such a band of workers, individuals can be changed and society rejuvenated with new life and strength.

However it cannot be said that legislation is entirely useless. In so far as it is the responsibility of the state, which is a social creation, to guide the citizens in the right direction it is the duty of the government to enact appropriate laws from time to time. But the actual success of the legislation lies in its implementation. The attempt to implement social legislation by force is not successful. The implementation of social legislation or social reform can be successful only when we adopt the method of non-violence which has the two pronged approach of love and truth. Social reform would be a success only when the individuals are willing to abide by it out of conviction. Finally it is the transformation of the individual which ushers in a permanent social reform. Thus we find that social change can really take place by nonviolence only.

RAPIDITY OF CHANGE

It is usually thought that violence brings about quick changes whereas non-violence or love entails a slow process of transformation. This point requires careful examination. It appears that by threat of force we can get things done with speed. But the question is, whether the objectives are achieved, especially in social matters?

Violence leaves behind rancour, suffering and a burning spirit of revenge. Violence breeds violence and there is no end to it. Gandhi says, "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent."¹⁰ Anything achieved through violence is only temporary. It gives apparent success only. If we are satisfied by such apparent success we can rely on violence.

Further a careful analysis reveals that even violence cannot bring about quick results. "Even an armed insurrection does not succeed in the first rush or with one effort. In the prolonged war for a cause, there are many skirmishes, battles and campaigns, and reverses and successes."¹¹ Permanent results are obtained only when there is a change of heart. This is true especially in social matters. In a sense, social reform can never take place through violence. In the context of religious conversion, Kripalani writes, "Real conversion is the conversion of the devotee's heart in search of truth."¹² In social matters also conversion of heart is essential. It is ultimately by appeal to see the truth and by love that social reforms can be made a success. So the question of the rapidity of change involving a particular method loses much of its meaning in matters of social change as there is only the method of non-violence to bring about the change. As Gandhi says, "We need not be afraid that the method of non-violence is a slow long-drawn out process. It is the swiftest the world has seen, for it is the surest."¹³

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1. C. E. M. Joad, *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics*, p. 34
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 35
 3. Kripalani, J. B., *Gandhian Thought*, pp. 24-25
 4. *All Men Are Brothers*, Ed. by Krishna Kripalani. p. 130
 5. Diwakar, R. R., *Gandhi : A Practical Philosopher*, p. 2
 6. *Ibid.* p. 6
 7. *Harijan*, 12-10-1935
 8. *Ibid.*, 22-2-1942

9. M. K. Gandhi, *Sarvodaya*, p. 74
10. Young India, 21-5-1925
11. Kripalani, J. B., *Gandhian Thought*, p. 118
12. *Ibid.*, p. 49
13. Young India, 30-4-1925.

25. REVOLUTION & NON-VIOLENCE: A PACIFIST VIEW

By Harold F. Bing

Today, as at the end of the eighteenth century, the word Revolution is being used everywhere either with enthusiasm or with fear. Opponents of the *status quo* proclaim the need for revolution to destroy the evils of the existing order, while the supporters of the system denounce the revolutionaries as the greatest enemies of peace, social order and humanity.

We live in a controversial age. Technological development has made possible the production of large quantities of necessities and even luxuries quite unimaginable to our forebears. Technically it is possible for every human being to enjoy the necessities and even some of the simple luxuries of life, but things are so unequally divided that we have rich nations and poor nations, and rich and poor within the same nation. The rich are apt to claim that their greater wealth is the result of hard work and or superior intelligence, while the poor blame the inequality on an unjust social order which permits of exploitation and maintains a so-called judicial system to enforce the mal-distribution of property. They declare (as indeed Rousseau declared two centuries ago) that the position of the rich rests solely upon force and that it is therefore changeable and ought to be changed.

Observing the contemporary gap between rich and poor (nations and individuals) one might imagine that time would reduce it. In fact, the gap is widening, even between the social classes in the developing countries. Contrary to the belief of some early nineteenth century economists, there is natural tendency towards equality.

Since revolutionaries believe that the present social order rests upon force, it is natural for them to think that only by force can it be changed. Certainly it is true that the social system can be changed by force, provided that its opponents are stronger than its supporters. But with what result? Power passes to a new group of people. Resistance to the new order will almost certainly

continue in an effort to restore the old. The new rulers will find themselves more and more driven to use force to maintain their position and carry out their plans. Thus the new order will even more closely resemble the old with the sole difference that power and profits will be in the hands of a different, but possibly not much larger group than before.

This problem is today closely bound up with that of war and peace. No longer do we regard war as an isolated phenomenon. It is an essential expression of a society based on competition and exploitation. To get rid of war, we must create a society based on co-operation and brotherhood. The great question is whether this revolutionary change is to be accomplished violently or non-violently.

If we recognize the rights of man, as set forth for example in the United Nations Charter, and more fully in the U. N. Declaration of Human Rights, we must strive to secure the right of every man to live free from hunger, war and disease; to live free from economic, social, racial or cultural exploitation. He must be enabled to express himself freely and to develop to his full potential a social capacity which will allow him to live in community and to rise above egotism.

From a belief in freedom stems opposition to war and to systems which exploit and corrupt, such as colonialism, capitalism and totalitarian communism. Such a belief touches every aspect of human activity. It requires an educational system which liberates rather than cramps the human spirit; an economic organization which is democratic and gives power to the workers involved. It demands nothing less than a total non-violent revolution.

THE VIOLENT STRUCTURE

A violent revolution creates a violent structure in which, having killed one's enemies, it is all too easy to kill one's friends for holding "wrong positions". Having once taken up weapons, it is difficult to lay them down. If, as some suggest, the use of violence can have a liberating effect on the oppressed, it

also has a brutalizing effect. If it be argued that a nonviolent revolution is too slow, we need only refer to Vietnam, where a violent struggle has raged without pause for 24 years, more than one million people have been killed, and the revolution has not yet been won. The Russian revolution which began with the enthusiastic support of practically all progressive movements in the world, eventually produced a State which killed millions of its own citizens in purges and forced labour camps, oppressed the nations of Eastern Europe, and to this day is still imprisoning writers who seek to exercise the most elementary freedoms.

Man is not free when he is subjected to violence. Therefore the struggle against violence must be seen in the context of a revolutionary effort to liberate humanity. Violence takes many forms. In addition to the direct violence of bombs and guns, there is the silent violence of disease, hunger and the dehumanization of men and women, caught up in exploitative systems.

While recognizing that we do not have answers to all the problems of revolution, we say that men should not organize violence against one another, whether in revolution or in civil or international war. To those who claim that a non-violent society will be possible only after the Revolution, we reply that unless we hold firmly to non-violence now, the day will never come when all of us learn to live without violence. The roots of the future are here and now, in our lives and actions.

A commitment to non-violence does not mean hostility to all contemporary revolutionary movements, but a rejection of their methods. Non-violence has its set-backs, it is no panacea. On the other hand violent revolution destroys the innocent as surely as does the violence of the oppressor.

Is there a pacifist answer to the problem of South Africa? Probably not, in present circumstances. But is there a non-pacifist answer either? Every non-violent movement in South Africa seems so far to have failed. But so has every violent movement. There are moments in history when we find situations that cannot be immediately resolved by violence or non-violence. In Spain, for example, there have been organized appeals for violent action against Franco

for the past 20 years. Yet Franco still holds power. The murder of Martin Luther King is - sometimes cited as evidence of the defeat of non-violence in the American civil rights struggle. But in fact it no more proves the failure of non-violence than the murder of Che Guevara proves the failure of violence in Bolivia.

Probably the greatest contribution we can make to the liberation movements is not by involving ourselves in abstract arguments as to the methods they should use—arguments which are not likely to have much influence on them—but by working to bring an end to colonialism and imperialism by attacking its centres of power in the West. This means changing the Western economic system in so far as it is based on the exploitation of the less developed parts of the world, and this, we shall find, involves a complete revolution in our socioeconomic pattern.

The basic reason for holding to non-violence, even when it seems to have failed, or when it cannot offer a ready answer to an immediate crisis, is because 'the non-violent revolution does not seek the liberation simply of a class or nation or race. It seeks the liberation of mankind. Experience shows that violence merely shifts the burden of suffering and injustice from one group to another; that it liberates one group and imprisons another; that it destroys one authoritarian structure but creates another.

A society without violence must begin with revolutionaries who will not use violence.

26. NON-VIOLENCE AND RAPIDITY OF CHANGE

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While many of us may be willing to accept the ultimate ideal of society being based on non-violence and the resolving of group and social problems by this technique, yet we may be tempted to ignore any methodology of change if we are not convinced that non-violent technique can bring about rapid social, economic and consequential institutional changes. For many of us violent techniques stand on their own right and claim some sort of self-justification to bring about rapid changes. But in spite of the supposed efficacy of violent methods one can point out several instances of the failure of such movements in the attainment of objectives that the leaders of these revolutionary movements had kept before them. The French Revolution raised the slogans of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. But violence and bloodshed has not brought France nearer these goals. The goal of the Russian revolution was the withering away of the State. The Russian society is far away from this ideal.

All over the world religions are full of instances of rapid, rather immediate, conversion of individuals to new values and new modes which revolutionised their lives. The critics are sceptic about non-violent techniques succeeding in dealing with group and social problems with such rapidity. The success that was attained by various movements led by Gandhiji disproves this thesis completely.

In South Africa with unlettered coolies, indentured labourers who had become slave labour, as his soldiers he demonstrated to the world that non-violence has capacity to test the might of the mightiest power. This campaign of Gandhiji resulted in the rapid change in the values of mankind. "When he (Gandhiji) started his campaign in 1893, apartheid was accepted by the world at large, not a voice was raised against it. Today ninety-nine out of every hundred human beings reject apartheid."¹ When Gandhiji came to India he tried' this technique for the redress of social and political problems with commendable

success. It is doubtful whether violent methods would have succeeded with the same rapidity. The Champaran Satyagraha that he organised produced remarkable results with lightening speed. Similar was the experience of Bardoli Satyagraha which was organised against the arbitrary enhancement of land revenue and for the holding of an impartial enquiry into the same. The Government unleashed severe repression. When every leader and worker was in prison the women of Bardoli came to the forefront. Some 380 women challenged the might of the British Government and took the pledge of independence. "Not one of the women stood up, not one retreated and not one cried out, although more than half of them had their sarees drenched in blood. But they would not budge; the police had to drag them into waiting lorries and take them away to prison."² "The Government with all its mighty resources and in spite of a frightful reign of terror failed to crush the no-tax campaign and had to yield to practically all the demands of the Satyagrahis."⁸

This method "was successfully tried for the solution of the dispute between the workers and mill magnates at Ahmedabad in 1918 where did not exist any trade union organisation to protect the interest of the workers.

Gandhiji employed the non-violent technique successfully to strike at century old social evil of untouchability. The Vykom Temple Road Satyagraha with Gandhiji's blessing (and not under his personal guidance) and his fast against separate election for schedule castes gave a crushing blow to this social evil and created mass awakening amongst the depressed classes. The upper sections too realised the irrationality of untouchability.

Gandhiji's non-violent struggle against the Rowlett Bills and his Salt Satyagraha need special mention. These were country-wide campaigns and led to mass awakening on an unprecedented scale. Satyagraha against Rowlett Bills was organised in March-April, 1919. This Satyagraha could not take its full course because it was suspended by Gandhiji because of outbreak of violence against which Gandhiji undertook penitential fast for three days. Pandit Motilal Nehru described the change brought about because of this Satyagraha, as "A new force was suddenly introduced into our politics, a force with the most tremendous

potentialities. India's masses were suddenly awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the humble's home."

The Salt Satyagraha was another instance when the whole nation was infused with new courage and hope like a flash. On 12th March 1930 Gandhiji set out for his historic Dandi March. The whole nation watched and when Gandhiji broke the law the whole nation rose. Pt. Nehru wrote, "It seemed as though a spring had been suddenly released." Everywhere people began to make salt. They collected "pots and pans and ultimately succeeded in producing some unwholesome stuff, which we waved in triumph, and often auctioned for fancy prices. The main thing," Pt. Nehru continued, "was to commit a breach of the 'obnoxious salt law'. As we saw the abounding enthusiasm of the people and the way salt-making was spreading like a prairie fire, we felt a little abashed and ashamed for having questioned the efficacy of this method when it was first proposed by Gandhiji. And we marveled at the amazing knack of the man to impress the multitude and make it act in an organised way."

The rapidity with which non-violent techniques succeeded is amply demonstrated by sheer personal deeds of Gandhiji during the period of communal disturbances that took place in the country during 1946 and 1947. On the eve of independence the country faced communal carnage. But Gandhiji was able to stop this communal carnage from engulfing the whole sub-continent. What the military failed to achieve was realised by Gandhiji. Lord Mountbatten described his as 'one man force*. One can venture to suggest that the efforts of Gandhiji, which even resulted in his assassination, saved the country from communal trouble for a number of years after 1948.

Examples of effectiveness of non-violent techniques can be had from countries other than India. The Norwegians organised an effective non-violent resistance against authorities during German occupations in the Second World War. In recent times the Czechs organised a protest against Russian army for a couple of days. These movements were not so effective as the movements and campaigns organised by Gandhiji in India. There were certain basic shortcomings in these limited campaigns. Yet the possibility of mass and rapid

action was clearly demonstrated even by these experiments. The example of Martin Luther King and other Negro leaders in their struggle for civil rights has once again demonstrated the effectiveness of non-violent techniques in the solution of social problems.

These instances clearly reveal that if tried in right earnest and with sincerity non-violent techniques can be more effective and speedier than violent methods. Gandhiji asserted : "The existing structure of economic society will not last for twenty- four hours if my weapon of Satyagraha can be gripped by the people."⁴

Success depends upon several factors. One essential condition is a faith that non-violence can be organised on a mass scale effectively. Non-violence, however, is not a cloistered virtue confined to the hermit and the cave-dweller. Being soul force, it is capable of being practised equally by all, children, young men and women, and grown-up people, by individuals as well as groups. Even the masses can practise non-violence. Gandhiji who claimed to be a practical idealist demonstrated that given proper guidance "it is possible to run a Satyagraha campaign with people who have no faith in non-violence as a creed provided they sincerely and implicitly follow the rules as a discipline and work under the leadership of unadulterated non-violence."⁵

The leader of non-violent action must also have confidence and faith in the efficacy of non-violent technique. It is true that non-violence work in a subtle, non-dramatic but sure manner. Gandhiji explained, "Passive resistance is a misnomer for non-violent resistance. It is much more active than violent resistance. It is direct, ceaseless, three-fourths invisible and only one fourth visible.... In its invisibility it appears ineffective but it is really intensely active and most effective in ultimate result. . . . Non-violence is an intensely active force when properly understood and used. A violent man's activity is most visible while it lasts. But it is always transitory..."⁶

It may be argued that Gandhiji's methods succeeded because the adversary was more civilised and democratic traditions and public opinion could influence the British Government's policy. Conversion of a die-hard fascist may not be so

easy. "A man who could make the unlettered coolies of South Africa challenge the brutal power of the South African Government would have found a non-violent remedy under Hitler. That he happened to be in particular circumstances of history was not his choice. It was one of the great accidents of history that he found himself in a certain situation and in that situation he found the remedy. To say that in other circumstances he would not have succeeded is to talk historical nonsense."

It must, however, be emphasised that non-violence should not become a cloak for cowardice or non-activity. Gandhiji repeatedly emphasised the need for constant action and activity. On a number of occasions he told us that if there was ever a choice between cowardice and violence, he will prefer violence. This does not mean that he considered violence to be more efficacious. In fact Gandhiji considered, as has already been pointed out, non-violence far more powerful and contagious. Gandhiji was a man of action. "The first imperative of Gandhiji was to act—here, now, in the living present—against injustice and evil. In doing so his inevitable corollary was that action to be truly effective must be non-violent. So when he said, 'where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence,' he was expressing his passionate conviction that there must be action, not words, not thought in the face of contingency . . . this was his way of clearing non-violence from the odium that it is inaction, cowardice and running away."⁷

The success of non-violence technique largely depends upon the leadership. The leaders have to make revolutionary changes in their own lives. Gandhiji prescribed a number of vows for his Ashram inmates. Thus those who wanted to be true Satyagrahis were to subject themselves to strict discipline. "The discipline involves the control and sublimation of divisive appetites and emotions, particularly those of sex, acquisitiveness, pugnacity, fear and hatred. The discipline is in the words of Mr. Andrews, 'a singular blending of different inward acts of conscience which issue in outward acts of observance.'"⁸

Even though Gandhiji felt that everyone has within him the divine spark and the potentiality to acquire this discipline, such discipline is essential only for the

leaders who seek to evolve truth by their own effort. It may be pertinent to remember that Gandhiji did not permit the use of 'fasts' by anyone except his ownself. The followers of the leaders are only expected to accept the advise like disciplined militia of the non-violent army. When the question was posed before Gandhiji that can masses practise non-violence, when we know that they are all prone to anger, hate, ill-will and fight for the most trivial things, his reply was, "They are, and yet I think they can practise non-violence for the common good. Do you think the thousands of women that collected contraband salt had ill-will against anyone? They knew that the Congress or Gandhiji had asked them to do certain things, and they did those things in faith and hope. To my mind, the most perfect demonstration of non-violence was in Champaran. Did the thousands of ryots who rose up in revolt against the agrarian evils harbour the least ill-will against the Government or the planters? Their belief in non-violence was unintelligent, even as the belief in the earth being round is unintelligent. But their belief in their leader was genuine and that was enough. With those who lead it is another matter. Their belief has to be intelligent, and they have to live up to all the implications of the belief."⁹

But such belief and faith in the leadership will not come simply by the example of personal lives of the individual leaders. These vows will train the leaders to be non-violent in thought, words and deeds. But they must identify themselves with the common man, the downtrodden who must be able to give vent to their aspirations in a non-violent manner. The problems that they face, the hardships which is their lot and the exploitation and injustices that they face, must be constantly attacked by the leader. He must evolve a strategy of action in which those who are affected can participate. Through this mass action the situation must be changed for a better socio-economic order. The leader must feel one with the masses. It was for this reason that Gandhiji insisted upon his constructive programme. Through the successful implementation of various items of constructive programme, Gandhiji wanted to identify the leadership with the masses, create conditions for the coming up of new leaders and revive the confidence of the masses in their capacity to solve their problems without recourse to violence or help from an external authority. At the same time he

felt that foundation of a really socio-economic non-violent order can be laid through such actions. To Gandhiji, "constructive work, therefore, is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility."¹⁰ On another occasion he remarked, "Un-accompanied by the spirit of service, courtesy imprisonment and inviting beating and lathi charges, becomes a species of violence."¹¹ "Civil disobedience, without the backing of the constructive programme, is criminal and waste of effort?"¹² In 1942 he wrote, "He who has no belief in the constructive programme has no concrete feeling for the starved millions. He who is devoid of that feeling cannot fight non-violently."¹³

If one analyses various items of constructive programme, e.g., he is bound to be impressed by the fact that nearly all of these items can be worked only with the co-operation of the masses. The initiative will pass on to them and thus the foundation of a truly non-violent socio-economic order be laid. Let us not remain under any misconception that Gandhiji was for *status quo*. On the contrary he was ceaselessly working through his non-violent technique, to bring about revolutionary changes in the shortest period of time. One who refused to soothe suffering patients with a song of Kabir, one who said that, "to a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wage,"¹⁴ and who had realised that "a nonviolent system of government is clearly an impossibility 'SO long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty unless there is voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good,"¹⁵ is a true revolutionary. He was so impatient that when Lord Irwin asked him to wait for three months, he refused to wait even for minutes. In history Gandhiji stands out as the one single individual who tried the utmost to bring immediate relief to millions of hungry people. His advise was, "We must refuse to wait for generations to furnish us with a patient solution of a problem which is even growing in seriousness. Nature knows no mercy in dealing stern justice. If we do not wake up before long we shall be wiped out of existence."¹⁶

We must also not forget that what Gandhiji did was an experiment in the use of non-violence. Never before in history this method was tried to solve problems of society. Gandhiji was trying to evolve new methodology. His ashrams were laboratories in the use of Ahimsa of the brave. He might not have succeeded fully "had he been to select the crusaders and to train them for their respective roles in the Satyagraha operation, the movements might have been ever more dramatic. Even so, the degree of success with which they met is specially striking when one considers that they worked on an ad-hoc basis, and that they dealt with a mass populace which had no prior understanding of the techniques involved and very few of whom had any consistent discipline in the application of these techniques."¹⁷

We who are to carry forward the task that he had left behind must take up the work in right earnest. "You cannot take up non-violence in the same way as you take to throwing stones. It is insane to ask a nation or group to answer an invasion with non-violence if that nation or group does not have leaders who believe in non-violence. There must be the cultivation of the basic attitudes of non-violence before the question becomes meaningful."¹⁸

Humanity is steadily marching towards acceptance of nonviolent techniques for the speedy attainment of socio-economic system based on justice and fair play. "The presence of Gandhi in our contemporary world was a kind of providential report to the unheard or upheaval of violence in the human race ... violence came to be considered by some important thinkers as a privileged tool in the progress of human race... or such was their theory. Gandhi denounced this tremendous error of our time... Gandhi is the living retort to this exceedingly grave development in the history of mankind."¹⁹ Satyagraha may, be the only means available to an oppressed people in this age of highly technical means of oppression. The chances of success are certainly as great as are the chances of violent revolutions under the modern polic-state system. Gandiji's experiments have not yet been completed.

To quote Gandhiji: "Ahimsa is one of the world's great principles which no power on earth can wipe out. Thousands like myself may die to vindicate the

ideal but Ahimsa will never die. And the gospel of Ahimsa can be spread only through believers dying for the cause.²⁰ "Let those, who believe in non-violence as the only method of achieving real freedom, keep the lamp of non-violence burning bright in the midst of the present unpenetrable gloom. The truth of the few will count; the untruth of millions will vanish like chaff before a whiff of Wind."²¹

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1. Philip Noel Baker in *Truth & Non-violence* – UNESCO symposium on Gandhi, p. 221
 2. G. Ramchandran *Truth & Non-violence* – UNESCO Symposium on Gandhi, p. 100
 3. Dhawan, G. *Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 252
 4. G. Ramchandran, *Truth & Non-violence* – UNESCO Symposium on Gandhi, p. 173
 5. Pyarelal, Quoted by Boqdarant Joan, V. in *Conquest of Violence*, pp. 103-104
 6. *Harijan*, 20-3-1937
 7. G. Ramchandran, *Truth & Non-violence* – UNESCO Symposium on Gandhi, p. 8
 8. Dhawan, G., *Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 101-102
 9. *Harijan*, 4-11-1939
 10. *Young India*, January 9, 1930
 11. *Harijan*, May 25, 1939
 12. Dhawan, G., *Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 191
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 191
 14. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 529, 610-11.
 15. Mathurs (Ed.), *Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 610-11
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 24
 17. Bondurant, Joan V., *Conquest of Violence*, p. 41
 18. Arne Naess, UNESCO Symposium on Gandhi, p. 1
 19. Oliver Lacombe, *Truth and Non-violence—UNESCO Symposium on Gandhi*, p. 307
 20. *Harijan*. May 19, 1946
 21. Quoted by Gopinath Dhawan in *Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 345

27. NON-VIOLENCE AND THE RAPIDITY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

By Dr. P. D. Hajela

That human societies change in all kinds of ways is obvious enough. That they should keep on changing is also almost equally obvious. The difficulty arises when the directions of change and the rapidity with which it has to be brought about are to be determined,

A characteristic which distinguishes our age sharply from the epochs which have gone by is that of impatience. Though ordinarily impatience implies something which is not quite desirable, one might be right in being impatient with joblessness, growing inequalities of income and wealth, hypocrisy, corruption, dereliction of duty, etc. Are these problems peculiar to our age alone? At least, they appear to be more serious in countries which we call 'developing economies'. The thing to note, however, is not the wider occurrence of these various problems so much as the desire to solve them in a much shorter time than might have been spent by men of the preceding ages or of our own age in countries which are now developed. The desire is naturally accentuated by the fact that today we can think of choosing from amongst different forms of economic and social frame-works currently in vogue when in the earlier ages such a choice was not really available.

Provided we divide the ills of the newly independent societies of Asia, Africa and Latin America between economic and non-economic, we can ask ourselves the question whether these are the ills of the former category with which the people are more impatient or those of the latter. In a way such ills are so inextricably mixed with one another that any categorization might be useless. But if we proceed on that basis, we may not progress to a solution at all.

At any given time, different societies will be having problems of different types and magnitudes. A country which is affluent will be more bothered about non-economic problems while a poor country will have an opposite worry. Even in poor countries, non-economic problems like casteism, superstition, other-

worldliness may have high priority because of their close relationship with, and impact upon, the economic problems. But on the whole the priorities as between the affluent and the poor societies should be, vastly different. It is, therefore, not entirely meaningless to separate the economic from non-economic and then try to deal with our difficulties. It may be that the attitude of impatience towards a number of social ills is due to the fact that economic ills are also continuing to persist. For argument's sake, one could take the position that provided poverty was substituted by affluence; people might take a more tolerant attitude towards such other ills as hypocrisy, corruption in public life, etc. This might not only explain why people in underdeveloped countries appear to be in greater hurry than their counter-parts in the developed ones, but also, by the same token, why actual changes dealing with these ills have to be more rapid in the former than in the latter.

Assume for a moment that the economic ills are due to non-economic reasons and that a country is poor because its people have no character or are highly selfish and self-seeking. Do we have a method whereby characterlessness can be quickly eradicated? A method which is talked about *ad nauseam* is the application of the moral force. But moral pressures can hardly be a mass pressure unless a whole people are committed to the cause for which the pressure is to be applied. We are, often, told of Gandhiji's great leadership during the freedom struggle and the manner in which the mass of people making enormous sacrifices and forgetting their narrow self-interests, brought that struggle to fruition. Freedom was a cause which could uplift a whole nation: Could not economic development also be such a cause?

The rationale behind economic growth is material gain rather than sacrifice and individuals and groups think of it largely in terms of the benefit that it would confer on them. Thus, it does not appear practicable to regard economic development as a cause which could enthuse the masses to the point of their being susceptible to moral pressure. Where economic self-interests are involved, it is easier to preach morality than to practise it.

However, even if in respect of the unsophisticated, illiterate masses often given to thoughts of the next life one could entertain some slight hope that they would yield to moral pressures, what of the classes whose response to moral persuasion alone could be really a crucial precondition to the removal of economic ills through a prior attack on the non-economic causes ?

Assuming the classes to include those who yield political administrative power, do we hope that we can get them to accept economic development as a principle worth crusading for?

While most of them swear that they accept accelerating economic development and raising the level of production as their highest commitment, they like to believe that the pursuit of their self-interest is the best way of carrying on that crusade. It is action based on self-interest which alone is capable of being efficient, they think. Since the public sector is the very anti-thesis of individual self-interest, it is suggested that an excessive enlargement of the public sector and a commitment to rapid development go ill together. They point to Germany, Japan and a host of Western countries which have developed through acting upon what they call 'enlightened self-interest*' of the really enterprising classes in the community. The public sector in these countries, much larger than our own, is merely a part of that strategy and action. It exists as a stimulant to entrepreneurial enthusiasm, not as its substitute of competitor. As we know, it is precisely for this reason that inspite of their being mixed economies, we call them 'capitalist*'. The basic rules of the game are the same, namely private property, profit-motive, consumer's sovereignty, etc.

Now the difficulty with the approach of these people, on whom the prescription of morality has to be tried first, is that they have no realisation of the precise nature of the challenge of poverty. Enlightened self-interest of capitalist economies is unlikely to be a very, effective push-button for rapid economic development in the underdeveloped countries of today. This is for a number of reasons.

In the first place, underdeveloped countries need a minimum standard of life in a world where the concept of minimum is itself undergoing vast changes. The

two square meals a day have to be defined in terms of the nutritional standards which are internationally current. This means that the per capita income of the people in these countries should increase at a rate that can assure this minimum. As is obvious, a minimum standard of living for a large majority of the population is not a function of per capita income alone. That income* has to diffuse itself through an optimum distribution pattern so that, apart from the level of per capita income which would enable realisation of a minimum standard of living, we have to assure a pattern of income distribution which makes that minimum a reality for the masses. Can enlightened self-interest guarantee both minimum per capita income based on contemporary levels of living and an optimum distribution pattern within a short time? In a country like India, it can assure neither. A minimum per capita income in a situation where we are almost at the lowest rung of the international income ladder, would require massive doses of saving and investment. Since enlightened self-interest can never shut out profit motive, and profit maximisation tends to be another name for consumption maximisation how can massive savings come from enlightened self-interest?

The other basic growth parameter which could pull up per capita income of the backward countries is technological progress. We are glibly told that if things were left to the individual, he could bring about the technological revolution in backward countries in much the same way as he has brought it about in the developed countries. Could he? If a major reason behind technological growth in the West was a highly favourable resource-population ratio which through repeated, recurrence of labour scarcity and high wage-costs compelled the entrepreneurs to think of methods of cost-deduction, can we really have technological progress in underdeveloped countries through private motivation? Countries like India have labour-surplus and in the post-Keynesian era, particularly, there is unlikely to be a situation in which entrepreneurial profitability would, at any rate, on the whole be adversely affected. Why should private entrepreneurs, barring a few cranky exceptions, bother about technological change? In any case, why should they be at all interested in capital-saving technological change which is the only one which would serve

the immediate needs of the country, when labour is so much of a political nuisance to them these days?

It is, thus, difficult to understand how encouragement to enlightened self-interest can solve the problem of poverty. In underdeveloped countries, the word 'enlightened' would, at least, for quite some time to come, imply production without consumption maximisation, and research and innovation of capital-saving type, not for personal profit so much as for providing employment to vast masses of surplus labour.

The fault with Gandhiji's trusteeship principle was that it could not be given a practical shape. While individual capitalists could become enlightened in the sense mentioned above, one has doubts if the capitalist class as a whole would agree to the abovementioned conditions of capital accumulation and technological progress. On the other hand, without the fulfillment of these conditions, achievement of a relative, minimum standard of living for a vast majority of population should be out of the question.

The moving of the State into the economic life of the people of India through plans, through an ever-growing public sector has to be viewed against this background. It has to be understood in the context of "the¹ nature of the challenge to our poverty and the sheer incapacity of enlightened self-interest to meet that challenge. An economy where the State enters our life to meet that challenge of poverty is not the same thing as the familiar mixed economy. In the latter, the capacity of enlightened self-interest to deliver the goods is accepted; in an underdeveloped economy it is not.

The classes as opposed to the masses cannot be expected to regard economic development as a cause as good as, say, freedom of the pre-independence days because they will seek to approach their task with preconditions which might almost be the opposite of those which are needed for the removal of poverty.

The question of non-violence and social change really hinges on how soon the believers in the theory of enlightened self-interest can be made to realise the true nature of the challenge of poverty and how fast they can adjust to the process of socialisation in the Indian economy. Their resistance is natural but to

expect that this resistance could be overcome just through sermons, which is what the moral approach really means is a little too much.

Luckily the alternative to the moral approach in India at present need not be bloodshed and violence. We have a democracy which if shed of its outlandish moorings could exercise the right kind of pressure on believers in enlightened self-interest. A political system borrowed from the familiar mixed economies of the world is bound to be unsuitable for us. As suggested above, we are heading towards different rules of the economic game and, therefore, for us, the present democracy is bound to appear foreign and somewhat irrelevant.

It is for this reason that one would be justified in maintaining that the evolution of a political system which retains individual freedom and is yet in consonance with the process of socialisation is, perhaps, the most imperative requirement for Indian society today. Neither the new rules of the economic game nor this new kind of political system may be found in history. We, therefore, have to use our own intellectual resources to the utmost and if this is difficult except when we have unlearned much of the economic and political theory and practice of the capitalist countries, let us be prepared to unlearn that as well.

But the process of unlearning creates a vacuum which we have to fill by our own efforts. If this takes too much time and we have gone on in the meanwhile drifting with our problems in the same manner as at present, relative poverty might drive people's impatience to a breaking point and violence could become unavoidable. Intellectual obscurantism could thus be as potent a reason behind violence undertaken for social change as economic, political or bureaucratic vested interests. Universities in India have now to realise that they are in urgent need of a radical change in their own approach and intellectual outfit.

But while this is being attempted, an attack on political and bureaucratic vested interests has also to be simultaneously undertaken. The high priests of democracy might be subverting the political system no less viciously than the high priests of the market are subverting the economy. It is not enough to shout a slogan. Political leadership should show by deeds that it is honestly and

sincerely committed to the evolution of a mass-oriented social and economic order. The same would apply to our bureaucracy as well. There is considerable substance in the view that when a nation has to approach its challenges with a sense of urgency, its bureaucracy cannot afford, to remain uncommitted. The plea for neutrality can, at best, rest on the assumption of the possibility of radical parties being put to rout in future elections. If our view that the challenge of poverty cannot be met except through radicalism and through an economic order which is vastly different from the present type of mixed economy, is correct, this possibility is unlikely to arise. If at all it does, it might be more because of democracy itself.

It looks, then, that if violence comes to be used as an instrument of social change the responsibility will not rest on the capitalists alone; it will have to be shared by political leadership, bureaucracy and the intellectual classes in almost equal proportions.

Let us hope all will try to change with speed and vigour and the occasion for violence will never arise.

28. GANDHI'S NON-VIOLENCE AND ITS SOCIAL EFFECTS

By D. Chaman Lall

For nearly four, years I sat in a British prison, as a detenue, without trial, four very difficult years. It was my mother's sudden illness, of which I had not been informed, that got me out of detention. She died that very day and I, unfortunately, was not by her side as I was released only that day and my mother had gone to one of our villages to see her people. I am quite certain that social changes as Gandhiji achieved in his life-time can follow in the wake of non-violence of the Gandhian type. Only through non-violence, as there is deep connection between the processes of social change and non-violence not only in our social structure but also in other processes of life. The very fact of violence militates against any worthwhile change for it creates problems of its own which react on social changes adversely. I am a firm believer in Non-violence of the Gandhian variety. Gandhiji following strictly the Hindu principle of non-violence, said: "My goal is friendship with the world. Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing but the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect them to draw close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man". Then, after his return from the Round Table Conference the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress passed a resolution, wanting the resumption of Civil Disobedience. The Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, summarily resolved not to grant an interview to Mahatma Gandhi for which he had asked the Viceroy and thus shut the door to further negotiations. Shortly before I had seen the Viceroy in Simla, when he told me that the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Wedgwood Bemr, had turned down the unanimous request of the Government of India, that, I should be nominated as Labour Representative to the Round Table Conference, saying to me: "that you can argue with a man face, but you cannot argue with a man sitting 6000 miles away." I was engaged in a case in Calcutta when I received a message from Mian Fazl-i-Hussan who was a member of the Viceroy's Executive, asking me to get in touch with him and try to proceed to Simla,

which I did. The old leaders are dead –Sir Malcolm Hailey, Mr. Graham, General Auchinleck, Sir Charles Innes, Muddiman, G. P. Roy and so are most of the leaders like Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, my colleagues B. Das, Shanmukham Chetty and K. C. Neogy and others. I have written about Mahatma Gandhi, the day he was assassinated. Nehru had called a meeting in his room in Parliament House of the Foreign Affairs Committee. I and Professor Ranga arrived a little early when suddenly Nehru who was laughing at what happened to his sister who at the Kingsway Camp was surrounded by schoolchildren who had posters which they displayed – saying: "Down with the Government which does not provide schools for us". Nehru had been called to the Secretary's room to another telephone and when he came back to the room he was a changed man and said to us: "We cannot go on, Gandhiji has been shot at", and he got into his car to go to Birla House. I had dismissed my chauffeur and sent him home and was driving the car myself but I arrived at Birla House almost as soon as Nehru did. Ranga and I went into the room where Gandhiji had been taken where I found that the widow of a nephew of mine had Gandhiji's body in her lap. But as I looked round I found neither Dr. Bhargava nor Colonel Mirajkar. I noticed the lower lip of Gandhiji move but I am now certain that it was the movement of my niece which had made that possible. Just then I heard a great noise outside and I thought I would go out to these people and stop them from creating a shindy. Just then Nehru came behind me and said to me: "Not like this, I think I will go out and speak to them." Just then I spied Sergeant Button whom I had known in Lahore and made a gesture to him to take out his revolver and stand by Nehru. I was afraid that it was the same crowd that had done violence to Gandhiji and may also do violence to Nehru. Fortunately nothing happened. When I came back into the room I saw Nehru weeping and Lord Mountbatten, who had arrived, putting his arm round Nehru. Just then Dr. Bhargava and Colonel Mirajkar arrived and Colonel Mirajkar shook his head at me in token of the fact that Gandhiji was really dead. The crowd wanted to know, whether Gandhiji was really dead and I remembering the lower lip move said, "Of course he is alive." When I saw Gandhiji, after visiting Lahore, I looked at my watch and I, had taken an hour and a half of his time. As I was getting

into the car Gandhiji's secretary rushed after me to say that "Gandhiji was going to the Purana Fort to the Muslim refugees and wants you to accompany him." I said: "I'll wait here". Thinking over this strange request, I came to the conclusion that Gandhiji had heard my version and wanted me to see the other side, too, when I motored in to the east wall – a big burly muslim gentleman quickly opened the door of Gandhiji's car and nearly assaulted him. There was tension brewing. Just then I saw a bullock cart and a lorry blocking the entrance to the Purana Qilla and as I proceeded to have this obstruction removed, lest we have to beat a hurried retreat, the first sentence Gandhiji uttered as he put his arm round me, saying I will whisper each sentence in your car and you shout it out to the audience as my voice, – the first sentence he uttered was: "For me Muslamans, Hindus, Parsis are the sons of the same god." Loud shouts came from the refugees, "*Sab Jhoot Hai* – "All lies". Then I saw a miracle happen. As Gandhiji proceeded he decided to fast unto death and said so to the audience. Some were kissing his hand, some touching his feet when he had made that announcement of fasting unto death. And all shouted: "Gandhi Zindabad" Thus was this miracle performed before my very eyes.

29. PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND NON-VIOLENCE

By G. K. Gahrana

The classical pattern of parliamentary democracy involved an elected parliament, whose members are responsible to the electorate and the political executive being responsible to the Parliament. A vigilant opposition keeps the government on the alert. The spirit of this structure is tolerance. Policies are processed through parleys. Minorities submit willingly to the majority decisions. This system is based on the inevitability of graduality. Thus its essence is love, understanding, goodwill, tolerance and patience.

There is a wide gulf between the spirit and the actual working of the system. Cabinet dictatorship has turned the servant into a master. Party system has created corruption, political selfishness of the worst order, and planned political chaos. The democratic structure, set up in the independent countries of Asia and Africa fell down like houses of cards and have given way to military dictatorship and one party rule.

Gandhi was a critic of this system, as he had closely watched the working of this system in England, whose parliament is the Mother of Parliaments. He called it as a 'sterile woman' and 'prostitute'

,¹ as "whatever good it had done was due to outside pressure"². He was not blind to this fact that this system had certainly the "germs of democracy"³ and that this system could be truly democratic if and when it was based on non-violence. Violence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But non-violence can do more. It can effectively control violence which is responsible for the many contradictions of parliamentary democracy. He wrote, "By its very nature, non-violence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But non-violence can do more, it can effectively control and guide power, without capturing the machinery of government."⁴ Parliamentary democracy should mobilize the entire resources of the community for common good. For this we need discipline, and dedication, duty and devotion, honesty and hard.

The development of science and technology has increased the powers of the ruler; leading to the economic and bureaucratic hegemony of the establishment. These developments have great impact on society and nature, and direction of social changes.

Two methods have been suggested for bringing about social changes. The one is the way of violence and the other is the path of non-violence. The support of violence extol guerilla techniques as "spiritual atom bombs"⁵. Marxist idealize 'revolutionary violence' as against the reactionary violence, meant to suppress and exploit the proleteriat.

War and violence solve no problems, they only delay and evade a solution. Modern technology has let loose the most diabolical death dealing devices, known to men and have thus put a great question mark before the future of mankind. Jean Paul Sartre, in *The Dirty Hands* had dramatized the irresolvable conflict experience by violent revolutionaries, blindly following orders from above or having to shoot down their own comrades for the sake of the so-called discipline. The Belgian socialist Bart de Light wrote: "The more of violence, the less of revolution."⁶ Social changes in the midst of violence lose purpose and permanence. The non-violent actions bring about a synthesis between the revolutionary desire to change and a democratic respect for opposing views. Hegelian synthesis reconciles the truth of the two opposite acquiescence and violence – and in doing so, it avoids the extremes and immoralities of both. "The non-violent resister agrees with the person who acquiesces that one should not be physically aggressive towards his opponent, but he balances the equation by agreeing with the person of violence that evil must be resisted."⁷

The concept of non-violence implies "Universal Love",⁸ "a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil doer".⁹ Gandhi further emphasized, "In its positive form, Ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest Charity".¹⁰ Love thus provides the cohesive force among men. Non-violence also implies active resistance to injustice everywhere. "No man could be actively non-violent and not rise against social injustice no matter where it occurred."¹¹ Another

attribute of non-violence is courage in the face of violence and is thus the virtue of the strong. "Ahimsa is impossible without fearlessness."¹² Non-possessions is another attribute of Ahimsa. Love lasts longer on suffering than on enjoyment. Gandhi wrote, "The hardest and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering, without anger, without malice."¹³ Non-violence is thus based on truth." Gandhi wrote, "If non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth must be told."¹⁴ This truth must be spoken in gentle language.¹⁵

Non-violence implies bread labour as "the first moral law of life".¹⁶ Bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe non-violence and worship Truth."¹⁷ Gandhi explained the relationship between non-violence and bread labour, in these words. "Service is not possible unless it is rooted in love or Ahimsa... This service is again impossible without bread labour."¹⁸ He believed that obedience to the law of bread labour will bring about a silent revolution. "Men's triumph will consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service."¹⁹ This would reduce both economic and social inequalities.

Non-violence alone can give that soul force to the parliamentary system which will not only impart strength to it, but, it will, in return give strength to others. Parliamentary system believes in resolving the conflicts through parleys and understanding. One may have to suffer for reason. "Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding."²⁰ Coercion is replaced by permission, but even in persuasion some kind of coercion may be used. Nonviolent coercion is permissible in the parliamentary System.

Democracy is disintegrating at the hands of violence. Defections, fraud, force are devouring democracy. Only nonviolence can save it. "Science of non violence can alone lead one to pure democracy."²¹ Gandhi appealed, "If they are to become truly democratic they must courageously become nonviolent."²² In parliamentary system, we try to grasp the truth with a precise insight and

affirm it non-violently. Democracy demands a calm and dispassionate thinking on public affairs.

It would be relevant to discuss the place of *Satyagraha*, *dharma*, *gherao*, fasts, *bunds* and other allied instruments of public protest as the means of pressure tactics in a democracy. Non-violence does not mean that we should simply oppose an evil, because a purely 'anti' behaviour involves a species of mental violence and is self-stultifying. Our protest, in order to be effective and purposeful, must take a positive form. Protest must be constructive. "Forcing the project through, at any cost, without waiting for the idea to grow organically in the people's mind, would have represented the kind of benevolent violence which the governments are accustomed to indulge in and which is largely responsible for the monumental wastage and inefficiency of development projects around the world. Rushing around the zone, staging hunger strikes, wherever a cause of public protest offered itself, would have turned the enterprise into travelling theatre company."²³ The present public protest movements degenerate into violence against persons and property. This is so because they are not able to infuse the spirits of self-reliance, through constructive work and positive thinking; such protests can never be effective instruments of social change. It is unfortunate that most of the thinking on Indian politics is based on the forces of negation. This leads to disorder and frustration and an outburst of violence. In the name of *Satyagraha*, *duragraha* persists.

We may thus conclude that an agitation which is purely negative in character creates hatred, fear and ignorance. If parliamentary democracy is to have a meaning it must adopt the politics of construction.

The present methods of public protest prove the growing mass impatience. Can the slow process of change, involved in the parliamentary system, cope with this impatience, violence and exterminate injustice?

The parliamentary system is for slow but sure, gradual, but good, patient and permanent changes. Patience and nonviolence are co-related. Non-violence converts the opponent and this needs patience. Our democratic system is, at

the moment, suffering from the violence of impatience. Gandhi rightly wrote, "Science of non-violence can alone lead one to pure democracy."²⁴

Exploitation will not end by killing the exploiters, but by removing the ignorance of the exploited and by educating and converting the exploiter. Parliamentary process is a mental training. Non-violence, as a potent force, must begin with the mind. "Non-violence of the mere body, without the co-operation of the mind, is the non-violence of the weak and cowardly, and has therefore no potency."²⁵

The parliamentary process involves a persistent pursuit of the possible, in the midst of the many and varied ways of approach to a particular problem. It tries to find out the 'practical possible'. This involves a lot of adjustments, rubbing of angularities, and sometimes even compromises. Gandhi wrote, "The very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise."²⁶ Non-violence is the means of arriving at compromise in matters of details though not on the fundamentals.

Parliamentary system works through discipline. "Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the first thing in the world."²⁷ Gandhi wrote, "A votary of *Ahimsa* must cultivate a habit of unremitting soil, sleepless vigil and careless self-control."²⁸ He further wrote, "The very first step in non-violence is that we cultivate in our daily life, as between ourselves, truthfulness, humility, tolerance, loving; kindness. Honesty... is not a mere policy."²⁹ "A votary of *Ahimsa* has, therefore, to be incorruptible, fair, and square in his dealings, truthful, straight forward and utterly selfless,"³⁰ *Ahimsa* alone can impart discipline to the parliamentary system. It can do so by directing our acts and activities. Thus non-violence has close relationship with democracy.

In the present day context, it is only non-violence that can give meaning and purpose to our parliamentary system. Non-violence has to be used to evolve democracy along right lines. For this we need men of dedication and devotion. This is a challenge. Every challenge is an opportunity. Let us not wait for extraordinary circumstances but act in the present.

1. "Hind Swaraja" as published in *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. IV, (Navajivan, 1968), p. 113
2. *Ibid.*, p. 114
3. Gandhi, M. K., *Communism and Communists*, p. 17 180
4. *Towards New Horizon*, (1959), pp. 91-92
5. Chinese Defence Minister, Lin Piao. quoted in *The New Times* of Sept. 4, 1965
6. Bart de Light, *The Conquest of Violence: An Essay on War and Revolution*, (Routledge, London, 1937), p. 162. See also Aldous Huxley, *Ends & Means*, (London. 1937), pp, 25-30.
7. Luther, M. K., *Stride Toward Freedom*, (London, 1959), p. 203
8. Gandhi, M. K., *From Yeraada Mandir* (Navajivan, 1957), p. 10
9. *Young India*, August 25, 1920, p. 2
10. *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, (Natesan, Madras, 1933), p. 346
11. *Harijan*, April 20, 1940, p. 97
12. *Young India*, Nov. 4, 1926, p. 384
13. *Ibid.*, Feb. 19, 1925, p. 61
14. *Harijan*, Dec. 14, 1936, p. 362
15. *Young India*, Sept. 17, 1925, p. 318
16. Bose, N. K., *Studies in Gandhism*, p. 75
17. *Harijan*, June 29, 1935, pp. 155, 156
18. *Young India*, Sept. 20, 1938, p. 97
19. *Harijan*, June 29, 1935, p. 165
20. *Young India*, March 19, 1925, p. 87
21. *Ibid*, June 30, 1920, p. 3
22. *Harijan*, 4 Nov. 12, 1938, p. 328
23. Eyvind Hytten, "Non violence and development work: Some experiences and considerations", *Our Generation Against Nuclear War* (Montreal) III, 1 June 1964, p. 48
24. *Young India*, June 30, 1920, p. 30

25. *Ibid.*, April 2, 1931, p. 58
26. Gandhi, M. K., *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, (Navajivan, 1940) p. 184
27. Gandhi, M. K., *Young India*, July 30, 1931, p. 199
28. *Harijan*, May 5, 1939, p. 113
29. *Ibid.* April 2, 1938, p. 65
30. *Harijan*, May 20, 1938, p. 139

30. VIOLENCE/NON-VIOLENCE AT KYOTO AND BEYOND

By Honer A. Jack

[Dr. Homar A. Jack was Secretary-General of the World Conference on Religion and Peace and he continues as executive of the World Conference on Religion and Peace with headquarters in New York. He is editor of *The Gandhi Reader*, *The Wit and Wisdom of Gandhi*, and *World Religions and World Peace*.]

Some months before the inauguration of the Gandhi Centenary, the International Seminars Sub-committee of the Gandhi Centenary Committee sponsored the convening of an International Inter-religious symposium on Peace in New Delhi. This 1968 event was so successful that a larger World Conference on Religion and Peace was held in Kyoto, Japan, in mid-October, 1970 – some months after the formal end of the Gandhi Centenary. Although the Kyoto Conference was not sponsored by any Gandhian body, Gandhi and Gandhism were very much on stage, in the persons of three worldwide practitioners – Dr. Ralph D. Abernathy of the U. S., Archbishop Helder Camara of Brazil, and Thich Thien-Minh of South Vietnam. Also present was a large Indian delegation, partly Gandhian.

The Kyoto Conference frequently discussed the problem of violence/non-violence in social change. This paper deals with how the 212 delegates from the ten major world religions and 39 nations dealt with the problem of violence/non-violence.

Dr. Ralph D. Abernathy, a Protestant and successor to the Late Martin Luther King, Jr., as President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, called for "no less than the beginning of a non-violent world revolution... to renounce war, to end poverty, to abolish racism." He asked that "nonviolent resistance and struggle following the traditions of a Gandhi in India, a Martin Luther King, Jr., in America, a Dom Helder Camara in Brazil."

Archbishop Camara, a Roman Catholic, was himself in Kyoto and in his address to the World Conference he said: "Without hate, without incitement to violence

and without fear but with firmness, let us denounce injustice as great obstacle to peace, injustice (being) the source and cause of all violence."

It was Thich Thien-Minh, a leader of the United Buddhist Church in South Vietnam, who spoke most explicitly about nonviolent resistance. He told a plenary of the World Conference : "There are those who assert that non-violent action does not work. I think that this rejection is too facile. In Vietnam, violence has not worked for 25 years. Instead, violence has bred violence. But, the critics will say, non-violence has not worked in Vietnam either. It is true that the non-violent struggle in Vietnam has not been able to bring an end to the war. But that does not mean that non-violence does not work. Permit me to tell you the reasons Vietnam has become an international conflict in which all the big powers are involved, directly or indirectly. The non-violent struggle, in order to succeed, needs to be carried out on an international scale."

Thich Thien-Minh also said that his associates have been "trying non-violent approaches to end the conflict and external intervention." He added that the "problem of leadership in a non-violent struggle is one of the most important problems...and the leader... must be a man of great compassion, courage, and integrity." Thich Thien-Minh affirmed that "the techniques of non-violent action are not non-violent action itself." He asserted that "without the inspiration of love and sacrifice, these techniques (of non-violent action) cannot be successful (and) will lack their deeper strength."

In addition to hearing a number of speeches, the delegates to the Kyoto Conference spent considerable time in three workshops or commissions. These were devoted to the allied topics of disarmament, development and human rights. In all three, the problem of violence was discussed and these discussions were reflected in all three final reports.

The Disarmament Commission concluded: "We as religionists should study and teach all forms of non-violence as a means of bringing about justice. However, the responsibility for violence in extreme cases of injustice rests on oppressive authorities." The Commission said no more, but did attach a footnote to this

section of its report asking readers also to read relevant sections of the Development report.

The Development Commission in its report stated: "We strongly support non-violent efforts to replace the unjust structures which marginalize the disinherited. At the same time we warn those who refuse to permit the reform of the unjust structures which support their privilege that their resistance to change will make violence inevitable and that the burden of responsibility will rest with me. We must face the realities, recognizing that development involves a transfer of power from the few to all. This necessarily involves conflict. It must be the task of religion to try to ensure that this conflict be creative."

The Human Rights Commission devoted a section of its report to "The Right to Resist Oppression". This stated: "In several regions of the world, the social and economic situation is such that it gives rise to the existence of social classes which are deprived of all possessions and rights. Many people, especially those in the developing countries, feel the need to work towards a profound reorganization of social and economic structures which they consider to be unjust. Confronted by the obstacles presented by the political order, they are frequently driven to take up positions which become increasingly more radical. They include a certain number of committed religious leaders who are convinced that by resisting oppression they are bearing witness to their faith. Under the various circumstances which change according to time and place, their manner of resisting oppression also varies from simple opposition, to disobedience, and even to revolt. We should acknowledge with right to oppose intolerable situations, but strongly recommend the use of non-violent means in the first instance. What is important is that they should act in good faith and form a feeling and love towards their fellowmen. They should respect the rights of those who are not involved in such conflicts. In this respect, it is important that humanitarian laws be reaffirmed and developed to include adequate provisions for the protection of individuals in cases of non-international armed conflicts."

The above quotations are sufficient to indicate that these Commission reports hardly constitute a Gandhian document. This is not even neo-Gandhian doctrine, too many loop-holes are left open for leaders, even the activists, still support nonviolence. Yet the qualifications reflected at Kyoto are important. The responsibility for violence rests with unjust structures, and their perpetrators (the so-called establishment), and not primarily with those who commit overt violence. The Conference statements also give two additional caveats: Those who commit violence should do so "from a feeling of love towards their fellowmen" and they should "respect the rights of those not involved (directly) in such conflicts."

While the Kyoto Conference did not wholeheartedly endorse non-violence, it has certainly not given a blank cheque to violence as a method of social change. This is indeed the present uneasy stance of many persons in the neo-Gandhian era – religionists and non-religionists alike – even some who have long admired Gandhi. Thus what is needed today is not a new theology (or philosophy or politics) of non-violence, although new formulations are always useful and the old ones should always be brought up to date. What is most necessary are contemporary demonstrations that non-violence works and can both topple "unjust structures" and replace them with more just ones.

Why the current vogue of violence not only in totalitarian society but more especially in erstwhile democratic ones today? Just a few years ago, non-violence was "in", in style, from the full wall-posters of Gandhi and King to the more important serious advocacy of the Gandhian rules of social revolution. In a very few years these posters have been replaced by those of Che or Mao. The cult of violence has had widespread currency, even among those of distinctly a non-ideological bent.

Violence does draw attention to recurring or obscured evils. So much injustice is buried under slick public relations in most societies. Injustice seldom makes the headlines. An assassination, a killing, a bombing draws public attention, especially in a television age. Such violence should not be equated with change, but public attention is undeniably a first step toward change.

Violence is also encouraged today in some quarters. It is sometimes covertly welcomed by the establishment of government or university, for it then makes the subsequent use of counter-violence or repression more respectable.

The frequent structures against the use of the overt violence obscures the existence of another kind of violence which is widespread and which may be equally evil; covert violence. The structures *at* society can kill as well as its guns. When one denounces One kind of violence, the overt, in order to perpetuate the other, the covert, this hypocrisy of the status- quo is detected and rightly denounced.

Yet for all the new sympathy for violence, there have been few victories for violence in modern times – only more violence and misery, whether it is violence on the streets of New York or on battlefield outside Saigon.

Violence has rather gained through the defaults of nonviolence in our time. It is non-violence that appears to have failed more than having won.

The irony of the assassinations of no-violence's two most noted advocates—Gandhi and King—within a single generation has not been lost in the public mind. If even the votaries of a method cannot survive. ...

Also some of the most publicised projects clearly labelled non-violent in the public press have clearly failed. But not all that carries the mantle of non-violence is in fact the genuine article, on the contrary, much which passes as non-violent even in India today is non-violent in name only, perhaps only through default. Often in order to gain respect and thus support, a project which should be relegated to the never-never land between violence and non-violence is given the non-violent label. When it fails, non-violence appears to have failed.

There have, however, been some current non-violent demonstrations which have been at least moderately successful. The catalogue since the death of Gandhi is not large one. Yet there are individuals and groups in several parts of the world (Vietnam, India, Italy, U.K., U.S.A.) who are actively and persistently experimenting with non-violent truth and techniques. These merit the

attention and participation of all who demand social change and still have faith in non-violence. The experiments are briefly catalogued in the recent pamphlet. *Training for Non-violent Action*, published in London by Quakers and the War Resisters' International. And they stand up well against the "achievements" of Fanon, Che, and Debray.

31. NON-VIOLENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

By Horace Alexander

When we use the expression "non-violence", there is, I think, a tendency to picture in our minds, methods of meeting injustice, or of thwarting unjust laws, by methods that involve a breach of the law, but without causing physical harm to the agents of the law. The purpose is to undermine the unjust system, so that it gives way, and reform can be achieved.

But there is another side to the matter, which we, perhaps, too often overlook. When we think of Gandhiji, and the inspiration of his life we should not forget that he was not primarily a law-breaker. In the situation in which he found himself, through most of his life, he felt driven from time to time to break the laws; whether those imposed on the Indian community in South Africa, or later, those imposed on the Indian people throughout India by the British Government. Yet, even as I write the words "break the laws", I realise that I am overstating the case. He broke some of the laws, some of the time, not all the laws, all the time. And he was always careful to make clear both to his fellow-sufferers from injustice and to the authority he was challenging that he was attacking a specific injustice, even when this act was a symbol of an attack on the whole system of government. The other aspect of his way of life was his deliberate, and even scrupulous, obedience to all the laws he did not feel conscientiously obliged to break. As a good lawyer, he had a healthy respect for law in general, and he would even scrupulously obey prison regulations and other laws, promulgated by those whose moral authority he was disputing, except when he was prepared to suffer to the utmost for disobedience.

One is often tempted to describe Gandhiji as an anarchist; I have myself suggested that he is more nearly an anarchist than a socialist or any other political 'category into which we find it convenient to herd our fellowmen. Yet, if an anarchist means one who thinks all law to be evil, then that does not fit Gandhiji at all. He knew that man, the social animal, must accept rules of behaviour if society is to continue to function at all. In an age of fast-moving

traffic, there must be a rule of the road, and those who do not obey it must be brought to their senses. So, too, there must be sanitary regulations, which all men should be expected to observe; and many other matters need to be regulated for the well-being of all. Even the Ashrams at Sabarmati and at Sevagram had their rules; and if necessary, step had to be taken to uphold the rules. Should I say "to enforce the rules"? "Enforce" is a strong word, and does not seem to fit the conception of an Ashram. Let us be content to note that every society, including, for instance, societies for scientific study or for promoting some art, must have certain "sanctions", which are likely to include the right of the majority, or the consensus, to expel an unruly member. In other words, the rule of law is an essential of any human society that is not to degenerate into a mere mob. Gandhiji knew this as well as, or perhaps better than, most of us. His violations of law were especially significant just because he was a believer in the rule of law.

I suggest that this is an important aspect of the struggle against violence in the world today. We see violence on all sides; and the governments of the world build up their mighty military forces, which are inevitably a threat to every other government, especially those of neighbouring States.

There is plenty of room for confusion here. Governments, even the most authoritarian, are fond of declaring that they must uphold "law and order"; yet this law and order is often a kind of tyranny, which contains a worse violence to the human spirit than the sporadic violence of those who rise up in anger against it. Thus, those who care deeply for human liberty may find the idea of the "rule of law" unpalatable. They can only conceive of it as a device for supporting tyrannical governments. Or, again, if you are living in the Christian, you will recall passages in the New Testament, especially in the writings of the Apostle Paul, where the rule of law seems to be treated as an early stage of development, out of which the Christian has grown into what is called "grace". The law was the schoolmaster; but if we are full-grown, we no longer live under the law. Perhaps this is in part due to the fact that the Apostle was himself living under the rule of the Roman Empire, an alien rule. But,

essentially, I think we are here concerned with a word that has various shades of meaning. We should live the good life, no doubt, not just to escape the penalties of those who break a law, we live the life of good neighbours, trying to serve the needs of others, rather than selfishly, because we have been released from the bondage of selfishness and have indeed come into the "glorious freedom of the sons of God". "Love, and do as you like", said St. Augustine; which means, of course, that all your actions will in fact be inspired by love of your fellowmen. You then live, not "under law", but in obedience to the law of love – a paradoxical expression, no doubt, but it does not need to be elucidated. The meaning is clear enough.

"Law, not war", was one of the slogans of those who were working for a warless world in the period of the League of Nations. Surely a good slogan. War will not disappear simply through war-resistance, important as the refusal to participate in war and war preparations may be. There must be an adequate substitute for war. And that means a system of world law which all sovereign states will accept and follow. Today, most sovereign States, including, I think, those only recently freed from colonial rule, are inclined to assert their independence in such a way as to allow no place for a superior international law. Too often, loyalty to the United Nations means no more than a readiness to cooperate in common endeavours, but with no readiness to submit to resolutions of the U. N. which do not suit immediate convenience. There is little hope for the achievement of "One World" of peace and cooperation until such state sovereignty is curbed, and the rule of law accepted, even when it seems to class with immediate political interest. The acceptance of obligatory jurisdiction by the World Court of all justiciable disputes would be a great step forward. It is unfortunate that so few States have yet accepted this jurisdiction; and that some who have done so have attached reservations.

The rule of law, when rightly interpreted, means that the weakest member will have his rights upheld by judicial authority against the most powerful. I am not sure where the principle of equality before the law originated. I have heard it said, though I am not sure if it is true, that the main positive contribution that

the British made to Indian was the introduction of this principle: the principle that the high-caste Hindu and the Harijan, the richest Maharajah and the poorest peasant, were equally protected from illegal actions. It would be idle to pretend that the law in any country is even today truly equal as between the rich and the poor. But the principle of such equality is very widely accepted in the world; and one of the tests of true civilization is the extent to which the principle is upheld by the courts. The Charter of Fundamental Human Rights, accepted by members of the United Nations, is surely a great step towards a truly non-violent world, even though this too is not fully applied. It is the duty of law-courts, of judges, to uphold it in all countries.

My argument is that one of the main goals of the proponents of non-violence should be the spread through all lands of the principle of equality before the law. This is "the rule of law". It is a noble ideal, and it should remain in the forefront of our minds as we struggle against war and violence and tyranny in their many manifestations.

32. NON-VIOLENCE, TRUTH AND INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKING

By Major-General Indar Jit Rikhye

President, International Peace Academy, former Military Adviser to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

As a professional soldier, I was trained by the British and fought alongside them in the Middle East and Italy. As an Indian, I was deeply influenced by Gandhi's non-violent struggle to free my country from British Rule. For a man schooled in the disciplined use of force, the doctrine of Ahimsa can only be made appealing if it is interpreted as courageous, if non-violent, action. That is why I was ready to listen when Gandhi talked about non-violence:

"I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.

"But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier." (From *Non-violence in peace and war.*)

NATIONALISM AND TRUTH In spite of Gandhi's teaching and example, I am afraid that my understanding of this adornment – the quality of mercy, in Shakespeare's words – was rather narrow until I stepped out of my role as an officer in the Indian army to become an international civil servant. I suppose that those who recommend me for the post of Military Adviser to the UN Secretary-General must have thought I possessed some of the traits needed for this sensitive job. But ten years of United Nations experiences have taught me that, whatever an individual's personal characteristics, national service is not the kind of preparation needed for international peacemaking and peacekeeping.

The reasons are obvious enough: national governments train their diplomats and military officers in adversary attitudes and strategies. Whether practised on the battlefield or in the conference room, the objective of adversary

methods is to win the contest rather than to resolve the conflict. Every issue or situation is refracted through mental lenses ground to national specifications.

This "in-group" bias has a subtly distorting effect on the way national representatives see the world and interstate relations. It is an inescapable aspect of individual identity: our personal values, attitudes, and interests are shaped by our "reference groups", as the sociologists call them. Conformity to the outlook of the groups with whom we identify ourselves gives us our social bearings and ballast. This is the essence of nationalism. It explains why an Indian army officer thinks like an Indian army officer rather than American officer or Indian pacifist.

With the exception of gifted or great souls, our normal roles lock us into stereotyped ways of perceiving conflict and reacting to it. Consider the problem of accurately explaining the causes underlying a particular conflict. There is an Arab and an Israeli truth about the Middle East crisis, just as there is an Indian and a Pakistani truth about Kashmir. I am directly acquainted with both of these situations. I have added up the pros and cons of the case advanced by each side in its favour and come to my own conclusions, though I must concede that I am able to do this more impartially when I am looking at the Middle East than when I am looking at Kashmir. Political truth is subjective: it involves *preferences* regarding the distribution of population, natural resources, and power. It is largely defined by territorially-based social attachments, though it can be argued that an evolutionary process has fitfully but steadily widened the effective loyalties of men. Loyalty to India is more universal than loyalty to Simla.

In an international dispute, the peacemaker's function is not to expound to those involved an indivisible, immutable Truth, but to help them *create* a new truth about their relationship by finding firm ground for agreements that will benefit both parties and bring their vital interests into closer harmony. When this happens, Arabs and Israelis, Indians and Pakistanis, Americans and Russians, will be able to say, "The truth of the matter is that peace and cooperation are in our mutual best interest." I am not suggesting that this is

easy, or that is possible at every point in the development of a conflict, but in the end it is the only alternative to mutually devastating violence or chronic and debilitating conflict.

GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY AND THIRD-PARTY ROLES

The creation of new political and social truths, new sympathies and relationships, is always the goal of great peace-builders such as Gandhi. There are many reflections of this insight in his writings on *Satyagraha*. It can be found in his *Non-violence in Peace and War*: "I did not consider Englishmen, nor do I now consider them, as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I consider them, as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes." Or from *Young India*: "We must try patiently to convert our opponents. If we wish to evolve the spirit of democracy out of slavery, we must be scrupulously exact in our dealings without opponents." "Means and ends are convertible in my philosophy of life."

It strikes me forcibly that Gandhi's attitudes toward opponents and his philosophy of means and ends have helped to open the way for the international civil service as a profession. The UN officer commits himself to an institutionalized third-party role. That role, whether it's incumbent is a military officer wearing the UN's blue beret, a diplomat acting temporarily as a mediator, or an FAO technical specialist, requires scrupulous impartiality in dealing with all parties. It also demands adherence to the principles of justice expressed in the UN Charter and Covenants on Human Rights. This calls for difficult and sometimes painful judgments.

Like Gandhi, international civil servant and other practitioners of peace will protest their fallibility, but the intent and thrust of their roles are clear and distinguish them from those who represent national and other partial interests. Peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace-building require a high degree of consistency in the conduct of those who seriously profess them.

THE LIMITS OF NON-VIOLENCE

While I recognize the contradiction, and the frequent futility of using violence to achieve moral ends, I am unable to accept Gandhi's faith in non-violent non-co-operation as a means of national defence. I have the same problem with this concept that the all India National Congress had with it in 1939. I grant that it represents the highest manifestation of bravery and humane patriotism, but it requires a capacity for collective self-imposed suffering which I fail to observe in any nation, including India. To me, the measure of its impossibility is implicit in Gandhi's 1940 "appeal to every Briton." "I want you to fight Nazism without arms, or, if I am to retain the military technology, with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity ...[if necessary] you will allow yourselves man, woman and child to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them."

That was too much to expect of Britons, or Indians, then. The arguments in favour of non-violent or non-military defence are far more relevant and compelling today. Strategic thermonuclear weapons threaten the extinction of states, probably whole populations, even the human race. Yet this quantum leap in the technology of warfare has not brought about a revolution in the social psychology of conflict, in spite of the impact] of World War II and the cumulative carnage of the "small" wars of the last twenty-five years. Leaders and their peoples alike have reacted to these psychic shocks with habitual responses which made some sense before Hiroshima. Unfortunately, the rate and magnitude of change are continually outrunning our ability to adapt to radically new conditions.

I regret to say that I see few if any signs that whole nations, or a large enough proportion of their population, can be mobilized in support of non-violent national defence. To pin 'our hopes for the prevention of nuclear war on that prospect would be like planning a future based on the merger of the Kremlin and the Holy See.

A STEP AT A TIME

So I can be called a pessimist. But I am also an optimist. Like Mark Twain, I believe that habit is habit, but I also believe with him that it can be "coaxed downstairs a step at a time." I suppose I am hoping for grace, for enough time to change our habits. And, since institutions are habitual patterns of action, to talk about changing habits is to talk about changing institutions. How is this to be accomplished? Not, I think, by sudden radical innovations which totally transform present international patterns into somebody's ideal system. As I have made clear, I do not expect the world to be swept by a religious passion which would turn us all into Satyagrahis. Nor do I foresee the establishment of world government by consent, or, for that matter, by conquest. But I do see the possibility of breathing renewed life into the politics of international co-operation.

At this moment in history the world's problems are not basically constitutional, they are political. We do not need to revise the United Nations Charter. We need to change the foreign policies of governments by changing the attitudes of political leaders and their followers. There is a starting place for this effort, though it is no more than that: their mutual interest in national survival.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations has been celebrated. We face the uncertainties of the next quarter century with an unsettling mixture of anxiety and desperate hope. The illusions about the UN experiment generated by early enthusiasm have evaporated. Where once they were only untested dreams about what wartime allies wanted the UN to be, there is now the truth of experience. It is the truth of this internationally shared history which we must build on in the future, realistically but courageously, patiently but with the determination that every possibility of expanding functional cooperation between nations will be vigorously explored and supported.

The United Nations and the Specialized Agencies provide the structure for collective action by governments, but they are also the institutional embodiment of compromises between governments. That is both their strength and their weakness. The will to international action is generated in the political

decision-making process within the member states of the UN. If we have not learned that, we have not learned anything in the last twenty-five years. Non-violent change in the international system depends on national attitudes, goals and policies.

The implications of this fact seem clear: first, national leaders must educate themselves and their people to look at international issues from a much less parochial, more global point of view; and second, we must train popular leaders, diplomats, military officers, international civil servants, educators, Journalists and Others in the values, attitudes and practical skills needed for third-party and other peace-related roles.

There is a critical shortage of men and women who are prepared to plan and participate in UN peace observation or peacekeeping operations, or to serve as supporting staff on mediation missions, or to bring "transnational*" discernment to the issues before them on the negotiating table. That is why I have devoted myself since leaving the UN to the establishment of an international peace academy.

The projects run by the International Peace Academy during the summers of 1970, 1971, and 1972 have demonstrated the eagerness of young practitioners and scholars for a new kind of training for peace-related responsibilities. The world's major regions and ideologies were represented, and the cross-currents shook all of us into questioning some of our suppositions and dogmas. I think it accurate to say that the spirit of truth-seeking illuminated the encounter of participants with one another. In both formal classes and work groups, and in informal contacts between participants, the climate favoured the kind of communication that transcends partial and partisan versions of the truth.

Regardless of our different assumptions about the causes of violence and the best means to eliminate it – attributable to our various world views and political beliefs – we were able to agree that justice was the fundamental condition of peace. This sweeping generalization is, of course, easy to accept. It must be brought down to specific situations before its meanings can be translated into public policy. All of us recognized that we would part company

on many issues. But whether we were from the Southern or Northern hemisphere, from East or West, the *will* to find a few common points of departure was reassuringly strong. When it came to the concrete procedures and skills of third-parties in peacemaking and peacekeeping, or the role of the outside catalyst in peaceful social change, there was a surprising measure of concurrence. It reminded me that "objectivity" in human affairs is the outcome of communication which leads to a common definition of the problem to be solved, and agreement about the steps which should be taken to solve it.

In spite of all the differences and divisions in the world, the spirit of non-violence and truth can find conditional but immensely significant embodiment in world institutions which are labouring to draw together the threads of human aspiration into a life-preserving mantle with seams that will hold. My personal faith is that one of the most important investments we can make is in transnational educational ventures which will equip men and women for the practical requirements of a future for which the past has failed to prepare us.

33. NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By N. Jha

How would I like society to change? I would certainly like the social organisation wherein I would like to live to be affluent – far more affluent than the Indian Society at present, but certainly less than some of the very rich Western Societies. I would like wealth and incomes in the society of my choice to be far more equitably distributed than in any that exist. I would like production relations in that society to be just and equitable, free from all forms of exploitation of one man by another and patterns of distribution reasonably equal. In other words to satisfy me it should be a social organisation which is democratic, reasonably rich, socialistic, exploitation-free and consisting of free and equal human beings. Gandhiji would have called it a non-violent society provided it had two more characteristics; namely that in place of people living in large towns and cities people lived in very much smaller communities, so that personal relations were possible among inhabitants of the community in place of the impersonal relations of large cities. In small communities which would perhaps be larger than the tillage society of Gandhiji's conception, it was possible for people to know one another and not feel anonymous and lost as happens now in large cities. New forms of living and local participation of social, cultural and political kinds have to be evolved so that cities become an aggregation of such live small communities. Thus people would come to live in a 'village society' without at the same time losing the advantages of living in large agglomerations. The rich western countries have already started thinking of the city problems of air, water and environmental pollution, and of traffic jams and they have started evolving meaningful integrations of 'town' and 'country'. It should also be a society where the necessity to work physically had not completely disappeared by adoption of mechanised production and living. I would not quite accept Gandhi's principle of bread labour as desirable for all. I would like this to mean that everybody had work to do and was employed in doing some socially useful and personally

satisfying work, that is, was gainfully employed. And work left men and women time enough for a rich family, community, cultural and spiritual life. Of course, in countries with large populations and fast growing populations, such as India, this would also mean some kind of voluntary limitation by the Government in these societies on the adoption and use of modern labour saving technology. Otherwise it would be impossible to create conditions of full employment, as planning in this country has already established, without damaging the world organisation through imperialistic development which perhaps is no longer possible. Modern technology has to be transferred and adapted imaginatively so as to make it really serve the interests of large developing societies without upsetting the social forms of democratic and decentralised living chosen above as desirable and without creating problems of unemployment, undue domination of man by man or of international tension involved in pursuit of selfish international trade and other objectives by nations.

The viability of the ideal social form which I have spelt out above would also depend on the presence of a peaceful World order. If we are to continue living in a warring world, maintaining an uneasy peace and engaged in a senseless but continual pursuit of preparations for war it would be difficult not to change and imitate the world norms of social organisation indicated above. But even so many of the elements of the ideal society could be retained.

Could such a society be brought about by non-violent means? Could such a society be run through adoption of the well-known parliamentary institutions?

Much would depend on what instruments of social change one includes under non-violence. If non-violent social change strategies excluded the use of democratic and parliamentary Government as illegitimate, and were limited to the methods Gandhiji followed to change his immediate or national human condition, then the established potency of non-violent action would, of course, come to be very limited. If, however, one includes the use of the coercive and constructive machinery of the parliamentary and democratic Govt. to bring out peaceful social change as legitimate exercise of non-violence, society can be made to change much faster and more basically in desired directions. It would,

however, be more appropriate in my view not to include the use of coercive powers of and established Govt. under the word non-violence as mode of action and initially, use it instead to describe only those reform and constructive activities which individuals or associations other than the Government are capable of undertaking without support from the coercive arm of law and executive authority some of which may occasionally be undertaken against the Govt. and in defiance of the laws of the land. To what extent then can non-violence as individual power (Vyakti Shakti) and as group power (Lok Shakti) change society in desired directions independently of what the Govt. is doing? Could it successfully force an unwilling Government to undertake measures to alter institutions, modernise attitudes and thus change the structure of individual and social activities in desired directions often by undertaking to expand its own economic and welfare activities? What have been Gandhiji's own achievements in this respect?

Gandhiji as is well-known struggled all through his life to reform social relationships. In South Africa by offering to suffer without ill-will, he and his fellow countrymen wanted the whites to realise the inhumanity and wrong of their unjust laws and action. By about 1908, he came to the conclusion that modern civilisation was doing harm to mankind and that it was wrong to use violent methods to bring about any social or political change. The ideal social order of the future was to be one free from violence, that is from exploitation and injustice and was not to have the undesirable characteristics of the 'modern civilisation'. The present Indian society was to be transformed into such a society through application of pure and non-violent means. In his view these means included persuasion, and education and if these failed the direct action of non-violent non-cooperation was to be used which again was an attempt to educate and to persuade through acceptance of self-suffering. To take an instance, he asked all those who were enjoying privileges of position of social, economic or political advantage to give up those privileges voluntarily and thus bring to an end the injustices which flowed from them. He put forward his doctrine of Trusteeship (a legal extension of the moral principle of Aparigraha) to change the use and enjoyment of property by limiting its use by

the owners in their own personal interest and thus without interfering with the laws of property. He urged men and women to consider themselves trustees of the property or of the abilities they possessed on behalf of the underprivileged and the poor. If one can't give up property Gandhiji would suggest, let him at least weaken his emotional attachment to it and give up a good part of the right to enjoy the fruits of that property.

There are indications in Gandhiji's writings particularly in the pieces he wrote during the last decade of his life that he would have permitted non-violent non-cooperation or the use of the gentle art of Satyagraha on the part of the poor and underprivileged and even appropriate forms of State action (legislation, taxation, etc.) against the large owners for bringing about a quick alteration in the existing laws of property and forms of property relationships. Such non-violent action would have to be consummated, if successful, by appropriate legislative enactments by Government.

Gandhiji believed in the potency of non-violence as the only legitimate means of social change. Successful persuasion of men and women in position of political and economic power and advantage was possible because of the basic rationality of man. If irrational elements in man's nature and instincts of self preservation are considered to be powerful as indeed they are, some form of coercion becomes necessary to alter his rights and privileges in social interest. This has, of course, been done and is still being done in all organised societies. Independently of Govt. action, Non-cooperation may succeed or may not in exercising that necessary social coercion. There is not much evidence available yet to prove that non-violence could be used successfully as an instrument of peaceful class war in this fashion to change the right to property and the way it is exercised. One may distinguish between two stages in the application of the mode of Satyagraha: the first stage is that of persuasion, that is exhorting people to change individually and thus to become good and pure by giving up property and privileges, initiating thus the process of social change. By and large such exhortation as non-violent means of social change has failed. And little has been done to successfully use Satyagraha of the second stage that is

nonviolent non-cooperation or withdrawal of cooperation or use of mass coercion techniques without resorting to violence to bring about social change of the type mentioned above. On the successful application or possible successful application of this part of Gandhi's technique of social change (Non-cooperation) perhaps rests the efficiency of the Satyagraha of the first stage (exhortation).

Whatever institutional and organisational changes have been brought about to alter the quality of the social life in India or elsewhere have been largely through use of the State machinery i.e., through coercive legislation such as taxation, regulation of economic life, government undertaking to provide many welfare services and economic activities. The State could be captured, I still believe, through rightful use of the ballot and thus be made to promote peaceful social change. Could one call this application of the non-violent method? Is change through state action and parliamentary legislation in democracies, non-violent social change? If the answer is in the affirmative the possibilities of non-violent action for social change appear to be indeed immense.

As is well-known, violent methods have been used often successfully in many countries to capture the state machinery and then to bring about far-reaching institutional, economic and social change. I have often wondered that at the present stage in our political and mental evolution, we have only two effective alternative instruments of social change namely the proper use of the right to vote available only in democracies and the use of violent force. Of these the first is undoubtedly much better wherever and whenever a choice is possible. I also imagine that non-violent General Strike is the third alternative method. But it will require considerable organisation, education and at least some degree of affluence in the people before it could be offered as the third effective instrument for bringing about social change. The very possibility of its successful use would render the second method of violent capture of state power unnecessary and useless, and would make the democratic method of the ballot more effective and speedy as an instrument of change. If it proves out to

be ineffective and/or too slow the second method will come to be generally used even if it is wrong to go in for it on moral, social and political grounds. "It would be a sad thing", Gandhi wrote (Harijan, March 9, 1947), "If India tried to build up the New Society based on cooperation by means of violence. Good brought through force destroyed individuality. Only when change was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-cooperation, i.e., love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved and real abiding progress be assured for the World." This is very true but I wonder if these words would be heeded in impatient and angry societies where aspirations of people have far outgrown the capacity of the social order in which they live to satisfy them.

Social change if it is to be brought about by non-violent means will have to come primarily through change in people's values and attitudes. To begin with, a section of the population will have to be changed through education, persuasion, through various programmes of constructive work for social development. Such people would be the prime movers of nonviolent social change and they would be able to build up gradually their ideal villages, islands of the new social order inside society and a time would presumably come when the whole society will get transformed. They also might occasionally be able to undertake mass action to change society in a big way that is to accelerate the pace of change. But I have a fear that all this would take much too long and change initiated through such methods would continue to be small in scope. Non-violence as a form of social and individual action to change society (unless it agrees to call the parliamentary govt, as its ally and state-sponsored change as legitimate nonviolent change) would only be marginal as a force bringing about social change. The great historical forces which drive and keep on reshaping human society will be as they have been in the past, the development of science and technology, clash of interests between stratified social groups (factors which Marx emphasised), and growth of population, spread of education and strength of religion, Nationalism and state action.

In all this non-governmental non-violence or the art of persuasion and education and Gandhi's economic and other ideas should and would play some

part; perhaps this would be some kind of a corrective or modifying role directing the somewhat blind and stronger historical forces mentioned above on to right lines; but it will perhaps not make much difference to the direction in which those great historical forces are taking mankind.

34. GANDHIJI AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By O. P. Bhatnagar

Of all political leaders of our country I feel that Gandhiji was the most consistent believer in social change. Social change must lead to a stable society and it is only possible if there is sound ideology. Change for the sake of change has no meaning. In different periods of human history changes were brought about through the efforts of political thinkers and leaders but quite often they led to social chaos. Gandhiji was one leader who while advocating social change had an eye on social stability as well. We can illustrate this assumption by taking into account the role of Gandhiji from the very beginning of his career.

Let us take his early life. One thing which is noteworthy in Gandhiji's life is his sense of realisation of his duty and his awareness of the environment in which he was living. He possessed an infinite amount of will power which enabled him to implement his decisions. As a student he did his work conscientiously, respected the wishes of his parents and was straight forward in his dealings with the people he came in contact with. The atmosphere in which he lived could have come in his way of the fulfillment of his duty but he believed that he could contribute to the betterment of the atmosphere in which he was living by following his dictates of conscience and that alone could have helped him in bringing about a change in the Indian Society. From his life we can take such instances as his emphasis on telling the truth, not falling a victim to the temptations suggested by his friends and not subjecting himself to any kind of wrong pressure. This kind of determination helped him in developing a sense of dedication while he was a student in India as well as in England. Without this kind of strong will any attempt at stable social change on the part of a political thinker is well high impossible. Let us take other instances in his life.

Soon after completing his education Gandhiji settled down as a barrister in Bombay. The atmosphere in which he began working seemed oppressive. He could not take up cases of men whose cause was apparently unjust. Moral

issues were uppermost in his mind. He was desirous of a change in society in which social injustice could be eliminated.

His role in Africa from 1891 to 1914 is a very clear illustration of his heroic attempts at battling against injustices which his countrymen and the local people were subjected to.

The problems which faced him were the evils of colonialism, racial discrimination and ignorance of the masses of the people. Throughout his stay in Africa, he fought against the prejudices of the rulers against the ruled and created amongst the masses of people a sense of dignity. The epic struggles which Gandhiji launched in South Africa have been described by him in his book *Satyagraha in South Africa* and by many of his biographers. The details don't need to be emphasised but the keynote which emerges is that Gandhiji fought persistently for the well-being of the people and against the tyrannical rule of the whites over the blacks. It may be noted here that the technique that he used was non-violence which Gandhiji felt was the most effective technique in bringing about social change. In his role as a political leader in India we find greater emphasis laid on this technique. It cannot be denied that Gandhiji succeeded admirably in bringing about social change and the lot of the people in Africa improved considerably.

From the year 1914 till the year of his martyrdom in 1948 Gandhiji worked incessantly for the betterment of Indian society: On his-return to India several problems stared him in the face. The British who were ruling over India were firmly entrenched, the enslaved people were victims of all kinds of social evils which an alien rule perpetuates. Poverty, ignorance, social backwardness were rampant all over the country. Attempts at reform by the moderate sections of the society had failed. Gandhiji realised very clearly that without a mass awakening no substantial change could come over the Indian society. He had in mind not only political freedom but he developed his own ideas regarding social, economic and cultural freedom in order to bring about a real change in Indian society. He not only evolved a technique for gaining freedom but also for bringing about an integrated society. He led in his life three mass struggles in

the years 1920, 1930 and 1942 which brought India nearer to political freedom and also helped in developing a new social set-up from 1920 to 1942. Under the pressure of Gandhian struggle the Indian social picture changed very rapidly. Gandhiji created a sense of unity amongst the disunited and a respect for the indigenous culture which had been completely dominated by the alien western culture. He aroused the people against the evils of caste and communalism. He helped the people in developing a sense of equality and by introducing his schemes of education and laying emphasis on the economics of Khadi, he led the people towards a new society.

If we take an overall view of the ideals which were placed before the people by Gandhiji we come irresistibly to the conclusion that Gandhiji persistently struggled towards the goal of social progress. In this struggle he did not lose sight of some of the fundamentals of life which are connected with social change and are being emphasised today, namely, Peace, and Security. Gandhiji strove for peace not only at the national level but also at the international level. His emphasis on the technique of non-violence emanated from his desire for maintaining amity and good-will even while fighting against the British. He was fighting against an evil system and not against a people. Complete absence of bitterness in the relationship of the people of two countries is a positive proof of his desire for stable social change. So far as security is concerned Gandhiji looked at the problem from a new angle. He was not merely concerned with external security but he emphasised the need of internal security as well. That is why he upheld the ideal of inner contentment of man and freedom which could ward off the ugly aspects of industrialism. The history of modern society today is a clear illustration of the struggle. Science and Technology have ushered in social change very rapidly but have brought in their wake social instability also. He did not oppose machines but dreaded their evil consequences.

After the advent of freedom Gandhiji did not live long to develop his new outlook. He fell a victim to the assassin's bullet. His martyrdom illustrates how till his last breath, he struggled for a social security of all sections of human

society* In spite of all the difficulties which seemed to retard the progress of the country, Gandhiji remained true to the ideals of social change.

In summing up we can say that Gandhiji by his emphasis on Truth and Non-violence which he considered basic to his theory of social change, laid a stable basis of society. His dream may not be realised for some time to come but man will achieve success ultimately through the guidelines suggested by him. In view of the growth of violence in society today and the failure of Science and Technology in solving the problems which face us, we should review the Gandhian teachings. Their acceptance will pave the way for national as well as international peace and security and usher in an era of real social change.

35. NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTIONARY ECONOMICS FOR INDIA

By Prakash Syal

Gandhi was not an economist in the conventional sense of the term and yet his economic thinking, which started in the 'ad hoc*' manner of replies to questions and ultimately blossomed into a system is most revolutionary. He was a more radical revolutionary than Chairman Mao. Gandhi seeks to combine Lincoln's love of liberty with Lenin's urge for equality without resorting to the barrel of a gun.¹

In order to understand Gandhian economic thinking, we have constantly to keep in sight the proper perspective which is provided by remembering the following:

1. He did not approach human life in fragments or segments. He could not think of an "economic man", a 'political man,' etc. His concern was the development of an integrated Man, without contradictions within him.² In the Gandhian scheme there is no place for dichotomy between a personal code of conduct and a social code.
2. The Gandhian system of economic thought cannot be appraised merely in terms of current economic theory which rests on certain limited assumptions. It is a challenge to those assumptions themselves.³ He would not believe in maximisation of material welfare as the final end of good economics. The supreme end of human life was happiness. Judged on this touchstone 'true economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethic to be worth its name, must at the same time be also good economics.'⁴
3. His thoughts and actions sprang out of an intense religiousness – in the spiritual rather than in the ritual sense. He believed in the fundamental unity and equality of mankind. Out of this basic belief springs his adherence to non-violence in personal and social affairs, which comes naturally out of a faith in a Supreme Power, God, after whose image all men are born.

4. His economic thinking, or prescriptions for economic maladies were conditioned by what he saw around him.
5. Gandhi had seen around him both Capitalism and Communism at work in different parts of the world and both seemed to be the obverse of and reverse of the same coin – Violence. Neither had been able to solve the problem of exploitation of one section of society by another. Both systems had failed to provide a full happy life to the individual and society – a life sans conflicts, sans bitterness.
6. Gandhi was never rigid in his approach. He had always opened the windows of his house and mind for winds from all directions to blow into them.

It is in the above context that his non-violent economics can be appreciated.

Gandhi would be no party to whipping up the craze for multiplying wants to an unlimited extent. The experience of affluent societies was not all sweet. Man does not live by bread alone. He is Matter plus Spirit. Spirit too must be fed as Matter has to be satiated. This does not mean that he advocates a society of ascetics or he extols the virtues of adversity and poverty. He had the greatest compassion and concern for the under god and maximum tears, reserved for the poor. What he wanted was (a) that the craze for material wealth at the cost of spiritual, moral and human wealth must stop; (b) that the enrichment of some people at the cost of and to the neglect of some others within the same society must stop even as enrichment of some nations at the cost of some others must stop. He was always ready to welcome material advancement without exploitation of individuals and societies and of the spirit. He was not an economist who would be neutral between ends nor would he like economics to be a mere 'catalogue of alternative means'.

He wanted to teach Indians the dignity of labour which idea he came across in Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. Here was a practical remedy for unemployment particularly among the educated. Self-employment, diversion of educated youth to agriculture and rural industries are the remedies that are being advocated now. Some sort of manual labour has also been prescribed as a corrective for emotional stress and strains by modern psychologists.⁵ Manual

work will not be relegated to any particular class and no particular work or workers will acquire a kind of social stigma.⁶ It will help promote 'equality of man'.

In the field of labour-capital relations he stood for nonviolent settlement of differences. He did not believe in any inevitable and irreconcilable antagonism between labour and capital.⁷ Both should work as equal partners in a joint venture. They were the co-trustees for society.⁸ Not that capital alone should not exploit labour but the labour too should not exploit capital otherwise labourers will become capitalists in a worse sense.⁹ Gandhi would like labour and capital to settle disputes by negotiation or, failing that, by arbitration which should be binding on both the parties. Violence will generate endless bitterness which will result in further violence in whose vicious circle both labour and capital will be caught up. He believed in the essential divinity of man howsoever latent or coiled it may be within him. If the labourers, after persistent efforts, found the appeal ineffective, they should unite, refuse to submit to injustice and offer Satyagraha, non-violent non-cooperation. The exploiter would be utterly ineffective without the cooperation of the exploited.

There is much muddled thinking about Gandhi's attitude towards machinery.¹⁰ He won't mind machines if they were 'non-violent', i.e., if they were not exploitive of labour, of handicrafts, of cottage industries and if they did not damage man's personality. He was not against machinery as such; he was against the 'craze' for machinery. Man was supreme for Gandhi and if machinery became the master and man its slave, he would avoid such machinery.

For him 'every machine that help every individual has a place'.¹¹ But the machine that helped some individuals to exploit other individuals or helped some sister nations to exploit other sister nations had no place whatsoever in his scheme of things.¹²

He shuddered to think of India taking to industrialism the way the West had taken to it. It had bred greed.¹³ Nehru assured him that 'if means of production are socialised, evils of industrialism could be avoided. But Gandhi thought industrialism would remain the same monster under both Capitalism and

Communism. Evils are inherent in large-scale and wholesale industrialisation. Under Capitalism, the tyranny is economic imperialism and acquisition of dependencies, whereas under Communism it takes the form of 'Satellite States'.¹⁴ In respect of industrialism he seemed to favour an attitude of 'making haste slowly' and of going cautiously, watching the results at every step and providing the correctives wherever needed so that industrialism does not become a Frankenstein threatening to devour its very creator—man.

He was more radical in his ideas about economic equality and said that the work of the lawyer as well as that of the barber had the "same value". 'To each according to his needs' was what Gandhi meant by equality.¹⁵

And to level the prince and the pauper he would not cut the head of the prince. This would be violence. He suggested the non-violent institution of Trusteeship for this. The privileged should think themselves trustee of the under-privileged as the mother behaves as the trustee of the child.¹⁶ Gandhi had unshakable faith in the essential but latent divinity of man. But if the privileged were incorrigible and would not use their material prosperity to subserve the community's interest, Gandhi had up his sleeves the trump card – the method of non-violent non-co-operation. The rich, after all, cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation, willing or forced, of the poor.¹⁷ At the same time he warned the rich that if they do not voluntarily agree to be the community's trustees, the awakened, but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country into chaos which even the most powerful armies will not be able to avert.¹⁸

In this context Gandhi drew a distinction between possession and possessiveness.¹⁹ The former could remain minus the latter. That would be more enduring a solution to the problem of inequality. If at one stroke inequalities are removed, they would not be over once for all. Men would always, by the very nature of things, continue to have different abilities and capabilities and the problem of inequality would always recur. And inequalities will recur not only in respect of riches but also in respect of intellect and mental abilities. The only permanent solution was to keep superior privileges of

gifts in trust for the community. That would keep intact -possession but possessiveness and greed would go. It would not only be beneficial for the community, it would also offer an opportunity to the economic and intellectual elite to ennoble their personalities.

The violent way of liquidating the rich will not necessarily mean the eradication of the instinct for possessiveness and acquisitiveness and hence is not a permanent, enduring, solution to the problem of inequalities.

Gandhi's views on Socialism and Communism were in line with his thinking about an integrated man within an integrated society. They were the views of a non-violent revolutionary, of an 'outspoken', 'radical' and 'enlightened liberal' as Myrdal calls him.²⁰

Gandhi and Marx were alike, as Vinoba says, in their great love for submerged humanity and in their earnest search for realisation of human equality or brotherhood. But that's all about their similarity. In Marx's own words: "Mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of the man that determines their existence but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness."²¹ Gandhi rejects this thesis because man does not crawl on his belly wholly or exclusively. For him 'above and beyond matter, mind is. It was not only a theoretical belief but a fact of experience for him that the body could be destroyed but the spirit will still proclaim its freedom.²²

Gandhi also rejected the theory of an inherent, and irreconcilable antagonism between labour and capital, the theory of class-struggle. If the capitalists do not heed the advice and read the signs of times, non-violent non-cooperation in the ultimate analysis is bound to achieve justice for the exploited without doing injustice to the exploiter and in the process ennobling him too. For Gandhi means and ends are convertible terms. 'As the means, so the ends.'²³ Violence had been tried and had failed and will fail. "Those who take up the sword, shall perish by the sword."

His socialism is Sarvodaya—the good of all. He neither subscribes to the utilitarian view—the greatest good of the greatest number— nor to the modern

view of judging an affluent society with the yardstick of Gross National Product²⁴. His touchstones are Sarvodaya, the welfare of all, and Antyodaya, 'even unto this last*.

Gandhi's method in economic affairs and relations, as in political and social affairs and relations, is 'non-violent transformation' and not violent destruction. He was a practical idealist²⁵ and had already proved the efficacy of the non-violent method in politics. In the social sphere he has been vindicated by people like Martin Luther in America. In fact 'Gandhi is inevitable' even in the economic sphere. David Mitrany of Oxford, while assessing the value of Gandhian economic thinking, comments: "... yet Mr. Gandhi's thought may still be valid and desirable wherever possible, as a programme. And, as philosophy, it is more valid than ever."²⁶

Before Gandhi had used the method of non-violence successfully. Gandhi's greatest contribution was that he took nonviolence to the streets, to the masses and made it a base for mass movements.²⁷

It is significant that the celebrated author of *Asian Drama* feels that more than anything what India needs today in the present mess and frustration is another Gandhi.²⁸ Yes, another Gandhi who could once again weld the masses together, inspire them to do great things and realise the superhuman potentialities which human beings have within them. "His greatest achievements are still to come."²⁹

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36. NON-VIOLENCE-BASED POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF GANDHIJI AND THE STATE

By P. C. Roy Chaudhury

Gandhiji used to repeatedly assert that he should not be taken by parts, but viewed as a whole. He was quaint and his rather anti-intellectual concepts of making the villages self-sufficient as a means to check the tide of the present industrialisation is as much a part of him as his insistence on Truth and God and God as Truth or that non-violence should be the essential basis of any political movement. It is futile to take Gandhiji as a political philosopher in the sense as we talk of the servants who have laid down political theories and have gone down in the intellectual world. Gandhiji himself knew that the ideal in him is in a great contradiction to the practical in him. In *Young India* on July 20, 1931 Gandhiji had referred to this concept of the non-violent, stateless and classless society and had observed : "But the ideal is never fully realised in life." Another time Gandhiji was asked at Shantiniketan : "If a State could carry on strictly according to the principles of non-violence?" Gandhiji's reply as mentioned in *Harijan* of March 10, 1940, was :

"A Government cannot succeed in becoming entirely nonviolent because it represents all the people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it."

Gandhiji is taken as a political philosopher because of his theory of non-violent State. According to him the structure of the State that should emerge on the completion of the nonviolence struggle against British imperialism is a via media between the existing order and the ideal of non-violent, stateless and classless society. He thought that political, social and economic equality should be the basis of such a State having a compromise of extreme decentralisation of political and economic authority. We have seen how the democracy in India has worked out since Independence has been achieved and how Gandhiji's ideas

of political philosophy have been completely shattered by his own followers in Congress administrations.

However, it is of academic interest to discuss Gandhiji's concept of State. Gandhiji was clear in his mind that his ideal of a non-violent State is not an end in itself but only a means to an end. He would not insist even on the loyalty and allegiance of the citizens unless the State could satisfy the legitimate demands of citizens. If the State fails to deliver the goods the citizens have the right to revolt. This direct intervention by the people and individuals will, according to Gandhiji assure a good Government. Where Gandhiji failed is in the things that he thought that the demons could possibly always have, a clear idea of what is right and what is wrong.

Gandhiji had a poor idea of parliamentary democracy based on centralisation of authority, at the top. The working of the British Parliament excited his contempt and ridicule and he did not restrain himself in giving expression to his feelings. Gandhiji favoured representative assemblies elected indirectly by the immediately lower territorial assemblies. He wanted the villages and towns to elect their Panchayats directly who would again elect District! Assemblies, the Provincial Bodies and Provincial Legislative Organs and finally elect the National Assembly. Gandhiji wanted that power would be decentralised and well-up from below. The primary bodies, the villages and the town Panchayats, would be left with large powers of self-government. The sphere of State action would be methodically reduced and authority would come to be handed over to voluntary associations, both functional and territorial. Such a State which must be secular in character shall use minimum amount of coercion. The police force who will bear arms will not and cannot be eliminated. But the military force which is nothing but concentrated violence must have no place in a non-violent state. Crime according to Gandhiji was a disease caused by social injustices and maladjustments. Gandhiji however, thought that some kind of punishment in some cases was unavoidable. But the purpose of punishment should be corrective and reformative and not vindicative. Under the modified scheme of things most judicial work will be performed by the Panchayats, or popularly

elected rural or urban commutes. Gandhiji, however, recognises that it will not be possible to banish the State as such from the judicial field in the near future.

The political system of Gandhiji had some more equally interesting features. Manual work shall be the qualification for franchise and it shall be open to all adults above the age of 21 or even 18. Characteristically enough, Gandhiji once in a lighter vein said that he would like to bar out from the exercise of franchise old men like himself. The national people's assembly would be elected indirectly and entrusted with a minimum of duties. Structurally, the non-violent State would be a combination of autonomous village units, politically and economically self-sufficient as far as possible. Gandhiji definitely sets his face against the rule of the majority. The majority or the minority must try to convince the other through persuasion or self-suffering. In the last resort, the minority of the representatives in the people's assemblies must yield unless the decision concerned offends their moral sense.

According to Gandhiji's concept, a non-violent State should have functional and territorial decentralisation with marked contribution from voluntary associations. He had underscored the importance of basic education and took both basic and post-basic education to be the responsibility of the State. A non-violent State in the fullest implementation of Gandhiji's idea would not allow any individual possession but dispossession of one's property should be done non-violently. Society will have the claim to the existing property and Gandhiji's advocacy of the doctrine of trusteeship leads him to support Death-duties and progressive taxation. He would not allow anyone to become rich by exploiting others and society as a whole will have the claim to all existing property.

It is considered that this concept of Gandhiji is far too Utopian and impossible to achieve in the present trends of civilisation. This ideal, however, does not fit in with the economic structure of the non-violent State as the economic structure underlined by Gandhiji in the stateless, classless society in a non-violent State. There would be heavy transport and centralised industry and

thereby labour will have to be utilised fully. But Gandhiji conceives a combination where the capitalist and the labourer or the worker will work as partners. If this is not possible, he would have socialisation of heavy industries and that means the State would own them. But at the same time Gandhiji underlined the necessity of the workers representatives to have a share in the management. As we have seen, Gandhiji wanted cottage industries to be revived and the village to be self-sufficient. He did not actually advocate the abolition of landlordism but he wanted the landlords to eliminate the social inequality between themselves and the peasants and he had threatened that failure to do so justified confiscation. Cooperative farming and collective farming were strongly advocated by Gandhiji.

Gandhiji did not consider deeply what could be the relationship of a nonviolent State in the family of States in an inter-dependent world although he had mentioned that a nonviolent State should not be an isolated unit. He had, however, advocated some sort of an international organisation which would keep up the relationship of the States whether nonviolent or not harmonious. But he knew that this was another impractical scheme and that is why he thought that there should be congeries of non-violent States which would assure perfect peace and harmony in the world.

Gandhiji as a political philosopher will go down in history because of the ethical principles he had advocated through his political philosophy. His contribution to humanity "distracted by war and soul killing repressions emanating from State and Society" stands as a means to his goal of a stateless, classless society in a non-violent State. No one was more conscious than Gandhiji himself that the target was difficult to achieve owing to the pressures or demands of the modern times. But he always said that the concept was worth-trying for and he was never tired of repeating like Cardinal Newman that one step was enough for him and that explains why he preached his political philosophy based on non-violence which would always have a certain amount of ethical value whether the political system advanced by his philosophy could be practical or not.

Political philosophy based on non-violence when applied to State-craft has so far failed is the common concept. It had failed when Independence came to India and Gandhiji realised it as would appear in an unpublished letter of Gandhiji to Madame Privat, wife of the late Dr. Edmond Privat that I got from Madame Privat in Switzerland in 1970. In this letter Gandhiji had said:

29-11-1947

"Coming to my own personal experience, whilst we undoubtedly got through passive resistance our political freedom ever which lovers of peace like you and your good husband of the West are enthusiastic, we are dearly paying the heavy price for the unconscious mistake we made, or better still, I made in mistaking passive resistance for non-violent resistance. Had I not made the mistake, we would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of a weak brother killing his weak brother thoughtlessly and inhumanly.

I am only hoping and praying and I want all the friends here and in other parts of the world to hope and pray with me that this blood-bath will soon end and out of that, perhaps, inevitable butchery, will rise a new and robust India – not basely imitating the West in all its hideousness, but a new India learning the best that the West has to give and becoming the Hope not only of Asia and Africa, but the whole of the aching world.

I must confess that this is hoping against hope, for we are today swearing by the military and all that naked force implies. Our statesmen have for two generations declaimed against the heavy expenditure on the armaments under the British regime, but now that freedom from the political serfdom has come, our military expenditure has increased and still threatens to increase and of this we are Proud. There is not a voice raised against it in our legislative chambers. In spite, however, of the madness and vain imitation of the tinsel of the West, the hope lingers in me and many others that India shall survive this death dance and occupy the moral height that should belong to her after the training, however

imperfect in non-violence for an unbroken period of thirty-two years since 1915....

I hope this will find you both in the same vigour in which you used to be during those happy days that you passed with me in India. I wonder if you will ever again come to India and see it, not her madness, but wisdom inspiring every department of love.

Love to you both.

Bapu"

37. GANDHI AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By R. Achuthan

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Change and growth are the conditions of life in this world and all prophets of mankind have helped in this change to better our life and to help the process of all-round evolution.

Religions in general believe that social change will come through individual reformation and they have not tackled the problem of structural change in society and its institutions. The communists and the socialists on the other hand believe that if we transform society, its economic and political framework, real social change will take place.

Gandhi is a unique revolutionary leader who emphasised the need for change both in the individual and society and he believed that this change should be brought about simultaneously to have progressive changes in society to help man.

Gandhi believed in a plenary Reality which is beyond change on the acceptance of which alone we can have meaningful and purposeful changes in man and society.

He believed that man has a spiritual destiny and all the changes should accept the basic fact of life, the reality of God and man's need to realise his spiritual destiny.

Change should come not through external pressure but through his integrated consciousness – Integral consciousness works at the material, moral and spiritual levels of man and through this integral consciousness man should rebuild the structure of his material, mental and spiritual institutions through which he has to constantly function. The structure of wealth and power has to be constantly kept resilient to serve the ends of man. He analysed the structure of tyranny that has exploited man from age to age and devised Satyagraha as a weapon which can be wielded by the tyrannised to resist tyranny.

Now Gandhi's greatest contribution to modern times is this weapon of Satyagraha which is the most effective instrument of social change.

Social change requires three phases of change. There should be change in the thought structure of the people. There should be change in the life of the people. There should be change in the various relationships in life. All these changes should be brought about together and there should be all-round revolutionary transformation in our thought, life and in the institutions of life. People should be trained to think creatively on the basis of Truth.

This requires the disciplines of the mind which can be built up only on the basis of our faith in God. Our life should be based on the law and philosophy of reciprocity and it has to be based on sacrifice which is the basis of creation. Sacrifice and creation goes on in this world as the law of life and we human beings should practise this consciously. Love and the constant process of sharing should be the basis of our life. The relationship in life at the economic and political levels should be freed from exploitation and the wealth and the power structure should help the process of human equality. Our economic, political and social institutions should help the evolution of man and should never cripple his freedom and creativity.

Gandhi when he fought the racial imperialism of the South African Government started with the programme of raising the consciousness of the people. He helped them to change their thinking which was based on fear and inferiority complex. He changed his life and built up the institutions of spiritual power.

In India also he made the people lose their fear and slowly built up their thought structure based on courage, justice and freedom. He introduced into life a sense of purpose, simplicity and God mindedness. He set up Ashrams and institutions of creative work and spiritual power and organised Satyagraha. He affected the thinking of the people, affected their lives and created new relationships in life. Gandhi became the living instrument of all-round change and transformation.

Gandhi said that change should come first to the individual. It is only when he accepts change, that he can introduce it in the life of society and institutions.

We have today many learned people who will talk about change, who will sociologically analyse the nature of change, but who will not accept change in their own lives and this has created social hypocrisy and lack of faith in change. With all our scientific understanding and sociological studies and social research there is no movement for change. We have destroyed the momentum for change which Gandhi built up in this country.

Social change today should be the result of various steps to be initiated by various agencies in society. People should change their thought structure and individuals should accept change and implement it on their family level and their institutional levels. The Government should thoughtfully legislate to change the existing organised evil and create a congenial atmosphere for real conscious change of the people. The various political parties should educate the people about the philosophy and strategy of change and build up a strange movement by which people will discard the old and accept the new. The academicians should play a creative role in preparing materials for study which will help this change. The scientists and technologists should create the scientific temper needed for social change and devise appropriate technology which will increase human happiness in the new context.

In Russia and China they have brought about social change by re-structuring their political economy and other institutions through organised military power combined with the communist ideology. This has naturally affected adversely the free consciousness of the people. Regimentation of thought even for a good purpose is not desirable. Individual development can come only through the development of integral consciousness in man and this can be done only through the freedom of the human personality.

So Gandhi's unique method of social change which is through the rousing of the consciousness of each individual is the basic thing for change.

In India we are yet to work out the conditions of social change through Gandhian methods. The individual personality should become the radiating centre of change and the change must come to the family, and other

institutions of human development. Our agricultural, industrial and educational revolutions should aim at creating this all-round change for the labour.

Gandhi wanted an organisation of national missionaries committed to integral outlook and integral programme of human action to change society. The all-round social transformation should start from the 'Tamasic' to 'Rajasic' and to the 'Satvic' state of creative freedom and human happiness. Only through integrated individuals committed to human freedom, can we effect social changes which will help human evolution.

38. NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

By Dr. S. Gopalan

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From the Gandhian point of view social change understood as progressive evolution of man and society involved a dynamic pursuit of the principle of non-violence. It has been conclusively shown by Mahatma Gandhi that in its truest sense social change is achieved not by violence but through adoption of the nonviolent method of social action. Sociological and philosophical analyses of the concept of social change point to the futility of the violent posture man is tempted to take in his anxiety to hasten the process of change in society, and offer the rational behind Gandhiji's insistence on adopting the non-violent method of social action.

It should however be remembered that the Gandhian view of social change was not born out of a conscious striving towards a formulation of consistent *theory*. The Mahatma has not given us theoretical analysis (merely) of man and society and of the situation of their mutual involvement in the production of the social good. Not that Gandhiji disregarded the value of having clear-cut ideals to work towards or plans of action to adopt for achieving the goals envisaged, but that he was conscious of the pitfalls inherent in over-emphasizing the theoretical aspect of (any) concrete plan of action.

It is perhaps a commonplace to point out that changes in human society are inevitable and unavoidable. But the question which is more significant is Which of the proposition is true—(I) The individual's having to reconcile himself to the changes taking place in all his institutions, considering that certain factors completely external to himself are at work and determine *for him* conditions under which he has to live and work? Or does it point to the basic factors contributing to the changes in society as emanating from the individual — who not only interrogates and introspects but also can will and achieve his ends — and hence as being capable of anticipation and modification if and when

necessary ? The answer to these questions will indicate whether institutions or individuals are decisive factors in social change. Affirmative answer to the first question would indicate the enviable role of institutions in giving the substance of the phenomenon of social change, and answering the second question in the affirmative would point to the dynamic role of the individual in designing his institutions to bring about the required changes in them to suit *his* needs.

The institutionalist point of view that social change signifies outright modifications in the patterns of the institutions, takes away the initiative (for social change) from the individuals constituting society, may treat them as non-entities in shaping their own histories and destinies. Dynamism is to be abstractly adduced to the institutions without further admitting the obvious truth that institutions without individuals are fictitious abstractions of human mind.

The individualist standpoint conceives of social change as originating from the *individual*, the *live human being* who is full of potentialities to transform social actualities into whatever he wants to make of them. The interpretation of human history is in terms of what human individuals have wanted history to be and how they have shaped it. Inability of most man to do anything about their society is no disproof of the thesis of the second alternative since it only means that dynamism in most cases has not passed beyond the realms of possibility. Even the negligibly small minority who do account for changes in society, prove that man is basically endowed with the potentiality to rise above the limitations imposed on him by his society. That is, the dynamism of the individuals gives meaning and significance to social change as such.

From the Gandhian point of view of social change it is important to hold that the influence of neither the institution over the individual nor of the individual over the institution is one-sided. We can't argue either that societies everywhere so determine the lives of individuals that the latter become static aspects of institutions without freedom to choose or shape their future or that all men all the time determine for themselves their institutions, create new institutions where necessary and modify existing institutions when warranted.

This is evident when we reflect a little about the fallacy in the institutionalist argument. In the ultimate analysis society is nothing but the objectification of man's value—systems for realizing which he enters into enduring communication with the others. What we call an integrated personality is not something given to us ready-made but a result of social interaction. The institutionalist is wrong if he were to make us believe that there is, on the one side, an abstract entity called society and, on the other, the concrete individual. It is essentially through communication that transmission of ideas and ideals, and formation of the individual's raw nature into a culturally acceptable form takes place. But, since communication is not confined to the 'face-to-face group' but operates 'impersonally*' also, society itself is looked upon as an objective, autonomous entity to which man has to either submit himself or against which he has to rebel. That Gandhiji was not prepared to admit the supremacy of the institutions over the individuals in this sense is evident from his assertion: "Man is superior to the system he propounds."¹ So he would have heartily agreed with Toynbee that individuals "cannot conjure up a giant in their own image out of the intersection of their own shadows and then breathe into this unsubstantial body the breath of their own life."²

If, as shown above, society does not determine completely the lives of all its individuals, it has to be conceded also that it becomes a subject of conscious analysis by some and becomes susceptible to the changes desired by them. Social change thus is neither inevitable nor unaccountable. Change in society is the outcome of some (at least) of its individuals consciously wishing and working for it and so it is dependent on the dynamism of the individuals. But, the individual cannot make himself felt all the time, thanks to his being also influenced by society. That the Mahatma appreciated the intimate and reciprocal relationship between the individual and society and hence that he discarded the 'one-way-influence' theory is evident from his words: "A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed advancing, and conversely no individual can advance without the nation of which he is a part also advancing."³ The same idea finds a reflection even in his insistence on the necessity for the individual voluntarily putting restrictions on his freedom. He

writes: "Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which he is a member."⁴

If man is thus not an entity but an individual, if he is not a static point in a series of points that is wrongly described as society, but a dynamic, willing subject determining the direction of social development, his basic nature points to his own aspirations and levels of attainment. According to Gandhi man's basic nature is spiritual and it is because of this that culture or civilization itself has been possible. The history of man, according to him is a "ceaseless growth or an unfoldment in terms of spirituality".⁵ One of the most important aspects of man's spirituality is *non-violence* and this has been responsible for human progress, according to Gandhi. He traces the various stages through which progress in human life and society has been achieved. It is worth quoting him at some length here. He writes: "If we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards Ahimsa. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He, therefore, took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus, from being a nomad, he settled down to civilized .stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community or a nation. All these are signs of progressive Ahimsa and diminishing Himsa. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct now even as many of a lower species have disappeared."⁶ Gandhi's conviction is that the alternative to adhering to non-violence is to be sought for by man only at his own peril. He writes: "Either he (man) progresses towards Ahimsa or rushes to his doom."⁷ Since it is absurd to argue that man would wish for his own doom, Gandhi seems to suggest that social change desired for can be only for the better.

It may be contended here that when Gandhi refers to 'progress' here, he is possibly thinking of the individual's own progress and that to bring in the

concept of social change and to read into the dynamics of it the individual's own initiative and drive is to read between the lines of Gandhi's writings and to find in his writing what we want to find in them. In this connection it is significant to note that even a critic of Indian thought like Albert Schweitzer has written approvingly of the efficacy of Ahimsa to the world of action: He makes a subtle distinction between the ancient Indian concept of Ahimsa "rooted in the background of work-and-life-negation" and Gandhian Ahimsa and points out that the former "sets before it no aims that are to be realized in the world, but is simply the most profound effort to attain to the state of keeping completely pure from the world."⁸ On the other hand since in Gandhi we find an acceptance of the philosophy of world-and-life-affirmation and service, "with him Ahimsa engages in activity within the world and in this way it ceases to be what in essence it is."⁹

This is not to cite an 'outside authority' in favour of our thesis but to mention the fact that even a critic of the concept of Ahimsa has been able to appreciate Gandhi's application of it to social action. Gandhi himself has expressed the view that, "It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind."¹⁰

Gandhi however was well aware of the fact that accepting non-violence as a principle for individual and social action meant also infinite sacrifice. He writes: "Individuals or nations who would practise non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to the last man) their all except honour."¹¹ Nor was Gandhi blind to the fact that the observance may not always lead to material gain, but that it may even lead to loss of possessions. In spite of this it was to be observed since it is a moral principle, the characteristic emblem of the human species. "Non-violence", he maintains, "affords the fullest protection to self-respect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property, though its habitual practice does prove a better bulwark than the possession of armed men to defend them. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts."¹² In effect Gandhi's view is that man is not a helpless weakling

before society and that the only (but powerful) instrument man has at his disposal to effect changes in his institutions is the capacity for non-violence.

Sometimes Gandhi's concept of non-violence is wrongly interpreted as having resulted from cowardice and fear-complex. That there is no room for such an interpretation is evident from Gandhi's expressing a preference for the man of violence than for coward: "Violence is any day preferable to impotence. There is hope for a violent man to become non-violent. There is no such hope for the impotent."¹³ Gandhi himself states the reason: "... cowardice itself is violence of a subtle and therefore dangerous type, and far more difficult to eradicate than the habit of physical violence. A coward never risks his life. A man who would kill often risks it. A non-violent person's life is always at the disposal of one who would take it. For he knows that the soul within never dies. The encasing body is ever perishing. The more a man given his life the more he saves it. This non-violence requires more than the courage of the soldier of war. The Gita definition of a soldier is one who does not know what it is to run away from danger."¹⁴

Gandhi's application of Ahimsa to society, therefore, signifies his pleading for the heroic non-violent action of the brave and not for offering non-resistance with a weak heart and the attitude of succumbing to the danger without doing anything to avert or overcome it. He wanted the cultivation of courage as a preparation for ethical life but he wanted the cultivation of courage as to be expressed non-violently and not violently. He insisted on the development of that moral courage and strength which proceed from an indomitable will. He is quoted, in evidence, as saying in Noakhali on November 27, 1946: "The only real guarantee is to be sought in the personal courage of individuals. Everything else depends on it." So the operation of Ahimsa is the exercise of the soul-force emanating from *each individual* and is hence considered as the strongest though subtlest force that man is inherently capable of, according to Gandhi.¹⁵ When considered alongside the psychology of violence if, Gandhi's theory, far from being considered as Utopian and idealistic will be appreciated as projecting the dynamism in man and as pressing for its expression through

society. "The cult of armament and preparedness is the indirect testimony to the wide prevalence of fear, distrust and suspicion" he maintains.¹⁶ Describing a war as defensive or as just is according to Gandhi only a way of justifying an unjustifiable act. In his characteristic way of pointing to the fundamentals, he cites the instance of violence (involved in war) and maintains that "man does not live by destruction".¹⁷ He emphatically maintains : "The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based, not on the force of arms, but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that in spite of the wars of the world, it lives on."¹⁸

Before concluding we may point out that the core of the Gandhian approach to social problems is to suggest that rather than dwelling on what has not been achieved it is always desirable to take stock of the achievements themselves. Very often in our anxiety to get a 'quick remedy' we forget that the malady itself is not as grave as we imagine and that there is no ground on which we could give up hopes in the effectiveness of the-ordinary methods of getting a remedy. In regard to social change the votaries of institutional and instantaneous change imagine that the application of violence is the only way out of social problems, forgetting the fact that such a forced phase of getting remedy for society will have the effect of damaging its very continuance. They dwell too much on the darker side of man and exaggerate it and ignore the nobler instincts in man. A calm reflection on the nobler instincts shows beyond doubt that the human situation is not as bad as some thinkers imagine it to be. If so, it is by appealing to the nobler instincts in man that any real achievement in the sphere of human action can be hoped for. It may, therefore, be maintained that if the Gandhian premise regarding human, nature is conceded, it is impossible to suggest that the principle of non-violence cannot work at the social level, for Gandhi has shown that man is dynamic and that his dynamism gets proportionately strengthened when he is moved by consideration for the larger and larger social institutions which envelop him.

1. *Young India*, July 13, 1921
2. Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. IV, p. 12
3. *Young India*, March 26, 1931
4. *Harijan*, May 27, 1939,
5. *Young India*, September 16, 1926
6. *Harijan*, August 11, 1940
7. *Ibid*,
8. Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, p. 233:
We do not subscribe to the view that Gandhi's view of Ahimsa is essentially different from that of the traditional Indian view of non-violence. We maintain that Gandhi's teaching of Ahimsa reflects the spirit of the traditional Indian view.
9. *Ibid*.
10. *Harijan*, September 5, 1936
11. *Ibid*.
12. *Harijan*, September, 5, 1936
13. *Harijan*, October 21, 1939
14. *Young India*, December 18, 1924
15. See V. P. Varma, *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Sarvodaya* (Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, 1965), p. 120
16. *Ibid.*, p, 16
17. *Ibid*.
18. *Hind Swaraj*, p. 46

39. NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH LEGISLATION IN DEMOCRACY

By S. L. Malhotra

An ideal social order, according to Gandhi must be based on non-violence for, he believed, that non-violence is the law of our species,¹ it is not merely a personal but a social value.² Gandhi's view of non-violence bears a profound and comprehensive meaning. Non-violence for him means refraining from inflicting injury on others through malice, anger, harsh words, exploitation or type of injustice. He regarded it as violence to cause pain to others in pursuit of a selfish purpose.³ It follows that a believer in non-violence cannot be an adherent of status quo, for he must fight injustice prevailing in society. Social change, therefore, is the corollary of our effort to establish a social order based on non-violence. Gandhi developed a nonviolent technique of fighting injustice in society in a situation where the wrong-doer cannot be made to stop inflicting injury on others through persuasion. The idea underlying his programme of Satyagraha is to make an appeal to the heart of a wrong-doer through self-suffering when the appeal to reason fails to move him. It follows from Gandhi's conviction that a social evil can be rooted out only by the change of heart of the evil-doer. In other words, it is conversion and not coercion that can bring about change in society. Fundamental change in the outlook of an individual is the first pre-requisite for transforming the social set-up. Transformation of the social macrocosm is not possible without a corresponding change in the ultimate microcosm, i. e. man. It follows that revolution in ideas is the first condition for social revolution. Sarvodayists claim that Vinoba's Bhoodan movement aims at such a revolution. It seeks the redistribution of land by bringing about a change of heart "among the people so that they may voluntarily distribute land without waiting for the legislation."⁴ Vinoba declares that as a devotee of Ahimsa or nonviolence, the only way open to him for achieving his goal of redistribution of land "is to go from village to village explaining and convincing the people of the aim of his mission."⁵ The Bhoodan

movement, according to Jaya Prakash Narayan, represents a new way of life. "It is the Gandhian way of bringing about an economic and social revolution."⁶ The question before us is: What place does legislation hold in this technique of social change? More specifically: Does it mean that a devotee of non-violence cannot favour a social legislation since it involves the violation of the ideal of non-violence? Does it mean distrust of institutionalism?⁷ Or is it correct to say that the direct action approach of Gandhi and Vinoba substitutes a democratic process? Does it pose a challenge to constitutional democracy?⁸

For the answers of these questions we have to turn to Gandhi's view of non-violence and the role of the state in society. Undoubtedly, law involves some degree of violence since obedience to law is compulsory and its violation is accompanied by physical punishment. According to this outlook only that society is best in which social ends are attained without the help of law. In other words, it means that society can be non-violent only when it has done away with the need of state. Gandhi's ideal of stateless society rests on this logic. But the ideal for Gandhi represents the state of perfection which like Euclid's straight line, cannot be attained completely. He, therefore, insisted on progressive realisation of the ideal of non-violence for perfect non-violence, according to him, is not possible so long as one is tied down to the shackles of the flesh. Thus the extent to which a person can observe non-violence depends upon his will and the degree of self-control that he has acquired. This means that in practice the observance of non-violence varies from individual to individual and from community to community. "The ideal", he said, "must always be the same, but the practice I have conceived to be different in the case of an individual and the society. Truly speaking, practice differs in case of every individual. I do not know of two men having the same extent of the practice of ahimsa, although their definition of ahimsa is the same. The extent of practice in case of society is the average of the different capacities of its members."⁹

The same principle applies to his ideal of stateless society. For him, it only represents a standard for judging the validity of our existing political

institutions and not a state of reality that can be realised fully in actual practice. Thus he wrote in 1918 in a letter to W. J. Wyberg, a member of Legislative Assembly of Transvaal, that his reading of Tolstoy's works had never led him (Gandhi) to consider that in spite of Tolstoy's "merciless analysis of institution organised and based upon force, that is government, he in any way anticipates or contemplates that the whole world Will be able to live in a state of philosophical anarchy. What he was preached... is that every man has to obey the voice of his own conscience, and be his own master and seek the kingdom of God from within. For him there is no government that can control him without his sanction."¹⁰

Similarly he wrote in 1931, "If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is thus a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs the least".¹¹

These statements make it clear that Gandhi never contemplated complete elimination of violence or state in society. He rather wanted a government that could implement its policies without relying mainly on force. He stood for the need of transforming the character of the state. By advocating the ideal of stateless society, he wanted to draw the attention of mankind to the need of devising ways and means for reducing the content of coercion in the operation of the state. A demand for the elimination of the state in society marks a protest against the steady centralisation of political power. Gandhi would have agreed with Radhakrishnan that the "withering away of the state is the replacement of coercion by habit, discussion and argument and the building of a system, of law, liberty and peace."¹² In such a system law is not the command of a human superior but is the manifestation of general consensus taking shape through discussion and free expression of opinion. The content of violence in such a law is reduced to the minimum since it is not an imposition from above.

Gandhi, therefore, held that "legislation imposed by people upon themselves is non-violence to the extent it is possible in society".¹³ A law backed by strong public opinion and aiming at removing obstacles in the way of social reformers, received his approval. Thus in reply to the observation of 'New chronicle' that untouchability could not be uprooted by legislation, he said in 1933, "The Government is bound to help the reformers to adopt reforms when the public opinion is ripe for it".¹⁴ So he supported the Bill introduced in the Central Legislature with a view to removing all those legal disabilities that prevented untouchables from entering temples on the ground that majority of the Hindus were in favour of opening the temples to the Harijans. In support of it he said in May 1934, "The will of the majority is to prevail. Today, according to legal opinion, even one dissentient vote is enough to keep a temple closed to Harijans...".¹⁵

Similarly the prohibition policy of the Bombay Government in 1939 received his unqualified approval for he believed that any law abolishing state trading in intoxicating liquors and drugs derived its justification from the moral conscience of the millions of India.¹⁶ Even Gandhi's scheme of trusteeship that aims at transforming the economic structure of society through persuasions and cultivation of spiritual and moral values in individuals, does not exclude legislative regulation. He wrote in 1946, "As for the present owners of wealth they would have to make their choice between class war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. They would be allowed to retain the stewardship of their possessions and to use their talent to increase the wealth, not for their own sake but for the sake of the nation and therefore, without exploitation. The state would regulate the rate of commission which they would get commensurate with the service rendered and its value to society. But such a statute will not be imposed from above. It will have to come from below. When the people understand the implications of trusteeship and the atmosphere is ripe for the people themselves, beginning with the gram panchyats, will begin to introduce such statutes. Such a thing coming from below is easy to swallow. Coming from above, is liable to prove a dead weight."¹⁷

Vinoba, too is not averse to social change through legislation provided it derives its validity from the will of the people expressed freely. Power entrusted to the people, according to him, is different from naked violence. It can, therefore, be made an instrument of service to the community so long as we cannot do away with its need.¹⁸ "... all of us know", he argued, "that under the existing situation coercion based governments are a reality and will continue to be so for the present. We will have to admit that coercion has its place today."¹⁹

It is evident that the Gandhian view of the social order does not rule out the need and validity of law. But its role in society is determined by the process through which law takes shape. It serves as an instrument in the hands of the people for promoting their happiness if it stems out of their consciousness of its utility. "Without the prior laws of the community", according to Maclver, "all the laws of the state would be empty formulas."²⁰ Gandhi's insistence that conversion must precede legislation only means that the programme that the Government decides to implement must be first accepted by society. In that case, very little state interference or violence would be necessary for its implementation. It is through this process the community maintains its superiority over the state.

The modern democratic system cannot find fault with this approach for it alone gives constitutional sanction to this principle.²¹ A government under democracy will risk its own existence if it dares to frame a law against public opinion. Further, in democracy any group that desires a change in the social set-up must convert at least the majority in that community to its view before its programme can be given a statutory status. This method is consistent with Vinoba's concept of Vichar Shashan which means "peaceful conversion of people to our view".²² So there is hardly any inherent opposition between Gandhi's method of social change through persuasion and conversion and democratic constitutionalism. Rather, it facilitates the democratic process. Vinoba's direct method does not substitute constitutionalism. It rather infuses new force into the democratic constitutional machinery by linking it to the conscience of the community which in fact is the sources of all power that the government can

legitimately wield. The government under the democratic system becomes an agent and the people the principal who holds it to account.

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1. M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Delhi: The Publication Division, 1965), XVIII, p. 133
 2. *Harijan*, 7-1-39, p. 417
 3. Nirmal Kumar Bose, *Selections from Gandhi* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1957), p. 155
 4. Vinoba, *Bhoodan Tajna* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1957), p. 89
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 94
 6. J. P. Narayan, *A Picture of Sarvodaya Social Order* (Tajore : Sarvodaya Pracharalaya, 1957), p. 11
 7. Krishna Kumar, *Democracy & Non-Violence* (New Delhi, Gandhi Peace Foundation, 19&8), article by Balraj Puri, p. 100
 8. Michael Brecher, *Towards the Close of Nehru Era*, International Journal (Canada), 1963, pp. 291-309, quoted by Balraj Puri in Krishna Kumar, op. cit., pi 99
 9. M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Ghandhi*, Vol. XXXII, p, 16 n.-16
 10. M. K. Ghandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Ghandhi*, Vol. X, p. 249
 11. N. K. Bose, (op. cit.), p. 40
 12. Radhakrishnan, *Religion & Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1961), p. 223
 13. M. K. Gandhi, *Non-violence in Peace & War* (Ahmedabad : Navajivan Publishing House, 1948), Vol. I, p. 292
 14. *Tribune*, Lahore, February 19, 1933
 15. 15 *Harijan*, 11-2-33, quoted in M. K. Gandhi, *The Removal of Untouchability* (Ahmedabad : Navajivan Publishing House), p. 83
 16. D. G. Tendulkar. *Mahatma* (Bombay : Vithalbhai K. Jhaveri and D. G. Tendulkar, 1952), Vol. V, p. 148
 17. *Harijan*, March 31, 1946, pp. 63-64; Also Pyarelal, *Mahatma Ghandhi –The Last Phase* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1958), Vol, II, pp. 633-34
 18. Vinoba, op. cit, p. 87

19. Suresh Ram, Vinoba & *His Mission*, (Kashi, Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh, 1958), p. 121
20. R. M. Maclver, *The Web of Government* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 193
21. *Ibid.*, p. 196
22. Vinoba, (op. cit.), p. 91

40. NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By Santi Kothari

Gandhiji never liked an academician built up any theory or law about social change. But he did conduct several experiments to bring about reforms in the society in which he worked for about 30 years and was successful to a great extent. A moribund society, hard-pressed under the pressure of age-old malpractice, injustice and superstition, did rise as one man and fought for the freedom of this country against a ruthless foe. This establishes the truth inherent in his experiments and if one tries, laws can be easily established for universal guidance of the leaders in every country. For none of his activities was confined to time and space. Therefore, all these experiments and their results are universal, applicable to every society.

To make these experiments applicable to all, he performed them on the premise of non-violence, as he believed that no truth could be discernible through violence. Violence rather colours every fact and hence is incompatible for any experiment of this type. It is reasonable, therefore, on the part of a scholar to study social change with respect-to non-violence. The social changes that are wrought through the medium of violence are often transient and reactionary.

We should, therefore, study clearly what Gandhiji meant by non-violence to observe its applicability to any social change. It may be stated without fear of any exaggeration that one is bound to reach satisfactory conclusion with any hazy idea of non-violence.

The interpretation of non-violence has undergone of late so much metamorphosis in the hands of scholars that the nonviolence as preached by Gandhiji has almost been lost in the whirlpool of controversial definitions. And some scholars have unfortunately concluded that Gandhian non-violence is irrelevant today. A clouded mind can give no better reply than this.

Non-violence, as practised by Gandhiji, is never exactly opposite to violence, nor can it be defined by a condition where violence is absolutely absent. Mathematically speaking, non-violence and violence are not two equal poles opposing each other vehemently. In fact, non-violence contains violence, i. e., non-violence is preceded by violence. More clearly, nonviolence cannot be conceived without the perfect knowledge of violence. This obviously points to the fact that no one can be non-violent without being brave and violent.

In this connection Gandhiji's two famous statements, namely, non-violence of the weak and non-violence of the brave must be borne in mind. Non-violence observed by a weak man emasculates him and if observed by a race in the same way it will weaken it. So Gandhiji was ready "to risk violence a thousand times rather than risk emasculation of race".¹ Imagine to what depth he went down to uphold the truth of non-violence. The beast in man must be driven out, but in doing so if man is emasculated, it is not desirable. Because while he accepted the supremacy of non-violence he did not decry violence in the act of killing where the question to kill or to be killed is only supreme. The victim "flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing".²

Actually non-violence is the step next to violence. Man can never be non-violent without becoming violent. History speaks of violence only; the day is not remote when it will glow its pages with non-violent deeds of mankind. For "nonviolence ... presupposes ability to strike".³ This evidently shows that man is by nature violent and his violent nature is sanctified if he becomes brave; for his utmost bravery will lead him to non-violence. Hence "non-violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is a supreme virtue of the brave."⁴ These brave men can alone change society to a desired direction. We are to create these brave men only. This then being our premise, let us proceed with the social changes.

What is a society? Apart from the definitions given in our text book, it means a condition where all men can stand erect without any fear of the loss of prestige. It is Gandhiji's Ram Rajya which is undoubtedly -"true democracy in which the meanest citizen could be served of swift justice, without an

elaborate and costly procedure".⁵ It ensures "equal rights alike of prince and pauper".

He found a society ridden with many ills. Rights were enjoyed by people according to 'their power and position. Money was taken as supreme arbiter. People were divided into so many water-tight compartments, distinctly dividing the entire society into two parts – touchables and untouchables. What was worse, is that fear, he observed, had enveloped every person, no matter what his station of life was.⁶

Gandhiji's first duty was to strike at the root of the fear. He conducted many experiments in the crucible of South Africa to see how the fear-component could be successfully removed. He ultimately discovered the clue. After coming to India in 1915 he applied this result to society here. It took him nearly 15 years to make people undaunted. A definite change took effect in 1930, when the common people under his leadership little feared to face bullets or bayonets. Once this fear-complex was on the verge of extinction, he found another deterrent to be very powerful. It was the touchable and untouchable problem. He started a mighty offence against it in 1932, risking his own life and he almost succeeded uprooting the age-old prejudices from our society. By 1946 few Indians were found either fearful or prone to caste-prejudices. A new society practically emerged in 1947 with new hopes and aspirations. Had he lived two or three, years longer, he could have made it more dynamic.

Gandhiji effected this change not through studies or writings. He placed his works at the disposal of science. From out of various experiments he evolved a formula which made him successful in his mission.

The formula he found is the non-violence which can eradicate the cause for all social ills. We have not yet given any scientific definition to the kind of non-violence we have already discussed. Non-violence is composed of Truth and Love. Truth and Love is not wholly philosophical but scientific too. For as Gandhiji has shown they will have to be found in the laboratory which is of course different from the one we are accustomed to see. Yet it is very simple and can be performed by ordinary men. Gandhiji never acted as a saint for he

was never a saint as his associates like to say about him. According to philosophy a saint is a different man in which Gandhiji never fits himself. He was, therefore, an ordinary man and as an ordinary man he accomplished all his deeds for the common man. Herein lies his greatness which has confused those who lived and worked with him.

Thus non-violence in him became a living force and it magnetised his soul to so high a strength that whomsoever he touched was immediately attracted by him. This is the cause of his success in changing society, and in this light we will have to study the possibility of social changes through nonviolence.

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1. *Young India*, 4-8-1930
 2. *Ibid.*, 20-10-1921
 3. *Ibid.*, 12-8-1926
 4. *Young India*, 12-8-1926
 5. *Ibid.* 19-9-1929
 6. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2-8-1934

41. NON-VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By Sri Chandra

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In the context of social change in this country Gandhiji may be looked upon as a social psychologist and social engineer. He was concerned with the study of the behaviour of the individual and groups of individuals as also with social problems, their analysis and the study of discriminatory behaviour under different social climates. As a social engineer, he worked as a planner, strategist, diagnostician and adviser. He primarily aimed at social change and problem – solution in various spheres of life of the people of India and also of other countries.

It is needless to attempt to prove that Mahatma Gandhi was, par excellence, a social psychologist as well as a social engineer. His study and understanding of the psychology of people, groups and classes was based on his acute observation and keen insight. The fine 'hunches' that he had concerning various social problems and issues are known to all of us. The magic with which he could influence the masses in this country and various other parts of the globe and the purposive tenacity with which he worked for the solution of various social ills like slavery, untouchability, poverty, and social injustice are just a few examples which demonstrate his acumen as a psychologist and social thinker.

Here, the most important factor that has to be reckoned is Gandhiji's dynamic personality structure. Besides being a charismatic leader, his personality traits like superior intelligence, emotional maturity, social skill, extraversion, clinical sensitivity to people's longings and aspirations stood him in good stead. His perception of those around him as well as away from him was extraordinary and his judgment, even from limited stimulus information, usually stood empirical verification. His integrity, selflessness and devotion and dedication to suffering millions made him an undisputed leader of the nation. In terms of these

personality characteristics it is but natural that he could easily sway the masses. The psychology on which suggestion works was reflected adequately in the person of Gandhiji.

Turning to the question of social change in the context of Gandhiji's non-violence, an attempt may be made to demonstrate why this great man followed and preached the technique of non-violence as a mechanism of social reconstruction and change. Broadly speaking, there are two methods for organizing social change, i. e. persuasion and coercion and consequently there are two types of social order or states democratic and autocratic (dictatorial). Looking to the political history of this country in the recent past, it is found that Gandhiji not only brought about social change but social revolution with the aid of his simple weapon of non-violent non-co-operation with the various evils and ills that obtained on the political and social scene in this country. The technique of non-violence that this social and political magician used, briefly speaking, implies a quiet, persistent, sublime, impulsive and selfless effort to bring about social transformation without touching the integrity of the people and without falling a victim to egoism and 'Himsa' of any kind – 'Himsa, of thought, deed or language. Gandhiji's approach to the problem of social change may be considered akin to what is implied in Immanuel Kant's maxim – 'Treat humanity whether in thy ownself or in that of another always as an end, never as a means only'.

A person with such vision and ideology did not only touch the hearts of the masses of this country, but also gradually succeeded in building up a pyramid of leadership and a climate of public opinion and attitude change which imperceptibly and spontaneously percolated in the remotest parts of this country and the countries. The technique of non-violence was used by him as a method and a mechanism of successfully effecting change in the attitudes and opinions not only of Indians but also that of the foreigners. It is a historical fact that the Quit India Movement was spontaneously organised in this country under the dynamic impact of Gandhiji's policy of and training in non-violent methods. He had made it absolutely clear to people, particularly the national

leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and a host of others that for the attainment of the freedom of this country not a single drop of blood should fall on the face of the motherland.

If ever slightest violence or aggression occurred in any part of the country, Mahatmaji adopted the non-violent method namely fast or Satyagraha to undo the evil. His Satyagraha, by any stretch of imagination, should not be taken to imply slightest aggression, even in word or thought, much less physical confrontation. The related technique of non-thieving and dispossession implied that the 'haves' should of themselves give away a part of their property not needed by them to the 'haves-not'. It is on the basis of this kind of programme of social transformation that- Vinobaji's 'Bhoodan Movement' is based. It aims at agrarian reform which is not based on any forceful ejection but on voluntary surrender by those who possess the amount of land which is much more than their requirements.

It is in this direction that Indiraji took up cudgels against vested interests and derecognition of Maharajas, as a true Gandhian. She aimed at bringing about genuine and rational socialism through non-violent methods. She has adopted the method of persuasion (legal) and not coercion. The moment she found that the constitutional position in derecognizing the rulers had been lost by the verdict of the supreme court, as true follower of Gandhiji's method of non-violence, she quietly respected the judgment and went before the electorate (Janta) for their democratic verdict in regard to her social welfare programmes and policies. Indiraji's programme of bank nationalization is yet another instance of how planned social change can be brought about by this measure, which is entirely free of any iota of violence and aggression.

In any programme of social change, the leader has recourse to group-decision making processes. Obviously in a democratic set up, group-decision is the sine qua non for any effective social change. Consequently it is not the method of coercion which can be -successful here. It is only when the decision emerges from the group and is accepted by it, that we can hope to fulfill the values for which a democratic social order stands.

In conclusion we may say that Gandhiji's method of nonviolence, in relation to social transformation in this country, amply justifies the claim that he was a social psychologist and social engineer. He would continue to inspire the correct and effective type of leadership and masses *not* only in this country but in every other country where democratic socialism, equality and justice are considered as primary values of human life.

42. NON-VIOLENCE AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

By T. P. Singh

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PRESENT SYSTEMS

Today there is a heavy concentration of economic and political power in society in a few hands. The power of the state is increasing all over the world. There is exploitation of the weak by the strong in the existing economic and political systems. In this paper only economic and political aspects of the problems have been discussed. The approach towards the solution of the problem has been made on Gandhian lines.

Only a few persons are decision makers in every country, whether it is in the field of economic or political systems. The economic surpluses that are created in society are, no doubt, necessary for the maintenance of the economic system and its further growth and for other social services. Here, however, three very important questions arise: (i) How these surpluses are created, (ii) how they are utilized and (iii) who are the decision makers in their creation and disposal.

Centralised big industries organised on a capitalist basis produce injustice, exploitation, imperialism, war and sensate culture. In this process it destroys true democracy and endangers international peace and debases humanity. Centrally organised big industries in a communist system also lead, by their consequences, to state capitalism. This cannot function without the expert, the bureaucrat and, ultimately, by the dictator. The boss in the factory is the prototype of the dictator in the state. The state, that centralises not only political but also economic power in its hands, cannot in the nature of things be organised democratically. It can have no place for fundamental rights and civil liberties or for the initiative of the individual. In such a dictatorial state, there are no checks and balances as in a democratic state. Such concentration of political and economic power in society all over the world is dangerous.

Ultimately it is bound to result in aggression and imperialism as it has done earlier. Such economic and political systems have resulted in gas, chemical, bacteriological and nuclear wars and armament race which can destroy humanity.

SYSTEMS GANDHIJI WANTED TO BUILD

Fully understanding the monstrous nature of the present economic and political systems to which educational and other institutions were geared, Gandhiji had a desire to change them. He started this at macro-level though he did not ignore the activities for an alternative system at micro-level. His first target was the Independence of the country, for then he could strive better for a decentralized economic and political system in which the people could participate and develop to the fullest extent as integrated men and women. However, even while fighting for the country's freedom decentralized institutions which gave an indication of and direction for post-independent India, such as spinners' association, different kind of village industries, Nai Talim Sangh, etc.

METHODS OF BRINGING OUT INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

Gandhiji believed that both ends and means must be fair otherwise we would never reach fair ends with unfair means. He, therefore, gradually built a theory of a Satyagraha. His Satyagraha was not an abstract philosophy but a philosophy in action. Truth to him meant not the uttered word, not the professed belief but something that has to be lived. The hiatus between thought and word, profession and practice, interposes a barrier which acts as a damper and chokes the action of the soul-force which is latent in every being.

Gandhiji's non-violence was graded. Lowest in the scale was the man who out of fear would not resist what he recognised as injustice and tyranny. He was not non-violent but a non-resisting coward. Such a man encouraged tyranny by allowing it free scope. Next in the scale and much higher was the soldier, the

violent resister. He took up arms against injustice and tyranny and in the process was prepared, if need be, to lay down his life. He was brave but he was not completely fearless. He would rather take than give his own life. He relied upon arms and strategy which involved him in untruth and violence. But even this was much superior to cowardice. Higher still in the scale was the physically nonviolent resister.

Satyagraha can take various forms like non-co-operation, boycott, fasting, etc. to reform and change a person, group institutions, social, economic and political order, etc.

There should be a sense of urgency in the Satyagrahi otherwise violent economic and political systems and institutions would be perpetuated or other violent movements would start to bring about changes which might result in the integral development of man.

Satyagraha is of a voluntary type. It cannot be state-directed as the state itself is based on police, prison and army which are symbols of violence.

PURPOSE OF SATYAGRAHA

The Government of India after Independence inherited all the institutions created by the -British Government, political system with slight modification, administrative system, judicial system, educational system, etc.

There is capitalism in this country of both private and state varieties. Gandhiji did not mean Swaraj of this variety. Structural changes were necessary. Satyagraha should be resorted to bring about changes in property relationship and to bring about decentralised economic and political systems and institutions so that the common man could directly participate in decision making. Then he would have a say in the rate of creation surplus, its method of creation and disposal. In some industries, units of production have to be large. These owners, whether private, cooperative or state, should work as trustees. For this also, i. e. to bring about a sense of trusteeship, Satyagraha may have to be

resorted to, whenever and wherever found necessary.

BUILDING FROM BELOW

There should be building from below. A concept of Gramsabha has now been developed. A Gramsabha consists of every adult person of the village. Its function is to look after all kinds of needs of the individuals like settling of village disputes, village planning for the economic development, etc. There is a wing of the Gramsabha which is called Gram Kosh. This Gram Kosh is expected to receive contributions in kind and cash from the village people. The Gram Kosh is supposed to advance loans to the villages both for consumption and production purposes. There is another wing of the Gramsabha which is called Santi Sena. This is likely to keep peace in the village and to protect the village from thefts.

There should be a confederation of these Gramsabhas, Gram-Kosh and Santi-Sena on a Block level so that deficiencies in one village or a group of villages at a particular time can be met from the resources of another village or group of villages.

The third tier should be the district level and such organisations, the fourth tier the State and the fifth tier all-India level. There should be indirect election to upper tiers with Gramsabha as the base.

The industries should be generally organised on cooperative or worker-owner basis. However, they also should have cooperatives for the supply of raw materials, equipments, finance, advertisement and marketing of their products.

Some industries might require more capital which* it may not be possible to raise at the village or block level. They should be started at the district level on cooperative basis. Similarly some industries could be started at state and all-India levels.

Gandhiji did not decry heavy industries but he certainly wanted to put a limit to their multiplication. Therefore, he regarded' them as a necessary evil. Such

industries however should only produce materials which would be required by the village and small-scale industries in their process of production.

The villages, Blocks, districts and states should be relatively self-sufficient but there should be some trade between village and village, district and state, state and state which would increase the welfare of the people and lead to mutual understanding, Swadeshi to the extent, possible and desirable is very necessary now than ever before. Today we are all looking up for the delivery of goods and the Government of India is looking to foreign countries.

There is lack of planners and technicians at the village and block levels and quite often at the district level also. Consultancy services should be organised on voluntary basis at district, state and all-India levels to help the villagers and agencies at various levels to plan. The demand for the use of these consultancy services should come from the agencies at different levels. They should not be imposed, otherwise there would be a tendency towards centralisation. Here the educated and talented persons assume an important role to work as catalytic agents and join the agencies to provide consultancy services. They should consider themselves as trustees of their talents and should be willing to render their services. Gandhiji started a few institutions not with the help of the British Government but despite the hostile attitude of the Government. The aforesaid organisations also should be started on a voluntary basis. Wherever and whenever the state interferes or does not provide the help needed and wanted by the people, Satyagraha should be resorted to.

43. GANDHIAN NON-VIOLENT SATYAGRHA AND INDEPENDENT INDIA

By Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Varma

GANDHIAN SATYAGRAHA AND DIRECT ACTION IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN POLITICS

Gandhi is famous in the history and politics of the world as a prophet of Satyagraha but the Gandhian Satyagraha may be launched upon only by people imbued with goodwill, who care for the common good, and who attempt to resist unjustified laws, promulgations and ordinances of the government, solely dictated by their "inner conscience" (*antaratman*). Satyagraha, as conceived by Gandhi, is, never an invitation to the disruption of society. But in India today we find that all types of coercive techniques are being practised and somehow or the other they are justified as if they were on the lines of Satyagraha.

Today we find the resort to large-scale hunger-strikes for the implementation of economic demands. But although there is an element of coercion in hunger-strikes, I will not call them un-Gandhian. The hunger-striker only punishes himself.

He does not injure the supposed adversary. Hunger-strikes have been resorted to in liberation movements in other parts of the world also.

A second technique, which is an extreme radicalization of hunger-strikes and - which is getting favour today is the threat of beginning fasts unto death. It is very true that in 1932 Gandhi undertook a fast unto death to get the Communal Award withdrawn or suitably amended. But today this threat has become very common. Sometimes fasts unto death are undertaken by irresponsible fanatics against some of whom there were rumours that secretly they had been taking food. If fasts unto death are undertaken by corrupt people, I will consider them un-Gandhian.

The third technique falsely allied to the Gandhian Satyagraha is the technique of self-immolation (*atmadaha*). Possibly this technique has gained favour by the practice of Buddhist monks in Indonesia but this was dramatised in Indian

politics in 1966 by the proposed self-immolation of Sant Fatah Singh and his Akali associates. The technique of *atmadaha* is definitely coercive and is definitely un-Gandhian because it wants to solve political problems not on the level of reason but by the capitalization of mass emotion, frenzy and violent fury.

After the last elections a fourth technique of mass action is becoming fashionable and that is *gherao*. This definitely contains the element of violence and is opposed both to the spirit of democracy and to the political philosophy of Gandhi. There is no doubt that the theory and practice of Satyagraha have been much perverted and misused in modern India. The pressurizing techniques adopted by the people who resort to *gherao* have no place in Gandhian thought and practice. I certainly will not blame Gandhi for the excesses committed by the people who swear by *gherao*. It will be unwise to blame Gandhism for its recent perverse interpretation.

The technique of *dharana*, on the other hand, I will consider Gandhian because in *dharana*, the person, engaged in the pursuit of that technique, undergoes personal privation and sufferings but there is no attempt at the coercion of the functionary against whose policies *dharana* is being practiced.

Another technique of direct action which can never be considered to have the remotest connection with Gandhism, is the organisation of demonstrations and processions by irresponsible leaders in which the participants shout provocative slogans and hurl abuses against some target of their hatred and wrath.

Still another un-Gandhian technique of direct action was the encirclement of Parliament which I said to have been resorted to by the Sadhus to press their demand for legal ban on cow-slaughter on November 7, 1966 in Delhi. A peaceful assembly of people before the Parliament is Gandhian and is democratic, but any attempt to encircle the Parliament and to terrorize the inmates by the sheer force of organised numbers and provocative slogans is un-Gandhian.

I do consider that the defection of legislators chosen on the ticket of one political party to another is morally and politically a fraud but I do not consider

it illegal. But although I consider it undemocratic, I am not prepared 'to concede that the electors have a right to put physical pressure on a legislator who practises defection. The civic and fundamental rights enjoyed by other citizens are also the privileges of legislators and no elector has a right to subject the person of a legislator to danger or assault. Here I may also add that a large-scale assembly of people before the houses of legislature, shouting slogans against a possible defector is opposed to the Gandhian spirit.

Even in the greatest emergencies, crises and times of trouble and communal riots Gandhi stood for general civility and decency. He approved of the non-violent martyrdom of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, in Kanpur, in 1931. After the death of Gandhi it was hoped that his martyrdom would corroborate the cause of non-violence in Indian politics but we find that in the country as a whole not only criminal violence has increased but political violence is also on the march. Gandhi was opposed to all types of violence as a method for the settlement of disputes. He would have been mortally shaken to hear about the violent liquidation of political opponents in independent India. When I contemplate the rising tempo of violence in the social and political life of the country, I am compelled to think that the show of non-violence which India maintained more or less, during the years of British imperial regime emerged from her helplessness and weakness. Now when the British toasters have gone, the suppressed layers of violence, criminality and lustful slaughter which were slumbering in the racial unconscious have plainly come to the forefront and violence appears to have become the creed of a substantial section of the population. Gandhi regarded non-violence as a norm of transcendent importance and it would not be an exaggeration to say that the rising trend of violence is not only a threat to democracy but will completely neutralize the moral and spiritual heritage of India which Gandhi was so anxious to safeguard.

It is no doubt true that once the energies of a group of people are unleashed, in the absence of proper canalisation they have the tendency to get deflected in wrong channels. It is true that during recent years there have been cases of such misdirection of both individual and social energy but so far as Gandhism

itself is concerned it cannot be blamed for these excesses. It is very true that in post-independence India some sections of political workers as well as students have perverted the Gandhian theories and practices and have indulged in anti-social acts and have also resorted to indiscipline, sabotage, destruction of national property and violence. But for these activities one cannot blame Gandhi or his theory. Nobody can blame Gandhi for not having foreseen that if students are encouraged in disassociating themselves from educational institutions run or subsidized by the British imperial power the trend would, later on, develop of their disassociating themselves from national institutions also if even their petty and flimsy grievances were not redressed. If such remote calculations were to be made then, in that case, nothing would have been started. Liberty implies the capacity to make wrongs and to correct these wrongs after they are detected.

Swaraj has been achieved after untold sufferings, misery and privation. Thousands of peoples have laid down their lives in different ways for the political emancipation of India. This Swaraj must be saved. Swaraj was immensely dear to Gandhi's heart. He would not have supported any weakness in the defence of Swaraj. He would have very much liked that Swaraj should be preserved by mobilisation of organised non-violent strength. If there was a threat to the independence of the country he would have wanted millions to lay down their lives gallantly and gladly. But if that kind of heroic power of resistance was not available in the country, Gandhi would not have tolerated abject submission or surrender before the aggressors. To him any surrender when there was a threat to Swaraj would have been intolerable. The true testament of Gandhi so far as Swaraj is concerned would have been that it must be preserved even by armed resistance, if the country does not have the power and the capacity to defend itself with fearless nonviolence.

As an ultimate ideal for mankind non-violence is still to be stressed. It will not be wise to ridicule Gandhism if the Indian Government and the people have failed to abide by his teachings. The period since man has been evolving from, his animal ancestry, has not been long and three to four lakhs of years have not

been sufficient to tame the animal instincts of man. It may be hoped that with further evolution man will be able to arrive at a situation when there will, be greater resort to the ideal non-violence.

44. SOCIAL CHANGE: WHY AND WHEN?

By Dr. L. K. Bharatiya

The process of change in the world is a universal rule; though sometimes, it remains invisible, just as a boy's or girl's, growth becomes visible only, when one sees him or her after some years. Otherwise, even the parents cannot mark this growth specifically. Similarly, an ordinary person does not find any new element in nature, but the poets get inspiration from it because of the new vision it offers them. We always quote the example of tribal societies which are known as static societies, but even these societies change themselves internally, though the speed of it may be very slow. Thus, change in the universe is a constant process and, therefore, Sorokin says that not only socio-cultural, but all "empirical phenomena, inorganic, organic, etc., are subject to change in the course of their empirical existence."¹ Vedas, therefore, says, "*Navo Bhavati Jaymanhe*", i. e. this world seems new every day (like the sun). But the newness in the world does not remain aloof from the external forces, which bring the change rapidly.

Internal mechanism of the world, which keeps the process of change constant, always gets strength from the external forces. In fact the internal and external, both the elements of change work together but the external forces, however, are not enough to change society, nor do they have the capacity to change without help from the inner mechanism of society. The inner mechanism is a source of change. It is inherited in the individual and the groups. The urge for change, therefore, occupies the heart of the person who, if he does not feel any change in his life, becomes uneasy. When the status quo dominates the situation, the process of change does not work smoothly and man revolts against the status quo. Revolutions occur, because of this situation. The external forces are, therefore, important, as they provide dynamism to the process of change.

In the present age, the external forces, like technological developments, play an important role in causing rapid changes, as they transform the structure of

the whole society. For instance, in Jamaica, technological progress brought forward its development process and the tribal community is progressing fast.² Though Battomore felt that Indian Society was static, yet due to contact with Western world, it was developed in the sense of the theories of change.³

The changes, however, occur in society in an evolutionary manner and not always through revolutions. But change is there as Comte's concept of fixed stages of change, from the theological to the scientific, Spencer's concept of human endeavour directing to the natural law and Ward's concept of 'telic' i.e., social engineering for social progress indicate that there is a mechanism in the world which works as a smoothing agent also for the process of change. When Sorokin says that the principle of imminent change of each socio-cultural system is supported by the externalistic principle within certain conditions and limits,⁴ he meant that these conditions and limits are subject to that mechanism. The internal mechanism of change, however, is governed by some norms. When some objectives are formulated through the prescribed norms, related with the tradition of society, they work like a guiding force, which gives direction to the process of change on the one hand, and on the other, controls the adverse influence of the external forces. The social changes, in fact, are "perceived as discreet incidents rather, than a continuous process as they are viewed as transitional periods, during which one variety of static structure is succeeded by another."⁵ Parson's theory of change, however, emphasises that a given process of action will continue unchanged in rate and direction unless impeded or deflected by opposing motivational forces.⁶

The changing process is, in fact, subject to the different motivational forces and many factors work when this process is in action. Even the conflicting attitudes of societies also influence this process. Barnett says that "the conflict between socially approved behaviour of any sort and individual desires have produced a great many innovations."⁷ Such a type of conflict may occur regularly, as the conflicting behaviour takes place when people do not accept change and novelty. It is a fact that conflicts between societies diffuses the

social change on the one hand and on the other, the conflict between the groups becomes the source of innovations and change.⁸

This situation, however, may bring such changes which might not be healthy in the long run. In the complex society of class divisions, cultural traits and social ranking, the dominant class would try to prevent the process of changes, and, therefore, conflict can bring change drastically.⁹ In such a conflicting situation, a guiding force is most necessary which can provide the direction to the process of change. When the revolution comes, it bypasses the change-process on the one hand and on the other, defies the prescribed norms also. The present age is full of new activities, forces, ideologies, etc., and external forces are in dominating position. The change is coming everywhere, rapidly and even the so called static tribal societies are facing drastic changes. When the promoters of status quo try to stop the changes, the revolutionaries destroy everything. The equilibrium between the forces of external pressures and internal urges is thus shaking. In this situation, a balancing approach, an integrative outlook is most necessary for activating the change.

As stated before, human society changes according to the inner urges and external pressures. Marx emphasises that the production system and economic surroundings change the society. But Gandhi stresses that unless you change from the inner world, the outside changes have no value. Sociologists argue that in the changing process, the value-oriented person is concerned with the achieving of a goal, which is in confirmation with the standards of excellence and realisation of values and this is his primary concern.¹⁰ The realisation of values, however, cannot take place unless the two approaches of Marx and Gandhi are not synthesised. Social systems comprise values and rules of conduct, which can be called the cultural elements of interacting individuals. Social change, as Devis observes, is a modification in patterns of human expectations and interactions and much of social change does result in cultural modifications.¹¹ The integration of inner mechanism, and external influences, however, can play its role fully, when the materialistic and, spiritualistic

approaches of Marx and Gandhi are combined for social action in relation with social change.

The process of change, however, suffers a setback when the status quo situation dominates society. The revolt arises from there. Then all the talks of synthesis become useless. Vinaba Bhave said that "I am not so much afraid of Naxalite violence as of that violence which ceaselessly emanates from status quo. When a man stoops low before status quo and accepts the violence therein, all hopes are shattered."¹² To avoid the status quo position, he further says – change the material environment as rapidly as you can, and do not waste your time vainly in weaving fantasies. Thus, create right conditions and they will inevitably give rise to the right set of qualities¹³ to bring the desired change in society.

The basis of change is related with the valued doctrinal base, institutionalised norms, behaviour pattern and socio- psychological guidelines.¹⁴ According to Lyarx, two elements in social change have a prominent place. They are: (1) The development of technology and (2) the relations between the social classes.¹⁵ Sociologist like Cottrell, Fieldman, Mack, etc., emphasise technology and cultural problems, which bring the changes.¹⁶

The Gandhian philosophy too provides a dynamic approach to the problems on social change with definite norms. Marx visualises a society in which the doctrine of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" is prescribed.¹⁷ The same is covered under Sarvodaya with the emphasis on non-violent means. The stress on non-violence is because though a violent revolution gives an appearance of radical changes rapidly brought about in society,¹⁸ but ultimately, society suffers because of the chain reactions which violent methods bring with them. Only here Gandhi differs with Marx. Otherwise, the aim of social change is the same under both the philosophies. Sarvodaya too believes in an evolutionary theory like Marxism but Gandhiji's evolutionary theory considers not only external forces, but the internal mechanism of society as well. It includes not only a materialistic, but a spiritualistic approach too. This idealistic view does not create obstacles in the

process of change, 'because, as Durkheim observes "If man conceives ideals, and indeed cannot help conceiving and becoming attached to them, it is because he is a social being. Society moves or forces the individual to rise above himself and give him the means for achieving this. A society cannot be constituted without creating ideals. Ideals are not abstractions, called intellectual concepts lacking efficient power. They are essentially dynamic, for, behind them are powerful forces of the collective."¹⁹ Sarvodaya represents the "collective" and, therefore, its basis for bringing change in society of controlling the process of change is in itself dynamic and provides strength to the mechanism of change, inner or outer.

The objectives of change, however, cannot remain abstract unless they are attached with some of the doctrinised norms. The social change would speed up when the external forces take guidance from internal force of such norms. The social objectives are, therefore, required to make the change dynamic and Gandhism is ready to meet it dynamically.

But what is happening today? The revolutionary aspect of Gandhism is dominated by the 'status quo' situation, which is inviting Naxalism, the Indian edition of Maoism. The people cannot wait long for the salvation of their problems, nor are they prepared to give more and more chances to different theories for experiments upon them. This is the outcome of the scientific age which requires speed in action, as the problems are concerned with people's life and death. They go to communism, because the dynamism of Marxism is related with its aim to establish classless society by speedy action, while the dynamics of Maoism is related with its method of action to achieve its own superiority. Maoism is gaining strength in India because the status quo is not being tolerated by the people. If Gandhism compromises with the status quo. merely by saying that it does not recognise class conflict, it has no alternative except to demoralise itself, because the Gandhian way of social change is not activated swiftly for removing exploitation except in the Gramdan movement. Therefore, there is a need of some type of synthesis with the spirit of Marxism related with its aim of removal of exploiting class differences. Our ways would

be quite different, but action will not be slow. For instance, Gandhism gives preference for "Antyodaya", but it lacks swift action and at the same time the status quo is also tolerated.

SYNTHESIS IN SPIRIT

Here it can be synthesised with the spirit. But in this synthesis, there is no need to compromise with Marxist instruments, which compelled it to transform itself into Maoism via Stalinism or via state-dictatorship. But, as the real aim of Marxism has been suppressed under its own actions, the real aim of Gandhism also gone in the background because of compromises with the status quo at every stage. It is, therefore, the synthesis of the spirit of both the isms, related with the aim of social change which is required to activate the people.

UNIQUE QUALITIES OF GANDHISM

Gandhism, in fact, has the greatest qualities, required for the modern times. Marx wanted social ownership of poverty. Gramdan of Vinoba provides active provision for it through the Gandhian way. Again, Marx wanted decentralisation ultimately, as he found that the capitalism is an off-shoot of the centralisation of capital. But Marxism failed here completely as its aim has been crushed from the beginning by accepting centralisation of power in the state, while Gandhism starts from the decentralisation of power at every level and has, therefore, chances to achieve success in it. Because of this trend of centralisation of power in the hands of the state (and then in the hands of party or party bosses), communism was shaken at its base.

To bring the socio-economic change in a dynamic manner, there is need of dynamic action also when the actual challenge is there. This is the prerequisite of social change which Gandhism intended.

1. Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, p. 630 263

2. Herbert R. Barlinger (ed.), *Social Change in Developing Areas*, p. 159
3. T. B. Battomore, *Sociology*, p. 270
4. Pitirim Sorokin, op. cit., p. 634
5. Herbert R. Barlinger, op. cit., p. 280
6. A Etzioni, *Studies in Social Change*, p. 4
7. H. G. Barnett, *Innovation : The Basis of Cultural Change*, p. 131
8. K. P. Chattopadhyay, *Some Approaches to Study Social Change*, p. 220
9. *Ibid*
10. Sister Marie Augusta Neal, *Values and Interests in Social Change*, p. 10
11. F. J. Davis, *Social Problems*, p. 4
12. *People's Action*, October 1970
13. K. G. Mashruwala, *Gandhi and Marx*, p. 10
14. Sister M. Augusta Neal, op. cit., p. 34
15. T. B. Battomore, op. cit., p. 275
16. Herbert R. Barringer, (ed.) op. cit., p. 9
17. Richard T. Lapiere, *Social Change* p. 11
18. K. G. Mashruwala, op. cit., p. 92
19. Tal Cott. Persons and others (ed.), *Theories of Society*, pp. 1309-10

45. CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION TO NON-VIOLENT TECHNIQUE*

By Dr. Banwari Lai Sharma

Can Social transformation be brought about by non-violent means? In my opinion, it no longer remains a question in the latter half of the twentieth century. Not only has this been proved that social transformation can be brought about only through non-violence but many events, minor or major, have clarified the potentiality and the capability of non-violence in bringing about social change. The demand for a new world has proved the indispensability of non-violence. The world today demands: freedom of man and in the wake of this freedom democracy to regulate human life. In words of Gandhiji: "In democracy the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. And this is not possible through any method except non-violence." Real democracy or people's Swaraj cannot be established by untruthful and violent means? The use of these methods (violence) will yield the natural result to root out opposition either by subjugation or by wiping out opponents. It does not pave the way for individual freedom. Individual freedom can flourish well in the ideal domain of non-violence. To deny individual freedom and democracy today is just like to reverse the whole process which appears to be impossible. Consequently, denial of the indispensability of non-violent techniques too is an impossibility impossible today. In social transformation, particularly in regard to resistance against injustice the role of violence in history has been clearly exposed. It has been proved that contexts can be changed through violence without changes in value of patterns. And a change in, which values remain unaltered is showy and not lasting and should therefore be not acceptable.

Nevertheless, the people are seen having faith in violence. In other words the sovereignty of violence appears to be universally recognized. Violent mentality is increasing every day. Violence appears to be omnipresent in a disguised form of social prestige, whether that of capitalists or that of ruling elites, all of whom are masters of violence; and their established violence is, in no way, less dangerous. The wind of violence is flowing in such a manner that non-believers

in violence are being compelled to think afresh for themselves. The challenge before the non-violent process is really formidable. There is no time for mere theoretical discussions. The real question is one of practicability of these techniques.

What is the reason that in spite of the inefficiency of violent processes, the people are even sticking to faith in these methods?

The first reason is, what is known as 'Newton's Law of Inertia', in Mathematics which states that a body is unable to change by itself. This property of inertness of matter by virtue of which a body resists any change in its state of rest or of uniform motions is called inertia and is the inherent property of matter. This belief in violence, which is a legacy of the past, continues due to this inertia.

Unfortunately, this inertness has been strengthened by the inactivity of persons and institutions professing faith in nonviolent process. There are several such institutions, quite a number of which pay homage to the name of Gandhi, which uphold the status quo. These persons and institutions do a lot of talking. They undertake what is known, as propagation of ideas. Organise seminars, discussions, sequential speeches, etc. Statements are issued quite frequently. Gandhi Centenary year was witness of several examples of inertness. One came across fire-brand speeches, exhibitions, seminars, pamphlets yet nothing seems to change. It appears rise in violent activities was in proportion to such activities. I do not opine that all these should not be done I claim that doing all these may be necessary, but can never be sufficient. In the wake of this inertness, the number of the so-called double-faced followers of non-violence, has increased by leaps and bounds. This has an adverse effect in the thinking of the people. The people are becoming of the view that those who profess the name of non-violence, talk and preach. They are good for nothing, ineffective persons.

The fact of the matter is that, non-violence is not a theoretical science, it is an experimental science. The potentiality, energy and possibilities of non-violence can be, actually, appraised through experimentation and not through

theorization. So many experiments have been executed upto now. One amongst those experiments was Gandhi also. Those experiments were performed in certain settings. Since environments are changing continually, hence the experiments of non-violence are to be done every day. Whatever has happened, can never become the base of the propagation of ideas. Newer and newer techniques are to be looked for. For this purpose everyone is to become an experimenter. The fields which we live or work, are to become our laboratories. Only after much experiments we may have collective discussions to share our experiences. Thus alone we can transform society and change the value pattern. We can then erect a system in which everyone will be bestowed into self-reliance and self-confidence and the society endowed with initiative.

Acharya Vinoba has put forth before the world a new programme in the form of the 'Gramdan' to bring about the fundamental social transformation, through non-violent process. It is a new technique in the field of non-violence. It is a practical programme which is full of infinite possibilities. Several new techniques are to be discovered by us. It is an open field.

Today we talk too much about the youth power and revolutionaries. Who is youthful and revolutionary? One who believes that for social transformation, the necessity of violence has come to an end—is youthful and revolutionary. One who considers that it cannot come to an end because it has not so happened upto now — is not youthful and revolutionary.

* Translated by Dr. D. N. Dvivedi from Hindi.

46. GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE*

By Dr. Raghuvansh

CREATIVE VALUE

We, the intellectuals and theoreticians, have to face a difficulty. We are used to thinking within the prescribed methods of different branches of knowledge and though the boundaries of these sciences are overlapping yet they are distinct. These different sciences deal with particular fields of life and world. They view and examine them from particular viewpoints. This is the basis of the formulation of theories and principles of these sciences. Besides, the theoretical study passes through such processes of abstraction, generalisation and effectualisation that it becomes impossible to form an idea of the totality, value and dynamism of human life. We investigate into the principles of these sciences sometimes with reference to human history and sometimes with reference to the environment of the age, but we have been unable, until today, to form such a concept of history in which the whole humanity can be dynamically included. Similarly when we try to discuss or explain particular age through the values propounded and accepted by it, its creative aspect is overlooked and there remains only a structure constructed of values. In this way we arrive at some abstract symbols or laws which are useful in calculations and experimentation on the basis of definite statistical data. The emphasis on objectivity in the name of scientific attitude can be taken to be universal so far as laws of the physical world are concerned. But mechanics and techniques developed by science instead of solving our value problems have further complicated the matter.

This limitation comes in our way when we try to think about a seer like Gandhi. We try to study his ideas and theories within the prescribed limits of different sciences. We try to evaluate his social, political, economics thought with the help of laws and theories of these particular branches of knowledge. But this is a fundamental error. Whether you accept Gandhi's views or not is a different matter, whether you take them to be important or meaningless is also a

different matter. What we have to understand clearly is this, that Gandhi's way of thinking is not theoretical and it is not right to discuss it that way. Obviously the meaning of theoretical method, in this context, is the method of reasoning based on facts. In a way it can be said that Gandhi's hypotheses are related to the intuitional level of experience, they are not based on experimental reasoning. It is a different matter that Gandhi does not regard this intuition in accordance with Indian tradition, as different from reason, because to the extent to which this reason is not fact-based but truth-based, it is also experimental on the level of internal identity.

Gandhi talks of inner consciousness, divine inspiration and takes self-realisation as a valid proof. All this gives rise to many difficulties for the intellectuals. Here, it must be made clear that if we disbelieve in and reject the grounds of validity accepted by Gandhi, we cannot accept the thoughts of Gandhi. But it is evident that the self-realisation to which Gandhi appeals is not prophetic vision because his thoughts are not divine commands only, obedience to which is a part of the divine theme. Gandhi appeals to a reason which is derived from an aggregate of experiences based on intuition. This method of knowing can be rightly called eastern in general and Indian in particular, because here more emphasis is laid on the method by which individual consciousness can be sublimated and a cultural, value based progress can be accomplished, rather than on the improvement in material conditions. Otherwise all the great seers of the world have taken recourse to this experience-based method of knowledge.

Gandhi has a distinct place among all the leaders of modern India. He not only accepted the challenge of the modern European, culture, remaining firmly bound to Indian tradition, but also presented a ground of cultural creativity which expresses the life of the people of our country and opens a way out of the cultural crisis that the West is facing. He is the first leader of the modern age who clearly saw that a right understanding of our background is essential for progress. And background means our tradition which is woven in our historical personality. That is why Gandhi could realise the Truth of the

Upanisads that Happiness lies in Infinite and Vast, not in the finite and narrow. Not only this, he understood all the social evils, rigidities and injustices of the present day Indian society. Along with this, though he appreciated the creative capacity of the modern western culture, he was not enamoured by its external aspects. This is the reason why he could see that the western culture in its process of evolution is getting entangled into mechanical materiality and in spite of several declarations of humanistic ideals is tending towards inhumanism. According to Karl Gaspers, man in the modern age has become a part of a machine which has no significance as an individual and can at any time be substituted by another. As a result of this blocking of the creative capacity of modern western culture, the western man finds himself anxious, fearful, frustrated, lonely and incongruous in spite of all the affluence, scientific progress, technical developments and mechanical comforts. The ideals that were proclaimed in the social field, politics and economics viz., liberty, equality, humanism, individualism, democracy socialism, communism etc. are losing their creativity and are stagnating in the mechanism and materialism of the modern culture. Gandhi has understood Europe intuitively and accepted the challenge of her culture. He realized that science can be helpful in the creative value sense of man, but it does not go beyond the formulation of laws which explains the sequence of material facts and processes. The creativity and richness of the cultural life does not come within its scope. So far as science helps in making the environment more and more favourable to man by ever increasing knowledge of natural laws, it presents before man conditions of creativity. Its universal form affords an extensive basis for human value sense. Gandhi had fully grasped this element of the western culture.

The causal theory of the nineteenth century science was propounded in the form of a rationalism which rejected all scales of empirical knowledge, creative value sense has totally vanished from the field of philosophical thinking. The result has been a cultural stagnation. Because the creative process of the aesthetic, moral and spiritual values cannot be explained in terms of logical and scientific laws, logical idealism regards the question of values as irrelevant.

Science instead of providing an universal ground for human values and creativity has been instrumental in spreading mechanical materialism. The west is in the grip of this wave of materialism and is losing its originality and creativity. Gandhi had realised these difficulties of the west as any serious western thinker would have done. Not only this, with an Indian background he has been able to estimate the inherent capacity and limits of that culture. He has very well recognised the valueless and uncreative nature of the western culture which has been constantly becoming more and more affluent. The value-based view of Indian culture and the distinction it makes between the transcendental and the empirical life is also well understood by Gandhi. In Indian culture the empirical viz., the social, political and economic life, has been totally separated from the spiritual values. The ill effects of this division are evident. The creative achievements of these fields have always been neglected in Indian life. That is why the Indian man attains the ultimate goal through worship and religious practices and gets a licence, as it were, for all sorts of injustice, exploitation and torture. The absence of value sense in the social, political and economic fields in India is largely due to this double standard in the personality and conduct of the individual, Gandhi had an insight into this paradox of Indian culture, i.e. maintaining duality of standards with the non-dualistic philosophy.

The earlier leaders of Indian renaissance had a great fascination for modern western culture. They had tried to assimilate it into Indian life and still preserve its special qualities. But this effort appears to be very weak when we look at the attitude of humility with which these leaders accepted the cultural challenge of the west. The first attempt to synthesise the practical values with the spiritual viewpoint and Remain proud of the Indian personality can be found in Swami Dyananda. Swami Vivekananda has not only accepted the challenge of the west but has also given a challenge to it. It was he who, for the first time, proclaimed that India will have to seek the help of the west for scientific progress and modern value: of physical life. But the west has to depend upon India for spiritual values. Gandhi has a deep insight into this problem of west-east, Europe-India. By an understanding of both the cultures he came to the

conclusion that the solution of the problem does not lie only in supplementing the one with the other- No purpose will be served by keeping the spiritual and scientific values separate and maintain a give and take relation between the two. He was convinced that these values have to be synthesised in such a manner that the spiritual becomes scientific and the scientific supports the spiritual.

With this introduction, it is now easy to see that nonviolence for Gandhi is not a religious belief, neither the foundation for moral life, nor a law to maintain the social balance and convenience. It is not even a political policy. When we discuss the limits and possibilities of non-violence from these viewpoints we should know that it has no connection, whatsoever, with the Gandhian idea of non-violence. If we say that discussing non-violence apart from these viewpoints, is accepting that it is a mystical experience and in this age we cannot believe in mysticism, then it means that-we deny Gandhi altogether, because the basis of Gandhian thought is establishing of the totality and richness of experience. It is essential for any attempt to understand Gandhi to accept this basis of experience.

Gandhi has reformulated the traditional spiritual values viz., Truth and non-violence on the ground of modern Indian culture with reference to modern western culture. He has accepted Truth with non-violence; in fact non-violence is an important value for the realisation of Truth. But it is to be kept in mind that Gandhi has propounded a non-difference between the means and end, between nonviolence and truth. One cannot realise the Truth without non-violence. Therefore one cannot realise the Truth without truth and non-violence, therefore the two are so interwoven that the one cannot be separated from the other. There is a fundamental difference between the theoretical discussion of values and their creative realisation. Gandhi sees man in his totality and therefore wants to see him possessing meaningful possibilities and this can only be possible when man is free to express himself in the creativity of values.

Before discussing the contemporary contexts in which Gandhi has propounded these values, it is necessary to see what he has thought about the extent and possibilities of the sources from which he has taken them. In Indian culture, that is, in religion, philosophy and spiritualism the highest value of Truth is the soul. This soul substance has been explained in various ways such as non-duality, Brahman, Sunya, Nirvana, Anand Rasa or Lila. In all these explanations the non-duality of life has been propounded. Various attempts at realisation of this non-duality on a creative level were made. This Highest value has been such an ultimate goal in Indian culture that all other social, moral values have become secondary. The Upanishadic saying "All that is moving in this moving world is pervaded by God" expresses this non-duality of soil, world and Brahman.

Not a less stress is laid on the creative value of morality and conduct in Indian culture. Our philosophers and yogis have given an equal importance to moral questions. Dutifulness, unselfishness, sacrifice, love, kindness, benevolence help in making our life better and fuller. They believe that these values make human life more and more worth living.

In the earlier period of Indian history there was a continuity, a relatedness between the moral and the spiritual values of life. But in the age just preceding Buddha the Vedic ritualism had put an end to the creative role of these values. Buddha had attempted to revive it by his doctrine of Middle path. But after him in the middle ages the ultimate spiritual values such as Nirvana, Moksa, Anand were totally cut off from the moral life. So much so that in modern India it was believed that one can attain this supreme goal, even if he has committed all sorts of sins, only by once taking a dive in the Ganga or by uttering the name of God. Evidently there was a total indifference to the wordly life and its moral aspect. The result was that the creativity of spiritual values was destroyed and they became mere static doctrines.

In this stage, in Indian culture two different standards were accepted, one for the practical life and one for the transcendental. The ill effect of this duality of standards is only too evident. We can live a life without morality and yet attain

the supreme values. The nineteenth century leaders of Indian renaissance had found Indian life in this state of cultural paradox. They tried to revive Indian life by bringing in the scientific and humanistic outlook from the west. But as has already been said, this resulted only in an external influence. At the same time after the First World War, the west also experienced a disillusionment and its faith in humanistic values and scientific theories was shaken. At this critical moment Gandhi appeared on the Indian stage. He, in the wide context of his age, gave a new creative form to the moral and spiritual values of Indian culture. He believes in the realisation of Truth at the experimental level, but he has propounded his philosophy on an objective basis, and it is in harmony with the Indian viewpoint because here such a realisation of values has been regarded as rational, not merely emotional. Thus Gandhi has given a common ground for science, philosophical thinking and creativity of values. While presenting the new scientific viewpoint of twentieth century, Einstein has also said that there is no fundamental difference between philosophical and scientific thinking and there is no opposition between the moral, spiritual values and science.

Gandhi has taken Truth as the perfection of life, as the totality of existence. Existence alone is meaningful. Life of man is the centre of this great existent world, because he alone is capable of experiencing the meaningfulness of existence. Human existence is a part of the great and infinite stream and it is capable of experiencing this eternity. The greatest proof of this is the unity of man with man and the basis of this is the oneness of all. From this equality and unity is born the human society which in this flow of time is called humanity. Man is not a solitary being, he is a member in the unity of human society which is spread over all time and space. Man's personality is both historical and social, he inherits the creativity and realisation of values of his forefathers. He shares the experiences of his society also. Being an emotional individual, he cannot remain unmoved by the misery and happiness of his comrades. Thus Gandhi sees the fullness of man's individuality in the unity and equality of social life. The unity of the individual and the society is the basis of morality and virtue. This relation of the individual and society is a living one, because each

individual is connected with the other in an active and emotional way. In other thinkers we find that this relation is regarded as only practical and mechanical whereas in Gandhi the basis of this relation is not empirical but transcendental unity.

Gandhi has absorbed the social, political and economic values in the all inclusive moral values. The process of these moral values, so far as it is creative, is completed in the unity and fullness of human life. In this value theory of Gandhi is accepted as the ideal of supreme value or Good. The values, on which the relation of the individual and society was based, in European thought, viz. liberty, equality and fraternity, could not be expressed in the experience process of values because of social and political reasons. Science gave birth to mechanization. Democracy, socialism and communism took the form of dictatorships. Thus the individual was reduced to merely a part of the whole, his personality was neglected and he was lonely and frustrated. In fact it is impossible to keep alive the creativity of these values without the conception of an ultimate value or Supreme Good. Almost the same situation was found in India where the Supreme values were cut off from the practical life and had, therefore, become meaningless. In these situations Gandhi again brought the ultimate good into a living relationship with life and experience. Man's life is valuable, his personality is unique and meaningful, but this meaningfulness can be experienced only by establishing unity and equality with other men. Thus Gandhi gives importance to human personality, makes his freedom meaningful. And on the other hand provides a ground for the supreme spiritual values in an objective unity of social life. In his view the social part is the most important in our journey from the lower values to higher and higher values.

When we have understood the value based concept of Truth, the idea of non-violence also becomes clear. It has been said that non-violence is the means by which man can attain Truth. In Gandhian thought non-violence is not merely the absence of an attitude of violence. It is positive which becomes creative in the vast expanse of our moral life. Gandhi says that non-violence is expressed

in love. Here a question arises, why did Gandhi give importance to non-violence with Truth, when according to him it is love which is expressed through non-violence. The answer is that love in itself is not an absolute and objective value because it can be impulsive and may become the cause of jealousy, hatred and rivalry. It is in the context of the extensive value of non-violence that love can also be regarded as an absolute and objective value. Non-violence is a double process of creation of social values. On the one hand it is an experience of freedom impulses, attachments, delusions, egoism, selfishness and hatred, and on the other hand it is a positive process of achieving such qualities as non-stealing, non-greediness, kindness, sacrifice, love and good. On account of this double process Gandhi regards non-violence as identical with Truth or social equality.

The attainment of moral values in social life is dependent upon non-violence. Non-violence is that self-discipline of the individual which being expressed in Satyagraha gives him freedom at the level of self-realisation. In this way the nonviolent man experiences heroic braveness which is free from rational and emotional losses. Violent bravery be a relative value, but a non-violent bravery is an absolute value.

Gandhi has propounded the values of the economic field on the basis of non-violence. He does not accept the difference between poverty and richness in the economic structure of society, because this difference is the consequence of a violent attitude and the Yoga of social equality is refuted by it. Gandhi went further than the prevalent principles of economics, such as 'Labour alone is a value' (Ricardo, Adam Smith). 'Money is that in exchange of which we get something' (Marshall and Mill). 'There is a price of labour, but it is never given, the labourer is exploited' (Marx). Gandhi said that labour should not be done for an exchange of price. It is the life-force of man and can be regarded as a form of the unity and equality of society. According to Gandhi the value of labour can be re-established on the basis of non-violence. At this level labour will be self-motivated and will be the carrier of social duties. In production by labour,

utility, recreation and artistic expression will be adjusted and this combination will be able to make human life richer and more creative.

In the same way non-violence has been applied to the political field. Gandhi believes that the basis of public life is mutual love and confidence in the people. This is possible only when doubts and fears are dispelled. This can be possible only when the life of the people is based on non-violence as a value. Non-violence is living together, coexistence cooperation and giving the other's personality a freedom. Such a creative value sense can be attained only in such social, political and economic units which are grounded in mutual cooperation and in which the relation between individuals is maintained on a natural human level. This is the concept of ideal individual, ideal society and ideal state, in Gandhian thought.