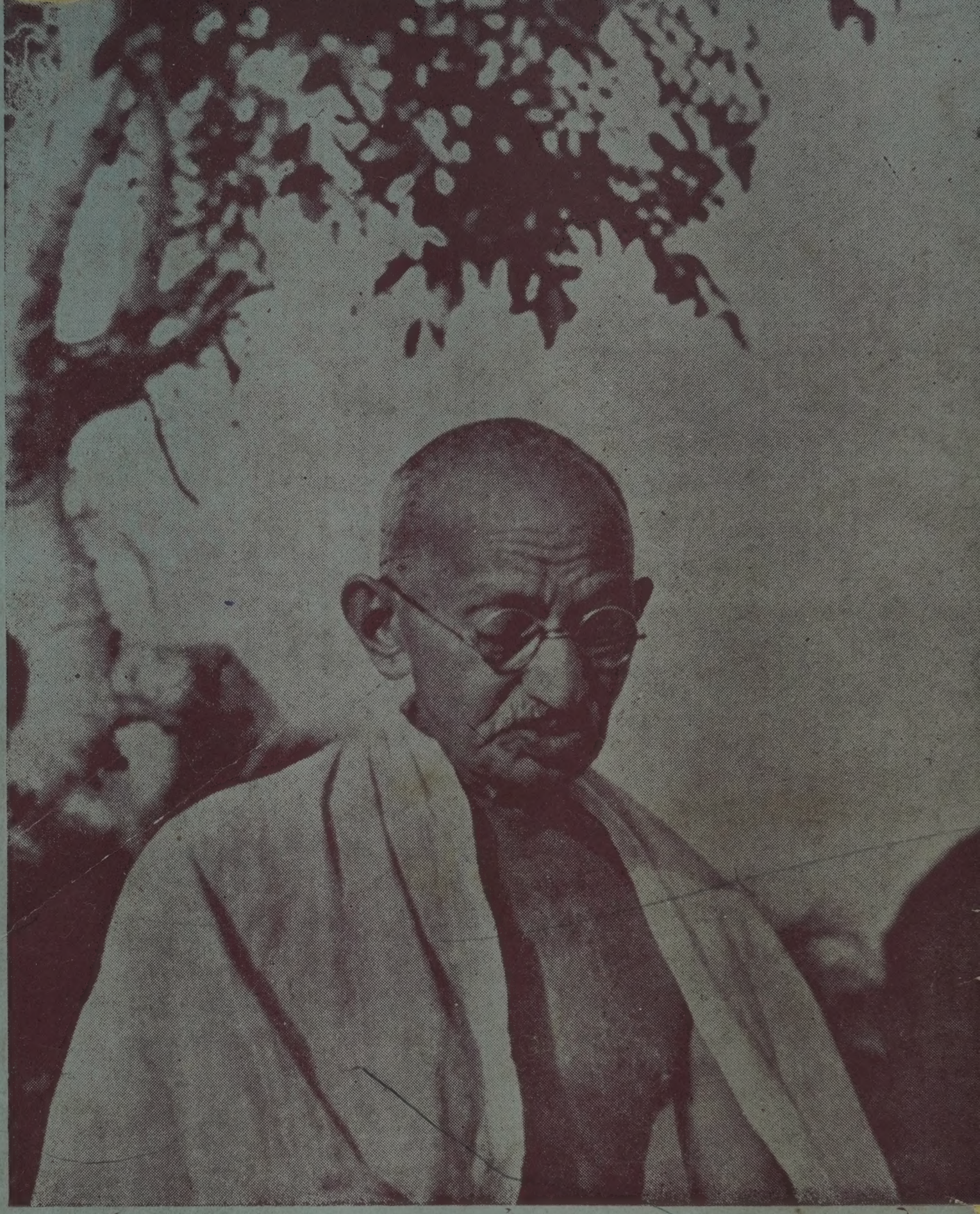
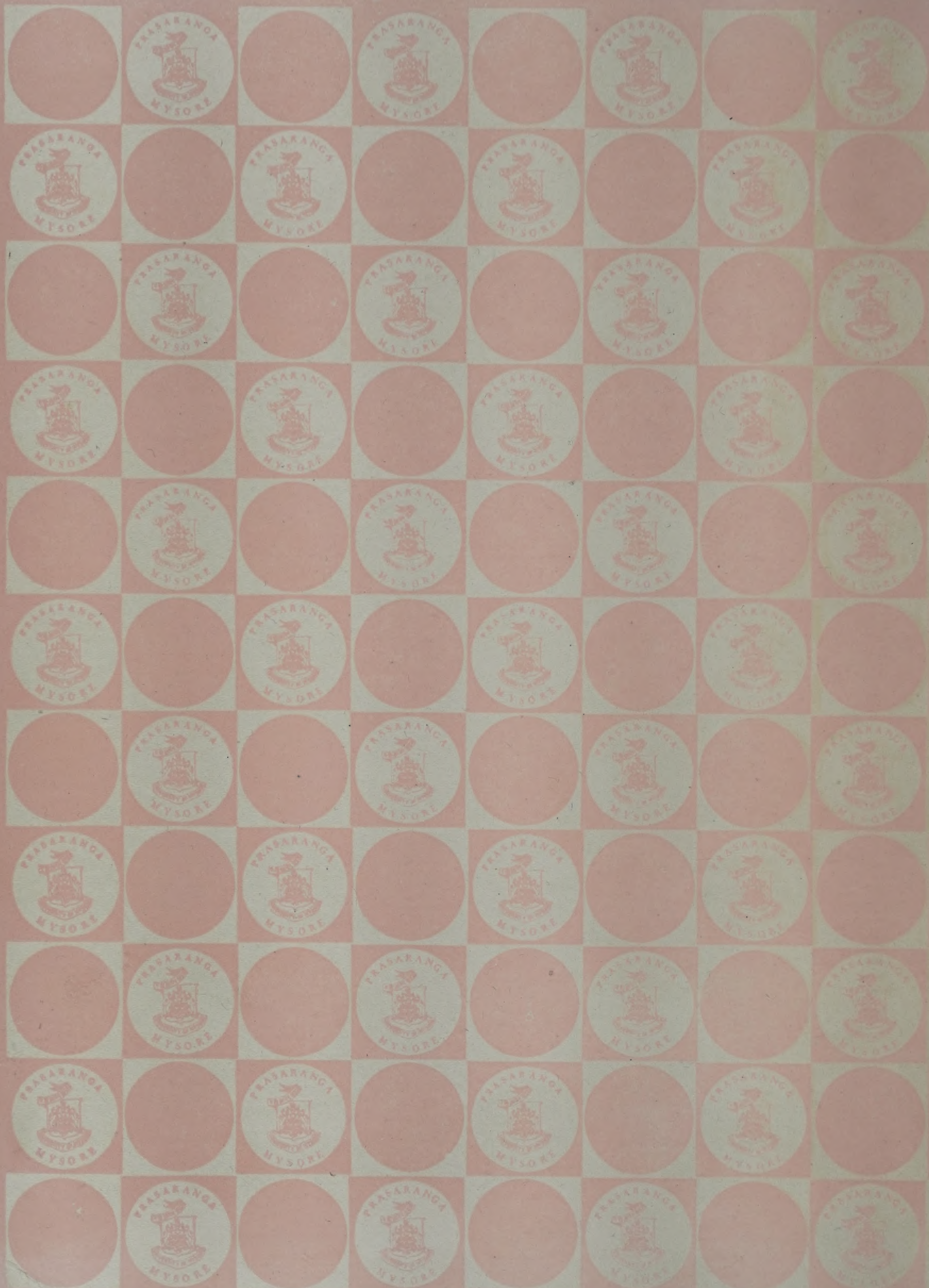


Gandhi's Contribution to Political Thought

Dr. R. S. Narayan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Gandhi's Contribution to Political Thought

Dr. R. S. Narayan

PRASARANGA UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE

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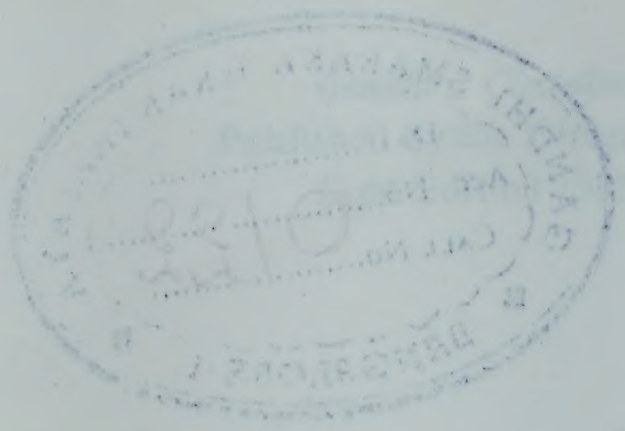
To

The memory of my brother

P. R. RAMAIYA



Publisher's note

We are happy to present to the reading public Dr. R. S. Narayan's book "Gandhi's Contribution to Political Thought." It is the result of the scholar's intense study conducted for several years. The present work is his doctoral thesis. We are grateful to Dr. Narayan for kindly permitting us to publish his book.

We are also thankful to the Mysore University Printing Press for their neat print.

K. T. Veerappa
Director

Preface

Over a decade ago, I presented a Thesis on "Gandhi's Contribution to Political Thought" for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Mysore.

Gandhi did not produce a treatise embodying his considered political thought, but one can gather it from his prolific writings and recorded speeches. What he wrote and spoke, founded on his experiments with truth and non-violence, constitute his earnest plea to humanity to tread firmly the path of love.

While the Gandhian movement in India aimed at political freedom of the country, it remained intensely spiritual. Its ultimate aim was to secure the absolute freedom for the individual. While Gandhi was outwardly a politician *par excellence,* he was inwardly completely spiritual. "In his innermost self Gandhi remained", as observed by Arnold Toynbee, "aloof from politics, even when his outer self was the most actively engaged in them".

His spiritual outlook set no premium on the ends justifying the means. He demanded the purity of the means at any cost. He was sure that the purity of the means would itself ensure the realisation of the end. The realisation of the end, according to him, was commensurate with the degree of the purity of the means.

Gandhi stood for the welfare of all. The concept of *Sarvodaya,* which he propounded, is superior to the Benthamite doctrine of 'the greatest good of the greatest number'; he wanted the greatest good of all. It is possible only if man gives up exploitation of man. Enjoining the people to build a non-exploitative society, he stressed that it should be free from these seven ills : politics without principles ; wealth without work ; pleasure without conscience ; knowledge without character ; commerce without morals ; science without humanity ; and worship without sacrifice.

The ideal, as Gandhi himself conceded, is not realisable ; he thought it was like Euclid's point. Though utopian, it shows the way. Progressive practice of love takes the people nearer to peace. As Sorokin affirmed, " if men and women could sit down and think calmly about the power or dynamics of love and then organise that love step by step among growing numbers of people, there is nothing such organised love cannot achieve in the world ". So long as there is need of love between man and man, Gandhi is relevant.

For the preparation of the Thesis the Gandhi Bhavan of the University provided me especial facility and Prof. S. S. Raghavachar guided me. The Thesis, abridged, is now being published by the Prasaranga of the University. I am grateful to all of them.

Mysore
July 1, 1982

R. S. Narayan

Contents

The Talisman

Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test : Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man, whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to *swaraj* for the hungry and spiritually-starving millions? Then, you will find your doubts and your self melting away.

M. K. Gandhi

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. The Purpose

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi sought and strove to build a world of happiness and peace on the certain foundation of truth and non-violence. Although he was unfortunately unable to accomplish that lofty ideal of establishing the *sarvodaya* order in his life-time, his message stands out as a beacon in the present world of abysmal darkness.

The task, though arduous, has to be performed and in the very endeavour lies the hope of a better tomorrow. " Man is not fixed in relation to truth ; as he passes through life, each individual man (and humanity in general) gains knowledge of a greater and greater degree of truth and frees himself more and more from error.[1]"

Gandhi did not preach a new gospel but amply demonstrated in his life and work the feasibility of building a new society by treading the age-old path of love for humanity. He, as none else ever, was quite conscious of the many failings of man through the ages and yet firmly believed that those could be eliminated, if only people practised what they preached. " If we did for ourselves what we do for our country ", Caviour declared " what rascals we should be! "[2] Gandhi was a man who meant what he said and said what he meant. " Each of

us " said Tolstoy, " has only to begin to do what he ought to do and cease doing the contrary. We need only each of us live according to the light that is in us to bring about the promised Kingdom of God towards which the heart of every man aspires.[3]"

The world today is in an age of twist ; there is a very hard struggle going on between truth and untruth, non-violence and violence. Humanity is groaning under a heavy load of numerous avoidable strains and stresses. It is consequently, impoverished mentally and morally ; " there is ", as S. Radhakrishnan said, " a large amount of rootlessness, dislocation and desolation all round.[4]"

There has, nonetheless, been a persistent ray of hope. The world has already passed through several dark ages ; though sceptics hold out no sure promise of a really bright tomorrow, unmistakable signs are present of sincere crusade for the welfare of humanity. " In the midst of encircling gloom," as Gandhi said, " light persists." Such signals of light are seen in the noble strivings of great men.

None has ever declared, much less demonstrated, that peace and plenty could be ushered in by an endeavour wholly divorced from pristine morality. Whenever society fell so low morally, there surely emerged on the horizon a redeemer to save it from the abyss[5]. The history of the world is enlivened with the work, from time to time, of those messengers of God, who held the torch of truth aloft to wean the erring humanity away from complete darkness.

Gandhi is the latest so born. When he arrived on the scene, the country of his birth had fallen low culturally, socially, economically politically, and, above all, morally, resulting from the unbridled exploitation of it by the ' satanic ' British administration. He was undoubtedly the man whom the hapless country at the time needed most. Although his life and work were confined to uplift his countrymen, his message of love and brotherhood is for humanity at large of all times. His practice of transcendental truth and non-violence crowned him ultimately with the inevitable but glorious martyrdom. " In his death, the meaning of his life was finally justified for all to see.[6]" " He has been greater in his death. I have no shadow of a doubt that by his death he has served the great cause as he served it throughout his life.[7]"

The world is crumbling under the almost unbearable burden of violence. Our seers and saints have all alike unequivocally demanded of us to eschew violence in thought, word and deed. As we have failed in our efforts, we are still distant from the goal of peace.

Gandhi urged us to conquer violence by non-violence. Evil is to be resisted by all just means, but never with another evil. His whole concept of confronting brute force with non-violence is not just the dream of a visionary but an approach to the heart of the matter, a call to the conduct and aspiration of the individual and a demand upon self-control without which civilisation, however sophisticated in other respects, must ultimately collapse[8].

History teaches us that no enduring solution can be found for any human problem except by persuasion and common consent. The use of violence is double-edged. Violence is bound by the doctrine of reciprocal action; it provokes violence in turn. Violence is such a thing that after one act of violence, there will be another of even greater violence. Those who take the sword perish by the sword, and those, who seek peace, who act in a friendly manner, inoffensively, who forget and forgive offences, for the most part enjoy peace, or, if they die, die blessed[9]. The organisation of society on principles of violence for the purpose of securing personal, family and social welfare, has brought men to absolute negation and destruction of that welfare.

Gandhi, therefore, believed that the weapon of truth, if firmly grasped and purposefully used, could lead to peaceful change without resort to violence[10]. Truth was the sovereign principle of his life. " This truth ", he declared, "is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal Principle, that is God. I worship God as Truth only. Often in my progress, I have had faint glimpses of the Absloute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal.[11]"

2. *The Spiritual Influences*

Whatever Gandhi stood for had a strong spiritual base ; the superstructure rested entirely upon it. Whatever power he possessed for working, whether in social, economic or political sphere, was derived from his experiments in the spiritual field.

Born in a pious Hindu family and brought up in a pure religious atmosphere, Gandhi, as he grew in life, imbibed progressively the eternal virtues of the seers and the saints alike. Whatever ennobled mankind applead to him instinctively. Whatever aided to wipe out the tears from the eyes of the low and the lost invited him to practise it. The immortal teachings of the Hindu scriptures and the classics as well as of the founders of the great religions of the world entered deeply into his very being.

The Upanishads gave us first the message of non-violence. The Chhandogya declared that non-violence was an ethical quality of man[12]. Patanjali held out non-violence as one of the five cardinal disciplines of man's life ; he did not believe that it was merely a negative doctrine of avoidance of violence but stressed that it manifested goodwill towards all[13].

The great epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha,* beckon us to practise non-violence for our civilised existence. *Ramayana* portrays the magnificence of morality (*dharma*). The message of *Mahabharata* is no less certain about it. Vyasa, concluding his great epic, cries with uplifted hands : " Wealth (*artha*) and pleasure (*kama*) accure to men through morality (*dharma*). Why do not men follow this truth? [14]" It procliams that war annihilates all. Bhishma extols non-violence as the highest religion and the highest penance ; " it is also the highest truth from which all duty proceeds[15]. Kapila extols non-violence as one of the sure ways to attain divine knowledge.

The Gita constitutes the quintessence of the doctrine of dharma. It was to Gandhi the unfailing guide in all circumstances. " When doubt haunts me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavadgita, and find a verse to comfort me ; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external

tragedies, and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavadgita.[16]''

Non-violence is the leading tenet of the Jaina philosophy. To liberate the soul from the bonds of the body (*muktatma*), it calls upon the individual to get rid of the karmas (*nirjara*) by three means (*triratnas*): right knowledge (*samyak jnana*), right insight (*samyak darshana*) and right conduct (*samyak charitrya*) ; right conduct consists of five practices (*vratas*) ; they are truth (*satya*) , non-violence (*ahimsa*), non-stealing (*astheya*), non-possession (*aparigraha*) and celibacy (*brahmacharya*). Jainism stretches the practice of non-violence to such an extremity as to forbid one to take the life of even an insect. This extreme form of non-violence, Gandhi felt, was not workable for the ordinary run of mankind ; he, therefore, spoke of relative non-violence ; the concrete situation should afford the criterion of judgement for the subtle application of non-violence as an accepted principle.[17]

Buddhism, however, takes a more realistic view of life. Its ethical message of Enlightenment is to put an end to suffering. The Buddha was not content with the practice of good morals for reaching the ultimate goal of life. Nirvana, he said, was beyond good and evil, both of which bind the individual. He urged for the eradication of the notion of self ; the individual must rise above name and aspect and he must see clearly the causal origination of all things and plunge into the Immortal. For the Buddha, non-violence was not merely the avoidance of injury ; it was the manifestation of disinterested love (*metta*), pity (*karuna*), tenderness (*mudita*) and impartiality (*upekha*). The Buddha's call of non-violence, according to the Metta Sutta, is : " Let goodwill without measure prevail in the world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. If a man remains steadfastly in this state of mind all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting or lying down, there is come to pass the saying : Even in this world holiness has been found.[18]'' The Buddha went on to say : " By no wrath should he conquer wrath ; unworth by worth should he overcome ; he should overcome the stingy by a gift; and by truth him who doth falsely speak.[19]''

Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood. The very word

'Islam' means peace, safety or salvation. The Prophet himself was extremely gentle, humane and 'more modest than a virgin in her veil.' To his disciples, he was always indulgent, he rebuked none. However, the Quran favours war against the aggressor. The Prophet himself waged defensive wars, although at the end forgave his defeated enemies. Yet, the Prophet preferred non-violence to violence; he advised: "Turn aside evil with that which is better."[20]

Confucianism likewise preaches pacifism to mankind. Confucius declared: "Men should not do to others as they do not want done to themselves." Lao Tse asked his followers to practise strictly the principles of non-assertion and non-violence.

Socrates conducted himself as a great votary of truth (*satyagrahi*). He did not heed to the warnings of the rulers and stop his teachings against the people's superstitious beliefs; he preferred ultimately the cup of hemlock to forsaking his pursuit of truth. Plato, his close disciple, in no uncertain terms, proclaimed that "the creation of the world (cosmos) is the victory of persuasion over force; violence promoted chaos, while the divine persuasion made for cosmos."[21]

Christ also proclaimed the eternal message of truth and non-violence. It was really the Sermon on the Mount which enlightened Gandhi on the efficacy of *satyagraha*. Jesus, to Gandhi, was the prince of *satyagrahis;* he said that he would not hesitate to call himself a Christian if he had to face only the Sermon on the Mount.[22] "Christianity's particular contribution", he declared, "is that of active love. No other religion says so firmly that God is love." Jesus advised: "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." His rejection of force was amply demonstrated when he was arrested; he insisted on his disciple, Peter, when he drew his sword to cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, to desist from doing so; he sternly advised him: "Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." None can forget this sermon of Jesus: "You have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that you resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law

and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." We contemplete in wonderment the glory and supremacy of non-violence, when the Christ on the Cross humbly prayed that his executioners be pardoned : " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

3. *The Western Light*

Gandhi not only concurred with the belief of Leo Tolstoy that "the Kingdom of God is within you", but realised it in his life by strenuous endeavour. His successful striving after truth was an eloquent demonstration of the Tolstoyan declaration that "the Kingdom of God can only be reached by effort and only those who make such effort reach it.[23]"

Gandhi agreed with Tolstoy's reminder to the mass of humanity, in the language of Christ, that "we are all sons of one Father, no matter where we live or what language we speak; we are all brothers and are subject only to the law of love, which the common Father has implanted in our hearts." Tolstoy pointed to the division of men into castes: one labouring, oppressed, needy and suffering; the other idle, oppressing and living in luxury and pleasure. "Not only does man see this, but he involuntarily takes part in one way or other in this division of men which his reason condemns, and he cannot but suffer from the consciousness of this contradiction and from his own participation in it."[24] Gandhi upheld the Tolstoyan dictum that an ideal state would be an ordered anarchy, in which every one would rule himself in such a manner that he would never be a hindrance to his neighbours.

John Ruskin also profoundly influenced the thought and action of Gandhi. His "Unto This Last", based on "Apology" of Socrates, which dilated upon our duty as men, inspired Gandhi to propound his concept of *Sarvodaya,* the welfare of all. Happiness of majority, for him, was not enough. Sacrificing the interests of minority for majority's happiness—physical happiness and economic prosperity—was not proper. Obedience to moral law alone, he firmly believed, brought true happiness. That was to him the message of "Unto This Last."

Ruskin, upholding the dignity of man, stressed that whatever hurts it must be relentlessly rejected. He thought that political economy took no account of the spirit of man and it concentrated on the material aspect of human welfare. He, therefore, attacked the mammon worship in society. He thought that riches were a power like that of electricity, acting through inequalities or negations of itself. "The force of the

guinea you have in your pocket ", he asserts, " depends wholly on the default of a guinea in your neighbour's pocket.[25]" The art of making yourself rich, in the ordinary mercantile economist's sense, is equally and necessarily the art of keeping your neighbour poor.[26] What is really desired, under the name of riches is, essentially, power over men, in its simplest sense, the power of obtaining for our own advantage the labour of servant, tradesman and artist.[27] It is the art of establishing the maximum inequality in our own favour. The true veins of wealth are purple—and not in rock but in flesh. The final consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible of full-breathed, bright-eyed and happy-hearted human beings.

That country, he emphasised, was the richest which nourished the great number of noble and happy human beings; that man was the richest, who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, had also the widest helpful influence, both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others; there was no wealth but life. Ruskin had no hesitation in coming to the irrefutable conclusion that true economics was the economics of justice. People would be happy in so far as they learnt to do justice and be righteous. All else was not only vain but led straight to destruction. To teach the people to get rich by hook or crook was to do them an immense dis-service.[28]

Gandhi, therefore, realised, way back in 1915, that *swaraj* for India was not enough to make the nation happy. *Swaraj* really meant for him self-control. Only he was capable of self-control, who observed the rules of morality. He determined that ' India must indeed have *swaraj* but she must have it by righteous methods.

He felt the ' magic spell ' of ' Unto this Last ', when he discerned its teachings to be :

1. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all.

2. A lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.

3. A life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living.[29]

Gandhi did not, however, accept Ruskin's advocacy of the rule of the wisest. Ruksin believed in " the eternal superiority of some men to others, sometimes even of one man to all others " and approved " the advisability of appointing such person or persons to guide, to lead, or on occasions even to compel and subdue their inferiors according to their own letter, knowledge and wiser will."[30] Gandhi believed entirely in the inherent good nature of man.

Gandhi was no less attracted by the stand, on pacifism and non-resistance, of the Quaker Society of Friends, established by George Fox in 1860. The Quakers firmly believed that each man's life was guided by an inner light which transcended even the Bible and which ruled out any right to constrain men. They desired that politics be spirtualised, curing it of all its violence, and the State be conducted on the lines of non-violence; and they supported unflinchingly the efforts for peace. Their administration of the Pennsylvania State without the defence of the armed forces was a success as a non-violent rule.

Henry David Thoreau's plea for the supremacy of conscience under all circumstances appealed to Gandhi so much that he admitted that his technique of passive resistance found scientific confirmation in the former's essay on " Civil Disobedience." The core of Thoreau's politics was his belief in a natural or higher law. He rejected the idea that the highest responsibility of the individual must be to the State. " All men recognise the right of revolution—that is, the right to refuse allegiance to and to resist, the government when its tyranny and its inefficiency are great and unendurable." He opined that a tyrannous government could best be with-stood by the tactics of with-holding one's taxes. He believed that " it costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would be to obey. They only can force me who obey a higher law than I.[31] " He refused to recognise a government, which failed to establish justice in the land.

Gandhi's anarchist view was fully supported by Thoreau's declaration that " that government is best which governs least." It in truth means that that government is best which does not at all govern. Gandhi also accepted the opinion of the American patriot that there will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recongise the individual as a higher and independent power, from

which all its own power and authority are derived and treats him accordingly.

Gandhi, therefore, believed that a free and enlightened State could be established on this planet if its inhabitants could be truthful and non-violent in thought, word and deed. This ideal, he never thought, was easy to achieve. " Being necessarily limited by the bonds of flesh ", Gandhi observed, " we can achieve perfection only after the dissolution of the body.". But while in this body, the gulf can certainly be narrowed. He said in 1947, a few months before his martyrdom, reviewing the freedom struggle he led, that " the non-violence that was offered during the past 30 years was that of the weak. Such non-violence can have no play....India has no experience of the non-violence of the strong "; nevertheless, he pleaded with his critics" to share my belief that there is no hope for the aching world except through the narrow and the straight path of non-violence; millions like me may fail to prove the truth in their own lives—that would be their failure, never of the eternal law.[32]

He warned: " Non-violence is a universal law acting under all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction.[33]"

If history teaches anything it is this that a happy world cannot be ushered in through violence and untruth. The only way is to build society through non-violence and truth. We can build such a society by voluntarily working for the good of all, by sacrificing even the good of oneself, if necessary. " It is not possible to achieve this goal quickly or in the near future even though there cannot be a better ideal for human society than this. Before we can hope to achieve *sarvodaya* as a reality, we have got to establish conditions which will minimise the destructive urges for unlimited acquisition of power and wealth and the utilitarian means of achieving material welfare···These urges lead to untruth, anger, jealousy and hatred, which are the greatest destructive forces in human life. These urges also suppress the inherent good qualities of human beings and accentuate destructive feelings. Serious and persistent efforts have to be made to remove them or to reduce them to the minimum. [34]"

4. *The Superior Goal*

Gandhi's philosophy of *sarvodaya* is loftier than the utilitarian thought, which characterises the European liberal tradition. " A votary of *ahimsa* ", Gandhi observed, " cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula of the greatest good of the greatest number. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realise the idea. He will, therefore, be willing to die, so that the others may live. He will serve himself with the rest, by himself dying. The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greatest number, and therefore, he and the utilitarian will converge in many points in their career, but there does come a time when they must part company, and even work in opposite directions. The utilitarian to be logical will never sacrifice himself; the absolutist will even sacrifice himself.[35]"

Gandhi cherished no love for the western concept of democarcy. To him, it appeared to believe in limitless expansion of capitalism, which meant the exploitation of the weaker sections of the society. " Western democracy as it functions to-day ", he said, " is undiluted Nazism or Fascism. At best, it is merely a cloak to hide the Nazi and the Fascist tendencies in imperialism.[36]"

Gandhi believed that true democracy was *sarvodaya*. In it, he said, the humblest and the lowest of the country is equally the ruler with the tallest. " All are pure. Purity must go hand in hand with wisdom. No one would then harbour any distinction between community and community, caste and outcaste. Everybody would regard all as equal with oneself and hold them together in the silken net of love. There will be no distinction between intellectual and physical labour. There will be no opium, liquor or any intoxicants. *Swadeshi* is the rule of life. He will be ready to lay down his life, when occasion demands it; he will never want to take another's life.[37]"

Locke initiated the liberal doctrine that men had rights, rooted in nature, and those rights must be protected, even against the established authority. " Man is born free ", declared Rousseau, who, however, bemoaned, " yet, he is everywhere in chains."

Locke considered man as a rational being and believed that all his actions must be governed by reason, the law of nature. The law

of nature, defined Grotius, was composed of the dictates of right reason, which pointed out the act according as it was or was not in conformity with nature, and had a quality of moral baseness or moral necessity, and either forbidden or enjoined by God, the author of nature. Locke emphasised that " a government is not free to do as it pleases. The law of nature stands as an eternal rule to all men, legislators as well as others." He insisted, however, as a pragmatist that the rule of the majority was binding on the minority, who must rationally perceive that the community could only act as a corporate body, if the lesser part agreed to political oblivion; the consent to passivity was imposed upon the unfortunate minority by the law of nature!

The ethical facet of the liberal thought was utilitarianism expounded by Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill. The utilitarian doctrine declared that an action was right if it achieved the greatest good of the greatest number of people.

The Benthamite formula was based upon the calculus of pleasure. " Nature has ", said Bentham, " placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters: pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standards of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to the throne.[38]" He argued that, as the value of pleasure increased with its extension, the more people were happy, the greater was the value of the happiness of the individual. If the general tone was happy, the individual would bask in its sunshine.

Although the individual is the product of his environment, Bentham was not content to see in it, like Burke, the process of ages, or, like Montesquieu, the result of climate, or, like Rousseau, the emotional pressure of ecstatic nationalism. He revealed that behind the sovereignty of the majority lay the controller of that environment, the benevolent legislator, who regulated the scale of penalties judiciously, wisely and altruistically.

Bentham's concern was to provide an apparatus for calculation of pleasure and pain as man's motivating forces. His attempt was to offer a recipe to end man's misery but he failed to protect the interests of the unfortunate. It was, as Laski comments, easy for Bentham to

lay down a universal code of conduct so long as he drew his assumptions from observations of the handful of eager rationalists, who regarded him as their master.[39] He could not hide the poverty of his arguments in a fog of rhetoric.

J. S. Mill strove to reconstruct the utilitarian philosophy on the basis that the quantitative theory of happiness was unreal. He insisted that the individual alone must be the final and the only judge of his actions. He relied on the judgement of " those who are qualified by knowledge ", i.e., of " the better qualified than the numerically strong." He thus substituted a qualitative for a quantitative concept of happiness.

Gandhi's view of individual liberty agrees with that of Thomas Hill Green, who represents the school of thought which affirms that self-realisation is possible in and through society. Green, indignant at the moral degradation of man in society, pointed out : " We content ourselves with enacting that no man shall be used by other men as a means against his will, but we leave it to be pretty much a matter of chance whether or not he shall be qualified to fulfil any social function to contribute anything to the common good or to do so freely.[40]"

Gandhi agreed with Green that " a man is free when he is in that state in which he shall have realised his ideal of himself and shall be at one with the law which he recognises as that which he ought to obey." Freedom was not the ability to do anything but " the power to identify one's self with that true good, which reason revealed as one's true good.[41]"

Green argued that the institutions of political and civic life were the concrete embodiment of people's moral ideas and were valuable to the extent they developed the moral character of the individual citizens. Institutions and individuals together constituted the community and their " collective well-being " or " common good " underscored the claim to private right. The State, according to him, represented a " general will " to promote " common good " of the society. The basis of the State was not an external coercive authority but the spiritual recognition by the citizens of that which constituted their true nature. " Will, not force ", he declared, " is the basis of the State." He did not hesitate to lay down a moral duty to rebel against the State in

the interest of the State itself, i.e., in order better to subserve that function which constituted the *raison d'etre* of the State. Such a revolt of an individual against the State, he believed, brought about " a clearer apprehension of the spirit underlying the letter of the obligations laid on him by society, which makes his rational recognition of duty, when arrived at, a much more valuable influence in promoting the moral growth of society. " The force of moral cirticism is indispensable in a system of government and the judgement of consicence on the right or wrong of government is the court of last resort. The function of government is to protect and promote all such relations, which enable man to discover himself and all of them converge on the liberty of the individual.

Gandhi's advocacy of individual liberty is opposed to the monistic theory of the State. Glorifying the sovereignty of the State, Hegal declared that " it is the nation, rather than the individual or any other grouping of the individuals, that forms the significant unit "; he believed that the genius or spirit of the nation, working through individuals but largely in independence of their conscious will and intention, was the true creator of art, law, morals and religion; to him, the State was the director and the end of national development.[42] Bosanquet's theory of " real will " rejected the right of individual criticism and dissent and called for conformity in the conduct of individuals towards the State, assuming that the State represented what individuals desired it to be.

The monistic doctrine was attacked by pluralists like Laski, Figgis, Lindsay and Barker, who contended that there were religious, social, political, economic and professional associations which arose naturally and spontaneously and were, therefore, independent of the state; hence, they were on a par with the state in relation to sovereignty. They argued that, for their efficient functioning, the sovereignty of the state should not become an impediment and demanded the " arid " and " unfruitful " conception of legal sovereignty of the state to go. Gierke and Maitland maintained that the permanent associations, which arose naturally with society, possessed personalities which were real, not hypothetical, fictitious or created from without; groups which acted in an intergal way become right-and-duty-bearing units, regardless of

whether the state had by some formal act endowed them with legal personality.

Laski assailed the absolutist doctrine by saying that the state had no right to the allegiance of an individual save insofar as his conscience gave assent. He observed: "The claim of authority upon myself is legitimate proprotionately to the moral urgency of its appeal;" the only state to which I owe allegiance is the state in which I discover moral adequacy. Our first duty is to be true to our conscience.[43]" Laski asserted that the state was one among many forms of human association and the state should, therefore, be regarded as federal in its nature; "the group is real in the sense that state is real." He wanted the state to compete with church, trade union, political parties and professional associations. Figgis called the state as a society of societies and an agency of co-ordination and adjustment.

Gandhi's concept of the state is not opposed to the pluralistic theory of the state. His emphasis on the supremacy of the individual limited the scope of state action; he insisted that there were vast areas of individual and social life in which the interference of the state cannot be countenanced.

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CHAPTER 2

The Metaphysical Content

1. The Meaning of God

All thought and action of Gandhi had their foundation in religion which, for him, was identical with morality, whose kernel was truth. He said: " At the back of every word that I have uttered since I have known what public life is, and of every act that I have done, there has been a religious consciousness and a down-right religious motive ".[1] While playing the role of a politician, he remained a deeply religious man. While most religious men were politicians in disguise, he, wearing the guise of a politician, remained at heart a religious man. He noted that " politics to-day encircle us like the coils of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how one tries. I wish to wrestle with the snake as I am trying to introduce religion into politics. "[2] He denied that politics should be free from religion. " Those, who say that religion has nothing to do with politics, do not know what religion means. "[3]

Religion, emphasised Gandhi, meant belief in the ordered moral government of the universe. Life without religion signified nothing but was just a maze of fury and sound. Religion, he believed, enabled him to secure self-realisation or obtain the knowledge of the self. Religion was bridge between man and God; it is " the lifting of the

empirical ego into the transcendental plane, mind in its immediacy into mind in its ideal perfection."[4] Gandhi's conception of the man's goal of life was essentially influenced by the Hindu philosophical tradition. Hinduism insists not on religious conformity but on spiritual and ethical outlook on life; it demands always a relentless pursuit of truth.

The apprehension of the Ultimate Reality is the Gandhian goal of life. Gandhi did not mind calling God as a person, because personality was for him a symbol to express the Transcendent Reality. "The difference between the philosophical idea of God as an all-embracing spirit and the devotional idea of a personal God is one of stand-point and not of essence."[5]

While truth is God in religion, God is truth in epistemology. Truth or God is all-pervading. "God is within us, also out of us. He is creator, sustainer and judge. He governs everything in the universe. He is law and law-giver."[6] "To the man, who has realised Truth in its fulness, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it is not Truth and, so, not true knowledge."[7]

Reason and perception, for Gandhi, were not the only sources of true knowledge. He denied the claim of western philosophers like Hegel and Bosanquet that the ultimate nature of the universe can be grasped by thought or reason. Reason, as Kant said, affirmed only the incomprehensibility of the incomprehensible. Kant believed that understanding was incapable of comprehending the noumenal order and that all arguments to prove the existence of God were defective. Gandhi maintained that intellect acted as a barrier to apprehend the Reality; he stressed that it could not grasp the self. He, therefore, relied on intuition or what he called inner voice. Intuition enabled him to realise Truth in its fulness. "It is a mode of consciousness which is distinct from the perceptual, imaginative or intellectual and thus carries with it self-evidence and completeness. Religious men of all ages have won their certainty of God through this direct way of approach to the apprehension of the Reality."[8] It is faith, which acts as the sixth sense and its presence is vouchsafed by sages and saints of all countries and climes. Gandhi had no hesitation to rely on the

experience of people who had lived a life purified by prayer. Belief in prophets and incarnations, who had lived in remote ages, was not for him an idle superstitution but a satisfaction of an inner-most spiritual want. The *rishis* and prophets said that anybody following the path they had trodden could realise God. Faith, Gandhi was convinced, was nothing but a living, wide awake consciousness of God within.

God, underscored Gandhi, could not be apprehended through perception and discursive reason. It defied all proof. He agreed with Green that the most convinced theist must admit that God was unimaginable, as He was unperceivable. That which we imagine has the necessary finiteness of that which we perceive; statements which could be applied to an imaginable finite agent cannot in any sense be applied to God. Statements which seek to define or describe God can only be imperfect, as that which is perfect is beyond description. Gandhi observed: " As a matter of fact, we are all thinking of the Unthinkable, describing the Indescribable, seeking to know the Unknown; that is why our speech falters, is inadequate, and even often contradictory. That is why the Vedas describe Brahman as ' not this, not this ' (*neti, neti*). But, if He or It is not this, He or It is ".[9] Rigorous moral and spiritual discipline enables one to experience self-realisation. " God is not proved by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within ".[10]

Nonetheless, Gandhi called God as pure undefiled consciousness, undefinable mysterious power that pervaded everything, purest essence. " God is a living force. Our life is that Force. He, who denies the existence of that great Force, denies to himself the use of that inexhaustible power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which tosses about here and there and perishes without making any headway ".[11]

Gandhi had no difficulty in identifying God as that Law which governed all. He argued that there was orderliness in the universe; there was an unalterable law governing everything and every being that existed or lived. It was not a blind law; for no blind law could govern the conduct of living beings. Law and the law-giver were one.

To those who chose to differ with him, Gandhi said: "Those who want to deny His existence are at liberty to do so. If anyone disdains

to bow to His will, He says: ' So be it. My sun will shine no less for thee, my clouds will rain no less for thee. I need not force thee to accept my sway '. Of such a God, let the ignorant dispute the existence. I am one of the millions of wise men who believed in Him and am never tired of bowing to Him and singing His glory. God is, was, and ever shall be. "[12]

Gandhi identified God as symbol of the Supreme Value. He found Him incarnate in every individual. He called the dumb millions as " Daridra-Narayan. "

Gandhi insisted in a votary of truth, a *satyāgrahi,* a living faith in God. " Without it, he won't have the courage to die without anger, without fear and without retaliation. "[13] He believed that " the only weapon of a *satyāgrahi* is God, by whatever name one knows Him. Without Him, the *satyāgrahi* is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons."[14] He wanted the finite to apprehend the Infinite; he strove for the realisation of " *Tat Thwam Asi* " (That Thou art), " Soham ' (I am He).

Gandhi pined to see the Almighty face to face. He always felt dependent upon Him, sought after His guidance and found that His voice had been increasingly audible as the years rolled by in the crucifixion of his flesh.

To realise God, Gandhi insisted, one should become a votary of truth; truth led one to see God face to face. He urged on undergoing the discipline, enjoined by the five vows of truth (*satya*), non-violence (*ahimsa*), celibacy (*brahmacharya*), non-possession (*aparigraha*) and non-stealing (*astheya*), to apprehend the Reality.

To atheists who denied God but not truth, Gandhi said: " Truth is God. " The atheists, in their passion for discovering truth, had not hesitated to deny the very existence of God. It was because of this that he preferred to say " Truth is God " to " God is Truth ". A truth-fearing man is evidently a God-fearing man.

Although Truth means literally that which exists or that which is factual, Gandhi was after Absolute Truth, which is the Supreme Reality. " For me ", Gandhi said, " truth is the sovereign principle, which includes numerous other principles. This truth is not only

truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal Principle."[15] The seeker after Truth, he enjoined, should be humbler than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after Truth should so humble himself that even the dust could crush him; only then, and not till then, will he have a glimpse of Truth.

Man, being a finite, cannot apprehend the Infinite. It is not given to him to know Him. His duty lies in living up to the truth as he sees it. God alone knows absolute truth. Gandhi insisted that one should follow truth as he saw it and assured that such pursuit of truth could not lead anyone astray. He also affirmed that truth never damaged a cause that was just. Believing so, one should go on towards the goal, without flinching, braving trials and hardships, as "Truth alone will endure. All the rest will be swept away before the tide of time."[16] He believed that a man of faith would remain steadfast to truth, even though the whole world might appear to be enveloped in falsehood.

2. *The Concept of Love*

If God exists, truth exists; and if truth exists, love exists. Love is the cementing force in the universe. If mankind still exists despite repeated manifestations of hatred, there exists unmistakably in the world the force of love, which is the force of the Eternal. " The fact that mankind persists shows the cohesive force (love) is greater than the disruptive force; centripetal force is greater than centrifugal."[17]

Boethius, the Latin poet, expatiates that the Universe itself is governed by the law of love; harmony and order that prevail in the universe are to be ascribed to the dynamic action of love. He says: " The universe with unchanging fidelity varies its harmonious seasons; seeds of things discordant mutually keep an abiding covenant; Phoebus on his golden car brings in the rosy day; Phoebe is the queen of the nights, which Hesperus ushers in; the greedy sea compels its waves to keep fixed limits lest they should take the liberty of ever shifting the far-extended boundaries of the land—the binder of all this order of things, who rules the earth and sea, and holds sway in the very heavens, is love. Should He let go the reins, all things that now live in mutual affection would be at continual strife, and would seek to break up the great machine, of which, with all its lovely motions, they are actually the driving forces. He it is who imposes on peoples the holy treaty of peace, who welds with chaste love the sacred bond of marriage, who promulgates his law to faithful comrades. O' happy race of men, Love, by whom the heavens are ruled, should also rule your souls! "[18]

He also tells us : " If you would discover, with mind comprehensive and serene, the constitutions of the Thunderer on high, examine the vast altitudes of heaven, there, bound by a treaty of justice, innate in things, the stars maintain their original peace. The red rage of his fire does not cause the Sun to disturb the Moon's icy sphere, and the Great Bear, revolving in his giddy circle in the high reaches of the pole, though he sees other stars dip and sink in western waters, never longs to bathe his flames in the ocean. The evening star, with due alteration, gives notice of the dusk, and the morning star brings again the benign light of day. Thus, through Eternal Love, eternal courses

are renewed and discordant war is absent from the regions inhabited by the stars."[19]

Plato believed that Eros was a movement of the human soul towards the beautiful and the desirable. He said: "When anyone, having the right kind of love, mounts up and begins to see the beauty present in the beautiful person, he is not far from the final goal. For, the right way of love, whether one goes alone or is led by another, is to begin with the beautiful things that are seen here, and ascend ever upwards aiming at the beauty that is above, climbing as it were, on a ladder from one beautiful body to two, and from two to all others, and from beautiful bodies to beautiful actions, and from beautiful actions to beautiful forms of knowledge which is the knowledge of nothing other than Beauty itself and, so, knows at least what Beauty really is. And when one has attained thither, there, if anywhere, is the life that is worth living, in the beholding of Beauty itself."[20] Love, according to him, was the sweetest of all pleasures and was the reason why the soul of the lover would never forsake his beautiful one whom he esteemed above all, and for this, he was willing to make very great sacrifices.

Aristotle extended the Platonic view to include a movement from imperfection to perfection, from potentiality to actuality, from phenomenon to noumenon. Eros, he thought, worked as a driving force of the universe whereby the lower is ever striving towards the higher. Dante extolled love that moved the sun and the stars. Kropotkin asserted that there was a sort of unconscious mutualism which produced survival values for every form of life, while Darwin declared that as man advanced in civilisation and small tribes were united into larger communities the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instinct and sympathies to all members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point, being once reached, there was only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to the men of all nations and races.

Augustine identified love with God. According to him, as God was, Love was limitless; it went on giving; it lived by giving out, not by taking in; it imposed nothing and demanded no return; it conferred freedom both on the giver and the receiver; and it was irresistible, undaunted by opposition.

Paul, emphasising love as the core of the Christian thought, told Corinthians: "I may speak in tongues of men or of angels; but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clonging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I am none the better....Love is patient, love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, not conceited, nor rude, never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs, does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing that love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope and its endurance....Love will never come to an end. There are three things that last for ever: faith, hope and love; but the greatest of them all is love."[21]

The capacity to love, however, is to be cultivated; it cannot, as Kant underscores, be commanded and none can love to order.

Spinoza spoke of the intellectual love of God, when he said that he, who clearly and distinctly understood himself and his emotions, loved God. Descending to mundane life, he called upon the people to cleanse their hearts of hatred. He cautioned them : "Hatred is increased by being reciprocated and can, on the other hand, be destroyed by love; hatred, which is completely vanquished by love, passes into love....Minds are not conquered by arms but by love and generosity."[22]

Buddha warned humanity that hatred was never ceased by hatred. He affirmed that hatred was ceased by love; He stressed that the law of the wheel was love. It was the law of laws, the eternal harmony; all who loved were healers of those who were in need of it.

The *bhakti* (devotion) cult of India glorifies love as the sure force to drive its votary into the presence of his Maker. Its five manifestations of *shānti* (peace), *dāsya* (service), *sakhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (affection) and *mādhurya* (sweetness) are apparent in the many invocations composed by saints through the ages. Mira sang:

Of this body I will make the lamp,
And of mind the wick;
With the oil of love will I fill it,
And tend its flame day and night.

Teresa admitted: " Between the soul and God, there is such a sweet love transaction that it is impossible for me to describe what passes. "

Tolstoy, in his letter to Gandhi, urged: " Love, which is the striving for the union of human souls and the activity derived from it, is the highest and only law of human life. The use of force is incompatible with love as the fundamental law of life; as soon as violence is permitted, the insufficiency of the law of love is acknowledged, and by this the very law of love is denied."[23]

Gandhi readily concurred with the Tolstoyan view and endeavoured to introduce what was held good in personal life into national as well as international life. He offered the cup of love not only to individuals but to nations also, because the brute force has been the ruling factor in the world ever since its birth and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along. Yet, humanity has survived to this day, because " life persists in the midst of darkness ", or there is 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 there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love ",[24] Gandhi pleads. " Real love ", he said, " is to love that hates 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."[25]

Where life exists, there is the operation of the law of love. " If love was not the law of life, life would not have persisted in the midst of death. Life is a perpetual triumph over the grave. If there is a fundamental distinction between man and beast, it is the former's progressive recognition of the law and its application in practice to his own personal life. All the saints of the world, ancient and modern, were, each according to his light and capacity, a living illustration of that Supreme Law of our Being. That the brute in us seems so often to gain an easy triumph is true enough. That, however, does not disprove the law. It shows the difficulty of practice. When the practice of the law becomes universal, God will reign on earth as He does in heaven."[26]

Gandhi was convinced that where love was, there God was also. " Love never claims, it ever gives. Love never suffers, never resents, never revenges itself."[27]

3. *The Eternity of the Soul*

Gandhi identified God with the soul. The empirical self is a reflection of the metaphysical self. As a true Hindu, Gandhi believed that the soul was God-head within man; it was self-acting; it persisted even after death; its existence did not depend upon the physical body; it was matter rarefied to the utmost limit. Hence, whatever happened to one body must affect the whole of the matter and the whole of the spirit. He believed in the gradual disappearance of the screen of ignorance between the self and the soul; there must inevitably be the evolution of the consciousness for the liberation of the soul; the spiritual ascendancy of the self should surely lead to the apprehension of the Light within. " In the spiritual experience itself ", said S. Radhakrishnan, " the barriers between the self and the Ultimate Reality drop away. In the moment of its highest insight, the self becomes aware, not only of its own existence but of the existence of an omnipresent spirit of which it is, as it were, a focussing."[28]

Gandhi advocated the subduing of the flesh for the strengthening of the soul. In direct proportion to the growth of the soul, the strength of the flesh diminished. " A brave soul often inhabits a lean body. A perfectly healthy body may be very fleshless. A muscular body is often heir to many an ill."[29]

Gandhi also believed the doctrine of *karma* (action). He said that " the law of *karma* is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the law and, as it were, retired ".[30] Every action produces a reaction; one reaps as he sows. " Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap ", declared Galatious. Jesus warned: " Judge not that ye be not judged. For, with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."[31] " All acts ", S. Radhakrishnan said, " produce their effects; their moral effects (*samskāra*) are worked into the character of the self."[32]

The doctrine of *karma* admits the freedom of the will, although, as Gandhi pointed out, " the free will we enjoy is less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck."[33] The little freedom that we have is real in the sense that we are free to choose how we use the freedom.

God helps, as Augustine said, even to help ourselves. A man, governed by moral law, as Kant observed, is free. Man is left to himself to make his own choice between evil and good; there is always scope for self-development. Man can, Gandhi believed, counteract the effect of past mistakes by attaining complete detachment. But, it is conceded that such a total detachment is not humanly possible, for no man can altogether undo the effect of his environment or of his upbringing. Though the self, as S. Radhakrishnan observed, is not free from the bonds of determination, it can subjugate the past to a certain extent and turn it into a new course; choice is the assertion of freedom over necessity by which it converts necessity to its own use and thus frees itself from it.[34]

As long as man possesses intellect, he has capacity to an act of free will. His will is not fettered by God who is just. Freedom has its source in divine grace. It is, as Fichte affirms, governed by the Universal Purpose. It lies in man's power to decide whether he shall become a blind tool of the Universal Purpose or become its conscious and willing instrument in the service of the good.

Gandhi also believed in the doctrine of rebirth, because there was scope for self-development to realise the Eternal. "I believe in rebirth as I much as I believe in the existence of my present body. I, therefore, know that even a little effort is not wasted. Transmigration and rebirth are not mere theories with me, but facts as patent as the daily rise of the sun."[35] It was his experience that man had unlimited capacity to improve his empirical self, although he lived in a world of illusion. Proportionately to improvement of his moral consciousness, he neared the goal of his life.

Why is, in the world of man, so much of evil? Philosophers through the ages have poured out their intellect to unravel the mystery but have not yet offered the solution. God, who is good, cannot be the author of what is bad. He merely permits it, as He must, if man is to have the freedom to act morally. Evil is there for man to fight against and conquer; by combating evil, man apprehends what is good; the great goods are realised in combating great evils.

Gandhi could not explain the reason for the existence of evil. "I cannot", he said, "account for the existence of evil by any rational

method. God and evil are, for human purposes, from each other, distinct and incompatible, being symbolic of light and darkness."[36] Nonetheless, he enjoined man to overcome it by moral endeavour; he advised man to stand on the firm ground of unadulterated good to defeat evil; he never compromised with evil but strove constantly to overcome it. Without destroying evil or darkness, man cannot visualise good or light. So, Gandhi declared: " I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself."[37]

By treading the path of *dharma,* which is the quintessence of ethical discipline, Gandhi believed, man could attain the ideal. *Dharma* is an ever–evolving code of conduct or a dynamic system of duties. " It is not, " as S. Radhakrishnan asserts, " a fixed code of mechanical rules, but a living spirit which grows and moves in response to the development of society."[38] The tenets of *dharma* have their source in the wisdom uttered and practised by seers of the ages gone by. Scriptures which propagate the tenets of *dharma* are the outpourings of the enlightened conscience. When mind is oppressed by a dilemma, *dharma* shows the path of right conduct. " When mind is vascillating, weak and indecisive, it has to be aided by the stored up knowledge of the community (*Veda*,) tradition (*Smriti*) and the conduct of the virtuous (*Sadāchāra*). All these must help ultimately to convince the conscience; the soul must feel satisfied by purge of passion and prejudice."[39]

Dharma is not devoid of reason although based on tradition and custom. " He, who applies reason dispassionately, really knows the *dharma* and no other. "[40] Such reason is possible by an enlightened conscience. " Conscience, " as Gandhi noted, " is the ripe fruit of strict discipline. Irresponsible youngsters, who have never obeyed anything or anybody, save their animal instinct, have no conscience, nor have all grown up people."[41]

When Gandhi, like Green, advocated social moral order, he obviously relied on the soundness of the conscience of man. Individual conscience, for him, was supreme, and no man of conscience could ever fail to perform his moral duties. " A life of goodness ", said Gandhi, agreeing with Kant, " is enjoined upon us, not because it will

bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of nature."[42] Gandhi was convinced that the moral law was superior to the law of the State and, therefore, urged that " we are bound to obey the laws of the moral world even more strictly than the laws of the State."[43] The moral law is not only to guide the individual in his conduct towards himself, his family and society to which he belongs, but towards reaching the Eternal.

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CHAPTER 3

The Ethical Test

1. The Convertibles

Gandhi's philosophy for promoting social good has an ethical base as all his thought, word and deed are born out of the moral order. He enjoined that the objectives of human welfare should be achieved only by justifiable means; the progress towards the goal would be in exact proportion to the purity of the means. For him, means justified the end; end grew out of the means; means and ends were inter-changeable; "means and end," he said, "are convertible terms in my philosophy of life."[1]

Green also regarded the separation of means and ends as false abstraction. He observed: "To what we call the consequences of action, many influences contribute, besides the action which we call the cause, and if evil seems to clog the consequences of action pure in motive, this may be due to other influences connected with motives less worthy, while the consequences which in the rough we call bad might have been worse but for the intervention of the purely-motivated action. We see the evil in the course of events and lay the blame on some one who should have acted differently, and whom perhaps we take as an instance of how good men cause mischief; but we do not see the greater evil which would otherwise have ensued."[2]

Gandhi explained that the means might be likened to a seed and the end to a tree; and there was just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there was between the seed and the tree. If one took care of the means the end would take care of itself. If the means are right, i.e., if they conform to the tests of truth and non-violence, even mistakes, errors and failures aided the realisation of the end. The Gita says that man has control over his act and none over its goal; an act should, therefore, be performed with a spirit of total detachment.[3] The renunciation of fruit, however, is by no means meant an indifference towards the result. Gandhi clarified: " In regard to every action one must know the result that is expected to follow, the means thereto and the capacity therefor. He, who thus equipped, is without desire for the result, and is yet wholly engrossed in the due fulfilment of the task before him, is said to have renounced the fruits of his action."[4] We reap exactly as we sow.

Gandhi wanted the means to be free from untruth and violence, from opportunism and oppression, from fraud and corruption. He was not for scoring victory by dubious diplomacy and espionage. If an end was realised by such evil means, it proved invariably partial or transitory or even burdensome. Violence always engendered worse violence; war always sowed the seed of a fiercer war.

Alduous Huxley pointed to a mass of empirical evidence which established that the use of force as a means of social control almost invariably led to a result which was not very different from, and in many ways opposed to, the goal ostensibly visualised orginally by those who perpetrated violence. It is, therefore, necessary to adopt right means to secure good end. Means should be on the firm foundation of pure goodness. As the means adopted by Gandhi in the Rajkot fast was not free from violence, it failed to convert his opponent; Gandhi, therefore, renounced the advantage gained through the intervention of the Paramount Power.

Although the Gandhian as well as the Marxian ideologies are to establish a stateless and classless society, their methods are diametrically opposed to each other. While Gandhi endeavoured to reconstruct society through truthful and non-violent means, Marx held as inevitable class struggle, revolution and dictatorship—all based on undiluted

violence. Against Gandhi, it is contended that the perpetuation of exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoise is itself the use of force in one form or another, and to eliminate it, there should be used a greater force. The protoganists of Marxism point out that, according to the law of the identity of opposites, in dialectical materialism, peace and war are phenomena without a difference inasmuch as one invariably shadows the other. Mao Tse-tung pointed out as examples that the First World War transformed itself into the post-war peace, which later transformed itself into the Second World War and the civil war in China had ended transforming itself into peace. History proclaims that the use of force has seldom ushered in enduring peace. As Roucek affirms, " violence is answered by violence and the result is a physical struggle."[5] Hence, Gandhi's technique of non-violence, truth in action, can be held up as superior to the technique of use of force. He insists that the non-violent technician should undergo a strenous course of discipline. Much stress is laid on self-control and self-suffering. These are unexceptionable pre-requisites for those who endeavour to effect peaceful social change. Endowed with these weapons, the technique of non-violence proves superior to the engineering of violence as the social change brought about by the latter results inevitably in naked oppression and exploitation, while that brought about by the former ensures enduring happiness and prosperity.

Even to resolve the conflicts of interest between nations, Gandhi advocates the means of non-violence. His specific, unlike the violent war, rouses truth, not false-hood, and love, not hatred; it leads to brotherhood and not perpetuation of enmity; it needs soul force and not an armed might; and it ends in justice and does not nourish injustice.

Critics of Gandhi, however, hold out that *satyāgraha* (truth and non-violence in action) cannot be panacea for the world's ills; his technique for social change, they assert, has some serious limitations; they point out that it can succeed (*i*) where liberal socio-political system prevails, (*ii*) with an adversary, not heartless, (*iii*) if the people concerned support it generally, (*iv*) when it is led by well-known leaders, (*v*) if external assistance or extraneous factors exist, (*vi*) against an opponent under undue pressure, (*vii*) only temporarily and emotionally,

and (*viii*) not as an instrument of national defence. It is argued that *satyāgraha* must fail as it is based on a relatively simplistic and, therefore, unscientific, approach to social conflict and its resolution.

Good intentions and personal devotion, Aldous Huxley observes, are not enough to save the world; neither goodness nor intelligence, by themselves, are equal to the task of changing society and individuals for the better.[6] Kenneth E. Boulding opines that the failure of Gandhism is not a failure of *ahimsa* but a failure of *satyāgraha*; he points out that the modern world is so complex that the truth about it cannot be perceived by common sense or by mystical insight, important as these are; " we must have more delicate and quantitative sampling and processing of information provided by the methods of the social sciences if we are really to test the truth of our images of social and political systems."[7] The Gandhian technique, though imperfect, to the extent implemented in India and elsewhere in the world so far, stands out as a sure weapon to destroy the demon of illwill. Gandhi himself admitted that his technique needed to be perfected; it was in practice evolving to a finer shape.

Ardent democrats hold the view that *satyāgraha*, as it adumbrates extra-constitutional means, has no place in a democratic society, as democracy is ' governed by discussion.' So long as there exists healthy democracy, the weapon of non-violence need not be wielded, for in such a climate the welfare of all the people, not only of the majority, is fully promoted. Only where discontent persists and resists the democratic process, *satyāgraha* becomes imperative.

2. *The Innate Goodness of Human Nature*

Gandhi had profound faith in the goodness of human nature and, consequently, believed that the goodness should ultimately overcome the bad element. He denied that his philosophy expected the impossible from human nature in which, according to his critics, evil predominated. He admitted, nonetheless, that " as man has the brute in him, he will more easily choose the downward course than the upward, especially when the downward course is presented to him in a beautiful garb."[8] There is no one without faults; not even the men of God are faultless. They are men of God, not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults and are ever ready to correct themselves. Like any other man, Gandhi also erred but, by constant endeavour, progressively reduced his commission of error and earned deservedly the title of the enlightened soul. " I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow-beings wears and am, therefore, as liable to err as any,"[9] he confessed but underwent stern discipline himself to remove the corrupting influence of his flesh on his mind.

Gandhi believed that man as animal was violent but as spirit non-violent; the moment he awoke to the spirit within, he could not remain violent. Man was by nature going higher although descent appeared to him easier. It was so because life persisted amidst destruction. " I believe," he said, " that the sum total of energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious, working of the law of love."[10] However brutish, man had a spiritual element inherently; " we were born with brute strength, but we were born in order to realise God, who dwells in us. That indeed is the privilege of man and it distinguishes him from the brute creation."[11]

What holds good for an individual must also hold good for a group and even a mass. Whenever the goal remains yet unrealised, the discipline undergone is not complete or even faulty. An individual in a group betrayed herd mentality; in such circumstance he behaved as the group behaved; his innate goodness remained dormant while the group of which he was a member adopted the path of evil. It accounted for the calling off of the Gandhian movements more than

once. Nonetheless, it was clear that if there was even one individual non-violent resister, who stood for what was good and braved the wrath of what was bad, the group and even the mass followed him, shedding its own weakness. All leaders of men are made of such stern stuff.

Gandhi was often asked whether his ideal was feasible inasmuch as what he practised could not be practised by lesser people. Tagore had himself so questioned him. He replied in this term: " I claim that what I practise is capable of being practised by all, because, I am a very ordinary mortal, open to the same temptations and liable to the same weaknesses of the least amongst us."[12] He explained that primary virtues of mankind were possible of cultivating by the meanest of human species; it was this undoubted universal possibility that distinguished the human from the rest of God's creation. Notwithstanding his firm belief in the ability of man to improve his moral stature, Gandhi was conscious that man, as he was, could not after all reach the goal, because " we can attain perfection only after the dissolution of the body."[13] Man, so long as he was in the flesh could at the most approach the ideal; he could never fully realise it. He should, however, never cease to strive for it. Gandhi believed that ceaseless quest after the ideal was the basis of all spiritual progress. If the goal was not reached in this birth, it might be realised in the next or after a number of rebirths. So, he advised his disciple, Mirabehn, once not to be in a hurry and never to go beyond her capacity. No doubt, it takes a lot of the time of an individual, but that time of the individual is after all a speck of the limitless time The effort is never a waste.

The rapid advance of science and technology in our own life time, the landing of men on the moon, should amply convince us that man's capability is limitless. What was thought yesterday to be impossible has become possbile today and what appears today to be impossible may become a realised fact tomorrow. But, Gandhi was for the ultimate victory of man over himself. He was aware that modern science was replete with illustrations of the seemingly impossible having become possible within living memory; but the victories of the physical sciences appeared to him to be nothing against the victory of the Science of

Life, which he summed up in the term love, which was the law of our being. He denied that his ideal enjoined the practice of either puritanism or asceticism; all he advised was the crucifixion of the flesh to see the light within. " The strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh,"[14] he stressed and reiterated later that " it is not possible to see God unless you crucify the flesh."[15] That is why Fullop-Miller hailed Gandhi as a high priest of renunciation. As the physical body is prone always to lust for pleasure and power, it is a hindrance to attain self-realisation. Increase of material comforts does not whatsoever conduce to moral growth. He did not believe that humanity's happiness was conditioned by increase of physical comforts; on the other hand, he believed that a progressive voluntary restriction on them led to true happiness. Indulgence and multiplication of wants hampered one's growth to the ultimate identity with the Universal Self. He disapproved of all outward forms which did not express the inward spirit of man. He saw beauty in voluntary simplicity. He laid stress on character and attached little importance to intellectual training and development.

3. *The Virtue of Fearlessness*

Fearlessness, closely associated with spirituality, is a *sine quo non* for the attainment of the human goal of God-realisation, according to Gandhi; it is an essential pre-requisite also for the solution of the many problems of life, including those which are social, economic and political. It is cultivated by rigorous moral discipline. Cowards can never be moral. Fearlessness is a divine attribute. It is the first of the weapons of the brave; the sword and the rifle are of no avail. Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear—fear of disease, bodily injury or death, of dispossession, of losing one's nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence. Right conduct emanates from fearlessness.

Absolute fearlessness, in Gandhi's opinion, can be attained only by him who has realised the Supreme, but one can always progress towards it by determined and constant effort.[16] One can shed fear if he does not love his body selfishly; as all fear revolves round the body it disappears as soon as one gets rid of the attachment for the body, When one loses attachment for the body, he loses attachment for family and wealth also. Possessive urge gives rise to fear. So, a fearless man regards all his possessions including his body as belonging to the Creator and he is only their trustee. The Upanishads enjoin us that we must enjoy the earthly things by renunciation (*téna tyakténa bhunjitāh*); such an attitude towards them gives us unsurpassed strength. " When we cease to be masters and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet ", said Gandhi, " all fears will roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace and see the God of Truth face to face. "[17]

Fearlessness is born out of adherance to Truth; he, who fears God, never fears man. A God-fearing man is never beaten by manifestations of untruth in society; he conquers them successfully by his stead-fast association with what he believes to be right. He is neither aggressive nor arrogant. He is calm and collect.

As fearlessness is an attribute of the soul, it is not identified with the physical frame. A hefty fellow is not necessarily fearless while rare courage can be discerned in a very frail body. Gandhi had the

frailest body but was the most fearless man of his age. Physical strength and moral strength do not necessarily co-exist. Blessed is that country where inhabit men of fearlessness. Gandhi wanted in his country, steeped in self-suppression and timidity, " the greater bravery of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul. "[18] He told humanity at large that there was no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great, and that without bitterness of spirit and in the fulness of faith that the spirit alone lived and nothing else did. Soon after political freedom was won, he urged his countrymen to shed all fear to build India as an invincible power. He told them: " We have two choices before us. We can become a great military power or, if we follow my way, we can become a great non-violent and invincible power. In either case, the first condition is the shedding of all fear. "[19]

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CHAPTER 4

The Twins : Freedom & Equality

1. Freedom and its Content

The concepts of freedom and equality are inextricably interwoven in the Gandhian thought; both co-exist in his anarchist order; they are like Siamese twins. While freedom ensures equality, equality thrives in the climate of freedom; where freedom reigns, equality persists.

Gandhi's concept of freedom aims metaphysically at ultimate freedom of the soul from the physical frame; but from its political standpoint, it means freedom to shape one's own destiny and that freedom is conditioned by the freedom of others, as he never desired freedom should degenerate into autocracy. Jean Paul Sartre also opined: " We will freedom for freedom's sake, in and through particular circumstances. And in thus willing freedom, we discover that it depends entirely upon the freedom of others and that the freedom of others depends upon our own. Obviously, freedom, as the definition, of a man does not depend upon others but as soon as there is a commitment, I am obliged to will the liberty of others at the same time as my own. I cannot make liberty my aim unless I make that of others equally my aim. "[1]

Gandhi's idea of the freedom of the individual does not at all countenance the authority of the State against it. He is on this point in the illustrious company of Godwin, Tolstoy, Thoreau, Emerson and Kropotkin. It does not, however, find any support in the Indian

secular tradition; it is indeed a radical departure from it. The political tradition of India, built through the ages, largely speaks of an era of authoritarianism of the rulers on the one hand and general submission to it of the people on the other. It has grown on the soil, provided by the fatalistic attitude of the people towards their life, based on the doctrine of *karma,* misinterpreted by those who undeservedly commanded popular allegiance. It came, therefore, to the lot of Gandhi to revolutionise the thought of the people so as to induce them to exercise their inherent freedom to shape their own destiny differently. He caused an awakening among the demoralised, ignorant and dumb millions of his countrymen, the like of which this country or any other country in the world had never before witnessed. In response to his clarion call to them to assert their God-given freedom, as Jawaharlal Nehru observed, " a demoralised, backward and broken up people suddenly straightened their backs and lifted their heads and took part in disciplined, joint action on a countrywide scale. "[2] This action itself gave irresistible power to the masses.

Before Gandhi emerged on the Indian political horizon, the then leaders of the Congress, who were on the vanguard of the freedom movement, were content with petitioning, praying and protesting. Gandhi warned them of the gilded slavery which had encompassed them. " Golden fetters are no less galling to a self-respecting man than iron ones. The sting lies in the fetters, not in the metal, "[3] he said and added : " To my mind golden shackles are far worse than iron ones, for one easily feels the irksome and galling nature of the latter and is prone to forget the former. If, therefore, India must be in chains, I would they were of iron rather than of gold or other precious metals. "[4]

To Gandhi, freedom of India was not a narrow ideology. Freedom of India, he believed, would pave the way for the emancipation of the exploited races the world over. He sought, through the deliverance of India, to deliver the weaker races from the crushing heels of Western exploitation. " Freedom of India ", he asserted, " will demonstrate to all the exploited races of the earth that their freedom is very near and that in no case will they, henceforth, be exploited. " [5] Immediately followed the freedom of India, the freedom of Burma and Ceylon;

during the past two decades, one State after another in Africa, South-East Asia and elsewhere in the world became free from foreign rule.

Gandhi had fondly hoped that India's freedom would usher in an era of international peace. India's freedom, he thought, would revolutionise the world's outlook upon peace and war. Her impotence, he warned, would affect adversely the whole of mankind. India's contribution in the United Nations, ever since it came into being, for the liberation of the enslaved States is in complete accord with the mandate of the Father of the Nation; if much more, as desired, has not been accomplished by India, the blame should be laid squarely at the doors of the States continually engaged in a power-struggle on the forum of the world body. He argued that Americans or English were not free so long as they had the power to hold the coloured nations in subjection. He asked for co-operation between nations to salvage civilisation and stressed that co-operation pre-supposed free nations worthy of co-operation.

If Tilak declared that Swaraj was man's birth-right, Gandhi reminded that no man lost his freedom except through his own weakness. " Man has to thank himself for his dependence. He can be independent as soon as he wills it, "[6] he stated and urged, " we must be content to die if we cannot live as free men and women. "[7] Freedom at any price was his call to the enslaved humanity.

Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living? But, freedom is not to be got at the cost of self-respect; it is indeed no freedom at all. Even little children do not bend, when an attempt is made to cross their purpose. It is, therefore, apparent that the master succeeds so long as his slave obeys. No tyrant has ever yet succeeded in his purpose without carrying the victim with him, it may be, as it often is, by force. Most people choose rather to yield to the will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequences of resistance. Hence, does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant. But we have instances in history where terrorism has failed to impose the terrorist's will upon his victim. Even the most despotic government cannot stand except for the consent of the governed, which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot; immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, his power is gone. Gandhi

asserted: " The moment the slave resolved that he will no longer be a slave, his fetters fall. He frees himself and shows the way to others. Freedom and slavery are mental states. Therefore, the first thing is to say to yourself: 'I shall no longer accept the role of a slave. I shall not obey orders as such, but shall disobey them when they are in conflict with my conscience'. The socalled master may lash you and try to force you to serve him. You will say: 'No, I will not serve you for your money or under a threat'. This may mean suffering. Your readiness to suffer will light the torch of freedom which can never be put out."[8]

That Gandhi wanted unfettered freedom for the individual is obvious, when he said: " Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err and even to sin. If God Almighty has given the humblest of His creatures the freedom to err, it passes my comprehension how human beings, be they ever so experienced and able, can delight in depriving other human beings of that precious right."[9] As every country is fit to eat, to drink and to breathe, even so is every nation fit to manage its own affairs, no matter how badly. The ancient method of progressing by mistakes and correcting them, he believed, was the proper way.

Gandhi was anxious that freedom which he wanted should not be for any particular class of people; it was for the prince and the pauper alike. He felt, therefore, hurt when the freedom for which he was fighting was held to be for the bourgeois society and made it clear that " for me, an India, which does not guarantee freedom to the lowliest of those born, not merely within an artificial boundary but within its natural boundary, is not free India.... I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability.... Women will enjoy the same rights as men.... All interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous."[10] He wanted freedom to bring heaven on earth; " independence of my conception ", he wrote, " means nothing less than the realisation of

the Kingdom of God within you and on earth. I would rather work for and die in the pursuit of this dream, though it may never be realised. "[11]

While holding out the ultimate value of freedom as self-realisation, Gandhi desired to point out that freedom did act in the material plane; it was open to man to exercise his undoubted freedom in this empirical world to take him towards lasting peace. This belief of Gandhi is shared by several western philosophers, notably Hegel, Bosanquet, Mill and Leibniz who do not find any necessary conflict between trans-empirical determinism and empirical freedom. As Thomas Aquinas said, the will was the prime mover in the kingdom of the soul.

Harold Ofstad rightly observed: " Those, who maintain that man is free when he is determined by a trans-empirical principle of rationality or virtue manifesting itself in the empirical world, may feel forced to defend some form of indeterminism. They will defend it, not because they hold that ' free ' means uncaused but because a certain degree of indeterminism is conceived as a pre-requisite for the operation of a trans-empirical principle. "[12]

Will is not, as Descartes said, the source of error; the source of error is the disparity between the finitude of the human intellect and the infinitude of the human will; error is due to the agent's failure to restrain the will from judging a thing when he does not conceive it with sufficient clearness and distinctness; by choosing the false instead of the true and the evil instead of the good, the will falls into error.

Gandhi believed in the doctrine of evolution which provided for progressive realisation of the ultimate goal of human happiness. What was true of the individual was also true of the society. By series of earnest efforts aimed at reducing the mistakes progressively, it is possible to realise the objective. Gandhi held the view that evolution was always experimental; all progress was gained through mistakes and their rectification. This is the law of individual growth. The same law controls social and political evolution also. The right to err, which means the freedom to try experiments, is the universal condition of all progress. It is thus open for man to try alternatives to promote his own happiness; he is not necessarily forced to solve the problem in only a particular method; by his own decision and endeavour, he can

make or mar his own future. What should obviously guide his decision and endeavour is his moral conduct; the freedom he exercises in choosing between right and wrong is his own but always influenced by his own enlightenment.

As Gandhi reminded, Christianity and Islam describe the same process as a duel between God and Saitan, not outside but within; Zorostrianism as a duel between Ahurmazd and Ahriman; Hinduism as a duel between forces of good and forces of evil. We have to make our choice whether we should ally ourselves with the forces of evil or with the forces of good.

Gandhi laid stress on man's freedom to strive for the ultimate Good, that was his duty, although there appeared a failure to apprehend the goal, because " the goal ever recedes from us; the greater the progress, the greater is the recognition of our unworthiness; " he wanted full effort for full victory. This full victory would undoubtedly be his when he acquired undiluted self-perfection.

Mortimer J. Adler called freedom acquired self-perfection; it is an acquired virtue or wisdom to will or live as he ought in conformity to the moral law or an ideal befitting human nature. It is, hence, obvious that freedom is synonymous with moral power; it is to be acquired, by exercise of love or following the path of truth. One, who was so free, inspired confidence and automatically purified the atmosphere around him. A man of such freedom can be a great force for the transformation of social relationship from evil to good.

Gandhi insisted that freedom had to be voluntary; freedom cannot thrive in an atmosphere of compulsion; they are exactly the opposites. What is unfree cannot also be moral. " No action which is not voluntary ", said he, " can be called moral. So long as we act like machines, there can be no question of morality. If we want to call an action moral, it should have been done conscientiously and as a matter of duty. Any action that is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral. "[13] A free or moral act is necessarily a good act. Conversely, a good act performed under unfree influence, cannot last long. The mind of man who remains good under compulsion cannot improve. In fact it worsens. And when compulsion is removed, all the defects well up to the surface with even greater force.

So, to eliminate evil from society, he insisted on freedom of the individual.

Although man belonged totally to his social environment, he was a free agent *par excellence* in all spheres of human activity. While he grappled daily with his and his associates' social problems in his *ashram,* Gandhi constantly exercised his complete freedom to tackle them as well as national and international problems. His freedom was a belonging of his own. Hocking observed: "Gandhi teaches us that there is no greatness except the greatness within one's own kind; no university except the university within one's own province, no freedom except the freedom within one's own belonging."[14]

Freedom applied to the organisation of society is self-government or what Gandhi called *Swarajya.* The *Swarajya* of society is directly proportionate to the freedom acquired by the individual, who is a part of the very society. Swaraj of a people means the sum total of the swaraj of the individuals. The outward freedom that we attain is only in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. Our chief energy must, therefore, be concentrated upon achieving reform from within. Inner freedom is ensured in one who is fearless and blessed is the nation which is inhabited by fearless people. Just because people of India were not fearless, they lost their freedom, and if freedom from the British yoke had been delayed to them so long it was also due to the same reason. Gandhi judged us aright when he said: "If Swaraj is delayed, it is because we are not prepared calmly to meet death and inconveniences less than death."[15] That nation, he said, is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are free from all fear. Only those, who are fearless, obey the voice of their conscience and seek to establish the Kingdom of God within; no government can ever control them, save with their sanction.

Gandhi's supreme consideration was thus the freedom of the individual and he was, therefore, wholly opposed to the totalitarian dogma which upheld the authority of the State against the freedom of the individual. He insisted that political self-government, that is, self-government for a large number of men and women, is no better than individual self-government and, therefore, it is to be attained by

precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule. He wanted the masses to be educated to regulate and control authority, as unintelligent exercise of freedom spells social ruin. While pleading for freedom for all, he enjoined that it should not be divided between majority and minority. The freedom of the minority was not to be abridged and, in matters of conscience especially, the law of majority had no place whatsoever. He said: " Under democracy, individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I, therefore, believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority. "[16] The dissenting action of the minority cannot of course interfere with other's democratic right.

One's or a group's action cannot cease to be the concern of others. Gandhi, therefore, underscored that there was not a single virtue which aimed at, or was inconsistent with, the welfare of the individual alone. Conversely, there was not a single offence which did not, directly or indirectly, affect many others besides the actual offender. Hence, whether an individual was good or bad was not merely his own concern, but really the concern of the whole community, nay, of the whole world.

Although Gandhi waged non-violent wars for India's freedom, his aim was to free the people from all traces of exploitation. He was bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever; he had no desire to exchange king log for king stork. Freedom of the people had to be zealously guarded, even from governmental encroachment. Self-government for him meant continuous effort to be independent of governmental control, whether it is foreign or national government. Swaraj government is a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. There was for Gandhi no question of protection of people's freedom by the armed might of the State. The supreme instrument of defending his just rights should be within the grasp of the unarmed individual. Gandhi went to the extent of declaring: " My work will be finished if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defence avails, though the whole world may be against the individual resister. "[17] His plea was for the prosperity of all without exception; there was to be perfect equality, social, political and economic; there

should not be disparities between the rich and the poor, and between capital and labour. Such conditions can exist only in a non-violent society. " Individual freedom can have fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated *ahimsa*" he, said and explained that " 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. "[18]

As freedom was for all, he wanted all including women and children to participate in winning, apart from protecting, freedom. He asked, granted that India produced sufficient arms and ammunition and men who know the art of war, what part or lot would those who could not bear arms had in the attainment of *swaraj*. He wanted *swaraj* in the winning of which even women and children would contribute an equal share with physically the strongest. That could be, he stressed under *ahimsa* only. He cautioned that *swaraj* would never be a free gift by one nation to another; it was a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood; it would cease to be a gift when people had paid dearly for it; *swaraj* would be a fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure. As those who shed fear could alone be free, he insisted that *swaraj* required the abandonment of the fear of death. A nation which allowed to be influenced by the fear of death could not attain swaraj and could not retain it if some-how attained. Fearlessness can be acquired by those whose thought, word and action are guided by truth and non-violence. Fearlessness alone would guarantee the enjoyment of freedom for individuals as well as for nations.

Gandhi was not enamoured of the democracy of the western type, as it was based on industrialism, unfree from exploitation and violence, although he conceded that it provided seeds for the development of the individual and society. " Democracy of the west is, in my opinion, only so called. It has germs in it, certainly, of the true type. But it can only come when all violence is eschewed and malpractices disappear. The two go hand in hand. Indeed malpractice is a species of violence. "[19]

Industrialism demoralised man and society; it also increased thirst

for exploitation of others, causing violence to them. It led to imperialism and dictatorship, concentration of political power and enslavement of the weaker sections of society. If there are still peoples and countries of Asia and Africa in political bondage, it is in no small measure due to the monopoly of economic power by a few nations of the west. Gandhi reminded an American Journalist in 1940: "Your land is owned by a few capitalists. The same is true of South Africa. These large holdings cannot be sustained except by violence, veiled if not open. The western democracy as it functions today is diluted Nazism, or Fascism. At best it is a mere cloak to hide the Nazi and Fascist tendencies of imperialism....It was not through the democratic methods that Britain bagged India. What is the meaning of South African democracy? Its very constitution has been drawn to protect the white man against the coloured man, the natural occupant. Your own history is perhaps blacker still, in spite of what the northern States did for the abolition of slavery. The way you have treated the Negroes presents a discreditable record. And it is to save such democracies that the war is being fought; there is something very hypocritical about it."[20]

Gandhi abhorred the political orders symbolised by Nazism, Fascism and Communism inasmuch as the freedom of the individual was set at nought in all of them and the individual under any of them was completely subservient to the absolute authority of the State. The abolition of individualism was total in them. These systems represented the tyranny of the State in its ignominious nakedness. His condemnation of Hitler, when he waged the World War II, was unqualified. He declared: "The tyrants of old never went so mad as Hitler seems to have gone. And he is doing it with religious zeal. For, he is propounding a new religion of exclusive and militant nationalism in the name of which any inhumanity becomes an act of humanity to be rewarded here and hereafter. The crime of an obviously mad but intrepid youth is being visited upon his whole race with unbelievable ferocity."[21] He sympathised with Chamberlain, the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who expectedly failed in his policy of appeasement of the Axis Powers. He thought aright that the Munich Pact, which Chamberlain entered into, compromising his and his country's honour, would not detract Hitler from war-mongering and declared later that it could not save honour was no fault of his (Chamberlain's).

It would be so every time there was a struggle with Hitler or Mussolini. It could not be otherwise. Democracy dreaded to spill blood. The philosophy for which the two dictators stood called it a cowardice to shrink from carnage. They exhausted the resources of poetic art in order to glorify organised murder. There was no humbug about their word or deed. They were ever ready for war. There was nobody in Germany or Italy to cross their path. Their word was law. It was different with Chamberlain or Daladier (the then French Premier). They had their Parliament and Chamber to please. They had parties to confer with. They could not maintain themselves on a perpetual war-footing if their language was to have a democratic accent about it.

Gandhi was no lover of the Russian or the Chinese dictatorship either. The life of the people there did not appeal to him at all. He exclaimed in the Biblical language: "What shall it avail a man if he gained the whole world and lost his soul?" He insisted that it was beneath human dignity to lose individuality and become a mere clog in the machine. He wanted every individual to become a full-blooded and a fully-developed member of society. He was not, however, disrespectful to Lenin and other architects of the Russian Revolution; he only hoped their glorious service and sacrifice might ultimately rid that system of Government of all its immorality.

Between Scylla of the Western democracy and Charybdis of the dictatorship, he wanted India to proceed in neither direction; his aim was to establish the *sarvodaya* order in India and the world to glorify the spirit in man.

2. *Equality and its Scope*

Gandhi, as a confirmed monist, could not but assert the absolute equality of all living beings. The unity of life presupposes the existence of love. Living beings would have long ago disappeared if love did not persist amongst them. He noted that thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depended for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and reawakens the love that is lying dormant in the other; the two again begin to live in peace. Even as there is cohesive force in blind matter, so must there be in all things animate, and the name for that cohesive force among animate beings is love. Where there is love there is life; hatred leads to destruction. Where love is, there God is also. The fact that mankind persists shows that the cohesive force is greater than the disruptive force, centripetal force is greater than centrifugal. His plea with people, therefore, was: "Wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love. The law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done."[22]

Gandhi was himself a personification of love, as he endeavoured constantly to project love in his daily life. "I must obey, even at the cost of my life", he said, "the law of love. To the extent I have represented love in my life, in thought, word and deed, I have realised the 'peace that passeth understanding'."[23] Whatever he accomplished in his life was a complete manifestation of his unbounded love; his only weapon of authority over others was pure love. His mission of love, he believed, would be recorded in history as a movement designed to knit all people in the world together not as hostile to one another but as parts of one whole.

Love promotes equality. Although his ultimate goal was to establish love or equality in all life, human and non-human, his immediate concern, as a realist, was to promote the brotherhood of man. The moment we have restored real living equality between man and man, we shall be able to establish equality between man and the whole creation. He argued that as all men were born equal, it was unjustifi-

able for men to create and perpetuate inequality amongst them. As he believed in the inherent spiritual equality of men, he struggled hard to fight the claim of superiority. He said: " I delight in calling myself a scavenger, a spinner, a weaver, a farmer and a labourer....I consider that it is unmanly for any person to claim superiority over a fellow human being....He who claims superiority at once forfeits his claim to be called a man. "[42]

Gandhi believed that social and political equality would not last long unless there was also co-existent economic equality. Economic equality alone ensured a non-violent social order. He explained that working for economic equality meant abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It meant the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands was concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand and the levelling up of the semistarved naked millions on the other. A non-violent system of government was clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persisted. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class nearby could not last long. He believed that economic inequality nourished violence and its non-eradication would without doubt lead ultimately to violent outburst.

He had, however, a rather peculiar notion of economic equality, because he desired that if India was to live an exemplary life of independence which would be the envy of the world, all the *bhangis,* doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others should get the same wages for an honest day's work. While the suggestion of same wages for all may appear absurd, it should be noted as indicating seriously the necessity for progressive elimination of the existing appalling economic inequality in human society. He did not accept the claim that some people like scientists, doctors and lawyers needed more wages than those like scavengers and stone-cutters. He declared: " Let no one try to justify the glaring difference between the classes and the masses, the prince and the pauper, by saying that the former need the more. The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight. The poor villagers produce the food and go hungry. They produce milk and their children have to go without it. "[25] He insisted that

everyone must have a balanced diet, a decent house to live in and facilities for the education of one's children and adequate medical relief.

As equal distribution was not feasible, he suggested equitable distribution as a pragmatic proposition; he wanted it to ensure goods and services to meet the basic requirements of every member of the society. There was no question of any body rolling in luxury, as everybody had to practise strictly the discipline of simple living. The real implication of equitable distribution, he explained, was that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural needs and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being, the entire social order, he said, had to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence could not nurture any other ideal.

As a measure of achieving the objective of equitable distribution, Gandhi, inspired by Ruskin, Bondaraf and Tolstoy as well as by the Bible and the Gita, propounded the discipline of bread-labour. Those savants propagated the divine law that man must earn his daily bread by labouring with his own hands. " In the sweat of thy brow ", the Bible urged, " shalt thou eat thy bread ". The Gita declared that he who ate without offering sacrifice (bread–labour) ate stolen food. " If all worked for their bread ", said Gandhi, " distinction of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only as trustees of their property and would use it mainly in the public interest. "[26] It also eliminated exploitation of man by man; he told the labourer to non-cooperate with him who deprived him of the fruit of his labour.

Gandhi believed that it was the best form of social service. If everybody lived by the sweat of his brow, the earth would become a paradise. He said: " The question of the use of special talents hardly needs separate consideration. If everyone labours physically for his bread, it follows that poets, doctors, lawyers, etc., will regard it their duty to use those talents gratis for the service of humanity. Their output will be all the better and richer for their selfless devotion to duty. "[27] He hoped that obedience to the law of bread–labour would bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society; man's triumph

would consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service; the law of the brute would be replaced by the law of man.

He entertained the conviction that the economics of bread-labour would solve satisfactorily the problems of scarcity of food and clothing. Since each will produce food as well as cloth according to his need, there will not arise want of either. " If I can convince the people of the value and necessity of bread-labour, there never will be any want of bread and cloth. I shall have no hesitation in saying to the people with confidence that they must starve and go naked if they will neither work on the land nor spin and weave."[28] He asserted that if all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery as we see around; such labour would be the highest form of sacrifice, men would no doubt do many other things, either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this would be labour of love for the common good; there would then be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

He advocated bread-labour to keep healthy one's mind and body. Manual labour, as experience has demonstrated, keeps the body and mind in fine fettle; it serves to improve even the quality of intellectual output. A millionaire not given to physical labour or exercise is prone to diseases both of body and mind. Gandhi pointed out that no one asked the cultivator to take breathing exercise or to work with his muscles; more than nine-tenths of humanity lived by tilling the soil; how much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become if the remaining tenth followed the example of the over-whelming majority, at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food. While pleading that " we should eat to live and not live to eat ", he asked: " Let any one try to sweat for his bread; he will derive the greatest relish from the production of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluities."[29]

Nonetheless, he was conscious that his objective was Utopian and couldnot, therefore, be realised in the world as it existed presently. Although unattainable, let us strive for it—that was his call. Even if we perform physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal.

To promote equality among men, Gandhi advocated voluntary renunciation of riches. These riches, symbolising exploitation and violence, deprived their owner of his tranquillity. A poor man reposed better than a rich man. The Isopanishad declares that through renunciation comes the real enjoyment of worldly life. Agreeing with this dictum, Gandhi called upon the rich to renounce, or, alternatively, hold in trust, their wealth. By voluntary dispossession of ownership and simple living, he believed, economic equality could be realised. None, he enjoined, should covet other's possession or accumulate material wealth beyond his absolute need. He had himself voluntarily reduced his personal wants to the barest minimum, in order fully to identify himself with the poor millions of his country. What is possible for an individual must also be possible for a group and what is possible for a group must also be possible for a society.

Where voluntary renunciation was not accomplished, Gandhi sought to bring it about by moral pressure. He observed: " If, in spite of the utmost efforts, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done? In trying to find the solution to this riddle, I have arrived at non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. If this knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities, which have brought them to the verge of starvation. "[30]

Gandhi advocated heavy taxation of the rich as a measure to reduce the gnawing disparity between them and the poor. He even demanded the nationalisation of all inherited property. He insisted the government to ensure the living wage to every worker; a government which failed to guarantee the minimum wage ensuring the worker a reasonable standard of living had no right to exist; and an industry which was unable to pay the minimum wage should be closed down.

Gandhi, thus, rightly claimed to be a socialist. He endorsed the concept of democratic socialism which aimed at removing all social, political and economic inequalities and upheld the dignity of the

individual. His insistence was that the edifice of democratic socialism should be built on the sure foundation of truth and non-violence. A few months before his martyrdom, he expatiated on his vision of socialism thus :

" Socialism is a beautiful word and so far as I am aware, in socialism, all the members of the society are equal—none low, none high. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is Socialism. In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In terms of religion, there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity. In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs. Socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means result in an impure end. Hence, the prince and the peasant will not be equalised by cutting off the prince's head nor can the process of cutting off equalise the employer and the employed. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Therefore, only truthful non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. To my knowledge, there is no country in the world which is purely socialist. Without the means described above, the existence of such a society is impossible. "[31]

Several admirers and followers of the western socialist doctrine have ridiculed the Gandhian socialist idea as a plea for the sharing of poverty by the people at large. No speech or writing of his allows one rightly to draw such a conclusion. His call to the rich to shed their wealth in favour of the poor is not to impoverish them; he only wanted them to live like brothers with the poor; he desired to redeem them from the shackles of accumulated exploitation and violence so that they might enjoy peace on earth. His plea for simple living is also attacked by those critics as they believe in industrial civilisation. As material prosperity through science and technology is limitless, there is apparent tendency progressively to de-humanise the labour force. Gandhi was totally opposed to that which destroyed the dignity of man. He did not also share the belief of socialists that the control over the State apparatus was essential to ensure equality in society; his insistence was on change of heart of men. He observed: " In order to reach

the state of equality, we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes our way. This is not socialism. The more we treat it as a game to be seized, the further it must recede from us. Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to the one. If, however, the beginner is a zero, multiplicity of zeros will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeros will be so much waste. "[32]

Gandhi was also opposed to the Communist method of social change, as it advocated naked violence. The Communist party ruled over men with unveiled dictatorship and enforced the compulsive processes ruthlessly. With such a party, he had no kinship. Equality was only in theory and not in practice in a Communist society. He said of Bolshevism: " All I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics, and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion, there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism, it not only does not preclude the use of force, but freely sanctions it for the appropriation of private property and maintaining the collective state ownership of the same. And, if that is so, I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik Government in its present form cannot last long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. "[33]

Gandhi upheld the Communist goal of establishing a classless society, but did not approve of its wielding of the bayonet to remove the distinction between the high and the low. By such means, the evil in the human breast could not be removed.

Gandhi's conception of absolute equality is shared by the anarchists generally. In natural society of their conception, there is no economic competition which eats at the root of equality. In such a society, all are brothers.

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CHAPTER 5

Non-violence : The Law of Love

1. An Evolutionary Doctrine

Gandhi's philosophy of love is the outcome of his life-long spiritual and ethical endeavour to outlaw untruth and violence from society. His life-work was a body of experiments to establish love or truth and non-violence in the life of the people; life without love was bereft of meaning to him. His autobiography, he called, his " Experiments with Truth ".

The idea of non-violence for the world did not, however, emanate from him. Its origin can be traced to the Vedic Age. The Upanishads proclaimed the glory of non-violence and the Gita echoed it. The Buddha and the Jaina religions expanded its scope. Lao Tze in China and Socrates in Greece, besides preaching, practised it in their lives. The Quakers, led by George Fox, in Britain wielded it effectively against their government. Later, Thoreau wrote his famous essay on civil disobedience. This essay encouraged Tolstoy, in Russia, and Gandhi, then in South Africa, to propagate and practise its message. Gandhi, who had already drunk deep in the fountain of peace had no difficulty in grasping this treasuretrove. He believed that non-violence was the law of the human race and was infinitely greater than and superior to brute force. It was for him, a universal law, acting under all circumstances; he thought that disregarding it was the surest way

to destruction. He asserted that the cosmic order enjoined on the practice of non-violence and it was the only right way of life for humanity.

Gandhi had his first lesson in non-violence from his wife, when she offered determined resistance to his will on the one hand and quietly suffered his 'stupidity' on the other. This lesson was strengthened from his knowledge of religions. He noticed that non-violence was common to all religions; *ahimsa* was in Hinduism; it was in Christianity as well as in Islam. These religions insisted not merely abstinence from a "tit for tat" or "an eye for an eye" or "a tooth for a tooth" but urged for overcoming evil with good and even doing good by one to the other who did evil to him.

None so far has advocated the use of violence as a final solution for ending the evils from which the world is suffering. Violence has always led to greater violence. No society or civilisation has yet thrived in an atmosphere of violence. Whitehead said rightly: "Civilisation is the maintenance of social order by its own inherent persuasiveness as embodying the nobler alternative. The recourse to force, however unavoidable, is a disclosure of the failure of civilisation, either in the general society or in a remnant of individuals." Therefore, for the survival of the human race, Gandhi called upon the leaders of men to reform their own minds and purify their own hearts. If the recognised leaders of mankind, who had control over the engines of destruction, were wholly to renounce their use, with full knowledge of its implications, permanent peace could be obtained.

The technique of non-violence is yet imperfect. Gandhi could not in his life-time make it a perfect instrument of peace; it was in the process of evolution all the time in the laboratory of his life; he himself declared that non-violence in politics was a new weapon in the process of evolution. He explained that he was himself growing in the knowledge of it; he had no text-book to consult in times of need; it was a science in the making. He stressed that he had no set theory to go by and he had not worked it out in its entirety. He, however, worked on the theme of non-violence with all the skill of a scientist; he was a great scientist in the realm of social turth; in his choice of problems and methods of solution, in his persistence and

thoroughness of research, and in the profundity of his knowledge of the human heart, he demonstrated his undoubted scientific acumen.

Gandhi did never feel the urge to produce a treatise on non-violence. He applied the technique as was evolving for the solution of human problems as and when they arose. When pressed by his followers as well as critics, he told them: " Any such treatise during my life-time would necessarily be incomplete. If at all, it could be written after my death. And even so, let me give a warning that it would ever fail to give a complete exposition of *ahimsa*. No man has ever been able to describe God fully. The same holds true of *ahimsa*. "[2]

His adherence to non-violence in thought, word and deed was so intense that he declared: " I personally would wait, if need be, for ages rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon thirty-five years, that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world. "[3]

As India had never waged an aggressive war against any nation, he believed, it was always for peace; there was no need for it to develop the will for peace afresh and it could very easily adopt the non-violent method to free itself from the bondage and prove an example to the rest of the world. He wanted the freedom of his country so that other countries might learn something from his free country, so that the resources of his country might be utilised for the benefit of mankind.

In him the deliverer had come to call upon a prostrate people to shed their fear and stand up, with their heads erect, although he, in his utter humility, claimed to be " no more than an average man with less than average ability ", and declared repeatedly: " I lay no claim to super-human powers. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow-beings wears and am, therefore, as liable to err as any. "[4]

Before launching the freedom struggle, he realised that the British would not quit the shores of India unless we, in India, generated power

within to enforce our will. And, he felt convinced that it was not possible to fight the imperialists successfully with conventional weapons. Unless there was a new way of fighting imperialism in place of the out-worn one of violent resistance, he saw no hope for the oppressed humanity. He advocated the technique of non-co-operation, because he sought to cripple the ruler's administrative strength by withdrawing the co-operation of the subject people. "No government", he said, "can exist for a single moment without the co-operation of the people, willing or forced, and if people suddenly withdrew their co-operation in every detail, the government will come to a stand–still."[5] He demonstrated that, in wielding the weapon of non-violence, we do not need to destroy the opponent or weaken his power in order to win the battle of right against wrong. We can transform and annex it by the alchemy of vicarious suffering....The essence of non-violence to struggle is that it seeks to liquidate antagonism but not the antagonist. The non-violent resister does not seek to injure, crush or humiliate his opponent but seeks to convert him to his stand-point.

Non-violent resistance, as Richard Gregg says, acts as a sort of moral jiu-jitsu; the assailant suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him; he loses his poise and self-confidence. In this moral jiu-jitsu, the non-violent person has superior position, poise and power for several reasons: first, he has taken the moral initiative; second, he is not surprised; third, his self-control and lack of anger conserve his energy; he has still another element of superior power: he has demonstrated his sincerity and deep conviction; the victim's refusal to use violence indicates his respect for the personality and moral integrity of the assailant; this respect, shown by the non-violent resister gradually tends to put his attacker to shame and to enhance the respect of any onlookers towards the former; once the respect of the opponent has been secured, a long step has been taken towards a satisfactory solution of the controversy.

2. *Indistinguishable from Truth*

To Gandhi, truth and non-violence were not different and independent of each other. They were obverse and reverse of the medal of love; they were rather " two sides of an unstamped metallic disc "; " looking at a blank sheet of paper, one cannot say which is the obverse and which is the reverse side; so it is with truth and non-violence; the one cannot exist without the other. "[6] "Where truth is, there non-violence inevitably is. When I look for ahimsa, Truth says, ' find it through me '; when I look for truth, ahimsa says ' find it through me'. "[7] If truth represented his spirituality, non-violence represented his ethical action. He believed non-violence as *dharma* in action; it was truth in action; it was creative and open morality.

In the world today, there is perceptible endeavour towards moral reconstruction of human society. The mental hospital has replaced the lunatic asylum; the penitentiaries have taken the place of jails; the reformatories are in charge of juvenile offenders and the criminal tribes are educated and brought up as respectable citizens in settlements. Likewise, the war-lords, the greedy kings, the vindictive rulers, the angry brother, the revengeful husband and the refractory child are all being encouraged to cleanse their hearts of hatred and implant love therein. As Bertrand Russell observed, passive resistance, if adopted deliberately by the will of the whole nation, with the same measure of courage and discipline, displayed in a violent war, would achieve a far more perfect protection for what is good in national life than armies and navies can ever achieve, without demanding the carnage and waste and welter of brutality involved in modern war.[8]

Passive resistance is, however, a far cry from non-violence by refusing to fight, and by carrying on propaganda against it, the latter seeks to destroy the very seeds of violence; if the former seeks not to return evil for evil or give blow for blow or resort to murderous weapons for protection or defence, the latter seeks to win the opponent by pure love. Passive resistance is thus less of a potent weapon than non-violence. Gandhi did not like the term passive resistance. It failed to convey all he meant. It described a method but gave no

hint of the system of which it was only a part. Real beauty—that was his aim – – was doing good against evil....Passive resistance was, narrowly construed, a weapon of the weak, it could be characterised by hatred and it could finally manifest itself as violence.

Non-violence lifts the self beyond itself freeing it from its petty interests and re-kindling its sensibility of appreciation of the arts of culture. The primary task is, therefore, the improvement of the self; it means the progresive development of self-control. A little introspection, a friendly timely warning and a real desire to improve are necessary conditions for one's own regeneration. When, for instance, one is angry, he is advised to count ten; or he is asked to stand before a mirror so that he may himself see how ugly he looks then; an angry man is an ugly man. It is thus obvious that the reform should begin with the individual self and spread to family and to society eventually. What other men had taught as a personal discipline, Gandhi transformed into a social programme for the redemption of the world.

When he put forward his programme of action, Gandhi faced downright protest as it was against the belief then prevailing. When he preached abolition of the police and the army, his critics thought that he was not a pragmatist. He, however, did not feel helpless with non-violence; he observed: " The hardest metal yields to sufficient heat, even so must the hardest heart melt before the sufficiency of the heat of non-violence to generate heat. During my half a century of experience, I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I had no remedy in terms of non-violence."[9] He stressed that even a little of true non-violence acted in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavened the whole society.

Non-violence, is not to be a cover for cowardice; cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence." He preferred violence to cowardice. " It is better ", he said, " to be violent in our breasts than to put on the cloak of non-violence to cover impotence."[10] He affirmed that his non-violence did not admit of running away from danger and leaving dear ones unprotected. Between violence and cowardly flight, he preferred only violence to cowardice. He had no objection to arming India to defend itself rather than suffer dishonour.

He made a distinction between defensive and offensive violence.

This distinction allowed him to wish success to arms raised against aggression. Although he did not approve of the use of arms by the Union Government for aiding the people of Kashmir against the Pakistani invaders, he could not with-hold his admiration for their resourceful and praiseworthy conduct. Defence by violence should be purely non-violent in intention.

When one is unable bravely to be non-violent in the face of physical danger to his life, family, property, religion, etc., he ought to use violence in order to defend them. When asked as to what a woman should do in the face of danger of molestation, he advised unhesitatingly the use of violence if inevitable. A truly pure and fearless woman cannot be molested as the beastly man will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity; however, realising the limitation of the discipline, he observed: "When a woman is assaulted, she may not stop to think in terms of *himsa* or *ahimsa*. Her primary duty is self-protection. She is at liberty to employ every method or means that come to her mind in order to defend her honour. God has given her nails and teeth. She must use them with all her strength and, if need be, die in the effort."[11] The evil-doer should be resisted, come what may. There is no question of helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence.

Gandhi called mercy-killing as an act of non-violence. He laid down conditions under which life could be destroyed under the influence of love and compassion; he had no objection for the killing of a patient if the disease was pronounced to be incurable, if all concerned felt despair of the life of the patient, if the case was beyond all help and service, and if the patient was unable to express himself. He explained that "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."[12] As is widely known, he once caused the poisoning of a calf in his *ashram,* as he could not bear witness to its intense and unbearable agony, beyond remedy. Gandhi said that to cause pain or wish ill to or take the life of any living being out of anger or a selfish intent was *himsa*. On the other hand, after a calm and clear judgement to will or cause pain to a living being with a view to its spiritual or physical benefit from a pure, selfless intent might be the purest form of *ahimsa*. Each such case must be judged individually and on its

own merits. The final test as to its violence or non-violence was the intent underlying the act.

Non-violence as the ultimate goal is accepted by the western liberalism also inasmuch as the latter holds that the method of persuasion is superior to that of force; J. S. Mill gave pride of place for reason in both individual as well as corporate life; free discussion was the means to arrive at the truth; hence, he recommended representative government for political uplift. The technique of representative government was a device to secure the transition from force to persuasion as the principle of government among men. Mill also advocated the Hare formula of proportional representation by single transferable vote to avoid the tyranny of the majority.

Gandhi, however, recognised the inevitability of violence on account of the imperfections of man. " So long as man continues to be a social being, he cannot but participate in the *himsa* (violence) that the very existence of society involves."[13] He said also that " perfect non-violence, whilst you are inhabiting the body, is only a theory...but we have to endeavour every moment of our lives towards reaching the non-violent state."[14] As government constituted, in his opinion, organised violence, he affirmed that no state can ever be totally non-violent; a government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all the people. He did not conceive of such a golden age; but he believed in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society and he was working for it.

Gandhi realised that in society one destroyed some life for his own sake or for the sake of others who claimed his affection. As he pointed out, " for food we take life, vegetable and other, and for health we destroy mosquitoes and the like by the use of disinfectants, etc., and we do not think that we are guilty of irreligion in doing so;....for the benefit of the species we kill carnivorous beasts;..even man-slaughter may be necessary in certain cases; suppose a man runs amuck and goes furiously about sword in hand and killing anyone that comes in his way and no one dares to capture him alive. Anyone who despatches this lunatic will earn the gratitude of the community and be regarded as a benevolent man."[15] He insisted, nonetheless, that this violence should be the lowest minimum, rooted in compassion, dis-

crimination, restraint and detachment. The votary of non-violence should suffer the maximum of inconvenience himself so that others may enjoy the maximum of convenience; everyone has to determine for himself the amount of inconvenience he is capable of putting up with; no third party can determine it for him.

3. The Universal Principle

Non-violence was, for Gandhi, the Universal Principle, His faith in it was matched only with his faith in God. He called non-violence as manifestation of the Omnipotent. As God cannot fail, non-violence also cannot fail. He said that there was no such thing as defeat in non-violence; the end of violence was surest defeat. He stressed also that non-violence had no limits; if a particular dose did not seem to answer, more should be administered; it was a never failing remedy. He urged that the failure in his practice of non-violence was not at all the failure of non-violence and, therefore, observed: "It is much better for me to say that I have not sufficient non-violence in me than to admit exceptions to an eternal principle. Moreover, my refusal to admit exceptions spurs me to perfect myself in the technique of non-violence."[16] There is no limit for perfection; it grows higher as one ascends.

Love is limitless; so is non-violence; it binds us to one another and to God. He believed that love in society was a scientific certainty. It was, however, clouded by passion, jealousy, etc.; it should be rescued from them. Scientists tell us that without the presence of the cohesive force amongst the atoms that comprise this globe of ours, it would crumble to pieces and we cease to exist; and even as there is cohesive force in blind matter, so must there be in all things animate, and the name for that cohesive force among animate beings is love. We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives, and in the use of it consists our knowledge of God. The same view was stressed by Gandhi when he observed: "Though there is enough repulsion in nature, she lives by attraction. Mutual love enables nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard among individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe, even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family."[17]

Although both violence and non-violence are immanent in the world, governed by the law of nature, Gandhi perceived that humanity was progressing towards shedding violence and embracing non-violence.

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 began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilised stable life; founded villages and towns; and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive *ahimsa* and diminishing *himsa.* Had it been otherwise, Gandhi insisted, the human species should have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species had disappeared. If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards *ahimsa,* it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression. No one can remain without the eternal cycle, unless it be God Himself.

Gandhi's view of non-violence was stated to be opposed to the law of *karma* and his distinction between human life and animal life was pointed out to offend the traditional belief that all life was unity. He was accused of interfering with the law of *karma* when he caused the killing of the sick calf; it was pointed out to him that the agony of the calf was the result of its own *karma.* Such interpretation of the law of *karma* rules out purposive activity and reduces it to a philosophy of inaction and fatalism. It is against the law of evolution: life has inherent capacity to improve itself towards realising its self. Fatalism is not supported by either scriptures or declarations of saints; they all invite effort but insist it should be selfless.

Gandhi explained: " I firmly believe in the law of *Karma* but I believe too in human endeavour. I regard as the *summum bonum* of life the attainment of salvation through *Karma* by annihilating its effects by detachment. If it is a violation of the law of *Karma* to cut short the agony of an ailing animal by putting an end to its life, it is no less so to minister to the sick or try to nurse them back to life. And yet, if a man were to refuse to give medicine to ap atient or to nurse him on the ground of *karma,* we would hold him to be guilty

of inhumanity and *himsa*. Without, therefore, entering into a discussion about the eternal controversy regarding pre-destination and free will, I will simply say here that I deem it to be the highest duty of man to render what little service he can."[18] The law of *Karma* itself dictates action.

Gandhi had no objection to destruction of animals harmful to the well-being of society. His defence was that animals, unlike human beings, were not responsive to moral appeal. Animals lacked the faculty of reasoning. He observed that there was a fundamental difference between the monkey nuisance and the human nuisance. Society as yet knows no means by which to effect a change of heart in the monkeys and their killing may, therefore, be held as pardonable, but there is no evil-doer or tyrant who need be considered beyond reform. That is why the killing of a human being out of self-interest can never find a place in the scheme of ahimsa. His advice to kill harmful animals was peremptory. He said such killing becomes a duty. It is not, however, synonymous with the utilitarian dictum of destruction of life. While the destruction, justified by the former, is restricted to the narrowest possible sphere, there is no necessary limit to the destruction by the latter.

Gandhi felt repelled by Communist doctrine based on violence and denial of God. His reaction was unequivocal. He was an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes. There was, therefore, really no meeting ground between the school of violence and himself. He was firm that nothing enduring could be built on the basis of violence. He regretted that Communists reduced people to chattel in their effort to reform them. He pointed out that those, who sought to destroy men rather than their manners, adopted the latter and became worse than those whom they destroyed under the mistaken belief that the manners would die with the men. They did not know the root of the evil. He was the last man to belittle the Russian achievements generally but could not approve of the Communist doctrine of use of force to end inequalities in society. He warned that ruthlessness, though exercised for the lowest and the poorest, had little good in it and it would some day create an anarchy, worse than ever seen before.

For the same fundamental reason, he rejected Nazism also; the reign of terror was not conducive to human progress. Commenting on how the Nazi war machine was, before the World War II, being perfected by Hitler, he observed that Germany was showing to the world how efficiently violence could be worked, when it was not hampered by any hypocrisy of weakness masquerading as humanitarianism. It was also showing how hideous, terrible and terrifying it looked in its nakedness. His righteous indignation against Hitler's persecution of Jews forced him to declare that a war against Germany for the sake of humanity was justifiable. But the votary of non-violence that he was would not recommend it as it involved the employment of greater force.

He was, therefore, opposed to the World War II. He pointed out that the Allies to win the war had to use superior or more ruthless violence; he warned that the defeat of Nazism would be bought at a terrific price, namely, superior Nazism, or call it by any name you like. He was not in favour of mass man-slaughter. The escalation of violence in the war drew from him this poignant remark: "No cause, however just, can warrant the indiscriminate slaughter that is going on minute by minute. I suggest that a cause that demands the inhumanities that are being perpetrated today cannot be called just."[19] The Allies, history records, eventually employed worse violence including the atom bomb and won the war.

The question whether the Allies could have heeded to the call of Gandhi to lay down arms and embrace the Nazis on the war path has to be answered only in the Gandhian way that they lacked faith in non-violence. The world is still very far from the ideal. Non-violence as the way of life leading to the realisation of Unity is still to be grasped; the age-old theory that conflict is inherent in human society is yet not disproved. For Gandhi, however, the conflict theory was false, as he held steadfast that love sustained life and promoted its progress and man could respond to the call of the spirit in him. Not that he was unaware of the violent biological and environmental urges of man, but he insisted on curbing them to see the light within and beyond; his call was for progressive striving to rouse to its full stature innate goodness in man. Social and political scientists admit

the ultimate value of non-violence but are sceptical about its applicability to effect social and political change. They hold the view that Gandhi's approach to social and political problems is a historical and, on that score, call it unscientific. But they cannot deny the continuous flow of under-current of love or non-violence in society which has enabled it to survive through the ages. " Non-violence is the tie by which all society is bound together ", asserts Pattabhi Sitaramayya and points out that " we are not aware of it any more than we were of the Law of Gravitation binding together the Heavenly orbs till it was discovered. "[20]

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CHAPTER 6

Non-Violence in Action: Satyagraha

1. The Content

Satyāgraha, according to Gandhi, is love or truth and non-violence in direct action. Nothing on this earth, has ever been done without direct action. It was direct action, told and told effectively, that converted General Smuts to sanity.

Gandhi made *satyāgraha* the moral equivalent of war; he made it also an instrument of social change as well as a way of life. For him, it was an eternal principle.

Satyāgraha means literally passion for, adherence to, insistence on or vindication of, truth, In it, if truth is abstract, non-violence is concrete; if truth forms the base, non-violence forms the super-structure.

Gandhi called his technique at first " passive resistance "; it was not, however, negative in scope as it did not admit of inaction; it was a positive and indeed an aggressive force as it endeavoured at revolutionary reconstruction. Realising its potency, he thought that it was misnomer to call it " passive resistance ". He observed: " When in a meeting with Europeans (in South Africa) I found that the term ' passive resistance ' was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed

to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterised by hatred, I had to demur to all these statements and explain the real nature of the Indian movement. It was clear that a new word must be coined by the Indians to designate their struggle."[1] On inviting suggestions, he came across the word '*sadāgraha*' but it appeared to him to be ambiguous; consequently, he modified it as '*satyāgraha*'. Confusion of the Gandhian technique with passive resistance led Neibuhr to observe: "Beginning with the idea that social injustice could be resisted by purely ethical, rational and emotional forces (truth force and soul force in the narrower sense of the term), he (Gandhi) came finally to realise the necessity of some type of physical coercion upon the foes of his people's freedom as every political leader must."[2]

Gandhi himself clarified thus: "For the past thirty years I have been preaching and practising *satyāgraha*. The principles of *Satyāgraha* as I know it today, constitute a gradual evolution. The term *satyāgraha* was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years, and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of passive resistance. Its root meaning is 'holding on to truth'; hence truth-force. I have also called it love-force or soul-force. In the application of *satyāgraha,* I discovered in the early stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but that he must be weaned away from error. And patience means self-suffering. So, the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but one's own self. *Satyāgraha* differs from passive resistance as the north pole from the south. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form."[3]

Although truth governs the law of the universe, it is difficult to practise it. As John Morley says, the one commanding law is that men should cling to truth and right if the very heavens fall; yet in practice, we know how all schools admit the necessity of accommodation as they say in the very interest of truth itself.[4]

The principle of *satyāgraha* is as old as human history. Many in the past have suffered martyrdom in defence of their conscience; the blood of martyrs has been the seed of new faiths and new philosophies. Gandhi himself acknowledged his inspiration to the *purānic* stories of Harischandra and Prahlāda, to the Upanishads and the Gita, and to the lives and teachings of Daniel, Socrates, Christ, Mohamed, Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau. He said: "When Daniel disregarded the laws of Medes and Persians which offended his conscience and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered *satyāgraha* in its purest form. Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the truth to the Athenian youth and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was, in this case, a *satyāgrahi.* Prahlāda disregarded the orders of his father, because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplainingly and cheerfully bore the tortures, to which he was subjected, at the instance of his father. Mirabai is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience; she was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to her husband's will. Both Prahlāda and Mirabai practised *satyāgraha.* It must be remembered that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahlāda nor Mirabai had any ill-will towards their persecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged, Prahlāda a model son, Mirabai a model wife."[5]

Gandhi refined the weapon of *Satyāgraha* and extended it to the whole gamut of human affairs. Though starting as an erring person, he overcame with determination weaknesses one after another and eventually became a mighty moral force in the world. He shook and awakened the very conscience of humanity in the process of uprooting the mightiest ever empire built on force, fraud and exploitation. In his effort to emancipate his countrymen, he gave *satyāgraha* its metaphysics, philosophy, technique and dynamism. Although it is spiritual in essence, he demonstrated its validity in secular life also.

He explained: "On the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you

do not wish to submit to it, is to compel him to retrace his steps by suffering in your own person, i.e., by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence, *satyāgraha* largely appears to the public as civil disobedience or civil resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.---The criminal, i.e., the ordinary law-breaker, breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty; not so is the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the State to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanctions but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But, there come occasions, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour; he then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law-giver, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the State by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude."[6]

Satyāgraha is essentially an inward and purifying movement, based on self-suffering. It seeks to penetrate the heart of the opponent by the self-suffering of the *satyāgrahi;* the success is not to the physically strong but to the morally powerful. The identification of the *satyāgrahi* with the cause should be complete to get the desired result. When once the mind of the individual or the group engaged in *satyāgraha* gets rooted in the truth of the situation, it is no longer the individual or the group who works but it is the truth force that takes over. The effort of the *satyāgrahi* lies in just awakening that truth power and harnessing it for the cause. The combined force of love, faith and sacrifice acts through it. The ultimate aim is not individual salvation but the salvation of the whole of humanity; it is not only the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the heart of one individual but also in the hearts of all who constitute collectively the mankind. Martin Luther King Jr. rightly declared: "If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable; Gandhi is inevitable."[7]

Satyāgraha, as Gilbert Murray observed, is a battle of the unaided human soul against overwhelming material force and it ends by the units of material force gradually deserting their own banners and coming round to the side of the soul; *satyāgraha* wins its battles because of its secret appeal to the spiritual element in its enemy, that humane

element from which man, in his utmost effort to be brutal, cannot quite shake himself free.

How *satyāgraha* invariably wins is described by Alfred Hoernle thus: " As a moral, not a physical, weapon, it raises political warfare to a higher plane. Groups, powerless in a political and military sense, can fall back upon it as their only weapon. It involves self-chosen suffering and humiliation for the resisters and thus demands in them unusual resources of self-mastery and strength of will. If it is effective, it is so by working on the consciences of those against whom it is being used, sapping their confidence in the exclusive rightness of their case, making their physical strength impotent and weakening their resolution by insinuating a sense of guilt for the suffering they have a part in causing. "[8]

Love being the foundation of *satyāgraha,* the practitioner of it can have no enemies; he has to love the individual who despises him. " It is easy for you to love your friends but I ask you to love your enemies ", Gandhi enjoined on his followers.[9] The business of the *satyāgrahi* is not to attack the adversary but his wrong action. Where reason failed, he called for self-suffering as it opened the eyes of understanding. The motto of a *satyāgrahi,* must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart of the opponent; he insisted also that " we (*satyāgrahis*) must ever be courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us; we must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as our enemies. "[10] *Satyāgrahi* should trust the opponent fully. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the *satyāgrahi* is ready to trust him the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed. Such unqualified trust ensures, according to him, the end of a non-violent war in agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent.

Gandhi denied the charge that *satyāgraha* was an instrument of coercion. If it ever caused mental violence, he said, it was *durāgraha. Satyāgraha* for him was moral pressure and not what C.M. Case described: " Such acts (non-co-operation, boycott, strike, etc.,) are instances of coercion, because in them suffering, though self-inflicted, aims at producing a dilemma in the mind of the opponent. Neither of the alternatives appeals to his desires or his judgement; yet he is compelled by the situation to choose

between them. No violence or threat of violence is used against him, on the other hand, nor is he persuaded of the excellence of either alternative, on the other. Whichever he accepts of the alternatives, he remains unconvinced, either by the assent of his judgement to facts and reasons given in argument, or by a reversal of his moral outlook through the contemplation of suffering passively endured. He is coerced, non-violently coerced it is true, but coerced nevertheless."[11] It is moral influence or, as Joad observed, "the effect produced by one human being upon the mind and actions of another, not through fear of punishment or hope or reward, but by virtue of the latter's intuitive acknowledgement of intrinsic superiority."[12] Arthur Moore explained: "It is a method of fighting which is open to unarmed people and is on a par with the boycott and strike, which are indeed part of its technique... It is not a distinctly spiritual weapon any more than is armed rebellion or war."[13]

One may contend that such an ideal is unattainable, as evil is inherent in man. The answer thereto is that goodness also is innate in man and tireless effort enables him to overcome evil; success is surely his, who acts sincerely on the principle he holds. The innate goodness of the most brutal opponent can be aroused by a pure and suffering *satyāgrahi.* Gandhi firmly believed that pursuit of truth was neither impracticable nor impossible. He remarked: "Modern science is replete with illustrations of the seemingly impossible having become possible within living memory. But the victories of physical sciences would be nothing against the victory of science of life, which is summed up in love, which is the law of our being."[14] One need not be in a hurry, Gandhi observed. "If it takes time that is but a speck in the complete time cycle,"[15] he consoled the impatient.

Satyāgraha, being a very powerful method of direct action, should not be launched without exhausting other means like discussion, negotiation, conciliation and arbitration. Gandhi laid down: "A *satyāgrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to *satyāgraha.* He will give ultimatum and continually approach the constituted authority; he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him; and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to *satyā-*

graha. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches upon *satyāgraha* he has burnt his boats and there is no receding ".[16]

Gandhi insisted on sticking to essentials and had no objection to compromise on non-essentials. Full surrender of non-essentials, he believed, was a condition precedent to accession of internal strength to defend the essential by dying. He was never for humiliating the opponent. When Irwin asked Gandhi to waive his demand for an enquiry into the police excesses during the *satyāgraha* movement of 1930, he yielded and convinced the Congress Working Committee on the soundness of his compromise.

Gandhi was not also bothered if the opponent abused the opportunity provided by negotiation for strengthening his own, though wrong, position, for, he thought that real strength is moral superiority and if all is well in the *satyāgrahi* camp, the preparedness of the adversary is immaterial. The moral stature of the *satyāgrahi* should be such as to own his mistakes and make proper amends therefor readily. Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. Never has a man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path. In 1939, he called off the campaign, which, he realised, had been launched in " haste and being over-confident ", and explained his stand:

" In *satyāgraha* there is no such thing as disappointment or heart-burning. The struggle always goes on in some shape or other till the goal is reached. A *satyāgrahi* is indifferent whether it is civil disobedience or some other phase of the struggle to which he is called. Nor does he mind if, in the middle of the civil disobedience march, he is called upon to halt and do something else. He must have faith that it is all for the best. My own experience hitherto has been that each suspension has found the people better equipped for the fight and for control over forces of violence. Therefore, in advising suspension, I dismiss from my mind the fear that it may lead to desertion and disbelief. If it does, I should not feel sorry, for it would be to me a sign that the deserters did not know what *satyāgraha* was and the movement was better without those who did not know what they were doing ".[17]

Gandhian dialectic describes a technique of action to any situation of human conflict, a process both creative and constructive. A few months before his assassination, Gandhi declared: "This I do say fearlessly and firmly that every worthy object can be achieved by the use of *satyāgraha*. It is the highest and infallible means, the greatest force. *Satyāgraha* can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral".[18]

2. *The Penance*

To become a *satyāgrahi*, Gandhi demanded, one has to undergo a rigorous moral discipline; he has to take and practise in his life the five vows (*yamas*) of *satya* (truth), *ahimsa* (non-violence), *asteya* (non-stealing), *aparigraha* (non-possession) and *brahmacharya* (celibacy). He told his disciples: " Unless you impose on yourselves the five vows, you may not embark on the experiment at all ".[19] They were also advised to abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs; in food too, they were advised to be very simple: " Eat not to please your palate but to keep the body in proper working condition ". The discipline required of them to become increasingly *satwik* in life. The control of mind and body was essential for a *satyāgrahi*. The vows aided him to attain self-control. Truth and non-violence enabled him to become fearless. One, who feared God, did not fear man. As Viscount Samuel observed, " Gandhi taught the Indian to straighten his back, to raise his eyes and to face the circumstances with a steady gaze. "[20]

Non-stealing and non-possession enabled him to lead a life of renunciation. Non-stealing is possible but absolute non-possession is impossible; so, Gandhi said: " If we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realising a scale of equality on earth than by any other method ".[21] Non-possession enables him to be free from exploiting others; it enables him to utilise his talents and wealth for common good; it also enables him to practise voluntary poverty, which helps for the realisation of the Unity; "realisation of the unity ", Gandhi underscored, " is not possible unless we crucify the flesh and simplify our wants ".[22] Matthew declared: " provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat ".[23] He also said: " It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God ".[24] Gandhi added: " The moment financial stability is assured, spiritual bankruptcy is also assured ".[25]

Sex-control enables one to apprehend the *Brahman*. One who has control over all his senses of thought, word and deed, is himself the embodiment of love; he looks upon all as his brothers and sisters.

One who has complete control over thought can be called a true *Brahmachāri;* as Gandhi observed, " since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corresponds to that of the former; hence the perfectly controlled thought is itself the power of the highest potency and can become self-acting ".[26]

Gandhi insisted also on adherence to the doctrine of bread-labour; no man ought to be free from that obligation as it promoted social and economic equality. ....

Gandhi had implicit faith in the invocation to God. Prayer, silence and fasting strengthen the moral fibre of man. They cleanse the body and the mind of pettiness, meanness and deceit. While he offered prayers twice daily, he observed silence every Monday. And whenever darkness was not removed from his mind by them, he invariably resorted to fasting.

Because of prayer, he said, he had known no disappointment. He affirmed: " Even in darkest despair, where there seems to be no helper and no comfort in the wide world, His name inspires us with strength and puts all doubts and despair to flight. The sky may be overcast today with clouds but a fervent prayer to Him is enough to dispel them ".[27]

In the human mind, there is, as the Gita says, constant struggle going on between the forces of the divine and those of the devil .[28] A person grows spiritually in proportion to his success in subduing the evil forces. Gandhi pointed out: " There is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world; the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable. Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily life ".[29]

His faith in prayer was such as to make him declare that " even if I were cut to pieces, I trust God would give me the strength not to deny Him and to assert that He is ".[30]

Silence helped Gandhi to be close to God. He felt that the silent

prayer was a mightier force than an overt act. It was a necessary part of his spiritual discipline; it was the time when he could best hold communion with God.

Silence also helped one to overcome his natural weakness to exaggerate, suppress or modify truth, wittingly or unwittingly. A man of few words offended others less than one who was not. Pythagoras advised us: "Be silent or say something better than silence." As Solomon warned "the mouth of a wise man is in his heart, while the heart of a fool is in his mouth".

Fasting is a powerful way of self-suffering. As a method of self-purification or self-discipline it has ever been accepted every where. Whenever one is in distress, he should fast to crucify the flesh and elevate the mind. It is a penance for the attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh. The strength of the soul grows in proportion as one subdues the flesh. He believed that there was no prayer without fasting and no real fast without prayer." Fasting took one nearer to God; he, therefore said: "It is not possible to see God face to face unless you crucify the flesh". Gandhi, however, insisted that fasting required God's grace; without it, in his view, fasting was useless starvation, if not worse.[31]

Gandhi warned that fasting should never be employed as a coercive weapon. "It is not to be denied", he observed, "that fasting can really be coercive. Such are fasts to attain a selfish object. A fast undertaken to wring money from a person or for fulfilling some such personal end would amount to the exercise of coercion or undue influence. I would unhesitatingly advocate resistance of such undue influence. If it is argued that the dividing line between a selfish and unselfish end is often very thin. I would urge that a person who regards the end of a fast to be selfish or otherwise base should resolutely refuse to yield to it, even though the refusal may result in the death of the fasting person".[32]

His abiding faith in the existence of God enabled Gandhi to surrender his judgement completely to the Voice within; his contention was that it never failed him, although he made no attempt to convince others about it; it surpassed reasoning. He observed: "My claim to hear the voice of God is no new claim. Unfortunately, there is

no way that I know of proving the claim except through results. God will not be God if He allowed Himself to be an object of proof by His creatures. He does give His willing slave power to pass through the fiercest of ordeals. I have been a willing slave to this most exacting Master for more than half a century. His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy ".[33]

It will, however, be a travesty of truth to contend that Gandhi had scant regard for logic. He was an astute logician himself but always sought to strengthen his argument by spiritual invocation.

Gandhi believed that every action of a *satyāgrahi* led to moral improvement of society and a multiplication of *satyāgrahis* meant ushering in of a moral social order. He was, however, conscious that it was not possible for a large body of men to practise the discipline of *satyāgraha,* although at times *satyāgraha* became mass action under his leadership. For the masses, he advocated a working knowledge of the technique. While those who led the movement had invariably to be true *satyāgrahis,* it was enough if the masses, who followed them, had implicit faith in the cause and maximised their efforts sincerely to inculcate in their lives the spirit of *satyāgraha.* He likened the *satyāgraha* force to that of an army in the battlefield; whereas the general took basic decisions, the ordinary soldiers obeyed his orders under certain rules of discipline. He was sure that " there will never be an army of perfect non-violent people and it will be performed of those who will honestly endeavour to observe non-violence ".[34]

Satyāgrahis, being the embodiment of love, should rouse similar emotion in the opponent; they should persuade him, by their suffering, to feel a sense of shame at the wrongs perpetrated by himself and generate in him a sense of moral uplift. They should not nourish in their breast fear, anger, hatred, selfishness and intrigue; they should, on the other hand, develop principle as against expediency and ethics as against politics. They should possess these virtues: truthfulness, kindness, tolerance, discretion, restraint on senses, non-violence, celibacy, charity, meditation, joy, gentleness, service, abandonment of

vulgar desires and purposeless acts, moderation in speech, introspection, seeing divinity in every living being, acting according to conscience and singing the praise of the Lord and dedication of the self at His feet.

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CHAPTER 7

Non-Violent Society

1. *An Indictment of Present Order*

Gandhi believed that the application of truth and non-violence for the solution of social, economic and political problems would promote the welfare of all. He did not write a treatise; he said: "I have purposely refrained from dealing with the nature of government based on non-violence. When society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non-violence, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. But I cannot say in advance what the government based wholly on non-violence will be like".[1] He, however, enunciated from time to time principles, which together constitute the content of the Sarvodaya Order. His disciples, notably Vinoba Bhave and Jaya Prakash Narayan, have in recent times explained and attempted to apply some of those principles to end the misery and want of the people in the country.

Gandhi used the word *sarvōdaya,* found in the Jaina scripture by Samantabhadra, to explain his reaction to Ruskin's 'Unto This Last', the title of which was inspired by a parable of Jesus.[2] The *sarvōdaya* doctrine is embedded in the Vedic prayer of *sarve-janaha sukhino-bhavantu.* It demands not only the greatest good of the greatest number but the greatest good of all, without exception; it seeks to uplift the

very last also; hence, Vinoba often employed the word *antyodaya* to stress the goal of *sarvodaya.*

Gandhi, as an anarchist, sought ultimately to esatblish a stateless society; he rejected the state as it represented violence in a concentrated and organised form. The state was, according to him, a soulless machine and it could never be weaned away from violence to which it owed its very existence. There cannot, therefore, be a state, non-violent in toto. There can only be a non-violent stateless society, an enlightened anarchy. " In such a state, every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state ".[3]

The *sarvōdaya* superstructure stands on a strong ethical foundation. Gandhi agreed with Ruskin that men could be happy only if they obeyed the moral law. A search as in the west for social and economic well-being prosecuted in disregard of morality is opposed to the divine law. The divine law insists that every one must perform his duties without insisting upon his rights, as rights follow duties like the day following the night.

The success of the moral order depends upon the spiritual discipline of those within it. All activities should invariably be informed of *satya, ahimsa, brahmacharya, astheya* and *aparigraha.* One who practises them can be fearless. A control over the palate and a spirit of self-sacrifice are other virtues that need be cultivated. Gandhi laid stress on the theory of bread-labour. His view was that the needs of the body must be supplied by the efforts of the body itself. Encouragement of *swadeshi* goods and religious tolerance were other virtues which he recommended. As the people imbibed in themselves increasingly the ethical virtues, the necessity for the existence of the state decreased proportionately. Self-regulation of the people made the power of the state superfluous.

Gandhi opposed totally the centralisation of authority. It was repugnant to the non-violent structure of society, because it could not be sustained without adequate force. The concentration of power in a few hands was likely to be abused. It curbed the freedom of the individual, which was essential for his progress in all spheres of activity.

He, therefore, advocated the formation of autonomous village communities. "The society based on non-violence", he said, "can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence".[4] He pointed out: "In this structure composed of innumerable villages, life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it would be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals. The outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it".[5] He had thought that the erstwhile village republic of India contained the germ of non-violent society.

Emphasising that the individual was the architect of his own government, Gandhi said the law of non-violence ruled him and his government. The law governing every villager was that he would suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour. He explained: "You must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom nad social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member".[6]

Gandhi never preferred the dictates of government to the dictates of one's conscience. He looked upon the increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear because while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it did greater harm to mankind by destroying the individuality itself which was at the root of all progress. If an individual subordinated his conscience to the state, he did not count at all. "If the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man surrender himself completely to the service of the society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined".[7]

The individual need not accept the majority opinion if his conscience opposed it. Swaraj, he thought, would be an absurdity if individuals

have to surrender their judgement to the majority. The majority should be persuaded to see its error, unconsciously committed, by the exercise of one's freedom to act according to his conscience. Vinoba attacks the majority rule as the exercise of brute force.

Government, for Gandhi, was artificial and futile; it was not necessary for the promotion of man's welfare; it was a device for the false sense of security of man; by supporting it, man deceived himself. The desire of man for government is explained in a parable by Vinoba thus: " Once the frogs desired to have a king of their own. They thought, 'without a king our administration cannot be run well'. Hence, they prayed to God: 'O, God, send us a king'. God heard their prayer and sent a bullock. As the bullock descended to earth, he crushed beneath his feet 50 to 100 frogs. The frogs prayed: " we do not desire such a king. Send us another king'. God threw a big stone from heaven to earth. The stone crushed 200 to 400 frogs. The frogs got frightened and asked God: 'What calamity have you sent us?' God replied: 'I sent a bull, my carrier. But he could not usefully serve you. So, I sent a stone, the one on which I sit in all my majesty. But you did not like this king also. Now, what other king can I send you? The best thing now for you is to do without a king'. Since then the frogs never uttered the word king from their mouth ".[8]

The people should, therefore, govern themselves; that is genuine democracy; it provides, as Jayaprakash Narayan affirms, for a moral order; its success depends on " concern for truth, aversion to violence, love of liberty, courage to resist oppression and tyranny, spirit of co-operation, preparedness to sacrifice self-interest to the larger interest of the community, respect for other's opinions, readiness to take responsibility, belief in fundamental equality of man and faith in the goodness of human nature ".[9] Morality is essentially a matter of inward choice as Mill, Green and Laski point out; it cannot be dictated by a state. " If we want to call an action moral ", said Gandhi, " it should have been done consciously and as a matter of duty. Any action that is dictated by fear or by coercion of any kind ceases to be moral ".

The state has a demoralising and corrupting influence on man. Whoever is attracted by it and participant in its functioning loses his

individuality and moral strength. All his goodness disappears the moment he begins to wield power. As Action observed, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Power is narcotic, a potent intoxicant.

Gandhi also rejected political parties as they became seats of power struggle. Instead of promoting the welfare of all, a party invariably functioned as a propaganda machine in favour of a coterie. Political parties are "less concerned with ideology than with organisation, discipline and propaganda. The party is an instrument for political power. And power predominates while ideas are mere convenient trade marks used for power-political rivalry".[10]

Truth is often a casualty while adhering to party discipline. The voice of genuine criticism is silenced in the name of discipline, while the honest criticism by the opposition party is dismissed as unworthy. The party system reduces the people to the position of sheep. Vinoba said: "The common people are helpless and crippled; they think they cannot do without the government. The people have got only the formal right to vote. This right is like the right of the sheep to elect a shepherd. It does not lead to any change in the condition of the sheep. The people are deluded in this fashion, while the government gets more power concentrated in its hands".[11]

Jayaprakash Narayan condemned the party system in no uncertain terms. Explaining his stand, he said: "The party system with the corroding and corrupting struggle for power inherent in it, disturbed me more and more. I saw how parties backed by finance, organisation and means of propaganda could impose themselves on the people and how people's rule became in effect party rule, how party rule became in turn the rule of a caucus or coterie. The party system, as I saw it, was emasculating the people. It did not function so as to develop their strength and initiative, nor to help them establish their self-rule and to manage their affairs themselves".[12]

Elections also do not guarantee a people's rule. Experience in India as elsewhere has convinced that elections are for those who are rich and can afford to spend money ungrudgingly. In such a situation, the poor and the dumb have to remain helpless spectators. Such elections which create democratic oligarchy can have no place in a truly

non-violent society. Elections also divide the people into groups and promote rivalry between them, thereby undermining the true interests of the people as a whole. They, as Vinoba said, at best established a democracy in which human intelligence occupied a subordinate position.

Legislative enactments are not conducive to springs of human action; they cannot inspire people to do the right. Laws, as Gandhi said, show water to the horse but cannot make the horse drink it. What is, therefore, required is conversion of the people prior to the making of the laws. If such conversion takes place due to the action of love, the law becomes superfluous. Gandhi compared the law-making bodies to liquor booths.

Law courts as are constituted today were also criticised by Gandhi. He felt they divided the people rather than united them. The crafty lawyers drove deeper the wedge that separated the parties. " If they do not do so, they will be considered to have degraded their profession ".[13] Gandhi was so harsh on lawyers as to delcare: " Men take up to the legal profession not in order to help others out of their miseries but to enrich themselves. Their interest consists in multiplying disputes. Petty pleaders actually manufacture them. Their touts, like so many leeches, suck the blood of the poor people ".[14] He also accused lawyers as tempting witnesses to sell their souls for money or friendship. He believed that people lived happily if they were free from lawyers and law courts; he declared: " If we were not under the spell of lawyers and law courts and if there were no touts to tempt us into the quagmire of the courts and to appeal to our basest passions, we would be leading a much happier life than we do ".[15]

Gandhi insisted on adherence to *dharma,* as it played a vital role in sustaining social cohesion. It is a combination of culture and discipline, essential for right conduct. It is, as Radhakrishnan urges, a living spirit which grows and moves in response to the development of society.[16]

As the qualifications of people for the *sarvōdaya* society being impossible of full attainment, Gandhi was conscious that the ideal society would ever remain an ideal " unrealised and unrealisable in its entirety "; " the ideal is never fully realised in life ".[17] He observed: " A government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent because it represents all the people. I do not conceive today of such

a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it".[18] The progressive elimination of the evil tendencies of the people is its primary function. That function is performed to the extent the people decline to participate in social evils. As he stressed, "the state evil is not the cause but the effect of social evil, just as the sea waves are the effect and not the cause of storm".[19]

2. *The Political Structure*

Gandhi accepted the present state but as a point of departure and outlined measures to transform it into a veritable Kingdom of God on earth. These measures aimed at progressive elimination of the coercive apparatus of the society, namely the state, and usher in what he himself called " *Ramarajya* "; he claimed that " *swaraj* without any qualifying clause includes that which is better than the best one can conceive or have today ". They sought for a complete decentralisation of the state authority and activisation instead of the power of the people for self-reliance. They desired to eliminate all external restraints on the individuals and encourage them to function in an atmosphere of total freedom for their own ultimate salvation. They upheld the autonomy of the moral self, glorified in the Brihadarnyaka Upanishad, according to which the rule over man should be moral and no other. They provided for a pure moral authority and did not countenance the determinate human superior as the sovereign. They were not, however, to be accepted as final; they indicated the direction and guide the people towards the realisation of the final goal.

Gandhi was satisfied with the immediate objective. " If we are wise ", he said, " we will take care of the present and the future will take care of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof ".[20] He agreed with Newman, who did not ask the distant scene; one step was enough for him. That one step was to perform one's duty regardless of his right – "the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights ".[21] He underscored also that those only were true rights which flew from a due performance of one's duty; rights escaped like will-o'-the wisp. when one failed to perform his duties. As the Gita declares, action alone is man's concern; he is not to bother about the fruit there of.

The unit of self-government being a village, all inhabiting it should work for self-sufficiency. The village life is to be complete as a unit of republic; it should be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the outside world. The inter-dependence of villages is not, however, ruled out. The work of villages is to be co-ordinated to the extent necessary for over-all

security. The federation of villages is to be on the moral basis of mutual help; it is not to be buttressed by a force of either police or military.

While condemning the western democratic system as indistinguishable from either Nazism or Fascism, Gandhi accepted it for India during the period of transition. " My *swaraj* ", said he, " is the parliamentary government of India in the modern sense of the term for the time being ".[22] It should, however, reflect the people's will, ascertained by the vote of the largest number of adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled. Every adult must exercise his franchise as a duty. Gandhi agreed with J. S. Mill that the voter was under an absolute moral obligation to consider the interest of the public, not his private advantage, and give his vote to the best of his judgement. He insisted on an electorate which was impartial, independent and intelligent. "If the electors do not interest themselves in national affairs and remain unconcerned with what goes on in their midst, and if they elect men with whom they have private relations or whose aid they need for themselves, this state of things can do no good to the country; on the contrary, it will be harmful ".[23] He did not, however, suggest that the electors should blindly exercise their franchise; if they did not find candidates worthy of their support they could as well boycott the poll. All enlightened and thoughtful voters would find that occasionally situations must arise when they would have to purposely refuse to register their votes. He hoped that when they did exercise the vote, they would give it to the best man, no matter to which party he belonged. Such candidates, after election, should have freedom to function according to dictates of their conscience in the legislature. As J. S. Mill observed, " the more the number is superior in intellect, the less should the electors seek to bind him ".

For Gandhi, true democracy was not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, hope and aspirations of those who elected them. He, therefore, suggested indirect election to the legislature. " This indirect election ", he observed, " should not be branded as undemocratic. It will give us representatives tried and tested in the life of groups and substitute active participation for the present day passive representation ".[24] Indirect election reduced considerably, if

not eliminated totally, corruption, deceit, violence and excitement; to that extent morality marked the election atmosphere.

As literacy is no test of wisdom, Gandhi did not insist on it as a qualification for franchise; illiterate people are often wiser than literates, even the educated class. What he wanted in the electors was moral character. The 3 R-s were not everything. He favoured labour franchise; those who exerted physically for their bread should be enfranchised. He thought that the intelligent and conscious adoption of the ideal of bread-labour would prevent voters from becoming mere pawns in the hands of politicians. Manual work as a qualification for voting gave an opportunity to all who wished to take part in the government and the well-being of the State. This view of Gandhi is in contra-distinction with J.S. Mill's view that the qualification of manual labour would lead to a great danger to the spirit of democracy because of 'too low a standard of political intelligence' and of 'class legislation'. The Constitution of India, enacted after freedom, does not restrict franchise to bread-labourers; it has provided for adult franchise, regardless of work or no work. The framers of the Constitution must have realised obvious impracticability of the bread-labour doctrine.

While advocating the power of vote to all those who were 18 years or above of age, Gandhi desired that old men above the age of 50 like himself should be disfranchised. He believed that old men were of no use as voters; his view was: "India and the rest of the world did not belong to those who were on the point of dying. To them belonged death, life to the young".[25]

Advocates who plead for retirement of the aged leaders from public life are not wanting. The aged leaders are often fingered at as solely responsible for the reactionary forces prevailing in public life. The fact of the matter is that the aged leaders cannot be in tune with the aspirations of the younger generation and are, consequently, sought to be rejected. Old men can, however, wield moral influence; they should not shirk this responsibility.

Being in favour of the bread-labour ideal, Gandhi naturally opposed payment of salary to legislators; at any rate, he did not want it to be disproportionate to the national income. He explained: "If A is satisfied with getting Rs. 25 per month in ordinary life, he has no right

to expect Rs. 250 on becoming a minister or obtaining any other office under the government ".[26]

According to Gandhi, all villages would elect their representatives one each; those representatives, forming an electoral college, would elect the members of the central or federal legislature. In villages, panchayats, representing the collective will of the people inhabiting each of them, would carry on the administration; they would discharge legislative, executive and judicial functions.

The case of majority rule had little meaning for Gandhi as his objective was to promote the good of both the majority and the minority alike. He did not believe that the majority was ever on the right path. " No school of thought ", he said, " can claim a monopoly of right judgement. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgement. And the least, therefore, that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-point, and if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours. It is one of the indispensable tests of healthy public life ".[27] The rule of the majority, he also said, did not mean that it should suppress the opinion of even an individual if it was sound. An individual's opinion should have greater weight than the opinion of many, if that opinion was sound. That was his view of real democracy.

The right to dissent is the salt of democracy. As he urged, " in matters of conscience, the law of majority has no place ".[28] Democracy, he explained, was not a state in which the people acted like sheep. Under democracy, liberty of opinion and action was jealously guarded. He, therefore, believed that the minority had a perfect right to act differently from the majority. The exercise of the right to dissent can take the form of direct non-violent action; the self-suffering process must be to convert the majority to the minority view. It is, however, understood that the weapon of *satyāgraha* in a non-violent society may not at all be necessary, as there is not to be the tyranny of the majority. The majority should always function with utmost magnanimity. The minority should likewise be magnanimous as to yield to the majority on matters trivial; where its moral sense is not hurt, the minority should accept the majority decision; such an acquiescence is essential for smooth corporate life; " where there is no principle involved and

there is a programme to be carried out, the minority has got to follow the majority ".[29] Democracy rests in citizens, however insignificant they may individually be. It grows with the spirit of independence as well as of tolerance amongst the citizens. It nourishes the sense of human dignity as well as the passion for human equality.

Gandhi believed that there could not be an end to crime and consequently to jails. All in the society cannot be angels and anti-social elements cannot altogether be eliminated from it. Some of the crimes, he said, would go on perhaps till doomsday as thieving would. But there should be progressive decrease of the crime; society should provide for it. As social consciousness improves in the people, commission of crime should proportionately reduce.

Gandhi accepted punishment of the guilty only as a necessary evil. He was quite capable of recommending even punishment to wrong-doers under conceivable circumstances; for instance, he would not hesitate under the present state of society to confine thieves and robbers, which was in itself a kind of punishment. But, he would also admit that it was not *satyāgraha* and that it was a fall from that pure doctrine. That would be an admission not of the weakness of the doctrine but the weakness of himself. He had no other remedy to suggest in such cases in the present state of society. No criminal should be allowed to go scot-free; he should bear responsibility for the crime and undergo penitence. As Earnest Barker points out, " If we respect personality we must respect responsibility. And if we respect responsibility, we must respect the right of the offenders to be punished for their offences[30]". There cannot be allowed chaos or anarchy to exist in society; safety of life and property shall be fully assured.

Punishment should, however, be such as to reform the prisoner and others of criminal tendency. Its objective may be deemed to have been fulfilled if the criminal is prevented from committing the crime again and others are deterred from committing a similar crime. Crime, according to Gandhi, is a disease like any other malady and is a product of the prevalent social system. This enlightened view is echoed by several leading thinkers. T. H. Green opines: " The justice of the punishment depends on the justice of the general system of rights; not merely on the propriety with reference to social well-being or maintaining

this or that particular right which the crime punished violates, but on the question whether the social organisation in which a criminal has lived and acted is one that has given him a fair chance of not being a criminal.[31]" That the punishment should be for reform of the criminal is also stressed by Green, when he observed: " If the punishment is to be just, in the sense that in its infliction due account is taken of all rights, including the suspended rights of the criminal himself, it must be, so far as public safety allowes, reformatory. It must tend to qualify the criminal for the resumption of rights. [32]"

Gandhi was not opposed to deterrent punishment. Discipline must be enforced fully on all. " It will go hard with us ", he warned, " if we let the real criminals understand that they will be set free or be very much better treated when *swaraj* is established. Even in reformatories, by which I would like to replace every jail under *swaraj,* discipline will be extracted ". Gandhi did not justify the sentence of death for deliberate murder; he was all for reforming the murderer. Under a state governed according to the principles of *ahimsa,* a murderer, he said, would be sent to a penitentiary and there given a chance of reforming himself. He opposed the death sentence because it would deprive the criminal of getting reformed; he said: " I can recall the punishment of detention. I can make reparation to the man upon whom I inflict corporal punishment. But once a man is killed, the punishment is beyond recall or reparation. God alone can take life, because He alone gives it[33]". Green was also unsure of the soundness of the capital penalty; he observed that " it may be doubted whether the presumption of permanent incapacity for rights is one which in our ignorance we can ever be entitled to make ". Nobody is beyond redemption, because goodness is inherent in man. In England, the capital punishment has been abolished and a time may come in India, sooner rather than later, for the acceptance of the Gandhian view.

Pleading for radical jail reform, soon after the Congress party assumed office in several provinces in 1937 under the Government of India Act of 1935, Gandhi underlined that there should be no punishment for punishment's sake. " Alll jails" he said " should be turned into hand-spinning and hand-weaving institutions. They should include, wherever possible, cotton growing to producing the finest cloth.

Prisoners must be treated as defectives, not criminals to be looked down upon. Warders should cease to be terrors of the prisoners, but the jail officials should be their friends and instructors.[34]" A few days, before his end, he urged that in free India " all criminals should be treated as patients and the jails should be the hospitals admitting this class of patients for treatment and cure. No one committed crime for the fun of it. It is a sign of a diseased mind. The causes of a particular disease should be investigated and removed. The outlook of jail staff should be that of physicians and nurses in hospitals. Prisoners should feel that the officials were their friends. They were there to help them to regain the mental health and not to harass them in any way.[35]" Gandhi's humanistic approach is in complete contrast with Bentham's theory of " Panopticon " which was formulated " to employ convicts instead of steam and thus to combine philanthropy with business ". The jail, for Bentham, was " a mill for grinding rogues honest and the idle men industrious ". Vinoba's plea for reform of the prisoner was so ardent as to hope for emptying all jails; " when jails become ", he said, " empty, then will real freedom dawn ". Every persuasive effort should be made to correct the error of the individual. To meet the individual's heart, fast may also be undertaken.

Gandhi could not visualise the superfluity of the police force altogether, but he insisted that their role should be different from what it is presently. They would have to function essentially as peace volunteers, believing firmly in the doctrine of non-violence. To the extent there was the necessity of the police force, he thought, however, that his faith in non-violence was defective. He admitted: " This is a sign of my imperfect *ahimsa*. I have not the courage to declare that we can carry on without a police force. Of course, I can and do visualise a state where the police will not be necessary; but whether we shall succeed in realising it, the future alone will show ". What their function should be, he explained thus: " The police of my conception will be a wholly different pattern from the present-day force. Its ranks will be composed of believers in non-violence. They will be servants, not masters, of the people. The people will instinctively render them every help and through mutual co-operation they will easily deal with the ever-decreasing disturbances. The police force will have some kind of arms but they will be rarely used, if at all. The police

men, in fact, will be reformers. The police work will be confined to robbers and dacoits. Quarrels between labour and capital and strikes will be few and far between in a non-violent state, because the influence of the non-violent majority will be so great as to command the respect of the principal elements in society. Similarly, there will be no room for communal disturbances [36]".

Gandhi also regretted that an army could not be ruled out as unnecessary. " Alas, in my *swaraj* of today, there is room for soldiers ". He bemoaned so, because it is impossible to realise perfect non-violence. He, however, warned that unless India developed her non-violent strength, she had gained nothing either for herself or for the world; the militarisation of India would mean her own destruction as of the whole world. He claimed that non-violence would suffice under all conditions. But, he insisted, it should be perfect

He wanted the rule of the people to be so strong as to make the military unnecessary. Democracy to be true, he observed, should cease to rely upon the army for anything whatever; it would be a poor democracy that depended for its existence on military assistance; the military force interfered with the free growth of the mind; it smothered the soul of man. If the people become fearless, they can themselves defend. Vinoba, pleading for a reduction in defence expenditure of the Nehru Government advised it: " You should not feel panicky because America is helping Pakistan to increase her armed might. Those who use the name of Gandhi should be the first to exhibit courage. If you are afraid of the military might of Pakistan, you do not deserve to be followers of Gandhi ".

Gandhi prescribed a role for the army which has not found favour yet. His description is: " A non-violent army acts unlike armed men, as well in times of peace as of disturbances. They would be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible. Theirs will be the duty of seeking occasions for bringing warring communities together, carrying on peace propaganda, engaging in activities that would bring and keep them in touch with every single person, male and female, adult and child, in their parish or division. Such an army should be ready to cope with any emergency, and in order to still the frenzy of mobs should risk their lives in numbers sufficient for the pur-

pose. A few hundred, may be a few thousand, such spotless deaths will once for all put an end to the riots. Surely a few hundred young men and women giving themselves deliberately to mob fury will be any day a cheaper and braver method of dealing with such madness than the display and use of the police and the military "[38].

Gandhi did not countenance the danger of external aggression of the country. As causes of war, mainly economic, would not arise in a decentralised politicoeconomic order, the state offered no temptation to neighbouring states to commit aggression on it. Its people believed firmly that nobody would attack them; they provided no scope for the greed of other nations. If, however, the country wedded to non-violence was attacked, it should either non-co-operate with or non-violently resist the aggressor.

So far as India was concerned, he hoped that it would be predominantly non-violent. He desired that free India should shed violence for the protection of its territorial integrity as far as it can. " The adoption of non-violence to the utmost possible extent ", he said, " will be India's greatest contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last 22 years to show the efficacy of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country "[39].

Gandhi's political heir, Jawaharlal Nehru, as Prime Minister, strove hard to reduce defence expenditure of the country; he ardently believed that other nations shared his full faith in the " Panch Sheel "; he especially hoped that China which declared " India-China *bhai bhai* " was true to its profession. But, what happened to India at the hands of China in 1962 is a black chapter of history. India's hand of friendship has also been repeatedly spurned by Pakistan and the relations between the two countries, present circumstances indicate, will not be cordial for many years to come. As long as the United Nations remains a helpless spectator of aggression by one nation against another, no nation can embark on total disarmament; freedom and sovereignty of a nation can remain intact so long as it is militarily strong.

Gandhi himself conceded that an entire mass of people cannot be given non-violent training; all of them cannot be enthused to cherish the same degree of living faith in non-violence. So, he said: " Whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive of occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For, I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion "[40].

Gandhi did not want equally to force any person take to arms for the defence of the home and hearth. He was opposed, therefore, to conscription. No nation at times of war can avoid compulsory military recruitment. Even for the maintenance of law and order internally, no nation can afford not to rely on the police and even the military. He, therefore, agreed that a sudden withdrawal of the military and the police would be a disaster if people had not acquired the ability to protect themselves against robbers and thieves. As long as anti-social elements were not eliminated from the society, both the military and the police had a vital role to play in safe-guarding the interests of the people.

Gandhi insisted that the administration of justice should be very cheap, efficient and speedy. He was not at all enamoured of the present judicial system, based on the British model. He believed that the courts existing in India in his time sought only to sustain the alien rule. He observed that those who wanted to perpetuate their power did so through the courts. The object of the courts was the permanence of the authority of the government which they represented. His view was that the courts were instruments in the hands of the bureaucracy, which had emasculated and was intent upon further emasculating a whole nation. The courts in free India, however, are functioning according to the constitution, which has upheld freedom of the individual and has provided for democratic administration. Efforts in states are being progressively made to separate the judiciary form the executive at all levels. There, however, still exist the law's delays and the dispensation of justice costly. Gandhi, therefore, advocated the panchayat system of judicial administration. As he expected the people to live with mutual love, there would be no scope generally for disputes. If

ever disputes arose, they should be resolved by negotiation, conciliation or arbitration. The village panchayat should function as the law court. Its verdict should be final; it should be such as to restore cordial relations between the litigant parties; it should not at all further embitter their feelings.

Gandhi did not want that the panchayat verdict be legally enforced. He wanted the litigant parties themselves to accept them voluntarily. He observed: " Only those will seek the protection of the panchayats who wish voluntarily to abide by their decisions and, therefore, need no process of enforcement of panchayat decress. The only penalty that is at our disposal is the force of public opinion. There is not much danger of parties, who voluntarily seek the protection of the panchayat, disobeying the latter's verdicts. We must run the risk of some disobedience; we must not, in impatience, resort to force or intimidation for the purpose either of securing reference to panchayats or execution of their decrees ".

Gandhi thought that the lawyers as a rule advanced quarrels, instead of repressing them; the true function of lawyers, according to him, was to unite parties driven asunder. He believed that the legal profession was a means to render public service. He advised the lawyers never to depart from truth; their duty, according to him, was to place the facts before the judges and to help them arrive at the truth. He did not want lawyers to earn more than what was required for their simple living. Nor did he make an exception of judges.

While propagating a spirit of nationalism amongst his countrymen, Gandhi was truly an internationalist. While he pleaded for spread of nationalism in the country, his objective was to secure freedom for all countries and enable all of them co-operate with one another for promotion of universal brotherhood. Through the deliverance of India he sought to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of western exploitation.

Because of his physical limitations he was content to help his countrymen redeem from their bondage, hoping that his work would lead other down-trodden countries also to freedom. In utter humility, he said: " It is arrogance to think of launching out to serve the whole of India when I am hardly able to serve even my own family. It were

better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that through them I was serving the whole nation and, if you will, the whole humanity. Under this plan of life, in seeming to serve India to the exclusion of every other country, I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my attention to the land of my birth, but is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature". He again stressed: "My patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt another nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world". "Our nationalism", he observed, "can be no peril to other nations, inasmuch as we will exploit none, just as we will allow none to exploit us".

He wanted India, through its freedom, to serve the whole world. There was no restriction on its service to other countries; there was no limit to extend one's services to his neighbours across the statemade frontiers. God never made those frontiers. His notion of freedom for India was not an isolated independence but healthy and dignified interdependence. He wanted "to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world".

Gandhi believed that nationalism promoted internationalism. In his opinion, it was impossible to be an internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism was possible only when nationalism became a fact, i.e., when people belonging to different countries had organised themselves and were able to act as one man; it was not nationalism that was evil, it was the narrowness, selfishmness, exclusiveness, which was the bane of modern nations, which was evil.

Gandhi envisaged the setting up of an international organisation to guarantee freedom, equality and peace to all nations. He observed that there would be an international league only when all the nations, big and small, composing it, were fully independent. The nature of that independence would correspond to the extent of non-violence assimilated by the nations concerned. One thing was certain. In a society based on non-violence, the smallest nation would feel as tall as the tallest. The idea of superiority and inferiority would

be wholly obliterated. He emphasised that the only condition on which the world could live was being united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts. The United Nations Organisation, established in 1945, has been, though very haltingly, fulfilling the purpose. It has to be made strong so that defence budget of nations may be reduced appreciably. Gandhi went to the extent of recommending to nations unilateral disarmament, facing the inherent grave risk. " Some nation ", he said, " will have to disarm herself and take risks. The level of non-violence in that action, if that ever happily comes to pass, will naturally have arisen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgements will be unerring, her decisions will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself ".[41] No nation, including India, has yet come forward to act according to his suggestion. Nonetheless, his message provides the inspiration to individual nations and the United Nations alike to work for universal disarmanent, which alone guarantees international peace.

3. *The Economic Structure*

1

The Gandhian economic order, founded on the ancient Indian dictum of ' simple living and high thinking ', enunciates the philosophy of limited wants, which promotes the elimination of exploitation of man by man. The progress of materialism, as the Western civilisation amply demonstrates, does not promote true happiness and, instead, engenders and nourishes social discontent. Increase of material comforts does not in fact conduce to moral growth.

Gandhi abhorred the profit motive which is the main characteristic of modern industrialism. He rejected the view of the classical economists and the utilitarians that profit was the source of pleasure and the lack of it the source of pain. He asserted that civilisation consisted not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. It alone promoted happiness and contentment and increased capacity for service.

Ruskin also observed that country was the richest which nourished the greatest number of noble and happy human beings. He also said: " We need examples of people who seek, not greater wealth but simpler pleasure, not higher fortune but deeper felicity, making the first of possessions self-possession and honouring themselves in the harmless pride and calm pursuits of peace ".[42]

The pursuit of peace is not made easier by the progressive accumulation of material wealth. " The mind ", said Gandhi, " is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge in our passions, the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that if we set our mind after such needs, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre ".[43]

The control of the mind in relation to material wants alone leads us to happiness; those who renounce material possessions voluntarily approach the region of bliss. A man is not necessarily happy because

he is rich or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy and the poor to be happy.

Despite opulence in America, happiness is a mirage; due to excessive indulgence in material pleasures, many young people in their craze for mental poise have adopted strange attitudes towards life. Hippies and Beatles have resorted to conduct hitherto unknown. A number of boys and girls from the United States and Europe lived not long ago in the caves of Matala in the island of Crete. In a press interview, some of them declared: " We have come here to clean our minds. We are going back to America. We are going to find a piece of land somewhere, may be Northern California, and set up a commune with some other kids and farm it, and have an outhouse and a goat but no T.V. The children won't miss it. We are not rebelling against affluence; we are rebelling against how people handle affluence ".[44]

Rabindranath Tagore exclaimed: " Of what avail is it to add and add and add? By going on increasing the volume or pitch of sound, we can get nothing but a shriek. We can get music only by restraining the sound and giving it the melody of the rhythm of perfection ".[45]

Kautilya in *Arthashāstra* cautioned us that *dharma* was the basis true happiness and stressed that " the aim of all sciences is nothing but restraint of the organs of sense. Whosoever is of reverse character, whosoever has not his organs of sense under his control, will soon perish, though possessed of the whole earth bounded by the four quarters ". So, " let us not pamper our wants. Let us subjugate them. Let us conquer them. Man's ultimate objective is to be and to remain wantless. That is the truth about our economic life ".[46]

Village life, based on minimum wants, according to Gandhi, ensured happiness. He told Nehru: " We realise truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of village life. The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs and become self-sufficient ".[47]

Self-reliance rested on agriculture and cottage industries, providing employment to all. He firmly said: " If the village perishes, India will perish too. The revival of the village is possible only if it is no more exploited. Industrialisation on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villages as the problems of

competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villages using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others ".[48]

Gandhi insisted on decentralisation of production and encouragement of cottage industries so long as there was available human and animal power; he observed: " *Khâdi* mentality means decentralisation of the production and distribution of the necessaries of life. Therefore, the formula, so far evolved, is that every village is to produce all the necessaries and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities. Heavy industries will need to be centralised and nationalised. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity which will mainly be in the villages ".[49]

Gandhi desired that every village should be self-sustained economically and even wanted it to be capable of defending itself against the whole world. All facilities for worth-while living should be available in every village. There should be nothing in life worth having which would not be had in the villages. Vinoba wants all the primary requirements of life as well as most of the secondary requirements should be met by the people of the village from the village itself. Jaya Prakash Narayan insists that local production for local consumption should be encouraged even where climatic considerations render certain other areas more favourable; but obviously such production would not be for the outside market; production for distant markets robs productive effort of its essential moral value, which consists in working for the people with whom one lives and whom one knows. Production for local consumption, as Shriman Narayan points out, promotes " economic security, juster distribution, better occupational equilibrium and co-operative living ". It also develops " in every house-hold a fund of self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance, dignity, energy, initiative, courage, hope, persistence and happiness that would exalt the individual and the nation ".[50]

Villages, depending upon plantation crops or mineral exploitation, may not in toto practise the principle of self-sufficiency. They should

form a panchayat serving their common interest. On this co-operative basis, even medical and engineering goods can be produced, as suggested by Jaya Prakash Narayan.

Co-operative endeavour should inform every facet of social life, so much so every village or a group of villages must have a voluntary collective farming and small-scale industries depending upon local resources. Considerable progress in the co-operative sector has been achieved during the past ten or fifteen years in the country inasmuch as co-operative credit facilities are being progressively expanded and liberalised, and the principle is being applied also to medium-sized industries. In Maharashtra and Mysore especially, co-operative sugar factories have been functioning quite successfully. Even in Uttar Pradesh, the local government decided recently to bring into co-operative sector all the private sugar factories in the State.

2

Gandhi gave his qualified support to the use of machine for production. His opposition to it was on the ground that it should not replace human labour which in India is available abundantly. He thought that the introduction of machinery to save human labour would only aggravate the unemployment problem. He rejected the machine mentality. " What I object to ", said Gandhi, " is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on saving labour till thousands are without work and thrown on the open street to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all. Today, mechinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might ".[51]

Gandhi thought also that machinery was repugnant to decent living; it only complicated life, which should be simple. Sometime before his martyrdom, he warned against industrialism in India. He observed that he did not believe that industrialisation was necessary in any case in any country. It was much less so for India. Indeed, he believed that independent India could only discharge her duty towards a groaning

world by adopting a simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottages and living at peace with the world. High thinking, he stressed, was inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on people by Mammon worship, and all the graces of life were possible only when people learnt the art of living nobly.

Gandhi believed that machines made men their slaves. In the factories, he saw the labourers working under subhuman conditions. He thought that if the machinery craze grew in India it would become an unhappy land. Machines also made workers work like themselves; they destroyed the workers' creative and artistic faculties; they dehumanised the workers.

Labour, for Gandhi, was wealth. Under his system it was labour which was the current coin, not metal. And, any person who could use his labour had that coin, had wealth. He converted his labour into cloth; he converted his labour into grain. If he wanted paraffin oil, which he could not himself produce, he used his surplus grain for getting the oil. It was exchange of labour on free and equal terms; hence it was no robbery.

Machines, Gandhi felt, killed co-operation and promoted competition. He opined that the future of industrialism was dark. England had got successful competitors in America, France, Japan and Germany. It had competitors in the handful of mills in India, and in the course of a few years the Western nations might cease to find in Africa a dumping ground for their wares.

Machines led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. They made the rich richer and the poor poorer. He wanted the concentration of wealth not in the hands of a few but in the hands of all. He desired all to become co-sharers of the wealth produced.

Gandhi pointed out that factories created cities, which were parasites on villages. Their mass production necessitated a system of distribution which thrived on fraud and speculation. He told an American journalist: " Granting for the moment that machinery may supply all the needs of humanity, still it would concentrate production in particular areas, so that you would have to go in a round-about way to

regulate distribution, whereas if there is production and distribution both in the respective areas, where things are required, it is automatically regulated and there is less chance of fraud and speculation ".[52]

As mass production invariably led to over-production, he warned that it would bring imperialism in its train. While securing foreign markets, the industrially-strong nation dominates eventually over the weak nation politically also; trade is followed generally by the flag.

Gandhi, nonetheless, thought machines were inevitable. The body itself was the purest piece of mechanism, he said, but if it was a hindrance to the highest flights of the soul, it had to be rejected. He welcomed machinery which did not deprive masses of men of the opportunity to labour, but which helped the individual and added to his efficiency and which a man could handle at will without being its slave. So, he permitted the use of machines like the sewing machine to remove drudgery. " Singer sewing machine is ", he said, " one of the most useful things ever invented and there is a romance about the devise itself. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing and seaming with her own hands and, simply out of his love for her, he devised the sewing machine in order to save her from unnecessary labour ".[53]

As such machines can be manufactured only in large factories he wanted those factories to be state-owned. He was a socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalised. He urged that they ought only to be working under the most attractive conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive power.

Gandhi also accepted the inevitability of several categories of machinery in the present economic condition, although he contended that in an ideal society machinery should not exist at all. Pointing out that nature had not provided any way whereby we may reach a desired goal all of a sudden, he conceded that large and basic industries were necessary as they aided the manufacture of utilities. Those industries should, of course, be in the public sector. However, he believed that the socialisation of the industries would not mitigate the evils of industrialism. Contrasting his view with that of Nehru he said, " Nehru wants industrialisation because he thinks that if it is socialised,

it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that the evils are inherent in industrialism and no amount of socialisation can eradicate them ".[54]

Meghnad Saha, as a member of the National Planning Committee of the Indian National Congress, however, urged for a powerful base of heavy industries to constitute " the root and stem ", while the medium and cottage industries represented " the branches and the leaves " of the country's economy; he viewed cottage industries as feeders to large ones.

Aurobindo affirmed that technological progress was consistent with and complementary to spiritual progress; technology, he said, was working something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity; " the idea of the limit and of the impossible ", he added, " has begun to disappear, thus widening, as never before, the frontiers of human freedom ".[55]

Rabindranath Tagore ridiculed the *charkha* outlook, by saying that " if *swaraj* comes to us in the semblance of more home-spun yarn, it would be intolerable. *Swaraj* must involve many-sided creative endeavour ".[56] He insisted that " the responsibilities of life are part of the responsibilities of the material universe, and to raise to the spiritual universe we must go through them and sublimate them, instead of evading them ".[57]

Dr. K. L. Shrimali argued recently that Gandhi's rejection of industrialisation based on science and technology was not justified. He observed: " While there may be a great deal of truth in what he (Gandhi) says regarding the evils of industrialisation, we have to recognise that machine is only a tool in the hands of man. It does not act independently. While he (Gandhi) was right in insisting that the unintelligent injection of Western technology and its blind imitation may be disastrous for the Indian people, he need not have rejected industrialisation altogether. Technology could be adapted to suit Indian conditions and adjusted to fit in with the cultural norms of Indian society ".[58]

The use of the machine depends upon the wisdom of the man himself. Lewis Mumford observed that no matter how completely technics relied upon the objective procedures of the sciences, it did not

form an independent system like the universe; it existed as an element in human culture and it promised well or ill as the social groups that exploited it promised well or ill. The machine itself made no demand and held out no promises; it was the human spirit that made demands and promises. In order to reconquer the machine and subdue it to human purpose, one must first understand it and assimilate it. So far, he thought, we had embraced the machine without fully understanding it; or, like the weaker romantics, we had rejected the machine without first seeing how much of it we could intelligently assimilate.[59]

The situations when machines are unavoidable have been explained by J. C. Kumarappa. In extremely rare cases, where the life and expansion of an industry calls for aid from machines in one or other processes which cannot be performed by hand, where the fullest advantage of the raw material available can be taken only by the use of machinery, where processes involved are so heavy that it would be cruel to use man-power, where the capital equipment needed for the due carrying out of the process is beyond the means available to the artisans, where it is possible to render the needed help by resorting to the use of machinery under safeguards to make sure that no exploitation is possible and the aid is given on a service basis, there can be no objection to machine power being used, according to him.

Vinoba has also no objection to machines if the country's economy warrants their use. He volunteered once " to burn his wooden *charkha* to cook his one day's meal " if there was any other method of solving rural unemployment. His warning is that " the machine that can prove a saviour in one country may prove to be a destroyer in another; similarly, in the same country a machine may prove to be a blessing at one time and a curse at another time. "

U. N. Dhebar does not hesitate to advocate the use of science and technology if it promotes the village–oriented national economy. Gandhi himself underscored: " I entertain no fads in this (village industry) regard. All that I desire is that every citizen of India who is willing to work should be provided with employment to earn his livelihood. If electricity or even atomic energy could be used without ousting human labour and creating unemployment, I will not raise my little finger against it. I am, however, still to be convinced that this

would be possible in a country like ours where population is large and capital scarce ".[60]

Gandhi conceded that mechanisation was good when the hands were too few for the work intended to be accomplished and it was an evil when there were more hands than required for the work as was the case in India.

Owing to automation in developed countries, the problem of unemployment is assuming an alarming proportion. Galbraith called the present poverty in his country " not only annoying but a disgrace ". In the Soviet Union earnest endeavour is being made to further develop subsidiary enterprises and industries in agriculture. Arthur Lewis condemned the irrational preferences for spending lavishly on structures for using the latest techniques and for large rather than small units of operation.

The assumption that mechanisation improves employment potential is erroneous. Gunner Myrdal asserted that " the ' spread effects 'of large-scale industries are more than neutralised and negatived by the ' back-wash effects '; " there is a real risk that the slight increase in demand for labour on new modern enterprises will be more than offset by reductions in labour demands in traditional manufacturing ".[61] Endorsing specifically Gandhi's plea for strengthening rural industries, Myrdal observed: " There was an essential element of rationality in Gandhi's social and economic gospel and the programme for promoting cottage industry, as they have been evolved in the post-war era, have come more to represent purposeful and realistic planning for development ".[62] If India is to avoid the present economic condition of the developed countries which is characterised as " the tragedy of mere affluence ", the technostructure here must be humanised; it should be, as Galbraith suggests, responsive to the larger purposes of the society, and those purposes, as Shriman Narayan urges, must necessarily be cultural and spiritual in accordance with Gandhiji's ideals and programmes.

3

Simple living is the foundation for economic equality. Gandhi wanted every one to lead a good life, which necessarily meant a life

free from exploitation. He did not believe in economics which upheld Mammon worship and enabled the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak. Such economics, according to him, was a false and dismal science. He was conscious that the realisation of this goal was not easy; nevertheless " we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal, we shall find contentment and happiness and to that extent too shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society ".[63]

Gandhi desired that every one should be paid so much wages as to meet the necessaries of his living. He had no objection for an intellectual to earn more as he desired not to cramp his talents. But the bulk of that earning should be used for the benefit of the society, just as the incomes of all earning sons of the father went to the common family fund. He urged that none should convert his talents into money. " The *Swaraj* of my dream ", he underlined, " is the poor man's *swaraj*. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the moneyed men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness. You or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that *swaraj* is not *purna swaraj* until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it ".[64] What he meant by bhangis, doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others would get the same wages for an honest day's work was that each of them should get wage according to his necessity. As J. C. Kumarappa observed, " the price we pay for human labour should be calculated not on the basis of market price that will be fetched by any commodity to be produced but on what it will cost to maintain the producer ". He was thus in favour of the need-based wage. As Vinoba pointed out, " we want equality tempered with discrimination ", each should be given according to his need.

Caste, even as it is generally understood in society, is no bar to reach the ultimate goal—the presence of God. The heritage of any country, let alone India, is replete with the lives of saints born of " low " caste. They saw God face to face and their message is a beacon for

the erring humanity through the ages. The call of the saints to apprehend the Absolute is to lead a life of simplicity and sacrifice.

4

To the bread-labour theory may be linked his basic education scheme. By enabling a student to earn, while learning, it seeks to help for his all-round development. Education, to be meaningful, should enable the student to live nobly. Gandhi held that true education of the intellect could only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g., hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc. In other words, an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provided the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body went hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop-sided affair. By spiritual training, he meant education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, could take place only when it proceeded *pari passu* with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constituted an indivisible whole. He stressed that it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they could be developed piecemeal or independently of one another. He emphasised that literacy training was not enough, when he said that it " adds not an inch to one's moral height and character-building is independent of literacy training ".[65] Intellectual development without bodily growth was, for him, unbalanced and distorted education; it might easily make of one a rogue or a rascal.

His scheme of basic education centred round handicrafts. It sought to teach academic subjects through the medium of productive activity like agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and cottage industries. His plea was that students should learn the principles of self-help and self-reliance along with their academic pursuits. " The new education scheme ", he underlined, " is not a little of literary education and a little of craft. It is full education through the medium of craft ".[66] He stipulated that the basic education should be of at least seven years' duration covering all the subjects from the primary stage to the end of the high school stage " plus a vocation ". Explaining his insistence

on a vocation, he said: " The utterly false idea that intelligence can be developed only through book reading should give place to the truth that the quickest development of the mind can be achieved by artisan's work being learnt in a scientific manner. True development of the mind commences immediately the apprentice is taught at every step why a particular manipulation of the hand or a tool is required ".[67]

Gandhi also made it clear that the basic education should pay for itself; "the running expenses of this education should come from the educational process itself. He stressed that self-support was the acid test of its reality.

Gandhi had no doubt that, while the present craftless education was " a debauchery of the mind ", the basic scheme would promote " the real, disciplined development of the mind resulting in conservation of the intellectual energy and indirectly also the spiritual ".[68] On completion of the basic training, boys and girls, he expected, would be truthful, pure and healthy; they would be village-minded; their brains and hands would have been equally developed; there would be no guile in them; their intelligence would be keen but they would not be worried about earning money; they would be able to turn their hands to any task that come their way; they would not want to go into cities; having learnt the lessons of co-operation and service in the school, they would infect their surroundings with the same spirit; they would never be beggars or parasites.

Gandhi's educational scheme provided for religious instruction of a fundamental character. It was to stress what was common to all religions. His urge for moral instruction struck a discordant note in Rabindranath Tagore, who remarked: " Moral instruction is a mechanical affair like daily doses of sarsaparilla to an invalid or prescribed diet for building up bonny babies and it represents many difficulties. It cannot possibly be made attractive to a boy; it either hurts him or goes over his head and it makes him feel like a criminal in the dock. I consider moral instruction utter waste of time and effort, and I am frightened that good people should be so keen on it. It is as futile as it is disagreeable and I cannot think of anything that does more harm to society. "[69]

Gandhi envisaged the medium of instruction to be the mother

tongue. Hindi, being the *lingua franca,* should also be learnt. He preferred Hindustani to Hindi to placate Muslim sentiment. He suggested that the University education should also be craft-oriented. The learning of foreign languages at that stage was made optional.

Gandhi entertained the hope that the basic scheme, if implemented faithfully, would bring about peacefully a social revolution. He thought: " My plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding, etc., is conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the ' haves ' and the ' have-nots ' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this would be accomplished without the horrors of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanisation of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialised talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands ".[70]

Several thinkers, through the ages, have pleaded for craft-oriented education. Bentham presented his scheme of Chrestomathia which was " conducive to useful learning ". It was founded on utility in life; it eschewed pure intellectual discipline; it even favoured the rejection of classical teaching; it was all for scientific bias.

Gunnar Myrdal supported the Gandhi scheme when he wrote: " The basic-oriented primary education could be the ideal solution to the much needed reform of the curriculum and teaching methods in the Indian primary school. Such a school would have roots and its isolation from the community at large would be lessened; it would encourage the teacher to participate in the life of the community and exert his influence towards changing attitudes; and, most important for effective teaching, it would give all children the experience of per-

forming purposeful work with their hands, which would also help to counteract prejudices against manual work. Undoubtedly, Gandhi's philosophy of basic education and similar movements in other South Asian countries represent a much needed revolt against the wasteful treadmill of the inherited primary schools ".[71]

The Kothari Commission on Education also recommended a ' work-experience ' scheme which is not very different from the Gandhi scheme.

Pleading for incorporating the basic scheme in the system of primary and secondary education Shriman Narayan cautioned: " Unless we reorient our educational institutions towards productive activities, in the villages as well as in the cities, and combine academic teaching with creative work, we shall be generating a complex and explosive conditions of educated unemployment and low productivity which are bound to imperil the very existence of our socialist democracy ".[72]

The prevailing wide-spread student unrest is an eloquent commentary on the futility of the present bookish educational system. The student cry everywhere has been for an employment-oriented education system.

5

Gandhi thought that the key to economic equality was non-possession, but he was aware of the impossibility of its realisation, because " from the standpoint of pure truth, the body too is a possession ". " Theoretically, when there is perfect love ", he said, " there must be non-possession. The body is our last possession. So, a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed, if he is prepared to embrace death and renounce his body for the sake of human service. In actual life, however, we can hardly exercise perfect love, for the body, as a possession, will always remain with us. Man will ever remain imperfect and it will always be his part to try to be perfect. So, that perfection in love or non-possession will remain an unattainable ideal as long as we are alive, but towards which we must ceaselessly strive ".[73] His plea, therefore, was for the minimum of possession. The golden rule for non-possession, which he laid down, was " resolutely to refuse to have what the millions cannot "; he said: " This ability

to refuse will not descend upon us all of a sudden. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to re-arrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality ".[74]

Linked with non-possession is non-stealing. Taking or keeping articles not required, according to Gandhi, is also thieving. Stealing was, for him, indistinguishable from possession beyond one's dire need.

The concept of non-possession is at variance with the utilitarian standpoint. Bentham was opposed to dispossession of one's property rights. " When the legislator ", he said, " does not interfere with them, he does all that is essential to the happiness of society ". J. S. Mill, however, held: " The institution of property, when limited to its essential elements, consists in the recognition, in each person, of a right to the exclusive disposal of what he or she has produced by his or her own exertions, except where positive evil to others would result from it ".

Gandhi emphasised that one can possess only what the society allows; he did not recognise " any right to private ownership of property except insofar as it may be permitted by society for its welfare ".[75] What is not allowed for private possession must be appropriated to the society. " The only justification ", as T. H. Green remarked, " is that it contributes on the whole to social well-being ". J. S. Mill wanted " the healing of the standing feud between capital and labour; the transformation of human life, from a conflict of classes, struggling for opposite interests, to a friendly rivalry in the pursuit of a good common to all; and the conversion of each human being's daily occupation into a school of the social sympathies and the practical intelligence. "[76] He favoured the association of labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital and working under managers elected and removable by themselves. He believed that the co-operative system contained in itself the good and not the bad of capitalism.

Gandhi went a step further by propounding the theory of trusteeship to mitigate the evil of capitalism as an alternative to the socialist demand for expropriation. It was to avoid confiscation that the doctrine of trusteeship came into play retaining for the society the ability of

the original owner in his own right. He urged both capital and labour to work not only as mutual trustees but also as joint trustees on behalf of the consumers. He insisted that the wealth accumulated by a few should belong to the society at large. " What belongs to me ", he said, " is the right to an honourable livelihood, no better than that enjoyed by millions. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community ".[77]

He conceded that absolute trusteeship was an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point and was, therefore, unattainable, but ' 'if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realising the state of equality on earth than by any other method ".[78] He called upon the wealthy people to make their choice between class war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. He told them that 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. What was needed, he explained, was not the extinction of landlords and capitalists, but a transformation of the existing relationship between them and the masses into something healthier and purer.

Gandhi's theory is by no means new. The Bhagavata asserts that we have a claim only to so much as would satisfy our hunger; if one desires more, he is a thief deserving punishment. The Gita urges one, who desires salvation, to act like a trustee who, though having control over great possessions, regards not an iota of them as his own. Christ also stressed that property was held in trust from God; " all life becomes a proving of loyalty and love to Him through loyal love to one's brother man ".

Gandhi was not opposed to capital; he wanted capital for the economic advancement of the country. But what he opposed was capitalism, the evil of exploitation which it constituted. What he opposed was its use for the benefit of a few. He said that capital was by itself not an evil; it was its wrong use that was evil; capital in some form or other would always be needed. He did not decry the merits of earning either. He supported those who earned by the gifts they possessed. " Society ", he said, " will be poorer if it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth ". He

also pointed out that capitalists could not altogether be blamed for what they were. Those who allowed themselves to be exploited could not be absolved of their responsibility. Thus, each was responsible for the perpetuation of the other. But the remedy lay in their realisation of mutual responsibility. He told mill-owners that they were not exclusive owners of mills and workmen were equal sharers in ownership; likewise he told zamindars that the ownership of their land belonged as much to the ryots as to them. He did not demur the existence of class divisions but wanted them to be horizontal, not vertical.

Gandhi suggested three ways of implementing the trusteeship doctrine. The first was voluntary sacrifice, the second persuasion and the last, if unavoidable, the State action. As he had inexhaustible faith in the goodness of human nature, he believed it was possible to reform the rich by non-violent method. " In the application of the method of non-violence, one must believe in the possibility of every person, however depraved, being reformed under humane and skilled treatment ", he observed.

If a zamindar refused to reform himself, the tenants, Gandhi enjoined, should not shirk to resort to non-co-operation. When they refused to till the land, the zamindar would be obliged to hire outsiders but the latter should be persuaded to see their error and make common cause with the evicted tenants.

Gandhi advocated the same method in the industrial sector also. He advised the capitalists: " You should hold your riches as a trust to be used solely in the interest of those who sweat for you and to whose industry and labours you owe all your position and prosperity. I want you to make labourers co-partners of your wealth ". Urging them to realise that labour was superior to capital, he said: " Labour is free of capital and captial has to woo labour, and it would not matter in the slightest degree that capital has guns and even poison gas at its disposal. Capital would still be perfectly helpless if labour would assert its dignity by making good its ' no '. Labour does not need to retaliate, but labour stands defiant receiving the bullets and poison gas and still insists upon its ' no '. "[80]

He had himself organised labour strikes successfully and had, therefore, no doubt about their efficacy as a weapon of non-violence.

When the employers complained that labour strikes ruined the industry, his advice to them was that they should at once offer the strikers full control of the concern which was as much the strikers' as theirs.

Gandhi had, however, no high hope of his theory being fully implemented. " It is highly probable that my advice will not be accepted and my dream will not be realised. Trusteeship, as I conceive it, has yet to prove its worth ".[81] Hence, he recommended state control as superior to unrestricted private enterprise. Even where the trusteeship principle was in operation, he wanted the State to fix the commission at a low level if it could not voluntarily be done by the party itself. He wanted also the state to step in while nominating the trustees' heirs. The trustees' right to nominate their heirs might not be taken away entirely but the choice must be finalised by the State. Such arrangement put a check on the State as well as the individual.

He did not hesitate to advocate the confiscation of property in extreme cases even without compensation. At the meeting of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference in London on November 19, 1931, he declared that, if the national government decided, " they (the propertied class) will be dispossessed and they will be dispossessed, I may tell you, without any compensation, because, if you want this government to pay compensation, it will have to rob Peter to pay Paul and that would be impossible ".[82] Explaining his stand later, he observed: " I would be very happy indeed if the people concerned behaved as trustees, but if they fail, I believe we shall have to deprive them of their possessions through the State with the minimum exercise of violence. That is why I said at the Round Table Conference that every vested interest must be subjected to scrutiny and confiscation ordered where necessary with or without compensation as the case demanded ".[83] As observed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi recently, Gandhi's theory of trusteeship " went much farther than anything we contemplate under socialism. For instance, Gandhiji felt that many buildings and other things can be taken over and he did not believe in compensation for them ".[84]

A few months before his martyrdom, Gandhi noted that the society was adopting, though slowly, the trusteeship doctrine, as it was proceeding towards Panchayat raj. He was sure that the capitalist class would

in course of time become a spent force. He said: " They (the capitalist class) are certainly moving in that direction (of trusteeship). It can, however, be asked whether the present *Rajas* and others can be expected to become trustees of the poor. If they do not become trustees of their own accord, force of circumstances will compel the reform unless they court utter destruction. When Panchayat raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the zamindars, the capitalists and the Rajas can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realise their own strength. If the people non-co-operate with the evil of zamindari or capitalism, it must die of inanition ".[85]

As a believer in the organised power of the masses and the possibility of State policies being influenced by popular will, Gandhi was not opposed entirely to State ownership, but he insisted that it should be the very minimum. Like Gandhi, T. H. Green also feared State ownership as it implied a complete regulation of life incompatible with a free morality. His prescription, therefore, was: " Property should, if possible, be got rid of, when the possession of property by one man interferes with the possession of property by another. "

To enable everybody to get rid of his possession and employ it for the benefit of the community, Vinoba launched the *sarvodaya* movement which has widened the scope of trusteeship so as to bring within its fold all sections of people. Vinoba pointed out that it tended to make people self-reliant as well as to strengthen the grass-roots of democracy. If the movement succeeds, there will emerge self-sufficient agro-industrial villages paving the way for the end of the machine age. Up to now, over 60,000 villages, including a number of compact taluks and districts, have adopted the mode of community–living based on self-help, trusteeship and co-operative endeavour. " The *gramdan* movement ", said D. R. Gadgil, " is an unprecedented movement with many complex implications and very great potentialities ". Louis Fischer described it as " the most creative thought coming out of the East. "

6

For the success of the self-reliant rural economy, *swadeshi* spirit must pervade the atmosphere. *Swadeshi* spirit, according to Gandhi,

is " that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings, to the exclusion of the more remote ". Politically, it is a principle of enlightened patriotism demanding the performance of one's duties towards his neighbours. From economic point of view, it recommends the use of those things that are produced locally to the exclusion of foreign ones.

Gandhi wanted the people to use indigenous goods with religious fervour. *Swadeshi* spirit, he underlined, should not give rise to ill-will towards any other country. Loving one's country is not to hate another. Goods which cannot be manufactured within the country, if required, should be imported, he insisted. " To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign and to go on wasting national time and money in the promotion, in one's own country, of manufactures for which it is not suited would be criminal folly and a negation of the *swadeshi* spirit ", he said and went on: " *Swadeshi* is in no sense narrow, for I buy from every part of the world what is needed for my growth. I refuse to buy from anybody anything however nice or beautiful if it interferes with my growth or injures those whom Nature has made my first care ".[86]

In village economy, *khadi* occupied a vital position as a cottage industry. As C. F. Andrews pointed out, the sole claim advanced on its behalf was that it alone offered an immediate, practicable and permanent solution of the problem of idleness...owing to lack of a suitable occupation supplementary to agriculture and the chronic starvation of the masses that resulted therefrom ". Supporting the *swadeshi* principle generally, Andrews observed that it made for contentment with local conditions and with the things that God had provided for man's sustenance, instead of the ruthless exploitation of other countries to obtain unnecessary luxuries, thus overthrowing their own internal economic equilibrium and introducing discord.

The question how service to one's neighbour is also service to humanity has been answered by Gandhi himself. When one serves his neighbour, the latter should serve his neighbour. " Thus considered, it will spread like the proverbial snow-ball gathering strength in geometrical progression, encircling the whole earth ".[87]

Gandhi favoured statutory protection for *swadeshi* industries; he said: "I hate legislative interference in any department of life. At best, it is the lesser evil. But I would tolerate, welcome, indeed plead for, a stiff protective duty upon foreign goods."[88] Such protection is inevitable for indigenous industries, especially at their infant stage.

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84. Speech reported in " The Hindu ", Madras, dated Oct. 6, 1969, p. 1.
85. Harijan, June, 1, 1947.
86. Young India, March 12, 1925.
87. Harijan, July 23, 1947.
88. Speeches and Writings, p. 342.

CHAPTER 8

Some Reflections

Gandhi's message to humanity is to practise love or truth and non-violence in their daily life, so that the Kingdom of God may be established in this very world. He conceived of a world which was classless and casteless and where all the people led in perfect freedom simple and spiritual life. He believed in the oneness of humanity and, therefore, called upon the people to strive for the welfare of all, sinking all their political, economic and social differences. As Sorokin observed, " an increased production, accumulation and circulation of love energy in the whole universe is a necessary condition for the prevention of new wars and for the alleviation of enormously increased inter-individual and inter-group strife ".

Gandhi's ultimate ideal of *Sarvodaya*, as he himself conceded, is unrealisable but he insisted that its value is in pointing out the direction. Striving after the ideal is the very essence of practising his philosophy. He wanted constant and honest effort in thought, word and deed with a view to its fulfilment. The very act of pursuing it generates the good-will essential for the wellbeing of corporate life.

Gandhi was a practical idealist. He evolved, arising out of practical experience of day-to-day problems and finding solutions thereto, a

complete picture of a non-violent society, which ensured to all what was absolutely necessary for contented and peaceful living and which would not create conditions of competition and conflict. He was not for the multiplication of wants. He emphasised that self-control was the key to happier and higher life. He himself by self-control rose from an erring and faltering condition to become, as Joad said, " a moral genius ".

Gandhi has been acclaimed as a prophet, who lived far ahead of his time. The years to come are expected to show that the world can survive only on the basis of love or truth and non-violence. History has thus far demonstrated that hatred or untruth and violence have not been able to solve the world problem of peace. Gandhi has shown a new way for its solution. As Douglas MacArthur observed, " in the evolution of civilisation, if it is to survive, all men cannot fail eventually to adopt his (Gandhi's) belief that the process of mass application of force to resolve contentious issues is fundamentally not only wrong but contains within itself the germs of self-destruction ". Einstein affirmed, " Gandhi demonstrated that a powerful human following can be assembled not only through the cunning game of the usual political manoeuvres and trickeries but through the cogent example of a morally superior conduct of life. In our time of utter moral decadence, he was the only statesman to stand for a higher human relationship in the political sphere ". Stafford Cripps remarked: " I know of no other man of any time or indeed in recent history who so forcibly and convincingly demonstrated the power of spirit over material things ". George Marshall hailed him as the spokesman for the conscience of all mankind.

Gandhi urged for the realisation of the new possibilities of peace. " If we are to make progress, we must not merely repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors ". The cosmic process, as S. Radhakrishnan stressed, is yet unfinished and the end of history is the final establishment of the Kingdom of God.

The concepts of truth and non-violence, upheld by Gandhi, are by no means new to us. Their observance as a rule of private morality and personal conduct has been insisted upon by the Upanishads. The

Mahabharata proclaimed truth and non-violence as the highest *dharma* and enjoined on the people to practise it. Jainism and Buddhism have adopted them as their cardinal principles. Christ and Mohamed also preached the gospel of love. *Dharma,* as C. Rajagopalachari emphasises, " is the mariner's compass of life; it is that which makes the human family one and makes it also one with the rest of living beings ". Gandhi sought to spread this message of *dharma* and prove its potency to resolve social conflicts and effect social change.

Gandhi endeavoured to spiritualise all human activity. He did not believe that the spiritual law worked in a field of its own. On the contrary, it expressed itself through the ordinary activities of life: It affected the economic, social and political fields. It was also to eliminate the split personality of man. It was to redeem him from the dilemma of " I know the right but I cannot adopt it; I know the wrong but I cannot abstain from it ". Man, as S. Radhakrishnan points out, is a duality; he is capable of doing great things and of doing very low things also; he is at once the crown of creation as well as the scum of it; this dichotomy in his nature has to be overcome; man must become one; when it happens, there is the fulfilment of man.[1]

Gandhi was a devout Hindu but his religion was universal; he believed in the universality of all religions and respected all of them alike. As S. Radhakrishnan urges, " those who profess to be religious must understand that religion required a great deal of self-denial; it is not something which we can buy; we do not become religious simply because we mutter some hymns or go to temples or churches ; true religion means the unmaking of your lower self; and the remaking of your higher self; it is putting yourself in conformity with the spirit of the Divine"[2]. For Gandhi, religion was lived truth; " Truth is God ".

Gandhi's total concern was the individual; he gave the greatest importance to the flowering of the individual. If individuals were strong, the society would automatically be strong. A chain is as strong as its weakest link and a system is as good as the individuals working it. He believed that no society could possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. Even those who did not believe in the liberty of the individual believed in their own!

Gandhi insisted that the freedom of the individual was conditioned by the freedom of the other individuals in society. Individualism should be governed by the requirements of social progress; we must strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. If individuals are free, the society which comprises them is also free. Only a free people can grow to their full stature, not only materially but also spiritually.

Gandhi wanted political freedom, economic equality and social justice to all the inhabitants not only of India but of all nations. His ideal was global. Discrimination anywhere destroyed peace everywhere.

2

Gandhi evolved the ' matchless ' weapon of *Satyāgraha* to rid the world of all ills plaguing the mankind. It is a " complete, effective and bloodless substitute for armed revolt ".[3] Its techniques are weapons in the armoury of love to transform the adversary to see truth as the *satyāgrahi* sees and insist for their success upon adequate training. They should be employed after exhausting all other peaceful avenues and only if dictated by inner voice or conscience. " Our first duty ", as Laski urged, " is to be true to our conscience ". " Disobedience to the law of the State ", Gandhi underscored, " becomes a peremptory duty when it comes in conflict with the law of God". " The submission to a State law wholly or largely unjust ", he said, " is an immoral barter of liberty ". No lover of freedom can ever submit to an unjust law of the State and he should, if he is true to himself, break it, regardless of consequences. By so doing, he educates the people and awakens them to their rights. It is not, however, easy to detect the inner voice and listen to it. A man who has surrendered completely to God alone is able to do so.

One cannot be a *satyāgrahi* without having a living faith in it. It is doubtful whether those who participated in one or other campaigns had such a faith. Certain amount of faith is required even to adopt it as an expedient. J. B. Kripalani admitted that he, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and other leaders had mental reservations on the efficacy of non-violence. Subhas Chandra Bose rejected it openly and even K. M. Munshi expressed to Gandhi his lack of faith in it.

The aim of *satyāgraha,* whatever may be its form, should be definite to the opponent, who should also be able to grant it. What is not in the opponent's power cannot be sought after; such an attempt becomes obviously futile. The demand should be the minimum to prove the essentially defensive character of *satyāgraha.*

Gandhi abhorred secrecy in *satyāgraha.* Secrecy nourishes untruth; a votary of truth cannot adopt dubious methods; open diplomacy is his sheet-anchor; fraud, falsehood, etc., cannot be in his armoury. It is open rebellion. Gandhi always gave an ultimatum before he resorted to non-violent action. " The more open you are ", said Gandhi, " the more truthful you are likely to be"[4]. Upton Close characterised Gandhi's technique as " the world's greatest example of political straight-forwardness; " " Gandhi is the only true follower of the ideal of open diplomacy openly arrived at"[5].

The effect of *satyāgraha* has ever to be moral pressure, never coercion. Coercion means physical violence. Gandhi did not want non-violent action to cause even mental violence; he called mental coercion as *durāgraha.* Mental violence is often more dangerous than physical violence. " Non-violence coerces as well as violence, sometimes even more terribly ", said Jawaharlal Nehru. C. M. Case opined non-co-operation, strike and boycott were forms of coercive suffering. Arthur Moore called *satyāgraha* as mental violence, while H. G. Wells characterised it as open conspiracy.

Fasting, as a political weapon, smacks of coercion. When Gandhi undertook fasts to convert Ambedkar and Virawala, both of them bitterly complained of immoral pressure on them. When fast is sought to exert its pressure on affectionate ones, it often acts as a weapon of coercion; the affectionate ones are not to reason but to save the life of the *satyāgrahi.* Why did not Gandhi fast to bend either Jinnah or Churchill? As they had no love for him, he could not obviously employ it against them. Morarji Desai, however, believes that fasting is of value even in the conditions of modern life. He says: " A fast should be undertaken only for the purpose of weaning a person away from a wrong attitude, an attitude calculated to harm society. Thus, it would be right to go on fast to restore peace in the community, to assuage violent feelings over specific issues, even to prevent the government's

resorting to violent action, like firing on a large-scale, to curb disturbances. Individual who goes on a fast should entertain no other thought than that he is doing his duty towards his fellowmen."[6]

Satyāgraha need not be a political campaign. It may be employed to end a social or an economic evil. It is a sovereign remedy to end any injustice. If the Vykom *satyāgraha* was launched to remove a social evil, the Bardoli *satyāgraha* aimed at removing an economic injustice. To deal with communal riots, Gandhi advocated the formation of peace brigade or *shānti sena*; the men of that brigade were to intervene between rioting elements and offer themselves as sacrifice, if the situation warranted. Their duty was to preach peace and persuade the violent elements to return to the path of peace. If they refused, the volunteers of the *shānti sena* should be ready to lay down their lives in the process of realising their objective. Gandhi advised Negroes and Jews to resist racial discrimination non-violently; Martin Luther King Jr. wielded the weapon effectively. Akalis and Arya Samajists also offered *satyāgraha*.

The essential feature of *satyāgraha* is active non-co-operation with evil. The withdrawal of co-operation and support results in complete paralysis of the evil itself. Calling for the boycott of British goods during the non-co-operation movement, Gandhi said that to trade with the evil-door was to co-operate with him and to be accessory to his immorality. No government or any authority can work in an atmosphere of non-co-operation. Without the consent of the governed, no government can govern; no sooner the subject sheds his fear and withdraws co-operation, than the ruler should take to his heels.

Satyāgraha never promotes chaos. Its basic objective is to secure peaceful change. The change should come about progressively. It should be as natural as " the dropping of a fully ripe fruit from a well-matured tree ". *Satyāgraha* never destroys the wrong-doer; it seeks to reform him. It does not also aim at the destruction of property. Gandhi disapproved completely the burning of post offices, railway stations, etc. He observed: " Even a national government will be unable to carry on for a day, if everybody claimed the right to destroy bridges, communications, roads, etc. The evil resides not in bridges, roads, etc., which are inanimate, but in men. It is the latter, who need

to be tackled. The destruction of bridges by means of explosives does not touch the evil but only provokes a worse evil in the place of one which it seeks to end. Sabotage is a form of violence ".[7]

Satyāgraha is essentially for individuals and groups, who cherish life-long faith in its efficacy. " Numbers do not matter in *satyāgraha*. Even a handful of true *satyāgrahis*, well-organised and disciplined through self-less service of the masses, can win independence of India ", Gandhi observed.[8]

Through the ages, there had been individual *satyāgrahis;* such are Socrates and Christ. Those non-conformists who showed rare intellectual courage and integrity are ever an asset of mankind. How group *satyāgraha* can uphold the glory of non-violence was amply demonstrated by those who raided the Dharsana salt depot in 1930. The Bardoli *satyāgraha* was successful because of the efficient leadership of Vallabhbhai Patel, who was able to inculcate the requisite faith in the villagers and discipline them to face and defeat the might of the State.

Lack of faith in the masses in the efficacy of non-violence and their consequent failure to practise it adequately led to the failure of both the non-co-operation movement and the civil disobedience movement. This failure affirms that mass action should never be resorted to without adequate preparation; in spite of all precautions there is always the risk of an outbreak of popular violence. A corporate non-violent action, asserts M. Ruthnaswamy, is an impossibility; under excitement of emotions, masses lose all restraint and cannot be depended upon to resort to direct action against the exploiters without being provoked into retaliation. It is a Himalayan blunder to place the remedy of civil disobedience in the hands of those who lack the habit of willing obedience to the law without fear of its sanctions; resisters, as Gandhi insisted, must be ready quietly to bear all punishments and stand all repression till the oppressor is tired.

Where mass action cannot succeed, individual or group action can succeed. Gandhi said: " The chief distinction between mass civil disobedience and individual civil resistance is that in the latter every one is a complete independent unit and his fall does not affect the others; in mass civil resistance the fall of one generally adversely affects

the rest. Again, in mass civil resistance leadership is essential; in individual civil resistance every resister is his own leader. Then again, in a mass civil resistance there is a possibility of failure; in individual civil resistance, failure is an impossibility. Finally, a State may cope up with a mass civil resistance, but no State has yet been found able to cope up with individual civil resistance. Civil disobedience is essentially an individual affair and so long as there is even one civil resister offering resistance, the movement of civil disobedience cannot die and must succeed in the end."[9]

Civil disobedience can be either defensive or offensive in character. It is defensive when resorted to in the performance of a normal duty or offensive when employed to violate law and meet its consequences. Explaining the point, Gandhi said: " The individual civil disobedience is a disobedience of orders or laws by a single individual or an ascertained number of group of individuals. Therefore, a prohibited public meeting where admission is allowed is an instance of individual civil disobedience, whereas a prohibited public meeting to which the general public is admitted without any restriction is an instance of mass civil disobedience. Such civil disobedience is defensive when a prohibited public meeting is held for conducting a normal activity, although it may result in arrest. It would be aggressive if it is held not for any normal activity but merely for the purpose of courting arrest and imprisonment."

The offensive civil disobedience is obviously a very dangerous weapon. It embarrasses and vexes the opponent and should, therefore, be avoided if the latter is in difficulty. It can be undertaken to remove a serious injustice when all peaceful means have been exhausted and when it is clear beyond doubt that there is no escape from non-violent resistance.

Satyāgraha does not require money; it plays least part. Gandhi firmly believed that no movement or activity which had at its helm true and good men ever stopped or languished for want of funds. Financial stability, he contended, led to spiritual bankruptcy.[10]

Satyāgraha's scope in a democracy is very limited, as people's grievances in such a set up have to be redressed through discussion in the legislature. As Zakir Husain observed, " a genuine democracy

provides within its own structure the apparatus for constituted and legitimate protests". Such expressions of discontent should be conceived through genuine non-violent method. Gandhi said after India won freedom that " *satyāgraha,* civil disobedience and fasts have restricted use in a democracy. They cannot even be thought of whilst the government is settling down and the communal distemper is still stalking from one province to another ".[11] He stressed that " civil disobedience and non-co-operation are designed for use when people have no political power. But immediately they have political power, naturally their grievances, whatever their character, will be ameliorated through legislative channels ". He, however, cautioned that " if the legislature proves itself to be incapable of safeguarding the *kisans'* interests, they will, of course, always have the sovereign remedy of civil disobedience and non-co-operation.[12] Green stressed: " There may be a duty of resistance in public interest in extreme cases, though there is no hope of the resistance finding efficient popular support ".[13]

Democracy is nearest to a moral order; *vox populi, vox dei* (the voice of the people is the voice of God). When democracy fails to carry out that which promotes the people's welfare, a peaceful direct action becomes a duty. No majority can always be right in its decisions and it may sometimes violate the legitimate aspirations or rights of particular minority groups. In such a circumstance the group involved can resort to non-violent action. Thus, non-violent action aids to correct the majority's wrong; it serves as a positive contribution for the promotion of democracy itself; by resorting to non-violent action, the *satyāgrahi* co-operates with the Government to keep anarchy away.

In a perfect democracy, non-violent action becomes superfluous; but it is yet non-existent. However, an atmosphere of non-violence is *sine qua non* for the success of democracy; violence annihilates democracy. R. R. Diwakar calls democracy and non-violence as " indivisible twins ". U. N. Dhebar points out that there is an unbreakable link between democracy and non-violence which needs to be strengthened in the interest of human survival with dignity. M. C. Chagla rejects the right to revolt in a democracy; he insists: " you must work within the constitution. That question of revolt can only arise if the people as a whole come to the conclusion that the democratic system itself

should be scrapped. The individual has the right, under certain conditions, to put his conscience above everything and to offer *satyāgraha,* but he should be prepared to pay the price, even the ultimate price, for it. But, a free and democratic people must find their organised collective conscience in their parliament. Organised agitation by groups is not to be confused with *satyāgraha.*"[14]

Does *satyāgraha* prove ineffective against a dictatorship? It does not, because there is no defeat for soul-force. Should there be a defeat, it means the *satyāgrahi* lacked requisite soul-force. In *satyāgraha,* victory is directly proportionate to the suffering undergone. " It is, therefore, a matter of rule of three to find out the exact amount of non-violence required to melt the harder hearts of the Fascists and the Nazis, if it is assumed that the so-called democracies melt before a given amount of non-violence."[15]

The Marxists believe in the inevitability of violence to bring about a revolutionary social change. " Force is indispensable " says Boris Nicholaivsky, " because it is the only means to dispossess the bourgeoisie, which throttles the progress of society, of the instruments of social production. The State, which is the governmental arm of the nation's industry, is the product and the manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The source of power of the State lies in an armed force which is not identical with or a part of the working population but is separate from it. The liberation of the oppressed class is impossible without the destruction of the machinery of the State power ". Gandhi rejects violence as a method of resolving conflicts. Violence always leads to counter-violence; it does not solve differences but suppresses them temporarily. Contrarily, as Gandhi says, " non-violence has checks that automatically work for the vindication of truth and justice on whichever side these may be in a preponderating measure. Victory thus inevitably goes to the party in the right."[17]

Gandhi advocated voluntary exile or *hijrat* for those who were unable to put up with repression; that was the only way of living without surrendering self-respect. He advised *hijrat* to *satyāgrahis* of Bardoli in 1928 and of Junagadh in 1939. But, *hijrat* does not offer a solution to violence. *Satyāgrahi* should not run away but face violence and perish in the process, if inevitable.

The matchless quality of the weapon of *satyāgraha* has yet to be established as man has not become perfect enough to wield it. Even Gandhi, its author, himself admitted his failure. His failure is not, however, the failure of the *satyāgraha* technique. Just because one is still unable to prove its efficacy beyond doubt, it cannot altogether be rejected. Progressive training, inculcation of discipline and attainment of efficiency help the realisation of the goal. Every little step in the direction of the goal takes the *satyāgrahi* nearer to it. No effort is a waste; reward is proportionate to the effort made.

3

Gandhi's non-violent society envisages a world of self-reliant villages, whose inhabitants practise in their daily life the lofty principle of universal brotherhood. His non-violent society has no national boundaries; it embraces the whole of mankind, although he had India in his mind while expatiating upon his concept of such a society. It is the Kingdom of God on earth.

His non-violent policy has the village as the centre, self-governing and self-sufficient.

The village for him was not a territorial entity; it was a face-to-face community; the lives of villagers were so interwoven that the individual good and the common good completely coalesced. As Jaya Prakash Narayan explains, " in a true community, there is communion, i.e., sharing, participation and fellowship; there is identity of interest; a feeling of unity in the midst of diversity; a sense of freedom within the frame-work of accepted social responsibilities, differentiation of functions converging to the single goal of the good of the community and its members. Everyone in the community has a share in its fortunes and misfortunes ".[18]

Being wedded to individualism, Gandhi naturally opposed statism and, in consequence, wanted the authority of the government to go; he did not countenance the role of the supervisor-general of society. As such a state was not feasible, he allowed the minimum of governmental control. That control, he insisted, should be in consonance with the will of the people. Hence, he supported the democratic form of administration. He was not, however, in favour of the majority

rule as it tended to be tyrannical. He favoured the principle of consensus so that both the majority and the minority might compose their differences and strike a compromise aimed at welfare of all.

Truth must inform democratic rule. It is the voice of conscience; it resides in every human heart and one has to search for it there and be guided by it. Can truth be different to different persons? So far as the absolute Truth is concerned, there can be no difference whatsoever. But, in work-a-day life, due to different degrees of manifestation of universal love, truth appears to be elusive. Hence, it is argued that " no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth ". Gandhi never sought to coerce anybody to accept his view; his attempt had ever been to awaken the conscience of his opponent.

A man of conscience need fear none; he need not bother about the majority or the minority opinion. He can and must exercise his individual freedom, because, as Bruno Leoni observes, " we ought always to remember wherever majority rule is unnecessarily substituted for individual choice, democracy is in conflict with individual freedom; it is this particular kind of democracy that ought to be kept to a minimum in order to preserve a maximum of democracy compatible with individual freedom ".[19] When he thus opposes the majority or the social will, he invites inevitably on himself the wrath of the State. He has got to pay that price for his martyrdom. Socrates and Jesus, standing by their conscience, paid the penalty of their life. Gandhi himself, in vindication of the dictates of his conscience, suffered under the ' satanic ' British rule of India and, at the end, fell to a fanatic's bullets.

In an ideal society, political parties have no role to play; but in a representative democracy they are inevitable. Parties based on ideologies, competing with each other to promote the welfare of the people, will be beneficial to the society. As people have naturally gregarious instinct, like-minded people unite in a common endeavour to realise a common goal. What is detestable, however, is the existence of many political parties without clear-cut ideologies or policies and without the command of an adequate following. Such parties can hardly influence the course of administration; they not only create confusion in the public mind but also weaken the democratic structure of governance.

Parties, well-organised and sufficiently strong are essential as specialised agencies of the people; they are to function as the voice of the people. Without their active service, democracy cannot be fruitful; they play the dual role of educating both the electorate and the administration on their mutual rights and responsibilities. They, however, need to be kept under check, on account of their acts of omission and commission, by an enlightened electorate. Politicians whose thought and action are informed by patriotism, wisdom and self-sacrifice are any day an asset to any country. An enlightened administration, as Appleby urges, " is not to be had by throwing out the politicians; it can be achieved by substituting the highgrade politicians for inferior ones ".[20]

With the system of representative democracy goes the system of elections, although it may rightly be attacked as fostering ill-will and corruption. The plea for consensus was criticised by Susanne Hoeber Rudolph thus: " To many Indians, finding a consensus appears to sustain and foster community solidarity and mutual accommodation, while adversary proceedings appear to sacrifice community harmony because they establish only partial sentiments of community purpose and interest. This is too extreme a juxtaposition, because adversary proceedings usually rest upon substantial, if latent, community agreement, on values and procedures, while finding a consensus often involves latent partiality and coercion. But the matter of appearance is important, for it reflects the moral standard by which the processes are judged; many Indians see the traditional way as moral and the modern as evil ".[21] Where people are all known face to face, as for example, in a village or an organisation, the element of consensus may succeed, if sincerely tried, but in a vast country like India, with over 68 crores of population having varied interests and outlook, it is well neigh impracticable. It is not possible in every case to select the five best servants of the society for the village panchayat by consensus. The village today is not that happy family which it should be. No village is free from clash of personalities, although on policies there may be broad agreement. This clash of personalities " can easily introduce into politics violence and bitterness which more impersonal polices will avoid; they are in fact the open road to dictatorship. And one of the advantages of strict party organisation is precisely that it tends

to depersonalise political controversy and to keep the struggle within the field of principles and collective interests".[22]

After India won political freedom in 1947, there had so far been four general elections and candidates at each time far outnumbered the number of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures. Leaders, themselves divided as between different political parties, were hardly those who could strive for the consensus. Despite objectionable methods employed by many candidates and their agents, the electorate at each time proved quite worldly-wise, although part of it was illiterate. The very fact that may corrupt candidates and parties were rejected at the polls is proof positive of the existence of a sound electorate. The elections constitute a sure process of purifying the political life of a country periodically. The concept of consensus oftentimes allows mutual adjustments and helps to create and perpetuate bossism. Periodical purging of the undesirable elements or at least partial eclipse of them from active public life without, in consequence, promoting either bitterness or hatred, is desirable to keep democracy in fine fettle.

Gandhi was not altogether opposed to legislation; all that he wanted was that it should be voluntarily self-imposed. Such imposition conduces to disciplined social life. In a democracy, law proceeds from the will of the society; it does not emerge *ex nihilo;* it expresses the sense of right of the people; it is "an actually achieved valuation of interests"; it helps to bring about conditions desired by the society; it ensures social harmony. The unregulated man, as Murchison points out, has no social life; "dining out, theatre-going, church attendance, love-making, family life, education all have rules that must be kept". A good law, as Harold Laski underscores, has three attributes—justice, which is the formal announcement by the legal sovereign; political, which implies acceptance or endorsement of the announcement by those to whom it applies; and ethical, which demands that the decision announced square with the community's sense of right. Every piece of legislation has a background; it rises from a matrix of influences of customs and traditions as well as social urges. In the statute book, "the state merely writes new sentences and here and there merely scratches out an old one; much of the book was never written by the State at all; the State can no more reconstitute the law as a whole, than a man can remake his body", as MacIver observes.

Legislation, no doubt, implies an element of coercion; but that coercion becomes necessary in the larger interests of society. Those few who deliberately seek to defy the law or those few who are indifferent to it have to be enlightened by the processes of law. The punishment corrects the erring person. How a lapse may be corrected by paying the penalty imposed by law may be explained, in the words of Bosanquet, thus: "If by casual action in the realm of duties, I commit some slip and if, therefore, I suffer the shock of a legal action, my conscience will be awakened and I will be stimulated to control that area of action which the shock brings me to recognise. Thus, punishment may mean not that henceforth I cease to have slips because I fear to experience a like shock again, but that henceforth I cease to have slips because I have come to my senses and have realised what my offending means".[23]

It is, however, to be stressed that as law abridges individual liberty, it should be the very minimum. The craze for legislation must be nipped in the bud, as laws, according to Bruno Leoni, "lead to the gradual destruction of individual freedom of choice in politics as well as in the market and in private life, for the contemporary legal point of view means the increasing substitution of group decisions for individual choices and the progressive elimination of spontaneous adjustments between not only individual demands for and supplies of goods and services, but all kinds of behaviour by such rigid and coercive procedures as that of the majority rule".[24]

The administration of law, Gandhi rightly insists, is to reform individuals and society. The punishment that the law inflicts should reform the criminal and not harden or kill him. The Police are to be the guardians of the people's interests; he wanted them to serve as men of a peace brigade. However laudable is the role of a peace brigade for the police force, conditions obtaining in society today make the coercive apparatus of the State inevitable. Nonetheless, it should be emphasised that the policeman has to be the friend, philosopher and guide of the citizen.

In the present situation, the army in no State can be dismissed, although in a perfectly non-violent world order it will have no role to play. No member-State of the United Nations, while supporting

the Charter, has as yet been able unilaterally to disarm, as Gandhi fervently desired. U. Thant observed: " One of the fundamental principles to which member-States have committed themselves is to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force. History teaches us that no durable solution can be found for any human problem except by persuasion and by common consent. The use of violence is double-edged, as violence is bound by the doctrine of reciprocal action, to provoke violence in turn. Before long, we find that the rule of law has given place to the law of the jungle. We have, therefore, to go back to first principles and to observe the Charter commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations ".[25] He believed that " the passing years will show that his (Gandhi's) faith in the efficacy of non-violent pressure as an agent for peaceful change is as justified today all over the world as it was in his time in India ".[26]

The armament race that is in progress between nations today does not go to ensure world peace; the greed of the nations must end if world peace is to become a reality. A world free from exploitation alone can guarantee peace to humanity. Should another World War break out, it would annihilate all that we cherish. Yet, as S. Radhakrishnan affirms, " we are not able to develop a firm attitude of purposeful hostility to the danger of universal destruction. We are courting it by our attitudes and actions. We seem to be moving towards a world catastrophe with our eyes wide open and our ears deaf to the voice of truth.

Punyasya phalam icchanti punyam nēcchanti mānavāh
Na pāpaphalam icchanti pāpam kurvanti yatnatah ".[27]

4

The self-reliant rural economy, recommended by Gandhi for the non-violent society, seeks to ensure simple living, based on full employment. It opposes materialism which undermines freedom and equality. Materialism thrives on industrialism, founded on capitalism. The continuously rising targets of both production and consumption do not guarantee human happiness. The materialist urge being unending,

people will be involved in a perpetual race in which the strong and the swift will always be at an economic advantage.

Gandhi's plea, therefore, was to avoid competition and promote co-operation. He denounced the motive of profit as it undermined the spirit of service. He insisted that an unrestricted accumulation of wealth led to moral insolvency, although Bertrand Russell observed: " Nothing improves the moral level of a community as much as an increase of wealth and nothing lowers it so much as a diminution of wealth ".[28]

Gandhi was not opposed to acquisition of wealth as such but he demanded its equitable distribution. What is harmful to society, according to him, is the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few people. He enunciated a theory of trusteeship for ushering in of an egalitarian society in India: (1) It gives no quarter to capitalism but gives the present owning class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption. (2) It does not recognise any right of private ownership of property except insofar as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare. (3) It does not exclude legislative regulation of the ownership and use of wealth. (4) An individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard of the interests of society. (5) Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, a limit should be fixed for the maximum income that would be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable from time to time so that the tendency would be towards obliteration of the difference. (6) The character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed .[29]

Gandhi's definition of economic equality was that each man should have the wherewithal to supply all his natural needs and no more. Jaya Prakash Narayan believes that " for man really to enjoy liberty and freedom and to participate in self-government, it is necessary voluntarily to limit his wants, because unlimited wants result in a system of production characterised by mutual conflict, coercion, spoilation and war ". The *Sarvōdaya* Committee of 1958 fixed the family requirement at Rs. 3,800 per annum on the basis of 1955 prices. This level

of earning in India is still a long way off, as the per capita income of a majority of people in 1961–62 was not more than Rs. 250. It is thus obvious that the national economic growth cannot at present be halted. That growth has, however, to be harmonious. It should not complicate the life of the people. The common man must be fully involved in it and should not be exploited. Unless he asserts himself, he will fall a prey to ambitious individuals, groups or nations; to serve him, they assume responsibility but they remain to rule over him! Under Marxism, there is economic growth but the people are not democratically governed; the people produce what they are commanded to produce. The hungry today may be tempted to so produce, but by and by will surely realise that plenty without freedom creates new hungers. In countries, which are highly industrialised, the people are not contented; their spiritual hunger especially is growing acute.

Gandhi discouraged industrialisation of the country as he believed that it created a capitalist society, a " religion of inequality ". He rejected any attempt which hurt the interest of the dumb millions. He urged at the Round Table Conference that " every interest which is worthy of protection has to subserve to the interest of the dumb and semi-starved millions and...I have no hesitation in saying that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interests of the dumb millions ".

Gandhi's rejection of industrialisation is qualified inasmuch as he favoured the use of machines in rural industries. All he wanted was that the instruments of production should be simple; the machines should be capable of being operated by the common people, like the *charkha;* they should not replace human labour creating unemployment. The extent of mechanisation depends upon the relative scarcity and cost of labour. In India it is profitable to use more of labour power and less of capital equipment. As India has a large labour force, it should be utilised fully. Gandhi thought village industries, based on agricultural production, alone provided full employment; they also arrested the flow of rural population into towns and cities. As the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, stressed, recently " the village must be made a more attractive place to live in. It should be capable of offering employment to the educated young person. It is of the

utmost urgency that technology reached the village, because economic progress to the exclusion of villages can only mean remorseless urbanisation ". She pointed out that " farming can be improved by electricity; farming can move to a higher level of technology and become a remunerative industry by electricity. Electricity can also mother a wide range of small industries based on agricultural produce ".[30]

Gandhi welcomed " the machine that lightens the burden of crores of men living in cottages and reduces man labour ".[31] He specifically welcomed machines like sewing machine; he wanted village industries to develop with the liberal application of science and technology, provided the latter did not create unemployment. He did not, however, want huge machines; as M. L. Dantwala points out, " if you retain the giant machines, you will require giant experts and technicians to manage them. Our dependence upon them will be so complete that it will result in our exchanging one ruling class for another, the capitalist of today giving place to the manager of the giant industrial state of tomorrow ".[32] Gandhi wanted the machine to subserve the interests of man; it should not become man's master. " Unless the mechanised society itself is under spiritual control ," S. Radhakrishnan underlines, " the future is full of peril; man's failure to master the machine is the root cause of his self-division and distress.[33] The machine may after all prove an unmixed blessing if it be used as the servant of man. J. B. Priestly, pleading for the machine, says: " It is probably too early to discover whether this machine-mindedness is good in itself, whether it is the friend or enemy of the good life. But we should recognise that it exists, that it is indeed a very potent force in our world and that we must not be in a hurry to condemn a form of expression that we do not happen to enjoy ourselves ".[34]

By the use of the machines, the villages in India may not only become self-sufficient but also produce for marketing. They have to feed the urban areas also. By so doing, their economy may significantly improve.

Even today, there is surplus rural production in India inasmuch as villagers go to weekly bazaars or towns and cities for sale of their produce and purchase of articles which they do not themselves produce. After all, villages cannot thrive in isolation. The rural and the urban

areas have to exist as mutually complementary. A. W. Sahasrabudhe, the *Sarvōdaya* leader, says: " I confess that my ideas about self-sufficiency have undergone some change. The romantic idea I had accepted all these long years has become, if I may say so, more realistic. It has passed through the fire of actuality. The village does not exist in isolation. It cannot be separated from the vast mass of national and international circles of ever-widening economic activity. One cannot put a village in a water-tight compartment and hope to create a brand new social order there. Even today villagers from long distances attend the weekly bazaars and the ideal of self-sufficiency hardly exists. I admit it is a confession that we cannot create conditions of self-sufficiency even in regard to basic everyday needs. We did try to form co-operatives and grain stores. But, we have learnt by experience that a part of this produce must be allowed to be sold for keeping the wheels of the economy moving. With the development of the area, the rural areas are bound to come in close contact with the urban areas. If employment for 300 days in a year is to be ensured to the villagers, the villager will have to produce much more and exchange it through co-operatives with other areas ".[35]

Self-sufficiency at village level is not feasible inasmuch as some villages may produce wheat only, some others paddy and yet others sugar-cane on account of special facilities available. A village has to grow what is best suited to it and exchange the surplus with other articles of its necessity, produced elsewhere. This exchange arrangement is to be not only on village level but also on national and international levels. The economic planning of any country has, for its success, to take adequate note of the international scene.

5

Gandhi had a notion that a self-reliant rural economy would never offer itself as a temptation to an aggressor. He believed that it was only in an economy of acquisition that there takes place capital accumulation and it was this storing up of wealth that attracts the invader; decentralised economy would neither be a victim of aggression nor be tempted to commit aggression; large-scale production led to dumping and to search for markets, and both of them in turn led to imperialist

wars. He observed: " Centralisation cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Simple homes from which there is nothing to take away require no policing; the palaces of the rich must have strong guard to protect them against dacoity. So must large factories. Rurally organised India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanised India well equipped with military, naval and air force ".[36]

His opinion is of global application. It cannot be unilaterally applied in a world of economic imbalance inasmuch as weaker nations are always vulnerable to external attack. The history especially of India confirms that economic backwardness deprives a nation of its freedom in a greedy world. Hence, Gandhi's advice was not accepted by his own close followers when they assumed the charge of administering the affairs of the country. The recent Chinese and Pakistani aggressions on India have brought home the lesson that the country should become not only economically but also militarily strong. However much we ardently desire to reduce our defence budget and follow a life of non-violence, we cannot forget the world situation which is yet not free from hatred and violence. As Shriman Narayan affirmed, " there is hardly any chance of presenting it (*satyāgraha*) as a practical alternative to war at least in the foreseeable future. Let us not, therefore, create confusion in the minds of the people about violence and non-violence so far as national defence against international aggression is concerned. Without developing her economic and military strength, India will neither be able to safeguard her own sovereignty nor inspire confidence and respect amongst her friendly neighbours ".[37]

India can build up its military might only on a strong industrial foundation. While small industries should flourish unhindered in rural sector, large and heavy ones should grow wherever facilities exist, fully utilising the advancing scientific and technological knowledge.

Nonetheless, earnest efforts not only of India but of all other nations also should continue towards multi-lateral disarmament so that human fellowship may eventually emerge under the aegis of the United Nations. Lord Boyd Orr underscored: " If sufficient number of nations are prepared to accept Gandhi's method (non-violence) there is a possibility of putting an end to war. When an aggression starts in some part of the world, the General Assembly must meet. The nation which has committed aggression must be warned. That nation

must be told that unless the aggression is stopped immediately, then the whole world is against it, the people of the whole world are against it, the joint forces of the whole world are against it. ' If you do not withdraw your forces immediately, all the forces of the world will be mobilised against you '. If that is done, I do not think any nation will be prepared to commit aggression. Gandhism must become a world force, completely outmoding the power of the armies ".

Unification, as Aurobindo emphasises, " is a necessity of Nature, an inevitable movement. Its necessity for the nations is clear; for without it, the freedom of the small nations may be at any moment in peril and the life even of the large and powerful nations insecure. The unification is, therefore, to the interests of all, and only human imbecility and stupid selfishness can prevent it; but these cannot stand for ever against the necessity of Nature and the Divine Will ".[39]

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Dr. R. S. Narayan, M.A.,LL.M., Ph.D., born in September 1915, is an earnest student of Gandhi. Besides studying carefully the profuse writings of Gandhi and the many scholarly commentaries thereon, he has closely followed the Gandhian movements based on the twin principles of truth and non-violence. As a Journalist for over a period of 35 years, he served "Tainadu," "Deccan Herald" and "The Hindu." He is presently engaged in a treatise on the pragmatism of *Sarvodaya*. He is an author of works in both English and Kannada.

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