GANDHI



THE OTHER SIDE

Rajnikant Puranik



Gandhi–
the Other Side

Study the past if you would divine the future.
—Confucius

Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is the truth.
—Mahatma Gandhi

As a politician, he was never a Mahatma! I refused to call him Mahatma. I never in my life called him Mahatma. He doesn't deserve that title not even from the point of view of his morality!
—Dr BR Ambedkar

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by

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Preface

I am a humble but very earnest seeker after truth.
—Mahatma Gandhi

"*It seems presumptuous to pick holes in Gandhi's campaigns and strategies, and appear to belittle a man of epic dimensions, especially when the nationalist mythologies render it sacrilegious to re-evaluate his achievements. Great men of action, who perform great deeds, do commit great mistakes. And there is no harm in pointing these out. In one sense it is a Gandhian duty, as he equated truth with God.*"
—S.S. Gill {Gill/75}

There is an ocean of books eulogising Gandhi. This book has consciously chosen not to be yet another drop in that ocean. This is also not a 'balanced' book. It does not attempt to offset good with the bad, or vice versa. This book looks hard at the other side.

"*Truth stands, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained*," said the 'Apostle of Truth' Gandhi; and this book looks hard at the truth about Gandhi.

This book brings out the fact that most of the Gandhian thoughts and ideas were regressive, backward, irrational, illogical, impractical, and products of faulty comprehension. They were founded on very limited study, and on stubborn egoism born out of 'I know best'. No wonder the 'Mahatma' has no legacy worth the name! Most of his ideas were discarded soon after his death—actually, much before his death: from 1944 onwards he stood sidelined. His only visible relevance that we see today is in 'Swachh Bharat'. True, he advocated cleanliness, but then millions too have been advocating it!

It was Gandhi who won us our freedom—so it is claimed. If it were true one would generously ignore all acts of omission and commission, and shortcomings of Gandhi. But, it is not true. Please refer to chapter-10, 'What Really Led to Freedom?' Gandhi had himself admitted: "*I see it as clearly as I see my finger: British are leaving not because of any strength on our part but because of historical conditions and for many other*

reasons."{Gill/24} Most likely, without Gandhi India would have won its freedom, or at least self-government, about two decades before 1947.

Apart from the history of India's freedom struggle, and Gandhi's role in it, this book brings out Gandhi's detailed biography, his beliefs, and the principal aspects of his character and personality.

A book on Gandhi, such as this, demands may more pages, but restricted by the publisher on the length, I had to drastically curtail the material.

—Rajnikant Puranik
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To the fond memory of my late parents
Shrimati Shakuntala and
Shri Laxminarayan Puranik

Thanks to
Devbala Puranik, Manasi and Manini
for encouragement and support

A Note on Citations

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Table of Contents

{ 1 } A Chronology
{ 2 } Gandhi Before South Africa
{ 3 } Gandhi in South Africa: 1893–1914
{ 4 } Gandhi After South Africa: 1915-1919
{ 5 } Phase-I of Gandhian Struggle: 1919-1922
{ 6 } Phase-II of Gandhian Struggle: 1930-1931
{ 7 } Interim Phase: 1931–42
{ 8 } Last Phase (III) of the Gandhian Struggle: 1942
{ 9 } Onwards to Freedom & Partition
{ 10 } What Really Led to Freedom?
{ 11 } Why the British Loved Gandhi & Gandhians?
{ 12 } Nehru over Sardar as PM : Gandhi's Mega Blunder
{ 13 } Patel, Gandhi & Integration of the Princely States
{ 14 } Gandhian Economics & Hind Swaraj
{ 15 } Gandhi & Non-Violence
{ 16 } Gandhi, Muslims & Appeasement
{ 17 } Gandhi, Dalits & Caste-System
{ 18 } Gandhi, Brahmacharya & Women
{ 19 } Gandhi's Idiosyncratic Notions, Ways & Fads
{ 20 } Gandhi's Ill-Treatment of His Family
{ 21 } No Serious Studies & Policies by Gandhians
{ 22 } What Others Said of Gandhi
{ 23 } Gandhi: An Overall Evaluation
Bibliography

Detailed Table of Contents

{ 1 } A Chronology
{ 2 } Gandhi Before South Africa
Initial Years: 1869–1887
In London: 1888–91
Back in India: 1891–93
{ 3 } Gandhi in South Africa: 1893–1914
Face-to-Face with Racism.
1894: Gandhi Extends His Stay
Poll Tax
1896–1897: Back to South Africa, After a Visit to India
1900: Serving the British in Boer War
Wacky Gandhian Facet
In India during 1901-02
In South Africa, Dec 1902 onwards
Helping the British in the Zulu War, 1906
1906–9: Gandhi's Failed Satyagraha against the Black Act
Gandhi's Farms & Ashrams
Racism—the Jarring Facet of Gandhi
Summary of Gandhi's Stay in South Africa
{ 4 } Gandhi After South Africa: 1915-1919
Gandhi in London in 1914
Gandhi's Return from South Africa, 1915
Champaran & Gandhi, 1917
India's Massive Contribution to WW-I & Gandhi
Rowlatt Acts and Rowlatt Satyagraha 1919
Jallianwala Bagh Massacre 1919
{ 5 } Phase-I of Gandhian Struggle: 1919-1922
Khalif, Khilafat & Armenian Genocide
Defeat of the Ottomans in WW-I & its Consequences
Gandhi & Khilafat
Unexpectedly, the Movement Gathered Steam
Gandhi's Inexplicable Calling-off of KNCM!
Reactions to Gandhi's Withdrawal of KNCM
Caliphate, Atatürk & Gandhi's Indefensible Stand!
Miserable Failure of Gandhi's First Mass Agitation

{ 6 } Phase-II of Gandhian Struggle: 1930-1931
Dandi March & Salt Satyagraha 1930
Salt Satyagraha & Gandhi-Irwin Pact 1931: a Failure
Nothing Done by Gandhi to Save Bhagat Singh & Colleagues
Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), Phase-II: a Failure
{ 7 } Interim Phase: 1931–42
Three Round Table Conferences (RTCs)
The Communal Award, Aug–1932
Gandhi's Fast Forces Poona Pact, Sep–1932
Attitudes towards Depressed Classes
1937 Elections & Rebuff to Jinnah that proved costly
Gandhi vs. Subhas: Presidential Election 1939
Gandhi, Congress & WW-II
Why the British ignored Gandhi and the Congress?
Oct-1940: Selective Individual Disobedience
Pearl Harbor, Dec 1941 & its Aftermath
Cripps Mission, Mar-Apr 1942
Rajaji (CR) Formula on Pakistan, Apr-1942
{ 8 } Last Phase (III) of the Gandhian Struggle: 1942
Call for "Quit India" & its Background
Poor Preparation, Arrests & Flop-Show
Gandhi's Fast, Feb 1943
Quit India Momentum
"Quit India" Misgivings among Congress Leaders
Release from Jails
Failure of "Quit India"
{ 9 } Onwards to Freedom & Partition
Gandhi's Parleys with Jinnah, Sep-1944
Sidelining of Gandhi: May 1944 Onwards
Major Developments Towards Freedom
April 1947: Gandhi's PM Offer for Jinnah
Patel & Partition, the Lesser Evil
Jun-1947: VP Menon–Mountbatten Plan
AICC Meet to Ratify Partition, backed by Gandhi
Could the Partition have been avoided?
55 crores to Pakistan & Gandhi's Untimely Death

Hurried, Irresponsible Partition & Clueless Gandhians
{ 10 } What Really Led to Freedom?
Was Freedom thanks to Gandhi & the Congress?
What They Said
Freedom: the Real Reasons
Mass Freedom Movement Already there before Gandhi
Stellar Role of Revolutionaries & Netaji Subhas
Effectiveness of the Constitutional Methods
Adverse Effect of Gandhian Intervention
Comparison: How & When Other Countries Got Freedom
Gandhi's "My Way or the Highway"
Extracts from Lohia's "Guilty Men of India's Partition"
Nature of the Gandhian Freedom Movement
{ 11 } Why the British Loved Gandhi & Gandhians?
What the British said
What Gandhi said
Gandhi & the British
Gandhi-Nehru amenable to Union Jack in the National Flag!
Top Gandhians: Privileged Freedom Fighters
Top Gandhian Leaders: Privileged Prisoners!
Tantrums in Ahmednagar Jail
Special Treatment for Gandhi & Nehrus
Ill-Treatment of Non-Gandhians
{ 12 } Nehru over Sardar as PM : Gandhi's Mega Blunder
{ 13 } Patel, Gandhi & Integration of the Princely States
{ 14 } Gandhian Economics & Hind Swaraj
Ostentation of Poverty & Related Fads
Gandhi & 'Spiritual Swaraj' — 'Hind Swaraj'
{ 15 } Gandhi & Non-Violence
Gandhi's Ineffective Non-Hindu Concepts
Nonsensical Non-Violence Concept
Deterrence vs. Gandhi's Irrational "An eye for an eye…"
Telling Examples of Gandhian Nonsense on Nonviolence
Gandhi's Crazy Comments on Hitler & Holocaust
Tackling Kashmir Non-Violently!

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre
Qissa Khwani Bazaar Massacre 1930 & Gandhi
Gandhi's Attitude towards Violence by the British
Recruitments for the British Army
Rowlatt Acts & Gandhi
Gandhi's Non-Violence for Hindu Victims
Gandhi's Absurd Non-Violence Rules
Brown-nosing the Powerful & the Adversaries
Indifference to Internal & External Security
Gandhi's Preposterous Notions on Bravery
{ 16 } Gandhi, Muslims & Appeasement
Secularism & Religious Appeasement
Gandhi's Defective Position
Illustrative Cases of Gandhian Appeasement
Swaraj conditional upon Hindu-Muslim Unity
Precedence for Khilafat over Swaraj
Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks, Aug-Sep 1921
Kohat Anti-Hindu Attacks
1939 Anti-Hindu Attacks in Sindh
Murder of Swami Shraddhanand
Recalling Muslims
Muslim League's Direct Action (Riots), 1946
Noakhali Killings, October 1946
Ambedkar on Gandhi's Appeasement of Muslims
{ 17 } Gandhi, Dalits & Caste-System
Gandhi's Notions on Caste-System
Why Gandhi had such regressive views?
Gandhi's shocking action against Dr Khare
Yet Another Shocker from Gandhi
Gandhi's Defective Approach to Untouchability Removal
Gandhi on Temple Entry
Examples of Gandhi's Contradictory Positions
Guruvayur Temple-Entry Satyagraha
President of India: Why Not An Untouchable?
Untouchability: Only Social/Moral Issue for Gandhi
Gandhi & His 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'

Dr BR Ambedkar on Gandhi & Dalits
Rationalising Gandhi's Defective Approach
{ 18 } Gandhi, Brahmacharya & Women
What Gandhi Said & Believed
What Gandhi Did
Gandhi and Saraladebi
Gandhi's Bizarre & Cruel Advice to Kripalanis
Unusual & Abnormal Habits & Experiments
Evaluating What Gandhi Said & Did
{ 19 } Gandhi's Idiosyncratic Notions, Ways & Fads
Religiosity
"Mahatma" Gandhi
Gandhi & Truth
Gandhi & Satyagraha
Dictator Gandhi
Gandhi & Power Politics
Gandhi's 'Simple' Living & His Army of Servers
Gandhi's Ashrams
Hand-Spinning
Gandhi's Odd Ways & Arrogance
Gandhian Dietetics & Nutritional Quackery
Denying Injection to Ailing Kasturba
Gandhi's Verbosity, Odd Notions & Contradictions
Gandhi's Irrational "Intellectualism" & Closed Mind
Gandhi & Proselytization
{ 20 } Gandhi's Ill-Treatment of His Family
{ 21 } No Serious Studies & Policies by Gandhians
Gandhi's Readings & Writings
Gandhi & His Autobiography
Gandhi's Writings
Gandhi's (Mis)interpretations
No Serious Studies & Policies by Gandhi & Gandhians
{ 22 } What Others Said of Gandhi
{ 23 } Gandhi: An Overall Evaluation
Bibliography

{ 1 }

A Chronology

Tabulated below is a summarised chronology on Mahatma Gandhi, his family, the freedom movement, and related events.

11 Apr 1869	Kasturba born in Porbandar.
2 Oct 1869	Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi born in Porbandar, Gujarat.
May 1883	Married Kasturba.
1885	Indian National Congress (INC) founded.
Nov 1887	Did Matriculation, obtaining 40% marks.
Aug 1888	Son Harilal born.
Sep 1888	Left for London for Studies.
Jan 1891	Passed Law Exam.
June 1891	Called to the bar in London—became barrister.
July 1891	Returned to India.
1891-92	Practised Law in Mumbai and Rajkot.
Oct 1892	Son Manilal born.
May 1893	Landed at Durban, South Africa, without family, on contract as lawyer for Abdulla & Co.
1894	Organised campaign against the bill denying voting rights to Indians. Campaign failed.
1894	Read Leo Tolstoy's Christian philosophy "The Kingdom of God is Within You" that formed the basis of his non-violence creed.
Jan 1897	Took family to South Africa.
1897	Son Ramdas born.
1900	Served the British army in Ambulance Corps during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.
1900	Son Devdas born.
1901-2	Toured India.
Dec 1902	Returned to South Africa.

1903	Established Phoenix Farm near Durban.
1906	Helped the British in their war against the native Zulus.
Dec 1906	The All India Muslim League (AIML) founded.
1906-9	Gandhi's major Satyagraha against "The Black Act"—Satyagraha failed.
1910	Established Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg.
9 Jan 1915	Gandhi returned from South Africa.
1915-17	Khalifa and the Ottoman Empire perpetrated the dastardly Armenian Genocide/Holocaust —the "Apostle of Non-Violence" lead the Khilafat Movement in 1920 to save Khalifa!
1916	INC–AIML Lucknow Pact by Tilak and Jinnah.
10 Apr 1917	Gandhi visits *Champaran*. Champaran Peasant Struggle. Thanks to Gandhi, the *Champaran Agrarian Act* in Bihar wef 29 Nov 1917.
1914–18	World War-I (WW-I).
1918-19	The Montagu–Chelmsford (Mont-Ford, in short) Reforms 1918, and the GoI Act 1919.
1919	Rowlatt Satyagraha against the Rowlatt Acts.
13 Apr 1919	Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.
1920-22	Khilafat & Non-Cooperation Movement (KNCM) led by Gandhi. Gandhi promised swaraj within 12 months—No aim of KNCM materialised.
Aug-Sep 21	Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks in Malabar.
4 Feb 1922	Chauri Chaura incident. Gandhi unilaterally called off KNCM on 12 Feb 1922.
1922	KNCM, Gandhi's first main movement, miserably failed, achieving none of its 3 aims, while it laid the foundation of Partition and Pakistan.
1924	Mustafa Kemal *Atatürk* overthrows Caliphate, exposing pointlessness of Gandhi's above KNCM.
Sep 1924	Major anti-Hindu riots in Kohat in NWFP.
1928	Sardar Patel led successful *Bardoli Satyagraha* that bestowed the title *Sardar* on Patel.
3 Feb 1928	Simon Commission arrived to review the Mont-Ford

	Reforms and the GoI Act of 1919.
17 Nov 1928	Lala Lajpat Rai succumbs to the lathi-charge on a procession against the Simon Commission.
1929	Nepotistic Motilal Nehru, who held the post of the Congress President in 1928, manoeuvred with Gandhi to have that post inherited by his son Jawaharlal, undemocratically and unfairly overriding Sardar Patel.
26 Jan 1930	Purna Swaraj Declaration promulgated by the Indian National Congress—so late!!
12 Mar 1930	*Dandi March* begins. Start of Salt Satyagraha.
5 Apr 1930	Dandi March ends.
6 Apr 1930	Breaking of Salt Laws by Gandhi.
5 May 1930	Gandhi arrested at Karadi near Dandi.
21 May 1930	2500 satyagrahis picketed the Dharasana Salt Works. About 320 were injured by lathi blows from police.
26 Jan 1931	Gandhi released from Yerwada jail.
5 Mar 1931	Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Failure of Salt Satyagraha: No major demand acceded by the British. Salt Laws remained intact. No clemency to Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.
Sep-Dec 1931	Second Round Table Conference in London. Attended by Gandhi as the lone representative of the Congress although the Congress could have sent 20 delegates (Muslim League had 16). Gandhi desired publicity only for self.
1932–34	Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), Phase-II, consequent to the new Viceroy not honouring even the highly diluted terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. CDM failed to build a tempo, and was crushed within a few months.
1932-33	Start of the massive Soviet famine. Gandhi anointed first PM Nehru did not learn from the failed Soviet Model, and pushed India into the abyss of socialism after independence.
16 Aug 1932	The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald made the '*Communal Award'* granting separate electorates for the Forward Caste, Lower Caste, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs,

	Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, and Depressed Classes/Dalits. BR Ambedkar strongly supported the Award for the Depressed Classes.
20 Sep 1932	Gandhi went on an indefinite fast against the '*Communal Award'* for the Depressed Classes—he didn't object to the Award in respect of other categories, like Muslims.
24 Sep 1932	The Gandhi–Ambedkar Poona Pact signed.
Aug 1935	Government of India (GoI) Act 1935.
1934-37	Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly (1934), and Provincial elections (1936-37). Congress swept the polls in 7 of the 11 provinces.
29 Jan 1939	Netaji Subhas Bose re-elected as the Congress President despite severe opposition of Gandhi.
1 Sep 1939	Germany invaded Poland. Start of WW-II.
3 Sep 1939	Great Britain declared war on Germany. Viceroy Linlithgow announced that India, along with Britain, had joined the WW-II. The Congress resented not being consulted in the matter.
Oct 1939	The Congress put forth conditions to the Raj for its support in WW-II. The Muslim League whole-heartedly supported the Raj, and gained favour and ascendency over the Congress.
17 Oct 1939	The Raj treated the conditions of the Congress as blackmail, and refusing to agree to them, offered minor concessions.
Oct 1939	Anti-Hindu attacks in Sindh.
Nov 1939	As a protest against the Raj for not consulting the Congress before declaring war on India's behalf, the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned (an unwise move) under pressure from Nehru and the leftists. Sardar Patel was against this.
22 Dec 1939	Jinnah and the Muslim League celebrated the "Deliverance Day"—deliverance from the "misrule" of the Congress (resignations of Congress ministries).
13 Mar 1940	Shahid Udham Singh avenged the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre by shooting Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer on 13

	March 1940. Gandhi and Nehru condemned the killing by Udham Singh!
26 Mar 1940	Muslim League's Lahore Resolution indirectly hinting about Pakistan.
Oct 1940	Gandhi's *Selective Individual Disobedience*.
19 Jan 1941	In a daredevil act, Netaji Bose escaped from the British custody to Germany via Afghanistan, Russia and Italy. The feat required tremendous guts, intelligence, cunning, and risk-taking ability. But, that was Bose, a leader like no other in India.
Jun-Dec 1941	Germany invaded the Soviet Union on 22 June. A Soviet counter-offensive drove away the Germans from the Moscow suburbs on 6 Dec 1941.
7 Dec 1941	US naval base *Pearl Harbor* attacked by Japan.
8 Dec 1941	The US entered WW-II.
Dec 1941—Apr 1942	Japanese troops landed in the Philippines, French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia), and British Singapore, and by April 1942 all these came under Japanese occupation.
7 Mar 1942	Burma (Myanmar) was the next target of the Japanese blitzkrieg on 15 January 1942. Rangoon fell on 7 March 1942. With that, the attack on India seemed imminent.
22 Mar 1942	Sir Stafford Cripps and his team arrived in Delhi.
30 Mar 1942	Cripps announced his proposals for Indian's Dominion Status in the form of Draft Declaration.
Apr 1942	Jinnah termed the *secession clause* in the Cripps offer as an implicit recognition of Pakistan; but rejected the proposal, as what he wanted was an explicit recognition of the right of the "Muslim nation" to separate. Congress rejected the proposal on account of the *secession clause*. Unsuccessful, Cripps left India on 12 April 1942.
Jul 1942	Gandhi insisted in CWC at Wardha for "Quit India" Movement.
8 Aug1942	Quit India resolution passed by the AICC.
9 Aug1942	Almost all the top leaders of the Congress including Gandhi arrested.

Nov 1942	‘Quit India’ had petered out and failed miserably.
1943–44	The totally man-made (British-made) Great Bengal Famine claimed 3.5 million lives.
22 Feb 1944	Kasturba Gandhi expired at the Aga Khan Palace where she was jailed along with Gandhi.
6 May 1944	Gandhi, who had been ill, released from jail.
May-Aug 1944	Gandhi tried reconciliation with the British offering cooperation, while diluting ‘Quit India’ demands. The Raj didn’t respond.
Sep 1944	Spurned by the Raj, Gandhi turned to Jinnah, visiting his home 14 times, and making a fresh offer similar to Rajaji’s 1942 Proposal on Pakistan. Jinnah rejected the offer.
May 1944 onwards	Gandhi stood sidelined by the Raj, and also by the Congress. The Raj felt it was pointless to engage with Gandhi; while the wise in the Congress realised Gandhian methods would yield little.
8 May 1945	WW-II practically ends.
15 Jun 1945	Sardar Patel, Nehru and others released from Ahmednagar Fort prison.
25 Jun 1945	Shimla Conference convened to discuss the Wavell Plan for Indian self-government.
26 Jul 1945	Clement Attlee's Labour Party trumps Winston Churchill's Conservatives in the General Elections.
6 Aug 1945	US drops an atomic bomb on *Hiroshima*.
9 Aug 1945	US drops an atomic bomb on *Nagasaki*.
14 Aug 1945	Unconditional surrender by Japan.
Nov 1945–May 1946	INA Red-Fort Trials unleashed massive patriotic fervour forcing the then Army Chief to commute the sentences.
End 1945–1946	Elections to the Central and the Provincial Assemblies. The Muslim League got all the 30 Muslim seats (100%) in the Central Assembly, and 427 of the 507 Muslim seats (84%) in the 11 provinces. The Congress won 56 seats in the Central Assembly and 930 in the provinces.
Feb 1946	Mutiny in the Indian Army. Mutiny in the Royal Indian Navy at Bombay; and mutiny in Jabalpur— mainly precipitated by the INA trials.

26 Mar 1946	A British Cabinet Mission arrived in India.
29 Apr 1946	Even though 12 of the 15 PCCs (80%) voted in favour of Patel, and NONE for Nehru, Gandhi undemocratically and unethically made Nehru the president of the Congress, and therefore the first PM; and Nehru shamelessly usurped that post.
12 May 1946	British Cabinet Mission published *Memorandum on States' Treaties and Paramountcy* that allowed the *562 Princely States to become independent*.
16 May 1946	The Cabinet Mission unilaterally proposed a "16-*May-1946 Cabinet Mission Plan*" for a UNITED dominion, NO Pakistan, a loose confederation of provinces, and their Groupings as A,B and C.
16 Jun 1946	"*16-June-1946 Cabinet Mission Plan*" for the Interim Govt. Muslim League accepted both the 16-May-1946 and the 16-June-1946 Cabinet Mission Plans. Congress didn't accept either.
25 Jun 1946	Sardar Patel risked his all and took a private, personal initiative to negotiate the matter with the British. He ultimately persuaded the CWC, against Gandhi's advice, to accept the 16-May-1946 Plan, while rejecting the 16-June-1946 Plan, to thwart the Muslim League from getting inflated share of power, and forming the government.
16 Aug 1946	Nehru's blunder resulted in Jinnah rejecting both the plans, that he had accepted earlier, and giving a call for the 'Direct Action Day' that resulted in the Great Calcutta Killings.
2 Sep 1946	Interim Government headed by Nehru formed.
Oct-Nov 1946	Muslim League's 'Direct Action Day', that is, anti-Hindu attacks, extended to *Noakhali* district in the Chittagong Division in East Bengal perpetrating a carnage of massacres, rapes, abductions, forced conversions, desecration of temples, and looting and arson of Hindu properties. Gandhi camped there for about four months, but his efforts failed.
20 Feb 1947	UK announced it would quit India by June 1948.

22 Mar 1947	Lord Mountbatten, the new Viceroy, arrived.
1 Apr 1947	Gandhi proposed to Mountbatten to let Jinnah head the Interim Government to avoid partition.
10-11 Apr 1947	Nehru, Patel and many CWC members told Gandhi they were opposed to his above proposal.
May 1947	Mountbatten Plan to quit India. There were no takers for the plan.
June 1947	VP Menon–Mountbatten Partition Plan envisaged transfer of power to two Dominions, and separation of the Muslim-majority areas from India. The Plan was pre-approved by Sardar Patel, and Nehru agreed with it.
2 Jun 1947	The CWC ratified Patel and Nehru's acceptance of the Partition Plan by 157 votes to 27, with 32 remaining neutral.
3 Jun 1947	Mountbatten announced the Partition Plan.
14 Jun 1947	AICC ratified the Partition Plan, backed by Gandhi.
Jan 1948	Prodded by the British Mountbatten, Gandhi disapproved of the cabinet decision to withhold rupees *55 crores to Pakistan* on account of Pakistani aggression in J&K, and forced the money to be given to Pakistan. This became the trigger for his murder.
30 Jan 1948	Gandhi shot dead.

{ 2 }

Gandhi Before South Africa

Initial Years: 1869–1887

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869 in a Hindu Modh Baniya (grocers) family in Porbandar, a coastal town in the Kathiawar Peninsula in Gujarat.

Mohandas's father, Karamchand Uttamchand Gandhi (1822–1885) was the diwan (chief minister) of Porbandar, a tiny Princely State. Karamchand had married four times. He had a daughter each through his first two wives, who died young. His third marriage was childless. He married his fourth wife Putlibai (1844–1891) in 1857. She was from Junagadh, and belonged to a Pranami Vaishnava family. Karamchand and Putlibai had four children: Laxmidas (1860–1914), Raliatbehn (1862–1960), Karsandas (1866–1913), and Mohandas (1969–1948). In 1876, Karamchand became diwan of Rajkot —his family therefore moved to Rajkot. His brother Tulsidas succeeded him as diwan of Porbandar.

Mohandas's was an arranged child marriage: in May 1883, when over 13-year old, he was married to 14-year-old Kasturbai Makhanji Kapadia, affectionately called Kasturba or just Ba. They had four children—all sons: Harilal (1888), Manilal (1892), Ramdas (1897), and Devdas (1900).

In school, Mohandas was an average student. He did his matriculation in November 1887 obtaining an average of 40%. He had to move to Bhavnagar in January 1888 as the Samaldas College there was the only degree-granting institution in the region. He did poorly in his first term, and withdrew from the college. Unable to get further in his graduation, someone suggested he should rather go to London for further studies.

In London: 1888–91

On 10 August 1888, Gandhi left Porbandar for Bombay en-route to London for higher studies, after having done his matriculation, but without doing graduation. Why so? Two reasons. One: In those days, apparently doing a barrister course in London was easier than doing graduation in India. Two: A foreign stamp fetched better income. Gandhi could go to London thanks to his elder brother Laxmidas agreeing to finance him, and taking care of his family (Gandhi was married by then)—not that he was rich or could afford the expenditure, but he took loans, and somehow managed. Laxmidas expected Gandhi to do well and subsequently take care of the extended family.

Gandhi enrolled at the Inner Temple with the intention of becoming a barrister. Gandhi was in England for about three years. He was called to the bar on 10 June 1891, enrolled in the High Court the next day, and sailed back for India a day after.

Back in India: 1891–93

Returning to Bombay from London in 1891, Gandhi tried to establish his law-practice, but failed, finding himself psychologically incapable of cross-examining witnesses. In his very first case he found himself tongue-tied when he rose to address the court. Gandhi himself recounted in his autobiography:

> "This was my debut in the Small Causes Court. I appeared for the defendant and had thus to cross-examine the plaintiff's witnesses. I stood up, but my heart sank into my boots. My head was reeling and I felt as though the whole court was doing likewise. I could think of no question to ask. The judge must have laughed, and the vakils no doubt enjoyed the spectacle. But I was past seeing anything. I sat down and told the agent that I could not conduct the case… I hastened from the Court, not knowing whether my client won or lost her case, but I was ashamed of myself, and decided not to take up any more cases until I had courage enough to conduct them. Indeed I did not go to Court again until I went to South Africa…"{MKG/112}

Returning the fee, and hastening back home in shame, he never again returned to the courts in India. Gandhi thereafter left Bombay, and applied for teacher's job, but couldn't get it, as he was not a graduate. He then began to make a modest living drafting petitions for litigants at Rajkot. Even that job he had to consider giving up when he ran afoul of a British Political Agent.

{ 3 }

Gandhi in South Africa: 1893–1914

Desperate for a job, Gandhi accepted a year-long contract in 1893 from a Meman firm of Dada Abdulla & Co based in Porbandar and South Africa. Dada Abdulla, along with his brother, headed a trading empire in Porbandar and Natal, South Africa, and ran his own fleet. Barely literate, Dada Abdulla was looking for a lawyer and a person familiar with business practices (Gandhi was a bania) who knew both Gujarati and English, and could interpret his (Dada Abdulla's) Gujarati and represent it in English to his lawyers in South Africa and in the courts there, particularly in respect of their company's civil suit of £40,000. The terms offered to Gandhi were modest remuneration of £105 (for the one-year contract), first-class return-fare, and actual expenses.

Gandhi, then 24, sailed for South Africa to work as a legal representative for the Indian Muslim traders in Pretoria, leaving behind his wife Kasturba and two sons, Harilal and Manilal, under the care of his eldest brother Laxmidas. Gandhi arrived in South Africa, landing in Durban in May 1893; and spent the next 21 years there till end of 1914.

Indians in South Africa included wealthy Muslim merchants, and impoverished Hindu indentured labourers, who came on contract for five years, and endured harsh and cruel working conditions, and dungeon-like ghastly barracks as their living quarters, on meagre salary of just 11 shillings a month to start with. Both faced racist segregation and abuse, and had very limited rights. It was no place for any self-respecting Indian.

Face-to-Face with Racism.

Gandhi personally faced racist abuse in South Africa. Gandhi had not faced colour prejudice in England during his three years there (at least, he doesn't mention so in his autobiography), but in South Africa, racism hit him cruelly at each turn. The Indians were addressed by the pejorative "coolies". Indians were debarred from walking on public footpaths in South Africa—Gandhi was kicked out of a footpath by a police officer.

Soon after arriving in Durban, when Gandhi attended court, the magistrate ordered him to remove his turban. Finding the order too offensive, Gandhi declined and preferred to leave the court premises.

Travelling from Durban to Pretoria via Johannesburg in 1893, he was thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg after refusing to move from the first-class, for which he had a valid ticket. Travelling on a stagecoach, he was beaten by a driver for refusing to move to make room for a European passenger. He was barred from several hotels.

1894: Gandhi Extends His Stay

By the time Gandhi's one-year contract period got over in 1894, and it was time for him to get back to India, the government came up with a bill to deny voting rights to Indians. Gandhi cancelled his departure, and led a campaign against the bill. The campaign, however, did not succeed. Indian community in South Africa requested Gandhi not to return to India as their many issues remained to be addressed. Gandhi was happy to oblige. As Gandhi was averse to being paid for public work, local merchants committed themselves to providing him retainership fee worth about £300 a year{Nan/45}. He then set up a regular office in Durban, and set up his practice. Gandhi sought to forge the Indian community of South Africa into a unified political force, and formed the Natal Indian Congress in August 1894. Over the years, Gandhi's annual income gradually rose to a peak of £5,000 a year.{Nan/74}

Poll Tax

So as to expel the labour no longer required, the government brought up a proposal to levy a penalty of 25 pounds on indentured labour who overstayed their contract period. It was a huge amount in those days. The amount of 25 pounds was reduced by the Viceroy of India, under whose jurisdiction the matter came, to 3 pounds. Even that was a large amount. Gandhi organised protests against the same.

1896–1897: Back to South Africa, After a Visit to India

After three years of stay in South Africa, Gandhi went to India in 1896 to fetch his family, which had meanwhile been under the care of his elder brother Laxmidas. During his stay in India, he appraised his compatriots of the pathetic condition of Indians in South Africa, and canvassed for the South African cause. This infuriated the white settlers of South Africa, a mob of whom attacked Gandhi in January 1897 in Durban upon his return. He was rescued by the wife of a police superintendent.

However, Gandhi didn't bring charges against any. He grandly stated one of his many puzzling and crazy principles: not to seek redress for a personal wrong in a court of law. Was attack on him just personal? Was it not racist? Did his law education and principles teach him a court of law must be used only for political, social and business causes, and not for personal and racial wrongs? Gandhi, not seldom, turned the mundane into a "principle", or covered-up helplessness or a compulsion or even a selfish requirement under the garb of a manufactured "principle".

1900: Serving the British in Boer War

During the Anglo–Boer War II (1899–1902), Gandhi mobilised 1100 Indian ambulance volunteers in 1900 as the ‘Natal Indian Ambulance Corps’ who served as stretcher-bearers to carry wounded soldiers from the front line to a field hospital a few miles away, the terrain being unsuitable to ply ambulances. For their courage, and for their arduous job under the sun without food or water, the British awarded Gandhi and 37 other Indians the War Medal: Queen's South Africa Medal.

Wacky Gandhian Facet

Gandhi was of the opinion then that if the Indians claimed rights as citizens of the British Empire, they were obligated to help the Empire. The other main reason of Gandhi behind the move was to disprove to the British their idea that Hindus were not fit for manly activities involving danger and exertion—but, the question is why Gandhi should have given himself in to that deliberate false propaganda of the British? Did Gandhi not understand the political reasons behind the British spreading such nonsense? Did he not know that it had been one of those cunning methodologies of the British to defame and demoralise the Hindus and Indians as 'non-manly' and 'effeminate', and show off their racial superiority to keep on ruling over them? Why prove yourself to falsifiers and racists who insulted you day in and day out? Was Gandhi unaware of the great and unmatched traditions of Chandragupta Maurya, Shivaji, Rana Pratap, Rani Laxmi Bai, and thousands of such braves of the Indian civilization? Apparently, Gandhi himself had not properly understood racism and colonialism.

In India during 1901-02

After the Anglo-Boer War Gandhi returned to India in October 1901, and toured extensively. He practised for some time in the Rajkot courts, and then shifted his law-practice to Bombay, staying in a bungalow in Santacruz. However, on a call for help he went back to South Africa in 1902.

In South Africa, Dec 1902 onwards

The purpose of call from South Africa to Gandhi was to request him to represent the grievances of the Indians there to the Colonial Secretary in the British Cabinet, Chamberlain. Gandhi returned to South Africa in December 1902. The condition of the Indians there had actually grown worse since the time Gandhi had gone there in 1893, with additional restrictions imposed on them both in Natal and in Transvaal. This time Gandhi set up his office in Johannesburg as an attorney of the Transvaal Supreme Court.

Helping the British in the Zulu War, 1906

Zulus (natives) had rebelled against the crippling taxes. In retaliation, in 1906, the British declared war against the Zulu (native) Kingdom in Natal. Zulus didn't have modern weapons. They had only assegai, a light spear, as armament. The British artillery butchered them. Several thousand Zulus were killed, thousands of their huts were burnt, and over 30,000 were rendered homeless.

Gandhi led an Indian volunteer detachment corps of 20 stretcher-bearers for the British for a period of two months. He called upon the Indians to aid the British war efforts so as to legitimise their claims to full citizenship. Why didn't it occur to Gandhi he was helping the colonialists against the poor, helpless, defenceless natives. Why didn't his conscience prick at harming the natives to gain favour for the Indians there?

However, Gandhi's services for the British bore no fruit; as the British administrators contemptuously snubbed his requests for reforms.

1906–9: Gandhi's Failed Satyagraha against the Black Act

The Asiatic Registration Ordinance (the Black Act) was published in 1906. It required all Indians above eight to obtain a certificate of registration that bore their thumb and finger impressions, and to keep registration documents on them at all times. Gandhi advised the Indians to refuse to submit to this indignity and humiliation of being finger-printed, and mobilised them to oppose the Act through non-violent protests—Satyagraha. In the ensuing non-violent resistance, thousands were jailed and flogged for refusing to register, or shot at for striking. Despite protests the Ordinance became the Asiatic Registration Law (the Black Act) in March 1907.

A campaign was launched in April 1907 against the law. It was so effective that by the deadline of 31 July 1907 for registration only 11 of the 13,000 got themselves registered. The government extended the deadline to October 31, and then to 30 November 1907. After the extended deadline the government decided to act tough: either register, or leave the Transvaal colony, or get jailed. As a follow-up, upon refusal to register, they jailed the entire top leadership of the British Indian Association that was carrying out the campaign. Gandhi too was warned, and upon his refusal, he too was imprisoned. Life in jail was terrible in those days. The merchant elite associated with Gandhi's satyagraha began to gradually desert. The campaign began to lose steam.

Gandhi was imprisoned thrice during 1908-9 for two to three months; and while he was serving his last term, Gandhi and other imprisoned leaders, finding the movement had almost evaporated, looked for a face-saving formula, and agreed to a secret meeting with General Jan Christiaan Smuts. Smuts proposed to Gandhi that if the Indians voluntarily registered themselves he promised to repeal the Act, and release all prisoners. Gandhi compromised, and agreed. Lest those who had sacrificed should feel betrayed, Gandhi came out with an innovative lie: their satyagraha was not against registration, it was actually against compulsory registration! He further stated (contrary to what he had stated earlier): "A reasonable man would have no objection to being finger printed."{AH/157}

Many who had gravely suffered in the agitation were angry at Gandhi's action, and regarded him as a turncoat. Many even claimed that Smuts had bought off Gandhi.

After coming out of the jail, Gandhi himself went to the Johannesburg Registration Office for voluntary registration on 10 February 1908. One Mir Alam, a mattress-maker and a satyagrahi who had been feeling betrayed, accosted him, and struck him smack across the face. Gandhi went sprawling on the ground. Alam and his colleague then kicked him on the face and chest.

Notably, Smuts went back on his word and refused to repeal the Black Act, denying having made any promise. Net result of Gandhi's agitation: ZERO, but immense suffering for the participants.

To add salt to injury, the Supreme Court in South Africa ruled that the Indian marriages not performed according to the Christian customs, and duly registered, would be deemed illegal.

To cool down the heat of the long-drawn Satyagraha, General Smuts set up a Commission of Inquiry. Its net result was that the (a)poll tax of three pounds was abolished; (b)marriages as per the Indian customs were held valid; and (c)rather than both the thumb and the finger impressions, the registration certificate would bear only thumb impression.

Gandhi's Farms & Ashrams

Gandhi' legal business had become lucrative earning him over £5,000 a year. He used to dress smartly in expensive business suits.{AH/89}

Gandhi established Phoenix and Tolstoy Farms in South Africa—the former in Durban in 1903, and the latter near Johannesburg in 1910. They served as experiments in community living. Phoenix Farm was in a 100-acre estate purchased for £1,000. It was about 3 miles from Phoenix station and fourteen miles from Durban. Tolstoy Farm was spread in 1,100 acres, and was situated about 21 miles away from Johannesburg. It was bought by Hermann Kallenbach, and given by him rent-free to Gandhi for satyagrahis. Kallenbach was a Lithuanian born Jewish South African architect who had become a friend and an associate of Gandhi.

Back in India, Gandhi established Sabarmati Ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati river in Ahmedabad on 17 June 1917, covering initially an area of 36 acres, which later expanded to 150 acres. Maganlal Gandhi, who had done much to establish the earlier two farms in South Africa, helped set up and run the Sabarmati Ashram too. {Nan/135}

When Gandhi started his Dandi March in 1930 from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi for the Salt Satyagraha, he vowed not to return to Sabarmati Ashram till India achieved independence. After release from jail, he finally established his Sevagram Ashram in village Segaon located at the outskirts (8km from) of Wardha in 1936. Seth Jamanlal Bajaj had made 300 acres of land available to Gandhi for the purpose.

Racism—the Jarring Facet of Gandhi

It's a given that Gandhi fought for the oppressed—hence, a Mahatma. But, what if you discover that in South Africa Gandhi actually fought for the people like him: relatively well-off Indians. While the *Blacks* (*whom Gandhi called 'Kaffirs'*), the suffering natives there, were totally out of his radar; for the poor, "dirty" Indians there, he initially had only contempt.

One of the first battles Gandhi fought was over the separate entrances for whites and blacks at the Durban post office. Gandhi objected that Indians were "*classed with the natives*" who he called the *kaffirs*. Said Gandhi: "*We felt the indignity too much and …petitioned the authorities to do away with the invidious distinction, and they have now provided three separate entrances for natives, Asiatics and Europeans*."{DV}{URL31}

Gandhi believed in the Indo-Aryan racist nonsense, and was partial to the idea of Indo-Aryan bloodlines. The Black African stood outside and below these civilized standards. In 1893, Gandhi wrote to the Natal parliament: "*I venture to point out that both the English and the Indians spring from a common stock, called the Indo-Aryan… A general belief seems to prevail in the Colony that the Indians are little better, if at all, than savages or the Natives of Africa. Even the children are taught to believe in that manner, with the result that the Indian is being dragged down to the position of a raw Kaffir*."{DV}{URL31}

In a speech in Bombay in 1896, Gandhi said that the Europeans in Natal wished "*to degrade us to the level of the raw kaffir whose occupation is hunting, and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with, and then, pass his life in indolence and nakedness*."{DV}{URL31}

In 1904, he wrote to a health officer in Johannesburg that the council "*must withdraw Kaffirs*" from an unsanitary slum called the "Coolie Location" where a large number of Africans lived alongside Indians. "*About the mixing of the Kaffirs with the Indians, I must confess I feel most strongly*."{DV} The same year he wrote that unlike the African, the Indian had no "war-dances, nor does he drink Kaffir beer". When Durban was hit by a plague in 1905, Gandhi wrote that the problem would persist as long as Indians and Africans were being "herded together indiscriminately at the hospital".

Gandhi wrote about his prison experience in 1908:

> "We were marched off to a prison intended for Kaffirs… our garments were stamped with the letter 'N', which meant that we were being classed with the Natives. We were all prepared for hardships, but not quite for this experience. We could understand not being classed with the whites, but to be placed on the same level with the Natives seemed too much to put up with."{DV}{URL31}

Shockingly, he accepted the racist theory and segregation, and that, in his own words, "*the white race of South Africa should be the predominating race*."{URL74} His limited objection was that the Indians were being treated at the same level as native Africans! Gandhi accepted white minority power, but was keen that Indians be their junior partner!

Gandhi later perhaps became sensitive to the plight of the natives; but, there is nothing to show that he did anything for them through words or deeds. Historian Patrick French wrote: "*Gandhi's blanking of Africans is the black hole at the heart of his saintly mythology*."{URL72} The South African Gandhi remained true to the Empire while holding the native Africans in contempt.

In the book 'The South African Gandhi: Stretcher-Bearer of Empire'{DV}, the authors Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed comb through Gandhi's own writings during the period and government archives, and paint a portrait that is at variance with the general manufactured perception on Gandhi. Gandhi used to routinely express disdain for black Africans, describing them as "kaffirs", "savages", "raw", living a life of "indolence and nakedness".

Wrote Arthur Herman in 'Gandhi & Churchill:{AH/131}

> "He [Gandhi] set up a new lobbying group, the British Indian Association [BIA] (The name made clear where the member's political loyalties lay), and took over a failing local newspaper, 'Indian Opinion', to serve as the BIA's sounding board. He sought to win support for revoking anti-Indian laws by convincing the whites that the Indian elite of Pretoria and Johannesburg would help to enforce the traditional colour bar. Editorials in 'Indian Opinion' pushed for a new racial order in which the whites and Indians would in effect preside together over South Africa's blacks and coloureds…

"'We believe in the purity of race as much as we think' whites do, Gandhi wrote. 'If there is one thing which the Indian cherishes more than any other, it is the purity of the [racial] type.'…

"His [Gandhi's] goal all along had been, not to overturn the colour bar, but to get the whites to accept Indians on their side of the line. British Indians, he wrote in June 1903, 'admit the British race should be the dominant race in South Africa.'…"{AH/131}

Summary of Gandhi's Stay in South Africa

Gandhi's 21 years in South Africa hardly brought about any improvement in the condition of the Indians there. Neither the racism against them decreased, nor did they win more rights, or earned a slightly more dignified living. Basic civil rights and equality before law remained a mirage for the Indians.

In so far as the Blacks—the Africans—were concerned, they were out of Gandhi's radar. Gandhi didn't do anything to mitigate their suffering. He only tried to ensure the Indians were not as badly treated!

Of course, Gandhi had some minor wins to his credit. But those were only in respect of the additional handicaps imposed by the British on the Indians. That is, while their original pathetic status remained unchanged, some of the further handicaps imposed were lessened. For example, rather than abolition of registration certificates (see above) for Indians for which Gandhi and Indians fought, the minor concession was that instead of the impression of their thumb and fingers, impression of only thumb would be taken—if you want to call it a win for Gandhi and a climb down for the British, you may do so. Marriages as per the Indian customs were recognised as legal—can that be called a "win" for Gandhi and Indians? Poll tax of three pounds was abolished. But, poll tax was an additional burden imposed.

Of course, it can be said that while Gandhi could not change anything in South Africa, South Africa certainly changed him. From a shy, diffident person, unsure of his future, he became a confident leader of people. He experimented with non-violent Satyagraha, that helped mobilise masses. But, did it yield results commensurate with the sufferings undergone by the participants? Unfortunately, NO! Non-violent Satyagraha certainly helped Gandhi enhance his profile, but the net results were either zero or meagre, while it imposed terrible suffering on the participants. Only Gandhi gained, while the participants either lost, or had no gains.

The main reason of Gandhi's failure both in South Africa, and later in India, were faulty strategy and action that flowed from faulty understanding of the history, historical forces, economic interests, environment, and forces at play. Ignoring all these he thought if he could get cozy with the British by helping them in their violent wars (in South Africa and in WW-I), and only

engage in such non-violent protests as would not really trouble them or hurt their interests, he would win their approbation, and gain something for his people, retaining his leadership.

Gandhi ignored the fact that the British had invested their tremendous brutal strength to colonise South Africa in order to make it an exclusive preserve, and means of living and prosperity, for themselves and their descendants—and certainly not for the Indians and the natives. They needed the Indians only as servants, workers, labourers or miners. They didn't want Indians to compete with them as merchants, shop-keepers, farm-owners, professionals, and so on. Because, they found, to their consternation, that the Indians were exceptionally hardworking, talented and frugal; and given free reign they might put them (the British) out of business. They found that even illiterate indentured Indians, after their indenture-period (contract period) was over, were setting up small shops or buying small agricultural plots from their hard-earned savings through the years, and had begun to prosper. It was the insecurity induced by the Indians that led the British to come out with laws, one after the other, to debilitate the Indians. The British didn't want Indians to settle in South Africa. Once their indenture was over they wanted them to return to India, or take fresh indenture. In other words, they wanted the Indians only as indentured labourers, and not as independent businessmen, agriculturists, or professionals.

Given the above scenario, and the self-interest of the British, no amount of buttering-up and ingratiating attempts by Gandhi to 'change the heart' of the British would have fetched any results. The British were highly enlightened about and alert to their self-interest. And, had their humanitarian side been stronger than their commercial and material interests, they would not have brutally colonised South Africa. Therefore, Gandhi's attempts to gain favour under the paternal protection of the Raj were doomed.

In fact, the position in South Africa became worse by the time Gandhi left it in end-1914 compared to what it was at the time he had first gone there in 1893, with more curbs and restrictions on Indians and Africans. A fresh legislation in 1913 restricted the land ownership for the Africans to just 13% of the total. Perhaps, Gandhi chose to leave South Africa, and return to India, because politically he had utterly failed in South Africa.

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Gandhi After South Africa: 1915-1919

Gandhi in London in 1914

Gandhi returned to India from South Africa via London, where he had gone to meet his ailing mentor Gopal Krishna Gokhale (9 May 1866 — 19 February 1915). He reached London on 4 August 1914. He was felicitated at Cecil Hotel on 8 August 1914. Among those who felicitated him was Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

In his address, Gandhi advised the Indian leadership to "*think imperially in the best sense of the word and do their duty*"—in the context of the WW-I that had begun. He proposed mobilising a medical unit of Indians.{Akb2/232-3}

Gandhi's Return from South Africa, 1915

Gandhi returned from South Africa to a hero's welcome on 9 January 1915 in Mumbai. His ship was allowed to berth at Apollo Bunder—an honour otherwise bestowed only to royalty, viceroys, and other VVIPs. He was felicitated at a magnificent reception in the palatial house of Jehangir Bomanji Petit (1879–1946), a philanthropist, and owner of Petit Mills, and Chairman of the Bombay Mill Owners Association.

Gandhi was in the King's birthday honours list of 1915, and was honoured by the British Government of India with the 'Kaiser-I-Hind' gold medal on 3 June 1915. It appears that what Gandhi had done in South Africa coupled with his association with Gopal Krishna Gokhale made the British regard Gandhi as a "safe" politician, and wanted him to step into the shoes of the safe reformist Gokhale, rather than gravitate towards Tilak.

Gokhale, Gandhi's political mentor in India, had advised him to eschew politics for a year, to not express himself upon public questions, and to tour India.

Champaran & Gandhi, 1917

Gandhi visited Champaran in Bihar, near the Nepal border, on 10 April 1917 along with Dr Rajendra Prasad, and others. He was invited there by disgruntled tenant farmers of indigo plantations (blue dye) who alleged unfair treatment by their European masters: for many years, they had been forced into planting indigo (for dyes) on a portion of their land and then selling it at below-market prices to the British planters who had leased them the land. A Bihari farmer Rajkumar Shukla approached Gandhi in Lucknow in 1916 with a request to examine their plight, and pursued Gandhi wherever he went till Gandhi agreed to accompany him.

However, WB Heycock, the district magistrate, ordered Gandhi to leave the district. Refusing to comply, Gandhi responded: "*I feel it to be my duty to say that I am unable to leave this district, but if it pleases the authorities I shall suffer the penalty of disobedience. I have disregarded the order served upon me in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience*." That defiance on the part of Gandhi won him many admirers.

The Raj conceded Gandhi's right to conduct his inquiry, and Gandhi went about systematically and meticulously documenting all the relevant facts through his interviews and cross-questioning of tenants. Gandhi was able to work out an unassailable case in favour of the tenants. The Raj, to somehow head-off Gandhi, appointed the Champaran Agrarian Committee to go into the issue, in which Gandhi was made a member. Gandhi's thorough documentation of the woes of some 8000 tenants ultimately won the day, and the Committee recommended abolition of the exploitive 'tinkathia' system. They also proposed refund by the British planters to the extent of 25% of the illegal recoveries from farmers—that was queer: why only 25%? But, that had been the way Gandhi operated: compromise, give up, or drastically dilute the original demands. However, thanks to those Gandhian efforts, the Champaran Agrarian Act came into force in Bihar on 29 November 1917.

India's Massive Contribution to WW-I & Gandhi

Over a million (1.34 million to be precise) Indian troops served overseas during the First World War, of whom about 62,000 died and another 67,000 were wounded. About 3500 Indian doctors and surgeons, and 165 vets, were also deployed abroad. Over 1,72,000 elephants, horses, camels, and goats were shipped overseas from India, along with over 3,00,000 tons of fodder and supplies. The Indian Army fought in Europe, South-East Asia, East Africa, Egypt, and nearly 700,000 Indian soldiers served in Mesopotamia against the Ottoman Empire, also fighting in Palestine. When with mounting officer casualties the British found their replacement difficult (officers used to be all British), they were left with no alternative but to take in officer cadets of Indian descent beginning 1919. India provided more (1,78,000 more) soldiers for the war than the combined contribution of all other colonies.

Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck had commented that the British "*couldn't have come through both wars [WW-1, WW-II] if they hadn't had the Indian Army*."{URL9}{IDR} The *India Gate* in New Delhi was built in 1931 to commemorate the Indian soldiers who gave their lives fighting in the First World War.

Despite chronic impoverishment, thanks to the British, Indians contributed 100 million pounds as gift, 700 million dollars as their subscription to war loans, in addition to sending various products valued to the tune of 1.25 billion dollars, leading to heavy shortages in India, and increase in prices.

The Congress Party, promising full cooperation with the Raj, offered in December 1914 "*its profound devotion… its unswerving allegiance to the British connection, its firm resolve to stand by the Empire, at all hazards and at all costs*" {MM/145}.

When Gandhi visited London in August 1917, he urged the Indians there to "*think imperially*", and conspicuously demonstrated his loyalty to the Raj. The 'Apostle of Non-violence' and the sworn pacifist actively supported the British war efforts, and helped recruit Indian soldiers (he did a stint as a recruiting sergeant for a regiment). Gandhi wrote a letter dates 30 April 1918 to the British authorities: "*I would like to do something which Lord Chelmsford would consider to be real war work. I have an idea that, if*

I became your recruiting agent-in-chief, I might rain men on you. Pardon me for the impertinence."{CWMG/Vol-17/12} During his recruitment campaign in Kheda he proclaimed in a speech that the British "*love justice; they have shielded men against oppression*." In his enthusiasm, he wrote to the Viceroy on 29 April 1918, "*I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at this critical moment…*"{CWMG/Vol-17/8} Gandhi even urged Jinnah to help in the recruitment drive, as it would encourage Indian nationalism{PF/26}!

Gandhi did all the above willingly and unconditionally perhaps in the vain hope that the British would reciprocate after the war with grant of dominion status and self-government, similar to Canada or Australia. The British did nothing of the sort. The Montagu–Chelmsford (Mont-Ford, in short) Reforms of 1918 proposed gradual movement of India towards self-government, and was finally incorporated in the Government of India Act 1919 (for details, please check author's book "What Really Led to Indian Freedom" available on Amazon)—both fell far short of expectations and promises. It exposed Gandhi's lack of political skill in extracting anything tangible from the British in return for the precious services rendered, and the tremendous sacrifices of the Indian soldiers.

In sharp contrast to Gandhi, Tilak had opposed extending unconditional support to the British for their war efforts. Tilak, the wise realist, had insisted upon an agreed quid pro quo with the British for helping them, and he was proved right. Annie Besant of the 'Home Rule League' had similarly pleaded that only a hard-pressed Britain could be made to yield. But, Gandhi had told her: "*Mrs Besant, you are distrustful of the British; I am not, and I will not help in any agitation against them during the war*."{Nan/151}

Rowlatt Acts and Rowlatt Satyagraha 1919

The British contemptuously threw water on all the fond hopes of Gandhi, and of freedom and swaraj after the war, and reneging on all promises, came up with the draconian Rowlatt Acts on 21 March 1919 to curb anti-Raj agitations, sedition and revolutionary activities.

A committee chaired by SAT Rowlatt, a British judge, was tasked in 1917 with investigating "revolutionary conspiracies", the hidden agenda being of extending the government's war-time powers. The Rowlatt committee presented its report in July 1918. It identified Bengal, Punjab and the Bombay presidency as the three regions of conspiratorial insurgency; and to deal with them the Rowlatt committee recommended use of emergency powers like in the war-time, that included, among other stringent measures, detention without trial. The draconian legislation also provided for arrest and house-search without warrant; in-camera trial; non-provision of a counsel to the accused; and no right of appeal against orders of special tribunals. The legislation attracted a telling slogan: "*No vakil (lawyer), no daleel (argument), no appeal*."

The Rowlatt Acts of 1919 were rammed through the Legislative Council despite the unanimous Indian opposition. Jinnah had resigned from the Council in protest against the law. Gandhi launched a nationwide protest against what came to be clubbed as the "*Black Acts*". *In fact, it were the Rowlatt Acts that marked the emergence of Gandhi on the national scene*. On 6 April 1919, a nation-wide '*hartal*' was organised, and fasts were offered to oppose the laws—the event came to be known as the *Rowlatt Satyagraha*.

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre 1919

The Background

Mahatma Gandhi gave a call for peaceful protest against the Rowlatt Acts. In Punjab, two Congress leaders, Dr Satyapal and Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew, from Amritsar were arrested on 10 April 1919, and deported. On the Baisakhi religious day of 13 April 1919, that also happened to be Sunday, a large unarmed crowd of about 10 to 15 thousand gathered at about 5pm at the Jallianwala Bagh, a few hundred yards away from the Golden Temple, in Amritsar in a festive, celebratory mood, and to also peacefully protest the arrest of the two leaders. And, what did the British beasts do? They decided on cold-blooded brutality to teach the natives a lesson.

The Massacre

Jallianwala Bagh was a large open space enclosed on three sides by high walls and buildings with only one narrow exit. Brigadier General Reginald Dyer, the military commander of Amritsar, surrounded the Bagh with his troops and armoured cars just before the sunset, closed off the exit and then ordered his Gurkha and Baluchi soldiers to shoot into the crowd with their machine-guns and rifles, without giving the slightest warning to the peaceful crowd to disperse. A non-stop fusillade of over 1600 rounds was fired into the crowd in a space of ten minutes. The trapped crowd had nowhere to run or hide. Men, women and children ran helter-skelter, some jumping into the well to escape the volley of bullets. Dyer personally directed the firing towards the exits where the crowd was most dense; "the targets," he declared, were "good"{Knu/55-56}. General ordered the firing to continue until all ammunition the soldiers had brought with them was exhausted. He then ordered his men to leave the area, his ghastly deed done. Dyer forbade his soldiers to give any aid to the injured, and by ordering all Indians off the streets, prevented relatives or friends from bringing even a cup of water to the wounded who were piled up in the field. The massacre toll: 1,200 killed, and 3,600 wounded.

A reign of terror followed. General Dyer issued an order that Indians using the street should crawl on their bellies; if they tried to rise on all fours, they were struck by the butts of soldiers' guns. He arrested many teachers and students and compelled them to present themselves daily for

roll-calls, forcing many to walk sixteen miles a day. He had hundreds of citizens flogged in the public square. He built an open cage, unprotected from the sun, for the confinement of arrested persons; other prisoners he bound together with ropes, and kept in open trucks. He had lime poured upon the naked bodies of Sadhus, and had them exposed to the sun. He cut off the electric and water supplies from Indian houses. The British did their best to suppress this news of barbaric orgy of military sadism, and managed to delay the spread of the news.

Rewarding the Butcher

Dyer showed no remorse for his beastly act. In fact, he openly bragged about the unforgettable lesson he had taught Indians! And, he was backed up by Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer, the British Governor of Punjab. The House of Lords passed a motion in his support. Sir Edwin Montagu who rose in the British Parliament to condemn the act was shouted down with anti-Semitic insults, and charges of Bolshevism.

But, what did the "famed" British judicial system do to Reginald Edward Harry Dyer, the butcher of Amritsar? Nothing! He was tried by the Hunter Commission, but got away without any punishment—he was only censured. Hunter Commission Report was an elaborate coverup and a laboured whitewash of Dyer's criminality.

As if that was not enough, upon his return to Britain, Dyer was felicitated by the British parliament, and given an honourable discharge. The British admirers gave him a purse of *80,000 pounds and a bejewelled sword inscribed 'Saviour of the Punjab'*![{Wiki1}]

Even Warren Hastings, the Governor General, despite his horrible, unpardonable offences in India, was ultimately acquitted by the British "Justice" System in 1795, after a trial that lasted seven years.

You hear educated people talk appreciatively of the author *Rudyard Kipling*. But, what that character, without any conscience, had done? Claiming that Dyer was the man who had saved India, he had started a benefit fund for Dyer, raising over £26,000![{Wiki1}]

A class of Indians is so shameless, slavish, and lacking in self-respect that it wanted to convert the house where Kipling lived in India into a museum! Kipling used to take pleasure in heaping ridicule upon the Indian people by the use of contemptuous expressions such as "*a lesser breed without the law*", "*new-caught sullen people half devil and half child*".

Professor Gilbert Murray had said about Kipling: "*If ever it were my fate to put men in prison for the books they write, I should not like it, but I should know where to begin. I should first of all lock up my old friend, Rudyard Kipling, because in several stories he has used his great powers to stir up in the minds of hundreds of thousands of Englishmen a blind and savage contempt for the Bengali…*"{Sund}

Film 'Gandhi'

In the film 'Gandhi' of David Attenborough, the director shows the trial of Dyer (Hunter Commission) to impress the audience the world over the grandness of the British judicial system; without revealing that Dyer received no punishment, and was rewarded back home! What's even more shocking is that the film attracted no protest in India in this regard. The real reason was that the film was released during the time of Indira Gandhi, was part-financed by the government (through NFDC), with the script informally approved by the Indira Gandhi's Congress in power to make sure Nehru was shown in flattering light in the film.{Gren}{Sally/113-4}

Gandhi's Inexplicably Bewildering Stand on Jallianwala

Gandhi, the 'Apostle of Non-violence', did NOT return any of the many medals earned by him from the British Empire in South Africa for his services in the British wars, in protest against the massacre. (Gandhi chose to return his medals only for the thoroughly regressive Khilafat Movement later to save the genocidal Ottoman Empire in the far away foreign land!)

Gandhi's press statement of 18 April 1919, four days after the massacre, regretting the civil disobedience campaign, stated: "*…I am sorry, when I embarked upon a mass movement, I underrated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation*."{CWMG/Vol-17/443}

Gandhi stated the following absurdity about the victims of the Jallianwala Massacre: "*Those who died at Jallianwala were definitely not heroic martyrs. Were they heroes they would have either unsheathed the sword, or used at least their sticks [as if they had gone there equipped with swords/sticks] or they would have bared their breast to Dyer and died bravely when he came there in all insolence. They would never have taken to their heels*."{MD/Vol-2/262}

Gandhi believed in the British justice and fair play; and felt that if he kept sucking up to them; and not letting harm come their way through violence, by adopting and propagating non-violence, hopefully, as a quid

pro quo, the British would grant self-government and freedom. Inexplicably, a few months after the Jallianwala Massacre, during the Amritsar Congress Session held under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in December 1919, far from condemning the British Government for the massacre, a resolution of loyalty to the emperor and of satisfaction on successful termination of war was passed!

Revenge by Shahid Udham Singh

Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer was the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab between 1912 and 1919, and was in the saddle at the time of the Jallianwala massacre. He unjustly and shamelessly endorsed General Reginald Dyer's Jallianwala Bagh carnage and termed it as "*correct action*"! In a telegram sent to Dyer, O'Dwyer wrote: "*Your action is correct. Lieutenant Governor approves*."

Revolutionary Shahid Udham Singh (26 December 1899 – 31 July 1940) born in Sangrur district of Punjab avenged Jallianwala Bagh Massacre by shooting O'Dwyer in Caxton Hall in London on 13 March 1940. District Udham Singh Nagar in Uttarakhand is named after him. He was a member of the Ghadar Party and was influenced by Shahid Bhagat Singh.

Gandhi-Nehru's Condemnable Condemnation of the Revenge

Sadly, but expectedly, Gandhi condemned the killing by Udham Singh, saying, "*…the outrage has caused me deep pain. I regard it as an act of insanity... I hope this will not be allowed to affect political judgement…*"{URL76} Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in 'The National Herald': "*… assassination is regretted but it is earnestly hoped that it will not have far-reaching repercussions on political future of India*."{URL76} Apparently, the non-violent freedom fighters against the British were always keen they remained in the tormentors' good books, and that nothing was done that would hurt or annoy them, and put them out of favour.

{ 5 }

PHASE-I OF GANDHIAN STRUGGLE: 1919-1922

Khilafat & Non-Cooperation Movement (KNCM)

I have nothing to do with this pseudo-religious approach that Gandhi is advocating.
— Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Khalif, Khilafat & Armenian Genocide

Khalifah or Khalifa or Khalif or Caliph (Caliph is the corrupted version) is supposed to be the supreme religious and political leader of all Muslims around the world. What the Khalifa or Caliph rule over is called the Caliphate or Khilafat. The Ottoman Empire, with its capital in Istanbul (Constantinople), Turkey, ran a Caliphate or Khilafat.

Khalifa and the Ottoman Empire perpetrated the dastardly Armenian Genocide, also known as the *Armenian Holocaust*, during 1915-17 involving the *systematic extermination of about 15 lakhs* (1.5 million) of its minority Armenian subjects inside their historic homeland, which lies within the present-day Republic of Turkey. The genocide commenced with Ottoman authorities rounding up and deporting around 250 Armenian intellectuals and community leaders from Constantinople to Ankara, and eventually murdering most of them. The genocide then expanded to the wholesale killing of the able-bodied male population; subjection of army conscripts to forced labour; and deportation of women, children, the elderly and infirm—deprived of food and water, and subjected to rape robbery and murder—on death marches to the Syrian desert.{AG1} Many women were raped, stripped naked, and crucified—in testimony, there are photographs of rows of naked women nailed to cross!{AG2}

It was the first modern genocide, and precursor of Hitler's Holocaust—indeed Hitler was inspired from, and took lessons from the same. Hitler was reported to have remarked in the context of his order to exterminate the Polish race: "*Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?*"{URL77}

Despite enough and mounting evidence, Gandhi had refused to acknowledge the Armenian genocide, saying "*I distrust the Armenian case*."{JA} Gandhi had made a bizarre statement in support of the Khilafat and Ottoman responsible for the many wrong-doings including the Armenian Holocaust: "*I would gladly ask for postponement of Swaraj if thereby we could advance the interests of Khilafat*."{BK2/81} How could the "Apostle of Non-Violence" lead a movement to save a regime that had perpetrated genocide? Was Gandhi totally ignorant of the what was going on elsewhere in the world? How could a person unaware of important currents in contemporary history be ever a good leader? Or, was he doing what he did aware of the background? If so, he was totally unprincipled!

Modern day ISIS, the perpetrator of indescribable crimes on the Yezidis and Kurds and others, is headed by a Khalifa, and their aim is to establish Khilafat all over the world! Gandhi was therefore supporting those whose modern incarnation is ISIS!

Defeat of the Ottomans in WW-I & its Consequences

Upon defeat of the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire) in World War I (28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918) by the Allied (or Allies) Powers (British Empire, US, France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, Romania, Serbia and others), the US President Woodrow Wilson called for the principle of self-determination for post-war reorganization of the territories formerly controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

The various countries that were carved out from the Ottoman Empire after its defeat in World War I were as follows: Yemen in 1918, Jordan in 1921, Turkey in 1923, Iraq (Mesopotamia) in 1932, Lebanon in 1943, Syria in 1946, Israel in 1948, and Kuwait in 1961. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was formed in 1932. It included Mecca which had been under the Ottomans.

Khilafat & Other Muslim Countries

With the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I, an outcry on behalf of the caliphate was raised by the Khilafatists (those who supported Khilafat) to restore the institution of Caliphate. It implied restoring the pre-war status for the Ottomans. But, why would a defeated empire be given that privilege?

Besides, it would have meant re-imposition of the Ottoman rule over Arabs, Egypt, and so on—something those Muslim countries least wanted, for they desired their own independent existence. Significantly, the Arabs and the Egyptians and the Muslims of other countries did not shed a tear at the demise of the Ottoman Empire

Khilafat & Indian Muslims

In sharp contrast to the Muslims of other countries like Egypt and Arabs, the Indian Muslims, especially the Sunni elites, decided to make a huge hue and cry about it. One of the reasons for this was that to protect the Ottoman empire from external threat and possible dismemberment, and to also crush the internal political problem caused by the growing democratic influence and democratic opposition at home, Abdul Hamid II (1842–1918), the Ottoman emperor, had launched his Pan-Islamic program. As a part of the same, he had sent an emissary, Jamaluddin Afghani, to India in the late 19th century. The Caliphate cause evoked religious passion and sympathy

amongst Indian Muslims. Abdul Hamid II was succeeded by his brother Mehmed VI (1861–1926).

Thanks to the ground prepared for it, as mentioned above, and the activism of people like the Oxford-educated Muslim journalist, Maulana Muhammad Ali, his brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, and many others, including Dr Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Hasrat Mohani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr Hakim Ajmal Khan, the All India Khilafat Committee was formed. They published the Khilafat Manifesto in 1920 calling upon the British to protect the caliphate, and exhorting the Indian Muslims to unite and hold the British accountable on that count.

Earlier, in 1912, during the Balkan wars, the Indian Muslims had sent a medical mission to Turkey headed by Dr MA Ansari.

Maulana Muhammad Ali wanted Sir Syed Ahmad's Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College (later AMU) to severe its links with the Raj in protest. When the College rebuffed the Khilafatists many students walked out, leading eventually to the foundation of Jamia Millia Islamia in 1920 in Delhi, at the initiative of the Khilafat leaders like Dr Ansari, Maulana Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan and others.{Akb/135}

Thousands of Indian Muslims even migrated to Afghanistan to fight for Khilafat—such was the fanaticism. King Amanullah of Afghanistan had to persuade their leaders to abandon the movement. Following the same, most returned to India thoroughly upset.

The Muslim middle-class was not troubled so much by what was happening in their own country of residence, that is, India, than by what was happening to the Muslim countries in the Middle East 'thanks to the conspiracy of Christendom against Islam!{Nan/181} It was queer that the Muslim educated class, and even the illiterate ones, were more concerned about the extra-territorial issue of Khilafat than about the gaining of freedom from the British in India! What was even more curious was that while the Muslims of the regions who had been under the Ottomans actually sought freedom from them, the Indian Muslims effectively wanted their slavery to continue! Indeed the Mughals never acknowledged the temporal authority of the Caliphate of the Turkish Sultan. Even Sir Syed Ahmad, the originator of the idea of Muslims as a separate nation and the founder of AMU, had never acknowledged the Caliphate. Another

interesting aspect was that a large number of Muslim soldiers in the British-Indian army had fought against the army of Khalifa in WW-I.

Stand of Jinnah & Agha Khan

Jinnah was against the Khilafat Movement, and had advised against supporting fundamentalist elements. Agha Khan and his companions remained loyal to the British. The Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha had opposed the Khilafat Movement.

Gandhi & Khilafat

Khilafat Movement began with the celebration of 'Khilafat Day' on 27 October 1919. Gandhi was elected as President of the All-India Khilafat Conference at Delhi on 24 November 1919, and said in his presidential address: "*It ought not to appear strange for the Hindus to be on the same platform as the Muslims in a matter that specially and solely affects the Muslims. After all, the test of friendship is true assistance in adversity and whatever we are, Hindus, Parsis, Christians or Jews, if we wish to live as one nation, surely the interest of any of us must be the interest of all… We talk of Hindu-Muslim unity. It would be an empty phrase if the Hindus hold aloof from the Muslims when their vital interests were at stake.*"{Akb2/237}

Gandhi supported the Khilafat movement and worked out an alliance of the Congress with the Khilafat leaders in 1920. Together they launched a nationwide non-cooperation movement, and a campaign of mass, peaceful civil disobedience.

Gandhi failed to appreciate that Khilafat was a moribund institution; and that those under it were themselves sick of it. Further, many Arab and non-Arab regions were straining to throw off the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. Why fight for what many Middle-East Muslims themselves wanted dead?

Gandhi returned the medals the British Raj had given for his services in South Africa. The 'Apostle of Non-violence' returned the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal to Viceroy Lord Chelmsford on 1 August 1920. Stating his reasons for returning the medals, Gandhi wrote to Viceroy Chelmsford: "… *Events have happened during the past month which have confirmed me in the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the Khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral and unjust manner and have been moving from wrong to wrong to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a government…*"{URL78}

The 'Apostle of Non-Violence' also returned the Zulu War Medal and the Boer War Medal earned by him from the British for help in the British wars against the native Zulus and Boers in South Africa. Gandhi was a rare fighter against the tormentors of Indians on whom the tormentors conferred medals!

Gandhi could return his medals in favour of the regressive cause of Khilafat against which the democratic Turks led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

were themselves fighting! However, Gandhi, who talked of non-violence at the drop of a hat, didn't think Jallianwala massacre of a year before was reason enough to return his war medals!

Approval of Non-Cooperation at Congress Sessions in 1920

In a special Congress session in Calcutta during 4–9 September 1920, the Congress, at the instance of Gandhi, adopted non-cooperation for the sake of Khilafat and other matters by a narrow margin of 144 against 132. The then Congress stalwarts like Chittaranjan Das, Motilal Nehru, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai were initially cool towards the proposal. However, Annie Besant, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Jinnah refused to endorse Gandhi on the proposal. The session saw the emergence of young leaders like C Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abul Kalam Azad, and Jawaharlal Nehru.

In the session, *Gandhi promised Swaraj within 12 months of the launch of the non-cooperation movement*! In fact, much later, at a conference in September 1921, Gandhi went to the wild extent of saying that he was "*so sure of getting Swaraj before the end of the year* [in the next 3-4 months, that is!]" that he "*could not conceive of himself as living beyond December 31, without having won Swaraj*."

Many of the leaders who had opposed Gandhi's non-cooperation proposal came around at the Nagpur session of Dec-1920.

Unexpectedly, the Movement Gathered Steam

1920 saw over 200 strikes involving over 15 lakh workers. KNCM showed no signs of abating, and by the end of 1921 over 30,000 were in British jails, including all the top Congress leaders. To dissuade people, flogging in the jails became a common practice. However, people wanted to further intensify the agitation. The AICC passed a resolution on 4 November 1921 to start additionally a civil disobedience campaign throughout India. Many in the Congress and in the Khilafat Movement felt Gandhi was not going far enough—they wanted intensification in the movement through mass civil disobedience spread all across the country. However, Gandhi wanted to play it small, and snubbed those who wanted a more wide-spread action, with his trade-mark non-violence condition.

Gandhi was appointed "dictator" of the movement—a term Gandhi loved. Gandhi was, by nature, undemocratic. His "dictatorship" cost his followers and India dear as would be obvious from the subchapter below.

Nine months into the movement at its peak, Gandhi recalled his promise at the Congress Calcutta session of September 1920 of getting Swaraj within 12 months of the launch of the non-cooperation movement, and wrote in 'Navajivan' of 12 October 1921: "*I should not like to remain alive next year if we have not won swaraj by then. I am, in that event, to be pained so deeply that this body may perish—I would desire that it should*."{CWMG/Vol-24/458} Gandhi's was a wishful thinking. There was no serious thought, no discussions with the colleagues, no planning, no strategy, no tactics, no guidance, no ground-rules! In fact, there was a pattern to it. It was one of Gandhi's life-long tendencies not to consult colleagues on most vital issues. He relied on "divine guidance", and once he had that, he acted dictatorial—and often wrong. Even the most ambitious "Quit India" movement of Gandhi of 1942 was on similar lines—lots of talk and show, but no planning! Only the Salt Satyagraha of 1930 was well-planned, and that was thanks to Sardar Patel, and not because of Gandhi.

Gandhi's Inexplicable Calling-off of KNCM!

Inexplicably, undemocratically and unilaterally, Gandhi suddenly suspended the non-cooperation movement on 12 February 1922, without consulting any of the stakeholders, including the Muslim leaders of the Khilafat Movement. Gandhi once again demonstrated his despotic tendencies. The reason, or the excuse, was the perishing of 23 policemen when the *Chauri Chaura* Police Station in the Gorakhpur district of UP was set on fire in a retaliatory violence on 4 February 1922. Police had arrested leaders of a group picketing a liquor shop in the market place. In protest, a crowd gathered in front of the police station shouting slogans. The police opened fire into the crowd killing three and wounding several. Angered by the unprovoked firing, the protestors set fire to the police station, killing the policeman as a result.

At the time Gandhi was over 800 miles away in Bardoli in Gujarat. So, linking his agitation to the incident was far-fetched. Further, in a big country like India where the British freely resorted to unjust acts, exploitation, violence, firing, and humiliation of the natives, such incidents were bound to occur.

Yet, Gandhi declared that his followers had sinned against God; and to continue the campaign would be to follow Satan. Satanic acts of the British didn't matter. But, stray violence, and that too only retaliatory violence, of some groups—that was bound to occur in a country as big as India—did seem to matter for Gandhi. And, if it did, why lead a freedom movement? Rather, sit like a sanyasi in some temple or monastery. Gandhi even went on a five day fast to purify himself, and withdrew from all Satyagraha activities.

Even if one grants Gandhi his indefensible logic of calling off the agitation on account of the violence, the question is why didn't he do so earlier in the face of far more ghastly violence? Reference is to the terrible Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks of August 1921 (please see details elsewhere in this book). Chauri Chaura violence of February 1922 was not even 1% of the same.

Under the camouflage of non-violence, withdrawal of KNCM actually amounted to betrayal of the freedom movement, because 'Swaraj' too was one of the aims of the KNCM.

As usual, Gandhi offered his typical *Mahatman Brand* absurd rationale, illogical logic, and unreasonable reason: "*The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound*."{CWMG/Vol-26/178} *Had Gandhi informed the participants in advance that he was on a religious, rather than a national or political, mission? Did anyone question Gandhi as to what particular passage of which scripture of which religion, or what religious tradition, prescribed abandoning freedom struggle in the face of minor retaliatory violence, that may be less than 0.0001% of what the opposite party (the British, in this case) may be unleashing?* Had Gandhi not read Gita? Gandhi could have espoused his crazy ideas in his personal field, but to turn absolute non-violence into a one-way creed of the victim and the violated, while the opposite party used violence freely, was not only politically unwise and impractical, it was also religiously immoral and unethical. In short, *Gandhi's act was both politically and religiously unsound and indefensible*.

The actual reason perhaps was that Gandhi was overawed by the increasing tempo of the struggle, and found himself unprepared to handle it. He had never really thought through the whole thing, and determined the ultimate goal. Nor had he planned for the eventuality. His was an unplanned, incremental thinking. Not being a team-player, he had not cared to discuss and plan with the colleagues. *Gandhi was not all-out anti-British. He only looked forward to some incremental concessions, acceptance of his leadership, and space for himself, and his group. He was therefore looking for an excuse, a face-saving device, to end the agitation*. Chauri Chaura came to his rescue. *If Chauri Chaura had not happened, he would have clutched at something else*.

What is noteworthy is that rattled by the agitation, in which thousands were in jail, the British were about to yield. Had Gandhi stood firm, and not withdrawn the agitation, the Raj would have offered conciliatory terms. But, Gandhi's sudden and cowardly withdrawal put paid to all hopes.

It is not widely realised, but the stark fact is none of Gandhi's big agitations whether in South Africa or in India was ever successful!

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228 people were arrested and tried for the Chauri Chaura incident in which 23 Policemen perished. While 6 died in police custody, 172 were

sentenced to death! Did Gandhi protest against the disproportionate punishment? The Communist leader MN Roy labelled it as "*legalised murder*"{Roy2}, and called for a general strike of workers. Reviewing the verdict, the Allahabad High Court sentenced 19 to death, and 110 to life-imprisonment on 20 April 1923. In sharp contrast, none were punished for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by the "impartial" British justice system—Dyer was hailed and rewarded. *Did Gandhi raise a voice?*

Reactions to Gandhi's Withdrawal of KNCM

General Reaction

The decision shocked, stunned and humiliated over 30,000 who were in Raj's prisons thanks to Gandhi. Many sent him angry letters. Many like Rajaji saw a near victory turning into a dark defeat. CR Das, then lodged in Alipore jail, felt distraught at *Gandhi's* "*repeated bungling*"{Gill/47}. Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's secretary then lodged in Agra jail, stated that the news had "*absolutely unhinged*"{SLM/165} {Gill/47} him.

Ali Brothers

The Ali brothers disapproved of Gandhi's move, and severed their ties. Many Muslims felt Gandhi had betrayed Khilafat by suspending the movement.

Jinnah

Jinnah denounced Gandhi for causing schism and split "*not only amongst Hindus and Muslims, but between Hindus and Hindus, and Muslims and Muslims, and even between fathers and sons…*".{Jal/8}

Romain Rolland

"It is dangerous to assemble all the forces of a nation and to hold the nation panting before a prescribed movement, to lift one's arm to give the final command, and then at the last moment, let one's arm drop and thrice call a halt just as a formidable machinery has been set in motion. One risks ruining the brakes, and paralysing the impetus."{Nan/237}

Netaji Subhas Bose

"To sound the order of retreat just when the public enthusiasm was reaching the boiling point was nothing short of national calamity."{Bose/82}

Jawaharlal Nehru

"We were angry when we learnt of this stoppage of our struggle at a time when we seemed to be consolidating our position and advancing on all fronts… Our mounting hopes tumbled to the ground… Must we train the three hundred and odd millions of India in the theory and practice of non-violent action before we could go forward?... If this was the sole condition of its function, then non-violent method of resistance would always fail…"{Gill/47}

Lala Lajpat Rai

"…To change the heart of mobs in such a way as to make it impossible for them to indulge in such brutalities without changing the hearts of governments that rule over them, is an impossibility… Leaders of political campaigns for freedom cannot afford to wear their hearts on their sleeves…"{Gill/47}

CF Andrews

"…The immediate consequence of this act of Mahatma Gandhi was profound dismay… there was a depression all over the country which could everywhere be felt. When I went in and out of villages, I found that the discouragement had penetrated the country as well as the cities…"{Gill/47}

Sacrifice Down the Drain

Leading Indian lawyers like Vallabhbhai Patel, C Rajagopalachari, Dr Rajendra Prasad, Motilal Nehru, CR Das, and many more had given up their lucrative practice. Hundreds of government employees had resigned from service, and had participated in the cause of freedom. While their lives, and that of their families, were ruined, they had no compensatory satisfaction in having achieved something. Careers of thousands of students who had left their studies in sheer enthusiasm were pointlessly spoiled. Many who had given up their legal practice were left wondering at the lack of wisdom of their act. Thousands faced police savagery, and rotted in jails.

All their sacrifice went not in getting freedom for the country, but in being guinea pigs in Gandhi's experiment with the Gandhian faddism and misconception of non-violence.

Caliphate, Atatürk & Gandhi's Indefensible Stand!

The height of irony was that while Gandhi and the Indian Khilafat Committee poured venom during 1920-22 against the British for destroying the Caliphate, the Caliph (Mehmet Vahideddin) himself (facing local opposition, and after his royal band deserted him), had written to the British General Sir Charles Harington on 16 November 1922 seeking British protection and refuge, as his life was in danger.{Akb2/141}

The second irony came in 1924 when Caliph's compatriots themselves overthrew him—the Khilafat Movement lost its raison d'être when the forces of the young, dynamic, revolutionary military officer Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938: the surname, Atatürk, meaning "Father of the Turks", was granted to him in 1934 and forbidden to any other person by the Turkish parliament), leader of the *Turkish National Movement* in the *Turkish War of Independence*, overthrew the Ottoman rule, abolished the role of Caliph, and established a modern, secular republic in independent Turkey in 1924, after his victories in 1922 and the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. In March 1924, Atatürk formally abolished the Caliphate (Khilafat) and expelled the Caliph/Sultan from Turkey.

Kemal destroyed the Pan-Islamic movement by deposing the Sultan and abolishing the Caliphate. He thus effectively cut the ground from under the feet of the Khilafists in India, including Gandhi. Ataturk modernized Turkey—he created a secular republic, did away with Ottoman religious foundations and paraphernalia, and banned veil and fez. *Jinnah* then (late 1920s, 1930s) had "*became a fan of the Turk [Mustafa Kemal Ataturk] who first saved and then reformed his country. Jinnah told his sister that if he ever got as much power as Ataturk he would westernize Indian Muslims*."{Akb2/245}

It is said that Gandhi supported the Khilafat Movement to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity, and to garner the support of the Muslims for national freedom. But, Gandhi's position is questionable on several counts. Gandhi, the 'Apostle of truth', was not really supporting a just and truthful cause. There was no Islamic canon that only the Sultan of Turkey could be the Khalifa. The Sultan was actually garnering support for his personal vested interest: to continue his oppressive, feudal rule.

As BR Nanda wrote:

> "He [Gandhi] failed to see that the Khilafat was a moribund institution, that the Turks themselves were sick of it, that the Ottoman Empire could no more remain intact after the war than the Hapsburg Empire, and that smaller nations, Arab and non-Arab, were struggling to be free from the stranglehold of Turkey."{Nan/185}

The British had not touched Gandhi, but once the movement petered out, and they sensed that neither the Muslims nor Hindus would be provoked by his arrest, they promptly got a six-year jail term pronounced for him in March 1922 for writing seditious articles, and arrested him. To rub in the point, a remark was made in the British Parliament that not a dog had barked in India on Gandhi's 1922 arrest. Gandhi was, however, released after two years from Yerwada prison after an operation in Sassoon Hospital in February 1924.

Miserable Failure of Gandhi's First Mass Agitation

First, let us see what were the aims of Gandhi-led first mass agitation of Khilafat and non-cooperation: (1)Protection of Khalifa and Khilafat—Caliph of Turkey. (2)Swaraj (Self-rule) within 12 months. (3)Hindu-Muslim amity and unity, so that apart from other positives, anti-British forces become stronger.

Were any of the above aims met? NO.

Major Negatives

By supporting the Khilafat Movement Gandhi ended up communalising the freedom movement. Even Jinnah (then a nationalist) had cautioned Gandhi and the Congress against it.

Why bring about Hindu-Muslim unity on the foundations of regressive, fundamentalist, feudal, backward-looking Islam, and promote pan-Islamism at the cost of nationalism? Why promote the retrograde Islamic group-consciousness? In fact, Jinnah, who later became a rabid communalist for the sake of power, had advised against support to Khilafat and to the fundamentalist elements. Jinnah felt alarmed at the emergence of the reactionary mullah elements. He wondered why the Hindu leaders were not realising that the movement was fostering Pan-Islamic sentiments. At that time, Jinnah believed that it was wrong to mix religious faith with politics. Gandhi had not realised the danger of mixing religion with politics, and it cost India dear. Patriotism ought always to be territorial, and not communal or religious.

Wrote MC Chagla:

> "I have always felt that Gandhiji was wrong in trying to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity by supporting the cause of the Khilafat… So long as the religious cause survived, the unity was there; but once that cause was removed the unity showed its weakness. All the Khilafists who had been attracted by to the Congress came out in their true colours…"{MCC/78}

Gandhi's move was thoroughly opportunistic. He thought that by lending support to and leading the Khilafat Movement he would become a leader of Muslims too, and outmanoeuvre Muslim leaders like Jinnah. In that sense, Gandhi's move had a strong element of personal ambition.

KNCM proved to be a big failure in so far as the Hindu-Muslim relationship was concerned. Many Muslim leaders, instead of joining the national mainstream or coming over to the Congress, joined the Muslim League. Moderate, educated Muslims, thanks to the Khilafat effect, became more conservative—many started growing beard. Commented Jawaharlal Nehru:

> "Owing to the prominence given to the Khilafat Movement in 1921 a large number of Maulvis and Muslim religious leaders took a prominent part in the political struggle. They gave a definite religious tinge to the movement, and Muslims generally were greatly influenced by it. Many a Westernised Muslim, who was not of particularly religious turn of mind, began to grow a beard and conform to the tenets of orthodoxy."

Jamait-Ulama-e-Hind was founded to provide political leadership on the 'universal' values of Shariah. The emerging conservative, maulvis-driven leadership became a challenge to (the then) secular Muslims like Jinnah. Wrote MC Chagla who later became India's Chief Justice:

> "I also think that the alliance between Mahatma Gandhi and the Khilafists considerably accentuated the communal and religious aspects of Indian public life… It also resulted in a great set-back both for Jinnah and men like him, and for the Muslim League, which were working on secular lines."{MCC/81}

Rather than teaming up with the progressive and secular elements (like Jinnah) among the Muslim leadership, Gandhi aligned with the backward-looking, conservative, fundamentalist and undesirable elements for Khilafat, giving fillip and exposure to those dangerous pan-Islamic (and generally anti-nationalist) leaders and their followers. Where was the so-called urgent need for forging Hindu-Muslim unity in 1919 when that had already been achieved and forged through the Lucknow Pact of 1916, thanks to Tilak and Jinnah. Or, was it that Gandhi wanted to establish his own leadership by undermining Tilak-Jinnah work, unmindful of the possibility of its terribly negative consequences. That the elements Gandhi had gone along with were undesirable would be obvious from the following:

Mohammad Ali, among the leading lights of the Khilafat Movement, who had earlier been hailing and praising Gandhi, declared after the failure

of Khilafat:

> "But between belief and actual character there is a wide difference. As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior to that professed by the followers of any non-Islamic religion. And in this sense the creed of even a fallen and degraded Mussalman is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his high character, even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself."{CWMG/468}

Muslims supported Gandhi's non-cooperation only because Gandhi supported Khilafat—as a quid pro quo—not because they had any faith in it. Gandhi himself admitted: "My talk with Hasrat Mohani left me much disturbed. According to him nobody believes in non-cooperation. But it has been taken up merely to conciliate me."

During the Hindu-Muslim bonhomie of 1919-22, many Muslim leaders had called upon Muslims to voluntarily given up beef, and stop cow-slaughter, as a gesture to Hindus, for their support for the Khilafat Movement. Gandhi had, however, insisted that the Hindu co-operation would be unconditional, saying, "Conditional assistance is like the adulterated cement which does not bind." Maulana Abdul Bari had stated: "Muslim honour would be at stake if they forgot the co-operation of the Hindus. I for my part say that we should stop cow-killing, irrespective of the cooperation, because we are children of the same soil."{Akb2/237}

However, after the withdrawal of the KNCM by Gandhi, the Muslims resumed the practice of cow-slaughter even more ostentatiously. Since the Muslim invasions of the eighth century cow-slaughter has been the Muslim device to desecrate the Hindu holy places, and to insult the Hindus. It has far more to do with humiliating Hindus, than it has to do with food-habits. It has been a symbol of Muslim aggression and intolerance. Wrote BR Nanda: "*The very Muslims who, as a gesture to their Hindu neighbours, had voluntarily given up cow-slaughter [in the wake of Gandhian/Hindu support to Khilafat] during the favourable climate of 1920-22, now [after Gandhi called off the movement] insisted on ostentatiously exercising it as a religious obligation*."{Nan/257}

The great Indian novelist, Sarat Chandra Chatterjee (Chattopadhyay), had commented in his speech at the Bengal Provincial Conference in 1926 that the Hindu-Muslim unity, particularly of the kind fostered by Mahatma

Gandhi, was a dangerous illusion as '*battles for a false cause can never be won*'.{Akb2/225}

There were wide-spread communal riots all over India during 1918-24, both during and after the Khilafat between 1918 and 19, as if Hindus were responsible for what befell the Ottomans and the Khalifa!

1921 Moplah anti-Hindu riots were the worst ever. Kohat anti-Hindu riots of 1924 claimed lives of over 155 Hindus and Sikhs, and the entire Hindu and Sikh population had to flee the town to save their lives. In 1926 alone there were 35 Hindu-Muslim clashes. Swami Shraddhanand was murdered in 1926. Said Gandhi in 1927: "I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands and has been transferred to God's hands alone." Sadly, despite ample contemporary evidence, and the surfeit of it through the centuries, Gandhi, Nehru & Co failed to grasp the nature of Islam, and the psychology of Muslims.

Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malviya and Swami Shraddhanand were of the opinion that thanks to Khilafat there was a dangerous awakening and turn among the Muslim masses leading to more frequent and brutal communal incidents, and that therefore the Hindus needed to prepare suitably for their self-defence against the increasingly aggressive Muslims.

Gandhi's close Khilafat friends and colleagues turned foes. Muhammad and Shaukat Ali, and their Muslim followers, began to say it was a mistake to align with the Hindus! Maulana Shaukat Ali went to the extent of alleging that while the Khilafat Committee had subsidised Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, Gandhi had turned his back on the interests of the Muslims. Gandhi was so piqued by Shaukat Ali's remarks that while rebutting him and asserting the finance was given unasked, Gandhi promised to return back the amount with interest.

Sadly, Gandhi's suspension of non-cooperation cost India Hindu-Muslim alliance, and created almost a permanent wedge between the two communities, leading ultimately to partition. In a way, Gandhi's first mass agitation resulted, not in communal bonhomie, but in communal disharmony, and laid the foundation of Partition and Pakistan.

{ 6 }

Phase-II of Gandhian Struggle: 1930-1931

Dandi March & Salt Satyagraha 1930

The government had levied tax on the manufacture and sale of salt, an item used by all—rich and poor. To Gandhi breaking the Salt Law appeared to be a fit case for peaceful civil disobedience, to gain publicity, and to mobilise masses: everyone could participate in it—scoop salt at the coast, or just sell and buy salt without paying tax.

To gain maximum Indian and international publicity, Gandhi planned a long 390 km march from his Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad to the coastal Gujarat village of Dandi near Navsari, where his group planned to produce salt at the coast without paying tax. 78 people began the march with Gandhi on 12 March 1930, and arrived at Dandi after a 24-day walk on 5 April 1930, breaking the Salt Law at 6.30am the next day on 6 April 1930. Many people had joined the group along the way. The march turned into a grand media event.

Gandhi had appointed Sardar Patel as the Grand Commander for the march. Dandi and the Salt Route were Patel's choice. Sardar did a fine job, delivering fiery speeches along the route, and mobilising and inspiring people.

Gandhi marched triumphantly ahead with host of processionists, making speeches along the way. The villages they passed through were festooned as if participating in a festival. Many villagers joined the march along the way. The procession gradually grew from under a hundred to a few thousand by the time they hit the destination. After making salt at Dandi, Gandhi continued further along the coast, producing salt and addressing meetings. Rajaji had remarked perceptively: "It is not salt but disobedience that you are manufacturing."{RG3/117}

It is significant that the Raj didn't interfere with Gandhi's march (although they arrested others), nor with the wide publicity it received, what with the newsreel cameras of the world clicking away. The British did indulge Gandhi; and the generosity of the media towards him both within

and outside India would not have been possible without the Raj's tacit approval. But, before the planned satyagraha at the Dharasana Salt Works, 40 km south of Dandi, Gandhi was arrested on the midnight of 4–5 May 1930.

However, Manilal, Gandhi's second son, and Sarojini Naidu led 2500 satyagrahis to *Dharasana Salt Works* on *21 May 1930*. As they approached the Works, they were mercilessly hit by lathis and boots on heads and body, at the instructions of 6 British officers, by about 400 Indian constables posted there. No blows were returned. About 320 were injured.

The Satyagraha continued for about a year at various places in India. Gandhi was released from jail unconditionally on 26 January 1931.

Salt Satyagraha & Gandhi-Irwin Pact 1931: a Failure

Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed off on 5 March 1931. Under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, the British acceded to NO major demand of the Congress. *It was effectively a failure of Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha: his second major movement. Salt Laws remained intact.*

Before the start of the Salt Satyagraha on 12 March 1930, Gandhi had put forth the following *Eleven Point Demand* on the Viceroy (stated below in brief), and made it clear that if the 11 points were ignored, the only way out was civil disobedience:

(1) Prohibit intoxicants.
(2) Change the ratio between the rupee and the sterling.
(3) Reduce the rate of land revenue.
(4) Abolition of salt tax.
(5) Reduce the military expenditure.
(6) Reduce expenditure on civil administration.
(7) Impose custom duty on foreign cloth.
(8) Accept the Postal Reservation Bill.
(9) Abolish CID.
(10) Release all political prisoners.
(11) Issue licenses of arms to citizens for self-protection.

Conspicuous absence in the above *Eleven Point Demand* is that for 'Complete Independence', especially when the Congress had grandly promulgated the Purna Swaraj Declaration, or the Declaration of the Independence of India, only a few weeks back on 26 January 1930!

None of the above 11 points were accepted by the Viceroy. While all the above 11 points put forth before the start of the agitation on 12 March 1930 were ignored by the Raj, Gandhi, in consultation with his colleagues, put forth the following six revised points to the Viceroy on 17 February 1931 as his condition for calling off the agitation:

1) Release all political prisoners giving them clemency.
2) As a policy, peaceful volunteers for freedom movement NOT to be prosecuted.
3) Return properties confiscated from political volunteers.
4) Re-appoint all the government servants dismissed for their political participation.

5) Grant freedom to picket the government offices, and the shops dealing in foreign goods. Grant freedom to make salt from the seawater.
6) Order an enquiry into the unlawful activities the police perpetrated on the people.

As would be seen from the above, while almost all of the original *Eleven Point Demand* for which the agitation was started disappeared, 5 of the above 6 demands are a consequence of the agitation (clemency to the agitators). The only demand that remained was the almost inconsequential and harmless demand number-5: "Grant freedom to picket the government offices, and the shops dealing in foreign goods. Grant freedom to make salt from the seawater."

Even the above watered-down demands were NOT fully agreed to by the Viceroy.

What then was agreed through the Gandhi–Irwin Pact? Just these two: (1)Permit peaceful picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops. (2)Permit free collection or manufacture of salt by persons near the sea-coast. *Mind you, NO withdrawal of salt tax. Salt laws remained intact*. Just that those living near the sea could make salt—which they had anyway been doing, it being near impossible to keep a watch on thousands of miles of coast. *Therefore, the Salt Satyagraha for ending the Salt Tax was a total failure!*

The other points of agreement in the Gandhi–Irwin Pact were only those that related to the consequence of the agitation: (1)Withdrawal of ordinances in the wake of the agitation, and ending prosecutions. (2)Release of political prisoners, excluding those guilty of violence. (3)Restoration of properties confiscated from the satyagrahis. (4)Lifting of the ban over the Congress. What about those who lost jobs?

Significantly, release of arrested soldiers of the Garhwali Rifles (please read details elsewhere in this book) was excluded from the Pact.

The cost of the agitation was huge, and results a big zero: People suffered heavy repression—over 60,000 were jailed, and hundreds were shot dead.

Vallabhbhai Patel was heartbroken at Gandhi's failure to obtain the restoration of sold lands of the peasants by the British. The Patidars of Kheda considered the Pact a betrayal—it was the Pact, and not the Police lathis, that broke their backs!

Several newspapers in London gloated on the victory of the Viceroy. Wrote 'The Times', London: "*Such a victory has seldom been vouchsafed to any Viceroy*." *It was said that only Gandhi could have made such an agreement* (being such a huge come-down), *and only he could have got away with it*![{Gill/59}]

As has been pointed out earlier too, Gandhi had a habit of making easy compromises with the British without achieving the stated goals of his agitations—at the expense of the agitating public, who suffered grievously. Public felt disappointed at the stoppage of the movement by Gandhi when the people were in high spirit—it was a case of déjà vu: similar to the stoppage of the Khilafat Movement by Gandhi in 1922.

Nothing Done by Gandhi to Save Bhagat Singh & Colleagues

Despite requests to make saving of Shahid Bhagat Singh and others a condition in the on-going negotiations between Gandhi and Viceroy Irwin, the Gandhi–Irwin Pact signed on 5 March 1931, and approved by the Congress at its Karachi session on 30 March 1931, remained silent on the matter, and Gandhi and the Congress did effectively precious little to save the braves. There were no demonstrations, no hartals, no satyagraha and no fasts organised by the Congress Party or Gandhi; nor did Gandhi include the matter of commutation of sentences of Bhagat Singh and others while negotiating release of the Congress prisoners of the Salt Satyagraha with Viceroy Irwin for the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

Sukhdev, who had not pleaded for himself and his colleagues, wrote an open letter to Gandhi after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact: "…Since your compromise (Gandhi-Irwin pact) you have called off your movement and consequently all of your prisoners have been released. But, what about the revolutionary prisoners? Dozens of Ghadar Party prisoners imprisoned since 1915 are still rotting in jails; in spite of having undergone the full terms of their imprisonments, scores of martial law prisoners are still buried in these living tombs, and so are dozens of Babbar Akali prisoners. Deogarh, Kakori, Machhua Bazar and Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners are amongst those numerous still locked behind bars. More than half a dozen conspiracy trials are going on at Lahore, Delhi, Chittagong, Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere. Dozens of revolutionaries are absconding and amongst them are many females. More than half a dozen prisoners are actually waiting for their executions. What about all of these people? The three Lahore Conspiracy Case condemned prisoner (Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru), who have luckily come into prominence and who have acquired enormous public sympathy, do not form the bulk of the revolutionary party. Their fate is not the only consideration before the party. As a matter of fact their executions are expected to do greater good than the commutation of their sentences…"{KN2}

The letter had no effect on Gandhi.

The British India Viceroy Lord Irwin recorded in his notes dated 19 March 1931: "*While returning Gandhiji asked me if he could talk about the case of Bhagat Singh, because newspapers had come out with the news of his slated hanging on March 24th. It would be a very unfortunate day*

because on that day the new president of the Congress had to reach Karachi and there would be a lot of hot discussion. I explained to him that I had given a very careful thought to it but I did not find any basis to convince myself to commute the sentence. It appeared he found my reasoning weighty."{URL75}

From this it appears Gandhi was bothered more about the embarrassment that would be faced by the Congress with Bhagat Singh's hanging than by the hanging itself.

The executions took place on the eve of the annual convention of the Congress party at Karachi; and Gandhi faced black flag demonstrations by angry youths who shouted "Down with Gandhi!"

Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), Phase-II: a Failure

Lord Willingdon, who had succeeded Lord Irwin as the Viceroy of India in 1931 was determined to teach Congress a lesson, and wipe it out. He even proclaimed that Gandhi was a "humbug" to whom he intended giving no quarters. He ignored many of the provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, and went against its spirit. Raj officials started acting tough and brutal on revenue recovery all over India. Any resistance was mercilessly suppressed. The Viceroy issued an array of ordinances giving the authorities unlimited powers. It was as if a "Civil Martial Law" had been promulgated. There were no civil liberties. The authorities could detain people and seize their property at will.

Gandhi returned after attending the Second RTC at London on 28 December 1931; and on that day, the CWC decided to resume the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), which we now refer to as CDM Phase-II, Phase-I being the Salt Satyagraha.

Within a week, Gandhi and Patel were arrested on 4 January 1932. Soon after all the CWC members were put behind bars. Many Congress organisations were banned, their funds confiscated, and offices seized. Leading Congress-persons were rounded up. Processions were lathi-charged or fired-upon. Press censorship was imposed. Ordinances ruled the day.

The movement failed to build a tempo, and was crushed within a few months. Officially, the CDM was suspended in May 1933, but was finally withdrawn in May 1934.

{ 7 }

Interim Phase: 1931–42

Three Round Table Conferences (RTCs)

As per the recommendations of the Simon Commission Report of May 1930, three Round Table Conferences were organized by the British Government during 1930–32 to discuss the constitutional reforms in India.

RTC-I

The First Round Table Conference was inaugurated in London on 12 November 1930 by the Viceroy of India Lord Irwin, and was chaired by the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. The participants were: 16 delegates from the 3 British political parties; 16 delegates from the Princely States; and 57 Indians from various political parties, and sections, including the Muslim League (Aga Khan III as their leader), the Hindu Mahasabha (BS Moonje and MR Jaykar), the Indian Liberal Party (Tej Bahadur Sapru, CY Chintamani and Srinivasa Sastri), the Sikhs represented by Sardar Ujjal Singh, and the Depressed Classes represented by Dr BR Ambedkar. The Indian National Congress was not represented as many of its leaders were in jail for the Salt Satyagraha.

RTC-II

The Second Round Table Conference (RTC) held during September–December 1931 (7 September 1931 to 1 December 1931) was also attended by the Congress, after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact that ended the Salt Satyagraha.

Gandhi: Sole Representative of the Congress!

There were too many varied issues to be discussed—too much for anyone person to handle. Yet, Gandhi chose to be the sole Congress representative—even though the Congress could have (and should have) sent 20 delegates to the Conference (the Muslim League had 16 delegates). Why? Let all regard you as a selfless Mahatma, but be careful and wise to protect your turf, and engage in blatant self-promotion. Publicity and projection only for self. Don't let competition grow. Be the sole representative and spokesperson for the Congress, and even India. All-

knowing! Wisest! Net Result: The Congress could not represent itself in many committees and sub-groups, as Gandhi was the only representative, who also happened to be busy in public relations, earning international publicity for himself.

Wrote Stanley Wolpert: "*…Gandhi embarked for London as sole representative of the Congress… the Mahatma refused to allow any of his colleagues to share his London limelight*."{Wolp/127}

Viceroy Willingdon had written to PM Ramsay MacDonald: "*He* [Gandhi] *is a curious little devil—always working for an advantage. In all his actions I see the 'bania' predominating over the saint*."{Wolp/127}

Gandhi was so high on his Gandhi-Irwin Pact 'achievement' that the saint went to extent of being petty in being contemptuously dismissive of the whole non-Congress delegation, saying they didn't represent the masses.

Gandhi returned to India virtually empty-handed!

RTC-3

The Third Round Table Conference was held in London between 17 November 1932 and 24 December 1932. The Muslim League and others attended it. Among others Muslim leaders, Muhammad Ali, Agha Khan, Fazlul Haq, and Jinnah attended the Conference. The Labour Party refused to attend it; and the Indian National Congress too remained absent.

However, the RTC's outcome was highly significant and path-breaking. Its output was the White Paper issued by the Government, on the basis of which the '*Government of India Act 1935*' took shape under the supervision of the Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare. *And, it is this act on which the Indian Constitution of 1950 derives significantly*.

The Communal Award, Aug–1932

The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald made the 'Communal Award' on 16 August 1932 granting separate electorates in British India for the Forward Caste, Lower Caste, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, and Depressed Classes (Dalits). Depressed Classes were assigned a number of seats to be filled by election from special constituencies in which voters belonging to the Depressed Classes only could vote.

The Akali Dal was critical of the Award as it provided for only 19% reservation to the Sikhs in Punjab compared to 51% for the Muslims and 30% for the Hindus.

The Award was also unfair to Bengali Hindus, but Gandhi took no objection to the same. Hindus were under-represented vis-à-vis Muslims, making it impossible for the Hindus to ever come into power democratically. Although Hindus comprised almost half (44.8%) of the total population of united Bengal, they were assigned only 32% (80) of the total legislative seats (250).

Notably, Maulana Azad and other Muslim leaders enthusiastically approved of the Communal Award, as it was loaded in favour of the Muslims. However, Madan Mohan Malviya and his colleagues wanted the Congress to disown the Communal Award; and when the Patna AICC on 16 May 1934 (attended also by Gandhi) expressed merely its neutrality on it, they resigned from the Congress.

However nationalist Muslim leader MC Chagla had this to say:

> "I also took an active part in denouncing the Communal Award given by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister of England. Muslim and Hindu representatives had failed to come to a settlement at the [Third] Round Table Conference in London [in 1932], and Mr. MacDonald gratuitously took upon himself the burden and the responsibility of giving an award which he thought would be fair to both the communities, and which should therefore be accepted by them. I pleaded for a swadeshi award and not an award which had upon it the imprint 'Made in England'. I posed the question 'What would you think of an arbitrator before whom, say X and Y appear, and the arbitrator says: I think the claim of X is

unsustainable in principle, but because he insists, I must allow it.' If you look at the covering letter of Mr. MacDonald, this, *in effect*, is what he says: '*Separate electorates are vicious and bad for the country, but the Mussalmans are so determined to have them that they must get them. Now not only that. I will extend separate electorates, bad as they are, out of the generosity of my heart, to communities who have never asked for them*.' On this alone any impartial tribunal in the world would set aside this award as an error apparent on the face of the record, or even on grounds of legal misconduct on the part of the arbitrator."{MCC/101}

Gandhi's Fast Forces Poona Pact, Sep–1932

BR Ambedkar strongly supported the Communal Award for the Depressed Classes, but Gandhi went on an indefinite fast from 20 September 1932 against the same at the Yerwada jail where he was lodged, even though Gandhi was a willing signatory to the requisition by the members of the Minorities Committee to the British Premier empowering the Premier to finally decide on the matter. Gandhi opposed it on the grounds that it would disintegrate Hindu society; and was effectively an attack on the Indian unity and nationalism. Treatment of depressed classes as a separate political entity would lead to the untouchables remaining untouchables in perpetuity, and the question of abolishing untouchability would get undermined. What was needed was rooting out of untouchability. As if much was being done in that direction—beyond tokenism!

To save Gandhi's life, a number of leaders—including Rajaji, Rajendra Prasad, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Rabindranath Tagore, Tej Bahadur Sapru—were jolted into action against the prevailing orthodoxy. A call was given to open temples to the untouchables; and an 'Untouchability Abolition League' was formed. Tremendous pressure was brought upon Ambedkar to give up on the separate electorate. Letters threatening his life cascaded upon him. A section turned abusive. Leaders from all over India rushed to Bombay and Pune to pressurise Ambedkar, and make Gandhi give up his fast.

Responded Ambedkar:

> "To save Gandhi's life I would not be a party to any proposal that would be against the interests of my people…"

Ambedkar later said:

> "It has fallen to my lot to be the villain of the piece. But I tell you I shall not deter from my pious duty, and betray the just and legitimate interests of my people even if you hang me on the nearest lamp-post… You better appeal to Gandhi to postpone his fast about a week and then seek for the solution of the problem…"{DK/209}

It was indeed shocking that the Congress and other leaders who had otherwise remained indifferent to the plight of the untouchables, or had kept the issue at a low priority, should have been forced to act only under threat of a separate electorate of Ambedkar! The great freedom fighters, including

Gandhi, seemed to have cared little for the freedom of the depressed classes. Even now, in 2018, their status leaves a lot to be desired. Shows that there were fundamental defects in the way the freedom struggle was executed; and those defects have persisted post-independence too. Nehru dynasty—Jawaharlal, Indira, Rajiv, Sonia-Rahul—has been a huge failure on that score, having ruled for most of the post-independence period, not that others can be absolved.

Finally, Gandhi negotiated an agreement with Dr BR Ambedkar—the Poona Pact—on 24 September 1932 to have a single Hindu electorate, with Untouchables having seats reserved within it. The Poona Pact was accepted by the British Government as an amendment to the Communal Award.

Dr Ambedkar had, however, made it very clear that the Poona Pact was accepted only because of Gandhiji's "coercive fast". Ambedkar was afraid that if something happened to Gandhi on account of the fast, mobs might take revenge on Dalits all over India—there could be pogroms directed against Dalits and a massacre—and he didn't wish to take such a big risk. Ambedkar had commented:

> "If the Poona Pact increased the fixed quota of seats it also took away the right to the Dual Vote (double vote). The increase in seats can never be deemed to be a compensation for the loss of double vote. The second vote given by the communal award was a priceless privilege. Its value as a political weapon was beyond reckoning. {Amb6/950} *…There was nothing noble in the [Gandhi's] fast. It was a foul and filthy act*. The fast was not for the benefit of the Untouchables. It was against them and was the worst form of coercion against a helpless people to give up the constitutional safeguards [which had been awarded to them]."{Amb6/4397}

> In an interview to BBC in New Delhi in 1955, Dr Ambedkar had said: "First of all my contention was this that for five years [election periodicity] we [Dalits] live separately from the Hindus with no kind of intercourse or intercommunication, of a social or a spiritual sort. What can one day's cycle of participation in a common electorate do to remove this hard and crushed [feeling of] separatism which has grown for centuries...it is a foolish thing to think that 'If two people vote together in a common polling booth that their hearts are going to change...nothing of that kind [will happen]'".{URL79}

It is interesting that in pursuance of the call for equal treatment of untouchables a bill was introduced in the Central Assembly enabling temple-entry of untouchables provided a majority of its devotees were agreeable! Can one call it a reform! What if the majority did not agree? And, was it a great concession to allow temple-entry?! Ambedkar had rightly declared that untouchables didn't care for temple-entry.

That the top leaders of the freedom movement were so orthodox and narrow-minded, and their liberal standards were so pathetically poor in this regard amazes you. When Gandhi declared his intent to bring out a new weekly journal, Harijan, with a view to social reform, many leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru (but NOT Sardar Patel), felt perturbed at Gandhi's move, which they felt would be at the expense of the national struggle for freedom! Such was the extent of "enlightened" thinking of freedom fighters!! Many leaders had felt that the temple-entry move was ill-advised as it would be unpopular. Such a stand effectively amounted to this: Let the gross injustice of centuries continue. A movement against it would adversely affect the movement of freedom from the British. Why? The freedom-movement was driven by caste-Hindus, and they should not get annoyed! Depressed classes could be ignored. No wonder, given such a quality of leadership, the Depressed classes continued to be treated shabbily even after independence.

Earlier, before the Communal Award and the Poona Pact, Gandhi had stated in the Minorities Committee: "I would like to repeat what I have said before, that, while the Congress will accept any solution that may be acceptable to the Hindus, the Mussalmans and the Sikhs, it will be no party

to special reservation or special electorates for any other Minorities." That is, even reservation of seats for the dalits (—what to speak of separate electorates), which he accepted through the Poona Pact, was not acceptable to him. His hands were actually forced by the British Communal Award, and by Dr Ambedkar. Ambedkar said after the Poona Pact that if Gandhi had been reasonable early on at the time of the Round Table Conferences, things would not have come to such a pass.

1937 Elections & Rebuff to Jinnah that proved costly

Result of Provincial Elections 1937

Province	*Total Seats*	*General Seats*	*Won by Congress*	*Won by Muslim League*	*Won by Other Muslim Groups*	*Won by Others*
Assam	108	40	35	9	25	39
Bengal	250	48	50	40	@ 77	83
Bihar	152	71	98	0	39	15
Bombay	175	99	88	20	9	58
CP*	112	64	71	0	14	27
Madras*	215	116	159	11	17	28
NWFP	50	9	19	0	31	0
Orissa	60	38	36	0	4	20
Punjab	175	34	18	1	# 83	73
Sind	60	18	7	0	36	17
UP*	228	120	134	27	37	30
Total	*1585*	*657*	*715*	*108*	*372*	*390*

*CP=Central Provinces, *UP=United Provinces
*Madras=Whole of South
@ Mostly Krishak Proja Party, #Mostly Unionist Party
Sources: {RPD/522} {MAK/40}

The Muslim League gave a poor showing. It secured less than 5% of the Muslim votes. It won a mere 6% (108/1585) of total seats. Its share (108/(372+108=480)) in the Muslim seats was also low: 22.5%. It failed to form a government on its own in any province.

Described Ayesha Jalal: "But for Jinnah the results of the 1937 elections proved another setback in a career marked more by snakes than by ladders. In the Punjab, the Unionists swept the board; in Bengal, Jinnah and the League had to accept a coalition led by Hug who did not acknowledge their writ; in Sind they faced an independent ministry; and in the N.W.F.P., where almost the entire population was Muslim, the worst humiliation of all, a Congress ministry. In each of the [Muslim] majority provinces, Jinnah's strategy had been repudiated by the voters' choice. In the Muslim-minority provinces, where the League did best, the Congress did much better than anyone had expected, and did not need the League's help to form stable ministries."{Jal/35}

Before the 1936-37 provincial elections, the Congress did not expect to get enough seats to form a government on its own in UP. That was because of the other parties in the fray who had strong backing of landlords and influential sections. So as to be able to form a government, it had planned for a suitable coalition with the Muslim League. So that the Muslim League got enough seats for a coalition to be successful, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai of the Congress (who had been private secretary of Motilal Nehru, and after his death, a principal aide of Jawaharlal Nehru) had persuaded, jointly with Nehru, several influential Muslims, like Khaliq-uz-Zaman (third in the AIML hierarchy after Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan) and Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, who had the potential to win, *to fight the elections on behalf of the Muslim League*, as Muslims fighting on behalf of the Muslim League had better chances of winning. They fought and won. But, after the elections, when the Congress found it could form the government on its own, without the help of the Muslim League, it began to put unreasonable conditions.{DD/181-83}

To Jinnah's proposal of inclusion of two Muslim League Ministers in the UP cabinet, Nehru, who was the Congress President then, and was also looking after the UP affairs, put forth an amazing, arrogant condition: the League legislators must merge with the Congress! Specifically, the terms sought to be imposed, inter alia, by Azad–Nehru were:

> "The Muslim League group in the UP Legislature shall cease to function as a separate group. The existing members of the Muslim League party in the United Provinces Assembly shall become part of the Congress Party… The Muslim League Parliamentary Board in the United Provinces will be dissolved, and no candidates will thereafter be set up by the said Board at any by-election…"{Shak/187}

The above humiliating condition that was the death warrant for the League was naturally rejected by Jinnah.{Gill/179-80}

In Bombay, with the Congress Chief minister designate BG Kher willing to induct one Muslim League minister in the cabinet in view of lack of absolute majority of the Congress, and the fact that the Muslim League had done well in Bombay in the Muslim pockets, Jinnah sent a letter in the connection to Gandhi. Gandhi gave a strangely mystical and elliptically negative reply to Jinnah on 22 May 1937:

> "Mr. Kher has given me your message. I wish I could do something, but I am utterly helpless. My faith in [Hindu-Muslim] unity is as

bright as ever; only I see no daylight out of the impenetrable darkness and, in such distress, I cry out to God for light..."{CWMG/Vol-71/277}

Jinnah then wanted to meet Gandhi; but Gandhi advised him to rather meet Abul Kalam Azad, by whom he said he was guided in such matters.

Rebuffed and humiliated Jinnah then decided to show Congress-Nehru-Gandhi their place. The incident led other Muslim leaders also to believe that a majority Congress government would always tend to ride rough-shod over the Muslim interests. It is claimed that, thanks to the above, the badly hurt pride of the Muslims led them to move away from the Congress and quickly gravitate towards the Muslim League, and ultimately to separation.

The incident actually proved a blessing-in-disguise for Jinnah and the Muslim League for they realised their politics needed to be mass-based to counter the Congress. Membership fee for the AIML was dramatically dropped to just two-annas. There was a huge move to increase membership among the Muslim masses, and it paid rich dividends: the membership dramatically rose from a few thousand to well over half a million!

Jinnah told his followers that he had done enough of begging the Congress in the past; he would see to it now that the Congress begged of him.{RZ/70-71}

The humiliated Muslim League aspirants Khaliq-uz-Zaman and Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan whose ambitions were thwarted by the Congress and Nehru thereafter became the pillars of Muslim reaction and played a critical role in swinging the Muslim opinion in favour of partition and Pakistan.

Wrote MC Chagla:

"To my mind, one of the most potent causes which ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan was what happened in Uttar Pradesh [United Provinces in 1937]. If Jawaharlal Nehru had agreed to a coalition ministry and not insisted on the representative of the Muslim League signing the Congress pledge, perhaps Pakistan would never have come about. I remember Jawaharlal telling me that Khaliquz Zaman [to whom Nehru had denied a birth in the UP cabinet in 1937] was one of his greatest and dearest friends, and yet he led the agitation for Pakistan… Uttar Pradesh was the cultural home of the Muslims. Although they were in a minority in the State,

if Uttar Pradesh had not gone over to the cause of separation, Pakistan would never have become a reality."{MCC/81-2}

Gandhi vs. Subhas: Presidential Election 1939

Subhas Bose, who had been the Congress President for a year, desired another one-year term at the end of 1938. Subhas felt the German threat to Britain in the Second World War was an opportune time to exploit its vulnerability and launch an all-out mass disobedience movement to kick out the British. However, the Gandhian approach was to be generally soft towards the British.

Gandhi didn't favour a second term for Subhas. Subhas was adamant, and a contest ensued: Subhas vs. Pattabhi Sitaramayya of Andhra PCC. Sitaramayya was backed by Gandhi. Gandhi went to the unseemly extent of asking Patel, Rajendra Prasad and several other CWC members to issue a statement favouring Pattabhi Sitaramayya! Subhas rightly objected. He held the senior leaders guilty of moral coercion, and pointed out it was unfair on the part of the CWC members to take sides in an organized manner. Despite the open support of Gandhi, and other senior leaders, Subhas was re-elected by 1580 to 1375 votes on 29 January 1939.

Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri:

> "His [Gandhi] speciality was his extraordinary ability to pursue his rancour [in this case, defeat of Gandhi's presidential nominee by Bose] without any sense of guilt and to sugarcoat it with an unctuous benignity. Thus, even in his [Gandhi's] letter of 27 December in which he had threatened Bose with excommunication, he did not overlook Bose's sore throat to which he had referred, and concluded with a wish for a quick recovery…"{NC/518}

After Subhas's victory, Gandhi remarked that Pattabhi's defeat was also his. Gandhi's hypocrisy in the affair is worth noting. He was not even a primary (4-anna) member of the Congress then, having resigned from the Congress in 1934. Yet, he wanted to decide who should or should not become the president of the Congress, and how the Congress should be run (run as per HIS direction and wishes!)!!

Not only that, Gandhi didn't take the defeat gracefully. He began machinations to somehow oust Subhas or make it difficult for him to function. In this, Gandhi used his colleagues and followers. He made 12 of the 15 CWC members resign from the CWC to make it difficult for Subhas to run the organisation.

At the 52nd annual session of the Congress in March 1939 at Tripuri, near Jabalpur, on the banks of Narmada, an unbelievably fantastic resolution was passed calling upon the President [Subhas] "to appoint the Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of [a person who was not even a member of the Congress] Mahatma Gandhi"!

Subhas was seriously unwell, but he attended the session on a stretcher. He demanded that the Congress should deliver an ultimatum of a six months to Britain and in the event of its rejection a country-wide struggle for 'Poorna Swaraj' should be launched. However, his advice went unheeded. His powers as President were sought to be curtailed through various means, including the above resolution.

Refusing to implement the Tripuri directive, Subhas resigned in April 1939. He announced formation of the Forward Bloc within the Congress in May 1939.

Although what was done to Subhas by Gandhi was obviously unjust and immoral, from the national angle it was God-sent: perhaps God desired that in the interest of India's independence! Thanks to the injustice meted out to Subhas, he took a radically independent path that ultimately led to India's independence.

No Prior Consultation with the Congress

The German–Soviet Non-aggression Pact, also called the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, or the Nazi–Soviet Pact, was signed between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in Moscow on 23 August 1939, in the presence of Stalin.

Soon after, on 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland (Soviet Union did so on 17 September 1939). In response, Britain declared war against Germany two days later—on 3 September 1939. On the same day, the Viceroy of India, Linlithgow, also announced that India, along with Britain, had joined the war.

The Congress had expected to be consulted by the British before declaring war on behalf of India. Yet, the British authorities just didn't bother. The Congress felt rebuffed and enraged.

Congress & Gandhi in a Quandary

What made the position of the Congress even more pathetic was that they didn't really wish to oppose the British authorities in India then. But, the unexpected British behaviour put them in a difficult situation. *"If only the British had given us a face-saver!"* they must have been thinking. It was a Hobson's choice for them. If they meekly went by the decision of the British authorities for India to join war efforts—without even consulting them—they would be seen as a party of no consequence. If they opposed the decision, the Raj would be annoyed with them, and they might lose any little leverage that they had. They didn't really wish to spoil their relationship with the British. So uncaring and thoughtless of the British! At least, the British could have kept up some appearances!!

Gandhi's Stand

Gandhi was at his hypocritical and dramatic best when he met and told Viceroy Linlithgow he viewed the war "*with an English heart*", even as tears came to his eyes!

Gandhi further told the Viceroy that although he could not speak on behalf of the Congress, but personally he was all for the Congress giving unconditional, though non-violent, support to Britain. Gandhi didn't wish to embarrass the British. Gandhi felt that by being supportive to the British,

and by allowing the Congress ministries to remain in the office, he could gradually seek Dominion Status or *Purna Swaraj*.

Gandhi never wanted to go against the British, but under pressure, and realising he may otherwise be rendered irrelevant, he gradually veered round to the opposite position.

Congress Conditions

The Congress put forth two conditions for cooperation to the British: (1)Britain to announce that India would be free at the end of the war; and (2)representative Indians to be associated with power at the Centre.

Rather than fully or partially meeting the conditions laid down by the Congress, the Raj chose to interpret the demands as blackmail by the Congress during Britain's life-and-death struggle; and began its divide-and-rule game even more vigorously by involving, apart from the Muslim League, the Chamber of Princes too.

All that the Viceroy offered in his reply of 17 October 1939 to the two conditions of the Congress was that (a)after the war the Indians would have constitutional talks, and not freedom; and that (2)during the period of the war the Indians would be granted a consultative committee. In short, both the demands of the Congress stood rejected. The British government in India practically shut the door on the Congress.

The Muslim League whole-heartedly and unconditionally supported the Raj, and gained favour and ascendency over the Congress.

Why the British ignored Gandhi and the Congress?

If the British had taken the Congress into confidence, there would have been two positives: what the British had desired would have happened, and the Congress would also not have felt slighted. Yet, they didn't do so? Why? Why weren't they tactical? Why did they ride roughshod over the Congress? Especially, when India's cooperation was critical to them.

The British attitude was driven by the fact that they really had no intention of quitting India: the loyalty of the Administration (ICS and others), the Police, and the Army was reassuring for them—whatever co-operation they desired they knew would be forthcoming from them, and from the industrialists for the increased production for the war-time requirements; and they never considered Gandhians and the Gandhian methods a threat to their rule—in fact, from their angle, they were God-sent. It seems clear from this episode that while the Congress and the Gandhians had too high a notion of their power and clout and indispensability, the British didn't really attach much weightage to them.

Oct-1940: Selective Individual Disobedience

Having been granted no fig leaf by the British, the Congress was left with little alternative but to show its displeasure in some way if it had to survive as an organisation "fighting" for India's freedom. However, the Congress was careful not to annoy the British further by launching some mass movement. The safer way was to go in for *selective individual disobedience* to show its displeasure. However, even that severely limited and harmless defiance was under the cover of the Congress praising Britain and the British people for their bravery and endurance in the face of danger and peril; and vociferously assuring the British that the Congress had absolutely no ill-will against them. Each individual Satyagrahi had to recite the unlawful statement, "*It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money*."

Barring the Christmas holiday season (during which the British were not to be troubled, as directed by Gandhi), the Satyagrahis courted arrest during 1940; and by the end of year their number grew to about 700. Vinoba Bhave was the first Satyagrahi, who was arrested on 21 October 1940.

The number of arrests of those undertaking *selective individual disobedience* rose to about 15,000 by May 1941.

Pearl Harbor, Dec 1941 & its Aftermath

The Japanese Navy carried out a surprise attack against the US naval base at Pearl Harbor situated in the US territory of Hawaii at 7.48am Hawaiian time on 7 December 1941. It was a massive attack in two waves involving 353 Japanese fighters, bombers, and torpedo planes launched from six aircraft carriers causing enormous loss to the US Navy: four of its battleships were sunk, while the remaining four were extensively damaged; additionally one minelayer, one anti-aircraft training ship, three cruisers, and three destroyers were badly hit, 188 aircrafts were destroyed, 2403 Americans were killed, while 1178 were wounded.

Both the scale and the unexpectedness of the unprovoked attack profoundly shocked the Americans. The attack happened without a declaration of war by Japan or without explicit warning.

What was Japan's rationale? Japan was planning attack in Southeast Asia against the overseas territories of the US, the UK, and the Netherlands. The attack was meant to deter the US from interfering in its plans. The Pearl Harbor attack was followed by Japanese attacks on the UK-held Malaya, Singapore, and Hong Kong, and the US-held Philippines, Guam and Wake Island.

The US joins the War

US domestic support for non-intervention that had been getting weaker following the fall of France turned belligerent; and following the day of the Pearl Harbor attack, the United States declared war on Japan on 8 December 1941. With the US on their side the position of the Allies strengthened.

23-Dec-1941: Congress Reviews its Stand

Taking cognizance of the changed world situation in the wake of the Pearl Harbor, the Congress Working Committee (***CWC***) meeting at the end of December 1941 at Bardoli in Gujarat recognised India could not be defended non-violently against a Japanese invasion. (*—A profound realisation! As if against an invader other than Japan non-violent means would have worked!)*

At the persuasion of Rajaji, subject to the declaration of freedom for India, the CWC offered cooperation with the Allies. Gandhi did not oppose, but made it clear that he would not lead a Congress ready to join a war. In

other words, the CWC yielded on non-violence. At the AICC meeting in Wardha in January 1942, the Bardoli proposal was ratified in the *hope* that the British authorities would do something positive for India.

Fall of SE-Asia: Dec 1941–Mar 1942

Japanese forces had invaded French Indo-China on 22 September 1940. To strengthen themselves, the *Axis Powers* of Germany, Japan and Italy had signed a Tripartite Act on 27 September 1940 which stipulated, among other things, that an enemy of any one of them would be an enemy of all the three.

The Axis Powers declared war on the US on 11 December 1941. Both Wake Island and Philippines, then under the US, fell to the Japanese on 23 December 1941 and 27 December 1941 respectively.

Japan attacked Dutch East Indies (part of Indonesia) on 11 January 1942, and captured Borneo, Celebes and Sarawak by 14 January 1942.

Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaya, then under the British, was captured by Japan on 11 January 1942, taking 50,000 *Allied* soldiers as prisoners of war. Singapore was the major British military base in South-East Asia.

Advancing down the Malaya peninsula, Japan attacked Singapore—aka the '*Gibraltar of the East*'—and captured it on 15 February 1942, taking 85,000 *Allied* soldiers as POW.

Burma (Myanmar) came under the Japanese attack on 15 January 1942. With Rangoon as the next target of the Japanese blitzkrieg, *attack on India seemed imminent*.

Cripps Mission, Mar-Apr 1942

Looking to the above critical situation, the US President Roosevelt and the Chinese Generalissimo Chiang urged the British PM Churchill to make a reconciliatory move towards the Congress to gain co-operation in the ongoing war. Churchill was reluctant, but once Rangoon fell, he was forced to make a move. He announced a mission to Delhi under the Leader of the House, Sir Stafford Cripps.

Sir Richard Stafford Cripps (1889–1952) arrived in Delhi on 22 March 1942 along with his team. Cripps was a Labour MP, the leader of the House of Commons, and a member of the British War Cabinet. He had brought with him a new constitutional scheme approved by the British Cabinet. In return, the British sought co-operation in the war-efforts. The team spent three weeks in India in March and April 1942, and had prolonged discussions with the concerned parties. Nehru and Maulana Azad were the official negotiators for the Congress.

Cripps announced his proposals in the form of Draft Declaration on 30 March 1942: (1)Right away, India could have a national government composed of representatives of the leading political parties. (2)Formation of a post-war Constituent Assembly whose members would be chosen by provincial legislatures or nominated by the princes. (3)India to be granted full Dominion Status after the war, with the right of secession from the Commonwealth. (4)Secession clause: Once India became a Dominion after the war, every province would have the right to secede and obtain a status equal to that of the Indian Dominion.{BKM}

Gandhi rejected the proposal, mainly on account of the *secession clause*. Though *Patel* was of the opinion "*no more mischievous scheme had been conceived*"{RG/306} about the Cripps Plan, he didn't mind continuance of talks, something Gandhi felt was pointless, and was annoyed about.

If one examines the above, and what India got in 1947 (Dominion Status), the only objectionable clause appears to the fourth-clause, the secession-clause. Both the Congress and the Muslim League had problems with it, but in an opposite sort of way. Jinnah termed the secession clause as an implicit recognition of Pakistan; but rejected the proposal, as what he wanted was an explicit recognition of the right of the "Muslim nation" to separate. The British had perhaps put the clause to make it partially

acceptable to both: No explicit Pakistan, to satisfy the Congress; and a possibility of Pakistan through the secession-clause to satisfy the Muslim League, and serve their [British] own selfish intentions too.

Gandhi had called Cripps's offer "a post-dated cheque", to which someone added "on a failing bank". Why? Looking to the way Japan was trouncing the British and the US in SE-Asia, and was in Burma, at India's doors, the Congress was elated Japan was doing their work of evicting the British. They had already written-off the British! Hence the term "the failing bank", and the "post-dated cheque" that was bound to bounce as the British would not have anything to give anyway. Such a faulty reading of the likely scenario was thanks to Gandhi, Nehru & Company's naivete on military and international affairs! Rather than considering the offer seriously and negotiating on the secession-clause; driven by hubris, thanks to Japan's military success, and over-confident they had an upper hand, and that the British were in dire need of their co-operation, they acted difficult and unreasonable. Had they made sensible negotiation on the secession-clause India could have got the self-government five years earlier, and there would perhaps have been no partition and Pakistan.

Attlee had commented: "*It was a great pity that eventually the Indians turned this down, as full self-government might have been ante-dated by some years.*"{JA/232}

Rajaji (CR) Formula on Pakistan, Apr-1942

In the background of the AIML's Lahore Resolution of March 1940 hinting at Pakistan , and its subsequent pronouncements and actions, C Rajagopalachari (aka CR or Rajaji) interpreted the CWC's clarification during the talks with Stafford Cripps in 1942 that they could not "think in terms of compelling the people of any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will" as acceptance of 'the principle of Pakistan'. Patel and several others totally differed with such an interpretation.

Rajaji's rationale for his proposal or formula was the following. Rather than making futile attempts at adjustments with the Muslims, the Muslim League, and other Muslim parties to somehow maintain a fragile unified Central Government, Rajaji felt it was better to let the Muslim-majority areas secede to form Pakistan so that the Congress could form a strong Central Government for the rest of India. As per the CR's formula, at the end of WW-II a commission be appointed to demarcate the districts having a Muslim population in absolute majority and in those areas plebiscite be conducted on all inhabitants (including the non-Muslims) on the basis of adult suffrage. That is, as per the CR's formula, the areas that could form Pakistan were not to be on the provincial basis (that is, the provinces like Punjab or Bengal could not decide as a whole whether to go to Pakistan or not), but on district-by-district basis.

Rajaji's purpose was also to bring forth the contradictions in Jinnah's stand (Provincial vs. Communal basis of partition) that could have made Muslims rethink on their Pakistan demand. CR's Proposal to accept the Muslim League's claim for separation of the Muslim-majority areas was put up to the AICC on 24 April 1942 by the Congress legislators of Madras, guided by Rajaji. However, the AICC rejected the proposal 120 to 15. Thereupon, Rajaji began canvassing the proposal with the general public. That was violation of the Congress discipline. While he didn't mind Rajaji's free expression of his views, Gandhi did mention to Rajaji: "It will be most becoming for you to sever your connection with the Congress and then carry on your campaign with all the zeal and ability you are capable of." Rajaji resigned both from the Congress and the Assembly, but stubbornly stuck to his views.

However, when Gandhi engaged Jinnah in talks in 1944, the basis of his talks was the CR Formula. The ultimate Partition and Pakistan too was close to what CR had proposed back in 1942.

Notably, Jinnah had rejected the CR Formula. Why? Jinnah wanted the whole of Punjab and Bengal to be in proposed Pakistan on the provincial basis (province as a whole), rather on the district-by-district basis that would have partitioned the two provinces. There lay the contradictions in Jinnah and AIML's demands. If Pakistan was to be on communal basis (Muslim-majority), how could they demand inclusion of Hindu-majority areas of Punjab and Bengal, and of Assam! Jinnah rejected the CR Formula on the ground that it offered "a maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan."{RG3/248}

{ 8 }

LAST PHASE (III) OF THE GANDHIAN STRUGGLE: 1942

Quit India Movement 1942

Call for "Quit India" & its Background

Gandhi felt dismayed by the blatant racist discrimination against the Indians returning from Burma: whites and blacks had separate routes—there was a 'white' road, and a 'black' road to Assam. The Europeans were well-provided with food and shelter along the 'white' road, while the Indians travelling on the 'black' road were left to starve! Realising that British were in India to take care of their own interests, and not that of Indians, he felt they had better quit. Gandhi felt appalled by the British attitude.

It seems queer that Gandhi should have realised the above, and the perfidy and the ill-intentions of the British as late as 1942, considering his personal experience of barbarous rabid racism in South Africa between 1893 and 1914, Jallianwala Bagh, and so on.

The Congress realised that no action on their part may brand them as docile and shy of fighting the British, rendering them irrelevant. Their passivity was likely to displace them, and allow Subhas Bose, already popular, to capture the Indian mind with his militant appeal. Such considerations of self-survival, coupled with "need to do something for which they were supposed to exist: freedom for the country" (the last mass agitation was well over a decade ago: the Salt Satyagraha and CDM) led to the conceptualisation of the idea of "Quit India". Gandhi's proposal was to give a call to the British to quit India, failing which the Congress would launch a struggle to enforce it.

Nehru and Rajaji tried hard and long to resist Gandhi's proposal. They were of the opinion the Indians must help the Allied Powers against the Axis Powers, and should not therefore weaken the position of the British. Nehru had changed his tune after Communist Russia had joined the forces with the Allies.

Maulana Azad was then the President of the Congress, who was also supporting Nehru. Sardar Patel and Rajendra Prasad and several others expressed their willingness to resign from the CWC in view of the differences over "Quit India" program, and wrote to Azad accordingly in May 1942. The Congress Socialists, who used to be otherwise in support of Nehru and critical of Sardar, showed enthusiasm for "Quit India", and criticized Nehru for his opposition.

In the CWC Meeting at Wardha in July 1942, Gandhi wanted to move quickly ahead with "Quit India", and advised Azad and Nehru that they could resign if they continued to differ; and that he [Gandhi] didn't even need the Congress to go ahead with his plan, as, in his opinion, "*the sands of India would throw up a movement larger than Congress if it did not act*."{RG4/240} After Gandhi's letter{CWMG/Vol-83/97-98} of 13 July 1942 to this effect to Nehru, that included an advice to Maulana Azad to resign from the presidentship of the Congress, both Nehru and Azad fell in line. Finally, all except Rajaji came around and accepted Gandhi's proposal with certain modifications in its wordings.

The Quit India resolution stated among other things, that if the British did not accept its appeal, the Congress would "be reluctantly compelled to utilize all its non-violent strength". Gandhi also hinted that unlike before, "Quit India" would not necessarily be halted if non-Congressmen committed acts of violence. "Quit India" was endorsed by the CWC on 14 July 1942.

Soon after, Patel put his heart, soul and body into preparation for the big event. In various public and private meetings he exhorted people for an all-out struggle: non-payment of taxes, civil disobedience, abstention from work, strike by the government employees in various departments like railways, P&T, schools, colleges, and so on, with a view to bring the entire government machinery to a standstill. He also told that the struggle would not be halted even if violence erupts. He wanted people to carry forward the struggle if the leaders are arrested. Patel expected the struggle to be short and swift.

Gandhi, in a press conference on 15 July 1942, had declared he would launch a non-violent rebellion against the British Raj. The CWC prepared a draft Quit India resolution on 7 August 1942 which was presented to and passed by the AICC at the end of its two-day meeting (7–8 Aug) at Gowalia Tank in Mumbai on 8 August 1942.

Gandhi sent Miss Madeleine Slade (Mirabehn) to the Viceroy to personally explain the resolution. Gandhi did not expect any immediate action from either side, or any confrontation. He wanted to use the resolution as a bargaining counter, and expected talks and negotiations. However, being war-time, and having noted the threat of Gandhi's rebellion, the Viceroy was in no mood to play soft and patient. He refused

an interview to Slade, and let it be known that the government would neither stand any rebellion, violent or non-violent, nor would it discuss with anyone who talks in such terms.{Azad/84}

Poor Preparation, Arrests & Flop-Show

Unlike the meticulous preparation done by Sardar Patel both for the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 and for the Salt Satyagraha of 1930; Gandhi and the Congress had hardly done the required preparation to execute their planned mass movement of "Quit India" on a massive scale, despite that being their only preoccupation. However, the Raj—despite its many responsibilities of governance and preparations for the war—had geared itself fully to crush the impending "Quit India". The Raj had made elaborate plans for arrests. It promptly acted to nip "Quit India" in the bud by promptly arresting all the Congress leaders. The Congress organisation was outlawed. Gandhi and the AICC hadn't anticipated such a strong and prompt reaction from the Raj. Why? Did they expect the Raj to be as laid back as they were? The Raj was better organized for crushing the revolt than Congress was for executing it—despite crushing the revolt being only one of the many responsibilities (governance, preparations for war, etc.) being shouldered by the Raj, while organising the revolt was the only responsibility of the Congress. It exposed the huge gulf in relative competence.

After the passing of the 'Quit India' resolution, Gandhi, in his address to the delegates after midnight, had said, inter alia: "*…The actual struggle does not commence this very moment… My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks… What are you going to do in the meanwhile? There is the spinning-wheel…*"{CWMG/Vol-83/319}

Churchill's War Cabinet's best offer in the form of Cripp's Proposals having been rebuffed, the Raj had was fully prepared to crush the Congress. They had learnt a lesson from the Salt March—not to give a long rope to Gandhi. This time they decided to swoop down, arrest all leaders, and nip the agitation in the bud.

Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Kriplani, Maulana Azad, Nehru, and the rest of the CWC, along with Mahadev Desai, Sarojini Naidu, Mirabehn, Asoka Mehta and others were arrested on the morning of 9 August 1942. Gandhi, Mahadev Desai, and several more were taken to the Aga Khan Palace, Pune; some were taken to Yerwada Jail, Pune; and Sardar Patel, Nehru, Maulana Azad, Acharya Kriplani, Shankar Rao Deo, Dr Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Asaf Ali, and Dr Syed Mahmud were taken to Ahmednagar Fort (in

Maharashtra) that served as a jail then. Dr Rajendra Prasad was not with them as, being ill, he had not attended the AICC at Bombay—he was arrested and jailed in Bihar. Although a warship was kept ready at Bombay harbour to deport them all outside India, the Raj finally chose to confine them in India. Rajaji was not arrested as he had resigned from the Congress in July 1942, and had kept aloof from Quit India. Sardar Patel's son and daughter, Dahyabhai and Maniben, were also jailed.

Thus, hardly had the "Quit India" started when all the top leaders were in jail. Gandhi was much dejected by the arrests. He expected negotiations, not arrests. Wrote Maulana Azad in his autobiography:

> "…We walked down the [train] corridor to his [Gandhi's] compartment [while being taken to jails on 9 August 1942 morning, after arrest] which was some distance away. Gandhiji was looking very depressed. I had never seen him looking so dejected. I understood that he had not expected this sudden arrest. His reading of the situation had been that the Government would take no drastic action. I had of course warned him again and again that he was taking too optimistic a view but obviously he had placed great faith in his own judgement. Now that the calculations had proved wrong, he was uncertain as to what he should do…"{Azad/88-9}

Gandhi had indeed told his secretary before going to bed in the early hours of 9 August 1942 that, "*After my last night's speech, they [the British] will not arrest me*."{Nan/463}

Why shouldn't Gandhi and others have planned for such an eventuality, and for the leadership to go underground, and carry forward the movement? Or, was it that they didn't mind being in the safety of jails, rather than risking the hustle-bustle and trouble of the movement outside? With no proper guidance or leadership, the Movement turned into anarchy.

Gandhi had grandly stated: "*I want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn if it could be had*."{Gill/39}

Only if wishes were horses!

Gandhi's Fast, Feb 1943

British propaganda had been insinuating that Gandhi was pro-Japan; and that he had indirectly provoked, if not actually plotted, the violence that had occurred during 'Quit India'. Taking offence, Gandhi demanded proof from the authorities. When there was no response, he went on a fast on 10 February 1943. The Raj did not bother. It was indeed hoping Gandhi would succumb to his fast. Reportedly, it was even ready for his cremation on the grounds of the Aga Khan Palace. The fast ended on 3 March 1943.

Quit India Momentum

Although the Congress leaders who had given a call for 'Quit India' were in jail before the movement barely started, the general public showed enthusiasm protesting in streets, educational institutions and villages. Here and there trains were derailed, telephone and telegraph wires cut, and police stations and post offices were attacked. About a thousand were killed in firing in the next few months; and about a lakh were jailed.

Quit India was brutally put down by the British, and it petered out soon enough, except for a few random token protests. It unfortunately didn't take the scale Gandhi, Patel and other leaders had hoped for. But, that was logically expected. If you have not put in the required strategy, planning and efforts, how can you expect results from disorganised public, with no definite directions? In fact, 'Quit India' soon degenerated into an ill-organised upheaval: anti-social elements and communists began harming the Indian interests themselves. The back of the struggle was broken by the Raj in less than two months: by end of September 1942 it had been largely controlled.

Wrote Durga Das: "The Quit India movement then degenerated into an ill-organised mass upheaval, lit up as much by acts of surprising individual ingenuity and heroism as by crude outbursts of incendiarism and looting. Anti-social elements and the Communists indulged in violence and destruction… But the back of the struggle had been broken by the end of September [1942]."{DD/206}

The question arises how vandalising railway stations, post offices, telegraph offices, shops, and bazaars, and removing railway tracks and cutting telephone wires, and so on advanced the cause of freedom? They only caused temporary disruptions and loss of public property. In the short run, the participant public paid by getting lathi-charged, or lashed in jails, and losing jobs. In the long run, the losses were recouped from the public itself through taxes. Only if the Gandhian movement had sought to create disaffection among the Indians in the police, bureaucracy, and the armed forces, kindled patriotism among them, and ensured that rather than being tools of the British to suppress Indians, they gradually became a bulwark against colonialism (like many revolutionaries had tried) that some worthwhile purpose could have been served. But, Gandhi wanted them—the police and the armed forces—to remain loyal to their masters!

Sadly, ‘Quit India’ did not encompass all of India. It was mostly confined to Bengal, Bihar, Delhi, Rajputana, and United Provinces. There was little action in South India, and elsewhere.

"Quit India" Misgivings among Congress Leaders

During their time in jail in Ahmednagar, Nehru, Maulana Azad, and Asaf Ali began to feel they had erred in following Gandhi for "Quit India". Azad used to even get angry at times when someone brought up the topic of Gandhian doctrine. Azad felt that his "reading of the situation was correct", and that "events showed that Gandhi was wrong"{Azad/90,92}. Nehru tended to agree with him.

Co-prisoner Mahtab recalled: "Maulana [Azad] used to criticise Gandhi [and say], 'His judgement was wrong and he forced his movement on all of us, but what was expected of him he did not do. We had thought that he would stake his life and go on an indefinite fast, but he hasn't done it.'"{RG/327} Strangely, Nehru would justify "Quit India" in later years, after independence, as inevitable and necessary. Nehru, by nature, was never sure of himself, and changed his stand as suited the situation.

Exploring Ways to Quit "Quit India"

Those like Nehru and Azad who were unhappy with "Quit India" began to explore ways to quit "Quit India". Plausible excuses had to be cooked. In November 1943, Maulana Azad, with Nehru's concurrence, suggested a letter from the CWC to the Viceroy intimating suspension of the Movement in view of the Bengal Famine, and growing threats from Japan. PC Ghosh's response to Azad-Nehru's proposal was: "I would rather take potassium cyanide and advise all of you to do the same rather than agree to any such humiliating course of action."{RG/329-30}

Release from Jails

Kasturba's Death and Gandhi's Release in May 1944

Kasturba Gandhi (1969–1944), left to fend for herself after the arrest of Gandhi on 9 August 1942, defied a ban on meeting along with her close associate Maniben, Sardar Patel's daughter, and both got arrested. Both were sent to Aga Khan Palace where Gandhi was lodged. Kasturba had been ill for many months. She expired on 22 February 1944 on the Mahashivaratri day, aged 74.

The Raj, not wanting to take any chances, released Gandhi, who had been seriously ill, on 6 May 1944, about 10 weeks after Kasturba's death.

Gandhi's Major Come-Down Moves after May 1944

After release from jail on 6 May 1944 Gandhi went in for physical recovery. While recuperating in the hill-station of Panchgani Gandhi began planning on how to get the Congress up from its down and out status—the net result of its own making!

After consultations with Rajaji at Panchgani Gandhi wrote to Viceroy Wavell that subject to the formation of a national government responsible to the Central Assembly he would advise the CWC that the Congress must withdraw "disobedience", and should fully cooperate with the war efforts. Gandhi's offer to the British was a huge come down from the "Quit India" demands. Yet, the Viceroy spurned the offer! Showed how little the Raj cared for the Congress or Gandhi.

Nehru-Patel's Release, June 1945

The Second World War ended on 8 May 1945 (about a week after Adolf Hitler had committed suicide) with the unconditional surrender of the Axis powers. Patel and others were released from Ahmednagar prison on 15 June 1945, about a month after the end of the Second World War, and over a year after the release of Gandhi (6 May 1944).

During the absence of the Congress leaders from the national scene for about three years (all were in jail), thanks to 'Quit India', while little was gained, Jinnah and the Muslim League immensely strengthened their position in the provinces—they also became favourites of the British.

Failure of "Quit India"

'Quit India' momentum had petered out in about three months. The impotence of the 'Quit India' became obvious from the fact that, despite Gandhi's call to the contrary, about half a million Indians joined the British army between August and December 1942!

About two years after the "Quit India" call, when Gandhi was released, there was no sign of the British packing up and quitting India. In fact, while the British Raj remained unaffected, and the strength of the Muslim League and Jinnah multiplied, the position of the Congress took a nose dive. *It was as if the Congress had "Quit" the national scene*.

Logically, that was expected. If you don't do any planning and preparation, if you do no hard work, and instead, you just issue a call for "Quit India", how can you, and why should you expect it to succeed. You don't even anticipate the crackdown, and make no plan to go underground to be able to direct the movement. You just get conveniently arrested soon after the call, and waste away precious time in jail. You claim to be leaders, but sitting in jail you wish the people would do the needful to somehow deliver freedom. What wishful thinking!

Stated Churchill's friend Page Croft: "*The failure of Gandhi to rouse India against the King-Emperor is one of the happiest events of the war*."{PF/178}

Gandhi, British, and Quit India

Though apparently opposed, Gandhi and the British had been having a good equation right since Gandhi's South Africa days. With his harmless creed of non-violence, and his services in sidelining and discrediting the revolutionaries and the militant nationalists (who were the real threat), the British were in a way obliged to Gandhi. As a quid pro quo, the British helped enhance the stature of Gandhi, and took care to always render special treatment to top Gandhians, especially in jails.

For all the talk of freedom, none of Gandhi's movements earlier to "Quit India" had an explicit agenda to make the British quit. However, for the first time in the overlong Gandhian Freedom Movement was a call given for the British to quit, with "Quit India". And, that too at a time when Britain was fighting with its back to the wall for its own survival in the WW-II. That

spoiled the special relationship between Gandhi and the British, and the British turned anti-Gandhi and anti-Congress.

Gandhi actually miscalculated. Developments on the WW-II battlefronts with the Axis powers advancing at lightning speed, and Allies on the retreat, made Gandhi conclude the British were on the losing side. By acting tough, he thought he could therefore bargain better with the British, if they needed India's cooperation to help them. However, the scene soon reversed, when the Allies gained an upper hand. Further, Gandhi had expected the Raj to negotiate with him, like it had done on earlier occasions. But, to his dismay, the Raj just ignored him. Gandhi's erroneous reading of the situation resulted in his marginalisation by the British, who later dropped him in favour of Nehru, who, behind the scenes, appeared more amenable to them. Had Gandhi been smarter, he would have got the hint when he had sent Mirabehn (Miss Madeleine Slade) to the Viceroy before giving the "Quit India" call. The Viceroy had not only rebuffed her he had made it amply clear that during the war-time the government won't tolerate any agitation—violent or non-violent—nor would it talk to any representative of such planned agitation.{Gill/73} {Azad/84}. Had Gandhi been pragmatic, and had he not miscalculated, he wouldn't have given the "Quit India" call then.

The fact of the matter was the British never considered Gandhism as a threat, or as a force they could not easily tackle. They had been indulging Gandhi in the past only because it suited them. The moment it sought to become inconvenient, they simply crushed the movement, and ignored Gandhi, and the Congress.

In retrospect it can be said that if Gandhi had continued to be on good terms with the British, like he had been earlier, had he helped the British unconditionally in WW-II, and had not got into "Quit India", perhaps India and the Congress would have been far better placed to negotiate the terms of "Transfer of Power" with the British. Further, if the pro-Russia Socialists-Leftists-Nehruvians had not come in the way, and Gandhi and the Congress had assured Britain and the US co-operation in joint defence matters, perhaps there would have been no Pakistan and Partition, or, at least, Kashmir would have been settled in favour of India in 1947 itself.

Advantage Jinnah

Thanks to the dog-like loyalty of the Muslim League towards the British; thanks to the resignations of the Congress ministries in 1939, resulting in severe contraction of the clout and the power of the Congress; thanks to the Congress defying the British power through "Quit India", and coming in their bad books; and thanks to the disappearance of the Congress from the national scene (most were jailed) following the "Quit India" call, Jinnah and the Muslim League had gained hugely.

Jinnah and the Muslim League managed to spread themselves wide. They had formed ministries in Sind and Assam in 1942, and in Bengal and NWFP in 1943. Besides, the British had become even more pro-Pakistan. Those Muslim leaders who had kept a distance from the Muslim League began to curry favour with Jinnah & Co now that they knew where the power lay, and who the British favoured. Similarly, pro-Congress Muslims, or those among the general Muslim public who were hitherto not too enamoured with the Muslim League and Jinnah began to gravitate towards them realising Pakistan was a possibility.

{ 9 }

Onwards to Freedom & Partition

Gandhi's Parleys with Jinnah, Sep-1944

Spurned by the British after release from jail on 6 May 1944, Gandhi commenced parleys with Jinnah. In just one month in September 1944, Gandhi visited Jinnah's home 14 times! That hugely gave boost to Jinnah's stature, particularly in the eyes of the Muslim public, and the Muslim leaders. This time Gandhi offered to Jinnah what he [Gandhi] was totally opposed to earlier.

Gandhi wanted the Congress and the Muslim League to jointly demand a national government from the Raj—the mutual understanding being that the contiguous Muslim-majority areas could secede upon gaining independence, if the majority adult population of those areas so desired. That amounted to conceding Pakistan—what Rajaji had proposed way back in April 1942.

Jinnah, however, rejected the offer for several reasons: (a)Pakistan on offer was not big enough. It excluded the Hindu-majority areas of Punjab and Bengal. (b)Gandhi's offer of Pakistan was post-independence, while Jinnah desired Pakistan prior to independence, or simultaneously with it, and under the aegis of the British, for he didn't trust the Congress. (c)Gandhi's offer tended to dilute Pakistan's sovereignty by stipulating a written agreement on Hindustan–Pakistan alliance. (d)The Pakistan on offer was subject to a plebiscite.

Rebuffed, Gandhi's logical response was, as articulated by him in his letter to Jinnah of 15 September 1944: "*I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock. If India was one nation before the advent of Islam, it must remain one in spite of the change of faith of a very large body of her children.*"{CWMG/V-84/381} {Par/178}

In an interview to "News Chronicle" on 29 September 1944, Gandhi commented: "I think he [Jinnah] is suffering from hallucination when he

imagines that an unnatural division of India could bring either happiness or prosperity to the people concerned."{CWMG/Vol-84/424}

Viceroy noted in his diary on the Gandhi–Jinnah meeting: "The two great mountains have met and not even a ridiculous mouse has emerged." {PF/187}

The land-mass that Jinnah ultimately got for Pakistan in 1947 was much like what the CR Formula of 1942 and the Gandhi's offer of 1944 contained. Had Jinnah agreed, perhaps the independence could have been earlier, and there might not have been the partition-mayhem on the scale that happened in 1947.

Sidelining of Gandhi: May 1944 Onwards

After the release of Gandhi from prison on 6 May 1944, his role in the freedom movement and transfer of power gradually dwindled. As long as Gandhi was soft on the British (before 1942), the British gave him due importance, and even helped his projection as a Mahatma. However, after Quit India he almost became like a persona non grata for the British. That lessened his stature and clout in the Congress too. Besides, the British found him to be too complex and unreliable a person to do further business with. The British therefore turned to Patel and Nehru.

Sardar Patel had internally (although he was not explicit about it) realised that Gandhian methods had ultimately fetched little for India; and if he [Sardar Patel] had to contribute something worthwhile for the country in its critical years after his release from jail in 1945, he had to ignore Gandhi and Gandhism, and chart out a course on his own. Without doubt, Sardar was a far more capable person, but by being subservient to Gandhi, his vast potential had remained untapped. The British also found Patel to be a frank and forthright person capable of taking decisions, convincing others, and standing by those decisions. They therefore began doing business with Patel, ignoring Gandhi.

In response to Gandhi's announcement in Calcutta on 9 August 1947 that he would spend the rest of his life in Pakistan, Mountbatten had reported to London:

> "Gandhi has announced his decision to spend the rest of his life in Pakistan looking after the minorities. This will infuriate Jinnah, but will be great relief to Congress for, as I have said before, his [Gandhi's] influence is largely negative or even destructive and directed against the only man who has his feet firmly on ground, Vallabhbhai Patel."{Wolp/336}{Tunz/236}

Gandhi had said in a prayer meeting on 1 April 1947: "*No one listens to me anymore. I am a small man. True, there was a time when mine was a big voice. Then everyone obeyed what I said; now neither the Congress nor the Hindus nor the Muslims listen to me... I am crying in the wilderness. …*"{CWMG/Vol-94}

Gandhi had remarked a few weeks before his death, in a prayer meeting in New Delhi on 25 November 1947: "*…But, today I have become a sort of*

burden. There was a time when my word was law. But it is no longer so."{CWMG/Vol-97/394}

Major Developments Towards Freedom

There were a number of major developments post 1945, including the Shimla Conference; the Cabinet Mission Plan; formation of Interim Government on 2 September 1946 with Nehru as head—with the Muslim League joining it on 15 October 1946; "Direct Action Day" of Muslim League leading to the Great Calcutta Carnage; Attlee's announcement of "Quit India" deadline of June 1948 on 20 February 1947; Lord Mountbatten as the new Viceroy wef 24 March 1947; initial Mountbatten Plan of May 1947 for India's independence for which there were no takers, and so on. These are not covered in this book as Gandhi did not have a major role to play in them. For details on these, please check the author's book on (a)*Sardar Patel*, and (b)"*What Really Led to Indian Freedom*" available on Amazon.

April 1947: Gandhi's PM Offer for Jinnah

To explore the possibility of averting partition, Gandhi had made the following proposal to Mountbatten on 1 April 1947:

> Dissolution of the Interim Government then headed by Nehru. Inviting Jinnah to take over. Allowing Jinnah to form a cabinet of his choice. If Jinnah ran the government in India's interest, the Congress would continue to cooperate with him, and not use its majority to thwart him. Who would decide if Jinnah was running the government in India's interest? Not Congress or Gandhi, but Mountbatten! Further, Jinnah could continue to advocate Pakistan—but peacefully!!

Absurd proposal! But, that was Mahatma. Who gave the authority to Gandhi to condemn the majority to the mercy of the minority, and the Muslim League. What were the credentials of Jinnah and the Muslim League that they could be entrusted with the fate of the majority? Why would Mountbatten decide whether or not Jinnah was running the government in India's interest? Was Mountbatten an impartial observer? Didn't he represent India's tormentors of two centuries? Wasn't Gandhi aware that Mountbatten was there to safeguard and advance the interests of Britain, and not of India? Even assuming Mountbatten was an impartial observer, was he competent to determine what really was in the interest of India? Even if he were both impartial and competent, how long was he to remain in India to act as a referee? What self-respecting freedom fighters would depend upon their colonisers and enslavers to act as a referee and adjudicate what was in India's interest?

Taken aback by Gandhi's extraordinary proposal, Mountbatten sought Gandhi's permission to discuss the proposal with Nehru and Maulana Azad in confidence. Gandhi agreed. Mountbatten didn't include Patel with Nehru and Azad. He knew Patel would dismiss it as a fantastic nonsense.

Gandhi repeated his proposal to Mountbatten the next day on 2 April 1947. Mountbatten told him he was interested in the proposal when Gandhi asked him specifically if he supported it. Gandhi advised Mountbatten he would try to persuade the Congress to accept it, and would tour India for support.

Shortly after the above meeting, Mountbatten met Maulana Azad, who not only expressed his approval for Gandhi's proposal, but was enthusiastic about it, and encouraged Mountbatten to get Jinnah to accept it. Maulana Azad generally used to be in favour of anything that gave more weightage and power to Muslims.

Having favoured Nehru undemocratically—overriding the 80% support of the PCCs for Patel—with the post of PM, Gandhi had expected to bring Nehru to his side. Gandhi should have known that a person like Nehru who unabashedly demanded to be anointed PM most undemocratically—not a single PCC had voted in his favour—for the sake of power could not be expected to yield his position to Jinnah. Although Mountbatten deployed people to talk to Nehru to dissuade him from accepting Gandhi's plan should he be so persuaded, the same was really not necessary.

Curiously, Mountbatten never discussed Gandhi's plan with Jinnah. In a meeting, Mountbatten had only indirectly mentioned his wish of seeing Jinnah as PM, something about which Jinnah showed keen eagerness; but Mountbatten did not deliberate on the matter further.

Gandhi & Co failed to appreciate the simple fact that Mountbatten was no do-gooder for India, he was HMG's representative, and HMG had a vested interest in the partition of India. No wonder Mountbatten would have exerted his all to ensure Gandhi's scheme never succeeded.

It makes one's heart sink, and leaves a bad taste in one's mouth, to find that our top freedom fighters were not really fighters, but pleaders with their adversaries, and dependent on their "good-will", their "fairness", their "sense of justice", their "commitment to what was good for India", and their "empathy" to deliver us in one-piece, and in good shape, from their clutches!

As expected, Patel had firmly opposed the plan. Patel hated Muslim appeasement. Being a wise and practical person, Patel also knew that given the embittered and surcharged atmosphere there was no way Hindus would tolerate or suffer Muslim rule.

On the evening of 10 April 1947. Nehru, Patel and many members of the CWC met Gandhi and told him they were opposed to his plan. Only Badshah Ghaffar Khan supported Gandhi. On 11 April 1947 Gandhi advised Mountbatten of his defeat vis-à-vis the plan, and left Delhi. Rajaji noted in his diary entry on 13 April 1947: "*Gandhiji's ill-conceived plan of*

solving the present difficulties was objected to by everybody and scotched."{RG3/270}

One wonders why Gandhi didn't fast-unto-death to prevent partition, if he indeed so desired. Was it because even if he had fasted Jinnah would not have bothered? Were his past fasts, like for the Poona Pact, devised only to browbeat the weak? Or, where the same would be non-risky? He could fast-unto-death to force the Indian government and Patel to part with rupees 55 crores to Pakistan after independence, knowing they would succumb to save his life; but not to prevent creation of Pakistan.

Patel & Partition, the Lesser Evil

Patel realised that governing India along with the Muslim League would be a nightmare. Having experienced the machinations of the Muslim League in the Interim Government, Sardar Patel rightly concluded it was not possible to govern the country jointly with the Muslim League then or in future. He realised the inevitability of the Partition around December 1946, and was perhaps the first tall Congress leader to do so, apart from CR (Rajaji), who had proposed his partition plan in 1942. It took Congress another six months to reach the same conclusion.

VP Menon had outlined to Patel in late December 1946 a scheme of partition, transfer of power and Dominion Status to which Patel had responded positively. Partition was to save India from civil war; while the Dominion Status would ensure the British cooperation in smooth transfer of power, particularly with the military under their command.

Concluding there would not be peace in united Punjab, and no place for them, Hindus and Sikhs demanded East Punjab. Seizing the opportunity, and as a rebuff to the League, Patel promptly agreed to the demand for partition of Punjab, and of Bengal, by implication. Other Congress leaders agreed, and on 8 March 1947 the CWC proposed the same. Jinnah and the Muslim League, who had coveted the whole of Punjab and Bengal as part of Pakistan, irretrievably lost East Punjab by their ill-thought violent acts. The CWC resolution meant the Congress was ready to yield Pakistan. Earlier, on 4 March 1947, Patel had written to Jinnah's close friend K Dwarkadas: "*If the League insists on Pakistan, the only alternative is the division of Punjab and Bengal*."{RG/390}

The above initiative for partition taken by Patel, and Patel's ensuring the necessary resolution was passed as above on 8 March 1947 by the CWC came as a bolt from the blue for Gandhi. Gandhi was not consulted.

Wrote Gandhi to Patel: "Try to explain to me your Punjab resolution if you can. I cannot understand it."

Responded Patel: "It is difficult to explain to you the resolution on Punjab. It was adopted after the deepest deliberation. Nothing has been done in a hurry, or without a full thought. That you have expressed your views against it, we learnt from the papers. But you are, of course, entitled to say what you feel right."{BK2/80}

The resolution indeed was the only answer to Jinnah demanding partition, for it meant he would neither get full Punjab, nor full Bengal, and not Assam either. But for Patel and the resolution he sponsored, the vicious stalemate that had gone on for too long would not have been broken. Patel had firmed up his resolve to get as much territory for India as possible, and to totally frustrate Jinnah's grand design of a large Pakistan with full Punjab, full Bengal and Assam—Jinnah ultimately got what he himself admitted: "*moth-eaten Pakistan*".{RG3/248} Patel had also hoped that confronted with the crumbs of "*truncated and moth-eaten Pakistan*", Jinnah might still desist from demanding partition. It was like catching the bull by the horns.

Patel got the above resolution passed also to checkmate Gandhi lest he came up with some other harmful appeasement move, or a move of some 'large-hearted' surrender.

Patel had grasped that continued resistance to partition and Pakistan would only mean further spread of communal strife and riots, cleavages within even the police force and the army leading to a situation that would have further favoured Jinnah's and British interests, and might have led to the whole of Punjab, Bengal and Assam becoming Pakistan.

Back in the sixteenth century, Tulsi Das had given his pearl of wisdom: "Budh ardh tajain, lukh sarvasa jata"—*realising that the whole would go, the wise surrender half*.

In the event, India surrendered only one-fourth, and retained three-fourth! Although Pakistan had been claiming the whole of Assam, Bengal and Punjab; India retained the whole of Assam (but for one district), while forcing partition of Bengal and Punjab.

Sardar Patel was the first prominent Indian leader who agreed to go in for the partition. The initial concurrence for the Partition was on 10 May 1947. It demonstrated his decisiveness, ability to take unpleasant, but necessary decisions, and high order of statesmanship. On 11 May 1947, while Acharya Kripalani confessed, "*When we are faced with thorny problems, and Gandhi's advice is not available, we consider Sardar Patel as our leader*"{RG/400}; Sarojini Naidu had stated that Sardar Patel was "*the man of decision and the man of action in our counsels*"{RG/400}. It was Sardar who convinced the rest on the wisdom of partition.

The CWC ratified Patel and Nehru's acceptance of the partition plan on 2 June 1947 by 157 votes to 27, with 32 remaining neutral. Sardar Patel delivered a key note address at the CWC as under:

> "I fully appreciate the fears of our brothers from [the Muslim-majority areas]. Nobody likes the division of India and my heart is heavy. But the choice is between one division and many divisions. We must face facts, cannot give in to emotionalism and sentimentality. The Working Committee has not acted out of fear. But I am afraid that all our toil and hard work of these many years might go waste and prove unfruitful. My nine months in office have completely disillusioned me regarding the supposed merits of the Cabinet Mission Plan. Except for a few honourable exceptions, Muslim officials from top to bottom are working for the League. The communal veto given to the League in the mission plan would have blocked India's progress at every stage. Whether or not we like it, de facto Pakistan already exists in Punjab and Bengal. Under the circumstances I would prefer a de jure Pakistan which may make the League more responsible. Freedom is coming. We have 75 to 80 % of India, which we can make strong with our genius. The League can develop the rest of the country."{RG/403}

Patel Refuses East-West Corridor to Jinnah, 30 May 1947

Unlike Nehru, Sardar Patel was very firm in his dealings. Writes Rajmohan Gandhi in his book 'Patel–A Life': "Returning from London on the night of May 30, Mountbatten, in his own words, 'sent V.P.Menon to see Patel to obtain his agreement to six months joint control [with Pakistan] of Calcutta', which is what Jinnah had been pressing for. The Viceroy recorded Patel's reply: '*Not even for six hours!*' Earlier...Jinnah had demanded an 800-mile 'corridor' to link West and East Pakistan. Patel called the claim '*such fantastic nonsense as not to be taken seriously*'. It died a quick and unremembered death."{RG2}

Jun-1947: VP Menon–Mountbatten Plan

VP Menon, the Constitutional Adviser and Political Reforms Commissioner to the Viceroy, came to Mountbatten's rescue, and suggested a way out for the British to transfer power. He gave Mountbatten an outline for transfer of power that he had prepared earlier, but which was not favourably seen by the authorities prior to Mountbatten.

Menon's scheme, prepared in 1946, envisaged transfer of power by the British to two Central Governments on Dominion basis, and separation of the Muslim-majority areas from India. *During December 1946–January 1947 Menon had discussed the matter with Sardar Patel, and had obtained his approval.*

Menon had opined that a unitary India under the Cabinet Mission Plan was an illusion; and the proposed 3-tier constitution would be unwieldy and difficult to work. It was better for the country to be divided than gravitate towards civil war. Menon had suggested that the best solution was partition and transfer of power to two central governments based on the Dominion Status; the advantages being (a)avoidance of civil war; (b)peaceful transfer of power; (c)greater likelihood of its acceptance in Britain, particularly by the Conservatives like Churchill on account of the "Dominion Status", and membership of the two dominions in the Commonwealth; (d)continued services of the British bureaucracy and the British army officers during the transitional period; (e)reassurance to the Princes on continuity, and better possibility of their peaceful merger with either of the two dominions; (f)strong central governments for each of the dominions to guard against centrifugal forces; and (g)facilitation for framing a constitution unhampered by communal and provincial/regional considerations. Sardar Patel had given Menon a positive response.

Mountbatten and Nehru broadly agreed with Menon's outline of the scheme, and asked him to prepare a draft plan. Knowing that without Patel's backing the plan would be a non-starter, Menon sent an advance copy of the plan to Patel. Patel's response was expectedly positive, for the plan had his pre-approval. On Nehru's hang-ups on membership of the Commonwealth as a condition in the plan, Patel assured Nehru that he would take care that the plan was approved by the Congress, provided the other conditions were met. Patel knew the Commonwealth-condition was put to satisfy conservatives like Churchill, and obtain their approval for the

passage of the Indian Independence Bill. All that Patel wanted assurance for was that the British parliament pass a bill to grant independence to India, and that the British actually quit within two months; and importantly, while they let the paramountcy for the Indian Princely States lapse, they don't interfere or take sides on their merger with India.

Jinnah, as usual, did act difficult, and stipulated additional conditions, including the wild one like an 800-mile corridor to link East and West Pakistan; but his tantrums didn't work, and he had to ultimately agree to what Mountbatten (or rather, VP Menon) had proposed, and what the Congress was agreeable to. Why that change in Jinnah? With their goal (Pakistan) achieved, Jinnah's mentors in London like Churchill (who had propped him up to get Pakistan as it was in the strategic interests of the British) conveyed to him to not act difficult any more, as he couldn't get more than what was on offer.

Apprehensive that Gandhi may yet come in the way of the partition plan, Mountbatten personally met Gandhi to explain the position. Gandhi accepted the position.

Mountbatten announced the Partition Plan, 3 June 1947

The CWC ratified Patel and Nehru's acceptance of the partition plan on 2 June 1947 by 157 votes to 27, with 32 remaining neutral.

On 3 June 1947, Mountbatten announced the Partition Plan: Power to be relinquished to the two Governments of India and Pakistan on the basis of Dominion Status by 15 August 1947, much earlier than the original date of June 1948. In regard to the Princely States, the plan laid down that the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Indian Princely States contained in the Cabinet Mission memorandum of 12 May 1946 would remained unchanged—the British paramountcy would lapse, and their status would revert to what it was before.

On the night of 3 June 1947, Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh on behalf of the Congress, AIML, and Sikhs respectively aired their acceptance of the VP Menon-Mountbatten Partition Plan. Jinnah was not happy with the truncated Pakistan that he was getting, but when Mountbatten firmly told him he could get no more, and that the only alternative was united India, Jinnah agreed.

Mountbatten wrote to his mother on 14 June 1947: "I must stress the importance of Patel in the agreements so far reached. He has a rough

exterior and an uncompromising manner… he has never wavered and has stood firm against inner voices and neutral indecisions that have sometimes afflicted his colleagues. Patel's realism has also been a big factor in the acceptance of the Dominion Status formula."{ACJ/136/L-2430}

AICC Meet to Ratify Partition, backed by Gandhi

Although Gandhiji had hang-ups, most of the top leadership of the Congress had realised the inevitability of the Partition. Gandhiji had told the CWC on 2 June 1946 when it took the decision in favour of Partition that although he disagreed, he will not stand in the way. Gandhi had earlier commented:

> "Today I find myself all alone. Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal think that my reading is wrong and peace is sure to return if partition is agreed upon... They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention... They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age."{RG/401}

Patel had himself admitted:

> "For several years, Gandhi and I were in perfect agreement. Mostly we agreed instinctively; but when the time for a big decision on the question of India's independence came, we differed. I felt that we had to take independence there and then. We had, therefore, to agree to partition. I came to this conclusion after a great deal of heart-searching and with a great deal of sorrow. But I felt that if we did not accept partition, India would be split into many bits and completely ruined."{ISS1} {NS/90}

Gandhi's role as a guide, or the one with a veto-power, had ended long back. Much earlier when he had expressed his wish to quit, none in the CWC had asked him not to do so.

Gandhi told Durga Das in 1946:

> "When I met him [Gandhi], he said there was too much deceit all round and added that Patel and Rajen Babu (Rajendra Prasad) had ceased to be his 'yes man'."{DD/226}

But, Gandhi had finally acquiesced to the Partition. Perhaps he also took into account the alternate consequence Patel reportedly talked of:

> "It is a question of civil war or partition. As for civil war, no one can say where it will start and where it will end. True, the Hindus might

> win in the end but only after paying an unpredictable and huge price."{RG/401}

Indeed, the Muslim League call for Pakistan and partition could only have been resisted if the Congress was prepared for a strong, sustained retaliatory violence, and a long drawn-out communal strife in cities, towns and villages. However, that was apparently beyond the Congress leadership brought up on Gandhian non-violence. The Congress leadership was incapable of American style civil war. If Netaji Subhas had been there, one could have thought about it.

It is also worth noting that the Hindus and Sikhs of East Punjab and the Hindus of West Bengal had openly demanded partition. Gandhiji had himself admitted in his prayer meeting on 10 June 1947 that as "*non-Muslim India is overwhelmingly in favour of partition*", he "*could not coerce public opinion*."{RG/401}

The AICC met on 14 June 1947 to consider and ratify the CWC decision in favour of partition. There were voices against the partition. When Nehru and Patel failed to persuade some members, Gandhi intervened and appealed to members to support the CWC and its decision for partition, in the absence of an alternative.

> Gandhi advised that political realism demanded acceptance of the Mountbatten Plan, and acceptance of the partition-resolution moved by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. While 29 voted for the resolution, 15 voted against—notwithstanding Gandhi's appeal to vote in favour of the resolution.{Azad/215}

A senior leader who stood out against partition, and voted against the Pant resolution, was *Purshottamdas Tandon*. He stated he was prepared to suffer the British rule a little longer than pay the heavy price of partition. He claimed the Nehru government had been intimidated by the Muslim League. He got a huge applause when at the end of his speech he said: "*Let us fight both the British and the [Muslim] League*."{DD/248}

Wrote Maulana Azad:

> "…Gandhi's conversion to the Mountbatten [Partition] Plan had been a cause of surprise and regret to me. He now spoke openly in the Working Committee [CWC] in favour of partition."{Azad/210}

Could the Partition have been avoided?

Could the partition have been avoided? Yes and No. Let's examine both the aspects below.

The answer to the captioned question is "Yes" had the Congress and Hindu leadership been sharp, knowledgeable, analytical, realistic, competent, clever and visionary enough to have not allowed the situation to descend to the level it descended by 1946. The factors responsible can be summarised as follows. (1)Gandhi's overweening ambition to be the sole leader and spokesman of the Indian Muslims too, not wanting to share power with the likes of Jinnah. (2)Nehru's arrogance and conceit (Gandhi too was partially responsible) in not accommodating Jinnah and the Muslim League in the power-structure in provinces post the 1937 elections. (3)The overall Congress position, thanks to Gandhi and Nehru, that made the British feel the Congress was inimical to its foreign policy interests both with regard to the Middle-east Oil and the cold-war with the Communist USSR and China. The British felt their interests would be well-served by a pliable Muslim Pakistan. Hence, the British concluded that the Partition and Pakistan was in their best interest. (4)Nature of Islam and Muslims.

Reasons why the British thought negatively on the Congress: Gandhi's Quit India call and non-cooperation with the British when they were in dire difficulties in WW-II; Nehru and his leftist groups' pro-Russia bend.

The answer to the captioned question is "No" if one analyses the situation as it existed in 1946 and 1947. The (a)the Muslim position had so hardened by 1946, and (b)the British foreign policy and security interests had so crystallised in favour of having a pliable Pakistan that not yielding on Pakistan would have led to a spate of communal riots and civil war in which the British as the interested party would have definitely favoured Pakistan with all their diplomatic and military might.

Sadly, the Congress, wedded to the Gandhian non-violence, had most irresponsibly failed to prepare the country for self-defence, and for facing up to the mobs. The Congress had no Abraham Lincoln (it had only non-effective, non-violent preachers) to see the country sail successfully through a civil war. Had Netaji Subhas been there, it would have been different.

For full details on Partition and Pakistan, please read the author's book "What Really Led to Partition & Pakistan" available on Amazon.

55 crores to Pakistan & Gandhi's Untimely Death

India and Pakistan had agreed in November 1947 that Rupees 55 crores remained to be transferred to Pakistan, as its share of the assets of undivided India.

However, at the insistence of Patel, India informed Pakistan, within two hours of the agreement, that the actual implementation of the agreement would hinge on a settlement on Kashmir. Said Patel: "*In the division of assets we treated Pakistan generously. But we cannot tolerate even a pie being spent for making bullets to be shot at us. The settlement of assets is like a consent decree. The decree will be executed when all the outstanding points are satisfactorily settled.*"{RG/461}

Pakistan had been pressing India for rupees 55 crores (over USD 500 million in today's terms). In the Cabinet meeting in January 1948 Patel stated that the money if given would surely be used by Pakistan to arm itself for use in Kashmir, hence the payment should be delayed. Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, NV Gadgil and Dr BR Ambedkar backed Patel. Nehru too expressed his total agreement. The Cabinet therefore decided to withhold the money. Patel told in a Press Conference on 12 January 1948 that the issue of 55 crores could not be dissociated from the other related issues.{RG/462}

Gandhi conveyed to Patel the next day (13 January 1948) that withholding 55 crores from Pakistan was what Mountbatten had opined to him as "a dishonourable act… unstatesman-like and unwise"{RG/462}, and what he [Gandhi] thought was immoral. Patel was furious and asked of Mountbatten: "How can you as a constitutional Governor-General do this behind my back? Do you know the facts?..."{RG/462}

Gandhi was apparently innocent of the fact that Mountbatten and the British were bent upon favouring Pakistan—even on Kashmir, despite Pakistan's aggression. How could a top leader be so blind to the realities?

Unfortunately, Nehru, rather than supporting Patel, and sticking to what he had himself fully agreed to, and had got passed in the Cabinet, went back on his commitment, and commented to Gandhi: "Yes, it was passed but we don't have a case. It is legal quibbling."{RG/463}

Gandhi and Nehru, rather than being prudent about what was in the best interest of the nation, went by what the British colonial representative

Mountbatten, having his own axe to grind, had to say, and the Cabinet decision was reversed to let Pakistan have the money, and trouble India further in J&K! Going by the net results, effectively, it appears that for Gandhi maintaining "Brand Mahatma", and its associated "morality", was more important than the national interests.

Why didn't Gandhi and Mountbatten consider the immorality of Pakistan in attacking Kashmir which had already acceded to India? If Pakistan had agreed to desist from its illegal action in Kashmir, it would have got the money anyway. Further, Gandhi wanted to look good in the eyes of the Muslims in Pakistan and India. Sell national interest for the sake of appeasement, and your own image. And for Nehru, kowtowing to Mountbatten and Gandhi was a priority, rather than standing up for the Cabinet decision, of which he was a part. People like Sardar Patel were out of place in such a scenario.

Gandhi went on a fast to force the issue in his favour (it was one of the several issues that led him to fast). Patel yielded, Gandhi won, and India lost. But, it also resulted in the tragedy of Gandhi's death.

Wrote Rajmohan Gandhi: "*Wounded by Mountbatten's backbiting and Jawaharlal's disloyalty and bitter at Gandhi's stand on the 55 crores, Patel felt too that the timing of Gandhi's fast 'was hopelessly wrong'*."{RG/464}

All those leaders, including Mountbatten and Nehru, who encouraged or prompted Gandhi into that unreasonable position were indirectly guilty of his untimely death. Patel had said something similar to General Roy Bucher: "At our meeting in Dehra Dun, the Sardar [Patel] told me that those who persuaded the Mahatma to suggest that monies (Rs. 55 crore) held in India should be despatched to Pakistan were responsible for the tragedy, and that after the monies were sent off, the Mahatma was moved up to be the first to be assassinated on the books of a very well-known Hindu revolutionary society. I distinctly remember the Sardar saying: 'You know quite well that for Gandhi to express a wish was almost an order.'" It was on Gandhi's insistence that [his] security had been withdrawn."{BK2/xxi-xxii}

Joint Culpability

Once the partition was agreed upon in principle by all the concerned and contending parties, it should have been carried out in a well thought-out, planned and professional manner. That responsibility lay principally with the British, and particularly with the Viceroy Mountbatten. Of course, the responsibility also lay with the Congress, the Muslim League, and the other political parties and organisations, and their leaders. Sadly, everyone failed the people.

British Culpability & Mountbatten's Gross Mismanagement

For such a hugely major operation like partition of a country, and creation of a new country, no blue print was prepared, no planning was done either to ensure security and safety of people and their property, or to provide for their rehabilitation. It was just hurriedly and haphazardly put through, exposing millions to grave risk.

If what is described below was possible, why thousands were allowed to be brutalised and slaughtered? It is from "*Empires of the Indus*" by Alice Albinia{AA/15}:

> "In 1947, Hameeda Akhtar Husain Raipuri was a young mother… She came to Karachi at Partition with her family from Aligarh… As the wife of a civil servant in the Education Ministry, Hameeda's introduction to Karachi was comparatively orderly. The train that brought her from Delhi was one of the first to be attacked; but it was full of government employees, and thus was well defended by the army. 'A gentleman was waiting at the station at Karachi with the keys to our flat in Napier Barracks,' she says, 'another was holding out a ration card.' So the family settled into their new country, full of hope…"{AA/15}

That is, had all trains been well-guarded, like in the above case, thousands of deaths, loot and rapes could have been easily avoided. Similarly, had proper planning been done, and had a bigger and stronger military, para-military, police or armed volunteer force deployed well in advance, with political leaders, social workers and volunteers to assist them, most of the other tragedies could also have been avoided.

Instead of doing the above, Mountbatten and his British staff had done the opposite—they had ensured that all the British troops were withdrawn before the partition. This is what Sir Evan Meredith Jenkins, the last governor of the Punjab, had advised Mountbatten (who too was of similar opinion):

> "I think it will be wise to avoid postponing the relief [withdrawal] of British troops for too long. It would be awkward if trouble on a large scale started while the relief was in progress. My own advice would therefore be to make the change before the end of July [1947]."{Wolp3/165}

Winston Churchill had accused Mountbatten of killing two million Indians!{AA/12} Mountbatten's critic Andrew Roberts had commented: "*Mountbatten deserved to be court-martialled on his return to London*."{Tunz/252}

Indian Leaders' Culpability

The British ensured security for their own people and families while quitting India as fast as possible; even as the so-called freedom-fighters hurried to occupy bungalows in Lutyens Delhi, and in the state capitals and civil lines; while the millions uprooted were left to get looted, raped, murdered, or to somehow save their lives, and fend for themselves.

Expectedly, our clueless, non-violent Gandhian leaders had done absolutely nothing to keep people safe—it was a repeat case of criminal negligence and gross irresponsibility not to have ensured proper advance preparation! If the Gandhians could launch what they called their major assault on the British colonialism, the "Quit India" Movement, without any preparation and planning, and without any strategy and tactics on how to keep themselves out of jail to be able to steer the movement properly; little could be expected from them by way of caution and preparation in the wake of partition. They could have heeded Dr BR Ambedkar's wise and elaborate plan in his book "*Pakistan or the Partition of India*"{Amb3} given several years back on peaceful transfer of population. But, with "Mahatmas" as leaders who would listen to the genuinely learned and wise people like Ambedkar? Although leaders and administrators tried to blame people for being communal so as to rid themselves of the accountability, all the three parties—the British headed by Mountbatten, the Congress leadership, and

the Muslim League leadership—were guilty, and none can claim they were not aware of what might happen.

Nehru had grandly declared: "I would rather have every village in India go up in flames than keep a single British soldier in India a moment longer than necessary."{Tunz/iii} But, if Nehru was happy having the highest post of the Governor General (till June 1948), and the highest posts in the Army with the British, why not the soldiers to save poor citizens?

Further, why shouldn't Mountbatten, Gandhi, Nehru, and the Congress have planned for augmenting the strength of the police and army by induction of Indians. Well-trained returning INA soldiers were readily available. But, the British and the Congress (especially Nehru) bias against anything remotely related to Netaji came in the way!

The point, however, is why the Indian and the Pakistani leaders, whose people were to be so frightfully affected, failed to read the writing on the wall? That terrible things were bound to happen should have been very well known to them after what happened on the 'Direct Action Day' in Calcutta in August 1946, in Noakhali in East Bengal, and in Bihar, and in scores of other places down the decades, including the most horrible Moplah Rebellion of 1920s in Malabar, Kerala, where Muslims butchered Hindus! So the leaders, including Gandhi, Jinnah, Patel, Nehru and others, had little reason to be smug. Weren't they aware that what actually happened was bound to happen if they didn't take sufficient care? What precaution and care did they take? Can they escape the blame?

If things had been planned well and foreseen, there could have been an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League for a well-designed protocol for smooth and orderly transfer of population (Ambedkar had suggested something similar many years back), as per the wishes of the concerned families and groups. Further, if the time was deemed too short to make adequate preparation for smooth transfer of power to the two domains, partition/independence could have been delayed by a reasonable time. Where was the tearing hurry?

Wrote Patrick French:

> "In 1946 Nehru had naively told a journalist: 'When the British go, there will be no more communal trouble in India.' As his biographer points out: 'He was wrong, but so was everyone else in a position of

> responsibility at this time.' There was a stunning incapacity among the politicians of all kinds to realise what was likely to occur. Even Jinnah, who might have been expected to foresee the impact of the creation of Pakistan, did not request a neutral military force either before or after 15 August…"{PF/344}

Gandhi was particularly to be blamed, what with his arrant nonsense of non-violence. Here is an example. During his prayer meeting on 1 May 1947, Gandhi, seeking to prepare the Hindus and Sikhs for the anticipated massacres in the wake of the upcoming state of Pakistan, exhorted:

> "I would tell the Hindus to face death cheerfully if the Muslims are out to kill them. I would be a real sinner if after being stabbed I wished in my last moment that my son should seek revenge. I must die without rancour… You may turn round and ask whether all Hindus and all Sikhs should die. Yes, I would say. Such martyrdom will not be in vain."{URL80}

Gandhi never cared to explain what purpose would be served by senselessly getting oneself killed! When the killings finally started upon partition, Gandhi refused to sympathise with the Hindu victims, or blame the Muslim perpetrators.

Rather than trying to save lives, commented Gandhi on 6 August 1947 to the Congress workers on the communal conflagration in Lahore:

> "I am grieved to learn that people are running away from the West Punjab and I am told that Lahore is being evacuated by the non-Muslims. I must say that this is what it should not be. If you think Lahore is dead or is dying, do not run away from it, but die… When you suffer from fear you die before death comes to you. That is not glorious. I will not feel sorry if I hear that people in the Punjab have died not as cowards but as brave men..."{URL80}

For full details, please read the author's book
"What Really Led to Partition & Pakistan"
available on Amazon.

{ 10 }

What Really Led to Freedom?

Was Freedom thanks to Gandhi & the Congress?

Was it Gandhi that made the British 'Quit India'? Was it the Congress that ultimately drove the invaders out into the sea? The prevalent myth is that the Congress won the independence for India, and that Gandhi and Nehru were its principal leaders.

Was that so? NO.

The last (and only!) Gandhian movement for full independence was the Quit India Movement of 1942. Mind you the previous movements like the Rowlatt Satyagraha, etc., or the two major once-in-a-decade Gandhian movements—the 'Khilafat & Non-cooperation Movement' (KNCM) of 1920-22, and the 'Salt Satyagraha' of 1930 plus the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1931-32 that followed it—did NOT have complete independence in their agenda (Pl. check the agenda of these movements given elsewhere in this book. KNCM had 'swaraj', but not 'purna swaraj', among its agenda.) at all! Yes, the Congress and the Congress leaders did talk of swaraj or dominion status or independence in their meetings, resolutions, speeches, and writings, and did officially promulgate the 'Purna Swaraj Declaration', or the 'Declaration of the Independence of India' at Lahore on 29 December 1929, followed by its pledge on 26 January 1930; BUT in none of their major movements until the Quit India 1942 did the Congress include 'Purna Swaraj' or full independence as an item of agenda or as a demand on the British!

Even on Quit India, recorded the noted historian Dr RC Majumdar: "*Far from claiming any credit for achievements of 1942 [Quit India], both Gandhi and the Congress offered apology and explanation for the 'madness' which seized the people participating in it*."—quoted by the author Anuj Dhar in his tweet of 1 July 2018. Anuj Dhar also tweeted: "*The claim that Quit India led to freedom is a state sanctioned hoax*."

Quit India fizzled out in about two months. After Quit India, Gandhi did not launch any movement. Is one to infer that the call to Quit India given in

1942 was acted upon by the British after a lapse of five years in 1947? That there was some kind of an ultra-delayed tubelight response? Quit India call heard after a delay of five years!

Britain hinted at independence in 1946, and announced it formally in 1947, even though there was hardly any pressure from the Congress on Britain to do so. Many of the Rulers of the Princely States in fact wondered and questioned the Raj as to why they wanted to leave (they didn't want them to—it was a question of their power and perks, which were safe under the British) when there was no movement against them, and no demand or pressure on them to leave.

The British initially announced the timeline as June 1948 to leave India. Later, they themselves preponed it to August 1947. If the British didn't wish to leave, and it was the Congress which was making them leave, why would the British voluntarily announce preponement of their departure?

The long and short of it is that Gandhi and Gandhism and the Gandhian Congress were NOT really the reasons the British left. Gandhi himself admitted as much (pl. check below).

What They Said

What Gandhi had himself said:

"I see it as clearly as I see my finger: British are leaving not because of any strength on our part but because of historical conditions and for many other reasons."{Gill/24}

The "historical conditions and other reasons" were not of Congress or Gandhi's making—they were despite them. Further, on design of the national flag Gandhi had said in 1947:

> "…But what is wrong with having the UNION JACK in a corner of our flag? If harm has been done to us by the British it has not been done by their flag and we must also take note of the virtues of the British. *THEY ARE VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAWING FROM INDIA, LEAVING POWER IN OUR HANDS*. A drastic bill which virtually liquidates the Empire did not take even a week to pass in Parliament. Time was when even very unimportant bills took a year and more to be passed... We are having Lord Mountbatten as our chief gate-keeper. So long he has been the servant of the British king. Now he is to be our servant. If while we employed him as our servant we also had the Union Jack in a corner of our flag, there would be no betrayal of India in this.…"{CWMG/Vol-96/86-87}

Admitted Gandhi, on different occasions during 1946-47: "Have I led the country astray?... Is there something wrong with me, or are things really going wrong… Truth and ahimsa, by which I swear and which have to my knowledge sustained me for sixty years seem to fail… My own doctrine was failing. I don't want to be a failure but a successful man. But it may be I die a failure…"{Gill/212}

He realised that his decades of work had come to an "inglorious end". An airy creed based on unreal, unscientific and irrational foundations that ignored historical, economic, religious and imperialist forces, and either did not recognise or grossly underestimated the forces it was up against, and the nature of British interests, had to fail.

Gandhi had envisaged the British troops remaining in India after independence for some time to train Indians. That is, Gandhi never considered driving out the British as an option, in which case the British

would certainly not have obliged by remaining in India to train their adversaries. Gandhi had remarked: "Having clipped our wings it is their [British] duty to give us wings wherewith we can fly."{Nan/314}

What the above implies is that Gandhi's independence movement was a friendly match where the adversary [the British], after withdrawing, was expected to be sporting, and be generous to the other side.

S.S. Gill:

"It seems presumptuous to pick holes in Gandhi's campaigns and strategies, and appear to belittle a man of epic dimensions, especially when the nationalist mythologies render it sacrilegious to re-evaluate his achievements. Great men of action, who perform great deeds, do commit great mistakes. And there is no harm in pointing these out. In one sense it is a Gandhian duty, as he equated truth with God."{Gill/75}

"*It is generally believed that Gandhi's greatest achievement was the liberation of India from colonial rule. BUT HISTORICAL EVIDENCE DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS VIEW.*"{Gill/24}

Dr BR Ambedkar:

"*…The Quit India Campaign turned out to be a complete failure…* It was a mad venture and took the most diabolical form. It was a scorch-earth campaign in which the victims of looting, arson and murder were Indians and the perpetrators were Congressmen… Beaten, he [Gandhi] started a fast for twenty-one days in March 1943 while he was in gaol with the object of getting out of it. He failed. Thereafter he fell ill. As he was reported to be sinking the British Government released him for fear that he might die on their hand and bring them ignominy… *On coming out of gaol, he [Gandhi] found that he and the Congress had not only missed the bus but had also lost the road*. To retrieve the position and win for the Congress the respect of the British Government as a premier party in the country which it had lost by reason of the failure of the campaign that followed up the Quit India Resolution, and the violence which accompanied it, he started negotiating with the Viceroy… Thwarted in that attempt, Mr. Gandhi turned to Mr. Jinnah…"{Amb3}

Nirad Chaudhuri:

"…After being proved to be dangerous ideologues by that [world] war, *the pacifists have now fallen back on Gandhi as their last prop*, and are arguing that by liberating India from the foreign rule by his non-violent

methods he has proved that non-violent methods and ideas are sound. *Unfortunately, the British abandonment of India before Gandhi's death has given a spurious and specious plausibility to what is in reality only a coincidence without causal relationship…* And finally, he [Gandhi] had no practical achievement, as I shall show when I deal with his death. What is attributed to him politically is pure myth…"{NC/41}

Patrick French:

"From late 1930s onwards, Gandhi was a liability to the freedom movement, pursuing an eccentric agenda that created as many problems as it solved. V.S. Naipaul has put it more bluntly, 'Gandhi lived too long.'"{PF/105}

VS Naipaul:

"Not everyone approved of Gandhi's methods. Many were dismayed by the apparently arbitrary dictates of his 'inner voice'. And in the political stalemate of the 1930s—for which some Indians still blame him: Gandhi's unpredictable politics, they say, his inability to manage the forces he had released, *needlessly lengthened out the Independence struggle, delayed self-government by twenty-five years, and wasted the lives and talents of many good men…*"{Na1}

Freedom: the Real Reasons

Till the early 1940s the British were well-ensconced in power, and looked forward to comfortably sailing through for several more decades—notwithstanding the Gandhian agitations of over two decades since 1918. If they played politics between the Congress and the Muslim League it was only to prolong their rule, and not to give independence or create Pakistan. They never perceived the Gandhian non-violent methods as threats to their rule. Then what changed that they left? Those major factors are detailed below.

1) WW-II and its Consequences

UK's Precarious Economy, and WW-II Exhaustion.

1.1) The UK was in a precarious economic condition as a consequence of the Second World War. It was hugely debt-ridden, and the maintenance of its colonies had become a tremendous drag on the UK exchequer. The Britain had colonised India to loot, and not to invest in it or to maintain it. The money flow had to be from India to Britain to justify continuance of the colony; and not the other way round, which had begun to happen.

> "The Empire was no longer turning a profit, or even paying its way… The result was what the historian Correlli Barnett has called 'one of the most outstanding examples of strategic over-extension in history'."{PF/197}

The famous UK economist John Maynard Keynes, who also happened to be an economic advisor to the UK, presented the war cabinet in 1945 with a financial analysis that showed that running the British Empire had cost 1,000 million pounds for each of the past two years, rising post-war to 1,400 million pounds per year; and that without the US financial assistance, the UK would go bankrupt!{Tim}

The British exchequer was forced to freeze debt repayment. Britain owed the largest amount to India in war debt: 1250 million pounds!{Chee/3} {Wire1}

Contrast the above reverse money-drain to the punishing and terrible Indian loot that was the reason for the establishment and prolongation of the Raj.

1.2) By the end of the WW-II territorial colonisation had ceased to be a viable enterprise, and decolonisation began. In fact, around the time India got its independence, many other colonies (like Sri Lanka, Burma–Myanmar, etc.) also got their independence, although there was not much of an independence movement in those colonies that would have forced the colonisers to leave. During 1947 Britain also pushed plans through the UN that would enable it to leave Palestine; and finally Israel was created on 14 May 1948.

1.3) Viceroy Wavell had stated to King-Emperor George VI as early as on 8 July 1946: "We are bound to fulfil our pledges to give India her freedom as soon as possible—and we have neither the power nor, I think, the will to remain in control of India for more than an extremely limited period...We are in fact conducting a retreat, and in very difficult circumstances…"{Pani2/v}

1.4) Militarily, administratively, financially, and above all, mentally the British were too exhausted after the Second World War to continue with their colonies.

2) Netaji Bose, INA and Army Mutinies

2.1) The military onslaught of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his INA hugely shook the British, and the Indian army.

2.2) The Viceroy was shocked to learn of thousands of soldiers of the British-Indian army switching over to INA (to support the enemy nation Japan) after the fall of Singapore in 1942. It meant the Indian soldiers in the British-Indian army could no longer be relied upon. What was more—there was a huge support for Netaji Bose and the INA among the common public in India.

Wrote Maulana Azad in his autobiography: "*After the surrender of Japan, the British reoccupied Burma and many officers of the Indian National Army (INA) were taken prisoner. They did not repent their action in having joined the Indian National Army and some of them were now facing trial for treason. All these developments convinced the British that they could no longer rely on the armed forces…*"{Azad/142}

2.3) The INA Red Fort trials of 1945-46 mobilised public opinion against the British on an unprecedented scale, so much so that the Congress leaders like Nehru (who had till then, and later too, opposed Netaji and

INA) had to demonstratively pretend their support to the INA under-trials to get votes in the 1946 general elections.

2.4) The Indian Naval Mutiny of 1946 and the Jabalpur Army Mutiny of 1946, both provoked partially by the INA trials, convinced the British that they could no longer trust the Indian Army to suppress Indians, and continue to rule over them.

2.5) In the context of the Indian colony, Sir Stafford Cripps stated in the British Parliament on 5 March 1947 that Britain had only two alternatives: either to (1)transfer power to Indians, or (2)considerably reinforce British troops in India to retain hold. The latter (option-2) he judged as impossible! {Gill/24}

2.6) Comments Narendra Singh Sarila: "In South-east Asia, Bose blossomed, and,...played an important role in demoralizing the British military establishment in India. Indeed, it is a toss-up whether Gandhiji's or Bose's influence during the period 1945-46—even after Bose's death—played a more important role in destabilizing British rule in India."{Sar/125}

2.7) Wrote MKK Nayar: "*The reason why Britain unilaterally granted freedom even before Congress had intensified its agitation was on account of Netaji's greatness*. Army jawans who had never dared to utter a word against the British had united as one to declare that INA's soldiers were patriots. Men of the Navy fearlessly pointed guns at British ships and establishments and opened fire. It was the same soldiers who had for a hundred years obeyed orders like slaves, even to massacre unhesitatingly at the notorious Jallianwala Bagh. They had now united to express their opinion and Naval men had shown their readiness to raise the flag of revolt. *Attlee and others probably realized that Indian soldiers may no longer be available to hunt Indians. This may have prompted them to leave with dignity and self-respect*."{MKN}

2.8) Stated Dr BR Ambedkar: "…The national army [INA] that was raised by Subhas Chandra Bose. *The British had been ruling the country in the firm belief that whatever may happen in the country or whatever the politicians do, they will never be able to change the loyalty of soldiers*. That was one prop on which they were carrying on the administration. *And that was completely dashed to pieces [by Bose and INA]*. They found that soldiers could be seduced to form a party—a battalion to blow off the British. I think the British had come to the conclusion that if they were to

rule India, the only basis on which they would rule was the maintenance of the British Army."{Amb}

2.9) The British historian Michael Edwardes wrote: "It slowly dawned upon the government of India that the backbone of the British rule, the Indian Army, might now no longer be trustworthy. The ghost of Subhas Bose, like Hamlet's father, walked the battlements of the Red Fort (where the INA soldiers were being tried), and his suddenly amplified figure overawed the conference that was to lead to Independence."{ME/93}

2.10) Chief Justice PB Chakrabarty of Calcutta High Court, who had also served as the acting Governor of West Bengal in India after independence, wrote in his letter addressed to the publisher of Dr RC Majumdar's book 'A History of Bengal'{IT1}:

> "You have fulfilled a noble task by persuading Dr. Majumdar to write this history of Bengal and publishing it ...In the preface of the book Dr Majumdar has written that he could not accept the thesis that Indian independence was brought about solely, or predominantly by the non-violent civil disobedience movement of Gandhi. When I was the acting Governor, Lord Atlee, who had given us independence by withdrawing the British rule from India, spent two days in the Governor's palace at Calcutta during his tour of India. At that time I had a prolonged discussion with him regarding the real factors that had led the British to quit India. My direct question to him was that since Gandhi's 'Quit India' movement had tapered off quite some time ago and in 1947 no such new compelling situation had arisen that would necessitate a hasty British departure, why did they have to leave?
>
> "*In his reply Atlee cited several reasons, the principal among them being the erosion of loyalty to the British Crown among the Indian army and navy personnel as a result of the military activities of Netaji [Subhas Bose]*. Toward the end of our discussion I asked Atlee what was the extent of Gandhi's influence upon the British decision to quit India. Hearing this question, Atlee's lips became twisted in a sarcastic smile as he slowly chewed out the word, **'m-i-n-i-m-a-l**!'"{Gla/159} {Stat1}

3) Pressure from the US

Wrote Maulana Azad: "I have already referred to the pressure which President Roosevelt was putting on the British Government for a settlement of the Indian question. After Pearl Harbour, American public opinion became more and more insistent and demanded that India's voluntary cooperation in the war effort must be secured [by giving it freedom]."{Azad/47}

The Cripps Mission of March-April 1942, the first one in the direction of freedom for India, was under the pressure from the US. The US felt that the best way to secure India from Japan was to grant it freedom, and obtain its support in the war.

US President Roosevelt had constantly pressurised Britain on India, and had specially deputed Colonel Louis Johnson to India as his personal representative to lobby for the Indian freedom.{Sar/104} Infuriated at President Roosevelt's sympathy for the nationalists [Indians], Churchill dismissed Congress as merely "*the intelligentsia of non-fighting Hindu elements, who can neither defend India nor raise a revolt*."{MM/218}

The US kept up the pressure. Shimla Conference was called on 25 June 1945 by Viceroy Wavell for Indian self-government again under pressure from Americans to get full Indian support to dislodge Japan from its occupied territories of Burma, Singapore and Indonesia. The Japanese surrender following the dropping of atom-bombs dramatically enhanced the US military clout. The US thereafter insisted that the Atlantic Charter be also made applicable to the European colonies in Asia (it was, after all, a question of grabbing markets for the US capitalists), and they all be freed.

Thanks to the war, Britain had almost gone bankrupt, and was dependent on massive American aid. It could not therefore ignore or withstand the US pressure. Clement Attlee himself acknowledged in his autobiography that it was difficult for Britain to keep sticking on to the Indian colony given the constant American pressure against the British Empire.

Wrote Maria Misra: "…the crisis ridden British economy and, especially perhaps, American pressure to decolonize, simply could not be ignored. As [Viceroy] Wavell himself confided to his diary, while Churchill, Bevin and Co. 'hate the idea of our leaving India but… [they have] no alternative to suggest."{MM/232}

Wrote Patrick French: "[By 1946] Demobilization [of armed forces] was almost complete, and there was no political will on either side of the House

of Commons for stopping this process and reinforcing India with the necessary five divisions. Indeed, it would not have been possible without US funding, which would never have been forthcoming."{PF/289}

The Chicago Tribune in its valedictory tribute to Churchill had mentioned that "we [the US] have no interest in maintaining [or allowing the UK to maintain] her oppressive empire."{PC/366}

The fact of American help and pressure in getting independence for India is not adequately acknowledged in India.

4) Gandhi & the Congress?

Gandhi and the Congress were among the minor reasons and non-decisive factors the British left. Strangely, and quite unjustifiably, the focus is on Gandhi, Nehru and the Congress on each anniversary of the Independence Day of India.

5) The British Sought Freedom from India!?

It may sound ironic but by 1946–47 it was actually Britain which sought freedom from India!

As Patrick French puts it: "The role given to him [Mountbatten] by Attlee's government was to be the lubricant of imperial withdrawal; nothing more. His task was to give Britain—a harassed, war-torn, penniless little island—*FREEDOM FROM ITS INDIAN EMPIRE*, which had turned from a valuable asset into a frightening burden."{PF/289}

Mass Freedom Movement Already there before Gandhi

A false picture has been painted depicting that the real freedom movement, and mass participation in it, happened only after Gandhi took up the reins. This is far from truth.

The first mass movement in which Gandhi participated was the Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919, which later led to the Jallianwala Massacre of 1919. There were many leaders involved, and Gandhi was not the principal leader. *In fact, it being the first mass movement in which he had participated, Gandhi was surprised at the response, and the participation of the masses*.

The excellent response of the masses was thanks to the ground prepared over the last many, many years by the inspiring personalities like Dayanand Saraswati, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Vivekananda; stalwarts like Naoroji, Gokhale, Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lal-Bal-Pal, Malviya, CR Das; and revolutionaries like Chapekar Brothers, Shyamji Krishna Varma, Madan Lal Dhingra, Madame Bhikaji Rustom Cama, Lala Har Dayal, Veer Savarkar, Rash Behari Bose, Khudiram Bose, Sachindranath Sanyal, and so on. To minimise the role of these personalities, and to shore up only Gandhi & Co is to be patently dishonest, something Gandhi, the 'Apostle of Truth", would have abhorred.

The Swadeshi and Boycott Movements started more than a decade before Gandhi returned to India in 1915 from South Africa. The 'Vandemataram Movement', also called the 'Swadeshi Movement' to boycott British manufactured goods was started in 1905 for Bengal's re-unification. A large number of young leaders in Bengal took up the task of educating people with the Swadeshi spirit. In 1905, Aurobindo Ghosh wrote 'Vawani Mandir' containing, inter alia, the plans and programmes for the freedom fighters. A call was given to boycott state-run institutions, and even quit government jobs.

The Movement had so percolated the masses that reportedly the cobblers in Mymensingh (now in Bangladesh) refused to mend shoes of the British; the Oriya cooks and servants refused to serve those who used foreign goods; and the washermen of Kalighat decided not to wash foreign clothes! Gandhi's swadeshi and boycott of foreign goods was only a copy of what had been done over a decade earlier.

Tilak's mobilisation of people through his papers and large-scale celebrations of religious festivals is well-known.

Gandhi's first major mass movement, the Khilafat Movement of 1920-22, was actually started and led by a group of Muslim leaders. Gandhi joined them. Gandhi had not yet become the mass leader; and the massive spontaneous response of the masses, without much efforts at mobilisation, startled and overwhelmed him and the other organisers. To say that it was Gandhi who made the independence movement a mass movement is therefore erroneous—the masses were restive and ready for a long time, and were pining for relief and freedom, thanks to the various economic factors, and the tremendous sacrifices made by earlier freedom fighters and revolutionaries. In fact, overwhelmed by the response, Gandhi wanted to tone it down; and finally took the "Chauri-Chaura" excuse to call it off.

Stellar Role of Revolutionaries & Netaji Subhas

Much is made of Gandhi, the Gandhians, and the Congress in the freedom struggle, ignoring, or according a lesser place, to those who really mattered. How can one forget the numerous tribal uprisings, notably those by the Santhals in 1855. Indigo cultivators in Bihar bravely rose against the European overlords who compelled them to grow indigo. Gandhi's Champaran campaign was thanks to them.

Books, poems and novels (particularly 'Anand Math') of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–1894) fired up the people. It was Bankim who composed the famous national song 'Vande Mataram'. Exhortations of Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) helped dormant self-respect and patriotism rise to the fore. Lal-Bal-Pal (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal) stirred up the youth.

A pioneering role in the international spread of the freedom movement was played by Shyamji Krishna Varma (1857–1930). He founded the *India House* in London, arranged scholarship for bright Indians, and promoted revolutionaries and their activities—Madan Lal Dhingra, Madame Bhikaji Rustom Cama, Lala Har Dayal, Veer Savarkar, etc. came from his stable. Lala Har Dayal (1884–1939) became a professor at the University of California in the US, and founded the *Ghadar Party*. Madame Cama set up the Bande Matram Group in Paris.

Rash Behari Bose (1886–1945) co-ordinated efforts to foment disaffection in the armed forces. He was the key organiser of the Ghadar Revolution and the INA (Indian National Army).

Among the major other revolutionaries were Chapekar Brothers, Khudiram Bose, Sachindranath Sanyal (Hindustan Republican Association), Chandrashekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Shivaram Rajguru, Batukeshwar Dutt, Surya Sen (Chittagong Armoury Raid of April 1930), Jatin Das, Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Verma, Ramprasad Bismil, Rajendra Lahiri, Ashfaqulla Khan, and many, many more.

Sadly, the rise of Gandhi led to the decline of revolutionary activities. In fact, the British Raj and the British media helped Gandhi have a much larger than life profile of a *Mahatma* to discredit and curb what really rattled them—the violence of the revolutionaries—through Gandhi's non-violence propaganda.

However, thanks to last of the revolutionaries Netaji Subhas and his INA defying Gandhi, Gandhism, and the Congress, the all-round massive national enthusiasm and patriotism generated by them, particularly in the wake of the INA Red-fort trials, and the Indian army mutinies provoked by them, the revolutionary violence ultimately led to India's freedom.

Effectiveness of the Constitutional Methods

Following the Act of 1858 that turned India into a British colony, the Indian Councils Act of 1861 expanded the Supreme Legislative Council, and the Provincial Councils of Bombay and Madras to provide for inducting Indians into the higher echelons of the government. The Local Self Government Acts of 1883-84 provided for elections to local bodies like District Councils and Rural Boards. The Councils Act of 1892 further expanded the membership of Indians in the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils. Indians were inducted into the Secretary of State's Council and the Governor General's Council in 1907. The Indian Councils Act of 1909, incorporating the Morley-Minto Reforms, took this gradual process further.

Thanks to the constitutional methods adopted by the freedom fighters prior to Gandhi's active participation on the Indian scene, the Government of India Act 1919 (aka the Reforms Act) that sought to gradually introduce self-governing institutions in India was already in place, following the Montagu–Chelmsford (Mont-Ford, in short) Reforms of 1918. It was at Gandhi's instance that this Reforms Act of 1919 was endorsed by the Congress, despite the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. When Tilak had opposed it, and had opined it could be accepted only to highlight its inadequacies, Gandhi had gone to the extent of putting his cap at Tilak's feet to secure his consent for unreserved support.{Gill/43}

However, Gandhi's views took an opportunistic turn with the dawn of the Khilafat Movement in 1920. He started calling the Act of 1919 as a "death trap"? Why this about turn? Gandhi wanted to endear himself with the Muslims and the Muslim leadership through their Khilafat Movement. Thus, rather than working further with the constitutional methods, and taking the process of self-government forward, Gandhi vitiated the atmosphere through his support for the regressive Khilafat Movement, that fetched nothing for the country, and did the opposite of what Gandhi had hoped to achieve: bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. If the constitutional route had been followed by Gandhi (which Jinnah desired), hopefully India would have attained the Dominion Status (as good as independence) before the 1930s.

In 1923 Gandhi rejected the 'Councils Entry' proposal of the Swaraj Party which would have taken further the constitutional way to freedom—

something which he allowed over a decade later, following the GoI Act 1935. Wrote Durga Das:

> "Not long after, [CR] Das, convalescing from an illness at Mashobra, a suburb of Simla, revealed to me his sense of desperation. Gandhi, he felt, was leading the country away from the path of constitutional struggle into the wilderness of sterile political agitation… 'How can we get rid of the Mahatma,' he exclaimed, 'and put the people back on the road to the capture of power, now within our grasp.' The same feeling of bewilderment and frustration was expressed to me on other occasions by Motilal Nehru and Vithalbhai Patel. Gandhi, they seemed convinced then, was rendering it impossible to fight the British with weapons they understood and respected; his own way of civil disobedience would take the nation nowhere."{DD/116}

Despite all the non-cooperation of the Congress, and non-participation in two of the three Round Table Conferences, the Government of India Act 1935 did come into force, and opened the way for further self-government. Gradually, both the civil services and the army were largely Indianised, except at senior levels, which too were thrown open to Indians later. The Congress did participate in the elections that were a consequence of the 1935-act, and started ruling in eight provinces.

In short, while the Gandhian non-violent non-cooperation of two decades fetched little, the British, despite the Congress tantrums, did bring in constitutional changes that allowed the Congress to rule in eight provinces by 1937!

Rather than making a success of it, and taking it further, Gandhi and the Congress (particularly Nehru, backed by the Leftists) again ruined the opportunity by getting the Congress governments to resign in 1939.

Adverse Effect of Gandhian Intervention

What did Gandhi achieve by sidelining the followers of both the Constitutional Methods and the Revolutionary Methods? Three things. *One*: Delayed achievement of freedom for India—delay by about two decades. *Two*: Partition. *Three*: Pakistan.

If Gandhi had not come on the scene in 1915, and the co-ordination of the Constitutionalists and the Revolutionaries had continued—undisturbed, unsubdued and uncompromised by Gandhism—then perhaps the freedom would have been gained much earlier, and India would not have born the heavy cost of freedom: Partition and Pakistan.

Gandhian methods actually suited the British in multiple ways. *One*: The Gandhian non-violence techniques never had the potential to harm the British interests or destabilise them. *Two*: Engaging people in the Gandhian techniques of fasting, khadi, satyagraha, and so on lulled people into a false sense of feeling of fighting for freedom. It made the public busy on a harmless path for freedom—harmless for the British. *Three*: It discredited what really adversely affected the British: revolutionary activities, and violent opposition.

Gandhian methods were also supported by the Indian and British business and trading interests, who always looked to peace, stability, and non-violence to protect and advance their material interests. No wonder most big business houses funded Gandhi, while none supported the revolutionaries.

Of course, the question arises that if the means were to be non-violent then why didn't Gandhi adopt and take forward the constitutional methods like Gokhale, Jinnah, and others. The reason is that the constitutional methods, by their very nature, remained restricted to leadership, and did not extend to masses. Hence, they were not popular. In sharp contrast, the militant and revolutionary methods made better appeal, and were more popular and effective. That is why, while Gokhale was not popular, Tilak was popular. And, aware of this severe handicap, it was Gokhale who had persuaded Gandhi to return from South Africa to India, to somehow shore up the scales for the constitutionalists. Britain had welcomed Gandhi's arrival into India. British had awarded Gandhi several medals in South Africa, and awarded him another ('Kaiser-I-Hind' gold medal) soon after

arrival in 1915. Realising that constitutional methods would not be popular, and would not make him a top leader, Gandhi chose an in-between path. Agitate, but non-violently. Engage people in various harmless and "constructive" activities so that they get a feel something is happening. The British must have been happy—indeed, they were very thankful to Gandhi.

Comparison: How & When Other Countries Got Freedom

Congress dragged on with its independence movement for too long a period of 40 years—tiring and sapping all! Despite that, it remained a minor factor in gaining independence for India, as we have seen above.

In sharp contrast, George Washington and team attained their aim within eight years of fighting with the British, and created a new nation. The American War of Independence (1775–1783) was won in 8 years through violent means.

Or, compare Gandhi & Co with the South American leader Simon Bolivar of Venezuela, after whom the country Bolivia was named. He liberated not just one, but six countries from the Spanish rule—Venezuela, Colombia, Panama (included in Colombia at that time), Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia! And, he achieved all this through his military campaign lasting mere 13 years. He died at a relatively young age of 47.

The British Empire had chosen to grant the Dominion Status to its four major colonies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa well before the Second World War, allowing them a large measure of self-government; while India got the Dominion Status much later in 1947. Commonwealth of Australia became a dominion of the British Empire way back on 1 January 1901. New Zealand's independence was a gradual process that began in 1835; and it gained the Dominion Status in 1907. Canada was formed as a federal dominion of four provinces in 1867, and gained official autonomy with the Statute of Westminster of 1931. South Africa got its independence in 1934.

How was it that these four major colonies could gain the Dominion Status, while India kept struggling for its freedom for decades? And, despite the fact that India contributed more to the British WW-I efforts than all the other colonies combined, and Gandhi, despite his creed of non-violence, personally helped the British in army recruitment.

It is also worth noting that many colonies—British and of other European nations—got their independence around the time India got its independence, whether or not they had any significant freedom movements. That was because the territorial colonial enterprises were no longer profitable; and the colonising nations were not inclined to continue with them any further. For example, Burma (Myanmar) gained independence

from the British on 4 January 1948; and Sri Lanka was granted the Dominion Status by the British on 4 January 1948, though neither had significant freedom movements.

Here is a short, select (incomplete) list of countries that were the colonies under the British Raj, and gained independence either before India, or shortly after India got independence.

In Chronological Order

Country	*Date of Independence/Remarks*
Canada	1 July 1867 (Dominion Status). Canada Day.
Australia	1 January 1901 (Dominion Status).
New Zealand	26 September 1907 (Dominion Status). Dominion Day.
South Africa	11 December 1910 (Dominion Status).
Afghanistan	19 August 1919. The Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1919: It was more of a border agreement, because technically Afghanistan was never a part of the British Empire.
Egypt	28 February 1922. Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. Became a Republic in 1953.
Ireland	6 December 1922 (Dominion Status).
Iraq	3 October 1932.
Jordon	The Emirate of Transjordan: 11 April 1921 The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: 25 May 1946.
Pakistan	14 August 1947 (Dominion Status).
India	15 August 1947 (Dominion Status).
Myanmar	4 January 1948.
Sri Lanka	4 February 1948.
Israel	14 May 1948. Birth-place of Jews, and their oldest nation, became a “new” nation. Actually, Israel should have become a nation along with the Emirate of Transjordan (pl. see above) on 11 April 1921 from the remaining land of the British Mandate for Palestine.
Sudan	1 January 1956.
Malaysia	31 August 1957.

Country	*Date of Independence/Remarks*
Singapore	9 August 1965. Singapore gained independence from Malaysia.

Gandhi's "My Way or the Highway"

Prior to Gandhi, India's independence efforts were through several strategies. You had the constitutionalists following the legal, constitutional methods. You had revolutionaries of various hues endeavouring to overthrow the yoke of the British slavery through violent means. And, there were groups that steered mid-way. But, none tried to pull the other down, or show off oneself as right, and the others wrong. It was a joint effort, even if not co-ordinated. But, each had respect and sympathy for the other. However, with the coming in of Gandhi, it was only "his way or the highway"! That is, all the other means were sought to be discredited. The untested non-violent satyagraha was the only means!

Predominantly constitutional means would have yielded the results if the Congress had made a convincing show (even if they would have done whatever was genuinely good for India after gaining self-rule) of protecting the British interests even after gaining self-rule and independence—the Congress needed to be tactical and clever. Revolutionary means would have also yielded results had they been well-planned and well-financed, and were intensified. One of the crucial deciding factors would have been generating patriotism among the forces of state violence, that is, police, army, and bureaucracy, by resorting to systematic, covert propaganda. Combination of the constitutional and the revolutionary, and the middle way, if co-ordinated, would have yielded faster results.

Unfortunately, the Gandhian way, that discredited and displaced all alternate ways, actually proved to be God-sent for the British, for it ensured the British could continue indefinitely. No wonder the Raj, aided by the British media, left no stone unturned to project Gandhi as a Mahatma, and deviously used his profile and services to discredit and finish off the alternate forces that were the real threat to them.

Taking the various aspects into account, it seems India would have gained independence about two decades earlier had Gandhi not come into the picture.

While the revolutionaries whole-heartedly supported Gandhi in his "Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movement (KNCM)" of 1920-22, even suspending their activities during the period, Gandhi never reciprocated. Gandhi was arrogant and conceited enough to think only his way was the

right way (which actually delivered zilch). And, by condemning the revolutionary way he actually helped the British.

An 18-year-old revolutionary Gopinath Saha killed Ernest Day on 12 January 1924 by mistake when he actually aimed to kill Charles Tegart, a notorious Police Commissioner. Saha expressed his sorrow at killing the wrong person. He stated: "May every drop of my blood sow the seeds of freedom in every home of India." He was hanged in March 1924. The BPCC paid a tribute to Saha's ideal of self-sacrifice, while disassociating itself from the violence. However, Gandhi strongly disapproved, and forced a resolution at the AICC in June 1924 strongly disapproving Saha's action as misguided love of the country; commiserated with the family of Ernest Day, but had not a word of condemnation for the hanging of teenaged Saha, or sympathy for his family. Was Gandhi doing all this to remain in the good books of the British?

Revolutionary Shachindranath Sanyal of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) who had supported Gandhi in KNCM wrote to him in 1924 that although he (Gandhi) had promised swaraj within a year in 1920, nothing much had happened even after a lapse of over four years despite all the willing-support of millions, including revolutionaries, and funding far in excess of what Gandhi had asked for (Rs. one crore), and therefore Gandhi should either retire, or at least not become a hindrance to the revolutionary movement:

> "…These are the Indian revolutionaries. They have now decided to remain silent no more and therefore they request you to retire from the political field or else to direct the political movement in a way so that it may be a help and not a hindrance to the revolutionary movement…"

About avenging the death of Lala Lajpat Rai (in the brutal police lathi-charge) by Shahid Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru, Jai Gopal and Sukhdev by killing Assistant Superintendent of Police JP Saunders in Lahore on 17 December 1928, Gandhi had this to say:

> "*The assassination of the Assistant Superintendent Mr. Saunders of Lahore was a dastardly act*… I wish however that it was possible to convince the hot youth of the utter futility of such revenge. Whatever the Assistant Superintendent did was done in obedience to instructions… There is equally none in the deliberate secret assassination of an innocent police officer who has discharged his

> duty however disagreeable its consequences may be for the community to which the assassin belongs… After all the story of the building of the British Empire is not itself wanting in deeds of valour, adventure and sacrifice worthy, in my opinion, of a better cause. If we may regard the assassination of Saunders as a heroic deed the British people would be able to answer this one, I hope, solitary act of so-called heroism with countless such acts enough to fill a volume."

The above amounts to Gandhi saying: Don't engage in revolutionary acts (even if the British kill your leaders), because the British would then take bigger revenge!

Revolutionary Bhagwati Charan Vohra, a colleague of Chandrashekhar Azad, wrote in an article 1930 that since the Congress had "*changed its creed from Swaraj to Complete Independence* [on 31 December 1929]*"*, *as a "logical sequence to this, one would expect it to declare a war on the British Government. Instead, we find, it* [Congress] *has declared war against the revolutionaries…*" Sometimes one wonders if Gandhi was more anti-Revolutionaries than he was anti-British.

Extracts from Lohia's "Guilty Men of India's Partition"

Here are certain relevant and interesting extracts from Ram Manohar Lohia's book , "Guilty Men of India's Partition"{RML}:

"*…The friendly politeness of the struggle for freedom has so far prevented its proper evaluation. It is assumed that this struggle was less costly than a violent fight or that it did not leave behind such bitterness and disorder which a violent revolution would have occasioned or that it made a continuity of ideals and habits easier. All these assumptions need to be closely inspected. Some of them are patently wrong. I must again and again emphasise the terrible and unparalleled cost of Partition as a part of the total expenditure of our freedom struggle…*

"…I should like to advance an additional point and *also to puncture yet another assumption* that a violent revolution against the British empire in India would not have succeeded, while the non-violent struggle did…

"The Indian struggle had, by the outbreak of the First World War, reached a two-pronged stage of fairly experienced constitutionalism as well as a pretty sharp terrorism… The cleverer people were going into constitutionalism. The braver people were going into terrorism. I suspect that there was a deep understanding, something like an unspoken and unwritten contract, between these two wings of patriots, until Gandhiji introduced such principles as caused antagonism between them.

"The constitutionalists and the terrorists would have gone on to intensify their campaigns with time. More and more people would have been drawn into the scope of their activities. A certain pattern of alternation would have held the field free to constitutionalists for a decade or so during which they would have tried to infect the entire people through their speeches and other parliamentary manoeuvres with a desire for freedom. A state would then be reached when the blocking of freedom's desire would have become intolerable. At this stage, the terrorists would come on the scene and operate for a year or two. With each such alteration, constitutionalists would have gained in experience and skill and mass following, and the terrorists would also have been able to evolve forms of action towards organised and mass violence, during which assassination would have played no role other than that of vengeance or sparking a conflict…

"There is again no reason to believe that this team would have needed more than three alternations to achieve its objective, it would certainly not have needed to go beyond the Second World War. *In fact, it might have needed less time to achieve success than Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence… There is indeed a possibility that India without Gandhiji would have been more happily placed*, at least in the short run.

"Gandhiji's mode of action has no validity or value, if it does not spread over the whole world [it hasn't]. It has value if only the future so unfolds itself that the temporary loss of India can be proved to have been the world's gain…" [hasn't happened]

Nature of the Gandhian Freedom Movement

Have-all-the-time-in-the-world-to-get-freedom Mindset

As we saw under the subchapter "Freedom Movement: Comparison with Other Countries", while the American War of Independence (1775–1783) was won in mere 8 years; Simon Bolivar of Venezuela liberated not just one, but six countries from the Spanish rule in 13 years.

In sharp contrast, the Gandhian freedom movement went on and on with Gandhi's arrival on the scene in 1915. Counting from 1915, it took 32 long years! And, even after those 32 long years, it was not freedom won or wrested from the British, but a willing transfer of power by them—and on their punishing terms, such as partition of India.

What was truly distinguishing about the Gandhian freedom movement was its leisurely, laid-back, have-all-the-time-in-the-world-to-get-freedom attitude and mindset. There was no constant, intensive struggle. It was a once-in-a-decade movement: (A)'Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movement' (KNCM) of 1920-22; (B)Dandi March and Salt Satyagraha of 1930, and its Phase-II (CDM: Civil Disobedience Movement) of 1932; and, lastly, (C)Quit India of 1942. That is, the three major Gandhian movements lasted for about 2 years in the decade of 1920s, four months in the decade of 1930s, and a few months in the decade of 1940s!

Gandhi indulged in jumping into and out of the Congress, as suited his fads. Around 1924 he got out of the Congress. Later, after rejoining, he again resigned in 1934 devoting himself to what he called "*constructive work*". Did he regard his political work as destructive? Why not first free the country from the British, then get into that "constructive work"? But, no, freedom could wait, there was no hurry. Gandhi's diversion into the "constructive work" suited the government. Viceroy Lord Willingdon wrote to the Secretary of State: "*This development suits us and I would certainly do nothing to disturb it*."

Commented Aurobindo Ghosh: "Political freedom is the life-breath of a nation. To attempt social reform, educational reform, industrial expansion, the moral improvement of the race without aiming first and foremost at political freedom, is the very height of ignorance and futility. The primary requisite for national progress, national reform, is the habit of free and

healthy national thought and action which is impossible in a state of servitude."{URL81}

Perhaps Gandhi's "constructive" work was a diversionary tactic. Reluctant to take on the British, he tried to keep down the charged-up public by engaging them in "*time-pass*" activities like charkha-khadi, and so on—elevating those "time-pass" activities to a status higher than the attainment of freedom itself!

Here is another example of the Gandhian Movement being leisurely and laid-back. Wrote Maulana Azad: "As he was leaving [along with Azad and others, Ahmednagar Fort Jail in 1945 after three long years of incarceration], Jawaharlal [Nehru]… requested me that I should not call a meeting of the Working Committee or the AICC [Azad was the Congress President then] immediately on release. He said he wanted a little time for rest [what were they doing for three years in jail—was it not forced rest?] and recreation and also in order to finish a book on India [Discovery of India] which he was writing."{Azad/102}

Ad Hoc & Unplanned

There were no detailed mutual discussions by Gandhi with the other leaders and state-holders, no spelling out of specific aims, no agreed-upon detailed plan and focus, no distribution of specific responsibilities, no chalking out of strategies and tactics in any of the three so-called major once-in-a-decade Gandhian movements of early-1920s, early-1930s, and early-1940s. No wonder, none of them was successful.

Even top leaders were unaware what exactly Gandhi had in mind. Did Gandhi himself know? Stated Nehru of the early-1930s Civil Disobedience Movement: "Still we were vague about the future… What, after all, was he [Gandhi] aiming at? In spite of my close association with him for many years, I am not clear in my own mind about his objective. I doubt if he is clear himself."

On Quit India, Nehru had this to comment: "Neither in public nor in private meetings of the Congress Working Committee did he [Gandhi] hint at the nature of action he had in mind, except a one-day general strike. So neither he nor the CWC issued any kind of directions, public or private, except that people should be prepared for all developments and should in any event adhere to the policy of peaceful and non-violent action."{Gill/73}

Gandhi's speech giving Quit India call on 8 August 1942 stated that "every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide" amply demonstrated there was no well thought-out, co-ordinated plan. Leave people to their devices, while leaders disappear to the relative comfort and safety of jails—top Gandhians were well looked-after in the British jails. This irresponsible ad-hocism of Gandhi led to confusion, sporadic and un-coordinated actions, pointless destruction of public property, and ultimately suppression of the movement in about two months.

Freedom Movements that didn't Demand Freedom

It sounds odd and unbelievable that but for the solitary exception of "Quit India", none of the Gandhian "Freedom" Movements demanded complete freedom from the British!

All the major movements like the "Rowlatt Satyagraha 1919", or the "Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movement 1920-22" (KNCM), or the "Salt Satyagraha 1930", or the "Civil Disobedience Movement 1932" (except the "Quit India 1942") comprised demands other than "complete freedom from the British" (Pl. check the agenda of these movements given elsewhere in this book. KNCM had 'swaraj', but not 'purna swaraj', among its agenda.), like repeal of some acts, reduction in taxes, introducing certain reforms, saving extra-territorial Muslim caliphate in Turkey, and so on.

Even the "Quit India" call to the British in 1942 was driven by the false judgement on the part of Gandhi that the British and the Allies were losing WW-II. However, as soon as it became clear that the tide had turned in favour of the British and the Allies, Gandhi changed his tune. However, the British completely ignored even Gandhi's highly watered-down demands.

Non-Violence Nonsense of "No Alternative"

Gandhi had said at different times: "*This country must NOT be liberated through bloodshed… If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me. My patriotism is subservient to my religion*." By the way, which religion says liberate your country, or throw off your slavery, only through non-violence? And, were there any examples in history of it, which that religion had picked-up? Or, was Gandhi trying to impose a new, personal, irrationally-manufactured religion on India?

Revolutionary Bhagwati Charan Vohra (1904–1930) had remarked: “Let nobody toy with nation's freedom which is her very life, by making psychological experiments in non-violence and such other novelties...”

Aurobindo Ghosh had rightly stated: “Liberty is the life-breath of a nation; and when the life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of breathing by violent pressure, then any and every means of self-preservation becomes right and justifiable—just as it is lawful for a man who is being strangled to rid himself of the pressure on his throat by any means in his power. It is the nature of the pressure that determines the nature of the resistance.”

A reasonable person would have said:

> “Liberate the country! How? It doesn’t matter. Whichever is the most efficacious and fastest way. Violence? No problem. If the enslavers can use violence to enslave us, why the slaves can’t counter with violence? Non-violence? Fine, if it can yield the result, and as fast, though there is nothing in the past to back it up. Mix of violence, non-violence, constitutional methods, and revolution? Fine, more methods, better co-ordinated, the better.”

However, diffident about the defensibility of the non-violent method alone, many have concocted a rationale for non-violence, which is often cited. Gandhian non-violent tactics have been defended on the *specious plea of* “*there being no alternative*”. That is, the Gandhian non-violence is defended not on the plea that Gandhi advanced as highly lofty, religious, spiritual and just; but on its practicality. “We couldn’t have won against the British through violence—they were too powerful. Non-violence was the only practical solution!” Assume it was possible to win against the British violently. Would violence have been justified and practical then?

In this context, please re-check the extracts above from Ram Manohar Lohia’s book , “Guilty Men of India’s Partition”{RML}: “…I should like to advance an additional point and *also to puncture yet another assumption* that a violent revolution against the British empire in India would not have succeeded, while the non-violent struggle did…”

Advancing the plea of practicality of non-violence demonstrated ignorance of history and the facts as they obtained then. All freedom movements all over the globe all through history have been violent. And, in all cases the state, that is, the ruler one had to fight against to gain freedom

from, had been much stronger than those seeking freedom. How did they win? How did the apparently weaker side overwhelm the stronger side? If you want to give up without even trying to give a good fight, you would always discover how the strength of the state is insurmountable, as Gandhi and the Gandhians did to justify their meek, ineffective non-violence.

The trick lies in identifying the weaknesses and the strengths of the adversary, and in planning accordingly. Let's look at the major weakness of the British: A mere one lakh or thereabout British lorded over 30 crore Indians. How? They effectively used Indians against Indians. Indians in the British army, police and the bureaucracy controlled the crores outside. What was the most effective way to turn the tables? Propaganda. Make a call to the patriotism of the Indians in the British army, police, courts, and the bureaucracy. Campaign through their family, neighbours, villagers or people from their town and city, and bring pressure upon them. Put insiders in key positions. Develop a spy network. Launch multiple types of freedom movements: through constitutional methods; through non-violent, non-cooperation methods, through violent revolutionary methods. Co-ordinate all the types of movements, and co-ordinate with insiders in the army, police, courts, and the bureaucracy. Had this been done, India would have gained freedom by early 1920s.

Revolutionary Shachindranath Sanyal had argued with Gandhi in February 1925 in his "A Revolutionary's Defence" [words in square-brackets are not part of the quote]:

> "Non-violent non-co-operation movement failed not because there was sporadic outburst of suppressed feelings here and there but because the movement was lacking in a worthy ideal. The ideal that you preached was not in keeping with Indian culture and traditions. It savoured of imitation… The non-violence that India preaches is not non-violence for the sake of non-violence, but non-violence for the good of humanity, and when this good for humanity will demand violence and bloodshed, India will not hesitate to shed blood just in the same way as a surgical operation necessitates the shedding of blood. To an ideal Indian, violence or non-violence has the same significance provided they ultimately do good to humanity. 'Vinashaya cha dushkrita' was not spoken in vain. ["Paritranaya sadhunam vinashaya cha dushkritam; dharma sansthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge..." of Bhagvat Gita mean "For the

upliftment of the good and virtuous; for the destruction of evil; for the re-establishment of the natural law, I will come, in every age."] *To my mind, therefore, the ideal that you gave to the nation or the programme of action that you laid before it is neither consistent with Indian culture nor practicable as a political programme…* Lastly, I would like to say something about the remarks you have made in connection with the strength of the British Empire. You have said to the revolutionaries: 'Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organised than you are.' [In the Ramayana, Jataayu constitutes a prime example of resisting evil, by every means, despite knowing it was futile to fight. Said Jataayu to Ravana: "I am old, you are young, armed with bow and arrows, are clothed in armour and mounted on a chariot. Yet, you shall not succeed in taking away Vaidehi [Sita] while I am alive."] *But is it not shameful that a handful of Englishmen are able to rule India, not by the free consent of the Indian people but by the force of the sword? And if the English can be well-armed and well-organized why can the Indians be not better armed and better organized still...* …what on earth makes the Indians so helpless as to think that they can never be better organized than their English masters? By what argument and logic of fact can you disprove the possibilities in which the revolutionaries have immense faith? And the spirit of non-violence that arises out of this sense of helplessness and despair can never be the non-violence of the strong, the nonviolence of the Indian rishis. This is tamas pure and simple?..."{URL87}

For complete details, please read the author's book
"What Really Led to Indian Freedom"
available on Amazon.

{ 11 }

Why the British Loved Gandhi & Gandhians?

No Indian has cooperated with the British government more than I have for an unbroken period of twenty-nine years of public life…I put my life in peril four times for the cause of the Empire.

—Mahatma Gandhi, 1920{DV}

What the British said

Wrote the famous author George Orwell (1903-1950): "*Gandhi has been regarded for twenty years by the Government of* [British*] India as one of its right hand men*. I know what I'm talking about—I used to be an officer in the Indian police. It was always admitted in the most cynical way that Gandhi made it easier for the British to rule India, because his influence was always against taking any action that would make any difference. The reason why Gandhi in prison is always treated with such lenience, and small concessions sometimes made when he has prolonged one of his fasts to a dangerous extent, is that the *British officials are in terror that he may die and be replaced by someone who believes less in 'soul force' and more in bombs*."{Orw2/59}

Many high ranking British officials, including Intelligence officials and Viceroys, regarded Gandhi as an "asset". Ellen Wilkinson, an MP and a member of the British cabinet during 1945-1947, remarked after her visit to India in 1932: "*Gandhi was the best policeman the British had in India*."{SKG/128}

The British loved Gandhi for his doctrine of non-violence, not because they felt moved and impressed by it, but because it worked in their favour.

What Gandhi said

Gandhi declared in April 1915 at a banquet: "*It gives me the greatest pleasure* this evening at this great and important gathering *to redeclare my loyalty to the British Empire*… I discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope for his energies and honour and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience…"{Nan/186}

The above, despite his experience in South Africa, and the state of affairs in India!

Gandhi & the British

Looking at how the British Raj and Gandhi sustained each other many observers and analysts opine that in a way Gandhi was the creation of the British. The British Raj, and its media, projected him as a great leader and a Mahatma so that an alternate leadership less inimical to the Raj did not emerge to create difficulties.

After the First War of Independence of 1857 the British looked forward to, and were glad to find, an Indian leader who was a pacifist, and promoted non-violence as a creed. The British were cunning enough to agree to Gandhi's minor demands in various agitations. That helped Gandhi retain his leadership role. But, they never agreed to any substantial demand.

It was not only the British government and the media that supported Gandhi, but also the powerful church. Even in South Africa, Gandhi had missionaries and church-men supporting him in subtle ways. After all, Church is an instrument of White Man's colonialism. Although Gandhi projected a Hindu religious persona, the crux of his propaganda and teaching were, in essence, Christian: pacifism, non-violence, "turn the other cheek"—something that immensely suited the Raj (but, something that the actual Christians—the colonisers—never followed!).

The open, peaceful, inform-the-authorities-before-you-do Gandhian method was never a menace for the British—at worst, it was a minor irritation for them, something they gladly indulged the Congress for, particularly because Gandhi, Gandhism, and the Gandhian methods had helped gradually eliminate what they were really afraid of: violence, methods of the revolutionaries, and the likelihood of the Indian Administration, Police and Army turning disloyal. Of course, the British periodically pretended to be hurt so as to keep alive the credibility of the Gandhian policies.

It is worth noting that though apparently opposed, the Gandhi-British relationship was a mutually beneficial relationship. The British Raj, and at their tacit approval, the British media and the academia, had helped project Gandhi as a Mahatma and as the only leader who mattered. They treated Gandhi & Co well, both outside, and in jail: Gandhi experimented with nutrition, health, 'upavas', and his medicinal quackery in jail; while Nehru, free from worries, wrote his books in jail.

Given Gandhi's almost unimplementable conditions of absolute non-violence anywhere in India in the cause of freedom, the British must have been congratulating themselves for the insurance they had through Gandhi against ever departing from India—Gandhi must have seemed to them to be God-sent!

Gandhi-Nehru amenable to Union Jack in the National Flag!

There couldn't be people more conceited than the British. They wanted continuity with the Raj even after the grant of independence, and desired appropriate symbols to represent the same. Among those symbols was national flag. They wanted the Raj to get reflected in that. How? Mountbatten, backed by the powers in London, started experimenting with the designs for the Indian national flag. He quite unabashedly suggested to the Congress and the Muslim League leaders to have the *Union Jack* in the upper portion or corner of their flags.

In a milieu where Lahore was burning and there was a huge refugee problem, when Nehru met Mountbatten on 22 June 1947, what was engaging Mountbatten was this, as he noted in his diary: "I [Mountbatten] gave him [Nehru] my painting of a proposed flag for the Dominion of India which I had designed. This consisted of a Congress flag with a small Union Jack in the upper canton.{Wolp2/400} Nehru took the proposed picture of the Indian flag and promised Mountbatten he would get back to him after discussing it with the Congress leaders.

Unbelievably, Gandhi was amenable to the idea. Gandhi rebuked those who opposed Mountbatten's suggestion of including a small Union Jack in India's national flag. Here is what Gandhi stated in his speech at a prayer meeting in New Delhi on 19 July 1947{CWMG/Vol-96/86-87}:

> "I have been asked some questions. Here is one: 'One understands that the national flag that has been proposed will have a little Union Jack in a corner. If that is so, we shall tear up such a flag and, if need be, sacrifice our lives.'… But what is wrong with having the Union Jack in a corner of our flag? If harm has been done to us by the British it has not been done by their flag and we must also take note of the virtues of the British. *They are voluntarily withdrawing from India, leaving power in our hands*. A drastic bill which virtually liquidates the Empire did not take even a week to pass in [the British] Parliament. Time was when even very unimportant bills took a year and more to be passed. Whether they have been honest in framing the bill only experience will show.
>
> "We are having Lord Mountbatten as our chief gate-keeper. So long he has been the servant of the British king. Now he is to be our servant. If while we employed him as our servant *we also had the*

Union Jack in a corner of our flag, there would be no betrayal of India in this. This is my opinion… It pains me that the Congress leaders could not show this generosity. We would have thereby shown our friendship for the British. If I had the power that I once had I would have taken the people to task for it. After all, why should we give up our humanity…"{CWMG/Vol-96/86-87}

Wrote Tunzelmann:

"While Edwina was concerned with world events and the plight of the growing number of victims of violence in the Punjab [impending partition], Dickie [Mountbatten] seemed to be incapable of seeing beyond protocol. *That day, he bothered Jawahar* [Nehru] *with a list of dates upon which the Union Jack might continue to be flown in India after independence*. It is hard to imagine an issue of less pressing import that could have consumed the Viceroy's time just ten days before the transfer of power…"{Tunz/229}

Reportedly, both Nehru and Jinnah were willing to fly the Union Jack twelve days a year—only they didn't want their intention to be publicised. Thanks to severe adverse public opinion, Mountbatten-Gandhi-Nehru plan didn't materialise.

Top Gandhian Leaders: Privileged Prisoners!

Talking of suffering and sacrifices, many were tortured and whipped in British jails—but, never the top Gandhian Congress leaders. Nehru himself describes in his book of severe whipping of other imprisoned freedom-fighters in jails. For most *Gandhiites*, especially the top ones, the jails were, relatively speaking, comfortable. While ruthlessly persecuting the other freedom fighters, the British kid gloved Gandhi & Co, and incarcerated them under comfortable conditions.

Tantrums in Ahmednagar Jail

Ahmednagar fort was used as a jail. Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Azad, Nehru, Kriplani, GB Pant, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Narendra Dev, Asaf Ali, Shankarrao Deo, PC Ghosh, Syed Mahmud, and Hare Krushna Mahtab were lodged in the jail in a row of rooms: most had a room each, and a few shared a room. All rooms had fans and furniture, and were provided with mosquito nets. Dining room, kitchen, baths and toilets were on a side row. They also had a doctor on call. That their life in Ahmednagar jail was not all that terrible can be inferred from the following episodes:

Wrote Rajmohan Gandhi:

> "On the day of their arrival [in jail], Kripalani recalls Azad showing 'towering rage': he threw out the Jailor who had brought ready-to-drink tea for them in an aluminium kettle along with loaves of bread on an aluminium plate and glasses for the tea. The Congress President 'ordered' the jailor to bring tea in a pot, milk in a jug and sugar in a bowl, plus cups, saucers and spoons. The jailor, an Indian, complied. According to Pattabhi, he was 'bravely performing his duties with visible regard for his new guests and with unshakeable loyalty to his old masters'."{RG2}

Described Maulana Azad in his autobiography:

> "…Dinner was served to us soon after on iron platters. We did not like them and I told the jailer that we were accustomed to eat from China plates. The jailer apologised and said that he could not supply us with a dinner set then but it would be obtained the next day. A convict from Poona had been brought to serve us as our cook. He

could not prepare food according to our taste. He was soon changed and a better cook appointed."{Azad/91}

The routine of the leaders in Ahmednagar jail used to be generally: breakfast at 7am, lunch at 1pm, bridge from 1pm to 3pm, rest from 3pm to 5pm followed by tea (alternately, writing or reading work between lunch and tea), games from 6pm to 7pm, dinner from 7pm to 8.30pm followed by coffee, then retire.

This is not to say that jail was fun place. It must have been a very dull and tedious and an oppressive place, where you are cut off from the world. And to be in jail for such long periods must have got on to their nerves. However, at least, they were relatively better placed compared to non-Gandhiite freedom-fighters, and lower-level Gandhiites, who were ill-fed, and ill-treated.

Special Treatment for Gandhi & Nehrus

When arrested in 1930, the British took due care to provide all provisions for the health and comfort of Gandhi. In 1942, rather than in a jail, Gandhi was lodged in the Aga Khan Palace in Pune. British arranged a special train for Gandhi in 1946 for his travel to Madras. It had a saloon, and a fixture with loudspeaker to enable him to address people at railway platforms.

Nehru had access to newspapers, magazines and books in Naini and other jails. He also had ample supply of reading and writing materials. He wrote *Glimpses of World History* in Naini jail between 1930 and 1933; *An Autobiography* during 1934-35 in Bareilly and Dehra Dun jails; and *Discovery of India* between 1942 and 1945 in Ahmednagar Jail.

It is said that Sir Harcourt Butler, the then Governor of UP, had even sent quality food and a champagne bottle to Motilal Nehru in his prison{Sar/323}, out of consideration for their association. As per MJ Akbar's book:

"…but this, Motilal [Nehru] told me [Arthur Moore, a former editor of 'The Statesman'], is what happened. His [Motilal's] first morning in prison an ADC from Government House [Sir Harcourt Butler was the governor] arrived at lunchtime with a half-bottle of champagne wrapped in a napkin, and every single day of his imprisonment this was repeated."{Akb/123-4}

They did not show similar indulgence to others. Even Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a non-*Gandhiite*, was ill-treated in prison, which severely affected his health.

Wrote Nehru in his autobiography:

> "Personally, I have been very fortunate, and almost invariably, I have received courtesy from my own countrymen and English. *Even my gaolers and the policemen, who have arrested me or escorted me as a prisoner from place to place, have been kind to me*, and much of the bitterness of conflict and the sting of gaol life has been toned down because of this human touch...Even for Englishmen I was an individual and not merely one of the mass, and, I imagine, the fact that I had received my education in England, and especially my having been to an English public school, brought me nearer to them. Because of this, they could not help considering me as more or less civilized after their own pattern..."{JN2}

Contrast this with the fate of thousands of freedom fighters who grievously suffered.

Top Gandhian leaders generally had a good time in jails. No lathis, no lashes, no bullets. VIP treatment in jails. Facilities for writing books, articles, and letters, or experimenting with nutrition or indigenous medicines. Top Gandhian leaders seemed to have actually developed a vested interest in Gandhism and non-violence. Because that ensured the British would be soft on them, their personal safety would be guaranteed, their families won't be harassed, or put into difficulties, even as they retained their respectable leadership position, with excellent scope for getting good positions in independent India, guaranteeing good future for themselves, their families, and their dynasty.

Ill-Treatment of Non-Gandhians

Like Tilak, even Netaji Bose was incarcerated at Mandalay jail. Both had developed serious health complications in jail. Revolutionaries (like Veer Savarkar, Sanyal, and many others) were inhumanly treated in jails like the Cellular in Andaman, where several lost their sanity, or committed suicide. People like Bose and Lala Lajpat Rai received lathi blows, specifically targeted at them, and were manhandled in jails, but not the top Gandhian leaders.

While on one hand the British were brutal to the likes of Chapekar Brothers (*all three hanged in 1899*), Anant Kanhere (*hanged at 18*), Khudiram Bose (*hanged at 18*), Aurobindo Ghosh (*exiled*), Lala Lajpat Rai (*beaten to death*), Chandrashekhar Azad (*shot dead*), Bhagat Singh (*hanged at 24*), Surya Sen (*Hanged in 1934. Before Sen was hanged, he was brutally tortured by the British: they broke all his teeth with a hammer, and pulled out all his nails. They broke all his limbs and joints. He was dragged to the gallows unconscious. Rather than giving proper funeral, the prison authorities callously put his dead body in a metallic cage, and dumped it into the Bay of Bengal.*), Veer Savarkar (*sentenced to two life terms totalling fifty years! Imprisoned in the Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands—Kaalapani.*), Subhash Bose (*ill-treated in jails*), Sachindra Nath Sanyal (*Sanyal has the unique distinction of having been sent twice to the Cellular Jail in Port Blair—Kaalapani.), and so on;* Gandhi and the Gandhians were royally treated in jails (please see above). Why? While the former set were real threats to the British, the latter ones gave minimum trouble.

What was the net effect of the Gandhian non-violence on its followers compared to that on the top Gandhian leaders? The followers, the common people, were at the receiving end of lathis, lashes, and bullets. Many lost their jobs, and their families grievously suffered. Madeleine Slade (Mirabehn), a Gandhian disciple had summarised the atrocities on Satyagrahis in an article in Young India of 12 June 1930:

> "Lathi blown on head, chest, stomach and joints; thrusts with lathis in private parts, abdominal regions; stripping of men naked before beating; tearing off loin-cloth and thrusting of sticks into anus; pressing and squeezing of testicles till a man becomes unconscious; dragging of wounded men by legs and arms, often beating them the while; throwing of wounded men into thorn hedges or salt-water; riding of horses over men as they lie and sit on the ground; thrusting of pins and thorns into men's bodies; beating of men after they have become unconscious, and other vile things too many to relate…"{Shod3}{Bose}

The conditions of revolutionary prisoners like Shahid Bhagat Singh and his group in Central Jail Mianwali in Lahore in 1929–30 was terrible. Their uniforms were not washed for several days; rats and cockroaches roamed their kitchen area; reading and writing materials were not provided to them.

That was in sharp contrast to the British prisoners, and the top Gandhians, who were treated very well in jails. Additionally, being political prisoners, they expected to be treated like one, rather than as common criminals. They demanded equality with the jailed Europeans in food standards, clothing, toiletries, and other hygienic necessities, as well as access to books and a daily newspapers. Unlike for the top Gandhians (who had a relatively good time in jails reading and writing books and articles, and experimenting with nutrition), the British refused classification of Bhagat Singh and group as "political prisoners". They also protested against their subjection to forced manual labour. To force the issue they began hunger strike. The strike gained wide popularity across the nation, with the media popularising it. The jail authorities tried enticing those on hunger strike with delicious food, and when that failed, with force-feeding. Bhagat Singh, still on hunger strike, had to be carried to the court handcuffed on a stretcher.

The condition of the revolutionary Jatindra Nath Das (Jatin Das), who was arrested on 14 June 1929 under the 'Supplementary Second Lahore Conspiracy Case' and who too had been on a hunger strike along with Bhagat Singh and group, deteriorated and became critical. Jail authorities recommended unconditional release, but the government refused. He was martyred on 13 September 1929 in Lahore jail after a *63-day hunger strike*. Durga Bhabhi (Durgawati Devi, a revolutionary, and wife of another revolutionary Bhagwati Charan Vohra) led his funeral procession from Lahore to Calcutta by train, with thousands thronging the railway stations on the way to pay homage to Jatin. His funeral procession in Kolkata was about two-mile long.

While everyone paid rich tributes to Jatin Das for his exemplary sacrifice for a common cause through his hunger-strike, conspicuously, *the serial hunger-striker Gandhi, who one would have thought would surely write glowingly about it, chose to keep silent; and in subtle ways, tried to look down upon Jatin's noble act*, as would be clear from his following letters. Gandhi's letter of 22 September 1929 to Mahadev Desai: "…As yet I cannot write anything about Jatin. I am not surprised that what may be called our own circle fails to understand me. Personally, I have not the least doubt regarding the correctness of my view. *I see no good in this* [Jatin's] *agitation…*"{CWMG/Vol-47/127} Gandhi's letter of 9 October 1929 to Raihana Tyabji: "…Now about Jatin Das. I have been deliberately silent because I have not approved of the fast…" Gandhi's letter of 18 October 1929 to

Rajaji: "…I am wholly against hunger-strikes for matters such as Wizia and Jatin died for... Do you not agree with my judgment of the hunger-strikes and with my consequent silence?..."{CWMG/Vol-47/272}

Did Gandhi feel jealous? 63 days of fast by Jatin! In comparison, Gandhi's longest fast was for only 21 days—one-third that of Jatin's. Also, anyone other than Gandhi running away with credit for a hunger-strike for a good cause, that Gandhi felt was his patent and copyright, deserved to be faulted on manufactured pretexts like "not moral", or "not the right cause"! Morally right, or the right causes were like Gandhi coercing Dr Ambedkar into the Poona Pact through his fast unto death!!

{ 12 }

Nehru over Sardar as PM : Gandhi's Mega Blunder

Race for India's First PM: Iron Man vs. Nehru

Post 1945, with the increasing hopes of the imminence of India's independence, all patriots looked forward to having a strong, assertive, competent, decisive, no-nonsense person as India's first prime minister, who would bring back the lost glory of India, and turn it into a modern, prosperous nation. Iron Man Sardar Patel was the clear choice, being a cut much above the rest.

The Congress Party had practically witnessed Patel as a great executor, organizer and leader, with his feet on the ground. Sardar had demonstrated his prowess in the various movements and assignments, including that in the Nagpur Agitation of 1923; the Borsad Satyagraha of 1923; excellent management of the Ahmedabad Municipality during 1924-27; tackling of the Ahmedabad Floods of 1927; the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 that earned him the title of "Sardar"; the Dandi March and the Salt Satyagraha of 1930; successful management of elections for the Congress during 1934-37; preparation, conduct and management of Haripura session of the Congress in 1938 on a massive scale; building up of the party machine; role in preparation for the Quit India Movement; and premier leadership role 1945 onwards. Patel's achievements were far in excess of Nehru's, and all Congress persons and the country knew it. For details, please refer the author's book on Sardar Patel available on Amazon.

Sardar was far better academically, and much more intelligent than Nehru. Sardar Patel too had studied in England. But, while Nehru's father financed all his education, Sardar financed his own education in England, through his own earnings! While Nehru could manage to scrape through in only a poor lower second-division in England, Sardar Patel topped in the first division!

Professionally too, Sardar was a successful lawyer, while Nehru was a failure. Sardar had a roaring practice, and was the highest paid lawyer in

Ahmedabad, before he left it all on a call by Gandhi; while Nehru was dependent upon his father for his own upkeep, and that of his family.

Wrote Balraj Krishna:

> "Common talk among the members of the Indian Civil Service post-Independence used to be: '*If the dead body of the Sardar were stuffed and placed on a chair, he could still rule*.'"{BK/xi}

Based on the ground-level practical experience since 1917, it could be said with certainty in 1946 that Nehru was no match for Sardar for the critical post of the prime minister. Of course, Nehru as PM in practice confirmed beyond a shred of doubt that it should have been Sardar, and not him, who should have been the first PM of India. For details, please read the author's other book "*Nehru's 97 Major Blunders*" available on Amazon and PustakMahal.com.

Critical Importance of Congress Presidential Election in 1946

With the end of the World War II, release of all leaders from jail, and hope of imminent freedom, it appeared likely that the Congress would soon be called upon to form the government. Hence, election of a Congress President, who would head the government as Prime Minister, became incumbent. Unlike all the previous occasions since the formation of the Congress in 1885, the election of the Congress President in 1946 became special and critical—because whoever became the President would also have become the first Prime Minister of India.

Result of the Election : Sardar Won Unopposed

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) met on 29 April 1946 to consider the nominations sent by the PCCs. As per the laid down procedure in practice for many decades, only the Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs) were the authorised bodies to elect a president. 12 of the 15 (80%) PCCs nominated Sardar Patel{RG/370}; and 3 PCCs out of the 15 (20%) did not nominate anyone. It therefore turned out to be a non-contest. Sardar Patel was the only choice, and an undisputed choice, with not a single opposition.

What was noteworthy was that on 20 April 1946, that is, nine days before the last date of nominations of 29 April 1946, Gandhi had indicated his preference for Nehru. Yet, not a single PCC nominated Nehru!

Hijacking of the Election by Gandhi–Nehru

Looking to the unexpected (unexpected by Gandhi) development, Gandhi prodded Kriplani to convince a few CWC members to propose Nehru's name for the party president. Kriplani promptly and unquestioningly complied: He got a few to propose Nehru's name. Finding this queer and illegal development, Sardar Patel enquired with Gandhi, and sought his advice. Gandhi counselled him to withdraw his name. Patel complied promptly, and didn't raise any question. That cleared the way for Nehru. The "democratic" Nehru didn't feel embarrassed at this blatant hijacking of the election.

Said Acharya Kripalani later: "Sardar did not like my intervention."{RG/371} Years later Kripalani had told Durga Das:

> "All the P.C.C.s sent in the name of Patel by a majority and one or two proposed the names of Rajen Babu in addition, but none that of Jawaharlal. I knew Gandhi wanted Jawaharlal to be President for a year, and I made a proposal myself [at Gandhi's prodding] saying 'some Delhi fellows want Jawaharlal's name'. I circulated it to the members of the Working Committee to get their endorsement. I played this mischief. I am to blame. *Patel never forgave me for that. He was a man of will and decision. You saw his face. It grew year by year in power and determination…*"{DD/229}

Gandhi-Nehru Act : Why Improper?

Gandhi's actions must be judged in the background of his being a "Mahatma", and an "Apostle of Truth and Non-Violence". As Gandhi had himself stressed, "non-violence" didn't have a narrow interpretation as just lack of violence, but a broad interpretation where things like anger, illegal and unjust acts also came within the broad definition of violence. What Gandhi and Nehru manoeuvred was not only illegal, immoral and unethical, but also against the interest of the nation. Here are the reasons for the same:

(1) *Illegality-1*: PCCs alone were authorised to elect the president. There was nothing in the Congress constitution to permit that rule to be overturned. How could Gandhi overrule what 15 PCCs had recommended? On what legal basis? Gandhi's action was totally illegal.

(2) *Illegality-2*: Gandhi had resigned from the primary membership of the Congress back in 1934 to devote himself to "constructive work".

Thereafter, he had never rejoined the Congress. How could a non-member of the Congress like Gandhi dictate who should be the president of the Congress, or even participate in CWC meetings?

(3) *Unreasonable-1:* Did Gandhi put on record his reasons for overruling the recommendations of the PCCs? No.

(4) *Unreasonable-2*: Did Gandhi put on record why Patel was not suitable as the president, and hence the first PM, and why Nehru was a better choice? No.

(5) *Unreasonable-3*: Was there a proper, detailed, and threadbare discussion in the CWC on why Patel was not suited for the post, and therefore why the recommendations of the PCCs should be ignored? No.

(6) *Unreasonable-4*: If CWC was not convinced of the recommendations of the PCCs, why didn't it refer back the matter to the PCCs, and ask them to re-submit their recommendations, with detailed reasoning? The decision could have been postponed.

(7) *Against National Interest-1*: How could responsibility of such critical nature be assigned to a person without doubly ensuring that person's relative suitability through fair and democratic discussions among all CWC members, and, of course, finally through voting.

(8) *Against National Interest-2*: National interests demanded that the choice of person was dictated not by personal biases, and diktats, but by suitability, and mutual consensus, and the reasons should have been put on record.

(9) *Dictatorial & Undemocratic-1*: How could an individual like Gandhi dictate who should or should not be the president, and hence the first PM? And, if that was fine for the Congress, then why the sham of elections, and votes of the PCCs?

(10) *Dictatorial & Undemocratic-2*: What kind of freedom "fighters" we had in the Gandhian Congress that they didn't even assert their freedom within the CWC, or show their guts against the slavery of Gandhi, and voice their opinions? Was an individual Gandhi correct, and were the 15 PCCs wrong?

(11) *Unethical-1*: Leave apart the legal and other aspects, was it ethical and moral and truthful for Gandhi to do what he did? If indeed he thought he was correct, and all others were wrong, the least that was expected from him was to explain his logic and reasoning. Or, was he above all that?

(12) *Unethical-2*: How could a person (Nehru) being nominated for president, and therefore as the first Indian PM, be so devoid of integrity, fair-play and ethics as to blatantly be a party to the illegality of throwing the recommendations of the PCCs into a dustbin, and allowing oneself to be nominated?

(13) *Unembarrassed*: Did it not embarrass Nehru that he was usurping a position undemocratically through blatantly unfair means? Did it behove a future PM?

(14) *Blunder*: Overall, it was a blot on the working of the CWC, and on the CWC members, and particularly Gandhi and Nehru, that they could so brazenly and irresponsibly commit such a blunder, which ultimately cost the nation heavy.

Reaction of Stalwarts on the Improper Act

Wrote Rajmohan Gandhi: "If Gandhi had his reasons for wanting Jawaharlal, the party had its for wanting Patel, whom it saw, as Kripalani would afterwards say, as 'a great executive, organizer and leader', with his feet on the ground. The party was conscious too of Sardar's successful Quit India exertions, not matched by Jawaharlal."{RG/370}

DP Mishra had commented: "When we members of the Mahakoshal PCC preferred him [Patel] to Nehru as Congress President, we had no intention of depriving Nehru of future Premiership. The younger man had already been raised to the office of Congress President thrice, and we therefore thought it just and proper that Patel, the older man, should have at least a second chance [at Presidency, and thus be the first PM]."{RG/372} {DPM/185-6}

Dr Rajendra Prasad had stated: "Gandhi has once again sacrificed his trusted lieutenant for the sake of the glamorous Nehru."{RG/371}

Wrote Maulana Azad, who had always favoured Nehru over Patel, in his autobiography:

> "Taking all facts into consideration, it seemed to me that Jawaharlal should be the new President [of Congress in 1946—and hence PM]. Accordingly, on 26 April 1946, I issues a statement proposing his name for Presidentship... [Then] I acted according to my best judgement *but the way things have shaped since then has made me to realise that this was perhaps the greatest blunder of my political life...*"{Azad/162}

Maulana Azad also confessed in his above autobiography:

> "My second mistake was that when I decided not to stand myself I did not support Sardar Patel. We differed on many issues but I am convinced that if he had succeeded me as Congress President he would have seen that the Cabinet Mission Plan was successfully implemented. He would have never committed the mistake of Jawaharlal which gave Mr. Jinnah an opportunity of sabotaging the Plan. I can never forgive myself when I think that if I had not committed these mistakes, perhaps the history of the last ten years would have been different."{Azad/162}

Wrote Kuldip Nayar: "[Humayun] Kabir [translator and editor of Maulana Azad's autobiography] believed that Azad had come to realize after seeing Nehru's functioning that Patel should have been India's prime minister and Nehru the president of India. Coming as it did from an inveterate opponent of Patel, it was a revelation...A year earlier, Rajagopalachari had said the same thing..."{KN}

This is what Rajaji, who had then been pro-Nehru, had to say two decades after the death of Patel in Swarajya of 27.11.1971:

> "When the independence of India was coming close upon us and Gandhiji was the silent master of our affairs, he had come to the decision that Jawaharlal, who among all the Congress leaders was the most familiar with foreign affairs [although the Nehruvian years proved Nehru had made a mess of the foreign policy and external security], should be the Prime Minister of India, although he knew Vallabhbhai would be the best administrator among them all… *Undoubtedly it would have been better… if Nehru had been asked to be the Foreign Minister and Patel made the Prime Minister*. I too fell into the error of believing that Jawaharlal was the more enlightened person of the two... A myth had grown about Patel that he would be harsh towards Muslims. That was a wrong notion but it was the prevailing prejudice."{RG3/443}

Rajaji took over from Mountbatten as the Governor-General (GG) of India on 21 June 1948. When Nehru had suggested Rajaji's name as the GG, Rajaji had, in fact, written to Nehru that he (Nehru) should himself take over as the Governor-General (GG), and make Sardar Patel the Prime Minister. However, Nehru, vide his letter of 21 May 1948 to Rajaji, had politely turned down the suggestion: "Please forgive me for the delay in

answering your telegram No.26-S dated 12th May 1948 in which you suggested that I [Nehru] might be GG [Governor General]. Any suggestion from you is worthy of thought, but I am afraid the present one is completely impracticable from various points of view…"{JNSW/Vol-6/356}

Wrote Stanley Wolpert:

> "The Sardar, as Congress's strongman was called, was determined to stay and solve whatever problems remained, rather than running away from them. He had long viewed Nehru as a weak sister and often wondered why Gandhi thought so highly of him."*{Wolp2/377-8}*

Wrote Minoo Masani in his book 'Against the Tide': "My own understanding is that if Sardar Patel had been Prime Minister during that time and not Nehru, India would have gone further and faster."{MiM/195}

Gandhi's Personal Bias & Illogical Logic

Gandhi had remarked:

> "Jawaharlal cannot be replaced today whilst the charge is being taken from the British. He, a Harrow boy, a Cambridge graduate, and a barrister, is wanted to carry on the negotiations with the Englishmen."{RG/370} {RG5/545}

But, what were the facts? Who was more competent to negotiate with the British? Nehru or Patel? Both the contemporary developments and the subsequent history showed that the critical negotiations and discussions with the British, and the decisions that affected the nation, were principally taken by Patel, and not Nehru—Nehru being too timid, confused, and indecisive.

Gandhi had once written of Nehru: "He [Nehru] is a friend of the English people. Indeed, he is more English than Indian in his thought and make-up. He is often more at home with Englishmen than with his own countrymen."{NC2} Gandhi had also commented about Nehru: "*Jawaharlal is the only Englishman in my camp*!"{URL82} Less said about Gandhi's remarks the better.

Another reasoning attributed to Gandhi's preference was that he felt Nehru was better known abroad and could help India play a role in the international affairs.{RG/370} But, if that were the reason, he could have been made foreign minister under Sardar. It is another matter that Nehru made a mess of the foreign policy, as obvious from the adverse results of his

policies post-independence. In fact, Sardar's views were far more realistic on foreign policy matters, and he would have done a better job of it.

In fact, without Gandhi, Nehru would have been nowhere near the top. It was Gandhi who sold him and promoted him.

Somebody asked Gandhi why he did so. Reportedly, Gandhi's reason was he wanted both Nehru and Patel together to lead the nation, but while Nehru would not work under Sardar Patel, he knew that in the national interest he could persuade Sardar Patel to work under Nehru, as Sardar would not defy him.{ITV} What Gandhi said amounts to this: that Sardar Patel, even though senior and more experienced, and backed by majority, was patriotic enough to work under Nehru in the national interest, if so prodded by Gandhi; Nehru, junior, less experienced, and not backed by a single PCC, wanted only to become PM, and was not patriotic enough to work under Patel, in the national interest, even if persuaded by Gandhi!

Durga Das recounted the following:

> "I asked Gandhi… He [Gandhi] readily agreed that Patel would have proved a better negotiator and organiser as Congress President, but he felt Nehru should head the Government. When I asked him how he reconciled this with his assessment of Patel's qualities as a leader, he laughed and said: 'Jawaharlal is the only Englishman in my camp… Jawaharlal will not take second place. He is better known abroad than Sardar and will make India play a role in international affairs. [Why not make him Foreign Minister then?] Sardar will look after the country's affairs. They will be like two oxen yoked to the government cart. One will need the other and both will pull together.'"{DD/230}

How Nehru became Gandhi's favourite

It is worth noting that as long as Gandhi was alive Nehru pretended to be his faithful follower (and Gandhi reciprocated by calling him his son) for he was ambitious, wise, cunning and selfish enough to realise that the route to power lay through Gandhi's blessings. Gandhi used to say that even though Nehru used to fight with him on many issues, ultimately he used to agree with him [Gandhi]. Little did Gandhi know that it was not because Nehru agreed with him, but because Nehru knew that to continue to differ from Gandhi might cost him his position—like it had happened with Netaji Subhas Bose—and his goal of becoming the prime minister.

Nehru's socialism was rather superficial—his posturing as a radical was a convenient ploy to win the hearts of the true radicals and the youth, even as he stuck to conservative Gandhi and Gandhism to advance his career. Gandhi had also said that after he would be no more, Nehru would speak his language. If Gandhi had watched from heaven, he would have known that Nehru had buried Gandhism along with his [Gandhi's] death. Incidentally, this last thing was told by a Nehru loyalist, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, himself, as quoted by Durga Das in his book: "*Jawaharlal has performed the last rites not only of Gandhi but of Gandhism as well*."{DD/279}

After Gandhi was no more, Nehru practically put into practice all such policies, norms, lifestyle and governance culture that flew in the face of Gandhism.

History of Gandhi's Personal Bias

The Old Man's weakness for the westernized Nehru over the home-spun fellow Gujarati [Patel] was yet another aspect of "*Swadeshi*" Gandhi's self-contradictory personality. Acharya Kriplani had remarked that Gandhi's reasons for preferring Jawaharlal "*were personal rather than political*"{RG2/L-3142}.

Gandhi had called Jawaharlal his "spiritual son". How Jawaharlal managed to become the "spiritual son" of Gandhi is a mystery. Wrote MN Roy in 'The Men I Met': "It can reasonably be doubted if Nehru could have become the hero of Indian Nationalism except as the spiritual son of Gandhi… To purchase popularity, Nehru had to suppress his own personality…"{Roy/11}

Looking to the once-in-a-life-time prospect of becoming India's first PM, Maulana Azad, who had been president till 1945, was more than willing to continue as President, and threw enough hints through the media. However, Mahatma Gandhi, who desired Nehru in that position, remonstrated with Azad, even writing a letter to him on 20 April 1946 to clear the air: "Please go through the enclosed [newspaper] cutting [stating Azad's desire for re-election]... I have not spoken to anyone of my opinion. When one or two Working Committee members asked me, I said that it would not be right for the same President to continue... If you are of the same opinion, it may be proper for you to issue a statement about the cutting and say that you have no intention to become President again... In

today's circumstances I would if asked prefer Jawaharlal. I have many reasons for this. Why go into them?"{RG/370}

Nominating Heir in a Democratic Setup

At the meeting of the AICC held in Wardha, Gandhi formally designated Jawaharlal Nehru as his heir on 15 January 1942—rather odd for an organisation with supposedly democratic setup. Declared Gandhi:

> "Somebody suggested that Pandit Jawaharlal and I were estranged. This is baseless. Jawaharlal has been resisting me ever since he fell into my net. You cannot divide water by repeatedly striking it with a stick. It is just as difficult to divide us. I have always said that not Rajaji, nor Sardar Vallabhbhai, but Jawaharlal will be my successor. He says whatever is uppermost in his mind, but he always does what I want. When I am gone he will do what I am doing now. Then he will speak my language too... He fights with me because I am there. Whom will he fight when I am gone? And who will suffer his fighting? Ultimately, he will have to speak my language. Even if this does not happen, I would at least die with this faith..."{CWMG/Vol-81/432-33}

Déjà Vu

It was not the first time Gandhi had been unfair to Patel—twice before he had unjustly promoted Nehru over Patel for the post of Congress president, first in 1929 and then in 1937.

Jawaharlal Nehru was given a leg up on Sardar Patel in 1929, his case being even more undeserving at the time. Sardar Patel had led the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 whose resounding success had made him a national hero, and had earned him the title *Sardar*. The Bardoli Satyagraha was the first successful practical implementation of the Gandhian non-violent technique involving the rural masses on the ground. Nehru lacked such credentials. He didn't have any significant practical achievements to his credit—he was more of a talker. Besides, Sardar Patel was much senior to Jawaharlal, and a larger number of PCCs had recommended him over Jawaharlal. Yet, Gandhi asked Patel to withdraw! Gandhi thereby tried to establish an unjust pecking order where Jawaharlal came before Patel.

Jawaharlal's father Motilal had a major role to play in Jawaharlal's undeserved elevation. Motilal was the Congress President in 1928. He

desired that his position should be taken up by his son. Subsequent to Patel's Bardoli win, Motilal wrote to Gandhi on 11 July 1928: "*I am quite clear that the hero of the hour is Vallabhbhai, and the least we can do is to offer him the crown* [make him President of the Congress]. *Failing him, I think that under all the circumstances Jawahar would be the best choice*."{DD/128}

Motilal actively canvassed for Jawaharlal with Gandhi, and Gandhi ultimately succumbed to the pressure, saying Sardar Patel would anyway be with him. Nepotism and "fight" for freedom went together: Nehrus from Motilal downwards ensured their family was well taken care of; and that it came first, ahead of the nation! In the long run, the nation paid heavily for Motilal's brazen nepotism, and Gandhi's unwise step, and indefensible indiscretion.

S Nijalingappa writes in his autobiography:

> "There is still another instance of the Nehrus blatantly supporting members of their own family. This happened in 1929. That year Sardar Patel's name was in everybody's mind for Congress presidentship as he had succeeded most gloriously in carrying out the No-Tax Campaign in Bardoli. He was the hero of the moment—of course, his whole life was heroic. As a result of that Satyagraha he became known as 'Sardar'. But Jawaharlal Nehru's father Motilal Nehru went to Gandhiji and insisted that his son Jawaharlal Nehru was young and very enthusiastic and it would be desirable that he be made the Congress president that year. Gandhiji acceded to Motilal's request… I am mentioning the incident to show how the Nehrus helped their own."{Nij/102}

Congress presidentship used to be for one year, and rarely was anyone given two terms. However, Jawaharlal was granted a second consecutive term in 1930, thanks to Gandhi! And, Jawaharlal became president again in 1936 and 1937. In sharp contrast, Sardar Patel became Congress President only once in 1931, even though his contribution to building up the Congress organisation was the highest.

Even in 1936, Gandhi had again favoured Nehru over Sardar. Wrote Durga Das: "The selection of the President [in the AICC of August 1936] for the next annual session again assumed political significance in view of the differences between Nehru and Patel on the issue of socialism. Patel and

Nehru had been proposed by Provincial Congress Committees; the former [Patel] had a majority backing. Gandhi, however, decided that Nehru be given another term and persuaded Patel to withdraw in his favour."{DD/175}

Wrong Instrument for Right Ideas

Brown Sahibs, Language-Issue, Socialism, Gandhi & Nehru

Gandhi had sensible and correct views on brown-sahibs, language-issue, and socialism. However, by anointing Nehru as the PM he ensured that his views were jettisoned.

Gandhi scorned the brown sahibs—the Indian English-speaking and English-imitating elite. He once remarked that the heart of the Indian problem lay in the heartlessness of the educated people. But, Nehru was himself a brown-sahib, under whom that tribe flourished after independence.

To rid India of the dependence of a foreign language, Gandhi was strongly in favour of adoption of Hindustani as the national language. As early as 1917 he wrote: "It [English] had dried up all originality, impoverished the vernaculars, and has deprived the masses of the benefit of higher knowledge which would have otherwise percolated to them through the intercourse of the educated classes with them. The system has resulted in creating a gulf between the educated India and the masses."{CWMG/Vol-15/46} He had also remarked: "…to be a voluntary victim of this system of education is to betray one's duty to one's mother."{MKG7/289}

Earlier, Bal Gangadhar Tilak also advocated adoption of Hindi as a national language. In his opinion, a national language was a vital concomitant of nationalism. Even Veer Savarkar held similar opinion—he had proposed a resolution on Swaraj in Hindi—"India's Lingua franca", in his view—in London in the first decade of the 20th century. In the Nagpur session of the Congress in December 1920, Gandhi earnestly took up the plea to make Hindi-Hindustani written in Devanagari script as the rashtrabhasha (national language).

While presiding over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in 1935, Gandhi advocated Hindi or Hindustani as the lingua franca of India, and prescribed Devanagari script for all the Indian languages. At a speech at the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad at Nagpur on 24 April 1936{CWMG/Vol-68/381}, Gandhiji said that Hindi or Hindustani stood the best chances of becoming

India's lingua franca since it was a comprehensive language and was receptive to outside influences, in that it had absorbed the best from every other literature. He favoured simplification of Hindi and deprecated the tendency to Sanskritize it. He also urged that all current expressions in different languages should be adopted.

However, Nehru, as PM, aborted Gandhi's ideas, and accorded further prominence to English.

Gandhi had stated on 17 September 1934{CWMG/Vol-65/6}: "…I have fundamental differences with them [socialists] on the programme published in their authorized pamphlets... *If they [socialists] gain ascendancy in the Congress, as they well may, I cannot remain in the Congress*." However, Nehru went all out for his socialism, which only helped perpetuate poverty and misery.

Given the above, it is puzzling why Gandhi chose Nehru over Sardar Patel as the president of the Congress (and, thereby, the first PM) in 1946.

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Patel, Gandhi & Integration of the Princely States

The problem of the [princely] states is so difficult
that only you can solve it.
—Gandhi to Sardar Patel.

Sir Stafford Cripps had estimated it would take India 10 to 15 years, if not more, to liquidate the Indian Princely States and merge them with India. It was a surprise to all, and a tribute to the Sardar Patel's abilities, that he took, *not 10 to 15 years, but less than 10 to 15 months* to merge all the 548 Princely States with India, *extending India's geographical area by a whopping 40%.*

A princely state was a nominally-sovereign or semi-sovereign monarchy under a local, regional ruler in a subsidiary alliance with the British Raj. Prior to Independence, about 60% of the area of the undivided India, with 75% of the population—about 300 million out of a total of 400 million—was directly controlled by the British (hence called British India) through its representative designated as the Viceroy. The remaining 40% of the area, with 25% of the population—about 100 million—was ruled by the princes: Maharajas, Rajas, Nawabs, Nizam, and so on. There were 562 such Princely States—548 of which joined India, and the remaining 14 joined Pakistan. The largest of these was J&K—Jammu & Kashmir—followed by Hyderabad, each of which was almost as big as the mainland Britain.

Rulers of all the princely states owed allegiance to the British Crown, and acknowledged British *paramountcy* through individual treaties. The States were allowed governance in internal matters such as law and order, civil liberties, health, education and economic development, while the British took care of the defence, foreign policy and communications. Their citizens were not British subjects. The British stationed company troops in the capital of each state under the control of a British Resident. The troops,

while "protecting" the state, were also keeping princes in line—a "service" for which they had to pay the British!

British Government's Cabinet Mission published *Memorandum on States' Treaties and Paramountcy* on 12th May 1946 that envisaged bringing the political arrangements between the Princely States and the British Crown to an end, and for the rights surrendered by the States—defence, foreign policy and communications—to the British to revert to the States when the Dominions of India and Pakistan came to be created. Thus, with the withdrawal of paramountcy, the Princely States were to become independent, and the division of British India was not to affect the States at all.

562 independent States! That would have meant ominous prospects of civil wars, military takeovers, and total chaos—more terrible than what happened during the partition! That may well have been the objective of the British. Else, why could they not have so arranged that the Princely States too had to either go to India or to Pakistan depending upon their contiguity and other factors. The Paramountcy could have been inherited by the succeeding dominions. But, British wanted it to lapse, and create difficulties for India. They wanted India to remain divided into as many parts as possible.

But, thanks to Sardar Patel, the adversity or the negativity of the "*Lapse of Paramountcy*" was turned into a massive advantage, when he managed to merge one state after another with lightning speed, expediting the whole process, which otherwise might have taken many, many years.

What if Sardar had not been there?

Mountbatten had observed:

> "I am glad to say that Nehru has not been put in charge of the new [Princely] States Department, which would have wrecked everything. Patel, who is essentially a realist and very sensible, is going to take it over...Even better news is that VP Menon is to be the Secretary."{BK2/91}

Had Sardar not been there, the country would have been fragmented into several pieces. We would have had several Pakistans and Kashmirs. Going from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, or from Dwarka to Dibrugarh, would have meant crossing the international borders of several countries, with its requirement of passport, and visas from those countries! India would have

had to enter into agreements with several countries for sharing of river-waters and building of dams. India's economic integration would have gone for a toss. Moving goods across India would have meant crossing multiple customs barriers.

This is what Mountbatten conveyed to Patel on 19 June 1948, just prior to his departure from India:

> "There is no doubt that by far the most important achievement of the present government is the unification of the [Princely] States into the Dominion of India. Had you [Patel] failed in this, the results would have been disastrous. But since you succeeded, no one can see the disastrous results that have been avoided. I feel no one has given you adequate recognition of the miracle which you and your faithful VP [VP Menon] have produced. Nothing has so added to the prestige of the present Government than the brilliant policy you have followed with the States."{Jag2/52}

Wrote Patrick French:

> "…The Minister was Sardar Patel, his secretary was V.P. Menon, and by the end of November [1947] they would between them have added more territory to India than was lost to Pakistan through partition."{PF/314}

Wrote Durga Das: "But what Sardar Patel accomplished, through the integration of these [Princely] States into the Indian polity in consolidating the country's post-independence stability and strength, Nehru the theorist would probably have flinched from attempting himself."{DD/49}

Gandhi-Nehru Pacifism & Soft-Pedalling

Non-settlement of the Kashmir issue by Nehru has caused India such a huge permanent headache through the decades. Imagine the situation if Nehru had a free hand in creating several more Kashmirs and Pakistans! Travancore, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Junagadh, Border States of Rajasthan, and several more were already on their way to becoming independent, or a Pakistan, or a Kashmir!!

Left to Gandhi and Nehru integration of all the 548 princely states (14 of the 562 went to Pakistan) that Sardar Patel did would not have been achieved. Several states would have asserted independence or gone to Pakistan. Why? Gandhi with his impractical and unrealistic 'non-violence', 'truth', 'honesty', 'fairness', 'kindness', and pacifism would have rendered

integration, which required *sam-dam-dand-bhed* and the fear and threat that Sardar invoked, a non-starter. Nehru was too timid and indecisive to have achieved much.

For example, Junagadh's accession to Pakistan was almost written off by Nehru and Gandhi, and Mountbatten didn't wish it to be disturbed except through the UN intervention, till Sardar Patel came into the picture, and rode rough-shod over the fond plans of the Nawab of Junagadh, Jinnah, and Mountbatten. Gandhi, being a pacifist, and more concerned about his "Mahatma" label, with its associated brand of "non-violence", never considered appropriate action to gain back Junagadh.

Nehru took away Sardar Patel's jurisdiction over the Kashmir issue despite it being a States' subject and under the States Ministry which Sardar headed. Gandhi backed Nehru on the issue. And, we all know what a mess Nehru made of Kashmir. Left to Gandhi and Nehru, Hyderabad would have been an independent state, and another Pakistan. Gandhi expired in January 1948, and Mountbatten left for Britain in June 1948, else they would have surely backed Nehru and Rajaji, and seen to it that the kind of military action that Sardar Patel took in September 1948 was not taken.

Wrote V Shankar, Sardar's the then secretary, in 'My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel':

> "…Sardar [Patel] was aware of the influence which Lord Mountbatten exercised over both Pandit Nehru and Gandhiji; often that influence was decisive... Sardar had made up his mind that Hyderabad must fit into his policy regarding the Indian states... I know how deeply anguished he used to feel at his helplessness in settling the problem with his accustomed swiftness. …the decision about the Police Action in Hyderabad in which case Sardar [Patel] described the dissent of Rajaji and Pandit Nehru as '*the wailing of two widows as to how their departed husband* [meaning Gandhiji] *would have reacted to the decision involving such a departure from non-violence*.'…"{Shan}

What would Gandhi say?

Gandhi, that experimenter with truth, often experimented to an extent what amounted to sheer hypocrisy. The problem with Patel was not merely to tackle the tough call on Princes for merger through persuasion, dangling of carrots, and threats where necessary; but to also pretend and present each

merger to Gandhi in such a manner as to be within the ambit of his "high moral principles". That meant there had to be no coercion, no trickery, no threat, no carrot-and-stick, no appeal to their patriotic sentiments laced with monetary and positional accommodation, and dire consequences otherwise, no "*sam-dam-dand-bhed*". It had to be all goody-goody and above board—as if that would have ever yielded results!

Unable to hide the truth from Gandhi, on many occasions Patel left the task of bringing Gandhi around to VP Menon. Menon, in turn, was tactful enough to assure and convince Gandhi that everything was being done in the interest of the concerned Princes themselves; and in cases where the medicine was bitter, that too was like administering 'castor oil to resisting children'.

For complete details:
Please read the author's following books:
(a)"Sardar Patel : The Best PM India Never Had"
(b)"How was India's Area Increased by 40% ?"
available on Amazon.

{ 14 }

Gandhian Economics & Hind Swaraj

Gandhian economics is a sure way of ensuring perpetual poverty and eternal backwardness, and inability to fund the requirements of army and external security—risking India, which came out of a millennium of slavery, again to slavery and domination by others—as the following ideas of Gandhi would themselves bear out.

Ostentation of Poverty & Related Fads

Psychologically, Indians of those days tended to get impressed with two contrasting sets of people: the set which made ostentatious display of religiosity and poverty; and the set which made ostentatious display of its royalty—Rajas, Maharajas. Gandhi belonged to the first set, and Nehru to the second. Nehru was grandson of a thanedar, but the Nehrus liked to show themselves off as a white, westernised royalty. It paid rich dividends for both. However, as Sarojini Naidu had remarked: "*It cost the nation a fortune to keep Gandhi in poverty!*"

Important thing for a worthwhile national leader is to work out means of removal of poverty, and find ways to prosperity, and not try to live in poverty. Gandhi's solution for poverty, and his economic agenda was the book "*Hind Swaraj*" that he wrote in 1909. Like Nehru's poverty-perpetuating and misery-multiplying socialism, Gandhi's "Hind Swaraj" was a guarantee for an ever-backward-and-poor India! Simple living is fine, but it's ostentation is not. However, what really matters are the ideas. Thanks to their deficient reading and knowledge, Gandhi and Nehru lacked the ideas that could have made India strong and prosperous. So, how they personally lived really did not matter.

C Rajagopalachari, Gandhi's colleague, had this to comment on Gandhi's legacy: "*The glamour of modern technology, money and power is so seductive that no one—I mean no one—can resist it. The handful of Gandhians who still believe in his philosophy of a simple life in a simple society are mostly cranks*."{URL83}

Did simple living, khadi and other fads help the national cause in any way? Hardly.

Rather than focusing on gaining freedom, the Gandhians began to indulge in the many fads that Gandhi propagated, as if they substituted for the national cause. One of those fads was khadi and hand-spinning yarn. As long back as the early-1920s the students participating in the non-cooperation movement had brought to Gandhi's notice that they could ill-afford khadi as it was relatively costlier. If Indian cloth mills owned by Indians were manufacturing cloth, where was the issue?

Gandhi & 'Spiritual Swaraj' — 'Hind Swaraj'

Gandhi sought not as much the freedom of India from the British as what he termed the "Spiritual Swaraj". That is, "Spiritual Swaraj" for him was a priority compared to the "Political Swaraj".

What was that strange animal "Spiritual Swaraj"?

That which conformed to Gandhi's unenlightened, backward thinking—moving not forward, but backward: freedom from the curse of modernity and western evils such as lawyers; railways; motor-vehicles; mill-made cloth; modern machinery; western-medicine-trained doctors; western hospitals, medicines and cures; contraceptives, and so on. Gandhi was highly critical of railways, but in practice, he used it extensively for his travel around India.

Here are some extracts from Gandhi's book 'Hind Swaraj', or 'Indian Home Rule'{MKG4} (words in square-brackets are author's comments, and are not part of the quote):

> "To them [English] I would respectfully say [Daydreaming!]: 'I admit you are my rulers. It is not necessary to debate the question whether you hold India by the sword or by my consent. I have no objection to your remaining in my country, but although you are the rulers, you will have to remain as servants of the people. It is not we who have to do as you wish, but it is you who have to do as we wish. You may keep the riches that you have drained away from this land, but you may not drain riches henceforth. Your function will be, if you so wish, to police India; you must abandon the idea of deriving any commercial benefit from us…'
>
> "…Railways, lawyers and doctors have impoverished the country… Machinery…represents a great sin… The tendency of the Indian civilisation is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilisation is to propagate immorality. The latter is Godless, the former is based on a belief in God…
>
> "…India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the last fifty years. The railways, the telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors and the such like have to go; and the so-called upper classes have to learn consciously, religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be life-giving true happiness…

"Western civilization is the creation of Satan…"{MKG4}

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Extracts of Gandhi's pontifications in his letter of 14 October 1909 to Henry Polak: "Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth… Medical science is the concentrated essence of Black Magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill… Hospitals are the instruments that the Devil has been using for his own purpose, in order to keep his hold on his kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery and degradation, and real slavery… I was entirely off the track when I considered that I should receive a medical training. It would be sinful for me in any way whatsoever to take part in the abominations that go on in the hospitals. If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption, and less sexual vice amongst us… India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years. The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live conscientiously and religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be a life giving true happiness… Indians should wear no machine-made clothing, whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills… England can help India to do this, and then she will have justified her hold of India…"{CWMG/Vol-10/169}

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More by Gandhi on machines and mills:

"Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English gates. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilisation; it represents a great sin. The workers in the mills of Bombay have become slaves. …but I am bound to say that it were better for us to send money to Manchester and to use flimsy Manchester cloth than to multiply mills in India. By using Manchester cloth we only waste our money; but by reproducing Manchester in India, we shall keep our money at the price of our blood, because our very moral being will be sapped…"{MKG4}

Gandhi wrote in the Young India of 19th January 1921:

"Do I want to put back the hand of the clock of progress? Do I want to replace the mills by hand-spinning and hand-weaving? Do I want to replace the railway by the country-cart? Do I want to destroy

machinery altogether? These questions have been asked by some journalists and public men. My answer is: I would not weep over the disappearance of machinery or consider it a calamity."{CWMG/Vol-22/224}

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Note Gandhi's contradiction in practice: The mill-owners, those who installed the machines that Gandhi railed against, were Gandhi's main financiers. GD Birla and others were his personal friends. The American journalist Louis Fischer asked Gandhi in June 1942: "Very highly placed Britishers had told me that Congress was in the hands of big business and that Gandhi was supported by the Bombay mill-owners who gave him as much money as he wanted. What truth is there in these assertions?" Gandhi responded: "Unfortunately, they are true." Fischer continued: "What proportion of the Congress budget is covered by rich Indians?" Gandhi replied: "Practically, all of it. In this ashram, for instance we could live much more poorly than we do and spend less money. But, we do not, and the money comes from our rich friends."{CWMG/Vol-82/405}

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Gandhi on education:

"…To teach boys reading, writing and arithmetic is called primary education. A peasant earns his bread honestly. He has ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow-villagers. He understands and observes the rules of morality. But he cannot write his own name. What do you propose to do by giving him a knowledge of letters? Will you add an inch to his happiness? Do you wish to make him discontented with his cottage or his lot? ...Carried away by the flood of western thought we came to the conclusion, without weighing pros and cons, that we should give this kind of education to the people..."{MKG4}

While Gandhi had not quite articulated what the independent India should be like, he was crystal clear what is should NOT be: an industrialized, centralized, modern nation-state like those of the West.

Had Gandhi been more observant and honest he would have realised that the railways and industrialization did overwhelmingly more to

demolish the caste-system and untouchability than all other efforts put together.

Others on 'Hind Swaraj'

Gandhi had written 'Hind Swaraj' in 1909, and he was sold out on it. Even as late as 1938 he wrote: "I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded in it."

Even after a lapse of over three decades after he wrote 'Hind Swaraj' in 1909, Gandhi asserted to Nehru in 1945: "I still stand for the system of government envisaged in 'Hind Swaraj'… I am convinced that if India is to attain freedom… then sooner or later… people will have to live in villages, not in towns…"

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom Gandhi had called his mentor, had commented that the thoughts contained in 'Hind Swaraj' were so crude and ill-conceived that Gandhi would himself destroy the book after spending time in India.{MKG4}

Gandhi had opined that a village as a unit, with its harmonious caste-regulated [!!] organicism, was the natural unit of Indian society, and what's more, the natural form of Indian state and nation.{MM/158}

Ambedkar challenged Gandhi's celebration of village life and morals, and considered Gandhi's idea of a village republic as one based on undemocratic values. He said, "*What is a village—a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow mindedness and communalism*".{URL84} While Gandhi's ideas were outdated even then, Ambedkar's observations are still relevant.

Gandhi's economics would have ensured Indians live at subsistence or sub-subsistence levels, generated little surplus, and hence paid peanuts as taxes, thereby ensuring India had primitive infrastructure, and little means to arm and defend itself against external, and even internal, threats.

{ 15 }

GANDHI & NON-VIOLENCE

I see no being which lives in the world without violence.
—Mahabharata

Gandhi's Ineffective Non-Hindu Concepts

Gandhi had made himself popular among the masses mainly through two complementary external projections of himself. *One*: Put-on, forced poverty wearing Khadi dhoti to identify himself with the poor. *Two*: Projecting himself as a Hindu holy person.

The British and the big business and commercial interests who also owned media helped Gandhi in projecting himself, and in publicising him as a 'Mahatma'. The British, because they found in him an asset to prolong their rule by being less demanding and non-violent; and the big business and commercials interests, because they felt reassured with his policies.

The Brits were happy at the emergence of a *'Hindu' Jesus* who evoked Hindu symbols but spread the Jesus message of "*turn the other cheek*", "*Sermon on the Mount*" with its biblical prophecy that "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth*", "*self-suffering for salvation and mass-suffering to change the heart of the aggressor or evil-doer*"; coupled with the Russian Christian philosophy of Leo Tolstoy articulated by him in his book "*The Kingdom of God is Within You*" advocating "*non-resistance of evil by force* [violence]". Tolstoy averred in his books 'What I believe' and 'The Kingdom of God Is Within You' that evil can never be conquered by force, because force was itself evil. When once told that passive resistance was but an expedient in the absence of power and army, Gandhi wondered if Jesus, who was the king of passive resistance, could be called weak. When cornered on how non-violence would tackle people like Hitler, Gandhi skirted the question by saying that not being a part of the government, he could not argue for the rationale of the governments.

The revered Hindu texts like Gita expounded in the context of the Mahabharata war declared it was one's duty to obliterate evil through all means—including violence. Hindu's most popular and holy scripture Ramayana is a story of ultimate defeat of evil through force by Sri Rama. 9-day Navaratri celebrations all over India are a celebration of "Shakti" (Power, Divine Power). The last day of the celebrations culminates in the popular Hindu festival of Dassehra or Vijayadashami on which "shastra-puja" (worship of weapons) is done.

In short, Hinduism has no concept of "non-violence" as enunciated by Gandhi. But, since Gandhi had projected himself as a Hindu holy man to

get popular with the masses, he proceeded to so misinterpret and emasculate Gita, Ramayana, Hinduism, and Indic traditions that they somehow fitted-in with his Christian concept of "non-violence"—the truth, although he claimed 'Truth was God", could take a backseat.

The irony was that the real Christians, the British, had little use for the Christian dictums, and they didn't flinch in using extreme violence to achieve their ends. But, the fake Christian—Gandhi—sought to use the Christian dictum of "turn the other cheek" to defeat the real Christian violence of the British. Apparently, Gandhi was unaware of the terribly violent and brutal history of Christianity.

Revolutionary Sachindranath Sanyal wrote to Gandhi in 1925:

> "...The non-violence that India preaches is not non-violence for the sake of non-violence, but non-violence for the good of humanity, and when this good for humanity will demand violence and bloodshed, India will not hesitate to shed blood just in the same way as a surgical operation necessitates the shedding of blood. To an ideal Indian, violence or non-violence has the same significance provided they ultimately do good to humanity. *Vinashaya cha dushkrita* was not spoken in vain. To my mind, therefore, *the ideal that you gave to the nation or the programme of action that you laid before it is neither consistent with Indian culture nor practicable as a political programme...*"{URL87}

Nonsensical Non-Violence Concept

All civilised societies and millennia of Indian/Hindu religious and cultural traditions teach you to resolve issues, contentious matters, and conflicts through discussions and non-violent methods. Violence and killing should be avoided, and that is why the Hindu society has been globally unique in advocating vegetarianism. However, if the contending party knows only the language of violence, it stands to reason that it should be answered in the language it understands.

Gandhi had stated grandly at various times:

> "This country must not be liberated through bloodshed… My love for non-violence is superior to every other thing mundane or super-mundane. It is equalled only by my love for truth which is to me synonymous with non-violence through which and which alone I can see and reach Truth."

GD Birla had said of Gandhi: "Swaraj attained through violence is no good to him [Gandhi]. He attaches more importance to non-violence than even to Swaraj. His nearest lieutenants believe in his policy."

Rajaji had rightly stated: "Ours is a political organisation, not working for non-violence, but for the political ideal."

The British also didn't see any particular virtue in being thrown out of India non-violently. They didn't wish to get evicted, whether violently or non-violently. Of course, non-violence must have appealed to them, not for its moral force, but for it being inherently harmless and ineffective, and something that suited them.

During the Civil Disobedience Movement, Gandhi had said in 1931: "*I would welcome even utter failure with non-violence unimpaired, rather than depart from it by a hair's breadth to achieve a double success*."{Gill/78}

Nobody would have minded Gandhi living by that dictum in his personal life; but to apply it for a national cause without any historical antecedent of success, and without any convincing reasoning, was irrational, and effectively irresponsible.

Gandhi advocated non-violence even for self-defence! What could be more self-defeating, suicidal and stupid? Ahimsa or non-violence is required to be preached to the aggressor and the violent; and not to the

victim. Victims have a complete moral right to self-defence through whatever effective means they deem fit.

To raise the wishy-washy dogma of non-violence, and its associated mealy-mouthed ahimsa-formula for Indian 'mukti', to a pedestal and a creed, and to insist on the same irrespective of the actions of the contending party, specific case or circumstances, is to be irrational, irresponsible, and even irreligious (if one goes by Gita)—Gandhi's concept of non-violence came into this category, as the examples further down below would illustrate. As someone said, Gandhian ahimsa-formula resulted in the '*feminization of politics*' at least for the Hindus who followed him.

Stated Gandhi on 25 October 1939:

> "You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages. Even if Hitler was so minded, he could not devastate seven hundred thousand nonviolent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process. Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have therefore to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent, and to be rural-minded you have to have faith in the spinning-wheel."{CWMG/Vol-77/43}

Absurd Gandhian conclusion from the above: Non-violence is not possible in industrialized societies. India ought to forever remain rural and backward to be able to effectively exercise non-violence.

Deterrence vs. Gandhi's Irrational "An eye for an eye…"

Given thousands of years of history, any rational person would have logically concluded that what works in the face of a violent adversary is deterrence, the capacity for violence, the ability to inflict counter-damage, and certainly not non-violence.

Following Gandhi's pacifist dictum "*an eye for an eye will leave the world blind*" would mean the blinded victims should let the violators go scot-free—for them to find fresh victims. And, don't attempt to blind the violators, so that the world has at least some people who can see—the violators! Common sense and factual statistics dictate that had the violators been aware of the tit-for-tat or worse, they would not have dared to blind the potential victims. Tit-for-tat deterrence would have resulted in lesser number of persons being victims of blinding, and overall more people with sight! So, what's better? The actual net result of "an eye for an eye" would be lesser overall blind persons, contrary to what Gandhi mistakenly believed and propagated.

The concept of deterrence is based on the assumption that both the contending parties being rational and acting in their own self-interest, the credible commitment to firm retaliation by either would deter the other from using force and violence. Gandhi, rather than appreciating this simple, rational, logical idea, parroted the Christian bilge of "turning the other cheek", something that the real Christians (the British, the colonists) never made the mistake to follow. The deeply-religious Hindu Gandhi forgot his own roots, and the teachings of Gita! Indeed, he misinterpreted Gita to suit his wrong notions.

Not Protecting the Innocents

A responsible leader would not have condemned the innocent Hindus and other Indians as guinea pigs in his experiments with non-violence. Of course, Gandhi was free to practise his creed at a personal level—away from harm to the general public. It was the responsibility of the Congress leaders to ensure safety of people—both by pressurising the administration and helping them in law-enforcement; and by adequately preparing the people for self-defence, and for counter measures in case of violence, especially in the face of the growing aggression and violence of the Muslim

League cadres and other Muslims engaged in violence. In this task the Gandhians bitterly failed, and the innocents paid with life, loot and rapes.

Extended Ahimsa: Theory & Practice

Gandhi claimed that for him ahimsa went much beyond mere non-injury: "Ahimsa means 'non-killing'. But to me it has a world of meaning, and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher. It really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy."{Gill/77} High sounding words. But, Gandhi's theory does not stand up to his practice judging by many instances, including the way he played dirty politics vis-s-vis Netaji Bose during the 1939 Congress Presidential Elections (please see details elsewhere in this book).

Gandhi grandly claimed in 1940: "I applied it [Ahimsa] in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed." The fact was all of Gandhi's major movements had bitterly failed, and none of his principles had managed to achieve anything of value for the nation. His such a claim therefore also flew in the face of facts.

GANDHI'S CRAZY COMMENTS ON HITLER & HOLOCAUST

When Japan mounted a full-scale invasion of China in 1937, Gandhi advised non-violent resistance:

> "It is unbecoming for a nation of 400 million, a nation as cultured as China, to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan's own methods. If the Chinese had non-violence of my conception, there would be no use for the latest machinery for destruction which Japan possesses."{SR}

On the French surrender to the Germans, Gandhi wrote:

> "I think French statesmen have shown rare courage in bowing to the inevitable and refusing to be party to senseless mutual slaughter. There can be no sense in France's coming out victorious if the stake in truth [whatever Gandhi meant by that term] is lost…"{MKG3/Ch-44}

Wrote Gandhi in a letter to Amrit Kaur dated 15 May 1940:

> "*I do not consider Herr Hitler to be as bad as he is depicted…* He is showing an ability that is amazing and he seems to be gaining his victories without much bloodshed…"{CWMG/V-78/219}

Gandhi stated on 18 June 1940 what was reproduced in the Harijan of 22 June 1940:

> "[In future] They [the Germans] will honour Herr Hitler as a genius, a brave man, a matchless organizer and much more…"{CWMG/V-78/344}

Gandhi advised Viceroy Linlithgow (to his utter disbelief, and making him wonder if Gandhi had gone senile) on 29 June 1940 that *Britain should resist Hitler's invasion strictly through non-violence, even if it meant self-annihilation*{Sar/54}. Gandhi followed it up with a letter to the Viceroy the next day mentioning, inter alia, "*…You are losing: if you persist it will only result in greater bloodshed. Hitler is not a bad man. If you call it off today he will follow suit. If you want to send me to Germany or anywhere else I am at your disposal…*"{Sar/54-5} Height of self-delusion!

Calling upon the British to lay down arms and oppose Hitler with only non-violence, Gandhi issued an appeal to all Britons on 2 July 1940, reproduced in the 'Harijan' of 6 July 1940:

> "I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may be now, to accept the method of non-violence… I want you to fight Nazism without arms

> or, if I am to retain the non-violent terminology, with non-violent arms… You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your souls nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child, to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them…"{MKG2} {CWMG/V-78/386-7}

Gandhi advised Jews to offer passive resistance to the Nazis, sacrifice their lives, yet pray for Adolf Hitler: "If even one Jew acted thus, he would salve his self-respect and leave an example, which, if it became infectious, would save the whole of Jewry and leave a rich heritage to mankind besides."

In 1947, interviewed by Louis Fischer, author of 'The Life of Mahatma Gandhi', Gandhi said:

> "Hitler killed five million Jews. It is the greatest crime of our time. But the Jews should have offered themselves to the butcher's knife. They should have thrown themselves in the sea from cliffs… It would have aroused the world and the people of Germany… As it is they succumbed anyway in their millions."{URL1} {Wiki3}

Gandhi had addressed two letters to Hitler as "My friend" in 1939-40. Perhaps he was unaware of the advice given by Hitler to the British Lord Halifax in 1938 on the suppression of India's freedom movement: Kill Gandhi, if that isn't enough then kill the other leaders too, if that isn't enough then two hundred more activists, and so on until the Indian people will give up the hope of independence.

On the atomic bomb threat Gandhi had said:

> "I would meet it by prayerful action… The pilot will not see my face at such a height, I know. But the longing in our heart that he will not come to harm will reach up to him and his eyes would be opened."{Gill/80}

For a political leader to be so detached from reality—it really hits you! It's fine to live in a fool's paradise for things personal—for they don't affect

others and the nation. But, to entertain such quixotic notions sitting in an apex leadership position is really hard to imagine.

Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri:

> "An anonymous correspondent [cheesed off with Gandhi's pronouncements on non-violence on WW-II]…said with an irony just tinctured with permissible malice that if all that Mahatma Gandhi was saying about non-violence were to be accepted; how utterly small and futile must Mr Gandhi's own little fights almost to death appear to him in retrospect—or were his hunger strikes just a form of blackmail without the real risk of death?' …throughout my life I have felt nothing but contempt for the doctrine of non-resistance to evil and non-violence… This doctrine is nothing but an attempt to claim credit for moral elevation without risking skin, which is even more absurd that trying to keep one's cake as well as eat it…"{NC/569-70}

Tackling Kashmir Non-Violently!

After the Indian army was airlifted to Srinagar in October 1947 to drive out the Pakistani invaders, Gandhi was asked if he had abandoned his faith in non-violence. Responded Gandhi:

> "I have already stated that I am a nobody and no one listens to me. People say that the Sardar is my man and Panditji also is but mine and Maulana too is my man. They are all mine and also not mine. I have never abandoned my nonviolence. I have been training myself in non-violence and it was acceptable till we attained independence. Now they wonder how they can rule with non-violence. And then there is the army and they have taken the help of the army. Now I am of no value at all. But why am I still with the people when I have lost my value? It is in the hope that they may perhaps listen to me... *However, if I could have my way of non-violence and everybody listened to me, we would not send our army as we are doing now. And if we did send, it would be a non-violent army.* It would be a non-violent fight if our people went there and gladly met their death at the hands of the Afridis [Pakistani invaders]. It would be a non-violent war because they would be dying remaining non-violent…"{CWMG/Vol-97/237-8}

Left to the Gandhian ways, all the three princely states that had not joined India by 15 August 1947, namely J&K, Junagadh and Hyderabad, would have remained OUT of India!

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

In protest against the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre of 1919, Gandhi, the 'Apostle of Non-violence', did not return any of the many medals earned by him from the British Empire in South Africa for his services in the British wars—unlike Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and others, who returned their honours. He did so only for the regressive Khilafat!

Newspapers carried a letter of Gandhi on 18 April 1919, four days after the massacre, regretting the civil disobedience campaign: "…I am sorry, when I embarked on a mass movement, I underrated the forces of evil, and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation." *Gandhi went on to absurdly state that the victims of the Jallianwala Massacre "were definitely not heroic martyrs", because rather than facing death calmly, they had "taken to their heels"!*{MD/Vol-2/262}

Qissa Khwani Bazaar Massacre 1930 & Gandhi

The Khudai Khidmatgar (Servants of God), led by Frontier (Seemant) Gandhi Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was a Pashtun organisation committed to overthrowing the British rule through non-violent methods. On 23 April 1930, Ghaffar Khan was arrested after a speech urging resistance to the foreign rule. After more leaders of the organisation were arrested, a large number of Khudai Khidmatgar members gathered at *Qissa Khwani Bazaar* (*Kissa-Khani* or Story-tellers bazaar) in Peshawar to protest.

A few British armoured cars were sent speeding into the bazaar to cow down the angry demonstrators, killing several. The gathered members protested, though peacefully, and offered to disperse if they could gather their dead and injured, and if the British troops left the square—which the British troops refused.

Deciding to disperse the mob, the British Commanding Officer ordered two platoons of the Second Battalion of the 18th Royal Garhwali Rifles to fire. But to his utter surprise, the Garhwalis, known otherwise for their loyalty to the Raj, defied the authority, refused to fire, and argued that they would not fire upon the unarmed civilians. This infuriated the British

official to the extent that he immediately fired upon the Jamadar of the Garhwali regiment. The bullet missed its target and hit his horse.

The Garhwalis were disarmed, arrested and sent to Abbottabad. Later on, 17 of them were court-martialled in Bombay and sentenced to various terms of harsh imprisonment. Chander Singh Garhwali, the group leader, was sentenced to transportation for life; Narain Singh for 15-year jail, and the rest, 15 in number, were given 3 to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment. Chander Singh Garhwali was released only upon independence. Thanks to the post-independence Nehru-Dynasty era, brave Garhwali remained neglected and forgotten till his death in 1981—he actually deserved a *Bharat Ratna*.

The British, after withdrawing the Garhwal Rifles, brought-in alternate force (City Disturbance Column), and ordered troops to open fire with machine guns on the unarmed crowd. The Khudai Khidmatgar members willingly faced bullets, responding without violence. Many were killed and wounded. The British violence continued for six hours turning the bazaar red with blood.

Gene Sharp, Professor Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, described the scene thus:

> "When those in front fell down wounded by the shots, those behind came forward with their chests bared and exposed themselves to the fire, so much so that some people got as many as twenty-one bullet wounds in their bodies, and all the people stood their ground without getting into a panic… The Anglo-Indian paper of Lahore, which represents the official view, itself wrote to the effect that the people came forward one after another to face the firing and when they fell wounded they were dragged back and others came forward to be shot at. This state of things continued from 11 till 5 o'clock in the evening. When the number of corpses became too many, the ambulance cars of the government took them away."{EE/123}

According to the state-appointed Sulaiman-Pankridge Enquiry Committee, 33 were killed and 33 wounded, but this was not the final figure, according to the same report. The Congress Inquiry Committee chaired by Vithalbhai Patel put the figures between 200 and 300 killed, and many more wounded.

Gandhi's Shameful Stand

Now comes the interesting, or rather the baffling and depressing, part. One would have expected Gandhi to congratulate Garhwal Rifles and Chander Singh Garhwali, their group leader, for refusing to fire into the non-violent unarmed protestors. But, no. Gandhi, instead, argued:

> "A soldier who disobeys an order to fire breaks the oath which he has taken and renders himself guilty of criminal disobedience. I cannot ask officials and soldiers to disobey, for when I am in power I shall in all likelihood make use of those same officials and those same soldiers. If I taught them to disobey I should be afraid that they might do the same when I am in power. But if they cannot conscientiously carry out the orders which are given to them they can always hand in their resignation."{KA/73}

If only someone had countered Gandhi asking what exactly were the Civil Disobedience and Non-Cooperation Movements that he had been championing? Asking government and other employees to engage in civil disobedience and/or non-cooperation: Was it not asking them to go against their oath of office? Breaking law—was it not unlawful? Was it lawful, permissible, and moral for a soldier to fire on peaceful, non-violent, unarmed crowd? Was it proper to obey an unlawful order? In fact, this is what the Gandhians should have tried to teach as widely and as intensely as possible to the Indians in the police force and the army—not to lathi-charge or fire upon peaceful, non-violent, unarmed protestors. Rather than doing that, Gandhi was doing the reverse.

So, in Gandhi's view violence of the government, the British, and the oppressors was permissible, whether lawful or not. And, if under Gandhi's rule the soldiers similarly disobeyed inhuman orders, Gandhi would consider it an improper and punishable!

Gandhi, the Hindu-Muslim unity advocate, even ignored the fact that the Garhwal Rifles comprised all Hindu soldiers, while the protestors were all Muslims. The Hindus, the Garhwali soldiers, at considerable risk to themselves, had saved many Muslims from death and injuries. *In sharp contrast, the same Gandhi, in the 1942-Quit India specifically called upon the soldiers to "refuse to fire on our own people".* {Gill/64}

AK Hangal, the late actor, was witness to the above ghastly massacre, as a school student then in Peshawar. He wrote in his autobiography 'Life and

Times of AK Hangal': "*Strangely, Gandhi had opined that Garhwali should have actually obeyed orders and fired, as a disciplined soldier. I could never understand this line of reasoning*."{AKH/17}

1921 Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks
Please read details under chapter-16.

Withdrawal of Khilafat Movement in 1922
Please refer chapter-5.

Gandhi's Attitude towards Violence by the British

Gandhi normally had no problem against the violence by the British, as obvious from the illustrative example of Qissa Khwani Bazaar Massacre above. He either rationalised them or manufactured "principles" to soft-pedal the same. Gandhi rarely called a spade a spade for any of the many violent communal carnages by the Muslims.

Recruitments for the British Army

Gandhi whole-heartedly responded to the call of the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford to help recruit more manpower for the British army. In a letter to the British authorities Gandhi wrote: "…*I would like to do something which Lord Chelmsford would consider to be real war work. I have an idea that, if I became your recruiting agent-in-chief, I might rain men on you*…." Gandhi even wrote to Jinnah suggesting they both go head hunting together to gather enough men for the British war.

In his addresses and pamphlets for recruitments in Gujarat, he stated, inter alia:

> "…We should suffer to the utmost of our ability and even lay down our lives to defend the Empire. If the Empire perishes, with it perish our cherished aspirations. Hence the easiest and the straightest way to win Swaraj is to participate in the defence of the Empire… The Government at present wants half a million men for the army... I expect from Kheda and Gujarat not 500 or 700 recruits but thousands. If Gujarat wants to save herself from the reproach of effeminacy, she should be prepared to contribute thousands of sepoys… I hope also that those who have grown-up sons will not hesitate to send them as recruits. To sacrifice sons in the war ought to be a cause not of pain but of pleasure to brave men. Sacrifice of sons at this hour will be a sacrifice for Swaraj…"{URL88}{CWMG/V-17/86}

Rowlatt Acts & Gandhi

Gandhi launched satyagraha against the Rowlatt Acts in 1919 calling them repressive. But, it was not as if he was opposed to the British violent and repressive measures where required. In his testimony to the Disorders Inquiry Committee (aka the Hunter Committee) on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre Gandhi testified that it was better to use the emergency legislation of ordinances, rather than promulgate laws like the Rowlatt Acts, to "stamp

out anarchy". Gandhi said that the "anarchy proper [revolutionary activity there] has been confined to Bengal", but that "Bengal is not India". *Gandhi felt that the revolutionary activity in Bengal was "serious enough to warrant strong Government measures"*. The British did listen to Gandhi and substituted the Rowlatt Acts with a set of ordinances in Bengal to crush all nationalist-revolutionary activities.

Gandhi's Non-Violence for Hindu Victims

Here are extracts from what Gandhi said in the context of the brutal violence on Hindus and Sikhs during March-May 1947, and later in the wake of the Partition:

"*If all the Punjab were to die to the last man without killing, the Punjab would become immortal. It is more valiant to get killed than to kill. Of course, my condition is that even if we are facing death we must not take up arms against them...* One thousand lost their lives of course, but not like brave men. I would have liked the sixteen who escaped by hiding to come into the open and courted death… What a difference it would have made if they had bravely offered themselves as a nonviolent, willing sacrifice!..."{CWMG/Vol-94/230-1}{URL88}

"*Hindus should not harbour anger in their hearts against Muslims even if the latter wanted to destroy them*. Even if the Muslims want to kill us all we should face death bravely. If they established their rule after killing Hindus we would be ushering in a new world by sacrificing our lives. None should fear death. Birth and death are inevitable for every human being. Why should we then rejoice or grieve? If we die with a smile we shall enter into a new life, we shall be ushering in a new India…"{CWMG/Vol-94/248-9}{URL88}

"Today [7 April 1947] a Hindu from Rawalpindi narrated the tragic events that had taken place there. Fifty-eight of his companions were killed just because they were Hindus. He and his son alone could survive. The villages around Rawalpindi have been reduced to ashes. The Hindus of the Punjab are seething with anger. The Sikhs say they are followers of Guru Govind Singh who has taught them how to wield the sword. *But I would exhort the Hindus and Sikhs again and again not to retaliate. I make bold to say that if Hindus and Sikhs sacrifice their lives at hands of Muslims without rancour or retaliation they will become saviours not only of their own religions but also of Islam and the whole world…*"{CWMG/Vol-94/254-5}{URL88}

"*I would tell the Hindus to face death cheerfully if the Muslims are out to kill them. I would be a real sinner if after being stabbed I wish in my last moment that my son should seek revenge. I must die without rancour....* There is nothing brave about dying while killing. It is an illusion of bravery. The true martyr is one who lays down his life without killing. You may turn

around and ask whether all Hindus and Sikhs should die. Yes, I would say. Such martyrdom will not be in vain…"{URL88}

Gandhi's Absurd Non-Violence Rules

Based on the above, one can conclude the following rules of the Gandhian "wisdom" on non-violence:

Rule-1. Interpretation and application of Gandhian non-violence was not something absolute, and unchanging, but was a function of who the perpetrator of violence was, and who the victim. If the perpetrators were the British Raj or Muslims, and the victims Hindus, the violence needed to be rationalised and interpreted differently.

Rule-2. It was the duty of Indians to strengthen the British Raj militarily, and help them in wars (that is, in violence) against others, if the Indians sought to be treated as equal citizens.

Rule-3. If it were the British, and those at the receiving end were Muslims, the act needed to be opposed.

Rule-4. If it were the British, and those at the receiving end were non-Muslims, state violence was permissible by definition, whether justified in a given context or not.

Rule-5. If the aggressors were Muslims there must be a current context, or a historical reason, for their violence; or the British or the non-Muslims must have done or not done something that led to the violence.

Rule-6. If it were the British or Muslims, and those at the receiving end were Hindus, Sikhs, and other non-Muslims, it was the duty of the non-Muslims to NOT retaliate with violence. Instead, the non-Muslims must not resist, or try to save themselves, but must happily allow themselves to be butchered. Further, the non-Muslims must take the blows in front smilingly, rather than running away, if they wished to be martyred as the "Gandhian Braves".

Rule-7. If in retaliation to the British violence, an Indian revolutionary kills a Britisher, and is therefore hanged, so be it—violence against the state as violator is impermissible.

Rule-8. If the rapist is a Muslim and the potential victim a Hindu, Sikh, or other non-Muslim, rather than fighting back, or trying to save herself, the potential victim should try to commit suicide, and throw a smile at the perpetrator.

Rule-9. Even if the Muslims have raped or butchered them, the non-Muslims should not entertain any feeling of revenge, but must try to

maintain cordial relations with the violator.

Brown-nosing the Powerful & the Adversaries

Gandhi's contradictory and weird interpretation of non-violence sometimes makes you wonder if he had made it all up to curry favour with the British, and the Muslims. How best to please your masters—the British? Assure them you wouldn't trouble them with violence. Not only that, you would so spread the non-violence message across that even the revolutionaries would be weakened. What more would British have wanted?! Don't let the message appear as a favour to the British. Give it an ethical, religious, and spiritual cover.

Talk of non-violence, but ignore it if done by the Muslims or the British. Don't annoy powerful adversaries. Talk against untouchability, but when powerful high-caste Hindus are involved, behave like he [Gandhi] did for Guruvayur Temple Entry (please see details elsewhere in this book). Talk against mechanisation, machinery, and mills, but take all financial help from the mill-owners and industrialists.

In short, construct your theories, principles, responses, definitions, and explanations flexibly enough in such a way that although they appear pious and principled, the powerful can be suitably shielded.

Indifference to Internal & External Security

Gandhi and the Congress, mislead by the self-hurting and disastrous notions on non-violence, did precious little to ensure either internal security —safety of innocents, whether Hindus or Muslims, protection of Hindus from the aggressive sections of Muslims, and so on—or external security, either before or after independence.

After the Muslim League's *Pakistan Resolution* of 1940 Savarkar could foresee the problems ahead for Hindus in India, and wanted Hindus to be militarily well-equipped. Therefore, rather than the 'Quit India 1942', Savarkar gave a call to the Hindus to take advantage of the opportunity of getting militarily trained by joining the army in the British war effort in WW-II. Fortunately, a very large number of Hindus responded to Savarkar's call, and joined the British army—finally making it Hindu-majority from its earlier position of Muslim-majority. That helped tremendously after partition and independence, providing a large army to India, the Muslims in the army having mostly opted for Pakistan. Unlike Gandhi and Nehru, Savarkar knew what a country of the size of India needed to defend itself. But for Savarkar's whirlwind recruitment drive during WW-II, Pakistan, after partition, would have had 60–70% of the soldiers, enough to overwhelm India in the border areas in a conflict—this debt to Savarkar is sadly unacknowledged.

In sharp contrast, rather than ensuring well-trained Indians in the army during the British times itself, Gandhi envisaged as early as at the time of the Second Round Table Conference in 1931 that the British troops should remain in India after independence for some time to train Indians. Gandhi was even poetic about his absurd notion: "*Having clipped our wings it is their [British] duty to give us wings wherewith we can fly*."{Nan/314}

As was bound to happen, Independent India witnessed the terribly calamitous effects of Gandhi's non-violence principles, when as Gandhi's chosen nominee Nehru as PM (overriding the most-deserving Sardar Patel) blundered through Kashmir and Tibet through weak-kneed "ahimsa", and finally shamed Indians before the world in the 1962 India-China war. Here is a telling episode with which Nehru began his disastrous innings:

Shortly after independence, the first Army Chief of independent India Lt General Sir Robert Lockhart (British then!), as per the standard procedure, took a strategic defence plan for India to Nehru, seeking a Government

directive in the matter. Unbelievably, Lockhart returned shell-shocked at Nehru's response:

> "The PM took one look at my paper and blew his top. 'Rubbish! Total rubbish! We don't need a defence plan. Our policy is ahimsa [non-violence]. We foresee no military threats. Scrap the army! The police are good enough to meet our security needs', shouted Nehru."{URL32}

Gandhi's Preposterous Notions on Bravery

Gandhi had an unbelievably preposterous notion of bravery which he even more outrageously propounded during the Second World War, the Jewish Holocaust, the communal riots and the partition: *Don't resist; don't run away; don't try to save yourself; let the other party kill you, or rape you; face it all with equanimity; and so on… it's too crazy to be expounded!* Maybe, he manufactured his brand of absurd, illogical non-violence to keep justifying his position.

What if a sane person countered: It is far more unethical, immoral, unprincipled, unbecoming, silly, idiotic, moronic, and cowardly to let the violator, that is, the violence-perpetrator violate without doing all one can to not only save oneself, but to teach the violator a befitting violent lesson of his life-time, lest he be encouraged to repeat such acts. Firm resistance, fight-for-the-right-cause, meet-violence-with-double-the-violence-lest-the-violent-do-a-repeat are the hallmarks of a sane, brave, deterrent policy; and not the passive, disgusting, cowardly Gandhian surrender, which is downright unethical and immoral.

Gandhi should perhaps have pondered on the following:

Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them… The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.

—Frederick Douglass (1818–1895)

A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves.

—Edward R Murrow (1908 – 1965)

Gandhi generally exhorted people not so much as not to fight, as to get killed! During the Quit India call his message was:

> "Satyagrahis must go out to die, not to live. They must seek the face of death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive. Karenge ya marenge."{CWMG/V-83/208}

Contrast the above with what General George Patton told on 31 May 1944 while addressing the US 6th Armoured Division:

> "No dumb bastard ever won a war by going out and dying for his country. He won it by making some other dumb bastard die for his

country.”

{ 16 }

Gandhi, Muslims & Appeasement

Secularism & Religious Appeasement

Secular doctrine mandates separation of the state from religion. It is the principle of the separation of government institutions and government functionaries mandated to represent the state from religious institutions, religious authorities, and religious functionaries. It's a belief that religion should not play a role in the government. A secular state is neutral in the matters of different religious beliefs.

What is religious appeasement, and why is it communal, non-secular and unethical? Religious appeasement of a given religious group is favouring them over other religious groups, and/or pandering to their unjustified demands, and/or providing them facilities not provided to others, and/or not applying the same yardstick to them as are applied to others, and/or ignoring their transgressions and excesses, and/or allowing them to do what is repugnant to others, when other groups are barred from doing what is repugnant to them.

Religious appeasement is indulged in by groups and individuals, mainly political parties and political leaders, to gain an unfair advantage, and to enhance their vote-bank. In India, the religious appeasement has been almost exclusively towards the religious minorities comprising the followers of the latter two proselytizing, supremacist Abrahamic religions, Christians and Muslims, particularly the Muslims.

The trend of appeasement of Muslims started with Gandhi, was vigorously followed-up by Nehru in the post-independent India, thereafter by the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty in the Congress, and now by almost all regional or semi-national political parties, like TMC, SP, BSP, RJD, NCP, DMK, AIADMK, TRS, TDP, JDS, etc.

Muslims, Gandhi & Situation in India

Muslims used to think (however wrongly—because Marathas and others had already come to dominate) that they were the rulers from whom the British had snatched the power, and hence it is they who should inherit the

power back from the British, or, at least, command as much power as the Hindus. Muslims were afraid of democracy that would have given the majority-dominance to the Hindus. They therefore desired their separate quota and areas of domination. They wanted their concerns to be addressed during the British rule itself, not wanting to get it postponed till after independence, for they were not confident Hindu leaders would do justice with them. Gandhi and other leaders either did not quite appreciate this critical Muslim concern, and therefore did little to address the issue; or, they deliberately wanted to ignore or ride rough-shod on the matter. Further, in their arrogance, Gandhi and other Congress leaders felt they represented the entire India, including Muslims.

Muslims the world over are driven by the Islamic concept of Dar-al-Islam and Dar-al-Harb, and when driven by and excited on their religious passion, co-operation with Kaffir Gandhi was irrelevant for them. Besides, given the violent and bloody history of Islam, how could non-violence and satyagraha appeal to Muslims?

While Gandhi kept indulging in his wishful thinking of Hindu-Muslim unity, the clever British kept widening the Hindu-Muslim fault-lines. Of course, after the overwhelming evidence of the Moplah and Kohat anti-Hindu riots, Gandhi could not help remarking thus: "*The thirteen hundred years of imperialist expansion has made the Musulmans fighters as a body. They are therefore bullies and aggressive. The Hindu has an age old civilisation. He is essentially non-violent… [Hindus] have become docile to the point of cowardice. This vice is, therefore, a natural excrescence of gentleness… The Muslim as a rule is a bully, and the Hindu as a rule is a coward…*"{MKG5}

Gandhi missed the critical point that it was the universal experience of centuries that strong counter-violence, or even the ability for befitting counter-violence, was the most effective deterrence against violence. Did Gandhi, Nehru and the Congress call upon the Hindus to be so strong, and to so unite and mobilise their strength (not for harming others), that the Muslims would be forced to think hundred times before getting violent? No! Gandhi only talked of non-violence that proved counter-productive.

Religion in Politics

Gandhi hoped to serve the moral and ethical ends by injecting religion into politics, little realising that he was thereby giving a wide berth to

religious fundamentalists. Please read the earlier details on the Khilafat Movement. By involving himself with the Khilafists, most of whose leaders were fundamentalist Muslims and Maulvis, Gandhi actually paved the way for communal politics, Partition, and Pakistan.

Gandhi would often claim and repeat that religion only unites, even though his claims flew in the face of historical evidence.

Gandhi's Defective Position

Gandhi's outlook and the positions that he took on various matters concerning Muslims and Pakistan clearly bring out the following:

(a)Gandhi had not really studied or understood the Islamic religious and political history.

(b)Though Gandhi had claimed to have studied Islamic scriptures like Koran, he had not really understood or grasped them, nor analysed them in their right perspective.

(c)When Gandhi claimed all religions were essentially same, or taught the same thing, he had not accounted for the proselytizing and supremacist aspects of Islam and Christianity, and was seemingly innocent of their grave political aspects.

(d)Though Gandhi claimed himself to be a religious person, he had not really understood what the various religions were all about, and how they were linked to nation and politics.

(e)Gandhi failed to grasp the realities about Islam, Partition and Pakistan, and acted in a way that (without wanting so) effectively amounted to harming the position of India, Indians and non-Muslims.

However, Gandhi was impelled to admit at various times: "*The Muslims take less interest* [in the country's political life]… *because they do not yet regard India as their home of which they must feel proud… The Muslims are religious fanatics*.{Gill/175} *They say Islam is the brotherhood of man. As a matter of fact, it is a brotherhood of Muslims…* [1927:] *I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands and has been transferred to God's hands alone*.{CWMG/Vol-38/12}"

It was not really a hyphenated problem of Hindu–Muslim. It was actually a hyphenated problem of Muslim–Islam. The problem lay in the very nature of Islam and Islamic history. Gandhi, with his simplistic superficial understanding, was unable to fathom it. Or, not having the guts to face up to the truth, he preferred to muddle the issue.

Illustrative Cases of Gandhian Appeasement

There are far too many examples. We would take up only a few by way of illustration.

Swaraj conditional upon Hindu-Muslim Unity

Gandhi claimed it was axiomatic that without the Hindu-Muslim unity there could be no Swaraj. This he propounded at the very beginning of his career as a freedom-fighter in India. What was the ultimate actual result in 1947, after over 30 years of Gandhi's Muslim-appeasement for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity and amity? There was swaraj; but there was Pakistan; and rather than Hindu-Muslim unity, there was deep-rooted, irreconcilable Hindu-Muslim enmity; and rather than Hindu-Muslim amity, there was barbaric mayhem!

Rootless, ungrounded, unresearched, thoughtless ideas flying in the face of history or even current milieu, and based purely on wishful thinking, on enhancing one's own humanitarian profile, on projecting oneself as a universal leader, a Mahatma, even at the expense of others, can never yield the desired results—it can only lead to failure like it did.

When Gandhi claimed, "I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without.. unity between the Hindus and Musalmans of India…"; as a responsible leader he should have also deliberated on the alternate scenario where the Muslims don't show any eagerness for unity, and prefer to remain separate. In other words, he should have found practical answer to the question, "What if Muslims are not interested in unity with the Hindus?" His failure to be realistic cost India dear.

Precedence for Khilafat over Swaraj

At the outset, it was a totally wrong move on the part of Gandhi to support the Khilafat Movement—details in chapter-5. But, as if that was not enough, he went on to state: "*I would gladly ask for postponement of Swaraj if thereby we could advance the interests of Khilafat*."{BK2/81} Khilafat Movement, rather than bringing Hindus and Muslims together, did the reverse.

Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks, Aug-Sep 1921

Over a thousand years back a horde of Muslim traders landed at the coast of Malabar. In keeping with the Hindu traditions of kindness and

generosity, the then Hindu king allowed them to settle, carry on their trade, and build mosques. In Malayalam 'Mopilla' means 'a bridegroom' or 'a great child'. Hindus endearingly called those incoming Muslims 'Mopilla'; and their descendants came to be called as 'Moplah' Muslims.

Forgetting the favours done to their forefathers by the Hindus, the Moplah Muslims, rather than targeting the British responsible for defeating the Ottomans, butchered the Hindus, and perpetrated indescribable atrocities on them in the terrible Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks in 1921 in the Malabar region of Kerala: rape, loot, killings, forcible conversions, and driving Hindus out of their homes. The hatred spread through the mosques; and the fiery speeches of Ali brothers and other Khilafat leaders (Gandhi's close colleagues then) added fuel to the fire. If one reads the horrid details of what the Muslims did then, one would find that what the ISIS has been doing in current times does have a history.

Brutality of the Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks

Sir Sankaran Nair wrote:

> "*For sheer brutality on women, I do not remember anything in history to match the Malabar rebellion*. It broke out about the 20th of August. Even by the 6th of September the results were dreadful…"{Nair}

Stated Viceroy Lord Reading in his speech: "A few Europeans and many Hindus have been murdered, communications have been sacked, houses of Europeans and Hindus were burnt. The result had been temporary collapse of civilian government. European and Hindu refugees of all classes are concentrated at Calicut and it is satisfactory to note that they are safe there. Those who are responsible for this grave outbreak of violence and crime must be brought to the justice and made to suffer the punishment of the guilty..."{PG1}

The women of Malabar, led by the senior Rani of Nilambur, petitioned the Vicerine Lady Reading:

> "…your Ladyship is not fully appraised of all the horrors and atrocities perpetrated by the fiendish rebels of the many wells and tanks filled up with the mutilated, but often only half dead bodies of our nearest and dearest ones who refused to abandon the faith of our fathers; of pregnant women cut to pieces and left on the roadsides and in the jungles, with the unborn babe protruding from the

mangled corpse; of our innocent and helpless children torn from our arms and done to death before our eyes and of our husbands and fathers tortured, flayed and burnt alive; of our hapless sisters forcibly carried away from the midst of kith and kin and subjected to every shame and outrage which the vile and brutal imagination of these inhuman hell-hounds could conceive of; of thousands of our homesteads reduced to cinder mounds out of sheer savagery and a wanton spirit of destruction; of our places of worship desecrated and destroyed and of the images of the deity shamefully insulted by putting the entrails of slaughtered cows where flower garlands used to lie, or else smashed to pieces; of the wholesale looting of hard earned wealth of generations reducing many who were formerly rich and prosperous to publicly beg for a piece or two in the streets of Calicut, to buy salt or chilly or betel leaf—rice being mercifully provided by the various relief agencies. These are not fables…"{Sans}

A conference held at Calicut presided over by the Zamorin of Calicut, the Ruler of Malabar issued a resolution:

"…That the conference views with indignation and sorrow the attempts made at various quarters by interested parties to ignore or minimise the crimes committed by the rebels such as: brutally dishonouring women, flaying people alive, wholesale slaughter of men, women and children, burning alive entire families, forcibly converting people in thousands and slaying those who refused to get converted, throwing half dead people into wells and leaving the victims to struggle for escape till finally released from their suffering by death, burning a great many and looting practically all Hindu and Christian houses in the disturbed areas in which even Moplah women and children took part and robbed women of even the garments on their bodies, in short reducing the whole non-Muslim population to abject destitution, cruelly insulting the religious sentiments of the Hindus by desecrating and destroying numerous temples in the disturbed areas, killing cows within the temple precincts putting their entrails on the holy image and hanging skulls on the walls and the roofs."{MR}

A Committee of Distinguished Citizens comprising KP Keshava Menon, Secretary, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, TV Mohammed, Secretary, Ernad Khilafat Committee, K Madhavan Nair, Secretary, Calicut

District Congress Committee, K Karanakura Menon, and KV Gopal Menon, appointed to tour the affected areas, stated, inter alia, in their fact-finding report:

> "Truth is infinitely of more paramount importance than Hindu Muslim unity or Swaraj and therefore we tell the Maulana Sahib and his co-religionists and India's revered leader Mahatma Gandhi—if he too is unaware of the events here—that atrocities committed by the Moplahs on the Hindus are unfortunately too true and that there is nothing in the deeds of Moplah rebels which a true non-violent, non-co-operator can congratulate them for... Their wanton and unprovoked attack on the Hindus, the all but wholesale looting of their houses...; the forcible conversion of Hindus…; the brutal murder of inoffensive Hindus, men, women and children in cold blood without the slightest reason except that they are 'Kaffirs'...; the desecration and burning of Hindu temples, the outrage on Hindu women and their forcible conversion and marriage by Moplahs…"{Nair/137}

Wrote Ms Annie Besant: "It would be well if Mr. Gandhi could be taken into Malabar to see with his own eyes the ghastly horrors which have been created by the preaching of himself and his 'loved brothers' Mohammad and Shaukat Ali…"{AB}

Statements by the Muslim Khilafat Leaders

Khilafat leaders passed resolutions after resolution congratulating Moplahs for the brave fight they were carrying on for the sake of religion. {Mak/102}

Significantly, Gandhi never called upon Muslim leaders to condemn the brutality.

Gandhi's inexplicable comments on various occasions were:

"The Moplahs are among the bravest in the land. They are God fearing. Their bravery must be transformed into purest gold. I feel sure, that once they realize the necessity of non-violence for the defence of the faith for which they have hitherto taken life, they will follow it without flinching."{CWMG/Vol-24/190}

"…Why is it 'strange' that I consider the Government solely responsible for the trouble? They could have avoided the trouble by settling the Khilafat

question, they could have avoided it by allowing non-co-operators to take the message of non-violence to the Moplahs. The outbreak would not have taken place if the Collector had consulted the religious sentiment of the Moplahs. I do indeed accuse the Government of punishing the Moplahs after they have done the mischief instead of protecting the Hindus from Moplah outrage…

"…Hindus must find out the causes of Moplah fanaticism. They will find that they are not without blame. They have hitherto not cared for the Moplah. They have either treated him as a serf or dreaded him. They have not treated him as a friend and neighbour, to be reformed and respected. It is no use now becoming angry with the Moplahs or the Mussulmans in general…"{CWMG/Vol-26/27}

"[Commending/defending Maulana Hasrat Mohani who had defended the Muslim attackers, Gandhi wrote] …Maulana Hasrat Mohani is one of our most courageous men. He is strong and unbending. He is frank to a fault. In his insensate hatred of the English Government and possibly even of Englishmen in general, he has seen nothing wrong in anything that the Moplahs have done. Everything is fair in love and war with the Maulana. He has made up his mind that the Moplahs have fought for their religion. And that fact (in his estimation) practically absolves the Moplahs from all blame... I advise my Malabar friends not to mind the Maulana. In spite of his amazingly crude views about religion, there is no greater nationalist nor a greater lover of Hindu-Muslim unity than the Maulana. His heart is sound and superior to his intellect, which, in my humble opinion, has suffered aberration…"{CWMG/Vol-26/25}

Handing out atrociously infuriating prescription of non-violence for the Hindus to die "bravely", Gandhi stated the following absurdity: "…I see nothing impossible in asking the Hindus to develop courage and strength to die before accepting forced conversion. I was delighted to be told that there were Hindus who did prefer the Moplah hatchet to forced conversion. If these have died without anger or malice, they have died as truest Hindus because they were truest among Indians and men... Even so is it more necessary for a Hindu to love the Moplah and the Mussalman more, when the latter is likely to injure him or has already injured him... Hindu help is at the disposal of the Mussalmans, because it is the duty of the Hindus, as neighbours, to give it…"{CWMG/Vol-26/26}

For Gandhi, no price was too great for appeasing Muslims. And, the price for Gandhi's Hindu-Muslim unity was always to be paid by the Hindus.

Without doubt, the Moplah Rebellion was the result of the 'Khilafat & Non-Cooperation Movement' (KNCM) launched by Gandhi jointly with the Muslim leaders. So, in a way, Gandhi was indirectly responsible for the ghastly fate that befell the unfortunate Hindus in Malabar at the hands of the Moplahs.

Statements by Dr Ambedkar on Gandhi's Comments

Wrote Dr BR Ambedkar{Amb3}:

"…The blood-curdling atrocities committed by the Moplas in Malabar against the Hindus were indescribable. All over Southern India, a wave of horrified feeling had spread among the Hindus of every shade of opinion, which was intensified when certain Khilafat leaders were so misguided as to pass resolutions of 'congratulations to the Moplas on the brave fight they were conducting for the sake of religion'. Any person could have said that this was too heavy a price for Hindu-Moslem unity. But Mr. Gandhi was so much obsessed by the necessity of establishing Hindu-Moslem unity that he was prepared to make light of the doings of the Moplas and the Khilafats who were congratulating them. He [Gandhi] spoke of the Moplas as the 'brave God-fearing Moplas who were fighting for what they consider as religion and in a manner which they consider as religious'…

"Speaking of the Muslim silence over the Mopla atrocities Mr. Gandhi told the Hindus: 'The Hindus must have the courage and the faith to feel that they can protect their religion in spite of such fanatical eruptions. A verbal disapproval by the Mussalmans of Mopla madness is no test of Mussalman friendship… My belief is that the Hindus as a body have received the Mopla madness with equanimity and that the cultured Mussalmans are sincerely sorry of the Mopla's perversion of the teaching of the Prophet [What presumption in the face of gross cruelty!]'…"{Amb3}

Nehru mysteriously overlooked the brutality of the Moplah anti-Hindu attacks in his autobiography published in 1936. He wrote a paragraph on the

Moplah rebellion{JN2/86-87}, but mentioned not a word on their anti-Hindu brutality!

Kohat Anti-Hindu Attacks

The 1924 Kohat riots were major anti-Hindu attacks in British India. During 9–11 September 1924, over 155 Hindus and Sikhs were killed by Muslims in the Muslim-majority Kohat (not very far from Rawalpindi) in NWFP. The entire Hindus and Sikh population had to flee the town to save their lives.

Even earlier, for many years, the local Muslims were in the habit of abducting Hindu women, married as well as unmarried, and converting them to Islam. Upon complaint, even if the court decided in favour of the Hindu husband, the Muslims would not agree to returning the wife, considering her connection with her Hindu husband illegitimate, and claiming it as their religious duty not to let the woman who had been converted to Islam to go to her Hindu husband!

What was Gandhi's remedy? A zero-effect 21-day fast in October 1924, and an irrelevant advice:

> "I can only suggest solutions of questions in terms of Swaraj. I would, therefore, sacrifice present individual gain for future national gain. Even if Mussalmans refuse to make approaches and even if the Hindus of Kohat may have to lose their all, I should still say that they are able to live at peace with the latter without the protection of the British bayonet…"{MKG6/343}

Rather than condemning the anti-Hindu/Sikh attacks by Muslims, the Congress, true to its irrational and blind Muslim appeasement policy, looked for an escape route: while it deplored the incident, it requested the Muslims to assure safety to their Hindu brethren! Motilal Nehru moved an inconsequential resolution on the matter, and himself said: "The resolution is a non-controversial one and commits the Congress to nothing."{Mak/105}

Rather than honestly stating the bitter truth and condemning the Muslim attacks, Gandhi chose to indirectly absolve the Muslims by doing a balancing act between the Hindus-Sikhs and the Muslims, and blame the government in his speech at Rawalpindi on 9 December 1924:

> "The truth is that the tragedy at Kohat would not have occurred and Hindus would not have run away if the Government had done its duty... The bandits on the frontier rob anyone and everyone; hence it

is difficult to assert that all this storm was raised for looting the Hindus only. I would, however, affirm that the looting and arson was perpetrated not by the people but by the officials of the frontier... I would not be sorry if this Government collapses and then Hindus and Muslims fight a civil war and loot each other to their heart's content. As long as there are rancour, weakness and fear in the hearts of both the communities, they will fight each other and cause rivers of blood to flow... I would say only this to you, you should prepare yourself to die with Rama's name on your lips if the Government is furious with you and incites the Muslims... I would ask the frontier Hindus in a locality with 95 per cent of Muslims never to seek the advice of the Government. You should return only if the frontier Muslims request you to do so, if they desire to take you back after assuring the perpetual preservation of your life and honour. You have been staying there for many generations. How can you stay there without their consent?... How can you stay there in peace and comfort without their co-operation and goodwill? No Government can guarantee safety against a majority community. Even when swaraj is attained, and Shaukat Ali is the Commander-in-Chief and I am the Viceroy, if somebody were to ask me to protect a community, I would say that I could not protect it from a community comprising 95 per cent of the population... That is the only way to stay in the frontier with honour and goodwill. I wish to say to you one thing before leaving. You should tell the Government that you would not move from here as long as you do not come to terms with the Muslims and they do not invite and conduct you there..."{CWMG/Vol-29/432}

Gandhi should have understood the nature of the AIML leadership when Shaukat Ali gave his report on the Kohat riots after visiting it in early 1925 that differed from Gandhi's{RG3/95}. Much later, Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali's brother, had said he prayed for the day when he would convert Gandhi to Islam!{RG3/100}

1939 Anti-Hindu Attacks in Sindh

Dr Choitram Gidwani, Vice President of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee, telegrammed Gandhi in October 1939: "Riots, loot, incendiarism in Sukkur district [Sindh] villages. Hindus mercilessly

butchered. Women and girls raped and kidnapped. Hindu life, property unsafe. Situation most critical. Government policy not firm. Pray send enquiry committee immediately to see situation personally…"{URL85}

Gandhi's response, which can only be termed as irresponsible: "Now the only effective way in which I can help the Sindhis (is) to show them the way of non-violence. But that cannot be learnt in a day. The other way is the way the world has followed hitherto, i.e. armed defence of the life and property. God helps only those who help themselves. The Sindhis are no exception. They must learn the art of defending themselves against robbers, raiders and the like. If they do not feel safe and are too weak to defend themselves, they should leave the place which has proved too inhospitable to live in…"{URL85}

Why are you a leader if you are unwilling to take concrete steps to save the innocents?

Murder of Swami Shraddhanand

Swami Shraddhanand (1856–1926), also known as Mahatma Munshi Ram Vij, was an Indian educationist, writer and an Arya Samaj missionary, who also published newspapers. He had established Gurukul Kangri University at Haridwar.

After the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh in 1919, when none had the courage to conduct the Congress Session at Amritsar, Swami Shraddhanand took the initiative and did the needful. He was among the first to sign the oath for participating in the Gandhian satyagraha movement, and supported Gandhi. Once, when he led a group of Satyagrahis in Ghantaghar area at Delhi, and the British soldiers were ordered to shoot them, he bravely challenged them to "*first shoot me in my chest*"—the soldiers didn't dare.

When he was lying in his sick bed, Shraddhanand was shot dead by a Muslim fanatic Abdul Rashid on 23rd December 1926. Despite Gandhi's bonhomie with Muslim leaders, no Muslim leader condemned the attack. Indeed, the Muslims rejoiced over it. *Shockingly, rather than denouncing the gruesome murder, and demanding punishment for the perpetrator, Gandhi wrote a letter to the murderer, addressing him as "Pyare Bhai Rashid" (Dear Brother Rashid); and tried to establish cordial relations with him*. Moving a condolence motion on Swami Shraddhanand at the Guwahati session of the Congress on 25 December 1926, Gandhi said: "…*I have called Abdul Rashid a brother and I repeat it. I do not even regard him*

as guilty of Swamiji's murder. Guilty indeed are all those who excited feelings of hatred against one another…"{Wiki2}

India being then under the British rule, and not under the Gandhi-Nehru "secular" rule, Abdul Rashid was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. Not the one to keep quiet on the "injustice", *secular–appeaser Gandhi promptly petitioned the Viceroy for clemency to the murderer*—the petition was, however, rejected, and Rashid was hanged to death. Gandhi never similarly petitioned the Viceroy for clemency to Bhagat Singh & Co.

Many years later Gandhi had expressed his shock that the murderers of noted leaders like Mahasay Rajpal, Bholanath Sen and Swami Shraddhanand by Muslim fanatics were looked upon as martyrs by Muslim leaders like Fazli Hassan, Muhammad Iqbal, and others. Fault was not theirs, fault was Gandhi's that he refused to grasp the obvious—the way Islam was practised by the Muslims through the centuries, and India's own terrible experience of over a millennium.

Recalling Muslims

On 15 November 1947, addressing the AICC, Gandhi demanded that the Muslims who had fled India "*be called back and restored to peaceful possession and enjoyment of all that they had had, but been forced to abandon while running away*."

That is, Gandhi wanted the Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan to be invited back, and handed back their property which had since been allocated to the Hindu refugees from Pakistan; without, repeat, without the reciprocal condition that Pakistan do the same in respect of the Hindu and Sikh refugees.

What could be more unjust and absurd? But, Gandhi's definition of his lopsided-secularism and "Brand Mahatma" demanded that Muslims be favoured over non-Muslims.

Muslim League's Direct Action (Riots), 1946

Patel had stated to Sir Richard Stafford Cripps on 15 December 1946: "If strong action had been taken or allowed to be taken, when Direct Action Day was fixed by the Muslim League, all this colossal loss of life and property and the blood-curling events would not have happened. The Viceroy took the contrary view and every action of his since the Great

Calcutta Killing has been in the direction of encouraging the Muslim League and putting pressure on us towards appeasement."

Gandhi's intervention in the riots that tended to equate the two sides—Hindus and Muslims—was dubious, when the riots were actually started and fuelled by the Muslim League provincial government, then in power.

Noakhali Killings, October 1946

The Muslim League's Direct Action (anti-Hindu attacks) in Calcutta from 16 August 1946 onwards was extended to Noakhali district in the Chittagong Division in East Bengal in October 1946. The Muslim community perpetrated a series of massacres, rapes, abductions and forced conversions of Hindus, desecration of temples, and looting and arson of Hindu properties in October-November 1946. The carnage came to be known as the Noakhali genocide.

What happened in Noakhali was far worse than the Calcutta carnage that preceded it! About 5000 Hindus were killed, hundreds of Hindu women were raped, thousands of Hindu men and women were forcibly converted to Islam, and about 75,000 survivors had to be sheltered in temporary relief camps, even as about 50,000 Hindus remained marooned in the affected areas under the cruel Muslim surveillance, needing permits from the Muslim leaders. Even Jiziya, the Muslim protection tax for Dhimmis, was levied on Hindus.

Gandhi camped in Noakhali for about four months to restore peace and communal amity. But, he failed.

Muslim League leader AK Fazlul Huq, addressing a rally in February 1947, claimed that Gandhi's presence in Noakhali had harmed Islam enormously, and had created Hindu–Muslim bitterness. Rather than feeling ashamed of their acts, the Muslims resented Gandhi's stay in Noakhali, and gradually their opposition to Gandhi assumed vulgar forms, like they began to dirty the route Gandhi would take. A goat that Gandhi had brought along with him was stolen by Muslims—they killed, and ate it.

Gandhi himself admitted later that the situation in Noakhali was such the Hindus should either leave or perish! The question is what did the Congress as an organisation, and Gandhi as its top leader do for over three decades that they couldn't even raise capable, well-organised, well-funded, and well-equipped self-defence units across the country to save innocents, considering the recurrence of such cases? Leadership is not mere talking. It

has a responsibility for the safety of people. Gandhi's advocacy of non-violent resistance to violence was not only absurd, irrational, and illogical; it was actually a case of shirking leadership responsibilities.

In retaliation of the anti-Hindu attacks by Muslims in Noakhali and Tripura, there were riots against Muslims in Bihar in 1946. Notably, Nehru (Premier of the Interim Govt then) wanted the ravaging Hindu mobs to be bombed![{Sar/237}] The riots were finally quelled by the army. Nehru had expressed no similar sentiment at the Muslim butchery in Noakhali.

Ambedkar on Gandhi's Appeasement of Muslims

Wrote Ambedkar{Amb3} [*Author's remarks are in italics in square brackets, and are NOT part of Ambedkar's writing*]:

"…He [Gandhi] has never called the Muslims to account even when they have been guilty of gross crimes against Hindus…

"It is a notorious fact that many prominent Hindus who had offended the religious susceptibilities of the Muslims either by their writings or by their part in the Shuddhi movement have been murdered by some fanatic Musalmans. First to suffer was Swami Shraddhanand, who was shot by Abdul Rashid on 23rd December 1926 when he was lying in his sick bed. This was followed by the murder of Lala Nanakchand, a prominent Arya Samajist of Delhi… Nathuramal Sharma was murdered by Abdul Qayum in September 1934. It was an act of great daring. For Sharma was stabbed to death in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner of Sind where he was seated awaiting the hearing of his appeal against his conviction under Section 195, I. P. C., for the publication of a pamphlet on the history of Islam. Khanna, the Secretary of the Hindu Sabha, was severely assaulted in 1938 by the Mahomedans after the Session of the Hindu Maha Sabha held in Ahmedabad and very narrowly escaped death…

"This is, of course, a very short list and could be easily expanded. But whether the number of prominent Hindus killed by fanatic Muslims is large or small matters little. What matters is the attitude of those who count, towards these murderers. The murderers paid the penalty of law where law is enforced. The leading Moslems, however, never condemned these criminals. On the contrary, they were hailed as religious martyrs and agitation was carried on for clemency being shown to them. As an illustration of this attitude, one may refer to Mr. Barkat Alli, a Barrister of Lahore, who argued the appeal of Abdul Qayum. He went to the length of saying that Qayum was not guilty of murder of Nathuramal because his act was justifiable by the law of the Koran. This attitude of the Moslems is quite understandable. What is not understandable is the attitude of Mr. Gandhi…

"Mr. Gandhi has been very punctilious in the matter of condemning any and every act of violence and has forced the Congress, much against its will to condemn it. But Mr. Gandhi has never protested against such murders.

Not only have the Musalmans not condemned these outrages but even Mr. Gandhi has never called upon the leading Muslims to condemn them. He has kept silent over them. Such an attitude can be explained only on the ground that Mr. Gandhi was anxious to preserve Hindu-Moslem unity and did not mind the murders of a few Hindus, if it could be achieved by sacrificing their lives… [*An inexplicable 'Mahatman' logic where condoning a wrongful act leads to its extinction, and not in its increase and encouragement*.]

"This attitude to excuse the Muslims any wrong, lest it should injure the cause of unity [in which Gandhi never ever succeeded even after over three decades of efforts], is well illustrated by what Mr. Gandhi had to say in the matter of the Mopla [Moplah Anti-Hindu] riots…

"The following instances of Muslim intransigence, over which Mr. Gandhi kept mum are recorded by Swami Shraddhanand…: 'As regards the removal of untouchability it has been authoritatively ruled several times that it is the duty of Hindus to expiate for their past sins and non-Hindus should have nothing to do with it But the Mahomedan and the Christian Congressmen have openly revolted against the dictum of Mr. Gandhi at Vaikorn and other places. Even such an unbiased leader as Mr. Yakub Hassan, presiding over a meeting called to present an address to me at Madras, openly enjoined upon Musalmans the duty of converting all the untouchables in India to Islam.' But Mr. Gandhi said nothing by way of remonstrance either to the Muslims or to the Christians…"{Amb3}

Ambedkar on Communal Riots

Wrote Ambedkar{Amb3}: "…The third thing that is noticeable is the adoption by the Muslims of the gangster's method in politics. The riots are a sufficient indication that gangsterism has become a settled part of their strategy in politics…

"…Such is the record of Hindu-Muslim relationship from 1920 to 1940. Placed side by side with the frantic efforts made by Mr. Gandhi to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity, the record makes most painful and heart-rending reading. It would not be much exaggeration to say that it is a record of twenty years of civil war between the Hindus and the Muslims in India, interrupted by brief intervals of armed peace…"{Amb3}

{ 17 }

GANDHI, DALITS & CASTE-SYSTEM

I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality.
—Mahatma Gandhi
(Then, why did Gandhi advocate varnashramdharma?)

Decades before Gandhi came on the scene, Dayanand Saraswati (1824–83) had decried caste-system while setting up Arya Samaj. Injunction of Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) was:

> "Go to the untouchables, the cobblers, the sweepers and others of their kind, and tell them, 'You are the soul of the Nation, and in you lies infinite energy which can revolutionise the world.'… Go and found schools among them…"

Tilak had stated: "If God were to tolerate Untouchability, I would not recognise him as God at all…"

Gandhi's Notions on Caste-System

Gandhi believed in the caste-system, and defended it—he was only opposed to the practice of untouchability. Gandhi believed that if you take away caste, nothing is left of Hinduism—showed how little Gandhi understood the essentials of Hinduism!

Gandhi said at various times [words in square-brackets are by the author, not by Gandhi]:

> "Varna means the determination of a man's occupation before he is born… In Varna system no man has any liberty to choose his occupation… The law of varna means that everyone shall follow as a matter of dharma—duty—the hereditary calling of his forefathers… *I consider the four* [caste] *divisions to be fundamental, natural and essential… It is not a human invention* [the caste-system] *but an immutable law of nature, the statement of a tendency that is ever present and at work like the Newton's Laws of Gravitation* [!!!]… I believe that if Hindu society has been able to stand it is because it is founded on the caste system… *The seeds of swaraj are to be found in the caste system*. Different castes are like different sections of a military division. [The 'Apostle of Non-violence' liked to give military analogies, and felt happy at being called a dictator!] Each division is working for the good of the whole… *A community which can create the caste system must be said to possess unique powers of organisation…* I believe everybody is born in this world with certain natural tendencies. Every person is born with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of these limitations the law of varna was deduced… There is nothing to prevent the Shudra from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities of service. [*This is, the Shudra, despite acquiring knowledge and other skills, must stick to his hereditary occupation —what could be more unjust and cruel!*] [*As per Gandhi yet another merit of the caste-system was that it*] avoided all unworthy competition… What is the system of varnashrama [caste-system] but a means of harmonising the differences between high and low, as well as between capital and labour…"{Amb2}{Gill/98}

Gandhi even went to the extent of saying:

> "The Shudra who only serves [the upper castes] as a matter of religious duty, and who will never own any property, who indeed had *not even the ambition to own anything, is deserving of thousand obeisance. The very Gods will shower down flowers on him*."{Amb2}

Gandhi could perhaps have simultaneously asked the rich caste-Hindus to partially sacrifice the lure of the lucre and qualify for obeisance and a few flowers!

Said Gandhi in 1916:

> "I have devoted much thought to the subject of the caste system and come to the conclusion that Hindu society cannot dispense with it, that it lives on because of the discipline of caste."{CWMG/Vol-15/226}

Gandhi also wrote in 1916:

> "The caste system is a perfectly natural institution. In our country, it has been invested with a religious meaning; elsewhere, its utility was not fully realized and so it remained a mere form, with the result that the countries concerned did not derive much benefit from it. These being my views, *I am opposed to the movements which are being carried on for the destruction of the system*."{CWMG/Vol-15/258}

Being favourably disposed towards the varnashrama, all that Gandhi sought to do was to merge the multitude of castes or varnas and sub-castes into the four major foundational varnas/castes; and, as for the outcastes, that is, the untouchables, he wanted them merged in the lowest tier, that is, into Shudras.

Gandhi's bizarre logic and backward-looking, absurd vision: Gandhi was of the opinion that if people inherited their occupations at birth, then selfishness, competitiveness and individuality would vanish. Casteist, backward village-India was not his nightmare, it actually suited his vision for the future—he loved the primitive; what indeed was his nightmare was India as a modern, industrialized, westernized nation-state! That his reactionary, anti-modern, and irrational views seemed shocking, bizarre and offensive to many right-thinking people didn't seem to matter to him—Gandhi was too full of himself.

More of the above shocking absurdity: Wrote Gandhi (Dr Ambedkar's translation of Gandhi's article{Amb2} in Nava-Jivan, a Gujarati journal,

in1921-22):

> "(1) I believe that if Hindu Society has been able to stand it is because it is founded on the caste system…
>
> "(2) The seeds of swaraj are to be found in the caste system. Different castes are like different sections of military division. Each division is working for the good of the whole….
>
> "(3) A community which can create the caste system must be said to possess unique power of organization…
>
> "(4) …Each caste can take the responsibility for the education of the children of the caste. Caste has a political basis…
>
> "(5) I believe that inter-dining or inter-marriage are not necessary for promoting national unity. That dining together creates friendship is contrary to experience...
>
> "(6) In India children of brothers do not inter-marry. Do they cease to love because they do not inter-marry?...
>
> "(7) Caste is another name for control. Caste puts a limit on enjoyment. Caste does not allow a person to transgress caste limits in pursuit of his enjoyment…
>
> "(8) To destroy caste system and adopt Western European social system means that Hindus must give up the principle of hereditary occupation which is the soul of the caste system. *Hereditary principle is an eternal principle*. *To change it is to create disorder*. I have no use for a Brahmin if I cannot call him a Brahmin for my life. It will be a chaos if every day a Brahmin is to be changed into a Shudra and a Shudra is to be changed into a Brahmin.
>
> "(9) The caste system is a natural order of society. In India it has been given a religious coating. Other countries not having understood the utility of the caste system, it existed only in a loose condition and consequently those countries have not derived from caste system the same degree of advantage which India has derived. *These being my views I am opposed to all those who are out to destroy the caste system…*"{Amb2}

Gandhi had opined that a village as a unit, with its harmonious caste-regulated [!!] organicism, was the natural unit of Indian society, and what's more, the natural form of Indian state and nation.{MM/158} *Ambedkar had*

retorted that a village was nothing but a sink of casteism and localism, and a den of ignorance, narrow mindedness and communalism.

Gandhi was full of praise for the Japanese qualities of unity, patriotism and bravery; but after the Japanese win over Russia in 1904-5, he opined that the Japan was not a suitable model for India, because India's varna-system restricted arms-bearing to only Kshatriyas. Said Gandhi:

> "India cannot rival Britain or Europe in force of arms. The British worship the war god and can all of them become… bearer of arms [but] the hundreds of millions in India can never carry arms… [because] the varnashrama is a necessary law of nature."{MM/159}

Gandhi had stated in 1920s: "*Prohibition against inter-marriage and inter-dining [among different castes] is essential for a rapid evolution of soul.*"{SG2/236}

Gandhi advanced an absurd logic that even if an untouchable got educated, or a person of one caste learnt the vocations and skills of another caste, he or she must, in practice, stick only to the vocations of his or her caste! The implication being that even if a person like Dr Ambedkar was learned, and had qualified himself in law and finance, he should not practice law, or manage finance, or be a leader, but should stick to his vocation of an untouchable!

By that logic, one wonders why Gandhi, the 'Apostle of Truth' and who believed in practising what one preaches, should not have been managing a provision store or some other shop, being a bania, rather than usurping the call of a brahmin or a kshatriya by being a political leader!

If Gandhi's words on the sanctity of castes, caste-based tendencies, and sticking to caste-based vocations, were to be taken as true one wonders how an untouchable Valmiki was born with a tendency that led to the composition of one of the greatest epics in the world—Ramayana. Or, why a non-Kshatriya Chandragupta Maurya became the greatest emperor of India. Or, why a bania Chandragupta Vikramaditya established the Golden Age of India. Or, looking to Gandhi's contemporaries, why was Dr BR Ambedkar the most learned—the greatest 'brahmin'.

Original Hindu Chaturvarna was as per the innate tendencies and competencies, and one could move from one varna to the other. Not understanding the real Hinduism, Gandhi swallowed the perverted practice

of Chaturvarna and Caste System based on birth, and irrationally defended the same.

Exasperated, Dr Ambedkar had commented thus on Gandhi's irrational arguments:

> "…The caste system has been defended by others. But this is the first time I have seen such an extraordinary if not a shocking argument [by Gandhi] used to support it. Even the orthodox may say, 'Save us from Mr. Gandhi'. It shows what a deep-dyed Hindu Mr. Gandhi is. He has outdone the most orthodox of orthodox Hindus. *It is not enough to say that it is [Gandhi's] an argument of a cave man. It is really an argument of a mad man*."{Amb6/4426}

Why Gandhi had such regressive views?

A reasonable person is baffled by Gandhi's regressive views on the caste-system, especially when he didn't mind himself being called a 'Mahatma'. Why didn't he live up to be a 'Mahatma'? It is not that those times were different. Many leaders in those times too were against both the caste-system and untouchability—for example, Lajpat Rai, Swami Shraddhanand, Bhai Parmanand, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh, RC Dutt, Lala Har Dayal, Veer Savarkar, and so on. Veer Savarkar considered caste-system indefensible, and believed its total demolition as a pre-condition for progress.

To understand the puzzle, it is worth factoring in the fact that Gandhi was less a 'Mahatma' and much, much more a politician seeking power. Caste-Hindus spread across thousands of cities, towns and villages had money, power, and clout. Gandhi's leadership depended upon their support. Rich and powerful Marwaris, who were steeped in casteism, were his financiers. He could not espouse a cause repugnant to the caste-Hindus. Dalits, on the other hand, were poor and powerless, and their support, or lack of it, meant little to Gandhi. Gandhi was no rebel or revolutionary. He was a deeply traditional and conservative person seeking political power. Gandhi's espousal of the caste-system, and his talking only of its one aspect of untouchability, lacked reason, logic, and conviction. Talking in favour of caste-system made him popular among the powerful caste-Hindus who thought similarly, and by talking only about untouchability he sought to become 'Mahatma'. It was a clever move that didn't cut any ice with the genuinely knowledgeable and rational people like Dr Ambedkar.

Gandhi's shocking action against Dr Khare

Dr Narayan Bhaskar Khare (1884–1970) was the President of the Central Provinces Provincial Congress Committee (CPPCC), Harijan Sewak Sangh, Nagpur and a member of the AICC for many years. Following the 1937 elections, Dr Khare became the Premier (as they were called then) of the Central Provinces (CP). He included in his cabinet one Mr Agnibhoj, well-qualified to be a minister, but an untouchable. In the CWC meeting on 26 July 1938 in Wardha charges of indiscipline were brought against Dr Khare. Wrote Dr Ambedkar in 'What the Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables':

> "In explaining what was behind this charge of indiscipline in forming a new ministry, Dr Khare openly said that *according to Mr Gandhi the act of indiscipline consisted in the inclusion of an Untouchable in the ministry*. Dr Khare also said that Mr Gandhi told him that it was wrong on his part to have raised such aspirations and ambitions in the Untouchables and it was such an act of bad judgement that he would never forgive him. This statement was repeatedly made by Dr Khare from platforms. Mr Gandhi has never contradicted it."{Amb2}

It is significant that through the decades no Dalit was ever made a member of the CWC by Gandhi.

Yet Another Shocker from Gandhi

In 1942 a Congress delegation of dalits approached Gandhi with a questionnaire seeking his reactions. Question-3 read: "3)Will you advise the Congress and the leaders of the various majority parties in the legislatures in the provinces to nominate the cabinet members from among the Scheduled Caste legislators who enjoy the confidence of the majority of Scheduled Caste members?" Gandhi responded: "I cannot. The principle is dangerous. Protection of its neglected classes should not be carried to an extent which will harm them and harm the country…"{CWMG/Vol-83/119}

Gandhi's Defective Approach to Untouchability Removal

Gandhi believed in the caste-system—he was only opposed to the practice of untouchability. But, Gandhi was opposed to the legislative route for the removal of untouchability. Why? He felt that would offend millions of caste Hindus, who regarded it as part of their religion. That millions of untouchables were getting offended by the caste Hindus on a daily basis apparently didn't seem to him to be an injustice intolerable enough to be removed without any further delay. He rather wanted to change the hearts of those who practised untouchability. Branded a 'Mahatma', it seems he could get away with any weird logic.

Ambedkar's Rational Views vs. Gandhi's Regressive Views

Said Ambedkar:

"The out-caste is a by-product of the caste system. There will be outcastes as long as there are castes. Nothing can emancipate the outcaste except the destruction of caste system. Nothing can help Hindus and ensure their survival in the coming struggle except the purging of Hindu faith of this odious and vicious dogma."

Responded Gandhi:

"…But when Dr Ambedkar wants to fight Varnashram [caste-system] itself, I cannot be in his camp, because I believe Varnashram to be an integral part of Hinduism."

Gandhi on Temple Entry

Prior to 1932, Gandhi was opposed to the temple-entry of untouchables. It was the Communal Award of 1932 (please see details elsewhere in this book) and his fear that the Dalits would make a break from the Hindu society that made him active towards what he termed as 'Harijans'.

Though Gandhi advocated temple-entry for all, he disapproved of untouchables claiming it as their right. When a satyagraha was sought to be launched in 1929 in the Bombay Presidency for temple entry, Gandhi opposed it saying that the instrument of satyagraha should only be used against foreigners! (Yet, Gandhi didn't mind fasting and doing Satyagraha to force the Poona Pact on Dr Ambedkar in 1932!)

Gandhi had said in 1930:

> "How is it possible that the Antyajas [untouchables] should have the right to enter all the existing temples? As long as the law of caste and ashram has the chief place in Hindu religion, to say that every Hindu can enter every temple is a thing that is not possible today."{Amb6/986}{PP/240}

Apparently, CTB Varma, the Maharaja of the Princely State of Travancore was more enlightened than Gandhi: he issued 'The Temple Entry Proclamation' in 1936 abolishing the ban on the so-called low-castes or avarnas from entering Hindu temples in his state. Taking the cue, similar proclamations were made in other parts of India. Notwithstanding the same, in practice, entry to the untouchables in the Guruvayur temple became a reality only upon independence.

Examples of Gandhi's Contradictory Positions

Guruvayur Temple-Entry Satyagraha

Guruvayur Temple-Entry Satyagraha was launched by K Kelappan (1889–1971: a reformer, freedom-fighter, educationist and journalist, also known as 'Kerala Gandhi') and others in 1931-32 to allow temple-entry into the famous Guruvayur Vishnu temple in Thrissur district of Kerala to all irrespective of caste, including dalits/untouchables.

On 18 September 1932 Kelappan announced he would undertake fast unto death to force the issue. Kelappan commenced his fast at the eastern gate of the Guruvayur temple. It created waves throughout India. One good result of the fast was that on 21 September 1932, the trustees of Sree Ramaswamy temple at Tali in Calicut decided to allow Harijans (dalits) to enter their temple.

After the Zamorin of Calicut, the authority responsible for the temple administration, requested Gandhi to advise Kelappan to postpone his fast, Gandhi commented that Kelappan had committed two errors. *One*: He should have had prior consultations with Gandhi on the fast—an "expert" in such matters! *Two*: He should have given the Zamorin reasonable notice of his intention to go on fast. Not doing so amounted to coercion in his fast. On 30 September 1932, Gandhi advised Kelappan to suspend his fast, and give 3-month notice to the temple authorities, after which, subject to Gandhi's consent, he would be free to resume fast, in case the temple should continue to be inaccessible to the low castes. Gandhi assured his share and responsibility in the Temple Entry Satyagraha at Guruvayur. Following Gandhi's words, Kelappan put an end to his fast on 2 October 1932{Shodh/185}, although, in his reply to Gandhi, he submitted that the ongoing year-long protest was itself sufficient notice; and that thereafter the whole burden of getting Kerala's temples opened for all would be on Gandhiji.

Gandhi had gone there to resolve the issue. Gandhi remonstrated with the agitators for being aggressive in their campaign, and showing disrespect to the Brahmins, ignoring the sensitivities of those Brahmins who found "*in their conscience the presence of untouchables objectionable*"!{MM}

Gandhi's solution? He proposed restricting temple-entry of the untouchables to specific timings, after which the temple could be ritually

purified. Gandhi:

> "The suggestion I made was this: During certain hours of the day, the temple should be thrown open to Harijans and to other Hindus, who have no objection to the presence of Harijans, and during certain other hours it should be reserved for those who have scruples against the entry of Harijans. There should be no difficulty, whatsoever, in accepting this suggestion, seeing that in connection with the Krithikai Ekadasi festival at Guruvayur, Harijans are allowed to enter side by side with other Hindus and then the idol of the temple undergoes purification. [Asked if his suggestion was that the temple might undergo purification daily after the entry of the Harijans, Mr. Gandhi replied:] Personally, I am opposed to purification at all. But if that would satisfy the conscience of objectors, I would personally raise no objection to purification…"{CWMG/Vol-58/349}

As expected, Gandhi's solution was rejected outright as insulting. Many leaders tried to persuade the Zamorin to do the needful, but to no avail. Gandhi then decided to settle the Temple-Entry question through a referendum. The referendum was conducted on 3 December 1932. Of the 20,163 persons who agreed to the recording of their opinion, 15,568 (77%) voted in favour of Temple Entry to dalits, 2579 (13%) against it, and the rest 10% remained neutral{Shodh/190}. The referendum clearly established that caste-Hindus were overwhelmingly in favour of the entry of dalits/untouchables into the temple.

But, did Gandhi accept the verdict of the referendum, and assumed responsibility for its implementation? No! Gandhi then insisted that unless 100% voted in favour, that is, unless all agreed, without exception, the temple gates should not be opened for the untouchables! The whole campaign eventually collapsed in exhaustion.{MM/xxiii-xxiv} {OM/106}

Meanwhile, two Bills called 'The Removal of Depressed Classes Religious Disabilities Bill' and 'The Temple Entry Disabilities Removal Act' were passed by the majority in the Madras Legislative Council at the end of 1932. In January 1933, the Legislative Council passed resolutions requesting the local Government to recommend to the Governor General to give his assent to the Bills. 8 January 1933 was celebrated as the 'Guruvayur Day' in support of the bills on Temple Entry.

Nothing came of the above, but, as a result of the massive mobilization of public opinion, the Travancore Maharaja issued 'Temple Entry Proclamation' on 12 November 1936. Under the same, the right to enter temples was granted to 'Backward' Hindus like Ezhavas, but NOT to untouchables! In practice, all Hindus, including untouchables, were allowed entry into the temple only on 2 June 1947 after the Madras government led by T Prakasam passed a Bill.

It was unfortunate that thanks to the above prolonged goings-on and shabby treatment to 'Backward' Hindus like Ezhavas, and untouchables, many converted to Christianity and Islam.

Blame for the same must rest with caste-Hindus who opposed temple-entry, and also leaders like Gandhi who failed to do the needful in time, despite tall talks. Further, if despite the support and the favourable referendum (detailed above) Gandhi could not ensure temple-entry, it reflected adversely on his leadership and tactics, and the sanctity of his promise.

President of India: Why Not An Untouchable?

Said Gandhi on the eve of independence at a prayer meeting in New Delhi on 27 June 1947: "If I have my way, the President of the Indian Republic will be a chaste and brave bhangi girl. If an English girl of 17 could become the British Queen and later even Empress of India, there is no reason why a Bhangi girl of robust love of her people and unimpeachable integrity of character should not become the first President of the Indian Republic."{CWMG/Vol-95/347}

But, was the "Apostle of Truth" being truthful? The question is what prevented him to make a capable dalit the first President of the Indian Republic—even the first Governor General, in lieu of a British Mountbatten. Such capable dalits were available—Dr BR Ambedkar was more capable and fit for the post than all the dalit and non-dalit leaders, and Mountbatten, put together.

Forget about the post of the President of the Indian Republic, Gandhi didn't even make a dalit the President of the Congress during its long history, in which a new president was appointed each year—'elected' (actually chosen) with the approval of Gandhi. Year after year, the CWC members too were nominated only with the approval of Gandhi, yet Gandhi

never made a dalit a member of the CWC. In fact, he kept dalits away from the power structure.

Untouchability: Only Social/Moral Issue for Gandhi

Gandhi was not opposed to the caste-system—only to the untouchability. And, in that too he took a moral-social stance. He never took what would really have been fast and effective—a political stance. A firm, non-compromising, all round comprehensive attack through all means —education, publicity, rules of Congress membership, rules for official positions, satyagraha, demonstrations, etc., and also, pushing for a stringent, punitive legislation—on the practice would not only have led to its early eradication, it would have earned massive support and goodwill for the Congress from a vast population of dalits.

The salvation of dalits lay not in the removal of certain social disabilities and temple entry, but in solid political empowerment—this latter requirement was what Gandhi cleverly skirted, because internally he was still pro-caste system, and didn't believe in empowering the lower castes. It is significant that Gandhi led no satyagraha and mass movement in the cause of eradication of untouchability and caste-system, and political empowerment of dalits.

Thanks to the indifference of Gandhi and the Congress to the real requirements of the dalits, a number of anti-caste movements sprang up in Bihar, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and in many other states, including the 'Self-Respect Movement' of Periyar EV Ramaswami Naicker (1879–1973) of Tamil Nadu, 'Reforms Movement' of Sri Narayana Guru (1856 –1928), and so on. Had Gandhi and the Congress co-opted the dalits in the political process, the freedom movement would have received an unprecedented boost, and the social disabilities of the dalits would have been a thing of the past by late 1920s.

Gandhi & His 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'

Gandhi sought to be neta of all sections. He tried in 1920-22 to be neta of the Muslims through his unstinted support for the regressive Khilafat Movement, but failed—Muslims moved away further from him, and from the Congress, and the Hindus.

In 1931 when he went for the Second Round Table Conference he arrogantly boasted that he himself, in his person, represented untouchables

—and that if a referendum were to be held he would top the poll![{Nan/313}] Such presumptions!! The purpose was to undermine Ambedkar and other dalit leaders.

In the wake of the Communal Award of 1932, and the subsequent Poona Pact, he felt worried that the depressed classes would also move away from him. Having, till then, done little for the dalits, holding steadfast to his casteist (varnashramdharma) notions, he felt it was high time he did something visible to maintain his leadership over the dalits. He therefore formed 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'. It is significant that his Poona Pact with Ambedkar was signed on 24 September 1932, and on 30 September 1932 he founded the 'All India Anti Untouchability League' that was later renamed as 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'. Notably, it was not to bring overall relief to Dalits on all aspects of their debility, it was only to remove untouchability!

Ambedkar had advocated an all-encompassing civil rights organization to win civic rights for Dalits: access into all public places, use of all public facilities, civil liberties, and so on. It stood to reason that such an organisation should have been under the control of dalits. But, why would Gandhi do so? He wanted to garner credit for himself for work, if any, done to remove untouchability. He desired a paternalistic organization, controlled by caste Hindus working for the "uplift" of untouchables, as would be obvious from the following:

Initially, there were 3 Dalits (including Dr Ambedkar) in the 8-member Central Board of the 'Harijan Sevak Sangh'. Gradually, all the three dalits were eased out, and the Board comprised exclusively of caste Hindus. Said Gandhi (—an irrational, offending, and insulting comment): "The money has been contributed by the [caste] Hindus. From both points of views the [caste] Hindus alone must run the Sangh. Neither ethics nor rights would justify Untouchables in claiming a seat on the Board of the Sangh."

The work of Gandhi's organisation was not to give the untouchables dignity or civil rights, but to "improve" and "reform" them: preaching cleanliness, anti-alcoholism, vegetarianism, and so on; and arranging drives to clean up slums.

Commented Dr Ambedkar:

> "The work of the [Harijan Sevak] Sangh is of the most inconsequential kind. It does not catch anyone's imagination. It

neglects most urgent purposes for which the Untouchables need help and assistance. The Sangh rigorously excludes the Untouchables from its management. The Untouchables are no more than beggars, mere recipients of charity." He further said that the untouchables see the Sangh "as a foreign body set up by the Hindus with some ulterior motive".{Amb6/4388}

Dr BR Ambedkar on Gandhi & Dalits

Dr BR Ambedkar had a tremendous clarity and logic in what he said and wrote. It was in sharp contrast to the mumbo-jumbo and tedious verbosity of Gandhi-Nehrus. Here are some extracts from what Ambedkar spoke or wrote at various times:{Amb2}{Amb6}

"Gandhism is a paradox. It stands for freedom from foreign domination, which means the destruction of the existing political structure of the country. At the same time, it seeks to maintain intact a social structure which permits the domination of one class by another on a hereditary basis, which means a perpetual domination of one class by another…"{Amb2}

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"…We need to pull away the nails which hold the framework of caste-bound Hindu society together, such as those of the prohibition of inter-marriage, down to the prohibition of social intercourse so that Hindu society becomes all of one caste. Otherwise untouchability cannot be removed nor can equality be established…"

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"…In 1921, Mr. Gandhi collected 1 crore and 35 lakhs of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Mr. Gandhi insisted that there was no possibility of winning Swaraj unless Untouchability was removed. Why did he not protest when only a paltry sum of Rs. 43,000 was given to the cause of the Untouchables?"

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"In 1922 there was drawn up the Bardoli Programme of constructive work. Uplift of the Untouchables was an important item in it. A Committee was appointed to work out the details. The Committee never functioned and it was dissolved and the uplift of the Untouchables as an item in the constructive programme was dropped. Only Rs. 800 were allotted to the Committee for working expenses."

"Why did not Mr. Gandhi support Swami Shraddhanand who was fighting with the Congress Working Committee for large funds being assigned to the Committee [for the Uplift of the Untouchables]? Why did not Mr. Gandhi protest against the dissolution of the Committee? Why did not Mr. Gandhi appoint another Committee? Why did he allow the work for the Untouchables to drop out as though it was of no importance?"
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"*Mr. Gandhi has gone on fast many a time to achieve a variety of objects which are dear to him. Why has Mr. Gandhi not fasted even once for the sake of the Untouchables?*"

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"Mr. Gandhi declared that he would fast if the Guruvayur temple was not thrown open to the Untouchables by the Zamorin. The temple has not been thrown open. Why did not Mr. Gandhi go on fast?"

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"After having accepted the Poona Pact why did not Mr. Gandhi keep up the gentleman's agreement and instruct the Congress High Command to include representatives of the Untouchables in the Congress Cabinets?..."

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"…Here was an opportunity for Mr Gandhi to advance his anti-untouchability campaign. He could have proposed that if a Hindu wishes to enrol himself as a member of the Congress, he should prove that he does not observe untouchability and that the employment of an Untouchable in his household should be adduced in support of his claim in this behalf and that no other evidence would be allowed to be tendered. Such a proposal could not have been impracticable for almost every Hindu, certainly those who call themselves high-caste Hindus, keeps more than one servant in his household. If Mr Gandhi could make the Hindu accept spinning and boycott as franchise for membership of the Congress, he could also make acceptable the employment of an Untouchable in a Hindu household a franchise for membership of the Congress. But Mr Gandhi did not do it…"

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"…After 1924, till 1930 there is a complete blank. Mr Gandhi does not appear to have taken any active steps for the removal of untouchability or got himself interested in any activity beneficial to the Untouchables during this period. While Mr Gandhi was inactive the Untouchables had started a movement called the satyagraha movement. The object of the movement was to establish their right to take water from public wells and to enter public temples. The satyagraha at the Chawdar Tank situated in Mahad, a town in the Kolaba district of the Bombay Presidency, was organized to establish the right of the Untouchables to take water from public watering places. The satyagraha at the Kala- Ram Temple situated in Nasik, a town
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in the Nasik district of the Bombay Presidency, was organized to establish the right of the Untouchables to enter Hindu temples. There were many minor satyagrahas… Thousands of men and women from the Untouchables took part in these satyagrahas. Both men and women belonging to the Untouchables were insulted and beaten by the Hindus. Many were injured and some were imprisoned by the government on the ground of causing breach of the peace. This satyagraha movement went on for full six years when it was brought to a close in 1935 at a conference held in Yeola in Nasik district in which the Untouchables, as a result of the adamantine attitude of the Hindus in refusing to give them equal social rights, resolved to go out of the Hindu fold. This satyagraha movement was no doubt independent of the Congress. It was organized by the Untouchables, led by the Untouchables and financed by the Untouchables. Yet the Untouchables were not without hope of getting the moral support of Mr Gandhi… *Naturally the Untouchables expected full support from Mr Gandhi for their satyagraha against the Hindus, the object of which was to establish their right to take water from public wells and to enter public Hindu temples. Mr Gandhi, however, did not give his support to the satyagraha. Not only did he not give his support, he condemned it in strong terms…*"

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"…Does the Mahatma practise what he preaches? One does not like to make personal reference in an argument which is general in its application. But when one preaches a doctrine and holds it as a dogma, there is a curiosity to know how far he practises what he preaches. It may be that his failure to practise is due to the ideal being too high to be attainable; it may be that his failure to practise is due to the innate hypocrisy of the man. In any case he exposes his conduct to examination, and I must not be blamed if I ask, how far has the Mahatma attempted to realize his ideal in his own case?

"The Mahatma is a Bania by birth. His ancestors had abandoned trading in favour of ministership, which is a calling of the Brahmins. In his own life, before he became a Mahatma, when the occasion came for him to choose his career he preferred law to [a merchant's] scales. On abandoning law, he became half saint and half politician. He has never touched trading, which is his ancestral calling.
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"His youngest son—I take one who is a faithful follower of his father—was born a Vaishya, has married a Brahmin's daughter, and has chosen to serve a newspaper magnate. The Mahatma is not known to have condemned him for not following his ancestral calling...

"When can a calling be deemed to have become an ancestral calling, so as to make it binding on a man? Must a man follow his ancestral calling even if it does not suit his capacities, even when it has ceased to be profitable? Must a man live by his ancestral calling even if he finds it to be immoral? If everyone must pursue his ancestral calling, then it must follow that a man must continue to be a pimp because his grandfather was a pimp, and a woman must continue to be a prostitute because her grandmother was a prostitute. Is the Mahatma prepared to accept the logical conclusion of his doctrine? To me his ideal of following one's ancestral calling is not only an impossible and impractical ideal, but it is also morally an indefensible ideal…"

Dalit leaders were not happy with the patronising attitude of the caste Hindus, including Gandhi, towards Dalits, and resented their gratuitous advice. Remarked Jagjivan Ram: "*After having perpetrated unparalleled atrocities on people who were once equal in culture and attainment, and after having degraded them into service as sub-humans, the 'give-up-meat-and-wine-and-develop-cleanliness' lectures* [of Gandhi] *appeared to add insult to injury.*"{Gill/109}

Rationalising Gandhi's Defective Approach

Those who defend or rationalise Gandhi's defective position advance the plea that whether it was the caste-Hindus vs. Dalits, castes-system or untouchability, industrialists vs. labour, landlords vs. peasants, or Hindus vs. Muslims, Gandhi endeavoured to suppress or ignore or dilute or soft-paddle the fault-lines in the interest of the national unity in the cause of freedom from the British. But, even if it was so, was it a wise, practical strategy? No. It was like appeasing or indulging or molly-coddling or favouring the powerful, the vocal, or the violent at the cost of the weak and powerless. Why should the weak and powerless have continued to sacrifice for several more decades (prior to freedom) in the cause of unity, while the rich and powerful should have continued to exploit? Why shouldn't the rich and powerful have changed and done the right things in the cause of national unity, and for taking the weak along? If that had been done the strength of the national movement would have multiplied many times, and the freedom would have been achieved many years earlier. It is also worth noting that those who remained dominant during the freedom movement remained dominant after gaining freedom also. Nobody yields power and pelf unless forced. So, it was not as if the dalits and the weak were to gain by keeping quiet till the freedom was achieved, because after the achievement of freedom their fate was sure to change for the better! It did not happen. The dominant became even more dominant after the attainment of freedom. The freedom movement, driven by nationalist surge, was the golden period for bringing about drastic changes, and for abolition of the caste-system. Gandhi chose not to make use of the opportunity.

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GANDHI, BRAHMACHARYA & WOMEN

"*In 1906 Gandhi told his wife that he was taking a vow of brahmacharya, believing it would help to conserve his 'vital fluids' and raise him to a higher spiritual plane... Although there were elements of Hindu mythology in all this, there was also a good chunk of the prudish Victorian schoolmaster…*"{PF/24-25}

While some of Gandhi's ideas were rooted in his interpretation (or misinterpretation) of Hindu texts and practices, he was largely affected by the Christian beliefs, and was more of a figure of the late Victorian age, both in his puritanism and in his eccentric and kooky theories about health, diet and communal living.

What Gandhi Said & Believed

Rather than describing the Gandhian notions on sex, brahmacharya and women, it is better to know him first-hand through his own words in his autobiography{MKG} and other sources, spoken or written at different times [words in square brackets are of author's]:

"*It became my conviction that procreation and the consequent care of children were inconsistent with public service*… the idea flashed upon me that, if I wanted to devote myself to the service of the community in this manner I must relinquish the desire for children and wealth and live the life of a vanaprastha—of one retired from household cares… After full discussion and mature deliberation I took the vow [of celibacy] in 1906… Even when I am past fifty-six years, I realize how hard a thing it is. Every day I realize more and more that it is like walking on the sword's edge, and I see every moment the necessity for eternal vigilance…

"Brahmacharya means control of the senses in thought, word and deed… Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal, and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it… Meanwhile let me make it clear that those who desire to observe brahmacharya with a view to realizing God need not despair, provided their faith in God is equal to their confidence in their own effort…

"Control of the palate is the first essential in the observance of the vow. I found that complete control of the palate made the observance very easy, and so I now pursued my dietetic experiments not merely from the vegetarian's but also from the brahmachari's point of view. As the result of these experiments I saw that the brahmachari's food should be limited, simple, spiceless, and, if possible, uncooked. Six years of experiment have showed me that the brahmachari's ideal food is fresh fruit and nuts…

"*Those who want to perform national service, or to have a gleam of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life, whether married or unmarried*… A man whose activities… require utter unselfishness can have no time for the selfish begetting of children… *Married couples can behave as if they were not married. If married couples can think of each other as brother and sister, they are freed for universal service… Sex urge is a fine and noble thing… But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity…*

"*…higher brain-power is enhanced by the physical sexual substance which is lost in ejaculation* [semen] *but can be saved in continence and pumped up to the brain… How to use the organs of generation? By transmitting the most creative energy that we possess from creating counterparts of our flesh into creating constructive work for the whole of life, i.e. for the soul. We have to rein in the animal passion and change it to celestial passion…* [That's grossly unscientific belief and quackery of Gandhi]…

"*…one who conserves his vital fluid* [semen] *acquires unfailing power… Why should I lose my vitality for the sake of a momentary pleasure? ...*"

On his Brahmacharya experiments, he had said: "*If I can master this, I can still beat Jinnah*."

Gandhi regarded marriage as an entanglement, and sex as dirty, degrading and sinful, and incompatible with selfless service. Basically, Gandhi wanted sexual intercourse eradicated from human relationship, except for the specific and limited purpose of reproduction. *This certainly had little to do with Hinduism, and much to do with the prudish Victorian norms*.

In 1907, Gandhi wrote in his periodical 'Indian Opinion': "Adultery does not consist merely in sexual intercourse with another man's wife. We are taught by every religion [which and where in their scriptures, he didn't elaborate—so much for the 'Apostle of Truth' who seemed to bluff unhesitatingly] that there can be adultery even in intercourse with one's own wife. Sexual intercourse is justified only when it is the result of a desire for offspring… it is the duty of every thoughtful Indian not to marry. In case he is helpless in regard to marriage, he should abstain from sexual intercourse with his wife."

Reportedly, Gandhi became a brahmachari in his mid-thirties while in South Africa, and hailed and propagated the practice for the rest of his life.

Gandhi and Saraladebi

Gandhi's marriage to Kasturba almost broke when at fifty he fell in love with Saraladebi, then forty-seven, in whose home he stayed in Lahore in October 1919, while her husband (Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhary, called Panditji), a prominent freedom fighter from Punjab, was in jail.

Saraladebi was a gifted, knowledgeable, well-informed, well-educated (both in science and arts), highly striking and intelligent, and a dynamic and driven woman, with independent views, and was a polyglot, knowing Bengali, Hindi, English, Persian, French and Sanskrit. Even Swami Vivekananda was highly appreciative of her talents: She had stayed in Vivekananda's ashram in the Himalayas, studying the Vedas and the Bhagwad Gita. She was the daughter of Janakinath Ghosal and Swarnakumari, Rabindranath Tagore's elder sister, who, like her brother, was well-accomplished in literature and the arts, and wrote novels, plays and poetry.

Gandhi, by his own admission, was enamoured of her. Gandhi–Saraladebi became a talk-of-the-town in Lahore on account of their closeness. Gandhi lapped up her poems and writings, and used them in his speeches, and in Young India and other journals. She travelled with him all over India. When apart, they frequently exchanged letters. Gandhi wrote to Saraladebi on 3 May 1920 at the height of non-cooperation movement, quoting Gita: "*It is strange that even a man abiding in the supreme oneness and set on attaining Moksha should get distraught with Passion, yielding to its overmastering urge through experience of the pleasure it brings*."{URL73} Gandhi wrote to her in May 1920: "*...you will continue to haunt me in my sleep. No wonder Panditji* [her husband] *calls you the greatest shakti. You may cast that spell over him. You are performing the same trick over me*."{URL73} Responding to one of her many letters, Gandhi wrote on 23 August 1920: "...you are mine in the purest sense. You ask for a reward of your great surrender, well, it is its own reward."{URL73}

Gandhi confided with his friend Hermann Kallenbach (from South Africa days) in August 1920: "I have come in closest touch with a lady who

often travels with me. Our relationship is indefinable. *I call her my spiritual wife. A friend has called it intellectual wedding*. I want you to see her. It was under her roof that I passed several months at Lahore in Punjab."{URL73} Wrote Rajmohan Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson and biographer: "Gandhi had not only overcome his caution regarding exclusive relationship but even thought of a 'spiritual marriage' [with Saraladebi], whatever that may have meant." *Gandhi had reportedly admitted to Margaret Sanger (American birth control activist) in 1935 that of all women it was Saraladebi who made him think of leaving Kasturba*.

Gandhi even talked of his dream in which, leaving her husband, she had come to travel with him. In the Sabarmati Ashram, which she visited, their close relationship was on public display, so much so that that those closest to Gandhi became extremely concerned. Gandhi's secretary Mahadev Desai, and Gandhi's youngest son Devdas, who was married to Rajaji's daughter Lakshmi, were also greatly disturbed. Rajaji wrote to Gandhi a strong letter. Gandhi, however, insisted he missed her when they were not together. Their relationship gradually cooled down after a year.

What is significant is that during all the above Gandhi didn't bother about the pain he was heartlessly inflicting on his long-time companion through thick and thin—Kasturba. It didn't strike the 'Apostle of Non-violence' that such behaviour also came within the ambit of unbearable violence.

Gandhi's Bizarre & Cruel Advice to Kripalanis

Sucheta and Professor JB Kriplani also lived at Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram. They fell in love. Wanting to get married, they approached Gandhi for permission. Gandhi opined that the marriage would ruin Kriplani. They therefore dropped the idea. But, after a few years they again approached Gandhi. Gandhi permitted them to get married provided they do not beget any children. They therefore took a vow of married celibacy, and died childless!

The above raises a number of questions. Why should mature, well-educated, and otherwise capable persons like the Kriplanis have sought permission from Gandhi to get married? Who was he to decide? And, why did Gandhi interfere in such matters? With what face Gandhi who had been happily married, had enjoyed all the pleasures of sex, and had beget four sons, enjoin upon the Kriplanis the heartlessly cruel vow of married

celibacy? This when Gandhi had had extra-marital (even if not sexual?) relations with the likes of Saraladebi, and had been sleeping naked with women other than his wife!

Nehru-Gandhi Secularism & Gandhi's Advice to Vijay Laxmi

Shocked by over-the-top "Hindu-Muslim unity" of Sarup (the sister of Jawaharlal Nehru) in falling for a Muslim employee of Motilal Nehru, Motilal persuaded the paramour to shift abroad, while he sent Sarup to Gandhi's ashram. Later, Motilal found a Brahmin match for her, and she became Vijay Laxmi Pandit. When the Pandit-duo went to Gandhi for his blessings, he advised them to take a vow of chastity!

Unusual & Abnormal Habits & Experiments

Gandhi's so-called experiments with brahmacharya or celibacy included testing the limits of his continence by sleeping with naked women. This habit got a further boost after the death of his wife in 1944. Reportedly, a number of women in his inner circle had slept naked with him in his "experiments". Sometimes, even two of them slept naked with him. *Rajaji* had once observed that "*he* [Gandhi] *was one of the hungriest men I have even known… actually he was highly sexed…*"{VM2}

Wrote MO Mathai:

> "'Freedom at Midnight'{FaM} had referred to Gandhiji's relations with Manu at Noakhali. Apparently, the authors did not know that this aspect of the great man's experiment with Truth started long years before… All the women in Gandhiji's entourage were involved in this, including the late Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who spoke to me freely and frankly about it. Gandhiji confided in Rajkumari Amrit Kaur that more than once, during the experiments, evil thoughts entered his mind. Most of Gandhiji's principal colleagues privately protested, without success, against this practice…"{Mac/44-45}

Wrote Alex Tunzelmann:

> "The aged [by then over 77] Mahatma had been testing [during 1946-47] his vow of celibacy by sleeping at night in bed with a naked or partially clothed women. The object of the experiments was to transcend physical arousal. One night, when the police turned up to arrest him [Gandhi], they found him in bed with a girl

of eighteen. The British authorities decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and hushed up the police report."{Tunz/144}

Abha Gandhi was married to Gandhi's grandnephew Kanu Gandhi, who was also Gandhi's typist and photographer. She was only sixteen when Gandhi began sleeping with her naked as per his "brahmacharya experiments" in 1945. Upon remonstrance by Kanu and others, Gandhi gave up the practice.

Later, Gandhi indulged in similar "experiments" with another young teenage girl Manu Gandhi, who was grand-daughter of his cousin. Manu had taken care of Kasturba till her death in 1944 in Aga Khan Palace jail in Pune, after which she had gone back to her father. But, through a letter dated 24-Oct-1946, Gandhi called her back from her father with a reassurance, "*I am not sending for you to make you unhappy. Are you afraid of me? I will never force you to do anything against your wish*."{CWMG/Vol-92/397} Gandhi took her along to riot-ridden Noakhali in East Bengal in late 1946, and started the practice of sleeping naked with her. She was just seventeen then. What is significant is that Gandhi was already over 75 years of age by then. Experiments in sexual controls beyond 75 years of age!? Gandhi was also used to getting massaged by women while lying naked.

Besides, why take along a young girl in the dangerous riot-ridden place like Noakhali, witnessing murder, loot and rapes each day? Why use the young girls in their teens as guinea pigs for your experiments? What about its injurious effect on the girls? Did Gandhi bother to consider its negative psychological effects on them? Or, was he so self-indulgent, that others could be sacrificed? Manu was an ambitious girl who had come to the ashram to be able to study and obtain degrees. But, Gandhi just ignored her desires and grandly advised her: "*A degree is really a burden… your degrees won't help you in doing God's work…*"{MKA/456}{MKA2/456} However, Gandhi never asked her if she really cared to do the "God's work" as defined by Gandhi! Gandhi was too self-indulgent to bother about others.

Nirmal Kumar Bose was a renowned anthropologist, and was the Director of the Anthropological Survey of India. He acted as Gandhi's secretary during 1946-47. He left Gandhi on 18 March 1947, unhappy at Gandhi's Brahmacharya experiments. He has written a book of his experiences during the period: 'My Days with Gandhi'. Its 'Chapter XVII: Till We Meet Again' and 'Chapter XVIII: An Excursion in Psychology'

deal at length with Gandhi's queer experiments with Brahmacharya, and his correspondence with Gandhi. When Bose tried to counsel Gandhi with arguments from Sigmund Freud's psychology, Gandhi blandly replied to him: "…What is Freudian philosophy? I have not read any writing of his…"{NKB/158} So, then, did he try to read? The question is should not the Mahatma engaging in such unusual experiments, that affected his partners too, have tried to read relevant and related material to enlighten himself, rather than being arrogantly insular.

Wrote NK Bose in a letter :

> "…So, when I first learnt in detail about Gandhiji's prayog or experiment, I felt genuinely surprised. I was informed that he sometimes asked women to share his bed and even the cover which he used, and then tried to ascertain if even the least trace of sensual feeling had been evoked in himself or his companion. Personally, I would never tempt myself like that; nor would my respect for woman's personality permit me to treat her as an instrument of an experiment undertaken only for my own sake... Whatever may be the value of the prayog in Gandhiji's own case, it does leave a mark of injury on the personality of others who are not of the same moral stature as he himself is, and for whom sharing in Gandhiji's experiment is no spiritual necessity. .."{NKB/150}

In his ashram, Gandhi indulged in using girls as walking sticks—he was used to resting his arms on the shoulders of young girls while walking. Why didn't he choose stronger, firmer and more convenient walking sticks comprising boys or men is not clear. The walking sticks used to be either poor Manu and Abha, or other women. It was also not as if the girls or women liked it. But, apparently they had little choice. Gandhi was such a dominating personality that it was not possible for others to refuse his demand. Manu had written: "*If we ever grumbled and did not want to serve as 'walking sticks' according to this practice, Bapu would catch hold of us and forcibly used us as his sticks*."{MKA/456}

Reactions of Stalwarts

Reportedly, Sardar Patel had strongly objected to Gandhi's Brahmacharya experiments, labelled them as 'adharma' practices, and had even, at one time, stopped talking to him. Many others—including Rajaji, Jayaprakash Narayan, Jivraj Mehta, and NK Bose—had objected to his

practices. Several—Vinoba Bhave, Kaka Kalelkar, and Narhare Parekh—in the editorial board of 'Harijan' resigned.

Control over one's passions and indulgences, particularly sex, the strongest of passions, has been regarded as a pre-condition for self-realisation and higher attainments by almost all religions—Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, etc.—except a few like Islam. They set a great store by brahmacharya or celibacy. For Roman Catholics, Buddhists, Jains celibacy is mandatory for their monks and nuns. Hinduism, being the most liberal, democratic, evolved and enlightened religion, is a cut above the rest in this regard. Like in its other practices, no compulsion here. A Hindu priest may choose to be a family man or a celibate. Revered Hindu gods and goddesses have their consorts—Shiv-Parvati, Vishnu-Laxmi, Ram-Sita, and so on. Lord Krishna enjoyed full conjugal bliss. No unscientific and unnecessary hang-ups on love and sex. In fact, Kama, that is, love and sex, is one of the four desirable human pursuits (purushartha: Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha) in Hinduism. Hindu architecture and literature celebrates love and sex. Further, all Hindus are expected to be brahmachari during the first of the four stages of life—Brahmacharya (when student), Grihastha (Householder), Vanaprastha (Retired), and Sanyasa (Renunciation).

Though Gandhi claimed, wrote and showed himself off to have intensely studied Hindu religious texts, and was a deeply religious man, his 'Hinduism' was a flawed Hinduism—at any rate his 'Hinduism' or its interpretation differed widely from the essence of real Hinduism. For example, he considered the caste-system to be integral to Hinduism, when the essence of Hinduism has nothing to do with castes. He deliberately misinterpreted Gita to support his erroneous notions on non-violence, when what he propagated was actually the Christian bilge of "turning the other cheek". Similarly, the Brahmacharya which Gandhi raised as a hallowed concept, and which he tried to practice and propagate, had little to do with Hinduism. It had more to do with repression and the Roman Catholic beliefs and practices. Gandhi's views were mal-assimilation of Tolstoy, Mahavir and Buddha. They differed from the Indic ethos. In fact, many contemporaries of Gandhi regarded him as a Christian in essence.

Not for Gandhi the scientific, proven facts. Quackery was fine if it corroborated his wrong notions: "…higher brain-power is enhanced by the physical sexual substance which is lost in ejaculation [semen] but can be

saved in continence and pumped up to the brain… [Please see further details above].” Strangely, when expounding on his “biology”, quackery and brahmacharya, the far greater role of women in procreation is totally ignored by him!

Facts, history, evidence, scientific enquiry, and logic didn’t seem to matter for Gandhi. Had they mattered, Gandhi would have realised that an overwhelming majority of great achievers in all fields among men and women were married persons, the brahmacharis being a miniscule, insignificant minority.

It speaks volumes for his lack of empathy that Gandhi never bothered to assess the ill-effects on women of his experiments of sleeping naked with them. It was as if what mattered was only himself—they were just guinea pigs.

It has also been said that Gandhi’s theory of Brahmacharya experiments and their positive effects was actually an afterthought after it was found out that he was sleeping naked with young women. How true this claim is one does not know.

Most of Gandhi’s conceptualisations were faulty, lacking in adequate domain knowledge and understanding, and exposing his unscientific and illogical mind—yet, he went to town with them driven by his mega-sized ego, a propensity to show himself off as a great ‘*gyani*’, and a self-deluding presumption that only he knew best what was good for the public! His concept of sex, marriage, and brahmacharya also fell in this category.

Ultimately his investment of time and energy in brahmacharya experiments over a long period of time yielded no beneficial results for himself, his partners, his ashramites, and the country. They were barren. Why would an unscientific notion bear fruit? Why would quackery succeed?

Gandhi, Rape & Suicide

Gandhi had stated in Navajivan on 23 October 1921: “*...Except for saving oneself from rape, suicide is, according to me, a major sin and an act of cowardice...*”{CWMG/Vol-24/458} Gandhi’s advice to women faced with rape in Punjab during partition was to bite their tongue and hold their breath until they died.

Why should a woman commit suicide to save herself from rape? Why shouldn’t she fight back? Why shouldn’t she rather survive, and proceed

against him legally, or try and take such revenge that the perpetrator would remember it for his lifetime, and would not dare commit the heinous act again? ‘Mahatma’, who loved talking about “bravery vs. cowardice” (his definition), didn’t think it was cowardice, or something undesirable, to commit suicide for the heinous act of the other?

{ 19 }

Gandhi's Idiosyncratic Notions, Ways & Fads

Religiosity

Gandhi was popular among the Hindu masses thanks to his combination of religiosity with ostentatious poverty that made him come across more as a religious leader, the Mahatma, than a political leader.

However, Gandhi's religiosity led to avoidable branding of the Congress Party as a "Hindu" Party, and the Congress leadership as a "Hindu" leadership, leading to unwise Gandhi-Nehru counter-measures of trying to be more pro-Muslim, at the expense of the Hindus and even the Dalits. Rather than greater Hindu-Muslim amity, Gandhi's arrival on the national scene led to deterioration in relationship as seen in the earlier chapters.

Gandhi's Hinduism was of the Vaishanavite brand, which was simple, quiet and passive. It lacked the sophistication, complexity, power, and grandness of the higher forms of Hinduism. Though Gandhi talked of Gita and Vedas and Upanishads there was really nothing in his pronouncements and practices that could be traced to those ancient texts. In fact, his creed of non-violence was a total distortion and dishonest interpretation of the teachings of Gita, Mahabharata war, and Ramayana. Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri:

> "Gandhi was a typical Hindu Sadhu in his entire behaviour: in his ostentatious airing of humility combined with overweening moral arrogance; in his vagueness and tortuousness; in his skill in weaving a spider's web of unctuous words of platitudinous moralizing; in his readiness to take money as an exercise in spiritual privilege; in his tyrannical urging of an unnatural asceticism on perfectly normal men; and not less in his attitudinizing and theatricality as a means of self-advertisement…"{NC/49}

Said Churchill: "*I have long known Gandhi as the world's most successful humbug*."

"Mahatma" Gandhi

"Mahatma" got attached to the name of Gandhi shortly after his return from South Africa on 9 January 1915. Gandhi visited Gurukul Kangri, set up by Swami Shraddhanand, (aka Mahatma Munshi Ram Vij), along with Madan Mohan Malviya in 1915, and stayed at the campus. Impressed, Gandhi addressed Munshi Ram as 'Mahatma'. However, *it was the institute that labelled Gandhi as 'Mahatma' here for the first time, and the label stayed*. Later, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore also very generously bestowed upon Gandhi the title 'Mahatma' (Great Soul).

Did Gandhi deserve it? Did he live up to it? More importantly, did he feel embarrassed about it, and shunned others not to use the title? Apparently, no.

It has actually been reported that Gandhi's followers used to remonstrate with those who used to address him as plain Gandhi or Mr Gandhi—they wanted him to be addressed as 'Mahatma'! Amazing!! At the Nagpur Congress in December 1920, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, then a nationalist leader, addressed him as Mr Gandhi, and he was shouted down by thousands of people who insisted that he should address him as Mahatma Gandhi. Demand, rather enforce, respect; not command it. A genuine 'Mahatma' would surely have had the modesty to shun or ban the usage of such a misnomer, or rather an over-the-top eulogy, or an exaggerated assessment or glorification or compliment, as title.

Gandhi had himself confessed in a prayer meeting in 1947: "*In our country, a Mahatma enjoys the right to do anything. He may commit murder, indulge in acts of debauchery or whatever else he chooses; he is always pardoned. Who is there to question him?... If one makes a fuss of eating and drinking and wears a langoti, one can easily acquire the title of Mahatma in this country*."

Gandhi & Truth

Besides being called the "Apostle of Non-Violence", Gandhi was also called the "Apostle of Truth".

For the Indian freedom cause, the first promise he had made was in 1920 claiming he would get "swaraj" within one year. On that basis, he collected massive funds too—saying funds were necessary to reach the goal. He didn't just say it once, he kept repeating his promise many times during that year, especially to get funds. Gandhi's solemn promise didn't come true. Did Gandhi ever say sorry for not keeping his promise? Did he apologise for misleading people? Or, did he at least say he had mistakenly promised the sky?

Gandhi had stated that he would have no desire to live should India not attain Swaraj by the end of 1921. Aware that little progress had been made towards swaraj, Gandhi played with words in his article in Navajivan on 23 October 1921:

> "I hope no one will believe that I ever told anyone I would commit suicide if Swaraj was not won this year. Except for saving oneself from rape [!!!], suicide is, according to me, a major sin and an act of cowardice. Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj?..."{CWMG/V-24/458}

The idea behind all this play of words was to emotionally blackmail people into not criticising him and his methods for non-attainment of swaraj.

Not only that. The "Apostle of Truth" then started shifting the goal-post. It was no longer just swaraj, what really mattered was the means to attain it. What was the implication? Any means other than the Gandhian means were inappropriate to attain swaraj. So, it was no longer a call to swaraj, it was a call to swaraj by the Gandhian means, and the Gandhian means alone! Success would not determine if the means were sound. The Gandhian method was sacrosanct. Success would come sooner or later depending upon how sincerely and universally the method was followed. Make the method unquestionable! That is, make Gandhism unquestionable. That is, don't question or criticise Gandhi. His method is sacrosanct and unquestionable by definition. No practical proof of its past success or possibility of future success is required.

The question is: Can manipulation be truth?

Can an "Apostle of Truth" repeatedly favour an undeserving person, and that too in a grossly undemocratic way? But, Gandhi did that for Nehru, overriding Patel. Please see chapter-12.

Can an "Apostle of Truth" run and boss over an organisation he is not even a primary member of? But, Gandhi did that in respect of the Congress. He resigned from it the second time in 1934—announced his retirement from the Congress on 17 September 1934{DD/165}—and never rejoined it thereafter. Yet, he had been running and bossing over the Congress show—deciding who should be the president of the Congress each year, and who all should be included in the CWC!

Should an "Apostle of Truth" play dirty politics? But, Gandhi did that vis-à-vis Netaji Subhas Bose in 1939 Presidential elections, and did so blatantly. Please see details elsewhere in this book.

Rejecting the other means as unsuited to the Indian genius, Gandhi advocated 'Satyagraha' (soul-force) to overpower the adversary with the moral truth of one's stand, as it was far more potent that the physical power. Satyagraha required infinite self-sacrifice and could be effectively deployed by only those who had sufficiently perfected themselves in attaining 'truth' [whatever that meant: Gandhi never clearly expounded on it]. A satyagrahi had to practice brahmacharya, and had to be have immense self-control.

To summarise, India could attain 'mukti' only through satyagraha. Satyagraha required satyagrahis. Satyagrahis had to, inter alia, practice brahmacharya and immense self-control, and thus have qualities that are extremely rare.

Looked at from the practical, real-world viewpoint and the nature of humans, satyagraha was therefore a non-starter. A solution that was no solution!

Dictator Gandhi

Gandhi was an extremely difficult man to work with. He had no partners or colleagues, only disciples.

He took the major decision of committing to the "Khilafat & Non-cooperation Movement" (KNCM) without first obtaining the consent of the Congress, and then tried to justify his undemocratic action. His decision was approved post-facto by the Congress, despite the reservations of many senior leaders including CR Das, BC Pal, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai and Jinnah.

In 1921, Gandhi was appointed "dictator" of the KNCM—a term Gandhi loved. Gandhi was, by nature, undemocratic. His "dictatorship" cost his followers and India dear as should have been obvious from the various aspects brought out in this book.

Gandhi worked not on deep analysis of history, politics, economics, military matters, colonial strategy; and/or with knowledgeable people and experts in various relevant fields; and/or on facts, reasoning, logic, and discussions with an enlightened group; but on "divine inspiration", instincts, and his "Mahatman" brand of thinking.

If he was unclear or confused or had doubts on what to do, he didn't mind involving others; however, if his "divine inspiration" and instincts told him something was right, he wanted to go ahead with it, and brooked no arguments. He then wanted to be dictatorial with his idea. What if someone told him what he thought was correct was actually wrong? That his idea needed to be discussed and analysed and approved. He didn't care. If he knew he was correct—he was correct, that's all! Those who differed could leave—leave even the Congress.

Kriplani had stated: "Since the time Gandhiji assumed leadership of the freedom fight, the Congress president had been unanimously elected [was it election or nomination!] with his goodwill."

Nehru had mentioned on different occasions: "[The Congress Working] Committee was practically his (Gandhi's) creation: he had nominated it, in consultation with a few colleagues, and the election itself was a formal matter… [Gandhi] has been the president-maker… *I remember that it was pointed out to him at the time that he wanted to be Mussolini all the time, while others were made by him, temporary kings and figureheads*." Nehru

had also commented: "*Gandhiji was the permanent super-president of the Congress*." Although Gandhi was the president of the Congress only once in 1924, he was all-through the super-president of the Congress.

Netaji Subhas Bose had said: "The Congress working committee today is undoubtedly composed of some of the finest men of India—men who have character and courage, patriotism and sacrifice. *But most of them have been chosen primarily because of their blind loyalty to the Mahatma—and there are few among them who have the capacity to think for themselves or the desire to speak out against the Mahatma when he is likely to take a wrong step. In the circumstances the Congress cabinet of today is a one-man show*."{Bose2/59}

Wrote Tej Bahadur Sapru to Durga Das in 1940 in the context of WW-II and the Congress stand: "The recent pronouncement of the Mahatma that it is no use calling an all-parties conference, as other parties do not share the point of view of the Congress, has filled me with despair. Bluntly put, it is the very essence of totalitarianism, and it does not matter that his totalitarianism is different from other brands of totalitarianism in that it is based on non-violence. The result is the same. There is no toleration for difference of opinion."{DD/197}

Non-Congressi Congress Dictator

Gandhi was unique in many ways. He had resigned from the Congress in 1924 to devote himself to "constructive work", but kept dictating the destiny of the Congress. He later re-joined.

He again resigned from the Congress in 1934. He ceased to be its primary member ever since. He never again formally became its primary member even. However, he continued to attend the meetings of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and of All India Congress Committee (AICC). Further, no vital decision in the Congress was taken without his consent.

Most amusing part was his opposition to re-election of Subhas Bose as the Congress President in 1939, when he [Gandhi] was not even a member of the Congress. But, when Subhas Bose got elected nevertheless, he [Bose] was advised to appoint CWC members in consultation with Gandhi. When Gandhi found Bose not quite amenable to his diktats, he saw to it that Bose's presidential tenure was made so difficult that he had to ultimately resign.

Netaji Bose commented: "The question here arises: has the Mahatma retired. If so, why? He has retired in the sense that his name does not appear in the list of members of the supreme executive of the Congress. But the executive—the working committee—has been backed by his blind supporters… Among the personnel of the present working committee, the Swarajists or Parliamentarians are conspicuous by their absence. Even MS Aney who dared to differ from the Mahatma on the question of Communal Award, is not there, despite his loyalty and submissiveness in the past. And poor Nariman who ventured to think independently has been virtually kicked out of the committee. In 1924, the Mahatma had really retired from Congress politics together with his party, as the Congress machinery has been seized by his opponents, the Swarajists. Today, the person of the Mahatma may not even be in the committee—but his party is there, stronger than ever... *The so called retirement of the Mahatma will not, accordingly, diminish his hold over the Congress machinery in any way—but will enable him to disown all responsibility for the failures of the official Congress party for the next few years*. His retirement therefore, is only one of his strategic retreats to which he is in the habit of resorting whenever there is a political slump in the country."{URL89}

Net Result of being a Dictator

With no one to speak against or check or counsel him, dictator Gandhi royally blundered through the overlong freedom struggle, making one blunder after another. To illustrate by a few examples: Making inexplicable comments on the horrible Jallianwala Bagh Massacre; unilaterally withdrawing the "Khilafat & Non-cooperation Movement" in February 1922; making no serious attempt to save Shahid Bhagat Singh and others from the gallows; drastic come-down in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931, forgetting about "swarajya", and setting to naught the demands in the Salt Satyagraha; unfairly unseating Netaji Subhas from the Congress Presidentship in 1939; agreeing to Nehru's proposal of resignation of the Congress Provincial Ministries in 1939; not cooperating with the British in WW-II, and throwing the Congress and the Freedom Movement into wilderness with "Quit India" call, paving the way for the ascendency of Jinnah and the Muslim League, and for Pakistan and Partition; launching ill-advised "Quit India" without any planning and preparation to make it a success; making incompetent Nehru the first PM, undemocratically overriding the far more suitable Patel;…

Gandhi's chela Nehru followed in his footsteps, not in the sense of simple-living and other ideals, but in becoming a dictator, concentrating all power with himself after independence. With no one daring to challenge him (especially after the death of Sardar Patel), Nehru, like Gandhi, went on a long spree of comprehensively committing one blunder after another in all fields he touched, right till his death (for details, please read "Nehru's 97 Major Blunders" by the author, available on Amazon).

Gandhi & Power Politics

Gandhi projected himself to be a simple, religious Mahatma, but if one carefully observes and analyses his actions (which this book has done) one can't help concluding that his life was devoted to a relentless quest for power, and domination over others. Gandhi considered himself to be an all-knowing wise Mahatma, and didn't hesitate to sideline or belittle those who refused to acknowledge him as their leader, or came in his way, or could come in his way—by any means, fair or foul.

Gandhi disparaged the stalwart Tilak's overlong Mandalay jail sentence of six years (1908–14) commenting it was merely to prove Indians could take courageous stand! However, when it came to collecting funds in Tilak's name, he didn't flinch, knowing Tilak was immensely popular. In 1921, Mr. Gandhi collected 1 crore and 35 lakhs of rupees for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund—a very large amount in those days—that hugely helped his campaigns and popularity.

The way Gandhi treated Netaji Subhas Bose, particularly after 1939 Congress Presidential Elections (details given earlier), and the way he side-lined Sardar Patel and installed Nehru as the Congress President in 1929, 1936, and then in 1946, and made Nehru the first PM (details given earlier) amply demonstrated his unprincipled manoeuvres and power politics.

Gandhi's 'Simple' Living & His Army of Servers

Gandhi's ostentatious poverty hid the actual facts of his upkeep. Lavish finance by Birlas, Sarabhais and Bajajs didn't come in the way of his display of poverty. Commented Sarojini Naidu: "*We have to spend a fortune to keep Gandhi in poverty!*"

While on one hand Gandhi propagated simple living and self-dependence, self-sufficient household, self-sufficient villages, self-dependence, doing even those activities oneself that is normally done by others, like hand-spinning, etc., and bridging the distance between what one says and what one does; on the other hand, in practice, Gandhi had an army of persons devoted to serving him. He had a help to shave him; then there were those responsible for his food; those taking care of his medicines and herbs; ladies or gents to message him each day; ladies or gents to bathe him; someone to fetch his dentures before eating; persons to prepare daily mud-poultice for him of his head and stomach, or for other body-parts; two of Abha, Manu, Sushila and others to serve as his walking sticks (male walking sticks were forbidden!), someone to warm him, or press his back, while sleeping; someone to wash his clothes and utensils; people to organise his meals; secretaries to make appointments, usher people in and out, and do host of assorted tasks; and so on. Mahatma was dependent on an army of servers for his upkeep!

He used to travel with a large entourage of disciples and assistants. That had made Jinnah once comment that although he [Jinnah] travelled first class in trains, he spent less on travel than Gandhi, who travelled third class —for he [Jinnah] had to buy only one ticket.

The pathetic situation was that those who served Gandhi and were close to him became so dependent upon serving him that they felt vacuous and jilted when prevented from serving Gandhi. Gandhi himself said: "Once I intended to give up all personal services from Sushila [Nayar] but within twelve hours my soft-heartedness had put an end to the intention. I could not bear the tears of Sushila and the fainting away of Prabhavati [Jayaprakash Narayan's wife]." Slavery too becomes addictive! Reportedly, providing personal services to Gandhi was a much sought-out assignment among the ashram inmates, and caused considerable jealousies!

When Gandhi stayed with Sarat Chandra Bose in Calcutta, what he would eat became a suspense, and a source of anxiety for Sarat's wife. It shouldn't have been so, considering Gandhi was a frugal eater. Nirad Chaudhuri was then the secretary to Sarat Chandra Bose. Wrote Nirad in his autobiography{NC} that neither Gandhi nor those who accompanied him would ever inform the Bose household in advance what he would eat. They would suddenly make known Gandhi's menu for the lunch in mid-morning. So as not to face embarrassment for not providing what Gandhi desired, Bose's wife would order quantities of a large array of vegetables each day. Only a few of them desired by Gandhi would be used each day, and the rest had to be generally thrown away.

Nirad Chaudhuri wrote further:

> "The supply of milk for Mahatma Gandhi presented no less difficult a problem, for he took only goat's milk… But, before being permitted to serve Gandhi, the she-goats had to be screened by his principal private secretary, Mahadev Desai, and therefore no goat's milk could be bought or stored in advance… when I arrived at about seven (am), I found a row of up to fifteen she-goats in the outer courtyard munching leaves and bleating for all they were worth. Behind them, the goatherds were standing to attention as though on parade… I was told that Mahadev Desai himself would come down to examine the she-goats, and choose the one which was to have the privilege of serving Gandhi as foster-mother…"{NC/436}

Wrote Patrick French:

> "There were many contradictions in Gandhi's way of living. He deified poverty and condemned modern industrialism, yet relied on lavish donations from the Birla, Sarabhai and Bajaj families, whose fortunes came from just such sources. He always travelled with a giant entourage of disciples, many of whom were renowned for their cold hauteur towards outsiders, yet he claimed to dislike special treatment. He wished to live like India's rural peasantry, but wherever he went herbs, vegetables and chaste goats would be garnered, buildings scrubbed, whitewashed and decorated in an appropriate style, and mud refrigerated for him to smear on his stomach as one of his many 'nature cures'."{PF/20}

Gandhi's Ashrams

Gandhi's first ashram in India in 1915 after return from South Africa was the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad. He organised life for all—children, men, women—in the ashram on a monastic pattern: wake up at 4am, last meal by 5pm to 6pm, sleep at 9pm; dress very simply; eat bland food—even salt was banned; inmates to take various odd vows, including that of brahmacharya; prohibition of sensual pleasures; and so on! It was a regimented, drab life devoid of all pleasures, with a sense of shame attached to even simple pleasures. Gandhi had once said: "I have found no fun or pleasure since I was twelve."{Gill/117} Did he unconsciously deprive others of pleasure?

The essence of your "wisdom" was to curb all pleasures in the cause of the pleasure of 'moksha' and 'self-realisation'. So, impose your 'wisdom' on the helpless, dependent inmates of your ashram. If they rebel or disobey or fail to follow any of the dozens of rules, like finishing their daily quota of yarn spinning, or come late for the various activities, like prayers, meals, and so on, punish them or throw them out of the ashram. Ensure their life became as lifeless as yours!

Gandhi's pointless asceticism, born out of wrong notions, had robbed him of fun, joy and happiness in life. The unfortunate part was that he inflicted a discipline born out of those ideas on the ashram-inmates making their lives as dry and boring. In his arrogance, Gandhi felt his way was the right way. It was strange people didn't contradict him despite his edifice being so tenuous, and his framework so illogical—it wasn't at all difficult to pick holes in most of the things he advocated.

Hand-Spinning

Gandhi propagated, vigorously promoted, and even enforced (setting quotas for individuals and organisations) hand-spinning and hand-weaving by individuals in almost a religious manner. Why? He believed every Indian household used to spin its own yarn and used to be self-sufficient before the arrival of the British who inundated India with their imported goods. But, that was a totally wrong belief. Yes, India was self-sufficient. Yes, it even exported fine muslin to many countries. And, yes, it didn't need foreign cloth. But, no, all Indian households didn't spin yarn. They had their own occupation to take care of. Only those whose occupation it was to spin yarn and make cloth did so. He could as well have said each household should make its own footwear, grow its own food-items, have its own little dairy, and so on. Basics of economics is division of labour, people engaged in various occupations, and exchanging their goods, and so on. And, if everyone should do everything, why was Gandhi a supporter of the caste-system which allocated each caste a distinct occupation? Apparently, consistency and rationality was never a strong point for Gandhi. Yet, how he could spin the nation!

Rather than focussing on the activities that would lead to independence, Gandhi diverted people into irrelevant activities like hand-spinning yarn, and so on. For Gandhi hand-spinning symbolised opposition to industrialization. Ignoring the irreversible and inexorable historical trend of greater and greater mechanisation and automation, like a Luddite, he kept promoting hand-spinning, and inflicting its practice on others, out of a deep bias and economic and historical ignorance. If, after independence, India would have followed Gandhi's economic remedies, it would have further gone to dogs—although it did go to dogs for the other reason: on account of Nehru's misery-multiplying and poverty-perpetuating socialistic clap-trap.

During the Khilafat & Non-Cooperation Movement (KNCM) Gandhi had proposed that those wishing to undertake individual civil disobedience need to know hand-spinning! Later, at the AICC meeting in June 1924, Gandhi introduced an amendment to the Congress constitution making it compulsory for every Congress member to spin a prescribed quantity of yarn. The Swarajists opposed this 'Khadi franchise', and staged a walk-out.

Spinning-wheel was more a symbol of Gandhi's regressive concepts enunciated by him in his book Hind Swaraj, and of his stand against

industrialisation and modernisation, than something that represented the artisan and the poor.

Gandhi's Odd Ways & Arrogance

Gandhi's attire shouldn't lead one to think he was a humble person. Unhappy at the insufficient production of khadi by the Congressis and volunteers in Bengal in 1921, Gandhi commented: "If, then, there are not enough volunteers in Bengal, I should think she should be swept into the Bay of Bengal and make room for better men and women."

How Gandhi treated his guests would be obvious from the following episode. Gandhi had invited Dr Ambedkar to meet him. Although Ambedkar reached at the appointed time, bowed to him and sat down, he was initially made to wait and ignored. Writes Dhananjay Keer in 'Dr Ambedkar—Life and Mission': "In the characteristic way which Gandhi observed in dealing with non-Muslims and non-European leaders and representatives, he did not look at first for a while at Ambedkar and kept chatting with Miss Slade [Mirabehn] and others. Ambedkar's men now feared that a little more indifference on the part of Gandhi and a collision would follow…"{DK/165}

Without ever having heard of calories, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, mineral salts or vitamins, and their importance for the body, and which eatable has what, and how much and how to take them, Gandhi considered himself to be an expert on diet—a great nutritionist. He kept furnishing unsolicited advice to others on what to and what not to eat. Like, he very deliberately shunned spices without realising their critical requirement in small doses. It's another matter that for all his expertise and food-fads, his teeth fell early, he sported a spindly physique, and carried an emaciated frame. Considering his obsession with food and drinks, no wonder the weapon that became his favourite and oft-used was fasting.

Once when he fell very ill, the British doctors diagnosed his problem as arising from malnutrition—he had been having only peanut butter and lemon juice!

Despite all his quackery (or, because of it?) Gandhi used to be a severely constipated person. Recounted his secretary Pyarelal: "…before he took to naturopathy, the Mahatma was virtually a slave to Eno's Fruit Salts. Every morning he put a spoonful of it at the bottom of a tumbler, poured in water and gulped down the fizzing liquid that gave him relief."

After Kasturba fell ill in 1908 Gandhi suggested she give up salt and pulses in the interest of her health. His belief was that the weak-bodied must avoid pulses, while saltlessness promoted chastity! He also recommended to her: "I suggested to her that she should give up vegetables and salt altogether. She should live on wheat and fruits only."

Gandhi had taken a vow of abstinence from milk; and that had affected his health. Kasturba, therefore, suggested to him in 1919 to go in for the alternative of goat's milk; and that's how Gandhi took to goat's milk.

Apart from considering himself an expert nutritionist, without any worthwhile scientific knowledge and training, Gandhi also considered himself a specialist in nature cure and indigenous medicine—again, without any formal studies and training. Poor ashramites were his guinea pigs, to whom he freely prescribed obligatory cures comprising various concoctions derived from cows.

Another fad of Gandhi was enema. You take improper food, that is, food as per Gandhi's prescriptions, turn severely constipated, and then become

enema-holic. Since Gandhi, thanks to his food-prescriptions for himself, had chronic constipation, he imagined all others too suffered from it—his loved ones and favourites were, therefore, at the receiving end of his enemas. Gandhi's enema-fad might have been some kind of a Freudian obsession, or a result of Gandhi's obsession with cleanliness within and without. It is said that Gandhi was so obsessed with the matter that in lieu of 'Good Morning!', or in addition to it, Gandhi would often enquire of his close associates, "Did you have a good bowel movement this morning?"{VM2}

Wrote Patrick French: "He had an obsessive interest in other people's diets and internal health, and his cure for almost any ailment was a saline enema, which he liked to administer to his acquaintances himself. His letters to his followers are full of instructions on matters such as the use of hip baths as a cure for vaginal discharge..."{PF/20}

Gandhi's fetish for eating (nutrition experiments) and defecating made him comment: "The process of eating is as unclean as evacuation, the only difference being that, while evacuation ends in a sense of relief, eating, if one's tongue is not held in control, brings discomfort."{CWMG/Vol-15/258}

Denying Injection to Ailing Kasturba

Gandhi's wife Kasturba expired on 22 February 1944 on the Mahashivaratri day, aged 74, in the Aga Khan Palace in Pune, where she was imprisoned along with Gandhi for the Quit India Movement.

The British doctors insisted on a shot of penicillin, that was arranged by Kasturba's youngest son Devdas, who got it flown-in from Calcutta. However, Gandhi disallowed it saying that the injection of the alien medicine penicillin would do no good. Gandhi remonstrated with Devdas: "Why do you not trust in God?" Instead, Gandhi filled Kasturba's room with his followers, who prayed for her, and sang devotional songs. The injection might have saved her. Any sensible person, in addition to praying, and singing devotional songs, would have definitely got the penicillin injection administered.

Worse was Gandhi's rationalisation, rather than admitting his guilt or wrong action. When Sushila Nayyar visited Gandhi on the night of Kasturba's death, this is what he told her: "*How God has tested my faith! If I had allowed you to give her penicillin, it could not have saved her. But it would have meant bankruptcy of faith on my part…*"{Tunz}{AH/526-7} For the

Mahatma the selfish saving of his own faith had a priority over an attempt to save his wife's life through penicillin!

Strangely, when Gandhi himself contracted malaria shortly afterwards, he didn't object to the usage of alien medicines on himself. Gandhi had written very critically in his book "Hind Swaraj" on the Western medicine and doctors, calling them evil, yet when he was diagnosed with appendicitis in 1923 while in jail, he allowed the British doctors to perform the alien outrage of an appendectomy on him in Sassoon Hospital in Pune on 12 January 1924!

Gandhi's Verbosity, Odd Notions & Contradictions

As Gandhi generally did not go by facts, reasoning and logic, his stands changed as it suited the circumstances, but he could suitably couch his contradictions that they didn't appear to be so.

During the agitations in 1920–22, Gandhi and his followers did not favour the boycott of British goods. Reason: It would engender hatred towards the British; and Gandhi's guiding principles were truth, love, and non-violence. But, the same (boycott) was acceptable in the Gandhian agitation of 1930.

Gandhi contended that an ideal satyagrahi could win swaraj for India. Gandhi also believed that a single true brahmachari would have the power enough to halt communal riots. He tried that in Noakhali on the independence day eve. Sadly, he totally failed! Early on, in South Africa, after reading John Ruskin, Gandhi was much impressed by his romantic notion of a simple life involving manual work—which would give the real joy. That prompted him to establish ashrams, make inmates do sundry manual jobs, and generally make life lifeless for its inhabitants.

Gandhi entertained idiosyncratic notions on masculinity. Said he: "My ideal is this: a man should remain man and yet should become woman."{MM} His notions on Hindu women were revivalist, an ideal Hindu woman being 'silent and submissive'! Gandhi on Hindu widow: "…a real Hindu widow is a treasure. She is one of the gifts of Hinduism to humanity… She has learnt to find happiness in suffering, has accepted suffering as sacred."{MM} Woman's proper role was as "the true helpmate of man in the mission of service… like the slave of old."{MM} Although Gandhi was favourable towards women's education and their participation in non-violent satyagraha; he looked down upon European suffragette activity, and discouraged women's participation in high-profile activity like the salt-march.

Gandhi's Irrational "Intellectualism" & Closed Mind

In lieu of propounding a comprehensive, consistent ideology for the country, both for the colonial and the post-independence period, and multi-dimensional strategy for achieving independence that would have galvanised people and leaders, Gandhi used to arrogantly claim that he was no propounder of a system—his life was his message! What of those who found his life not inspiring enough, or who felt deflated by his actions?

Gandhi had loftily said: "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides, and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible." However, his last sentence was perhaps a giveaway on his stubborn ways: "But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." His claim of his being open-minded was false for he was actually proud of not altering his opinion. For example, on the Home Rule League (from which he had manoeuvred to ease out Jinnah) he had commented back in 1918: "At my time of life and with views firmly formed on several matters, I could only join an organisation to effect its policy and not be effected by it."{Nan/154} Gandhi had actually closed doors on all fresh thought or on thoughts that differed from his. Otherwise, he would not be repeating his regressive and irrational "Hind Swaraj" in 1945 over 36 years after he wrote it in 1909. Gandhi had an egotistical and imperious mental makeup, and with others having branded him 'Mahatma' he became even more so.

Gandhi had once claimed that he had learnt little from history; and that his method being empiric, he had drawn his conclusions based on his personal experience. A highly uninformed claim for a leader to make! Can one's personal experience and experiments be wide, large, reliable, and conclusive enough; and should a nation be condemned based on the personal experiences of a single leader? What about the different personal conclusions of other leaders? Further, only an arrogant, obstinate, and an unenlightened person won't learn from history?

Gandhi & Proselytization

Handing out atrociously infuriating prescription of non-violence for the Hindus to die "bravely" in the context of the terrible '1921 Moplah Anti-Hindu Attacks', Gandhi made the following absurd statement:

> "I see nothing impossible in asking the Hindus to develop courage and strength to die before accepting forced conversion. I was delighted to be told that there were Hindus who did prefer the Moplah hatchet to forced conversion. If these have died without anger or malice, they have died as truest Hindus because they were truest among Indians and men... Even so is it more necessary for a Hindu to love the Moplah and the Mussalman more, when the latter is likely to injure him or has already injured him... Hindu help is at the disposal of the Mussalmans, because it is the duty of the Hindus, as neighbours, to give it…"{CWMG/Vol-26/26}

In the context of separate electorates/reservations of seats for the Dalits Gandhi had said: "…*I do not mind the Untouchables being converted to Islam or Christianity. I should tolerate that but I cannot possibly tolerate what is in store for Hinduism if there are these two divisions set up in every village*. [As if the two divisions were not already there in each village, with separate area/quarters for dalits!]"{DK/189} Significantly, Gandhi never raised a strong voice, or agitated, or fasted, or undertook satyagraha against blatant, illegal conversions through fraud, enticements, or force. Why? Lest his 'Mahatman' and 'Secular' image get tarnished for being anti-Muslim or anti-Christian!

Gandhi wrote in 'Young India' of 7 May 1931:

> "Moreover, with my known partiality for the Sermon on the Mount and my repeated declarations that its author was one of the greatest among the teachers of mankind I could not suspect that there would be any charge against me of underrating Christianity... In India under swaraj I have no doubt that foreign missionaries will be at liberty to do their proselytizing, as I would say, in the wrong way; but they would be expected to bear with those who, like me, may point out that in their opinion the way is wrong."{CWMG/Vol-52/64}

{ 20 }

Gandhi's Ill-Treatment of His Family

For all his grand 'Mahatman' pronouncements and setting of examples for others to follow ("My life is my message," he had once said), many of the acts of Gandhi with relation to his wife, sons, and brothers were either outright irresponsible, or bordered on the callous. The foundation of such an obnoxious behaviour was his thinking that the family or the extended family were basically a burden that came in the way of his attaining his ambitions, including 'spiritual' pursuits. Here are a few samples.

Brother Laxmidas

Gandhi's elder brother Laxmidas had supported him in his studies and initial struggles, and took care of his family both when he went to London for three years for his studies, and also during the time he was in South Africa without his family. While in South Africa, Gandhi did send money for his family's upkeep. But, then one fine day he unilaterally decided and intimated to Laxmidas he couldn't send the money any more as he planned using his future earnings for the community! Laxmidas, who had expected better from him, and had rightly expected Gandhi to support the extended family like he [Laxmidas] had himself done, sacrificing everything, was obviously offended. Laxmidas treated Gandhi's son like his own and got the eldest, Harilal, married, arranging an expensive wedding. Gandhi, however, refused to reimburse him the expenses, and wrote to him: "It is well if Harilal is married; it is also well if he is not. For the present at any rate I have ceased to think of him as my son."

Wife Kasturba

(11 April 1869 – 22 February 1944)

Gandhi, when over 13, got married in May 1883 to 14-year-old Kasturbai Makhanji Kapadia, affectionately called Kasturba or just Ba. Kasturba took active part in the establishment and running of Ashrams/Settlements both in South Africa and in India. She also took part in the Freedom Movement and went to jail. Kasturba was much disturbed

by Gandhi's dalliance with Saraladebi during 1919–21 (for details, please see chapter-18).

While Gandhi was in prison in South Africa in 1908, his wife Kasturba fell seriously ill. As per the prison rules, Gandhi could have come out to take care of his wife after paying a fine. But, Gandhi discovered or invented a "principle" not to do so. Instead, he wrote to Kasturba:

> "Even if you die, for me you will be eternally alive. Your soul is deathless. On my part, I would assure you I have no intention of marrying another woman after your death. I have told you this a number of times. You must have faith in God and set your soul free. Your death will be another great sacrifice for the cause of Satyagraha. My struggle is not merely against the authorities but against nature itself. I hope you will understand this and not feel offended."{JA}

What cruelty! Rather than giving courage to an ailing person, Gandhi is talking about her death. When one gets to read such things one wishes there were less principled and more unprincipled persons in the world.

On how Gandhi allowed Kasturba to die, please check chapter-19, sub-chapter "Denying Injection to Ailing Kasturba".

Gandhi's Indifference to his Sons' Education

Gandhi had four sons: Harilal, Manilal, Ramdas, and Devdas.

Gandhi was fortunate that his sons looked forward to being well-educated knowing that to be the key to good prospects, and were therefore very keen on good education. However, Gandhi's indifference to their education, and his crazy notions on the nature of education, like on other things, put paid to fond hopes of his sons.

Here is a sample of Gandhi's crazy ideas on education. He admonished his eldest son Harilal: "*I must advise you to shake of this craze for examinations. If you pass, it won't impress me much. If you fail, you will feel very unhappy*."{JA2}

He chided his second son Manilal: "*Why does an idea of study haunt you again and again? If you think of study for earning your livelihood, it is not proper; for God gives food to all. You can get enough to eat even by doing manual labour*."{JA2}

What is bewildering is that against all odds Gandhi had himself gone to London for higher studies. Why was he denying opportunities for higher education to his sons. There is only one reason: defective ideas. Gandhi had since developed his own regressive ideas on education and economy.

It is worth noting that his sons had supported Gandhi in his agitations in South Africa, and had even gone to jail several times. Gandhi, however, did not support them where required—on education.

Eldest Son Harilal

(23 August 1888–18 June 1948)

While in South Africa, Gandhi's eldest son Harilal desired to go to London for higher studies, like his father had gone. Fortunately, an opportunity presented itself when Gandhi's old friend Pranjivan Mehta offered to give a scholarship for the purpose—it was implied it would be for Gandhi's sons. However, Gandhi, to show to the world how great and impartial he was, passed on that scholarship to his nephew Chaganlal, ignoring his own son Harilal. That was not all. Later, it so happened that Chaganlal fell ill, and could not continue with his studies in London. That opened the way for Gandhi to substitute him by Harilal. But, Gandhi again ignored Harilal and sent someone else. For Gandhi it seems his own projection mattered more that the education of his children. "How non-nepotistic I am!" that's how Gandhi wanted to project himself. Although, it was not a case where he could be accused of nepotism. Because, Pranjivan Mehta had offered the scholarship for his wards only. Gandhi was too full of himself; and tended to look at everything from his own selfish, egotistic angle; and from the vantage of his own projected image.

Disgusted at his father's attitude, Harilal left South Africa for India in May 1911 remarking to his mother: "*He [Gandhi] just does not care for us, any of us*."{JA2} Harilal felt that his father had treated his mother even worse. Harilal wrote to his father in 1915: "…*You have treated us as a ring-master would treat the beasts of the circus… You have spoken to us never with love, always with anger… You have a heart of stone…*"{JA2} Rebelling against his father, he renounced all family ties. When 50, Harilal converted to Islam and named himself Abdullah Gandhi; but re-converted via Arya Samaj to Hinduism shortly after, upon his mother's request.

Harilal married Gulab Gandhi, and they had two daughters, Rani and Manu, and three sons, Kantilal, Rasiklal and Shantilal. His grand-daughter

Nilam Parikh, daughter of Rani, wrote a biography of him: “Gandhiji's Lost Jewel: Harilal Gandhi”.

Harilal in later life declined into alcoholism—in a great measure, Gandhi was to be blamed for it. He died of tuberculosis on 18 June 1948 in a municipal hospital in Sewri in Bombay. The play, and its movie adaptation, ‘Gandhi, My Father’ brings out the tragedy of being Harilal—it is worth watching.

Second Son Manilal

(28 October 1892 – 5 April 1956)

Gandhi’s second son Manilal, then 18, was caught in an embrace with a young married lady, by mutual consent, in Gandhi’s Phoenix Farm in South Africa. Gandhi found the sin to be unbearable. As a penance, Gandhi coerced the lady to shave her head, and made Manilal fast for seven days, and said: “*He will, I hope, be able to bear the seven days’ fast; but if he dies in the process, it will not be a matter of regret*.” Gandhi also imposed on himself a seven-day fast, followed by one-meal-a-day for the next four months. Further, *he ordered Manilal to a lifetime of celibacy*—on which he relented much later, at the instance of Kasturba, when Manilal was 35.

Manilal was running a periodical ‘Indian Opinion’ in South Africa, which Gandhi had started. In 1926, while still under that forced vow of celibacy, Manilal fell in love with a Muslim lady, Fatima. Manilal wrote to Gandhi from South Africa seeking permission to marry Fatima Gool, daughter of a Muslim merchant, who happened also to be a family friend of the Gandhis. Outraged Gandhi wrote to Manilal: “*Your desire is against your religion… It would be like putting two swords in one scabbard… Your marriage will be a great jolt to Hindu-Muslim relations…*”{AG}{Tunz} “Secular” Gandhi, the propagator of Hindu-Muslim unity, further wrote to Manilal: “*Your marriage will be great jolt to Hindu-Muslim relations. Intercommunal marriages are no solution to this problem. You cannot forget nor will society forget that you are my son*.”{AG} Love between two adults apparently was no issue for Gandhi. To ensure the marriage did not happen Gandhi indirectly threatened Manilal he would lose his job of ‘Indian Opinion’ if he went ahead with the marriage. Not only that, he hinted at ostracization: “*It will be impossible for you, I think, after this to come and settle in India*.” Poor Manilal backed out. One would have thought inter-religious, inter-caste, inter-region marriages ought to be promoted for better

inter-community relations. Apparently the Mahatma entertained different notions.

Gandhi later got him married to a Gujarati Bania girl Sushila Mashruwala (1907-1988) in 1927. They had two daughters and a son: Sita (1928), Arun (1934), and Ela (1940). Manilal remained editor of the 'Indian Opinion' till his death in 1956 in Durban, South Africa. Uma Dhupelia Mesthrie, grand-daughter of Manilal and daughter of Sita, published a biography on Manilal, 'Gandhi's Prisoner? The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal'.

Third Son Ramdas

(1897 – 14 April 1969)

Gandhi's third son Ramdas was born in South Africa. He married Nirmala, and had three children: Sumitra (pl. see below), Kanu, and Usha. He expired in Pune in 1969. Kanu (Kanubhai) was a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who had worked with the US Department of Defense on the wing structure of fighter aircraft, and had joined NASA in 1991, from where he retired. He returned to India in 2014, and expired in 2016.

Fourth Son Devdas

(22 May 1900 – 3 August 1957)

Devdas was born in South Africa, and returned to India with his father. He was editor of the Hindustan Times. Devdas fell in love with Lakshmi, the daughter of C Rajagopalachari, and married her. They had four children: Rajmohan, Gopalkrishna, Ramchandra, and Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee.

Grand-daughter Sumitra

Not all were cowed down by Gandhi's overbearing persona. Gandhi's third-son Ramdas's daughter Sumitra was one such. Like he did for others, Gandhi persuaded and pressurised Sumitra to get 'educated' in the 'Ashram-way' evolved by him, rather than the normal way. Sumitra resisted, then rebelled. After she graduated (in the non-Gandhian normal way) and wished to study further, Gandhi told her: "*What is the need for further formal education? Come and be my secretary—I will train you*." Responded firm and self-confident Sumitra: "*I don't need to be one of your inferior secretaries who wash your clothes and utensils, organise your*

meals, make appointments, usher people in and out, and are filled with self-importance."{VM2}

Thanks to her not getting entangled with Gandhi, she made good in life —studied in the US, and later became an MP.

Manubehn Gandhi

Manu, Gandhi's grandniece, had served him faithfully and diligently for many years. She wrote:

> "I complained to him [Gandhi] at times that he had made me give up education, since he called me away from Karachi, where I was going to school. I wanted to pass examinations and had a fascination for degrees like girls of today… When Bapu was alive I complained bitterly to him that he did not let me go to school. He replied, 'I want to impart to you both knowledge and wisdom.' I retorted, 'Mahadevbhai could become your secretary only because he was so highly educated. Not only he, all others who have risen and become great have done so because of their degrees.' Bapu laughed and said, 'No use being great. You had used the word *upadhi* (burden) for a degree. A degree is really a burden… What I want to impress upon you is that all your degrees won't help you in *doing God's work*.'"{Manu/17}

Did Gandhi care what others desired? Apparently, serving him was *doing God's work*. He had to impose his will upon others. He knew best what others should do! What self-absorption, ego and presumption!!

{ 21 }

No Serious Studies & Policies by Gandhians

Gandhi's Readings & Writings

Apart from a variety of religious texts, Gandhi read books like "The Kingdom of God is Within You" by Leo Tolstoy. Responding to a question from the Pharisees about when the Kingdom of God would come, Jesus had responded: "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20-21). Tolstoy's book deals with the principle of non-resistance when confronted by violence, as taught by Jesus. 'Sermon on the Mount' with its biblical prophecy that 'the meek would inherit the earth', pushed him to theorize on non-violent resistance.

Henry Polak, a sub-editor of 'The Critic', a Johannesburg paper, had given John Ruskin's book 'Unto This Last', an anti-industrial diatribe, to Gandhi in a vegetarian restaurant in South Africa in March 1904. The book had a profound impact on Gandhi, inspiring him to set up the Phoenix Settlement. The title of the book references one of Jesus' parables in the Bible. Gandhi translated 'Unto This Last' into Gujarati in 1908 under the title of Sarvodaya (Well Being of All). Ruskin's irrational aversion to industrialization and emphasis on the dignity of manual labour appealed to Gandhi.

Henry Thoreau's essay 'Civil Disobedience' stating it to be one's duty to disobey unjust laws impressed Gandhi.

The biblical 'Sermon on the Mount' prophesying that 'the meek would inherit the earth', together with Jainism's non-violence, and Thoreau's passive resistance against injustice made Gandhi advocate a mix that, in the real world, would condemn any group that faithfully followed the preaching to eternal slavery.

Not for Gandhi the rigorous study of economics, politics, social sciences, and their historical evolution and progress, or history of nations, or search for answers to questions like "What makes a nation prosperous?", "What leads to downfall of nations?", and so on—so vital for an aspiring

national leader. Fluffy, superficial, impractical, emotional, high-sounding blah-blah apparently appealed to him.

Although Gandhi is among the most documented figures, and he himself wrote and spoke profusely on various topics, yet his writings tend to be opaque—they tend to obfuscate, rather than to illuminate. He frequently tended to contradict himself both in actions and in writings, but when found out, always had grand rationalisations to offer. Many British officials considered him to be devious, and a twister of words.

Gandhi & His Autobiography

Gandhi's grand-sounding autobiography "The Story of My Experiments with Truth" is a testimony of his total self-indulgence. It is a dry and dull story that has no place for the nature of milieu and surroundings in which he grew up. It has no anecdotes about his friends, brothers, wife, relatives, colleagues, class-mates and acquaintances. No interesting description of his journey to London, and his initial and later impression. Nothing about the streets, buildings, restaurants, parks, and things in London that caught his attention. Or, on the English cuisine and drinks. Or, the life in London. Or, the various aspects of life in South Africa. Or, how his wife and children coped with the changes when they came to South Africa. Or, of growing up of his children, their life and interests. No. His autobiography is "*I, me, and myself*"; and his indulgence with his vegetarianism, nutrition, and other fads, coupled with moralising. There are other things too, but they don't have prominence.

The exciting scientific discoveries and new theories; the far-reaching technological changes; the industrial advances; the great social, political, and economic writings; and new literature did not seem to have made any impact on Gandhi. His autobiography, particularly his years in England described in it, is silent on this. There is no mention on Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur, Alexander Graham Bell, Gregor Mendel, Charles Dickens, Karl Marx, Giuseppe Mazzini, Abraham Lincoln and American Civil War, and so on.

Wrote MJ Akbar: "The only memorable thing that Gandhi did in the rest of 1920s was to publish a patchy autobiography about some sensational experiments he had conducted with truth. Readers got a prismatic view of his highly unusual sex life."{Akb2/244}

Gandhi's Writings

What Gandhi spoke and wrote have been compiled into the 'Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi'{CWMG} that run into 98 volumes and about 30 million words. Besides, there are about 5,000 books on Gandhi—these plus CWMG are collectively termed 'Gandhiana' by Ved Mehta. Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri:

> "…Nothing is more baffling than an attempt to form a precise, coherent, or even intelligible idea of what he [Gandhi] really meant, if one goes to his writings. Anything more vague, inconsistent, elusive, or evasive than his own exposition of his ideas cannot be conceived of. The very copiousness of his written and printed output is more a hindrance than help…"{NC/40-41}

Nirad wrote further:

> "The articles which he poured out in unceasing stream in 'Young India' and 'Harijan' were an exercise in edifying with a figurative bludgeon. They illuminated nothing, not even that verbal obsession of his—Truth. He probably wrote more than a million words on that alone, but after reading all that no one could discover what exactly he meant by Truth. But he himself was never aware of any dishonesty or prevarication…"{NC/49}

Wrote Patrick French: "*A close reading of his statements on a particular subject usually results not in a sense of illumination, but of obfuscation… To British officials he was 'a twister', and his methods were simply devious…*"{PF/18}

Gandhi's (Mis)interpretations

Affected by the Christianity-inspired books like "The Kingdom of God in Within You" and "Unto This Last", and by the Bible and the missionaries, Gandhi chose to (mis)interpret Gita, and turn it on its head. Since Mahabharata, the grand epic of war, did not suit his philosophy of non-violence, he chose to give Mahabharata itself a spin, calling its war actually an allegory; and endeavours of Arjuna and Krishna as essentially spiritual quests to defeat evil! In other words, he sought to Christianise Gita. Where went his claimed honesty? Where was the honesty in misinterpreting?

Viceroy Wavell had this impression of Gandhi:

> "[Gandhi] never makes a pronouncement that is not so qualified and so vaguely worded that it cannot be interpreted in whatever sense

best suits him at a later stage."{PF/245}

No Serious Studies & Policies by Gandhi & Gandhians

Among the greatest weaknesses of the Freedom Movement was the failure of the Congress to formulate an enlightened constitution suited to India much prior to 1947. Not just the verbose one full of legalese, but also a short lucid one readable and understandable by non-experts, like the American constitution. After independence, it should have been taught in schools as a compulsory subject.

Of course, a much greater weakness of the Freedom Movement was the failure of the Congress to formulate well thought-out policies on economy, finance, taxation, agriculture, industries, education, science and technology, culture, language, administration, law and justice, internal security, external security, foreign policies, and so on, well in advance of the freedom in 1947. They should also have studied how the Western nations, especially the US, had managed to drastically reduce poverty, and became prosperous, and how India could emulate them after gaining freedom. Even if there could not be agreement on various issues, differing options with their pros and cons, along with practical examples from various countries, should have been documented as a guide for future. Expert teams should have been formed with such an end in mind. Finance for the study-teams should have been arranged—there were no dearth of financiers for the Congress. There was enough talent to deploy. There was no dearth of time. The freedom movement stretched on for several decades! The Congress had all the time in the world to formulate India's future constitution and policies at least six times over.

Most of the leaders who were jailed over long periods had the additional advantage of undisturbed time at their disposal to read, study, think, discuss and thrash out details on various aspects related to the future constitution and policies.

Twelve top Congress leaders—Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Azad, Nehru, Kriplani, GB Pant, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Narendra Dev, Asaf Ali, Shankarrao Deo, PC Ghosh, Syed Mahmud, and Hare Krushna Mahtab—were in Ahmednagar Fort jail for about three years from 1942 to 1945. But that overlong period of three years generated no short or detailed plans or policies or expert-studies on anything of relevance to the immediate or mid-term or long-term future of India, or even on the burning problem of the day: way forward towards freedom!

Gandhi, Nehru, and other top Congress leaders spent a number of years in the British jails where (unlike the revolutionaries and others who were whipped or tortured, and were deprived of the basic facilities) free from any compulsory labour or torture or hardship, they had the facilities of reading and writing and discussions. Yet, they hardly produced a work which could be considered of worthwhile practical use and implementation after independence.

In jail, Gandhi indulged in his fads of naturopathy, nutrition, fasting, enema, and medicinal quackery; and in flood of words through innumerable letters and articles that didn't really contribute much to what really mattered. When not in jail, Gandhi enjoyed playing dictator in his ashrams making life difficult for the inmates, and engaging people in all kind of time-pass activities like spinning yarn and so on.

Collected works and other writings of Nehru, Gandhi and others contain no serious discussions on any of the crucial topics listed earlier, and the most critical of all—the economic policies. It was as if they had no interest in ascertaining how to make India prosperous after independence. It was as if Adam Smith, Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, and host of other notable economists did not exist for them. It was as if the study of economics and how to manage a modern state was irrelevant for them.

As became obvious during Nehru's post-independence era, despite "Glimpses of World History" India miserably failed in foreign affairs, defence and external security, and despite "Discovery of India" India failed to discover its forte, and became a basket case. Other leaders didn't help much either in defining well before independence what India's future policies should be. That gave Nehru a free ride; and he royally blundered unchecked. Of course, Patel was able to limit Nehru's blunders as long as he was alive.

Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri:

> "…*In the Indian nationalist movement there was not only a total absence of positive and constructive ideas, but even of thinking*. These shortcomings were to have their disastrous consequence in 1947… The intellectual poverty of the nationalist movement gradually became intellectual bankruptcy, but nobody perceived that because the hatred of the British rule left no room for rational ideas… *Over the whole period with which I am dealing* [1921-52]

> *none of them* [Gandhi, Nehru…] *put forth a single idea about what was to follow British rule… What was even more astonishing, none of these leaders were qualified to put forward any positive idea because none of them had any worthwhile knowledge of Indian history, life, and culture…*"{NC/31-2}

Wrote Rustamji: "Another shortcoming that could be mentioned is that in those years we did not think that the freedom would come so soon [actually, it came too late]. So, we never prepared, studied or made arrangements for running governments in the proper way."{Rust/216}

{ 22 }

What Others Said of Gandhi

CN Patel, Deputy Director of the 'Collected Works of Gandhi':

"Although he [Gandhi] imparted to his countrymen, humiliated by their British enslavement, a certain self-confidence and energy, he felt toward the end of his life that he had failed in everything, and in a sense he had…"

Dr BR Ambedkar:

In an interview to BBC in New Delhi in 1955, Dr Ambedkar had said: "As a politician, he was never a Mahatma! I refused to call him Mahatma. I never in my life called him Mahatma. He doesn't deserve that title not even from the point of view of his morality!"{URL79} Told Ambedkar to a visiting journalist Beverley Nichols: "Gandhi is the greatest enemy the untouchables have ever had in India."

Chief Justice PB Chakrabarty of Calcutta High Court:

who had also served as the acting Governor of West Bengal in India soon after independence, wrote:{IT1}

> "When I was the acting Governor, Lord Atlee, who had given us independence by withdrawing the British rule from India, spent two days in the Governor's palace at Calcutta during his tour of India. At that time I had a prolonged discussion with him regarding the real factors that had led the British to quit India. My direct question to him was that since Gandhi's 'Quit India' movement had tapered off quite some time ago and in 1947 no such new compelling situation had arisen that would necessitate a hasty British departure, why did they have to leave? *In his reply Atlee cited several reasons, the principal among them being the erosion of loyalty to the British Crown among the Indian army and navy personnel as a result of the military activities of Netaji [Subhas Bose].* Toward the end of our discussion I asked Atlee what was the extent of Gandhi's influence upon the British decision to quit India. Hearing this question, Atlee's lips became twisted in a sarcastic smile as he slowly chewed out the word, **'m-i-n-i-m-a-l**!'"{Gla/159} {Stat1}

Churchill:

dismissed Congress [and, hence Gandhians] as merely "the intelligentsia of non-fighting Hindu elements, who can neither defend India nor raise a revolt."{MM/218}

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Gandhi's mentor:

Gokhale had commented that the thoughts contained in Gandhi's book 'Hind Swaraj' were so crude and ill-conceived that Gandhi would himself destroy the book after spending time in India.{MKG4} Though full-of-himself Gandhi remained wedded to those crude ideas even till independence and later.

Kanshi Ram:

"What has Gandhi done? He had fought tooth and nail against the interests of the downtrodden people… He was a great hypocrite to my mind."{Gill/111}

In fact, the leadership of the various Dalit movements have rarely a good thing to say about Gandhi.

Mountbatten:

In response to Gandhi's announcement in Calcutta on 9 August 1947 that he would spend the rest of his life in Pakistan, Mountbatten had reported to London:

> "Gandhi has announced his decision to spend the rest of his life in Pakistan looking after the minorities. This will infuriate Jinnah, but will be great relief to Congress for, as I have said before, his [Gandhi's] influence is largely negative or even destructive and directed against the only man who has his feet firmly on ground, Vallabhbhai Patel."{Wolp/336}{Tunz/236}

Nirad Chaudhuri:

"I said that in spite of their [Mont-Fort Reforms] inadequacies they should have been worked, if for nothing else than to gain administrative experience. *But, of course, neither Mahatma Gandhi nor the Congress cared for practical matters*."{NC/11}

"Nothing is more baffling than an attempt to form a precise, coherent, or even intelligible idea of what he [Gandhi] really meant, if one goes to his writings. Anything more vague, inconsistent, elusive, or evasive than his

own exposition of his ideas cannot be conceived of. The very copiousness of his written and printed output is more a hindrance than help…"{NC/40-41}

"After being proved to be dangerous ideologues by that war [WW-II], *the pacifists have now fallen back on Gandhi as their last prop*, and are arguing that by liberating India from the foreign rule by his non-violent methods he has proved that non-violent methods and ideas are sound. *Unfortunately, the British abandonment of India before Gandhi's death has given a spurious and specious plausibility to what is in reality only a coincidence without causal relationship…* And finally, he [Gandhi] had no practical achievement, as I shall show when I deal with his death. What is attributed to him politically is pure myth…"{NC/41}

George Orwell (1903-1950), the famous author :

"Gandhi has been regarded for twenty years by the Government of [British] India as one of its right hand men… It was always admitted in the most cynical way that Gandhi made it easier for the British to rule India… the British officials are in terror that he may die and be replaced by someone who believes less in 'soul force' and more in bombs."{Orw2/59}

Patrick French:

"If Gandhi is your hero, it can be a deflating experience to read what he actually did and said at crucial points in India's political history. The authorized version of the Mahatma is very different from the real one. Far from being a wise and balanced saint, Gandhi was an emotionally troubled social activist and a ruthlessly sharp political negotiator…"{PF/17}

"A close reading of his statements on a particular subject usually results not in a sense of illumination, but of obfuscation… To British officials he was 'a twister', and his methods were simply devious…"{PF/18}

"From late 1930s onwards, Gandhi was a liability to the freedom movement, pursuing an eccentric agenda that created as many problems as it solved. V.S. Naipaul has put it more bluntly, 'Gandhi lived too long.'"{PF/105}

C Rajagopalachari on Gandhi's legacy:

The glamour of modern technology, money and power is so seductive that no one—I mean no one—can resist it. The handful of Gandhians who still believe in his philosophy of a simple life in a simple society are mostly cranks.{URL83}

Sri Aurobindo:

While commenting on Gandhi and his policy of Muslim appeasement, behind the façade of non-violence, Sri Aurobindo once said, "India will be free to the extent it succeeds in shaking off the spell of Gandhism."

VS Naipaul:

"Not everyone approved of Gandhi's methods. Many were dismayed by the apparently arbitrary dictates of his 'inner voice'. And in the political stalemate of the 1930s—for which some Indians still blame him: Gandhi's unpredictable politics, they say, his inability to manage the forces he had released, needlessly lengthened out the Independence struggle, delayed self-government by twenty-five years, and wasted the lives and talents of many good men…"{Na1}

Ellen Wilkinson:

an MP and a member of the British cabinet during 1945-1947, remarked after her visit to India in 1932: "*Gandhi is the best policeman the British have in India*."{SKG/128}

Viceroy Willingdon:

had written to PM Ramsay MacDonald: "He [Gandhi] is a curious little devil—always working for an advantage. In all his actions I see the 'bania' predominating over the saint."{Wolp/127}

{ 23 }

Gandhi: An Overall Evaluation

The prominent aspects of Gandhi are summarised and highlighted in this chapter. The explanations and justifications for the statements below are contained in the chapters above [referred below in brackets as (Ch-…)], and are not repeated or synopsized here.

First, the Positives: Gandhi's Relevant Legacy

Gandhi's relevant legacy is with regard to honesty, integrity, selflessness, and service in public life; his personal example and teachings against nepotism and dynasty; his empathy for the poor and the weak; and his work on cleanliness (being followed in Swachh Bharat Mission).

Gandhi had justifiably severe negative views on Brown Sahibs. But, he didn't practice what he preached in this case, for he anointed a dyed-in-the-wool brown-sahib Nehru as the first PM, with all its negative consequences for India. (Ch-12)

Gandhi had right views on the language policy and the language (medium) of education; but again, by anointing the brown-sahib Nehru as the first PM, he spoilt everything. (Ch-12)

Independence: NOT thanks to Gandhi & the Congress!

Gandhi had himself admitted as much (Ch-10). Gandhi and the Congress were minor and inconsequential factors for India's freedom. The major and decisive factors are detailed in chapter-10. Further, around the year India got independence several other British colonies also got independence, although they hardly had much of an independence movement—why? (Ch-10)

Delayed Independence—thanks to Gandhian Methods

Had Gandhi not arrived on the scene, India would have gained Dominion Status (—as good as independence, which is what it got in 1947) about two decades earlier. (Ch-10, 22)

Notably the British colonies Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa gained Dominion Status in 1867, 1901, 1907, and 1910 respectively.

How come we were such laggards? (Ch-10)

Gandhian movement stretched on for an overlong period of about 30 years (and finally it was not the major reason India got independence); while in sharp contrast, thanks to non-Gandhian, violent methods, American War of Independence (1775–1783) was won in 8 years; and South American leader Simon Bolivar liberated not just one, but six countries from the Spanish rule through his military campaign lasting mere 13 years! (Ch-10)

Nature of the Gandhian Freedom Movement

The Gandhian freedom movement was a leisurely, laid-back, have-all-the-time-in-the-world-to-get-freedom-mindset-driven, ad hoc, unplanned, once-in-a-decade movement (with each movement lasting a few months), there being no constant, intensive struggle; the intervening time being filled-up with time-pass, diversionary, "constructive" activities like hand-spinning that deluded the followers into thinking they were working for freedom. (Ch-10, 19)

Gandhi created Mass-Movement? No.

It is claimed that thanks to Gandhi the freedom movement became a mass-movement. That is not true. (Ch-5, Ch-10, subchapter: "Mass Freedom Movement Already There Before Gandhi")

Gandhi's My Way or the Highway

Prior to Gandhi, India's independence efforts were joint efforts (even if not co-ordinated) of constitutionalists, agitationists, revolutionaries, and those who steered mid-way—and each group had respect and sympathy for the other, and tried to help one another where possible.

However, with the arrival of Gandhi, it was only "his way or the highway"—his way being the untested, unproven (which ultimately fetched zero results) way of non-violent satyagraha. Further, Gandhi sought to actively discredit all alternate ways! (And, that suited the British.) He decried all revolutionaries, including Bhagat Singh & Co, and Udham Singh. Had he allowed all the alternate paths to bloom, and allowed and encouraged patriotic rebellion in the army, police and bureaucracy, it would have brought tremendous, unbearable pressure on the British Raj, forcing them to concede the Dominion Status much earlier. In effect he weakened the freedom movement. (Ch-10)

Gandhi's Failure : Main Reason

The main reason of Gandhi's failure both in South Africa (Ch-3), and later in India, were faulty strategy and action that flowed from faulty understanding of the history, historical forces, economic interests, environment, and forces at play. Ignoring all these he thought if he could get cozy with the British by helping them in their violent wars (in South Africa and in WW-I), and only engage in such non-violent protests as would not really trouble them or hurt their interests, he would win their approbation, and gain something for his people, retaining his leadership.

Gandhi : An Asset for the British

The British Raj loved Gandhi's pacifism, non-violence, passive resistance for it suited them immensely. No wonder the Raj and the British media projected him as a 'Mahatma', and used his non-violence and related propaganda to discredit those who could really give trouble to the British— the revolutionaries, and other non-Gandhian freedom fighters like Netaji Subhas Bose. (Ch-11)

Partition & Pakistan

Partition and Pakistan were thanks to overlong Gandhian freedom struggle, and the consequent delayed independence. Pakistan question came to the fore only in 1940. Had the Dominion Status been gained earlier (see above) there would have been no Pakistan. (Ch-9 and 10)

Could Partition have been avoided?

Gandhian policies, strategies and tactics had boxed India into a situation by 1946 that Pakistan could not have been avoided. But, yes, had Gandhi and Gandhism not dictated the Indian politics since 1919, there perhaps would have been no partition. (Ch-5, 9 and 10)

Could Partition Holocaust have been avoided?

Certainly. It was on account of unprofessional and irresponsible handling by the Raj, and by the Gandhian and Muslim leadership. Lack of deterrence and preparation on account of the Gandhian non-violence was another handicap. (Ch-9, 15 and 16)

Had Dr BR Ambedkar's prescription on peaceful exchange of population detailed by him in his book 'Pakistan or the Partition of India'{Amb3} many years prior to independence been followed the partition

holocaust could have been avoided. But, with 'Mahatmas' as leaders who would listen to the genuinely wise people like Ambedkar. (Ch-9)

Was Gandhi against Partition? No.

Although Gandhi had initial hang-ups, he ultimately supported partition. In the AICC meeting on 14 June 1947 for ratification of the CWC decision in favour of partition, when several members protested, Gandhi intervened and appealed to members to support the CWC and its decision for partition, in the absence of an alternative. (Ch-9)

All of Gandhi's Major Movements were Failures

Gandhi's 21 years in South Africa hardly brought about any improvement in the condition of the Indians there. Gandhi's overlong major satyagraha during 1906–9 against the Black Act in South Africa failed. (Ch-3)

Gandhi's first major movement in India (1920-22), the Khilafat Movement, failed to achieve any of its three major aims. It actually resulted in negative consequences, and laid the foundations of Partition and Pakistan. (Ch-5)

Gandhi's second major movement in India (1930-32), the Salt Satyagraha, had 11 demands, none of which were met by the British. Even Salt-Tax was NOT abolished! There were a few minor concessions. (Ch-6)

Gandhi's third and last major movement in India, the 'Quit India' Movement of 1942, petered out in about two months, and the British Raj rebuffed all the demands. 'Quit India' didn't make the British quit, it rather made the Congress quit centre-stage, ensured dramatic ascendency of the Muslim League, and hastened Partition and Pakistan. (Ch-8)

Top Gandhian Leaders: Privileged Freedom Fighters

Top Gandhians received special treatment in the British jails, unlike the revolutionaries, and other freedom fighters, who were severely ill-treated, or condemned to Kaalapani. (Ch-11)

Sidelining of Gandhi post Quit-India

After Gandhi came out of jail post Quit-India failure, he stood sidelined both by the British Raj and by the Congress leadership. He no longer played a decisive role—and that was good for India. His ways would have further put India into difficulties. The decisive role was taken up by Patel and others. (Ch-9)

Integration of the Princely States

Left to Gandhi and Nehru there would have been many more problematic states like Kashmir, and perhaps several Pakistans. Had Gandhi been alive, given his pacifism and non-violence principles and the type of views he had expressed on the Kashmir problem (Ch-13), the decisive military action that Patel took in Hyderabad in Sep-1948 would not have happened, and most probably Hyderabad would have been Pakistan-II. Integration of 548 Princely States was thanks to Patel. (Ch-13)

55 crores to Pakistan

Pakistan's aggression of J&K had prompted the Indian cabinet to withhold rupees 55 crores to Pakistan in January 1948; yet at Gandhi's insistence—prodded by the Mountbatten—that money was given to Pakistan. It helped Pakistan create further trouble in Kashmir; and it also triggered Gandhi's murder. (Ch-9)

Gandhi & Non-violence

The Gandhian concept and practice of non-violence is theoretically, practically, rationally, logically, strategically and tactically unsound. The Gandhian concept of non-violence is a Christian concept inspired from Tolstoy's "The Kingdom of God is Within You", something which the actual Christians and colonialists never followed. It is a non-Hindu concept that flies in the face of the teachings of the revered Hindu scriptures like Ramayana, Mahabharat and Gita; but the "Apostle of Truth" did his best to so mis-interpret them as to be in conformity with his Christian non-violence concept. (Ch-15)

Gandhian dictum "an eye for an eye would make the whole world blind" is logically untrue as comparatively the Gandhian dictum would actually leave more people blind! (Ch-15)

Gandhian practice of non-violence rendered the unfortunate victims of communal violence defenceless. Deterrence is a vital instrument of self-defence. (Ch-9 and 15)

Gandhi Soft-Pedalled/Rationalised British/Muslim Violence

Gandhi was prone to soft-pedalling or rationalising the violence of the British and the Muslims. (Examples: Ch-15, 16)

Non-Violence Nonsense of "No Alternative"

There is a concocted rationale for Gandhian non-violent tactics: "There was no alternative"—that is, "We couldn't have won against the British through violence—they were too powerful. Non-violence was the only practical solution!"

The above demonstrates ignorance of historical facts. All freedom movements all over the globe all through history have been violent. And, in all cases the state, that is, the ruler one had to fight against to gain freedom from, had been much stronger than those seeking freedom. How did the apparently weaker side win?—check chapter-10. The stark fact was that no one ever gained freedom through non-violent means (nor did India, ultimately)—and, yet it was advanced as the only panacea!

Back to being a Slave Nation

Had Gandhian path been followed on economics and non-violence, India would have remained too weak to defend itself, and within a decade after independence India would again have lost its freedom and been enslaved. (Ch-14, 15)

Thanks to the Gandhian influence and legacy of non-violence, India failed to adequately invest in deterrent violence—army—and was shamed before the world in the 1962 India-China war. Again, thanks to the same, Pakistan dared to attack India in 1965.

Gandhian Economy—Hind Swaraj : Prescription for Dark Ages

Gandhi was against industrialization; modern transport; western medicine, hospitals and doctors; and most of the modern and progressive things. It would have been an unmitigated disaster had the Gandhian path shown by him in his book 'Hind Swaraj' and other writings been followed. It would have taken India into dark ages, and condemned it into a poor, backward rural republic, with little generation of surplus to develop itself, or ensure its internal and external security, plunging it into another millennium of re-enslavement. (Ch-14)

Gandhi's Regressive Hand-Spinning

Gandhi's hand-spinning and such other pursuits were effectively time-pass activities meant to give false feeling to the followers that that too was a relevant activity for the fight for freedom, lest they become restive. They were, in fact, huge wastage of time and efforts, that could have been better utilised. Spinning-wheel was more a symbol of Gandhi's regressive

concepts enunciated by him in his book Hind Swaraj, and of his stand against industrialisation and modernisation. (Ch-14, 19)

Gandhi : Racist in South Africa

Gandhi's pronouncements in South Africa reeked of racism—please check his quotes in chapter-3.

Gandhi Defended Caste-System

Rather than trying to abolish it (which many of his contemporaries advocated and tried), Gandhi vigorously defended the indefensible and regressive caste-system! He was only against untouchability—and all he wanted was absorption of untouchables into the lowest caste hierarchy! Dr Ambedkar regarded him as the greatest enemy of dalits. (Ch-7, 17)

Gandhi's Defective Approach on Muslim Appeasement

Despite claiming to have mastered religious texts, Gandhi's understanding of Islam, Islamic history, Muslims, and Muslim psychology was highly erroneous, leading to his defective approach, and bizarre acts of Muslim appeasement. (Ch-16)

Gandhi's anointed protégé Nehru made the situation worse post-independence by leveraging Gandhi's defective approach for vote-bank politics, now imitated by most of the political parties to the detriment of India.

Gandhi & His Idiosyncratic Notions, Ways & Fads

It's true Gandhi drew women into the freedom movement; but, it's also true he didn't view them as equal to men, and entertained traditional notions on their role. (Ch-18)

Gandhi's views on brahmacharya and sex were crazy, unscientific and regressive. Gandhi's "brahmacharya experiments" showed lack of consideration and empathy for the female partners with whom he slept naked. (Ch-18)

Without any training or expertise Gandhi freely engaged in his experiments in nutrition and home-remedies on himself and his hapless targets, with little positive results. (Ch-19)

Although Gandhi advocated simple living, Sarojini Naidu had commented: "*We have to spend a fortune to keep Gandhi in poverty!*" Gandhi talked of self-dependence, but had an army of persons serving him! (Ch-19)

Gandhi talked against it, but did precious little to stem proselytization. (Ch-19)

Gandhi & Family Responsibility

Gandhi was callous about the education of his children; and could have treated his family better. (Chapter-20)

Gandhi didn't allow a penicillin-shot (recommended by doctors) on his ailing wife in 1944 leading to her untimely demise. (Ch-19)

No Worthwhile Policies & Studies from Gandhi & Gandhians

Despite the overlong period of about three decades of Gandhian freedom struggle, and long years spent by the top Gandhian leaders in jails, where they had undisturbed time and all the facilities to read, think, discuss, debate, write and thrash-out all important national matters well in advance of the freedom in 1947 (on constitution, economy, finance, taxation, agriculture, industries, education, science and technology, culture, language, administration, law and justice, internal security, external security, foreign policies, and so on), hardly a work came out which could be considered of worthwhile practical use and implementation after independence. That left the field open to Nehru to blunder as he wished. (Ch-21)

Gandhi's Mega Blunder & Injustice

Gandhi's gross injustice was to have anointed Nehru as the Congress President in 1946 (and hence the first PM) overriding the much more deserving Sardar Patel—even though 12 of the 15 PCCs had voted for Patel, and none for Nehru. (Ch-12)

It was a mega blunder which proved immensely costly for India, as Nehru, and after him, his dynasty, condemned India to be a forever a third-rate, third-world country. For details, please read the author's book "*Nehru's 97 Major Blunders*" available on Amazon and at PustakMahal.com.

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Citation Syntax & Examples

Citations are given as super-scripts in the text, such as {Azad/128}.

{Source-Abbreviation/Page-Number}
e.g. {Azad/128} = Azad, Page 128

{Source-Abbreviation/Volume-Number/Page-Number}
e.g. {CWMG/V-58/221} = CWMG, Volume-58, Page 221

{Source-Abbreviation} … for URLs (articles on the web), and for digital books (including Kindle-Books), that are searchable, where location or page-number may not be given.
e.g. {VPM2}, {URL15}

{Source-Abbreviation/Location-Number}… for Kindle Books
e.g. {VPM2}, {VPM2/L-2901}

{VPM2/438/L-2901} = Page 438 for Printed/Digital Book; and L-2901 for Location 2901 for a Kindle Book. Applicable, where citations from both type of books given.

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A	Abbreviations used in citations.
B	B=Book, D=Digital Book/eBook on the Website other than Kindle, K=Kindle eBook, U=URL of Document/Article on Web, W=Website, Y=YouTube
C	Book/Document/Web Particulars

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AA	B	Alice Albinia—*Empires of the Indus*. John Murray, London, (2008) 2009.
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