CHAPTER VII

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Socialism is primarily concerned with the creation of an egalitarian society. It aims at doing away with the irrational socio-economic system where a few rich and idle persons enjoy a life of affluence and luxury when millions of hard-working peasants and workers are deprived of their absolute minimum. It is a vision of society where all its members inspite of their accident of birth enjoy almost equal economic benefit and occupy equal status. It envisions a social system that is marked by a spirit of fraternity and fellowship. Interpreted from economic angle it encompasses a society that is free from exploitation and marked by freedom of the individual both as a producer and a consumer. Hence it is rightly said: "It is his equality, freedom and his fellowship - not only his economic advantage - which have been the ends of socialist endeavours".

Thus, equality, freedom and fellowship constitute the very cornerstone of socialism. Socialists of all hues are, therefore, concerned with elimination of all types of inequalities that are man-made, provide freedom to the individual as producer and consumer and create an atmosphere of fraternity and fellowship in the society.

Hence it is said: "what socialists have wanted to see embodied in the economy are the human ideals of equality freedom and fellowship".

But the starting point of all socialists to which-ever school they may belong is an ethical approach to social philosophy. The very existence of inequality between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, the privileged and the under-privileged, the suffering of millions of hard-working peasants and workers in face of a life of extravagance and luxury of the few idle and the rich throw a challenge to the ethical sensibility of the socialists and whips up their ethical sense in favour of an egalitarian society free from such social and economic contradictions. Hence, the very starting point of socialist philosophy and actions in the direction of a socialist society is an ethical approach to the society. This ethical approach is common to all brands of socialists inspite of the fact that they differ in respect of their emphasis and strategy for socialist transformation. Such ethical approach is, therefore, common to all brands of socialists whether they are according to Marxian description utopian or scientific.

2. Ibid., p.19.
(A) Subhas and Socialism

It is sometimes said that Subhas was a "born socialist". It is of course true that he did not talk in terms of socialism or the socialist ideal during the formative period of his life, yet an ethical approach to the society is visible in the life of Subhas from his early childhood. This ethical approach continued in his life like a running thread, inspired his social philosophy throughout his life and lent it socialist colour and complexion.

From early childhood his ethical sense had been stirred at the sight of misery and suffering of the poor and the down-trodden in the face of the pleasant and placid life of the privileged section of the society. Subhas belonged to a relatively well-to-do family and he had no experience of poverty, scarcity or hunger from his early childhood. Yet, the sight poverty and destitution had always had its echo in his heart. As he has written in his autobiography: "In front of our house in Calcutta, an old decrepit beggar woman used to sit every day and beg for alms. Every time I went out or came in, I could not help seeing her. Her sorrowful contenance and her tattered clothes pained me whenever I looked at..."

her or even thought of her. By contrast, I appeared to be so well off and comfortable that I used to feel like a criminal. What right had I - I used to think - to be so fortunate to live in a three-storied house when this miserable beggar woman had hardly a roof over her head and practically no food or clothing? Thoughts like these made me rebel against the existing social system.4

Subhas's ethical sense and compassion for suffering humanity led him to practise renunciation in a small scale in his own way to remove such social ill. He had to forego his own comfort for the sake of giving a little bit of relief that he could afford to render to the unfortunate section of society. As he writes: "I used to get money from home for going to and returning from College by tramcar. This I resolved to save and spend in charity. I would often walk back from College - a distance of over three miles - and sometimes even walk to it when there was sufficient time. This lightened my guilty conscience to some extent."5

Subhas's ethical sense and compassion for suffering humanity got a spurt when he had a vision of poverty in the countryside. The sense of compassion for suffering humanity led him to visit cholera infested

5. Ibid., p. 66.
areas of the country and attend to the cholera patients. He encountered poverty of rural India and came face to face with the lot of millions. The extent of poverty, illiteracy and ill health shook his ethical chord. As he has written: "A week's experience opened a new world before my eyes and unfolded a picture of real India, the India of the villages - where poverty stalks over the land, men die like flies and illiteracy is the prevailing order." 6

Such vision of rural India fortified Subhas's egalitarian inclination and helped the evolution of his socialistic personality.

Subhas's compassion for suffering humanity and his ethical sense not only contributed to the evolution of his egalitarian philosophy, he even condemned and caricatured the privileged life of his own class and its culture - the "Babu Culture". As he writes in his letter to his mother: "In the current age, God has created something new, something that was not in existence in previous ages. This new creation is the Babu. We belong to this community of Babus. God has given us a pair of legs, but we are unable to walk 40/45 miles because we are Babus. We possess a pair of precious hands but we are averse to manual labour, we do not make proper use of

6. Ibid., p. 67.
our hands, because we are Babus. God has given us good physique but we look upon physical labour as behaving only inferior classes because we are of the class of Babus. For all sorts of work we cry out for servants— we have difficulty in working our limbs, because, after all, we are Babus. Though born in a tropical country, we can not bear the heat because we are Babus. We are so scared of cold that we cover ourselves up with the heaviest possible clothing because we are Babus. We parade ourselves as Babus everywhere as we are after all Babus—but in fact, we are animals in the garb of humans, devoid of all human attributes. We are even lower than animals because we have intelligence and conscience which animals have not. Being reared ever since birth in comfort and luxury, we have no capacity whatever to face difficulties—that is why we cannot master our senses.7

If during his early youth Subhas was inspired by egalitarian philosophy under the spell of his ethical sense, during his relatively more matured youth he became more vociferous in giving expression to his egalitarian conviction. Hence in his Presidential address at the Maharashtra Provincial Congress, held at Poona on 3rd May, 1923, he said: "If we want to make India really great, we must build up a political democracy on the pedestal of

7. Ibid., p. 136.
a democratic society. Privileges based on birth, caste or creed should go and equal opportunities should be thrown upon to all irrespective of caste, creed or religion.°

Subsequently in his Presidential address at the Midnapore Youth Conference on December 29, 1929 he also gave vent to his socialistic conviction. Although he was during those days involved in the national struggle for liberation and nation-hood he said: "A new social structure we shall have to raise on the sound basis of an all embracing Samyavad i.e. Socio-political equality.....economic inequality must not be tolerated any longer........We must steadily exert ourselves in organizing the state on a solid foundation by making it completely independent and socialistic in principles."°

This conviction was made further explicit during his Presidential address at the Karachi Conference of All India Naujawan Bharat Sabha. He pronounced on unequivocal terms: "I want a socialist republic in India."°

Subhas's socialistic conviction became further evident from his Presidential address at the All India Trade Union Congress held at Calcutta on July 4, 1931. In

10. Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, p.58.
this connection he made it abundantly clear that not only the problems of India but of the whole world can be solved by socialism. As he said: "I have no doubt in my own mind that the salvation of India, as of the whole world, depends on socialism."

Another milestone in the evolution of Subhas's socialistic conviction was his address on Anti-Imperialist struggle and Samyavada delivered at London in 1933. The India that he envisioned here shall not only have political but also social and economic democracy. "Free India" said Subhas "will not be a land of capitalists, landlords and castes. Free India shall be a social and political democracy."

Subhas's plea for a synthesis of communism and fascism advocated in his book "The Indian Struggle" whipped up a spate of misunderstanding of his ideological position. Some branded him as a communist, others a fascist and still others a combination of both. In his clarification on the question of a synthesis between Communism and Fascism he told Rajni Palme Dutt in 1938 "What I really meant was that we, in India wanted our national freedom and having won it, we wanted to move in the

11. Ibid., p.64.
direction of socialism.\textsuperscript{13}

Subsequently in an editorial in the Forward Bloc Subhas made his position clear as a socialist as against a fascist or communist. He made it unequivocally clear that if he had independence as his immediate goal, socialism was his ultimate goal. As he said: "When Imperialism is ended, the socialist phase of our movement will commence."\textsuperscript{14}

The All-India Anti-Compromise Conference held at Ramgarh on March 19, 1940 provided Subhas a forum to act as a champion of socialism. He foresaw that the future of the world was on the side of socialism and not on the side of capitalism or imperialism. "The age of imperialism" said Subhas "is drawing to a close and the era of freedom, democracy and socialism looms ahead of us."\textsuperscript{15} He further said: "Our main task in this age is to end imperialism and win national independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be the socialist phase of our movement."\textsuperscript{16}

In his last public address before he left India or in his Presidential address at the second


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.,p.292.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.,p.293.
session of the All India Forward Bloc Conference on June 18, 1940 Subhas said that socialism was his ultimate goal. He made it amply evident that his ultimate goal was "to build up a new India and happy India on the basis of the eternal principles of liberty, democracy and socialism". During his secret sojourn in Kabul he wrote in January 1941 that the Forward Bloc had as its objective "a thoroughly modern and socialist state".

(B) Sources of Subhas Chandra Bose's Socialism:

Since the days of Bolshevik revolution the socialist movement and the socialist strategy all over the world have been profoundly influenced by Marxism. The socialist parties all over the world have taken cognizance of the scientific socialism of Karl Marx and Engels in shaping their policy and programme and in defining their immediate and ultimate objective. Even the Labour Party of Great Britain that derived it's primary inspiration from the democratic and fabian tradition was also sufficiently influenced by Marxism after the success of the Bolshevik revolution. The Left Wing of the party acquired distinctly Marxian complexion.

The Congress Socialist Party in India that emerged in the thirties of the century that was originally

17. Ibid., p.337.
meant to be a Fabian party and had within its fold democratic socialists like Ashok Mehta, Achutya Pattrwardhan, Minoo Masani gradually acquired Marxian complexion under the leadership of Marxists like Acharya Narendra Dev and Jaya Prakash Narayan. In course of time the rank and file of the party became Marxists.

Subhas Chandra Bose's socialist leanings became evident from the early twenties although his compassion for suffering humanity was evident from his student days. Hence, it is very natural to presume that Subhas's socialist thought derived its inspiration from Marxism or Soviet Communism.

(i) No Marxian Source

It can not be disputed that Subhas had a soft corner for Marxism and Soviet Union. He unhesitatingly said: "I have always understood and am quite satisfied that communism, as it has been expressed in the writings of Marx and Lenin and in the official statements of policy of the Communist International, gives full support to the struggle for national independence and recognises this as an integral part of its World outlook". The First Socialist republic in the World kindled much hope and ignited much of aspirations in the

heart of Subhas. His reference to "the first socialist republic in the World, that is Russia" is evident from his letter to Charu Chandra Ganguly written on 23rd March, 1920. The work of national reconstruction under the communist regime and the socio-economic changes introduced in the country impressed Subhas. It's "phenomenal progress" from a community of primarily half-starved peasants to one of primarily well-fed and well-clothed industrial workers and its considerable success in solving the problem of poverty, disease and famine which haunted Pre-revolutionary Russia and that too solving it within a short period could not but impress Subhas. The planned industrialization of the country and the onset of a planned economy was considered "One great achievement." Besides, "the way Soviet Union solved the problem of minorities" also caught the imagination of Subhas. That apart, the educational reconstruction of Soviet Russia under the Communist regime had also its impact on Subhas who could not but admire the Soviet achievement and the Soviet regime.

It is fairly well-known that Subhas's original intention was to go to the Soviet Union in his quest for foreign aid for India's freedom. It is known from Sheel

Bhadra Yajee, one of his comrades of the Forward Bloc that after the Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh in March 1940, Subhas consulted some of his colleagues "on the question of seeking active help from the USSR" for the liberation of India. It is known that Lala Shankarlal, the then General Secretary of the Forward Bloc had been to Japan to finalise an agreement with the Soviet ambassador in Japan regarding possible Soviet aid for India's liberation movement. It has been further said by Sheel Bhadra Yajee that "due to non-aggression pact with U.K., Stalin and Molotov advised Netaji to take help from Germany and Italy".22

It is also equally significant to note that Subhas's Azad Hind Government declared war against USA and UK but not against the USSR although the latter was an ally of UK during the War. It is said that Subhas sought Soviet help during the war and tried to establish contact with Russian ambassador through Mr. A.M. Sahay. He also made an official reference "to Government of Japan to contact Russian authorities on his behalf".23

Subhas's sympathy for the Soviet Union was also evident from his reactions on the Russo-German

War of 1941. The Soviet Union, according to him had been popular in India and was considered an anti-imperialist power to be India’s ally against England. "In the Russo-German War" Subhas is reported to have said to Herr Woermann, a Secretary of State at the German Foreign Office "the sympathies of the Indian people were very clearly with Russia because the Indian people felt definitely that Germany was the aggressor and was for India, therefore, another dangerous imperialist power".

Hence, there is sufficient reason to believe that Subhas’s socialist ideology drew it’s inspiration from Marxism and Soviet Communism.

It is said that the British intelligence found in Subhas "some tendency to communist ideology" since 1922. As it has been further said by the British intelligence he was "in touch with Communist agents abroad, particularly the prominent Indian Communist M.N.Roy", The British Home Secretary Hallet also felt that Subhas "preached the message of Communism and urged a parallel government at the Lahore Congress".

All this superficially conforms that Marxism and Soviet Communism provided the source from which Subhas’s socialist ideology was drawn.

Yet, the socialist ideology of Subhas has nothing to do with Marx, Marxism or Soviet Communism. This is evident from his Presidential Address at the Rangpur Political Conference held on March 30, 1929. As he said: "This socialism did not derive its birth from the books of Karl Marx. It has its origin in the thought and culture of India. The gospel of democracy that was preached by Swami Vivekananda has manifested itself fully in the writings and achievements of Deshabandhu Das, who said that Narayan lives amongst those who till the land, prepare our bread by the sweat of their brow, those who in the midst of grinding poverty have kept the torch of our civilization, culture and religion burning."^27

Although Subhas was full of admiration for the Marxist and Leninist doctrine of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism and the Soviet achievements, he was not enamoured of Marxism or Communism as such; particularly the way the Indian Communists looked at the national struggle, their "anti national" stance and the hostile attitude which several among them exhibited

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towards the Indian National Congress shocked Subhas. He meant no words to say that Communism will not succeed in India and adduced reasons in favour of his conviction. Communism was not acceptable to him because it was unsympathetic to Indian nationalism, the Soviet Communists were not extending their hands of co-operation to the Indian National Struggle, the Soviet Communism was anti-religious and atheistic and it relied on materialistic interpretation of history. As he said about the shortcomings of Soviet Communism: "Firstly, Communism today has no sympathy with nationalism in any form. Secondly, Russia is now on her defensive and has little interest in provoking a world revolution. Thirdly, while many of the economic ideas Communism would make a strong appeal to Indians, there are other ideas which will have a contrary effect. One such other idea was that "Communism in Soviet Russia has grown to be anti-religious and atheistic." Fourthly, the materialistic interpretation of history which seems to be a cardinal point in Communist theory will not find unqualified acceptance in India. Fifthly, while Communist theory has made certain remarkable contributions in the domain

of economics (for instance the idea of state-planning), it is weak in other respects.\textsuperscript{29}

Hence, it can well be expected that Subhas's socialist ideology did not derive its inspiration from Marxian source.

If Subhas's socialist ideology did not derive its inspiration from Marxian source, it had to bank upon Indian sources for its emanation, unfoldment, and full blossoming. As it is said: "Subhas's socialism is purely Indian in its mould and not Western.\textsuperscript{30}

As it has been stated earlier in this chapter, Socialism as a doctrine is concerned with equality, freedom, fraternity and fellowship. The Indian view of life is all-along based on communitarian philosophy that is equality, fraternity and fellowship; particularly the Indian tradition of joint family fosters such communitarian sentiment. Subhas, from his early childhood was nursed and nurtured in the midst of a joint Hindu family consisting of apart from his parents uncles, cousins etc. Hence, from his early childhood, Subhas imbibed the spirit of fraternity and


fellowship and a spirit of equality.

As it has been indicated earlier, socialism pre-supposes an ethical approach to society. It is concerned with a state of social equality and reduction of heartening inequality. Besides, its ultimate objective is the elimination of misery, suffering, destitution and deprivation of the underdog. Subhas had, from his early childhood, observed his father's all-out effort to help and serve the distressed and the downtrodden. As he has written about his father: "He was very closely connected with all philanthropic institutions and activities. Poor school and college students used to get help from him regularly, month after month and year after year. Indigent neighbours and families in straightened circumstances expected help from him and none was ever disappointed. Every Sunday, beggars were fed at his residence." 31

Thus, Subhas's compassion for suffering humanity that made him an egalitarian thinker derived its primary inspiration from his family and his father.

Apart from deriving his inspiration from his joint family and parents, Subhas also derived his inspiration for his socialistic ideology from Swami Vivekananda.

and his master Ramakrishna Paramahansa. While rejecting the notion that his socialism was derived from the books of Karl Marx he said: "It has its origin in the thought and culture of India. The gospel of democracy that was preached by Vivekananda has manifested itself fully in the writings and achievements of Deshabandhu Das who said Narayan lives amongst those who till the land, prepares our bread by the sweat of their brow, those who in the midst of grinding poverty have kept the torch of civilization and culture burning". Thus, as per his own admission it was Vivekananda and Deshabandhu C.R.Das who provided the source of inspiration for his socialist ideology.

As discussed in earlier chapters Swami Vivekananda provided Subhas "an ideal" to which he "could give his whole being". His letters as well as his speeches from Colombo to Almora that inspired him most conveyed the message "Atmano Mokshartham Jagadhitaya" or one's own salvation and service of humanity. Besides, Swami Vivekananda preached the message of brotherhood of all Indians or their fraternity and fellowship. In one of his passionate utterances he had said: "Say

brothers at the top of your voice - the naked Indian, the illiterate Indian, the Brahman Indian, the Pariah Indian is my brother". Besides, he also predicted that the future lies with the emancipation of the underprivileged and the underdog and particularly that of the Sudras or the down-trodden classes.

Subhas has written: "I was barely fifteen when Vivekananda entered my life. Then there followed a revolution within and every thing was turned upside down. It was, of course, a long time before I could appreciate the full significance of his teachings or the greatness of his personality, but certain impressions were stamped indelibly on my mind from the outset". One of the impressions that was stamped indelibly on Subhas's mind was Swami Vivekananda's impassioned call for brotherhood of all Indians or their fraternity and fellowship. Besides, the call for the emancipation of the down-trodden had also its indelible impact on Subhas. Hence, the social philosophy of Swami Vivekananda provided a source of inspiration for the socialist ideology of Subhas.

Apart from the social philosophy of Vivekananda, Subhas was also profoundly influenced by the spiritualism.
of Swami Vivekananda's master Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Subhas who had a philosophic personality from his early childhood was spiritualistic throughout his life even inspite of his involvement in the national struggle and activities connected with organising and commanding the Indian National Army. Ramakrishna Paramahansa's prescription for spiritual uplift consisted in service and sacrifice. He used to harp on renunciation and self-abnegation for self-realization and spiritual development. He would repeat the upanishadic dictum: "through abandonment of worldly desires can immortal life be attained". As Subhas has written: "The burden of Ramakrishna's precepts was—renounce lust and gold. This two-fold renunciation was for him the test of a man's fitness for spiritual life".\(^{35}\)

Under the joint impact of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, Subhas grasped the significance of brotherhood of man, service to humanity, self-sacrifice, self-abnegation and renunciation. These ideas when penetrated into his heart and intellect convinced him of the rationality of egalitarian philosophy.

Subhas said: "New ideas of socialism are now-a-days travelling to India from the West and they are revolutionizing the thoughts of many, but the idea

\(^{35}\) Ibid., p.39.
of socialism is not a novelty in this country". Hence, socialism was not an ideology of importation for Subhas. It had its roots already in the Indian soil and may be, much before such ideology was conceived in the West. Hence, it is in the fitness of things to say that Subhas's socialist ideology derived its inspiration neither from Marx nor from any Western thinker but from the cultural heritage of India.

(c) NATURE OF SUBHAS'S SOCIALISM

(i) Non-dogmatic Approach:

Subhas's approach to socialism was not dogmatic. Socialism as a social philosophy has many prophets and many patrons. These prophets and patrons have given their own views about socialism or have defined it in their own ways. Hence, these definitions differ from one another conveying different meanings but satisfying the need of the aforesaid prophets and patrons. Sometimes these different definitions differ from one another so drastically that they convey contrary meanings. Hence Alexander Gray has observed: "The definitions of socialism that strew the expositions and the criticisms of socialism furnish a depressing prospect. Some are foolish, some are vacuous, some are contradictory, some which appear

commendable upto a point leave gaping omissions". Hence Joad was prompted to remark "socialism is like a that that has lost its shape because everybody wears it".

Hence, it is very much deceptive to properly define what socialism is or is not. Hence Bertrand Russell very rightly said "socialism like everything else, that is vital is rather a tendency than a strictly defined body of doctrines".

Subhas was aware of the fact that socialism has been used by different persons in different senses and the term has acquired different connotations. He was concerned of the fact that socialism meant different things to different people and the term had gathered different significances. Hence in a letter to the United Press of India from Vienna he said: "Socialism today has different complexions and therefore different connotations when used by different people. And there seems to be hardly anything in common between the Socialism of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and the militant policy and method of the Socialists of Spain. To some people, again, Socialism is synonymous with Communism".

Hence, Subhas was not very much interested to define what socialism is or is not. Rather he said: "why then use a terminology which is used by different people in different senses". In order to evade the prospect of entering into the arena of controversy he preferred to describe his egalitarian philosophy as Samyavada in preference to Socialism.

(ii) Pragmatic Approach:

If Subhas was non-dogmatic in his approach to socialism, he was by logical necessity a pragmatist and had pragmatic approach to socialism. To say about him: "Subhas was an idealist in his personal outlook of life but in his practical approach to ideological thinking and political ideas and actions he behaved in a strikingly pragmatic manner and with a sense of real politik. He thought of a state in free India, which will be fit to act as the national piston to canalize the energy of the Indian people towards fulfilling the urgent task of speedy and purposive socio-economic reconstruction of the country."

Subhas was interested in the matter of socialistic reconstruction of India after independence.

40. Ibid., p.384.
He comprehended an egalitarian society in free India that shall be inspired by equality, freedom, fraternity and fellowship. However, in having such a society he did not accept any existing model for wholesale adoption and transplantation on Indian soil. Instead he wanted to have a model of socialism that shall suit the need and taste of Indian people and Indian conditions and shall be in conformity with Indian tradition and cultural heritage.

As already indicated earlier, Subhas had no jaundiced view about Marx and Marxists or the Soviet architects of socialism or communism. As a matter of fact, he was full of admiration for Marx and Lenin. The Soviet experiments in socialism touched a very vital chord of Subhas. He was full of admiration of Soviet Russia and the socio-economic changes introduced in that First Socialist Republic in the world. There was a tremor in his heart for the planned economic development and particularly the planned industrial development had very great appeal for Subhas. Yet, he was not prepared to accept wholesale the Marxian or Soviet brand of socialism for adoption and transplantation in India. Immensely proud of his own culture and civilization, traditions and customs and its social philosophy, he felt that India
must evolve its own brand of socialism and should not blindly follow Soviet Russia that had completely different history, tradition and culture. Hence, he said: "India will not become a new edition of Soviet Russia." 42

As a pragmatist, Subhas was sufficiently broad-minded and was ready to accommodate all new and healthy ideas in whichever corner of the World it may be found. As he himself said: "All the modern socio-political movements and experiments in Europe and America will have considerable influence on India's development. Of late, India has been taking and in future will continue to take, more and more interest in what goes on in the outside World." 43 As a pragmatist that he was, he was not prepared to imitate Soviet Russia or engraft the Soviet brand of socialism and transplant it on Indian soil. As a pragmatist, he also realised that although Soviet Russia had adopted Marxism as the national ideology and was implementing Marxian socialist strategy on the Soviet soil, it has also modified the ideology and technique to suit to Soviet needs. "We must not forget "warned Subhas "that the Russians, the main disciples of Karl Marx have not blindly followed his ideas; finding it

43. Ibid., p.348.
difficult to apply his theories, they have adopted a New Economic Policy consistent with possession of private property and ownership of business factories.\footnote{Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Op. Cit., p. 47.}

The pragmatist in Subhas dictated him to accept a brand of socialism that shall suit Indian cultural heritage, Indian ideals and Indian needs. If he did not accept the Soviet Model it was mainly because it did not conform to Indian cultural heritage and ideals and Indian needs. Therefore he said: "We have to shape society and politics according to our own ideals and according to our own needs. This should be the aim of every Indian."\footnote{Ibid., p. 47.} But Soviet brand of socialism fell short of the Indian needs and Indian ideals. India was in need of a national struggle for liberation and political, moral and ideological support for the struggle. Soviet Russia was reluctant to extend such support to India. Besides, Indian culture is predominantly spiritual and religious. But, Soviet Russia under communist regime was exhibiting anti-spiritual, anti-religious and atheistic trend. Hence, the Soviet model fell far short of the political, ideological, and idealistic need of India. Hence, the pragmatist in Subhas inspite of his admiration for Marx and Lenin and Soviet experiments had an aversion\footnote{Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Op. Cit., p. 47.}
for wholesale acceptance of Soviet brand of socialism and its transplantation in India. In explaining the non-acceptability of Soviet brand of socialism or communism to him Subhas writes: "Firstly, Communism today has no sympathy with nationalism in any form and the Indian movement is a nationalist movement - a movement for the national liberation of Indian people. Secondly, Russia is now on her defensive and has little interest in provoking a World revolution......thirdly, while many of the economic ideas of communism would make a strong appeal to Indians, communism in Russia has grown to be anti-religious and atheistic......Fourthly, the materialistic interpretation of history which seems to be a cardinal point in Communist theory will not find unqualified acceptance in India even among those who would be disposed to accept the economic contents of communism". 46

Subhas was conscious while thinking of socialism that it is not a doctrine alien to Indian soil or culture. He believed that socialism is almost a part and parcel of Indian culture and as old as the culture itself. Our ignorance of our own culture may sometimes tempt us to adopt wholesale a foreign brand of socialism but our conscious effort to rediscover our

culture will certainly enlighten us about India's adherence to egalitarian philosophy since time immemorial. As Subhas said: " ..........Socialism is not a novelty in this country. We regard it as such only because we have lost the thread of our own history".47

Hence, Subhas wanted that India, shall evolve its own brand of socialism which shall draw its inspiration from the Indian cultural heritage, traditions, thoughts, ideas, faith and belief enriched by novel notions discovered from different parts of the World. Such a brand of socialism while accepting everything novel but good or noble shall reject all the features of modern socialism that are antagonistic to Indian cultural heritage and Indian nationalistic needs and requirements. Hence, addressing the All India Trade Union Congress session held on July 4, 1931 he said: "I have no doubt in my own mind that the salvation of India, as of the whole world, depends on socialism. India should learn from and profit by the experience of other nations - but India should be able to evolve her own methods in keeping with her own needs and her own environment. In applying any theory to practice, you can never rule out geography or history. If you attempt it,

47. Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Op.Cit.,p.47,
you are bound to fail. India should, therefore, evolve her own form of socialism. When the whole world is engaged in socialistic experiments why should we not do the same? It may be that the form of socialism which India will evolve will have something new and original about it which will be of benefit to the whole world.\(^48\)

Subhas's pragmatism led him to accept a synthetic view of socialism. As indicated earlier, he was ready to accept every thing noble and valuable in the socialistic experiments in other parts of the World. As he himself said in a statement issued from Geneva in February, 1935: "My own view is to work out a synthesis of all that is useful and good in the different movements that we see today. For this purpose, we shall have to study with critical sympathy all the movements and experiments that are going on in Europe and America. And we would be guilty of folly if we ignore any movement or experiment because of any pre-conceived bias or predilection.\(^49\) But, as far as the socialist movement during his time was concerned it was mainly materialistic in its aspiration. The emphasis was on economic development of the nation and higher standards of living of the people. But, Indian culture is mainly spiritualistic. If Subhas rejected

48. Ibid., p. 64.
wholesale adoption of Soviet brand of socialism it was partly because, as indicated earlier, of its profoundly materialistic bias and anti-religious and atheistic approach. Hence, while thinking of Indian brand of socialism Subhas wanted to synthesise the materialistic approach of the West with the spiritualistic approach of India. As Subhas said in his article "Impressions of Egypt" "The glorious periods of our history were, when we were able to strike the golden mean between the demands of spirit and of matter, of the soul and of the body — and thereby progress simultaneously on both fronts".50

Thus while thinking of Indian brand of socialism Subhas had in mind both material prosperity of the nation and moral and spiritual development of the people.

(iii) Emphasis on Equality:

As discussed earlier, socialism is primarily concerned with certain ethical values like equality, freedom and fraternity. Yet, equality constitutes the very core of socialism because freedom and fraternity becomes possible only in an egalitarian society marked by socio-economic equality.

Subhas, as a socialist although restrained himself in giving any specific definition of socialism, continuously harped on the egalitarian character of the socio-economic system, or on socio-economic equality. He had the vision of elimination of all types of privileges from the society so that equality can be ensured. He was equally determined to see that any socio-economic distinction based on the accident of birth, caste and creed should go. He had in view a society free from caste or class distinctions and a society free from the sad and unfortunate distinctions between the rich and the poor, the privileged and under-privileged and the haves and the have-nots. Hence, in his Presidential address at the Maharastra Provincial Conference, Poona on May 3, 1928, as referred to earlier in this chapter, he said: "If we want to make India really great we must build up a political democracy on the pedestal of a democratic society. Privileges based on birth, caste or creed should go and equal opportunities should be thrown Open to all irrespective of caste, creed or religion". In course of his Presidential address at the Students Conference held at Lahore on October 19, 1929, Subhas explained his concept of freedom. He harped on the

question of elimination of economic and social inequality and creation of an egalitarian society. As he said: "This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage; but also, equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers, social inequities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance".  

While engaged in the struggle for national liberation, he was visualising a day when socio-economic inequality shall be a feature of the past and equality - social, political and economic shall inform and inspire national life. Although he pitched his ambition for the time-being on national liberation, political freedom and political equality, still he realized that in the absence of socio-economic equality, political freedom and political equality shall lose its savour. Hence, in his Presidential address at the Midnapore Youth Conference held on December 29, 1929, he said: "A new social structure we shall have to raise on the sound basis of an all-embracing Samyavada that is socio-political equality..... economic inequality must not be tolerated any longer..... We must steadily exert ourselves in organising the state on a solid foundation by making it completely independent and socialistic in principles".  

52. Ibid., p.53.
Subhas was critical of the Congress policy of toleration in favour of the privileged classes of society like the capitalists and landlords. Its policy of compromise even in the interest of national struggle was unacceptable to him. He was opposed to the spirit of adjustment and accommodation exhibited by the Congress towards the privileged class. Hence, in his Presidential address at the Karachi Conference of the All India Naujawan Bharat Sabha held on March 27, 1931 he castigated the Congress in saying, "The fundamental weakness in the Congress policy and programme is that there is a great deal of vagueness and mental reservation in the minds of the leaders. Their programme is based not on radicalism but on adjustments - adjustments between landlord and tenant, between the capitalist and the wage-earner, between the so-called upper classes and the so-called depressed classes, between men and women". To Subhas, who was committed to "a socialist republic in India", the Congress policy seemed disappointing.

Thus, Subhas wanted radical restructuring of the socio-economic system of India by abolishing inequality between the landlord and tenant, the capitalist and the wage-earner and the upper caste people and lower caste

people in Hindu society. He who was primarily concerned with struggle against imperialism and thought of national reconstruction after liberation could not but visualise elimination of inequality in all forms social and economic.

Subsequently in his Presidential address at the Third Indian Political Conference London, 1933, he advocated abolition of all "privileges, distinctions and vested interests" and creation of an atmosphere of perfect equality, social political and economic. As he said in this connection: "Free India will not be a land of capitalists, landlords and castes. Free India will be a social and political democracy". 55

Subsequently explaining the plan and programme of the Samyavadi Sangha envisioned by him, he also emphasised on the abolition of vested interests from the society and creation of socio-economic equality. Hence he writes: "The party will stand for the interest of the masses that is of peasants, workers, etc., and not for the vested interests that is the landlords, capitalists and money-lending classes". 56

As an advocate of equality, social and economic, Subhas was opposed to both capitalism and land-lordism. He wanted radical reform of the national economy bidding

good-bye to the system of capitalistic and feudalistic exploitation of the masses. Hence, although he discovered much in the political outlook of the Nazi Party i.e. its emphasis on national unity and solidarity, he did not appreciate the Nazi emphasis on capitalistic development of the German national economy. As he said in his address to students of Tokyo University in November, 1944:

"National Socialism has been able to create national unity and solidarity but it has not been able to radically reform the prevailing economic system which was built up on a capitalistic basis." 57

In his essay on "Tatas under Hammer" (December 1935) Subhas condemned the capitalistic policy of Tata Iron and Steel Company perpetuating socio-economic inequality.

It is of course true that till the attainment of independence Subhas was more concerned with the political rather than socio-economic questions affecting India yet while struggling for independence he set before him the ideal of an egalitarian society under which every individual must have equal facilities in respect of food, clothing, shelter and education. He was not prepared to concede to richer sections of the society any additional

privilege that is not enjoyed by the masses. As he said: In the new set up every Indian "must have equal facilities for food, clothing and education". To ensure such equal facilities to all he said: "We can not allow a few rich people to have more than their due measure".58

(iv) Emancipation of Peasants and Workers

While thinking in terms of socialism Subhas had in mind the emancipation of both peasants and workers. Marx and Engels, the prophets of scientific socialism were primarily concerned with the problems facing the industrial proletariat and they were out to prescribe the panacea for bringing relief to this class. They not only laid emphasis on the elevation of the status of the proletariat; they wanted the proletariat to take leadership in the revolution leading to the establishment of an egalitarian society. They considered the proletariat to be revolutionary and the peasants to be reactionary. As a matter of fact, Lenin characterised peasants as less "revolutionary" and hence, a "less reliable class as a tool for socialist movement".59


59. John H. Hallowell, Main currents in Modern Political Thought, p. 491 quoted by Rai Akhilendra Prasad, Socialist Thought in Modern India, Meerut Prakashan, Meerut, 1974, p. 9.
But Subhas the pragmatist realized that industrial proletariat constituted a microscopic minority during his time. India for all practical purposes lived in seven lakh villages as conceived by Gandhi. The village economy was dominated by the peasantry. Hence, Subhas felt that neglect of the interests of the peasantry and only championing the cause of the proletariat would tantamount to flying in the face of reality.

Hence, while thinking of a socialist India after liberation from alien bondage, Subhas had in mind the emancipation—economic and social of both the peasantry and the proletariat. Hence, while visualising the plan and programme of Samyavadi Sangha of his conception he said: "The party will stand for the interest of the masses, that is of the peasants, workers, etc. and not for the vested interests, that is, the landlords, capitalists and money-lending classes." He laid the emphasis on the peasantry rather than the proletariat. That he did put the term peasants before workers was not accidental but intentional. That he laid more emphasis on peasantry than workers is evident from the aforesaid passage when he did put the term landlords before capitalists while thinking of abolition of vested interests.

Besides, he also said in course of the party's programme "it will seek to abolish landlordism and introduce a uniform land-tenure system for the whole of India". He further said: "it will seek to build up a new social structure on the basis of the village communities of the past, that were ruled by the village 'Panch' and will strive to break down existing social barriers like caste".

Thus, Subhas was more concerned with the interest of the peasantry and their emancipation although he did not overlook the interest and emancipation of industrial workers.

That Subhas was more interested in improving the lot of the peasantry in his vision of socialist India is evident from the fact that he considered India to be "predominantly a country of peasants" and said: "the problems of peasants will be more important than the problems of the working class". It may well be said in this respect that like Mao Tse-Tung he wanted to make the peasants "the carrier of socialism".

61. Ibid.,p.345.
62. Ibid.,p.344.
(v) Emphasis on Freedom:

It is said: "socialism is not only about equality; it is also and even more fundamentally about freedom." Hence, it is not only equality but also freedom that is the concern of socialists. Rather, it is more appropriate to say that socialism is concerned with freedom of all individuals as against the freedom of a few that is enjoyed in a non-socialist or feudalistic or capitalistic society. One of the equalities that is enjoyed in a socialistic society is equal enjoyment of freedom.

As is the practice in a non-socialistic society—feudalistic or capitalistic, real freedom is enjoyed only by a few. It is only the privileged class that is the capitalists, the feudal chiefs or the rich farmers or craftsmen who enjoy freedom. As per the rest, whether they are the tenants or industrial workers, they do not enjoy real freedom. As a matter of fact, for their very existence they are dependent on the mercy of the feudal lords or the capitalists. Freedom for many is conspicuous by its absence in a non-socialist society—the feudalistic society or capitalist society. Even if there is some freedom for the tenants or the industrial workers, it is purely temporary depending on the sweet

will of the feudal chiefs or the capitalists. The most essential of all freedom, that is the freedom to live is not safe in such societies since the tenants or the industrial workers may be deprived of their means of livelihood - and thus the freedom to live by the feudal chiefs or the capitalists.

Hence, one of the essential characteristics of a socialistic society is the provision for freedom for all individuals or equal privilege of all individuals to enjoy freedom. Hence, it is rightly said: "the struggle for equality is a struggle against the violation of other people's freedom." 66

Subhas's commitment to socialism made him realise not only value of freedom, he considered it a precious possession. He accordingly used to say: "Life has got one meaning and one purpose, namely freedom from bondage of every kind. This hunger after freedom is the song of the soul." 67 Subhas's socialistic personality further said: "Freedom means life and death in the pursuit of freedom means glory imperishable." 68

Subhas while visualising a socialist society laid great stress on freedom. The Samyavadi Sangha of his conception had in view as per Subhas's own admission

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66. Ibid., p.38.
68. Ibid., p.55.
"complete political and economic liberation of Indian people." Thus, Subhas had in view not only liberation of India but also liberation of its people from social, economic and political serfdom. As a matter of fact, free India for him meant India with social, economic and political freedom for all its people. In other words, he pitched his ambition on all-round freedom of all Indians.

While harping on freedom, Subhas had a comprehensive view of this concept. His immediate objective was of course freedom of the nation or freedom from political bondage and imperialistic servitude. Yet his ultimate objective was freedom of all classes of people of different castes, communities, religious professions and economic interests. As he said in this connection: "Freedom is a word which has a varied connotation.......by freedom I mean all-round freedom, that is freedom for the individual as well as for society, freedom for the rich as well as for the poor; freedom for men as well as for women; freedom for all individuals and for all classes. This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and

social inequities, and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance.\(^7\)

Thus, for Subhas, freedom did not imply merely political emancipation but also economic and social emancipation. Freedom had to embrace not only all classes of people, rich and poor, men and women, and people belonging to different religious groups, he moreover wanted all caste barriers and social inequities to be abolished. Thus, freedom for him meant equal enjoyment of all social and economic privileges by all members of the society.

Subhas's emphasis on freedom in the socialist society of his conception is also evident from the statement that he issued from Geneva in February, 1935. As he said therein: "this party must stand for the masses as distinct from the vested interests. It must stand for justice for all sections of the people and for freedom from bondage of every kind whether political economic or social. In order to ensure justice and freedom for all, the party must stand for the principle of equality and work for the destruction of all artificial barriers whether of religion, creed, caste, sex or wealth. Thus, it should aim at a really democratic state in which

\(^{70}\) Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Op.Cit., p.53.
we shall all be equal and in which there will be no problem of minorities. 71

At the All India Anti-compromise Conference held at Ramgarh, Bihar on March 19, 1940 Subhas also harped on the dawning of an era of freedom. "The age of imperialism" said Subhas "is drawing to a close and the era of freedom...........looms ahead of us." 72

In a signed editorial in the Forward Bloc on April 27, 1940 Subhas also emphasised upon "freedom for the masses". 73

Thus, while dreaming of a socialist India after its liberation, Subhas dreamt of a system based on freedom, both economic and social apart from political freedom. People belonging to different castes, communities, religious professions, economic groups shall enjoy freedom in such a society. All types of bondage must be broken and there shall be resurgent freedom for all.

(vi) Plea for Municipal Socialism:

A novel feature of Subhas's socialistic thought was his plea for Municipal Socialism. He said:

"Municipal Socialism is nothing but collective effort

73. Ibid., p. 307."
to serve the entire community." 74

As far as the concept of Municipal Socialism is concerned, Subhas derived his inspiration as much from Indian cultural heritage as he did from what he saw in the Socialist Municipality of Vienna.

As indicated earlier, Subhas was proud of Indian heritage and was deeply moved by what he discovered from India's past. India, he had realised, made much civic progress during the heydays of Mohenjodaro and Mauryan empire. The civic life of Mohenjodaro and Pataliputra drew home to him how civic bodies in ancient India were in a position to solve many civic problems in order to bring relief to the city dwellers. This convinced him that municipalities and corporations can go a long way in solving many urban problems thereby bringing relief particularly to the poorer sections of the community and thereby reducing the gap between the rich and the poor.

That apart, during his career as the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation, he had the opportunity of implementing certain welfare measures that went a long way in improving the conditions of the city dwellers and particularly that of the poor and the indigent.

He also witnessed how the Vienna Municipality had provided good housing to two lakh persons without raising loans. The entire cost for providing such accommodation to about two lakh persons was met out of the revenue realised through taxing entertainments. The Municipality had also solved the problem of water supply, roads, education for children, health, infant mortality and hundreds of other problems.

As the Chief Executive Officer of Calcutta Corporation with Deshbandhu C. R. Das as Mayor, he was instrumental in providing many amenities to the city dwellers that were not dreamt of prior to it. An education department was started under the Corporation providing free primary schools for boys and girls throughout the city. Health associations financed by the Municipality were started in every ward of the city by public spirited citizens for carrying on health propaganda among the people. Dispensaries were opened by the Municipality in the different districts for giving free medical treatment to the poor. Infant clinics were established in different parts of the city. A milk kitchen was also started for supplying milk free to the children of the poor.

Subhas's interest in implementing social welfare programmes raised the style of living of the city dwellers and particularly of the poor which went
a long way in bridging the gap between the minimum
amenities available to the rich and the poor. The faci-
lities made available by the Socialist Municipality
of Vienna also solved many problems that brought relief
particularly to the poorer sections of the society. These
experiments in social welfare measures launched by the
municipalities convinced Subhas that for bringing relief
to the poorer sections of society that will scale down
the difference between the rich and the poor, there is
no need for state intervening in these matters thereby
leading to concentration of power in the hands of the
state and the bureaucracy. If these local problems could
be solved by self-governing local bodies or municipal-
ities, people not only reduce economic inequality but
also introduce greater measure of social equality without
state intervention that leads to concentration of power
in the hands of the state, bureaucratisation and slashing
down of individual freedom.

Hence, Subhas's plea for Municipal Socialism
that shall rely on collective effort to solve the problems
of the community.

The modern trend is in favour of decentralised
type of socialistic measures in order to check concent-
ration and bureaucratisation of economic power in
socialist states. Besides, corporate ownership and management
public utility services is considered as one of the types of social ownership, management and control of public enterprises. Hence, it may well be said that Subhas was much ahead of his time in advocating Municipal Socialism. Hence, it is reightly said "Bose expounds the most human form of democracy - Municipal Socialism. It reminds us of justice and fairplay in the Greek City States." Thus, Subhas's concept of Municipal Socialism holds out a hope of redemption for the urban poor.

(vii) Technique for attainment of Socialism:

Although all brands of socialists aspire for the attainment of the egalitarian goal, they differ from one another not only in respect of the details about the socialist society but also in respect of the technique that they believe in for the establishment of a socialist society. Broadly speaking the socialists are divided according to Engels into two categories, the Utopian and the Scientific. The Scientific Socialists like Marx and Engels are distinguished from their forerunners whom they brand at Utopians not only by

virtue of their philosophy of historical inevitability of socialism, another equally important distinguishing feature of these scientific socialists is their attitude towards the application of violent means for the attainment of their socialist objective. The utopian socialists like Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier and Robert Owen were advocates not only of peaceful but also of piecemeal reform for the establishment of a socialist society. They believed in the potency of the method of persuasion and appeal to the good sense of the emergent bourgeois and the cooperative effort of the workers or the proletariat. They had no place for violence in their technique for socialist transformation. As Marx and Engels have observed: "They reject all political and specially all revolutionary action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means and endeavour by small experiments necessarily doomed to failure and by the force of example to pave the way for the new social gospel." 76 They have further observed: "they still dream of experimental realization of their social Utopias ...... duodecimo editions of the New Jerusalem "through appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeois". 77

77. Ibid., pp.92-93.
The scientific socialists and particularly its author Marx and Engels believed on the other hand in the application of violent technique for the attainment of a socialist society. As they have written in the Communist Manifesto "The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society can not stir, can not raise itself up without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air". Thus, there is no escape from the abuses of bourgeois society unless the proletariat handles the weapon of violence. The bourgeois society according to them shall have to suffer the birth-pang before the socialist Utopia is delivered. They have prescribed that open revolution shall break out "Where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat".

Thus, according to the authors of scientific socialism like Marx and Engels, socialist reconstruction of the society shall commence only after the complete destruction of the bourgeois society and its economic system. The proletariat must ruthlessly destroy cold-bloodedly the entire bourgeois socio-economic

78. Ibid., pp. 58-59.
79. Ibid., p. 59.
relationship, bourgeois property and bourgeois legal, moral and religious order in order to make the ground clear for the erection of the temple of socialism. As they have said: "their mission(mission of the proletariat)is to destroy all previous securities for and insurance of individual property".\textsuperscript{80} Laying bare their strategy - the strategy of the communists portrayed by them they say: "They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution".\textsuperscript{81}

As far as Subhas was concerned, although he subscribed to the socialist ideology and had before him the vision of a socialist India after national liberation, subscribed neither to the Utopian technique of slow and piecemeal reform nor to the Marxian doctrine of violent technique.

As already indicated earlier, Subhas had admiration for Marx and Lenin; he also admired Soviet attempt at socialist reconstruction of their country, yet the Marxian technique or Soviet technique of socialist transformation was unacceptable to him. The Marxian violent technique as a matter of fact was founded on the Marxian doctrine of class conflict or class-struggle.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.,p.58.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.,p.96.
unacceptable to Subhas. It is of course true that Subhas in his London address on "The Anti-Imperialist Struggle and Samyavada" said: "The Indian movement will have two phases. In the first phase the fight will be a national fight against Great Britain - though the leadership will be in the hands of the "party of the people" representing Indian labour and inter-class fight under the leadership of the same party, and during this phase of the campaign - all privileges, distinctions and vested interests will have to be abolished, so that a reign of perfect equality (social, economic and political) may be established in our country". Yet, Subhas was not in favour of class-struggle in the Marxian sense of the term which is inconceivable without violence. Subhas's armed struggle against British imperialism should not be interpreted as Subhas's preference for violent technique for solving socio-economic problems inside the country. He did not like chaos, confusion, disorder and lawlessness overtaking social life and economic relationship. Instead, he believed in the potency of a well-ordered and well-equipped state machinery to bring about socialist transformation. As a matter of fact, as has been indicated

in earlier chapters, he reposed his faith in "a strong central government" for preventing chaos when Indians are free and are thrown entirely on their own resources. As a matter of fact he said categorically "it would be disastrous in the highest degree if we were to launch class-war while we are all bed-fellows in slavery, in order that we may afford amusement to the common enemy". As a matter of fact, the prospect of a class-war in India drew his attention and in order to avoid it he suggested that the Congress should identify itself with the interest of the masses. As he said: "If the Congress neglects the masses it is inevitable that a sectional—and if I may say so, anti-national movement will come into existence and class-war among our people will appear even before we have achieved our political emancipation".

Subhas further felt that such violent technique "will not necessarily suit Indian conditions", As he further said: "the methods and tactics" of communism "are such as to tend to alienate rather than win over possible friends and allies". As Kitty Kurty has observed: "I feel that he believed more in evolution than in revolution, more in orderly ways of

84. Ibid., p.32.
nature than in force and violence even if at a given moment for practical political reasons he might use radical methods and go along with the communists.35

As indicated earlier, Subhas emphasised upon like other socialists on equality, freedom and fellowship, besides his emphasis was on "discipline and love". As he said while advocating a "Socialist Republic" for India "I am led to the conclusion that the principles that should form the basis of our collective life are justice, equality, freedom, discipline and love.......I shall go further and say that these principles constitute the essence of socialism. I understand of socialism, what I would like to see established in India".36 Violence, bloodshed, terror and upsurge of revolutionary violence can not be reconciled with Subhas's concept of socialism as enunciated in the aforesaid passage. Hence, inspite of his ardent appreciation for many features of Soviet Socialism he said: "With regard to methods and tactics employed by the Bolsheviks in Russia I may say that they will not necessarily suit Indian conditions.........Communism has not been able to make much headway in India chiefly because the methods and tactics generally employed by

86. Statement of Subhas on May 31, 1931—Socialist Republic based on Indian Conditions Published in Driya Daily Samaj on 26.1.38, p. 2.
its protagonists are such as to tend to alienate rather than win over possible friends and allies. A violent class struggle or class conflict of Marxian conception is facilitated, when the state acts as an instrument of exploitation in the hands of the dominant class to exploit the many. Where the state stands for and looks to the interests of one and all-of the masses, there is less possibility of the emergence of a violent class struggle. Subhas not only considered a class struggle "disastrous" as has been indicated earlier; he thought it also "quite unnecessary" in India. As he said in his address to the students of Tokyo University in November, 1944: "Class conflict is something that is quite unnecessary in India. If the Government of Free India begins to work as the organ of the masses, then there is no need for class conflict. We can solve our problems by making the State the servant of the masses."

If Subhas rejected outright the violent technique prescribed by Marx and Engels and applied in Soviet Russia, he rejected equally scornfully the reformist technique of socialist transformation. The

87. Ibid., p.2.
Fabian socialists who emerged after Marx adopted like the Utopian socialists reformist technique for socialist transformation. They like the Utopian thinkers believed in piecemeal reforms, "step by step, slice by slice" and in slow and gradual change. But the Fabian socialists and their technique did not find favour with Subhas. Although he considered the emergence of the Congress Socialist Party as "a legitimate and natural reaction against the move towards the right which Congress policy adopted", he considered the Congress Socialist Party as backward looking because of Fabian or reformist approach. As he said: "If I am not mistaken............. the Congress Socialist Party seems to be under the influence of Fabian Socialism which was the fashion in England 50 years ago. Since then much water has flown down the Thames and also down the Ganges........A modern party cannot afford to hark back to the idea and shibboleths prevalent in Europe 4 or 5 decades ago".89

Thus, Subhas rejected both the reformist methods and the revolutionary methods of socialist transformation. One who was proud of Indian heritage and more so as a pragmatist, he believed that India shall evolve it's own appropriate technique for the establishment of a socialistic society. Hence, he said in

his Presidential address at the All India Trade Union Congress session in Calcutta, on July 4, 1931: "Various currents and cross-currents of thought sometimes make trade union workers feel bewildered as to the path or the modus operandi they should follow. There is on the one hand the Right Wing who stand for a reformist programme above everything else. On the other side there are our Communist friends who, if I have understood them aright, are adherents and followers of Moscow. Whether we agree with the views of either group or not, we cannot fail to understand them. Between these two groups is another group which stands for socialism - for full-blooded socialism - but which desires that India should evolve her own form of socialism as well as her own methods. To this group I humbly claim to belong."

Ashok Mehta observed in respect of technique for socialist transformation "there are those who believe in reform and those who believe in crisis and catastrophe."

But Subhas wanted that India should evolve its own technique steering clear of both reformism and crisis and catastrophe.

(viii) Role of the State:

All brands of socialists desire to displace un­restrained private ownership by social ownership or control of the national economy for the sake of socialist transformation. Some brands of socialists identify social ownership with state ownership and control. Particularly, the Marxian socialists believe that for the sake of establishing a classless society State ownership should be a must. Hence Marx and Engels in their Communist Manifesto while advocating Proletarian Revolution were of the opinion: "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy". They further say that "the proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest by degrees all capital from bourgeoisie to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state i.e. of the proletariat organised as the ruling class". They have said still further "In the beginning this can not be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property and on the conditions of bourgeois production". Their ten-point programme also emphasised upon the

93. Ibid., p.58.
94. Ibid., p.58.
abolition of private property and land, abolition of all rights of inheritance, centralisation of credit in the hands of the state, centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state, extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state.

Thus Marx and the Marxists advocate complete state ownership and management of means of production, distribution and exchange.

As far as Subhas was concerned, although he rejected the Marxian doctrine of class-struggle and the violent technique for socialist transformation still had admiration for Marx. May be, under Marxian influence, he imbibed the philosophy that the state should play a significant role in the matter of establishment of a classless society. Besides, as a pragmatist he also realized that without state ownership and control of the economy, it will not be possible to introduce socialism. Hence, while dreaming of a socialist society in free India he said in his Presidential address at Haripura in February, 1938: "A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownership and state control will be indispensable. ......... However much we may dislike modern industrialism and condemn the evils which follow in its train, we can not go back to the pre-industrial
era, even if we desire to do so.....the state on the advice of a Planning Commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socialising our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation".

Thus Subhas believed that the state should play a very significant role in the matter of socialist reconstruction of the country. It shall properly plan out with the help of a Planning Commission agricultural and industrial development and shall own and control these two major sectors of the national economy. Besides, not only the system of production both agricultural and industrial shall be directly under the state ownership and control, the state shall also take appropriate steps for ensuring proper distribution for such products. For the sake of agricultural production the state shall not only control agricultural production, he also advocated abolition of land lordism. "That will require" said Subhas "a radical reform of our land system, including the abolition of landlordism".

Apart from state ownership and control of industrial and agricultural sector of the economy, Subhas also advocated state control of foreign trade.

Subhas was not prepared to leave the national economy at the mercy of private owners and private initiative. The state shall have to intervene and play a key role in the development of Indian economy particularly during the stage of socialist reconstruction. He apprehended that if the national economy is left at the mercy of the private sector, not only socialist reconstruction will become impossible, it may take centuries to improve the economy and remove the problems of poverty and unemployment. As he said during his address to the students of Tokyo University in November, 1944: "Well, at present, public opinion in India is that we cannot leave it to private initiative to solve these national problems, especially the economic problem. If we leave it to private initiative to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment for instance, it will probably take centuries. Therefore, public opinion in India is in favour of some sort of socialist system, in which the initiative will not be left to private individuals, but the state will take over the responsibility for solving economic questions. Whether it is a question of industrializing the country or modernizing agriculture we want the state to step in and take over the responsibility and put through reforms
within a short period, so that the Indian people could be put on their legs at a very early date.\(^7\)

Thus, Subhas wanted that the state should play a pivotal role in building up a socialist society and in removing our national problems of poverty and unemployment.

As far as the state is concerned, its role shall not be a temporary role as conceived by the Marxists. The state according to Marxists that shall play the key role in socialist transformation during the transitional period intervening between defeat of the bourgeois and the establishment of a classless society is not only a proletarian state but also a state that starts withering away from the very moment it comes into being. Such a proletarian state while completely liquidating the remnants of the bourgeoisie and consolidating the forces of socialism shall pave the way for its own decline or decay or in Marxian terminology, its withering away. But, Subhas did not visualise that the state that shall usher in socialist transformation shall ever in future vanish. For him not only for socialist transformation but also for the continuation of a socialist society the state shall be a must. Instead of being a temporary institution, it shall be a permanent one.

Hence, the state occupies a place of crucial importance in Subhas’s concept of socialism.

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As the Marxists, Subhas wanted an authoritarian state during the transitional period for the establishment of a socialist society. However, this authoritarian state shall not be a permanent feature though the state as such shall never wither away nor would ever decline or decay. Hence he said: "You cannot have a so-called democratic system if that system has to put through economic reforms on a socialist basis. Therefore, we must have a political system - a state - of an authoritarian character". However, such state with authoritarian character shall not be an instrument like the Soviet state in the hands of a few for the suppression of democratic freedom of the masses. As he said about his state of an authoritarian character: "it will work as an organ, or as the servant of the masses, and not as a clique or of a few rich individuals".

To sum up, Subhas was a socialist who derived his inspiration from indigenous sources like his joint family, and benevolent parents and the philosophy of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. His socialist thought had

99. Ibid., p. 82.
nothing to do with Marx or Marxism. As a socialist, he was not dogmatic in his approach but was pragmatic through and through. His socialism has the flavour of peasantism rather than proletarian flavour. Like all other socialists of all hues, he emphasised on equality, fellowship, fraternity and freedom. For the attainment of socialism, he had faith neither in reformism nor in the Marxian technique of violence. He believed in a type of municipal socialism. Subhas's socialism hinges on state-ownership and control.