CHAPTER I

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Subhas Chandra Bose was an outstanding political personality of India. The greatest mission of his life was emancipation of India from alien stranglehold and build it up as a sovereign, democratic, secular and socialist state. An uncompromising and relentless foe of British Imperialism he plunged headlong into the National Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. However, he believed that Indian freedom could not be achieved by the Gandhian strategy. Besides, he also believed that foreign assistance was essential for winning freedom and tried his best to enlist the support of Axis powers during the Second World War. He of course lost the battle and lost his life in course of his quest for freedom; yet he has left behind a saga of struggle and sacrifice and a political philosophy of his own although he was not a professional philosopher or a speculative academician. However, in order to properly understand and appreciate his political philosophy it is essential to form an idea of his political personality and the forces and factors that shaped it.

1. Impact of the Family

In portraying the evolution of Subhas Chandra Bose's political personality one can hardly overlook the environment in the midst of which he was born and grew up.
Subhas Chandra Bose, the burning symbol of a virile and militant nationalism was the sixth son and the ninth child of Janakinath Bose and Prabhabati Bose. The Bose family was a distinguished and aristocratic family of Cuttack in the year 1897. However, as Subhas has written "Ours was not a rich but what might be regarded as a well-to-do middle class family......at the same time there was not that luxury and lavishness in our home which has been the ruin of so many promising but pampered young souls or has helped to foster a supercilious, high-brow mentality in them". The Boses are Kayasthas by caste and Kayasthas are none other than Kshatriyas (warrior caste) in Origin. It may be noted that half the revolutionaries belonged to the rich and educated Kayastha caste from which sprang Subhas Chandra Bose.

Janakinath Bose, who had migrated from Bengal to Orissa and had settled down at Oriya Bazar, Cuttack as a lawyer, was a unique person who combined in himself many opposite traits. A lawyer by profession, he was appointed by the British Raj as Public prosecutor, Government pleader and a member of Bengal Legislative Council and was conferred the title of Rai Bahadur. But he was also a nationalist.

2. Ibid., p. 7.
at heart and humanitarian to the core with immense love of his country and her people. By no means a stooge or yesman of British imperialism, he did not hesitate to resign the post of Government pleader or even renounce the title of Rai Bahadur in protest against the repressive policies of British Raj. What is all the more significant is that he had all along been sympathetic to the Indian National Congress and its activities. Even during the period when he was a Government pleader he used to attend Congress sessions regularly and on account of this he incurred the displeasure of the authorities. A patron of Khaddar he used all kinds of Swadeshi goods and was an all-round supporter of Swadeshi. During the Non-Co-operation movement he tried to help the Congress in its Constructive Programme as far as possible and was associated with the first nationalist educational Institution of Orissa established by Gopabandhu Das called "Satyavadi Vidyalaya". In a way, the nationalist proclivities of the father, left its indelible impact on Subhas Chandra Bose in shaping and moulding his personality and to sowing the seed of patriotism and nationalism in his psyche, right from his childhood.

That apart, Janakinath was a man of very broad outlook and vision, and felt completely at home in his new domicile at Cuttack. He never thought in terms of narrow parochialism or provincialism. As Subhas writes, "I can not

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 245.
remember ever to have heard one single disparaging remark about the people of Orissa or for the matter of that about the people of any other province. Over and above, Janakinath Bose was looked up to as "a patriarch" by his Muslim neighbours of Oriya Bazar which was a predominantly Muslim locality. He did never mind to keep Muslim servants, even Muslim cooks who were as devoted to him as others. In fact, Subhas and his family members took active part in Muslim festivals like Moharrum and enjoyed their Akhra. Subhas's early playmates were not only Oriyas but Muslims too.

This broad-mindedness of his father went a long way in enthroning the ideal of a broad and integral nationalism in Subhas which was neither limited by region, religion or community and foreshadowed the miracle of national Unity in Bose's Indian National Army.

Over and above, Janakinath was humanitarian to the core with immense love of the poor and the needy. 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. On every Sunday, beggars were fed at his residence. Janakinath's concern and solicitude for the poor had a salutary impact on young Subhas who developed a genuine concern for the poor and the destitute.

7. Ibid., p.32.
8. Ibid., p.245.
In another way father Janakinath contributed towards the evolution of Subhas's political personality. Janakinath was a deeply religious man. During his student days he was greatly influenced by the Brahmo leader Keshav Chandra Sen and there was a time when "he even thought of a formal conversion to Brahmoism".  

For a long time he was the President of the Theosophical lodge at Cuttack. In 1912 he along with his wife took spiritual initiation from Pandit Shyamnath Bhattacharya of Bag Bazar. After the death of his first Guru he joined the Sat Sangha of Thakur Anukul Chandra. As Subhas has written about his father, "He was all along of a religious bent of mind". Besides he "became all the more religious as he grew in years. In his life of intense activity and struggle, religious inspiration was the greatest source of sustenance and strength". Janakinath's first Guru was a Sakta where as his second Guru was a Vaishnava. As Subhas has written, he "received initiation twice, his first Guru being a Sakta and the second a Vaishnava". A Sakta puts premium on power or Sakti where as a Vaishnava emphasises on renunciation, love and service. Subhas's political personality and political philosophy obtained a deep impress of these twin ideals. He turned out to be a  

10. Ibid., p.12.  
11. Ibid., p.245.  
12. Ibid., p.12.
militant nationalist and revolutionary and sought to overthrow British imperialism through Sakti or power. Besides, the Vaishnavic trait is evident in the life of Subhas through his spirit of renunciation and service for the cause of the nation. This Vaishnavic trait of love provided also a foundation for Subhas's Socialist thought.

The unusually large family in which Subhas was born and the insufficient personal interaction between him and his father in early childhood created emotional ripples in his mind. In a way, in those emotional ripples lay hidden a spirit of revolt right from his childhood. In his own words "the earliest recollection I have of myself is that I used to feel a thoroughly insignificant being. My parents awed me to a degree. My father usually had a cloak of reserve round him and kept his children at a distance. What with his personal work and what with his public duties, he did not have much time for his family".13

Subhas's mother Prabhabati though "more humane" than the father was also "held in awe" by Subhas. About his mother Subhas writes "No doubt she ruled the roost and where family affairs were concerned, her's was usually the last word. She had a strong will and when one added to that a keen sense of reality and sound common sense, it is easy to understand how she could dominate the domestic scene".14 Thus

13. Ibid., p.4.
Bose was also exposed to the power, authority, dominance, and strong will of his mother in his early days. In a way, he imbibed these traits both from his father and mother.

Subhas's aforesaid feeling of insignificance in his large family along with his exposure to the dominance and authority of his parents created a spirit of revolt in him. Particularly after he came under the spell of Vivekananda this spirit of revolt got ample sustenance and "there followed a revolution within and everything was turned upside down". As he writes "Vivekananda's ideal brought me into conflict with the existing family and social order". It was followed by "tension and unhappiness with occasional fits of depression". As he further writes, "The more my parents endeavoured to restrain me the more rebellious I became......I was becoming callous, perhaps eccentric and more determined to go my own way........the only solace was to be found in the company of friends and I began to feel more at home when away from home".

Thus under the domineering personality of his parents Subhas developed a revolutionary bent of mind which in course of time assumed the form of rebellion against British imperialism and even against the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. In another respect Subhas's mother Prabhabati contributed much towards his political evolution. The Bose family

15. Ibid., p.38.
16. Ibid., p.40.
17. Ibid., p.40.
including Subhas’s mother was devoted to the worship of Goddess Durga – the Goddess of power or Sakti. It has been rightly said that Subhas’s mother was a “strict and devoted Sakta”.

From his mother Subhas imbibed the worship of Sakti or power which later assumed the form of reliance on human effort or physical force for the sake of attainment of the nobler goal like Swaraj. That apart, from her concept of worship of Sakti, he also imbibed the spirit of worship of the source of all Sakti of the people of a land, that is the mother earth, or the motherland. This amply contributed to Subhas’s concept of patriotism, nationalism and leadership in the national struggle. Hence it is rightly said that Subhas’s mother Prabhabati Devi initiated her son into a burning love of the country which consumed him in later life by making him aware of the great and hoary traditions of India.

II. Evolution during School Days

Subhas’s early schooling commenced in the Protestant European School at Cuttack run by the Baptist Mission. The School was meant primarily for the European and Anglo-Indian boys and girls with fifteen percent of seats reserved for Indians. Subhas was “delighted” and “over joyed” when the message of being sent to the School was communicated to him.

19. Ibid.
He looked forward for the first day in the School to be "a red-letter day" for him.

The School was based on English model and run on English lines, as far as Indian conditions permitted. Subhas liked many features of the School particularly its lack of "unhealthy emphasis on studies which obtains in Indian Schools" and emphasis on "deportment, neatness, and punctuality than is done in an Indian schools". Besides the school laid greater emphasis on individual attention of the teachers on students, regularity, punctuality etc. In the matter of studies students also received more individual attention at the hands of their teachers, and daily work was done more regularly and systematically than is possible in an Indian School. The result was that no special preparation was needed while an examination had to be faced.

Subhas was "quite happy" at School. He learnt eagerly whatever came his way and felt completely in line with the school system as the other peoples did. The School had a reputation for turning out well-behaved boys and girls and he "tried to live upto it". His days in the school passed on "smoothly for some years" and as per his own admission "he seemed to have fitted into our milieu splendidly".

Yet, in course of time there appeared a fissure in the even tenor of Subhas's life in the school or as he
called it "a rift in the lute". There were certain features in the school life which he felt revolting. Even as a young boy he could not appreciate the idea of Indian students of the school being discriminated against in respect of certain privileges which the English or Anglo-Indian students enjoyed. As Subhas writes; "we were told that because we were Indians we could not sit for scholarship examinations like primary and middle school examinations though in our annual examinations many of us were topping the class. Anglo-Indian boys could join the volunteer corps and shoulder a rifle but we could not. Small incidents like these began to open our eyes to the fact that as Indians we were a class apart though we belonged to the same Institution".

It is of course true that "it would be wrong to infer from the above that I was in revolt against my school environment after I had been there for some years". Yet the discriminatory treatment meted out to Indians or the "rampant racial discrimination" not only caused a sense of resentment in the heart of Subhas against the School authorities but also a sense of revolt against the superiority complex of the English and Anglo-Indian authorities of the School and the British people in general. It also from his very childhood stirred his patriotic feeling and greatly


subscribed to his nationalistic fervour in days to come. This is evident from his own mood when he left the school after about seven years of study therein. As he writes;

"When in January, 1909 I shook hands with our Headmaster and said good bye to the school, the teachers and the students I did so without any regret, without a momentary pang".22

After taking leave of the Protestant European school, Subhas joined the Ravenshaw Collegiate School at Cuttack for his further studies in the year, 1909, and spent four years there till he completed his School studies and left for Calcutta for his higher studies in 1913. These four years of School studies were very much significant in the evolution of the political personality of Subhas.

As it is said "the first great influence"23 on Subhas outside the family circle came from the then Headmaster of the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, Sri Beni Madhav Das. As Subhas has himself written, "of the teachers there was one who left a permanent impression on my youthful mind. That was our Headmaster Babu Beni Madhav Das".24 At the very sight of him, Subhas discovered "an irresistible moral appeal in his personality". Till now he had not developed the sense

of paying respect to others than his own parents, kith and kin. But the very sight of Babu Beni Madhav Das effected a very radical change in his attitude. As Subhas writes; "For me to see Beni Madhav Das was to adore him. I was not old enough then to realise what it was that I adored. I could only feel that here was a man who was not an ordinary teacher, who stood apart from, and above the rest of his tribe. And I secretly said to myself that if I wanted an ideal for my life it should be to emulate him."25

Babu Beni Madhav Das of course roused in Subhas "a vague perception of moral values" i.e. the feeling that in human life moral values should count more than anything else. However, what is more important, he instilled in him a sense of patriotism and nationalism. Babu Beni Madhav Das used to teach that "the most important thing in the world is to serve the interests of the father land."26 This emphasis on service to the mother-land made Subhas to dream of liberation of his motherland that was then in bondage. As it is very appropriately said. "This was instrumental in helping him to grow up with a spirit of dedication to the independence movement."27

Apart from the influence of Babu Beni Madhav Das, Swami Vivekananda and Ramkrishna Paramahansa signally contributed for the evolution of the political personality of

25. Ibid., p.32.
27. Ibid.
Subhas Chandra Bose. It was only by sheer accident that Subhas came across the writings of Vivekananda. This occurred at a period of crisis in his life when his higher-self was beginning to revolt against the natural attraction of a worldly life and worldly pursuits. This accident as Subhas says "turned out to be my greatest help in this crisis". He discovered from the writings of Swami Vivekananda something which he had been longing for. Once in possession of his writings he "not only devoured them"; he felt "thrilled to the marrow of his bones". Regarding its impact Subhas writes; "my Headmaster had roused my aesthetic and moral sense, had given a new impetus to my life—but he had not given me an ideal to which I could give my whole being. That Vivekananda gave me".28

It is of course true that by the time Subhas came across the writings of Vivekananda, he was hardly fifteen years old. It is equally true that a long time passed before he could properly appreciate the full significance of his message or the greatness of his personality. Yet many of the questions that were stirring his mind then, and of which he became conscious later on, found satisfactory solution in the writings of Swami Vivekananda. His dictum "Atmano Mokshartham Jagaddhitaya" or for your own salvation and for the service of humanity, appealed greatly to Subhas. Besides, Swamiji's

passionate utterance "say brothers at the top of your voice the naked Indian, the illiterate Indian, the Brahman Indian, the Pariah Indian is my brother" appealed to Subhas enormously. As it is said of Vivekananda, "the queen of his adoration was his motherland". There was not a cry within her shores that did not find a responsive echo in Swamiji. His emphasis on the brotherhood of Indians, his adoration of his motherland, his passion for service of humanity, stimulated Subhas Bose's sense of patriotism and nationalism. As he writes, "Neither the selfish monasticism of the middle ages nor the modern utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill could be a perfect ideal and the service of humanity included of course the service of one's country..." 29

Apart from coming under the influence of Swami Vivekananda, Subhas also came under the influence of his master Ramkrishna Paramahansa. What appealed Subhas most in the life and message of Ramkrishna was his emphasis on character building and spiritual uplift. But the very essence of character building and spiritual uplift consisted in renunciation or complete self-abnegation for spiritual development. It was through abandonment of worldly desires, felt Ramkrishna, that immortality could be attained. The fitness for spiritual life he felt can be attained by renunciation of lust and gold. Under the impact of Ramkrishna's

29. Ibid., p.37.
ideology of renunciation and passion for spiritual and immortal life, Subhas started thinking in terms of service to humanity. As he writes; "I had a new ideal before me now which had inflamed my soul - to effect my own salvation and to serve humanity by abandoning all worldly desires and breaking away from all undue restraints. I no longer recited sanskrit verses inculcating obedience to One's parents. On the contrary I took to verses which preached defiance".

This passion for the new ideal of service to humanity, the spirit of renunciation, and the spirit of defiance contributed to Subhas's love for the motherland. His sense of patriotism and nationalism was shaped by his spirit of renunciation, and self-suffering for the sake of liberation of the motherland in future. The spirit of defiance that overtook him under the influence of Ramkrishna Paramahansa prepared him to defy the imperial authority in future for the sake of national liberation.

As Subhas writes; "As long as I was at School, I did not mature politically". However, under the influence of Vivekananda and Ramkrishna Paramahansa and particularly under the influence of their Philosophy of service to humanity, renunciation and self-abnegation Subhas developed the trait of egalitarianism which subsequently blossomed into his theory of socialism. As Subhas writes; "it slowly dawned on

30. Ibid., p.39.
me that for spiritual development social service was necessary. The idea came probably from Vivekananda for he had preached the ideal of service of humanity which included the service of one's country. But he had further enjoined on every one to serve the poor for according to him God often comes to us in the form of the poor and to serve the poor is to worship God. I remember that I became very liberal with beggars, fakirs and Sadhus and whenever any of them appeared before our house, I helped them with whatever came within my reach.\textsuperscript{31}

Apart from the sense of egalitarianism that made its appearance in his life in the school days which contributed to his concept of socialism in future, Subhas also developed a love for revolution and revolutionaries during his school days. He of course admits that Orissa during those days was a "political backwater" and there was lack of inspiration within his family circle for political activities. The partition of Bengal and Swadeshi movement that followed suit had relatively meagre effect on his family. As he himself writes; "they occasioned a mild interest but politics was tabooed in our house-so we could not take part in any political activity.\textsuperscript{32} However, Subhas took interest in the revolutionary upheaval and the revolutionaries and in his own way, he paid his tribute to

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.,p.44.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.,p.45.
the revolutionary cause and the great revolutionaries in "cutting out pictures of revolutionaries from the papers and hanging them up in his study".33

Yet, as per his own admission Subhas was "politically undeveloped" till December, 1911. The first political impetus he claims to have received in the year, 1912, when a student of his age came from Calcutta who was associated with an organisation that had as its ideal spiritual uplift and national service along constructive lines. This meeting with such a student from Calcutta occurred at a time when Subhas says "my mind was beginning to turn towards social and national problems".34 Hence when this visitor from Calcutta talked to him passionately about his duty to the country, he was "greatly impressed".

Thus Subhas's sense of patriotism and nationalism was stimulated by the year 1912 after his association with the politically, socially and nationally conscious student from Calcutta.

III. His College Days

By the time Subhas joined the Presidency College, Calcutta, in the year, 1913, his mind had almost been made up in a definite direction. He was by now deeply committed to the uplift of humanity and renunciation of worldly career.

33. Ibid., p.45.
34. Ibid., p.46.
This had of course been strengthened and solidified under the influence of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda. As he writes; "Though I was passing through a period of stormy transition when I left school, I had by then made certain definite decisions for myself I was not going to follow the beaten track, come what may; I was going to lead a life conducive to my spiritual welfare and the uplift of humanity; I was going to make a profound study of philosophy so that I could solve the fundamental problems of life; in practical life I was going to emulate Ramkrishna and Vivekananda as far as possible and in any case I was not going in for a worldly career. This was the outlook with which I faced a new chapter in my life".35

By the time Subhas joined the Presidency College, although it was a Government Institution, "the students as a rule were any thing but loyalist".36 These students, it was rumoured had a bad name in the councils of the C.I.D. The main hostel of the college, known as the Eden Hindu Hostel, was looked upon as "a hot-bed of sedition, a rendezvous of revolutionaries and was frequently searched by the police".37 During those days there was even a secret group of revolutionaries among the students. However, Subhas belonged to a group of students called the neo-Vivekananda group. This group

35. Ibid.,p.51.
36. Ibid.,p.58.
37. Ibid.,p.58.
considered service as a means of spiritual development. However, for this group service did not mean social service in the sense of rendering help to the poor, needy, distressed and disabled. Instead, it believed in national reconstruction as the right form of social service. As Subhas writes; "it interpreted social service not in terms of building hospitals and charitable dispensaries as the followers of Vivekananda were inclined to do, but as national reconstruction". 38

Thus during his college days Subhas developed politically in the midst of non-loyalists and in the revolutionary atmosphere that was a hot-bed of sedition. Besides he under the influence of the Neo-Vivekananda group developed a flair for social service particularly in the sense of national reconstruction. Thus, he evolved into a nationalist and non-loyalist opposed to alien domination and alien exploitation.

Yet, the spirit of nationalism that struck root in Subhas during these days was a spiritual type of nationalism. This was particularly due to the influence of Ramkrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. As Subhas writes; "Our main object was to bring about a synthesis between religion and nationalism, not merely in the theoretical sphere but in practical life as well". 39

38. Ibid., p.58.
39. Ibid., p.58.
If during those days Subhas developed as a nationalist, the spiritual nature of his nationalism kept him away from the revolutionary and terrorist elements among the students. As Subhas himself writes; "Politically the group was against terroristic activity and secret conspiracy of every sort".  

During his College days Subhas also became attracted towards Aurobindo Ghosh. By this time Aurobindo's active political life had already come to an end. He had by then retired to Pondicherry, the French possession to indulge in meditation and spiritual regeneration. However by now his "was a name to conjure with". He had sacrificed a brilliant career and a lucrative one too for the sake of devoting himself to the cause of national politics and national liberation. He had become the champion of the most radical elements among the nationalists. He had undergone incarceration with perfect equanimity for the sake of emancipation of his motherland. Particularly the spiritualization of politics inspite of uncompromising militancy had endeared him not only to the youth but also to the most radical elements among the nationalists. As Subhas writes, "when I came to Calcutta in 1913, Aurobindo was already a legendary figure. Rarely have I seen people speak of a leader with such rapturous enthusiasm......". As he further

40. Ibid., p.60.
41. Ibid., p.61.
writes; "As a college student it was not the mysticism surrounding Aurobindo's name which attracted me but his writings and also his letters".\textsuperscript{42} It is of course true that he had been during his school days greatly impressed and inspired by the writings and messages of Ramkrishna and Vivekanananda but he was impressed still greatly by the personality and philosophy of Aurobindo.\textsuperscript{43} He found in Aurobindo's philosophy something original and unique.\textsuperscript{44} As he writes; "it was so refreshing and inspiring, to read Aurobindo's writings as a contrast to the denunciation of knowledge and action by the later-day Bengal Vaishnavas".\textsuperscript{44}

But of every thing what attracted Subhas most towards Aurobindo was the latter's passion for patriotism and nationalism and his spirit of self-sacrifice and self-surrender. Particularly Aurobindo's exhortation, "I should like to see some of you becoming great, great not only for your own sake but to make India great so that she may stand up with head erect amongst the free nations of the world. Those of you who are poor and obscure - I should like to see your poverty and obscurity devoted to the service of the motherland. Work

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p.62.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p.63.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., pp.63-64.

"I was impressed by his deeper Philosophy....The reconciliation between the one and the many, between God and creation which Ramkrishna and Vivekanananda had preached, had indeed impressed me but had not till then succeeded in liberating me from the Cobwebs of Maya. In this task of emancipation Arabinnda came as an additional help".
that she might prosper, suffer that she might rejoice”, penetrated deep into Subhas's heart and contributed amply for his transformation into a passionate nationalist. Besides, the nationalism of Aurobindo was spiritualistic in tone. Hence apart from the message of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda, Aurobindo's intermingling of spiritualism and politics contributed not only to the evolution of Subhas's political personality but also to the evolution of his spiritualistic nationalism.

Subhas had during his school days a flair for social work and social service. During his early College days his interest in serving the poor got a spurt. He even did not hesitate to beg from door to door with sack in hand to feed the needy poor and to collect funds for flood and famine relief. However, during these years the spirit of social service acquired a deeper dimension. The sight of poverty, hunger and beggary stirred his intellectual self. He started questioning his own comfortable living in the face of poverty, misery, degradation and deprivation of millions. As he writes, "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 in seeing

45. Ibid.,pp.64-65.

"When I became eager to do some practical work, I found out a society for giving aid to the poor. This society used to collect money and foodstuffs every Sunday by begging from door to door. . . . The first day I went out, I had to overcome forcibly a strong sense of shame, not having been accustomed to this sort of work".
her. Her sorrowful countenance 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. What was the value of Yoga if so much misery was to continue in the world? Thoughts like these made me rebel against the existing social system.46

During his college days Subhas even used to go out to nurse cholera patients in rural areas. During these days he had also the vision of the extent of poverty of the masses in rural areas and extent of their misfortune. As he writes, "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."47

Such experiences of poverty both in the urban and rural areas whipped up his egalitarian sentiments. He even started practising renunciation and self-sacrifice by

46. Ibid., pp. 65-66.
47. Ibid., p. 67.
saving his tram-fare to help the poor and the needy.\textsuperscript{48}

This intellectual conviction about the irrationality of poverty in the midst of plenty and practice of renunciation for the sake of bringing relief to the poor and the down-trodden contributed to the development of the socialist facet of Subhas's personality.

Although Subhas's political personality was evolving in nationalistic and socialistic direction, yet it was too immature during his early college days. Even if he under the influence of Ramkrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda and Aurobindo had learnt the lesson of renunciation, self-sacrifice and self-surrender and had been inspired by nationalistic fervour and patriotic sentiment, yet it was very much in the nature of sentimental out-pouring of an emotional youth. He came in contact with "terrorists-revolutionaries" among the students of his college and in the hostel yet he was "never drawn towards them".\textsuperscript{49} However, he was convinced that "the ultimate salvation of our people would come through the

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.,p.66.

"I used to get money from home for going to and returning from college by tram car. This I resolved to save and spend in charity. I would often walk back from college.....sometimes even walk to it when there was sufficient time".

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.,p.72.

"I often met either in college or in the hostel several of those who I learnt afterwards were important men in the terrorist revolutionary movement and who later were on the run. But I was never drawn towards them, not because I believed in non-violence as Mahatma Gandhi does, but because I was then living in a world of my own and held that the ultimate Salvation of our people would come through the process of National Reconstruction".
process of national reconstruction. Yet the Neo-Vivekananda group to which he belonged although had the vision of national emancipation before it, had no idea about the way India was to be liberated. It was at this stage that the arrogant behaviour of the Britishers and the state of introspection showed him the way for properly defining the nature and means of liberation. As Subhas writes: "Two things forced me to develop politically and to strike out an independent line for myself - the behaviour of Britishers in Calcutta and the Great War."

Subhas had taken to bed down with typhoid "as the price of pilgrimage and guru-hunting." Here, he got an opportunity "to reexamine all his former ideas and to revalue all the hither-to accepted values."

Once at Calcutta Subhas experienced quite often the arrogant behaviour of British people. The British people were found to be "purposefully rude and offensive" to Indians in various ways. Often such rude and offensive behaviour led to wordy duels and on some occasions matured into exchange of blows. Even on the roads the Britishers expected the Indians to make way for them and in case of failure of the latter to oblige them, they pushed them aside by force or had

50. Ibid., p.72.
51. Ibid., p.72.
52. Ibid., p.71.
their ears boxed. In the railway trains it was sometimes difficult for an Indian to travel with self-respect unless he was prepared to fight. On occasions, even high court judges had to enter into conflict with Britishers in railway trains.

Subhas inspite of his philosophic nature, indulgence in yogic exercises, and commitment to "Sankar's Doctrine of Maya" was not prepared to swallow all these humiliations heaped on Indians.

Subhas also witnessed during his college days that the law of the land in force was of no avail to Indians when there was inter-racial conflicts. He also saw how Indians had started to hit back after failing to secure legal remedy. And as he writes; "on the streets, in the tram-cars, in the railway trains, Indians would no longer take things lying down. The effect was instantaneous. Everywhere the Indian began to be treated with consideration"\(^5^3\)

This act of assertion of Indians and their sense of self-defence had ofcourse roused Subhas's political consciousness; yet it was not enough to give a definite turn to his mental make-up. However, during the War years when he was lying in bed he started reexamining his outlook and attitude to the moral and national problems and started revaluing the values that he had adhered to so far. Out of

\(^{5^3}\) Ibid., p.74.
this reexamination and reevaluation evolved Subhas's notion of complete independence or freedom from imperialistic bondage. As he writes, "......I began to reexamine all my ideas to revalue all the hitherto accepted values. Was it possible to divide a nation's life into two compartments and handover one of them to the foreigner, reserving the other to ourselves? Or was it incumbent on us to accept or reject life in its entirety? The answer that I gave myself was a perfectly clear one. If India was to be a modern civilized nation, she would have to pay the price and she would not by any means shirk the physical, the military, problem. Those who worked for the country's emancipation would have to be prepared to take charge of both the civil and military administration. Political freedom was indivisible and meant complete independence of foreign control and tutelage. The war had shown that a nation that did not possess military strength could not hope to preserve its independence.\(^{54}\)

Thus by now Subhas had become conscious of his political goal - the goal of complete independence and was convinced that sufficient price has got to be paid for the attainment of this goal. This sufficient price involved both sufficient sacrifice and the courage of conviction to shoulder necessary responsibilities. Not only he became conscious of his political goal and the price that it demanded; realisation

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54. Ibid., p.74.
of this goal became the very mission of his life. This is evident from his letter written to Hemant Kumar Sarkar on 31.8.1915. Subhas wrote; "I am realising more and more as time passes that I have a definite mission to fulfil in life and for which I have been born and I am not to drift in the current of popular opinion......as one who is aiming to reach out to the skies is oblivious of hills or wells on the way, so also is one whose mind is directed towards his mission to the exclusion of everything else, completely unconcerned by other things. I must move about with the proud self-consciousness of one imbued with an idea".55

Subhas has written; "I wonder how I would have developed politically, but for certain fortuitous circumstances".56 One such circumstance was provided to him when he was a student of the third year class of the Presidency College in the year 1916. Quite consciously he became entangled in what is popularly called "the Oaten Affair" involving an assault of Prof. E.F. Oaten of the College by some students. Although he was not directly involved in the act of assault nor did justify it, yet as a representative of the class, he argued before the Enquiry Committee that "the students had acted under great provocation". For not unconditionally condemning this act of assault, Subhas was rusticated from the College as "the most troublesome man".57 This expulsion from Presidency College had profound

55. Ibid.,p.166.
56. Ibid.,p.72.
57. Ibid.,p.78.
effect on the evolution of the political personality of Subhas. By not unconditionally condemning the assault of Prof. Oaten he of course, ruined his own case but had no feeling of remorse for that sake. As he writes; "I felt, however, that I had done the right thing regardless of its effect on me". Although he had a feeling that "his fate was sealed" he had no regret for the position he had taken.

Subhas's taking the side of the students in this act of assault of a Professor was not in the nature of condonation of an act of indiscipline or violence but a clear manifestation of his anti-racial, anti-imperialistic and nationalistic fervour. That he was crucified for a noble cause like vindication of the self-respect of Indians not only gave him sufficient satisfaction but also emboldened him to march ahead with the banner of nationalism held aloft. As Subhas says "I had already some theoretical conception of social morality and nationalism, but on this day I passed through the first real test of them all- indeed a test in flames. Having passed this most difficult test successfully, I found that the course of my life and its future programme had been decided once for all". A national struggle for

58. Ibid.,p.79.
59. Ibid.,p.79.

As he writes "my Educational career was at an end and my future was dark and uncertain. But I was not sorry. There was not a trace of regret in my mind for what I had done. I had rather a feeling of supreme satisfaction or joy that I had done the right thing. That, I had stood up for our honour and self-respect and had sacrificed myself for a noble cause. After all what is life without renunciation I told myself".

freedom demands of the citizen immense suffering, sacrifice, trials, tribulations, toil and tears. Subhas embraced suffering and ran the risk of ruining his own case. But this was the right type of preparation of a would be nationalist. "From now on" as Gerald H. Corr rightly says, Subhas, became "a committed nationalist".61 Hugh Toye says; "All was high tragedy. In his own eyes he was a victim of racial prejudice struck down for protesting against an insult to his motherland".62

Subhas himself writes; "my principal had expelled me, but he had made my future career, I had established a precedent for myself from which I could not easily depart in future. I had stood up with courage and composure in a crisis and fulfilled my duty. I had developed self-confidence as well as initiative which was to stand me in good stead in future. I had a foretaste of leadership though in a very restricted sphere and of the martyrdom, that it involves".63 The future career that was made for Subhas was the career of a patriot and a nationalist. He had set the precedent as a fighter to lay down his life in the battle for national liberation. He had developed a sense of self-confidence and a sense of initiative that helped him amply in evolving into

a fighter during the Second World War and take the leadership in the national struggle in the later part of his life. This incident also foreshadowed his concept of sacrificial swaraj that manifested splendidly in his ideas and actions in the years to come.

During his youth Subhas exhibited sufficient interest in military training. That stood him in good stead in organising a national liberation force and taking its leadership in future during the years of the Second World War. In 1916 Subhas met a demobilised officer of the Bengal Ambulance Corps who was present at the siege of Kut-et-Amara and was a prisoner of War in Turkey. He felt sufficiently excited by his tales of adventure and wanted to join the Army. Subsequently he seriously tried to enroll himself in the 49th Bengali Regiment but failed. Such interest in military training was a clear manifestation of his realisation during the First World War that a nation without military powers could not dream of preserving its freedom.

Subhas's subsequent participation in the University Unit in the India's defence Force- India's Territorial Army—was a source of "positive pleasure" for him. He enjoyed both military training and Camp life and was rather very much enthusiastic over them. As he writes; "what a change it was from sitting at the feet of anchorites to obtain knowledge about God, to standing with a rifle on my shoulder
taking orders from a British Army Officer". As he further writes; "This training gave me something which I needed or which I lacked. The feeling of strength and of self-confidence grew still further. As soldiers we had certain rights which as Indians we did not possess. To us as Indians Fort William was out of bounds, but as soldiers we had right of entry there, and as a matter of fact the first day we marched into Fort William to bring our rifles, we experienced a queer feeling of satisfaction, as if we were taking possession of something to which we had an inherent right but of which we, had been unjustly deprived."

The feeling of self-confidence and strength, that Subhas acquired as a result of his participation in the University Unit of the Indian Defence Force was a source of "positive pleasure" for him perhaps because of the fact that he was dreaming of wielding these weapons in future with self-confidence for the liberation of his nation. Entering into Fort William to gather rifle gave him "a queer feeling of satisfaction" perhaps because he felt that he had now access to the store-house of military strength which he can utilise in future in his struggle for national liberation. This provides a clue to his future leadership of the military struggle against the British Empire and the INA. As it is said "Indeed in Subhas's mental reflexes of that time, there

64. Ibid., p. 91.
65. Ibid., p. 92.
seems to be a kind of naivete, charming and at the same time with a suggestion of thunder about it. This also foreshadows Subhas's violent and military approach to the struggle for national liberation.

IV. Evolution In England

In 1919 when Subhas emerged with flying collars from his B.A. examination with a first class Honours in Philosophy, his father sent him to England to sit for the I.C.S. Examination. Though he went to England and joined the Cambridge University, he was in two minds since he could not think in terms of "joining I.C.S. and accepting a job under the British Government" even in his dreams. "That will mean" writes Subhas to Hemant Kumar Sarkar "giving up my goal in life". That goal of life was nothing but the struggle for mother India's emancipation from alien bondage. Subhas's two minds foreshadowed his historic decision to resign Indian Civil Service in 1921 and join the national struggle for freedom.

Subhas stayed at Cambridge for only about twenty months. However this brief stay in England played a significant role in the evolution of his political personality. It strengthened the passion of a leader and a revolutionary in Subhas.

68. Ibid., p. 190.
At Cambridge Subhas was greatly impressed by the measure of freedom allowed to the students, unlike the one available in "a Police-ridden city like Calcutta where every student was looked upon as a potential revolutionary and suspect!" He admired the perfect freedom allowed to the students in the debates at the Union Society where even prominent members of Parliament and the Cabinet were subjected to "slashing criticism, not unmixed with invective at times". Hailing from a country under foreign rule, he compared the measure of freedom available in a free country like England vis-a-vis his own country under British Yoke where freedom was a rare commodity. At it were, this further reinforced his nationalistic fervour.

Subhas admired certain traits of British Character like their sense of punctuality, robust optimism, their strong commonsense, which prompts them to appreciate their national interest. In his own words; "they have a strong common sense, they appreciate their national interest very well". It may be noted that these traits of English Character shaped and moulded Subhas's life to a great extent. More particularly, like the British people he put the national interest at the forefront of his political programme throughout his political career. In his alliance with the Axis powers during the Second World War, he was

69. Ibid., p.99.
70. Ibid., p.101.
71. Ibid., p.199.
primarily motivated by consideration of India's national interest, its freedom being the over-riding goal at that point of time. The question of ideology was relegated to the background as of no consequence in his quest for foreign aid and for the sake of winning freedom. In this respect Cambridge appears to have greatly contributed towards the evolution of his political personality.

Cambridge, however, was not all good for Subhas. He felt bitter about the racial arrogance of the British and the discrimination against Indians. "One could detect" writes Subhas in his autobiography "in the average Britisher a feeling of superiority beneath a veneer of bon-homie which was not agreeable to others". In his autobiography he has recorded instances of discrimination and racial prejudice against Indians in matters like captainship of the Tennis team in the inter-university matches, and enlistment of Indian students in the University Officers Training Corps. Subsequently he had to encounter the insulting references about Indians in the printed instructions issued to Civil Service probationers by the India Office. The said printed instructions under the caption "Care of the Horses in India" insultingly remarked that the Indian syce(groom) eats the same food as his horse that Indian Bunnias(traders) are proverbially dishonest etc." Subhas was a "born patriot"

72. Ibid., p.102.
73. Ibid., p.116.
and a nationalist to the core whose heart revolted against such insulting references. He was the only one among the civil service probationers who had the courage of conviction to lodge a strong protest to Mr. Raberts, the Secretary Civil Service Board against such derogatory references being totally unconcerned of Official pleasure or displeasure.

Subhas was exposed to racial arrogance and discrimination in India. He found the same state of affairs even at Cambridge. This unwholesome, and unfortunate experience was partly at the root of his uncompromising attitude against British imperialism.

While preparing for the Indian Civil Service examination Subhas studied Modern European History and in this connection studied, some of its original sources like Bismark's autobiography, Matternich's memoirs, Cavour's letters etc. "These original sources" writes Subhas, "helped to rouse my political sense and to foster my understanding of the inner currents of international politics". Further, he learnt at Cambridge that "a nation can be made only by the uncompromising idealism of Hampden and Cromwell". At Cambridge, he also studied about the methods and tactics employed by the foreign revolutionaries in their struggle for freedom. As it is said "the Resorgimento movement of Italy under the leadership of Mazzini and Garibaldi and the struggle of the Irish people against their British oppressors

74. Ibid., p.105.
75. Ibid., p.233.
exercised a strong influence on his youthful mind. Lenin's success in establishing the first socialist republic in the world demonstrated to him what the power of the people could accomplish and further strengthened his faith in Vivekananda's assertion that India's progress would be achieved only by the peasants, the washerman, the cobbler and the sweeper.  

Sri C.C. Desai, a contemporary of Subhas at Cambridge portraying the picture of Subhas's mind has observed: "Subhas never intended to join the Indian Civil Service and to be a cog in the wheel of British imperialism. His mind was all the time set on how to get rid of the British, how to make the country free and how to raise the self-respect of Indians."  

Subhas during these days had an amount of pride for being born as an Indian. He was proud to feel that India had a great and glorious past. He also thought that India had a mission to fulfil in future. In his word, deed, movement, manners and in every thing he behaved every inch as a self-conscious Indian. Giving an impression of this aspect of his personality Sri Dilip Kumar Roy another contemporary of his at Cambridge has recorded:

"I can not remember a single student in England who took life a tithe as seriously as he or strove as assiduously to make himself into a standard bearer of free India."

Subhas had the rare honour of standing fourth in order of merit in the Indian Civil Service Examination. But as was expected, he resigned on 22nd April 1921 from this heaven-born service to join the national movement and contribute his mite for the freedom of his mother India. The way his mind was working is evident from the series of letters written to his brother, Sarat Chandra Bose and to Sri C. R. Das, whom he had accepted almost as his political Guru, before and after his resignation from the Civil Service. The burden of all these letters conveys his definite commitment to the liberation of mother India which made any other consideration "absolutely irrelevant and inconsequential". In fact, Swami Vivekananda's call for the cause of the motherland, Aurobindo's dedication to free India from subjugation and Tilak's fervent appeal to the Indian students at Cambridge not to go in for Government service but to devote themselves to the National Cause.

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"When Lokamanya B.G. Tilak visited Cambridge in 1919 he appealed to the Indian students not to go in for Government service but to devote themselves to national service. He regretted that so many bright and promising students were hankering after Government jobs."
contributed adequately towards his historic decision to resign from Indian Civil Service and jump into the fire of the national struggle for freedom.

Standing on the threshold of a promising career that would solve the "paramount problem" of life, i.e. the problem of bread and butter, he felt "life loses half its interest if there is no struggle - if there are no risks to be taken". Besides, as he further said in his letter to his brother Sarat Chandra Bose "it is not possible to serve one's country in the best and fullest manner if one is chained to the Civil Service. In short, national and spiritual aspirations are not compatible with obedience to civil service conditions". Thus Subhas renounced a comfortable life with a nice and fat income, a good pension in after life, and the prospect of becoming either a Commissioner or a Chief Secretary to a provincial Government for the sake of serving his nation, nay to bring an independent nation into being. He renounced his promising career because he could not accept the idea of being "a part of the machinery which has outlived the days of its usefulness, and stands at present for all that is connected with conservatism, selfish power, heartlessness and red-tapism". He was determined to "chuck this rotten service and dedicate whole heartedly to the country's cause".

80. Ibid., p.108.
82. Ibid., p.110.
83. Ibid., p.110.
Subhas did all these because, he was not prepared to give the go-by to all his dreams and aspirations and utilise whatever little capacity he possessed for the welfare of his country.  

Before resigning from the I.C.S. he in his letter dated 16.2.21 to C. R. Das, wrote: "A life of sacrifice to start with, plain living and high-thinking wholehearted devotion to the country's cause— all these are highly enchanting to my imagination and inclination. Further, the very principle of serving under an alien bureaucracy is intensely repugnant to me. The path of Aurobindo Ghosh is to me more noble more inspiring, more lofty, more unselfish, though more thorny than the path of Ramesh Dutt. In his letter to C. R. Das on 23.2.21 he also said "I am fully convinced now that I shall be able to serve my country better if I am one of the people than if I am a member of the bureaucracy."

84. Ibid., pp.106-109.

"What should I do with the job? Was I going to give the go-by to all my dreams and aspirations and settle down to a comfortable life...........I had resolved early in life not to follow the beaten track........I had certain ideals which I wanted to live up to......constituted as I am, I have sincere doubts as to whether I should be a fit man for the Civil Service.......I rather think that what little capacity I possess can be better utilised in other directions for my own welfare as well as for the welfare of my country".

85. Ibid., p.111.

86. Ibid., p.111.
Subhas's uncompromising patriotism, nationalism and anti-imperialism is also evident from his letter of 6th April, 1921 to Sri C. R. Das. For him resignation from the Civil Service was a matter of principle—the principle of a diehard patriot who under no circumstances was prepared to "own allegiance to a foreign bureaucracy and sell ourselves for a mess of pottage." Not only he could not reconcile himself to the principle of serving an alien bureaucracy; he said "the day I sign the covenant I shall cease to be a free-man." A patriot and nationalist to the core, he was optimistic that India's liberation was only a question of time, a matter of few years and appropriate price must be paid for the attainment of such lofty goal. He was fully prepared to devote himself wholeheartedly to the national cause and pay the appropriate price. As he said; "the price consists of sacrifice and suffering. Only on the soil of sacrifice and suffering can we raise our national edifice. Each family should now bring forward its offering to the feet of the Mother."

It is evident from his letter to C. R. Das that Subhas by now was not only convinced that India's liberation and attainment of nationhood was not only a matter of time and needed the payment of appropriate price; he believed then that one of the appropriate strategies for winning liberation

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87. Ibid., p.112.
88. Ibid., p.112.
89. Ibid., pp.112-113.
from foreign subjugation was withdrawal of co-operation from the British Imperialist regime. He had become convinced by now that British Imperialism and colonialism had got entrenched on the Indian soil because of the cooperation extended to the imperialist rulers by the sons of the soil. Once this cooperation is withdrawn, the colonial regime shall collapse like a house of cards. As he said in his letter dated the 6th April,21"if the members of the services withdraw their allegiance or even show a desire to do so - then only will the bureaucratic machine collapse". In his letter to G. R. Das after his resignation from the I.C.S., he also harped upon the principle of non-cooperation with the colonial power for ending the colonial rule and win national resurgence. As he said "Every Government servant whether he be a petty chaprasi or a provincial Governor only helps to contribute to the stability of the British Government in India. The best way to end a Government is to withdraw from it. I say this not because that was Tolstoy's doctrine nor because Gandhi preaches it - but because I have come to believe in it".

Subhas resigned from the I.C.S. by not signing the covenant not only because it was an "emblem of servitude"; he considered non-cooperation with the Government, when non-cooperation movement of Gandhi was already on, to be the most correct strategy for winning Swaraj. As he said in

90. Ibid.,p.113.
91. Ibid.,p.115.
his letter to C. R. Das written on 6th April, 1921; "In the absence of adequate response at the right moment, the whole movement might tend to flag and if response comes too late it may not have any effect. I believe it will take years to initiate another such movement and hence I think that the tide in the present movement must be availed of. . . . but delay in resigning may . . . . have some untoward effect on the movement."92 It would also be evident from Subhas's letter to C. R. Das that his commitment to nationalism was not merely an emotional expression of an impulsive youth but the result of a deep-rooted conviction of a rationalist and idealist patriot. Disowning his allegiance to the foreign bureaucracy which would have made a placid and pleasant life possible, he said; "I have come to believe that compromise is a bad thing . . . . it degrades the man and injures his cause . . . . we have not come to that stage where we can accept a philosophy of expediency. We have got to make a nation and a nation can be made only by the uncompromising idealism of Hampden and Crom well . . . . . I have come to believe that it is time for us to wash our hands clean of any connection with the British Government."93 Thus we find that by the time Subhas resigned from the I.C.S. he was a politically matured patriot and nationalist uncompromising in matters of principles. His political

92. Ibid., p. 114.
93. Ibid., p. 115.
personality by now had not only acquired sufficient maturity but had been deeply inspired by high sense of idealism, sense of self-sacrifice and self-suffering.

Subhas by now was not only deeply committed to the dream of national liberation; he had also, before he resigned from the I.C.S. prepared a blue-print for national reconstruction. He had even suggested in his letter of 16.2.21 to G. R. Das about research on various national problems by a group of research students under the direction and supervision of Indian National Congress. He had urged upon the congress to formulate a definite and clear-cut policy in respect of its attitude towards the native states, universal franchise and emancipation of the depressed classes. In his subsequent letter written on 2.3.21, he hinted at formulation of a clear-cut policy about labour, factory legislation, vagrancy and poor relief. Besides he also suggested formulation of a constitution for independent India.

Thus by the time Subhas set-sail for India after resigning from the I.C.S. he had acquired adequate political maturity as a patriot and a nationalist.

V. Political Apprentice Under C.R. Das

Subhas returned to India in July, 1921 and plunged headlong into Indian politics. He reached Bombay on July 16, 1921 and the same afternoon he arranged an interview with
Gandhi. By then Gandhi had become the undisputed leader in the Indian Political firmament. His call for non-violent non-cooperation at the Nagpur Congress in December, 1920 and promise of Swaraj within a year had electrified the nation at large. "Truly the country was aflame and our country had a sight, transient but wonderful, of the promised land of freedom and fulfilment."^94

It was but natural on the part of Subhas to seek an interview with Gandhi. He was about to join the National movement of which Gandhi was the acknowledged and undisputed leader. During his Cambridge days he had studied the methods and tactics employed by revolutionaries in other parts of the world and in the light of that, he wanted to apprise himself of Gandhi's mind and his plan of action. For that Subhas asked a volley of questions to Gandhi during his interview but unfortunately, he could not be impressed with Gandhi's plan of action. He was "depressed and disappointed" and felt that there was a "deplorable lack of clarity in the plan which the Mahatma had formulated and that he did not have a clear idea of the successive stages of the campaign which could bring India to her cherished goal of freedom."^95


This first and fateful encounter foreshadowed the gradual turning away of Subhas from the magic spell of Mahatma's leadership and striking an independent line for himself befitting his own conviction. Of course on the advice of Gandhi, he proceeded to Calcutta and reported himself to C. R. Das to whom he had written from Cambridge about his decision to join the National movement. He had a detailed discussion with Sri Das about the object of the Congress Movement. After this interview with Sri Das, Subhas "began to see his way clearly and was able finally to take the decision of throwing himself heart and soul into the movement started by Gandhi". That Subhas was captivated by Sri Das is evident from the following observation, "During the course of the conversation I began to feel that here was a man who knew what he was about—who could give all that he had and who could demand from others all they could give a man to whom youthfulness was not a shortcoming but a virtue. By the time our conversation came to an end, my mind was made up. I felt that I had found a leader and I meant to follow him".

We find Subhas hereafter in the forefront of the National Movement with C. R. Das as his immediate political

preceptor. As it is said "Mr. Das was a more aggressive Nationalist than Mr. Gandhi, even as Bengal Congress opinion was more turbulent than that of the Congress as a whole, Subhas quickly won his confidence and was soon at the heart of the Congress affairs in Calcutta".98 Sri Das entrusted Subhas with a number of important assignments such as principal of the National College at Calcutta, Captain of the National Volunteer Corps and last but not the least, the Chief Publicity Officer of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. "In every capacity he showed his mettle".99 The Anglo-Indian daily The Statesman remarked "while the Congress had gained such a capable man, the government had correspondingly lost a civil servant of high promise".100 Sri Das proudly introduced his "dashing young lieutenant" to Gandhi and to the members of the Congress working Committee during a secret conference between Gandhi and the ex-revolutionaries at Calcutta in September 1921. It was the first occasion for Subhas to come into personal contact with prominent leaders of the Congress.

The Montague-Chelmsford reforms of 1919 which the Congress under Gandhi's leadership rejected, were inaugurated in early 1921 by the Duke of Cannaught but the people's mood continued to be sullen. With a view to

assuage public feelings and to win the support of the people for the reform, the Prince of Wales came on a visit to India and landed at Bombay on 17th November. Owing to a decision by the Congress Working Committee, there was a countrywide boycott of the Prince's visit. In Calcutta a complete Hartal made the boycott a unique success. The Congress volunteers took possession of the city and as a matter of fact the Government had to abdicate from the scene. Anglo-Indian papers such as the Statesman and Englishman demanded immediate and drastic action against the Congress volunteers, subsequently Congress was declared illegal. A meeting of the Bengal Congress Committee of which Subhas was already a member, decided to launch civil disobedience as a reply to the arbitrary action of the Government. Subhas was put in charge of the campaign which turned out so outstanding a success that the Government in sheer desperation resorted to drastic action. In fact, by the evening of 10th December, 1921, Sri C. R. Das and Subhas Chandra Bose were in prison.

This was the first prison term of Subhas out of a total of eleven terms most of them being imprisonment without trial—until his escape from the country in 1941. This time he was sentenced to six months imprisonment by the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta. "Only six months"? Have I then stolen a chicken? was the spontaneous
outburst of Subhas. It showed his youthful ardour and enthusiasm with his implied commitment to pay a much heavier price for the cause of India's freedom. As Hugh Toye has observed "It was a good start for a political cadet". Subhas had the privilege of staying in the same jail with Sri Das for eight months in 1921-22. They used to have discussions about political and national problems and Subhas could have the opportunity to form an idea about C. R. Das's political ideas and ideals.

About C. R. Das approach to politics. Subhas has written "It was his belief that our society, our politics and our philosophy would in the natural course be evolved out of our cultural heritage and our pressing national problems. Hence he could never countenance any struggle or conflict between classes or communities. In this respect he was opposed to the doctrines of Karl Marx. Till the last days of his life it was his hope that all our differences could be resolved by concluding pacts between different religious communities, so that all Indians irrespective of race, caste and creed would come forward to join the fight for Swaraj.

"That Swaraj in India meant primarily the uplift of the masses and not necessarily the protection of the interest of the upper classes, was a matter of conviction for Deshabandhu". Subhas's commitment to socialism, yet

his non-reliance on class struggle, rather its rejection, and his secularism may be attributed to the influence of C.R. Das.

Towards the end of 1921 the political situation became aggravated. The Prince of Wales was due to arrive at Calcutta on December 24th. The Viceroy Lord Reading did not want the cool reception given to the Prince at Bombay to be repeated at Calcutta. He became anxious for a political settlement with the Congress. The offer was mooted through Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who met C.R. Das in the Presidency jail in that connection. The Government offered to withdraw the notification declaring Congress volunteers illegal, agreed to release political prisoners incarcerated under it and further, undertook to summon a round table conference to determine the future constitution of India. The offer was made on condition that Congress would call off the Non-cooperation Movement immediately and would not boycott the Prince of Wales’s visit to Calcutta. When C.R. Das broached the idea of a political Settlement, Sri Bose vehemently opposed it. However, he could be convinced by Sri Das that since the Mahatma’s promise of Swaraj within a year was nowhere in sight, a settlement before December 31st, 1921 with release of political prisoners would at least be a shot in the arms of the Congress. Hence it is said “the first major lesson in
political realism came thus perhaps to Subhas, for C. R. Das yielded to none in his capacity for ardour but could at the same time appreciate the limitations of circumstance - a lesson which Subhas inspite of his whole whogging action, never forgot.¹⁰²

On the 4th February, 1922, an unfortunate incident occurred at a place called Chauri Chaura in the United Provinces. People set fire to a police station and killed some Police men. Thereafter at Mahatma's instance, the Congress Working Committee called off the Non-Cooperation Movement throughout India and for an indefinite period. There was resentment against Mahatma's decision even in the Congress camp. "No one could understand why the Mahatma should have used the isolated incident at Chauri Chaura for strangling the movement all over the country."¹⁰³ While in prison, Subhas shared the popular resentment along with his mentor Sri C. R. Das. It may be noted that soon after the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on 10th March, 1922 for sedition and was sentenced six years of imprisonment.

On his release from jail, Subhas in one of his first political speeches stressed on "sincere work and

Towards the end of September, 1922, he grappled with unprecedented floods in North Bengal and proved his mettle in the organisation of relief work.

It may be noted that the question of Council entry was decided upon by Deshabandhu and his other associates in jail. It seemed to them that the Congress boycott of reformed councils provided in the Reform Act of 1919 was altogether too simplistic a solution. It would be more effective to contest the elections, enter the councils and wreck them from within while presiding over the Gaya session of the Indian National Congress, Sri C. R. Das urged upon the Congress to approve of his plan of Council entry which however was rejected by the orthodox followers of the Mahatma. Thereafter Pandit Motilal Nehru announced the formation of Swarajya Party. Deshabandhu tendered his resignation from the office of the President of the Congress so as to work freely in opposition to the official resolutions.

In Deshabandhu's campaign to mobilise the country in favour of his plan of council entry, Subhas stood as a solid bulwark. He became an Editor overnight under the orders of C. R. Das and edited "Bangalar Katha" which became

105. Ibid., p. 27.
the mouthpiece of Swarajist propaganda. During this period, he emerged as a leader of youth forming the All Bengal Youth League or the Young Bengal Party with himself as its President. It had the laudable goal of complete independence in its programme. "The programme was rather ambitious for youngmen and comprised complete Independence of India, community of interests with labour and peasants, amelioration of the economic condition of the masses, reduction of working hours, a minimum scale of wages, medical leave with full pay, old age pension, compensation for infirmity or serious accidents etc." After the victory of the Swarajist Policy at the special Congress in Delhi in September, 1923, Deshabandhu launched an English daily, forward with Subhas at the helm. During this period, he became the General Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee continuing till his voluntary resignation on April, 25th, 1924.

At this time Deshabandhu prepared the Bengal Pact to bring about Hindu-Muslim Unity in Bengal which unfortunately was rejected at the Coconada Congress in December, 1923. Subhas must have been influenced by such efforts of Sri Das to establish communal harmony in India. It may be said that this broadened his outlook enabling him to achieve the miracle of communal harmony in the Indian National

Army. With the Swarajya Party capturing the Calcutta Municipal Corporation in March, 1924, Sri Deshabandhu Das was elected as Mayor and Sri Subhas Chandra Bose was made the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation. As the Chief Executive Officer, Subhas Bose proved his ability as an "able and conscientious" administrator in the field of local self-government. The words of Deshabandhu that the "civil bodies should be made into a real poorman's corporation" influenced his programme and action. That apart, Subhas the nationalist was fully evident in the working of the Corporation. The councillors put on "home-made Khadi", streets and parks were named after India's greatmen and civil receptions were accorded to nationalist leaders rather than to Viceroy and Governors.

In the meantime, the Government felt hardpressed from all sides. In Central Provinces and Bengal the working of the constitution was paralysed by the Swarajists. In Bengal and almost throughout the country the local bodies were coming under the increasing influence of nationalists. There had been recrudescence of violence in Bengal. In fact, a young student named Gopinath Saha attempted to assassinate Sir Charles Tegart, the Police Commissioner of Bengal.

A young student named Gopinath Saha, had attempted to assassinate the commissioner of Police of Calcutta, Sir Charles Tegart. Through mistaken identity, he shot at and killed another Englishman, Mr. Day. At the trial before the High Court of Calcutta, Saha made a statement.... He was glad to pay with his life and hoped that every drop of his blood would sow the seeds of freedom in every Indian home. Saha was sentenced to death....
What unnerved the Government all the more was that C. R. Das extolling the bravery of Saha got a resolution adopted in the Siraganj Bengal Provincial Conference in May 1924. Under such pressing circumstances, the Government got panicky and on October 25th, 1924, Subhas along with a number of Congress men were put under arrest under the regulation-III of 1818 and Bengal ordinance. Though engaged day in and day out in municipal duties almost "lost to the Congress as a political worker", it was alleged by the Anglo-Indian papers of Calcutta that Subhas "was the brain of the revolutionary conspiracy", even though there was no documentary evidence to prove his complicity. Official suspicion turned against him, to the British he was that most sinister of objects, an enigma and he was arrested as "one of the most dangerous". After his arrest, he was lodged in

108. Manmath Nath Gupta, They lived dangerously, people publishing House, New Delhi, 1969, p. 70.
109. Netaji Collected Works, Op. Cit., pp. 116-117. "On October 25th, 1924, in the early hours of the morning they (Government) made a clean sweep of a large number of Congressmen in Calcutta.... These arrests were made under Regulation III of 1818 and partly under emergency ordinance (called the Bengal ordinance) promulgated by the Viceroy at midnight on October 24th. This ordinance conferred on the Government of Bengal powers of arrest and imprisonment similar to those conferred on the Government of India by regulation III of 1818, and the ordinance was issued in order to help the Government of Bengal to order arrest and imprisonment without trial of persons in Bengal without any reference to the Government of India".
the Alipore Central Jail, Calcutta where he could perform his municipal duties. In the first week of December he was shunted to Berhampur Jail. On January 25, 1925, he along with seven other political prisoners was taken to Mandalay Jail in Burma.

VI. DAYS AT MANDALAY:

Between 25th January, 1925 and 16th May, 1927 Subhas was in Mandalay jail. This period of more than two years which he spent at far off Mandalay, away from the din and bustle of active political life constitutes a vital period in the evolution of his political personality. It was a period of deep and serious introspection, a period when he looked within and without, preparing himself for the struggle ahead and also a period when he developed his political ideas and possibly thought out the technique of his struggle. As Hugh Toye has aptly observed "He went there a fledgling looking to his guru for guidance, and with a mass of student notions in his head, only recently seasoned with the experience and discussions of adult political life. When he left prison in 1927, he had a political conception of his own". The prolonged incarceration and enforced seclusion at Mandalay enabled Subhas to read voraciously, ponder deeply over the freedom struggle, and write down innumerable letters and articles that throw a good deal of

light on the working of his mind, his ideas and attitude as regards his future programme and strategy.

On his arrival at Mandalay Subhas had some "consolation and pride" that it was the same jail where patriots like Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh lived and moved and that it was a privilege to follow their foot-steps. On the other hand, the awe-inspiring and dehumanising surroundings of the jail was an unique experience "quite novel" to him. In his letter dated 28.3.25 to Sarat Chandra Bose, Subhas has written "I have been to the zoo to see its inmates but I never knew that I would have to be an inmate myself. This may make you scratch your head but it is true that we are now like inmates of the zoo. The wards in this jail are made of wooden bars or palisades and are not brickbuilt. I am sure that when we are locked in at night, to an outsider we look like so many human beasts prowling about in a lighted cage. That apart, they are completely "at the mercy of elements" such as "the biting cold of winter, the intense heat of summer or the tropical rains of Mandalay. Even then Subhas believed that "association of ideas won't bring back, the tails and claws which

human beings have dropped once for all". Having been the
honoured guest of so many jails and particularly that of
Mandalay with its dehumanising surroundings, Subhas's eyes
were opened to "an urgent need of radical reform of prison
life". It was not merely the structural lacunae of Indian
jails which received his attention; he also thought of the
attitudinal motivation that characterized jail prescriptions
as regards a convict. It was the penalizing mood which
should give place to a "new orientation guided by a flair
for true reform" that is what Subhas would write.

Subhas's letter dated 2.5.25 to Dilip Kumar Roy
is a remarkable and significant document. It provides an
insight into his mind under the adverse, trying, and appalling
conditions of Mandalay. It shows the mystic in Subhas deeply
pondering over the "most tangled questions in the individual
and collective life". He has written "The enforced solitude
in which a detenu passes his days gives him an opportunity
to think down into the ultimate problems of life. In any
event, I claim this for myself that many of the most tangled
questions which whirl like eddies in our individual and
collective life are edging gradually to the estuary of a
solution. The things I could only puzzle out feebly, or the
views I could only offer tentatively in days gone by are
crystallising out more and more presentably from day to day.

116. Subhas Chandra Bose, Correspondence (1824-32), Op.Cit.,
p.33.
It is for this reason, if for no other, that I feel I will be spiritually a gainer through my imprisonment".117

This passage with a philosophical touch is thought-provoking. It has been stated earlier that Subhas in his letter dated the 23rd April 1921 to C. R. Das had harped on non-cooperation considering that "the best way to end a Government is withdraw from it". During that period, in England, Subhas though not averse to admire the courage and conviction of the revolutionaries of the Swadeshi days yet admitted revolutionary violence and terrorism "regrettable and even ugly".118 As would appear, he was not unreservedly and hundred percent committed to a revolutionary strategy of struggle. However now there was a change in his outlook after he was incarcerated at Mandalay which he considered unjust, Vindictive and which of course was tortuous. Could one link up his sentences "the thing, I could only puzzle feebly or the views I could only offer tentatively in days gone by are crystallising more and more presentably from day to day" to a newfound conviction under the weight of a crisis of confidence in British sense of justice that possibly non-co-operation as a strategy was no answer to get rid of British imperialism from India? Was his mind veering round to the path of armed struggle?

117. Ibid., p.34.
Subhas's letter dated 9.10.25 addressed to Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy shows another facet of Subhas's evolving personality. It shows that he preferred a life of action to that of a life of contemplation. He regretted that "Aurobindo should have left politics for philosophy". India, he felt, was in bare need of an activist philosophy. He saw the danger involved in a life of total contemplation. He has written "Here there is a danger, the active side of a man might get atrophied if he remained cut off for too long from the tides of life and society. This need not indeed apply to a handful of authentic seekers of uncommon genius, but the common run the majority, ought, I think take to action in a spirit of service as the main plank of their Sadhana. For a variety of reasons our nation has been sliding pauselessly down to the zero line in the sphere of action, so what we badly need today is a double dose of activist serum, rajas".119

Faced with Dilip Kumar Roy's advice that he should lean on divinity leading to a life of contemplation, Subhas would say: "I could not be deaf to the miseries of our teeming millions. India calls to me in my blood".120 His interest in a philosophy of activism is also inherent in his love for physical culture. He writes "there are especially

119. Ibid., pp. 186-187.
120. Ibid., p. 18.
two features in India's present day life that could inspire one with hope. These are first a love of physical culture and a desire to tour round the world and secondly, a new awakening among our youths. So far as Bengal is concerned the Bengalis were at one time branded as cowards. That stigma has now been removed. Not even the worst enemy of Bengal would dare to utter that calumny again. But the Bengalis are still stigmatised as being physically poor. The Bengalis have to get over this disability too. I am really glad to notice that centres for physical culture are springing up everywhere and that the Bengalis seem to be determined to remove that stigma. Physical culture must be organised on a nationwide scale so that the whole race may go through a sort of physical transformation.  

Subhas felt encouraged to see the growing interest of Indian youths to tour round the world. He has written "In this longing to see the unknown lands, to follow unknown tracks, to contact unknown people lies the secret which goes to the building up of Nations and empires.....Although we do not think in terms of an empire, still it goes without saying that travelling in foreign lands will broaden our outlook, add to our knowledge and experience, strengthen our self-confidence and develop our intellectual powers".  

The awakening among the youth, Subhas considered to be a happy sign for India of the future and he urged upon them to consecrate their life for the cause of India's freedom. He said "our idea is to build up an ideal nation - a nation that could take its place among the most advanced races of the world in knowledge and achievement, in education and morals. What is needed therefore, is awakening in every field of life......Young India must discover its own power and possibilities. Our youths must learn to rely on their own strength. The task of building a new nation devolves on them and them alone,......the sacrificial fire is alight......let us sacrifice ourselves at the altar of our motherland. "Do or die" - let this be our motto."

In later half of 1926, Subhas was fixed up as the Congress nominee for election to Bengal Legislative Council from a Calcutta constituency. He defeated a formidable opponent Mr. J.N.Basu, the leader of the liberal party in Bengal and got himself elected. It was hoped by his friends and well-wishers that his election would pressurise government to release him. Inspite of all ingenious arguments on the floor of the legislature that it would be a breach of privilege to keep out a duly elected member, Bose had to stay and suffer in prison for a still longer period. In the meantime his health went from bad to worse due to an attack of

123. Ibid.,pp.13-14.
bronchopneumonia. In 1927, his condition became more serious and the Government offered to release him on condition that he should go straight to Switzerland without setting his foot on Indian soil. Subhas contemptuously turned down this offer and wrote to his brother on 6th May, 1927 in a highly philosophical vein. "Ideas will work out their own destiny and we who are but clods of clay encasing sparks of the divine fire have only got to consecrate ourselves to these ideas. A life so consecrated is bound to fulfil itself regardless of the vicissitudes of our material and bodily existence. My faith in the ultimate triumph of the ideas for which I stand is unflinching and I am not therefore troubled by thoughts about my health and future prospects.

I am not a shopkeeper and I do not bargain. The slippery path of diplomacy I abhor as unsuited to my constitution. I have taken my stand on a principle and there the matter rests. I do not attach so much importance to my bodily life that I should try to save it by a process of higgling. My conception of values is somewhat different from that of the marketplace and I do not think that success or failure in life should be determined by physical or material criteria. Our fight is not a physical one and it is not for a material object either. As St Paul has said "we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Our cause is the cause of freedom and truth and as sure as day follows night that cause will ultimately prevail. Our bodies may fall and perish but with faith undiminished and will unconquerable, triumph will be ours. It is however, for providence to ordain who of us should live to witness the consummation of all our efforts and labours and as for myself, I am content to live my life and leave the rest to destiny."

Subhas was so seriously ill that it was physically impossible on his part to proceed to Switzerland. With his deteriorating health, the Government was almost forced to release him on May 16th 1927. Thus ended his detention without trial for more than two and half years. This Mandalay period was an important milestone in the evolution of Subhas's political personality. As a matter of fact it marked the maturity of his political conviction - the political goal and the appropriate strategy.

As it is said "He entered prison as a twentyeight year old activist full of dedication but still with no properly developed ideas. He would leave as a hardened, sceptical man of thirty one brimming with ideas and plans".

When Subhas returned from Mandalay, he saw that the political situation was "somewhat gloomy". In the absence of any struggle for freedom, there was unfortunate growth of communalism in the country. That apart, he found the Deshabandhu gone, Mahatma Gandhi in virtual retirement from public life and Pandit Motilal Nehru abroad due to his daughter-in-law's illness. However, he had by now acquired sufficient political apprenticeship under Deshabandhu Das and had spent enough time in prison, to think and chalk out in his own mind the broad strategy that the country must follow in the years to come if it was to throw off the British Yoke.  

VII. PLUNGE INTO ACTIVE POLITICS (1927-1933):

On his return from Mandalay, Subhas reemerged in active politics. In between 1927 and 1933, he bestrode Indian Politics as a young militant with radical views coming into clash, even with Gandhi. By November, he could recoup his shattered health to resume his political activity with "redoubled vigour". In the faction-ridden political scenario of Bengal, his entry into politics was welcomed by one and all of Bengal Congressmen and soon he was elected President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee replacing his predecessor Sri J. R. Sengupta. From Mandalay Jail, he had expressed his sorrow and disgust at the sorry state of affairs...
In Bengal politics which was torn asunder by the "quagmire of party factions". He in fact said that the Bengalis had forgotten the ideal of service of Vivekananda who said "Give and only give and never ask for any return" and even the recent and the great example of C.R. Das's rare renunciation. However, though he became terribly conscious of the evils of party politics, could not escape the debilitating effect of rival politicking. It so happened that he had to swallow the humble pie of defeat in the Mayoral election to the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and that too by an "undistinguished liberal".

In November, 1927, the British Government announced the appointment of a Parliamentary Commission under the headship of Lord Simon. The appointment was made under Section 84A of the Government of India Act 1919 which provided for decennial reviews of the political situation in India. However, there was no Indian member in the said Commission which led to much resentment. Moreover, Indian Nationalists had long been thinking in terms of early dominion status. A mere routine commission established under the 1919 constitution...provided simply new forces of attack. Towards the end of December, 1927, the Madras session of the Indian National Congress passed a resolution to boycott the Simon Commission, "at every stage and every form". By another

resolution it directed the Executive to convene an all­
parties conference to draw up a constitution for India as
a reply to Lord Birkenhead's challenge that Indians could not
produce a constitution. Further it declared the goal of the
Indian people to be "complete independence". This Madras
session brought Subhas to limelight all over India when he
was made a General Secretary of the Indian National Congress
along with Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Shuaib Qureshi. "Thus at
the end of 1927, Bose made his debut on the All India stage.
He was thirty then". 130

The arrival of Simon Commission in India in
February 1928 was greeted with an All-India Hartal or boycott
demonstration with the cry of "Simon go Back" renting the air.
"This was once again the atmosphere of 1921, the air in which
Subhas's personality thrived". 131 He spear­headed the movement
in Bengal and it was largely due to his "untiring energy and
tactfulness" that the hartal was more successful in other parts
of India. 132 At Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai, while leading the
boycott demonstration, was seriously injured by police assault
which led to his subsequent death. It convulsed the country
with a sense of anger and indignation.

130. N.G. Jog, In Freedom's Quest, Orient Longmans,
Delhi, 1969, p.67.
132. Kalicharan Ghosh, A Saint turns Patriot, Netaji-
Subhas thought it a moment opportune to mobilise the countrywide resentment, and to launch a struggle on the broad issue of India's right to self-determination.\textsuperscript{133} For that he visited the Mahatma in May 1928 at Sabarmati and "begged him to come out of his retirement and give a lead to the country".\textsuperscript{134} During this period he emerged as a leader of resurgent youth along with Jawaharlal Nehru trying to build up a solid youth movement in the country. He felt that time had come to lay emphasis on the invigorating ideal of Poorna Swaraj or complete independence, before the youth of the country as it is the inherent right of every nation to live its own life according to its own needs and ideas.\textsuperscript{135}

Apart from his Presidential address at the All Bengal Youth Conference in December 1927, Subhas had the opportunity of addressing the resurgent youth at the Maharashtra Provincial Congress, Poona on May 3, 1928 and also the third session of the All India Youth Congress at Calcutta on December 25, 1928. The burden of his speech at the All Bengal Youth Conference was to urge upon the Indian youth to sacrifice their all - even their precious life, for the freedom of mother India. That apart, he was against blind imitation of foreign ideas and institutions ignoring the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{133} J.N.Ghosh, \textit{Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose}, Orient Book Company, Calcutta, 1946, p.12.
  \item \textsuperscript{134} Subhas Chandra Bose, \textit{The Indian Struggle}, p.163.
\end{itemize}
history and tradition of Indian people. Another facet of his emerging political personality concerned his unhesitating and open declaration that without the close involvement of peasants and workers, "our dream of independence would be reduced to a mere day-dream." 

Subhas's Presidential address at the Maharastra Provincial Conference at Poona showed his vision of a free India. That apart, he reinforced his inclination to broaden the Indian National Movement through increasing co-operation between the Indian National Congress and the Indian Labour. More particularly, he emphasised on the need of a more vigorous, active, and dynamic strategy conceiving of "a sort of general strike or countrywide hartal coupled with a boycott of British goods. Use of such phrases as "storming and capturing bureaucratic seats of power" Congress Committees labelled as the Nation's Army and his conviction that in order to enforce the national demand, "a mere appeal to the sweet reasonableness of Britishers will be of no avail" unless the nation takes such steps as lie in its power, presage his plea for a philosophy of activism to create a new India at once "free, happy and great". At the third session of the All India Youth Congress, Calcutta, he, pleaded for a "philosophy of activism" in place of the passivism of the Sabaramati and Pondichery Schools. This open revolt


against Gandhi and Aurobindo raised many eyebrows, invited to some extent the wrath and anger of Gandhites and foreshadowed that he would steadily articulate "the radical activist alternative to Gandhi probably long before it had become fashionable or prudent". The youth movement which Subhas and Nehru spearheaded showed young India realizing its own power, potentialities and possibilities and marked "the emergence of radical and militant trends in the nation".

The year 1928 catapulted Subhas into the Trade Union Movement. A strike occurred in the Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur. When it was about to collapse, Subhas took its leadership, and revived and strengthened it, which ultimately led to an honourable settlement. This strike initiated him into the worker's movement with which he was connected ever since.

Subhas had the rare honour and recognition of becoming a member of the All Parties Committee presided over by Motilal Nehru to draft a report on the principles of the New Constitution. It recommended dominion status as the goal of national endeavour. However this recommendation could not appease the younger elements in the committee, like Subhas and Jawaharlal who were not prepared to forgo the goal of

complete independence as laid down at the Madras Congress mainly due to their pressure. They offered to resign from their post of Joint General Secretary of the Indian National Congress so as to work independently for an "Independence of India League" formed by them. However, they were allowed to work for the proposed League by the Congress Working Committee and they did not have to resign.

The Congress session at Calcutta in December, 1928 was a memorable session in the history of the Indian National Congress and an important landmark in the life of Sri Subhas Chandra Bose. It brought the issue of Dominion status VS complete Independence right into the open session of the Congress and "registered the first major trial of strength between the Right and Left wings." In Subhas's life the session is important for the courage of his conviction in moving a left-wing amendment to the Dominion status resolution of Mahatma Gandhi and his bold assertion of "complete independence" as the goal of India's national endeavour. That apart, his developing radicalism was clearly marked in his organization of Congress volunteers in a military fashion designating himself as the "General Officer Commanding" As it is said "It was really a stage-rehearsal of a great feat which he would actually be destined to demonstrate in the real field of activity", as the supreme

commander of the Indian National Army leading the war of liberation.

A few months after, Subhas was elected President of All India Trade Union Congress and continued in that position until 1931. It was a turning point in his career. From now on he gathered confidence that he "could lead and act". After the death of G. R. Das, he was somewhat groping to evolve his own image and personality. He now crossed that stage. Leftist elements now rallied around him and he was able to draw the untapped strength of working classes into the freedom movement. During 1929, Subhas was associated with the Defence Committee in the Meerut Conspiracy case meeting the undertrial labour leaders at Meerut frequently.\(^{143}\) That apart, he led the funeral procession through Calcutta of Sri Jatin Das who had taken a leading part in organizing and training Congress Volunteers at the Calcutta Congress in 1928.\(^{144}\) During the year under review Subhas addressed a

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143. The Meerut Conspiracy Case involved prominent labour leaders who were persecuted on the charge of conspiracy "to deprive the king of the sovereignty of India and endeavouring to set up a government on Soviet model with the help of communist International" N. G. Jog an Indian Pilgrim (1897-1933), A Beacon Across Asia, Op. Cit., pp. 29-30.

144. Jatin Das was arrested and put on trial in connection with the Lahore conspiracy case. He launched a hunger strike for 61 days in demanding human treatment for political prisoners. He died on 13th September 1929, in Lahore Jail. N. G. Jog, Op. Cit., p. 30 & 31.
number of students and youth conferences such as Surma Valley students conference, Houghly District Students Conference, Punjab Students Conference at Lahore, Conference of Students of Central Provinces and Barar Pabna Youth Conference, Rangpur Political Conference, Jessar-Khulna Youth Conference, Youth Conference of Central Provinces and Midnapore Youth Conference.

Subhas's developing political ideas are evident from his speeches delivered at these places. As it is said "The accent was on patriotism, integrity, sacrifice, courage and firm adherence to the cause of National Independence." The political ideas characterising the aforesaid speeches reveal his bold and comprehensive vision of freedom and incompatibility between colonialism and world peace, his views on students and politics, his point of view concerning the idea of superman as propounded by German Philosopher Nietzsche, his view on hooliganism as a technique in politics and his dream of an independent India and a rejuvenated Asia. He was not satisfied with the mere resolution on complete independence at Lahore Congress in 1929 and demanded through an amendment motion that the aim of the Congress should be a parallel Government, and that it should start an immediate and intensive mobilization of youth, workers and peasants for

the struggle ahead. At the Lahore Congress Subhas declared "I am an Extremist and my principle is all or none". From now on the personality of Subhas emerged forcefully in the forefront of the struggle for freedom organizing and giving a dynamic lead to the youth and students of the country on a national scale, rallying the support of industrial labour by building up trade unionism on solid foundations and generally spear-heading the leftist elements in the country which were getting more and more impatient for a showdown with the alien regime.

In between Lahore Congress of 1929 and his banishment to Europe in March, 1933, Subhas was elected as the Mayor of Calcutta Corporation in 1930, resigned the office of the President of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (1931) and was elected as Treasurer of the All India Trade Union Congress (1931-32). During this period, his inaugural speech of 24th September, 1930 as the Mayor of Calcutta Corporation is significant. In this speech he lauded socio-economic justice and equality of socialism along with the efficiency and discipline of Fascism. His Karachi speech at the All India Naujawan Bharat Sabha in March 27, 1931 was one of his first detailed references to a socialist India. His Presidential address at the All India Trade Union Congress session in Calcutta on July 4th, 1931

146. Selected speeches of S. C. Bose publications division, p.56.

reinforced his commitment to Socialism or an Indian brand of socialism.

VIII. EVOLUTION IN EUROPE (1933-1936):

Subhas was arrested on 2nd January, 1932 under Regulation III of 1818 with the allegation that he became a thorough nuisance to the authorities in Bengal, criticising, inciting, prying into any situation of political delicacy, displaying a haughty detachment to British officials who impeded him, disregarding orders and injunctions, prohibitions... and was naturally included in the general arrests of leading congress men\(^{148}\) during the period. However, while in prison he was taken seriously ill. Medical treatment proved thoroughly unavailing and the Government found itself almost forced to release him of course, on a condition that he would proceed to Europe for medical treatment. He did and reached Vienna on 8th March, 1933 and three days thereafter entered Dr. Furch's sanatorium. Apart from his brief return to India in 1934 to see his dying father, he stayed in Europe for full three years. This European sojourn from 1933-1936 contributed profusely for the evolution of his political personality. Though his visit was primarily for medical treatment, even then the thought of independence of India remained his primary preoccupation and he strove his utmost to further that goal in Europe.

Away from a hectic political life, Subhas had the time and opportunity of studying at first hand the world situation in general and post-Versailles Europe in particular. That apart, he could be able to pause and ponder over the development of India's freedom struggle for the last thirteen years. In Vienna, he had the opportunity of meeting Vithal Vai Patel, another "fiery patriot and ardent leftist", who was also convalescing there after a grave ailment. Through their discussions, they came to the conclusion that unless India developed international contacts and tried to make Indian freedom an "issue between nations", India's freedom as such could never be hastened. That apart, they thought that without taking resort to foreign help, India would never be able to become free.¹⁴⁹

Subhas was one of the very few leaders like Vithal Vai Patel, who apart from believing in promoting international contacts, had full appreciation of the utility of foreign propaganda and thought of bringing out the question of Indian freedom from the domestic to the international arena. It was of course the late Deshabandhu C. R. Das, who had first opened his eyes to the necessity of making India known in foreign countries:¹⁵⁰ Two ideas of Deshabandhu i.e. ¹⁴⁹ Dr. Girija Kumar Mookherjee, Subhas Chandra Bose, p.23.
¹⁵⁰ Subhas Chandra Bose, Through Congress Eyes, India Abroad Kitabistan-Allahabad and 20-21 Tooks Court, Cursitor Street, London, p.76.
Indian Propaganda in foreign countries and the organisation of a Pan-Asiatic League appealed to Subhas much.

While in Vienna, Subhas and Patel heard the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Campaign by Mahatma Gandhi on 8th May, 1933. As a reaction to this both issued a joint statement condemning Gandhi's action. It was an important document showing a clear sign of Subhas's trend of thought. The statement stated; "The latest action of Mahatma Gandhi in suspending the Civil Disobedience Movement is a confession of failure as far as the present method of the Congress is concerned. We are clearly of the opinion that as a political leader, Mahatma Gandhi has failed. The time has therefore come for a radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle and with a new method. For bringing about this reorganisation change of leadership is necessary, for it would be unfair to Mahatma Gandhi to expect him to evolve or work a programme and method not consistent with his life-long principles. If the Congress as a whole can undergo this transformation, it would be the best course. Failing that a new party will have to be formed within the Congress, composed of all radical elements. Non-cooperation cannot be given up but the form of non-cooperation will have to be changed into a more militant one and the fight for freedom to be waged on all fronts."

151. The Bose-Patel-Statement, dtd. 9.5.33, Dr. Girija Kumar Mookerjee, Subhas Chandra Bose, p. 107 (Appendix).
Mr. Alfred Tyrnauer of the Saturday Evening Post interviewed Subhas and Patel while they discussed about the joint statement. This conversation which was published on 11th March, 1944 and to which Hugh Toye in his book "The springing Tiger" has referred to, shows Subhas's attitude, then, towards Gandhi's leadership and to his technique of struggle. Said Patel to the journalist, who interviewed them, "My young friend believes that an attack must be sharp like a dagger, whereas I hold, one should not be careless in one's own house". Subhas intervened, "Gandhi is an old useless piece of furniture. He has done good service in his time, but is an old obstacle now". "May be he is", replied the older man "as an active politician. But his name is of great and permanent value". The Round Table Conference Subhas held had been a waste of time, for "no real change in history has ever been achieved by discussions". "But the only alternative is War". "What of it"? India can well afford to bring a blood sacrifice for her liberation. 350 million miserable lives are waiting for, deliverance.

"There speaks the mind of young India", said Patel, "it may be a brilliant mind and it may be a foolish one. It may be creative and it may be suicidal. But it is here and if the Gods are thirsty what can we do but offer our blood". 152

In his anger towards Gandhi as a sequel to the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Subhas had become very much uncharitable in his estimate of Gandhi. In June, 1933 he was invited to preside over an Indian Political Conference in London. He sent his address since he was not allowed to visit England. This London address on Anti-Imperialist struggle and Samyavada, is considered to be "one of his fundamental political writings". That showed clearly how his political preparation was already far advanced both in respect of the strategy of the fight against Britain and the ultimate end of Indian Revolution. It was a landmark in his developing political personality. Subhas wrote in the aforesaid address. "There is no royal road to success in winning political freedom.....As long as people do not actively menace the government and their supporters, either with arms or through an effective economic blockade, the present Government can continue to exist for an indefinite period, inspite of our non-cooperation and civil disobedience".

That apart he felt the historic necessity of setting up a new party called Samyavadi Sangha. "The new party would fight and win India's freedom and would also be" called upon to undertake the work of post-war reconstruction. "It will be a centralised and well-disciplined All India Party that will

stand for" all round freedom for the Indian people, "wage a relentless war against bondage of every kind and stand for the ultimate fulfilment of India's mission".155

Subhas spent a part of his time in Geneva in 1933 and 1934 with a view to study the organisation of the League of Nations. His primary purpose was to explore the possibility of utilising the League for advancing the cause of India's freedom. During this period he also worked in collaboration with the International Committee on India which had its headquarters in Geneva. He helped in the publication of a monthly bulletin on India which was published in three languages - French, German and English and was sent all over the world. However, towards the end of his study, he realized that it was impossible to utilise the League for advancing the cause of India's freedom since it was controlled by Britain and France.156

The year, 1934 is important in the political career of Subhas. He wrote his major work, "The Indian Struggle" (1920-1934), which was published in London towards the middle of December, 1934. The book apart from being an account of India's struggle for freedom, throws light on his controversial political ideology, a synthesis between communism


and Fascism. The idea of "Samyavadi Sangha" which he conceived of as the "Party of the Future" in his London Address of 1933 is further developed in this book, "The Indian struggle" with a ten point programme as its sheet-anchor.

During his European sojourn Subhas thought and acted as India's unofficial ambassador enlisting sympathy for the cause of India's freedom. As it is said "By personal contacts, correspondence, lectures, writing etc. he endeavoured to create in the people of the continent of Europe an interest in the Indian National Movement, and to win their sympathy for the struggle for freedom carried on by the Indian National Congress and moral support against Great Britain".157

Between 1933 and 1936 Subhas toured practically the whole of Europe excepting Soviet Russia. He was several times in Italy and Germany. In Rome he was received by Signor Mussolini "on several occasions" but Hitler, it has been said, "refused to have any conversations with him".158 Italy and Germany apart, he visited Austria-Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Balkans to study at first hand the changes brought about by the Treaty of Versailles, His tour ended with a visit to Ireland where he met president De-Valera and other Ministers of his Government.

Subhas not merely acted as India's un-official ambassador trying to promote sympathy for India's freedom; he deeply studied the freedom movements in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Italy and Ireland. His study impressed upon him that a country could achieve freedom only by armed struggle and through an army of liberation organized beyond the frontiers with foreign help of some sort.

Italy occupied an important place in the programme of Subhas during his European sojourn. "The compelling reason was that the then Government of Italy had come out openly in support of India's struggle for independence. The most eloquent testimony to this was the interview, the head of that Government Signor Mussolini had with Mahatma Gandhi on his way back to India after the abortive Round Table Conference in London, in the course of which the former conveyed his best wishes for the success of the freedom movement in India."

In Italy "one of the subjects of Subhas's special interest was the underground organisation known as Carbonari". The Carbonari were the pioneers of Italian freedom movement and of Italian Risorgimento. "Their methods consisted of direct action, organised popular rebellion, and guerilla warfare. It is said that "Subhas Bose was interested in their method of propaganda for national freedom because the political conditions in India and historical perspective of the Italian freedom movement showed certain similarities, although phased

Subhas was influenced by Mazzini's nationalism. In his conversations, it is said he frequently referred to the writings of Mazzini who had formed a small group called "Young Italy". Hence it is said "what remarkable affinities they showed in their political concepts and ideals".161

From his study of Italian freedom movement, Subhas could realise that it is only trained young cadres who could bring national consciousness and awakening among the people. This has got to be done in the first stage of national awakening. As it is said "He came to believe that the forerunners of a new strong national consciousness could only be the youth. They were to be inspired and trained in such a way that they would be ready to sacrifice everything when the call came for mother India".162

In connection with evolution of his political personality in Europe the conversation between Subhas and Mussolini deserves mention. Mussolini asked Subhas; "Do you really and firmly believe that India will be free soon"? When Subhas said "Yes", Mussolini asked him again "Are you for reformist or revolutionary methods for achieving Indian Independence"? Subhas said in reply that he preferred

161. Ibid., p.59.
162. Ibid., p.60.
revolutionary to reformist methods. Mussolini said "then indeed you have a chance". Mussolini asked further "Have you got any plan for such a revolution"? As Subhas remained silent, Mussolini said, "You must immediately prepare a plan for such a revolution and you must work continuously for its realisation".163

In July, 1933, Subhas visited Berlin. "He was particularly interested to know as to how Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy could succeed to rouse national consciousness to such a height in such a short time that they could challenge the supremacy of England and France."164

Germany in 1933 was not altogether a pleasant country to reside in for Indians or for that matter, the so called coloured races. Hitler in his book Mein Kampf had made derogatory references to India. One of the Nazi leaders Alfred Rosenberg wrote a pamphlet which also contained insulting references to Indians. It could not escape Subhas's attention. In Berlin he made representation to foreign office and submitted a written memorandum. However, he could not meet any of the big guns of the Nazi hierarchy except Dr. Schmidst, Minister of Economics who promised to take up the matter with Herr Hitler.165 Inspite of his best of efforts, it has been said Subhas could not meet Hitler or Goebbels in this connection.

163. Ibid., p.60.
During his German tour he protested against exhibition of films like "India Speaks" and "Bengali" which disparaged India and its culture. As Dr. Ashok Kumar Bose Subhas's nephew writes "The films were subsequently withdrawn from public exhibition owing to uncle's vehement protests". Before returning to India, Subhas was brutally frank about his expectation and disappointment in connection with his experiences in Germany. In his letter dated the 25th March, 1936 to Dr. Thierfelder on Indo-German relations, he wrote:

"When I first visited Germany in 1933, I had hopes that the new German nation which had risen to a consciousness of its national strength and self-respect would instinctively feel a deep sympathy for other nations struggling in the same direction. Today I regret that I have to return to India with the conviction that the new nationalism of Germany is not only narrow and selfish but arrogant."

During his Ireland tour, Subhas studied the practicability of underground organisations as set up by Irish revolutionaries, with German help, during First World War. The underground movement was considered a successful historical model for India's fight for freedom, particularly because Subhas was facing the same enemy.

166. Ibid., p.116.
In January, 1936, Subhas met De Valera and other Ministers of his republican movement besides veteran Irish revolutionary Mc Bridge. As it is said "His main object of meeting De Valera was to popularise the cause of India in Ireland and with Irish support make the cause of the Indian fight for freedom known to the world". He had a fairly long discussion with De Valera who sympathised with the cause of Indian freedom. As it is said "Subhas's militant nature was profoundly impressed by the re-doubtable valour and the consummate political skill and strategy of Eamon De Valera".  

Besides, Subhas studied the phenomenal and swift progress of Turkey under Mustapha, Kemal Pasha. He was specially attracted by Mustapha Kemal Pasha's success in swiftly modernising a backward, oriental country.

On 3rd April, 1935 Subhas met the French savant Romain Rolland in Geneva. Romain Rolland's view that if Satyagraha ultimately failed, the hard facts of life would have to be faced and the struggle conducted on other lines deeply impressed Subhas who said "Here then was an idealist who did not build castles on the air but who had his feet planted on terraferma".

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During his stay in Europe Subhas could see and learn that foreign policy of a nation is conducted by programatic considerations taking into account the national interest. As it is said, "His presence in Europe in the mid-thirties enabled him to understand the inner currents of international politics. He realised that pious platitudes and frothy sentiments had no place in international politics. Foreign policy of a nation is a realistic affair and it is framed in keeping with a nation's own interest. There is nothing as permanent friendship in the domain of international relations."  

IX. AS CONGRESS PRESIDENT AND AFTER (1938-1941):

On his return to India on April 8, 1936 Subhas had to undergo another spell of imprisonment until his release on March 17th, 1937. Soon after, he left for Europe, to spend a few weeks at Badgastein. In about ten days, he wrote here his un-finished autobiography- 'An Indian Pilgrim'. In January, 1938, he paid a brief visit to England and while there he received the news of his unanimous election as the President of 51st session of Indian National Congress to be held at Haripura. In his first public statement after his election as President, he declared "it will be agreed on all hands, that we have to bring India before the world more than we have done so far. India's problems after all,

are world problems. On our close contact with the progressive movements will depend not only the salvation of India but also of the suffering humanity as well.\footnote{173}

While in England, Subhas had the opportunity of meeting the members of the British Cabinet like Lord Halifax and Lord Zetland as well as the members of the Labour and Liberal parties who showed their sympathy towards India. Of special significance were his two meetings in London with Eamon De Valera. The Manchester Guardian wrote; "English people who met Bose for the first time were impressed alike by his pleasant quiet manner and the decisiveness with which he discussed the Indian affairs.\footnote{174}

During his stay in London, Subhas was interviewed by Rajani Palme Dutt in connection with his controversial views on "a synthesis between communism and Fascism" as expressed in his book 'The Indian Struggle' which was published in the Daily worker London on January 24, 1938. Bose had said "considering everything, one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world history will produce a synthesis between communism and Fascism\footnote{175}.

On his return from England, Subhas presided over the Haripura Congress which commenced on February 19th, 1938.

\footnote{174} Ibid., p.71 or p.72 of Hugh Toye's "The Springing Tiger".
It was the highwatermark of his political career in India. Befitting to the august Office, he delivered a wonderful address. As it is said "He surveyed the entire national and international scene, clearly indicated the lines of development of the National struggle against imperialism and drew the outlines of post-war national reconstruction on socialist basis." His ideas on the role of the Congress, his emphasis on the need of planning and family limitation, his advocacy of socialism, his views as regards foreign policy etc. revealed the maturity of a statesman and the vision of a thinker.

In January, 1939, Subhas announced his intention to contest for the office of Congress President for a second term. He rose to triumphant eminence when he became the President of the Indian National Congress at Tripuri after having defeated Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya, nominee of Gandhi and of the Congress right wing.

Subhas considered that the time was ripe for a struggle against the British Raj. He wanted to swing the Congress to the left, so as to start an uncompromising and relentless national struggle. At the Tripuri session of the Indian National Congress in March, 1939, he proposed that

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178. Dr. V. P. Verma, Modern Indian Political Thought, L. N. Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 1980, p. 572.
the Congress should immediately serve a six month ultimatum to the British Government demanding independence for India. As he said "In my opinion" we should submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum and give a certain time limit. If no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received we should resort to such sanctions as we possess in order to enforce our national demand."\(^{179}\)

However, this proposal of Subhas was opposed and turned down. Then followed the Pant Resolution which expressed full confidence in Gandhi and directed the President to nominate the Working Committee in accordance with his wishes. But as it is said "The selection of the committee was properly the prerogative of the President Bose and to give Gandhi an overwhelming display of confidence was obvious means of displaying a lack of it in Bose."\(^{180}\) Thereafter followed a prolonged correspondence between Subhas and Gandhi with the former trying his very best to reach an understanding with Gandhi and the Congress right-wing. He pleaded, appealed, entreated, and prayed for reconciliation but Gandhi would not budge from his position. So, at the All India Congress Committee meeting at Calcutta in April 1939, Subhas resigned from this august Office, "after mature deliberation and in an entirely helpful spirit".

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179. Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Publications Division, p.95.
These unfortunate developments of 1939 and the open breach between Gandhi and Subhas was the natural culmination of a process of widening gulf between the left and the right wings of the Congress. Though not visible to the public, it was inherent in the womb of 1938. Subhas himself has written "As Congress President the writer did his best to stiffen the opposition of the Congress party to any compromise with Britain and this caused annoyance in Gandhian circles, who were then looking forward to an understanding with the British Government. Later in the year, 1938, he launched the planning committee for drawing up a comprehensive plan of industrialisation and of national development. This caused further annoyance to Mahatma Gandhi who was opposed to industrialisation. After the Munich Pact, in September, 1938, the writer began an open propaganda throughout India in order to prepare the Indian people for a national struggle, which should synchronise with the coming war in Europe. This move, though popular among the people in general, was resented by the Gandhiites who did not want to be disturbed in their ministerial and parliamentary work and who were at the time opposed to any national struggle".181

Three days after his resignation Subhas formed the Forward Bloc within the Congress in May, 1939. The new party

was meant to win the support of the youth and left-wing in its favour; combat the right-wing influence inside and outside the Congress which it appeared, wanted to put a brake to the boiling enthusiasm of the people for a fresh struggle to achieve independence.\textsuperscript{182} The immediate objective of the Bloc was an uncompromising struggle against British imperialism to achieve freedom and its ultimate objective was "a new post-war socio-economic order in India on a socialist basis".

The first All India Conference of the Forward Bloc was held in Bombay on 22nd June, 1939. There emerged a left consolidation committee comprising of the Forward Bloc, the Congress socialist party, the Radical Democratic Party of M.N.Roy and the Communist etc. However, Subhas could not succeed to transform this left-wing combination into a sharp instrument of people's struggle.

Subhas was becoming more and more certain that the onset of war in Europe could not be long delayed. In fact, since Tripuri he was pleading for the synchronisation of an all out struggle for India's freedom with Britain's involvement in hostility.\textsuperscript{183}

The Second World War broke out exactly as Subhas had predicted at Tripuri "with almost prophetic insight".

\textsuperscript{182} Dr. Girija Kumar Mukherjee, Subhas Chandra Bose, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.27.

Almost to his surprise, he was formally invited to help in formulating the war policy of the Congress. With Gandhi "still" harping on change of heart on the part of Britain and the Congress leaders unwilling to seriously implement the Haripura resolution declaring India's determination not to participate in Britain's imperialist war and to resist the employment of India's man power and resources, Subhas had no other go but to pursue his own line. At the Anti-compromise conference of Ramagarh in March, 1940, he criticised Congress in-action at the crucial period in the nation's history and gave a call for an immediate All India Struggle, "with no rest or break or any side-tracking as happened in 1932". Britain's difficulty was to be treated as India's opportunity and it was the time opportune to launch an all-out struggle for India's freedom, was the cry and conviction of Subhas in those days. As it is rightly said, "Subhas Bose was now convinced more than ever before that India would win her independence if she played her part in the war against Britain and collaborated with those powers that were fighting Britain. He arrived at the conclusion that India should now actively enter the field of international politics. He and his Forward Bloc now launched an anti-British anti-war campaign all over the country. The British Government realised that Subhas could hardly be left at liberty when the war was on. He was

arrested on 2nd July, 1940 along with hundreds of his co-workers of the Forward Bloc.

Subhas knew that the Government would not release him till at least the end of the War. He did not like to rot in British prison at a time when Britain was involved in a life and death struggle and opportunity was knocking on India's door. To secure his release, he launched a fast unto death on the ground that there was no moral or legal justification for his detention. The government was forced to release him after the fast unto death that lasted a few days. After his release, followed another bout of introspection. "He reviewed the whole war situation and thought of the possibility of opening a second front from outside India with the help of Indians living abroad and with the assistance of foreign powers, without sacrificing national honour. He considered the question of seeking external support dispassionately and came to the conclusion that if the almighty British Government could go around the whole world with the begging bowl asking for help everywhere even from the enslaved and impoverished people of India - there was nothing wrong on the part of India to ask for help from outside. A careful study of the struggle for freedom conducted during the last two hundred years revealed to Subhas not a single instance where freedom was won without some sort of
help from outside.\textsuperscript{185}

X. IN GERMANY AND SOUTH EAST ASIA-QUEST FOR ARMED ASSISTANCE:

After his daring and thrilling escape from India on 17th January, 1941, Subhas reached Berlin on 3rd April, 1941, in his quest for foreign armed help to dislodge the British power from India. As it is said "Bose journey from Calcutta to Berlin, full of thrilling details, was a historic one and its nearest parallel is the escape of Shivaji from the clutches of Aurang Zeb\textsuperscript{186}". Thereafter commenced "the most glorious period" of his life of struggle and sacrifice which ended in August, 1945, when he left, for an unknown destination. He emerged during this period "as the immortal Netaji raised to a meteoric height for which providence had prepared him from his childhood\textsuperscript{187}"

It was a Herculean task for Subhas to make the German Government interested in India's struggle for freedom. S.A. Ayer writes, "it was no easy task for Subhas to persuade Germany to treat him as a top-ranking representative of the Indian Nation and extend to him the facilities to collect an army to fight for India's independence. He


ultimately won the Hitler regime's respect for his firm determination to liberate his country from the British yoke by taking the aid of Britain's enemies without any strings attached. He had to overcome formidable obstacles before he could accomplish the formation of the first Azad Hind Fauj (Free India Army) on German soil out of the Indian prisoners of war brought to Germany from various European and Middle East War theatres. 188

The first task that Subhas addressed himself to was the establishment of an Indian Organisation called Free India Centre. N. G. Jog writes, "Adam Von Trott Zu Solz a high official of German foreign office, evinced special interest in Bose's activities. He had taken a fancy for India since his student days at Oxford and counted many Indians among his friends. He used his good offices to enable Bose to set up an Indian Organisation in Berlin. A number of Indians were called and carefully screened by German foreign office. They were then interviewed by Bose for recruitment to the Free India Centre." 189

To meet the expenses of the Free India Centre, monetary aid on the basis of a national loan was agreed upon. It may be noted that the Free India Centre was given the status of a diplomatic mission and was established in

the Tiergarten area of Berlin where the foreign embassies were located. Dr. N. G. Ganpuley, the celebrated author of 'Netaji in Germany, A little known chapter', A. C. H. Nambiar, and Girija Kumar Mookherjee were leading lights of the Free India Centre who rallied round Subhas.

The Free India Centre, Subhas established in Germany passed four important resolutions of far-reaching importance on 2nd November, 1941, which have come down to present India as a legacy of Subhas's nationalism. These were "the war cry Jai Hind, the title of the national hero Netaji, our national anthem the Jana Gana Mana and our national language Hindustani." It may be noted that the Free India Centre was the predecessor of the provisional government of Azad Hind proclaimed at Singapore in 1943.

The next thing that Subhas devoted himself to was to put out "regular" and uncensored broadcasts over the German radio stations directed at India. This was agreed to by the German Government. The Indian Radio programme was to be sent in the name of Azad Hind Radio. It is to be transmitted on a special independent wave length un-mixed with any German broadcasting programme. N. G. Ganpuley writes, "the programme of the Azad Hind Radio was to be completely manned by Indians except for Radio technicians who were to

190. N. G. Ganpuley, Netaji in Germany, A little known Chapter, (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1964), pp. 41-42.
record the talks and broadcast the same at given hours through specially chosen powerful stations meant for the Far East. There was to be no censorship of any kind from the German side and there was to be no dictation about the subjects to be selected.\textsuperscript{191}

Besides the Free India Centre and Radio broadcasts, Subhas's next task was to build up something positive and effective like a National Army. He realised that "Indian freedom could not be secured by waging only a verbal war. Something more positive and effective was needed for that purpose—something for instance, like a national army raised abroad."\textsuperscript{192}

In fact, he thought of creating an army of liberation out of the Indian prisoners of war brought to Germany from the various European and Middle East War theatres. In this Subhas also succeeded, though initially the German Government was dis-inclined to the idea of forming an army of liberation. In spite of the discouraging response of the Indian prisoners of war at the Annaberg Camp, Subhas could ultimately transcend their insulation from all ideas of nationalism and in fact could transform them into soldiers of Indias freedom. By December, 1942 this army of liberation formed in Germany named as Indian Legion had gained a strength of four battalions of about 4,000 men. While Subhas was busy raising an Indian Legion his mind was pondering over the whole spectrum of the international situation and his own plans and programme. "Germany was too

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid., p.49.
\textsuperscript{192} N.G.Jog, In Freedom's Quest, Op. Cit., p.211.
far away from India and whatever hopes he had entertained about Hitler's quick victory in Europe and subsequent drive to the East were dissipated by the heroic Russian defence of Stalin grad".

On the other hand, Japan had occupied the whole of South East Asia knocking on the North Eastern gates of India and it was the time to be as near his motherland as possible so that he could synchronise his own armed struggle with the Quit India Movement launched by the Congress in August, 1942.\(^{193}\)

So in February, 1943, Subhas again "took the plunge into the unknown—his second historic journey with death staring him in the face every minute of that journey". As S.A.Ayer has written "It was a perilous submarine voyage from Germany through enemy infested waters round the British isles, round Africa, across the Indian ocean, to Sumatra and Penang and from there by air to Japan and ultimately to Singapore is another glorious chapter in the history of India's struggle for freedom".

Subhas reached Japan in June, 1943. Immediately thereafter he started his exploits in South East Asia.

A backward look is needed here for a proper appreciation of Subhas's work in South East Asia. In December, 1941, the World War had been extended to the Pacific and

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193. Ibid., pp.216-217.
Japan had entered into the fray of the World War against Great Britain. Thereafter, Indian Independence Leagues were formed throughout East Asia due to the appeal of Sri Rash Behari Bose, an outstanding Indian Revolutionary, who had been a political exile in Japan for the last three decades. With the fall of Singapore in February, 1942, the British surrendered to the Japanese about 20,000 Indian soldiers and officers as prisoners of War. By virtue of an understanding with the Japanese authorities, these prisoners of war were handed over to General Officer commanding Captain Mohan Singh. This was the genesis of the Indian National Army which later attracted thousands of Civilian youths in East Asia and enabled Subhas in course of time to raise no fewer than three combatant divisions totalling over 30,000 men under arms\(^1\)

On 15th June, 1942, the Indian Independence Conference at Bangkok under the chairmanship of Sri Rash Behari Bose requested Subhas to come over to East Asia to take up the leadership of Indian Independence Movement. It appealed to the Imperial Government of Japan "to use its good offices to obtain the necessary permission and conveniences from the government of Germany to enable Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose to reach East Asia safe\(^2\)."

\(^2\) Rath, Rash Behari Bose, His struggle for India's Independence, Calcutta, 1963, p.94.
With these developments in mind Subhas in Germany was working out his plans to reach East Asia and raise a free Indian Army from among the large Indian community in Malay, Singapore, Burma and other regions of East Asia. S.A. Ayer gives out the working of Subhas's mind then; if only the active and enthusiastic co-operation of the Japanese, Burmese and other war time Governments in East Asia was assured, it would be a much easier task to lead a free India Army massed on the Burma border to launch an attack on the British Forces on the other side of the Indian boarder and roll them back in Bengal and Assam. Such a spectacular achievement by an Indian Army of liberation on the Bengal and Assam boarders, he calculated, would lead to a country-wide uprising against the British regime.

So on reaching Japan in June, 1943; Subhas entered into parleys with his excellency, the Japanese Prime Minister, Tojo. His single-minded devotion to the cause of India's liberation could not but impress the latter who on 16th June, 1943 made his momentous and epoch-making announcement that, Japan was firmly resolved to extend all support to India's struggle for freedom. In the meantime Subhas got himself acquainted with the problems of the freedom movement in South East Asia through a long and protracted confabulation with Sri Rash Behari Bose. In between June 19th, 1943 and June 13th, 1943, he gave a number of interviews to the press and
addressed a series of broadcasts from Tokyo. These interviews and broadcasts indicate Subhas's conviction that there was no hope of overthrowing British imperialism through the strategy of civil disobedience alone and that there was the need of transforming the non-violent struggle into a violent one. He had lost all faith that Britain would recognise India's freedom without a violent struggle.

That apart, he expressed his faith in an Axis victory and considered Axis powers in general and Japan in particular as India's best friends and allies in its struggle for freedom. To those of his countrymen who did not believe in the sincerity of the tripartite powers, he appealed to believe in him. In his broadcast from Tokyo on June 24th, 1943, he confidently declared that he was not the man to be cajoled, corrupted or demoralised by anybody.

On 4th July, 1943 the Presidentship of Indian Independence League was made over to Subhas is a colourful function at Singapore presided over by the Ex-President of the League, Sri Rash Behari Bose. Here after, Subhas formally assumed the leadership of the freedom movement in South East Asia.

Thereafter events moved in a cyclonic speed.

On 5th July, 1943, Subhas inspected "the Indian National Army which led by Commander Bhonsle marched past and pledged
their allegiance to the New Leader. To the Army of Liberation, Subhas now gave the battle cry of "Delhi Chalo".
The day following, premier Tojo inspected the I.N.A., just taken over by Subhas. On 9th July, 1943 at a mass rally, he gave the slogan of "Total Mobilization for a total War".
To the three millions of his country men in East Asia, Subhas said "give me total mobilization in East Asia and I promise you a second front - a real second front of the Indian struggle". His marathon tour to Malay, Thailand, Burma and French Indo-China to mobilise men, money and material for his proposed struggle had a unique, splendid and spontaneous response. In the words of S.A. Ayer, he could make the Indians in East Asia "freedom mad".

On 25th August, 1943, Subhas by a special order of the day took over the I.N.A. and became its Supreme Commander. On 21st October, 1943, he proclaimed the formation of the provisional Government of India at Singapore. He became thereafter Head of State, Prime Minister and Minister for War and Foreign Affairs besides being the Supreme Commander of the I.N.A. The provisional Government was recognised by 9 World powers including Nippon and Germany. On the 23rd October, 1943, the provisional Government of Free India declared War on Britain and

United States. A large assembly of Indians took the pledge that they would sacrifice their all in the sacred war of India's liberation. With all the honours due to a Head of State, Subhas was received by the emperor of Japan while he flew to Tokyo a week after. At the Greater East Asia Conference held in Tokyo, his excellency Prime Minister Tojo announced on November 6th that Japan had decided to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. Thus the provisional Government of Free India acquired its first stretch of territory in Free India.

It may be noted here that Subhas paid an official visit to these Islands and appointed Lt. Col. A.D. Loganadhan as the Chief Commissioner of these Islands. Soon afterwards the headquarters of the provisional Government of Azad Hind, the Indian Independence League and the Supreme Command was shifted from Singapore to Rangoon so as to use Burma "as a spring board to jump at the throat of the enemy in India". Subhas's most challenging and striking call to Indians was "Give me blood and I promise you freedom". Be prepared for a blood bath roared Subhas.

On 4th February, 1944 the war of Independence was launched by the I.N.A. in the Arakan Region of Burma.

The fight in the Arakans was for the Azad Hind Fauj its "baptism of fire" out of which it came out with collars flying."200 War was now carried to another sector of the Indo-Burma border, the Tiddian Sector. A week later, a general offensive began in the direction of Manipur and Assam and very soon the Indian border was crossed at a number of points. Units of the Azad Hind Fauj side by side with the Japanese Army marched into Manipur and Assam.201

On the 19th March, 1944, the I.N.A. crossed the Burma border and for the first time stood on the sacred soil of India which certainly was "a historic day in the annals of the I.N.A."202 Describing the progress of the I.N.A. S.A. Ayer describes "the I.N.A., was fighting freedom's battle on eight Sectors of Burma-Indian border, on the plains of Imphal and in the neighbourhood of Kohima. In the matter of hours news was expected of the fall of Imphal to India's army of liberation. This would have meant the death-knell of British empire in India."

However, destiny ordained it otherwise. Fortunes of war now went against the Axis powers. Heavy bombing by the Americans and their rapid advance to the Pacific forced the Imperial Army of Japan to withdraw from India-Burma

200. Ibid., p.4.
201. Ibid.
203. Ibid.
border. Heavy monsoon along with the reinforced air power of the British incapacitated the I.N.A. to proceed further. The I.N.A. had to retreat under orders of Subhas on April 24th 1945. The arrival of Subhas in Bangkok in mid-May, 1945, just a week after Germany's surrender, discussion with colleagues, drawing up elaborate plans for continuing the freedom's battle thereafter, his air dash to Singapore from Bangkok and his broadcast from Singapore dated 19th June, 1945 appealing to the Congress to reject Wavell offer were among the important events of his stirring political career. Unfortunately, on August 18th, 1945, Subhas succumbed to an air-crash in Formosa as announced by Tokyo radio in its broadcast dated 22nd August.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, Subhas Chandra Bose a Political activist who became imbued with patricictic and nationalistic zeal from student days renounced a lucrative career for devoting himself to the noble cause of national liberation and its socio-economic-political emancipation and died the death of a martyr for a great cause. During the course of his participation in the national struggle he exhibited traits of his character as a nationalist a socialist, a secularist, a democrat, that taken together constitute his Political Philosophy although he was not a philosopher in the true sense of the term.

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