Gandhi firmly and strongly believed in the application of non-violent methods to fight against racial discrimination, exploitation, injustice and also to bring about real social change. In practice he adopted it as a way of life to resolve all kinds of conflicts in society. Accordingly, there is a need to focus and highlight, discuss and analyse the various methods and events where Gandhi applied his non-violent methods to meet the challenges under various compelling circumstances. Application of Gandhi’s Satyagraha has world-wide significance but only few know how to use this great weapon of non-violence.

It has been established that truth and non-violence are the basics of whole of Gandhian thought. We, as a matter of fact, cannot discuss Gandhi’s Philosophy if we neglect his understanding and interpretation of non-violence. Gandhi was more a practical man and that is why he had a firm belief in practical (progressive) non-violence. Infact, many people do not know what does exactly Gandhi mean to non-violence and they not only misunderstand Gandhi’s view of non-violence but also misinterpret and abuse the same without knowing the real meaning. Therefore, the focus here is to go through the entire gamut of his writings and speeches to find out the truth and the exact meaning of this important concept. Various factors helping in making of Gandhi’s view in this respect need to be thoroughly examined.

In the words of Gandhi, “From a long time, the word Satyagraha is often most loosely used and is made to cover veiled violence. But as the author of the word I may be allowed to say that it excludes every form of violence, direct or indirect, veiled or unveiled, and whether in thought, word, or deed. It is a breach of Satyagraha to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him or of him with the intention of doing harm. And
often the evil thought or the evil word may, in terms of Satyagraha, be more dangerous than actual violence used in the heat of the moment. Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice... It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence."

Most people hitherto have been skeptical of non-violent resistance simply because they did not understand how it could possibly work. They might be less skeptical once they could see how the method could operate and be effective. Modern psychology enables us to understand the emotional, mental and moral mechanisms involved. If one man attacks another with physical violence and the victim hits back, the violent response gives the attackers a certain reassurance and moral support. It shows that the position of violence on the victim’s scale of moral values is the same as that of the attacker. A mere display of either fear or anger by the victim is sufficient to have this effect. It makes the attackers sure of his own savoir-faire, of his choice of methods, of his knowledge of human nature and hence of his opponent. He can rely on the victim to react in a definite way. The attacker’s morale is sustained, his sense of values is vindicated.

But suppose the assailant, using physical violence, attacks a different sort of person. The attitude of this new opponent is fearless, calm, steady; because of a different belief, training or experience he has much self-control. He does not respond to the attacker’s violence with counter-violence. Instead, he accepts the blows good-temperedly, stating his belief as to the truth of the matter in dispute, asking for an examination of both sides of the dispute, and stating his readiness to abide by the truth. He offers resistance, but only in moral terms. He states his readiness to prove his sincerity by his own suffering rather than by inflicting suffering on the assailant. He accepts blow after blow, showing

no signs of fear or resentment, keeping steadily good-humoured and kindly in look of eye, tone of voice, and posture of body and arms. To encounter violence he adopts non-violent resistance.

The assailant’s first thought may be that his opponent is afraid of him, that he is a coward, ready to give way and acknowledge defeat. But the opponent’s look and posture both show not fear but courage. His steady resistance of will reveals no subservience. His unflinching endurance of pain is startling and surprising particularly because, as F. C. Bartlett has pointed out, “it is easier and requires less courage to attack than to withstand fire without retaliation.”

At such an unusual and unexpected reaction the assailant will be surprised. If at first he was inclined to be scornful or contemptuous of the victim as a coward, those feelings rapidly become displaced by curiosity and wonder. As the psychologist Shand points out, “Wonder tends to exclude repugnance, disgust and contempt in relation to its object.”

In a struggle between a violent person and a non-violent resister, if there are any onlookers or a public that hears of the conflict, the non-violent resister gains a strong advantage from their reaction. When the public sees the gentle person’s courage and fortitude, notes his generosity and good will toward the attacker, and hears his repeated offers to settle the matter fairly, peaceably and openly, they are filled with surprise, curiosity and wonder. If they have been hostile to the victim before, they at least pause to think. His good humour, fairness and kindness arouse confidence. Sooner or later his conduct wins public sympathy, admiration and support, and also the respect of the violent opponent himself. Gandhi’s chivalrous and generous conduct toward the South African Government when it was threatened by a railway strike is an instance of

this sort. Once the respect of the opponent has been secured, a long step has been taken toward a satisfactory solution of the controversy, no matter whether it be public or private.

Now the question arises: what is the psychology of the affair if the assailant is filled with the sort of cruelty or greed, pride, bigotry, or hardness that seems to grow on what it feeds on? Cruelty is a complex of fear, anger and false pride. Greed is a distorted desire for security. In a sense it is a fear of lack. Pride is another mistaken sense of divisiveness. Bigotry is an obstinate, narrow religious pride. In all such instances, the tendency of non-violent resistance is to remove fear, anger and any foreboding or dread of loss or sense of separateness, and to replace these with feelings of security, unity, sympathy and good-will. Since fear and anger are elements of cruelty, the removal of fear and anger will tend to reduce cruelty. Shand tells us that “wonder tends to exclude repugnance, disgust and contempt in relation to its object.” In so far as these may be elements involved in pride, the wonder evoked by the conduct of the non-violent person also tends to reduce pride and hence to reduce cruelty. In so far as cruelty is due to a desire or hunger for power or a feeling of superiority, the ability of non-violence to win the support of the outside public presently makes the cruel person feel and realize that the kind of power he has valued is disadvantageous and that perhaps he is not so superior as he had previously supposed.

Apart from its effect on the spectators, non-violent resistance gradually creates even in the violent opponent himself a gradual realization of human unity and a different idea of what kind of power is desirable. Cruelty may be partly due to a defect in the cruel person’s imagination or to dullness of observation, and in this case, dramatic

scenes of prolonged non-violent resistance act to stimulate his imagination and powers of observation, and thereby to reduce his cruelty. If avarice or desire for revenge are factors in a particular case of cruelty, these also are reduced by prolonged non-violent resistance. The attacker gradually loses divisive emotions in relation to the victim: fear, anger, hatred, indignation, pride, vanity, corn, contempt, disdain, disgust, anxiety, worry, apprehension. These feelings are not merely thwarted or suppressed by the use of non-violence; their very basis is uprooted.6

Accordingly, anger as well as love can be creative, for both are expressions or modes of energy. But love contains more energy and endurance than anger. Love involves the very principle and essence of continuity of life itself. If considered as an instrument, it can be more efficiently and effectively wielded, has better aim, has a better fulcrum or point of vantage, than anger. Love gains a stronger and more lasting approval from the rest of mankind. The probabilities in favour of its winning over anger in the long run are strong. Courageous violence, to try to prevent or stop a wrong, is better than cowardly acquiescence. To Gandhi, Cowardice is more harmful morally than violence. The inner attitude is more important than the outer act, though it is vitally important always to be true to oneself, to make one’s outer conduct a true reflection and expression of one’s inner state. Fear develops out of an assumption of relative weakness. Since all men have the innate possibility of moral strength, to be afraid is really a denial of one’s moral potential powers and is therefore very harmful. Violence and anger at least show faith in one’s own moral powers and thus provide at least a basis for further growth. He who refrains from fighting because he is afraid, really hates his opponent in his heart and wishes that circumstances would change so

that he could hurt, humiliate, harm or destroy his opponent. The energy of his hate is present but that is suppressed.

As to the outcome of a struggle waged by non-violence, we must understand one point thoroughly. The aim of the non-violent resister is not to injure, or to crush and humiliate his opponent, or to “break his will”, as in a violent fight. The aim is to convert the opponent, to change his understanding and his sense of values so that he will join wholeheartedly with the non-violent resister in seeking a settlement truly amicable and truly satisfying to both the parties. The non-violent resister seeks a solution under which both sides can have complete self-respect and mutual respect, a settlement that will implement the new desires and full energies of both parties. The non-violent resister seeks to help the violent attacker to re-establish his moral balance on a level higher and more secure than that from which the first launched his violent attack. The function of the non-violent type of resistance is not to harm the opponent nor impose a solution against his will, but to help both parties into a more secure, creative, happy and truthful relationship.

If you want to conquer another man, do it not by outside resistance but by creating inside his own personality a strong new impulse that is incompatible with his previous tendency. Reinforce your suggestion by making it an auto-suggestion in him, so that it lives by his energy instead of by yours. And yet that new impulse is not to conflict directly with his former urge, but to divert and blend with it and absorb it, so as to use the full psychological energy of both impulses. That is the wisest psychological dynamics and moral strategy. The new ideas in the astonishing situation tend strongly to stimulate the attacker’s imagination. The Nancy School of psychology maintains that imagination and suggestion together are much stronger than conscious will-power, so that if a person consciously wills and thinks that he desires to accomplish a
given purpose, while his imagination is filled with ideas of his inability to accomplish it or of some contrary desire, then he will certainly fail in his task. Baudouin mentions it as the ‘law of reversed effort’ as he maintains, “When the will and imagination are at war, the imagination invariably gains the day.”

In this case, for instance, suppose A attacks B, and B responds with violence. While part of B’s response is purely instinctive and defensive, part of it also is unconscious imitation of A. So anger, resentment, hatred and revenge, in the process of reciprocal imitative violence, mount higher and enter more tensely into the personalities of the combatants, consuming all their energies, to the point of utter exhaustion or destruction. Non-violent resistance is a means of communicating feelings and ideas. It uses facial expressions, bodily gestures and the tone of voice, just as in all personal communication. In prolonged situations it may also use writing and printing. Its means of expression are as ample as those of any language. Even in situations where words can be used little or not at all, conduct, as indicated above, itself may be a rapid, accurate, and efficient means of communication.

Nevertheless, the ideas to be conveyed are so unusual that the understanding of them by the recipient may be slow or incomplete. At first and perhaps for some time, the understanding will be more emotional than intellectual. Therefore, the success of the communication does not depend upon the extent of formal or book education of either party to the conflict. On the other hand, the idea itself is no more complex than that of war, for both require discipline and control. In waging war, fear must be controlled, while anger is deliberately intensified and directed against the opponent; while in non-violent resistance, both anger

7. Ibid., p. 52.
and fear are controlled. As a matter of fact, both anger and fear are elemental and similar emotions, and one control is no more complex than the other, nor are the ideas to be conveyed in either case.

Non-violent resistance in complete form is a dramatization of the idea of essential human unity. Therefore, with all the subtle power of genuine drama, it works upon the mind and heart of the opponent. In this drama the movement and confronting of ideas and forces cause in both the opponent and the spectator a clearer and profounder realization of human relations, a reconciliation of impulses and an illumination, enlargement and enrichment of consciousness. It brings about a more highly organized and much delicately balanced synthesis of the elements in the spectator’s experience, an inner organization “less wasteful of human possibilities” than that which prevailed in him earlier. It reveals the power of the human spirit to triumph over suffering and apparent disaster.

Thus, the psychological nature of non-violent resistance may well be considered a form of what Rivers calls “manipulative activity.” In discussing different modes of reaction to danger, he elaborates:

“In the presence of danger, man, in the vast majority of cases, neither flees nor adopts an attitude of aggression, but responds by the special kind of activity, often of a highly complex kind, whereby the danger may be avoided or overcome. From most of the dangers to which mankind is exposed in the complex conditions of our own society, the means to escape lie in complex activities of a manipulative kind which seem to justify the term I have chosen. The hunter has to discharge his weapon, perhaps combined with movements which put him into a favourable situation for such an action. The driver of a car and the pilot of an aeroplane in danger of collision have to perform complex movements by which the danger is avoided.”

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As a method of resolving a conflict, non-violent resistance is much better than reciprocal violence, because it is more effective and efficient. The first reason for this is partly physiological as anger, hatred, and fear make an enormous drain upon our energy. Hatred eats up our energies and kills our imagination. If we hate a man, we cannot get him out of our mind, we are always attached to him, and as a result we are his slave. The thought of him is an obsession; it wastes most of our time. In a violent struggle, these emotions persist after the combat itself creases. A victory by violence means humiliation for the conquered. He has had to admit the winner’s superiority for the moment, but he vows vengeance. His resentment seeks satisfaction as soon as possible. His original anger, repressed by circumstances, becomes hatred and longs for revenge and retaliation. He nurses his grudge. In this respect, there have been many instances of feuds lasting many generations. International enmities in Europe have lasted for centuries. Retaliation provokes counter-retaliation. The original evil or damage is vastly multiplied and absorbs an enormous amount of time and energy diverted from useful occupations.

Gandhi set the theoretical foundations for the coming movements in the following words:

"There are two methods of attaining one’s goal. Satyagraha and Duragraha. In our scriptures they have been described, respectively, as divine and devilish modes of action. In Satyagraha, there is always unflinching adherence to truth. It is never to be forsaken on any account. Even for the sake of one’s country, it does not permit resort to falsehood. It proceeds on the assumption of the ultimate triumph of truth. A Satyagrahi does not abandon his path, even though at times it seems impenetrable and beset with difficulties and dangers,... Even an inveterate enemy he conquers by the force of the soul, which is love. We can cultivate such an attitude even towards the Government and, doing
so, we shall be able to appreciate their beneficial activities and, as for
their errors, rather than feel bitter on their account, point them out in love
and so get them rectified. Love does not act through fear. Weakness there
certainly cannot be. A coward is incapable of bearing love, it is the
prerogative of the brave. Looking at everything with love, we shall not
regard the Government with suspicion, nor believe that all their actions,
being directed by love, will be unerring and is bound, therefore, to carry
conviction with them.

"Love can fight; often, it is obliged to. In the intoxication of power,
man fails to see his error. When that happens, a Satyagrahi does not sit
still. He suffers. He disobeys the ruler’s orders and his laws in a civil
manner, and willingly submits to the penalties of such disobedience, for
instance, imprisonment and gallows... In the event, no bitterness
develops between the Satyagrahi and those in power, the latter, on the
contrary, willingly yield to him. They discover that they cannot command
the satyagrahi’s obedience. They cannot make him do anything against
his will. And this is the consummation of Swaraj, because it means
complete independence. It need not be assumed that such resistance is
possible only against civilized rulers. Even a heart of flint will melt in the
fire kindled by the power of the soul... But Duragraha is a force with the
opposite attributes."\(^{10}\)

It is true that the sacrifice of one evokes sympathetic feelings in
others and as a result big movements are launched. However, the extent
of their success depends on individual purification and self-discipline. In
armed struggles, the stress is on both collective attack and defence. But in
a Satyagraha struggle, the individual effort at self-suffering and the
conversion of the heart of the oppressor is the vital and decisive factor as
Satyagraha is the force of love. It is based on the logic that triumph

against injustice can be achieved only through moral will, because the active non-violent resistance of the heroic zeal makes an immediate appeal to the head and heart of the so-called adversary.

In the course of such experiments, an exponent of Gandhian thought, Shridharani has very beautifully classified the different methods of Gandhi’s non-violent philosophy of Satyagraha as Persuasion, Negotiations and arbitration (basically and primarily to be used before offering the Satyagraha). However, it requires awakening of the people through:

- Public education,
- Protests, Processions and Similar other forms of agitation such as
- Demonstration and ultimatum,
- Self-purification,
- Strikes including Sympathetic strikes and
- Picketing (Dharna),
- Renunciation of titles, honours and positions,
- Boycott (economic and social),
- Non-payment of taxes,
- Court and office boycott,
- Non-cooperation,
- Civil-disobedience and

- Assertive Satyagraha such as setting up of Parallel administration (Government), Fasting as Penance, as prayers and Fast Unto Death, and finally, Migration (Hijrat). As a matter of fact these were some of the methods adopted and taken by the Congress\textsuperscript{11} under the leadership of Gandhi in different contexts at various times. Most of them were used in Peculiar Circumstances and had, therefore, local or temporal importance and their significance should be assessed keeping in view the prevailing circumstances and situations at that time alone.

However, the above list of the methods of Satyagraha may not be considered as the complete and comprehensive one as to Gandhi there can be as many forms of Satyagraha as there are various forms of injustice, and same is the case in respect of their different grades of intensity, different nature of the agents and their relations with others. For instance, Satyagraha starts with meaningful ‘Persuasion’ and ‘Negotiations’ while non-cooperation and civil-disobedience in a way, are its radical forms. However, fasting and especially fast unto death is the most radical, perhaps, the last weapon in the operational strategy of Satyagraha. Furthermore, we must keep in mind that the science of Satyagraha is still in the process of development and growth. Vinoba Bhave, the first Satyagrahi of Gandhi even added new dimensions to Satyagraha by introducing the concept of ‘Sukshm Pravesh’, i.e., gentle, gentler and gentlemost notion of Satyagraha.¹²

Satyagraha in its real form and in its comprehensive aspect is not only a concept or a creed but a way of life as believed and lived by Gandhi himself*.

“Satyagraha is a process of educating public opinion, such that it covers all elements of the society and in the end makes itself irresistible...Satyagraha is a law of universal application. Beginning with the family, its use can be extended to every other circle... Satyagraha as conceived by me is a science in the making... Satyagraha is a force that has come to stay. No force in the world can kill it.” (CWMG, Vol. No. XXVI, p. 292)

He called it a non-violent weapon to be used not only by individuals but also by groups and masses to fight against corruption, exploitation, imperialism, social, economic and political injustice. He suggested that it was an alternative to all violent weapons which involved...
hatred, anger and violence to both – persons and property. In other words, Satyagraha is the moral weapon and the utter self-tolerance, compassion and full faith in truth and non-violence. In Satyagraha one takes Buddha’s injunction very seriously to overcome hatred by love and one has to follow the Principle of Lord Jesus, i.e., loving an enemy and seeks to win his opponent by appealing to his reason and conscience through selfless devotion to truth and self-suffering.\textsuperscript{13}

Accordingly, Satyagraha seeks to extend to groups and communities, the laws of love and self-suffering associated with domestic life and solution to its problems. Similarly, Satyagraha looks upon the use of physical force as a symbol of weakness, because it believes that the use of violence is the result of fear. It is constant fear complex that compels man to arm himself. On the other hand, ‘resist evil with good’ is the motto of Satyagraha.\textsuperscript{14} Besides, Satyagraha is the effort of the soul to wake up from its slumber. It can be used for wide and varied purposes. Gandhi is of the firm view that it can be used for resisting any injustice – large or small, for bringing about reform in an institution or society, for the repeal of any unjust or bad laws for the removal of any grievances; for the prevention of communal riots or disturbances; for bringing about change in the existing system of government; for resisting an invasion or for replacing one government by another.

Moreover, Satyagraha is a science of life – an attitude towards life and concerns every aspect of life and not a single act, not a string of actions is beyond its jurisdiction.

Undoubtedly, non-violence has been part of man’s evolutionary process. Although during the past centuries man had previous experience of individuals and small groups practicing non-violence, it has come out before him, during the last half a century on a global scale as an

\textsuperscript{13} Young India, 12-05-1920, Vol. II, p. 3.
alternative way of living, a technique with more lasting and sound results, a philosophy more suited to the need of the present day, a new method of resolving social conflicts. To secure peace, man must create the things that bring peace, and to create the things for peace, he must be training himself in non-violence. As Gandhi said in 1936: “Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence. Violence does not mean emancipation from fear, but discovering the means of combating the cause of fear. Non-violence on the other hand, has no cause for fear. The votary of non-violence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear.”

However, some thinkers have often raised the question whether non-violence could be acquired through training. They feel that non-violence is an attitude, a way of life and a growing commitment to cultural and human values. How can a few week’s training, it is argued, inculcate, these attitudes and instill faith? It is only education that will lead to the adoption of attitudes. Faith is but a product of proper education, conducive environment and planned programme of training.

However, training should include not only the process of education adopted to cultivate attitudes, but proper equipment for skills in action. In a well-defined programme both these aspects coalesce, thus leading to the enrichment of the quality of the individual and his capacity to act.

A programme of training in non-violence should make an attempt to synthesise aspects of both individual and community growth towards non-violent strength. Non-violence, moreover, has to concern itself with the change and growth of individual mental attitudes through methods and techniques of ethical development as well as evolving techniques.

leading to group functioning and proper interpersonal relationships which can be much more effective and result oriented.

Non-violence is an individual faith in or attitude towards a certain method of social change. It contains at least the following aspects of human life:

(a) A deep sense of compassion and concern for fellow human beings.
(b) An awareness about the situation.
(c) A sense of justice and a deep sense of righteous indignation against all injustice, exploitation and discrimination.
(d) A faith that no individual or situation is beyond persuasion.
(e) Recognition that there can be no permanent change without change of heart and that the sound method of social change is through education, persuasion, negotiations, or if necessary, through self-suffering which is an essential part of Gandhi’s Satyagraha.
(f) A sense of fearlessness and open-mindedness (Liberal attitude).

All these factors combined lead to active non-violent strength. The training in non-violence, has, therefore, to be organized in such a way that it can prepare individuals, groups and communities for such dynamic non-violence.16

As a matter of fact, the first manifestation of Gandhi’s technique of non-violent revolution attracts the attention of the world. But little attention was paid to the constructive part of his technique which to him was not only a technique but a way of life. It prepared the individual, the community and later in India, a nation, in the making for non-violent revolution. Constructive work provided the Satyagrahis with opportunities to go to the grass-roots, organize mass contacts, and train them for bigger sacrifices. Most of all, it gave Satyagrahis a chance to train themselves. It provided occasions for self-discipline, experience and

the aptitudes that are essential to those devoted to real non-violent revolution.

In fact, Gandhi’s constructive work started in South Africa’s farms. It developed into a well-balanced educative process in the Ashrams of Sabarmati and Sevagram in India. Gandhi developed his science of non-violence in these Ashrams. The training was obtained through community living, namely, working together, enjoying together and suffering together. The Ashrams were the training grounds where individual meditation, self-discipline and devotion of the inmates blended with the social aspirations of the community. Here non-violent revolution meant the merging of the individual’s development with a social revolution.

It may be mentioned here that the efforts to organize corps of ‘volunteers of peace’ were made first in 1922 by Gandhi as after undergoing a self-purification fast in Bombay, he laid down certain conditions for the volunteers. The first condition was that volunteers would bear no arms – not even the short sticks. The second wanted the volunteers not to expect any remuneration. The third condition made it obligatory upon the volunteers to wear Khadi uniforms. This identified them in a crowd. The fourth condition was voluntary acceptance of self-discipline – willingness to obey the orders of the leader. The fifth condition expected the volunteers to practice non-violence in thought, word and deed. The last condition was that the volunteers would show equal respect for all religions.

It is interesting to note that most of these conditions were included, 35 years later, in the Shanti Sainik’s pledge when it was drafted for Shanti Sena organized by Vinoba Bhave.

Back in 1920, Gandhi had said: “Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one’s whole soul
against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion and his soul.”\(^{17}\)

While remembering some old incidents, Narayan Desai narrated: “I remember an incident in the early nineteen forties. My parents were discussing a problem. They thought that I was asleep in my bed by their side. But I was listening with all attention to the dialogue that my parents apparently wanted to conceal from me!

“Did you realize what Bapu wanted to tell us? asked my father. Bapu was the affectionate term for Gandhi. Literally it means father.

“Why not?” asked my mother. “What he said was very simple. He wants to enlist an army of volunteers who would be able to face aggressors on our frontiers.”\(^{18}\)

Somebody, it seems, had raised the question whether Gandhi had plan to defend the country non-violently. Gandhi wanted to ascertain from his close colleagues whether they would be willing to lay down their lives in case of aggression. The problem that my parents were discussing was the future of their only child. Who among them would take care of the child, and who would enroll as a volunteer in Gandhi’s army to go to the front and serve as cannon fodder? Ultimately, it was decided that both of them would enroll as Gandhi’s volunteers, leaving the child in the care of society. That was the spirit in which Gandhi’s Shanti Sena operated.

**Discipline for Non-violence:** The action which can be proposed for the non-violent resister is participation in manual work with the following stipulations:\(^{19}\)

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1. It must produce something beneficial to the community, especially to the poor and unemployed, and
2. It must be the kind of work which the poor and unemployed can themselves do and thus self-respecting help themselves.

These conditions make the discipline for non-violence more moral, and hence more potent than the discipline for war. The value of such work is double, for instance:

1. It is socially useful and brotherly, and
2. It furnishes discipline for non-violence.

There are sound evolutionary reasons that why manual labour is the logical discipline for non-violence. The hand is the physical characteristic which distinguishes man from beast and enables him to use tools. The tool is the first means and symbol of our power over nature and of our conscious, close, and active relation with natural forces. Tools gave man his first glimpse of cause and effect. From learning the operation of cause and effect in the outer world man began to understand the inner operations of the self, and to develop his power of mental objectification. The correlation of the hand and the eye, and their combined use gave man self-consciousness. All through the evolution of man, the hand and the use of tools have greatly stimulated and influenced the development of his mind. Prolonged, habitual use of tools subtly but powerfully organizes our thoughts, emotions, and sentiments, giving a sense of power in dealing with our environment. This immediate sensory and intellectual experience, with the cumulative effect of many frequent repetitions, gives faith, self-confidence, imaginative power, dignity, and self-respect that can never be destroyed and which has the ever-lasting and soothing results too.

Before addressing ourselves to the discussion we must answer one incisive criticism. The sceptic may say, "if manual work were an effective habit-forming discipline for non-violence, then why aren't farmers and city manual workers, the majority of the nation, now ready for a successful campaign of non-violent resistance towards a possible foe? Why aren't they all alert, active, and poised for effective action, like soldiers? Why aren't those who rely wholly on hand tools, like our Southern highlanders, especially noted for non-violent types of action?"21

There are three parts in the answer to this poser. The first is that most of the manual workers, both agricultural and industrial, as individuals are in fact capable of such a campaign. This has been shown by the predominantly non-violent character of most industrial strikes. This non-violence is a fact, even though agents-provocateurs and police have sometimes succeeded in breaking it down, and though the editors of most newspapers try to make strikes appear violent. Experienced newspapers reporters and other eyewitnesses of strikes will verify this statement. When non-violent leadership is provided, manual workers show wonderful self-restraint. This readiness of working people for non-violence is due, I believe, to the results of manual work upon their character, in the way which will be presently explained. But those workers are not prepared now to make prolonged mass non-violent resistance. This is chiefly because of lack both of political skill and of unity with the more articulate middle-class people to whom they are accustomed to look for leadership. Also, most people do not understand or believe in the power of non-violence. Very few even of the leaders understand it.

Secondly, mere manual activity, undirected by understanding, cannot act as a discipline for sustained group of non-violent resistance.

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The situation is like that of an unassembled or dismembered watch. The parts are all piled together in a disorderly heap. To make them work they must be put together in a certain pattern, so that every part will have a specific functional relationship to every other part. So it is with manual work. When practised understandingly, in comprehending relation to the full implications of the non-violent way of life, it becomes a healthy and sound discipline for even an individual; when practised with many others on a large scale as a part of an intelligible plan, with partial or complete comprehension of the implications and working of a programme of non-violent social or political reform, then it becomes a most effective group discipline.

However, the difference in results between doing things ignorantly or comprehendingly is great. A lad skilled at drawing but ignorant of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, for instance, could copy out a trigonometrical diagram and theorem without its producing any effect upon his mind. But another chap who understands algebra and geometry and had studied trigonometry as far as this particular theorem, might go through the same motions of hand and eye as the first one, but the result would be entirely different. He would see what is meant, he might be excited over its immediate application to surveying, and he might then be able to get work on a surveying crew, have a happy and interesting job, and do effective work on a bridge or road construction project of great value to the community. The understanding of that bit of pencil work may alter his whole life, and create in him a whole new set of habits. When people have understood a programme, have caught a vision, have approved the motive - what a surge of enthusiasm, of energy, of persistent devotion has arisen! Look, for example, at the Boy Scouts, Sinn Fein in its early days, the mediaeval Crusades.
Such a lack of relationship and of understanding would apply to the hand work of the Southern highlanders. Their work is predominantly individualistic and unintegrated for purposes of any programme of social change or improvement. It, therefore, cannot act as a discipline for steady non-violence.

The third reason why manual workers at present, by the very nature of their work, are not disciplined for mass non-violence is that, where their work is correlated, the chief principle of organization is competition in industry or commerce. This condition holds as true for most farmers as for factory people and middle men. Competitive industry and commerce on a large scale, under modern conditions, amount to economic warfare, and warfare of all sorts is the negation of non-violence.

If again some sceptic dislikes this idea of manual work as a discipline for non-violence and suspects its viability, then one can only say that all good things can be abused and linked to mistakenpattern of life. But one can ask him to suspend his judgment until he has read all the inherent philosophy of non-violence. When a military struggle for any good cause is proposed, even the young men realize the necessity of giving months or years to drilling, discipline, organization and acquiring the necessary munitions. For a successful struggle of non-violent constructive programme, the equivalent discipline is hand work.

Besides, self-respect comes only from the realization by the hand worker that in doing this work he is industrious and manually competent, that he has created something tangible which is immediately useful, has economic value, and may also be beautiful. Self-reliance also is built up by hand work. City dwellers, intellectuals, those whom extreme specialization and division of labour have made technologically helpless and dependent on others, particularly require such a fillip of capacity to provide directly for themselves. Today increasing economic depression
and impoverishment of the middle classes of all nations, none of us know when we may become depressed and destitute. The actual practice of making the material of one’s own equipment is a firm anchor to windward. It gives self-reliance and self-confidence of a peculiarly solid and enduring nature and not the blustering sort of self-confidence. To Gandhi, self-reliance is more needed by the gentle resister than by the armed soldier, for often the struggle of a humble resister has to take place away from the supporting presence of his comrades.

Once the self-reliance and self-confidence are developed, willingness to accept responsibility follows. This, in fact, generates many sources of leadership and the value of leadership to any movement is essential. Steady, daily, habitual hand work, learning and practicing the delicate, patient, rhythmic coordination of eyes, fingers, hands and arms is necessary for any manual skill which yields self-control of mind and emotion as well as control of body.

Further, devoting an hour or more a day to hand work may to some people seem like self-sacrifice. It would be more accurate to say that manual work helps us to understand the necessity, the meaning and the rewards of self-sacrifice, and so helps us to accomplish it. Sacrifice is not a mere giving up. It is a giving up of a lesser good in order to secure a greater good.

The steady, daily practice of hand work, making it into an unvariable habit, develops tenacity, just as much as does the soldier’s daily marching in the parade ground. The psychological reason for this is that two elements in will are, first, a clear concept of a pattern of feasible action, and second, the establishment and use of a set of consistent exterior stimuli which induces action along the chosen channel. These two elements are found in military discipline, and their effect on the will of troops is undeniable. These two elements are also found in manual
work. Further observation is also needed to realize their effect upon hand workers.

However, another source of courage is the possession of patience which is developed by hand work. All its practitioners agree to that. The winning of equanimity and moral strength is partly a problem of an inner organizing of sentiments and thoughts, and attaining a unifying ultimate spirit. That organizing of sentiments is taken care of by another phase of the pacific resister’s discipline. But the winning of equanimity and moral strength is also in part a problem of mobilizing energy and giving it satisfying direction and use.

Each person is a centre of energy which is expressed in various ways, like physical, emotional, intellectual, moral and spiritual. Each of us in growing up has experienced numerous frustrations and some humiliations. Such experiences meant that the energy behind the desire, hope, plan or partly completed action was suddenly blocked. The blockage caused resentment within us. Continuance of the blocking caused bitterness. Sometimes the energy of that resentment found normal expression through another channel. Much of it still lies within us like a coiled-up watch-spring. The occasions of most of our childhood frustrations and humiliations and probably most of those of our adult years have been forgotten. But much of the energy is still bottled up within us. A trivial occasion may pull the trigger, as it were, for the explosion of such stored up resentment.22

Similarly, whenever we do manual work with other people we learn their moral quality, and usually we find ourselves respecting them more and having more faith in human nature. Profound cynics are not usually found among the manual workers. The beneficent results of a manual

22. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
work movement will increase the detail, the range, the strength, and the enduring quality of our love for mankind.

For these reasons the hand work programme would provide the finest kind of discipline for a national effort for non-violence. Throughout most of his history man has found satisfaction in trying to master material things, the forces of his environment. When he has not had that opportunity, his creative, dominating instincts have had to have an outlet and so have led him to try to dominate his fellow men. The results of that warping are apt, sooner or later, to be unpleasant all around. So a man is more normal and his fellow men are usually happier, if he has a regular outlet for his creative, master-desiring instincts via some sort of manual work. Manual work provides a sublimation of energy which is not indiscriminate but appropriate and just.

Every reader of the Gita knows, that fearlessness heads the list of the Divine Attributes enumerated in the 16th chapter. Whether this is merely due to the exigencies of metre, or whether the pride of place has been deliberately yielded to fearlessness, is more than one can say. However, fearlessness richly deserves the first rank assigned to it. For it is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek truth, or cherish love, without fearlessness? As Pritam (loved one) says, ‘the path of Hari (the lord) is the path of the brave, not of cowards.’ Hari here means truth, and the brave are those armed with fearlessness, not with the sword, the rifle and the like. These are taken up only by those who are possessed by fear and are coward and weak.

Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear, - fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one’s nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on. One who overcomes the fear of death does not surmount all other fears, as is commonly but erroneously supposed. Some of us do not fear death, but
flee from the minor ills of life. Some are ready to die themselves, but cannot bear their loved ones being taken away from them. Some misers will put up with all this, will part even with their lives, but not their property; others will do any number of black deeds in order to uphold their supposed prestige. Some will swerve from the strait and narrow path, which lies clear before them, simply because they are afraid of incurring the world's odium. The seeker after truth, however, tries to conquer all these fears. He is ready to sacrifice his all in the quest of truth, even as for instance, Harishchandra did. The story of Harishchandra may be only a parable; but every seeker bears witness to its truth from his personal experience, and therefore that story is as precious as any historical fact.

However, perfect fearlessness can be attained only by him who has realized the Supreme, as it implies freedom from delusions. One can always progress towards this goal by determined and constant endeavour, and by cultivating self-confidence.

According to Gandhi, we must give up all external fears. But so far the internal foes are concerned, we must always fear. We are rightly afraid of animal passion, anger, and the like. External fears cease of their own accord, when once we have conquered these traitors within as all such fears revolve round the body as the centre, and will, therefore, disappear, as soon as we get rid of attachment for the body. We, thus, find that all external fear is the baseless fabric of our own vision. Fear, accordingly, has no place in our hearts. When we have shaken off attachment for wealth, family and the body. Gandhi advises, "Enjoy the things of the earth by renouncing them"23 It is a noble precept. Wealth, family and body will be there, just the same; we have only to change our attitude towards them. All these are not ours, but belong to God.

Actually, nothing whatever in this world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. Why then should we have any fear? The Upanishad, therefore, directs us “to give up attachment for things, while we enjoy them.” That is to say, we must be interested in them, not as proprietors, but only as trustees. He, on whose behalf we hold them, will give us the strength and the weapons requisite for defending them against all usurpers. When we thus cease to be masters, and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace, and see Satyanarayan (the God of truth) face to face.

According to Gandhi, the law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy’s writing on Bread Labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin’s Unto This Last. The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by a Russian writer named T. M. Bondaref. Tolstoy advertised it and gave it wider publicity. To Gandhi, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the Gita where we are told that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean Bread labour.

Further, reason too leads us to an identical conclusion. How can a man, who does not do body labour, has the right to eat? ‘In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread,’ says the Bible. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long, and is even helped to his food. He therefore induces hunger by exercise, and helps himself to the food he eats. If every one, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive, i.e., Bread labour? No one asks the

24. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
25. Ibid., p. 19.
26. Ibid., p. 21.
cultivator to take breathing exercise or to work his muscles. And more than nine tenths of humanity and more peaceful would the world become, if the remaining tenth followed the example of the overwhelming majority, at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food! And many hardships, connected with agriculture, would be easily redressed, if such people took an interest in it. Again, invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished, when every one without exception acknowledged the obligation of Bread labour. It is common to all the varnas. There is a worldwide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread distinctions of rank would deem themselves only trustees of their property and would use it mainly in the public interest. This conviction of Gandhi will lead to non-violent social and economic order.

This is because of the reason that bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe Non-violence, worship truth, and make the observance of Brahmacharya a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But at present at any rate, everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can therefore spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture however to be the ideal. To Gandhi, everyone must be his own scavenger. Evacuation is as necessary as eating; and the best thing would be for every one to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. He felt for years, that there must be something radically wrong, where scavenging had been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man, who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he by no means did us a good. We should, from our childhood, says Gandhi, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is, for everyone who
has realized this, to commence Bread Labour as a scavenger, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to a true appreciation of the equality of man.\textsuperscript{27}

**Bases and Evolution of Gandhi’s Non-violent Methods and Movements:**

Gandhi’s different-different Satyagrahas and other movements can be seen in the following different phases, which also became bases, starting from South Africa upto the independence of India and even in his later life.

1. South Africa
2. Champaran Satyagraha
3. Ahmedabad Labour-Mill Strike
4. Kheda Satyagraha
5. Rowlatt Satyagraha
6. Khilafat Movement
7. Non-cooperation Movement
8. Simon Commission
9. Bardoli Satyagraha
10. Civil Disobedience Movement
11. Dandi March (Salt Satyagraha)
12. Violation of Government laws
13. Epic Battle at Dharasana
14. Gandhi-Irwin Pact
15. Resumption of Civil Disobedience
16. A new India Emerges Out of the Cauldron of Suffering
17. Mahatma Gandhi Raises a new issue
18. Retires from the Congress but not from the Service of the people
19. War and India’s Dilemma
20. A Baffling Situation
21. Prophet of Peace
22. Individual Civil Disobedience
23. Vykom Satyagraha
24. Quit India Movement
25. Quit India and Non-violence
26. Fast: No Blackmail

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp. 21-22.
South African Phase:

It is merely a chance that the weapon employed for the achievement of India’s independence was discovered and forged by Mahatma Gandhi in a foreign land. Primarily, the weapon of non-violence was used in South Africa to ameliorate the lot of indentured labourers. When Gandhi went to South Africa, he was just young London returned lawyer, who was having no experience of how to tackle the cases but still he went there to help the advocate. After reaching there, he had to face numerous insults and humiliations time and again. Despite having the first class passenger train ticket, he was asked to shift to the 3rd class compartment else he was threatened to be thrown out of the train. Refusing this, he was thrown out of the train in real sense and to his further insult, he was refused entry in a hotel too. There are other many instances, where he had to face humiliations and insults without any fault. The same day he decided to fight but in a different way.

As a result, the Satyagraha struggle of an Indian in South Africa lasted for many years. It is highly remarkable that Gandhi became a creative leader and he made a synthesis of the diverse and different stands of view-points.

As we know that Gandhi had returned home in 1891 after completing his Law studies in England. The stay in India, from July 1891 to 1893 was marked by confusion and restlessness, as he was not able to establish himself in the court. However, a new hope came far from sea shore from Abdul Karim Jhaveri, who was a partner in the firm of Dada Abdulla and company, who was owner of many ships and having important interests of trades in South Africa. Abdul Karim Jhaveri, wrote
to Gandhi’s elder brother, Laxmidas, suggesting that Gandhi might like to go to Durban in South Africa. He offered the following offer: “We have business in South Africa. Ours is a big firm, and we have a big case there in the Court, our claim being £ 40,000. It has been going on for a long time. We have engaged the services of the best vakils and barristers. If you sent your brother there, he would be useful to us and also to himself. He would be able to instruct our counsel better than ourselves. And he would have the advantage of seeing a new part of the world, and of making new acquaintances.” However, the proposal was not more than a year and he was to be paid a first class return fare and a sum of £105. So in April 1893, he set forth full of zest to try his luck in South Africa.

**South Africa of 1893:** At that time South Africa was divided into 4 colonies, namely:
1. Natal;
2. The Orange Free state, under the Dutch domination;
3. The Transvaal, it was also under the Dutch domination and;
4. The Cape Colony, it was under the Britishers domination.

**Situation:** The Indians had to face the discrimination at all levels, whether it was boarding of Buses, Trains or any other transport vehicle. They were even not allowed to move out of the houses at certain time periods, on particular roads, no 1st class anywhere and were known as the ‘coolies’ and ‘Samis’. In fact, Gandhi was called up by the name of ‘coolie lawyer’. After reaching South Africa, he had to face many difficulties and hardships and some times the big insults, but they all changed his life and his style of working. They can be taken as under.

**Turning Point of Gandhi’s Life:** The making of Gandhi a real Mahatma later on starts with the fateful journey from Durban to Pretoria, can be

29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., p. 86.
said as the turning or the twist point of his life for the practical work and the application of non-violence in his life, work and deeds. As mentioned earlier, Gandhi was traveling with the first class ticket from Durban to Pretoria, but when the train reached the Peter Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 p.m. bedding used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked Gandhi if he wanted one. Gandhi replied, “No. I have one with me.” he went away. But a passenger came next, and looked him up and down. He saw that he was a ‘coloured’ man. This disturbed him. He went out and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to him and said, “Come along, you must go to the van compartment.” When he refused to comply with the unjust order, one of the constable pushed him out of the compartment along with his luggage. The train steamed away leaving him to shiver in the dark waiting-room all night.

That became a fateful and historical event in Gandhi’s life. He said, “I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the Case? It would be cowardice to turn back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial – only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice. So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria.”

This was not the end but just beginning of the sufferings of Gandhi in South Africa as another insult was waiting for him at Charlestown, after reaching there, he had boarded the stage-coach to reach Johannesburg. Here in the stage-coach, instead of allowing him to sit

31. Ibid., p. 93.
32. Ibid., p. 94.
inside, he was asked to sit outside on the coachbox. But later on he was asked to sit on the footboard. So, in fear and trembling he said to the driver that, “it was you who seated me here, though I should have been accommodated inside. I put up with the insult. Now that you want to sit outside and smoke, you would have me sit at your feet. I will not do so, but I am prepared to sit inside.”  

As he was struggling through these sentences, the man came down upon him and began heavily to box his ears. He seized Gandhi by the arm and tried to drag him down. However, Gandhi clung to the brass rails of the coachbox and was determined to keep his hold even at the risk of breaking his wristbones. The passengers witnessed the scene, the man swearing at, dragging and belabouring him, and he remained silent and still. He was strong and Gandhi was weak. After sometime, some of the passengers were moved to pity and exclaimed: “Man, let him alone. Don’t beat him. He is not to blame. He is right. If he can’t stay there, let him come and sit with us.” ‘No fear,’ cried the man, but he seemed somewhat crestfallen and stopped beating him. He left his arm, swore at him a little more, and asking the Hottentot (a member of a stocky Negroid people of SW Africa) servant who was sitting on the other side of the coachbox to sit on the footboard, took the seat so vacated. This was the second big face to face insult having different approach towards life.

**The Real Fight:** The case for which Gandhi had gone to South Africa, was finished over with the involvement of Gandhi. “I had no reason for staying in Pretoria. So I went back to Durban and began to make preparations for my return home. But Abdulla Sheth was not the man to

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33. Ibid., p. 95.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
let me sail without a send-off. He gave a farewell party in my honour at Sydenham.”36

At the farewell entertainment held by Dada Abdulla, someone put a copy of the *Natal Mercury* in his hands. He read it and found that the detailed report of the proceedings of the Natal Legislative Assembly contained a few lines under the caption ‘Indian Franchise’. The local Government was about to introduce a Bill to disfranchise Indians, which could only be the beginning of the end of what little rights they had been then enjoying. The speeches made at the time, left no doubt about the intention of the Government. He read the report to the traders and others present and explained the situation to them as best as he could. He, however, was not in possession of all the facts. He suggested that the Indians should strenuously resist this attack on their rights. They agreed but declared their inability to fight the battle themselves and urged him to stay on and as a result of their persuasion, consented to stay a month or so longer to fight the struggle in question.37

Though Gandhi desired to return home but the agitation had aroused such a keen interest among the Indians that they would not let him go. They argued: “You yourself have explained to us that this is the first step taken with a view to our ultimate extinction. Who knows whether the Colonial Secretary will return a favourable reply to our memorial? You have witnessed our enthusiasm. We are willing and ready to work. We have funds too. But for want of a guide, what little has been done will go for nothing. We therefore think it is your duty to stay on.”38

However, Gandhi was on the point of returning home and showed his inability to express what was passing through his mind in this matter.

36. Ibid., p. 115.
38. Ibid., pp. 40-41.
He simply said to Abdulla Sheth: “This Bill, if it passes into law, will make out lot extremely difficult. It is the first nail into our coffin. It strikes at the root of our self-respect.” The farewell party was thus turned into a working committee. Thus God laid the foundations of his life in South Africa and sowed the seed of the fight for national self-respect with a non-violent weapon of Satyagraha.

For this purpose, a large number of volunteers were enrolled. The bill had already passed, or was about to pass. In his speeches on the occasion, the fact was that Indians had expressed no opposition to the stringent bill was urged as proof of their unfitness for the franchise.

Here, Gandhi explained the situation in the meeting. The first thing they did was to dispatch a telegram to the Speaker of the Assembly requesting him to postpone further discussion on the bill. A similar telegram was also sent to the Premier, Sir John Robinson, and another to Er. Escombe, as a friend of Dada Abdulla. The Speaker promptly replied that discussion on the bill was to be postponed for two days. This gladdened their hearts. However, in spite of the efforts made by Gandhi and his supporters, the Bill, however, was passed.

The purpose of mentioning this event here is that though this was a foregone conclusion, but the agitation had infused new meaning and new life into the community and had brought home to them the conviction that the community was one and indivisible, and that it was much their duty to fight for its political rights as for its trading rights. Not less than ten thousand signatures were obtained in the course of a fortnight. To secure this number of signatures from the whole of the province was no light task, especially when they considered that the men were perfect strangers.

40. Ibid., p. 117.
41. Ibid., p. 118.
42. Ibid.
to the work. The petition was at last submitted. A thousand copies were printed for circulation and distribution. It acquainted the Indian public for the first time with serious and pitiable conditions in Natal. They sent copies to all the newspapers and publicists they knew.

The Times of India, in a leading article on the petition, strongly supported the Indian demands. Copies were sent to journals and publicists in England representing different parties. The London Times also supported their claims, and they began to entertain hopes of the bill being vetoed.  

Under this situation, it was now impossible for Gandhi to leave Natal. The Indian friends surrounded him on all sides and importuned him to remain there permanently. However, Gandhi expressed his difficulties as he had made up his mind not to stay at public expense. So, he felt it necessary to set up an independent household. Accordingly, he applied for admission as an advocate of the Supreme Court of Natal. The Natal Law Society opposed his application on the sole ground that the law did not contemplate that coloured barristers should be placed on the roll. The late Mr. Escombe, the famous advocate, who was Attorney-General and afterwards also became Premier of Natal, was his counsel. The prevailing practice for a long time was that the leading barrister should present such applications without any fees, and Mr. Escombe advocated his cause accordingly. He was also Senior Counsel for Gandhi’s employers. The Senior Court over-ruled the Law Society’s objection and granted his application. Thus, the Law Society’s opposition brought him into further prominence. On the other hand, the newspapers of South Africa ridiculed the Law Society and some of them even congratulated him. As a result, the power of non-violence started showing its results to strengthen Gandhi’s faith in it.

43. Ibid., pp. 118-19.
**Formation of The Natal Indian Congress:**
The dispatch of the petition regarding the disfranchising bill was not sufficient in itself. Sustained agitation was essential for making an impression on the Secretary of State for the Colonies. For this purpose, it was thought necessary to bring into being a permanent organization. So Gandhi consulted Sheth Abdulla and other friends, and they all decided to have a public organization of a permanent character having faith in non-violent resistance to injustice and exploitation. Accordingly, with full explanation of his reasons, he recommended that the organization should be called the ‘Natal Indian Congress’, and on the 22nd May, 1894 the Natal Congress came into being.\(^{45}\)

**Fight against the £3 Tax: Start of a Successful Step**
In the year, 1894, the Natal Government sought to impose an annual tax of £25 on the indentured Indians. The proposal astonished Gandhi. He put the matter before the Congress for discussion, and it was immediately resolved to organize the necessary opposition. At the outset Gandhi explained briefly the genesis of the tax. About the year 1860 the Europeans in Natal, finding that there was considerable scope for sugarcane cultivation, felt themselves in need of labour. Without outside labour the cultivation of cane and the manufacture of sugar were impossible, as the Natal Zulus were not suited to this form of work. The Natal Government therefore corresponded with the Indian Government and secured their permission to recruit Indian labour. These recruits were to sign an indenture to work in Natal for five years, and at the end of the term they were to be at liberty to settle there and to have full rights of ownership of land. Those were the inducements held out to them for the whites then had looked forward to improving their agriculture by the

industry of the Indian labourers after the term of their indentures had expired.

But the Indians gave more than had been expected of them. They grew large quantities of vegetables. They introduced a number of Indian varieties and made it possible to grow the local varieties cheaper. They also introduced the mango. Nor did their enterprise stop at agriculture. They entered trade. They purchased land for building, and many raised themselves from the status of labourers to that of owners of land and houses. Merchants from India followed them and settled there for trade. The late Sheth Abubakar Amod was first among them. He soon built up an extensive business. As a result, the white traders were alarmed. When they first welcomed the Indian labourers, they had not reckoned with their business skill. They could be tolerated as independent agriculturists, but their competition in trade could not be brooked.

This sowed the seed of the antagonism to Indians. Many other factors contributed to its growth. Different ways of living, simplicity, contentment with small gains, indifference to the laws of hygiene and sanitation, slowness in keeping houses in good repair — all these combined with the difference in religion, contributed to fan the flame of antagonism. Through legislation this antagonism found its expression in the disfranchising bill and the bill to impose a tax on the indentured Indians but in the independent of legislation, a number of pinpricks had already been started.

The first suggestion was that the Indian labourers should be forcibly repatriated, so that the term of their indentures might expire in India. The Government of India was not likely to accept the suggestion. Another proposal was therefore made to the effect that:

1. the indentured labourer should return to India on the expiry of his indenture; or that
2. he should sign a fresh indenture every two years, an increment being
given at each renewal; and that
3. in the case of his refusal to return to India or renew the indenture he
should pay an annual tax of £25.

A deputation comprising Shri Henry Binns and Mr. Mason were
sent to India to get the proposal approved by the Government there. The
Viceroy at that time was Lord Elgin. He disapproved of the £25 tax, but
agreed to poll a tax of £3. Gandhi thought it to be a serious blunder on the
part of the Viceroy. In giving his approval he had in no way thought of
the interests of India. It was no part of his duty thus to accommodate the
Natal Europeans. In the course of three or four years an indentured
labourer with his wife and each male child over 16 and female child over
13 came under the impost. To levy a yearly tax of £12 from a family of
four – husband, wife and two children – when the average income of the
husband was never more than 14s. a month, was atrocious and unknown
anywhere else in the world. Gandhi made a plan to fight against that
imposition but in his distinct way.

He, along with many, organized a fierce campaign against this tax.
If the Natal Indian Congress had remained silent on the subject, the
Viceroy might have approved of even the £25 tax. The reduction from
£25 to £3 was probably due solely to the Congress agitation. Besides it
may be possible that the Indian Government had disapproved of the £25
tax from the beginning and reduced it to £3, irrespective of the opposition
from the Congress. In any case it was a breach of trust on the part of the
Indian Government. As trustee of the welfare of India, the Viceroy ought
never to have approved of this inhuman tax.

The Congress could not regard it as any great achievement to have
succeeded in getting the tax reduced from £25 to £3. The regret was still
there that it had not completely safeguarded the interests of the
indentured Indians. It always remained its determination to get the tax remitted, but it was twenty years before the determination was realized. And when it was realized, it came as a result of the labours of not only of the Natal Indians but of all the Indians in South Africa. The breach of faith with the late Mr. Gokhale became the occasion of the final campaign, in which the indentured took their full share, some of them losing their lives as a result of the firing that was resorted to, and over ten thousand suffering imprisonment.

However, truth triumphed in the end. The sufferings of the Indians were the expression of that truth. Yet it would not have triumphed except for unflinching faith, great patience, and incessant effort. Had the community given up the struggle, had the Congress abandoned the campaign and submitted to the tax as inevitable, the hated impost would have continued to be levied from the indentured Indians until this day, to the eternal shame of the Indians in South Africa and of the whole of India. It again gave much strength to Gandhi to continue his struggle of non-violence.

**Home Coming in 1896:** Gandhi spent nearly two years and a half in Natal, mostly doing political work. He then saw that if he was still to prolong his stay in South Africa, then he must bring over his family from India. By this time, he had established a fairly good practice, and could see that people felt the need of his presence. The other motive of his coming back to home was that by coming to India, he might be able to do there some public work by educating public opinion and creating more interest in the Indians of South Africa. However, the £3 tax was an open sore for Gandhi. So Gandhi was allowed to go back to India on one condition that he had to return back to South Africa when his presence was needed. Gandhi left South Africa on June 5, 1896, for a brief visit to

46. Ibid., pp. 129-131.
India. In India, he drew the public opinion towards the plight of British Indians in South Africa. During this visit he also met Indian’s great leaders. From Sir Pherozeshah “the Himalyas, unscaleable”47 – “he had come upon Tilak” – “the Ocean,”48 boundless, majestic, and fathomless. But in Gokhale he found “the mother Ganges” against whose bosom he could pillow his head.49 Gandhi enshrined Gokhale in his heart. He was eminently successful in enlisting the support and sympathy of many for his cause.

After reaching Calcutta, the same day he started for Bombay. But because of unavoidable circumstances, he had to halt at Allahabad in between the way. There the unexpected interview with the editor of The Pioneer laid the foundation of the series of incidents which ultimately led to his being lynched in Natal.50

**Birth of Green Pamphlet:** From Allahabad, he went straight to Rajkot without halting at Bombay and began to make preparations for writing a pamphlet on the situation in South Africa. The writing and publication of the pamphlet took about a month. It had a green cover and came to be known afterwards as the ‘Green Pamphlet’. In it he drew a purposely subdued picture of the conditions of Indians in South Africa. The language he used was more moderate than that of the two pamphlets which he had referred to before, as he knew that things heard of from a distance appear bigger than they are. Ten thousand copies were printed and sent to all the papers and leaders of every party in India. The Pioneer was the first to notice it editorially. A summary of the article was cabled by Reuter to England, and a summary of that summary was cabled to Natal by Reuter’s London office. This cable was not longer than three

47. Ibid., p. 148.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., p. 140.
lines in print. It was a miniature, but exaggerated to the Indians in Natal, and it was not in Gandhi’s words. To get these pamphlets ready for posting was no small matter. It would have been expensive too, if he had employed paid help for preparing wrappers, etc. But he hit upon a much simpler plan. He gathered together all the children in his locality and asked them to volunteer two or three hours’ labour of a morning, when they had no school. This they willingly agreed to do. He promised to bless them and give them, as a reward, used postage stamps which he had collected. They got through the work in no time. That was his first experiment of having little children as volunteers. Two of those little friends were his co-workers.51

But in the middle of all this in Calcutta, he received a cable from Durban: “Parliament opens January. Return soon.”52 In the beginning of December set sail a second time from the Courland steamship for South Africa, now with his wife and two sons and the only son of his widowed sister. Another steamship Naderi also sailed for Durban at the same time. The agents of the company were Dada Abdulla and Co. The total number of passengers these boats carried must have been about eight hundred, half of whom were bound for the Transvaal.53

The Impact of the Storm: The two ships reached Durban on or about 18th December. No passengers were allowed to land at any of the South African ports before being subjected to a thorough medical examination. Though medical reason was one of the reasons of detaining as at that time Plague had broken out in Bombay. But the main reason was the ‘Green Pamphlet’s transcription sent by the Reuter’s office.’ The whites were holding monster meetings everyday. They were addressing all kinds of threats and at times offering even inducements to Dada Abdulla and Co.

51. Ibid., pp. 140-141.
52. Ibid., p. 151.
53. Ibid., p. 152.
They were ready to indemnify the company if both the ships had to be sent back. But Dada Abdulla and Co. were not the people to be afraid of threats.\textsuperscript{54} Gandhi was the real target and there were two charges against him:

1. that whilst in India he had indulged in unmerited condemnation of the Natal whites;
2. that with a view to swamping Natal with Indians he had specially brought the two shiploads of passengers to settle there.

Though with the help of the local media persons he was able to pacify the opposition against the people on the two ships. And they were allowed to land in South Africa but Gandhi and the members of his family were not allowed to land. But later on his family alone was able to land without Gandhi. Gandhi was asked to land only at the dusk time so that the whites might not harm him in any way. But according to Mr. Laughton entering into the city at dusk would be stealthily. So Gandhi moved out of the ship at the same time and when both of them were on the road, was beaten very brutally by the whites. He was welcomed by the kicks everywhere, with rotten eggs, stones and brickbats. The wife of the police superintendent, who knew Gandhi, happened to be passing by. Infact, she came to his rescue. Later on, the police took Gandhi to Mr. Rustomji’s house, where again the white’s mob attacked the house with stones. At that time the Police Superintendent, Mr. Alexander advised Gandhi to move out of the house in disguise. Thus on one and the same day he was faced with two contradictory positions. When danger to life had been no more than imaginary, Mr. Laughton advised him to launch forth openly. He accepted the advice. When the danger was quite real, another friend gave him the contrary advice, and he accepted that too. Who can say whether he did so because he saw that his life was in

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 157.
jeopardy, or because he did not want to put his friend's life and property or the lives of his wife and children in danger? Who can say for certain that he was right both when he faced the crowd in the first instance bravely, as it was said, and when he escaped from it in disguise? Thus, Gandhi faced the grave situation but with confidence and determination to root out injustice, exploitation and discrimination against Indians in South Africa.

Similarly, in December, 1896, he forcefully reiterated: "...we should resist the passing of any law to restrict the freedom of Indians entering the colony." The non-violent revolutionary wished to launch his campaign in a manner as "to show that there is (was) no conflict of interest between the two countries." By 1896, he was fully convinced that laws could be defective and, in such a case, they had to be resisted. But the blueprint of resistance was not yet fully drawn. Its necessity was acutely felt, and in consequence Satyagraha was born. Gandhi declared on December 18, 1896, aboard the steamer, 'Courland', at Durban: "The object of our agitation is... to have the imperial question decided once for all: namely: 'what status will the Indians outside British India have?' That was the principle we have been striving to determine." He set out to fight the "legal disabilities" - placed on his fellow beings in South Africa. In support of this cause, Gandhi appealed to his Indian friends to start a constitutional agitation in India. He drafted a voluminous memorial, dated March 15, 1897, to Mr. Chamberlain, Principle Secretary of State for the colonies, London, protesting against the discriminatory legislation and the general policy of the South African

55. Ibid., p. 161.  
57. Ibid.  
59. CWMG, Vol. II, Op. Cit., p. 120.  
60. Ibid., p. 123.  
61. Ibid., p. 121.
Government. Between 1896 and 1897, Gandhi had launched a protest campaign against the following Bills in Natal:

1. The Quarantine Bill,
2. The Immigration Restriction Bill,
3. The Trade Licenses Bill, and
4. The Bill related to uncovenanted Indians.

He, then moved into petitioning action against the Dealer’s licensing Act enforced by the Natal Government on December 31, 1898. He drew a comprehensive petition, the stated object of which was “to exhaust all the resources available in the Colony, and to obtain a proper judicial interpretation of the Act.” The petitioners protested against the deprivation of their professional and other rights. In another petition, addressed to the Governor of Natal, dated July 31, 1899, Gandhi stated that in the Dealers’ Licenses Act No. 18, 1897, Government of Natal was really “bad”, “arbitrary” and “un-British” and entailed “a gross encroachment upon the elementary rights of citizens in the British territories.”

When Gandhi was asked to prosecute his assailants, who had attacked him after returning from India, his reply was: “I might perhaps be able to identify one or two of them. But I must say at once before this conversation proceeds that I have already made up my mind not to prosecute my assailants. I can’t see that they are at fault. What information they had, they had obtained from their leaders. It is too much to expect them to judge whether it was correct or otherwise… that is a political matter, and it remains for me to fight with you in the political field and to convince you and the other Europeans that the Indians who constitute a large proportion of the population of the British Empire wish

63. Ibid., pp. 25-49.
64. Ibid., p. 92.
to preserve their self-respect and safeguard their rights without injuring the Europeans in the least.65

Thus, the roots of the Satyagraha can be seen in the early 1896, in the ‘Green Pamphlet’ in which he had pointed out that his method in South Africa “was to conquer hatred by love.”66 He elaborated: “We do not attempt to have individuals punished but, as a rule patiently suffer wrongs at their hands.”67 Again he remarked: “Sufferance is, really and sincerely the badge of the Indians in South Africa…”68 Such were his non-violent ways around 1896. In 1899, Gandhi held out the hope: “...victory must be ours, for our case has been universally regarded as just, our methods moderate and without reproach.”69 Long before the commencement of the heroic struggle, in 1906, against the Transvaal Government, Gandhi petitioned, agitated and strongly protected against racial arrogance. He organised Indians in South Africa to rise in a body and fight for their grievances. As it is well known that his all protests and activities were conducted on non-violent and humanist line. The genesis of Satyagraha was the pledge taken by the delegates on September 11, 1906, at Johannesburg to resist the law of the Transvaal.70 By this time, he had given up the use of the phrase ‘passive resistance’ and called his movement ‘Satyagraha’, the force born of Truth and Love based on non-violence.71 He further explained: “...brute force had absolutely no place in the Indian movement in any circumstance... no matter how badly they suffered, the Satyagrahis never used physical force... Satyagraha is a soul

67. Ibid.
70. The same day is also known as “Black Tuesday” as in terms of September 11, 2001, (attack on the World Trade Centre Towers) where in the name of freedom, some terrorists started freedom movement against the whites and the world.
force pure and simple..."72 Gandhi spelled out: "Satyagraha had not been a preconceived plan. It came on spontaneously, without having willed it. But I could see that my previous steps had led up to that goal."73 He told Doke: "Some years ago, when I began to take an active part in the public life of Natal the adoption of this method occurred to me as the best course to pursue if petitions should ultimately fail..."74

At the Time of Boer War (1899 – 1902): The ceaseless struggle between the Boer (Dutch Farmers) and the British for the hegemony over South Africa came to a head in form of Boer War in 1899. In the Boer War Gandhi saw an opportunity to rectify the bad impression about the Indians – being coward. The Indians were charged that they went to South Africa only for money-grabbing and were merely a dead-weight upon the British. Like worms which settle inside wood and eat it up hollow, the Indians were considered in South Africa only to fatten themselves upon them. The Indians would not render them the slightest aid if the country was invaded or if their homes were raided. The British in such a case would have not only to defend themselves against the enemy but at the same time to protect the Indians. To Gandhi, Indians carefully considered this charge. All of them felt that this was a golden opportunity for them to prove that it was baseless.75 So on behalf of the Indian community, Gandhi offered the help. Though at first instance, it was rejected with something like contempt, but later on as things went badly for the British, Gandhi’s offer was accepted and he organised an ‘Indian Ambulance Corps.’ The whole idea, according to Gandhi, was to prove that in common with the other subjects of the Queen Express, the Indians in her South Africa realm too were ready to do their duty by their

72. Ibid., pp. 104-105.
73. Ibid.
sovereign on the battle field. At the conclusion of the war, he and other 36 volunteers received ‘War Medals’ from the British Government as a reward for the contribution in winning the war.

**Coming back to India Once Again:** When the Boer war was over, Gandhi felt that now the Whites were with the Indians and there was also change in the political climate and he hoped that the Whites’ antipathy to the Indians in course of time might fade away. So after these developments, he decided to come back to India. So asked for the permission from the people of South Africa to return back. He was allowed to go back but again with the same promise that whenever they required his services, he would have to come again to South Africa. And, he agreed on their terms. So a party was organised in his honour. But in this party he and his family members were awarded with very expensive gifts, which according to Gandhi, were of no utility for him. So he decided to return or give them to a trust. The gifts of course included things in gold and silver, but there were articles of costly diamond as well. He commented: “What right had I to accept all these gifts? Accepting them, how could I persuade myself that I was serving the community without remuneration? All the gifts, excepting a few from my clients, were purely for my service to the community, and I could make no difference between my clients and co-workers; for the clients also helped me in my public work.”

As Gandhi was not in favour of all these things, first of all he changed the mind-set of his two sons, then his wife’s with the help of his sons. Gandhi returned all the things and all were sold and the money collected from the sale of the ornaments, was handed over to Natal Indian Congress. Gandhi reached back in India by November 1901, well in time to attend for the first time a Session of the Indian National Congress which was scheduled in Calcutta. He was able to get

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the Congress pass a resolution in support of the claims of the Indians in South Africa. Gopal Krishan Gokhale was deeply impressed with Gandhi’s integrity, dedication, and moderation – a firm friendship grew up between the two. Gandhi had hardly taken a house in Bombay to settle down and started legal practice there – when he was recalled again to South Africa in December 1902, as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the then Secretary of State for Colonies was visiting South Africa. Gandhi proceeded to Natal leaving behind his family and taking only the four young men of his family. Later on these four men played the major role in his life and their co-operation was remarkable in his non-violent approach to resolve the conflicts.

**Indians Facing More Problems:** When Gandhi reached South Africa, he was surprised to find that in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, the officer-in-charge had refused to register deeds of transferring lands to the Indian purchasers. It was decided that deputation of Indians should wait on Mr. Chamberlain and acquaint him with the sad situation. The deputation, however, was of no avail, as Mr. Chamberlain expressed inability to help Indians. After the Boer War, the conditions in Transvaal had undergone great changes. No person could enter the state without a permit, though the Europeans could get permits easily and Gandhi too managed to get one with some one’s help. To live smoothly, he enrolled himself as an Attorney of Transvaal Supreme Court and set up his office at Johannesburg, which became the centre of his all activities. The Transvaal Government had set up the Asiatic Department to deal with Indians. And according to this department, if the labourers wanted to remain as the labourers, then it was ok, but if they demanded for a status of equality with the whites, then the real problem could arise. And Gandhi was destined to fight for equality. This was a long fight causing
complete transformation in Gandhi’s personal and political life and leading to discovery and acquisition of new values.

**Lesson of Non-violence:** When Gandhi was practising in Durban, his office clerks often stayed with him, and there were among them Hindus and Christians, or to describe them by their provinces, Gujaratis and Tamilians. In fact, Gandhi treated them as his own ‘kith and kin.’ “I treated them as members of my family, and had unpleasantness with my wife if ever she stood in the way of my treating them as such.” 77 One of the clerks was a Christian, born of Panchama parents. And he was not accustomed to the household work like “cleaning their own pots”, but the Christian clerk was a newcomer, and to Gandhi it was their (Gandhi and his wife’s) duty to do the needful. His wife managed the pots of the others, but to clean those used by one who had been a Panchama (untouchable) seemed to her to be the limit. She could not bear the pots being cleaned by him, neither did she like doing it herself. Gandhi has elaborated that “Even today I can recall the picture of her chiding me, her eyes red with anger, and pearl drops streaming down her cheeks, as she descended the ladder, pot in hand. But I was a cruelly kind husband. I regarded myself as her teacher, and so harassed her out of my blind love for her. I was far from being satisfied by her merely carrying the pot. I would have her do it cheerfully. So I said, raising my voice: ‘I will not stand this nonsense in my house.’ The words pierced her like an arrow. She shouted back: ‘keep your house to yourself, let me go.’ I forgot myself, and the spring of compassion dried up in me. I caught her by hand, dragged the helpless woman to the gate, which was just opposite the ladder, and proceeded to open it with the intention of pushing her out. The tears were running down her cheeks in torrents, and she cried: “Have you no sense of shame? Must you so far forget yourself? Where am I to

77. Ibid., p. 231.
go? I have no parents or relatives here to harbour me, being your wife, you think I must put up with your cuffs and kicks? For Heaven’s sake behave yourself, and shut the gate. Let us not be found making scenes like this!”

On this Gandhi put on a brave face, but was really ashamed and shut the gate. If his wife could not leave him, neither could he leave her. They had numerous bickerings, but the end had always been peace between them. To Gandhi, the wife, with her matchless power of endurance, has always been the victor.” Thus, Gandhi learnt the first real lesson of non-violence from his wife Kasturbai in South Africa itself.

**Role and Impact of Indian Opinion:** In 1904, Sjt. Madanjit approached Gandhi with a proposal to start ‘Indian Opinion’ and sought his advice. He had already been running a press, and Gandhi approved of his proposal. The journal was started in 1904, and Sjt. Mansukhlal became the first editor. In the beginning it was published in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and English. But later on the Tamil and Hindi sections were discontinued. This journal became for Gandhi a training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with his thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact, the tone of *Indian Opinion* compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen. *Satyagraha* would probably have been impossible without *Indian Opinion*. The readers looked forward to it for a trustworthy account of the *Satyagraha* campaign as also of the real condition of Indians in South Africa. It was a fine education for him to study, digest and answer all the correspondence. It was as though the community thought audibly through this correspondence with him. It made him thoroughly understand the responsibility of a journalist, and the hold he secured in this way over the

78. Ibid., pp. 231-232.
79. Ibid., p. 232.
community made the future campaign workable, dignified and irresistible.\footnote{80}

The popularity of the Indian Opinion was based upon the following facts:\footnote{81}

1. It was an open book to whosoever wanted to gauge the strength and the weakness of the community, be he a friend, an enemy or a neutral.
2. It was a faithful mirror of the current history of the Indian Community.
3. It was the voice of not only of Gandhi, but of the whole Indian Community.

**Role of Vow of Brahmacharya:** The final resolution could only be made as late as 1906 when Satyagraha had yet to be started. Gandhi had no idea of its coming. He was practising in Johannesburg at that time of the Zulu ‘Rebellion’ in Natal, which came soon after the Boer War. He felt that he must offer his services to the Natal Government on that occasion. The offer was accepted. But the work kept him seriously thinking in the direction of self-control. So he had to break up his household at Johannesburg to be able to serve during the ‘Rebellion’. Within one month of offering his services, he had to give up the house he had so carefully furnished. He took his wife and children to Phoenix and led the Indian ambulance corps attached to the Natal forces. The ‘Rebellion’ did not occupy him for more than six weeks, but this brief period proved to be a very important epoch in his life.\footnote{82} After full discussion and mature deliberation he took the vow in 1906 itself. He had not shared his thoughts with his wife until then, but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection. But he had great difficulty in making the final resolve as he had not the necessary strength. “How was I to control my passions? The elimination of carnal relationship with one’s

\footnotesize{80. Ibid., p. 239.  
wife seemed then a strange thing. But I launched forth with faith in the sustaining power of God."

According to Gandhi, “Control of the palate is the first essential in the observance of the vow. I found that complete control made the observance very easy, and so I now pursued my dietetic experiments not merely from the vegetarian’s but also from the brahmachari’s point of view. As a result of these experiments I saw that the brahmachari’s food should be limited, simple, spiceless, and, if possible, uncooked.”

At another place he mentioned, Brahmacharya meant control of the senses in thought, word and deed. Each day he realized more and more necessity for restraints of the kind he had detailed above. Gandhi says, “Let no one think it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal, and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it.”

To Gandhi, Brahmacharya definitely is helpful in strengthening the will to observe and practice non-violence in many ways.

**Birth of Satyagraha: Strengthens Gandhi’s Faith in Non-violence**

Certain events were so shaping themselves in Johannesburg as to make this self-purification on Gandhi’s part a preliminary as it were to Satyagraha. He could now see that all the principal events of his life, culminating in the vow of Brahmacharya, were secretly preparing him for it. The principle called Satyagraha came into being before that name was invented. Indeed when it was born, he himself could not say what it would be. From ‘Passive Resistance’ he came to pronounce it ‘Satyagraha’. When in a meeting of Europeans he found that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, he had to

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83. Ibid., p. 174.
84. Ibid., p. 175.
85. Ibid., pp. 176-177.
demur to all these statements and explain the real meaning and nature of the Indian movement. It was clear that a new word must be coined by the Indians to designate their struggle. Gandhi said: “But I could not for the life of me find out a new name, and therefore offered a nominal prize through Indian Opinion to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject. As a result Maganlal Gandhi coined the word Sadagraha (Sat: Truth, Agraha: Firmness) and won the prize. But in order to make it clearer I changed the word to Satyagraha which has since become current in Gujarati as a designation for the struggle.”

The Roots of Non-violent Struggle: The First Ashram in South Africa
(The Phoenix Settlement): After reading John Ruskin’s ‘Unto This Last’ which according to Gandhi, was a ‘Magic Spell of a Book,’ resulted in the formation of the Phoenix Settlement, came around in November – December 1904. There was a small orchard with orange, mango, guava and mulberry trees; only two or three acres had been under plow; the rest, amounting of about eighty acres, was black soil, as fertile as any to be found in South Africa. He bought the land outright for a thousand pounds and proceeded to put his plans in order. Later on Gandhi also added up his Indian Opinion press there. In fact, in the Ashram, every one lived very simple life and it was totally based on John Ruskin’s book format, i.e., on the self employment and on manual labour, promoting the cause of non-violence making it a way of life.

More Hardships For Indians: Soon after the establishment of British rule in the Transvaal and the Free State, Lord Milner appointed a committee whose terms of reference were to prepare a list of such of the old laws of both the republics as placed restrictions on the liberty of the subject or were opposed to the spirit of the British Constitution. The anti-

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86. Ibid., p. 266.
87. Ibid., Part IV, Chapter No. XVIII, p. 248.
Indian laws could clearly have been included in this description. But Lord Milner’s object in appointing the committee was not to redress the grievances of Indians but only those of Britishers. He wanted to repeal at the earliest opportunity those laws which indirectly pressed hard upon Britishers. The committee submitted their report in a very short time, and many acts, large and small, which affected Britishers prejudicially, were, it can be said, repealed by a stroke of the pen. The same committee prepared a list of anti-Indian acts. These were published in the form of a book which served as a handy manual easily used or from the stand-point of abusing by the Asiatic Department. Now, if the anti-Indian laws did not mention the Indians by name and were not thus made expressly applicable to them alone but to all subjects, and if their enforcement had been left to the discretion of administrators; or had the laws imposed general restrictions which could have been enforced against Indians in a specially rigorous manner, the object of the legislators could all the same have been general laws. None would have felt insulted by their enactment, and when the existing bitterness was softened by the time, there would be no need to modify the laws, but only a more liberal administration of the laws would have suffered to relieve the aggrieved community. Just as Gandhi called laws of the second kind general laws, those of the first kind could be described as particular or racial, and establish what was known as the ‘color bar’, as on the specific ground of colour they imposed greater restrictions on members of the dark or brown races than on Europeans.

Other instances of the same kind could be cited from among the laws in force in South Africa. The wise policy, therefore, was to enact as little class legislation as possible; and it could be wiser still to avoid it altogether. Once a law was enacted, many difficulties could be encountered before it could be reversed. It was only when public opinion
was highly educated that the laws in force in a country could be repealed. A constitution under which laws were modified or repealed every now and then could not be said to be stable or well organized.

Our purpose here to narrate this story is that when these laws were passed into the hands of the Asiatic Department, they began to enforce them strictly. If the laws were at all worthy of being enforced, Government could arm itself with further powers in order to close the loopholes intentionally kept or left by inadvertence in favour of Asiatics. This looks quite simple and straight. Either the laws are bad in which case they had to be repealed, or they were proper in which case their deficiencies should have been remedied. The local officials clearly observed that the anti-Asiatic laws enacted by the late Boer Government were neither adequately severe nor systematic. If the Indians could enter the Transvaal at will and carry on trade wherever they chose, British traders could suffer great loss. All these and similar arguments carried greater weight with the Europeans and their representatives in the ministry. They were all out to amass the maximum of wealth in a minimum of time; how could they stand the Indians becoming co-sharers with them? Hypocrisy pressed political theory into service in order to make out a plausible case. A bare-faced selfish or mercantile argument would not satisfy the intelligent Europeans of South Africa. The human intellect delights in inventing specious arguments in order to support injustice itself, and the South African Europeans were no exception to this general rule.89

In 1906, this re-registration was completed. Mr. Lionel Curtis had drafted an Asiatic Bill and advised the Government that so long as his Bill was not passed, there was no provision in the laws already in force to prevent the Indians from surreptitiously entering the Transvaal or to

89. Ibid., pp. 81-83.
remove unauthorized residents from the country. Mr. Curtis’ arguments met with a ready response from the Government, and a draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance to be introduced into the Legislative Council was published in the Transvaal Government Gazette.

**The Zulu ‘Rebellion’**⁹⁰ At the time of Zulu rebellion, Gandhi, considering himself as a citizen of Natal, wrote to the Governor, expressing his readiness, if necessary, to form an Indian Ambulance Corps. The Governor replied immediately accepting the offer. Gandhi went to Durban and appealed for men. A big contingent was not necessary. They formed a party of twenty-four, of whom, besides him, four were Gujaratis. The rest were ex-indentured men from South India, excepting one who was a free Pathan. In order to give him a status and to facilitate work, as also in accordance with the existing convention, the chief Medical Officer appointed him to the temporary rank of Sergeant Major and three men selected by Gandhi to the rank of sergeants and one to that of corporal. They also received their uniforms from the Government. Their corps was on active service for nearly six weeks. Their main task was to attend the Zulu people, who were wounded in the war and one point was quite strange to Gandhi and his fellow men that the Whites were not attending the Blacks and it was their Corps that helped the Zulu people and served them with proper treatment and medicines. Whenever their corps people went to the field, the Zulu people welcome them and they treated them as the sons of the God. After the completion of the task, the corps group was dismantled. ‘After a short while Gandhi got a letter from the governor specially thanking the Ambulance Corps for its services.’⁹¹ Motto of service to the people, became part and parcel of Gandhi’s future life.

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⁹¹ Ibid., p. 264.
Fasting and Non-violence: Just about the time when Gandhi gave up milk and cereals, he started on the experiment of a fruit diet and began fasting as a means of self-restraint. Fasting became a part of his life but for purely health reasons. That fasting was necessary for self-restraint. He learnt this from a friend. According to Gandhi, “Fasting can help to curb animal passion, only if it is undertaken with a view to self-restraint. Some of my friends have actually found their animal passion and palate stimulated as an after-effect of facts. That is to say, fasting is futile unless it is accompanied by an incessant longing for self-restraint. The famous verse from the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is worth noting in this connection:

“For a man who is fasting his senses
Outwardly, the sense-objects disappear,
Leaving the yearning behind; but when
He has seen the Highest,
Even the yearning disappears.”

“Fasting and similar discipline is, therefore, one of the means to the end of self-restraint, but it is not all, and if physical fasting is not accompanied by mental fasting, it is bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster.”

1st Term of Jail: Gandhi was sentenced to three months imprisonment on ‘January 10, 1908.’ By this time, the number of the arrested Indians had started to increase. The people were now not afraid of court arrest or hard imprisonments, infact they felt good in coming to the jails. Later on when the situation became difficult for the Whites to cope with this type of situation, then they came with one proposal that if the Indians voluntarily registered themselves then later on the Black Act would be abolished. It was trap set up by the General Smuts where Gandhi and the Indian

92. Ibid., p. 276.
93. Ibid., pp. 277-278.
94. Ibid., p. 278.
community were the targets. Though Gandhi tried his level best to help the Indians to come out of this problem but General Smuts’ breach of faith came as a hurdle. Instead of repealing the Black Act, General Smuts took a fresh step forward. He maintained the Black Act on the statute book and introduced into the legislature a measure, validating the voluntary registrations affected and the Government in terms of that Act, taking the holders of the voluntary registration certificates out of its operation, and making further provision for the registration of Asiatics. Thus, there came into force two concurrent pieces of legislation with one and the same object, and freshly arriving Indians as well as even later applicants for registration were still subject to the Black Act.  

In counter of this the satyagrahis started their agitation against the Whites and later, on August 16, 1908, they had a bonfire of certificates, where around 2000 people burned their certificates. The reporters of English newspapers present at the meeting were profoundly impressed with the whole scene and gave graphic descriptions of the meeting in their papers. A description of the meeting was sent to The Daily Mail (London) by its Johannesburg correspondent, in course of which he compared the act of the Indians in burning their certificates with that of the Boston Tea Party. However, Gandhi did not think this comparison did more than justice to the Indians, seeing that if the whole might of the British Empire was ranged against the hundreds of thousands of able Europeans in America, here in South Africa a helpless body of 13000 Indians had challenged the powerful Government of the Transvaal. The Indians’ only weapon was a faith in the righteousness of their own cause and in God. There was no doubt that this weapon was all-sufficient and all-powerful for the devout, but so long as that was not the view of the man in the street, 13000 unarmed Indians could appear insignificant before the well-armed

96. Ibid., p. 175.
Europeans of America. Gandhi said, “As a God is the strength of the weak, it is as well that the world despises them.”

Besides, during the same year in which the Black Act was passed, General Smuts carried through the Legislature another bill called the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Bill (Act 15 of 1907), which was ostensibly of general application but was chiefly aimed at the Indians. This act generally followed the lines of similar legislation in Natal, but it treated as prohibited immigrants those who could pass education tests but were ineligible for registration under the Asiatic Act, and was thus indirectly made an instrument for preventing the entry of a single Indian newcomer. However, Gandhi decided to oppose and fight against such moves in his own way. These efforts strengthened Gandhi’s belief in non-violent approach.

**Establishment of Tolstoy Farm:** By 1910, there were many more Satyagrahis who wanted to go to jails and to participate in the on going Satyagrahas. According to Gandhi, to take care of the families of the jail going people, was his own responsibility. And to meet their daily needs, he wanted to bring all of them at one place so that some of his burden could be reduced. By this way public funds had to be largely saved and the families of Satyagrahis had to be trained to live a new and simple life but in harmony with all Indians belonging to various provinces and professing divers faiths so that they could have an opportunity of living together. But for this Phoenix was too much far away to be for this purpose. So a new place was searched out and for this Mr. Kallenbach, bought a farm of about 1100 acres and gave it for the use of Satyagrahis free of cost or any charge. On May 30, 1910, the farm was named after

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97. Ibid., pp. 187-188.  
98. Ibid., p. 188.  
99. Ibid., p. 214.
Tolstoy. The farm became a hub of non-violent activities of Satyagrahis. It also served as a Training ground for them.

**Last Two Years in South Africa:** In the last phase, the participation of both men and women was too much. This time for the first time the women, too had been to jails. Along with the women, this time the labourers too, went on strike. “The women’s imprisonment worked like a charm upon the labourers on the mines near Newcastle who downed their tools and entered the city in succeeding batches. As soon as I received the news, I left Phoenix for Newcastle.”

It is said that the jeweler rubs gold on the touchstone. If he is not still satisfied as to its purity, he puts it into the fire and hammers it so that the dross if any is removed and only pure gold remains. The Indians in South Africa passed through a similar test. They were hammered, and passed through fire and had the hall-mark attachment to them only when they emerged unscathed through all the stages of examination. It means that Gandhi’s non-violence had been working very successfully in South Africa with day by day good results.

Consequently, it was in December 1913, that Lord Hardinge in Madras made his famous speech which created a stir in South Africa as well as in England. The Viceroy not only publicly criticized other members of the Empire, but he passed severe criticism upon the Union Government, as well as whole-heartedly defended the action of the Satyagrahis and supported their civil disobedience approach to oppose unjust and invidious legislation. The conduct of Lord Hardinge came in for some adverse comments in England, but even then he did not repent but on the other hand asserted the perfect propriety of the step he had taken to adopt. Lord Hardinge’s firmness created a good impression all

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100. Ibid., p. 260.
round. This was a historical and memorable victory of Gandhi’s non-violent approach.

In fact, the Union Government had not the power to keep thousands of innocent men in jail. The Viceroy could not tolerate it, and the whole world was waiting to see what General Smuts would do. The Union Government now did what all Governments in such a situation could generally do. No inquiry was really required. The problem was well known, and every one had realized its redressal. General Smuts too saw that there had been injustice which needed a remedy, but he was in the same predicament as a snake which had taken a rat in its mouth but could neither gulp it down nor cast it out. He desired to do justice, but had lost the power of doing justice, as he had given the Europeans in South Africa to understand that he would not repeal the £3 tax nor could carry out any other reform. And now he felt compelled to abolish the tax as well as to undertake other remedial legislation. He, anyhow had to appoint a commission of three members, with which the Indians pledged themselves to have nothing to do so long as certain demands of theirs in respect of the commission were not granted by the Government. Actually, the appointment of the commission was just like a formality, as from Indians’ side no proper representation was allowed. In fact, Lord Hardinge also felt the pain of this commission, so he sent Sir Benjamin Robertson, in a special steamer to Pretoria for this cause. Later on with the intervention of many hands, the things changed. Within a short time of the issue of the report, the Government published in the official Gazette of the Union the Indians Relief Bill which was to effect a settlement of their long-standing dispute with the Indians. The Bill contained 9 sections. One part of it dealt with the question of marriages and validated in South Africa the marriages which were held legal in

102. Ibid., p. 286.
103. Ibid., pp. 291-292.
India, except that if a man had more wives than one, only one of them would at any time be recognized as his legal wife in South Africa. The second part abolished the annual licence of £ 3 to be taken out by every indentured Indian labourer who failed to return to India and settled in the country as a free man on the completion of his indenture. The third part provided that the domicile certificates issued by the Government to Indians in Natal and bearing the thumb-impression of the holder of the permit should be recognized as conclusive evidence of the right of the holder to enter the Union as soon as his identity was established. There was a long and pleasant debate over the bill in the Union Parliament.

Besides, administrative matters which did not come under the Indians’ Relief Bill were settled by correspondence between General Smuts and Gandhi, e.g., Safe-guarding the educated Indians’ right of entry into the Cape Colony, allowing ‘specially exempted’ educated Indians to enter South Africa, the status of educated Indians who had entered South Africa within the last three years, and permitting existing plural wives to join their husbands in South Africa. After dealing with all these points, General Smuts, in his letter of June 30, 1914, added: “With regard to the administration of existing laws, it has always been and will continue to be the desire of the Government to see that they are administered in a just manner and with due regard to vested rights.”

As a result, the passing of the Indians Relief Bill and this correspondence finally stopped the Satyagraha struggle which had commenced in September, 1906 and which to the Indian community cost much physical suffering and pecuniary loss. Thus, the great Satyagraha struggle came to a successful end after eight years and it appeared that the Indians in South Africa were now at peace.

104. Ibid., pp. 303-304.
105. Ibid., pp. 304-306.
After going through the above successful story of Gandhi’s approach, it may be mentioned here that Gandhi had come to South Africa only for a year, but the destiny had something else (special) for him. He spent his precious about 21 years in South Africa and the making of the real Mahatma started only from this battle-field and from here he discovered the magic power of Satyagraha and learnt its many new techniques and for him it was a live laboratory for the practicals and live demonstrations to realize and practice the efficacy of non-violence.

**Experiments in India:**

In 1930, before starting the Dandi March, Gandhi had drawn up some basic rules for the conduct of Satyagrahis. Following are the preamble and rules which appeared in ‘Young India (27-02-1930).’

Love does not bum others, it burns itself. Therefore a Satyagrahi, i.e., a civil-resister, will joyfully suffer unto death. It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing British rule, will not do intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman. This necessarily brief explanation of a Satyagrahi may perhaps enable us to understand and appreciate the following golden rules.

**As An Individual:**

1. A Satyagrahi, i.e., a civil-resister, will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.
3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, and never retaliate, but he will not submit out of fear of punishment or the like to any order given in anger.
4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil-resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest. He will not resist the attachment or

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106. Young India, 27-02-1930, Vol. XII, No. 9, p. 69.
107. Ibid.
removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by the authorities.

5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

6. Non-retaliation includes swearing and cursing.

7. Therefore, a civil resister will never insult his opponent and therefore also not take part in any of the newly-coined cries or slogans which are contrary to the spirit of Ahimsa.

8. A civil-resister will not salute the Union-Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian (During pre-independence days).

9. In the course of the struggle if any one insults an official, or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

As a Prisoner:

10. A civil-resister will behave courteously towards prison officials, and will observe all such disciplines, of the prison as are not contrary to self-respect, as for instance, whilst he will salute officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and he will refuse to shout “Victory to Sarkar” or the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insulting served or served in unclean vessels.

11. A civil-resister will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself superior to the rest, not will he ask for any convenience that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical or spiritual well-being.
12. A civil-resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose lack does not involve any injury to his self-respect.

As a Unit:

13. A civil-resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.

14. He will carry out the orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical, or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free before joining, to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him, but after he has joined it, it becomes a duty to submit to its discipline, irksome or otherwise. If the sum-total of the activities of the corps appears to a member to the improper or immoral he has a right to serve his connection, but being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.

15. No civil-resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil-resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds and thousands give themselves up to it they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should such be the case of Satyagraha! It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

In Communal Fights:

16. No civil-register will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.

17. In the event of such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu he will be generous towards Mussalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.
18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

19. If there is a procession of Satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities.

The following essential qualifications were prescribed by the Mahatma for a Satyagrahi in India during freedom struggle:108

1. He must have a living faith in God for He is his only rock.

2. He must believe in truth and nonviolence as his creed and therefore have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.

3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.

4. He must be a habitual Khadi-wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.

5. He must be a teetotaler and be free from the use of other intoxicants in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind steady.

6. He must carry out with a willing heart all rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.

7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are specially devised to hurt self-respect.

However, it was clarified by Bapu that these qualifications were not to be regarded as exhaustive but illustrative only.109

The Historic Fight against the Stain of Indigo:110

Champaran has been called the land of king Janaka (the father of goddess Sītā). Just as it abounds in mango groves, so used it to be full of

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109. Ibid.
indigo plantations until the year 1917. The Champaran tenants were bound by the law to plant three out of every twenty parts of their land with indigo for their landlords. This system was known as the ‘Tinkathia’ system, as three kathias out of twenty (which make one acre) had to be planted with Indigo. This was in imposition on the tenants.

It was Mr. Rajkumar Shukla, who was filled with a passion to wash away the stain of indigo for the thousands who were suffering as he had suffered and he tried to meet Gandhi in the Congress Session, at Lucknow in 1916 and urged him to visit himself to Champaran and see the plight of the poor and helpless farmers. At later stage also on one or two more occasions, requested Gandhi to visit Champaran. But as Gandhi was having no sufficient time, he was unable to visit the place. But in early 1917 somehow he reached Patna with Rajkumar Shukla.

After reaching the place, his objective was to inquire into the condition of the Champaran agriculturists and understand their grievances against the indigo planters. For this purpose it was necessary that he should meet thousands of the ryots. But he deemed it essential, before starting on his inquiry, to know the planters’ side of the case and see the Commissioner of the Division. He sought the appointments with both. The Secretary of the Planters’ Association told me plainly that Gandhi was an outsider and thus had no business to come between the planters and their tenants. However, he was plainly told that if he had any representation to make, he could submit it in writing. On this point Gandhi said, “I politely told him that I did not regard myself as an outsider, and that I had every right to inquire into the condition of the tenants if they desired me to do so. The commissioner, on whom I called, proceeded to bully me, and advised me forthwith to leave Tirhut. I acquainted my co-workers with all this, and told them that there was a likelihood of Government stopping me from proceeding further, and that
I might have to go to jail earlier than I had expected, and that if I was to be arrested, it would be best that the arrest should take place in Motihari or if possible in Bettiah. It was advisable, therefore, that I should go to those places as early as possible.”

At that time, Champaran was a district of the Tirhut division and Motihari was its headquarters. Rajkumar Shukla’s place was in the vicinity of Bettiah, and the tenants belonging to the *Kothis* (houses) in its neighbourhood were the poorest in the district. Rajkumar Shukla wanted me to see them and I was equally anxious to do so.

So he started with his co-workers from Motihari the same day. They had scarcely gone half way when a messenger from the Police superintendent overtook them and said that the latter had sent his compliments. Gandhi saw what he meant. Having left Dharanidhar babu to proceed to the original destination, he got into the hired carriage which the messenger had brought. He then served on him a notice to leave Champaran, and drove him to his place. On his asking him to acknowledge the service of the notice, he wrote to the effect that he did not propose to comply with it and leave Champaran till his inquiry was completed. Thereupon he received summons to take his trail the next day for disobeying the orders to leave Champaran.

However, Gandhi kept awake that whole night writing letters and giving necessary instructions to Babu Brajkishore Prasad. The news of the notice and the summons spread like wildfire, and he was told that Motihari that day witnessed unprecedented scenes. Gorakhbabu’s house and the court house overflowed with men. Fortunately he had finished all his work during the night and so was able to cope with the crowds. His companions proved the greatest help. They occupied themselves with regulating the crowds, for the latter followed him whenever he went.

111. Ibid., p. 342.
A sort of friendliness sprang up between the officials – Collector, Magistrate, Police Superintendent – and Gandhi. He might have legally resisted the notices served on him. Instead he accepted them all, and his conduct towards the officials was correct. They thus saw that he did not want to offer civil resistance to their orders. In this way they were put at ease, and instead of harassing him they gladly availed themselves of his and his co-workers co-operation in regarding the crowds. But it was an ocular demonstration to them of the fact that their authority was shaken. The people had for the moment lost all fear of punishment and yielded obedience to the power of love which their new friend exercised.

It must be noted here that no one knew him in Champaran. The peasants were all ignorant. Champaran, being far up north of the Ganges, and right at the foot of the Himalayas in close proximity to Nepal, was cut off from the rest of India. The Congress was practically unknown in those parts. Even those who had heard the name of the Congress shrank from joining it or even mentioning it. “That day in Champaran was an unforgettable event in my life and a red-letter day for the peasants and for me. Accordingly to the law, I was to be on my trail, but truly speaking Government was to be on its trail. The commissioner only succeeded in trapping Government in the net which he had started for me.”

Accordingly, the trail began. The Government pleader, the Magistrate and other officials were at a loss to know what to do. The Government pleader was pressing the Magistrate to postpone the case. But Gandhi interfered and requested the Magistrate not to postpone the case, as he wanted to plead guilty to having disobeyed the order to leave Champaran. To Gandhi, there was no occasion to postpone the hearing, but as both the Magistrate and the Government pleader had been taken by surprise, the Magistrate postponed the judgment. Meanwhile Gandhi had

112. Ibid., pp. 342-344.
wired full details to the Viceroy, to Patna friends, as also to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others. This gave a moral strength to Gandhi and his supporters.

Before he could appear before the court to receive the sentence, the Magistrate sent a written message that the Lieutenant Governor had ordered the case against him to be withdrawn, and the Collector wrote to him saying that he was at liberty to conduct the proposed inquiry, and that he might count on whatever help he needed from officials. None of them was prepared for this prompt and happy issue.

Gandhi called on the Collector, Mr. Heycock. He seemed to be a good man, anxious to do justice. He told him that he might ask for whatever papers he desired to see, and that he was at liberty to see him whenever he liked. The country thus had its first direct object-lesson in Civil Disobedience. The affair was freely discussed both locally and in the press, and his inquiry got unexpected publicity. It was necessary for his inquiry that the Government should remain neutral. But the inquiry did not need support from press reporters or leading articles in the press. Indeed the situation in Champaran was so delicate and difficult that over-energetic criticism or highly coloured reports might easily damage the cause which he was seeking to espouse. So he wrote to the editors of the principal papers requesting them not to trouble to send any reporters, as he could send them whatever might be necessary for publication and keep them informed accordingly.

However, Gandhi was fully aware that the Government attitude countenancing his presence had displeased the Champaran planters, and he knew that even the officials, though they could say nothing openly, could hardly have liked it. Incorrect or misleading reports, therefore, were likely to incense them all the more, and their ire, instead of descending on him, would be sure to descend on the poor fear-stricken
ryots and seriously hinder his search for the truth about the case. In spite of these precautions the planters engineered against him a poisonous agitation. All sorts of falsehoods appeared in the press about his co-workers and even himself. But his extreme cautiousness and his insistence on truth, even to the minutest detail, turned the edge of their sword.

Thus, the Champaran struggle was a proof of the fact that disinterested service of the people in any sphere ultimately could help the country politically. Crowds of peasants came to make their statements, and they were followed by an army of companions who filled the compound and garden to overflowing. Those who took down the statements had to observe certain rules. Each peasant had to be closely cross-examined, and whoever failed to satisfy the test was rejected. This entailed a lot of extra time but most of the statements were thus rendered incontrovertible.

However, an officer from the CID used to be always present when these statements were recorded. They could have prevented him, but they had decided the very beginning not only not to mind the presence of CID officers, but to treat them with courtesy and to give them all the information that it was possible to give them. This was far from doing them any harm. On the contrary the very fact that the statements were taken down in the presence of the CID officers made the peasants more confident and fearless. Whilst on the one hand excessive fear of the CID was driven out of peasants’ mind, on the other, their presence exercised a natural restraint on exaggeration. It was the business of CID friends to entrap people and so the peasants had necessarily to be cautious.

Further, along with the writing down of the statements, Gandhi in consultation with his fellow, decided to open primary schools in six villages. One of the conditions was that the villagers would provide the
boarding and lodging. And the teachers would come up from the educated volunteers. Apart from this, he also laid down emphasis on the aspects of cleanliness, sanitation work, cleaning of the ponds, wells and their other home related works.

Along with the community development, the work of recording statements of the ryot’s grievances was progressing apace. Thousands of such statements were taken, and they could not but have their considerable impact. The ever growing number of ryots coming to make their statements increased the planters’ wrath and they moved heaven and earth to counteract his inquiry.

One day he received a letter from the Bihar Government to the following effect: “Your inquiry has been sufficiently prolonged; should you not now bring it to an end and leave Bihar?”\(^{113}\) The letter was couched in polite language, but its meaning was clear and obvious.

Accordingly, Gandhi wrote in reply that the inquiry was bound to be prolonged, and unless and until it resulted in bringing relief to the people, he had no intention of leaving Bihar. Furthermore, he pointed out that it was open to Government to terminate his inquiry by accepting the ryots’ grievances as genuine and redressing them, or by recognizing that the ryots had made out a prima facie case for an official inquiry which had to be immediately instituted.

As a result, Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor, asked him to see him and expressed his willingness to appoint an inquiry and invited him to be a member of the committee. Gandhi ascertained the names of the other members, and after consultation with his co-workers agreed to serve on the Committee, on condition that he should be free to confer with his co-workers during the progress of the inquiry, that Government should recognize that, by being a member of the committee, he did not

\(^{113}\) Ibid., p. 353.
cease to be the ryots’ advocate, and that in case the result of the inquiry failed to give him satisfaction, he could be free to guide and advise the ryots as to what line of action they had to take.

Consequently, Sir Edward Gait accepted the condition as just and proper and announced the inquiry. The late Sir Frank Sly was appointed Chairman of the Committee. The Committee found in favour of the ryots, and recommended that the planters should refund a portion of the exactions made by them which the Committee had found to be unlawful, and that the Tinkathia system should be abolished by law.

Sir Edward Gait had a large share in getting the Committee to make a unanimous report and in getting the Agrarian Bill passed in accordance with the Committee’s recommendations. Had he not adopted firm attitude, and had he not brought all his tact to bear on the subject, the report would not have been unanimous and the Agrarian Act would not have been passed. The planters wielded extraordinary power. They offered strenuous opposition to the bill in spite of the report, but Sir Edward Gait remained firm upto the last and fully carried out the recommendations of the Committee.

As a result, Gandhi’s method worked and the Tinkathia system which had been in existence for about a century was thus abolished, and with it the planters’ raj came to an end. The ryots, who had all along remained crushed, now somewhat came to their own, and the superstition that the stain of indigo could never be washed out, was exploded.114

**Ahmedabad Mill Strike: Another Milestone of Non-violence**

Another instance of resolution of conflict, which created history was Ahmedabad Mill Strike. When Gandhi ji was participating in the Champaran Satyagraha, he received a letter from Shrimati Anasuyabai about the condition of labour in Ahmedabad. At that time, the wages

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114. Ibid., pp. 353-354.
were low, the labourers had long been agitating for an increase. A virulent plague broke out in Ahmedabad in the later half of 1917. The mill owners gave plague-bonus to the workers to the tune of 70 per cent increase in their daily wages since August that year. When the plague was over, they withdrew the bonus, whereas the prices of essential commodities were increasing. So the workers demanded an increase in dearness allowance up to 50 per cent. The employees offered 20% increase. In fact, Shrimati Anasuyabai, had to battle against her own brothers, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the mill owners. Gandhi’s relations with them were friendly, and that made fighting with them the more difficult. So, he held consultations with them, and requested them to refer the dispute to arbitration, but they refused to recognize the principle of arbitration.

However, before coming at a final stage, Gandhi had gone through the complete study of both sides and then he had therefore to advise the labourers to go on strike. Before he did so, he came in very close contact with their leaders and explained to them the following conditions of a successful strike:

1. never to resort to violence,
2. never to molest blacklegs,
3. never to depend upon alms, and
4. to remain firm, no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread, during the strike, by other honest labour.

According to Gandhi, there could be 35% increase of dearness allowance of the workers, instead of 20% proposed by the Mill-owners and 50% demanded by the labourers. The Mill-owners stick to their old version but the labourers came down to 35% increase of D.A. The leaders of the strike understood and accepted the conditions, and the labourers pledged themselves at a general meeting not to resume work until either
their terms were accepted or the mill-owners agreed to refer the dispute to arbitration. It was only through this strike that the personalities like Vallabhbhai Patel, Shankarlal Banker came into his contact.

For the first two weeks the mill-hands exhibited great courage and self-restraint and daily held monster meetings. But at last they began to show signs of flagging. Just as physical weakness in men manifests itself in irascibility, their attitude towards the blacklegs became more and more menacing as the strike seemed to weaken, and Gandhi began to fear an outbreak of rowdyism on their part. The attendance at their daily meetings began to dwindle by degrees, and despondency and despair were writ large on the faces of those who did attend. On March 12, events took a new turn. On that day the lockout was ended, mills were opened for those workers who were prepared to work on an increase of 20%. Employers’ agents began to induce the workers to start work. Many of the workers join the mills. Gandhi asked the workers to stand by the pledge they had taken and he sent his co-workers to sustain them in their resolve. Expressing their grumble, the workers of Jugaldas Chawl told Chaganlal Gandhi, “What is it to Anasuyabai and Gandhi ji? They come and go in their cars; they eat sumptuous food, but we are suffering death-agonies; attending meetings does not prevent starvation.”

As a result, Gandhi realized that workers’ criticism was justified, but he could not tolerate the idea of their breaking the pledge. He spontaneously announced in the meeting, “Unless the strikers rally... and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food.” The announcement of the ‘fast’ turned the tables on labourers, time and again they asked him not to go on to fast but he refused to their request, instead he had been asking them to

115. Ibid., pp. 355-356.
earn their bread by labour. Now they began to work in the weaving school building under construction in the Ashram. In the meantime Vallabhbhi was trying to find some employment for the strikers under the Municipality. Shankerlal Banker and Anasuyabai also carried bricks and sand on their heads. The workers were infused with new strength. They learnt a lesson in self-help.

Gandhi began his fast on March 15, Anasuyabai and some other workers joined the fast on the first day, but they were successfully dissuaded to give it up. About his fast Gandhi clarified that his fast was undertaken not on account of the lapse of the mill-owners, but on account of the lapse of the labourers in which, as their representative, he felt he had a share. With the Mill-owners he could only plead, to fast against them would amount to coercion. With this, the morale of the workers increased and some of the mill owners agreed to give 35% increase for his sake. But Gandhi said, “Don’t give 35% out of pity for me, but do so to respect the workers’ pledge, and to give them justice.” The net result of it was that an atmosphere of good-will was created all around. The hearts of the mill-owners were touched, and they set about discovering some means for a settlement. Anasuyabehn’s house became the venue of their discussions. Sjt. Anandshankar Dhruva intervened and was in the end appointed arbitrator, and the strike was called off after Gandhi had fasted only for three days. The mill-owners commemorated the event by distributing sweets among the labourers, and thus a settlement was reached after twenty-one days’ strike. The formula was prepared like this that on the first day the labourers would get 35% increase of D.A. to enable them to uphold their pledge and on second day they will get only 20% increase to honour the employers resolve and thereafter an increase to be decided by the arbitrator. The arbitrator was to give his decision

118. Ibid., p. 360.
119. Ibid.
after three months. From the third day till the Arbitrator’s decision, a further compromise increase up to $27 \frac{1}{2}\%$ was agreed to by both the parties. It was further agreed that if the arbitrator decided upto $35\%$ increase, the mill-owners would pay $7 \frac{1}{2}\%$ more than $27 \frac{1}{2}\%$ and if he decided on $20\%$ the workers shall refund $7 \frac{1}{2}\%$. The significance of this Satyagraha proved that, the Ahmedabad strike provided the richest lessons of life. The power of love was never so effectively demonstrated to him as it was during the lock out. Ultimately, the existence of God was realized by the mass of men before him as soon as the fast was declared.\textsuperscript{120}

**Kheda Satyagraha (March–July, 1918) Experiment: An Encouraging Move**

Flooding had caused the failure of the crops in Kheda (Kaira) district of Gujarat leading to near famine conditions there in the early months of 1918. The Patidars of the area found themselves unable to pay revenue to the Government for that year. But the rules entitled them to claim suspension of the payment of revenues, if their product in a particular period of assessment was one-fourth or less of the normal yield. Accordingly, they appealed to the Government to grant them the legitimate relief. They made representations to the Government and sent deputations to wait upon the Governor of Bombay to seek justice. Mohanlal Pandaya and Shankerlal Banker helped the peasants in the case. Vithalbhai Patel began an ‘agitation’ in the Bombay Legislative Council and moved resolutions there, but to no avail. Besides, the attitude of the authorities was also unsympathetic.

However, the cultivators’ demand was as clear as daylight and so moderate as to make out a strong case for its acceptance. Under the Land Revenue Rules, if the crop was four annas or under, the cultivators could

\textsuperscript{120. CWMG, Vol. No. XIV, Op. Cit., p. 316.}
claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. According to the official figures the crop was said to be over four annas. The contention of the cultivators, on the other hand, was that it was less than four annas. But the Government was in no mood to listen, and regarded the popular demand for arbitration as lese majeste. At last all petitioning and prayer having failed, after taking counsel with co-workers, Gandhi advised the patidars to resort to Satyagraha. But he was not in favour of collecting the money and pay the revenue to the Government. He joined the deputation consisting of Vithalbhai Patel, Dinshah Wacha and Gokuldas Parekh appointed by the Bombay Governor on February 5, 1918. Further, he suggested that an independent inquiry committee be appointed to enquire into the condition of Kheda peasants’ capacity to pay revenue. The Government did not agree to it. In a letter to Vinoba Bhave, dated February 10, 1918, Gandhi wrote, “on the issue in Kheda district, Satyagraha may possibly have to be offered.” Before taking any further step, he himself went for a personal verification of the complete facts. Arrived at Nadiad on February 16, and formed groups of workers that visited 425 villages in a week’s time. He himself also visited the places and investigated the things, cross-examined peasants in 30 villages and felt that their demand for suspension of revenue was justified. At the same time the Satyagrahi volunteers had to learn the new lesson of simplicity. He could not say that they had imbibed it fully, but they considerably changed their way of life. For the Patidar farmers, too, the fight was quite a new thing. They had, therefore, to go about from villages to village explaining the principles of Satyagraha.

123. Ibid., p. 189.
In this respect, the main objective was to get rid the agriculturists of their fear by making them realize that the officials were not the masters but the servants of the people, in as much as they received their salaries from the taxpayers. And then it seemed well-nigh impossible to make them realize the duty of combating civility with fearlessness. Once they shed the fear of the officials, how could they be stopped from returning their insults? And yet if they resorted to incivility it would spoil their Satyagraha, like a drop of arsenic in milk.\textsuperscript{125} On March 22, at Nadiad, Gandhi called the meeting of the local people, about 5000 people attended the same and thus Kheda Satyagraha started. In his speech, he asked those whose crops were less than four annas to tell the Government politely that, it was not possible for them to submit to this injustice, when the crops had in fact failed, they could not pay up their dues and thereby proved themselves liars. They must realize the dues by force if they chose. Gandhi clearly told the audience what sufferings and sacrifices they must be prepared to make after they became Satyagrahis, namely:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a)] Government might recover the revenue by selling their moveable property or cattle,
  \item[b)] It might impose fines,
  \item[c)] It might confiscate jagirs, and
  \item[d)] It might even put people in jail on the ground that they were defiant.
\end{itemize}

Despite all these developments the Government attached an onion field. The attachment being had in law in Gandhi’s view, he asked Mohanlal Pandya and seven or eight more to reap the crops. “I did not regard this as civil-disobedience, but even if it was, I suggested that this attachment of standing crops, though it might be in accordance with law, was morally wrong, and was nothing short of looting, and that therefore it

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
was the people’s duty to remove the onion in spite of the order of attachment. This was a good opportunity for the people to learn a lesson in courting fines or imprisonment, which was the necessary consequence of such disobedience. For Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya it was a thing after his heart. He did not like the campaign to end without someone undergoing suffering in the shape of imprisonment for something done consistently with the principles of Satyagraha. So he volunteered to remove the onion crop from the field, and in this seven or eight friends joined him.”  

Accordingly, it was impossible for the Government to leave them free. The arrest of Sjt. Mohanlal and his companions added to the people’s enthusiasm. When the fear of jail disappeared, repression put heart into the people. Crowds of them besieged the court-house on the day of the hearing. Pandya and his companions were convicted and sentenced to a brief term of imprisonment. Gandhi was of opinion that the conviction was wrong, because the act of removing the onion crop could not come under the definition of ‘theft’ in the Penal Code. But no appeal was filed as the policy was to avoid the law courts. A procession escorted the ‘convicts’ to jail, and that day Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya earned from the people the honoured title of ‘dungli Chor’ (onion thief) which he enjoyed to that day.  

The four months long Kheda Satyagraha had a very good effect both on the people and the officials. However, the end was far from making Gandhi feel happy, in as much as it lacked the grace with which the termination of every Satyagraha campaign ought to be accompanied. The collector carried on as though he had done nothing by way of a settlement. The poor were to be granted, suspension, but hardly any got the benefit of it. It was the people’s right to determine who was poor, but they could not exercise it. He was sad that they had not the strength to

126. Ibid., p. 365.
127. Ibid.
exercise the right. Although, therefore, the termination was celebrated as a triumph of Satyagraha, he could not enthuse over it, as it lacked the essentials of a complete triumph. The end of a Satyagraha campaign could be described as worthy, only when it left the Satyagrahis stronger and more spirited than they were in the beginning. The campaign was not, however, without its indirect results which they could see that day and the benefit of which they were reaping. Thus, the significance of Kheda Satyagraha can be viewed in the light that it was the first occasion when Gandhi involved the common people/peasants in mass action and educated them on the lines of Satyagraha in which they did considerably well. The Kheda Satyagraha marked the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat, thus, proving the beginning of their true political education.128

The Rowlatt Act Satyagraha: Another Significant Experiment
The Progative of Rowlatt Act of February 1919, made him turn to all India Satyagraha for the first time. Period from April 6, 1919 to 1922, Gandhi’s transition from a small figure in Indian nationalist politics to most influential leader. Enactment of Rowlatt Act provided the base for Gandhi’s participation. The Rowlatt Bills aimed at providing the special powers to Government to deal with the conspiracies and the people directly involved in them. The people of India were on the one side and Government officials and police on the other, representing the Government of India officials. The main issue was the most unjustifiable imposition of restrictions on the liberty of citizens, and the main form of Satyagraha adopted, was the civil-disobedience of certain unwanted laws selected by the Satyagraha committee and Gandhi drew up a pledge on 18th March 1919. The plan of action was originated in Ahmedabad whereas the Satyagraha headquarter was kept in Bombay for further

128. Ibid., p. 366.
deliberations where taking it as a national wrong, they formed the Satyagraha Sabha. The main reasons against the Rowlatt Act were:

1. Powers were out of proportion to danger in view of viceroy’s emergency powers,
2. Bill was instrument of the further depression and distrust,
3. Bill negated Montague Chelmsford reforms, and
4. Against indecent manners of forcing bills on Indians.

The specific news came that the Rowlatt Bill had been published as an Act. That night Gandhi fell asleep while thinking over the question. Towards the small hours of the morning he woke up somewhat earlier than usual. He was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness when suddenly the idea broke upon him – it was as if in a dream. “Early in the morning I related the whole story to Rajagopalachari.”

The idea came to him last night in a dream that they should call upon the country to observe a general hartal (strike). Satyagraha, to Gandhi, was a process of self-purification, and a sacred fight, and it seemed with an act of self-purification and penance. It had to be followed in the following manner:

1. Let all the people of India therefore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer. The Musalmans may not fast for more than one day; so the duration of the fast should be twenty-four hours.
2. The date of the hartal was first fixed on the 30th March 1919, but was subsequently changed to 6th April.

Before taking any further action, the proper notice was given to the Viceroy. Signatures were collected for the pledge and public meetings were held to educate the masses for the Satyagraha.

129. Ibid., pp. 382-383.
The people thus had only a short notice of the hartal. As the work had to be started at once, it was hardly possible to give longer notice. But who knew how it all could come about? The whole of India from one end to the other, towns as well as villages, observed a complete hartal on that day. It was a most wonderful spectacle.\textsuperscript{130}

Accordingly, at many places, the hartal was observed on March 30\textsuperscript{th}. Delhi to observe hartal on 30\textsuperscript{th} March. Delhi had never witnessed a hartal like that before. Hindus and Musalmans seemed united like one man. The police checked the hartal procession as it was proceeding towards the railway station, and opened fire, causing a number of casualties and the reign of repression commenced in Delhi. On the morning of the 6\textsuperscript{th} April, the citizens of Bombay flocked to the Chowpati for a bath in the sea, after which they moved on in a procession to Thakurdvar. The procession included a fair sprinkling of women and children, while the Musalmans joined it in large numbers.

Thus, the move was a complete success in Bombay. However, the movement was confined only to the cities and big towns. In the final stage, the Satyagraha committee was held under Gandhi’s leadership to disobey law, dealing with literature and registration of newspapers. ‘Hind Swaraj’ was one of them. When Gandhiji went to Punjab after the celebrations in Bombay were over, he was arrested in mid way and sent back to Bombay, the leaders thought that he was arrested and it resulted in violence and disturbances at many places in Punjab and Gujarat.

Taking it as a personal responsibility, he termed the acts as the “Himalayan Miscalculation” and announced the suspension of civil-disobedience on April 18, 1919. Because of the instances of the violence, to purify them, he addressed a meeting in which he clarified: “I tried to bring home to the people the sense of their wrong, declared a penitential

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p. 383
fast of three days for myself, appealed to the people to go on a similar fast of three days, and suggested to those who had been guilty of acts of violence to confess their guilt. I saw my duty as clear as daylight. It was unbearable for me to find that the labourers, amongst whom I had spent a good deal of my time, whom I had served, and from whom I had expected better things, had taken part in the riots, and I felt I was a sharer in their guilt. Just as I suggested to the people to confess their guilt, I suggested to the Government to condone the crime. Neither accepted my suggestion... If those amongst whom I worked and whom I expected to be prepared for non-violence and self-suffering, could not be non-violence, Satyagraha was certainly impossible. I was firmly of opinion that those who wanted to lead the people to Satyagraha ought to be able to keep the people within the limited non-violence expected of them. I hold the same opinion even today.”

The significance of the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha is an evidence of the fact that it was primarily confined to urban areas leading Gandhi to be an all India leader, plus the attention was focused on Gandhi’s personality, his ideology and technique of Satyagraha which made Gandhi a political leader with a tremendous moral appeal with a difference.

Non-Co-operation Movement: Historical Significance:

Hardly had one year passed after the Satyagraha against the Rowlatt Bills in April 1919, when the Hunter Committee Report was published. It indemnified the officers concerned and whitewashed the actions of those who were responsible for the massacres of Jallianwala Bagh and atrocities of the Punjab. Another grievance especially concerning the Muslims of India served as an additional insult. They had been promised by the British Prime Minister during the war that Turkey

131. Ibid., pp. 390-391.
would be given such terms as would keep the Khalifate inviolate. That did not happen as evidenced by the terms of treaty which were published on 20th May 1920. These clubbed together as the Punjab and the Khalifat wrongs were the cause of the next Satyagraha campaign that Gandhi ji launched. It took the form of non-violent, non-co-operation and it was declared on 1st August, 1920.

In his manifesto issued on 10th March, there were already clear indications that non-co-operation was imminent. He informed the public that, “Now a word as to what may be done if the demands are not granted. The barbarous method is warfare open or secret. This must be ruled out if only because it is impracticable... Non-co-operation therefore is the only remedy left open to us. It is the cleanest remedy as it is the most effective, when it is absolutely free from violence. Voluntary withdrawal (of all help to Government) alone is the test of popular feeling and dissatisfaction...”

Further, he had already announced that the first of August would be as important as event in the history of India as was the 6th April last year. The 6th of April had marked the beginning of the end of the Rowlatt Act. The power that wrested justice from an unwilling Government was the power of Satyagraha, whether it was known by the name of Civil-Disobedience or Non-co-operation. As in the past, the commencement was to be marked by fasting and prayer, suspension of business and by meetings to pass resolutions praying for the revision of peace terms and justice for the Punjab, and for inculcating non-co-operation until justice had been done. The giving up of titles was to begin from that day. But the greatest thing was to organize and evolve order and discipline.

Here, it is important to mention that the Khilafat Committee had already accepted non-co-operation on 28th May, 1920 and the Special

Session of the Congress had accepted it on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1920. The movement was called progressive non-violent, non-co-operation. In the first place, there was the five-fold boycott of titles and honours, of elections and legislatures, of schools and colleges, of courts and tribunals and of foreign cloth. There was also a constructive side to it. National Schools and Institutions were to be started, arbitration courts and Panchayats were to be established, spinning on charkhas was to begin. Then Government levees, durbars and 'all semi-official or official functions were to be boycotted, sale and use of drinks and drugs were to be prevented through peaceful picketing. People were asked not to offer themselves as recruits for civil or military service.

It has been observed that never before was the country so awakened, so active, so united and so determined as during the eventful months of 1921-22. Hindus and Muslims seemed to come together into a single community. The movement which began with a simple hartal, fasting and prayer spread like wild fire having greater impact. The masses took up the campaign of prohibition spontaneously and tried to enforce it through peaceful picketing. There was some sporadic mob-violence, but on the whole, the campaign was non-violent, vigorous and effective. National schools sprang up by hundreds. The Congress membership also went up to fifty lakhs. The Tilak Swaraj Fund was over-subscribed and went up to 115 lakhs, at that time it was a very handsome amount. About 20 lakhs of charkhas began to ply in India. On its part, the Government was affecting arrests on a large scale. No effective workers were spared. In the United provinces and Bengal, the volunteer organizations were declared unlawful and mass arrests for civil disobedience became the order of the day. When the Congress met in December 1921, more than 30,000 Congress workers were in jail. Congress in turn decided to enroll 50,000 new volunteers, pledged to non-violence. Gandhi was preparing to
launch an extensive no-tax campaign in Bardoli early in 1922, when the murder of some twenty police constables and a sub-inspector in Chauri-Chaura, coupled with riots attending the visit of the prince of Wales, led him to induce the Working Committee of the Congress to suspend mass civil disobedience in favour of a comprehensive constructive programme. He himself was arrested on March 10 and was sentenced to six years’ imprisonment for seditious writing. He pleaded guilty and said that it was his duty to preach disaffection and also requested the court to award the fullest penalty.

Although the immediate objectives of the 1920-22 campaign were not gained, the indirect gains were invaluable. Gandhi declared that in that period the country had advanced by at least thirty years, if not more. The Governor of Bombay was reported to have remarked that the movement was “within an inch of success.”

**Bardoli Movement: Another Classic**

Bardoli had come to a momentous decision. It had made its final and irrevocable choice. Viththalbhai Patel, the President, addressed a conference of the representatives of the taluka in a speech impressive for its warning. He certainly did not mince matters. There was an audience of Khaddar-clad representatives numbering 4,000. There were five hundred women, a large majority of whom were also in Khaddar. They were interested and interesting listeners. It was an audience of sober, responsible men and women with a stake. After having fully understood and considered the conditions essential for the starting of mass civil disobedience, this conference of the inhabitants of the Bardoli taluka resolved that the taluka was fit for mass civil disobedience. This conference was of the opinion:

a) That for the redress of India’s grievances, unity among Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Christians and other communities of India was absolutely necessary.

b) That non-violence, patience and endurance were the only remedy for the redress of the said grievances.

c) That the use of the spinning wheel in every home and the adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven garments to the exclusion of all other cloth by every individual were indispensable for India’s freedom.

d) That Swaraj was impossible without complete removal of untouchability by the Hindus.

e) That for the people’s progress and for the attainment of freedom, readiness to sacrifice movable and immovable property, to suffer imprisonment and if necessary, to lay down one’s life was indispensable.135

In comparison with other Satyagrahas, Bardoli Satyagraha was equally important and significant in changing the attitude of the masses, in terms of mass mobilization or the shifting of the people towards the non-violent methods. Or in other words it may be said that all the Satyagraha campaigns in India so far described pale into insignificance before the epic struggle wages by the peasantry of Bardoli. The issues involved were of utmost importance to the whole of the ryotwari area. The bureaucracy also applied all its force to crush the movement and yielded only when they saw that it was impossible to kill the spirit of the people.

The Bardoli Satyagraha was started in 1922, when the first non-co-operation movement was in full swing, Bardoli taluka would have been the scene of the fiercest struggle and a place where all the items of the

135. Ibid., 02-02-1922, Vol. IV, No. 5, p. 72.
non-cooperation programme would have been put into practice. But the Chauri Chaura incident of violence by volunteers deprived Bardoli of that honour. The no-tax campaign was indefinitely postponed. But later, in 1928, Bardoli fulfilled its destiny, for in that year, it launched the momentous no-tax campaign which has been recognized as a landmark in the history of Satyagraha.

The Government of Bombay revises once in 30 years the assessment on land in every taluka. Mostly revision means an increase in the assessment. In the case of Bardoli and Chorasi talukas they raised it by 30 per cent. Protests brought down the percentage of the increase to 22, but the peasants challenged even this decision and demanded that an open inquiry should be held, before there was any enhancement in the revenue. The Government did not heed the protests. After much patient deliberation, the peasants took the plunge. They held conferences and passed resolutions and gave due notice to their intention to withhold payment in case the Government stuck to its decision. The population of the taluka numbered about 88,000 and the revenue demand according to the new scale was about Rs. 6,27,000. Gandhi studied the situation and blessed the struggle. At the request of the peasants Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel took up the leadership. He infused in them the determination to carry on the campaign to the bitter end.

Men, women and children ready to make all the sacrifices that Satyagraha might call for, thronged at meetings held by the Sardar. The whole taluka was electrified in a few days and the atmosphere was that of the old days of 1922. The Government tried its best to compel payment. It tried flattery, bribery, threats, fines, imprisonment, forfeiture, and lathicharges. It attempted to divide the communities. Property on a large scale was attached and sold for a song to outsiders as no local buyer came forward. They attached about 1400 acres of land and sold it by auction.
Pathans were employed to threaten people and created an atmosphere of fear. But all this only infused more solidarity in the taluka. A strong social boycott was imposed on all Government representatives and against those who brought the attached property. The whole of India sympathized with the struggle and looked with admiration on the heroes of Bardoli. Women, no less than men, took part in the struggle. Several members of the Legislature resigned as a protest against the repressive policy of the Government. The matter was also discussed in the Parliament. The peasants stood firm and non-violent. After five and a half months’ struggle, the Government yielded and the Governor appointed a committee of enquiry. All property that had been attached was restored and village officers who had resigned were reinstated. The Committee found that the complaints of the peasants were substantially true and instead of 22 per cent, they recommended only a 6 ¼ per cent increase.

Thus, the campaign demonstrated beyond doubt the efficacy of the weapon of Satyagraha. The ryots’ cause was just, their case unassailable, and their method non-violent. At the close of the historic struggle, Shrimati Sarojini wrote to Gandhi, “Your dream was to make Bardoli the perfect example of Satyagraha and Bardoli has fulfilled itself in its own fashion by interpreting and perfecting your dream.”136 Accordingly, the non-violent method proved its mettle to solve the conflict.

Civil Disobedience Movement For Swaraj 1930-31:
The next step was Civil Disobedience not for the removal of any specific grievances but to get Swaraj itself. Although the years 1924-29 were years of constructive activity on the part of the Congress yet there was a growing feeling, particularly among youth that the time was ripe for a declaration of Indian Independence. Hitherro, Congress had talked in terms of Dominion Status, but at the December 1927 Session, a

resolution was passed declaring ‘the goal of the Indian people to be complete independence.’ As a countermove to the unwanted and boycotted all-white Simon Commission on political reforms (1928-29), Congress appointed its own Committee to draw up a Dominion Status Constitution for India, this was adopted by the All Parties Conference held at Lucknow at the end of 1928. The Calcutta Session of the Congress, December 1928, undertook to adopt the constitution recommended by the All Parties Conference, provided it was accepted by the British Parliament in its present form before December 31, 1929. But in case it was rejected, the Congress would be free to organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation to advise the country to refuse taxes, and to carry on civil disobedience in such other manner as might be decided upon. However, the Government paid no heed to this resolution, and hence the Lahore Session of the Congress, December 1929, changes the Congress creed from Dominion Status to complete Independence. It instructed Congress members of the legislatures to resign and the people to take no part in the elections. It appealed to the nation ‘zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress’ and authorized the All India Congress Committee to launch a programme of Civil-disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, whenever it saw fit. This was the formal beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930.

The Working Committee of the Congress decided to observe January 26, 1930, as Independence Day throughout the country, and in February authorized Gandhi ji to start Civil Disobedience in the manner he thought best. It said that civil disobedience for the purpose of obtaining complete independence should be initiated and controlled only by those who believed in non-violence as an article of faith.
Historical Dandi March (Salt Satyagraha):

Gandhi ji opened the campaign with his dramatic march from Sabarmati to Dandi to break the Salt Laws. The 200 mile foot journey was completed on April 5, and on April 6, Gandhi ji picked up a pinch of untaxed salt and broke the law. The All India campaign was on. Though Gandhi ji was arrested on May 4, leadership of the campaign passed to a succession of others – each relinquishing command as he was put in to jail. Salt raids continued, and the repressive measures of Government became more and more severe. India became a vast prison house. During this movement, the lathi was brought into full play by the police and the number of firings that took place in a number of towns showed that the Government was trying to deal with the situation in a ruthless manner.

Mass raids on salt works and depots at different places in three or four provinces were a special feature during this movement. The Dharasana raid was witnessed by a number of foreign correspondents and by impartial observers in India. The volunteers wrote new history with their blood. The marvelous endurance and discipline of the non-violent raiders at Dharasana and Wadala drew unstinted and unqualified praise from eminent foreigners like Mr. Brailsford and Mr. Slocombe. On the 21st May, 2500 volunteers raided the salt pans at Dharasana. Two hundred and ninety were injured by lathi charges. Two of them subsequently died. Fifteen thousand people, volunteers and non-volunteers raided the Wadala pans. About 150 were injured by lathis. At Sanikatta ten to fifteen thousand people, in a mass, raided the salt depot and carried away hundreds of maunds of salt. But the point in a Satyagraha raid was not the amount of material removed but the bold, defiant, open action resorted to by the masses without the idea of using violence or counter violence, but with a clear idea about the suffering involved and of the right vindicated.
Mr. Webb Miller of New Freeman wrote about Dharasana as follows:

"During eighteen years of reporting... I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharasana. Sometimes the scenes were so painful that I had to turn away momentarily. One surprising feature was the discipline of the volunteers. It seemed they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhi’s non-violent creed."\(^{137}\)

There was not a single case of retaliation or counter violence or even cursing. And this went on for days.

Though people showed such exemplary patience and conducted themselves quite non-violently, the police and the military acted most brutally and inhumanly against unarmed thousands that were ready to sacrifice themselves and shed their blood for their country. Many times even the innocent spectators were hit hard and hundreds of them were injured.

During the whole year a number of ordinances were promulgated. Lathi charges and belabouring by police became the order of the day. During the months of April and May alone, firing was resorted to at nineteen places killing 111 and injuring 422. But the people kept calm and suffered without violence on their side. Women in large numbers took part in this movement and persisted in spite of very harsh treatment.

In the meantime, attempts were being made to negotiate a settlement. Some of them were by Mr. Slocombe, Shri Sapru, Shri Jayakar and Mr. Horace Alexander, but all of them failed. The Round Table Conference, which had been convened in spite of the happenings in India, helped to speed Gandhi’s release. On January 26, 1931, Gandhi ji and twenty-six colleagues came out of jail to begin negotiations which ultimately resulted in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of March 5, 1931. Mutual

good will on the part of Lord Irwin and Gandhi was responsible for the successful termination of the negotiations. The pact was a moral victory for the Congress and its principle of non-violence. But Government parted with no real political power. However, the pact offered a breathing spell rather than a real peace.

The 1930-31 movement lasted a complete year. Nationalist India waged a relentless struggle, facing hardship and losses cheerfully, with no thought of resorting to violence. The British Government, armed to the teeth with all modern weapons, sought to crush the spirit of India with ordinances, the lathi and other methods of terrorism. The main forms of Satyagraha current during the struggle were civil breach of Salt Laws, non-violent raids on salt pans and depots, breach of the ordinances, no-tax campaigns in certain parts of the country, civil breach of the press laws, boycott of foreign articles, special boycott of British cloth and British concerns, general non-co-operation with Government, and boycott of the legislatures. The campaign marked a distinct moral victory, which created self-confidence among the people and confidence in the weapons of Satyagraha. The pact that came at the end, led the way to Congress participation in the Round Table Conference and many more fruitful discussions.

**Civil Disobedience For Swaraj 1932-34:**

This was really a continuance of the struggle begun in 1930 with a break of nine months during which Gandhi attended the Round Table Conference in London without any visible success. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact, which was signed on 5th March 1931, was broken almost before the ink was dry. Lord Willingdon, who had succeeded Lord Irwin as Viceroy, was in no mood for compromise. When Gandhi returned from England from the Round Table Conference, he found India under Ordinance-Raj, with leading Congressmen under arrest. Although Gandhi endeavoured to
present the Congress point of view, the Viceroy was not in a mood to yield and Civil Disobedience had to be resumed. In the mean time, Gandhi and some fifteen thousand other prominent Congressmen throughout India were picked up and arrested and detained without trial. Besides, Congress property was seized and Congress and allied organizations were declared unlawful. Ordinance rule was the order of the day, with the lathi and baton very much in evidence. Soon the jails in the country were filled to capacity, with more than a hundred thousand prisoners. Repression was thorough and ruthless. But Gandhi’s approach had to show its future results.

On 12th September 1932, the country suddenly heard the news that Gandhi ji was going to fast ‘Unto Death’ over the question of the Communal Award, which had proposed separate electorates for the Harijans. Gandhi commenced the fast on September 20, and broke it when the Poona Pact, which restored joint electorates to the Harijans, was signed on the 26th. Civil Disobedience was continuing, but the removal of untouchability came to receive more serious attention. Ultimately, after a meeting of Congress workers in Poona on 12th July 1933, mass civil disobedience was given up and only individual civil disobedience continued. Attempts at reconciliation with Government failed and on 7th April 1934, civil disobedience was suspended for some time.

**Individual Satyagraha 1940-41:**

1934-39 was a period during which the Congress had decided to enter the legislatures and at the same time to carry on constructive activities among the masses. 1939 September saw the coming of the Second World War. Britain declared war on behalf of India as well without consulting her. That gave occasion to the Congress legislators to resign their seats.
Individual Satyagraha campaign was a type by itself. The life and death struggle in which England was engaged and the general non-embarrassment policy followed by the Congress decided the form of Satyagraha. Gandhi in his speech initiating the movement said that the virtue of waiting was becoming a vice. Several alternatives had been suggested to Britain. It was asked to declare Indian independence but that question was evaded. It was asked to give India a constitution framed by a Constituent Assembly. The idea was laughed out. Full armed co-operation was offered if India was recognized as free. However, that was rejected. The exercise of restraint was good so long as it helped the spirit to live but it turned into a vice as soon as it threatened to kill the very spirit. He said, “I am not only speaking for the Congress but for all who stand for national freedom, unadulterated independence. I should be untrue to all of them if I said now: ‘No embarrassment to the British…’ therefore, if I exercised that self-suppression at this critical moment, it should be suicidal.” He further added, “We can’t sit still. It is not Satyagraha to watch the people being marched to jail in the exercise of their right to freedom of speech. If we looked on, the Congress would disappear and with it the national spirit.” Gandhi hit upon individual Satyagraha as the most appropriate method of expressing its dissatisfaction. It was the contention of the Congress that India should be free to carry on non-violently and openly anti-war propaganda and to preach non-co-operation with the Government in their war effort.

Gandhi interviewed the Viceroy on September 27 and 30, 1940. But the Viceroy could not concede his demand for freedom to preach the war policy of the Congress in a non-violent manner or to tell people not to help the war effort, on the grounds that all war was evil and destructive

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139. Ibid., p. 18.
in nature. The Viceroy said that he would allow the same freedom that was given to conscientious objectors in Britain to Congressmen in India, but could go no further. Then followed the inauguration of the Satyagraha campaign. Gandhi laid down very strict rules and drew up a pledge. He wanted ‘quality’ on this occasion. The campaign was opened at Paunar on October 17, 1940, when Vinoba Bhave, selected by Gandhi for this honour, made a public speech in which he preached the Congress war policy and exhorted the people not to help the war effort, as all war immoral and bad. He was arrested after he had been making speeches for four days and sentenced to three months’ imprisonment.

Gandhi then directed chosen Congressmen to march on foot towards Delhi, explaining the Congress war policy as they went. Hundreds started, but many were arrested and sentenced before leaving the bounds of their own provinces. Later Gandhi prescribed that instead of speeches and statements Satyagrahis should repeat a slogan that it was wrong to help the British war effort with men and money and that non-violence was the best way of resisting all wars. On this issue about thirty thousand people courted jail. It is significant that most of the Congress representatives in the Legislatures, Central and Provincial, in District Boards and Municipalities, in Congress organizations, and in public life found themselves in jail in this campaign. Eleven members of the Working Committee, 176 members of the All India Congress, 29 ex-Ministers, 22 members of the Central Legislature and 400 of the Provincial Legislatures courted jail. This campaign continued until the end of 1941, when the imminent invasion of India by the Japanese led Government to release the Satyagrahis in an attempt to secure cooperation in the war effort.
Quit India 1942-44: Unique Soul Force: The Move and Its Impact

In December 1941, Japanese planes swooped on Pearl Harbour and forced America into the war. The soldiers of Nippon, however, marched with incredible speed and stepped from island to island in the Pacific. They were marching across Burma and Japanese bombs had already fallen on Indian soil. The prestige of the British was at its lowest.

It was at this time that Sir Stafford Cripps brought his proposals to India which were rejected by all parties because they had no substance. Cripps left India angered and bitter, and anti-British feeling ran the highest. Gandhi saw that the parting of ways had come if India were to defend herself. She must free herself from the enervating influence of British Imperialism that was his feeling. He had no objection to the armies of United Nations being here but he said that it must be with the consent of Free India. In July 1942, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution upon Britain to withdraw from India. The resolution said that if the appeal failed, Congress would then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all its non-violent strength for the vindication of the political rights and the liberty of India, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The All India Congress Committee, meeting in Bombay, August 7 and 8, endorsed this action, resolving ‘to sanction for the vindication of India’s inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle.’ It declared that such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhi.

Before the next day dawned, Gandhi and all the Working Committee members were arrested. Within a week everyone who mattered in the Congress organization was in jail. Then followed rule by ordinances, firings, lathi charges – even bombings from airplanes were
reported from some places. At some centres people, driven to desperation, retorted in kind, attacking railways and the police. Government reported that 56 people succumbed to mob fury. It is estimated that more than 2,000 unarmed and innocent people were shot down and about 6,000 were injured by the police and military. Tens of thousands were wounded by lathis, about 150,000 jailed, and about a million and a half of rupees were imposed as collective fines. There was no record of tortures, burning of houses, looting, and other atrocities by the police and the military.

The struggle which continued to 5th May 1944, was truly remarkable and incomparable with anything in past history. The few acts of unorganized violence could detract in no way from the mass awakening and mass revolt witnessed throughout India and the predominantly non-violent manner in which the masses conducted themselves. What shape the movement would have taken in Gandhi’s hands was a matter for conjecture. But even without his guidance, or without the guidance of any top-ranking leader, the struggle continued unrelentingly and paved the way for final victory. The Quit India Campaign will ever remain an important chapter in the history of non-violent resistance movements all over the world.

**Success Story of Vykom Satyagraha: Strengthened Gandhi’s Faith in non-violence**

In the history of Satyagraha movements, the Vykom Satyagraha has a very significant place which was undertaken in 1924 and 1925 to obtain permission for “untouchables” and “unapproachables” to use certain roads towards the temple in Vykom in Travancore, South India.

The anti-untouchability campaign at Vykom provided an interesting study in Satyagraha, and as it was being conducted in a calm spirit, it certainly proved of great use for future workers along similar
lines. The Travancore authorities, whilst they still remained unbending regarding the prohibition order, were carrying out their purpose in a courteous manner. The public already knew how quickly the authorities had tried to check violence against Satyagrahis. The treatment in the gaols too was in keeping with their conduct in the open.\textsuperscript{140} Gandhi used the technique of Satyagraha for social change during the Vykom Satyagraha where untouchables were not allowed by the Brahmins to use the public road nearing the Shiva Temple. They were put in great trouble especially during the rainy season as there was no other road to pass through for the routine work. Gandhi supported and guided the Satyagraha movement undertaken by the untouchables of Travancore State and some other progressive and enthusiastic reformers in 1924. No doubt, it took a longer time but ultimately successfully changed the attitude of the high caste Brahmins and the untouchables were not only allowed to use the road in question but they were also permitted the entry in the temple premises for worship.

It was experienced that Hindu reformers who were intent on removal of untouchability had to understand the implications of Vykom Satyagraha and its results. The immediate goal of the Satyagrahis was the opening of the roads surrounding the temple and not their entry into the latter. Their contention was that the roads had to be opened to the so-called untouchables as they were Hindus and even non-Hindus. That point had been completely gained. But whilst Satyagraha was directed to the opening of roads, the ultimate aim of reformers was undoubtedly removal of every disability that ‘the untouchables’ were labouring under and which the other Hindus were not. It, therefore included access to temples, wells, schools etc. to which other non-Brahmins were freely admitted. But for achieving these reforms much remained to be done

before the method of direct action could be adopted. Satyagraha was never adopted abruptly and never till all other and milder methods had been tried. The reformers of the South had to cultivate public opinion in the matter of temple-entry etc. This was, moreover, a disability not peculiar to the South but unfortunately and, to our shame, it must be admitted, common, to more or less extent, to Hinduism throughout India. Gandhi, therefore, welcomed the decision of Sjt. Kellappen Nayar who was in charge of the camp at Vykom to concentrate his effort on working among the unhappiest and the most suppressed among ‘the untouchables’ i.e., Puliyas whose very shadow defiles. It was a golden rule to follow out every direct action with constructive work, i.e., work of conservation. Reform had to be undertaken at both ends to make savarnas do their duty by the ‘untouchables’ whom they had so cruelly suppressed and to help the latter to become more presentable and to shed habits for which they could in no way be held accountable but which nevertheless had to be given up if they were to occupy their proper place in the social scale.\textsuperscript{141}

The Vykom Satyagraha passed through three different stages. In the first stage, processions of untouchables and caste Hindus were taken along the forbidden road, where the Satyagrahis were attacked and beaten up by the Brahmins. However, the volunteers refused to retaliate and observed strict non-violence. At the same time a second procession along the road led to the arrest of the Satyagrahi leaders who were replaced by others to fill the gap. In the second stage of struggle, the state police erected barricades on the roadside and the volunteers consisting of untouchables and others took up positions – opposite to the police and started their non-violent action by prayers and spinning for the days together. In the third phase, Gandhi visited the state himself and when those barricades were removed and the police retreated, the volunteers

\textsuperscript{141} Young India, 14-1-1928, Vol. VIII, No. 2, pp. 17-18.
took the orthodox Brahmins by surprise by their announcement that they would not enter the road, until the Brahmins were fully persuaded and agreed to and the Government declared acceptance of the untouchables and their use of the road. In the autumn of 1925, the Brahmins ultimately declared:

“We cannot any longer resist the prayers that they have made to us and we are ready to receive the untouchables.”

**The Communal Riots of Calcutta and Gandhi’s Approach:**

When the country was celebrating its independence in 1947, at that time Gandhi himself went to Calcutta. Pyarelal describes it thus: “Hydari Mansion, an old abandoned Muslim house in an indescribably filthy locality, had hastily been cleaned up for Gandhi’s residence. It was a ramshackle building open on all sides to the crowds. In a few days all the glasses in the windows were smashed. There was only one latrine and it was used indiscriminately by hundreds of people, including the police on duty, the visitors and even the darshan-seeking (to see personally) crowd. Owing to the rains there was mud and slush. It stank. To drown the stink, bleaching powder was sprinkled liberally all over the place, which made one’s head reel. One room was reserved for Gandhi, another had been set apart for his luggage, the members of his party and the guests. A third served as his office.”

An excited crowd of youngmen stood at the gate as Gandhi’s car arrived. They shouted: “Why have you come here? You did not come when we were in trouble? Now that the Muslims have complained, all this fuss is being made over it. Why did you not go to places from where the Hindus have fled?”

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144. Ibid.
A little later, Suhrawardy’s car arrived. The angry crowd surrounded it. The situation threatened to take an ugly turn. Gandhi sent some of his men outside to expostulate with the demonstrators and tell them to send in their representatives to meet him. This was done. The rest of the demonstrators thereupon calmed down and allowed Suhrawardy to go in... Presently the representatives of the demonstrators were ushered in to meet Gandhi. One of them began: “Last year when Direct Action was launched on the Hindus on 16 August, you did not come to our rescue. Now that there has been just a little trouble in the Muslim quarters, you have come running to their succour. We don’t want you here.”

Further, Gandhi added: “Much water has flown under the bridge since 1946. What the Muslims did then was utterly wrong. But what is the use of avenging the year 1946 on 1947? I was on my way to Noakhali where your own kith and kin desired my presence. But now I see that I shall have to serve Noakhali only from here. You must understand that I have come here to serve not only Muslims but Hindus, Muslims and all alike. Those who are indulging in brutalities are bringing disgrace upon themselves and the religion they represent. I am going to put myself under your protection. You are welcome to turn against me and play the opposite role if you so choose. I have nearly reached the end of my life’s journey. I have not much further to go. But let me tell you that if you again go mad, I will not be a living witness to it. I have given the same ultimatum to the Muslims of Noakhali also; I have earned the right. Before there is another outbreak of Muslim madness in Noakhali, they will find me dead…” “We do not want your sermons on Ahimsa. You go away from here. We won’t allow the Muslims to live here.”

145. Ibid., p. 366.
“This means that you do not want my services. If you will co-operate with me and allow me to carry on my work, it will enable the Hindus to return and to live in all the places from where they have been driven out. On the other hand, it will profit you nothing to remember old wrongs and nurse old enmities.

“An eighteen year old youngster interposed: “History shows that Hindus and Muslims can never be friends. Anyway, ever since I was born, I have seen them only fighting each other.”  

In this respect, Gandhi replied that he had seen more of history than anyone raising the question and he told them that he had known Hindu boys who used to call Muslims ‘uncle’. Hindus and Muslims used to participate in each others’ festivals and other auspicious occasions. He said that if they wanted to force him to leave that place but they should know that he had never submitted to force. It was contrary to his nature. They could obstruct his work, even kill him, he won’t invoke the help of the police. They could prevent him from leaving this house, but what was the use of their dubbing him an enemy of the Hindus? He argued, I will not accept the label. To make me quit, you have to convince me that I have made a mistake in coming here.

Thus, it went on till eight O’clock. At last Gandhi ji said: “I put it to you, young men, how can I, who am a Hindu by birth, a Hindu by creed and Hindu of Hindus in my way of living, be an enemy of Hindus? Does this not show narrow intolerance on your part?

“His words had a profound effect. Slowly and imperceptibly the opposition began to soften. Still they were not completely converted. One of them said, “Perhaps we should now go.” Gandhiji replied, “Yes, you

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must go. It is already late. Come again in the morning when you have thought things over.”

The next day the young men came again and in Suhrawardy’s presence had a long session with Gandhi. In the course of the discussion Gandhi ji reminded them that united action on the part of Suhrawardy and himself in Beliaghata was only the first step. If and when the Hindus of Beliaghata invited their Muslim neighbours to return, they would next move to a predominantly Muslim area, where they would stay till the Hindus were invited to return and so on till each community had invited its neighbours to return to their former houses all over Calcutta.

Accordingly, Gandhi’s these words had a magic spell as by this time the young men were completely won over and they undertook to do all in their power to win over their friends to work with Gandhi for peace and goodwill. One of them afterwards did not hesitate to say that, “What a spell-binder this old man is!” Some of them later guarded his house as volunteers when armed guards were withdrawn after 15 August.

It was in that very spirit that Vinoba, popularly known in India as Gandhi’s spiritual heir, marched on foot in 1951 to Hyderabad. It was then troubled by the continuous clashes between the communist and police. “What would be your programme in Hyderabad?” someone asked him. “I do not know”, replied Vinoba. “I have no preconceived programme in my mind. I know that I am going there as a Shanti Sainik. I go there in all humility, and leave everything to God. He will show me the path, if he so desires.”

The path that Vinoba found in Hyderabad was that of Bhoodan, the land gift mission, which grew into a national movement of great

147. Ibid.
significance. It encouraged millions of people to share part of their property with the poor, it mobilised thousands of constructive workers into a force working in the service of non-violent revolution.

It was as an offshoot of the Bhoodan-Gramdan movement that Shanti Sena emerged in 1957. “Shanti Sena was started by Bapu himself who was its first soldier”, Vinoba explained. “In both capacities, he completed his work. The idea itself is not new; there have been saints in various countries who organized Peace Armies, and one may read their history. When I entered Telengana (in Hyderabad), I thought of myself as a Shanti Sainik. So far as I am concerned the work of the Shanti Sena began there. Ever since then, I have been traveling as a Shanti Sainik.”

Vinoba added: “This little army contains old men, women, and even the sick. I hope that it will be effective in bringing relief to the suffering. I hope and expect that this Shanti Sena will be able to relieve misery both in India and throughout the world. When Bhoodan and Gramdan made a beginning, they helped people to clear their minds about the land problems, and as a result the path of progress became clear. We may expect the initiation of Shanti Sena, in the same way, to open some new path of progress.”

Vinoba had his own method of working. Earlier, in 1940, Gandhi had chosen Vinoba to be the first Satyagrahi in the ‘Individual Satyagraha’ against the war. His quiet method of peaceful persuasion and ‘looting through love’ seemed to him to be the most appropriate way of practicing Satyagraha in the changed situation. Walking over forty thousand miles, across the length and breadth of India, moving from village to village, he was able to instill a spirit of self-reliance in the people. The Gramdan villages, he hoped, would lay the foundation of a new society based on love and compassion.

150. Ibid., p. 125.
151. Ibid.
Throughout his life, Mahatma Gandhi stood for a simple and, more or less, self-sufficient living in the rural surroundings mainly because he could foresee that a highly sophisticated and centralized life in the cities would inescapably lead to the organisation of inhuman violence's and aggressive nationalism resulting in international tensions and wars of unprecedented devastation. That is why, he always advocated the establishment of ideal villages where the people could pursue the ideal of “simple living and high thinking.”

Gandhi an apostle of non-violent action never approved war – a violent action. He always rejected outright and condemned war as a means of resolving a conflict. According to Gandhi the problem of peace was not just a political problem involving the adjustment or rectification of relations between armed nations. It was the problem of mankind, posing a challenge not only to a particular state but also to every individual human being and human group.

What Gandhi had to say about the future world during his time, seems to be most relevant today: “Will our world always be one of violence?” Gandhi asked. “Will there always be poverty, starvation, misery? If there is to be a great change in society, how will that change be wrought? By war, or revolution? Or will it come peacefully?”

Gandhi ji then proceeds to answer his questions. “Different men give different answers to these questions, each man drawing the plan of tomorrow’s world as he hopes and wishes it to be. I answer not only out of belief but out of conviction. The world of tomorrow will be, must be, a society based on non-violence. That is the first law; out of it all other blessings will flow. It may seem a distant goal, an impractical Utopia. But it is not in the least unobtainable, since it can be worked for here and now. An individual can adopt the way of life of the future – the non-violent way – without having to wait for others to do so. And if an
individual can do it, cannot whole groups of individuals? Whole nations?
Men often hesitate to make a beginning, because they feel that the
objective cannot be achieved in its entirety. This attitude of mind is
precisely our greatest obstacle to progress – an obstacle that each man, if
he only wills it, can clear away.

In this respect Gandhi pointed out, “Equal distribution – the second
great law of tomorrow’s world as I see it – grows out of non-violence. It
implies not that the world’s goods shall be arbitrarily divided up but that
each man shall have the wherewithal to supply his natural needs, no
more…

“Here we come to perhaps the most vital question connected with
the shaping of tomorrow’s world. How is this equal distribution to be
brought about? Must the wealthy be dispossessed of all their holdings?

“Non-violence answers, no. Nothing that is violent can be of lasting
benefit to mankind. Forcible dispossession would deprive society of
many great gifts; the wealthy man knows how to create and build, his
abilities must not be lost. To my mind, as soon as a man looks upon
himself as a servant of society, earns for its sake, spends for its sale, then
his earnings are good and his business venture is constructive.

“But does not this whole idea of non-violence imply a change in
human nature? …Emphatically it does. Many an individual has turned
from the mean, personal, acquisitive point of view to one that sees society
as a whole and works for its benefit. If there has been such a change in
one man, there can be the same change in many.

“I see no poverty in the world of tomorrow, no wars, no
bloodshed.”

He further clarifies that, “Swaraj is useless at the sacrifice of truth.
Such Swaraj will ultimately ruin the people. The man who follows the

152 Prabhu, R. K., (compiled), Nonviolent Way to World Peace: M. K. Gandhi
path of Duragraha becomes impatient and wants to kill the so-called enemy. There can be but one result of this. Hatred increases. The defeated party vows vengeance and simply bides its time. The spirit of revenge thus descends from father to son. It is much to be wished that India never gives predominance to this spirit of Duragraha. The Duragraha, like the oilman’s ox, moves in a circle. His movement is only motion but it is not progress. The Satyagrahi is ever moving forward. The Satyagrahi and the Duragrahi are both warriors. The latter, bereft of his arms, acknowledges defeat, the former never. He does not depend upon the perishable body and its weapons, but he fights on with the strength of the unconquerable and immortal atma (soul).”

According to Gandhi, Swaraj for him means the freedom for the meanest of our country men. If the lot of the Panchama (Untouchable) is not improved when we are all suffering, it is not likely to be better under the intoxication of Swaraj. If it is necessary for us to buy peace with the Mussalmans as a condition of Swaraj, it is equally necessary for us to give peace to the Panchama before we can with any show of justice or self-respect talk of Swaraj. I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have no desire to exchange “king log for king stork.” Hence for me the movement of Swaraj is a movement of self-purification. Further he says, “Let Hindus and Muslims understand firmly that the cornerstone of Swaraj, the cornerstone of the freedom of India is Hindu and Muslim unity.” At another point he emphasised that, “Lovers and makers of Swaraj must not be dismayed by these

omens. My advice is Satyagraha first and Satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom.”

In another instance, when in May 1947, after nine months of unprecedented Hindu-Muslim Communal riots or civil war had ravaged Calcutta, Sir Frederick Burrows, Governor of Bengal, made an observation that this great city had become a tragic microcosm of the nation: “The problem of communal (religious) strife which is vexing the whole of India can be studied in an intensified and concentrated manner in this focal city.” Then The Statesman, Calcutta’s leading newspaper, commented on Burrow’s remark. In an editorial of despair more than of indignation, it eloquently voiced the city’s agony:

Calcutta, once the most lively if never the most lively if never the most comfortable city of India, was becoming almost unbearable to its inhabitants. Under the blight of communalism, it was from dusk onwards a city of the dead. Even by day, life was at low ebb. Shadowed by past calamity, not daring to turn their eyes from the morbid present to a future without hope, [its citizens] drag out meaningless lives, thankful only from day to day that those were still safe from the goonda [thug] and the housebreaker. They asked themselves if such terrible conditions were to be permanent and found no answer. If Calcutta passed two “quiet” days in succession, hope revived to fall again as the third day would bring news of fresh outrages.

At another place, Sir Francis Tuker, writes that the February riots had a special significance as they “set a march to the fuse which detonated the charges with such fearful violence months later not only in Calcutta and Eastern Bengal, but far afield in Bihar and into the United Provinces at Garhmukteswar and finally into the Punjab.”

158 Tuker, Sir Francis, While Memory Serves (London: Cassell), 1950, p. 108.
On similar lines, the Calcutta killing (as it came to be called) again began on the morning of August 16, 1946 and lasted until August 20, in which approximately 4,000 people were killed and 11,000 were injured on a scale of urban violence that was wholly unprecedented. One survivor recalled the tragedy twenty years later in the following words:

"It was a moment of terror that I never imagined could happen here. I saw the city I loved, the neighbours I trusted, desecrate themselves in a terrible fury unknown before in Calcutta. Those few days of bloodshed proved to me that Swaraj had to be much more difficult and distant than we thought."  

Similarly, another observer also reported that "for four terrible days this massacre and brutality continued unabated. During this time the life of the city was completely paralysed," including all medical facilities.

On the other hand at the national level, Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, had induced Gandhi and Jinnah to sign, on April 15, a joint appeal for peace, deploring the recent acts of "lawlessness and violence." All communities were urged "to refrain from violence in any form." However, the appeal had little impact and affect on both the Hindu and the Muslim communities in Calcutta. But Gandhi had already sensed the problem and on a visit to the city in early May, he threatened a "fast unto death." On the prospect of Gandhi’s fasting, The Statesman editorialized:

"It is with regret that many will learn that Mr. Gandhi has again spoken of a fast… We think, however, that all those who are close to him should do their best to dissuade him… The contemplated fast could not be expected to influence Muslims generally, whether aggressors or (as

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160. Ibid.
162. Ibid., May 12, 1947, p. 6.
both communities tend to believe of themselves when involved) acting on
the defensive. In such circumstances, if Mr. Gandhi started a fast, he
would presumably continue to the end. As Hindus saw his life ebbing
away, their own bitterness would greatly increase and the outcome would
be in every way disastrous.

"Like many others, we have never been able fully to understand
these Gandhian fasts. The appeal they make is primarily to the emotions,
to the heart. But also, perhaps, they are intended to appeal to the head. If
one man greatly admired is so strongly convinced of the rightness of the
cause he advocates that he is prepared to sacrifice his life for it than they
concede; and so they start to consider their own position afresh although,
we think, under compulsion. But with communal (religious) disputes it is
different… We trust that Mr. Gandhi will see that his duty is not to use
this last weapon."

When, on the day before Gandhi arrived in Calcutta, a crowd of
more than three hundred had stopped a train, selected twelve of its
passengers, and wantonly slaughtered them in full public view. This
incident, which ignited many others, is a prime example of the impotence
of government when the citizenry, in fear or vengeance, acquiesce before
forces of violence.

However, Gandhi had announced that he would spend
independence day in the Noakhali district of Bengal, but after a day spent
in Calcutta, “listening to the oves of the city,” his departure was
postponed. At his prayer meeting, on the evening of August 10, Gandhi
told a vast crowd that his “head hung in shame at this recital of man’s
barbarism”163 in Calcutta. This was madness, and his aim was to effect a
return to sanity. He refused to write off Calcutta’s riots as simply a
manifestation of goondaism. All citizens of Calcutta were responsible for

September 1983, p. 22.
the mob violence, all must “turn the searchlight inwards” and see that “wide open goondaism was a reflection of the subtle goondasim they were harbouring within.”\textsuperscript{164}

The post-World War-II era of decolonization was ushered in by Mahatma Gandhi’s nonviolent campaign to free India from British colonial rule. Regrettably, there were too many struggles for independence that were violent.

The year that Berlin Wall fell and the Third World War came to an end, the Dalai Lama received the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle to promote Tibet’s self-determination. During his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech he advocated the establishment of a zone of Ahimsa (Nonviolence) in Tibet.\textsuperscript{165} He made it clear that his struggle was totally nonviolent. In a way, the Dalai Lama’s commitment to nonviolence parallels that of Mahatma Gandhi.\textsuperscript{166}

Like other Wars, World War-II also left its impact on the society. It was fought on a colossal scale. The enormity of losses could be judged from the fact that the Soviet Union alone had lost about 20 million lives in the war while six million Jews were killed in Hitler’s gas chambers alone. In July 1945, America exploded the first nuclear weapon in the history of mankind and in August they dropped two bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japanese cities). Japan surrendered forth with and that gave America an imminent edge and deprived the Russians of all but a token share in the post war settlement in the Far East. The war ended with an act, which contained the two central elements in the cold war: the advent of nuclear weapons and Soviet American rivalry.

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., p. 20.
In this way, the Second World War has been considered one of the greatest watersheds in human history as it brought the destruction not only of the most perverse and pernicious political formation of capitalist/industrialization of Western Europe, namely, Nazism-Fascism but also beginning of the wiping of European colonialism and imperialism, that had dominated the World scene for almost two thirds of human population living in three-fourth of the World’s territory in Africa, Asia, Latin-America and Pacific.

It may be mentioned here that significant experiments are now under way to replace war with nonviolent struggle. The human community has been elaborating testing and embellishing the means of violent conflict for thousands of years. But its nonviolent counterpart languished prior to the twentieth century. It is no accident that it is only when the path of violence reached a dead-end that the means of nonviolent war have begun to emerge. Nonviolence, in concept or form, is not new as nonviolent actions have been utilized for centuries in interpersonal relations, within the family, and as a central element of social life. It was only in the twentieth century, however, that the mass mobilization of populations for the purpose of nonviolent struggle became a self-conscious collective process on a broader scale.167

In this respect, Nicholas Mansergh observes that “In the last year of his life, Gandhi’s influence was transcendent. By the people of India he was treated with the awe given to the prophets and religious teachers of the past. Indeed he was already numbered with them. It was his preaching of the doctrine of nonviolence more than any other single factor that stood between India and bloodshed on a frightful scale.”168

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It is very often asked whether Gandhi wanted to abolish violence or reduce it. The reply in this connection is that he wanted both. He wanted to reduce violence and also vanquish violence in all departments of life. This stupendous and gigantic task involves an infinitely gradual process. However, he did not hope that violence would disappear overnight in the world – rather he expected conditions to be created for violence to be eschewed as quickly as possible. In modern times, we must try our best to change the general situation and atmosphere of humanity slowly and steadily, so that the universal and eternal message of nonviolence begins to be recognized and heeded. Nonviolence does not mean surrender to evil or unjust force nor does nonviolent struggle mean compromise with violence. This clearly indicates that Gandhi was in favour of solving all struggles through the use of proper weapons strong enough to achieve the desired goals.

He dealt with Truth first of all, as the Satyagraha Ashram owed its very existence to the pursuit and the attempted practice of Truth. And where there was Truth, there also was knowledge which was true. Where there was no Truth, there could be no true knowledge. That is why Gandhi argues that the word Chit or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (Ananda). Accordingly, in that case sorrow has no place. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as Sit-chit-ananda, one who combines in Himself truth, Knowledge and Bliss.169

As a result, devotion to this Truth is the sole justification for our existence. Accordingly, all our activities should be centred in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. When once this stage in the pilgrim’s progress is reached, all other rules of correct living will come

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without any effort, and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without Truth, it is impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.

Normally, observation of the law of truth is understood merely to mean that we must speak the truth. But in the Ashram one should understand the word Satya or Truth in a much wider sense. There should be Truth in Thought, Speech and in Action. To the man who has realized this Truth in its fullness, according to Gandhi, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it, is not Truth, and so not true knowledge; and there can be no inward peace without true knowledge. If we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of truth, we will at once be able to find out what is worth doing, what is worth seeing, what is worth reading.

However, the question arises that how one is to realize this truth, which may be likened to the philosopher’s stone or the cow of plenty? By single-minded devotion (abhyasa) and indifference to all other interests in life (vairagya) – replies the Bhagavadgita. In spite, however, of such devotion, what may appear as truth to one person may often appear as untruth to another person. But that should not be the worry of the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appears to be different truths are like the countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree says Gandhi. Does not God Himself appear to different individuals in different aspects? Yet we know that He is one and only one. But Truth is the right designation of God. Hence, there is nothing wrong in every man following Truth according to his lights. Indeed it is his duty to do so. Then if there is a mistake on the part of any one so following Truth, it will be automatically set right. For the quest of Truth involves tapas – self-suffering, sometimes even unto death. There can be no place in it for even a trace of self-interest. In such selfless search for truth nobody can lose his bearings for long. Directly he takes to the
wrong path he stumbles, and is thus redirected to the right path. Therefore, the pursuit of Truth is true bhakti (devotion). It is the path that leads to God. There is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. It is the talisman by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal.

In this respect, it would be quite significant if we examine the lives and examples of Harishchandra, Prahlad, Ramachandra, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain, the Christian saints, etc. Gandhi explains: “How beautiful it would be, if all of us, young and old, men and women, devote ourselves wholly to Truth in all that we might do in our working hours, whether working, eating, drinking or playing, till dissolution of the body makes us one with Truth? God as Truth has been for me a treasure beyond price; may be so to every one of us.”

Accordingly, it was in the pursuit of truth that Gandhi made the discovery of non-violence and this discovery led him to make Satyagraha as a political programme during the long-drawn struggle against the British Raj. His rich experience in South Africa made him realize that sacrifice was nothing but an active co-operation and celibacy which clung to him in all kinds of dealings with humanity with great success and achievements.

However, Gandhi defined Satyagraha in various ways. He ventured to place before the masses of India the ancient law of sacrifice. He stated that, “for Satyagraha and its off shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance were nothing but new names for the law of suffering.” The origin of Satyagraha could be traced to the ‘Indo-Aryan ancient practice of Yajna.’ Between the original form of human and animal sacrifice and its contemporary manifestation is Satyagraha, it has undergone the

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170. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
intellectual refinement of the Upanishads and humanistic transfusions from Jainism and Buddhism. In fact, Gandhi believed that without Yajna, the world would perish.

According to H. N. Brailsford, a prominent Labourite journalist gave his assessment of the Civil Disobedience Movement thus; “The Indian had freed their own minds, they had won independence in their hearts… A lasting change had happened in the minds of the hundreds of thousands who went to prison and millions who faced the lathis of the police. It was enough to perform even a symbolic act of rebellion by making salt, or to picket a cloth shop as thousands of shy and sheltered women did. By these acts they broke the paralysis, the consciousness of a predestined inferiority.”

As a matter of fact, non-violence is a multi-hued concept and phenomenon. It is an essential component of this strategy as a form of political action and behaviour. In fact non-violence had transformed the strategy of the Congress from its very inception. It was not a mere dogma of an individual or a cleaver ruse of the propertied classes, it was in some essential ways integral to the nature of the Indian national movement as a hegemonic movement based on wide mobilization. He further rightly adds that adoption of non-violence by the national movement was also linked to the fact that a disarmed people had hardly any other recourse. On the other hand, the colonial state had through an elaborate system completely disarmed the Indian people since 1858 and had made it difficult for them to obtain arms or training in their use; on the other hand, it was a strong and not an inert state. The leaders of the national movement understood from the beginning that Indians did not possess the

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172. Ibid., p. 162.
173. Ibid., p. 162.
176. Ibid.
material resources necessary to wage war against such a strong state. In non-violent struggle, on the other hand, it is moral strength and mass support that count a lot and here disarmed people are not at a disadvantage. In other words, non-violence is also a way of becoming equal in political resources to an armed state in a war of position.

According to some authors including Gandhi himself, was quite shy in the first phase of his experiments after coming from South Africa and before the formal launching of the final satyagraha in India (Harijan, 14-3-1936), and yet he said, “well... it may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of Non-violence will be delivered to the world.” What a coincidence! The Negroes under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.), the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, are demonstrating the truth of Gandhi’s prediction! It is no less a personage than the President of the U. S. A., who responds to Dr. King in the text of his Civil Rights Message to U. S. Congress (15-3-1965): “It is the effort of the Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause. It is not just Negroes, but all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome.”

When Gandhi had started the Khudai Khidmatgars movement in association with Badshah Khan who is also known as the Frontier Gandhi Khan Abdul Gaffer Khan, he has said that “people laugh at me and the idea of Khudai Khidmatgars becoming full-fledged non-violent soldiers of Swaraj. But their mockery does not affect me. Non-violence is a quality not of the body but of the soul. Once its central meaning sinks into your being, all the rest follows by itself. Human nature in the Khudai Khidmatgars is not different from mine. And I am sure that if I can

practise non-violence to some extent, they and for that matter any one can. I therefore invite you to pray with me to the almighty that he may make real my dream about the Khudai Khidmatgars.”  

The developments in various fields not only in India but also in different parts of the world during the last fifty-six years since Gandhi’s death and the growing interest with which the international community examines the relevance and efficacy of Gandhian philosophy, justify the optimism Gandhi himself entertained that what he was doing was bound to influence humanity some day. Let us not it forget that even quite a few of the close associates of Gandhi had also found it difficult to understand him when he was alive and he himself was not surprised on this point. He once remarked: “After I am gone they will speak my language.”

An outstanding feature of Gandhi’s life, work and message is that they reveal an amazing sweep of his mind and vision. At no point of his fairly long life and work in three continents does it appear that he was bogged down by any dogmatic assumptions. His idealism does not appear to be philosopher’s assumptions nor do the various methods he used indicate an adventurer’s attempts to remain in the limelight. Aldous Huxley’s contemptuous description of Gandhi as one “who plays the ascetic in his loin-cloth” betrays the total ignorance of arrogant men like Huxley the importance of new and creative methods adopted by original thinkers and activist like Gandhi. Perhaps Huxley’s scientist-brother, Julian Huxley was able to see the importance of Gandhi’s work in a better light as he observed in the Gandhi Memorial Number: “Gandhi’s social and economic ideas are based upon a realistic appraisal of man’s nature and the nature of his position in the universe. He knew on the one

hand that the cumulative triumphs of an advancing organization and progressive technology can’t alter the basic fact that man is animal of no great size in most cases of very modest abilities.”

The message from his martyrdom is loud and clear: should we hate each other, kill and get killed in the name of what we very often do not know? As Mathew Arnold described in his poem, “Dover Beach”, we are like the ignorant army clashing in the night. Gandhi showed a lamp so that we might recognize each other and behave like civilized human beings. Let it not be forgotten that Gandhi too was a human being. To deify him and to see in him answers and solutions to all our problems will be an attempt which Gandhi himself would not approve of. Much of what Gandhi did and said was on the basis of his own understanding of the situations that existed at that time-frame. During the last 56 years since his death, humanity has witnessed breath-taking developments in many fields. To Mahatma Gandhi, the Shanti-Sena ideal had a great potential in providing an effective and enduring alternative to the eventual replacement of army and police which, according to him, symbolize the authority of the State and in that sense are an instrument of suppression which can be effective only if violent methods are resorted to. The genius of Gandhi conceived a certain device by which peace-making, peace-keeping, and preventive peace-building will become the core of a well-conceived peace initiative. That is the Shanti-Sena of his dream. To Gandhi, like his other several experiments, Shanti-Sena was also an experiment and if it fails, the humanity must strive to make improvement and make it more meaningful and effective. Besides, Gandhi’s non-violence is the non-violence of the brave and not of coward. In case of dishonour of women folk and even one’s own country, he has no hesitation to use violence. Accordingly, his approach to conflict

\[181\] Ibid., pp. 2-3.
\[182\] Ibid., pp. 9-10.
resolution should be viewed and examined in the light of his statement under which he had advised the use of violence. Thus, non-violence has its limitations also under certain circumstances. And such exceptions are available in the history and our religious scriptures and literature.
“Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding”
---Albert Einstein

“When peace has been broken anywhere, the peace of all countries is in danger.”