Chapter – VI
Conclusion

As we have moved to the new millennium, we have put ourselves into watertight compartments and have differed ourselves from each other. We are heading towards such a situation where we don’t want to see each other eye to eye. And the big examples could be the 11\textsuperscript{th} of September 2001 (attack on WTC), December 13, 2001 (attack on Indian Parliament), January 22, 2002 (attack on American Centre, Calcutta). These and many other such incidents define themselves so far the gravity of the problem of violence is concerned in the present context. Living in a nuclear era and talking about nonviolence seems to be quite surprising and contradictory. As a matter of fact, violence and non-violence have been universal phenomena since the time immemorial. What lessons have we learned from these incidents? Nothing, but to harm and hurt others only. Had Gandhi been alive today, What would have been his reaction? It is a big question which has to be answered by us and not by the Mahatma at the moment. Probably he would have started an agitation against us in the present context.

What happened on Black Tuesday (September 11, 2001), we all know but still some more planes and aircrafts are hitting the buildings in the name of \textbf{Fight for Freedom}. The violence is coming day-by-day with new features and distinct dimensions. It rages within nations, subcultures, cities and homes. It disturbs relationships, questions values, and challenges systems, brings fluidity in every institution and carries blood stains to the doorstep. The impact is so great that a scientific appraisal of the phenomenon cannot be delayed any further. That is necessary not only for understanding how such violence occurs and never ceases, but also to find out its gravity.
Vicious Spiral and Gandhi's Land in Flames: (Ahmedabad, March 2, 2002) Following Wednesday’s horrific train attack in Godhra, Gujarat has been rapidly engulfed in a spiral of violence. From Ahmedabad to Baroda to Surat, Rajkot and Anand, there was scarcely a major town or city in the state which had escaped the fury of lawless mobs out to “avenge” Wednesday’s savagery. Apart from the many innocents who have lost their lives, there has been extensive damage caused to public property.

Thirty-eight people were burnt alive in a district of Ahmedabad on March 1, 2002, 12 among them were children. Property worth lakhs of rupees was gutted to ashes. Shops were looted and vehicles were torched. Welcome to the land where the Father of the Nation spoke about ahimsa (non-violence) and where he spoke about national unity. Sabarmati was in flames. Hundreds of innocent people were killed in the name of religion. Still the Hindus say that they have lost their patience. On the other hand, the Muslim community argues that they are fighting for its existence. The BJP blames the Congress and the other parties are raising their fingers on the irresponsibility of the ruling Government in Gujarat. And while this war of words rages on, the common people-let with no one to protect them-are being butchered like animals. The army had to be deployed to normalise the sensitive situation in Mahatma Gandhi’s own land. No one was willing to offer his right cheek when his left one had been slapped. The firing of guns, the reverberating sounds of breaking glass and burning buildings ushered in the mourning of the morning after.

In the present context, Gandhi does not need any formal introduction. The whole world knows him by the name of messenger of Non-Violence (Ahimsa) and Truth (Satya). The question arises here that whether his thought and teachings are still relevant or not? Well it is asking just like asking the status of Sun for the Solar System, it means, he
is still relevant and would be relevant for the centuries to come because truth and non-violence will never lose their significance and relevance. History is a reliable evidence and proof of this fact that violence always failed to achieve any positive result.

In the present juncture, the humankind is faced with a serious crisis of war and violence, which, in fact, have brought us to the brink of a precipice. It has several dimensions. It is to be noted that the collapse of the bipolar world has further deepened the crisis as it has created a situation of uncontrolled local wars based on ethnicity. Shrill echoes and reechoes of war cries and war trumpets are heard everywhere and religious and sectarian fanaticism and fundamentalism are only fanning and adding fuel to the fire of war. In fact, evil and powerful forces of war and violence appear to have taken control of every human heart and hearth. Some of the bloody incidents can be cited which created havoc in all over the world:

- Slaughter in Indian Ocean by the Portuguese with Fire and Sword
- Jallinwalabagh Massacre – A Unpardonable British Colonial Crime – April 13, 1919
- The Massacre in the Island of Mauritius in 1967 and 1968
- Greed for Rubber – the cause of Human Rights Violation in Malaysia in 1960 to 1962 in the concentration camps.
- Slaughter in Indonesia from 1965 to 1970
- Blood bath for ‘Liquid Gold’ (Oil) in the Middle East started from 1901 on the basis of an agreement of purchase by William Knox D’Arcy with a right to extract oil on five-sixth of the Persian territory, the deed of purchase being valid for 60 years, which was later on sold to someone else, he again sold it to an Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the same again sold under secret meetings to the British people. And that war is still going on.
- Massacre in Yemen in 1964
- Massacre in Lebanon in 1978
- Massacre in Manama (Bahrain) in 1965
- Mass Massacre in the Republic of Tunisia in 1978
- Setif and Guelma Massacre in Algeria in 1945
- British Massacre in Natal in 1906
Apartheid and Slaughter of Students at Soweto in South Africa in 1976 and again in September 1984 to May 1986 the number of people killed were 1782. As many as 213 were killed in one month only.

Massacres in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)

Portugese crimes in Mozambique in 1968. Between May 1976 and June 19, 1977, 1432 civilians had been killed and 527 wounded.

Massacre in Angola, Ghana (Gold Coast)

Colonial Massacres in Namibia in 1979 and from September 1984 to October 1985, some 750 people including many women and children were killed or wounded.

The tragedy in Nigeria where the fight started on 6th July 1967 and ended by January 1970 after having claimed 15,00,000 casualties.

Monstrous murders in Kenya

French Colonial massacre in Bengui (Central African Republic) where more than 400 students died in Bangui and more than hundred in Bokassa

French Colonial massacre in Djibouti

Massacres of Masses and Plunder of Wealth in Congo (Zaire)

Belgian Bloodshed in Rwanda

Fascist Holocaust in Ethiopia

In human Carnage in Madagascar, about one lakh died as a result of brutal repression unleashed by the French authorities.

Spanish massacre in the Temple in Gulf of Mexico

Dreadful Decimation of population in Jamaica

Extermination of native population in Santa Lucia by French and British colonialists

Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre of protestants by Catholic Fundamentalists of Jesuit order on August 24, 1572

Death Camps of German Fascists

Horrific slaughter of Peasants after the Great Peasant War in Germany (1525)

Gulf war in Iraq (2003)

Plunder of ‘Liquid Gold’ (Oil) by Anglo-American Multinational Companies Starts

Plantation on Landmines

Inhuman killings by Terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Nagaland and at many more places. These massacres prove that violence only destroys public and property.

Today human-kind appears to be possessed of by all kinds of dominic tendencies like black passion, greed, anger and despondence. We
are trying to seek satiety from material possessions, which are incapable of producing a feeling of total satiety. In the process, dissatisfaction, despair, and despondence are becoming the lot of the man and a feeling of meaninglessness is eating into the very vitals of his being.

As the kalchakra (cyclic orders of the time) of human civilisation moves towards the endpoint of the second millennium and the starting of the third millennium, war cries of different ideologies trading and trumpeting human liberation and mass welfarism are dying out leaving behind in their trail many broken hearts.

With the advancement in the technology and armament race, we are heading towards a state where the mighty and stronger has the complete control over the others. Our strategy is towards the violent ways, we are spending more than 1000 billion dollars every week just to achieve the status of supreme power. January 12, 2002, an army convoy carrying ammunition caught fire at an ammunition sub-depot near Bikaner that afternoon, spreading panic in the area. The 150-truck convoy was on its way to the inter-national border (IB), ahead of Bikaner from Bathinda in Punjab. About 100 trucks were blown up and more than 1000 tones arms ammunition was damaged within minutes. Who will pay the price of this vast destruction? It is the common people, who have to pay for this, without their own fault. But why are we all forgetting here that the war will neither abolish war rather it will abolish us? Counter result of violence is always violence and it will give birth to hatred, anger, disrespect, bloodshed revenge, jealousy, murder and above all, constant fear at the cost of development.

It must be noted here that it is not only the arms race that generates violence but the mad rush also for the Western material comforts which results in constant dependence, dissatisfaction, cut-throat competition, exploitation and hatred. These are also responsible for untruth and
violence. The modern military weapons have become so indiscriminate and their efforts so catastrophic that the very existence of mankind is threatened. Unscrupulous pursuit of material additions without heading ethical and human values, has eaten into the very vitals of our life and culture. As a result, the moral fibre of the people has been weakened. The only practical way to resolve these problems in a lasting manner is to turn once again to the teachings and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. We must study them in depth and find proper solutions for our ailments. No shadow of doubt can exist that the world needs Gandhi in the new millennium much more than ever before. He is not a relic of the past, but a prophet of the future. His argument was that so long as his faith burnt bright as he hoped it would, even if he stood alone he could be alive in the grave and what was more, speaking from it. In fact, Gandhi’s ideas are by no means out model or out dated as some believed, and on the contrary might be good for application in today’s world too.

When we discuss the problem of violence, it can be divided into several categories such as societal and physical, violence of the establishment and the violence of dissent, inner-directed violence and the outer directed too. The last one refers to aggressive activities directed towards an external being, human, a systematic or inanimate. The categories are not mutually exclusive. They indeed are interrelated, one thing common to all-violence hurts everyone.

It has been seen that war clouds loom large over India also. There is a widespread public sentiment to go all out and teach Pakistan a lesson, prove our strength and resurrect our self-esteem in the wake of the attack on our Parliament. But Military action alone won’t work here as many other aspects also need some loud thinking for people of both the countries.
The first reality is that the will of a nation can’t be subjugated to military action. Germany annexed and decimated in World War I, yet within a period of two decades it resurrected itself as a world power and triggered a World War that killed millions and caused immeasurable destruction. In effect this means that we can't motivate Pakistan to leave its disruptive policies by lauding an offensive or by wholly/partially annexing it. One can not neglect the Volume and the net result of destructions at both sides.

The other reality is that terrorist organisations can't be decimated by a military offensive. America gained control over the whole of Afghanistan but has not been able to capture or kill Mullah Omar and Osama Bin Laden so far.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, for a Warrior, nothing is higher than a war against evil. The warrior confronted with such a war should be pleased. Arjuna, for it comes as an open gate to heaven. If you don’t participate in this battle against evil, you will incur sin.

In the words of Martin Luther King, the choice before mankind is between non-violence and non-existence. To abolish war, we must get rid of our anger, hate, passion, pride, cupidty, fear, egotism and inordinate ambition and lust for power. Gandhi has often been described as an apostle of peace. He strove and died for peace. He advocated, “peace-but not at the cost of non-violence” for his philosophy was a philosophy of commitment. He saw peace as integrally related to justice. Peace is not mere cessation of hostilities. He did not share the diplomatic view of peace. Peace for him meant a positive state of affairs, the pre-condition being freedom from exploitation. In his opinion, only non-violent and just order could ensure lasting peace. He did believe that, peace will never come until the great powers courageously decide to disarm themselves. Exploitation and domination of one nation over another could have no
place in a world striving to put amend to all wars. In such a world the militarily weaker nations would be free from the fear of intimidation or exploitation. He had no doubt that unless big nations shed their desire of exploitation and the inevitable consequence, there was no hope for peace in the world.

In this respect, he fervently hoped for “a world federation of free and independent states.” His concept of World Government transcended in the traditional thinking, the pattern of conventional international organisations could not satisfy the conditions for bringing genuine and lasting peace. He held that peace could not be established through mere conferences. Similarly, he was not optimistic about the League of Nations and the U. N. Since they lacked the spirit of non-violence and failed to serve as vehicle of peace in the absence of a force to enforce their decisions.

It has been observed that more than fourteen thousand and five hundred wars, which claimed the lives of about four billion people, have been fought on this earth in five thousand years since the dawn of civilization. Armed conflicts have taken upto 21 million lives since World War II. War appears to be natural to man and the aggressors justify war as a means of ending wars; ‘peace through war’ is what they talk about. But wars continue in spite of the League of Nations and United Nations. And, man has the discredit of being the biggest killer of his own species and the dilemma is that he still claims that he is the only civilized creature on this earth. On the other hand, as a matter of fact, man has proved worse than a beast of the jungle.

Richard B. Gregg says that, “when people get to talking about non-violence they readily admit that in Gandhi’s hands it did have power, indeed great power.” Then they usually say, “But he was a saint and I am not.” Or, “I haven't such courage or selflessness or strength.” Or, “that is
asking too much of the average man. This aspect is quite important which requires a strong will to meet the challenge. It further needs a thorough examination and an honest probe.

While expressing his views about the atom bomb in Madras on 1-2-1946 at the meeting of ‘Teachers and Students’, Gandhi, full of emotion, referred to violence such as causing destruction with the atom bomb and the victory won thereby, and said that he had applied his mind to this point. He felt that Truth and Non-violence were really more powerful than the atom bomb. He further added that he was not afraid of the atom bomb. While they could cause physical injury, they could not kill their soul. Once they had the determination that they could not be conquered by violence, victory was theirs; for a moral protest against evil was itself a victory.

In reply to a question Gandhi’s remarks were that it had been suggested by American friends that the atom bomb would bring in ahimsa (non-violence) as nothing else could. It would, if it meant that its destructive power would so disgust the world that it would turn it away from violence for the time being. That was very like a man gluttoning himself with dainties to the point of nausea and turning away from them only to return with redoubled zeal after the effect of nausea was well over. Precisely in the same manner would the world return to violence with renewed zeal after the effect of disgust was worn out? Often did good come out of evil? But that was God’s, not man’s plan. Man knows that only evil can come out of evil, as good out of good. That atomic energy, though harnessed by American scientists and army men for destructive purpose, might be utilized by other scientists for humanitarian purposes and morally to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb was that it would not be destroyed by counter-bombs, even as

violence could not be by counter-violence. To Gandhi, mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence as hatred can be overcome only by love. Counter-hatred only increases the surface as well as the depth of hatred. Therefore, one must be wise enough before entering into violent activities in haste without keeping in view the far-reaching consequences.²

Further, it must be understood that violence to persons and property has the effect of clouding the real issues involved in the original conflict while non-coercive, non-violent action invites the parties to a dialogue about the issues themselves. Gandhi, therefore, warns that we must hate the sin and not the sinner. And, this is one of the basics of Gandhi’s non-violent approach to peace and prosperity. The message is simple but loud and clear, do we want peace or destruction?

Thomas Weber, an eminent scholar explains that as we know that violence and non-violence are two opposite terms. The arguments against violence often revolve around the assumption that it does not work, that there are inherent laws governing violence that prevent it from producing positive results.³ Their reference may be useful in this context as under:

1. Continuity, i.e., once you start using violence you cannot escape it.
2. Reciprocity, i.e., violence creates, begets and procreates further violence. On this point Gandhi warned that to answer brutality with brutality is to admit one’s moral and intellectual bankruptcy and it can only start a vicious circle.
3. Sameness, i.e., it is impossible to distinguish between justified and unjustified violence, between violence that liberates and violence that enslaves. No matter how high the goal, violence reduces all

practitioners to the same level. Or again, in Gandhi’s words that counter-violence can only result in further brutalization of human nature.

4. Violence begets only further violence, i.e., the end grows out of the means used; and

5. Violence needs to be justified, but such justification is hypocritical, there is no “pure” violence. Violence and hatred are always linked to each other, they are inseparable.

Similarly, he also believed that disarmament was possible only through “the matchless weapon of non-violence.” And it was his hope that India would prove herself worthy of being the first nation in the world to give lead to other nations for the delivery of earth from the burden of war. He wanted the great powers to lead the rest by disarming themselves; they should give up ambitions and exploitation and revise their mode of life. Thus, according to Gandhi, disarmament cannot crystallise, unless the nations of the world cease to exploit one another. Exploitation must go that is the essential pre-condition for the establishment of a world free from blood-spilling and destruction. Napoleon had sent this appeal for peace at the height of his glory and success. He saw the futility of war to end hostilities and appealed for peace. Napoleon subscribed to the Gandhian view when he said that there were only two powers in the world, those powers were the spiritual and of sword. In the long run the Sword would always be conquered by the Spirit.

Raghavan Iyer offers an alternative framework for the Gandhian virtues in his observation that ‘Gandhi tended to assimilate all the virtues to that of moral courage.’ Even in his time Aristotle had realized that courage was more than just the physical bravery of his Greek forefathers, who “strutted their stuff” with drawn swords. Susanne and Lloyd
Rudolph distinguish between physical bravery—not being afraid to use violence to defend one's home and principles—and Gandhi’s nonviolent moral courage as the will not to retaliate in the face of violence. Gandhi speaks of active nonviolence as both love and truth, so yet another profitable way to see Gandhian virtues is through the virtue of love. According to him, in its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If he is a follower of ahimsa, he must love his enemy too. He must apply the same rule of the wrong-doer who is his enemy or a stranger to him, as he would to his wrong-doing father or son. This active ahimsa necessarily includes truth and fearlessness.

As an apostle of peace and nonviolence, Gandhi repeatedly asserted the supremacy of moral force over physical force. His advocacy of the use of soul force in preference to physical violence even in the atomic age underscores his strong faith in the spirit of man and the capacity of weak countries to resist aggression from strong ones. Gandhi has in his armoury the weapon to promote world peace even in this nuclear age. Gandhi once said that war itself was a crime against God and humanity. The wanton destruction of human life that the atomic warfare introduced had serious impact on his mind. To him, atomic war was unjust because of its supreme indifference to human life and its naked violence. He believed that nothing of value was produced from armed conflict. He emphasised in unmistakable terms the need for world peace but only through non-violent means.

Gandhi believed that violence, crime and other troublesome behaviours were the product of the prevailing social system. And only sensible approach could change the mind of criminals and offenders.

Now, the question arises, how to handle the violent behaviour? And it is a question especially for technological research. As Gandhi claimed, history has shown that violence usually provokes violence. Violent action
may have an immediate and temporary effect of reducing the aversive 
behaviour of the crushed, but it strengthens the violent behaviour of the 
victorious. Also the surviving victims of violent acts may develop a 
stronger tendency to act violently. The recent incidents of violence at 
Godhra railway Station of Gujarat and further violence in various cities 
of Gujarat and other states are the eye-opener examples of such events. 
Violence at one place was multiplied and everything went out of control, 
which resulted in killing of many and destroyed the countless property of 
the country. According to Gandhi it is easy enough to be friendly to one’s 
friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the 
quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business. Successful 
examples of Gandhian Satyagraha in this study have shown that 
nonviolent actions answer violent actions while not reinforcing them. 
Jonathan Schell argues in ‘The Fate of the Earth’ that nuclear weapons 
force us to be either strategic or moral idiots. Gandhi appeared to argue 
for Schell’s strategic idiocy as he contended that even Hitler could have 
been taught with techniques of nonviolent resistance - namely Satyagraha 
(truth force or soul force) which sounds strategically idiotic.²

It was only in the latter half of the twentieth century that Gandhi’s 
methods came to be invoked across the globe, in Asia, Africa, America 
and Europe. In South Africa, the African National Congress carried on 
non-violent agitation and passive resistance for nearly forty years. Chief 
Albert Luthuli, the president of the ANC and a Nobel Peace Prize 
laureate, belonged to the Zulu warrior tribe, but was inspired by Gandhi’s 
writing and became a champion of non-violence. The ANC was, 
however, unable to sustain its non-violent struggle in the face of ruthless 
oppression by the apartheid regime. After the massacre of Sharpeville 
and until the release of Nelson Mandela, the major liberation movement

². Lester, R. Kurtz, “Nonviolent War: An Idea Whose Time Has Come?” in Gandhi Marg 
in South Africa took to guerilla warfare. However, the armed struggle would have been much more difficult and prolonged had not students, industrial workers, religious leaders, youth and women’s organizations joined in non-violent resistance to the racist regime on such issues as rent, consumer embargoes, and bus boycotts. Thus the liberators of the blacks in South Africa were not only the guerilla fighters, but hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children, shop assistants, and workers living in shanty towns who consciously or unconsciously adopted methods which Gandhi would have approved.

In the United States, Gandhi’s teachings and examples inspired Martin Luther King Jr., a Baptist minister, who was able, in words of an American writer, to ‘meld the image of Gandhi and the image of the Negro preacher, and to use biblical symbols that bypassed cerebral centres and exploded in the well of the Negro psyche’. King championed the non-violent method as a practical alternative not only to armed conflicts within a country but between countries. ‘The Choice’, he wrote in his ‘Stride Towards Freedom 1958’, ‘is no longer between violence and non-violence. It is either non-violence or non-existence.’

The last two decades of the twentieth century witnessed some spectacular demonstrations of ‘peoples’ power’ to non-violently resist colonial rule, foreign domination, racial discrimination, and tyrannical regimes. In the Czech Republic and Poland, the Baltic States, the Philippines, and several other countries, unarmed men and women collectively dared to defy the might of the modern state. In Poland, Lech Walesa, the leader of the ‘Solidarity’ movement, acknowledged that he derived his insights from his study of Gandhi’s campaigns. He skillfully alternated disciplined and peaceful strikes with negotiations. He was one of the first to be clapped into prison from where he sent out earnest appeals to his countrymen to refrain from violence. His struggle had its
vicissitudes, but by 1989 Poland became the first country in Eastern Europe to free itself from Soviet domination.

In Czechoslovakia a massive non-violent protest in 1968 fizzled out, but twenty one years later, on 17th November 1989, a spontaneous upsurge against Soviet occupation turned into the largest demonstration in the history of the country. Hundreds of demonstrators were injured when the security forces charged the crowd. Over a hundred thousand marchers gathered in Wenceslas Square in Prague, sat down on the road, and sang nursery rhymes. They held candles and waved flags. Their leader Vaclav Havel, speaking in virtually the Gandhian idiom, exhorted them to refrain from violence. A ‘Civic Forum’ emerged, which incorporated all opposition groups and avowed its commitment to non-violence. Havel paid a tribute to the students of Czechoslovakia who had thrown themselves into ‘the non-violent struggle for giving this revolution a beautiful, peaceful, dignified, gentle, and we could say, loving face, which is admired by the whole world’. This was, he declared, ‘a rebellion of truth against lies, of purities against impurities, of the human heart against violence’. The Prague demonstration had a chain reaction across the country. Protests and participants grew daily. Thousands of strike committees were formed. Peaceful crowds, holding nothing but candles and flowers, were beaten up by truncheon-wielding police. In the words of Mary E. King, the author of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. (UNESCO, 1999), the people of Czechoslovakia enacted ‘the power of Truth, as Gandhi had defined it, as Havel interpreted it’. On 7th December, the Prime Minister of the Communist Government resigned. On 10th December a government of ‘national understanding’ was announced. By the end of the December 1989, the Soviet-dominated regime had surrendered and the Federal Assembly elected Havel, as the President of Czechoslovakia.
Another striking victory of non-violence was witnessed in Philippines as a result of which the despotic and corrupt regime of President Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown. Marcos threw into the prison one of the protagonists of democracy and his chief rival, Senator Beniquo Acquino. In prison Acquino pored over the Bible and the writings of Gandhi and was converted to the creed of non-violence. When he returned home after three years of self-exile, he was assassinated. His death galvanized the country and paved the way for a non-violent struggle. The crisis came in 1986 in the wake of fraudulent election conducted by the Ferdinand Marcos’s government, which enraged the people. On 22nd February, two army generals with their troops defected. This was followed by an amazing scene. Three million men, women and children, many of them praying, poured into the streets to protect the defecting soldiers from the advancing tanks and troops sent by Marcos. The atmosphere became so magnified and electric that some of Marcos’s soldiers joined the rebellions troop. This confrontation between the armed forces and unarmed people lasted for 77 hours till the Marcos regime crumbled.

Gandhi’s ideas have fuelled not only struggles against foreign domination and tyrannical rule, but also crusades against the piling up of nuclear weapons and the havoc being wrought by developed countries through wanton and wasteful use of resources of the planet. Peter Kelly, a leader of the Green Peace Movement in Germany who was influenced by the ideas of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, denounced methods of production which depended upon a ceaseless supply of raw materials and were leading to the exhaustion of natural resources and threatening ecological devastation. Speaking almost in the Gandhian idiom, she said, “We cannot solve any political problem, without also addressing spiritual ones.”
Despite these examples of non-violent struggles over the past two decades, which have highlighted the power potential of the oppressed, it must be admitted that Gandhi’s ideas and methods are still appreciated by only a small enlightened minority in the world. Gandhi himself had no illusions about their ready acceptance. He did not claim finality for his views, which he regarded within a broad ethical framework as aids for bettering the lives of his fellow men; they could be altered if they did not work. Though he expounded his philosophy of life in hundreds of articles and letters, he never tried to build it into a system. Nevertheless, the truth is that more than fifty five years after his death, his deepest concerns have become the concerns of thinking men and institutions working for a peaceful and humane world. He discovered a non-violent weapon to resolve our conflicts. This weapon can bring miracles as pointed out by Gandhi, “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.”

In fact, Mahatma Gandhi lived, worked, fought and died for peace, equality and respect for all human beings, tolerance and respect for all religious faiths and ethnic groups and settlements of differences (whether personal, national and international) by dialogue and discussion. He led the Indian masses, without distinction of race, gender or religion, to independence from what was at the time the mightiest power on earth, without violence and rancor towards the colonial authorities. It was undoubtedly an unparallel achievement in the annals of humankind.

At the same time, his teachings and personal examples provide practical tools which are relevant for addressing the multi-dimensional challenges faced by the world of today.

Non-violence to Gandhi, is not a weapon of the weak, but of the strong and fearless. It does not consist merely of abstention from physical injury; it demands a discipline of not even thinking of hurting others. Non-violence has been successfully used across the world. The most recent example was the initiative taken by the former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Behari Bajpai to establish a relationship of peace with Pakistan.

The mindset of people has to be made more pro-non-violence. Strong peace movements need to be created in all countries. Publications explaining the concept and methods of non-violence should be widely distributed. It is also essential to bring about connectivity among different peace movements.

The general masses of the world could call upon the governments and civil societies to create awareness throughout the world of the importance and relevance of Gandhi’s message towards the fulfillment of the fundamental expectation and right of humankind for a peaceful world order. Gandhi’s non-violence is effective and positive in all respects. However, it does not go along with cowardice as a coward is unaware of its meaning and application. Gandhi’s non-violence is based on truth and his faith in the application of pure and noble means to achieve an end. He successfully achieved his goals in his life time. The same can be achieved today and tomorrow but the only thing is the proper understanding of his principles and their proper application. Mere words will not do, following is also important.

The ongoing discussion and analysis can be concluded with a remarkable observation about Gandhi’s non-violence and its efficacy
made by Mr. Terry Michael Tracy, a prominent thinker, a Gandhian follower and author of world famous work ‘The Meaning of Life’. His remarks must be taken in right spirit. He says that we all believe on planet Earth. However, everyone steps to a different drummer. The beat many of us hear is certainly one of non-violence, but that is what we want and like. In our world the oceans are blue, the water is clear. The rivers run deep, the lovely fish are plentiful enjoying up to their satisfaction. Mountains are a majestic purple in the afternoon sun, their peaks are mantled with glacier white snow caps. Green meadows, grass blades vibrating in the summer, breeze spread as far as our eyes can see. We are happy to live with peace and tranquility in a snug harbour of wind and chimes and fluffy charming clouds. There is no violence to be committed, seen or felt here. We like to meet and help our neighbours. No one feels alone and helpless here. But that is how we imagine or want it.

On the other side there is a category of people who are habitual to hear a different drummer. They live in a world of their own, a world full of violence. They are crazy for guns, bombs and bloodshed. They enjoy the cry of crippled persons and Molotov Cocktails. Their streets are littered with trash and the homeless souls all around. They like riots and commit loot and murders. Their avenues are chocked with smoke and haze. Buses and garbage trucks stem fumes. They are bodies in bedlam – but that is what and how they want it. People may call them terrorists or give another worse name. They live in a different and disgruntled world of their own. However, the question arises that how can they become the part of a non-violent world? How can they be changed and brought in a world without violence? Can they be changed with the same methods which they have been adopting and following? Like Gandhi, Mr. Terry Michael also believes that they must be having the burning desire to cross over their line in their inner hearts. Accordingly, we know a world
without violence but do we dare to embrace the same serenity, humility, patience, religious tolerance, faith in truth and non-violence which Gandhi had embraced for a peaceful world? And if we can understand this message of Tracy, there should be no doubt in our minds about the application and efficacy of Gandhi’s non-violence in the present or even future contexts. In this respect, Gandhi himself used to say that the music was already in the flute but only those could bring out the music who knew how to play the flute. His message is simple but loud and clear, meaningful and wonderful. Accordingly, the choice is between existence and non-existence. The so-called civilized world must think over it once again and there is no harm to seek the blessings of the Mahatma – The Man of the Millennium.