CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Nationalism says Hans Kohn is an idea, 'an idea force' which fills man's brain and heart with new thoughts and new sentiments and drives him to translate his consciousness into deeds of organised action.¹ Kohn argues that a group acting under the impulse of nationalism seeks to find its expression what it regards as the highest form of organised activity in a sovereign state. As long as a nationality is not able to attain this consummation it satisfies itself with some form of pre-state organisation which however always tends at a given moment, the moment of 'liberation' to develop into a sovereign state. Nationalism demands the nation state, the creation of the nation state strengthening nationalism.² That C.R. was a nationalist and his life and career were shaped by the spirit of nationalism are the two inferential statements which depend on each other for their validity.

A stroke of providence determined the birth of C.R., at a time when nationalism as a spirit was gathering force in India, when India was on the verge of plunging into her struggle for freedom. To quote Kohn again "nationalism is inconceivable" without the idea of popular sovereignty proceeding without a
complete revision of the position of the ruler and the ruled, of classes and castes. The rise of the educated bourgeoisie, the crumbling of the caste system which had till then kept the various levels of traditional Hindu society strictly apart, a general hostility against British colonialism and a drive to attain freedom were all different manifestations of the same force, i.e., nationalism when it was young and pure. C.R.'s mind was exposed to this force when it was at its most impressionable stage. He therefore imbibed the spirit of nationalism in its purest and most forceful form, and driven by circumstances he translated his thoughts and ideas into action.

The question which faces one at this juncture is that in what way did C.R.'s mind and personality influence the impulses of nationalism which he projected? In other words could C.R.'s brand of nationalism be called unique? If so why was it different from the theories of his contemporaries? The answers to this question may be found in the analysis of those decisions of C.R., which were totally contrary to the policies of his contemporaries.

His C.R. formula was one of the butts of criticism which received opposition from many quarters. Jinnah and the Muslim League welcomed the idea of partition of India with enthusiasm. They had the well being of the Muslim minority in mind, when they supported the proposal. Other political
leaders who were indifferent to the possibility of partition were either too eager for a quick solution to the problem to think of the far reaching effects of such an action or did not grasp the implications of the step. But C.R. viewed the issue from a nationalistic outlook i.e., he considered the problem from the point of view of national solidarity and prosperity. He urged the need for co-operation of Hindus and Muslims in the war period, demarcation of Muslim provinces by a plebiscite on condition of full transfer of power, mutual agreement between Hindustan and Pakistan for safeguarding defence and commerce and communications for essential purposes. His attitude was clearly aiming at the settlement of contradicting religious interests between the two communities for a balanced national government, and in the interest of national unity.

A similar problem in the post independent India was Dr. Ambedkar's advocacy of the division of states on the basis of language. He emphasised that every state must be an unilingual state but all people speaking one language should be brought together. To him it was an easy and clear cut way of dividing India into well segregated states and a step towards efficient administration. C.R. however opposed the proposal because he felt that such a segregation would only intensify the difference between different linguistic groups and might breed hostility and parochial feelings. C.R's warnings went unheeded and India was divided into states on
the basis of language. With the power of hind sight one realises today that C.R's words have been proved right by the turn of events. The demands for autonomy at the state level which have led to terrible bouts of violence and an awesome waste of material and human lives, the quarrel between two linguistic groups on grounds of infringement on another's right which gave rise to unrest in Assam, the loss of economic stability incurred by further division of small states as seen in the case of Mizoram are cases in point providing the veracity of C.R's words. Constant disputes between the states on matter of territories, water and other issues born of a sense of alienation in one linguistic group from another have repeatedly endangered the stability and integrity of the nation.

C.K. was almost always acknowledged as a balanced able and shrewd administrator. But even in this sphere the same phenomenon i.e., C.K. being the recipient of adverse criticism from his contemporaries repeats itself. For instance he always attached the political position by the Congress i.e., the separation of the executive from the judiciary. He felt that the old system of the judiciary seeking as the conscience keeper of the executive would no longer be effective in the changing times.

C.R's motive for introducing a number of reforms was his strong desire to uplift the poor and the down trodden. He supported and implemented prohibition with the zeal of a
missionary. The bureaucrats said that he was depriving the government valuable source of income, which it would otherwise have received in the form of revenue. But C.R. argued that the existence of the government to strengthen itself with revenue would be a cruel mockery of the purpose of its existence.

C.R. introduced the shift system in schools so that a balance between academic and vocational training could be achieved. This exposed him to most virulent criticism from his contemporaries. He was accused of evil machinations for perpetuating the caste system and its structure. The adverse criticism gathered momentum when C.R. opposed the policy of reservation in schools, colleges and jobs on the basis of caste. C.R. was indeed against caste discrimination. What he viewed was that the economically weaker section of the society should be given a chance to better themselves. But to sacrifice the value of merit to attain equality in a short period of time would be counter productive. All the down trodden came under economically weaker section hence there was no need for reservation. For to offer the weaker classes, benefits without encouraging them to work for those benefits would lead them to mental laziness. Time has once again proved C.R. right. The ineffective educational system in the post independent India, the problem of unemployment resulting from it and the New Education policy with emphasis on vocationalisation proves C.R. right after decades. The shift
system is also adopted in the recent decades in many educational institutions which provide opportunities to the students to learn vocational courses in their spare time, an idea which then suggested by C.R. was unfortunately given a different picturisation.

He wrote for a practical and immediate purpose. He wanted to educate and inform the masses so as to reform a deplorable situation and his pen served as a conversent and effective medium of communication to promote awareness. C.R's thinking and reasoning were firmly rooted in and derived support from his knowledge of the Hindu scriptures and his belief in Hinduism as a way of life. It is from this angle that he differed so drastically from a contemporary of his namely, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Both active participants in the freedom struggle, both of them were inspired by the moving spirit of nationalism to devote their lives in working for their country men. Yet ironically enough, the history of post independent India shows that no two leaders could be more different in their ideology and their approaches to problem solving. The difference between the two statesmen is one of ideology and practice. Products of the same fervour and purpose, followers of the same leader, Gandhi, why and how did they choose different paths? For their differences were even at the beginning those between a self conscious, revolutionary radical and a disciple of Gandhi, a true Hindu
who believed in the concept of Dharma as a tool for political and socio economic change.

The period between 1933-1936 saw the change in Jawaharlal Nehru, who was on the verge of becoming a Marxist revolutionary anti imperialist. If the impact of the world wide economic depression on India (1929-1931) the resultant crisis and collapse of the capitalist system, alarmed him, his favourable impressions on the relevance and feasibility of dialectical materialism as an instrument of political and social change reassured him. To him capitalism meant "the developed system on private property except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system of a higher ideal of cooperative system." Further Nehru believed that neither reason nor moral consideration over ride the economic interests of the people. If there was to be a change it would come through the upheaval resulting from a revolution. Coercion no said was the instrument of change. So he moved away from the Gandhian dichotomy of conversion versus coercion and showed definite leanings towards Marxism.

In the concrete political situation of 1934-36, the dominant Congress leadership and the leadership of the Indian capitalist class felt that the stage of pressure or active struggle was over and the stage of compromise, co-operation and good will had to be ushered in under the status quo. This involved the working of constitutional reforms which were
finally promulgated in 1935. Gandhi and the dominant right wing leadership of the Congress prevented the Congress from adopting a policy of office rejection in the provinces under the Act of 1935. At the same time G.D. Birla, C.R. and the right wing leaders tried to bring about a spirit of mutual trust between the rulers and the Congress leadership in general and Gandhi in particular.

Unlike C.R., Nehru argued that if the aim was a new state and not new administrative power could not be gained through stages and with the co-operation of ruling power. He also said that there was a need, for uncompromising opposition to and permanent confrontation and conflict with imperialism until it was overthrown. In the same way Nehru criticised the right wing leaders for subordinating the social struggle to the political struggle. This was he believed the result of the middle class bourgeois character of Indian nationalism.

U.R. on the contrary stood unswayed by the onslaught of Marxism and its accompanying school of thoughts. C.R. too wanted the political change to be followed by the social change of India but he believed that the political social culture of India will not assimilate a concept like Marxism smoothly. The uplift of the have nots should be effected by the willing co-operation of the haves and such a change born with our rancour and bloodshed would result in harmonious and peaceful co-existence. A change for the better according to C.R.
should result from the strengthening of the social fabric and never from its disintegration. His knowledge of and faith in the Hindu scriptures, his desire to preserve the culture and his belief in the concept of Dharma cemented this attitude of C.R. It is in this respect that C.R. was a true disciple of Gandhi.

If observed closely, every stance and political decision that he adopted would seem to have sprung from this facet of C.R. The reason of course lies in the fact that Nehru was an agnostic who believed in the theory of dialectical materialism to achieve economic equality and financial stability while C.R. remained a true India, who had faith in Hinduism not as a religious tenet but as a way of life. While Nehru borrowed heavily from foreign sources to invest in heavy industries, C.R. maintained that villages were the backbone of Indian economy and to promote cottage and small scale industries would help India achieve her aim of the introduction of land ceiling and argued for the implementation of the doctrine of benign trusteeship which was Gandhi's solution to the problem. The theory of trusteeship is of universal application. It provides that every individual who has more than his proportionate portion becomes a trustee for that portion. Theoretically, Gandhism was akin to Communism in the avowed objective of creating an economic order in which economic equality and total employment are assured and to each according
to need is the rule followed. In practice however Gandhi
found communist methods of achieving that objective as faulty,
unendurable and reactionary since communism is created and
sustained by violence crushes individual liberty and initiative
has no respect for truth, and banks on secrecy and other foul
methods, and is based on atheism. 12 C.R. followed this economic
doctrine which is an adjustment with the fundamentals namely
truth and non-violence.

He criticised the policy of non-alignment on two grounds
at the conceptual level, he thought that it was weak and a
more realistic level it spelt immediate danger for a third
world country like India from the power blocs. In a forth
right manner, he advocated that India make her ideological
earnings clear. It might have seemed less glamorous, but
time has once again proved C.R's political acumen. 13 In short
C.R. opposed any form of reform or growth which might breed
differences and hostility among the masses. For he believed
that growth was healthy only if it was unobtrusive and
integral to the daily lives of men.

'Only such a phenomenon he said would tighten the fabric
of society and sustain the unity and solidarity of the nation
as a whole. His activities in his political career and his
writings establish this factor in a clear and unequivocal
light. C.R. was not a politician nor a social reformer in
the strictest sense of the terms, nor was he a religious thinker or a littorateur alone, but was basically a nationalist and his words, deeds, policies, and ideology were all inspired and backed by a deep sense of nationalism.
REFERENCES


2 Ibid., p. 4.

3 Ibid., p. 5.


7 Jawaharlal Nehru, Recent Essays and Writings, Allahabad, 1934, p. 89.

8 Ibid., p. 582.


10 Jawaharlal Nehru, Recent Essays and Writings, Allahabad, 1934, pp. 4-6.
