GANDHIJI ON POLITICS

In this chapter an attempt is made to spell out the Gandhiian approach to politics and the role of the State in the life of society. Gandhi viewed life as a whole and as such his view of politics is also governed by ethical considerations. His political ideal was a stateless society, a society that is morally bound and self-regulated by discipline: individuals. As a compromise he did accept a democratic state where the citizens will have the capacity to resist non-violently any abuse of authority. He was against importation of any political system and wanted India to evolve a true science and art of politics which should represent the genius of the country.

An appraisal of Gandhiian ideas with reference to developments in post-independent India is also made with a view to assess the functional aspects of Gandhi political thought.

Gandhiji's conception of God and human nature influenced his thinking on all aspects of life. Politics was no exception to this. He perceived life as an integral whole. "Society cannot be divided into watertight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another."¹ In Gandhiji's view there is no polarisation between the real and ideal. Gandhiji tried to solve problems that confronted him with pragmatism

¹ Young India : 2-3-1922; P.131
and with the Bania common sense. "The citizen-leader Gandhi moved with the times and his theory underwent a continuous process of evolution. This evolution is a distinctive note of Gandhian theory. Gandhi would have been marked as a political leader of least significance if he could not have moved with the times and reflected the historical urges and aspirations of the Indian masses. There was, indeed, a gap between the ideal political order he envisaged and the national democratic state for the creation of which he led the Indian nation. The hiatus between the ideal and the actual was not of his making; it was implicit in the given objective situation in Gandhi's India. This was not a case of political opportunism as has sometimes been alleged, but a clear expression of astute realism which speaks of his sagacity and political maturity."

Spiritualisation of politics:

For Gandhi, politics was not an end but only a means for serving the poor and the down trodden. He never conceived politics as outside the purview of religion and morals. He spiritualised the then Indian politics through his sustained devotion to truth and nonviolence. He took to politics not as a profession but as a vocation to save and inspire people with faith.

2. "Gandhi's attitude towards political power" by Sudhadeb Bhattacharya in 'Gandhi: theory and Practice, social impact and contemporary relevance', Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, pp 263-4
in God and love of humanity. He had deep-rooted faith in the efficacy of Truth and non-violence in overcoming conflicts at various levels. Satyagraha, when applied to politics, took the form of a technique and developed the moral resistance of the people to injustices of all sorts. It aims at change of heart on the part of the wrong-doer by igniting in him the spark of morality and social justice. Lack of moral integrity on the part of those who want to practice it will result in its misapplication.

Gandhiji preached and practised politics of love and trust in which there was no room for deception and cunning, no secret or underhand dealings of any kind and means being as pure as the end. He never accepted the dictum that 'end justifies the means' instead he always reiterated on means justifying the end.

Gandhiji was a national leader interested primarily in seeking solutions to the problems that confronted the country. He was not a leader of a particular party. Due to historical accident the Indian National Congress became the platform for achieving national independence. So far the Congress could muster the support of the masses, and so long it fostered his cherished ideals, he encouraged and fostered the organisation. When once he found that the organisation had lost its validity, he asked for its dissolution. "Gandhiji was not a party leader fighting and manoeuvring for power for his party. Had it been so it could never have occurred to him to ask the Congress to quit the field of power politics. He was a national leader fighting for
the freedom of his country; nay, he was a world leader of humanity working to free his fellow men from bondage. The Indian freedom movement was a people's movement par excellence. It was not Rajniti (politics of the state) but Lokniti (politics of the people). 

Gandhian conception of politics: 

Gandhiji upheld politics without power. He believed that power corrupts man. Accordingly he was against acceptance of office by the Congress in 1937. He exhorted to avoid office and power. But he insisted that if office is for service it can be accepted. The working of satyagraha clearly shows that it is not a power-technique. "Gandhi's rejection of power was not only negative, but quite positive also. He was not content merely with advising the Congress to decline power. His vision of a non-political society took a concrete form in the organisation of constructive workers within the national fold of the Congress. Gandhi attached the greatest importance to the role of the constructive workers. They were not to function only as a subordinate and secondary group to the predominantly political wing of the Congress. The constructive workers had to discharge a more important duty by remaining outside the politics in the Congress. He believed that if constructive workers were outside power-politics they could act as a corrective to the political workers in the Congress.

3. Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy; Jayaprakash Narayan, Edited by Bimal Prasad; P. 158
4. Young India, May, 7, 1931.
Thus Gandhi's approach to politics belongs more to the category of influence rather than of power. He believed that wielding of power involves coercion and violence. Throughout Gandhiji insisted on creation of moral influence by the Congress through the techniques of non-violence.

Gandhiji's politics has two dimensions viz. positive and negative. The positive aspect is the politics of influence. The negative aspect is the 'politics of protest! Gandhiji's politics may very well be described as "politics of protest" rather than a politics of rule." He protested against injustice in any form and in any quarter. He fought against foreign domination, fought against exploitation either of individuals or groups through peaceful means. He has proved the efficacy of politics of non-violence in conduct of conflicts at individual and group levels. He was convinced that non-violence alone can bring about peaceful order in society. Referring on the world of tomorrow he wrote: "The world of tomorrow will be, must be, a society based on non-violence, 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."

Non-violent state:

Gandhiji was a philosophical Anarchist. He looked
at the state with a sort of distrust for it is an
instrument of coercion. For him an ideal state would be
a stateless society. But he knew that ideals only provide
directions and they can never be realised. So long as
human imperfections persist and so long as moral revolu-
tion does not take place in all walks of life such a state
will not be reached. The ideal society for him was the
stateless democracy, the state of enlightened anarchy
where social life is self-regulated.

As a practical idealist Gandhiji visualised that
it was not possible to realise immediately such a state
of society. It required radical change in the moral out-
look of individuals. Hence a via media or a compromise
between the ideal non-violent society and the facts of
human nature was postulated. The result was a non-violent
state where minimum force or coercion was used. Moral
persuasion takes the place of forcible conversion either
in changing individuals or groups in such an order of
society.

7. Non-violent way to world peace: M.K. Gandhi;
Gandhiji identified the state as the organ of violence. He drew a distinction between state and society and opposed the absolute sovereignty of the state. He advocated the sovereignty of the people as the panacea for all the ills. "To me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour.

In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that the Government is best which governs the least."

Thus for Gandhiji the state was only "one of the means" to secure the greatest good of all. There was nothing sacrosanct about the state. It was a concession to human weakness and the more man can do without it, the more real was his freedom. He had great distrust for the state and through satyagraha sought to develop in the people the capacity to resist.

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8- Young India: 2-7-1931, P.162
the state authority when it was abused. He was against concentration of power in the state and as such advocated decentralisation of political and economic power, reduction in the functions of the state, establishment of voluntary associations, elimination of inequalities through trusteeship system and the decentralisation of the administration of justice. Gandhiji admitted the necessity of police and military organisations; but the police and military will play such different roles than what they play in modern states. They will be servants and not masters of the people.

Man is the measure of all things:

Gandhiji gave supreme consideration to individual freedom or liberty. But he was against unrestricted individualism and always exhorted individuals not to ignore their duties or responsibilities. Awareness of one's responsibilities towards society will solve all the problems of order in society. Reiterating on the interdependence of individual and society Gandhiji wrote: "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member." 9

Gandhiji recognised the right of the people to pull down a government if it went against their welfare. This capacity arises when people become more and more conscious of their capacities and responsibilities. "Real swaraj will come, not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority."  

Gandhiji bemoaned too much dependence of people on the state. This was neither in their interests nor in the interests of democracy. As a born democrat he realized that democracy thrives on the initiative and consciousness of people. "I look upon an increase of the power of the state with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress."  

Gandhiji visualised the possibility of the state becoming non-violent i.e. a state or order wherein all individuals are morally conscious and morally bound. We saw no conflict between politics and religion and in his political campaigns he tried to synthesise both. 

In ushering such an order, Gandhiji gave topmost priority to individual purification or self-purification.

He was certain that if individuals were to purify their lives, society will progress in the desired direction. In this sense, we have to understand, his statements that if the country can prepare one true Satyagrahi, he will have great influence on the minds of the people.

"The non-violent state of Gandhi's conception was the state that is predominantly non-violent. The determinant of such a state was not its institutional structure but the non-violence of its citizens. The institutional form of the non-violent state would simply be concrete expression of the moral level of the people.

The non-violent or democratic state therefore presumes the self-purification of the individual citizen. This was the starting point of all Gandhi's campaigns, which were first of all moral revolutions: in the heart and mind of the individual. Gandhi distrusted mass movements as much as he did the existing structure of the state. He identified power not with millions of marching feet but with the moral regeneration of a single person. If enough persons could undergo such regeneration, combining to form a non-violent political movement, their power would create the non-violent state."¹²

What Gandhi ji meant by Swaraj?

Swaraj or self-government for Gandhiji was not merely change of rulers. Swaraj has to start with individuals. Unless individuals change their way of life and develop self-regulatory habits democracy would be meaningless. Swaraj is self-rule, it is a rule from

within and not without. "Swaraj for me means freedom for the meanest of our countrymen.... 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'". 13

Swaraj is the capacity to resist the state and be independent of its influences. All forms of government represent violence in some form or the other. As such "self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign government or whether it is national." 14

Gandhiji believed that "... Good Government is no substitute for self-government." 15 If Swaraj cannot provide the minimum and ordinary amenities of life, it is no Swaraj. His conception of poorna swaraj was based on Sarvodaya order where every individual is an end for himself and in no way he is exploited. "The Swaraj of my dream is the poorman's swaraj. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the monied men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness. You or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that swaraj is not poorna swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it." 16

13. Young India : 12-6-1924, P.195
15. Young India : 22-9-1920, P.1
16. Young India : 26-3-1931, P.46
Gandhiji valued socialism but it was to be non-violent. He conceived a non-violent order wherein individuals will have utmost restraint in their needs and desires. Gandhiji was not blind to the material needs of man but he was against apotheosising material welfare at the cost of moral or spiritual happiness. Too much hankering after material welfare cuts at the root of human happiness. There can be no peace in the minds and hearts of men, nor peace amongst men if this hunger (for material happiness) gnaws at them continuously. That would necessarily set up an uncontrolled competition between individuals, groups and nations. In such a restless society violence and war would be endemic. All values of life would be subordinated to this overmastering desire for more.

From this perspective we have to understand Gandhiji's constant exhortation on voluntary limitation of wants. Such a thing is possible only when men really become participatory members of small communities where competition and exploitation could be minimised. Jayaprakash Narayan has remarked, "... I believe that for man really to enjoy liberty and freedom and to practise self-government, it is necessary voluntarily to limit his wants. Otherwise, the greed for more and yet more will lead to mutual conflict, coercion, spoliation, war, and also to a system of production that will be so complex as to bind democracy head and foot and deliver it to a bureaucratic oligarchy."
Democracy and Non-violence:

Gandhiji had implicit faith in democracy as a way of life. But he had his own reservations regarding the forms of democracy that have taken shape in different countries. He was highly critical of parliamentary democracy based on party rule. As experience has shown, parties become partisan and do little to represent the interests of the people. Their main aim will be to promote the interests of the party, seek power for the party. Thus Gandhiji's conception of democracy embody the seeds of a party-less democracy. After Gandhiji, Jayaprakash Narayan has come to be a staunch advocate of partyless democracy.

Gandhiji was highly emphatic in maintaining that violence and democracy are poles apart. It is non-violence alone that can sustain democracy and integrate individual freedom with social restraint. Democracy was considered real when sovereignty rests in the people. It is the people's participation that makes democracy effective and efficient. So long as people have the capacity to wrest power from the Government, there will be little scope for totalitarianism. "Non-violence and democracy are both rooted in the spiritual equality of all men. Democracy to be genuine must provide adequate opportunity to the weakest and the strongest. This cannot happen except through non-violence."

Gandhiji defined democracy as "the rule of unadulterated non-violence." True democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa."

Jayaprakash Narayan points out that it is basically a moral problem. Unless the moral and spiritual qualities of the people are appropriate, the best of constitution and political systems will not make democracy work.

For Gandhiji the ideal democracy was a federation of self-sufficient and self-governing village communities. "Society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary cooperation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence." Organisation of such communities was through the revival of panchayats. He was against centralisation for it leads to concentration of power in the hands of a few resulting in suffering for many. Centralisation was inconsistent with non-violent structure of society. A decentralised society, on the other

20. Ibid, Oct. 13, 1940, P.320
21. Ibid. 27-5-1939, P.159
23. Harijan: 15-1-1940; P.411
hand, will generate power for the people, to avoid exploitation of the masses, the only remedy was decentralisation in political and economic spheres. "If India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralise many things. Centralisation cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force."24

Reiterating on the importance of decentralisation, Gandhiji wrote: "Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world....

This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

This society must naturally be based on truth and non-violence which, in my opinion are not possible without a living belief in God, meaning a self-existent, All-knowing Living Force which inheres every other force known to the world and which depends on none and

24- Harijan : 18-1-1942, p.5.
and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or cease to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living Light.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral parts."

Gandhiji was not against elections and representation. "By swaraj I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the largest number of adult population, male or female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the State and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters."

A critical review of Gandhian influences:

Gandhiji came on the Indian horizon at a time when there was need for a charismatic leader who could sustain the dreams and aspirations of a subjected people. He had the sagacity to feel the pulse of Indians and orient his actions towards national liberation. A subjected people if at all they have to wake up betimes need confidence and courage to stand up against

25. Harijan : 28-7-1945; P.336
26. Young India II; Pr.488-89
exploitation and injustice. Sensitive to the religious orientations of Indians Gandhiji harnessed the traditional ideals such as Truth, Non-violence, asceticism etc. to the requirements of modernising Indian Society. In the process he did reinterpret some of those values to suit the changing circumstances. What was hitherto fatalistic, other worldly and ritualistic came to have new meaning and purpose. The traditional values began to acquire instrumental dimensions. In a perceptive study of Gandhiji, Rudolph and Rudolph point out: "Gandhi's greatest contribution to political modernization was in helping India to acquire national coherence and identity, to become a nation, by showing Indians a way to courage, self-respect and political potency." Reiterating on the impact of Gandhiji on Indian political scene Rudolphs have pointed out: "... A man with Gandhi's spiritual concerns might be supposed to show little interest in the more routine tasks of modern politics. Yet far from being incapacitated for mundane political entrepreneur-ship by his religious heritage, Gandhi drew from it a this-worldly asceticism. His efforts to build effective political organisations were associated with a psychological disposition toward wprk and efficiency that mobilised like propensities among those whose lives were affected by his example and teaching.

27. The modernity of Tradition: Political development in India: Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph; P. 25.
Gandhi approached his public work with the frame of mind of those modernizing men who confront all tasks with the calculation of the metronome and the balance sheet. While Weber and contemporary social psychologists associate industriousness and the economizing of time and resources with achievement drives rooted in "protestant" character, Gandhi came to them through familial and religious socialization in the vaishnavite and Jain traditions of Gujarat. His life of-course does not support Weber's belief (on Hindus and Hinduism)."\textsuperscript{28}

Gandhiji had a keen sense of organizing abilities. Even while he was in S. Africa, his organizing skills came to the fore when he established the Natal Congress. Soon after his return to India he dramatically showed his skills in organizing and strengthening associations such as Gujarat Sabha, Indian National Congress and various Ashrams. His organizing skills became proverbial for the sagacity with which he converted Indian National Congress into a strong and solid forum. "One of Gandhi's most important contributions to political modernization was to help congress become a mass political organisation, manned by full time political workers and capable of mobilizing public opinion and bringing it to bear on Governmental policy and administration..."\textsuperscript{29}... In doing so he not only changed fundamentally the character of nationalist struggle for independence but also modernized Indian politics by moving it in a professional and

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid ... P.219
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid ... P.232
democratic direction and by providing the organisational base, procedures, and habits for national politics.\textsuperscript{30}

In the process of modernizing the Indian politics, he was influenced by both revolutionaries and politicians. He was influenced by the ideals of revolutionaries but rejected the element of power that politicians pursue and deploy. Gandhiji believed that self denial is a virtue and unless politicians have self-control and resist the desire for power, they will not be of much use in the service of the people. "If the professional revolutionary and the professional politician represent two types of the modern political specialist, the Gandhian professional embodies qualities of both without resembling either.... The Gandhian model of politics as a vocation emerged in the years immediately following his return to India in 1915. Although in its particulars this type was related to the Indian cultural context, it has more general application as an example of the professionalization of peaceable ideal politics. Its concern for spiritual meaning, its emphasis on service, its insistence on non-violent means, and its suspicion of power distinguish the Gandhian from the other two models."\textsuperscript{31}

It is a matter of history that Gandhiji's ideas came to be accepted half-heartedly by his staunch...

\textsuperscript{30} Rudolphs op.cit. P.240
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid... P.235
followers. Jawaharlal Nehru who became the first Prime Minister of independent India did not accept Gandhian ideas in their totality. Even non-violence came to be accepted as a policy and not a creed. The developments in post-independent India reveal that Gandhian influences were marginal. Gandhiji was against rapid industrialisation and centralisation of power. He was for democratic decentralisation in the spheres of politics and economics. Gandhiji wanted to bring about a moral revolution in the spheres of politics and economics. He advised Congressmen to dissolve the Congress party and convert it into a Lok Sevak Sangh. His advice was not heeded. Instead Congressmen at state and national level became more and more power-hungry. Elections though seemed to be democratic manoeuvres came to be fought for seeking power and pelf. Motto of service which was the main criterion of political life in pre-independent India came to have no meaning. With the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru, the situation became more tense. There has been a crisis of character. Everywhere there is moral vacuum and nothing prevents individuals to amass wealth by fair or foul means. We should not have expected violence on a large scale whenever communal tensions flare up or when students become agitative. But it has become the order of the day. Corruption and opportunism have become rampant. Today politics seems to have become carrot-chasing by the greedy for crumbs of power or money. The tendency for floor crossing has been on the increase both
in the Parliament as well as in the State Assemblies.
All these untoward things may be due to lack of proper
moral leadership. After Gandhi and Nehru, India has
not been able to produce a leader who could motivate and
sustain the ambitions and aspirations of Indian people.

The developments in 1947 especially partition
and communal riots were quite disappointing to Gandhiji.
As days passed, Gandhiji himself began to feel that he
was being neglected and no one was ready to seek his
advice. Almost all the developments that occurred after
independence went against his wishes. "The pity is
that no one trusts me with the reins of Government.
Otherwise I would show how to govern non-violently." 32

Pointing out to the mood of Gandhiji in 1947, Pyrelal
writes: "I found Gandhiji to be the saddest man that
one could picture when I rejoined him in the middle of
December, 1947. In the midst of the pomp and pageantry
of the capital, surrounded by loving friends, and with
his name on everybody's lips, he was spiritually
isolated from his surroundings and from almost everyone
of his colleagues, who now held positions of power and
prestige in the Government." 33 The disappointments
made him to say that "I have shed the desire to live
upto 125 years." 34

"Politically speaking India has rejected Gandhi
in circumstances similar to those in which Britain
rejected Churchill, but for precisely the opposite

32. Harijan : August 25, 1940, P.262
33. The last phase, Vol. II : Pyrelal ... P.681
34. Ibid...
reasons. Each of these men was given the leadership in a struggle. Churchill led a military struggle, and was rejected at the end of it because many British people who had accepted him as a war leader did not consider a war leader the best person to lead the nation in time of peace. Gandhi led a non-violent struggle for independence; and when it was won his ideas were rejected because those who had accepted a pacifist and his methods in trying to win freedom were unable to believe that the same methods could preserve that freedom, once it was achieved..." 35

We need to search for the answer to the question as to why the moral foundations of Indian society have weakened? Is it our poverty that has made us greedy or is it our political bondage that has made us lose all sense of proportion? What is happening in our society today is not the result of the sudden desire to become rich or to make politics a business rather than a vocation. Our social framework with its multiplicity of segregative institutions have never helped us create a sense of belonging to whole India. We are willing to sacrifice for our family, our caste, for our language or for our religion but not for the nation at the expense of all the four. This may be the reason that we miss the woods for the trees.

It can be argued that a society in order to maintain its dynamism cannot for all time reject moral foundation; it may do this for sometime. When the whole world is in a chaotic state because the earlier values founded on the narrow group life, be it caste, tribe or state, have become dysfunctional and the values appropriate to the space age are slow to evolve. Our ambivalence to Gandhian ideals springs from our political relation with other states. Left to ourselves we may choose Gandhian methods of reconstruction. But they are slow to give results and we have no time if we want to survive as a nation.

Whatever may be the impact of Gandhian ideas on the policies and programmes of Government in India, it is a fact that Gandhiji stood for certain values that have everlasting significance. His Satyagraha technique provides a civilized alternative in seeking solutions to various problems that irk mankind. The most outstanding problem facing mankind is the threat of a nuclear war. Gandhian approach and method seems to be the best available alternative against an all-out nuclear war. "The meaning of the Gandhian contribution was to reformulate the moral/religious argument for non-resistance into one that emphasised the obligation of actively opposing injustice." 36

On the technique of Satyagraha Surendra Varma points out: "Gandhi is a social idealist. But he is not a visionary. He is an utterly practical politician who rejects the violent method of war-fare precisely for its impracticability. He worked out a really Copernican revolution in politics by introducing the technique of Satyagraha, the only practical way to achieve a social order, at once just and human." 37

Thus the main contribution of Gandhiji to the political life of India was the popularisation of Satyagraha as a technique of non-violent resistance. In his struggle against the British, Satyagraha took different forms such as civil disobedience, non-co-operation etc. All these have had great influence on the minds of the people inside and outside India in making them more conscious of themselves. In spite of developments that go against what Gandhiji desired, his influence is potentially felt by one and all.