Chapter IV

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN AND SOCIALISM
Jayaprakash Narayan was one of the greatest socialist philosophers in the world. He realized about socialism in his own angle. He contributed his socialist thought to enrich and strengthen socialism. No ideology in Political science remains as vexed today as socialism; and in way, even more vexed that what it was during the period of its origin. Where as most thinking people in the world of today would aspire for a socialist organization of social relations, there is little agreement on what exactly “Socialism” stands for. There may in practice, be as many varieties of ‘Socialism’ as there are advocates. So much has been written and said about the ‘new religion’-socialism that it has become almost impossible to present a definite, precise and universal version of its concept. No unanimously acceptable definition of socialism is available till date. In the ‘Dictionary of Socialism’, Anglo’s S. Rappaport, reproduced about forty definitions of socialism, without being able to pretend that his list was exhaustive.1

The most accepted definition of socialism is that it refers to the goal of a societal organization in which society or the state will hold all the instruments of production and distribution. But for achieving this goal socialism appears and obtains as a methodology, a philosophy, a movement and a creed urging on a faith and a religion in the context of its appeal and emotion vis-à-vis its
followers. It works like “an ethical code,.... a historical category, judicial principle”, and assumes the form of “a popular movement and a scientific analysis, an interpretation of the past and a vision of the future, was cry and a nation of war, a violent revolution and a gentle revolution, a gospal of love and altruism and a compaign of hate, greed, the hope of mankind and the end of civilization, the dawn of millennium and frightful catastrophe.”

It is in this context that the term socialism evades an all embracing definition. The phrase is of a changeful and an evolutionary nature. According to Shadwell, “Socialism is the most complicated, many sided and confused question that ever plagued the minds of men.”

To Ramsay Muir, “Socialism is a chameleon-like creed. It changes its colour according to its environment...” All over the world, Socialism has the reputation of being like a hat that has lost its shape because everyone has worn it. Rappaport has expressed the difficulty in defining the Socialism. “If I am asked whether I am a socialist myself, I cannot but frankly reply: I do not know. It all depends upon what one understand by Socialism.”

As far as the modern Socialism is concerned it wears a threefaced mask. First socialism before Marx has been called Utopian Socialism, of Owen, St. Simen and Fourier. Secondly, the revolutionary phase of Socialism with Marx and Engels as its scientists and thirdly, from Russian Revolution to the present day i.e., Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin as its great exponents. J.P. was not unaware of this. He was more of a social and political activist. He was painfully
conscious of the grave injustice, oppression and exploitation that marked the arrangement of existing social and economic relations of his society. He definitely wanted to play an active role in changing this order. In his meditations on the nature of the order that should replace the existing one, he had no doubt that Socialism was the only answer. No intelligent person today will doubt that the next stage in the evolution of human society is socialism. As regards the features of Socialism his ideas had been undergoing change with more experience both of the practice of Socialism in other countries and his perception of the specific cultural proprieties of Indian Society.

He obviously looked at the problem from the perspective of the problems of Indian Society and its peculiarities of social and economic relations. There were many, Jayaprakash Narayan argued, who thought that since India's traditions were different, it was industrially backward and it was primarily and agricultural country, it was therefore, not the country where Socialism could be applicable. He, however, felt that the crucial question was not that of the nature of its economy but of the ruling party and its ideology. Thus he emphasized, "If there is a party in power in India, desirous of establishing Socialism in the country, the fact of its being predominantly agricultural will not be an impediment."6

He also refuted the view that Socialism as an ideology could be "foreign", to any territorial areas. He thus pointed out, if in such backward societies as Uzbek-Turkistan, Socialism had been established through the
Soviet Communist Party, the possibility of a developing Socialism in India on similar lines could not be ruled out. Discussing the dire necessity of Socialism he observed “Socialism alone can solve Indian agriculture from ruin and bankruptcy; can alone make the nation strong and powerful”.

The evolution of J.P’s socialist ideology can be divided into three broad phases - The Marxist Phase: 1922 - 46, the phase of Democratic Socialism 1946-54 and the Gandhian phase since 1955 which included his final broader view of “Total Revolution”. The transformation of his ideas from one phase to the other was gradual and evolutionary. However it appears that even within a single phase his ideas did not remain constant or uniform; they continued to evolve and change.

During his Marxist days he believed in State action for bringing about Socialism. At that time he believed in class struggle, violent methods and dictatorship of the proletariat. He had, therefore, defined Socialism strictly in economic terms.

After the death of Lenin, becoming disillusioned with Marxism as practiced in Soviet Russia and with the role of C.P.I. in India he moved towards Democratic Socialism. In this phase under the influence of Gandhiji instead of talking of the “basic causes” of economic inequality and exploitation he started giving more importance to purity of means and democratic freedoms.
During Sarvodays phase, instead of State action he talked of people’s voluntary action for the achievement of Socialism. In the seventies, however, seeing the disastrous consequences of purely voluntary action he talked of a wider concept of “Total Revolution”. He was convinced that the deep-rooted malaise of the Indian society and problems of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, caste system, disparities between the rich and the poor, could not be met simply with the slogan of Socialism. There was need of over-all transformation of the system.

**MARXIST PHASE**

In 1922, he went to America for higher studies and spent about seven years at the universities of California, Iowa, Wisconsin and Ohio. It was in Wisconsin that he came in contact with Marxist ideas. In the company of a Jew friend Avrom Landy and through the Mexico-born leader of the American Communist Party, Manuel Gomez, he received the first lessons of Marxism and communist theory and practice and tried to “Devour” the existing Marxist literature in the company of a few friends. He observed later, “It was in the land of resilient and successful capitalism, in the United States of America, which was my home from 1922 to 1929 that I became a convert to Marxism, or more precisely to Soviet communist as it was then.” He is said to have left nothing unread of Marxism that was available including the pungent writings of M.N. Roy.
But when he reached India at the end of 1929 his ideas began to change. He felt that Marxism was not the suitable creed at that time. His sense of primary concerns led him to join the mainstream of nationalist struggle. I naturally kept away from the C.P.I. and joined the ranks of the soldiers of freedom.” He stated. Narendra Deva who was also a Marxist like J.P. in his pre-independence days was convinced of giving priority of nationalism. He was aware of problems of reconciling nationalism without Socialism. He was convinced, however, that for the then existing priorities he would not sacrifice nationalism for the cause of Socialism. Narendra Deva noted that he would:

No doubt, if circumstances are favourable try to establish a socialist state but if the objective situation is not ripe for such an event, we will not for that reason frustrate the cause of freedom....

In Indian national movement few people lost faith in Gandhian principles. In 1934, discarding Gandhian method of liberalism, all those Congressmen who had come under the influence of “Marxism Socialism” formed their own revolutionary party known as Congress Socialist Party.

During this first phase there was no difficulty in discussing J.P’s concept of Socialism as he had dealt with these ideas in his books like why Socialism? Towards Struggle and in his Meerut Thesis and Faizpur Thasis. In the first chapter of the book Why Socialism? J.P. stated categorically that there was “only one type, only one theory of Socialism-Marxism.” Later on in Meerut
and Faizpur Theses while dealing with the nature and ideology of C.S.P. (Congress Socialist Party). He called it a “Marxist Party” rather than a Marxist-Leninist Party. Talking about the tasks before the C.S.P. he felt convinced that the immediate task of the party was to develop the national movement to fight foreign domination. He believed that only “Marxist Socialists” could wean the anti-imperialist elements in the Congress from its bourgeois leadership and thus to bring them under leadership of “revolutionary socialism.” Only his party could perform such miraculous task, he thought, he therefore, emphasized that “party members must fully understand the technique of revolution, the theory and practice of class struggle, the nature of the State and the processes leading to the Socialist society.”

He examined different theories of Socialism but felt sure that “if we accept Marxism, or belong to the Marxist school, as I do the differences are greatly narrowed down....” He was aware of the conflicting trends among the Marxists, the Stalinists and Trotskyist, for instance, who not only differed from each other, but are even “thirsty for each other’s blood.” Which of these two “Marxian” schools present a true picture of Socialism? He asked. “Those who belong to neither of these warring camps would doubtlessly say, neither”, it was felt. Clarifying what was true Marxism for him he said it was something like “Democratic Socialism.” It was observed:

I believe that Socialism which Marx pictured was the socialism which we are trying to describe by the term democratic socialism. Only that socialism
can bring about the emancipation of toilers and no other. He regarded Marxism as a “science of society” and a scientific method of social change, which includes the idea of social revolution. As such, there would no room for “dogmatism” or “fundamentalism” in Marxist thought.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{According to him Objectives of Socialism were:}

Elimination of exploitation and poverty; provision of equal opportunities to all for self-development; full freedom of the material and moral resources of society and utilization of these resources in accordance with the needs and wishes of society as a whole rather than in accordance with the dictates of profit; equitable apportionment of national wealth.\textsuperscript{16}

In his concept of socialist society there would be economic and political democracy. In this democracy, as he observed:

Men will neither to slave to capitalism nor to a party or the state. Man will be free. He will have to serve society which will provide him with employment and the means of livelihood, but within limits he will be free to choose his avocation and station of life. He will be free to express his opinion and there will be opportunities for him to rise to his moral stature. There will be no difference between man and man-except the difference of physical and mental endowments for there will be no great difference in incomes.\textsuperscript{17}

J.P. agreed with Marxist analysis of class struggle, but look care to emphasise that Socialism did not mean that Taluqudars or Rajas or Maharajas
should be blown up to bits; “Socialism” was something more sensible, more scientific, more civilized than all that. J.P. regarded socialism as a complete theory of socio-economic reconstruction. “It is much more, he said, than a theory of personal ethics.” To him socialism was a theory and technique of widespread planning. Its involved a technological reconstruction of the total aspects of society. His aim was “harmonious and well-balanced growth of the wholesociety.”

Between 1929 and 1946 J.P. was an ardent believes in Marxian socialism. But at no stage he was attracted towards the Indian or the Russian communists. It was due to the anti-nationalist stand of the Indian communists and the violent purges in the Soviet Union that he disapproved of both of them.

He regarded Socialism at that time largely as an economic doctrine implying social or State ownership of the means of production and aiming at the eradication of inequality from society and end to concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. His programmatic ideas included the abolition of private ownership and establishment of social ownership over the means of production. Here he did not appear to make a distinction between State ownership, and social ownership and thus used both terms as synonyms. In this way he drew no distinction at that stage between “Socialization” and “State control.” Socialization of the key industries, elimination of the class of princes, landlords and other classes of exploiters was considered necessary for “the reorganization of the whole economic and social life of the country.”
Here J.P.’s views on Socialism seemed to be more akin to M.N. Roy who explained in J.P.’s tone that socialism is the abolition of private property in the means of production, distribution and exchange. The basic thing, however, is production. Private property in that key position of public economy once abolished, socialization of distribution and exchange inevitably follows.... Therefore, to Roy the more exact definition of socialism would be “abolition of private property in the means of production.”

He was in agreement with the Marxian proposition that material forces affected individual and social institutions in large measures. But he simultaneously brought in another phrase. As a Marxist, he said, he was an “environmentalist” “Social division (class) is an organic process of society”, it was stated. “Marx showed that its primary source lay in the manner in which men earned their livelihood.” Dialectical materialism of Marx, implied that the material forces primarily affected all ideological and social divisions including the institutional patters of society. Pointing to the difference between Marxism and Gandhism he maintained in his book Why Socialism?

.... The real difference between socialism and Gandhism is not in the “materialism” of the one and the “spiritualism” of the other. Those, as commonly used, are meaningless words. The startling point of socialism is the inquiry into the causes of economic inequality: into the origin of princes, landlords, capitalists and paupers: into the secrets of human exploitation.
It was thus observed that the key to this inquiry, according to J.P. lay in the “Marxian Theory of Dialectical Materialism”. Gandhism, however, did not attempt any such enquiry. J.P. was a strong critic of Gandhian “theory of trusteeship” and was not prepared to accept that social transformation could be brought about through this technique.

So far as M.N. Roy’s views on Socialism are concerned he seemed to be more revolutionary in his ideas to bring about social transformation in the society. To Roy, socialism was synonymous to communism and was, therefore, a philosophy of class struggle, culminating into an equitable society. It was more than a philosophy of struggle and reconstruction. It was a revolutionary philosophy of life. “Socialism (that is to say communism) is not equalitarianism. It does not seek to level down humanity to a uniform standard. Socialism will establish equality only in respect of opportunity. In the socialist society, every man and human will have equal opportunity to attain the highest level of creativeness and intellectual progress. Artificially created inequalities will be removed.... Socialism is more than an economic theory. The plan of revolutionary political action on the part of the working class is not the whole of socialism. Socialism is not comprehensively defined by calling it an ideology of social reconstruction. Socialism is a revolutionary philosophy of life.”

Discussing “how” to bring about Socialism J.P. thought that the road to that transformation passed through control of the levers of State power. “The
first thing to remember about socialism is that it is a system of social reconstruction.” It was asserted. “It is not a code of personal conduct…. No party in the world of today can build up Socialism unless it has the machinery of the State in its hands.” Only a party in power could establish Socialism, provided it had either “sufficient power of coercion to put down resistance or sufficient popular support to be able to deal with opposition.” Socialism could not be brought about by moral appeals and platitudes, he felt convinced at time of utility of “insurrectionary method,” not excluding necessary violence.

Planned economy and reconciliation between centralization and decentralization were two other means considered necessary for socialist transformation. It was recognized that for a planned economic development the necessity of a large measure of centralization was obvious. He emphasized at the same time his preference for planning through democratic method, and considered reconciliation of centralization which was necessary for planned development with democracy.

J.P's views on class-struggle and dictatorship of the proletariat seemed to be vary vague and he rarely tried to discuss these precisely. Hari Kishore Singh in his book A History of the Praja Socialist Party pointed out, however, that “doctrines of class harmony, similar to those preached by Gandhi, were unlikely to appeal to young socialists, who under Marxist influence had convinced themselves of the inevitability of class struggle.” Gandhian emphasis on class-harmony and the concept of trusteeship appeared to the
socialists as unrealistic. The Socialists advocated "class-war" and "confiscation of private property". Discussing the issue of class-war, it was stated by J.P.

To speak of the necessity of creating a thing which is ever present is meaningless. The question is not of creating a class-war but of deciding what side we should take in that war, the side of the oppressed or the oppressor.²⁵

The argument that the Congress creed of nonviolence ran counter to the socialist programme was met with the assertion that nonviolence was not creed of the Congress but only "peaceful and legitimate" means with which socialists were not in disagreement. The masses were warned that there could be no solution to their problems and no end to their exploitation, unless the economic organization is brought under "social control", and there could be no adjustment of "class interest" because there was no party in Indian society "which could bring about and maintain this adjustment.²⁶

J.P. also subscribed at that time to the theory of the proletarian dictatorship, because the owning classes by themselves could never be expected to sign their own death-warrant as a class. Hence he believed in class-struggle the class being conceived as a group of people depending on the particular mode of production and the profit derived from it. According to Thomas A.Rusch J.P. believed that "it was not in the nature of capitalist
countries to part with their power voluntarily,” thus power would have to be seized from them.

So far as M.N.Roy’s views on the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ are concerned he seemed to be very clear about it. He outrightly rejected the Marxian principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary means to achieve socialism. He had further elaborated his ideas saying that in India, the proletariat was numerically weak and politically inexperienced, so, according to Roy, the proletariat could not bring about the socialist revolution alone. In India, dictatorship of the proletariat would mean rule of minority. According to Roy, bourgeois democratic revolution was a historical necessity for India. He characterized the impending Indian revolution as bourgeois democratic revolution, which would take the form of “clash between a class based on land as the means of production and another based on new means of production namely, capital.” To Roy, the only way for the economic development of India was to carry out “an agrarian revolution, and build up modern industry under the control of a really democratic state.” The bourgeois democratic revolution would create conditions in India favourable for a convenient development towards the socialism. There would be an intervening period, during which the conditions for socialism would be created. He further added, “The real and lasting freedom of people demands their complete and unconditional social emancipation,” (which means abolition of private ownership in the means of production, distribution and exchange). In the
bourgeois democratic revolution, the Indian proletariat would be able to exercise its hegemony. The bourgeois democratic revolution would transform itself, in course of time, into a socialist revolution.

In his Meerut and Faizpur Theses J.P. dealt with the agencies and techniques for bringing about Socialism. It was categorically maintained:

The anti-imperialist struggle in India is multi-class struggle of the peasantry and the working and middle classes. The working class in India though organizationally week and politically not sufficiently conscious of its role, is nonetheless potentially the most revolutionary class. The struggle of the Indian masses for freedom will not reach its objective unless the working class is the vanguard of that struggle.28

It was quite evident that during the Marxist phase J.P. believed in working class as the most revolutionary class. He also observed that their foremost task outside the Congress was to develop independent organizations of the peasants and workers of other exploited sections of the people. Besides these class organizations they were also to attempt to organize the youth of the country so as mobilize the most active elements of the lower middle class.

J.P., in his book, why Socialism? Analysed the class organization in Indian society. According to him, the Indian bourgeoisie, that is, the industrialists, landlords, highly paid government servants, the titled gently, the middlemen, were the partners with the British imperialism to exploit the Indian
masses. The Indian industrialists "exploit the masses as junior partners of imperialism..." J.P. believed that Indian bourgeoisie could not lead the anti-imperialist movement. They had always been in league and compromise with the British imperialism. Refering the New Constitution, granted by the British imperialism, J.P. stated, "That constitution represents... Just such as compromise between imperialism and the upper classes of India for the further exploitation of its masses. And, as it is already history, the constitution was made possible by the pressure of the latter themselves."29 The bourgeois was dependent on the imperialism for their benefits but the masses were not. Therefore, according to J.P., "the masses are the only classes in India, which are uncompromising anti-imperialist. They alone stand for the complete independence of the country others either openly ridicule and oppose the idea or only pay lip-service to it."30 The masses were poverty striken. It was due to the disproportionate ownership and control of the means of production. He stood for social and economic equality. Socialism to him, is also a theory and technique of comprehensive planning, it involves a technological reconstruction of the total aspects of society. Its aim is the "harmonious and well-balanced growth of the whole society."31 It is thus true that during the Marxist Phase J.P. manifested considerable appreciation of the Soviet achievements, and he advocated the expansion of the role of State in the spheres of economic and political activities. In this way he regarded, the State as the most important tool of socialist transformation in the society.
J.P. – His Criticism on Gandhism

As a true Marxist, J.P. was a staunch critic of Gandhism. As an orthodox Marxist, he came to believe that Marxism provided a truer diagnosis of the economic ills of the society. According to J.P., Gandhi had accepted the well established traditional order. He did not try to find out the roots of the evil. He wrote, “There was nothing new as distinctive about it, nothing that was peculiarly Indian. Similar alternatives to Socialism were advanced in the West. What Gandhi said had been said by Church divines and philosophers of the old order in Europe at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution....”32 He emphasized that Gandhi had reiterated the same principles, which were expressed by the Western thinkers. There might be difference in emphasis but the spirit was the same. For instance, “class-struggle was futile; capital and labour were interdependent and necessary for each other; revolution was wasteful, a synthesis of the contending forces of society was higher ideal than revolution, enlightened control of profits, wages,” and prices was necessary and possible; the theory of trusteeship, were the familiar principles of Western bourgeois professors, thinkers and Churchmen.33

J.P. ridiculed Gandhi’s theory of trusteeship and his vision of Ram Rajya. Gandhi believed in improving the behavior, of higher classes towards the poor. He also believed that the interests of both princes and paupers would be protected. But J.P. regarded Gandhism as being well-intentioned but “dangerous”, in its blindness to pressing economic problems. He regarded it as
being deceptive for the masses. J.P. dubbed Gandhi, as the protector of the interests of the higher classes. He wrote, “By not questioning the right of the prince, landlord and capitalist to continue their functions, Gandhiji has signified his tacit approval of this large scale, organized theft and violence.”

J.P. also rejected Gandhian theory of change of heart and conversion. He further maintained it could not solve the problem in India. He put emphasis to change the social environment which shapes the Human behaviour to establish a socialist society. It could be done by acquiring full power over the state and not by conversion of heart of the individuals. He favoured the use of coercive apparatus of the state for affecting an economic transformation of the society. He outrightly rejected Gandhian doctrine that state was best which governed the least. J.P. said, “Those who desire to construct a socialist society should have the power and the requisite sanction behind them to do so…”

During Marxist Phase he was so anti-Gandhi that he even defended the violence in the Russian politics as being political violence for creating a new social order. To him, Russia was a symbol of steady economic success. He admired R. Palme Dutt's *Fascism and Social Revolution*. In the whole of this period he urged the people to develop a mass movement comprising the working class and the peasants against the government.

Not only J.P even Roy was also a vehement critic of Gandhism during his Marxist Phase. The first detailed criticism of Gandhism appeared in his first major book, *India in Transition*. In this book, Roy argued that “Gandhism
has now reached a crisis” and its impeding wane... signifies the collapse of the reactionary forces and their total alienation from the movement.” He further believed Gandhism as a temporary obstacle in the path of history. He believed that Gandhism would fall victim to its own contradictions. It was bound to be defeated. He also wrote, “Gandhism is nothing but petty bourgeois humanitarianism hopelessly bewildered in the clashes of the staggering forces of human progress.” According to Roy, the nonviolent revolution of Gandhiji was impossible. There was bound to be bloodshed in the course of freedom struggle. The non-co-operation movement led by Gandhiji, could not be expected to win by soul-force alone. He observed, “This victory will be won, not through the soul-force but with blood and tears and will be maintained by blood and iron.” It is obvious thus that during this phase both J.P. and M.N. Roy believed in Marxian way to bring about socialism in India. But it is interesting to note both starting their career as a Marxist in the early phase of their political life discarded it in the later phase of their life. Thus both J.P. and M.N. Roy once a bitter critic of Gandhism came under the influence of Gandhism in the later period of their life.

Later J.P. had become disillusioned with communist practice in Soviet Russia following the death of Lenin. Serious doubts emerged in his mind whether that was the right course for India. Use of violence now appeared revolting to them. His ideas underwent a drastic change. Where as a little earlier he had stood for a proletarian revolution followed by a period of
“dictatorship of the proletariat”, now these and other allied ideas of the inevitability of violent revolution, hostility to constitutional and parliamentary methods and the argued necessity or authoritarian and dictatorial rule during the transitional period were openly and frankly repudiated.

His ideas on real Socialism were now articulated form a very different perspective. Socialism he thought was not merely the negation of capitalism. He thought that even if capitalism was destroyed and industry, trade, banking agriculture-all were nationalized and collectivized this would not necessarily ensure an advance towards Socialism, but may even go counter to it. He, therefore, argued:

In Soviet Russia we saw not only denial of “formal” freedom but also denial of social justice, of equality; we saw the growth of a new class of bureaucratic rulers, of new form of exploitation. All this was not only the absence of Socialism but also its negation.38

The revulsion for communist methods led J.P. for the first time to question the basic tenets of Marxism itself. Though he still claimed that he believed in Marxism but Gandhian influence upon him was now in ascendency. He thus began to describe his philosophy not as Marxism as he had done in the thirties, but as “Democratic Socialism”. According to Bimla Prasad this phase of democratic Socialism in J.P’s life began as early as 1940 and lasted till 1952.39
Democratic Socialist phase

In two important articles, “My Picture of Socialism” and “The Transition to Socialism” he emphasized the need to adopt democratic method for Socialism. “There could be no real Socialism without the enlargement of liberty and freedom,” he told his partymen in 1949. Narendra Deva also observed in 1949 that “one of the prevailing misconceptions that Socialism is incompatible with democracy deserves to be removed”. Thus it was asserted that “Democratic Socialism must become our life’s mission, the philosophy of our life.”

J.P. rejected the use of violence and advocated only purely democratic means. He reminded the socialists:

Remember the goal I have laid down is that of democratic socialism. The method of the violent revolution and dictatorship might conceivable lead to a socialist democracy, but in the only country where it has been tried, it had led to something very different, i.e., to a bureaucratic state, in which democracy does not exist. I should like to take a lesson from history.

During the earlier phase the achievement of the goal of Socialism was the first priority but in the second phase more in Gandhiji’s idiom he started giving priority to means. The goal became secondary. There could now be no compromise on the means, whether the goal could be achieved with those means became less important. Russi’s or Stalin’s interpretation of socialist
philosophy, he came to believe, had reduced it to “a Machiavellion Code of Conduct utterly devoid of any sense of right or wrong, good or evil.” This made J.P. to put ethics in command of Politics, “I for one have come to believe that for the achievement of socialism a strict regard for means is of the highest importance.” In this way more importance was now given to the so called “human values” and “standards of conduct”.42

The assassination of Gandhiji, and the bloody riots of the partition days further convinced him of the futility of violence for achieving socialist objectives. Thus he observed almost in Gandhi’s language:

There were many things that Mahatma Gandhi taught us. But the greatest thing he taught us was that evil means can never lead to good ends. Some of us may have been sceptical of this truth but recent world events and events at home have convinced me that nothing but good means will enable us to reach the goal of a good society, which is Socialism.43

The fact is that ever since 1940 he had been drawing closer to Gandhiji. With his adoption of “Democratic Socialism” as the ideal of the Socialist Party on the eve of independence, the Gandhian technique of nonviolence came to have a more pointed relevance.

As for the methodology for bringing about Socialism in this phase was concerned J.P explained that the policy statement of the Socialist Party adopted at Kanpur had indicated the existence of the two methods for social revolution-
the insurrectionary or violent and the democratic or peaceful methods. He further explained that neither the first meant out and out violence nor the second meant out and out constitutionalism. For India democratic method was the "only right method to work for socialism."44

J.P. who had been a vehement critic of democratic methods earlier, now believed that the correct Marxian position was that either method could be used, but which of the two was suitable to a particular situation could be determined only by the "relevant historical and objective conditions". Thus he was now convinced that Socialism could be brought only by peaceful methods.45

But his democratic methods should not be confused with more constitutionalism. While making the distinction between the two he maintained:

The Socialist Party is not mere parliamentary party. As a matter of fact, the Socialist Party hardly exists in the Parliament. The party is a revolutionary party and while it may use the parliamentary methods it relies for its success mainly on its work outside parliament and among the people.46

Now he advocated that the State in socialist India must be a fully democratic state.
During the Marxist Phase he used to reconcile Socialism with Statism. But now he maintained that Socialism was not merely "anti-capitalism". It was something more than that. According to him:

The aims of the socialist movement which needed to be emphasized was not more overthrow of the capitalist order and establishment of a party dictatorship, but the creation of a society of free and equal people, a society based on certain values of human and social life, values which could never be sacrificed in the name of theory or the party line or expediencies of any sort.

His ideas were claimed to be non-doctrinaire. "I assure you", he wrote to Nehru when the latter had invited J.P. to join his cabinet, our approach to Socialism is not doctrinaire, hidebound or conservative." Further talking about the values and ultimate concept of socialist society he observed that he was not thinking of a very gradual movement towards the Socialism which may be achieved in a distant future. He asserted therefore, that "these goals for us or for that matter for any socialist are not to be achieved in a distant future but in the soonest possible time."

Being aware of the fact that European variety of Socialism both Marxian and Non-Marxian was the product of and a response to re-ordering of an industrial advanced societies, he thought that countries like India needed a different approach. India being a predominantly agricultural society Gandhian Sarvodaya appeared a more suitable philosophy of reconstruction. His final
break with Marxism came in 1952 when he was convinced that “materialism as a philosophical outlook could not provide any basis for ethical conduct and any incentive to goodness.”

Sarvodaya phase and his concept of People’s Socialism

Bimla Prased is of the view that it is not correct to say that J.P. abandoned Socialism when he embraced Gandhism. The fact according to him was that ever since J.P. embraced Gandhism he had been ceaselessly working for the enrichment of the content of Socialism and pointed the way to its realization. The old goals of Socialism were not given up, on the contrary Gandhism was adopted primarily because these goals appeared more likely to be reached through the path of Gandhism.

“The Ideological Problems of Socialism”, based on his address at the First Asian Socialist Conference held in Rangoon in 1953, was an expression of his pre-occupations with these tasks. Here he maintained that Socialism was 90 per cent practice and 10 per cent Theory. Theory unrelated to practice was not good.

In “A Plea for Gandhism”, J.P. stated that to mix Gandhism and Socialism was a sign of ideological confusion. He suggested that Gandhism should be used for developing the ideology of Socialism in India because the doctrinaire Socialism had produced very unhappy consequences in practice. He was of the view that communism, wherever it had been practiced, had only
ended with “State Capitalism and dictatorship”. In Western Europe Socialism had become only a “parliamentary or legalistic creed”. Rejecting both these varieties he pleaded for adoption of Gandhian path which was more a product of India’s typical problems and cultural ethos. He put it categorically “Gandhism offers the third alternative of revolution by nonviolent mass action...”50 He had now left his earlier doctrinaire position that the route to Socialism lay through control of State power by a political party committed to Socialism or accentuation of class struggle. The Gandhian technique assured a wider, more assured path “beyond the confines of party and class,” because it, as he observed, aimed at “converting or revolutionizing members of all parties and classes”. Whereas Socialism thought of advance by a process of setting class against class, Gandhism proceeded by “cutting across classes”. Explaining his new political thinking he observed the distinction:

> Socialism wishes to destroy classes by making one class victorious over the other—which seems to be somewhat illogical. Gandhism wishes to abolish classes by so bringing the classes together that there are no class distinctions left.51

This appeared to be a rejection of Socialism for Gandhism. He, however, still claimed that he believed in Socialism. Earlier in 1936 pointing out the real difference between Gandhism and Marxism, he felt convinced that the key to the enquiry into the cause of economic inequality lay in the “Marxian Theory of Dialectical Materialism” and not in Gandhism. He had
now embraced Gandhism and still claimed that he was a socialist. The change in his ideas is noteworthy for that was the true Socialism in his new framework of ideas.

During the Marxist phase he talked about State Socialism, in the next phase he talked about democratic Socialism, and in the final Sarvodaya phase more emphasis was laid on human values. Discussing this problem in "New Dynamics of Social Change", based on his address to the second Asian Socialist Conference held in Bombay in 1956, he defined Socialism in a different manner. He explained what he had been strongly expressing for quite sometime:

All of us agree that Socialism is a way of life, an attitude of mind, a certain ethical behaviour. What is not so universally recognized is that such a way of life, attitude, behavior cannot be imposed from above by the dictates of the government or by merely nationalizing industry and abolishing capitalism.\textsuperscript{52}

This new task was beyond the capacity of the coercive apparatus of the State. So the emphasis in the Socialist Movement, it was asserted, "must change from political action to such work of reconstruction."

Talking about the objectives of Socialism he observed that "Socialism had placed before mankind noble ideas of equality, freedom and fellowship, of peace and international brotherhood". In this exposition, \textit{From Socialism to}
Sarvodaya he argued that these ideals would be achieved through people's Socialism rather than State Socialism. He was searching for new forms and argued:

The remedy is to create and develop forms of Socialist living through the voluntary endeavour of the people rather than to seek to establish socialism by the use of the power of the State. In other words the remedy is to establish people's socialism rather than State socialism. Sarvodaya is people's socialism. Whether every socialist agrees or not with Sarvodaya, he should agree that the more of people's or voluntary Socialism and the less of State enforced Socialism, the fuller and more real the Socialism.53

A Socialist Society to him was one in which the individual was prepared voluntarily to subordinate his own interest to the larger interests of the society. The "old dynamics of Social change" based on conflict of self interests was not suited for that purpose. It required a new way of life of "human reconstruction." It was here that we see the importance of Bhoodan in the struggle for Socialist.

It is evident that in the evolution of his thinking on Socialism he had come a long way and like Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave put emphasis on the voluntary action of the people. He seemed to be accepting Gandhi's "Theory of Trusteeship" also, which he had rejected completely during his Marxist days.
As for the methods for bringing about Socialism during this purpose were concerned he rejected the idea of one party dictatorship as also of parliamentary democracy. The alternative now was decentralization of political power so that the people themselves may participate in the management of their affairs. Allied with this was the issue of the shape of the structure of a desired socialist society. The old belief in nationalization of industries was now rejected as it had been tried but did not lead to establishment of Socialism in Soviet Russia. This only produced "centralization, bureaucratization, lack of workers participation in the management of industry..."\textsuperscript{54} The only solution possible was that of political decentralization accompanied by economic decentralization.

**M.N. Roy’s Co-operative Socialism**

Like J.P. Roy also discarded party-system and power politics during the last phase of his life. According to Roy, Capitalism, Socialism, Communism and welfare state etc., were unable to give Freedom, democracy and security to the individual. The only alternative, in his view, was co-operative socialism. It was not merely a method of economic attainment, but a way of life. It would provide greater freedom to the individual and larger benefits to mankind.

Consequently, he dissolved his Radical Democratic party in December 1948 and founded the Indian Renaissance movement. In order to bring about a social revolution, he propounded the philosophy of New Humanism or (Co-
operative Socialism). In Co-operative Socialism the individual would be an independent unit of society. There would be no domination of any kind on the individual to limit his freedom. In Roy's words "Man is freedom loving, romantic and creative animal. He would submit to no domination, dictation or bondage. So it would be the task of the Co-operative common-wealth to give every individual opportunities for direct participation in the governance of the State through panchayats."^55

Roy further believed that co-operative socialism could be a substitute to Capitalism-based on competitive economy on one side and to communism-based on collective economy on the other side. Through Co-operative socialism the present political crisis can be resolved. Roy believed in direct democracy in the form of a network of small co-operative commonwealths. There would be no clash between individual interest and the community interest. He thus observed:

The co-operative approach, moreover, does not stand merely for forms of enterprise or political institutions. It is the name for a social philosophy. It has an ethical-spiritual dimension. Regarded as such it is an alternative to orthodox liberalism as also to recent varieties of corporativism and communism."^56

The Roy's Co-operative socialism is based on widespread decentralization and a spirit and practices of co-operation. The Co-operative
economy according to Roy, should be guided by two considerations. “(a) The basic purpose of national economy is to provide food, shelter and clothing for the people and (b) one must cut the coat according to the cloth available.”

No doubt J.P. before joining Sarvodaya Movement and M.N. Roy before presenting his new philosophy of Radical Humanism critised Marxism severely but their grounds of criticism was different. Whereas J.P. mainly criticized it for its practice in Soviet Russia, Roy’s main emphasis was on the conceptual criticism of Marxian philosophy. As J.P’s main concern was with the practice of Marxism in Soviet Russia, which according to him, had distorted the ideology and in comparison to Roy, J.P’s critique appears to be sporadic, piecemeal and less comprehensive while J.P. kept in view only Indian situation. Roy criticized Marxism from the stand-point of international Communism. J.P. warned the Indian socialists to learn a lesson from the Russian communism. According to him, Marxism could not be practiced in India in the same manner as in Russia, because there were deep and far-reaching differences in the circumstances, ethos culture and tradition of the two countries. He appealed to the Indian communists; “to declare their independence of Moscow and to choose their own road to socialism”. To J.P. Gandhism was not only an alternative to Marxism but a much superior and suitable replacement ideology for India.

Later J.P. advocated the philosophy of Total Revolution which, to him was the true alternative form of socialism. He was convinced that the need of
the hour was an over-all transformation in the society. In a letter to friends, he wrote:

I have faith only in such socialism in which the economic power would be in the hands of the working people themselves and individual freedom and civil liberty would remain secure. In my opinion a socialist revolution will be successful when the economic power (and political authority also) is in the hands of the people and they will be able to build their future without any outside interference. The total revolution of which I speak today is such a revolution and is based on Socialism with real equality and human freedom.59

Here he was influenced with the teachings of Gandhiji, Vinoba and M.N. Roy and Lenin to a certain extent. According to him, the ideal of Total Revolution was similar to that Gandhi’s ideal of Purna Swaraj. He observed, “any Gandhian approach or model is one of a continuos revolution which I have called Total Revolution.” Satyagraha or nonviolent struggle, is the essence of this revolution. It is also dialectical in a special sense-it makes a struggle between individual and society. Authority and freedom, Elite and the Masses, Property and Non-possession, Labour and Capital and so on….60

J.P. advocated persuasion and Conversion-Social revolution through human revolution to achieve total development and welfare of the society. Giving the meaning of Total Revolution, J.P. advocated a seven-fold scheme of revolutions. He said, “I have been saying that total revolution is a combination
of seven revolutions—social, economic, political cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual. This number may be increased or decreased...." According to J.P. the Total Revolution would bring about revolution in all aspects of society as well as the individual simultaneously. It would change the entire system. Its methodology would be nonviolent and peaceful.

The philosophy of total revolution aims at renunciation of the lust of power. The people would be the real masters of the political power. He suggested the organization of people’s committees in each assembly constituency polling booth. These would act as watchdogs of democracy and people’s rights and duties. The people’s committee would set up candidates and would send a representative selected by general consensus to an assembly constituency people’s committee. The people would have right to recall their representatives who have ceased to enjoy the confidence of a majority of voters. He wrote, “in a democracy the people do have the right to ask for the resignation of an elected government if it has gone corrupt and has been misruling. And if there is a legislature that persists in supporting such a government it too must go so that the people might choose better representatives.”

All through the way of development of his thought from Marxism through democratic socialism and Sarvodaya to Total Revolution, J.P. remained an ardent advocate of all-round development of individual and
society. As a matter of fact, it is this seminal and consistent factor, which appears to have steered the course and determined direction of the development of his thought through its various stages. During his phase of Total Revolution he also visualized a radical change in the ownership of the means of production. As a Gandhian, he laid emphasis on agricultural development, equitable land ownership; the application of appropriate technology to agriculture; the development of domestic and rural industries and the widest possible expansion of small industries, regional planning and development. The concept of total revolution may be taken as a synthesis of socialist revolution and the agrarian rural realism of the Sarvodaya. Thus J.P. had given in this scheme the central place and utmost importance to the individual. Thus starting his career as a Marxist he seemed to have become a Utopian socialist more akin to early Marx by aspiration. In practice however, his great movement was reduced to an “Indira Hatao” movement. He succeeded in that immediate aim, but died a disillusioned man. It is doubtful if there are many buyers of his Socialism or Total Revolution.

J.P. through his discussions and writings on socialism in different dimensions enriched and strengthened socialist thought in India.
References


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5. Ibid.


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