Gandhi took several measures to tackle the communal problem in India. Since the problem was the result of multifarious causes covering social, political, religious and economic differences, it had to be tackled at various levels. So the remedies that he suggested dealt with both immediate and fundamental causes of the trouble. These can be divided into three categories: (i) psychological and moral; (ii) legal and constitutional reforms; (iii) Political.

As already noted the fundamental cause of the tension between the two communities, according to Gandhi, was their mutual distrust and suspicion. Each community had fears that the other was aiming at political domination of the country. Consequently, each of them suspected questionable motives in any move towards settlement made by the other. Gandhi, therefore, suggested the remedy of self-surrender. Though couched in idealistic idiom, it was not devoid of reason and pragmatism. Thus he
wrote in Young India in July 1925, "To surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender; justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives transcends justice. And yet it is always less than he wishes to give, because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left." However, "My surrender," he adds, "does not mean surrender of principle", for to surrender a principle shows one's weakness. He appealed to both the Hindus and the Muslims to act according to this theory of surrender and not on terms of justice. "They may not weigh their acts in golden scales and exact considerations". Continuing, he said, "Each has to regard himself ever a debtor of the other. By justice, why should not a Mussalman kill a cow everyday in front of me? But his love for me restrains him from so doing and he goes out of his way sometimes even to refrain from eating beef for his love of me, and yet thinks that he has done only just what is right. Justice permits me to shout my music in the ear of Maulana Mohammed Ali when he is at prayer, but I go out of my way to anticipate his feelings and make my talks whispers whilst he is praying and still consider that I have conferred no favour on the Maulana". He further

2. Ibid., p.349.
3. Ibid., p.348
added, "Love never claims, it every gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself." Consequently, he advised both the communities not to "prate about justice" as then they would never come together, for "might is right" is the last word of Justice and nothing but justice." He, therefore, suggested that we should not "weigh in the scales of justice so-called." "But we shall introduce into the calculation the disturbing factor of surrender, otherwise, called love or affection or fellow-feeling." He was sure that a day would come when we would realise "that vengeance was not the law of friendship; not justice but surrender and nothing but surrender was the law of friendship."

By self surrender Gandhi, however, meant surrender of non-essentials only and not of vital and essential things. It is a "criminal folly", he argued, "to quarrel over trivialities." He was sure that "voluntary surrender on the part of either community, preferably by the majority community, of all rights and privileges would immediately effect this unity. It would be a great thing, a brave thing, for Hindus to achieve this act of

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
self-denial. Surrender over non-essentials is not an unusual principle. It is the first pre-requisite for the settlement of disputes that follow from mutual prejudices and suspicion. In fact, no agreement can be arrived at between the parties to a dispute unless each shows its readiness to accommodate the other provided the demand in question does not involve any fundamental principle. Yielding over non-essentials, especially by a party which is relatively strong, is sure to create a favourable atmosphere for an amicable settlement. Gandhi, therefore, reminded Hindus that the key to the communal tangle lay with them. It was for them to set their house in order and shed their timidity, for he believed, that one of the major causes of the communal trouble was the cowardice of the Hindus that prevented them from trusting the minorities and winning them over through generosity and love.

But the remedy against timidity, according to Gandhi, did not lie in physically strengthening a community through 'akhadas' or gymasia, as such methods were sure to intensify the prevailing suspicion. He argued, "The remedy against cowardice is not physical culture

12. Ibid., p. 142.
but the braving of dangers. So long as the parents of middle-class Hindus, themselves timid, continue to transmit their timidity by keeping their grown up children in cotton wool, so long will there be the desire to shun danger and run no risks. They will have to dare to leave their children alone, let them run risks and even, at times, get killed in so doing. The punniest individual may have a stout heart. The most muscular Zulus cower before English lads. Each village has to find out its stout hearts."  

At the same time he advised the Muslims to consider it "beneath their dignity to bully their Hindu brothers."

Gandhi's analysis of the communal trouble had revealed to him that one of the major causes of the communal riots was loss of faith in non-violence. He was confident that reliance on non-violence, even to a limited extent, would reduce the frequency of riots. He did not insist on adherence to non-violence in absolute terms over such questions. He only demanded its acceptance to the extent it had been admitted by the general norms of the society. For, it was the first pre-requisite of a peaceful settlement. He argued that both the parties to the dispute must accept the principle that neither "shall take the law into its own hands, but

that all points in dispute, wherever and whenever they arise, shall be decided by reference either to private arbitration, or to the law-courts if they wish. This principle is normally observed in all matters of civil disputes and there is nothing unusual if Gandhi insisted on faith in non-violence as the primary condition for the maintenance of communal harmony. This would have, in his opinion an additional advantage: "for it will teach us to husband our corporate physical strength for a better purpose, instead of dissipating it, as now, in a useless fratricidal strife, in which each party is exhausted after the effort."  

In consonance with this approach he favoured the establishment of a permanent board of arbitrators composed of persons of great integrity, reputation and impartiality for settling disputes through arbitration. Consequently, the Unity Conference following his fast against communal riots in 1924, provided for a Central National Panchyat consisting of not more than 15 persons to enquire into and settle communal differences. Initially only 6 persons representing different communities were nominated with Gandhi as their chairman. In order to

16. Ibid., p.140.
make the decisions of this Panchyat binding on all the parties, he advised that "public opinion should be cultivated in favour of the decisions of such Panchayats so that no one would question them."\textsuperscript{18}

Gandhi suggested positive measures to end disputes over cow-slaughter and music before mosque. Though he never looked upon these questions as the basic causes of the tension between the two communities, he dwelt upon them at length in view of the unusual dimensions that these factors had acquired in the disputes between them. His solution to these problems were quite unconventional and could hardly appeal to the orthodox sections in both the communities. He appealed to the Hindus that in place of taking measures to force the Mohammedans to stop the slaughter of cows, they should devote themselves more earnestly to looking after cows, for, he believed, cow-slaughter could not be checked through compulsions.\textsuperscript{19} He, therefore, wanted Hindus to depend upon the goodwill of the Mohammedans for the protection of cows.\textsuperscript{20} Moreover, according to him, Hinduism did not teach them to kill fellowmen even to save the cow.\textsuperscript{21} Cow-protection, according to him, could best be secured by cultivating universal friendliness.

\textsuperscript{18} C.W., Vol.XX, p.90.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., Vol.XXIV,p.151.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p.363.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., Vol. XX, p.497.
He was sure that voluntary self-denial with regard to slaughter of cows on the part of the Muslims would reduce the killing of cows as they would favourably respond to the call of protection of cows out of regard for the religious susceptibilities of their Hindu brethren. In support of his views he quite often cited the situation that prevailed in India in 1921, when Muslims voluntarily offered to co-operate with Hindus in preventing the killing of cows. This was, of course, true but one wonders if this was the result of any change of heart on the part of the Muslims or it followed from the consciousness among Muslim leaders about the value of Hindu support to Khilafat.

Similarly, he believed that Mohammedans could not compel Hindus "to stop music or 'arati' before the mosques at the point of the sword." However, he considered it as an insensate and unfriendly act on the part of Hindus if they would deliberately start or perform 'arati' as soon as the Mohammedans commenced their prayers. As a practical measure, he advised Hindus not to play music if it was not a "religious necessity". "The general rule in this respect",

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22. C.W., Vol.XX; p.192.
23. Ibid., p.193.
25. Ibid.
according to him, "may be said to be this, that
where the Hindus have long been deliberately observing
to stop music
the custom before mosques, they must not break it.
But where they have been playing music without
interference, the practice should continue. Where
trouble is apprehended and facts are disputed, both
communities ought to refer the matter to arbitration."
However, he added, "Where the Mussalmans refuse to
yield, or where the Hindus apprehend violence, and
where there is no prohibition by court of law, the
Hindus must take out their processions with music
accompanying, and put up with all the beating
inflicted on them. All those who join processions or
who form the musical band must thus sacrifice them­selves. They will thereby defend their Faith and
their self-respect." On the other hand he appealed
to Muslims to keep themselves absorbed in their
prayers in the presence of "din and noise", in place
of getting irritated at music.

Gandhi's advice regarding Shuddhi and Tabligh
was based both on his approach to religious conversions
and pragmatic considerations. According to him, a

28. Ibid., Vol.XXIV, p.140.
systematic and organised attempt to seek conversion was contrary to the very spirit underlying conversions since it is "a heart-process known only to and by God".\(^29\) Conversion is meaningful if it is the result of inner urge. But Gandhi had realised that conversion was carried on by the advocates of both Shuddhi and Tabligh only for increasing the numerical strength of their respective communities. There was hardly any religious motive behind it. Consequently, many unfair means were employed by the proselytizers for the realisation of their ends. However, he felt that these movements had come to stay. So he only advised their organisers to conduct their activities honestly and avoid secret propaganda, attacks on other religions and offer of material rewards to tempt people to change their religion.\(^30\)

Some of Gandhi's contemporaries favoured inter-dining and inter-marrying between the two communities as a measure to promote understanding between them. But Gandhi was not convinced of their utility on the ground that if a brother and a sister could live together why couldn't both these communities live together on terms of friendliness. Moreover, inter-dining or inter-

\(^{29}\) C.W., Vol.XXXII, p.515.  
\(^{30}\) Ibid,
marring he argued, was no guarantee against disputes, for, though Kaurvas and Pandwas 'interdined and inter-married', they did quarrel. Similarly, he added, "There is inter-marriage and inter-dining in Europe, but Europeans have fought amongst themselves as we Hindus and Mussalmans have never fought in all history." "The true beauty" he asserted, "of Hindu-Mohammedan unity lies in each remaining true to his own religion and yet being true to each other." For him Hindu-Muslim unity could best be promoted by "having a common purpose, common goal and common sorrows... and by mutual toleration." It looks, Gandhi's reluctance to advocate inter-dining and inter-marriage between Hindus and Muslims followed from his apprehensions that it would unnecessarily open fresh controversies among Hindus with whom marriage and dining were wrapped in a religious attire.

Gandhi's awareness of the vested interests of the British in preventing the unity between the two communities, convinced him that Indians must not rely on the British arms for the settlement of their inter-communal differences. Consequently, he advised the Kohat Hindu refugees in Rawalpindi, who had been forced to flee their homes as a result of a terrible communal

32. Ibid., Vol.XLVI,p.303.
33. Ibid., Vol.XVII, p.46.
34. Ibid.
riot, to refrain from help of the Government for their safe return to their homes, though he admitted that some contact with the foreign Government was inevitable in the existing circumstances. But he insisted that "all voluntary contact must be avoided wherever possible." He rather advised them to return only when the Muslims of that area had ensured their safety.

Similarly he believed that cultivation of fearlessness for making an objective analysis in a conflict situation and for putting blame where it was due was essential for preparing a ground for a lasting settlement between the parties to a dispute. Consequently in his analysis of the communal problem in 1924, he did not refrain from casting adverse reflections on some of his admirers and close associates whose activities and programmes were inimical to communal harmony. He was ready to tell the harsh truth even at the risk of his unpopularity. No doubt, those who were engaged in strengthening their own community against the other even in self-defence, could hardly judge the damage that their actions were doing to communal harmony in the country. Gandhi's attempt to investigate into the causes of the problem with detached outlook had great merit. However, in

the atmosphere of communal tension his analysis could not be well appreciated by most of the elite in both the communities. In certain matters Gandhi's plain speaking and straight forwardness hurt some sections unnecessarily. No doubt the activities, programmes and modus operandi of the Arya Samaj had added to the communal tension by creating certain fears among the Mohammedans of northern India. However, while making his observations about the Samaj, he failed to take into account the forces that had given rise to the Samaj and the political situation that had transformed it into a militant Hindu organisation. As one observer remarked if the Aryas are pugnacious their opponents are scarcely less so.36 It is the insecurity felt by the Hindus in the Punjab, where they were in minority, following from the claims and degings of the Muslim majority that shaped the outlook of the Samaj. To a large extent, the popularity of the Sangathan movement especially among the Hindus of the Punjab can be traced to this kind of situation. Even strong Congressmen could oppose it, at least during the period of riots, only at the risk of alienating the Hindus.

Moreover, he could make his analysis less offensive to the Samaj if he had refrained from casting

36. The Tribune, 5 June 1924.
adverse reflections on certain beliefs of the Samaj which had nothing to do with communal trouble. For instance, his observation about the faith of the Samaj in the infallibility of the Vedas could be avoided without compromising the truth regarding the communal situation.

Consequently, Gandhi’s analysis appeared to a section of the Hindus as biased in favour of the Muslims. Some of them openly expressed the view that Gandhi’s analysis was not only one-sided but was the product of pure ignorance. So his remarks about the Arya Samaj led to loud protests from a section of the Hindus. Gandhi received several letters and telegrams, mostly from the Punjab and U.P., of vociferous protests against his reference to the Samaj, its illustrious founder and Swami Shradhhanand. The Government Intelligence also reported that “Gandhi has been the recipient of a number of protests against his statement on Hindu-Muslim unity. He has raised, to use his own words, a storm of indignation on the part of the Arya Samajists . . . .” It is further stated that “during the fortnight there has been an appreciable increase in tension between Hindus and Mohammedans, particularly in Lahore. The admonitions

37. The Tribune, 5 June 1924.
of Mahatma Gandhi to the Arya Samajists and the approval which Mohammedans in public meetings have given to them have aroused very keen resentment amongst Arya Samajists ...."39 At a meeting of the Arya Samaj at Ajmer-Marwara, it was reported that "Ram Bilas Sarda criticised the policy of Gandhi. He warned his hearers to beware of Gandhi's attacks on the Samaj, and urged them to continue their activities. He also declared that Hindu-Muslim unity appeared impossible owing to fundamental differences on questions of cow-killing, playing of music before mosques and Shuddhi."40

Similarly, Gandhi's doctrine of self-surrender appeared to the Hindus or the Sikhs of the Punjab as inapplicable to them as they were in a minority while this doctrine implied voluntary surrender of rights and claims by a majority. It could hardly appeal to the Muslims of this province too, since, though in majority, they had yet to raise their political and economic status in the province in proportion to their population. Moreover, voluntary surrender of rights, even in the sphere of non-essentials, involves high moral character, foresight and breadth of outlook which were beyond the comprehension of most of the elite in both the communities.

39. Home (Pol.) Dept., Govt. of India, File No. 25/1924.
40. Ibid.
Gandhi repeatedly said that remedy lay with the majority community, that is, with the Hindus. Like a father who sacrifices for his son and expects nothing from him, Hindus should yield to certain claims of the Muslims without expecting anything from them. According to him, adjustment between any two sections is possible only when the powerful takes the initiative, without waiting for response from the weaker. 41

Further, there could not be any agreement between Gandhi and several other leaders regarding the contents of the non-essentials. Certainly most of them felt uneasy when Gandhi listed distribution of seats in the elective bodies in the category of non-essentials.

Some of the Muslim leaders, too, were not much impressed by Gandhi's analysis. Those who viewed Islam as the only true religion could hardly reconcile themselves to the doctrine of equality of religions and the futility of all conversions. His observations about the questionable means used by Aga-Khani Khojas for conversions offended them. The Government sources reported that five representatives of Aga-Khani Khojas met him to point out various errors in his statement on their religion. 42 The justification of the charge of Hindus against Gandhi for partiality to Muslims should

41. C.W., Vol.XXIV, P.152.
42. Home (Pol.) Dept., Govt.of India, File No.25/1924.
be assessed in the light of the annoyance expressed by Mohammedans at his observations about their responsibility in creating conditions of inter-communal rivalry. If he was harsh in casting reflections on the methods and performances of the Arya Samaj, he did not mince matters in showing his disapproval of the methods employed by Aga-Khani Khojas for conversion.\footnote{43}

Again, a Muslim correspondent viewed his advice to Hindus to shed cowardice and protect their homes as dangerous since it would excite them to commit violence.\footnote{44}

Consequently, Gandhi's appeals to both the communities to refrain from using violence for the settlement of their disputes had no effect on them. The tragic events of Kohat were the culmination of communal frenzy that had seized Hindus and Muslims especially of northern India after the withdrawal of Non-co-operation movement and there was no abatement in its intensity even after the release of Gandhi. There were riots at Gulbarga — a thing which was never heard in an Indian state.\footnote{45} This was followed by Jabalpur, Nagpur and Calcutta\footnote{46} riots during 1924. But the riots at Kohat were the worst as a result of

\footnote{43}{Home (Pol.) Dept., Govt. of India, File No. 25/1924.}
\footnote{44}{C.W., Vol. XXIV, p. 235.}
\footnote{45}{I.Q.R., 1924, Vol. II, p. 25.}
\footnote{46}{Selected Works of Nehru (New Delhi: Orient Longmans Ltd., 1972), Vol. III, p. 183; According to R. Coupland, "There were 11 riots in 1923, 18 in 1924, 16 in 1925, 35 in 1926 and 31 up to November 1927". R. Coupland, The Indian Problem 1833-1935 (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 75.}
which 155 Hindus were killed and practically the whole of the Hindu population of Kohat had to leave their homes and take refuge in Rawalpindi.  

Realising that all his measures had failed to check the fury of communal frenzy, Gandhi was forced to adopt an unusual and unconventional device to make an appeal to the hearts of members of both the communities to stop the fratricidal blood-shed. He decided to observe a fast of 21 days with effect from 18 September 1924.

Explaining the reasons for this unusual step he said, "The recent events have proved unbearable for me.... My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one can not remove, one must fast and pray."  

Showing his helplessness during that period he wrote, "Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am, therefore, imposing on myself a fast of 21 days...."  

In the end, he requested all the communities to end this quarrel which was a disgrace to religion and to humanity.

48. Ibid.,p.147; C.W., Vol.XXV, p.171.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.,
Gandhi's fast at once attracted public attention. "The news sent a thrill of concern and anxiety throughout the country", wrote a leading journal, "and when everything else failed, this single act of Mahatma served to arrest the attention of all communities, not excluding the Europeans, to the one problem of Hindu-Muslim unity." 51

Its immediate effects were quite satisfactory. As Shuddhi and Sangathan were suspended, Muslims also stopped their counter-movement. The Press propaganda of both the communities engaged in maligning and vituperating their opponents stopped at once. A few Muslim papers in the Punjab announced their decision to suspend writing on the Hindu-Muslim question. 52 It was observed that even the die-hard European Press subdued their usual calumining style in writing about Indians, and on the whole, an atmosphere of a "great national calamity was created." 53

As a result of this historic fast, the leaders of both the communities gave a call for a Unity Conference. It sat from 26 September to 2 October 1924, with a view to settling the difference between the

52. The Tribune, 24 September 1924.
two communities. It met in Delhi under the shadow of Gandhi's penance for communal unity. Three hundred delegates belonging to different religions and various shades of opinion attended the Conference. Prominent among them were Hakim Ajmal Khan, Swami Shraddhanand, Mangal Singh, Mohammed Ali, Annie Besant, Mufti Mahomed Sadiq Sahib of Quadian, M.M.Malaviya, Hirdeynath Kunjru, Lala Hansraj, Sarojini Naidu, Lajpat Rai, Azad, C.R.Dass, Raju Palcharaia, M.A.Ansari, Kitchlew, M.R.Jayakar, Shaukat Ali, Purshottamdas Tandon, Pirzada Mohammed Husain, P.D.Kakkar, of Lucknow, Nawab Syed Mehdi Husain, Syed Jalib of Lucknow, Moulna Ranbir Ahmed of Deoband, Haji Jam Mohammed and Amir of Bhamwar Peshawar, Dr.Choitram, Lal Duni Chand of Lahore. J.L.Nehru and Shuaib Qureshi acted as secretaries of the Conference. 54

Before starting their deliberations, its President, Pt.Motilal first read out the statement of Gandhi, and then appealed to the participants to conduct the proceedings in the spirit of Gandhi's message. He reminded them that they had not assembled there simply for passing pious resolutions but had met for searching their "own hearts and asking themselves whether they were keeping up the principles laid down by Mahatma Gandhi." 55

55. Ibid., p.150.
The Conference passed several resolutions that were in accord with Gandhi's approach to communal problem. Thus, besides deploring the dissensions and quarrels among Hindus and Muslims, it declared the burning of property and desecration of temples as a barbarous and an irrereligious act. It advised the leaders of both the communities to get their mutual disputes settled through arbitration or courts. To facilitate it, a Central National Panchyat of not more than 15 persons, with power to organise and appoint local Panchyats, was created to enquire into and settle all disputes between the two communities.56

It passed several resolutions to ensure religious toleration and prevent the desecration of religious places. It also laid down rules for regulating cow-slaughter and music before mosque with a view to making them less offensive to any community. It runs as follows: "That Hindus must not expect that the exercise of the right of cow-slaughter by Muslims can or will be stopped by the use of force, resolution of a local body, act of the Legislature, or order of the Court, but only by mutual consent, and must trust to the good sense of the Muslims and the establishment of better relations between the two communities to create deeper respect for their feelings."57

57. Ibid., p.156.
The Conference also held that "Muslims must not expect to stop Hindu music near or in front of mosques by force, resolution of a local body, act of Legislature, or order of a Court, except by mutual consent, but must rely upon the good sense of Hindus to respect their feelings."\(^{58}\)

All these resolutions were moral in nature; their compliance did not depend upon any coercive authority. They were, as Jinnah put it in a meeting called by the Bombay Presidency Muslim League at Bombay on 2 October 1924, "merely appeals to the good sense of the Mohammedans."\(^{59}\) Change of heart was the first pre-requisite for their observance. Unfortunately, it was this condition which was sadly missing and consequently, no Unity Conference could yield the desired results. Even the proceedings of this Conference were not free from acrimonious debates. The Government Intelligence reported that "amongst the members of the Subjects Committee, hot-words have frequently been exchanged on certain resolutions and some Hindu leaders have blamed Gandhi for conspiring with the Mohammedans."\(^{60}\)

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59. Home (Pol.) Dept., Govt. of India, File No.25/1924.
60. Ibid.
Regarding the impact of the Unity Conference, the Intelligence Report observed, "The Lucknow Fyzabad and Agra divisional reports all remark that the Unity Conference at Delhi has been scarcely noticed. From Lucknow doubts are reported to have been expressed as to the genuineness of Mr. Gandhi's fast. The Punjab Government Report stated that, "generally speaking, neither his fast nor the Unity Conference has made much impression." The Fortnightly Report of Bihar and Orissa stated, "Mr. Gandhi's fast attracted little attention. The meetings which took place in connection with it were poorly attended and evoked no enthusiasm, hartals were few and negligible. The resolutions of the Unity Conference have not yet been much advertised and have had little effect in this province so far." The Bombay Government reported that "while on the whole, the Hindus are in favour of fostering Hindu-Muslim unity on the lines of the Conference resolutions, the Mohammedans are more or less, indifferent." One can understand the attitude of an alien bureaucracy to all the developments that were likely to raise the image of the Indian leadership challenging the claims of the former to rule over India. One may, therefore, doubt the validity of their assessment. But contemporary Indians, too, were

61, Home (Pol.) Dept., Govt. of India, File No. 25/1924.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
not fully satisfied with the result of all such efforts. An eminent Indian leader remarked that this Conference did not result in "all the good things expected of such a gathering" except generating a "degree of good feeling" for the time being. What was really wanted was repentance, as the Mahatma himself was doing penance — repentance for the follies committed or permitted." Only after four days of the commencement of the fast serious riots broke out at Shahjahanpur. On 8 October 1924, immediately after the completion of the fast, serious riots occurred at Allahabad, Kanchrapara near Calcutta, and at Sagar and Jubbulpore in C.P.

Much has been said about the value of such fasts by Gandhi. This, in fact, was an unusual remedy for the malady that had defied all conventional treatment. As Gandhi's biographer puts it, "The bridges of the West are made of concrete, steel, wire words. Eastern bridges are of spirit. To communicate, the West moves or talks. The East sits, contemplates and suffers." Gandhi, he adds, "partook of West and East. When Western methods failed him, he used Eastern methods". "The fast," he continues, "was an adventure in goodness. The stake was one man's life. The prize was a nation's freedom."  

His fast was an effective prayer both to the Hindus and the Mussalmans, who had hitherto worked in unison, "not to commit suicide". For, he had an unbounded faith that "the prayer of a pure heart never goes unanswered," and the "silent prayer, is often mightier than any overt act...."

Explaining the spirit underlying the fast in terms of human relations, he said in 1922, "When a lover is hurt, he does not penalize his beloved but suffers himself. He starves himself and breaks his head against a stone wall. To him it matters little whether his beloved understands it or not."

Though his language was imbued with high idealism, his motive behind the fast was not totally bereft of pragmatism, for its purpose was to force the leaders of both the communities to withdraw themselves from the heat of the fratricidal strife and throw them into a mood of self-introspection. It was not a solution of the problem. Its object was to create conditions for finding a solution. It was only a measure to halt the blood-bath when all other measures had failed to yield the desired result.

70. Ibid.
Gandhi's critics denounced his fast, as an "unpractical idealism" since it was argued, hooligans, who were mainly responsible for riots, would never yield to such appeals to the hearts. But Gandhi's appeal was not to the hooligans but to the rest of the community that encouraged them either by appreciating their deeds or by showing indifference to their misdeeds. His appeal was based on his faith that once the conscience of the community was aroused against any undesirable act, no hooligans would indulge in undesirable acts against the determined Will of the community.