Jayaprakash Narayan’s concept of ‘Total Revolution’ is one of his most important contributions to modern Indian political thought. His reflections on Total Revolution crystallized out of his experiences during the sarvodaya phase of his life. It was also a reaction to the contemporary socio-economic and political situation of the country. The aim of this chapter is to:

a) analyze the historical and political context of Total Revolution, b) J.P.’s own vision about it and c) its theoretical implications.

As far as the context of Total Revolution is concerned, J.P. was dissatisfied with 1) the strategy and outcome of the sarvodaya movement and 2) the policies of the central and state governments in response to the Naxalite movement. Jayaprakash Narayan had set up an ashram at Sokhodeora on the land donated to him by Mr. J.R.D Tata, in 1954. It was at this ashram that J.P. first came across a few practical problems associated with the sarvodaya movement. Following the Gandhian precedent of using an ‘ashram’ for political, social and spiritual development, J.P. used this new institution for a series of experiments. He keenly felt that these experiments were necessary to explore the different avenues of development in India after independence. The aim was to strike a balance between spiritual and socio-economic development, in keeping with the essence of sarvodaya. He expected that the members of the ‘ashram’, having experienced the advantages of perfect communal living, would spread the message of sarvodaya to the
other parts of the country. The members, fortified with spiritual strength and some practical training in social work, were expected to remake society according to the Gandhian ideal. Sokhodeora became a vibrant human laboratory for him.

However, Jayaprakash Narayan’s major problem lay in resolving the conflict between theoretical assumptions and practical implementation at Sokhodeora. He found it difficult to reconcile two different yet related aspects: sarvodaya and community living required changes in the attitudes of the people and attitudes could not be transformed overnight. His experiment soon ran into trouble over trivial issues. His biographers, Allan and Wendy Scarfe, have narrated an interesting anecdote in this context. Since the Ashram was located at a remote area and communication was difficult, J.P. provided the members with a jeep (Mr. Mahindra had gifted this vehicle to him). Jayaprakash had to face complaints from the inmates of the Ashram about the misuse of the vehicle by the office bearers for personal benefits and ultimately decided to “sell the ashram jeep. It has always caused so much trouble.” The authors also noted that J.P. expected the members of the ashram to rise above their personal concerns but could not offer any practical remedy when problems of interpersonal relationships arose. These inherent conflicts rooted in human relationships at the ashram made him realize that mere persuasion at the individual level was not enough. A major struggle was needed to change the values and attitudes of the people.
At the same time, the gradually widening differences with Vinoba Bhave's policies and the weaknesses of the sarvodaya movement made him impatient. J.P. was now compelled to look for a new strategy to bring comprehensive change and development in the Indian society.

The Sarvodaya movement, as mentioned in the previous chapter, veered around four elements:

a) Belief in politics as the process of achieving consensus rather than conflict

b) Development of an attitude of love and sacrifice among the members of the society; bhoodan and gramdan were utilized to encourage the spirit of sacrifice and sharing among the people.

c) Accepting the dictum that the moral and material development of all can be achieved through community development and decentralization at the grass roots level,

d) Belief in non-violence to be the crowning principle in every activity.

Both Jayaprakash Narayan and Vinoba Bhave rejected the idea of politics as rajniti or politics of the state that was based on power and insisted on politics as consensus that ensured maximum participation of the people. The sarvodaya leaders organized a band of constructive workers through organizations like the 'Sarv Seva Sangh' and the 'Shanti Sena' and these organizations were expected to work with the people.
The workers associated with these organizations would use the Gandhian concept of 'satyagraha' to carry out the programmes of Bhoodan and Gramdan.

The concept of 'satyagraha' has been a unique contribution of Mahatma Gandhi. Satyagraha is the method of peaceful resistance based on truth and non-violence. Satyagraha offered a new revolutionary technique. Before Gandhi had preached this concept, there were very limited means of peaceful agitation which the oppressed could adopt against the oppressor. The Gandhian concept of satyagraha was based on truth, respect (and not hatred for opponent) and a code of morality to be followed by the participants. Gandhi emphasized on 'soul force' or recognition of the power of soul; hence the satyagrahi (one who follows this method) knew no defeat and was not deterred by the fear of death.

Jayaprakash Narayan thought that Vinoba Bhave only followed one meaning of satyagraha: the idea of non-violent assistance in right thinking and ignored the other aspect, i.e. non-violent resistance to evil. Hence the members of the Shanti Sena and other followers of the Bhoodan Movement could not deal effectively with the people who opposed Bhoodan at the village level. In Prison Diary J.P. wrote,

"Vinobaji did something miraculous for some years....But after his stormy Bhoodan experiment, not even a mild breeze blew...Later he withdrew into his inner self and started an experiment in action in the form of 'inaction'."
J.P. hoped that Vinoba would review the shortcomings of the Bhoodan Movement to make it more aggressive. Echoing this opinion he mentioned in an interview given to Brahmanand in June 1976, “...there were several mistakes committed by Vinoba and all of us who followed him....We accepted whatever kind of land whether cultivable or uncultivable....the task of actual redistribution of the collected land was left over to a later date or delegated to political parties....”7

As soon as the euphoria over initial contribution of land in the state of Bihar settled down, it became apparent that the foundations of Bhoodan had not been truly laid or were crumbling down. The success of the Bhoodan Movement depended on the bureaucracy as far as the transfer of land on paper was concerned. J.P. felt that the bureaucracy had no faith in the philosophy; thus the exploitation of the poor continued unabated. There were many cases of fraud in transfer of land. In some cases the land gifted was unsuitable for cultivation. In a nutshell, the major problem of the sarvodaya movement lay in its inability to transform the ideals into practice. The transition from bhoodan to gramdan became even more difficult as it “...represented a move from a basically individualist program to a basically socialist program.”8 Bhoodan still involved individual ownership but in gramdan land was to be owned by the community through the institutions of democratic decentralization. Hence people from all walks of life, still nurturing traditional values about the sanctity of ownership of land, found it difficult to accept gramdan. There were criticisms from different quarters
especially from those people who saw the movement as a threat to their authority.

However, J.P. did not lose faith in man’s unlimited potential for goodness; he only realized that both good and evil often existed side by side,

Any society must prepare for both or else with the greatest philosophy of goodness in the world the poor will go to the wall and the weak will be persecuted.”

The sarvodaya movement had to be reinforced by a dynamic strategy that could encourage the popular participation in the movement itself and at the same time minimize the resistance against it. He decided to integrate sarvodaya to Total Revolution (or sampurn kranti) in the twilight of his life and thus again entered the domain of politics which he had renounced two decades ago. On September 1973, at the half yearly meeting of the Sarvodaya workers, a small minority led by Vinoba Bhave advocated ‘spiritualization of politics’ while the majority led by J.P. firmly stood for ‘politicization of sarvodaya’.10

In ‘Prison Diary’, J.P. wrote how he was bitten by the bug of revolution during his high school days.11 This indomitable spirit continued to inspire him during the sarvodaya phase and even later. This ‘bug of revolution’ took him to Marxism and through the national freedom movement’ to democratic socialism and to “Vinobaji’s non violent revolution through love...total transformation of man and society...social revolution and human revolution.”12 He left the arena of party politics in
order to spread the message of sacrifice, love and cooperation but indicated that he would not hesitate to return to public life; “I should also add that though all my energies would be bent towards developing lokniti I shall not shut my eyes to what happens in the sphere of rajniti. For good or ill, rajniti does to some extent influence the life of the people. It shall be my concern from the outside to see that the influence is as salutary as possible.” He went on to add in this article that there cannot be any question of hostility between the two and they could not be kept apart. Lokniti, he believed was the child of rajniti and between the two there must be constant contact and cooperation. He continued to take keen interest in domestic and international political issues; the problems related to human rights did not escape his attention. Hence he could not but express his concern when any state tried to restrict human freedom within and outside the country. So when Hungary was overrun by the Russians in 1956, he raised his voice against it. In 1960, he campaigned for the Tibetan cause and spoke against Chinese aggression. In the mid sixties he felt the need to intervene in the Nagaland question. His causes were far flung indeed including “peace marchers in Northern Rhodesia, political prisoners in Indonesia, panchayats in Nepal and police firing in Patna.....and above all the salvation of mankind.”

From 1969 onwards, there was a subtle change in J.P.'s speeches and writings that indicated an aggressive stand taken by him. In his address to the National Conference of Voluntary Agencies held in New Delhi in 1969, he referred to the dismal socio economic situation in India and the solution, he believed, was a non violent social revolution. In an article published in
The Times, London on 13 October, 1969, he for the first time used the word ‘Total Revolution’,

“Gandhi’s non violence was not just a plea for law and order, or a cover for status quo, but a revolutionary philosophy. It is indeed a philosophy of a total revolution, because it embraces personal and social ethics and values of life as much as economic political and social institutions and processes.”

In this statement, he makes it clear that his theory of revolution was more akin to the Gandhian philosophy than to any other theory propagating revolution.

If Sarvodaya was his aim, Total Revolution was the means to achieve it. However the change in his thinking and action originated after his analysis of the social and economic condition in India. His experience of public life in independent India, first as a socialist leader and then as a sarvodaya leader, had convinced him that piecemeal economic reforms could not improve the lot of the masses in India. He recognized that in spite of land reforms, the village life was still dominated by big and medium land owners belonging to the upper and middle castes. The condition of the small and marginal farmers, Harijans and the tribals had hardly changed. They were yet to be freed from the caucus of bureaucrats, politicians and moneylenders. In the Urban areas too, the condition of the urban poor had hardly improved. The wheels of progress had seen the rise of industries both in the private and public sector but state ownership and control could not reduce inefficiency and corruption. The common man continued to suffer.
As a result of certain political developments, particularly the spread of the Naxalite movement, J.P. perceived that public order and democracy could be threatened by violence in India. He believed that the Naxalite movement was not just a law and order issue. He accepted the Naxalite insurgency to be a political, social and economic problem that arose because a large section of the Indian society was deprived of the benefits of development. Both the Central and the State Governments however took it to be a law order problem and adopted short term measures to deal with it. The movement spread to other parts of the country and the threat of violence loomed large over large areas of the country in the early 1970s. In many other parts of the country the Naxalites were waiting in the wings to capture mass support. J.P. apprehended that unless corrective measures were taken, the common man could turn to violence in order to escape poverty and hunger.

His experiences at Musahari Block in Muzzafarpur district of Bihar helped him to analyse the causes of the Naxalite movement. In June 1971, two prominent sarvodaya workers were served with death notices by the Naxalites. J.P. rushed to Mushahari, ignoring the danger to his own life. “At Mushahari, it was a struggle between Naxalism and sarvodaya for the souls of the people. Sarvodaya and Jayaprakash had the stronger, more moral and more compelling appeal, but the Naxalites....had only to wait, for it was not philosophy and ideals which would dispel the shadow of violence but land and food.” The failure of the economic policies of the central and state governments coupled with bureaucratic apathy at all levels forced people to adopt violent methods or follow those
groups that thrived on violence. J.P. realized how poverty and destitution drove the poor people to choose violent means to survive in a hostile environment. J.P. spoke to the villagers and requested them to reject any idea of violence. He blamed the Central Government for the failure of economic development. Gradually he continued to find flaw in the existing political structure. Mushahari was the centre of his attempt to salvage the sarvodaya method. He realized that the threat posed by the Naxalites could be challenged by positive action aimed at social change. At the same time, it was necessary to expose the bureaucratic-politician nexus that was responsible for the failure of socio-economic reform.

He blamed the politicians and administrators for misusing their power and position. The State and its machinery used force against the poor villagers. That could not guarantee them freedom and equality for which thousands had sacrificed their lives in the struggle for independence. In the face of dreadful rural discontent and despair, J.P. tried to establish village cooperatives and at the same time, he prepared the villagers psychologically for selfless cooperation. He wrote, "Ours is not a trade union approach. Our aim is not to divide the community and set one part against the other but to integrate it by creating community consciousness and sense of mutual responsibility...mutual adjustment leading to a just and better social order...." Time and again he had insisted that cooperation and not conflict could solve India's problems.

This Herculean effort to offer a non violent method of change from the grass roots level encouraged J.P. to place his
ideas into a wider perspective: to look beyond Mushahari and spread the message to other parts of the country. Ever since his high school days, J.P. had lived by ideals and had always believed that given a new ideal to live by and new moral values and means to follow, people in this country will accept it, rejecting any other violent method. His concept of Total Revolution fulfilled the above requirements.

Jayaprakash Narayan nurtured the concept of Total revolution with two objectives:

First to bring a change in every sphere of society through non violence and public education. He had closely watched how the 'Bhoodan' movement was being paralyzed by bureaucratic apathy (the paper work, legalizing the gift of land had to be processed by the bureaucrats). The sarvodaya movement was about to be split into rival groups; Jayaprakash felt that a new positive attitude and an intensive mass struggle could salvage the movement.

In Face to Face, published in December 1970, J.P. provided a clear hint of what could be the major elements in his revised strategy. "To find a way, we will have to go back to Gandhiji...conditions seem to be ripening in the context of our present programme that may necessitate large scale Satyagraha."\(^{19}\) J.P. was here adding a new dimension to Vinoba Bhave's concept of Satyagraha (non violent assistance to right thinking). He believed that the political situation in India demanded large scale non violent 'resistance' to evil, as used by Gandhiji in the struggle to oust the British.\(^{20}\)
In his speeches and writings during 1970-73, J.P. also pointed out to the need to include students, youth and the politically uncommitted citizens, especially the middleclass in the movement. His 'Appeal to Youth Power' was issued in December 1973. The Forum of 'Citizens for Democracy' was established in April, 1974. In December, 1973, he put forward a 'Program of Immediate Socio political Action' to build a structure of people's democracy to carryout his programme and these structures would spread from the villages to the urban areas. Around this time he realized the need to spread the movement to the urban areas.

Second, in the political sphere, he wanted to challenge the rampant misuse of political power by a single dominant party. He felt the need to raise an organized protest against corruption and abuse of freedom. He became the leading architect of a political alliance that provided an alternative to the Congress Party. This is where he entered the sphere of rajniti to challenge the power of the state controlled by a party that tended to be totalitarian. Biju Paitnaik, founder of the Utkal Congress, met him in 1973, requesting him to lead an All India Front against the ruling Congress Party at the centre, he initially refused because he was more interested in leading mass movements rather than entering the domain of party politics. he offered consultation, advice and moral support for any such move. In July, 1973, J.P. started an English weekly, Everyman's, which he said was "not wedded to any isms-left, right, or centre." He advised the politicians of the day to forge an alliance that would be based on principles and not on opportunities. He wanted the opposition parties to provide a concrete and time-bound
programme of action. Yet ultimately, he could not turn a blind eye to the increasing instances of political oppression and violation of civil liberties.

Finally he responded to the national crisis and despair and stepped out of his personal grief and tragedy (his wife, Prabhavati, had breathed her last on 15 April, 1973, after prolonged illness). He vowed to spend the remaining years of his life fighting again for freedom, equality and change. His resurrection at the age of 72 left an indelible impact on India's social and political life. The genesis of the revolution lay in the movement which was started by the students of Gujrat who came out in the streets protesting against fee hike in 1973. The Gujrat Navanirman Samiti was formed with the support of many opposition parties and soon the agitation became a wider protest against other social issues. The Samiti demanded the resignation of the state government. J.P. visited Ahmedabad and asked the students to put moral pressure on the MLAs to force them to resign. After a series of strikes and agitation the Chief Minister resigned.

The students of Bihar started a similar movement with twelve initial demands including educational reforms, removal of corruption, bringing down prices and removal of unemployment. Started in early 1974, the Bihar Movement soon snowballed in to the largest mass movement after independence. J.P.'s involvement in the movement added a new dimension to it; the movement turned out to be a crusade against corruption and other evils and a crusade for the moral regeneration of society. Addressing the sarvodaya workers he
had observed, "If democracy were to be in peril, if there was a
danger of political chaos of dictatorship, shall we sit back
smugly...on the ground that we have nothing to do with
politics?"\textsuperscript{23} He was once again prepared to lead the country
against attempts to impede freedom and democracy.

On March 18, 1974, more than 10,000 students laid a
siege on the Bihar Assembly demanding the resignation of the
government. As the agitation gathered momentum, the
government came down heavily on the agitators. In August, J.P.
raised the pitch by calling for a no-tax campaign. On August 15,
that year, agitators organized people's Independence Day in
contrast to the official celebration organized by the government.
J.P. visited Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan. By early
1975, J.P. explained his movement as 'Total Revolution'; he
declared that his aim was not change of power but change in
the system.

As the leaders of the opposition parties united under
Jayaprakash Narayan's leadership, the movement soon shifted
to Delhi and was transformed into an agitation against the anti-
democratic policies of the central government. On June 25,
1975, the opposition parties organized a massive rally in Delhi
and the rally was addressed by J.P. and other leaders. On the
midnight of June 25, 1975, internal 'Emergency' was clamped
on India and J.P. and other opposition leaders were arrested.

J.P.'s health showed signs of failing and the Government
released him on 15 November 1975. On January 18, 1977,
General Elections were announced. Under J.P.'s persuasion,
several opposition parties came under one banner and the Janata Party was formed. He was not tied down by his ill health (he had to undergo dialysis every other day) and toured the different constituencies campaigning for the Janata Party. In 1977, March, the Congress Party suffered the first electoral defeat at the centre after independence. Jayaprakash Narayan's battle against the anti democratic forces was successful but his job was half done; a larger mobilization was required to bring socio-economic changes in this country.

Foregoing discussion makes it more relevant now to discuss the salient features of the philosophy of Total Revolution of JP. In many of Gandhiji's writings and speeches the concept of Total Revolution was implicit indicating significant change in the material conditions and the moral character of individuals.24 Vinoba Bhave expanded the idea of revolution when he wrote that his aim was to bring about a threefold revolution through Bhoodan. The first revolution was to bring a change in people's hearts. The second revolution would bring changes in their lives and the third would change the social structure.25 J.P.'s concept of Total Revolution was an attempt to put non-violent revolution through 'bhoodan' and 'gramdan' to a wider perspective. He wanted to link the movement to a mass movement for social justice. Vinobaji's forte was his deep sense of spirituality. J.P.'s strength was his scientific temper, knowledge of social science and history of social movements. His experiences with political movements made him aware of the fact that the sarvodaya Movement must achieve tangible rather than symbolic results. Total Revolution was necessary to challenge the intricacies of the existing power.
structure and the socio-economic conditions; it would thus plug the loopholes that threatened the sarvodaya movement.

Vinoba Bhave's strategy was based on 'gentle persuasion'. Many land lords made pledges to gift land but when the time came to redeem these pledges, various problems came up. J.P. was quick to point out that the gentle persuasion should be replaced with a far more aggressive strategy involving the youth and politically non committed citizens. He criticized Vinoba Bhave on a number of occasions for refusing to initiate direct struggle against the power holders. Total Revolution would thus salvage the sarvodaya movement. Here one can refer to what J.P. himself had remarked on one occasion, "There is hardly any difference between Sarvodaya and Total Revolution ... Sarvodaya is the goal and Total Revolution is the means....there cannot be any Sarvodaya without this." The three major steps of Total Revolution were:

a) The creation and organization of people's power,
b) Total and revolutionary change in all aspects of public life and
c) Development of people's government from the lower level.

The major features of Jayaprakash Narayan's concept of Total Revolution include: First, the concept of Total Revolution was based on non violence. In My Concept of Total Revolution, J.P. admitted that on his return from the U.S.A., he had advocated the path of violence against the British. But later on he realized the importance of non-violence. He had told
Gandhiji that there was no need of violent social change in India. In this article, J.P. referred to five reasons for rejecting violent revolutions; these reasons point out how the common people are left in the lurch and forced to suffer after any violent revolution.

Jayaprakash Narayan argued,

"I don't believe that you can change a man with violence....illusion of success created by the fact that a 'successful' violent revolution does succeed in destroying the foundations or the old power structure...But...the building up of a new social order in accordance with the revolutionary ideals gets lost in the new power structure that comes into being." 

He explained that violence always led to further violence and to control the out break of mass violence, an instrument of organized violence is required. He referred to the role of the Red Army in China; and whoever controlled that instrument of organized violence controlled power.

J.P. also refuted the idea that violent revolutions could lead to 'swift and sure' result. "It takes a long time, sometimes centuries, for a violent revolution to succeed and when it does the aims of the revolution are thrust into the distant future to be achieved no one knows when. Witness France or Russia...." With this example he was trying to prove that violence cannot yield proper results. If the French Revolution sought to strengthen the people the out break of violence during the 'Reign of Terror' defeated that aim. It took many centuries for the French people to ultimately establish their power.
Political violence, he believed, could be both revolutionary and reactionary. He referred to the rise of Fascism to prove that an apparently revolutionary movement could strengthen the reactionary and non democratic forces in a country.

Even if a violent revolution succeeds after a long period of incubation, what would success mean? Many radical thinkers would argue that it meant the destruction of the old order. But, J.P. has a very pertinent question: Is destruction an end in itself? Revolutions are not remembered for what they destroy but for what they build. Quoting an example from the Soviet political system, he argued that the post revolutionary power struggle, stemming out of the efforts to destroy the old order, finally kept people away from power.

J.P. felt that revolutions were carried out in the name of 'power to the people' but "when power comes out of the barrel of a gun and the gun is not in the hands of the common people....To alter slightly Tolstoy's famous remark, the revolutionaries have done everything for the people but to get off their backs."

Jayaprakash Narayan agreed to Tolstoy's famous remark which showed that at times the revolutionaries tend to exploit people in the name of revolution itself.

The second major feature of J.P.'s concept of Total Revolution includes his idea that one of the objectives of the revolution would be to maintain the democratic structure of the state. In his notes penned down on 23 August, 1975, while still in prison, he remarked, "Total Revolution has to be peacefully brought about without impairing the democratic structure of society and affecting the democratic way of life of the people."
He also explained that the functioning of democracy was not restricted to elections, legislation planning and administration. There must also be people's direct action which would include civil disobedience, non cooperation and peaceful resistance, in short satyagraha in its widest sense. In response to Chandrashekhar's question, J.P. added that the aim of the Bihar Movement and that of Total Revolution was not just the removal of the Government. The movement would go on and would keep the opposition government (the new government that came to power when the old one had resigned) on its toes and that it would go on faster and smoother because the new government would give its full cooperation. It should be noted here that J.P. also felt that the movement or struggle need not be always against the government. It was for the government to decide whether it would support the movement for all round social change.

Thirdly by his total revolution, J.P. meant a transformation in the internal life of individuals as well as in the entire social structure. To Fred Bloom, the meaning that Jayaprakash gave to Total Revolution was very simple: a transformation which makes what is truly human the centre of life. “We just become human beings. I would like that kind of world to grow.” His reference to both human and social transformation becomes clear when one goes through the combination of seven revolutions: political, social, economic, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual. Life is a combination of all these aspects and any revolution that seeks to change life in all these aspects at the same time is total revolution.
However the various dimensions of the revolution as mentioned above could vary according to the situation in a particular society. The greatness of Jayaprakash Narayan lay in the fact that he never prescribed any rigid concept or method for future generations. Hence, with regard to the content of Total Revolution, he had mentioned that, at different periods total revolution might assume different forms depending on the needs of time and place and on the forces that are contending for power. Unfortunately this attitude of a great leader has been often interpreted as his weakness!

J.P. could not spell out the different aspects of the seven revolutions in detail but one can draw a picture of what he wanted to achieve from several of his articles that he had written. In the political sphere the revolution would remove all vestiges of centralization. In an interview with Professor Bimal Prasad in 1977 he mentioned that the socio-political structure would be based on what he had mentioned in his articles “A Plea for Reconstruction of Indian Polity” and “Swaraj for the People”. In these articles he had rejected the western concept of democracy. His concept was that of communitarian democracy where people at the grass roots level would administer their own affairs; to reach this ideal J.P. had to traverse through the ancient Indian concept of ‘panchayats’, Gandhiji’s concept of ‘gram swaraj’, and M.N. Roy’s concept of ‘Radical Democracy’. All these thinkers have criticized the western concept of democracy and the trend of centralization in the modern state.
Gandhiji advocated that the decentralization of power to be the true basis of democracy. In the Harijan, Gandhi referred to democracy as the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of various sections of the people in the interest of common good of all. He advocated decentralization because there should be reduction of state interference in the activities of the village community. He favoured the idea of self governing village communities where decisions on local issues would be taken by consensus or near unanimity; the emphasis was on the development of people's ability to run their affairs with minimum governmental control.

M.N. Roy was also highly critical of Western Parliamentary democracy. Political parties were at the root of the major problems of Parliamentary democracy. He argued that with the development of the party system, indirect democracy has been reduced to a game of numbers and counting of heads. In a Parliamentary system, the importance of individuals is judged not in terms of their talent or qualities but in terms of the numbers they add to. Roy also referred to the need to do away with the myth of centralization. He believed that his idea of organized local democracies, otherwise called 'Radical Democracy' would be achieved by dissolving political parties and ensuring maximum freedom and participation by the people.

J.P.'s concept of democracy is logically a theory of decentralized power and that of a party less administration. At the root of J.P.'s contempt for political parties was his analysis of the Soviet situation (where the party was synonymous with
bureaucratic elitism), and the Indian scenario (where the parties were the haven of self seeking politicians). At the base of the new political organization will be the local or primary communities, neither so small that a balanced development of communal life and culture become difficult, nor so large that life in them becomes impersonalized. He always insisted that such communities will be neither rural nor urban but 'agro-industrial' based on a balance between agriculture and industry.

The economic base of Total Revolution was laid on "Marx's exploitation free society, Gandhian values of greedless society and appropriate technology which should come from best possible scientific research." As mentioned in previous chapters, J.P. was attracted to socialism because of its insistence on equality and social justice. But the call for social justice had to be linked to the need of moral development of individuals. Material progress alone cannot lead to social justice. The greed of material prosperity in a individualist and consumerist society had to be curtailed by upholding the values of simplicity and cooperation.

J.P. was against the strategy of large scale industrialization and state capitalism, (introduced in the guise of nationalization of industries). Industrial development should be based on small scale industries and labor intensive enterprises. In the economic sphere also J.P. emphasized on economic decentralization and balanced regional development. At the centre of economic development should be 'man' and hence every adult or head of a family should be given work and
a minimum standard of living should be adopted. This obviously required moral and spiritual development of the people. Individuals must be taught to rise above the desire of material satisfaction. Referring to the moral and spiritual revolution, J.P. wrote: "I do not have asceticism in mind. That is for the spiritual seekers. For the average man, for all of us ....a full material satisfaction is itself a spiritual life. Craving excess, bad means to gather wealth, these are anti spiritual." He was a deeply moral person and felt that people must be taught to turn away from the consumerist way of life. This leads to the importance of value-based education. Education must ensure that the members of the community are well prepared to accept new ideas.

During the period of 1974-79, J.P. laid profound emphasis on the transformation of social customs and institutions. In particular he pleaded for the abolition of the caste system and spoke vehemently against the custom of dowry offered during marriages. In the cultural sphere, he advocated a cultural resurgence based on a re-evaluation of existing values including freedom, equality and brotherhood. The cultural aspect of Total revolution emphasized on a change in our way of living and thinking. His obvious aim was to bring change that will improve the quality of life and make "man more human." 

Fourth, J.P. believed that the Total Revolution was a permanent revolution. It would continue always and keep on changing our personal and social lives. As he put in 1976, "It will always go on and on...this revolution knows no respite, no
halt and certainly not a complete halt." But he continued to add that the goals of the Total Revolution would keep on changing according to the requirements of contemporary society.

Fifth, he assigned the role of leadership to the students. He felt that the students were better equipped to spearhead the revolution because they were neither swayed by power politics nor were they burdened by the day to day struggle for survival. Moreover the students are always inspired by the spirit of self sacrifice for the betterment of society. He formed the Student-Youth Struggle Brigade or the 'Chatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini'in 1974-75. As for the organizational aspect, he preferred to give responsibility to the 'Jan Sangharsh Samiti' (People's Struggle committees) and 'Janata Sarkars' (People's Government) at the village level to spread the gospel of revolution among the villagers.

Although he was against the involvement of political parties but later on he admitted that it was difficult to keep political parties at bay. In Prison Diary, he recalled that the existing government had taken a confrontationist stand in Bihar. It was a signal for the opposition parties to jump in the fray but he felt that it lent strength to the movement He expected that the parties would undergo a sea-change in the process. All the parties involved were committed to Total Revolution and to the dynamics of change.45

Unfortunately, J.P.'s optimistic evaluation of the role of the opposition parties was shattered after the victory of the
Janata Party in the elections. He had expected that the political parties would emerge out of petty power politics. The politicians continued to fight over narrow individual interests. A few days before his death, J.P. was visited by Achyut Pattawardhan and J.P. told him that he was lingering, waiting for death. Pattawardhan could not hide his anguish and told him, "You had also renounced power politics but you continued to work for political transformation in your own way...I have to hang my head in shame when I see the moral fall of Janata men who rode to power with your support and blessings...What you called Total Revolution was inclusive of moral and spiritual revolution." Indeed, it was in the sphere of moral revolution that the politicians had failed J.P.

Sixth, Jayaprakash Narayan also mentioned the difference between class struggle and Total Revolution. In Class Organization, *Class Struggle and Social Change*, he wrote that during his association with the Sarvodaya movement, he admitted the view that class organizations and class struggle would lead to violence. Sarvodaya prohibited class struggle or any class organization. As he witnessed the exploitation that continued in the Indian society, he felt that the downtrodden must develop a capacity for resistance. The Sarvodaya leaders had tried to change the heart of the economically stronger sections of the society. Vinoba Bhave never appreciated the need for struggle against the vested interests in the government and in society. He felt that after independence, a social revolution could be brought about by changing the consciousness of the people through the power of thought. Hence while addressing a meeting of the Sarv Seva Sangh in
December 1973, Vinobaji observed, “In Gandhi’s days there was no freedom of thought and expression... But in India today we enjoy the highest measure of freedom in the world..... satyagraha as practiced by Gandhi has become quite irrelevant in India.”

J.P.'s experience of village life in India forced him to disagree with Vinoba. Indeed the so-called freedom of thought and expression did not benefit the underprivileged. The attempts to change the attitude of the rich could not reduce the misery of the poor and they continued to suffer; but the struggle and resistance of the poor do not represent what the Marxists refer to as ‘class struggle’. In his scheme of resistance there was no question of violence. Moreover, he felt that the contemporary working class in India was not a revolutionary class. “Generally the youth constitutes the revolutionary force in India. But to me the working class has no significant role to play..... I consider it to be a part of the petty bourgeoisie.” Total Revolution was conceived to be a movement spearheaded by the students who would lead the weaker sections of the society for a just social order. J.P. considered it to be a struggle to be achieved through ‘satyagraha’.

The history of revolutions has often revealed a saga of the betrayal of vast masses of humanity because the revolutionary forces frequently become involved in struggle for power. Political power only changed hands from one group to another and the common man continued to be pawns in the power struggle. Jayaprakash Narayan had keenly observed that the French Revolution started with the mission of realizing 'liberty and
equality' but ended in 'Reign of Terror' and finally in Bonapartism. He was also highly critical of the fallout of the Russian Revolution. Hence he wanted to develop a new strategy of revolution adding a moral and spiritual dimension to it. If the moral fabric of the revolutionaries is strengthened, they would not indulge into petty power politics.

As discussed earlier, Sarvodaya was his aim and Total Revolution was the means to achieve it. Total Revolution was the ultimate expression of the power of the people (lok shakti); the common man who would rise up in revolt against blatant misuse of authority. Unfortunately, his failing health did not permit him to elaborate his ideas into a coherent theory; he was on the verge of proposing a new theory integrating the concepts of liberty, equality and change with Sarvodaya and Total Revolution but he could not complete it.

In a nutshell, Jayaprakash Narayan's concept of Total Revolution was significant for three reasons: 1) His idea that political and social revolution must continue simultaneously with moral and educational revolution. Unless the people are prepared to accept and stand for change, no movement could be successful. 2) He insisted that the revolution should be carried out by the people involving all the sections of society including students, peasants, workers and middle classes. His revolution was not to be restricted to any particular class. 3) J.P.'s movement challenged the existing party system in India and paved the path for the formation of a coalition or an alternative to the one party dominant system in India.
The Marxists refer to revolution as permanent and a continuous process. "It is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all dominant countries of the world....abolition of classes, not the improvement of existing society but the foundation of a new one." The Marxist concept of 'permanent revolution' clearly has two implications: one, the application of continuous pressure and creating the conditions for revolutionary break with the bourgeois democratic regime; two, fostering and supporting revolutions abroad in all major countries of the world. The Marxist scholars feel that J.P. had failed to understand the real nature of the instruments of power; political parties, police, bureaucracy and judiciary. According to them J.P. ignored the fact that these institutions were controlled directly or indirectly by the class that controlled power. In fact the instruments of democratic decentralization like the Panchayati Raj, operate to consolidate the power of the rich landlords in the villages. These critics have also ridiculed J.P.'s arguments against violence. E.M.S. Namboodiripad wrote that it was a pseudo revolution that completely ignored the class structure of the Indian society. J.P.'s arguments against violence has been often interpreted by critics as the reflection of inadequate knowledge about the source of violence in a capitalist country.

V.M. Tarkunde attempts a comparative analysis of political revolutions and Total Revolution. He pointed out that
a communist revolution is 'statist' because it seeks to seize state power and then this power is used to bring changes in the structure of society. In this case there is always a veiled threat—state power could be monopolized by a minority, thus defeating the objectives of the revolution. Total Revolution is based on people's power, based on cultural resurgence and reevaluation of current values.

Bimal Prasad has observed that his concept of Total Revolution was a 'synthesis' of Marxist and Gandhian concepts along with the principles of Western Democracy. His emphasis on mass uprising to uproot the old order and establish a new one, the need of revolutionary leadership, and his reference to economic changes reveal the Marxist influence. His concept of social change through Total Revolution resembled the Gandhian concept of social transformation upholding the importance of spiritual aspect of social reconstruction thus breaking the barriers between ethics, politics and economics. He tried to portray how a social revolution could be both a struggle against the vested interests of the rich and powerful, and an attempt at social reconstruction without any violence.

Finally, through his concept of Total Revolution, J.P. outlined the contours of a new politics based on mutual respect, trust and cooperation. Yet the question that he left unanswered was whether a nation wide struggle could be achieved without a well knit cadre-based organization. Is it possible for university or college students only to lead the movement to its logical conclusion? While the movement that he led from 1974-77 was
significant in uniting the opposition parties against the threat to democracy, these parties soon lost interest in the long-term objectives of the movement. They were soon involved in a bitter power struggle over the spoils gained through electoral victory.

J.P.'s concept of Total Revolution aimed at the creation of a new man and a new consciousness through far reaching changes in the social political and economic life of the country. Its success should not be evaluated in the context of party and electoral politics.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Naxalite movement started as a peasant uprising in the Naxalbari village in West Bengal on May 25, 1967. Led by leaders like Kanu Sanyal and Charu Majumdar, it protested against the exploitation perpetrated by the landlords and money lenders in the villages. Later on it spread to some urban areas and was joined by students. It propagated a policy of destruction of class enemies.

2. An Ashram is a traditional Indian institution where the teacher passed on to his disciples ideas and concepts of social existence and knowledge. Gradually this became an institution where people from all walks of life could live permanently or temporarily, sharing all the requirements of community living.


5. A brief but illuminating discussion on Gandhi’s concept of satyagraha can be found in A. Appadorai, *Indian Political Thinking in the Twentieth Century*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 36-39.


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49. Ibid., p.273.


