CHAPTER I

FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN INDIA
A GENERAL OUTLOOK
The struggle for freedom in India actually began in the second half of the 19th century in an organized manner, though isolated attempts were made in various parts of the country to bring the British rule in India to an end about a century ago. It was one of the biggest liberation movements against Imperialism and Colonialism. The English had came to India as traders around 1600 AD. When the English East India company was established, Surat was the first centre of their trade. The British East India company gained the upper hand among other European companies by the beginning of the 19th century. The company grew slowly but steadily. The East India company introduced radical changes in India's system of land tenure. The company remained fundamentally a trading concern from 1600 to 1757. It became successful in gaining monopoly over trade in India by pleasing the British Government and its influential class and by winning the sympathies and patronage of Indian rulers.

The battle of Plassey in 1757 witnessed the expansion of
the British domination all over India. It was mere skirmish for the English. The battle of Plassey in June 23, 1757 in which the Nawab of Bengal, Siraj-ud-Daula was defeated, was of crucial importance in the history of the traders from England, who had defeated the other three European powers through mutual conflicts lasting for nearly three centuries. Tarachand states that "Plassey started a long chain of consequences which utterly changed the face of India; the system of economy and government which had lasted for centuries was transformed."1

Many revolts broke out in different parts of the country towards the end of the 18th century and in the beginning of the 19th century. Not only suppressed each of these revolts, but the feudal lords who remained in power in Delhi, which was India's centre of administration in the ancient and medieval period and in surrounding areas were also conquered. It was with this development that the true colours of foreign rulers were revealed to both the elite classes and the common people

throughout northern India. It was the outburst of the discontent which arose out of this situation that was witnessed in the struggle for independence in 1857-59. Tarachand describes the situation on the eve of this outburst in the following words: "A deadly pall hung over India, under which the classes were smothered and the masses breathed with difficulty. The Muslim and Hindu ruling princes were disarmed and isolated, the Muslim and Hindu families, tribes and castes which had provided soldiers, administrators and leaders were ostracized from offices of responsibility and condemned to serve as a lots, the Muslims and Hindu learned classes were deprived of patronage and slowly squeezed out of their avocations."

The series of revolts which broke out in 1857 in North India had lasted nearly two years, was India's 'first struggle for independence'. In the year 1857, the first attempt on the part of the Indians happened for the freedom of their country. According to some writers, the outbreak was really a rebellion

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of the people rather than a mutiny of the sepoys. But some others viewed it as a mere mutiny of the sepoys. For example, the view of John Secley was that the mutiny was "wholly unpatriotic and selfish sepoy mutiny with no native leadership and no popular support." Of course it was started in the form of mutiny of sepoys and resulted in a popular revolt. The sepoys, of course, had a prominent role in this struggle. Disraeli was one of the eminent thinkers amongst the British administrators in 19th century. He characterized this struggle as a 'national revolt' and not an army revolt. Another historian Justin McCarthy has recorded: "The fact was that throughout the greater part of the north and northwest of the great Indian peninsula, there was a rebellion of the native races against English power. It was not by any means merely a military mutiny. It was a combination of military grievances, national

3. See the modern interpretations of the Revolt.
4. Quoted by V.D. Mahajan, Modern Indian History, S.Chand and Company Ltd., Ram Nayar, New Delhi, 1997, p. 182.
hatred and religious fanaticism against the English occupation of India. The native princes and the native soldiers were in it. The Muhammadan and the Hindu forgot their old religious antipathies to join against the Christain.\footnote{6} The popular character of the revolt of 1857 was emphasized by Rev. Alaxander Duff when he remarked "It was not a military revolt but a rebellion or revolution which alone can account for the little progress hitherto made in extinguishing it."\footnote{7} Moreover the strength of the revolt of 1857 lay in Hindu Muslim unity. The view of Lord Canning, the Governor General of India was that "the struggle which we have been more like a nation was than a local insurrection."\footnote{8}

Many Indian writers have described the events of 1857 as a war of Independence. V.D. Savarkar wrote his book called \textit{The Indian war of Independence} in which he tried to show how

\footnote{6}{Quoted by Tarachand, \textit{op.cit.}, Vol. II, p. 41.}
\footnote{7}{\textit{The Indian Rebellion; Its Causes and Results}, London, 1858.}
\footnote{8}{Quoted by S.N.Sen, \textit{History of Freedom Movement in India}, New Age International Ltd., New Delhi, 1997, p. 38.}
the mutiny was really a war of independence.⁹ Following Savarkar, several other political activists and scholars of history basing themselves on the stand of the nationalists tried to evaluate the struggle of 1857-59. Thus, Asoka Mehta admits that the sepoys were the mainstay of the rebellion and they bore the brunt of the struggle to break the chains that imprisoned India.¹⁰ But Dr. Tarachand comes to the conclusion that while it is appropriate to give the designation mutiny to the events of 1857, it was also not proper to call them 'the national war of Independence'.¹¹ The view of Dr. R.C. Majumdar is that the revolt of 1857 was not at all a national movement. The title of his book was Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857. "I have selected the title 'The sepoy mutiny and the revolt of 1857', as in my opinion it correctly describes the essential nature of the movements whatever we might take of it. The revolt is used in its normal sense of casting of allegiance to the rulers and

⁹. For more details see, E.M.S. Namboothirippad, op. cit., p. 31.
¹⁰. Ibid.
¹¹. Tarachand, op. cit., p. 222.
does not convey any moral judgement such as disapproval or odium."^{12}

As we have already noticed from the point of view of modern nationalism, the struggle of 1857-59 was a national struggle with a number of weakness and inadequacies. But we should not underestimate the historical importance and significance of these and other bigger and smaller struggles that took place in different parts of India. Each and every one of these struggles demonstrated the intensity of the feeling of patriotism among the Indian people which could not be suppressed by the use of brutal force.

The mutiny brought out far-reaching changes in the character of the Indian administration. It was the first largescale uprising against British rule in India. It failed because the rebel leaders could not work together. They were not moved by feelings of national patriotism; at best they fought for their state,

at worst for their own gain. Now here was a plan for a new order developed, rather the leaders fought for the vanished feudal way of life, with the suppression of the revolt, all of these was swept away. No more could men dream of setting up a Mugal or Marathi empire. The defeat of the old order left the way clear for the development of modern India.

Briefly the rebellion of 1857 was the outburst of the social contradictions that lay below the new military organization and the state established by the British rulers in India. And behind the suppression of the rebellion lay the fundamental contradiction inherent in the pre-British Indian society. The mutiny was a great landmark in the growth of Indian nationalism as it created a sense of bitter ill-feeling between the Indians and Europeans. Thus the year 1857 may be looked upon as the great divide between the two great landmarks in the Indian history that of British paramountcy in the first half and that of Indian nationalism in the second half of the 19th century.
The struggle of 1857 was the first largescale popular uprising against British rule and the first expression of India's urge for freedom. It was undoubtedly the same urge which realized itself ninety years later.

Between 1858 and 1905 British rule in India was at its strongest. But during this same period a current of national feelings began to flow through India. Soon this swelled into a stream that in half a century swept the mighty British Raj away. Nationalism in India arose to meet the challenge of foreign rule helped the growth of a national sentiment among the people. There was also clash between the British interests in India and those of the Indian people. The British had conquered India to secure their own interests and they ruled over primarily with this object in view. There was a realization in India and that realization brought bitterness against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country.

The quest for self-determination or national identity
provides an ideological content which plays a seminal role in the growth of nationalism. It is defined that "Nationality is a will to live together and to keep the common heritage alive."\(^{13}\)

The Indian National Movement which galvanized millions of people of all classes and ideologies into political action and brought to it knees a mighty Colonial Empire. Various aspects of Indian National Movement, especially Gandhian political strategy are particularly relevant to these movements in societies that broadly function within the confines of the rule of law, and are characterized by a democratic and basically civil liberation policy.

In general, nationalism is applied to 'nationality' in both the political and cultural sense and that played a vital constructive part in the creation of modern nation states.

The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 marked a new beginning in the history of Indian nationalism. It was the first organized expression of the Indian nationalism.

It was the first organized expression of the Indian National movement on an all India scale. The credit for founding the premier political organization, The Indian National Congress, goes to Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912).\(^\text{14}\) Lord Dufferin, who was the Governor General and Viceroy during the days of the formation of Congress, had also not concealed from his friends his sympathies with the movement that was developing among the educated, when Hume formulated his plan for the formation of the Indian National Congress, he had the blessings and good wishes of Dufferin.\(^\text{15}\)

The first Indian National Congress met in Bombay in 1885 under the presidency of W.C. Banergee (1844-1900). The second session of the Congress met in Culcutta and was presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917).\(^\text{16}\) Naoroji in

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\(^\text{14.}\) He had played an important role in the preliminary work connected with the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Historians have even conferred on him the epithet of 'founder of the Congress.'

\(^\text{15.}\) See E.M.S., *op. cit.*, p. 77.

\(^\text{16.}\) For details see, S.N. Sen, *op.cit.*, p. 60.
his presidential address asserted that the Congress should work as a political organization and discuss only those matters which affected the whole country, with the foundation of the National Congress in 1885, the struggle for India's freedom from foreign rule was launched in a small but organized manner.

National movement in India passed through several phases. The first phase started from 1885 and continued till 1905 AD. This is known as moderate period. Second stage in India's freedom struggle (1905-1919) started with the coming of the extremists. Third stage started from 1919 to 1947, known as Gandhian period.

**Moderate Period (1885-1905)**

The first stage of Indian National movement was dominated by leaders who have often been described as moderate nationalists or moderates. Gopalakrishna Gokhale (1866-1915), Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1926) etc., were important moderate thinkers. They had unbounded confidence in the British sense of justice and demanded moderate reforms
like administrative re-organization, Indianization of services and admission of Indian into the legislative councils. The political method of moderates can be summed up as constitutional agitation within the four walls of law and slow orderly progress. They believed that if public opinion was created and organized and popular demands presented to the authorities they would concede these demands gradually. Moderate leaders believed that the continuation of India's political connection with Britain was in the interest of Indian at the stage history.

The British authorities were from the beginning hostile to the rising national movement and had become suspicious of the National Congress. In 1887, Dufferin attacked the National Congress in a public speech and ridiculed it by saying that microscoping minority of the people. Dufferin who had encouraged Hume in his efforts to form the Indian National Congress, later wrote: "There is a mischievous busybody of the name Hume who Lord Ripon rather feted and who seems to be one of the chief stimulators of the Indian Home Rule
Movement. He is cleverish, a little cracked vain un-scrupulous man very careless in truth.\textsuperscript{17}

As we have seen, the main demand of the Congress were active role for the Indians in the administration and as part of it, ending the monopoly of Englishmen in government employment. The British authorities in India and England took totally negative attitude to this demand. They made out that those who raised these demands constituted a small minority among the Indian people and that a large majority of the people were not interested in such political agitations. They argued that since the agitating minority were Hindu Bengalis, Muslims throughout India and all other communities outside Bengal were against these demands. They even went to the extent of propagating that those who shed blood in the wars for protection of the interests of both England and India were martial races outside Bengal, and that they were against the demand being raised by the cowardly Bengali Hindus. Thus they did all that they could to turn the martial races and Muslim against the Congress.

\textsuperscript{17} Quoted by Tarachand, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 554.
Not only did they conduct propaganda of the sorts, they also tried to obstruct in various ways the organized functioning of the Congress such as imposing ban on holding meetings in certain places, putting obstacles before travels and lodging facilities. Other delegates attending conferences and harassing those who were in the forefront of agitational and organizational activities. The Congress had to face all these difficulties to function effectively.

If we critically evaluate the work of moderates, it appears that they did not achieve much success. Very few of the reforms advocated by them were carried out. The foreign rulers treated them with contempt. S.N. Sen quote Lala Lajpat Ray: "After more than twenty years of more or less futile agitation for concession and redress of grievances, they had received stones in place of bread."¹⁸ The moderates failed to acquire any roots among the common people and even those who joined the Congress with high hopes were feeling more and more

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¹⁸ S.N. Sen, op.cit., p. 82.
disillusioned. The moderates failed to keep pace with the yearnings and aspirations of the people. They failed to understand and appreciate the impatience of the people who were suffering under the Foreign yoke. They did not realize that the political and economic interest of the Indians and the British clashed and consequently the British people could not be expected to give up their rights and privileges in India without a fight. Moreover, they kept themselves away from the Congress and that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Pakistan. Inspite of their best efforts, the moderates were not able to win over the Muslims. But it is wrong to say that the political record of the moderates was a barren one. Taking into consideration of the difficulties they had to confront with at that time, the moderates achieved a lot. It is their achievements in the wider sense that led lateron to the more advanced stages of the nationalist movement. They evolved a common political and economic programme which united the different sections of the people. Inspite of their many failures, they laid strong foundations for the national movement to grow
upon and they deserve a high place among the makers of modern India. S.N. Sen quotes Gokhale, "Let us not forget that we are at a stage of the country's progress when our achievements are bound to be small and our responsibility is ended when we have done the work which belongs to that place. It will not doubt be given to our countrymen of future generation to serve India by their success; we of the present generation, must be content to serve her mainly by our failure. For, hard though it be out of these failures the strength will come which in the end will accomplish great tasks."\textsuperscript{19}

Second stage in India's freedom struggle started with the coming of the extremists.

**Extremist Period (1905-1919)**

Many factors were responsible for the rise of extremism in the Congress. It found expression in the movement against the partition of Bengal in 1905. The extremist Lala Lajpat Ray (1865-1928), Bala Gangadhara Tilak (1865-1920) and Bipin

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
Chandra Pal contended that good government is not a substitute for self government. There was a strong demand for more vigorous political action and methods than those of the meetings and speeches in the legislative councils. The extremist wanted to extent the Swadesi and they boycotted foreign goods to every form of association with the colonial government. They were convinced that the battle for freedom had begun as the people had been roused. They preached the message of self-respect and asked the nationalists to rely on the character and capacities of Indian people. The extremist viewpoint has been beautifully summerised by Bipin Chandra Pal in the following words: "Our eyes have been turned away from the govt. house, away from the houses of parliament from Simla or Culcutta, and our faces have turned now to the starving, the naked, the patient and long suffering 300 millions of our people and in it we see a new potency and in the teeming, tooling starving and naked populations of India, we find possibilities, potentialities germs that have given rise to this new movement ......."  

conceived of a new dynamic political platform for Indian political action. He said "People has no soul, just as slave have none; a man without a soul is a mere animal. A nation without a soul is only herd of dumb driven cattle." Bipin Chandra Pal become a fiery spokesman for a new nationalist idea. His burning eloquence set listeners aflame with the fever of a wild consuming desire. He wondered whether self government within the empire was at all a practicable ideal. In his own words, "Either no real self government for us or no real overlordship for England." In Calcutta, he found the famous nationalist news paper *Bande Matharam*. Bipin Chandrapal was a champion of absolute political independence. In 1906 he categorically declared in *Bande Matharam*: "Our ideal is freedom which means absence of all foreign control. Our method is passive resistance, which means organized

21. Ibid., p.86.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Published in August, 1906.
determination to refuse to render any voluntary or honourary service to the government.  

By this period the number of educated Indians had increased perspectively. Large number of them worked in the administration on extremely low salaries while many others increasingly faced unemployment. Their economic plights made them look critically at the nature of British rule. Many of them were attacked by radical nationalist policies. The educated Indians become the best propagators and followers of militant nationalism both because they were low paid or unemployed and because they were educated in modern thought and politics and European and world history.

The extremist movement did not succeed much in India because many terrorists did not have the patience to undergo sufferings and therefore, they better thought to disassociate themselves with terrorist activities. These activities were confined to only younger generation of society and thus at no

25. S.N. Sen, op. cit., p. 84.
stage could become a mass movement. It needs courageous, well equipped and trained people and the number of such persons is always limited. India is traditionally a peace-loving country and the people, by and large, hate violence. The movement faced great set back with the popularity of Gandhiji. He was opposed to every kind of violence. Next phase of the Indian freedom movement started with the coming of Mahatma Gandhi on national scene.

**Gandhian Era (1919-1947)**

The next phase is known as the Gandhian Era of Indian National Movement. After getting his education, Gandhi went to South Africa to practice law. Gandhiji returned to India in 1915 at the age of 46. He was keen to serve his country and his people. Gandhiji, by the advice of his political Guru, Gokhale, kept himself aloof from Indian politics for one year. He first decided to study Indian conditions before deciding the field of his work. In 1915 he founded the Sabarmathi Āśram at Ahammadabad, where his friends and followers were to learn and practice the ideals of truth and non-violence.
Mahatma Gandhi has been rightly be called the father of the Nation. He was, in every sense of the word, the creator of modern India. It was under him that India won her independence. It is true that Tilak had anticipated him by advocating a policy of begging as followed by the moderates in India, but it cannot be denied that it was under Gandhiji that the nationalist movement in India become a mass movement and not a movement of the mere intelligentsia of India.

In 1917 Gandhiji began his career of political agitation in India. He avoided the national political arena and concentrated on specific grievances. Gandhiji could only join an organization or a movement that adopted non-violent 'Satyāgraha' as its method of Satyāgraha with which he had experimented in South Africa, Camparan in Bihar, Kheda in Gujarath and Ahmedabad to solve the issues faced by the entire Indian people. The common feature of the struggles was that they were

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26. Gandhi described Satyāgraha is an all sided sword, it can be used any how. It blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood it produces far-reaching results. It never rest and cannot be stolen.
fought for the economic demands of the masses. Two of these
struggles, Camparan and Kheda, involved the peasants and the
one in Ahammadabad involved industrial workers. By the
beginning of 1919 Gandhi had become one of the most
prominent leaders in the country. His firmness and
uncompromising idealism had won him many devoted followers
and helped to focus nation-wide attention on himself and on
his methods.

In 1919 he called for a nation-wide protest against the
unpopular legislation that British were threatening to introduce.
The publication of Rowlet\textsuperscript{27} Bills set the stage for wide-spread
agitation against the government. The Rowlet Bills introduced
in the Central legislation on February 1919 armed the executive
with unlimited powers to political violence. Coming soon after
the war when the Indians were expecting generous treatment
from Britain, it definitely aroused violent protest from all parts
of India. The Bills were opposed by all elected non-official

\textsuperscript{27} Rowlet was Chairman of the revolutionary Conspiracies Enquiry
Committee.
members of the legislature. Gandhiji decided to oppose the Rowlet Bills which he described as 'symptoms of a deep-seated disease'. The remedy he proposed was Satyagraha.

Gandhiji followed various methods to achieve his ends. He started Khilafath movement, Non-Co-Operation movement and also started Civil-Disobedience movement. The Khilafath movement assumed great significance in September 1919, when decision at the peace conference approved to imminent actions. Gandhi was elected President of All India Khilafath Conference. Khilafath was the movement formed to express the protest of Indian Muslims against this and in sympathy of the non-Muslims with their Muslim brothers. Two individuals who played leading role in this movement deserve special mention. They were Maulana Muhammadali28 and Maulana Shaukath

28. He was an educated Indian Mohammadan who with his brother lead the Khilafath movement in 1920 and joined Gandhi and the Indian National Congress in the non-co-operation movement. He presided over the Gaya session of Indian National Congress.
Ali, known as the Ali brothers. The all India Khilafath Committee was the organizational demand and of the protest against the violation of assurance given with regard to the future of the Calif. These developments took place at the end of 1919, when the wave of mass upsurge against Jallian Wallah Bagh massacre was sweeping the country and opinion that there was no question co-operating with the Montagu Chemsford reforms was gaining strength.

The Hindu-Muslim unity that emerged around the Khilafath helped to sow the seeds of a country-wide mass movement which advanced in a step-by-step process, often weakening temporarily before rising again like the ebb and flow of an ocean tide.

In 1920 Gandhiji suggested to his Muslim friends to adopt the path of non-violent non-co-Operation for the solutions to Khilafath issues. This was the first public presentation of the

29. Shoukath Ali was a prominent leader and politician of Indian Mohammadans. Born in Rampur near Banaras in 1873. In 1934 member of Indian legislative Assembly.
technique of political action that would dominate to Indian scene for the next few years and would fundamentally alter the course of the struggle for freedom.

Non-Co-Operation movement marked a turning point in the history of the Indian National Congress. The Congress which was a resort of a handful of educated elite, inaccessible to the common man, was remoulded by changing its style of work and mode of organization permitting to maintain a more intimate contact with the masses. The Non-Co-Operation movement consisted of surrender of British titles and honours a 'triple boycott' of British legislatures court and educational institutions and a boycott of foreign-made goods. To this negative side of Non-Co-Operation was added a constructive side that included the promotion of Svadeśi goods especially hand-spun and hand-woven Khādi clothing, the removal of untouchability, the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity and temperance, or abstention from alcoholic beverages.

The Non-Co-Operation movement captured the
imagination of the people. The movement produced impressive result in many fields. Teachers and students sacrificed their prospects by leaving English colleges and schools. New educational institutions such as Kāśividyāpīṭh, Jamia Milia of Delhi, National Muslim University of Aligarh were established to provide education along national lines. As part of the boycott of law-court, many members of the legal profession gave up their practices.

Dr. R.C. Majumdar says that the most outstanding feature of the Non-Co-Operation movement was the willingness and ability of the people in general to endure hardships and punishments inflicted by the government. It is true that the movement collapsed but the memory of its greatness survived and was destined to inspire the nation to launch a more arduous campaign. The movement served as baptism of fire which initiated the people into a new faith and hope and inspired them with a new confidence in their power to fight for freedom. As a result of this movement, the Congress movement for the first
time became a really mass movement. The national awakening not only penetrated to the people at large but also made them active participants in the struggle for freedom. Moreover, the Indian National Congress was turned into a genuine revolutionary organization. It was no longer a deliberative assembly, but an organized fighting party pledged to revolution.\(^{30}\)

Withdrawal of Non-Co-Operation movement by Gandhiji was not recognized by many Congress leaders like Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das and they formed a new party.\(^{31}\) The party took part in the ensuing elections of the provincial legislature and gained good success. In 1923 when elections were held under Montford scheme,\(^{32}\) the party emerged very powerful in Central

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31. Swaraj Party formed in 1922.

32. The Montford Scheme is also known as Government of India Act 1919. The scheme was introduced by British as a reward for the helps and co-operations tendered by the Indians towards the 1st world war. The scheme was declared in the year 1919 August 20th and three main ingredients of the Act are, 1. Responsible Government in the Provinces; 2. The expansion of Legislative council by including more Indian
Provinces and Bengal. In many other provinces it became a formidable opposition. It could have a say in Central legislature. The Swarajists upheld the moral of the people. In assembly they very bitterly exposed the weakness of the government policies.

Dr. R.C. Majumdar says that the Swarajist party rendered a signal service to the country. For the first time, the legislative assembly wore the appearance of truly National Assembly where national grievances were fully voiced, national aims and aspirations expressed without any reservation and real character of the British rule exposed. The British autocracy and Indian bureaucracy stood exposed to the whole world.33

By 1928 struggle against British imperialism entered a new phase. There was a lot of agitations in the country when the

representatives; 3. The relaxation of direct control of British Parliament and the Secretary of State over Indian Government. The reforms was put in the British Parliament in 1919 June and the bill was passed as an Act in 1919 December.

33. R.C. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 190.
Simon Commission\textsuperscript{34} visited India. At the Calcutta session of the Congress held in 1928, it was intended to pass a resolution declaring complete independence as the goal of India. However Mahatma Gandhi intervened and dominion status was declared to be the goal of India. Mahatma Gandhi gave the assurance that he himself would lead the movement for independence by the end of 1929. The British government did not confer Dominion status on India.

The Lahore Congress of 1929 had authorized the working committee to launch a programme of Civil-Disobedience including no-payment taxes. It had also called upon all members of legislature to resign their seats. In 1930, the working committee meeting at Sabarmathi Ashram invested Gandhiji with full powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement at a time and place of his choice. The acknowledged expert on mass struggle was already desperately in search of

\textsuperscript{34} In 1927 British government appointed a commission to look into the working of the reforms of 1919 and suggest further measures for reforms. Its Chairman was Mr. Simon.
an active formula. Gandhiji decided to begin the campaign with a march from his Āśram to the sea-sided village of the Dandi, Where salt would be collected in violation of the laws. The government controlled the sale of this indispensable commodity and imposed tax on it which was felt most keenly by the poor.

The Civil-Disobedience movement demonstrated that the Indian people were willing to struggle and suffer to reach their goal, independence. The Salt-Satyagraha, in effect, turned out to be a programme which inspired the people to enter the field of struggle. The limitations of Gandhian theory of Satyagraha has no hindrance in raising the salt Satyagraha to the level of far wider and better organized struggle than that of the 1920-21 period, in which a wider spectrum of people from children and women who had hitherto been confined to homes and irrespective of caste distinction, members of various religious minority communities took part.

The movement was gaining strength when it was suddenly side-tracked with the announcement of communal award by the
British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald.\textsuperscript{35} The movement gradually waned. The Congress officially suspended the movement in May 1933 and withdrawn it in May 1934.

British Prime Minister announced the communal award on August 16, 1932. According to this award, the Muslims, European and Sikh voters would elect their candidates by voting in separate communal electorates. Similar provision was also provided for the depressed classes. The provision for depressed classes was strenuously opposed by Gandhiji who decided to

\textsuperscript{35} British Politician, first Labour Party Prime Minister of Britain (1924, 1929-31, 1931-35). He joined the precursor of the Labour Party in 1894 and was its secretary from 1900 to 1911. He was a member of the House of Commons (1906-18), where he served as the leader of the Labour Party (1911-14), before he was forced to resign after opposing Britain's participation in World War I. Re-elected to Parliament in 1922, he led the Labour opposition. He became Prime Minister in 1924 with Liberal Party support, but he was forced to resign later that year when Conservatives regained majority. In 1929 Labour won a majority and he returned as Prime Minister. In 1931 he offered his resignation during the Great Depression but decided instead to remain in office as head of a national coalition until 1935, when Stanley Baldwin became Prime Minister. MacDonald remained in the government as lord president of the Council until 1937.
go on a fast-untto-death in the Yervada prison where he was lodged. This decision brought about negotiation with B.R. Ambedkar culminating in the Poona pact, by which a common electorate of all Hindu was agreed upon with reserved seats for depressed classes in the central and provincial legislatures.

The Viceroy Lord Linlithgow, offered a set of proposals to the Congress for securing its co-operation during the war, which is popularly known as August offer. It turned down the Congress' demands for setting up the provincial national government but made alternate proposals like a representative constitution-making body to be set up after the war, increase in the number of Indians in the Viceroy's executive Council, a war advisory Council to be set up. The Congress rejected the August offer.

In October 17, 1940, the Congress, started 'Individual Satyagraha'. Acharya Vinoba Bhave was the first individual to offer Satyagraha. It had dual purpose; joining the war, it
gave the British government a chance to peacefully accept Indian demands. The movement created little enthusiasm.

As the war situation worsened president Roosevelt (1858-1919) of USA and Chiang Kaishek (1887-1975) of China pressurized Churchil (1871-1947) to seek the action headed by Stafford Cripps. He was sent to India in March 1942. The draft declaration promised India dominion status and a constitution-making body after the war. The Pakistan demand was accommodated by the provision that any province which was not prepared to accept the new constitution would have the right to sign a separate agreement with Britain regarding its future status. Negotiations between Cripps and Congress leaders broke down. Gandhiji rejected it by terming it as 'a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank'.

36. A successful lawyer, he served in Parliament (1931-50). He was on the extreme left of the Labour Party and helped found the Socialist League in 1932. After serving as ambassador to Moscow (1940-42), he joined the British war cabinet and conducted the Cripps Mission (1942), an unsuccessful attempt to rally Indian Support against the Japanese. As chancellor of the Exchequer (1947-50), he instituted a rigid austerity programme to revive Britain's economy.
In 1942, due to the failure of the Cripps Mission, Gandhiji's attitude towards the British underwent a fundamental change. Gandhiji suggested the immediate withdrawal of the British from India. On July 14, 1942, the Congress working Committee passed resolution stating clearly that 'British rule in India must end immediately.' Congress had no desire whatsoever to embrace Great Britain as the allied powers, but if the British did not leave the country, congress would be compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 in a wide-spread struggle under the leadership of Gandhiji. The all India Congress Committee endorsed this Quit India Resolution on August 1942. It authorized the starting of mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale. The historic 'Quit India Resolution' at Bombay was followed by Gandhi's memorable utterance.

"Everyone of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free.... I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of
complete freedom. We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt.\textsuperscript{37}

It was indeed a clarion call for unarmed revolt on a mass scale. Gandhi stressed the non-violent character of the movement in his address to the members of all India Congress Committee before his arrest adding "even if under provocation such things happen you may take it that you will not find me alive wherever I may be."\textsuperscript{38}

Gandhi became the symbol of poor India and nationalist India. He strove for Hindu-Muslim unity, fought against untouchability and tried to raise the social status of women in the country. He summed up his attitude in his inimitable style.

"I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low

\textsuperscript{37} Kripalani J.B., \textit{Gandhi - His Life And Thought}, Govt. of India, Govt. Publication Division, 1971, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony ....... women will enjoy the same rights as men ... This is the India of my dreams.\textsuperscript{39}

His outlook endowed the spirit of national as well as universal. He wanted Indians to imbibe their own rich cultural heritage but at the same time to acquire what the best other civilizations has to offer.

Thus Indian people, after their century-long struggle had thrown out the foreign yoke, even though it happened in the midst of unimaginable tragedies on 15 August 1947, when India celebrated with joy its first day of Independence.

The history of freedom movement in India from 1857-1947 is an eventful period in the history of the world. The nationalist movement was basically the product of the central contradiction between colonialism and the interests of the Indian people. The leadership of the movement gradually arrived at,

and based itself on, a clear scientific and firm understanding of Colonialism that the British were using their political control to subordinate the Indian economy and society. It began to perceive that overall the country was regressing and under developing.

The Sepoy revolt of 1857, though not a mighty upsurge of Indian Nationalism, was enough to create a sense of panic among the British imperialists. The birth of Indian National Congress in 1885, with active official patronage, was at first intended to counteract Indian Nationalism. Dominated by the moderates in the initial stage, the Congress agitated for constitutional reform and a great share of Indian participation in the administration. But the extremist philosophy of Bankim Chandra, Aurobindo and Tilak made inroads into the Congress organization.

Indian nationalism nurtured by constitutional agitation and watered by revolutionaries assumed a new dimension with the entry of Gandhi in Indian politics in 1919. It was no mere
change of leadership, but a veritable revolution. The Congress changed its character and Gandhi became the leader of the masses. Beginning with 1920, a powerful socialist trend developed in the national movement. The bourgeoisie development perspective of the national movement was challenged in serious manner by early communist group, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose and a large number of socialist-minded groups and individuals. The Congress, under Gandhi, touched the emotions of the multitude and its message reached every nook and corner of India. Gandhi remained the dominant factor in Indian politics for the next three decades. His unflinching faith in non-violance for achieving the country's freedom upset all the calculations of the British statesmen and Indian leaders. To him non-violence as the means were more important than the goal. A major ideological dimension of the national movement was the overall social outlook of Gandhiji and the Gandhians. Gandhiji did not accept a class analysis of society and the role of class struggle. He was also opposed to the use of violence even in defence of the
interest of the poor. But his basic outlook was that of social transformation. Gandhi was not present at Delhi when the transfer of power from Britain to India took place on August 15, 1947. He was in Calcutta, trying to restore communal harmony between the Hindus and Muslims.

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