CHAPTER VI
THE TWO APPROACHES

Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose represent two alternative approaches. They were brought up and nurtured in different milieu. They underwent different experiences and influences which shaped their lives and outlook towards contemporary issues.

Most of the political commentators and writers of modern Indian history have magnified the differences between Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose. This is not correct and is unjust to both the supreme martyrs of Indian freedom. There are a number of common points between the two which need to be emphasised.

Practical Idealism

Gandhiji and Subhas Bose both were practical idealists. Gandhiji claimed that he was not a visionary but a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence was not meant merely for the rishis and saints. It was meant for the common people as well. Non-violence was the law of our species as violence was the law of the truth. Gandhiji called himself a practical dreamer. His dreams were not airy buildings. He wanted to convert his dreams with realities far as possible.

Subhas Bose confessed that he was a dreamer. He had been a dreamer even when he was a child. He thought that the progress of the world had depended on dreamers and their dreams, not dreams of exploitation, aggrandisement and perpetuating injustice, but dreams of progress, happiness for the widest masses, liberty and independence for
all nations. The dearest dream of Subhas Bose's life was the freedom of India. He believed that if a leader wanted to solve the fundamental problems of public life, he would have to look miles ahead of his contemporaries. The leader must summon courage to stand out alone and fight the rest of the world. One who desired to swim with the tide of popular approbation in all occasions might become the few of the house, but he could not live in history. Subhas Bose was prepared to die so that India might live. He once said: "In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish, but ideas, ideals and shears do not. One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will live after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of revolution move on and the ideas, ideals and dreams of one generation are relegated to the next. No idea has even fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice."¹

Organisers

Gandhiji and Subhas Bose both were great organisers and mass leaders. Before Gandhiji's appearance on Indian political scene Indian National Congress was an organisation of the upper middle class leaders without any mass following. It met every year in some big town and passed resolutions hinting at some political reforms. By and large the

¹ While speaking at the Hooghly District Students Conference on 22nd July 1929, Subhas Bose had stated: "Every single nation or individual has got a special trait on ideal of his own. He shapes his life in accordance with that ideal. It becomes the sole object of life to realise that ideal as fully as possible. And minus that ideal his life becomes absolutely meaningless and unnecessary. Just as in the case of the individual the pursuit of an ideal continues through long years so also in the case of the nation it works from generation to generation. That is why the wise people say that an ideal is not a lifeless and motionless entity. It has got speed, locomotion and life giving power." Bose, Sisir K. and Sujata Bose (ed.), The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 96.
Congress leaders had a feeling of praise for the British Raj and its institutions. Congress was mainly a deliberative organisation and did not possess any positive programme for mass action. Gandhiji gradually transformed the Indian National Congress into a revolutionary and mass based organisation. Its impact was felt across the country. During his speech at the plenary session of the Round Table Conference in London on November 30, 1931, Mahatma Gandhi claimed that the Congress represented 85 percent of the population of India. He went further and claimed that the Congress represented the whole of India including the princes, landed gentry and the educated classes. He saw: "All the other Parties at this meeting represent sectional interest. Congress alone claims to represent the whole of India and all interests. It is no communal organisation, it is a determined enemy of communalism in any shape or form. Congress knows no distinction of race, colour or creed. Its platform is universal. It may not always have lived up to the creed. But the worst critic will have to recognise that the Indian National Congress is a daily growing organisation, that its message penetrate the villages of India, that on given occasions the Congress has been able to demonstrate its influence among these masses who inhabit 700,000 villages." The constructive programme of Gandhiji needed almost all the items required for the social reconstruction of India.

Subhas was also an able organiser. He organised the Calcutta Congress in 1928, which was presided over by Pt. Motilal Nehru. He is most remembered for the energy and grace with which he filled the role of General Officer Commanding or GOC. He skilfully organised a volunteer corps in uniform. He also encouraged the setting up of the Mahila Rashtriya Sangh.

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The organising abilities of Subhas Bose can best be gauged by his work in Germany and Far East during the Second World War. Bose went to Europe in 1941, primarily to gain access to Indian soldiers in the British Indian army who were prisoners of war in the hands of Germany and Italy. With the assistance of Indian exiles he set up a Free India Centre and raised an Indian Legion. The organisation of Indian National Army and its heroic saga is a brilliant testimony to the organisational power of Subhas Bose.

Discipline

Discipline was an important theme in the life and thought of Mahatma Gandhi. He was at heart a religious man. According to him, religion supplied a moral basis without which life was a mere sound and fury signifying nothing.

Gandhiji believed in traditional view of Hindu philosophy about the aim of life and how to achieve it. But he gave it a new interpretation. He believed in the principle of spiritual unity. He thought that the immediate service of human beings was a necessary part of our endeavour to attain god. He was essentially a Karmayog, a man devoted to action, to the service of mankind to the best of his ability. This approach to religion replied a vigorous ethical discipline on the part of Gandhiji. Truth, non-violence, brahmacharya, control of the palate, non-possession, non-stealing, fasting, prayer, fearlessness, bread labour, tolerance, equality of religions, swadeshi all these vows were in the nature of self-discipline.

Gandhiji laid down the following rules for the observance of a Satyagrah:

1. He will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.

3. In doing so, he will put up with assaults from the opponent. He will never retaliate. He will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the likes to any order given in anger.

4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a Satyagrahi, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest. He will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by the authorities.

5. If a satyagrahi has property in his possession as trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it, he might lose his life. He will however never retaliate.

6. Satyagrahi will never insult his opponent.

7. Satyagrahi will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it on officials English or Indian.

8. In the course of the struggle, if any one insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a satyagrahi will protect such official from the insult on attack even at the risk of his life.³

A noteworthy feature of Gandhian view of character and discipline, the concept of the steadfast man as propounded in Bhagvad, a book that exercised a tremendous influence upon Gandhiji. Subhas Bose freedom did not mean indiscipline or license. Freedom not imply the absence of law. It only meant the substitution our own law and our own discipline in place of an externally imposed law and discipline. Discipline imposed on us by ourselves necessary not only when we had attained freedom but was more necessary when we were struggling to achieve freedom. Therefore, discipline whether for the individual or for the society necessary as a basis of life.

Subhas was attracted towards military training from his student days. He had joined the University Volunteer Corps in 1917, and spent four-months at a summer camp. The military training gave him a sense of confidence and strengthen. He had also tried to join the University Officers' Training Camps at Cambridge but not successful. Subhas filled the role of GOC at the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928. The setting up of the Indian Legion in Germany and INA in the Far East were acts of supreme courage could not be accomplished without an iron will and discipline.

Indian Culture

India was to Gandhiji the dearest country in the world. The reasons his attitude was that Gandhiji had disconcerned the greatest goodness in it.

India had everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations would want. India according to Gandhiji was essentially a Karmabhumi (land of duty) in contradistinction to Bhogbhumi (land of enjoyment). India was pre-eminently the land of religion Gandhiji thought that India through non-violence, would be a messenger of peace to the world. He clung to India like a child to its mother. He felt that she gave him the spiritual nourishment he needed. She had the environment that responded to his highest aspirations. When that faith was gone, he should feel like an orphan without hope of even finding a guardian. If India attained freedom by violent means, she would cease to be a country of his pride. Gandhiji's ambition was much higher than independence of India. Through the deliverance of India, he sought to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of western exploitation in which England was the greatest partner. Gandhiji refruted the charge
that India was not one nation, India could not cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions lived in it. The introduction of the foreigners did not necessarily destroy the nation. They merged in it. A country was one nation only when such a condition obtained in it. That country must have a faculty of assimilation. India had ever been such a country.

Subhas hailed India as God's beloved land. He was born in this great land in every age in the form of the saviour for the enlightenment of the people, to rid the earth of sin and to establish righteousness and truth in every heart. He care into being in many countries in human form but not so many times in any other country. Subhas said; "In India you may have anything you want the hottest summer, the heaviest rains and again, the most heart warming Autumn and spring everything you want."

Subhas could feel heavenly bliss on the banks of Godavari. He could see with his mind's eye Rama, Lakshmana and Sita spending their time in great happiness there. He could see before his mind's eye the holy Ganges proceeding along her course. Near the end of a life devoted to the service of the motherland, Subhas Bose wrote in his last message to Indians on 15th August 1945, "... never for a moment falter in your faith in India's destiny. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long."

Many of Subhas early letters to his mother and to his friends echo the sentiments of Swami Vivekanand who described the miserable condition of India and emphasised the need for selfless service to the country. Subhas considered India as the Mother goddess.

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4 Bose, Sisir K. and Sujata Bose (ed.), Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit, p. 327.
The Aim

Gandhiji and Subhas Bose had one common aim the freedom of India. Gandhiji used the terms Swaraj and Ramrajya for his concept of freedom. Swaraj means self rule. It has a spiritual connotation, Ramrajya is a utopian state described in Ramayana. Gandhiji has given a picture of free India in these words: "I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country and in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. There can be no soon in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of the intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men."5

Subhas Bose's picture of Indian freedom is similar to that of Gandhiji. He says: "By freedom I mean all round freedom, i.e. freedom for individual as well as for society, freedom for men as well as for women, freedom for all individuals and for all classes. This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social inequities and destruction of communalism, religious intolerance. This is our ideal which may appear utopian to hard-headed men and women, but this ideal can alone appease the hunger of the soul."6

The Basic Differences

The basic differences between Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose

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5 Young India, 26-03-1931, p. 46.
6 Speech at the Lahore Session of the Punjabi Students Congress, 19 October, 1929, in Bose Sisir K. and Sujata Bose (eds.), Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit., p. 106.
centred around two issues: (1.) How to achieve freedom of India; and
(2.) How to reconstruct Indian society after achieving independence.
Gandhi was not anti-British. His faith in human nature was irrepres-
sible and even under the circumstances of a most adverse character he 
found Englishmen amenable to reason and persuasion.

Gandhi had cooperated with the British government for an unbro-
ken period of twenty nine years of public life from 1893 to 1922. In 
his statement in the great trial of 1922 (18.3.1922) Gandhi vividly 
explained why from a staunch loyalist, he became an uncompromising 
disaffectionist and non cooperation.

Gandhi wanted to achieve the freedom of India through non-
vinitic means. He had evolved the technique of satyagrah to organise 
mass consciousness. His method was to change the heart of his oppo-
ents through under going suffering and exerting a moral force.

Gandhi's programme of satyagraha stood on a high moral 
pedestal. In his thinking means and ends were convertible terms. The 
means could be likened to a seed, the end to a tree. There was just the 
same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there was 
between the seed and the tree. He felt that realisation of the goal was 
in fact proportion to that of means that was a proposition which admitted 
of no exception. Gandhi believed in the doctrine of the Bhagvad-Gita 
which enjoined that man could not command results. He could only 
strive.

Subhas Bose held in adverse view about the British Government.
He did not make any difference between the British Government and the 
British people. He thought that the subject people were justified to use 
vioent means to achieve freedom.
In his view history did not afford any example when a subject nation had achieved independence without armed struggle.

When Subhas Bose joined the national movements in 1921 under C.R. Das he worked as his close lieutenant till Das passed away in 1925. Since Subhas had accepted C.R. Das as his political guru he faithfully followed the footsteps of his mentor. The creed of the Swaraj Party was his creed and he believed in carrying out the non-cooperation with the government in the legislatures.

It was during his presidential address at the Maharashtra Provincial Conference, Poona, 3 May 1928 that Subhas Bose expressed his own ideas about the methodology to be followed for achieving independence. He was particularly critical of the bureaucracy which had enriched itself by erecting a network of organisations and institutions and by appointing a hierarchy of officials to run them. These institutions were the seats of power. Through them the bureaucracy had a grip on the very heart of the people. Subhas Bose advised to storm these citadels of power and setup parallel institutions. The Congress committees could act as parallel institutions. Subhas Bose did not like the idea that Congressmen should concentrate wholly on the constructive programme to the conclusion of everything else. Deshbandhu Das had pointed out in the manifesto of the Swaraj Party that it was absolutely necessary to keep up a spirit of resistance to bureaucracy. He firmly believed that without an atmosphere of opposition it was not possible to push on the constructive programme or to achieve success in any other direction.

Subhas envisioned that the movement would reach its climax in a sort of general strike coupled with a boycott of British goods. Along with the strike there would be some form of civil disobedience. There might be
non-payment of taxes. Where the crisis was reached the average Britisher at home would feel that to starve India politically meant economic starvation for him. The bureaucracy in India would find that it was impossible to carry on the administration in the face of a country-wide non-cooperation movement. The jails would full and there would be general demoralisation within the ranks of the bureaucracy, who would no longer be able to count upon the loyalty and devotion of their servants and employees. There would be a paralysis of the administration and possibly of foreign track and commerce. The bureaucracy would consider the situation as chaotic, but from the points of the people, the country would be organised, disciplined and determined. The bureaucracy would then be forced to yield to the demands of the people's representatives.

Subhas Bose did not like the idea of the Dominion Status of India. Gandhiji had moved a resolution to this effect at the Calcutta session of the Congress in December, 1928. Subhas moved an amendment to the resolution and pleaded for complete independence. Subhas Bose advanced his reasons for the resolution of independence, "....we develop a new mentality. After all, what is the fundamental cause of our political degradation? It is a question of mentality, and if you want to overcome the slave mentality you do so by encouraging our countrymen to stand for full and complete independence. I go further and say, assuring that we do not follow it by action, that merely by spreading the gospel honestly and planning the goal of independence before our countrymen we shall bring up a new generation."7

Subhas Bose also referred to the international situation and warned that another world war was imminent. There were many reasons for this

7 The Speech of Subhas Chandra Bose at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, December, 1928, Ibid., p. 94

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view. All the causes which contribute to war were present in different parts of the world. The settlement brought about by the Treaty of Versailles had not satisfied the national aspirations of all people. It had not satisfied the people of Italy, the Balkans, Russia, Austria-Hungary and so on. Then there was the Asiatic situation. There was the combination of capitalistic countries against Russia. Again, there was same for armaments. These factors tended to a world war. All those countries which were free were working for another war. If India was to be on the alert, she had to acquire a new mentality. That could only be done by proclaiming the ideal in a clear and unequivocal manner.\textsuperscript{8}

The amendment of Subhas Bose was lost by 973 votes to 1350. The large number of votes cast against in opposition to veteran leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Motilal Nehru showed the rising strength of the left wing in the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi moved the resolution for complete independence at the Lahore Congress in December, 1929, Subhas introduced an amendment to Gandhiji's resolution and called for the setting up of a parallel government in India. He said: “I take this opportunity of conveying my cordial and hearty thanks to Mahatma Gandhi for coming forward to move a resolution which declares Swaraj to mean complete independence. But I move this amendment because I believe that the programme laid down by resolution is not such as to carry us towards the goal of complete independence. My amendment is consistent with the goal, and in keeping with the spirit of the times. I have no doubt it will find favour with the younger generation in this country. Mine is a programme of all round boycott. Let us be for complete boycott or none

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
at all. I am an extremist and my principle is .... all or none.”

Gandhiji opposed the amendment of Subhas Bose. He said that he was not out of touch with the young. The country was not prepared for parallel government. We ought not to bite more than we could chew. Gandhiji asked to reject summarily the resolution of Subhas Bose. Bose's amendment was defeated. After following the adoption of the goal of complete independence by the Congress, Bose pressed Mahatma Gandhi to start a nationwide movement. There was the threat of two kinds of violence. Gandhiji himself conceded: "I find that the Governments organised violence goes on increasing day by day and the group wanting to meet violence with violence is becoming correspondingly stronger. Hence, if non-violence has the power to check violence and if I am truly non-violent, I must not be able to find a non-violent way to restrain the double violence which I have mentioned.”

Gandhiji launched the Civil Disobedience Movement to channelise the two kinds of violence. While the movement was in progress, he negotiated a pact with the Viceroy Lord Irwin. Subhas Bose and other left wing leaders were annoyed at this climb down by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji attended the Second Round Table Conference as the sole representative of the Congress Party. The conference was a failure. Subhas Bose was critical of Gandhiji's role at the Round Table Conference.

The failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement led to the emergence of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934. The Congress socialists were offered seats on the Congress Working Committee in 1936, 1937 and 1938. They did not accept the offer in 1938. Subhas

10 Ibid., p. 222.
became the Congress President in 1938. In January, 1939, Subhas Bose stood for his re-election as Congress President. The move was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose as the following reasons for Gandhiji's opposition to his re-election: "Since September, 1938, Gandhism has tended to become increasingly static and hide bound. At the Haripura Congress in February of the same year, the most important resolutions passed were on the question of Federation and the coming war. Though the resolution in Federation was one of uncompromising opposition, through that year the air was think with rumours that negotiations for a compromise between the Gandhiites and the British Government were going on behind the scenes. My attitude of uncompromising hostility towards Federation was the first item in the Gandhian charge-sheet against my Presidentship. The second item was that the Gandhiites regarded as my unduly friendly attitude towards the Leftists. The third item in the charge sheet was my sponsoring and subsequent inauguration of the National Planning Committee which in the view of the Gandhiites would give a filled to large scale production at the sacrifice of village industries, the revival of which was a very important item in the Gandhian constructive programme. The next change against me was that I advocated an early resumption of the national struggle for independence to be proceeded by an ultimatum to the British Government."  

Subhas did not favour the acceptance of ministerial office by the Congress under the Government of India Act of 1935. Under the influence of this factor a large number of congressmen turned away from the thorny path of revolution to the noisy path of constitutionalism. Another weakness of the Gandhi movement, according to Subhas Bose was the use of authoritarianism within the Congress. Since the acceptance

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of ministerial office, the Gandhiites, had a taste of power and they were anxious to monopolise it for themselves in future. The aim of orthodox Gandhians was to beat down all the opposition within the Congress so that they could comfortably rule the roost for all time to come. Subhas Bose thought that the efforts of the Gandhiites to consolidate themselves was right consolidation within the Congress. Subhas stood for left consolidation within the Congress. It could be achieved in either of the following ways:

1. By forming one party and rallying all the leftist elements therein. This however was not possible because several parties claiming to the leftists, already instead and they were not prepared to liquidate themselves in favour of one Party.

2. By organising a new Block which all leftists and existing leftist parties could join. They could retain the separate identity of their own. This was the first aim and endeavour of the Forward Block launched by Subhas Bose. But the Block could not make much headway.  

Attitude Towards Revolutionary Activities

An important current of the Indian national movement was the revolutionary activities carried out by Indian patriots in India and abroad. There were two broad divisions among the revolutionaries. One group believed in the armed conflict with the British, the other group held that violent actions such as murdering officials would paralyse the administration.

The earliest storm centre of revolutionary activity was Maharashtra

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\(^{12}\) Ibid.
where terrorism first manifested itself in the double murder of Rand and Ayerst in 1899. The movement was led by Shyamji Krishna Verma, V.D. Savarkar, his brother Ganesh Savarkar and the two Chapekar brothers. These leaders preached the gospel of killing the English and dying after killing only. The Abhinav Bharat Society was the revolutionary party which coordinated the revolutionary activities.13

The partition of Bengal saw an outbreak of revolutionary activities in that promise also. The partition inflamed the emotional temperament of the young Bengalis and drove them to the path of violence. The leaders of the movement were Barindra Ghosh and Bhupendranath Dutt. They carried on vigorous revolutionary propaganda calling upon the youth of Bengal to take up arms against the foreign rule. The Anusilan Samiti was the first revolutionary organisation in Bengal. The revolutionary fervour in Bengal was very strong. It was responsible for a large number of political murders and dacoities. By 1907, revolutionary activities started in Punjab as well. Ajit Singh, Bhai Parmanand, his brother Balmukund and Hardayal were responsible for revolutionary activities in Punjab. The attempt on the life of Lord Hardinge in 1912, was the work of these groups.

Indian revolutionaries were also active outside India. In England, Shyamji Krishna Verma started the Indian Home Rule Society and ran a monthly journal called the Indian Sociologist. He organised a small group of revolutionaries with the India House as the centre later on he was joined by V.D. Savarkar who became the guiding spirit of the Indian revolutionaries in U.K. These youngmen tried to send arms to the revolutionaries working in India. On 1st July 1909, Madan Lal Dhingra, a

13 Sharma, Jai Narain, Political Thought of Veer Savarkar (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company), 2008, p. 15
member of this group shot Sir William Wylie at the India House. During the same period an active group of Indian revolutionaries operated in continental Europe under the leadership of Shyamji Krishna Verma.\(^\text{14}\) They also had the support of some European sympathisers like Madam Cama of Paris. In America Har Dayal built up a revolutionary organisation and started newspaper called Ghadar in San Francisco in 1913. The Ghadar movement was also active in the Punjab where it was led by Baba Gurjit Singh and other revolutionaries who had returned from America.

The emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the leader of the Indian nationalist movement led to the gradual decline of revolutionary activities. The revolutionary spirit continued to burst forth from time to time. The Hindustan Socialist Republican Party tried to meet the terrorism of the rulers with an even greater terrorism. Patriots like Bhagat Singh, Jatindranath Das, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Rajguru, Sukhdev, Ramprasad Bismil, Avadh Behari, Balmukund, in ArjunLal Sethi, Sufi Amba Prasad, Rash Behari Bose, Sachindra Sanyal, staked their lives for the cause of Indian freedom. Subhas Bose who moved to Calcutta in 1913 was influenced by the revolutionary activities Aurobindo as revolutionary theoretician advised young men to practice with lathis and with pistols when they would get them. Das, the political mentor of Subhas Bose understood the idealism of the revolutionaries.

The revolutionary movement was contained by the government by 1916. The movement did exist but it was not a force. The Rowlatt Act gave the Government of India special powers to combat revolutionary movement. Gandhiji launched his Satyagraha campaign against the Rowlatt Act.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., p. 18.
Subhas Bose had close connections with the revolutionary movement. He had alliance with the members of the Jugantar Party the Bengal volunteers. Some of the important members of organisations were Jyotish Joarder, Hem Chandra Ghosh, Satya Rajan Bakshi and Suraj Singh and Nishi Kant Gangopadhyaya.

Jatin Das was a close associate of Subhas Bose. He was taken to prison in Lahore. He went on hunger strike and resisted forced feeding. He died on September 13, 1929. Gandhiji felt that hunger strike should not have been taken up.

When Subhas published his book The Indian Struggle 1920-1934, it was proscribed by the Government of India on the ground that it intended generally to encourage methods of terrorism and direct action.

Subhas decided to seek foreign assistance for Indian freedom movement, he was guided by the precedents. During the First World War, Indian revolutionaries had sought help from Germany. After the Great War Soviet Union was willing to back the development of a communist movement in India.

When Gandhiji carried on negotiations with Lord Irwin for a compromise, Subhas Bose had urged Gandhiji to ask the Viceroy to commute the sentence of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev. About Bhagat Singh Gandhiji said that he was undoubtedly a brave man but he was not in his right mind. The three revolutionaries were executed. The people generally condemned the government for not showing more humanity. Bhagat Singh became a hero and many persons blamed Gandhiji for not making more effective representation to the Government. Gandhiji could threaten the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on this issue. Subhas paid a handsome tribute to Bhagat Singh: "Bhagat Singh
was a symbol of the spirit of revolt which has taken possession of the
country from one end to the other. That spirit is unconquerable, and the
flame which that spirit has lit up will not die. India may have to lose
many more sons before she can hope to be free.... These recent executions
are to me sure indications that there has been no change of heart on the
side of the Government and the time for an honourable settlement is
not yet arrived ripe”.15

At the Karachi Congress, Nehru proposed a resolution which
praised the bravery of Bhagat Singh and his comrades while dissociating
Congress from acts of violence. Some tried to have the condemnation of
violence removed but did not succeed due to the opposition of Gandhiji.
Subhas Bose in his secret memorandum to the German Government,
dated 9th April, 1941 had submitted a plan for cooperation between the
Axis Powers and India. In the plan he had outlined the work to be done in
Europe, in Afghanistan, in the tribal territory and in India.16 He had also
discussed the question of finances and military aid for smashing British
power in India. Subhas Bose had appended an explanatory note to the
memorandum which dealt with the following points:

2. Future of the British Empire.
3. The importance of India in the British Empire.
4. Some aspects of the British diplomacy in the present war.
5. The attitude of the Indian people in the present war as compared

15 Speech of Subhas Chandra Bose at the All India Naujawan Bharat Sabha
in Karachi on 5 April, 1931, in Bose, Sisir K. and Sugata Bose (eds.),
Essential Writings of Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit., pp. 115-16.
16 Gupta, V. P., and Mohini Gupta, The Quest for Freedom A Study of
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with their attitude in the world war of 1914-18.

6. The military position in India today.

7. The importance for India of Japanese foreign policy. Subhas Bose sent a supplementary memorandum to the German government on 3.5.1941. In the memorandum he advised that in order to struck at British power in India it was necessary to have some channel of communication between Germany on the one side and Afghanistan and India in the other.  

On May 20, 1941, Subhas Bose sent a secret message from Berlin telegraphically to Rahmat Khan through the Italian Legation in Kabul. The message gave an outline for working up a revolution in India. When after escaping from his Calcutta residence Subhas Bose reached Berlin, he was well received by Ribbentrop, the right hand man of Hitler. He started broadcasting anti-British propaganda from Berlin and raised an Indian Legion from Indian prisoners of war in Germany. The Axis Powers did not agree to make a declaration of Indian independence.

Bose reached Japan during early June, 1943. Japan agreed to help India in her war of independence. Subhas took over the command of the Indian independence movement in July, 1943. He became the supreme commander of the INA and the President of the Provisional Government of Free India. Subhas Bose, by the sheer magnetism of his personality, his brilliant organising capacity and the force of his eloquence, made the ill equipped INA a splendid fighting machine. His slogan "Dilli Chalo" raised the spirits of soldiers who fought under extremely adverse circumstances.

17 Ibid., pp. 281-282.
The INA fought some brilliant engagements in Burma. For a short time it penetrated the Indian soil. Netaji’s Provisional Government functioned for a while in the small territory of Manipur comprising about 15,000 sq. miles. But the INA was ultimately overwhelmed by the Allied superiority in men and materials and the unhelpful attitude of the retreating Japanese.

The Vision of Free India

Every leader of a subject nation has a vision for the future. It is this vision which acts as a light and inspires his followers. The vision has to centre round the welfare of his countrymen. The leader is required to have a clear picture about the content of this vision and also the steps though which it can be realized. It is against this backdrop that all the eminent leaders of the Indian freedom movement had a vision for free India. Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were no exceptions. Both of them nourished a vision of free India where there would be no exploitation and the basic necessities of life would be satisfied without any discrimination. This implied a transformation of society.

It was misfortune of India that Netaji died couple of years before his country achieved independence. Gandhiji followed him within six months of India attaining freedom. None of them could find time or opportunity to put their vision into reality. However, both of them have left a rich legacy of their ideas and ideals for reshaping India. These ideas and ideals had ground during the freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi had an integrated philosophy of life. His social, economic and political ideas were an offshoot of this philosophy. The basic features of Gandhian thought for the reorganisation of Indian society were:

1. Strong moral foundations.
3. Maximum decentralization of authority in all spheres leading to the encouragement of individual initiative.
4. Resurgence of villages and developing them as vibrant units of social and political life.
5. Growth of cottage industries.
6. Emphasis on freed labour, basic education and other items of constructive programme.
7. Simplicity.\(^{19}\)

Gandhiji in his letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dated October 5, 1945 told him that if India was to achieve real freedom, then sooner or later we would have to go and live in villages in huts not in palaces. Gandhiji had also outlined his picture of an ideal village. Millions of people could never live in the cities and palaces in comfort and peace. Nor could they do so by killing one another, i.e. by resorting to untruth and violence. Gandhiji had not the slightest doubt that without truth and non-violence mankind would be doomed. We could have the vision of that truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of the villages. That simplicity resided in the spinning wheel. It did not frighten Gandhiji that the world was going in the opposite direction. Gandhiji cited the example of the moth. When it approached its doom, it whirled round faster and faster till it was burnt up. It was possible that India would not be able to escape this moth-like circling. It was his duty to try, till his last breath, to save India, and through it, the worked from such a fate. The sum and substance of what Gandhiji wanted to say was that the individual person should have control over things that were necessary for the sustenance of life. If he could not

have such control, the individual could not survive. Ultimately, the world was made up only of individuals. If there were no drops, there would be no ocean. While Gandhiji appreciated modern thought, he found that an ancient thing, considered in light of modern thoughts looked so sweet. Gandhiji was not talking about the villages of today. His ideal village existed only in his imagination. After all, every human being lived in the world his own imagination. In the village of Gandhiji's dream, the villager would not be dull. He would be all awareness. He would live like an animal in filth and darkness. Men and women would live in freedom, prepared to face the whole world. There would be no plague, no cholera and no smallpox. No one would be allowed to be ideal on to wallow in luxury. Everyone would have to do body labour. Granting all this Gandhiji still envisaged number of things that would have to be organised on a large scale. Perhaps, there would be even the railways and also post telegraph offices. Gandhiji was not concerned about other things. If he could be sure of the essential thing, other things could follow in due course. 

Gandhiji wrote his last will and testament on 29 January, 1948, one day before his assassination. The document was published in the Harijan dated 15.2.1948. It is a document of historical importance and portrays the Gandhian vision of free India. Had the ideas embodied in the document been implemented, India would have been a different country. Gandhiji thought that the Indian national tress had outlived its use. India had still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns. The struggle for the ascendency was bound to take place

21 Harijan, 15-2-1948
in India's progress towards its democratic goal. It must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties and communal bodies. For these similar other reasons Gandhiji recommended to dissolve the existing Congress organisation. He wanted the setting up of a Lok Sevak Sangh.\textsuperscript{22}

Gandhiji suggested the constitution of the Lok Sevak Sangh on the following broad lines.

Every panchayat of five adult men or women being villagers on village minded shall form a unit. Two such contiguous panchayats shall form a working party under a leader elected from among themselves when there are one hundred such panchayats, the first grade leaders shall elect from among themselves a second grade leader and so on, the first grade leaders meanwhile working under the second grade leaders. Parallel groups of two hundred panchayats shall continue to be formed till they cover the whole of India, each succeeding group of panchayats electing a second grade leader after the manner of the first. All second grade leaders shall serve for the whole of India and severally for this respective areas. The second grade leaders may elect, whenever they deem necessary, from among themselves a chief who will during his tenure, regulate the command of all groups.\textsuperscript{23}

Gandhiji had enumerated the duties of the workers as follows:

1. Each worker shall be a habitual wearer of Khadi made from self spun yarn. He must be a teetotaller. If a Hindu, he must have abjured untouchability in any shape on from in his own person or in his own family. He must be a believer in the ideal of inter

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 15-2-1948, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
communal unity, equal respect and regard for all religious and
equality of opportunity and status for all irrespective of race,
creed or sex.
2. He shall keep a personal contact with every villager within his
jurisdiction.
3. He shall enroll and train workers from amongst the villagers
and keep a register of all these.
4. He shall keep a second of his work from day to day.
5. He shall organise the villagers so as to make them self-supporting
and self contained through their agriculture and handicrafts.
6. He shall educate the village folk in sanitation and hygiene and take
all measures for prevention of ill health and disease among them.
7. He shall organise the education of the village folk from birth to
death along the lines of Nai Talim.
8. He shall see that those whose names are missing on the statutory
voters roll are duly entered therein.
9. He shall encourage those who have not yet acquired the legal
qualification, to acquire it, for getting the right of franchise.
10. For the above purpose and others to be added from time to time,
he shall train and fit himself in accordance with the rules laid down
by the Sangh for the due performance of duty.  

Gandhiji wanted the Lok Sevak Sangh to affiliate the following
bodies.

1. A.I.S.A.
2. A.I.V.I.A.
3. Hindustani Talimi Sangh
4. Harijan Sevak Sangh

24 Ibid.
5. Goseva Sangh.\(^{25}\)

Gandhiji recommended that the Sangh should raise finances for the fulfilment of its mission from among villagers and others, special stress being laid on collection of poor man's pie.\(^{26}\)

Gandhiji has drawn a picture of free India, an India of his dreams in his writings. In an eloquent passage he says: "I shall strive for a constitution which will release India from all thralldom and patronage and give her, if need be, the right to sin.

"I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose working they have an effective voice, an India in which there will be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in harmony. There can be no room in such India for the course of untouchability on intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women shall enjoy the same rights as men since we shall be at peace with the rest of the world, neither exploiting nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable. All interests not in conflict with the interest of the dumb millions will be scrupulously rejected, whether foreign or indigenous. I hate the distinction between foreign and indigenous. This is the India of my dreams."\(^{27}\)

Subhas Bose was a unique synthesis of action and contemplation. While he was engaged in a bitter struggle with the British authorities to achieve freedom, he always dreamt of free India and its problems.

He used to say: "Young India has a gigantic task to fulfill. There

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\(^{25}\) Ibid.

\(^{26}\) Kapoor, A.N. and V.P. Gupta, Facets of Gandhian Life and Thought, op. cit., pp. 115-17.

\(^{27}\) Young India, 26-3-1931, p. 46.
are tremendous difficulties to overcome, no doubt, but there is also the joy and glory of struggle and ultimate victory."\(^{28}\)

Subhas Bose was in favour of planned development. He was impressed with the planning experiment of Soviet Russia and was keen to try it in India. He said:

"To solve the economic problem agricultural improvement will not be enough. A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state ownership and state control will be indispensable. A new industrial system will have to be built up in place of the old one which has collapsed as the result of mass production abroad and alien rule at home. The Planning Commission will have to be carefully consider and decide which of the home industries could be revived despite the competition of modern factories and in which sphere large scale production should be encouraged. However, much we may dislike modern industrialism and condemn the evils which follow in its train, we can not go back to the pre-Industrial era even if we desire to do so. It is well, therefore, that we should reconcile ourselves to industrialization and devise means to minimise its evils and at the same time explore the possibilities of serving cottage industries, where there is a possibility of their surviving the inevitable competition of factories. In a country like India, there will be plenty of room for cottage industries, especially in the case of industries including hand spinning and hand weaving allied to agriculture."\(^{29}\)

Subhas Bose was keen to develop a new generation of leaders who could take upon themselves the task of controlling and guiding the new

\(^{28}\) Bose, Subhas Chandra Bose, The Indian Struggle 1920-1942, op. cit., p. 456.

\(^{29}\) Bose, Sisir K. and Sugata Bose (eds.), The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit., pp. 207-08.
state. He was happy at the encouraging signs of the growth of a genuine students movement all over India. This movement was a phase of the wider youth movement. The movement was characterised by a feeling of restlessness, of impatience with the present order of things and by an intense desire to usher in a new and a better order. A sense of responsibility and a spirit of self-reliance pervaded this movement.

"Youth of the present day no longer feel content by handing over all responsibility to their elders. They rather feel that the country and the country's future more to them than to the older generation and it is therefore their bounden duty to accept the fullest responsibility for the future of their country and to equip themselves for the proper discharge of that responsibility. The students movement being a phase of the larger youth movement, is inspired by the same outlook, psychology and purpose as the letter."

Today our population is 1200 million as against 361 million in 1951. The population we have added over these years is equivalent to half that of China. We constitute 16 percent of world population. Our size and demographic structure have very vital implications for security, nutrition, health, education, employment, dependency, riots, migration, ultimate human development and quality of life, economic growth and distributive justice. We have been making sustained efforts at addressing our nation problems. Under the years, policy statements have been conducted studies from time to time and programmes evolved implemented. As a consequence we have made some progress.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had anticipated the seriousness of

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30 Ibid., p. 103.
31 Lok Sabha Secretariat, Fifty Years of Indian Parliamentary Democracy, New Delhi 1997, p. 93.
population problem and had suggested a comprehensive policy in this regard: "With regard to the long period programme for a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population. I do not desire to go into the theoretical question as to whether India is over populated or not. I simply want to point out that where poverty, starvation and disease are stalking the land, we cannot afford to have our population mounting up by thirty million during a single decade. If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. It will therefore be desirable to restrict our population until we are able to feed, clothes and education to those who already exist. It is not necessary at this stage to prescribe the methods that should be adopted to prevent a further increase in population, but I would urge that public attention be drawn to this question."  

Subhas Bose considered it premature to give a detailed plan of reconstruction. He was prepared to consider some of the principles according to which social reconstruction in free India could take. His opinion was:

"...Chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines. The very first thing which our future national government will have to do would be to set up a commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan of reconstruction. Regarding reconstruction, our principal problem will be how to eradicate poverty from our country that it require radical reform of our land system, including the abolition of landlordism. Agricultural indebtedness will have to be liquidated and provision made for cheap credit or the rural

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32 Bose, Sisir K. and Sugata Bose (eds.), Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit., p. 207.

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An extension of the cooperative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers. Agriculture will have to be put on a scientific basis with a view to increasing the yield from the land."

Although, Subhas Bose was a member of the Indian National Congress, he was not very happy with its working. He did not consider it sufficiently radical and wanted to organise a political party of determined men and women which could create an independent state in India and also execute the entire programme of socio-economic reconstruction. He described the aims of the new political party in these words: "It is thus evident that we want a party of determined men and women who have consecrated their life to the great cause, who have had the necessary intellectual training and who have formed a clear conception of the work they have to do before the conquest of power and thereafter. It will be the task of this party to create a new, independent and sovereign state in India. It will be the task of this party to execute the entire programme of post war socio-economic reconstruction: ... It will be the task of this party to lead India to her honoured place among the free nations of the world."

Subhas Bose was proud of India and believed in its destiny. He wanted his countrymen to remain true to India and not waver in their faith in India's glory. He envisioned India to be the torch bearer of cultural revolution throughout the world.

"...In the seventeenth century, England made a remarkable contribution to world civilization through her ideas of constitutional and

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33 Pasricha, Ashu, The Political Thought of Subhas Chandra Bose (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company), 2008, p. 34
democratic government. Similarly in the eighteenth century, France made the most wonderful contribution to the culture of the world through the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. During the nineteenth century, Germany made the most remarkable gift through her Marxian philosophy. During the twentieth century, Russia has enriched the culture and civilization of the world through her achievement in proletarian revolutionary, proletarian government and proletarian culture. The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilization of the world, India will be called upon to make."35

Subhas was never tired of reminding the youth of their responsibilities. He often said that the youth of today would be the leaders of tomorrow. The idea which was not supported by the youths was sure to die a natural death. The responsibility for making a new social order devolved, in the last analysis, on the youth of the country. "Friends, I would implore you to assist in the awakening of youth and in the organization of the youth movement. Self-consciousness youth will not only act, but will also dream, will not only destroy, but will also build. It will succeed where even you may fail, it will create for you a new India and a free India out of the failures, trials and experience of the past. And, believe me, if we are to rid India once for all of the cancer of communalism and fanaticism, we have to begin our work among our youth."36

Gender concerns have gained prominence in the Human Development Agenda. The roles played by women in society and their contribution as a human resource are slowly becoming visible. Efforts to

35 Ibid.
36 Bose, Sisir K. and Sugata Bose (eds.), Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op. cit., p. 87.
remove discrimination against females and establish equality has become part of a global movement.

India's contribution to the global debate on women issues has been rich, diverse and in many ways unique. The principles of gender equality and gender equity have been basic to Indian thinking. The 19th and early 20th centuries, saw a succession of women's movements, first around social issues and later around the freedom struggle itself.37

One of the significant contributions of Subhas Bose to our national awakening was that he assigned important position to the role of women in the social and political development of the country. He felt sorry that the women's movement had been neglected in India. He said: "It is impossible for one half of the nation to win liberty without the active sympathy and support of the other half. In all countries and even in the Labour Party in England women's organisations have rendered invaluable service. There are various non-political organisations among women in different parts of the country, but I venture to think that there is room for a countrywide political organisation among them. It should be the principal object of this organisation, which will be run by women alone, to carry on political propaganda among their sex and to help the work of the India National Congress."38

Throughout his public career Subhas Bose had always felt that though India was otherwise ripe for independence in every way she was lacking in an army of liberation. Indian National Army was the army of liberation. It had a two fold task to perform. It had to win liberty. Then, when India was free, it was required to organise the

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37 Lok Sabha Secretariat, Ibid., p. 148.
38 Bose, Sisir K. and Sugata Bose (eds.), The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, op cit., p. 87.
permanent army of free India whose task would be to preserve liberty for all time. He wanted to build up our national defence on such an unshakable foundation that never again in our History, we should lose our freedom. Subhas Bose had described his vision of a national army as: "Building up a national army will be a more difficult task. India has of course, a large number of trained and experienced soldiers and their member has been augmented as a result of the present war. But till quite recently, the Indian army was officered largely by Britishers, and in the higher ranks, the officers were exclusively Britishers. Owing to war conditions, the British have now been forced to appoint a large number of Indian officers and the higher ranks have also been opened to a few Indians. Modern weapons, like tanks, aeroplanes, heavy artillery, etc. which were formerly reserved for Britishers, also have been handed over to Indians. Nevertheless, the dearth of Indian Officers of high rank remains and will present some difficulty in building up a national army. In this connection, India's chief problem will be to train up a large number of officers of all ranks within a short period say ten years and thereby complete the formation of national army. Alongwith the Army, a navy and air force will also have to be built up and this work will have to be speeded up as much as possible. If India can enjoy peace for sometime and if the assistance of some friendly powers be forthcoming, then the problem of organising national defence can be satisfactorily solved."  

Subhas Bose did not want to dogmatise the exact form of the Indian state after achieving independence. India had experience of several empires in the past. This experience could furnish the background on which to build a new state. Indians were also familiar with modern political constitutions. The requirements of Indian situation were also to

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39 Ibid., p. 289.
be kept in mind. However, there were certain things which were quite clear.

"There will be a strong Central government without such a government order and public security can not be safeguarded. Behind this, government will stand a well organised, disciplined all-India party, which will be the chief instrument for maintaining national unity."40

Subhas Bose stood for a secular India. There was to be no state in free India. All religious minorities were to enjoy equal rights. "The state will guarantee complete religious and cultural freedom for individuals and groups and there will be no state religion. In the matter of political and economic rights, there will be perfect equality among the whole population. When every individual has employment, food and education and has freedom in religious and cultural matters, there will be no more any minorities problem in India."41

India is a country of diversities regional, sectarian, social. As the problem of national unity has been a gigantic problem in India. Subhas wanted the state to do everything possible to unify the whole nation and felt that all methods of propaganda: Press, radio, cinema, theatre, etc. could be utilized for this purpose. His panacea for forging the bond of national unity was: "All national and international elements will have to be firmly suppressed along with such secret British agents as may still exist in the country. An adequate police force will have to be organised for this purpose and the law will have to be amended, so that offences against national unity may be punished heavily. Hindustani, which already understood in most parts of the country, will be adopted as the

40 Ibid., pp. 290-91.
41 Ibid., pp. 291-92.
common language for India. Special emphasis will have to be laid on the proper education of boys and girls and of students in the schools and in the universities, so that they may imbibe the spirit of national unity at an early date."

Subhas Bose wanted the new state of India to concentrate its attention on the solution of the social problems. The most anti-social problem was that of poverty and employment. There were two causes for this problem, one is in systematic destruction in industries by the British and other is lack of scientific agriculture. Subhas Bose stated: "In pre-British days, India produced all her requirements in food and industry and she imported her surplus industrial products to Europe e.g. textile goods. The advent of the industrial revolution and political domination by Britain destroyed the old industrial structure of India and she was not allowed to build up a new one. Britain purposely kept India in the position of a supplier of raw materials for British industries. The result was that millions of Indians who formerly lived on Industry, were thrown out of employment. Foreign rule has impoverished the peasantry and has prevented the modern scientific agriculture. The result of this has been that the once rich soil of India has a very poor yield and can no longer feed the present population. About seventy percent of the peasantry have no work for about six months in the year, India will therefore, need industrialization and scientific agriculture through state aid, if she has to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment."\textsuperscript{42}

Bose and Gandhi were men with iron grit and determination. Each respected the other for his patriotism, yet each felt that the other was pursuing the wrong path to achieve freedom. They assailed each other's stand with all the power and logic they could command. It is difficult to

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p. 291.
decide how much Netaji's militant nationalism influenced British decision to quit. But even those who give maximum marks to Gandhi as the Father of the Nation admit that Netaji's role in the national struggle cannot be minimised. With the passage of time, the passions and emotions of the turbulent times which made an impartial assessment difficult have subsided. There is a deeper understanding of the roles of Gandhi and Bose. The forces set in motion by these two patriots, assailing British power from two different sides, made British continuance in India impossible. An unbiased student of Indian nationalism may conclude, justifiably, that if Gandhi's role in the struggle was pre-eminent, Bose's own contribution was nevertheless historic.

Sarojini Naidu has paid a well-deserved tribute to Bose when she said, "The name of Subhas Chandra Bose is an integral part of the History of India's fight for freedom. The last years of his life — if indeed, they are the last years of his life — are charged with vivid drama and present to us a stirring and moving image of a great patriot. With his implacable passion for liberty whose intrepid courage made remarkable gift of initiative, imagination, organization and leadership found their fullest expression in a foreign land which he had made the scene of his memorable campaign for the independence of India.

"His finest achievement to my mind was the deep sense of national unity he was able to kindle in his army and the profound and almost fanatical love and loyalty he was able to inspire."  

Just before his death Bose was at the pinnacle of his glory. Just than a group of soldiers visited Gandhi and told him. "We are soldiers,

but we are soldiers of Indian freedom." Gandhi replied: "I am glad to hear that. So far you have been instrumental in the suppression of Indian freedom. Have you heard of Jallianwala Bagh?" "Oh yes, but those days are gone. We were, in those days, like the proverbial frog in the well. We have now seen the world, our eyes are opened." "We admit we are mercenaries, as you once put it," interpolated another. "But our hearts are no longer so."44

"I am glad to hear that," said Gandhi, "But let me tell you that my use of that word was not meant to cast any reflection upon you. It was only descriptive of a soldiery that serves a foreign government for a living." "There was a time," remarked one of them, "when we are not allowed to read any civil newspaper. And now we go and tell our officers that we are going to see our greatest leader, and nobody stops us." "I know," replied Gandhi, "there is a new ferment and a new awakening among all the ranks today. Not a little of this credit for this change is due to Netaji Bose. I disapprove of his method, but he has rendered a singal service to India by giving the Indian soldiers a new vision and a new ideal."45

Before taking leave of Gandhi the soldiers asked "May we shout slogans?" "Well, you may," replied Gandhi. Then they all shouted 'Jai Hind, Netaji-ki Jai!' The soldiers did not shout 'Gandhi-ki Jai!' but 'Netaji-ki Jai!' in the presence of the Mahatma.46

45 Ibid.
Indian and foreign observers agree that Bose brought nearer the end of British rule in India by waging the war against the British from abroad. Even the trial of I.N.A. prisoners had roused the nation no less than the Quit India Movement of 1942. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has rightly observed: "Future generations would read the amazing story of his life with pride and reverence, and salute him as one of the great heroes who heralded India's dawn."\(^{47}\)

It may be asked what is Bose's place in Indian History? There cannot be two opinion, says N.G. Jog, that his place "is along with that of Gandhi, as co-architect of our freedom. He might have failed in his immediate mission, but even that failure brought India's independence nearer. Indeed, it was an essential part of the Bose legend. The volcanic forces released by the I.N.A. trial and the legend of Netaji in the latter part of 1945, closely followed by the R.I.N. mutiny in 1946, were equally responsible, if not more, than the "Quit India" movement of 1942, for the realisation by the British rulers that their days in India were numbered."\(^{48}\)

Neelam Sanjiva Reddy voiced the same sentiments when he said in a speech at Calcutta on December 12, 1981: "Bose's contribution to the freedom of India was different from the approach of Mahatma Gandhi but each of them had their way." He added: "Mahatma Gandhi was a revolutionary but there was a little difference of opinion with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose about the programme. However, later on they agreed on their common objective of achieving independence."\(^{49}\)

\(^{47}\) Ahluwalia, B. K. & Shashi Ahluwalia, Netaji and Gandhi, op. cit., pp. 221-222.


\(^{49}\) Ahluwalia, B. K. & Shashi Ahluwalia, Netaji and Gandhi, op. cit., p. 222.
Bose and Gandhi were beyond doubt two of the most charismatic figures of the national struggle for freedom. Each in his own way, contributed to the cause. They held nothing back. They suffered privations, sufferings, imprisonments with pride. They knew that out of their self-abnegation would come the strength and the wherewithal for India to break the shackles. To them, the nation was supreme. Love for India sustained them, nourished them to the last, made them im-moral. The patriotism which coursed through them gave lustre, a radiance to their images. They became, through different in their styles and attitudes, the darlings of the masses.

In the final years, Bose steered a course which was completely at variance with that of Gandhi. Bose found nothing wrong in aligning with Japan, in fighting British power, in hoping to exploit the unsettled conditions caused by the Second World War to wrest freedom for the country. He formed the Indian National Army, led the force with dignity and honour, created a stir in the minds of the people by his militant stand. During the short but saniation period when Bose loomed as the warrior, leading a mighty force to liberate India, his personality overshadowed even Gandhi. A large section of people looked beyond the Naga hills and the Manipur border for the liberation forces led by Netaji to throw Britain out of India. The tide of fortune turned rather swiftly, aborting the grand designs of Bose. By his efforts he stimulated Indian minds as few movements ever had. The example set by Bose acted like a tonic.

Gandhi and Bose never lost their personal regard for each other. They still retained mutual respect born out of the conviction that whatever they had a common aim - happened to be India's freedom. The differing strands of their personalities found sublimation in surviving the nation. That was the unifying force which lent them the mantle of greatness. That
was the force which breathed life into mortal clay and helped them leave their imprints on the sands of time. When future generations study the History of India's freedom struggle, they will respond equally favourably to the style of functioning of Gandhi and Bose, admit that the two, despite their conflicts and contradictions, shared the same dreams and hopes, that the two, despite all outward differences, were two sides of the same coin i.e. one side displaying the high moral values and ethics of Bharatavarsha and the other the militant, valiant fearless facet of hoary India. Gandhi and Bose together gave meaning to our nationalism. Though poles apart in temperament and attitudes, they basked under the light of patriotism, did their best for the Nation. Gandhi by himself, might have led India to freedom. Bose, fighting alone, might have, but for the ill fated flight, have broken the shackles of India. But together they gave colour and drama to the national struggle, made it an unforgettable saga.
ANNEXURE

'Father of Our Nation'

(Address to Mahatma Gandhi over the Rangoon Radio on 6 July 1944. The address is couched in very respectful language to Mahatma Gandhi. Netaji briefs Mahatma Gandhi why he collaborated with the Axis Powers. He seeks his blessings in the final war of independence.)

Mahatmaji,

Now that your health has somewhat improved, and you are able to attend to public business to some extent, I am taking the liberty of addressing a few words to you with a view to acquainting you with the plans and the activities of patriotic Indians outside India.

Before I do so I would like to inform you of the feelings of deep anxiety which Indians throughout the world had for several days after your sudden release from custody on grounds of ill-health. After the sad demise of Shrimati Kasturbaiji in British custody it was but natural for your countrymen to be alarmed over the state of your health. It has, however, pleased Providence to restore you to comparative health, so that three hundred and eighty-eight millions of your countrymen may still have the benefit of your guidance and advice.

I should like to say something about the attitude of countrymen outside India towards yourself. What I shall say connection is the bare truth and nothing but the truth.

There are Indians outside India, as also at home, who are convinced that Indian Independence will be won only through the historic method of struggle. These men and women honestly feel that the British
Government will never surrender to persuasion or moral pressure or non-violent resistance. Nevertheless, for Indians outside India, differences in method are like domestic differences.

Ever since you sponsored the Independence Resolution Lahore Congress in December 1929, all members of the Indian National Congress have had one common goal before them. For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. In all their propaganda before the world, they give you that position and the respect due to that position. For the world-public, we Indian nationalists are all one—having but one goal, one desire and one endeavour in life.

In all the countries free from British influence that I have visited since I left India in 1941, you are held in the highest esteem, as no other Indian political leader has been, during the last century.

Each nation has its own internal politics and its own attitude towards political problems. But that cannot affect a nation's appreciation of a man who has served his people so well and has bravely fought a first-class modern power all his life. In fact, your worth and your achievements are appreciated a thousand times more in those countries that are opposed to the British Empire than in those countries that pretend to be the friends of Freedom and Democracy. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India and by foreign friends of India's freedom, was increased a hundredfold when you bravely sponsored the 'Quit India' Resolution in August 1942.

From my experience of the British Government while I was inside India—from the secret information that I have gathered about Britain's policy while outside India—and from what I have seen regarding Britain's aims and intentions throughout the world, I am honestly
convinced that the British Government will never recognise India's demand for Independence. Britain's one effort today is to exploit India to the fullest degree, in her endeavour to win this war. During the course of this war, Britain has lost one part of her territory to her enemies and another part to her friends. Even if the Allies could somehow win the war, it will be United States of America, and not Britain that will be top dog in future and it will mean that Britain will become a protege of the U.S.A.

In such a situation the British will try to make good their present losses by exploiting India more ruthlessly than ever before. In order to do that, plans have been already hatched in London for crushing the nationalist movement in India once for all. It is because I know of these plans from secret but reliable sources that I feel it my duty to bring it to your notice.

It would be a fatal mistake on our part so make a distinction between the British Government and the British people. No doubt there is a small group of idealists in Britain as in the U.S.A. who would like to see India free.

These idealists who are treated by their own people as cranks form a microscopic minority. So far as India is concerned, for all practical purposes the British Government and the British people mean one ant the same thing.

Regarding the war aims of the U.S.A. I may say that the ruling clique at Washington is now dreaming of world domination. This ruling clique and its intellectual exponents talk openly of the 'American Century' that is, that in the present century the U.S.A. will dominate the world. In this ruling clique there are extremists who go so far as to call Britain the forty-ninth State of the U.S.A.
There is no Indian, whether at home or abroad, who would not be happy if India's freedom could be won through the method that you have advocated all your life and without shedding human blood. But thing being what they are I am convinced that if we do desire freedom we must be prepared to wade through blood.

If circumstances had made it possible for us to organise an armed struggle inside India through our own efforts and resources that would have been the best course for us. But the Mahatmaji, you know Indian conditions perhaps better than anybody else. So far as I am concerned, after twenty years' experience of public service in India, I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to organise an armed resistance in the country without some help from outside—help from our countrymen abroad, as well as some foreign power or powers.

Prior to the outbreak of the present war it was exceedingly difficult to get help from a foreign power, or even from Indians abroad. But the outbreak of the present war threw open the possibility of obtaining aid—both political and military—from the enemies of the British Empire. Before I could expect any help from them however I had first to find out what their attitude was towards India's demand for freedom. British propagandists, for a number of years, had been telling the world that the Axis Powers were the enemies of freedom and, therefore, of India's freedom. Was that a fact? I asked myself. Consequently, I had to leave India in order to find out the truth myself and as to whether the Axis Powers would be prepared to give us help and assistance in our fight for freedom.

Before I finally made up my mind to leave home and homeland, I had to decide whether it was right for me to take help from
abroad. I had previously studied the history of revolutions all over the world, in order to discover the methods which had enabled other nations to obtain freedom. But I had not found a single instance in which an enslaved people had won freedom without foreign help of some sort. In 1940 I read my history once again, and once again, I came to the conclusion that history did not furnish a single instance where freedom had been won without help of some sort from abroad. As for the moral question whether it was right to take help, I told myself that in public, as in private life, one can always take help as a loan and repay that loan later on. Moreover, of a powerful Empire like the British Empire, could go round the world with the begging bowl what objection could there be to an enslaved, disarmed people like ourselves taking help as a loan from abroad?

I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that before I finally decided to set our on a hazardous mission. I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the pros and cons of the case. After having served my people so long to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor, or to give anyone a justification for calling me a traitor.

It was the easiest thing for me to remain at home and go on working as I had worked so long. It was also an easy thing for me to remain in an Indian prison while the war lasted. Personally, I had nothing to lose by doing so. Thanks to the generosity and to the affection of my countrymen, I had obtained the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. I had also built up a party consisting of staunch and loyal colleagues who had implicit confidence in me.

By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking — not only my life and my whole future career — but what was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we
would win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our life-time we would get another chance — another golden opportunity for winning freedom as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home. But I was convinced of two things: firstly that such a golden opportunity would not come within another century — and secondly, that without action from abroad we would not be able to win freedom, merely through our own efforts of home. That is why I resolved to take the plunge.

Providence has been kind to me. In spite of manifold difficulties, all my plans have succeeded so far. After I got out of India, my first endeavour was in organise my countrymen, wherever I had happened to meet them. I am glad to say that everywhere I found them to be wide awake and anxious to do everything possible for winning freedom for India. I then approached the Governments that were at war with our enemy, in order to find out what their attitude was towards India. I found out that contrary to what British propaganda had been telling us for a number of years—the axis Powers were now openly the friends of India’s freedom. I also discovered that they were prepared to give such help as we desired, and as was within their own power.

I know the propaganda that our enemy has been carrying on against me. But I am sure that my countrymen, who know me so well never be taken in. One who has stood for national self-respect and honour all his life and has suffered considerably in vindicating it, would be the last person in this world to give in to any other foreign power. Moreover, I have nothing to gain personally at the hands of a foreign power. Having received the highest honour possible for an in at the hands of my own countrymen, what is there for me to receive from a foreign power? Only that man can be a puppet who either no sense of honour and self-respect
or desires to build up a position for himself through the influence of others.

Not even my worst enemy can dare to say that I am capable of selling national honour and self-respect. And not even my worst enemy can dare to assert that I was a nobody in my own country and that I needed foreign help to secure a position for myself. In leaving India, I had to risk everything that I had, including my life. But I had to take that risk because only by doing so could I help the achievement of India's freedom.

There remains but one question for me to answer with regard to Axis Powers. Can it be possible that I have been deceived by them?

I believe it will be universally admitted that the cleverest and the most cunning politicians are to be found amongst Britishers. One who has worked with and fought British politicians all his life, cannot be deceived by any other politicians in the world. If British politicians have failed to coax or coerce me, no other politician can succeed in doing so. And if the British Government, at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assault, has been unable to demoralise me, no other power can hope to do so.

Moreover as you personally are aware, I have been a close student of international affairs. I have had personal contacts with international figures before the outbreak of this war. I am therefore no novice who could be duped by a shrewd and cunning politician. Last but not least, before forming an opinion about the attitude of the Axis Powers I established close personal contact with important leaders and personalities in the Axis countries who are responsible for their national affairs.
Consequently, I make bold to say that my countrymen can have the fullest confidence in my judgment of international affairs. My countrymen abroad will testify to the fact that since I left India, I have never done anything which could compromise in the least, either the honour or the self-respect or the interests of my country. On the contrary, whatever I have done has been for the benefit of my nation, for enhancing India's prestige before the world and for advancing the cause of India's freedom.

Mahatmaji, since the beginning of the war in East Asia our enemies have been carrying on a raging and tearing campaign against Japan. I shall, therefore, say something about Japan—particularly because at the present moment I am working in the closest cooperation with the Government, army and people of Japan.

There was a time when Japan had an alliance with our enemy. I did not come to Japan so long as there was an Anglo-Japanese alliance. I did not come to Japan, so long as normal diplomatic relations obtained between the two countries. It was only after Japan took what I consider to be the most momentous step in her history—namely, declaration of war on Britain and America—that I decided to visit Japan of my own free will.

Like so many of my countrymen I had read anti-Japanese propaganda material for a number of years. Like so many of my countrymen, I did not understand why Japan went to war with China in 1937. And like so many of my countrymen, my sympathies in 1937 and 1938 were with Chungking. You may remember that as President of the Congress. I was responsible for sending out a medical mission to Chungking in December 1938. But what I realised after my visit to Japan
and what many people at home do not yet realise, is that since the outbreak of the war in East Asia, Japan's attitude towards the world in general, and towards Asiatic nations in particular has been completely revolutionised.

It is a change that has overtaken not merely the Government, but also the people of Japan. A new consciousness what I may best describe as an Asiatic consciousness has seized the souls of the people of Japan. That change explains Japan's present attitude towards the Philippines, Burma, and India. That is what explains Japan's new policy in China.

After my visit to Japan and after establishing close contact with the present day leaders of that country I was fully satisfied that Japan's present policy towards Asia was no bluff but was rooted in sincerity.

This is not the first instance in history when an entire nation has been seized with a new consciousness. We have seen instances of it before in France during the French revolution and in Russia during the Bolshevik revolution. After my second visit to Japan in November 1943. I visited the Philippines, and met Filipino leaders there and saw things for myself. I have also been in Burma for a fairly long time and have been able to see things with my own eyes after the declaration its independence And I have been to China to find out if Japan's new policy was real or if it was a fake. The latest agreement between Japan and the national government of China has given the Chinese people practically all that they had been demanding. Japan, under that agreement, has even agreed to withdraw her troops from China on the termination of hostilities.

What then is Chungking-China fighting for? Can one believe that Britain and America are helping Chungking-China out of
purely altruistic motive? Will not Britain and America demand their pound of flesh in return for the help that they are now giving to Chungking to make her continue the fight against Japan? I clearly see that Chungking is being mortgaged to British and America because of past hatred and antagonism towards Japan.

So long as Japan did not initiate her present policy towards China, there might have been some justification or excuse for the Chinese to seek British and American aid for fighting Japan. But now that an entirely new chapter in Sino Japanese relation has begun, there is not the slightest excuse for Chungking to continue her meaningless struggle against Japan. That is not good for the Chinese people; it is certainly not good for Asia.

In April 1942, you said that if you were free to do so you would work for an understanding between China and Japan. That was an utterance of rare statesmanship. It is India's slavery that is at the bottom responsible for the chaos in China. It is because of the British old over India that Anglo-American could bluff Chungking into hoping that sufficient help could be brought to Chungking to enable Chungking to continue the war against Japan. You were absolutely right in thinking, Mahatma, that free India would work for peace between Japan and China. I go so far as to say that the freedom of India will automatically bring about an honourable understanding between Chungking and Japan, by opening the eyes of Chungking to the folly of the China.

Since I came to East Asia and visited China. I have been able to study the Chinese question more deeply. I find that there is a dictatorship ruling in Chungking. I have no objection personally to
dictatorship, if it is for a righteous cause. But the dictatorship that rules
the Chungking is clearly under foreign American influence. Unfortunately, the Anglo-Americans have been able to deceive the Chungking clique at Chungking into thinking that if Japan could be somehow defeated, then China would become the dominant power in Asia. The fact, however, is that if Japan were defeated by any chance, then China would certainly pass under American influence and control, that would be a tragedy for China and for the whole of Asia.

It is through this false hope of becoming the dominant power in Asia, if Japan could be somehow defeated, that the ruling clique at Chungking has entered into an unholy alliance with ruling clique at White House and at Whitehall. I know something of the propagandist activities of the Chungking Government in India and of its efforts to play upon the emotions of the Indian people and win their sympathy. But I can honestly say that Chungking which has been mortgaged to Wall Street and Lombard Street, does not deserve the sympathy of the Indian people any longer especially after Japan has initiated her new policy towards China.

Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her declarations of policy had been mere promises. But I have seen with my own eyes how in the midst of a world war Japan has put through revolutionary changes in countries like the Philippines, Burma and National China. Japan is true to her word and her actions are in full conformity with her declarations.

Coming to India, I must say that Japan has proved her sincerity by her deeds. There was a time when people used to say that Japan had
selfish intentions regarding India. If she had them, why should she recognise the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should she decide to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should there now be an Indian Chief Commissioner of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands stationed at Port Blair? Last but not least, why should Japan unconditionally help the Indian people in East Asia in their struggle for their independence?

There are Indians all over East Asia and they have every opportunity of seeing Japan at close quarters. Why should three million Indians distributed all over East Asia adopt a policy of the closest cooperation with Japan if they had not been convinced of her bona fides and of her sincerity? You can coerce one man or coax him into doing what you want him to do. But no one can coerce three million Indians distributed all over East Asia.

If Indians in East Asia had taken help from Japan without putting forward their own efforts and without making the maximum sacrifice, they would have been guilty of wrong doing. But, as an Indian, I am happy and proud to be able to say that my countrymen in East Asia putting forward the maximum efforts to mobilise men, money and materials for the struggle for India's freedom.

I have had experience at home in collecting funds and materials in recruiting men for national service for a period of twenty years. The light of this experience, I can properly assess the worth and issue of the sacrifice that our countrymen in East Asia are now making. Their effort is magnificent. It is because they are putting forward a magnificent effort themselves and are prepared to make maximum sacrifice that I see no objection to taking help from Japan such necessary articles as arms,
ammunition, etc. that we ourselves not produce.

Mahatmaji, I should now like to say something about the provisional Government that we have set up here. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind (or Free India) has been recognised by Germany and seven other friendly powers and this has given Indians a new status and a new prestige in the eyes of the whole world. The Provisional Government has as its one objective, the liberation of India from the British yoke, through an armed struggle. Once our enemies are expelled from India and order is established, the mission of the Provisional Government will be over. It will then be for the Indian people themselves to determine the form of government that they choose and also to decide as to who should take charge of that Government.

I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that I and all those who are working with me, regard themselves as the servants of the Indian people. The only reward that we desire for our efforts, for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among who would like to retire from the political field once India is free. The remainder will be content to take up any position in Free India, however humble it may be. The spirit that animates all of us today that it is more honourable to be even a sweeper in Free India than to have the highest position under British rule. We all know that there are hundreds of thousands of able men and women at home to whom India's destiny could be entrusted one freedom is achieved.

How much help we shall need from Japan till the last Britisher is expelled from the soil of India, will depend on the amount of cooperation that we shall receive from inside India. Japan herself does not desire to thrust her assistance upon us. Japan would be happy if the Indian people
could liberate themselves through their own exertions. Is it we who have asked for assistance from Japan after declaring war on Britain and America because our enemy has been seeking help from other powers. However, I have every hope that the help we shall receive from our countrymen at home will be so great that we shall need the minimum help from Japan.

Nobody would be more happy than ourselves, if by any chance our countrymen at home should succeed in liberating themselves through their own efforts or if by any chance the British Government accepts your 'Quit India' Resolution and gives effect to it. We are, however, proceeding on the assumption that neither of the above is possible and that an armed struggle is inevitable.

Mahatmaji, there is one other matter to which I shall refer before I close and that is about the ultimate outcome of this war. I know very well the kind of propaganda that our enemies have been carrying on in order to create the impression that they are confident of victory. But I hope that my countrymen will not be duped thereby and will not think of compromising with Britain on the issue of independence under the mistaken notion that the Anglo-American will win the war.

Having travelled round the world under wartime conditions with my eyes open, having seen the internal weakness of the enemy on the Indo-Burma frontier and inside India and having taken stock of our own strength and resources I am absolutely confident of our final victory.

I am not so foolish as to minimise in the least the strength of the enemy. I know that we have a long and hard struggle in front of us. I am aware that on the soil of India Britain will fight bravely and fight hard in a desperate attempt to save her Empire. But I know also that however long
and hard the struggle may be it can have but one outcome namely, our victory.

India's last war of independence has begun. Troops of the Azad Hind Fauj are now fighting bravely on the soil of India and in spite of all difficulty and hardship they are pushing forward, slowly but steadily. This armed struggle will go on until the last Britisher is thrown out of India and until our Tricolour National Flag proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

Father of our nation! In this holy war for India's liberation we ask for your blessing and good wishes. Jai Hind.