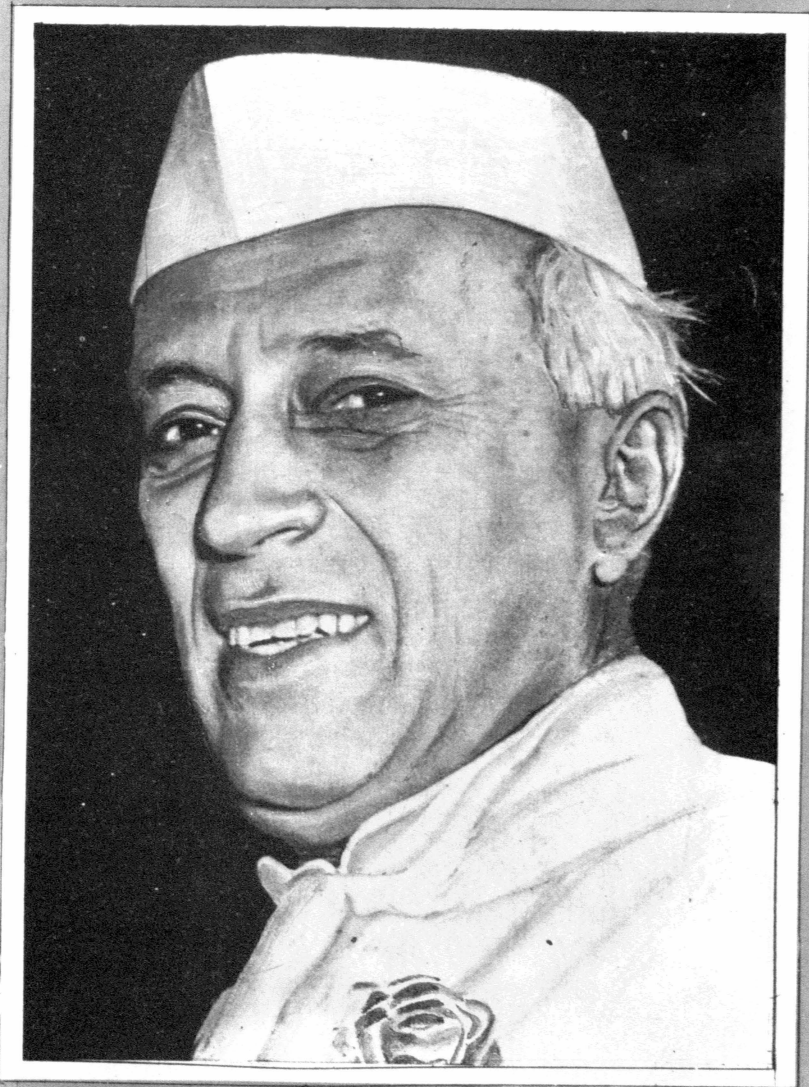


# Jawaharlal Nehru

## His Life, Work and Legacy



Subhash C. Kashyap  
Editor

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

As a thinker, writer, freedom fighter, parliamentarian and administrator, Jawaharlal Nehru left his indelible mark in every area he chose to tread in life. This work mainly consisting of contributions from Nehru's contemporaries and eminent academics touches upon the various facets of his many splendoured personality and explores the glorious life, work and legacy of this maker of modern India. The picture of Nehru that emerges from the pages of this volume is that of a superb human being and an ardent patriot and a statesman imbued with the spirit of reason and science.

This would also help the reader to have a glimpse of the memorable years of our great struggle for freedom and of Nehru's prodigious knowledge, his endogenous creativity, his incisive world view and the great ideals that he left behind.



**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**  
**HIS LIFE, WORK AND LEGACY**

# **JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**

## **HIS LIFE, WORK AND LEGACY**

*Edited by*

**Subhash C. Kashyap**  
**Secretary-General, Lok Sabha**  
**and**  
**Secretary-General**  
**Indian Parliamentary Group**

**S. CHAND & COMPANY LTD.**

# **S. CHAND & COMPANY LTD.**

H.O. : RAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI - 110055  
Show Room : 4/16-B, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi - 110002

## *Branches :*

Mai Hiran Gate, Jalandhar-144008  
Mahabeer Market, 25 Gwynne Road,  
Aminabad, Lucknow-226001  
Blackie House,  
103/5, Walchand Hirachand Marg,  
Opp. G.P.O., Bombay-400001  
152, Anna Salai, Madras-600002  
613-7, M. G. Road, Ernakulam,  
Cochin-682035

285/J, Bipin Bihari Ganguli Street,  
Calcutta-700012  
Khazanchi Road, Patna-800004  
3, Gandhi Sagar East,  
Nagpur-440002  
KPCC Building  
Race Course Road, Bangalore-560009  
Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-500195  
Pan Bazar, Guwahati-781001

Published for the Indian Parliamentary Group,  
Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi - 110001

Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of  
Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any  
form, except for purposes of review, without  
prior permission, in writing from the Lok Sabha  
Secretariat.

© Lok Sabha Secretariat  
First Published : 1990

*Published by S. Chand & Company Ltd., Ram Nagar, New Delhi - 110055*  
*Laser Typeset by Printmakers, C-7 Kalindi, New Delhi - 110065*  
*Printed at Rajendra Ravindra Printers (Pvt.) Ltd., Ram Nagar,*  
*New Delhi - 110055*

## PREFACE

The second half of the nineteenth century in India witnessed the birth of many valiant men and women of vision. If Mahatma Gandhi was the brightest star among them, Jawaharlal Nehru was the one chosen by the great Mahatma to speak his language when he was gone. Indeed he did that with remarkable brilliance and consummate dexterity. Gandhiji's will and moral leadership, combined with Nehru's vision and dynamism, shook the very edifice of the British Raj in India and cleared the way for Independence. We in India will always remember with gratitude this great patriot and charismatic leader, who, along with Gandhiji and a score of other great men, changed the course of history of our subcontinent and transformed, for the better, the destiny of our people.

An embodiment of modern spirit with faith in reason and belief in Science, Nehru's mission in life was not only to raise the moral stature and ethical values of the people but also to improve their standard of living. Endowed with indomitable courage and strong convictions and filled with immense zeal to help and emancipate his fellow countrymen, he sought to establish a new order on which Indian society could be reorganised. Always proud of India's rich cultural heritage, Panditji was a student of the past and a prophet of the future, a thinker and a doer who not only studied history but changed it too.

As a thinker, writer, freedom fighter, parliamentarian, administrator and leader of the Lok Sabha, Panditji left his indelible mark in every area he chose to tread and in the process earned for himself a permanent place in the history of our times. Perhaps nothing we do today can repay abundantly for the innumerable big and small things he accomplished for the people whom he 'discovered' "naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable". And no amount of literature can match the power and grace of his writings or the all pervasive excellence and versatility of the man, to whom our nation owes a deep debt of gratitude. Having possessed a very keen and analytical mind and having studied

profoundly our glorious past, Panditji's thought process can only be described as endogenous. His portentous learning, pursuit of excellence in life, sententious world view, and the great ideals that he left behind him will be sources of inspiration for posterity.

This volume carries a collection of articles written by some of Panditji's contemporaries in public life and by other distinguished personalities. These articles, woven with personal reminiscences and narrating incidents, perhaps seeing light for the first time, seek to give a clearer perspective of Nehru to all those interested in his life and work. From his sister's remembrances of her 'Bhai', the leaders' memory of their ideal leader, to the academicians' assessment of the man who moulded a newly emerging republic, each of these articles will be of interest to the old and the new generations alike. Some of the articles are based on the authors' addresses at functions held under the aegis of the Indian Parliamentary Group to observe the birth/death anniversaries of Nehru in the recent years. A few others had appeared earlier in important national dailies or private publications. Their inclusion in this publication, we hope, would enhance its value.

We have received substantial help and encouragement from various quarters in the preparation of this volume. We are most grateful to the Honourable Speaker, Dr. Balram Jakhar, for constant inspiration and guidance. Our acknowledgements and thanks are all the more due to the eminent contributors to this volume. All of them, despite their heavy pre-occupations, responded favourably to our request by sending their valuable contributions.

This volume is part of the Indian Parliamentary Group's humble tributes to Jawaharlal Nehru on the occasion of his birth centenary celebrations. We dedicate this work to Panditji, in all humility, with the hope that it would supplement the nation's efforts in perpetuating the memory of this great architect of modern India and of parliamentary democracy.

New Delhi  
14 November 1989.

SUBHASH C. KASHYAP  
Secretary-General, Lok Sabha  
and  
Secretary-General,  
Indian Parliamentary Group

# **Contributors' Who's Who**

**Shri R. Venkataraman**  
**President of India**

**Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma,**  
**Vice-President of India**

**Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao**  
**Union Minister of External Affairs**

**Shri Buta Singh**  
**Union Minister of Home Affairs**

**Shri P. Shiv Shanker**  
**Union Minister of Human Resource Development**

**Shri Vasant Sathe**  
**Union Minister of Energy**

**Shri Dinesh Singh**  
**Union Minister of Commerce**

**Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy**  
**Member of Parliament and Leader of the**  
**Opposition in Rajya Sabha**

**Shri N.D. Tiwari**  
**Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh**

**Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha**  
**Chief Minister of Bihar**

**Prof. S. Nurul Hasan**  
**Governor of Orissa**



Dr. Gopal Singh  
Governor of Meghalaya

Shri Frank Anthony  
Member of Parliament

Shri B.A. Masodkar  
Member of Parliament

Shri Mohammed Yunus  
Member of Parliament

Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap  
Secretary-General, Lok Sabha

Shri B.N. Pande  
Former Governor of Orissa

Smt. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit  
Former Governor of Maharashtra and Former Member of  
Parliament

Shri Raj Bahadur  
Former Union Minister

Shri V.K.R.V. Rao  
Former Union Minister, Former Member of Parliament and  
an Eminent Academician

Shri E.M.S. Namboodiripad  
Former Chief Minister of Kerala and General Secretary,  
Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Shri V.R. Krishna Iyer  
Former Judge of the Supreme Court

Prof. Hiren Mukherjee  
Former Member of Parliament

Dr. Rafiq Zakaria  
Former Member of Parliament

Smt. Renuka Ray  
Former Member of Parliament

Smt. Aruna Asaf Ali  
An Eminent Freedom Fighter and Social Worker

Shri G. Parthasarathi  
Chairman, Research Information System, Non-aligned  
and other Developing Countries, New Delhi

Prof. Bimal Prasad  
Professor in International Relations,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Shri V.P. Dutt  
Professor Chinese and Japanese Studies,  
University of Delhi  
and Member of Parliament

Prof. D.D. Malhotra,  
Professor, Indian Institution of Public Administration

# CONTENTS

*Preface*  
*Contributors' who's who*

*v*  
*vii*

**Jawaharlal Nehru : A Profile**  
(xv)

1

**Nehru : A True Democrat**  
R. Venkataraman  
(1)

2

**Jawaharlal Nehru : The Maker of the Modern Commonwealth**  
Shanker Dayal Sharma  
(12)

3

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Socialism**  
P.V. Narasimha Rao  
(20)

4

**Pandit Nehru and Nation Building**  
Buta Singh  
(26)

5

**Nehru : A Crusader for Social Justice**  
P. Shiv Shanker  
(32)

6

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Planning in India**  
Vasant Sathe  
(45)

(xii)

7

**Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Foreign Policy of Nonalignment**

Dinesh Singh

(52)

8

**Nehru : An Appraisal**

M.S. Gurupadaswamy

(57)

9

**Jawaharlal Nehru as External Affairs Minister**

Narayan Datt Tiwari

(61)

10

**Jawaharlal Nehru : A Multifaceted Personality**

Satyendra Narayan Sinha

(72)

11

**Jawaharlal Nehru and National Integration**

S. Nurul Hasan

(76)

12

**Jawaharlal Nehru : The Ideal Democrat**

Dr. Gopal Singh

(82)

13

**Some Reminiscences**

Frank Anthony

(90)

14

**Panditji : Luminous Socialist Philosopher**

B.A. Masodkar

(94)

(xiii)

15

**Travelling with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru**  
Mohammed Yunus  
(113)

16

**The Golden Age of Parliamentary Democracy**  
Subhash C. Kashyap  
(125)

17

**A Sister Remembers**  
Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit  
(149)

18

**Jawaharlal Nehru : Some Reminiscences**  
B.N. Pande  
(163)

19

**Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (A Homage) : Modern India**  
**His Greatest Movement**  
Raj Bahadur  
(169)

20

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Developmental Planning**  
V.K.R.V. Rao  
(172)

21

**Jawaharlal Nehru as I Knew Him**  
E.M.S. Namboodiripad  
(184)

22

**Jawaharlal Nehru : A Legacy of Humanism**  
V.R. Krishna Iyer  
(187)

(xiv)

**23**

**The Great Parliamentarian**  
Hiren Mukherjee  
(192)

**24**

**Some Reflections**  
Rafiq Zakaria  
(198)

**25**

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Democratic Values**  
Renuka Ray  
(213)

**26**

**Jawaharlal Nehru : As Seen by Foreign Friends**  
Aruna Asaf Ali  
(220)

**27**

**Democracy, Socialism, National Integration and Peace**  
G. Parthasarathi  
(233)

**28**

**Jawaharlal Nehru and the Foundation of  
Indian Foreign Policy**  
Bimal Prasad  
(243)

**29**

**Jawaharlal Nehru and Social Change in India**  
V.P. Dutt  
(253)

**30**

**Jawaharlal Nehru : His Vision of Science and  
Technology and Public Administration**  
D.D. Malhotra  
(272)



# Jawaharlal Nehru : A Profile

---

Jawaharlal Nehru was born on 14 November, 1889. Regarding the backdrop in which the family surname (Nehru) was coined, he wrote in his *Autobiography*:

“A *jagir* with a house situated on the banks of a canal had been granted to Raj Kaul\* and, from the back of this residence, ‘Nehru’ (from *nahar*, a canal) came to be attached to his name. Kaul had been the family name; this changed to Kaul Nehru; and in later years, became simply Nehrus”.<sup>1</sup>

His father Motilal Nehru had earlier moved from Kanpur to Allahabad where he carved out a niche for himself. A lawyer by profession, Motilal, by dint of perseverance, had established himself as a leading lawyer of the town. Enlightened and educated, Motilal followed a westernized life style. Jawaharlal’s mother Swarup Rani, schooled in Indian ethos and values, extended to him, in his own words, “excessive and indiscriminating love” As the male child of prosperous parents, born after 11 years of their marriage, Jawaharlal grew up in opulence.

Educated in Persian and Arabic, Motilal wanted his son to go beyond the traditional and classical learning which he had acquired. Naturally, therefore, he wanted his son to have Western education. Private tutors and governesses were, therefore, appointed to give him and his two sisters, Vijayalaxmi and Krishna, instructions at home.

Explaining Motilal Nehru’s penchant for Western education, B.R. Nanda observes in his biography of Jawaharlal Nehru :

“To this decision, Motilal may have been led partly by his aristocratic pride, partly by pro-English prejudices and partly by the consciousness that he could afford the best and most expensive education for his children”.<sup>2</sup>

---

\* His ancestor

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, (Oxford University Press, 1982) p. 1.
2. B.R. Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Pictorial Biography*, 1980, p. 7.

Among the private tutors who left an indelible imprint on Jawaharlal was Ferdinand T. Brooks, a theosophist recommended to Motilal by Annie Besant. Brooks was a brilliant youngman of French and Irish extraction who instilled in Jawaharlal a yearning for reading. He read novels of Scott, Dickens and Thackeray, H.G. Wells's romances, Mark Twain, and the Sherlock Homes stories. Besides literature, Brooks also cultivated in him interest in natural sciences. Within the premises of Anand Bhawan a laboratory was developed for the purpose of conducting scientific experiments. Thus, Jawaharlal had the right exposure in right time to the domain of knowledge.

### **Voyage to Britain**

When home tuition was found not enough, Motilal Nehru decided to admit young Nehru, in a public school in England. In 1905, therefore, he took his family to England when Jawaharlal was fifteen and got him admitted at Harrow. He pursued Latin at Harrow. Jawaharlal had an encyclopaedic mind and as such his reading interests were wider. He did remarkably well in general knowledge. He also observed the political developments taking place in and around with avid interest. Besides politics, the early growth of aviation fascinated him, for those were the days of Wright Brothers.

While Jawaharlal was in England, freedom struggle was gaining firm ground at home in India. The news of partition of Bengal, the Swadeshi movement and the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and S. Ajit Singh greatly stirred his mind. He used to discuss the political developments taking place in India with visiting friends and relatives from India. He found Harrow and its intellectual ambience too narrow for interaction and articulation of his ideas—political or otherwise. So, he left Harrow after two years with his father's permission and joined Trinity College, Cambridge in the beginning of October, 1907 at the age of seventeen.

It was at Cambridge that his pentup zest for intellectual pursuit received greater stimuli. Although he offered science subjects like chemistry, geology and botany, he also studied economics, history and literature with keen interest. Among the books that influenced Jawaharlal politically at Cambridge was Meredith Townsend's *Asia and Europe*. While studies, games and amusements filled his life at Cambridge, the political upheavals

spearheaded by Balgangadhar Tilak and Aurobindo Ghosh greatly agitated his mind. During those days, Jawaharlal's political sympathy got more aligned with the extremists. The Majlis, a society formed by Indian students at Cambridge, provided the platform for discussions and deliberations about political developments taking place in India. He attended Majlis quite often although he seldom spoke there. This was precisely due to his natural 'shyness and diffidence'.

Like any other ambitious, educated and enlightened youngman, Jawaharlal would have found Cambridge a springboard for joining the covetous civil services. But it seems the prospect of a cosy, comfortable and secured career under the alien rule did not lure him very much. He ultimately decided not to appear in the civil services examinations and took up law. Thus, he joined Inner Temple even before his final Tripos examinations. Law papers did not take much time and Jawaharlal got through the bar examinations one after the other, with 'neither glory nor ignominy', as he himself put it.

Jawaharlal also had a stint at the London School of Economics before returning to India. During this intervening period of two years before his return to India he was vaguely attracted towards the Fabian and socialist ideas. On a visit to Ireland in the summer of 1910, he was impressed by the *Sinn Fein* movement. "The parallel in India was, of course, obvious, and Jawaharlal's visit to Ireland and his understanding of politics seem to have strengthened his extremist sympathies".<sup>3</sup> Jawaharlal, with a political disposition inclined towards socialism with a tinge of extremism, came to India in the summer of 1912, at a time when the freedom struggle was caught between the moderates and the extremists.

### **Back home in India**

On his return from England in 1912, Jawaharlal started practising law at the Allahabad High Court as his father's junior. After having been abroad for seven years, he enjoyed the early months renewing the old contacts. However, the dry and drab demands of the profession gradually made him feel uneasy. Fortunately, the domestic atmosphere was quite congenial. It was against this

---

3. Sarvepalli Gopal : *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, (Vol. I, Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 22.

backdrop that he decided to join Congress to take part in its activities. When special occasions arose, like the agitation against the Fiji indenture system for Indian workers, or the South African Indian question, he threw himself into it and worked with dedication and zeal. These enthusiastic involvements were flickers of his keen interest in the foreign policy and international relations which later became the sheet-anchor of Congress party's freedom struggle.

While politics and practice kept him busy, in between, he also found time for reading, outing and hunting. On 8 February, 1916, on *Vasanta Panchami* day which is the precursor of spring in India, Jawaharlal got married to Kamla Kaul, a young girl of seventeen belonging to a Kashmiri middle class Brahmin family. It was an arranged marriage, the bride being chosen by Motilal himself.

### Plunge into Politics

Political struggle in India took a militant turn with the release of Lokmanya Tilak. Jawaharlal joined the Home Rule League started by Tilak and Mrs. Annie Besant. He was also introduced to Mahatma Gandhi at the Lucknow Congress held during the Christmas of 1916. He had, however, seen Gandhi earlier at the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress in 1915. Gandhiji's fight against the obnoxious practice of apartheid in South Africa appealed to him a great deal. Though somewhat bewildered by Gandhi's political philosophy, Jawaharlal was captivated by his personality and earthy political commonsense. He was particularly impressed by the agrarian agitation which Gandhiji led in Bihar in 1917. What appealed to the young Nehru was Gandhi's strength, his rock-like commitment to India's freedom, the way in which he had perfected his character and personality so as to make himself an effective instrument of political change in India".<sup>4</sup>

After World War I, there was greater political expectation towards self-government in India. The rising expectations, however, met with disappointment when the British Government passed the repressive and draconian Rowlatt Bills. This evoked mass protest and demonstrations all over India in the form of *Satyagraha* at the call of Mahatma Gandhi. The bizarre incidence of Jallianwala

---

4. *Ibid*, p. 40.

Bagh massacre took place at Amritsar in Punjab. All these unfortunate developments agitated Jawaharlal so much that he gave up the profession of law and there was a metamorphological change in his life style. He became more of a Congress activist. Sacrificing the comforts of life, he became a lieutenant to Gandhiji.

During this period of militant freedom struggle, he also had a stint with journalism. Dissatisfied with the leading moderate newspaper, the *Leader* of Allahabad, Motilal Nehru had started another daily, the *Independent*, from Allahabad itself in early 1919. Jawaharlal acted as one of its directors.

In February 1920, Jawaharlal participated in the Allahabad district conference at Bahadurganj, and in July he was elected Vice-President of the Allahabad District Congress Committee. He toured the interior parts of Uttar Pradesh which acquainted him with the poverty of rural India. He had experienced the excitement and anguish of political strife. During these years, he went to jail several times which had a telling effect on him. His life style became austere and his outlook radical.

### In Europe again

After the unfortunate Chauri Chaura incident in February 1922, Mahatma Gandhi decided to discontinue the civil disobedience movement. The tempo of the freedom movement relapsed into inertia for a few years. During the impasse he, accompanied by his wife Kamla and their eight year old daughter Indira, sailed from Bombay for Venice *en route* to Switzerland in March 1926. The basic purpose of going abroad was for the treatment of his wife, whose illness had been diagnosed as tuberculosis. While in Geneva, he led very simple life living in a modest three-room apartment.

In spite of very good medical treatment, Kamla Nehru did not improve much during her stay in Switzerland. Money was no constraint as Motilal Nehru was always generous to spend as much as was needed for the treatment of his daughter-in-law. The indifferent health of his wife greatly disturbed Jawaharlal and he found solace and relief in extensive reading. Geneva, the hub of international politics, greatly fascinated him. It also provided him an opportunity to assess the ongoing political developments in India. With the international and national politics juxtaposed

in this perspective, Jawaharlal formulated his own vision of India. These were the years in which the seeds of his world view and political thought were sown which in later years guided the destiny of the nation, both within and in relation with the world outside.

During a brief visit to Berlin towards the end of 1926, Jawaharlal learned about the proposed Congress of Oppressed Nationalities at Brussels in February, 1927. The idea immediately attracted him. Jawaharlal was appointed Congress party's representative to this unusual conclave of radical spokesmen for colonial people and their sympathizers in Latin America and Europe. Regarding the far-reaching impact of Brussels Congress on Nehru, Michael Brecher very cogently writes,

“The Brussels Congress proved to be a milestone in the development of Nehru's political thought, notably his espousal of socialism and a broad international outlook. It was there that he first came into contact with orthodox communists, left-wing socialists and radical nationalists from Asia and Africa. It was there that the goals of national independence and social reform became lined inexplicably in his conception of future political strategy. It was there, too, that the notion of an Afro-Asian group of nations cooperating with one another was conceived. Indeed, the Bandung Conference in 1955 may be seen as the fruition of an idea which first found emotional expression at Brussels almost thirty years earlier”.<sup>5</sup>

At Brussels Conference Jawaharlal made his debut before a galaxy of international celebrities such as George Lansbury, Albert Einstein, Romain Rolland and Madame Sun Yat-sen. The Congress helped him to understand some of the problems of colonies and dependent countries. Later on when Kamla Nehru's health improved, Jawaharlal, along with his wife paid a short visit to France, England, Germany, and Italy. These visits gave him an opportunity to meet many Indian revolutionaries such as Madam Bhikaiji Cama, M.N. Roy, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Moulvi Obeidulla and Moulvi Barkatulla.

On his last leg of the European tour, Jawaharlal along with his wife, sister Krishna and father, who had arrived in Europe in

---

5. Michael Brecher, *Nehru—A Political Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 1959) p. 109.



the summer of that year, landed in Moscow in November 1927. His four-day visit to the Soviet Union left a lasting imprint on his mind. It acquainted him with the working of the Soviets, their Socialist polity and society. He was impressed, too, by the seeming simplicity of the life of Soviet officials and members of the Communist Party, as contrasted with the large salaries, the material comforts and the ostentation of British officials in Delhi. On a visit to the State Opera House, he was surprised by the casual dress of the audience, consisting mostly of the ordinary workers.<sup>6</sup>

The health of his wife, although not fully recovered, had considerably improved. Naturally therefore he had nothing more to do in Europe. His own physical and mental conditions were perfect after the prolonged holiday. His travels abroad, particularly participation in the Brussels Congress and his subsequent visit to Moscow had convinced him of the need for a socialistic pattern of society for India.

### **The Resurgent Nationalism**

With such disposition, Jawaharlal sailed for India, accompanied by his family, in December 1927. The militancy of the freedom struggle which had mellowed down when he left for Europe, had again picked up since the visit of Simon Commission in November 1927. Jawaharlal reached Madras in December 1927 at the most opportune time when the Congress was meeting there.

The controversy over complete independence or dominion status for India was given a definite direction by Jawaharlal when he moved on 27 December 1927 at the Madras Congress—the famous resolution that the ‘Congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be complete National Independence’. The resolution was indeed revolutionary. At a time when most of the Congress leaders were reconciled to gradualism as a mode of freedom struggle, the clarion call for complete national independence came like a bolt.

Jawaharlal mobilised the youth, the peasantry, and the labourers in order to give a further thrust to the call. In the autumn of 1928, he was elected President of All India Youth Congress. In recognition of his organisational ability, he was reappointed the General

---

6. *Ibid*, p. 117.

Secretary of Congress at the Calcutta Congress in the latter part of December, 1928. Next year in September, he was unanimously elected as the Congress President. Commenting on Jawaharlal's election to the post of Congress Presidency, Mahatma Gandhi said:

"In bravery he is not to be surpassed. Who can excel him in the love of the country?... And if he has the dash and the rashness of a warrior, he has also the prudence of a statesman. A lover of discipline, he has shown himself to be capable of rigidly submitting to it even where it was seemed irksome.... He is pure as crystal, he is truthful beyond suspicion. He is a knight *sans peur, sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands".<sup>7</sup>

At the historic Lahore Congress held in late December 1929, the son succeeded the father at the podium. The socialist credo of Jawaharlal was given a public expression at this Congress. But a pragmatic and sober Jawaharlal was not bogged down by his personal predilection. He knew that the objective conditions prevalent in India then, were not congenial to adopt a full socialist programme. He, therefore, reiterated the call for complete freedom from British domain. The resolution for complete national independence was reiterated and passed at the stroke of midnight on 31 December, 1919 at the Lahore Congress. The flag of independence was unfurled on the bank of the Ravi catapulting Jawaharlal to the forefront of national politics.

The call for complete national independence created a stir throughout the length and breadth of the country. It fired the salvo of national emancipation from the yoke of foreign rule. It was in this context that Gandhiji decided to launch the *Salt Satyagraha*, a unique method of civil disobedience. He thus started the long march to Dandi from his Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad on 12 March, 1930. The long march evoked nationwide upsurge. The spectacle so overwhelmed Jawaharlal that both he and Motilal joined the Mahatma on his march. Speaking about the significance of Dandi March, Jawaharlal said,

"Today the pilgrim marches onward on his long trek.... The fire of a great resolve is in him and surpassing love of his

---

7. B.N. Pande, *Nehru*, Macmillan, 1977, p. 139, citing Tenduelkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. II, p. 490.

miserable countrymen. And love of truth that scorches and love of freedom that inspires. And none that passes him can escape the spell, and men of common clay feel the spark of life.”<sup>8</sup>

Motilal Nehru donated his palatial home, *Anand Bhawan*, to the Congress as a contribution to the cause of the nation. It was renamed *Swaraj Bhawan* epitomising the abode of freedom. It was a great saga of sacrifice. The triumph and tragedy of the Nehrus now became interwoven with the trials and tribulations of the freedom struggle chronicling the history and the destiny of the nation. Prison became Jawaharlal’s habitat where he spent about four years between 1930 and 1935.

### Detour to Literature

The solitude of the prison gave him the opportunity for reflection, introspection and retrospection, besides the abundance of time for reading. His facile pen and agile mind produced some classics such as the *Glimpses of World History* (1934), *Letters from a Father to a Daughter* (1929), his *Autobiography* (1936). Besides, during this period he wrote a number of articles, essays and speeches which were compiled into two collections *Recent Essays and Writings* (1934) and *India and the World* (1936). The rich literary output naturally put him in the galaxy of philosopher-statesmen. The royalty that accrued from these publications also sustained him when in financial difficulties.

Commenting on his classical work, *Glimpses of World History*, Jawaharlal’s biographer, Michael Brecher writes:

“What makes it original and unique, a marked departure from the standard universal historian, is its Asian-Centred orientation. The lack of balance in historical writing is redressed. Europe and America are placed in the perspective of ‘World history’, and the reader is made aware of the fact that the history of non-European peoples is not merely an extension of European culture overseas”. He further adds, “*The Glimpses of World History* is a milestone in his developing political outcome, embodying in its purest form his international idealism”.<sup>9</sup>

---

8. Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

9. *Ibid*, pp. 163-165.

The demise of his father Motilal Nehru on 6 February 1931, desolated him. It was a great loss to young Nehru. For, Motilal was not only his father but a constant companion. The void created by his death was filled later on by Mahatma Gandhi.

### **The Karachi Congress**

Hardly two months after the death of Motilal Nehru, the Congress was convened in Karachi in the last week of March. While the Lahore Congress was significant for declaration of complete national independence, it was at the Karachi Congress (March 1931) that the Socialist credo of Jawaharlal found concrete manifestation in his resolution on fundamental rights. In effect, the resolution was the precursor of the ideals and objectives enshrined in the Constitution of free India and laid the blue-print for a Secular, Socialist and Democratic State. His commitment to socialism was further demonstrated when he extended his support and patronage to the Congress Socialist Party formed in 1934, while he was in jail. His was, however, not a doctrinaire approach. What he believed and categorically formulated was the concept of mixed-economy synthesising the virtues of capitalism and socialism. The idea was to curb profit motive and to use the machinery of the State to regulate economic activity.

A great personal tragedy befell Jawaharlal when his wife, Kamla, passed away in Switzerland in February 1931. On his way back to India after cremation of Kamla's body, Jawaharlal sent a cable to his publisher in London, who were bringing out his autobiography, requesting them to dedicate the book "To Kamla who is no more".<sup>10</sup>

### **Interest in Foreign Affairs**

Jawaharlal was elected President of the Indian National Congress at its Lucknow session for the year 1936. The challenging task of steering the Congress, reconciling the Left and the Right now fell on his shoulders. He performed this duty with dexterity.

During this period he also took keen interest in world affairs. He laid down the goal and objective of foreign policy of Congress

---

10. Pande, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

Party. As President of the Indian National Congress in 1936-37, he organised a 'Foreign Department' in the party Secretariat to maintain contacts with individuals and parties abroad who were sympathetic to the Indian cause. In 1937, he paid goodwill visits to Burma and Malay. And in the summer of 1939 he visited Ceylon in an effort to reduce the friction between Indian settlers and the Sinhalese.

In 1938, on his way to Europe, he met Nahas Pasha, the leader of Egypt's Wafd Party. The Spanish civil war greatly stirred him. He viewed it as a war between democracy and autocracy and extended his sympathy for the cause of democracy.<sup>11</sup> In August, 1939 he paid a visit to the Nationalist China, but he had to cut short his visit when World War II broke out.

### Independence and After

Turning to the domestic arena, Jawaharlal Nehru anticipated the inevitable consequences of India's involvement in the war. If Britain recognised its claim to freedom, India would be prepared to extend her support to the war, and "would be a friend and colleague in the World affairs." But if Britain chose the path of continued domination, it was absurd to think that Indian nationalists would support London's lead in foreign policy.<sup>12</sup>

It was against this backdrop that the British War Cabinet despatched the Cripps Mission to India in 1942. The 'Draft Declaration' recognised India's right to convene a Constituent Assembly for framing the Constitution. But the seeds of the divide and rule germe in it agitated the Congress and Jawaharlal Nehru. Ultimately, the Congress rejected the offer. This precipitated in launching the Quit India Movement on 8 August, 1942.

The British government tried to quell the mass upsurge with an iron hand putting the front running leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru behind the bars. This was also Jawaharlal's longest spell in the jail. He was released in June 1945 just when the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, convened a Conference in Simla to break the deadlock.<sup>13</sup> Nehru's pivotal role in these negotiations and later with Lord Mountbatten in 1947 was a feat of great statesmanship.

---

11. Nanda, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

12. Brecher, *op. cit.* p. 258.

13. Nanda, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

The freedom struggle culminated in India's independence from the clutches of colonialism in the midnight of 14-15 August, 1947.

The herculean task of steering the new born nation of continental proportion now fell on Jawaharlal Nehru. The immediate task before him was to set the house in order. The trauma of transition posed a plethora of problems which he handled impeccably. With the farsight of a statesman he laid the foundation of political, economic and social edifice. He also gave a clear direction to India's role in the comity of nations with the policy of non-alignment and the principles of *Panchsheel*. These policies paid rich dividends in later years.

Jawaharlal Nehru also took great interest in the development of science and technology. As he himself explained it: "Politics led me to economics and this led me inevitably to science and scientific approach to all our problems and to life itself. It is science alone that would solve the problems of hunger and poverty".<sup>14</sup> Two distinguished scientists, Homi Bhabha and Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar, who were also men of great energy, drive and organisational ability, helped him in building the scientific infrastructure by establishing a chain of laboratories under the aegis of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. In 1958, he piloted through Parliament a 'Science Policy Resolution', pledging the country to foster, promote and sustain cultivation of science and scientific research by all means.

Jawaharlal believed in planned economic development. He set up the Planning Commission in 1950, which gave concrete shape to his economic policy. Resources being limited, Jawaharlal's thrust was how to gain maximum benefit out of it avoiding lopsided development. He presided over the Planning Commission and the National Development Council. In the pursuit of development, he never lost sight of the tribals and the backward classes. While he made all the efforts to bring them to the national mainstream, he also sincerely tried to preserve and project their identity and rich cultural heritage. His patronage for the promotion of art, culture and literature was abundant.

Notwithstanding his preoccupation with the national and international affairs, Jawaharlal Nehru always had a soft corner for the children to whom he was affectionately known as 'Chacha Nehru'. He knew well that today's children are tomorrow's citizens.

---

14. *Ibid.*, p. 48.



He therefore took keen interest for their mental and physical growth.

Nehru's eventful public life spanning a period of over forty years came to an end on 27 May 1964. His death created a void and a vacuum. However, he bequeathed to us a rich legacy which sustains us even today. Although he did a lot for his countrymen and to the world at large, he was never contented. To remind himself of the unfinished task that lay ahead he had been keeping a four line stanza from a poem of Robert Frost besides him:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

Although cosmopolitan by instinct and temperament, Nehru's love for his land and the people of his country knew no bounds. He lived with them sharing their weal and woe and wholeheartedly integrated with the national mainstream. He longed that after his death, his mortal remains be intermingled with the land and water of his beloved motherland. His will and Testament eloquently speaks of his total commitment to India and his abiding love and affection for his countrymen to whom he endeared himself so much:

"I have received so much love and affection from the Indian people that nothing that I can do can repay even a small fraction of it, and indeed there can be no repayment of so precious a thing as affection. Many have been admired, some have been revered, but the affection of all classes of Indian people has come to me in such abundant measure that I have been overwhelmed by it. I can only express the hope that in the remaining years I may live, I shall not be unworthy of my people and their affection".

In deference to his desire, after his death, his ashes were flown and scattered all over the country including the Himalayas and some were immersed in his beloved river Ganga.

*R. Venkataraman*

## Nehru—A True Democrat

---

Twenty-two years ago, this day, a wonderful being passed away. A numbness crept over us. I, with countless others, had looked upon Jawaharlal Nehru as a leader and a lodestar. Jawaharlal Nehru (as you all know), was impatient with anything that was not rationally explicable. But the fact that on the day his remains were consigned to the flames the earth shook in Delhi could not be ignored. We did not seek to interpret the natural phenomenon too much. It sufficed us to feel that the soil of India, which Nehru had served so truly and well, trembled with the rest of us. On the anniversary each year of that day of infinite sadness, the people of India offer to Jawaharlal Nehru reverence and tribute. Though reverence and tribute are offered to many, the people of India offer him something more, something special. They offer him flowers of adoration.

“Many have been admired”, wrote Jawaharlal Nehru in his will and Testament, “some have been revered, but the affection of all classes of Indian people has come to me in such abundant measure that I have been overwhelmed by it”.

It is difficult to say who overwhelmed whom, Nehru or India. If Nehru could feel palpably the love that the people of India bore for him, the reverse was equally true. The people of India were affected by him in a manner that was altogether unique. One might in fact say that India was in love with him. Not for nothing did Gandhiji write a few days before his assassination:

बहुत वर्ष जियो और हिन्द के जवाहर बने रहो।

Man is mortal and Gandhiji could not have wished for Jawaharlal

## 2 *Jawaharlal Nehru: His Life, Work and Legacy*

eternal life; but Man's spirit is undying and so Gandhiji wished for him a permanence as the Jewel of India. He was a Bharat Ratna in every sense of the term.

Here are some thoughts on Nehru as the architect of Modern India and on the unique bond that linked Jawaharlal Nehru with the people of India, its evolution from incipient beginnings in England, through perceptions of human history into confidence in the potential greatness of India. This evolution is indeed a saga, one that is not merely of interest but of eternal relevance to India. It is of infinite appeal to all those who believe that the people of India do matter.

The past, present and future have rarely co-mingled so elegantly and to such fine purpose, as in Jawaharlal Nehru. If his upbringing at Anand Bhawan in Allahabad had given Jawaharlal an anchorage in conservative tradition, his exposure as a student in England to the bracing winds of Fabian Socialism had given young Nehru a vision of the future. Having gone to England to do his Tripos and to study Law, Jawaharlal found that his real interests inclined to political economy. Fabian Socialists dominated the intellectual scene in England at that time. No one interested in political thought could have failed to take notice of the style of thinking that came, in time, to be associated with the name of Harold Laski. Jawaharlal joined the London School of Economics and was drawn to this system of ideas. His introduction to the basic principles of Marxist thought, as Nehru said, lighted many a corner of his mind. The following classic observation of Laski's for instance, could not but go home with a person of Jawaharlal's sensitivity:

Law, like life, has its periods of change and its periods of conservation. It is not a closed system of eternal rules elevated above time and place. The respect it can win is measured by the justice it embodies, and its power to embody justice depends upon its efficiency to meet the demands it encounters.

Nehru saw at once that in India, the Rule of Law meant the law of British Rule. He saw, too, that neither this law nor this rule was doing any good to the millions of his country. The Raj embodied no justice; on the contrary, it masked the deepest injustice. Nehru realised that Law which he was studying had to be regarded as a part of life and must relate to all the other

contours of existence, social, political and above all, economic. No two persons have been more different from each other than Harold Laski and Motilal Nehru. And yet they thought alike. Motilal Nehru, at this time, writing to his son said, "Politics are inseparable from law, and economics are the soul of politics". Nehru saw, with clarity and conviction, the truth of his father's advice and Laski's contention that no man can understand law who lacks an intimate acquaintance with economics. And here it was, at this stage, that a path began to open up before Nehru, a path that beckoned him irresistibly.

Back in India in 1912, his life in the upper-middle class society in Allahabad, did not prevent Jawaharlal Nehru from watching world events with keenness and understanding. What was even more important, Jawaharlal was able to relate world events and trends to the Indian situation with a clarity that was unique. For instance, 1917 saw the Russian Revolution and 1917 was also the year of the activity for Home Rule, under the leadership of Dr. Annie Besant. Expelled from Bombay and then from the Central Provinces, she was finally interned. Jawaharlal signed up as one of the Joint Secretaries of the Home Rule League in U.P., with Motilal Nehru as President. "Home Rule has come and we have but to take it if we stand up like men and falter not", so wrote Nehru, in a letter to *The Leader*. Even in his twenties, Jawaharlal had found a cause. What was required at that stage, was for him to find a medium. It came to him almost adventitiously. What knowledge of the indigo workers of Champaran had done to Gandhiji in 1916, an encounter with the peasantry of Pratapgarh did to Panditji four years later, in 1929. This encounter, according to Panditji's distinguished biographer Professor S. Gopal, "gave a new and permanent dimension to his outlook". It also brought Gandhiji and Nehru together. If Laski and Fabian Socialism gave Nehru a certain goal and an end, Nehru's encounter with the Pratapgarh peasantry gave him an idea of the means to be adopted to reach that end. Chalapati Rau, in his incisive biography of Nehru, says:

As he wandered from village to village, especially in the districts of Rae Bareli, Pratapgarh, and Sultanpur, he saw a new aspect of India, the terrifying aspect of peasant India to revolt. This was also the real India; the veil was lifted. And among the peasants, Jawaharlal found articulation and

#### 4 *Jawaharlal Nehru: His Life, Work and Legacy*

discovered not only the vitality of the people of India but his own abundant vitality and capacity for hard, unrelenting work.

Nehru saw that the Company's rule that was followed by the British Government had brought a many-sided deprivation to the countryside. A new class of rural capitalists and landlords which rack-rented the cultivator had come in. So had a new class of extortionist middlemen which lived usuriously on the interest on agricultural debts. And like a superstructure on this misery was the fact of the exploitation of the countryside by what has been described as "the trade capital of the mother country". Famines visited India with a deadly regularity. It was obvious that nature or the failure of rains alone could not have accounted for all this misery. And, to cap it all, there was taxation. It was in this environment that Dadabhai Naoroji wrote his memorable chastisement—*Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*. Fabian Socialism gave Nehru's ideology its bricks, and enlightened Indian opinion gave it the cement. He found corroboration of his own first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the peasantry in Dadabhai's following unforgettable words:

And is it not a great condemnation of the present British administration of Indian expenditure that the people of India cannot make any wealth—worse than that, they must die off by millions, and be underfed by scores of millions, produce a wretched produce, and of that even somebody else much deprive them of a portion.

Plunging into the non-co-operation movement of the Congress under Gandhiji's leadership, Jawaharlal Nehru accepted the non-violent method not so much as an all-time principle but as the only practicable method that was then available. Its practice also appeared to suit the national genius. If he accepted non-violence, it was largely because of the explanation Gandhiji himself had offered for it. He wrote:

Abstinence (from violence) is forgiveness only when there is power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature.

And, Nehru was not one of these helpless creatures of any kind. It was the bravery, and even romance, implicit in Satyagraha

that appealed to him. And more than anything else he was convinced that the Indian farmer desired a non-violent revolution.

He was absolutely convinced of the fact that revolution was desired. Nehru, like a well-trained political scientist, tried always to find a practical correlative to establish theory and, conversely, to find a theoretical basis to his real-life observations. If he found the rural peasant of India becoming increasingly restive, he also noted that this was because the country itself was becoming progressively more and more dependent on land. It is an incredible fact that in the middle of the nineteenth century, only 55 per cent of the population was dependent on agriculture, while at the beginning of the twentieth century, nearly 74 per cent of the population had become dependent on the land. Britain desired that India should become a rural vassalage with no chance of standing on its own legs. Britain, in other words, so manoeuvred that during the greater part of that crucial century, its colonies would miss the industrial revolution while it itself would industrialise and remain without a competitor. But Britain was being very naive. Already seasoned in the theory of Fabian Socialism and in the practice of revolutionary work, Jawaharlal was now poised for another ideological graduation. In 1927, he visited Moscow along with his father and was greeted by *Pravda* as a "leader of the left wing of the Congress".

Nehru saw in the Soviet Union a process in operation which his sense of justice and his sense of history told him, needed to be adopted in India. He was only too aware that there can be no such thing as replication of a revolution; a revolution must strike roots and grow indigenously. But then, if history had prepared the soil for a revolution in India, could not the seeds for it be taken from another nursery of proven quality? India's political revolution, he knew, was taking its own shape in the extraordinary hands of Mahatma Gandhi. And yet, at the same time, more than any other political leader in India, Jawaharlal saw the need for an economic revolution in India. That revolution would have to redeem India from the backwardness of its agrarian structure and, in fact, from its dependence on agriculture itself. In the Soviet Union he saw the sinews of industrial growth taking shape. There is a lyricism in the following description given by Nehru of the Soviet endeavour at planning for both its agriculture and its industry:

## 6 *Jawaharlal Nehru: His Life, Work and Legacy*

The peasant was to be brought near to industry by means of enormous model State farms and collective farms, and the whole country was to be industrialised by the erection of huge factories, hydro-electric power works, the working of mines, and the like; and side by side with this, a host of other activities relating to education, science, co-operative buying and selling, building houses for millions of workers and generally raising their standards of living, were to be undertaken.

It was on this visit that the concept of Five Year Plans, the famous 'piatiletka' as the Russians called it, caught the imagination of Nehru. Apart from Russia, Nehru had also attended in Brussels, the International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism as representative of the Indian National Congress. He met there some of the leading leftists of the world like George Lansbury, Ellen Wilkinson, Fenner Brockway, Harry Pollitt, Ernst Toller, Mohammed Hatta, Roger Baldwin, besides a large number of delegates from China, Africa, Mexico and Latin America. But it would be important for us to remember that if Nehru became convinced that the solution to India's socio-economic problems lay in socialism. It was "not in a vague humanitarian way, but in the scientific economic sense". Nehru saw that Planning was part of socialism. And so it was that the Congress set up the National Planning Committee with Jawaharlal Nehru as its Chairman. Jawaharlal Nehru included in it—farsightedly not just politician but scientists, economists, businessmen and industrialists. There were reservations and even criticisms at that time. The word 'Socialism' was anathema to many and to some even within the Congress Working Committee. But Nehru's socialism had been launched. It was at about this time that he wrote:

The argument about success or otherwise of the Five year Plan is rather a pointless one. Everybody talks of 'planning' now, and of Five Year Plans. The Soviets have put magic into those words.

But it needs, however, to be understood that for him the road to economic democracy in India had to be laid by Indians, with Indians and through Indians, though it had to be the socialist road. This meant that India's socialism would not be authoritarian. Nehru became clear on that, very early. Violence whether by or

against the State held no appeal to him. And hence Indian socialism had to live and breathe in freedom, in decency and dignity.

Nehru foresaw in the Spanish Civil War of the thirties of this century, the beginnings of Fascism in Europe and it is with pride that we look back on the Congress Working Committee resolution condemning the emergency of dictatorships. It is also noteworthy to recall that Nehru declined an invitation from Hitler during one of his visits to Europe. This amounted to a remarkable prognostication of the fate that awaited Hitler's National Socialism.

India, then, had to find its own way to socialism. It was after all, on Indian soil that Gautama the Buddha had spoken of the Middle Path. And it was, again, India's great fortune to have had another *messiah* in our midst, who had sought to balance rights and duties and show equal importance of means and ends. Could democracy and socialism not blend? Democracy by itself, as a purely political need could not have served India. Socialism as exemplified by its existing models could not, by itself, have sufficed for India. But Nehru found Democratic Socialism to be eminently feasible, both as a goal and as a way. The great planner statistician and economic philosopher P.C. Mahalanobis has in fact said, "The Nehru approach to planning may perhaps be called the Middle Way or the Middle Path". Nehru explained the concept of democratic socialism in the following words:

In the past, democracy has been taken chiefly to mean political democracy, roughly represented by the idea of every person having a vote. It is obvious that a vote by itself does not mean very much to a person who is down and starving...Therefore, political democracy by itself is not enough except that it may be used to obtain a gradually increasing measure of economic democracy.

He made his basic recommendation in clear terms: the problems of poverty and unemployment, of national defence and the economic regeneration were not to be solved without industrialisation. And Industrialisation was not to be achieved without science and technology.

It was only natural that when history placed Jawaharlal Nehru at the helm of the new nation State, he should have regarded the opportunity as a 'tryst with destiny'. Looking upon Parliament as the agency that would secure political democracy, he set up the Planning Commission as the agency that would secure an



economic democracy. The first Plan's stress was on agriculture. In the Second Plan, it was industry's turn to receive priority. Emphasis came to be placed on the development of heavy machine building, heavy electricals, steel and non-ferrous metals and on energy. There was to be provision for three steel plants, at Bhilai, Rourkela and Durgapur, to be started with Soviet, German and British collaboration.

It was at the historic Avadi Session of the Indian National Congress in 1955, when, after the new democracy had stabilised, that the Congress gave itself, formally the creed of a socialistic pattern of society. It is significant that the Avadi Session took place in the first year of the Second Plan. Nehru had already oriented the country to the socialist path by enacting the Directive Principles of State Policy at the inception of the Constitution. But it was from Avadi and the Second Plan onwards that a more vigorous utilization of our resources, a rapid industrialization and, most important an equitable distribution of the resources of the community, became the country's formally declared charter and course. The Mixed Economy and a Welfare State emerged as a viable concept. Legislation acquired a nation-building dimension and phrases such as 'the commanding heights of the economy' entered not just our political lexicon but, in fact, that of the entire developing world. The emergence of the public sector, of land ceiling, of regulations on industrial monopoly, of state trading, are all facets of this same policy.

Great changes were taking place at the same time, in the world of science and technology which could not but affect the ways of living and thinking in India. Always interested in scientific research and in the progress of science and technology as such, it was at Nehru's initiative that a large number of national laboratories came into existence to do research in diverse fields. It was again due to his initiative that the resources were made available for the development of atomic energy and the exploration of our oil and mineral resources through the Public Sector. But as in the case of his socialism, his scientific temper also required that India's science be adapted in a manner and style suited to our *genius* and our traditions.

India, with its many stages of development and problems of great complexity required the State to be not merely a balanced one, but one in fact, itself a balancer, a holder and promoter of shared interests.

Nehru perceived these interests as being, basically, regional and denominational. To overcome these, he devised the technique of attaining a national consensus on national issues. He tried to obtain a broad-based agreement on basic principles and then proceeded to implement the agreed proposals. Nehru thought of the institution of the National Development Council which was able to secure an inter-regional consensus on programmes. This Council represented true federalism in action. Even the States reorganisation on the basis of regional languages was in essence a democratic exercise, intended to fulfil sub-national aspirations. Nehru's assurance to non-Hindi speaking States about the use of English falls in the same category and has to be seen as an action in the best traditions of democratic federalism.

The concern Nehru showed for the tribal people demonstrates his approach to the needs of backward regions and of minority communities. He has said:

I approached them in a spirit of comradeship and not like someone aloof who had come to look at them, examine them, weigh them, measure them and report about them or to try to make them conform to another form of life.

His inviting the tribals to the Annual Congress Sessions and the Republic Day celebrations reflected this approach. More tangibly, his ensuring that tribal rights in land and forests be respected, did the same.

Again, Nehru's concern for the religious minorities in India showed the same liberal attitude. A good socialist had to be a good democrat and a good democrat, necessarily, had to be secular. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulana Azad, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Sheikh Abdullah and Dr. Zakir Husain were some of those for whom Panditji had always the highest regard and esteem. They represented, for Nehru the truth that India has been and is intended to be a secular nation.

For Nehru, the exploitation of any one or any group by another was unpardonable. He was equally concerned about the underprivileged or disadvantaged people such as the women of India. The national movement had thrown up a number of patriotic women with dedication and sacrifice into the struggle in spite of the shackles that bound women by customs, inhibitions and social obloquy. Panditji afforded them status and position by

choosing, consciously, women as legislators, Ministers, Ambassadors and Governors. He used to insist on the inclusion of women in the State Cabinets and in the Legislatures. The Nehru era saw many women blossom into stalwarts. Nehru's role in the matter of women's rights can only be called pioneering. The subject of marriage, divorce and maintenance has been very much on the public mind of late. I am, therefore, tempted to refer to an episode when the Special Marriage Bill of 1954 was under consideration. I moved an amendment to the Bill to the effect that a petition for divorce may be presented to the district court by both the parties together on the ground that they have been living separately for a period of one year or more, that they have not been able to live together and that they must have a mutually-agreed dissolution. The district court was to be empowered to declare the marriage dissolved after a stipulated period. There was a great deal of discussion and opposition to this. Speaking on the proposal, Panditji, had this to say:

The question that ultimately arises is the question that when two people find it impossible to get on together whatever the cause, what is to be done about it? I am prepared, if I may say so, to forgive not one lapse but many, but I am not prepared to forgive the intolerable position of two persons who hate each other being tied up to each other. Therefore, I welcome this clause here. I welcome particularly the amendment that my colleague, Mr. Venkataraman, is moving on it in regard to divorce by mutual consent.

This is yet another example of Nehru's progressive and modern thinking.

A tree, they say, is best measured when it is down. How right he was, how wise were his various emphases, became clear on the 27th May, 1964. Professor Ranga had not always agreed with Panditji and yet he said of him:

Many things we have to say, and we had to say, in criticism of his policies; they are there on record. He had many things to say *about us* and *to us* also; they are also on record. These records could not have been there if it had not been for his loyalty to the cause of democracy. That stands to his eternal credit.

At the other end of the pole, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, a doyen of Communists, said of Nehru something; that too was extremely significant.

He understood more than any other leader in power the essential impulses of human progress. He gave our nation an orientation so that it could manfully meet the challenge of poverty, backwardness and social injustice . . . .

Democrat of democrats, socialist of socialists, Jawaharlal Nehru was a unique phenomenon, an answer to the challenge of our times.

The arithmetic of numbers in Parliament did not require him to make compromises with any other group or party. But nonetheless, he liked to carry with him the country and the Parliament and all reasonable points of view by painstakingly explaining, justifying and removing doubts and persuading others.

To sum up, Nehru was an architect who transformed a mediaeval India into a modern State, and brought it abreast of the modern States of the world.

Nehru loved India for what it was, but fought to make it what it is meant to be. The then Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Dr. Zakir Husain, said movingly on the occasion of Panditji's demise:

We shall ever miss his personality and be the poorer—very much the poorer—for the loss. But the values to which that personality was committed will live and will demand commitment from us. As an English poet has said: 'To us he is no more a person now, but a whole climate of opinion'. The tasks—many and difficult—of growing national life do not stop with the passing away of one great person. They press for completion, they demand fresh commitment, they call for renewed dedication.

Let us rededicate ourselves to that climate of opinion, treading the path of democratic socialism, the Middle Way, that he showed us.

May Nehru's path of working not just *for* but *with* the people of India be our path always. And may the years of the rose be not just a memory but a living inspiration.

*Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru : The Maker of the Modern Commonwealth**

---

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the chosen instrument of God for freeing India. I would like to quote a letter Bapu wrote to Panditji on 3 December, 1928:

My dear Jawahar,

My love to you. It was all done bravely. You are braver to do things. May God spare you for many a long year to come and make you a chosen instrument for freeing India from the yoke.

Of the various contributions of Pandit Nehru, one of equal significance and which is of recent interest also is a discussion on Nehru's role in the Commonwealth of Nations. It has been rightly said that Pandit Nehru studied history, he wrote history and he made history. Seen in historical perspective, it would be useful to appreciate that Panditji's impact on world affairs and on international institutions, represented the positive influences of humanism on national and international political processes.

Pandit Nehru played the most important role in moulding the foreign policy of the Indian National Congress both during our freedom struggle as well as after our winning Independence. He made the people of India conscious about the affairs of the world. He looked upon India's struggle for Independence against the mightiest imperialist power as a part of the struggle of oppressed humanity against Colonialism. Thus, when we became independent, Pandit Nehru reminded the people of India that our struggle for

Independence was to continue till the whole world was rid of all vestiges of colonialism and till all peoples win independence—political as well as economic. After Independence, he looked upon the Commonwealth as something capable of being moulded into an instrument to help the freedom struggle of people against colonialism and racism. He also visualised the potential of the Commonwealth to provide economic assistance to the newly liberated countries in the initial stages of their independence. In 1928, in the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru, with Subhash Chandra Bose, countered senior Congress leaders when they wanted Dominion status as the objective of India's freedom struggle.

Jawaharlal Nehru was not to be satisfied with anything less than complete independence. With great deal of persuasion he agreed to postpone his demand of complete independence for one year. Next year, as Congress President, he proclaimed complete independence as our clear goal. In the late thirties, he became disgusted with the British policy of tolerating fascism. He called imperialism and fascism as two sides of the same coin. In his disgust with British foreign policy, he repeatedly asserted that free India will sever all connections with the imperialist British Government.

In view of these continuous assertions by the Indian National Congress, people were surprised when India decided to continue in the Commonwealth. However, if one considers the whole matter deeply, one would find that there is no contradiction. The Indian National Congress and Pandit Nehru were opposed to British Imperialism, but not to the British people. Even in 1929, in his Presidential Address at the Lahore Congress, Pandit Nehru, while advocating complete freedom as the Congress aim, did not rule out Independent India's free association with Britain.

Similarly, Bapu said at the Second Round Table Conference in London, in 1931, "The Congress contemplates a connection with the British people. But that connection must be such as can exist between two absolute equals".

Thus, when Attlee announced in the British Parliament that after Independence India would be free to leave the British Commonwealth, any reservation due to imposition disappeared. When Burma left Commonwealth, it was said that Burma's leaving the Commonwealth demonstrated that practically any member

could leave when the country so desired. Thus, on Independence, India decided to continue as a Dominion. However, India had decided to become a Republic and could not agree to owing any allegiance to the British Crown. In order to accommodate India, Britain had to change the law with the concurrence of other Dominions, like Australia, Canada and New Zealand. These difficulties were removed by a new formula devised by Nehru and Attlee. The name of the British Commonwealth was changed to Commonwealth and the word 'British' was dropped. India agreed to the British monarch's continuing as the symbolic head of the Commonwealth. Thus, now India was joining, as a Republic, not the British Commonwealth but the Commonwealth — a free association of nations, of which India was to be an equal partner.

In December 1948, at the Jaipur Session of the Indian National Congress, under Pandit Nehru's guidance a resolution was passed which said that India would welcome her free association with independent nations of the Commonwealth for their common welfare in the promotion of world peace.

On his return from Britain, after agreeing to India's continuance in the Commonwealth, in a broadcast to the nation, he called this: "a fateful and historic decision," and answering critics, said:

I have not the least doubt in my mind that I have adhered in letter and spirit to every pledge that I, in common with millions of my countrymen, have taken in regard to the independence of India during the past twenty years or more. I am convinced that far from injuring the honour or interest of India, the action I took in London has kept that honour bright and shining and enhanced her position in the world.

To quote him further:

I have naturally looked to the interests of India for that is my first duty. I have always conceived that duty in terms of the larger good of the world. That is the lesson that our masters taught us.

He told us also the ways of peace and friendship with others, always maintaining the freedom and dignity of India.

The Constituent Assembly agreed with his stand. He told the Constituent Assembly that India joined the Commonwealth because it was beneficial to India and also to certain causes in the world which we wish to advance.

Pandit Nehru was a practical idealist. He always talked about India's interests. On independence, India was facing many problems due to Partition. There was the refugee problem to be tackled, so also other problems. Remaining in the Commonwealth helped India economically, as we could take advantage of Commonwealth preference. Technical development was also helped by remaining in the Commonwealth. Our major trade was with the Commonwealth countries and we could not afford to disturb it. Similarly, this helped in the settlement of sterling balances. Settlement of sterling balances also helped us in the earlier development. Most of our defence equipment was British and we could not afford a complete break. It was not possible to change completely. Now everybody agrees that the Commonwealth link was to India's advantage.

The Commonwealth link also provided a platform for propagating India's foreign policy. India's joining the Commonwealth encouraged other newly freed Commonwealth nations to join the Commonwealth which has ceased to be a white man's preserve. Now the Commonwealth stands against racism, and in 1961, South Africa had to leave the Commonwealth due to its racist policies. Pandit Nehru used the Commonwealth platform for espousing the cause of liberation of British colonies. Now it is a recognised fact that the new Commonwealth played a significant role in the liberation of British colonies and the liquidation of the British Empire.

In this process, Pandit Nehru played the most important role. He was, throughout his life, an outspoken advocate of ending all forms of colonialism. Pandit Nehru looked upon Africa as a neighbour across the sea—this is the word he coined, 'neighbour across the sea'—and took keen interest in the process of the liberation of African nationalities. He had an emotional attachment to the African people. While he did not approve of violence in the Mau Mau Movement, he said: "I am interested in standing by people who are in great trouble and who have to face tremendous oppression by a powerful government. I should condemn, of course, every species of violence and give no quarter to it. But I shall stand by the Africans nevertheless. That is the only way I can serve them." He condemned British oppression and supported the African cause both inside as well as outside the Commonwealth.

Naturally, this could not be to the liking of the British Government and when the British Government objected in 1953,



Pandit Nehru sent the following sharp reply:

Our Government is not used to being addressed in this way by any Government and I can only conclude that he (the British Commonwealth Secretary) has for the moment forgotten that he is addressing the independent Republic of India .... It has been our constant endeavour not to embarrass the British Government and we have tried to cooperate with them to the largest possible extent subject to our own principles and policies. We shall continue to do so, but we are not prepared to change these policies because of any pressure exercised by any outside authority.

This is the sum and substance of Pandit Nehru's policy that we are not prepared to change an iota of our policy because of any pressure from whatever source it may come.

Even though for continuing to be a member of the Commonwealth Nehru faced strong criticism from the leaders of all parties in India and in 1949, Jayaprakash Narain criticised the membership as suggesting a lack of self-confidence and an implicit commitment to one of the power blocs, India did get support from the Commonwealth for its Korea and China policies. There was one thing in Nehru. When he thought a thing was right, he had the courage to stand up with conviction. It is our good luck that more often than not he proved correct.

Kashmir occasioned lot of tension in the Commonwealth. However, Pandit Nehru was able to make Commonwealth members agree to not raising bilateral issues in Commonwealth meetings. Britain, because of its early predilection, and her own strategic consideration, often took positions patently adverse to India and condoning internationally wrong actions of Pakistan. Though Sir Owen Dixon, the U.N. representative in Kashmir accepted India's charge that 'Pakistan was an aggressor in Kashmir', Britain continued to equate Pakistan with India.

Naturally the Indian leadership resented it and in 1952, Shyama Prasad Mukerjee said: "On every critical occasion the Commonwealth countries have failed to stand by India where India's stand has been right and just." Again in 1956, all the opposition parties agreed in denouncing the Commonwealth in Parliament and asking Nehru to quit the Commonwealth. Acharya J.B. Kripalani said in Parliament: "Ever since our independence,

England has always sided against us." M.S. Gurupadswamy, on behalf of the Praja Socialist Party, demanded severance of Commonwealth links. A.K. Gopalan wanted us to quit the Commonwealth as our "membership of the Commonwealth gives Britain the prestige which enables it to deceive world public opinion." Bhupesh Gupta said: "Why should our friends ask us to continue in this association, which has injured our prestige, which has injured our economy, which offends our conscience and our prestige in the world." The Communist party even staged a demonstration in front of Parliament House on 14th November of that year demanding India's withdrawal from the Commonwealth.

Similarly, there was universal resentment on military action by Britain in Suez. Britain did not consult India before this action. However, India expressed herself firmly and succeeded in making Britain withdraw. This was a significant victory of the Non-aligned Movement, and the statesmanship of Pandit Nehru.

The benefits of our membership of the Commonwealth were apparent at the time of the Chinese aggression in 1962. The support from fellow Commonwealth countries, with the exception of Pakistan, was "quick, satisfactory and substantial." In the beginning, Britain offered military assistance without any strings attached. President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan met at Nassau and agreed that all possible help should be given to India and that expenses were to be met by the U.S. and the Commonwealth jointly.

Thus, one can see that Pandit Nehru's policy of continuing in the Commonwealth was in our interest as well as in the interest of world peace. India's continuance in the Commonwealth, in spite of all tensions during Nehru's time, shows that Nehru was a statesman who knew that indignation can never be a substitute for policy.

The Commonwealth as moulded by Jawaharlal Nehru, developed in subsequent years in a manner that its merits become more and more evident. Shrimati Indira Gandhi in her address to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting at New Delhi on November 23, 1983, said:

The Commonwealth brings together about a third of the member-States of the United Nations. It is genuinely eclectic grouping of nations, comprising many races, religions and

diverse geographical regions. No constitution, act or treaty limits the ambit of its concerns. It is a North-South forum, encompassing a representative range of developing countries and some of the developed. It is also a forum where nonaligned countries meet those who belong to military alliances. It is obvious that we cannot agree on all matters, yet we try to find some common ground. To be a living organism, the Commonwealth must be flexible and responsive to changing situations. As the world evolves, so should the Commonwealth.

Similarly, our Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi in his address at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting at Vancouver on October 13, 1987 said:

..... A shared history created the Commonwealth. Commitment to peace and justice holds it together. Our support goes out to initiatives for peace and endeavours that challenge injustice. We are an important world organisation committed to peace, justice and equality, to harmony and progress, and to the unity of humankind.

This is how Commonwealth has come up from the early stages and how it is helping the cause of India and the causes which are dear to India. Again, on November 11, 1987, in his *suo-moto* statement in Parliament, the Prime Minister said:

The Vancouver Summit confirmed the dynamism and relevance of this organisation in international affairs. Notwithstanding the single discordant note on the issue of sanctions, the Summit welded together a large section of world opinion on key issues of peace and stability in the world.

It is no mean achievement that on the question of sanctions against racialism in South Africa, all the Commonwealth nations, with the solitary exception of Britain, came together. They all held the views which India had been propounding from the time of Bapuji himself. It is a big success for the correctness of our stand both on racialism and in continuing in the Commonwealth.

It must be recognised that at the Vancouver Summit there was near unanimity on the issue of sanctions to combat apartheid. This was a major achievement with one exception (the British Prime Minister). But even she had to condemn apartheid. It represented the ascendance of human values in world affairs,

values that have been of critical importance in Indian philosophy and thought from time immemorial. The Rig Veda enunciated:

एकैव मानुषी जप्ति (There is only one race — of human beings)

Implicit in this, is the whole philosophy of humanism. It is this philosophy that is exemplified in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's approach to world affairs, moving his guiding hand in shaping the evolution of the Commonwealth.

Thus, one may conclude that the Commonwealth has served the cause of world peace, of freedom of subjugated nations—almost all of whom are free with the exception of Namibia—and also the cause of human dignity in opposing apartheid until it is abolished from the face of the earth. The Commonwealth is also working for human welfare, with important initiatives in key areas such as world trade, distance/education and protection of the environment.

*P.V. Narasimha Rao*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru and Socialism**

---

To most people, socialist ideology or philosophy conjures up visions of rigid political theories and doctrinaire economic systems. Even in recent years some nations have been kept apart by the belief that different socio-political systems cannot co-exist with a socialist ideology. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was a refreshing exception to this dogma. As a man, who put an indelible stamp on every important political movement for Indian independence and was deeply involved in the Government of independent India for nearly two decades, he was too full of political realism to put dynamic political processes into the strait-jacket of theory. He was certainly inspired by the ideas of Marx and Lenin and his writings showed that he was profoundly moved by the revolution in Russia. However, he clearly recognised that India must find for itself its own road to socialism, which would be influenced by the peculiarities of its own historical experiences and the genius of its race.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the adoption of socialism as a coherent objective of the Indian National Congress was Panditji's achievement. Immediately after taking over the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in 1929, Panditji declared at the Lahore Congress:

I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry . . . . we must realise that the philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over . . . . India will have to go that way too if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality . . . . .

It was his lead that resulted in the socialist economic programme adopted by the Congress party at the Karachi session two years later. The political and economic programmes of the Congress were shaped by Panditji's conviction that in the existing international situation the struggle for national liberation of the colonial peoples must be influenced by socialist ideas and ideals. This is a thème that recurs in his speeches and writings during the independence movement. For him, *Swaraj* and socialism were joint objectives of the movement. It was his firm conviction that India could not have the one without the other.

As long as the country was under foreign rule, Nehru realised that nationalism would inevitably have to take precedence. Nehru's idea of socialist development in India could really take root in the country's political life only after independence, when in December 1954, the Lok Sabha passed a resolution declaring that the object of the country's economic policy should be a socialistic pattern of society. This was followed in January 1955 by a similar resolution at Avadi session of the Congress. Now, a very significant factor which needs attention is that it was not the Indian National Congress from where socialism emanated as a creed, but it was from our Parliament that it first emanated and was later adopted by the Congress. So, the socialism suitable to our circumstances is not an ideology of any political party, but it is the basic tenet of the nation itself as was evidenced by the Parliament accepting it before any other party, particularly the ruling party. Therefore, when we talk of socialism in the Indian context, we have to understand that in the context of our Parliament having adopted the socialistic pattern of society before the ruling party did.

Panditji's concept of socialism did not adopt a doctrinaire approach. He called himself a socialist since he accepted that socialist principles were common to all, but he retained the right to vary their application in the light of his own judgement of the conditions in which he had to apply such principles. This explains why he frequently refused to provide a definitive description of socialism or for the socialistic pattern which he advocated. At the National Development Council meeting in November 1954, he clarified this approach:

The picture I have in mind is definitely and absolutely a socialistic picture of society; I am not using the word in a dogmatic sense at all. I mean largely that the means of

production should be socially owned and controlled for the benefit of society as a whole . . . . .

This is a very pregnant statement that he made: "I mean largely that the means of production should be socially owned and controlled", —this is one part, and "for the benefit of society as a whole"—is another. If the means of production today have been nationalised or have been taken under public control, the question which, according to Panditji has to be asked is: whether this control and this public ownership is being used for the benefit of the society as a whole? This is the most important question. We are not really addressing ourselves to this question to which we ought to. Probably today there is a new fermentation in the thinking of our Government and the Governments elsewhere, including the Soviet Union, where public ownership and public control is being very closely scrutinised on the touchstone of its being or not being for the benefit of all the people or the society as a whole. This is the *kasauti* (yardstick) which we have to place in front of us and judge every economic activity that is going on in our country against this *kasauti*.

At the same time Pandit Nehru was clear about the role that socialism would have to play in our country and of the objectives of a socialistic pattern of society. He declared in his presidential address in April 1936 that "Socialism is something even more than an economic doctrine; it is a philosophy of life." This is the desideratum; this is the real reason why he wanted socialism, not as a doctrine which he liked; not as something which was being adopted by another country which he admired, but he wanted socialism because of the conditions he specifically found then and we find in India. That is what he says:

I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vested interests in land and industry, as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian States system. That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit-system by a higher ideal of cooperative service. It means ultimately a change in our instincts and habits and desires.

So, it was not just an economic doctrine he was propounding, but it was a new philosophy and a new basis for the reorganisation of society. That is what socialism was to him.

It was in this blend of ideology and idealism with pragmatism that Nehru's greatness lay. He did neither preach a peasant or proletarian revolution for which our society was ill-prepared, nor did he flirt with utopian concepts of a classless society or a completely state-controlled economy. His commitment to the democratic path was equally absolute. This is the dynamic concept of socialism which was enunciated by Panditji.

In fact, Panditji also inherited this concept from our own tradition. In this context, it may be pertinent to mention an instance when some sort of running battle was going on between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League on certain basic issues. One Muslim League leader made fun of Panditji by calling his socialism a brand of his own and that he was all the while oscillating between Moscow and Benaras. Today, while retrospectively, I think what he said was exactly what was the situation then and what really was subsumed by Panditji's socialism. He never cut himself adrift of the country's tradition and its rediscovery. All of his works clearly demonstrate his characteristics as a great historian, a great statesman, a great liberator, a great person with scientific temperament and, above all, a great writer. He was great in anything that he touched. A person cannot imbibe all these traits without a sense of history and tradition. If he looked at socialism, it was from the angle of an Indian with a 5,000 year-old philosophy behind him to fall back upon.

In the society which developed in India in ancient periods, the King's duties were so prescribed that there was no distance between him and the people. So, some kind of socialism, egalitarianism and equality built into our system from times immemorial is truly reflected in Panditji's socialism which is typically based on Indian ethos and rooted in our own traditions, not something taken from the Communist Manifesto of 1848. He, too, referred to it many times at public meetings and at the meetings of the Congress Legislature Parties.

There is no doubt also that his ideas of democratic socialism enriched the political consciousness of other nations struggling for national liberation in the post-war years. I recall a particular speech made by him in one of our meetings at Hyderabad, in which he tried to explain democratic socialism. He said there can



be no democracy without socialism and *vice versa*. According to him, democratic socialism was like a coin, which had two sides—one that of socialism and the other of democracy. He said one cannot exist without the other and he went on to explain like a teacher and we were just spell-bound listening to him how he tried to derive one from the other. In fact, those are the teachings which none of us will ever forget. We were very lucky to be part of such audiences which Panditji addressed time and again and we had the benefit of his ideas coming direct from him and not from secondary sources.

In a world that glorifies political personalities during their life-time and belittles their achievements after their death, the legacy of Panditji's socialist ideas has possibly suffered some neglect. Visions and ideals, however, fortunately have a longevity greater than that of human beings. Our good fortune has been that Panditji was there to introduce us to some visions and ideals during the formative stages of our national consciousness. Even if sometimes they are not traced back to him, they are part of our political culture and social ethos. Quite often in the process of national development, our political culture or social trends have reflected the values that we have inherited from Panditji, for example, the Directive Principles of State Policy framed by the makers of our Constitution contain the Nehruvian ideals of socialism to guide Government policies. However, how much they are guiding is a separate issue. We all know the *Golaknath* case. We are very well aware of the later developments and the kind of conflict between Fundamental Rights on the one hand and Directive Principles on the other and how they were sought to be reconciled. Whether they have reconciled or not, the fact remains that they were part of the same Constitution and because of some other exigencies they have been given different values perhaps in a value system which seems to be a little different from Panditji's value system. So, what has emanated from Panditji has taken different forms. It is for us, his torchbearers—if we call ourselves so—to think of what is to be done in the present context. If Panditji interpreted Gandhiji someone has to interpret Panditji as he had interpreted Gandhiji. Implementation of one of his programmes in all vigour is different from interpreting it. In changing circumstances it is a totally different thing. Today the greatest Gandhian I can think of is Nehru. Now, who can be called the greatest Nehruite is still to be decided. History will

decide it. Shrimati Indira Gandhi was there but her life was a life of struggle. It was not a life of precept. On the other hand Panditji's was not a life of struggle, since he became leader very early in life, even much before becoming Prime Minister. That is the difference between the two. Indiraji in a way interpreted and implemented Panditji. But, in the context of our march towards the 21st century or on the eve of the 21st century, how Panditji is to be interpreted is something which is a challenge to the younger generation. I am trying to interpret but I don't think I have succeeded. And I am sure no one from my generation will succeed hundred per cent in interpreting and grasping the significance of the 21st century. So, we require someone who can understand the significance of 21st century, and who is then able to maintain the continuity of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Let us see, if we have a historic personality emerging who can do this. In this lies the future of India and perhaps the future of mankind.

The force of conceptual ideas cannot be judged by short-term achievements. Nehru did not promise us socialism in a short span of few years. He perceived it as a goal capable of achievement, but over a length of time. He gave us an aim to strive for.

"I cannot say", he said once, "when socialism will come to India. But, that it will come, I am certain. It will come not because I or half a dozen others want it to come. Nor will it stop because 'big business' do not want it to come". In his one of the most pithy statements, he says: "I do not know when it is going to come, but I am sure, it is going to come because as it has become part of our ethos and what we have called in our language *Yuga Dharma*". Socialism has become the *Yuga Dharma* of India today. It has to take roots. It is taking roots and it has to manifest itself in every walk of life of the people in the years to come.

Now, we need a person who understands the 21st century and is able to maintain the continuity of the Nehruvian line in order to suit and reinterpret it in order to fit into the 21st century. This is the need of the hour in India today. India does not merely need great *pundits* who will simply tell us what the books contain or what the texts contain. There are many like that. India is not in need of those total opium-eaters, who will go on giving us all kinds of imaginary words and ideas. India is in need of interpreters and *vyakhyatas*. Panditji was one of the great *vyakhyatas* of Indian political, social and literary scene and today we need some leader, who has to interpret Panditji in the same way as he interpreted Gandhiji.

*Buta Singh*

## **Pandit Nehru and Nation Building**

---

Panditji was a multi-dimensional personality who bestrode the Indian scene like a colossus for years. His invaluable service covered every area of country's life. He was almost a mythic figure, a great democrat, a creative thinker, the darling of the masses and messiah of the poor and under-privileged. Indeed he was a 'Yug Purush' who led our country through freedom struggle and guided its destiny through the first turbulent decades of nationhood. Secularism and social justice were very closely identified with Panditji's thinking and what he did during his long span in public life. Secularism to him was an article of faith and social justice and effective tool for reducing economic and social disparities.

Panditji was fully conscious of diversities prevailing in the Indian situation and perceived in secularism an effective tool for harmonising these diversities. In fact the epilogue of his book "Discovery of India" beautifully sums up the features of Indian society and what held it together. He wrote :

*"what have I discovered? It is presumptuous of me to imagine that I could unveil her and find out what she is today and what she was in the long past. Today, she is 400 million separate individual men and women, each different from the other, each living in a private house of thought and feeling. If this is so in the present, how much more difficult is it to grasp that multitudinous past of innumerable succession of human beings. Yet, something has bound them together and bind them still. India is a geographical and economic entity, a cultural unity amidst diversity, a bundle of contradictions held together by strong indivisible threads. Overwhelmed*

again and again, her spirit was never conquered; and today that she appears to be a plaything of a proud conqueror she remains unsubdued and unconquered. About her there is the elusive quality of a legend of long ago; some enchantment seems to have held her mind. She is a myth and an idea; a dream and a vision and yet very real and present and pervasive. There are terrifying glimpses of dark corridors which seem to lead back to primeval night, but also there is the fullness and warmth of the day about her . . . .”

This speaks of his innate faith in the capacity of the Indian people to pull together despite diversities of language, religion, caste or creed towards attainment of the common objective. How relevant are these words even today when the political situation in the country is fraught with certain disquieting developments which pose a serious threat to its security environment. We shall do well to keep these prophetic words of Panditji always at the back of our mind in order to promote the spirit of Indian nationhood rather than getting enmeshed in the politics of violence in pursuit of sectional demands.

Panditji always laid great stress on maintaining unity and integrity of the country and combating the forces of fundamentalism and communalism. He stated “it is not enough to talk of political unity, we must have something deeper than that, we must have emotional unity that does away with professional barriers, caste barriers or communal or religious barriers. Only then can we talk about really unified India.” Continuing in the same vein Pandit Nehru stated “political integration has already taken place to some extent, but what I am after is something much deeper than that—an emotional integration of the Indian people so that we might be welded into one, and make India one strong national unit, maintaining at the same time all our wonderful diversities.” He cautioned against being swept away by momentary passion, or misapplication of religion to politics or communalism or provincialism or casteism. He conjured the vision of India which was mighty, not in the ordinary sense of words that is, having great armies, but mighty in thought, mighty in action, mighty in culture and mighty in its peaceful service to humanity.

Panditji spoke against mixing of politics with religion. He expressed himself in a forthright manner when he said in the Constituent Assembly on April 3, 1948, “We must have it clearly

in our minds and in the mind of the country that the alliance of religion and politics in the shape of communalism is a most dangerous alliance and it yields the most abnormal kind of illegitimate brood." How prophetic indeed are these words when we look at the situation prevailing in certain parts of our country today. The manner in which religion is being misused for political and narrow ends is a cause of serious concern for all right-thinking men as it threatens to undermine the democratic process and the secular character of our polity. These evils have to be fought with determination for preserving the unity and integrity of this country.

Panditji also cautioned us that the whole structure of our country and the process of emotional integration will be seriously impaired if we forget the duties and obligations and stop taking pride in having a secular state. He always advised the majority community to win the good-will of the minorities by fair and even generous treatment. At the present critical juncture, when passions have been roused and have assumed communal overtones in certain parts of our country, we should draw lessons from Panditji's views which show the right path. It is our duty not to get embroiled in the controversy of 'majoritism' and 'minoritism' which both preach a pernicious philosophy and work for strengthening the bonds of unity and communal harmony in the midst of diversities.

Panditji mirrored in himself the deepest urges of Indian people and carved a niche in the hearts of millions of our countrymen through sheer dedication and complete identification with their cause. His concept of social justice was not confined merely to the question of reduction in economic disparities. His canvas in this respect was very wide. It covered the area of reducing social disparities equally in law and practice and giving a better deal to women who were suppressed and exploited for centuries under the weight of traditionalism in Indian society. He toiled tirelessly at great personal sacrifice both during the days of freedom struggle and in the aftermath of Independence for ameliorating the lot of common man and women. The various Congress Party resolutions passed during those turbulent days of freedom struggle amply reflect his views. He lent a new meaning to the freedom struggle by linking it with the problems of poverty and hunger. His patriotism, compassion for the down-trodden

and love for truth were truly infectious and endeared him to one and all alike. He represented the quintessence of Indian culture and Western modernism. Nurtured as he was in rational and scientific traditions, he never lost sight of spiritualism. This unique combination and his ideas found the fullest expression when he came at the helm and embarked upon the tasks of nation building after India became free. He made solid contributions towards all-round economic, social, technological and scientific progress of our country. His vision was to make India a truly strong, modern, socialistic State with secular bias.

Nehru's Presidential address at the Lahore (1929), Lucknow (1936) and Faizpur (1948) Sessions of the Congress openly proclaimed his faith in scientific socialism. Therefore in line with this thinking and as a true democrat and socialist he adopted a planned pattern of economic and social development for India as he realised that this was the only way India could become self-reliant and improve the quality of life of its teeming millions. Through the Planning Commission which he set up in 1950, Panditji sought to devise a strategy of rapid economic growth as well as reduction in economic disparities. He also conceived planning as a means of forging new links in the Indian federal system. His call to work for establishment of a socialistic pattern of society as well as promotion of science and technology in the country have to be seen in the context of his total commitment to the cause of upliftment of the down-trodden of our country. His concept of social justice was closely linked with an integrated plan for the economic growth of the country which also meant growth of the individual. He was convinced that political democracy and adult suffrage would have no meaning if there is economic inequality in the country. Real democracy to him meant putting an end to all differences between class and class and development of a more unitary society which in other words meant striving for economic democracy. His concept of economic development did not mean merely establishing a number of factories or increasing production which of course was necessary, but something with a deeper significance aimed at gradual development of societal structure and by adopting an integrated approach for agricultural, industrial, social and economic development.

Panditji also worked for establishment of an egalitarian society which did not permit differences based on birth, income or position.

His objective was obliteration of divisions and fissures in our social life, but he was a realist and did not want to ignore the existing facts. He stressed that we must find a middle way between our objectives and existing facts and keep our ideals in view and then take steps which gradually carry us in that direction. He was, therefore, not averse to the idea of introducing changes in the Constitution for realising the desired objectives. In his view "a Constitution which is unchanging and static—it does not matter how good it is, how perfect is it—is a Constitution that has outlived its use."

Pandit Nehru laid great stress on the development of public sector as he felt that it was not enough merely to increase production, but it was equally important to know what happens to the produce. Pandit Nehru did not believe in distribution of poverty as he felt that this was an anti-thesis of a welfare State. He favoured a welfare State based on socialistic pattern, but then this was not possible unless the national income went up greatly. He laid great stress on community schemes as he felt that no great change can come merely by Governmental action. He gave special attention towards according better status to women in our society. Hindu Code Bill was the singular most important contribution of Panditji which sought to give the women their due and end their exploitation in society.

Panditji's basic thinking whether it is in the area of economic development or social progress or international relations or industrial and scientific advancement continues to be as relevant now as when these were enunciated.

Panditji constantly reminded us that "We belonged to a great country. If we are to be worthy of our country, we must have big minds and big hearts, for small men cannot face big issues or accomplish big tasks. Let each one of us do his duty to his country and to his people and not dwell too much on the duty of others. We have to inculcate these qualities and an objective approach in order to resolve complex issues which confront us today. We can overcome the various problems facing us today and contribute to the all round progress of our country only if we act in a united and dedicated manner. As Panditji said "unarmed and peaceful, we faced foreign empire, not looking for aid to any other country and relied only on ourselves. This gave us the strength that sustained us during our struggle for Independence.

If we had faith and self-confidence when to outward seeming we were powerless, then surely we are much better of today when we are free people with the strength of a great country behind us".

We can progress much faster and add to the strength of the country if we work in the same spirit.



*P. Shiv Shanker*

## **Nehru : A Crusader for Social Justice**

---

On the midnight of 14 and 15 August, 1947, when the world slept, India awoke to freedom. The mantle of steering the ship of Indian nation fell to the lot of the great soul, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru on that occasion. His promise on that midnight "long ago we had tryst with destiny and the time has come to redeem the pledges that we made to the nation" still echo in the ears of the Indian politician, reminding him of his duties and responsibilities to the nation which remain still unfulfilled. The 'pledges' referred to by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru were those that the Indian National Congress had made to the people of India from time to time in the form of its resolutions which were engrafted later in the diverse articles of the Constitution and its Preamble. Nehru, with his farsighted astuteness, guided the Constituent Assembly to conceive and adopt these concepts in order to see the dawn of an egalitarian society and a welfare state. To put it succinctly, the constitutional concepts sum up the personality in Nehru which was at once democratic, secular and socialist.

Jawaharlal Nehru was the combination of a many-faceted personality, a patriot, a statesman, a thinker, a man of letters and specially a humanist. He would undoubtedly enjoy always a pre-eminent position amongst the great men of this country. As the first Prime Minister of independent India, he would be remembered for the way in which he steered the ship of the State and faced myriads of mighty problems.

There were many intensely human qualities in Jawaharlal Nehru which captivated the masses and made him their idol. He was a far-sighted statesman, thinking in most matters ahead of his colleagues in the Cabinet.

In the whole history of parliamentary government in any democratic country during the last hundred years, Jawaharlal Nehru held the record for the rare combination of the unchallenged and unrivalled leadership of his party and the Government as Prime Minister. He had always been a disciplined soldier of the Congress, ever obeying its behests, ever loyal to its resolutions, ever fulfilling its objectives. In his opinion, discipline was the very bedrock of democracy. "You may define democracy in a hundred ways", he says, "but surely one of its definitions is self-discipline of the community". Again and again he called upon his followers to channel their energies and enthusiasm in proper directions in the interest of the community without a resort to wild talk or behaviour, impelled by the proud consciousness of their superior numbers. "Democracy means tolerance, not merely of those who agree with us, but of those who do not agree with us. With the coming of freedom our patterns of behaviour must change so as to fit in with this freedom."

Born in affluent circumstances and brought up and educated in accordance with the best contemporary aristocratic traditions, when Nehru joined the Allahabad Bar, it seemed that his future career was set on the pattern which convention usually prescribed for brilliant young intellectuals belonging to his class. Providence, however, had willed otherwise, and so the young, impressionable and impetuous Nehru came into close contact with Gandhiji, the Sage of Sabarmati, who had meanwhile appeared on the political horizon of India and had begun to preach his revolutionary doctrine of truth, non-violence, non-attachement and non-cooperation. Thus began the relationship of the teacher and the disciple between Gandhiji and Nehru, which was destined to have such a significant and far-reaching impact on the history of India.

When Motilal Nehru died, the entire responsibility of the Nehru family naturally fell on his son Jawaharlal who had led a life almost free from anxieties and domestic worries. Motilal Nehru had left no will, and Jawaharlal was afraid lest the family should think that now after his father's death everyone was dependent upon him for everything. He did not want anyone to have this impression. He wrote a letter to sister Krishna in which he said that after father's death she and mother should consider themselves "the real owners of Anand Bhawan and all that father

had left". Vijaya Lakshmi had already been married and, therefore, Nehru did not include her in his generous offer.

In this money-mad world, it is difficult to come across men who have genuine contempt for wealth. Nehru was one such rare individual and was of a species which was utterly indifferent to money. Nehru believed with A.P. Herbert that "money was the bane of bliss and source of woe".

Speaking in Parliament on 11 April, 1955, he said, "I have no respect for property at all, except for some personal belongings . . . . The House will forgive me if I say I have no property-sense. It is a burden to me to carry property about. In life's journey one should be lightly laden. One cannot be tied down to a patch of land, or building, or something else. So I cannot appreciate this tremendous attachment to property".

Nehru strongly pleaded for a parliamentary system as opposed to other systems. According to K.M. Munshi, "as a middle-of-the-way socialist, impatient to transform India's life, Nehru favoured parliamentary supremacy". The system of parliamentary democracy was finally adopted by deliberate choice, in Nehru's words, "not only because, to some extent we had always thought on those lines previously, but because we thought it was in keeping with our own old traditions also." Conscious of the problems faced by parliaments everywhere, he recommended parliamentary reforms as early as February 1956 and in that connection referred to the paucity of time with the Legislatures and the suggestions for the appointment of large committees to deal with legislation in depth. Parliamentary democracy, he felt, was inevitably going in the direction of economic democracy and whatever forms it might take, "only in the measure that it solves the economic problems does it succeed even in the political field". Nehru believed that the parliamentary form of Government was "more likely to do so than the other forms which lead to some measure of authoritarianism". The parliamentary system with all its failings, had "the virtue that it can fit in with the changing pattern of life".

India's Parliament owes a great deal to Nehru. It has developed from its beginning as the Constituent Assembly, inaugurated on 9 December, 1946, and has progressed through eight general elections as a sovereign institution representative of the people. In its constitution, composition and functioning Nehru has left an

indelible impression. Under his guidance, it has laid solid foundations for our country's political and economic growth. He took good care to safeguard the rights and privileges of Members and to uphold the dignity and prestige of the House. He was responsive not only to the members of his own party, but also to those of the opposition. This was amply illustrated when he agreed in 1956 to amend the States Re-organisation Bill to constitute Bombay into a large bilingual State in accordance with the overwhelming wishes of Members belonging to all parties.

It was through Nehru's conscious efforts as well as through his very association with it in the formative years after Independence, that the Parliament of India soon became a true and effective institution of people's representatives and secured a pre-eminent position in the country's democratic polity. His respect for the parliamentary institution was as deep-rooted as his faith in the democratic process. Parliament symbolised for him the ultimate sovereignty of the people and he was ever zealous of guarding its dignity.

I would like to mention one or two instances about Nehru's forthrightness and frank expression. When he stood up in Parliament as early as in 1949, he said about food imports : "I think the very case with which we have been able to get foodstuff from abroad has rather prevented us from facing the problem properly. I think we should think in terms of not getting any food at all from abroad after a certain period—let us put it at two years, I should not add a day more and just make up our minds that we shall live on the food that we produce after two years or die in the attempt". A few years later, when a Member of Parliament reminded him of his earlier resolve to put an end to all imports of food by April 1952, he answered frankly: "I regret that my words have been falsified and I feel thoroughly ashamed that what was almost a pledge to the country has been broken".

Again, on another occasion in the early days of Parliament (15 November, 1950) referring to the stupendous refugee problem and the enormities that had followed in the wake of partition, he said: "In fact, I have often wondered why the people of India put up with people like me who are connected with the governing of India after all that has happened during the last few months. I am not quite sure that if I had not been in the government I would put up with my government".

The born democrat that he was, the democratic form of government had a powerful appeal to him on the ground that it provided a peaceful method of achieving all ends—resolving all differences, religious, regional, lingual, social and economic, in our national context. Expounding his view on the subject, he once said:

“Democracy means to me an attempt at the solution of problems by peaceful methods. If it is not peaceful, then to my mind, it is not democracy. In a proper democracy, discipline is self-imposed. There is no democracy if there is no discipline”. Never was the need greater than today to remind ourselves of these noble ideas when fissiparous tendencies and divisive forces are raising their ugly heads in some parts of the country.

There was nobody as punctilious as Jawaharlal in regard to the courtesies of parliamentary life, the very manner of his entry into the House, the deep bow to the Chair as he took his seat, his observance of parliamentary etiquette in the best sense of the term particularly as regards respect to the whole House and his constant readiness to answer even irritating interruptions were exemplary. He was no expert when questions relating to privilege and such things cropped up, but he was full of sound sense in his suggestions regarding procedure and was always keen on upholding the prestige of the House as a whole.

In the earlier years, he would sometimes flare up and show something of his celebrated temper, but he would calm down quickly, and if necessary would make ample amends for his own outburst. It was a delight to watch him in such moods, for it showed him as a straight and generous man who stood sharply for certain principles but respected also the other man’s right to his point of view. In later years, he seemed to have developed a kind of quietude; he would be seldom angry, and if more than ordinarily provoked, would recover himself very quickly. This was felt by many to be a loss, for even when he flared up, there used to be a sudden shine of his spirit which itself was worth a great deal.

Unlike most Prime Ministers he spoke extempore almost entirely without notes, and while as a result he sometimes rambled, the artist in him came out regularly in some beautiful flashes and the thinker in him always gave a certain compactness to his ideas. It was as if a very sensitive man was thinking aloud, and

to hear him thus, though occasionally he was repetitive, was a genuine pleasure. One could see that here was a politician very different from the usual breed and here was a coin minted very differently.

One of the ideas which endeared Nehru to the populace of the world was his passion for social justice. He knew that legal justice was not social justice because law is framed and applied to maintain a certain social structure. It has no eternal validity because that which is legal at a certain stage of the development of society may become illegal at another stage of its development. Many things which were legal in India during the British rule have become illegal after independence.

Social justice, therefore, meant for Nehru, the removal of economic injustice which the individual in a capitalist society was compelled to suffer. In the Indian context, as Nehru says in his autobiography, the greatest sufferer was "the agricultural proletariat", the large number of landless labourers in rural areas who, Nehru says, were drawn to the national movement of liberations because of the "growing pauperization of both the petty landholders and tenants". He came, therefore, to the conclusion that "only a solution of the basic problem of land (not to mention other vital national issues) could resolve the conflict" which was increasingly assuming, according to him, the form of a class conflict.

Nehru's success in winning admiration for himself wherever he went was actually a gain for India herself because, by admiring Nehru, people everywhere in the world admired also our country. And people admired him because they saw in him the embodiment of an ideal human being who fought, and they verily believed he also died fighting, for "social justice" not only for the people of his own country but also for the people everywhere in the world. His fight for obtaining social justice was all the more unique because never and nowhere in the world had any statesman laid so much emphasis on the purity of means by which one fights "injustices" in order to bring into this world a just order based on social, political and economic justice. This purity of means, which Nehru had adopted and for which Mahatma Gandhi also stood unflinchingly, had come into sharp conflict with law and the legal system which existed at the time. That is to say, what was known as legal justice was, in the eyes of Nehru, not social

justice and, therefore, he had no hesitation in breaking those laws which tried to give the society an unjust system based on certain principles of law. Maintenance of law and order, which is the main function of legal justice, was not, however, considered to be enough because it came into conflict with the notion of social justice, notion of political justice and also the notion of economic justice. If the laws of a state fail to give political liberty, freedom of expression to the individual and the right of every man to earn his bread and to live the life he chooses, then this legal system condemns itself completely. Thus, the more one reads of Nehru's approach to the society—not only the society of the period in which he lived but the society as a whole or the human society also in future—then one realises that his main aspiration was that eventually our society should evolve a system where the greatest degree of justice would be meted out to the people at large and that justice would not be merely a legal term but a term which would have its significance in the everyday life of the citizen of every country.

Thus Nehru believed the goal of national endeavour to be a new social order under which the basic needs of the common man will be fulfilled: all shall enjoy fundamental human freedoms and have equality of opportunity. The Constituent Assembly and the Constitution framed by it were to be mere parts of the larger national endeavour.

Nehru had told the Assembly that its first task was “to free India through a new Constitution, to feed the starving people, and to cloth the naked masses, and to give to every Indian the fullest opportunity to develop himself according to his capacity”. In other words, the Constitution was relevant to him only as an instrument of social change. “I trust”, Nehru said, “the Constitution itself will lead us to the real freedom that we have clamoured for and that real freedom in turn will bring food to our starving people, clothing for them, housing for them and all manner of opportunities of progress”. And, what Nehru said in the Constituent Assembly remains as relevant today as it was then:

“At present the greatest and most important question in India is how to solve the problem of the poor and the starving. Wherever we turn, we are confronted with this problem. If we cannot solve this problem soon, all our paper Constitution will become useless and purposeless.”

Nehru gave persons coming from any part of the country a feeling that he belonged to the country as a whole and that barriers of caste, creed, religion etc. were artificial and constricting in their effect. He understood clearly that socio-economic problems were at the root of such divisive tendencies, and, therefore, it was his ceaseless endeavour to see that no part of India lagged behind in development and no section of the society felt neglected. His concept of planning was comprehensive and wide-ranging and its central inspiration was more equitable distribution of opportunities for people from all regions and strata of society. He was particularly concerned about the hardships suffered by the weaker sections of society and, therefore, special emphasis was laid in all development programmes to provide a helping hand to them.

Jawaharlal Nehru never in his life demonstrated any inclination towards religious feelings. Religion had no practical meaning for him, as it was not capable of solving India's vital problems on a scientific basis, and also because it demanded a completely different approach to life on Earth than one that could secure the social and economic advance of the Indian people. "Religion, as I saw it practised, and accepted even by thinking minds, whether it was Hinduism or Islam or Buddhism or Christianity, did not attract me," writes Nehru in *The Discovery of India*. "It seemed to be closely associated with superstitious practices and dogmatic beliefs, and behind it lay a method of approach to life's problems which was certainly not that of science."

Nehru more than once pointed out that religion could not exist in some pure form, but was often mis-applied by its representatives for the exploitation of others, thus becoming a tool of oppression. He did not therefore conceal his criticism of the application of religion in political life. In his *Autobiography*, for instance, he contemplated the reactionary role of religion: "The spectacle of what is called religion, or at any rate organized religion, in India and elsewhere has filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation, and the preservation of vested interests." And further: "religion" has lost all precise significance (if it ever had it) and only causes confusion and gives rise to interminable and argument, when often enough



entirely different meaning are attached to it ...". And yet further: "...organized religion, whatever its past may have been, today is very largely an empty form devoid of real context." Whenever representatives of religious systems tried to avail themselves of the situation for their own profit and started to actively encroach upon political life, Nehru never hesitated to stand up with sharp criticism of such communal tendencies. In free India, Nehru naturally passed from anticommunalism to secularism. He was firmly convinced that political life, the ideology of the new state and state administration must be completely rid of all religious influence.

Nehru's secular spirit provided the inspiration for establishing a secular society based on justice and equity. But in a country like ours, with its many religions, creeds and castes, secularism could endure only by strengthening national integration. All his life Nehru worked devotedly for bringing the diverse groups in our society closer to each other emotionally and bound by a higher loyalty to the nation. He could not but regard communalism and parochialism as dangerous and inimical to the unity of India and to the democratic set up which he had helped to establish.

A universal man, Jawaharlal Nehru could never tolerate bigotry dogmatism of any sort-of religion, caste or language. His faith in man was self-warming and communicated itself instantly to anyone who came in contact with him. Under his leadership, people from all parts of India were proud to call themselves Indians. He fully appreciated and voiced the right to freedom of religion and the right to one's culture, but he was clear in his mind that it did not entitle anyone to be bigoted and biased against others who preferred a different religion or creed. Notwithstanding Nehru's abstinence to religious and dogmatic susceptibilities, his rational mind developed the ethos and values, which were imbued in the culture and civilization, that is only Indian.

In no other aspect of the short history of India as a sovereign state is Nehru's impact as great as on foreign policy. He was the sole architect of the foreign policy of independent India. As Michael Brecher has pointed out in his penetrating political biography, he was 'the philosopher, the architect, the engineer and the voice of his country's policy towards the outside world.' He has further stated: "In no other state does one man dominate foreign policy as does Nehru in India."

By the end of 1956, Nehru was recognized as one of the few living men who made an impression on the world—'the man who', in the words of Harper's Magazine, 'since the end of the Churchill-Stalin-Roosevelt era, is the most arresting figure on the world political stage.' A writer in the *New York Post* described him as 'one of the most incandescent figures of contemporary history', and the *Chicago Daily Tribune* warned its readers that 'he will lead India as long as he wishes—for better or for worse—and his voice will be heard as long as he lives, in world councils—again for better or for worse. *The New York Times* recognized in him one of the world's most important politicians, and of the unchallenged rulers of the world, perhaps the only one who ruled by love and not fear. This acceptance of the position of Nehru was, of course, primarily because of the impact of the strength and the sanity that his foreign policy had achieved. He had, on assuming office, made clear that India would participate actively in the world, not merely because of his understanding of the role which India had assumed and could not shirk but because this policy was also to him a way of safeguarding India's newly won freedom.

Nehru's thinking and the ideas he expressed on foreign policy and international relations have become a part of India's political culture and no Government in India could function beyond that culture at least for quite some time to come.

There was a distinct idealist image in many of Nehru's utterances on international politics. He often spoke as a keen student of history and as a visionary.

Nehru's greatest achievement was that he could make an economically poor and militarily weak India a factor in international politics. Many features of the International situation facilitated India playing this role and Nehru had the intellectual ability to comprehend the complexities of the international situation and displayed remarkable diplomatic skill to take advantage of them and to promote India's national interest and increase its moral and ethical influence.

While formulating the basic aims of India's foreign policy and in giving a shape to it in its formative phase one of Nehru's main concerns was to have a national consensus. He fully realized that in the context of the national and international politics of 1946-47, a government of a newly independent country like India

could not separate domestic and foreign policies into watertight compartments. Apparently, the Indian public opinion followed rather than led the government in regard to foreign policy. But from the very beginning, Nehru was cautious not to go against the sentiments of the people. As early as March, 1949 while explaining that India could not be tied up to any group of states. Nehru said: 'Any attempt on our part i.e., the government of the day here, to go too far in one direction could create difficulties in our country. It would be resented and would not be of any help to us or to any other country'.

When India became free, the majority of the politically conscious people of India looked upon the Western Powers with suspicions because their outlook was influenced by their struggle for independence and by their impressions about the attitude of these Powers towards it.

India's decision not to align with the West was thus connected with the desire of the people of India to defend their freedom and to champion the cause of other countries which were struggling to be free.

The experience of many Asian and African countries confirmed the wisdom of Nehru. Whenever any government tried to move too much in one direction, it created instability partly because a determined and well-organized group of people inside the country challenged its legitimacy and partly because it depended upon a foreign power which tried to penetrate inside the country and convert the government into a clique.

Nehru was the first Asian statesman who comprehended the interrelation between domestic politics and foreign policy of an under-developed and newly independent country.

After the freedom struggle, Jawaharlal was invited to direct the Nation towards development as the first Prime Minister of the largest democratic republic, bent upon moving towards socialism. In his personal as well as in public life, Jawaharlal built bridges of understanding and tolerance between tradition and modernity in the development process, and amity and friendship between the contending forces in the east and the west. His Panch Sheel (non-alignment) was an significant a contribution to international relations as Panchayati Raj (Democratic Decentralisation) to people's participation in public administration (Government-in-action). His main contribution to administration

was by way of constitution framing, steering the ship of State through turbulent times after partition, and the dynamic adventure of development through planning.

Thus in 1946 when Nehru and his colleagues assumed the reins of power they inherited an administrative system and structure which was devised entirely for a different purpose. Here was a herculean task of transforming an autocratic administrative structure and into that of a democratic apparatus suited to the needs and genius of Indians and conforming to their hopes and aspirations. According to Nehru, verily the focus had now to change from law and order problems to that of socio-economic problems and programmes.

The outstanding problem faced by Nehru was the administrative frame-work and the services left over from the British regime. His charismatic personality and national stature easily enabled him in winning over the loyalty of the administrative personnel and, without breaking the structure, he tried to mould and adapt it to the changed needs and circumstances.

The cornerstone of his concept of administration was human approach to problems. He yearned to bring administration as near to the common man as possible and was very much concerned with the administration at the grassroot levels. That is why he laid great emphasis on administration of Community Development Programme and Panchayati Raj.

Nehru laid great emphasis on the devotion of the civil servants to the general welfare and cause of the masses they were expected to serve. In his view "an administrator has to work with some objectives in view, more especially in a dynamic society".

Nehru was a great writer. His autobiography is a remarkable book. Whatever he wrote that had the stamp and impact of his personality. Nehru as a writer is, however, certainly submerged in Nehru as a political leader of unbounded popularity and public esteem. In fact, some keen observers of Nehru's life and work are of the opinion that the stress and turmoil of his political career provided the sure base on which he could set up the edifice of his literary workmanship. His four main books *An Autobiography*, *The Glimpses of World History*, *The Unity of India*, *The Discovery of India* have been applauded as remarkable pieces of writings in English.

Nehru was a superb draftsman. He drafted many historical

resolutions for the Congress. Independence Pledge was one of them. He wrote it in his study in Anand Bhawan. When he had finished it, he asked his daughter to read it aloud because he wanted to know how it sounded. She read it. Nehru remarked, "You read it well, Indu. But do you realize that by reading it aloud, you too are now pledged?"

Such was the mind, heart and the spirit of THE MAN who strode like a colossus for decades on the Indian political firmament and left an indelible impression on the socio-political-economic institutions of independent India that he conceived in many a cases and nurtured undoubtedly in the case of all.

*Vasant Sathe*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru and Planning in India**

---

Many of us who have had the privilege of having been brought up on thoughts, life and philosophy, of the great visionary, the founder of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, right from our childhood and who, in every walk of life, have taken and continue to take inspiration from him even today, would recall all that he used to tell and teach us. Even in the mass meetings of the so-called common, illiterate people, one can recall Jawaharlal Nehru addressing them, more or less holding a class, telling them about what socialism was, what science was, what technology was, what international relations were. Sometimes some of his colleagues used to just chide him by saying: "Why are you wasting so much time on telling all this to these people? Do you think they understand?" But Panditji used to say, "No, our people have the capacity, they may be unlettered, but they are not uneducated in the larger sense of the term and our people have the capacity to understand even the best of the modern thoughts". And that has proved true. Therefore, today, it would be best to recall some of his thoughts.

On the concept of Welfare State, Nehru's address, while laying down the office of the President of the Congress Party at the historic session of Avadi in 1955, is one of the most important landmarks. Avadi session gave a specific thrust to the creation of a Welfare State and establishment of a socialist society. His thoughts, as contained in his speech, are relevant till this day.

He said:

Our national aim is a Welfare State and a socialist economy. Neither of these can be attained without considerable increase

in national income and neither is possible without a much greater volume of goods and services and full employment. In order to attain this Welfare State of a socialist pattern, it is not enough to pass a resolution or even law or to limit our thinking to nationalisation of existing industries. We have to increase production and aim at an economy of plenty. We have to see that there is equitable distribution and that the privileged position of individuals and groups is not favoured. Everything, therefore, that leads to fuller production and fuller employment is to be encouraged provided it does not take us away from the ultimate objective of a socialist pattern of society. If we cannot have fuller production and fuller employment, then there will be neither welfare nor socialism, even though, we might nationalise some industries or pass brave laws and decrees. If we aim at mass production, this is only possible if this production is for the masses and the masses have the purchasing power to consume it. We have to introduce a certain dynamism in every sector of our economic and national life in order to achieve this goal. The test must always be the results to be achieved and not some theoretical formula.

Having said this, he went on to say:

But the Congress, if it is to perform its true function effectively and worthily, must not only remain true to its ideals, but must also maintain high moral standards of behaviour. It has distressed me greatly to see that those standards have fallen and many a person who calls himself a Congressman has not hesitated to behave in a manner which brings discredit to him and the Congress. If we cannot maintain our high standards, then we have lost our function and the spark that lighted our path has gone out within us. The Congress never measured its strength by mere numbers. It was by the quality of its membership and the service that they rendered that it grew in strength and in the affection of our people. It is of the utmost importance that every Congressman should search his heart and seek an answer to the question as to how far he has kept up to the standards of old. Little men cannot work for great causes.

Every single word rings in our ears so clearly as if it is said today. He also said in this very speech:

I realise that we are very far indeed from the realisation of our objective. There is a great deal of unemployment, both explicit and disguised. Our standards are low and we cannot provide even the necessities of life to all our countrymen. But the progress we have already made and the strength we have developed, fills us with hope for the future.

If Panditji was alive today and he was to utter these words, they would be true and apply equally to what we are today, after 40 years of independence and nearly 35 years of planning. Therefore, as he said, our achievements do fill us with hope. Indeed in every walk, field and sector of life, we have made advances by any measure or any standard that can make us proud. For instance, in the field of electricity or power which he had emphasised, from a mere 1,300 MW of installed capacity to reach a level of 52,000 MW of installed capacity is an amazing achievement. From just 3,000 villages electrified out of five and a half lakh villages in 1947, today more than 4 lakh villages have been electrified. From a mere 60,000 tonnes of fertiliser that was being used, to reach a level of 8 million tonnes of fertiliser production is, by any measure for any country, a remarkable achievement.

In spite of the fact that population has more than doubled from 36 crores to more than 80 crores today, the availability of life expectancy has increased from 36 to 56. This proves that the people have better medical facilities and better nutrition and food and are living longer. In absolute terms, therefore, our planning process has made remarkable strides. But, as Panditji has himself said, we have to think in retrospect and examine more candidly and freely whether we could have done better and whether we have gone wrong anywhere or whether we have gone wrong at all. If we come to the conclusion that we have not gone wrong anywhere and that all is well and that everything has been as it was planned, well, we can happily go home and sleep and allow things to take their own course.

In this context, the four anna debate raised in the Parliament in the fifties by that great stormy petrel, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, may be recalled. Panditji did not dismiss him. But, he said, "I really wonder. If this is so, where has all the growth gone? We



must examine it". And, therefore, he appointed the Mahalanobis Committee to go into this whole question of unaccounted money. We know that today the phenomenon of unaccounted money has virtually become a parallel economy which generates more than Rs. 40,000 crores of unaccounted income every year which escapes the net of taxation and is not available to the Government's revenue. This is nearly double the Plan expenditure in our Annual Budget. This definitely would have shocked Panditji and he would have liked to know how this thing happened.

Panditji's nature was such that he used to get very impatient when things were going out of hand; when there was no proper answer available because he wanted to know the truth and find out the answer. He was willing to look into himself. He was a man with tremendous courage. It is because of this that the first thing Panditji did when the process of planning was started was to start Perspective Planning Division in the Planning Commission itself because planning pre-supposes things; planning itself means perception. Unless you have the perspective, there can be no planning. Even a house builder prepares a blue-print as a perspective. If perspective is not there, one may get relegated to what is called the Rolling Plan, as it has indeed happened. Living from hand to mouth is not planning at all. So, therefore, planning means perception.

Nehru inducted eminent perspective planners like the great Pitambar Pant who, unfortunately, did not live long. I had a privilege of meeting him in 1964 to discuss future planning, because we were the dreamers from our childhood and we used to dream of an India which will make up that backlog of colonial past and come on par with the world as fast as we can. We were thinking of India of 20 years hence; India of 40 years hence and that person gave me a small paper prepared by him on the perspective planning, on the basis of which a Perspective Plan was prepared in 1965. It was for employment, growth and welfare, including those for children and the Planning Commission was supposed to prepare a regular Perspective Plan. In that Perspective Plan prepared by Shri Pitambar Pant and Shri Vaidyanathan, a perspective was put and let us see what was the projection of some of the key sectors. We must know this if we are thinking of Nehru. We must know what was his dream, what was his imagination, what were the projections and how far they have

come true and if we have lagged behind, we have to consider why it is so. Mere platitudes will not do and if that is what we have to do, we will not be able to do justice to Pandit Nehru.

I will, therefore, point out where we are today and what were our projections in the salient core sectors of India. As far as cotton textiles—both mills and handloom—are concerned, in 1965-66, it was 8,300 million metres. In 1975-76, it was supposed to be 16,500 million metres. In 1985-86, it was supposed to be 37,000 million metres; however, then we were only at 9,178 million metres—less than nearly half of what was projected even for 1975-76.

Another very important and key sector was the nitrogenous fertilisers. With irrigation, one tonne of fertiliser helps production of nine tonnes of food. That is why there is so much emphasis on this item. We were at a very low level of 3.25 lakh tonnes of nitrogenous fertilisers in 1965-66. The projection was 40 lakhs in 1975-76; 90 lakhs in 1985-86 and we got stuck up, in 1985-86, at 43.28 lakh tonnes, i.e. the achievement, more or less, that of 1975-76.

Coming to steel, which is another major sector of our economy, the projection was 6.5 million tonnes in 1965-66 in respect of steel ingots; 30 million tonnes in 1975-76; 60 million tonnes in 1985-86. We have been stagnating and we have got stuck up at 12.15 million tonnes of steel ingots, even today in 1988.

As far as cement, yet another important sector, is concerned, it should have been 40 million tonnes in 1975-76 and 75 million tonnes in 1985-86. We were at 32 million tonnes in 1985-86, i.e., lower than the projection for 1975-76. Coming to even coal, we should have been at 170 million tonnes in 1975-76 and 320 million tonnes in 1985-86. But we got up to only 162.3 million tonnes in 1985-86. Regarding generation of electricity, although we have reached the capacity to the tune of 52,000 MW, it should have been 80,000 MW in 1985-86. This was the projection. The point being emphasised here is that there have been various unforeseen eventualities. We have had wars and natural calamities. There have been other difficulties also. All these factors have stalled expected growth. But, why have we lagged behind the projection by such a tremendous margin? This needs to be introspected. According to the people who have prepared the Perspective Plan, the modest rate of growth that they were visualising was seven per cent.

As far as population is concerned, it is not as if we have gone far off the mark. They hoped that the population in 1985-86 would be 750 million. But we are fifty million more. Can we explain away our failures on that account? It is not right to compare with other countries, but we want to come on par at least with the countries similarly placed. Then what is the meaning of the word 'coming on par' if it is not to be matched with their production? The word excellence itself means excelling. Unless we excel the mark of the other man, whether in running or in any other field, how do we compete? How do you do better whether in sports or any other field? What is the concept of 'coming on par' with the developed countries of the world. This is what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wanted. Therefore, we must today introspect. Today in the 40th year of independence, the centenary year of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the members of Parliament who believe in Nehru's philosophy, irrespective of party affiliations or other differences and the intellectuals of this country who vouchsafe by the vision of Panditji, must sit up and ask this question: "Where have we gone wrong?" The fact is that we have become complacent. We thought we had adopted the philosophy of mixed economy, and now, we must have best of both the worlds. We brought in the concept of public sector to achieve socialism to be in the vanguard of development and to have commanding heights. But, in that sector, we injected the working philosophy of capitalism and structure of bureaucracy. In the name of social objectives, we made the public sector units uneconomic from the very word 'go' by employing people to the tune of ten times more and saying that this is social objective. We never bothered about what Panditji wanted. Panditji wanted that public sector must become the efficient sector of producing core sector needs efficiently and economically so as to generate employment. Today, if we were to produce steel alone, as was envisaged, we would have been employing more than two crore people in the country, because one million tonnes of steel generates employment for two and a half lakh people. When someone talks of China, people don't like that. They say: "That is a communist country." That means, democracy must be slovenly, laggardly and must not have growth. China is reaching, by the end of this plan, a target of 90 million tonnes of steel. Can we compete with China with 16 kg. of per capita availability of steel? In rural areas

it is not even 3 kg. These are the figures of our own perspective. We must be willing to introspect as Panditji wanted us to do, even in the Congress or outside, as he said: "We must search into our hearts and be honest to ourselves."

I can end only by quoting his speech in the historic declaration on the banks of river Ravi at Lahore in 1929 when he took over as President from Motilalji. In that historic speech and that famous sentence which is oft-quoted, he said:

The Congress represents no small minority in the country and though many may be too weak to join it or to work for it, they look to it with hope and longing to bring them deliverance. Ever since the Calcutta Resolution, the country has waited with anxious expectations for this great day when this Congress meets. None of us can say what and when we can achieve. We cannot command success but success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from high writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

*Dinesh Singh*

## **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Foreign Policy of Nonalignment**

---

Much of what a nation thinks or does is linked with its past; its culture, its traditions and its belief. India cannot be different. India has been fortunate that it has had, in this century, great leaders, who have successfully charted its course deriving from its rich heritage and the wisdom of the millennia gone by. Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent movement is an example of the application of India's valued tradition of peace and peaceful change to political action. This was the path he showed us, and the world, for the neutralisation of force in political relations and its replacement by negotiation and consensus. He emphasised the universality of human rights and the dignity of the individual; a life and society free from oppression. Nonalignment is the logical extension of this concept in relations between States. It is a basic departure from the state relations based upon force, which was the hallmark of the imperial era.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, following the lead given by the Mahatma gave this concept a concrete shape and launched it as a world-wide movement in collaboration with Presidents Nasser, Tito, Soekarno and Nkruma.

\*Nehru said: "basically our outlook is derived from that old outlook which Gandhi gave us and made us powerful in favour of peace and peaceful methods".

Nonalignment was not conceived merely as a response to the

---

\* Statement at the U.N. Correspondents' Association in New York on 4 October 1960.

military blocs or the cold war, but as a global egalitarian movement to restructure the existing inequitable world order in all its aspects; political, social and economic. It perceived a whole new order based upon the sovereignty of nations—big and small—and their equality in every respect. The evil of colonialism, racialism, economic exploitations had no place in such an order. It had to rest upon global cooperation, not confrontation, on universal prosperity and well-being, not inequality and impoverishment. Accordingly, decolonisation, disarmament and egalitarian economic order are all integral components of nonalignment. In accord with this, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence—the Panchsheel—a brain child of Jawaharlal Nehru emerged as guiding principles for state relations. In a broadcast on 7 September 1946 as Head of the Interim Government, he said:

“We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale”.

Nehru's nonalignment was not purely idealistic with only global relevance. It had a strong nationalist content.

He perceived that a newly independent India, militarily and economically weak, will not be able to retain its independence if it became a camp follower of one military bloc or the other; that hard won independence, for which millions had made great sacrifices, would have no meaning if Indians would not be the masters of their destiny. He had seen big and powerful countries industrially and technologically developed bow down to their bloc leaders. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) on 8 March 1948 he said:

“What does joining a bloc mean? After all it can only mean one thing: give up your view about a particular question, adopt the other party's view on that question in order to please it and gain its favour. It means that and nothing else as far as I can see . . .”

This was not the kind of independence Indians had fought for. Nonalignment according to him would mean keeping India's options open. It would enable India to judge issues on their merits, take independent decisions and play a role to lessen

tension and preserve peace. For him there was no other course for India. A large and richly endowed country must stand on its own.

Peace was also essential for India's economic development. In a climate of confrontation and conflict there would be little opportunity to get assistance from abroad unless it was for military purposes in the interest of one bloc or the other. In contrast, what India required was economic assistance in the form of loan and technology transfer for its industrial growth. Peace was not an isolated matter. It was deeply entangled in superpower rivalry. Besides, when a large part of humanity was still under colonial domination there could hardly be real peace and international cooperation. Thereafter, decolonisation and enlargement of the non-bloc area was an important input for our own independence and development. As Nehru said:

“We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries and peoples, and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all races”.

Nonalignment was, thus, as important in India's own national interest as in the interest of other newly independent countries and, in fact, in the interest of the world community as a whole.

A world divided into two warring camps was hardly a safe place to live in. Despite the efforts of interested agencies to float dangerous concepts such as of military balance, over-kill capacity, nuclear deterrent, the world was longing for peace and international cooperation. Everyone was aware of the dangers of nuclear holocaust; the awesome possibility of total annihilation. The balance of terror is not what the international community was heeding. The search was for lasting peace, for global cooperation for a world free from oppression. There was yet no better known way of achieving it except through the nonaligned movement. Beginning from twentyfive countries which met in Belgrade in 1961 the movement has grown to encompass over hundred countries and the majority of humanity on this planet. It is a movement that offers freedom, dignity and equality as an alternative to fear,

oppression and rearmament, the hallmarks of the concept of force and of military blocs.

While some have criticised Pandit Nehru for his policy of nonalignment as being idealistic and neutralist there are others who have blamed him for not being neutral enough between the superpowers in their bloc rivalries. Panditji was against India's neutrality. Speaking in Lok Sabha on 22 November 1960 he said:

“As I have said repeatedly, I do not like the word ‘neutral’ as being applied to India. I do not even like India’s policy being referred to as ‘positive neutrality’ as is done in some countries. Without doubt, we are unaligned; we are uncommitted to military blocs; but the important fact is that we are committed to various policies, various urges, various objectives, and various principles; very much on”.

Neutrality is not a fitting response to bloc rivalries. To lessen tension a country has to act positively, remove fear, find a via media and promote understanding. When peace is threatened India cannot be neutral. Nonalignment does not require a country to be equidistant between the two superpowers. Each issue has to be judged on its merit.

Nehru was against the nonaligned movement being converted into another bloc—the third bloc. He announced:

“When proposals have been made that we should form some kind of a bloc of ‘neutral’ countries, I have not taken very kindly to them. While I do not like the system of blocs as such, we meet and discuss, have some measure of common thinking, sometimes common action, and we co-operate”.

The idea of the institutionalisation of the movement is counter to its very concept. Nonalignment is founded on independence of thought and action. If these are subjugated to bloc conformity then there would be no difference between this bloc and the other blocs. The whole exercise in nonalignment is to preserve independence. Of course, as he had pointed out, the nonaligned meet and discuss and a consensus is evolved. Thereafter, it is left to individual countries to act singly or in concert as they think fit. Both independence and flexibility of action are retained”.

The world is still far from this goal. Often doubts arise whether



humanity is moving towards an egalitarian order or away from it. But, then there are also silver linings on the stormy horizon. Decolonisation is almost complete, disarmament talks have yielded results, international organisations are aiding development, helping the under-privileged, feeding them, looking after their health and above all men and women all over the world are becoming more and more aware of the dangers of armament. More and more citizens' groups are challenging their national governments and pressing them for disarmament and eventually to nonalignment. This was Nehru's dream.

*M.S. Gurupadaswamy*

## **Nehru—An Appraisal**

---

“Life is too short to be little”. This is what great Disraëli once said. We often allow ourselves to be troubled by little things, overtaken and obsessed by small events and spend much of our time on minor irritations. We brood over petty grievances, pains and pitfalls. We never try to raise ourselves above trifles. We do not take charge of our lives. We do not try to act intelligently and effectively. Much of our time is wasted in meaningless pursuits. Irrational pride and prejudice make man small and make the society in which he lives smaller. Noble thought and laudable action alone will make everyone great. A society with indolent and inert beings will remain poor, brutish and short. A great nation and little minds go ill together.

India was in servitude and slumber for centuries. So long as it remained in this mental and physical state, it was in distress and agony, and its people remained in darkness without light and without hope; poverty, illiteracy and disease oppressing them. It is one of the greatest aberrations and anomalies of history that a handful of adventurous and rapacious traders from a far-off island were able to establish their dominion and power over the vast Indian territory and virtually converted it into a Company estate. In a way the British Indian empire controlled and owned by a limited company of traders, is itself an anomaly of anomalies. This could happen only where people live like sheep and goats or live like cats and dogs. Both seemed to be true when foreign traders landed in India. Large masses of people lived the life of sheep and goats and the rulers and chieftains who were in plenty worked like dogs and cats against each other weakening themselves and the land they ruled. It was an ideal troubled water for the

British to fish in. It was a strange twist of destiny that India which had enjoyed the unique sunshine of glory and which had given to the world rich philosophy, religion and culture, had to suffer the worst ignominy, oppression and inhuman degradation; and it was all because the rulers of India played treachery to each other.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who changed the corrosive and dismal scene by his supreme will and effort which was again unique and unsurpassed in the annals of the modern world. By his perseverance and steadfastness, and his undaunted courage and devotion to truth and non-violence which were the seminal essence of Indian life, he restored self-respect and dignity to the people of India and brought about their ultimate emancipation from colonial rule.

Mahatma Gandhi's task had become less arduous and easier because of a galaxy of leaders around him who could share in his suffering and sacrifice. There was great Sardar Patel, devoted scholar Mualana Azad, shrewd intellectual giant Rajaji, besides daring Subhash Chandra Bose, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Acharya Kripalani and many others. Among them there was a great darling of the masses Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Of all the leaders of India after Mahatma Gandhi, two stand out as most illustrious; one Jawaharlal Nehru and another Subhash Chandra Bose. In my view they represent and personify two different but complementary qualities. Nehru, in the words of George Patterson, an English expert on Asian affairs, "was charming, mild, courteous, generous to a fault, sensitive, impulsive and emotional". But Subhash Bose was courageous, dynamic, persuasive, blunt in action, outspoken and somewhat rude and tactless in his methods. If Subhash Bose had been living with us after Independence, I am not sure whether both he and Nehru would have remained as political twins cooperating and strengthening each other or as political rivals working in opposite camps. At this distance of time I can only imagine that the country and the people, and the democratic fabric would have been greatly strengthened even if only one of the alternatives had happened. As either as friends or foes, both would have certainly taken India to greater heights by their enlightened complementary or competing leadership. The fact, however, cannot be denied that India has seen Nehru more than Subhash Bose. The effort to compare these two great sons of India need not be carried too far.

That Nehru by his personality and his qualities endeared himself both to Mahatma and the people of India, there is no doubt. It did not at all come as a surprise that Mahatma Gandhi had called him his political heir, and so indeed he was. Long before he became the Prime Minister, the poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore, referring to his activities, had said that "he was greater than his deeds and truer than his surroundings". He was a human being par excellence. Under his Prime Ministership and with the great collaborative and pragmatic role played by Sardar Patel, India achieved cohesion and unity as never before. He laid the constitutional foundation for the Democratic Republic of India. He tried hard to make India a modern State. He introduced planning and tried to bring sweeping changes in the economy through public sector, heavy industry, new technology and community development. He tried hard to convert his dream and his vision of greatness of India into reality. He could not however fully realise his great ambition, not because of his zeal and his effort were lacking in any way, but because the instruments and the strategy he had chosen were either inadequate or failed. For a country to prosper, first, the people have to be educated and properly trained; second, the growing population has to be contained; third, an effective infrastructure and environment have to be created.

In the latter part of his office, Nehru perhaps realised that some great distortions and aberrations have crept into the socio-economic system. He tried to correct them but found to his dismay that his colleagues in the Government and in the Congress Party were not imbued with the same spirit and drive. The missionary zeal which prevailed in earlier years had withered away. The sense of commitment was not visible. So he planned in his own way a shake-up of the Congress Ministries at the Centre and the States under the cover of Kamraj Plan. This did not bring needed change in the quality and style in the Governments, because there was utter paucity of talent and merit in the Congress. In frustration he looked around to take more steps. He thought that one of the causes for the crisis was the ideological degeneration of the Congress which had to be reversed if the party and the Government were to get the public support. He also perhaps realised that winning of the election was easier than governing of the nation. After 1962 General Election and when Parliament

met in the budget session, he sent a message to me to meet him. During my brief talk in his Parliament Office, he brought up the subject of possible merger of the Praja Socialist Party (P.S.P.) with the Congress. Subsequently he also involved the late Kamraj and Indiraji and Asoka Mehta who happened to be the Chairman of the P.S.P. at that time in further discussion. The result was that on his assurance that the Congress would unconditionally adopt a resolution on democratic socialism at Bhuvaneswar session of the Congress, one wing of the P.S.P. merged with the Congress. Soon after his death pro-merger P.S.P. convention organised at Lucknow ratified the decision. But after his passing away there is no doubt that the battle of ideology gave place to the battle of power, the bitter fruits of which we are eating today.

In the field of international relations Nehru by his great depth of knowledge and understanding, created a landmark for India in the world. Even before Independence he was responsible for shaping and guiding the foreign policy of the Congress. All the leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, had accepted foreign affairs as his 'private monopoly'. At the very beginning of the interim government, he had organised Asian Relations Conference. But it is sad that he did not pursue afterwards in his effort to consolidate Asian countries. After Bandung he did not show any nerve for it. Nevertheless, the credit should go to him as one of the great architects of non-alignment. Today the non-aligned countries are the largest grouping of nations wielding considerable clout in the world. The non-aligned movement has, in fact, brought stability and peace, and created an atmosphere for global consolidation. However, his understanding of China and his approach towards that country was proved wrong. In his great desire to keep China in good humour, he allowed himself to be digressed and tripped. There was really no need for him to make any pronouncement on the occupation of Tibet. He could have maintained the posture of silence. Shrewd Chinese no doubt exploited the magnanimity of Nehru.

On the whole the period of Nehru's Prime Ministership would remain as one of the glorious chapters in the history of Independent India. There are various facets to his personality which are unique. He was a great leader, versatile writer, a thinker, a visionary, a socialist, a statesman and all in one. He was an amalgam of the best in the past and the present. He was a rare anti-dogmatic dogmatist.

*Narayan Datt Tiwari*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru as External Affairs Minister in Parliament**

---

Jawaharlal Nehru not only led the people of India in their struggle for freedom, but as Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs after 1947 gave expression to the basic principles of our foreign policy and laid the foundations of India's role in world affairs. Any reflection upon the stewardship of our foreign policy by Jawaharlal Nehru is bound to be much more than a recapitulation of our recent history. Nehru's vision of world affairs rested upon such firm premises that, although two decades and more have passed since his demise, the principles which he enunciated continue to guide us in our relations with the world community. Any reconstruction of the principles which informed Jawaharlal Nehru as the Minister for External Affairs is, therefore, more than an historical exercise. Such recapitulation enables us to reflect afresh upon the basic principles of our foreign policy at the same time as it enables us to reinforce our role and policies in international affairs.

Jawaharlal Nehru was not only a great Foreign Minister, but also a great parliamentarian. It was because of the importance Jawaharlal Nehru attached to Parliament as the vibrant embodiment of the great experiment in popular and social democracy which we had initiated on our soil after our liberation from British imperialism in 1947. Indeed, Nehru looked upon Parliament as the coping stone of that magnificent structure of democratic institutions which is formally enshrined in our Constitution. For him, Parliament was a forum where he could conduct an open dialogue with the chosen representatives of the people, and,

indeed, with the people themselves. This dialogue was a crucial activity, not only because it strengthened participative democracy in India, but also because it enabled Jawaharlal Nehru to shape foreign policy in creative interaction with popular aspirations at the same time as it created an informed body of opinion on world affairs in the country. Perhaps such considerations are not altogether absent from our minds even today, when we debate the great issues of war and peace in Parliament. Such occasions provide our leadership with an opportunity to interact with the representatives of the people, and through such interaction, draw popular aspirations into the business of formulating policy in the domain of foreign affairs.

It is also necessary to recall the stance which the Indian National Congress, as the premier vehicle of the struggle for freedom, adopted towards the world community prior to 1947, largely at the initiative of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru was firmly of the opinion that the struggle for freedom in India was an integral part of a much wider struggle of the peoples of Asia and Africa, who, after centuries of exploitation and oppression, were seeking to liberate themselves from European domination. Nehru believed that an awareness of the wider Asian and African revolution strengthened the several movements for national liberation at the same time as it strengthened the aggregate struggle of the peoples of the third world for a life of material dignity and cultural creativity. He further believed that it was the inescapable destiny of India to play a seminal role in this worldwide struggle of the oppressed, to voice their aspirations and their dreams and hopes for a better world and to hold out, where necessary, moral and material sustenance to the peoples involved in struggles for national liberation.

While the liberation movements of Asia and Africa constituted a seminal development in world politics, according to Jawaharlal Nehru, the socialist transformation which had been initiated in the Soviet Union, through the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, was no less significant a factor in the history of mankind. Indeed, to the extent European imperialism was a manifestation of world capitalism, the oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa possessed the Soviet Union and in the international socialist community a natural ally against a common enemy. The mutually beneficial relationship between the national liberation movements of Asia

and Africa, on the one hand, and the worldwide socialist movement, which had triumphed in the Soviet Union in 1917 (and was to triumph elsewhere later), on the other, was the dominant feature of the international landscape in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Yet this natural alliance did not, indeed, could not, distort the character of the liberation movements; nor did it imply that the countries of the third world were to find in the Soviet experience, or in the experience of other socialist countries, a readymade model for their development. On the contrary, it was through reflection upon their own individual historical traditions as well as upon the content of the struggles which they had waged against European imperialism that the leaders and the peoples of the third world would be able to shape for themselves strategies and tactics that would not only deliver them from political bondage but also ensure their deliverance from poverty and deprivation. In all these decisive issues concerning the human conditions in the twentieth century, so Nehru stated on more than one occasion, the third world would find much illumination in socialist theory and practice, creatively interpreted in the light of the historical experience of different societies.

It is crystal clear that when Jawaharlal Nehru assumed the responsibility of conducting our foreign relations, as Prime Minister as well as Minister for External Affairs, he had already devised a vision of the world community in which India, as the spokesman of resurgent Asia, played a seminal role. India could play such a role, so Nehru believed, only if she developed close and intimate relations with the third world, and gave voice to the aspirations of its citizens in various international forums. What the oppressed peoples desired above all was a life of material dignity and an opportunity to shape their future free of external interference. Basic to the realisation of such a state of affairs was the establishment of durable peace between India and her neighbours within Asia as a whole and in the world at large. Indeed, peace, so Jawaharlal Nehru believed, was a basic need of the newly liberated politics of the third world because only under conditions of peace could such polities embark upon those urgent programmes of industrialisation and social reconstruction which were to provide the basis for a revolutionary transformation of the lives of the common people.

If the objective of durable peace was to be realised, then the



first problem awaiting resolution at the hands of Jawaharlal Nehru, immediately after 1947, was the Kashmir problem, which was in turn linked to overall relations between India and Pakistan. When Pakistan encouraged tribesmen from her frontier regions to embark upon an invasion of Kashmir and backed tribal aggression with her armed forces, Jawaharlal forthwith called in the army to repel Pakistan aggression against India. As he repeatedly observed before members of Parliament in the course of debates of Kashmir and Pakistan, the issues at stake were higher than just the fate of Kashmir, important though the latter was in itself. Despite the tragic subdivision of the subcontinent in 1947, India held firmly to the policy of secularism as the only legitimate policy for conjuring into existence a progressive and democratic polity in the twentieth century. The fateful decision of Kashmiris to opt for union with India rather than with Pakistan was, therefore, the lynchpin of Indian secularism and the true basis of a secular identity for India. The epic battle for secularism in India had to be fought on the soil of Kashmir.

So far as Pakistan was concerned, India had nothing but goodwill for the people of that country. However, the insecurity which haunted the rulers of Pakistan prompted them to use the hypothetical fear of India as a means to perpetuate their hold over their people. The legitimate response to such tactics was to reiterate the friendship of the people of India for the people of Pakistan, so that the ruling classes of Pakistan could not utilise clumsily fabricated external threats to reinforce their hold over their people. In this connection Nehru had stated:

When we consider the question of Indo-Pakistan relations, we have to look at it as a whole. We have to think a while of past history, too, because what we see today has grown out of the past.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, most of us stood, as we do today, for intercommunal unity. We wanted a peaceful solution of our internal problems and a joint effort to win our freedom. We hoped we could live together in that freedom. The supporters of Pakistan had a different gospel. They were not for unity but disunity, not for construction but for destruction, not for peace, but for discord, if not war. I do not think that the people of Pakistan are any better or any worse than the people of India. But, fortunately, a certain ideal was before us in this country during the last twenty or thirty years which naturally affected our thinking and action. And in spite of everything that ideal continues to be our guiding star. That is the major difference between India's policies today and those of Pakistan.

In the 1950s and 1960s (as is true today), India's relations with Pakistan not only affected bilateral links but also impinged adversely upon the position which India occupied in the world community, particularly with respect to the United States of America. When India attained independence in August 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru entertained sentiments of friendship for the United States of America and deeply respected the values which it represented as a liberal polity, irrespective of his view of the American stance in world politics. Here was a vigorous industrial society free of the feudal past which bedevilled the countries of Europe. Here, once again, was a country with a revolutionary anti-colonial past, and with living memories of that past, which was not directly involved in the exploitation of Asia and Africa during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Friendly relations with such a country could yield material assistance to the people of India that could be crucial in their desire to embark upon the industrialisation of their society. Small wonder, then, that Jawaharlal reflected deeply upon the consequences which could flow out of his first visit to the United States in August 1949, in the following words:

I think often, whenever I have the time to think, of this coming American visit. In what mood shall I approach America? How shall I address the people etc.? How shall I deal with the Government there and businessmen and others. Which facet of myself should I put before the American public ... I shall have to meet some difficult situations. I want to be friendly with the Americans but always making it clear what we stand for. I want to make no commitments which come in the way of our basic policy. I am inclined to think that the best preparation for America is not to prepare and to trust to my native wit and the mood of the moment, the general approach being friendly and receptive. I go there to learn more than to teach... I am receptive if I want to be and I propose to be receptive in the United States. I want to see their good points and that is the best approach to a country. At the same time I do not propose to be swept away by them. I do not think there is much chance of that.

Notwithstanding the careful thought which went into planning the first visit to the United States, all did not go well between the host and the guest. Proud of his cultural heritage and sensitive to a high degree, Jawaharlal Nehru found the patronising attitude of American leaders less than helpful while the latter lost a rare opportunity to draw into a friendly relationship a statesman who, at this juncture more than anyone else, spoke for resurgent Asia. Yet it was not just a question of the clash of cultures and

personalities. The strategic perspectives of the two nations obviously rested upon different if not opposed perspectives. A few years after the visit, a paranoid fear of Soviet expansionism encouraged the U.S. Government to enter into a military alliance with Pakistan. As a result of this, Nehru developed a deep concern for the independence of his country and the security of Asia as a whole. In protesting against the military arrangements between the leaders of Pakistan and the United States, Nehru spoke in Parliament of the historical experience of India *vis-a-vis* such pacts and alliances as follows:

I have stated on earlier occasions that I believe that the Prime Minister of Pakistan earnestly wishes, as I do, that there should be good relations between India and Pakistan. Mr. Mohammed Ali has made various statements about this matter of aid from the U.S. He asks why India should object. Of course, they are a free country; I cannot prevent them. But if something affects Asia, India especially, and if something in our opinion is a reversal of history after hundreds of years, are we to remain silent? We have thought in terms of freeing our countries, and one of the symbols of freedom has been the withdrawal of foreign armed forces. I say the return of any armed forces from any European or any American country is a reversal of the history of the countries of Asia, whatever the motive. It was suggested some two or three years ago in connection with Kashmir that some European or American countries should send forces to Kashmir. We rejected that completely because, so far as we can see, on no account are we going to allow any foreign forces to land in India.

If the misunderstandings which soured relations between India and the United States, despite the efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru, had the makings of a tragedy, then the deterioration in relations with the People's Republic of China provided the raw material for a major disaster, which cast a dark shadow over the closing years of Nehru's life as the custodian of India's foreign relations. This was all the more so, because from the very outset, Nehru had looked upon the Chinese experience as comparable to India's own experience just as he had also looked upon cordial relations between these two civilizations of antiquity, which were seeking to transform themselves into modern industrial societies, as the basis of peace and stability in Asia, and indeed, in the world as a whole. The importance which Nehru attached to China is vividly reflected in the visit which he paid to that country towards the middle of 1939; a visit which was cut short by the outbreak of World War II. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 Nehru expeditiously extended

diplomatic recognition to it in the belief that such a step would go a long way towards ensuring a healthy growth of the new Chinese polity. This is not to suggest that Jawaharlal Nehru was oblivious to various unresolved issues between India and China; nor was he oblivious to the strategic tension between these two Asian giants *vis-a-vis* the transformation of their agricultural societies into modern industrial communities. The first indication of Chinese bellicosity came in their proclaimed intention to liberate Tibet. Jawaharlal Nehru supported the notion of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet just as he also believed that China was morally obliged to respect Tibet's autonomy. He, therefore, raised the question as to what (or whom) was Tibet to be liberated from? Nevertheless, when the Chinese leadership decided to assert its rights over Tibet through an armed intervention, Nehru refused to take undue alarm, and patiently worked out an agreement whereby India formally acknowledged the status of Tibet as an integral part of China. It has been argued, with the benefit of hindsight, that the negotiations over Tibet offered a golden opportunity to settle India's northern border with China. Yet it is important to remember that Nehru, at that juncture, had received assurances from the Chinese that they looked upon the border issue as one that was already resolved in principle and that nothing was needed beyond the detailed cartographic resolution of agreed principles. Indeed, the Sino-Indian agreement over Tibet was in some ways a model agreement; more particularly, because it became the occasion for the definition of the five principles of peaceful co-existence—the principles of *Panchsheel*—which were to feature slightly later as the ideological lynchpin of the Non-aligned Movement.

The hopes which were aroused of friendly Indo-Chinese relations as a result of the agreement over Tibet, in 1954, were belied shortly afterwards. The Government of India discovered, to its utter astonishment that China had made substantial encroachments upon Indian territory in the process of building a communication system in its South-Western regions. When India attempted to assert its administrative control over her far-flung Himalayan territories an escalating series of border incidents, triggered off by China, greatly embittered relations between the two countries.

The deterioration in relations between India and China caused

grave disquiet to Nehru, because of their implications for the grand design of world affairs in which he had placed India as a pivotal member of the international community.

Whatever be the motivations behind China's stance towards India in the late 1950s and the early 1960s the objective of defending India's vital interests was pursued by Jawaharlal Nehru with great vigour. It was the pursuit of this objective which led to the unfortunate developments of November 1962, when China perpetrated an unprovoked military attack upon its southern neighbour. Yet the speed with which India recovered from this reverse is testimony to Nehru's strategic insight and supreme courage, as it is also testimony to the patriotism and resilience of the people of India. It takes a truly great leader just as it also takes a truly great people to snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat and to transform a tactical reverse into a strategic gain. India soon recovered her military and political strength, which has since been tested on numerous occasions, in the theatres of war no less than in the form of diplomacy. As a result of the enriched understanding of China, her goals and her objectives, which Jawaharlal Nehru communicated to us in the 1960s, we shall be able to fully protect our national interests in our continuing dialogue with the People's Republic of China.

Although Nehru's diplomacy towards China resulted in a temporary reverse for India, a durable by-product of this diplomacy was the enunciation of the five principles of peaceful co-existence, or *Panchsheel*, which became the mainspring of the Non-aligned Movement and which continue to guide India, as indeed, they guide other countries of the third world, down to our own times. I have spoken earlier of Nehru's profound awareness of the Asian and African revolution of the twentieth century, which in the context of world history, meant the emergence of the third world, after centuries of repression and exploitation, as an autonomous force on the world stage. As Nehru's experience of handling India's foreign relations ripened in the 1950s he realised the urgent need for an organized forum for third world opinion, in which India's voice could exercise a decisive influence. Perhaps the Asian Relations Conference, held at Nehru's instance in 1947 was a step—albeit a tentative step—in this direction. The founding fathers of the Non-aligned Movement first met at Bandung in 1955 to proclaim the emergence of a new force in world politics.

Nehru played a historic role at the Bandung Conference and his was perhaps the leading voice in giving shape to its deliberations. As he stated in Parliament shortly after the Conference:

The Bandung Conference has been a historic event. If it only met, the meeting itself would have been a great achievement, as it would have represented the emergence of a new Asia and Africa, of new nations who are on the march towards the fulfilment of their independence and of their sense of their role in the world. Bandung proclaimed the political emergence in world affairs of over half the world's population. It presented to unfriendly challenge or hostility to anyone but proclaimed a new and rich contribution. Happily that contribution is not by way of threat or force or the creation of new power blocs. Bandung proclaimed to the world the capacity of the new nations of Asia and Africa for practical idealism, for we conducted our business in a short time and reached agreements of practical value, not quite usual with international conferences. We did not permit our sense of unity or our success to drive us into isolation and egocentricity. Each major decision of the Conference happily refers to the United Nations and to world problems and ideals. We believe that from Bandung our great organization, the United Nations, has derived strength. This means in turn that Asia and Africa must play an increasing role in the conduct and the destiny of the world organization.

The growth of the Non-aligned Movement in the 1950s, and the increasingly significant role which India came to play in this movement, also provided the basis for the development of a close and friendly relationship between India and the Soviet Union. This was so despite the fact that in the first few years after 1947, the Soviet leadership was doubtful of the extent to which India had emerged as a truly autonomous factor in Asian and world politics. Perhaps the crucial development, in this respect, was the growth of a military understanding between Pakistan and the United States, on the one hand, and the emergence of a new leadership in the Soviet Union, on the other. These events constituted the backdrop to a visit which Jawaharlal Nehru paid to the Soviet Union in 1955, in the course of which he discovered the great progress made by the country since his earlier visit in 1927. Nehru also realised, in the course of his dialogue with the new Soviet leaders, the extent to which they looked upon non-

alignment as a positive factor in world politics and a signal contribution to world peace. As he told his hosts in Moscow:

We came here to convey to the people of this great country greetings and good wishes of the Indian people and we go back laden with your affection and good wishes for our country and our people. We did not come here as strangers, for many of us have followed with deep interest the great changes and development that have taken place in this country. Almost contemporaneously with your October Revolution under the leadership of the great Lenin we in India started a new phase of our struggle for freedom. Our people were engrossed in this struggle for many years and faced heavy repression with courage and endurance. Even though we pursued a different path in our struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi we admired Lenin and were influenced by his example. In spite of this difference in our methods there was at no time an unfriendly feeling among our people towards the people of the Soviet Union.

The friendly relationship with the Soviet Union which Nehru carefully nurtured was to become an extremely significant factor, both in the internal development of India as well as in the conduct of Indian foreign policy. It provided our diplomacy with a solid underpinning, as the leaders of India piloted the country through the turbulent waters of international politics in the third quarter of the twentieth century.

As we dwell upon India's relations with the world community, in the closing decades of the twentieth century, the foresight and sagacity with which Jawaharlal Nehru had shaped our foreign policy, in the 1950s and the 1960s, stands out in bold relief. It was his great ambition to place India at the centre of world stage, through drawing upon her moral strength and through highlighting the leadership which she could offer to the third world, as a country which had triumphed in the course of a unique non-violent struggle over the greatest imperial power known to human history. It was also his great ambition to establish through such leadership durable peace in the world which would provide developing countries, like India, with the respite they needed to successfully industrialise themselves and provide their citizens with the basic material and cultural requirement of civilized

existence. Through the pursuit of such a foreign policy, Jawaharlal Nehru hoped to lay the foundations of India's role in the world community; a role which rested not upon military but upon moral strength and was exercised to ensure lasting peace and social equity for mankind. Perhaps the best tribute we can pay to the memory of Jawaharlal Nehru, is to bear in mind the basic principles which informed his foreign policy, as we meet the challenges which confront us today, or which we may face in the years which lie ahead.



*Satyendra Narayan Sinha*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru : A Multifaceted Personality**

---

For most of us it is a matter of pride that we happen to live in an era of Gandhi and Nehru, who belonged to the glorious Indian tradition of *Karmayogis*, who, by virtue of their extraordinary will power and sacrifice, changed the face of mankind. The advent of Ashoka the Great in the 2nd Century B.C. was repeated in the birth of Jawaharlal Nehru. The secular democratic character of the great sage king was reborn in Nehru's recognition of the inexhaustible vitality of secularism and democracy. It was because of the power of his strong commitment to these two great ideals that the country was able to maintain its unity and integrity through tempestuous times of communal riots and secessionist movements. The non-secular Pakistan got disintegrated in the quarter century of its life and the theocratic state of Sri Lanka is on the threshold of dissolution. What China and Burmah have witnessed recently at home is a manifestation of the evil consequences of total disregard of the values for which Nehru stood.

An independent, integrated and industrialised India is the outcome of his creative imagination, scientific planning and constructive pursuits. He changed an archaic system into a progressive one. Under his leadership the country achieved political independence and moved forward towards economic freedom too. It was because of his policies and programmes that the country achieved self-sufficiency in foodgrains and the green revolution became possible. The Nation moved forward towards heavy industrialization under his stewardship. From completely dependent country India was transformed into one of self-

sufficiency in most of the manufactured products. A perceptibly substantial and quantitative increase was witnessed in both agricultural and industrial outputs.

Nehru never professed to be a founder of a school of thought but a system of social science and political philosophy can be carved out of what he spoke, wrote and did. His idea of a socialistic pattern of society was a unique system of thought. It was born of his deep insight into the problems of Indian economy. To him socialism was not merely an economic doctrine, it meant to him a "*new civilization, radically different from the present capitalistic order*". It was a creed which he professed and practised with all his head and heart. He paved a new way for the achievement of his socialistic goals through the agencies of public sector undertaking, co-operatives and social control over the private sector of production.

Patriotism and internationalism joined hands in him. He had a deep love for the Himalayas and the Ganga, the flora and fauna, the hills and fields of India. Poetry poured in his words when he had occasions of describing his homeland. His will is a unique piece of poetic prose, fathoming the profundity of his feelings for the native soil and pointing to his sense of thorough communion with the soil of the motherland. Coupled with this was his broad humanism. He had a belief that a free India on every plane was destined to play a big part on the world stage. He hoped that 'India will always lay stress on the spirit of humanity and the human spirit will prevail over the atom bomb'.

His patriotism was not watery and sentimental. In like manner his internationalism was not without solid reasons. He was not prepared to hold that India was great because he was born in India. He had solid reasons behind this feeling and conception. He explored the causes of its cultural invincibility and found out the invisible but strong chords of unity and continuity in its history of thousands of years. He discovered a strangely identical type of secularism in Ashoka and Akbar. His was an internationality that was spiritual. His humanism bears the impact of the famous dictum—"*Vasudhaiwa Kutumbakam*" and "*sarve bhawantu sukhinah*" meaning thereby the world as one small family and happiness for all. This is evident in his relentless fight against imperialism, apartheid and colonialism. He wanted democracy and socialism not only in the texture of Indian society but also in

the superstructure of a new world order. He championed the cause of freedom movements of many African states, which toned up the morale of those fighting for the end of colonial domination. His concept of non-alignment was in the line of his concept of individual freedom. His vital role in the movement aimed at ushering in a new era of equality, non-interference and co-existence in the polity of nations. As a corollary to it he translated into words and practice the *Panchsheel* of Lord Buddha. He not only preached this philosophy but he practised it. His adherence to it stood the test of time. In 1948 Pakistan launched an offensive on Kashmir and in 1962 the country experienced the treacherously jolting Chinese onslaught. The relevance of non-alignment started being questioned. The angel of peace had to face the dragon of war. At his call 59 countries of the world decried the Chinese move. The country got a unique type of international moral support. The dragon crawled back. The rock of integrity did not move. The clouds could not blur the vision of the philosopher statesman.

Everything in Nehru had a musical harmony. His tastes and habits, his aesthetic sense, his quest for knowledge, his powerful expression, his freshness of vision, his love for children and his integrated view of life were in complete tune with the principles and policies by which he reached the commanding heights of world politics. There was no hiatus between what he wrote in the *Discovery of India* and *The Glimpses of World History*. He wrote his autobiography "to fix himself in the context of the Indian struggle". He wrote *The Discovery of India* to find out the real India and behind *The Glimpses of World History* there was his aspiration to see his country and his age in the proper perspective of world history. Writing to him was not a pastime, it was, according to him, essentially an aid to thinking. He had a Wordsworthian love for nature. His references to "the magnificent animals of jungles and beautiful birds that brighten our lives" and to the varying seasons of India are excellent piece of poetic prose. His writing and speeches are the real expressions of his mind and heart.

Panditji was not only a builder of a strong, powerful and self-dependent India but also of an ideal family. Indira becoming synonymous with India was an outcome of an education imparted to her by the *Father's Letters to his Daughter*. The dynamic Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is the creation of a family environment. Nowhere in the world can we find a parallel to this family.

The grateful Nation cannot forget the confluence in Panditji of so many crowning qualities: heroic courage, indomitable spirit of struggle, poetic imagination and great creative power. He epitomised in himself whatever is good and great in the history of India—the heart of Buddha and the intellect of Shankara. Tagore rightly called him *Rituraj*, representing the season of youth and triumphant joy, of an invincible spirit of combat against evil and uncompromising loyalty to the cause of freedom.

*Prof. S. Nurul Hasan*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru and National Integration**

---

Panditji was proud of the fact that he was first and foremost an Indian. He even went to the extent of expressing pain at the attitude of certain sections of the people who regarded themselves as belonging primarily to one part of the country or another; or belonging to this religion or the other; speaking one language or a different one. He promoted the concept of unity in diversity. He was deeply conscious of the need to reassure every section of the population that its culture, religion, economic and social interests will be safeguarded in free India. When India became free and he became the Prime Minister, he tried his very best to ensure that the rights and interests of all sections were fully safeguarded. Jawaharlal Nehru believed that the conflicts that were arising in the name of religion or caste or language or region were basically due to social and economic factors. He stressed that it was the duty of every section of the people to think of the welfare of the country as a whole and to fight against vested interests.

Even though Nehru had taken his formal education in natural sciences with special emphasis on Chemistry and Botany, he nevertheless became a historian and never lost the sense of historical perspective. He was proud of the Indian tradition of religious tolerance, which was practised by many enlightened Kings and preached by Saints of different faiths. This tradition he considered to be the basis of national unity which was so important for the struggle for freedom. The fight against communalism continued to be vitally important for the well-being and progress of independent India.

In this connection, I venture to draw the reader's attention to the contrasting situation of Europe and West Asia on the one hand and India on the other during the Sixteenth century. In the middle of that century in Central Europe, soon after the emergence of Protestantism, the States of Germany fought among themselves on religious grounds for long years and finally the wars ended with a Treaty whose principle was that every Prince would select his religion and that would be deemed to be the religion of his people.

In 1572, in Paris, a city which is rightly considered to be one of the finest cities in the world, there was a ghastly massacre on Saint Bartholomew's Day due to religious intolerance. It was only at the beginning of the 17th Century that what is known as the edict of Nantes was proclaimed giving to the French Huguenots a measure of tolerance, an edict which was revoked towards the end of 1698 by the very famous French monarch Louis XIV.

Nearer home in Persia, the Safavid dynasty was ruling. It was a Shia dynasty which did not hesitate to persecute the Sunnis. In Central Asia, a bigotted Uzbek dynasty was ruling which persecuted the Shias. In fact, one of the finest surviving monuments of that period is a 'madarsa' which according to its inscription was constructed to fight against Shiaism.

But it was in India that Akbar (1556-1605) proclaimed the philosophy of *Sulh-i-Kul* (peace with all) where no discrimination was to be practised or tolerated against the followers of any religion, and persons were permitted even to change their religion provided the change of religion was voluntary and not due to any pressure or temptation. This tradition of tolerance is an old tradition of India, most prominently propounded for the first time by the great emperor Ashoka. And that is one of the reasons why our State emblem has been taken from an Ashokan column.

In the 18th Century, the British Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis after his victory against Tipu Sultan, sent letters to the Hindu princes saying that he had taken action against Tipu Sultan principally because he was anti-Hindu; but to the Muslim princes he wrote that he had taken action against Tipu Sultan because the latter had aligned himself with the Marathas. Lord Cornwallis naturally hoped that this religious argument would carry a great deal of weight with the princes of India. The replies of the rulers is fortunately extant. They did not fall into the communal traps but only congratulated Cornwallis for his success.

Four decades earlier, in 1753, one of the very famous British travellers, Orme wrote his book on India. What surprised him was that in this country the Hindus and Muslims were not fighting against each other. The Europeans were bewildered at India's culture of tolerance and of the art of living together. Panditji with his historical perspective understood it and emphasised it.

In his speeches during the independence struggle he kept on stressing the fact that the Muslims and the Hindus should not be permitted to fight against each other. It was the vested interests of both the communities which were clashing.

This small passage from Nehru's *Autobiography* shows his thinking:

"India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else and Hindu and Muslim and Sikh and others take pride in their faiths and testify to their truth by breaking heads. The spectacle of what is called religion or at any rate organised religion in India and elsewhere has filled me with horror and I have frequently condemned it and wish to make a clean sweep of it. Almost always it seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation and the preservation of vested interests and yet I knew well that there was something else in it, something which supplied a deep inner craving of human beings. How else could it have been the tremendous power it has been and brought peace and comfort to innumerable tortured souls?"

This sums up in my humble opinion Nehru's basic attitude towards religion. He felt that religion should not be permitted to be used by the vested interests for the breaking of heads but it should be seen as something which is far deeper, bringing solace and comfort to the inner-self of the people.

And we owe a great debt of gratitude to Jawaharlal for having provided the leadership in framing a secular Constitution which symbolised the hitherto not so articulated and not so well-defined urges of the Indian people. It was the historical perception of Jawaharlal which enabled him to provide a modern solution to the communal problem.

The next aspect of national integration to which I would like to make a reference, apart from religion, is caste. Like Gandhiji,

Jawaharlal Nehru found no justification for discrimination on the basis of caste, and for the most pernicious manifestation of casteism, namely, untouchability. And that is why the Constitution has abolished untouchability and the Parliament has been pleased to pass legislation providing for punishment for those who practise untouchability in any form. But untouchability cannot be fought unless we fight against casteism itself. Jawaharlal would never discriminate between human beings on the basis of their caste.

In the name of elections, caste or casteism is sought to be given a new lease of life by interested political leaders. If they follow Nehru, they should fight against casteism consciously and resist the temptation of succumbing to it even where it may appear that caste would bring them advantages. However, the history of Independent India makes it abundantly clear that even these advantages are very ephemeral. In the long run, it harms the country and it harms the political party which takes recourse to casteism.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was the President of the Indian National Congress for the second time—I am referring to the Lucknow Congress of 1936—he made a special attempt to look at those areas which had been ‘excluded’—I am using the technical term under the British laws—and he directed the office of the All-India Congress Committee to look into the interests of the people of these excluded areas. He realised that tribals, in the areas and elsewhere had been kept aloof from the national mainstream and had not been allowed to develop themselves in the manner the rest of the country had been. That is why the Constitution provides so many safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes and for the Scheduled areas where people belonging to these Tribes live.

Nehru was deeply concerned about the welfare of these people. He did not want that any steps should be taken by the Government which would make the people belonging to these tribes lose their identity, but he did not want them to become museum pieces. He wanted them to grow by themselves, to grow according to their own genius and to overcome their poverty and backwardness. His contribution to the development of Scheduled Tribes and the concern for their welfare that he instilled among the enlightened political leadership of the country will always be remembered with gratitude by all of us.



Yet another aspect of national integration which Jawaharlal Nehru emphasised was that of language. We cannot forget the fact that the Constitution has guaranteed to every section of the people of India the right to preserve their language, their culture and their script and that a Schedule of the Constitution has listed all the major languages of India which have all been given the status of national languages. Obviously, in a federal country like ours, a link language is essential and it was felt that that link language could be Hindi. But it was the statesmanship and vision of Jawaharlal Nehru that he gave a solemn assurance in Parliament on behalf of the Government, an assurance which has been honoured by Parliament as a whole continuously since it was given, that for so long as the non-Hindi speaking States do not decide to have Hindi as a link language, English shall continue to be an associated link language and, for all practical purposes, all correspondence with those States shall be done through the medium of English.

This was a very important contribution of Jawaharlalji to the nation and to the cause of National Integration. It was not merely a formal decision. But it had a deeper meaning and that meaning was that each region of our country could be fully assured that it can preserve its own genius, that it can develop itself according to its own likes and that it will have every share of the national cake, but it will not be forced into submerging its identity.

People who have heard Panditji speak, would recall a simile that he very frequently gave of India as a garland which attained its beauty because it had flowers of different colours and different shades and yet the garland remained a garland because it was knit together. He gave that simile very poignantly and it remains valid and true to this day.

Jawaharlal Nehru, while ensuring the rights of all people to preserve their cultural identity, their language, their script, their religion, their way of living, was nevertheless deeply conscious of the danger of religion or linguistic slogans being used for fanning parochialism and chauvinism, these would endanger the unity of the nation. He, therefore, pleaded for a scientific outlook. According to the Scientific Policy Resolution which Jawaharlal Nehru drafted and which was presented to each of the two Houses of Parliament in 1958, emphasis was laid on the need to build in the country the scientific temper. This implied inculcating

the spirit of rationalism, the capacity to reject superstition and obscurantism. These, Nehru thought, would be useful and powerful instruments to ensure the unity of the country.

Though we often talk of building the scientific temper, we have failed to do so. The spectre of communalism, casteism and linguistic chauvinism still haunts us. It is necessary that we review our educational system and ensure that the values of national integration are reflected in it.

*Dr. Gopal Singh*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru, the Ideal Democrat**

---

We have read and heard a lot about Jawaharlal Nehru, the sophisticated idealist who battled for long for the freedom of his motherland; the only son of a great father rolling in wealth who courted suffering and identified himself with the poorest of the poor; a born democrat who fought many a battle even with Gandhi, his mentor, over socialism; who created order out of the chaos that resulted from the partition of our motherland; who put a primitive agricultural country of 500 million people in his day on the industrial map of the world in the face of heavy odds; a supreme patriot who yet was concerned deeply with the world-view of history; who gave a new meaning to secularism in a nation divided grievously by religious animosities; an incorruptible hero of deprived nation whom neither money nor power could purchase, and who opted for non-alignment as between superpowers then as now keeping the world of the oppressed waiting on their doorsteps for small mercies and thus giving moral dignity and hope to all the poor of the world . . . And, who always remained a democrat at heart and in action, in spite of the unchallenged power he enjoyed and the total affection and reverence he received from almost all his people.

### **Humility**

All this is known, though appreciated only by the people in accordance with the needs of their personal ambitions and circumstances of the day! No one, however, has been able to deny him a place among the immortals of history. But what is less known about him is his sense of innate humility; his unswerving

dedication to democratic and humanistic values; his religious spirit of forgiveness and compassion and appreciation of the other man's point of view; his identification with unpopular causes and his willingness to compromise even with the adversary.

What he achieved was indeed great, but what he didn't or couldn't was not because he didn't try, but because he felt strongly along with Gandhi that the means were as important as the ends, that great ends could not be achieved by small minds nor would stay long if brought about by dishonest tricks, falsehoods, violence, or by hitting below the belt. How rare is the man of authority about whom one can say after he's gone: *"He was great and powerful, but more than that he was good"*.

### Exciting

I came to know him in 1936 as President of the Punjab Students' Federation. We had gone on a 21-day strike in the only Sikh college in the Punjab, at Amritsar, in protest against the pro-British management who had dismissed a few of our nationalist professors and students. We succeeded only partially; the odds were far too many against us, though we won the point of hoisting the tri-colour Congress flag on the college building, which we had made a point of honour with us. What gave a most exciting turn to our careers at that young age was the nearness we developed with the politically tallest in the land. The entire nationalist leadership of the Punjab and the Frontier province rallied to our support by visiting us and imparting some of their patriotic fervour to our young formative minds. But, the most unexpected was the inspiration we received through a message from Jawaharlal Nehru, the beau-ideal of all the young in the land, which electrified the atmosphere as nothing else could.

He said (I am quoting from memory) we should not mind if we succeeded or not in our struggle immediately, but if our cause was just and we were prepared to sacrifice for it, we were bound to win in the long run. Though considered a fire-brand, he asked us to observe the strictest discipline in our ranks and do nothing which might give a handle to the authorities to weaken our cause or resort to repressive measures.

Also we should do nothing which should cause damage to the property or life of anyone, or leave behind a trail of bitterness and should keep ready for a compromise on honourable terms at

all times. "Do not falter in your resolve or submit to repression, but also do not be obstinate before facts", he said in effect (much to our surprise). I wish this message of his someone would carry to the multifarious agitators of today. How often we confuse our petty political feuds and ambitions with the first principles of life?

Came the Partition of the country. The non-Muslim refugees were pouring from Pakistan in an endless stream with harrowing tales of butchery, rapine and abductions, and severe reprisals against innocent Indian Muslims were being committed. But here was the noble Prime Minister of India visiting all the disturbed areas in Delhi personally, consoling, reprimanding, intervening, separating parties locked in mortal communal duels, in spite of the Partition of this nation on the basis of religion. So far from communalism was he.

We are aware that in spite of their acute differences, it was Jawaharlal Nehru who had offered a seat to Jayaprakash Narayan in the Central Cabinet in 1953, which the latter refused to take and put forth his socialistic 14-point programme, and negotiations for the merger of the Praja Socialist Party in the Congress fell through. But Jawaharlal had convinced the nation of his utter selflessness.

### Selflessness

Master Tara Singh, once an honoured colleague of his in our fight for freedom, had taken a different path after and a little before Independence. He led many agitations, one of the worst being in 1959. He was arrested and lodged in the Dharmasala jail.

His younger brother, Prof. Nirranjan Singh, a well-known nationalist, and once my Professor of Chemistry, asked me to accompany him to Jayaprakash Narayan, the PSP leader, to use his good offices with Jawaharlal Nehru, for his release, as he had fallen seriously ill in jail. "JP is the only one he would listen to", his brother pleaded.

### Soothing Touch

I could not understand why? JP was opposed bitterly to Jawaharlal politically though he was on the best of terms personally with him. JP agreed to intervene, and the very next day, Master Tara

Singh was released to the surprise of everyone! And the plea JP had taken with Jawaharlal was: "*Master Tara Singh is one of the tallest of freedom-fighters and one of the truest Opposition leaders. We must keep him alive and well!*"

A few months after, Master Tara Singh, true to his style, threatened to go on a fast unto death, because he thought he had been defeated to the office of President of the SGPC through the 'machinations' of the Congress Party, and particularly of Jawaharlal Nehru.

He came to Delhi and announced his resolve. I saw Master Tara Singh (whose permanent critic I was for his communal policies and yet respected him for his sense of honour and integrity) and requested him not to undergo this suffering for a grievance which might turn out to be ill-founded.

At my request, Master Tara Singh wrote a letter to Panditji, setting forth his reasons for going on a fast unto death and (in spite of my persuasion) holding him responsible for his defeat at the Gurudwara polls. I called on Panditji the same evening and explained to him the whole background and requested him to soothe the injured feelings of the old Sikh chief who felt hurt over an imagined grievance.

Panditji hesitated for a while saying: "You know it is impossible to deal with this man. He does not know his mind. He does not stick to his word. He invents grievances and promotes communalism in a community known for its nationalistic outlook and sacrifices in the cause of the country's freedom. He is hurting their interests more than the nation's." I could not agree with him more, and yet pleaded that an awkward situation he had created had to be averted.

Panditji yielded to my pleas and wrote a soothing letter in reply. When the letter was received by Master Tara Singh, the press wanted to know its contents, but Masterji would not divulge them, though he announced his decision to abandon his fast as soon as the letter was received.

It became the subject of all sorts of caustic comments and wild conjectures in the press and the people at large. But when Master Tara Singh showed the letter to me, it took my breath away.

While disowning any responsibility for his defeat and saying that fasts for political reasons were anti-democratic, that he had

opposed even Gandhiji's fasts as well, that he was willing to discuss any Sikh grievances Master Tara Singh would like to place before him, Jawaharlal had concluded in the end: *"If, however, you still feel I have hurt your feelings by any chance, I ask your forgiveness"*.

Both I and Master Tara Singh were in tears, the old patriarch saying to me: "For this one sentence, I did not show this letter to the Press. Jawaharlal is so great in his humility that he asks my forgiveness for any hurt he may have caused me. Should I be so mean as to publicise it to the press?"

Over Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's incarceration for many years, he was equally unhappy. And, his one last act of grace was his unconditional release and invitation not only to stay with him, but also later to go out to Pakistan as his personal emissary to bring about lasting peace between India and her intractable neighbour! Alas, however, that was not to be, and Sheikh Abdullah was still in Pakistan when Jawaharlal breathed his last! No one grieved over his loss more than Sheikh Abdullah did.

Only a man of his moral stature and idealistic temper could invite the last imperial Viceroy to become the first Governor-General of free India and agree to remain within the Commonwealth after having opposed the idea for about two decades. Within India also he opted for compromise and conciliation between various sections rather than conflict or subjugation.

I know of an incident connected with Hem Barua, PSP member of Parliament from Assam. He came to me one day (As MPs, we were neighbours in the South Avenue apartments) and started crying. I asked him what had hurt him so deeply that he should cry so unabashedly. He said he had committed a great sacrilege that day. When pressed further he sobbed: 'You see, this morning I criticised Panditji in full fury, hitting right and left, on the floor of the House. But when I came out into the lobby, Panditji followed me and placing his hand around my shoulders asked, "Hem, how is your book on Assamese literature proceeding?" I felt the weight of his generosity so much on my soul that I wished the earth would give way and I sink to perdition at that very moment'.

Krishna Menon was relieved of his post in the Cabinet late in 1962 under circumstances which we are all familiar with. He felt greatly hurt. He believed he was not to blame. The whole

Cabinet had taken decisions which he had carried out.

But never did a word escape his lips even after the demise of his great leader against his person or policies, no matter what the temptation or provocation. Such was the loyalty Nehru evoked from the friends he trusted.

How Panditji brought to the fore illustrious intellectuals like Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Sir John Mathai, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, Sir Gopala Swami Ayyangar, Dr. Tara Chand and many others, who loved to serve him in any capacity, is a testimony of his love for intellect and character.

A true democrat, he would bow before the Opposition (though consisting of very weak and insignificant groups) whenever he found the ruling party in the wrong. And several times, he deliberately climbed down in order to keep the face of the Opposition, though he knew the weakness of their case. It was he who as Congress President in 1936 had written an article (anonymously) titled "Rashtrapati Ki Jai" in the "Modern Review" of Calcutta, against himself, and warned the people against his being boosted too much too soon, so that he may not become another Caesar or ride roughshod over the wishes of the people! Where in history could one find an example as rare as this?

China had wronged this nation grievously, but he never abandoned support to its cause at the UN or elsewhere. Pakistan often tried to build and blackmail him, but he remained the most formidable protector of the Muslims in this country and a true friend of the Arab world.

He pulled the womenfolk of this land out of their thralldom of centuries as no one else perhaps could. He used to say, "My main contribution as Prime Minister of India is the liberties and privileges I've brought to the womenfolk of this conservative and male-dominated society—that right to property, divorce and public employment".

When we look around and find most of the Third World in turmoil, bidding good-bye both to democracy and modernism, we thank our stars that we were led by Jawaharlal Nehru and later his illustrious daughter and grandson to enjoy the blessings which are denied even more after freedom to the citizens of the developing nations.

I myself enjoyed his friendship in ample measure and the correspondence we had over various public issues is my proudest



possession in life. You asked for an interview and the courier was there the very next day at your doorstep to inform you that it had been arranged. And as you sat with him, it appeared you grew up in stature, for he brought out the best (not the worst) in you.

How calm and unruffled he was, how affectionate and delicate in his gestures, how generous to your demands on his time and sense of idealism. He never said 'no' to an intellectual whom he honoured for his intellect and integrity. I never saw him angry, though many stories were current about his short temper. And sometimes his sense of humility was so embarrassingly overwhelming that you wondered if he was a human being or an angel.

There was a whispering campaign during his last few years in office that he was building up his daughter as his successor. But, the world saw that he had done nothing of the kind in spite of the best efforts of some of us to see this happen. It was someone else who succeeded him.

And when later Indira Gandhi came to power, there was no other choice before the nation.

How repugnant to him was flattery became clear to me when after our reverses during the Chinese invasion on us in October 1962, a Rajya Sabha Congress MP from Karnataka, leading the debate on foreign affairs in the House, tried to preface his speech with fulsome praise for Nehru and his great father. Panditji was brimming over with rage and after about two minutes, asked Dr. Zakir Hussain, the then Chairman of the House, to stop him. "The debate, Sir, is on China, not on me or my family background".

The able Parliamentarian, much humbled and annoyed, sank, as if dead, in his seat. When I rose next to second his motion on behalf of the Congress Party, I spoke on the genesis of the conflict, of the effect of our humiliation on the world opinion, (in isolating China), the vindication of our policy of non-alignment (in that the engagement ended only after 10 days and both the USA and the USSR came to our rescue).

It had also made of us a nation, I said, more mindful than ever before of her weak defences and which would henceforth take no nation on trust only for its slogans, etc. As I had done my home-task rather well, it wreathed the face of Jawaharlal Nehru with a rare smile of approval, which brought the whole house down with the cheers of my colleagues, led generously by the Prime Minister of India.

Someone has said, "He couldn't achieve more than what he did because he could not take hard decisions, that he took history and the world around him too much to heart, that he was an idealist, almost a saint strayed into politics." But such, indeed, are the salt of the earth.

. Great men are far too many strutting about, clothed in brief authority, for a time, on the stage of life. But history has ultimately honoured only those like him, not the time-serving opportunists, or small-time tyrants who are feared or made use of, when alive, and thrown on the dungheap of history when dead. The earth shook twice the day his earthly remains were consigned to the flames!

And for good reason. Scarcely, as Einstein said of Gandhiji, would the future generations believe that such a one as he ever trod upon this earth. Undoubtedly, he was one of the wisest statesmen and a great man of history, but what will put him on the pedestal for our posterity is that he was, in spite of it, a good eternal man and true son of Mother India.

*Frank Anthony*

## Some Reminiscences

---

As it happens, because of my long tenure of service in the Central Legislature since 1942, then in the Constituent Assembly and later on in the Lok Sabha continuously, except for a break of two and a half years during the regime of Morarji Desai, I inevitably had occasion to work in many respects closely with Jawaharlal Nehru.

### **The National Anthem**

In the Constituent Assembly I was a member of the Steering Committee, of which Jawaharlal Nehru was the Chairman: we used to meet often in order to give directions to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. One matter which is indelibly impressed on my mind is with regard to the National Anthem. There was some division of opinion as to the National Anthem. As is well known, *Vande Mataram* evoked a great deal of reverential support. There was a suggestion that it should be the National Anthem. Ultimately, because of the decisive intervention of Jawaharlal Nehru, *Jana Gana Mana* was decided as our National Anthem, and *Vande Mataram* was regarded as our National Song.

### **First Delegation to the United Nations**

Jawaharlal Nehru had asked me to go as one of the principal delegates in the first delegation of Independent India to the United Nations. I was happy to accept the request. If I may say so, that delegation was powerful not only in respect of the principal delegates, led by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, but also in respect

of the assistant delegates. The particular contribution of the delegation was, if I may say so, a landmark, especially as we were able to muster enough support to out-vote Field Marshal Smuts with regard to the policy in South Africa.

### **Our Incomparable Jawans**

Another item which I remember vividly is that when I was on the small Committee that Jawaharlalji mustered and which met every day when we were attacked in 1962 by China. The news of the Chinese advances and the rather ignominious retreat of our own forces was understandably unsettling. My impression was that there was a lack of coordination between the Intelligence Departments of the different branches of the Armed Forces. So far as I could gather, according to the Air Force, the Chinese were not in the strength that the Armed Forces had assessed. I believe the basic weakness was in the supreme local leadership that was ultimately substituted for the Army. I spoke strongly in the debate that occurred after the Chinese invasion and compared it with the leadership of our incomparable jawans fighting in Ladakh. In Ladakh fighting in Company strength our troops not only countered but decimated a much larger number of Chinese troops.

### **English as the Associate Official Language**

Another circumstance of considerable importance that I remember rather vividly was the part played by Jawaharlalji with regard to the Official Language issue. Under Article 344 there was a provision for election of a Committee to report to the President. I was a member of that Committee: mine was the only minute of dissent, while all the other members agreed to English being effaced from the language pattern after 1965. Because of my minute of dissent, the matter came to Parliament. I pleaded fervently the case for English.

In April, 1959, I moved a resolution for the inclusion of English in the VIIIth Schedule of the Constitution. I discussed the matter at some length with Jawaharlalji. Whatever his private feelings were, he realised that the pro-Hindi lobby was predominant politically. In replying to my resolution with regard to the position of English, on the 7th August, 1959, Jawaharlalji made the

statesmanly and, indeed, historic announcement that English would be the associate/alternate official language for as long as the non-Hindi speaking people so desired. After a few years that was translated into legislation.

I believe strongly that, because of Jawaharlal Nehru's statesmanship and vision and the position that he legitimately gave English as the associate official language, it has helped English to be a major mortar of unity in the Country today. As Rajaji said, English is Saraswathi's gift to India. Because of that gift, India today has been able to enter the Nuclear Club through the Agni triumph, where the Indian scientists obviously acquired their expertise and knowledge through the medium of English.

It is extremely important that English is recognised by the leaders of all sections as an Indian language. This position was underlined in the case that I had argued in the Bombay High Court before Chief Justice Chagla against a dictum of Morarji Desai that only Anglo-Indians, whose mother-tongue is English, could be taught through the medium of English. That dictum was struck down by Justice Chagla, who handed-down a classic judgment that English being the mother-tongue of the Anglo-Indians, a small but recognised and respected community could not be discriminated against: anyone who wished to study through the medium of English has the right to do so. In Chief Justice Chagla's view, constitutionally, English was more an Indian Language than many of the languages in the VIIIth Schedule because it was the language of the Constitution, the language of the Supreme Court, the language of authoritative legislation and, above all, a major link language. Today, English is the only world language and a major mortar of unity in India. Thus, Jawaharlal Nehru's statesmanly vision, declaring it as the associate/alternate official language, has been fully vindicated.

Relatively, English was foreign even to the British: it became the language of Britain through the dialects of the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes who went there as conquerors: the original tongue of the British, Irish or Welsh was Celtic.

Today, with 200 years of acclimatisation in India, English, the only world language, is an ocean being constantly widened by innumerable streams, American English, Australian English, Canadian English and, today, the ever widening stream of Indian English.

Today, English is a major mortar of Indian Unity: administrative unity is imparted through the All-India Services, judicial unity is imparted through the upper echelons of the courts and perhaps, most importantly, it is the link language between the leaders of thought and action throughout the Country, especially between the North and the South.

### **Democracy and Secularism**

In a manner of speaking, I believe Jawaharlalji's dominant contribution was his dedicated and repeatedly expressed commitment to the basic principles of democracy and secularism as inspiring the Government of the Country.

*B.A. Masodkar*

## **Panditji : Luminous Socialist Philosopher**

---

This monograph on late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is an offering unto his illustrious personality and an encomium to his ever-inspiring memory; a tribute to a towering amongst the tallest Indian political leaders, an assessment of his political philosophy.

To think of Panditji is to think of all pervasive excellence of his versatile genius and a many-splendoured personality. At once noble and benevolent, kind and ever-reaching out, a doer and a dreamer, a sincere realist and an ardent idealist, a politician, pragmatist and a profoundly courageous thinker, Panditji perhaps is the last of that dwindling tribe of men who represent the elegant dynamics of political philosophy. He ever belongs to that enlightened royalty as his constituency spread over to transcend national and international borders.

Proud of the historical heritage of Mother India and full of hope for the future of humanity as such, he addressed himself to basic questions both in politics and philosophy. Upon a search for finding humanistic and egalitarian answers and for moral ordering of human society—he became the part of that inevitable struggle, a soldier, a captain and then the leader of this vast country. Notwithstanding the parameters that determined his choice to resolve the pernicious problems, he moved from strategy to strategy so as to face the ever growing crisis. Intensely conscious of the misery of the teeming millions of his fellow men, whom Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi described as “dumb toiling millions”, Panditji pinned his hope in reformation and resurgence of their true spirit. This unflinching faith in man was the spring force of his thought and of his actions. Life of the people who

crowded around him offered to him the lessons in the school of his life struggle. That brought natural love and affection of the people for him. At every focal and historical point whether during the freedom struggle or thereafter, people thronged around and looked to him, not merely as their leader but as the maker of their destiny—a beckoning light, leading them on to an era of salvation and liberty. Exuding confidence in them, he was to them the unfailing friend, a sort of liberation from the forces of subjections—alien, imperialistic as well in-built in the social structure. Interaction with this surging mass of men led to the formulations of his own original socio-economic philosophical thinking. Ever scintillating with spirit of resurgence, he carved out a path assuring equality among men and liberty to all societies.

In the proud gallery of the galaxy of the makers of the Indian Republic, Panditji's place eventually is that of an architect of a free developing people. That has added historical significance of its own. In truth, he was moulded by the people of India, their past and present, as he ever sought to discover them and in turn he grappled with the intricacies of the socio-economic morass alongwith the cultural conditions in which people were caught up. Even while structuring the India of his own dreams, he remained for ever a man of the masses close and dear to the people everywhere. He tried to spell out his own original political philosophy for the good of the people and for their well being. Intensely and that sometimes moved with emotions and having political tools available in the era, he leaned clearly towards socialism and yet wanted to achieve its goals by his own chartered path of peace, non-violence and humanism. Welfare State with socialistic ideals emerged out of his personal interaction with the penury of the people, their backwardness, illiteracy, mal-nourishment and political and cultural subjection reigning all around. In this, first and final premise were the masses.

Masses came with 'sadder' faces and 'sunken eyes' having haunted hopeless look to him.<sup>1</sup> Poverty of the people presented to his sensitive mind, involved moving poignancy and that aroused penetratingly, political and economic questioning. Out of that travail and turmoil he grappled with questions and carried on search for solutions. He was thus ever on a voyage of discovery.

---

1. *Thoughts of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Cab. Sectt. Implementation Committee for the Jawaharlal Nehru Centenary, p. 55.



Philosopher in him sobbed within, as the leader continued his ceaseless fight. He found "people were in miserable rags, men and women, but their faces were full of excitement, and their eyes glistened and seemed to expect strange happenings which would, as if, by a miracle, put an end to their long misery."<sup>2</sup>

"They showered their affection on us and looked on us with loving and hopeful eyes, as if we were the bearers of good tidings, the guides who were to lead them to the promised land."<sup>3</sup>

He carried all this burden of human pain, poverty and misery, his soul struggling as a rebel. He acknowledged "Looking at them (people) and their misery and overflowing gratitude, I was filled with shame and sorrow, shame at my own easy-going and comfortable life; and our petty politics of the city which ignored this vast multitude of semi-naked sons and daughters of India; sorrow at degradation and overwhelming poverty in India".

And again "A new picture of India seemed to rise before me, naked, starving, crushed, and utterly miserable. And their faith in us, casual visitors from the distant city, embarrassed me and filled me with a new responsibility that frightened me."<sup>4</sup> Yet in them he found the country's hope, a never failing image, of *Bharat Mata*, Mother India, was essentially these millions of people, and victory to her, meant victory to these people. You are part of this *Bharat Mata*. I told them, you are in a manner yourselves *Bharat Mata*, and as this idea slowly soaked into their brains, their eyes would light up as if they had made a great discovery."<sup>5</sup>

This vision of people as "*Bharat Mata*" and problems of poverty had always been focal to all his socio-political thought. Speaking at the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Merchants Chambers, Bombay Feb. 3, 1958, he made a moving reference to Biblical theme. He stated that he was not a preacher, "Nevertheless, I should like to take a text for my address, a well-known Biblical text: *For unto every one, that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he*

---

2. *Ibid*, p. 56.

3. *Ibid*, p. 56.

4. *Ibid*, pp. 56-57.

5. *Ibid*, p. 60.

*hath*". Eventually this spelt out his philosophy and political tenet.

In the same speech he asserted that the country was struggling to get out of the morass of poverty so as to achieve "the take off stage" into an era of a sustained economic growth. In that he wanted the nation first to cross the barrier of poverty and secondly structure the stage where growth becomes relatively spontaneous. His economic assessment was that in the present day situation in India the poor becomes poorer. Poverty becomes its own curse. It represents and adds to under-development. Economic subjection and the degrading forces of poverty, required adequate solution.

Deeper thoughts that turned his mind and soul had one concern and that was liberation of the people from poverty and uplifting them from deprivations. Eversince the freedom struggle, he believed in political and economic freedom of the people. To his mind both were interlinked and will have to be resolved with appropriate economic and political strategy. He looked around for ready parallels, in the sphere of politics and in the sphere of economic management. Being the part and parcel of Gandhian philosophy, he sought solutions within the compassionate compass of principles of Gandhism. The rising red star of socialistic thought charmed him, and enlightened his path. Thoughtful brooding over the enveloping phenomenon, he eventually marked out the lines of the golden middle streak, which in his views could master the forces of socio-economic subjection and usher an egalitarian welfare era on the basis of equality and freedom. The path struck was the middle path. Neither the extreme and total socialisation nor that of free, liberal economic *laissez faire* are the part of this path. Extremes lead to regimentation and these be avoided. Neither the steel frame of regimentation nor the loose liberty. His middle path perceived planned economic arrangement with necessary state intervention, side by side encouraging healthy competition amongst men and instilling more and more cooperative principles in all vital walks of life. On this path, he steered the affairs of this complex nation. On this path he sowed the seeds of growth and development. By this path he thought, true liberty, fraternity and equality could be ushered.

Born and brought up in somewhat idyllic conditions, Panditji was the product of an age of turmoil. Influences that turned his mind and soul to egalitarian goals were constantly interacting all around the political world. Although shaken by deadly wars,

science was offering solutions for development. Even political theory was claiming certain scientific basis. History was receiving a new interpretation while religion and its base was challenged. All this was quietly affecting Panditji's scientific mind as well as political and economic considerations. Freedom struggle led him to be incarcerated not less than nine times. That offered him profound break to ponder over problems that had beset men and society.

In the early Thirties, he declared himself to be a socialist. His first and enduring love for socialism as a political philosophy of salvation, remained a predominant and undying faith with him all through. It is interesting to note that even after the current political shift in socialist thinking of its mother country like USSR, Panditji is remembered as an unique proponent of scientific socialism. Recently Professor Ulianovsky paid glowing tributes while assessing Nehru's concept of scientific socialism. Writing in *Soviet Review* (July, 1989), the learned Professor states that indicative of Nehru's keen political insight was his attitude to scientific socialism. In his famous press statement late in 1933, he said that he considered the basic ideology of communism and its scientific interpretation of history to be sound. Such was the message of his clear and bold speech at the 1936 session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow. "I am convinced", said Nehru, "that the only key to the solution of the world's problem and of India's problem lies in socialism, and when I use this word, I do so, not in a vague humanitarian way, but in the scientific economic sense.

"I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vast interests in land and industry . . . That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a higher ideal of cooperative service . . . In short, it means a new civilisation, radically different from the present capitalist order."<sup>6</sup>

The Professor, however, rightly qualified by observing that in transcendent philosophical matters of being and consciousness, in his theory of cognition and the personality's spiritual and

---

6. *Soviet Review*, July, 1989 pp. 6-7.

moral development, Nehru was dominated by a mixture of Hinduist religious-ethical traditions and European rationalistic scepticism.<sup>7</sup> And further goes on to say that Nehru absorbed the traditions of India's ancient culture and the rich history of its national liberation movement, particularly the philosophy and practice of Gandhism. He assimilated all that the European bourgeois liberalism had to offer when he studied in Great Britain, its cradle, and being disillusioned, turned to socialist ideas, initially in their Fabian version. Having studied the theory and practice of scientific socialism, he was one of the first national liberation leaders to acknowledge the applicative forces and the significance of Marxism-Leninism and the logic of historical development and the call of the times for scientific socialism.

These statements from Professor Ulianovsky recognise Nehru's indomitable faith in the philosophy of socialism and yet are partial in perception of his total philosophical approach to the problems faced by the people. Panditji never minced his words while indicating his preference for socialism and thought communistic revolution was a great stride in the history of man. However, deeper urges of his spirits did not accept the method and the modality of the violent revolution nor forcible preemption of changes in socio-economic structure of the society.

Just to turn to Panditji's own thoughts, they offer ample evidence of his nobility of spirit, clarity of his vision and courage of his convictions. Of his fundamental frame, drawing upon socialism there is no doubt. As back as Sept. 22, 1928, he asserted socialism was "the only hope for a distraught world of today."<sup>8</sup>

While addressing the National Congress a decade after in 1938, he stated that socialism is for him not merely an economic doctrine, but a vital creed which he holds with all head and heart. He made it clear that he strives for Indian independence because the nationalist in him cannot tolerate alien domination and he works more for it because it was an inevitable step to social and economic change.<sup>9</sup>

Addressing a gathering in Bombay in the same year he reaffirmed that if there is any country in the world that stands most in need of this, that is, independence and socialism, it is our

---

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Thoughts of Jawaharlal Nehru*, op cit., p. 85.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

own poverty-stricken country, and expressed his hope that countrymen will make the fullest effort to reorganise the society so that the country may be guided by the principles of socialism and side by side it may contribute to the efforts for the freedom of humanity.<sup>10</sup>

*He clarified that socialism for him was an economic doctrine whereby there would be a proper distribution of the things that we produce, thereby raising the standards of the people all around. It means that private vested interests should not exploit the community and the principal means of production should not be in private hands and it means a large measure of equality.*<sup>11</sup> (Emphasis added). Hoping for economic revolution along with political liberation he set his goal, as the country struggled to free itself from forces of imperialism and the forces of economic subjection.

All through till almost the dawn of independence, his philosophy sings the song in this manner of "scientific socialism". Within it, he hoped to free people politically as well economically. In a way it was rebel in him that was asking people to throw away the shackles of subjection and to rise on their own. Political justice along with economic justice were the twin inseparables. And he emphasised the same again and again, with all force and fervour.

Politics in India had offered him hard facts. His outlook was the result of the clash of realities of socio-economic plane and his original philosophical as well somewhat spiritual perception of human life. He was choosing his means to reach the goal. At the same time had chosen a well thought of path. India's hoary history and the pressing dynamism of the scientific age came handy to construct safer political premises. There is abundance of evidence about his socialistic philosophy. It was context-bound. In a sense, he was putting Indian garb on socialistic thinking, having regard to the problems and the intricacies of the life of the people.

In his *Autobiography*, there is vivid account of how he thought of the principles of socialism and what was its applicative force. Stating that he had long been trained to socialism, communism in Russia appealed to him, he hastens to add that he disliked the ruthless suppression, the wholesale regimentation and the

---

10. *Ibid*, pp. 88-89.

11. *Ibid*, pp. 90-91.

unnecessary violence that came in the wake of communism.<sup>12</sup> His outlook even in politics did not depart from ethical considerations, nor the values of peace.

He does not halt there. His perception is clear as he observes, that on the basis of mere theory it was absurd to copy blindly what had taken place in Russia *for its application depended on the particular conditions prevailing in that country and the stage of its historical development.*<sup>13</sup> (Emphasis added) Probing further like a true scientist, his quest looks around to other political societies.

He takes into account carefully what was happening not only in Russia but also in countries like Germany, England, America, Japan, China, France, Spain, Italy and Central Europe so as to understand the "tangled web of current affairs".<sup>14</sup> Before formalisation of the basis of his political philosophy, he had before him all that empirical data however complex and interlinked. His pursuit for original solution to India's problem thus was the product of his intense as well interacting study of socio-political realities available in various countries.

Having cleared the thorns and thickets and having sorted out the pattern, he marked his elegant path. While at it, he candidly stated that the theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many a dark corner of his mind. History came to him with new meaning and the Marxist interpretation threw a flood of light on it. It became an unfolding drama, with some order and purpose, however unconscious, behind it. Eventually he observed, "In spite of the appalling waste and misery of the past and the present, the future was bright with hope, though many dangers intervened".<sup>15</sup> Freedom from dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism were the highpoints that appealed to him ever more.

Indian political scene had its apparent drawbacks and various contradictions. These were inherent in the situation through which history was unfolding. He had realisations with regard to these difficulties being not only the product of the past but of the basic structure of Indian society eventually worsened by forces of imperialism and foreign rule. These required socialistic

12. Jawaharlal Nehru—*An Autobiography*, p. 301

13. *Ibid*, p. 362.

14. *Ibid*, p. 363.

15. *Ibid*, pp. 362-63.

considerations while on the path of building a state and restructuring the society. He observed, "Socialism involves a certain psychological outlook on life and its problems. It is more than mere logic. So also are the other outlooks based on heredity, upbringing, the unseen influences of the past and our present environments. Only life itself with its bitter lessons forces us think differently. Perhaps we may help in this process. And perhaps, "on recoontre sa destinee Souvent par less chemins q'on prend pour l'eviter".<sup>16</sup> This panoramic view of matters continued to highlight his choices and eventual political theory and political practices.

On one side the violent saga of Russian revolution and on the other the intricate web of political and socio-economical facts having focal point of Indian masses, determined the course of Panditji's philosophy. In a way, it was a search of a sincere politician for adequate solution. In a way a thinker was out on a journey at once inspiring and luminous. Deep and profound study of the people and the forces that make them ages after ages, set parameters for understanding politics and eventual necessity of appropriate statecraft. Earnest desire to resolve the real issue for providing liberty, dignity and justice to man, was central to this thinking, eventually leading to realistic philosophy that eludes classification. It is not set in terms of any particular jacket; but has essentially egalitarian and humanistic formulations, whereunder socialistic considerations continue to hold the field seeking reformation or restructuring of the society and the State. It is a happy synthesis of several socialistic principles brilliantly woven together on the loom of humanism.

It would not be far from truth to state that Panditji's pristine socialistic philosophy had two basic primary pillars. One that of rationalism and another of humanism. From first came the powerful current of thinking for providing and having necessity of state intervention wherever necessary, so as to secure basic human values. The second furnished principles of peace, non-violence, and reformation. The trinity of socialism, rationalism and humanism woven into one like a confluence of three holy rivers, mixed and mingled. The outflow was wonderous glow of eternal values. The processes and actual working of those processes as Panditji administered the affairs of the State evidently indicated this.

-----  
16. *Ibid*, pp. 368-69.

Speaking on April 14, 1956, he made it clear that he wanted "the socialistic pattern of society", and that phrase did indicate in one word "Socialism". He explained that it did not contain any doctrinaire thinking, for such thinking leads to rigidity and rigidity of outlook was bad.<sup>17</sup> Sublime in spirit, he offered a pristine political philosophy having high aim of socialistic society to be structured by humanistic methods.

On January 4, 1957 addressing the All India Congress Committee, he made his perception on this very clear. He stated that he believed that socialism can be of many varieties. Socialism in a very highly developed industrial community may be of one type, while in agricultural country it may be of somewhat different type. "I do not see why we should try to imitate another country, although we should take advantage of the experience gained elsewhere."<sup>18</sup>

He rejected the capitalistic structure of Society for it led to building up of "acquisitive society". The socialistic society in his view must try to get rid of this tendency to acquisitiveness and replace it by cooperation. Though not Gandhi's "total renunciation", this had a high ring of ethical ideal. While spelling out the basic approach he asked, "What is socialism?" It is difficult to give a precise answer and there are innumerable definitions of it... Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism, though I think, it is true that wide gap between them tends to lessen because many of the ideas of socialism are gradually being incorporated in the capitalist structure. *Socialism is after all not only a way of life but a certain scientific approach to social and economic problems... Socialism should therefore be considered apart from these political elements or the inevitability of violence.* It tells us that the general character of social, political and intellectual life in a society is governed by its productive resources. As those productive resources change and develop, the life and thinking of the community changes".<sup>19</sup> (emphasis added)

It was his belief that the "*philosophy of socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods of advance to its full realisation. India will have to go that way, too,*

17. *Thoughts of Jawaharlal Nehru, op cit., p. 92.*

18. *Ibid, p. 93.*

19. *Ibid., p. 95.*



*if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race".<sup>20</sup> (emphasis added).*

Being a rationalist humanitarian and egalitarian in outlook Panditji ever strived to usher socialistic era for the general good of the people as a whole. He accepted principles of state intervention and thereunder importance of public sector in the economic life of the society. Although he seems to permit mixed economy as a step while upon the golden middle path, that was for ensuring competition in economic life. Public and private sector should vie with each other so that country's economy is developed by cumulative efforts. He observed on December 14, 1953, that if India has to have solid economic foundations and go up, Government must be a party to it. The public sector thus becomes very important.<sup>21</sup> And again addressing on December 22, 1954 the Congress Parliamentary Party, he made it clear that it was advantageous for the public sector to have a competitive private sector, to keep it up to the mark. On the whole it was good to have a private sector, something where the surplus energy of the people who are not employed in the public sector may have some play, provided, of course, we control that private sector in the interest of the national Plan.<sup>22</sup> Again to the National Development Council in 1956, he said that no field of activity is sacrosanct for the private owners but certain fields of activity should be sacrosanct for the State. The rest is an open field and there we should give every opportunity and freedom for private enterprise to grow. We should encourage every element to produce and to help in nation-building, subject always to the consideration that wrong tendencies are discouraged.<sup>23</sup>

The State intervention was necessary along with planning. He laid emphasis by observing that *if it was left to the normal economic forces to take their own course, as in the capitalist system there was no doubt that poor will get poorer and the handful of the rich richer. It is vital that the State should intervene. "From the riches of the rich it will provide the poor with education, health, housing and other amenities".<sup>24</sup>*

20. *Ibid*, p. 158.

21. *Ibid*, p. 63.

22. *Ibid*, p. 64.

23. *Ibid*, p. 66.

24. *Ibid*, p. 70.

State intervention became essential so as to stop the cumulative forces that make the rich richer. The State have to stall these cumulative forces that would enable the poor to get over the barriers of poverty. Herein was the premise to fuse several philosophical trends to restructure and build a new healthy society into a Welfare State.

It was as if a phase of the change, a cut off point from that of the traditional society being converted into "a more modern society". Unless a social group of a country changes, it loses its pre-eminence and becomes backward. In modern life, science and the progeny of science, techniques, technology, etc. are of highest importance. They govern our lives and change conditions of living today.<sup>25</sup> A scientific orientation involved a great task. That involved building of the nation and the country and an emergence of a new society based on the principles of equality, fairness and justice. Such a work of building a nation or a country "is never completed". It goes on and no one can arrest its progress—the progress of a living nation. Nation has to press forward.

He observed, "when we undertake a big work, we have to do so with a large heart and a large mind. Small minds or small-minded nations cannot undertake big works. When we see big works our stature grows with them, and our minds open out a little."<sup>26</sup>

Here is then the core of Panditji's philosophy. The contours of his thought and its manifestation of his outlook as he administered the affairs of State always had the backing of basic principles of social activism. Having possessed a very keen analytical mind and having studied profoundly the world political scene, Panditji's thought processes can only be termed as his own, truly original in form and inspiration. An enlightened traveller on the path of philosophy and politics he never ceased to carry on his search, even while working at his synthesis, resolving the curious riddles that faced Indian masses. His discovery, a synthesis at work, offers an illustrious, elegant exposition of the high drama both in the field of thought and action.

There is yet another live facet to his humanism. While in Ahmadnagar Fort, the poet-philosopher in Panditji, looked at the moon as "ever a companion to me in prison, has grown more

---

25. *Ibid*, p. 147.

26. *Ibid*, p. 145.

friendly with closer acquaintance, a reminder of the loveliness of this world of the waxing and waning of life, of light following darkness, of death and resurrection following each other in interminable succession. Ever changing, yet ever the same, I have watched it in its different phases and its many moods in the evening, as the shadows lengthen, in the still hours of the night, and when the breath and whisper of dawn bring promise of the coming day".<sup>27</sup> Probably what he observed about Lord Buddha would aptly apply to his singular search carried on in nobility, courage and with convictions. He perceived, "Buddha had the courage to attack popular religion, superstition, ceremonial, and priestcraft, and all the vested interests that clung to them. He condemned also the metaphysical and theological outlook, miracles, revelations, and dealing with the super natural. *His approach was to logic, reason, and experience, his emphasis was on ethics, and his method was one of psychological analysis, a psychology without a soul. His whole approach comes like the breath of the fresh wind from the mountains after the stale air of metaphysical speculation*".<sup>28</sup> (emphasis added) Enlightened Nehru and his enlightened political philosophy was the product of the same order and reach. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Panditji did possess the same said courage and same said conviction of his belief. While on this pursuit he drew inspiration from brilliant minds and searched for basis on which Indian life can be reorganised. In historical and modern context he thought of means so as to have moral ordering of the society. He took in his sweep the entire humanity and had an integral vision of life. Reaching out and feeling the soul and spirit of India, critically examining the same, he thought of the new thrust so as to make and sustain India. He had unfailing faith in India's dynamic capacity. "Nature renews itself and covers yesterday's battlefields with flowers and green grass and the blood that shall shed feeds the soil and give strength and vigor to new life".<sup>29</sup>... "Present slips into the past before we are hardly aware of it; today, child of yesterday, yields place to its own offspring, tomorrow,"<sup>30</sup> stated the optimist in him.

Planning was a must so as to have brighter tomorrow. Its

---

27. Jawaharlal Nehru—*The Discovery of India*, p. 1.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 499.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 500.

success inevitably depended not merely on production but on a proper and equitable distribution of the national wealth. Planning with a planned society can secure social goods. For growth, dynamic thrust was necessary. Without dynamic outlook stagnation and decay do set in, without principles disintegration and destruction follows. The ills and evils in society seek to threaten order and peace. To have strength and effectiveness behind it we should have constitutional Government run by majority of the people, and that should reflect the inter-relation of the social forces.

“From those who have faith in the moral ordering of the universe and of the ultimate triumph of virtue can, fortunately for them, function as lookers on or as helpers, and cast the burden on God, others will have to carry that burden on their own weak shoulders, hoping for the best and preparing for the worst”.<sup>31</sup>

The political philosopher in Panditji did not stop at merely referring to moral ordering of the society but tried to give a definition thereof. He stated,

“We have to revive passion for truth and beauty and freedom which gives meaning to life, and develop afresh that dynamic outlook and spirit of adventure, which distinguished those of our race who, in ages past, built our house on these strong and enduring foundations. Old as we are, with memories stretching back to the early dawns of human history and endeavour, we have to grow young again, in tune with our present time, with the irrepressible spirit and joy of youth in the present and its faith in the future”.<sup>32</sup>

To Panditji’s vision truth came, as the ultimate reality and “It was eternal, imperishable, unchanging. With infinite, eternal, unchanging, truth cannot be apprehended in its fullness by the finite mind of man which can only grasp, at most, some small aspect of it, limited by time and space, and by the state of development of that mind and the prevailing ideology of the period”.<sup>33</sup>

---

31. *Ibid.*, p. 509.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 510.

33. *Ibid.*,

This statement is in fact an unflinching footnote to Panditji's thought. What he observed, perceived and philosophically, either in the realm of politics or administration, continued to propound, practise and propagate was closer to ethical considerations. He tried to offer to entire humanity an integral vision of life that should inspire the temper of science, along with humanistic philosophy, and have reverence for all that lies beyond.

"Thus we may develop an integral vision of life which embraces in its wide scope the past and the present, with all their heights and depths and look with serenity towards the future... Man's journey through life is an odd mixture of joy and sorrow; thus only can we learn and advance. The travail of the soul is a tragic and lonely business. External events and their consequences affect us powerfully, and yet the greatest shocks come to our minds through inner fears and conflicts... Whether that journey has any ultimate purpose or not we do not know, but it has its compensations, and it points to many a nearer objective which appears attainable and which may again become the starting point for a fresh advance"

The Philosopher-king in him, so defined and described the inevitable chain of creation and regeneration, of decay and continuity. His approach was one of fearless search for truth, based on the solidarity of man. He was willing to note the divinity of everything, living and to free it for cooperative development of the individual and the species, ever hitched to greater freedom and higher stage of human growth.<sup>34</sup> He perceived the spirit of the age being equality and abhorring all forms of exploitation of human beings. For him equality, democracy and collectivism were goods for this purpose. He states:

*"Equality means equal opportunity for all and having no political or economic or social barrier in the way of any individual or group so as to progress. It means a faith in humanity and a belief there is no race or group that cannot advance and make good in its own way, given the chance to do so".<sup>35</sup>*

*"Equality to realise demanded construction of an economic system which fits in with its concept and encourages it. Along with*

---

34. *Ibid.*, p. 515.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 521.

political change economic change was a must.<sup>36</sup> "That change will have to be in the direction of a *democratically planned collectivism*".<sup>37</sup>

*"Collectivism need not mean an abolition of private property, but it will mean public ownership of the basic and the major industries. It will mean the cooperative or collective control of land"*.<sup>38</sup> (emphasis added)

Such a system of *democratic collectivism* will need careful and continuous planning and adaptation to the changing needs of the people.

Collectivism involves communal undertakings and cooperative effort. Such a system in Panditji's view was in harmony with his perception of socialism. A self-governing system could be the pivot. That could envisage in turn, the self-governing village. The village community organised on the collective and cooperative principles would eventually offer a functional role to the democratic organisation of free progressive state.

Panditji's conceptual unfolding as well as his acceptance of philosophy of socialism, and further, its definitive format in the shape of "socialistic pattern of society" thus represented his total political perception, having background of national peculiarity. This original context, he believed, ever continues to determine the resilience of social forces, so as to hold together the nations and the societies even in the face of worse of the storms. A true rationalist and humanist he chose socialistic ideology so as to reach the goals of welfare of the humanity. Indeed it would be ironical to limit his philosophical vision to India, for he ever thought of human family as one and existence on this planet as integral.

Evidently, while accepting the Marxist formulations in this manner particularly with regard to the interpretation of the ongoing process of human history as well as explanations offered by theory of dialectical materialism, amongst the developing society he could not miss the evident. Colliding of conflicting social interests that constantly pushed forth the inherent contradictions available in societies who sought to achieve state

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 521-22.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 522.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 522.

of political and economic liberation were the part of the unfolding of history. While analysing these forces Panditji was ever alive to the human links, of development and growth. He stood firm on his own ground having a scientific and rational approach to this explainable as well attainable phenomenon all around. Society was no exception. Similarly, being a philosopher at heart he sought measures that could reform the social structure. His assiduous search was ever fresh and fragrant with hope and faith. To him social justice and principles of equality were the desideratum while economic and political freedom was the condition. It is true that Mahatma Gandhi's political mechanism based on political and moral freedom and having peaceful non-violence movement did influence not only the theory but this core philosophy of Panditji's politics. In *Autobiography*, there is vivid and clear statement with regard to what is loosely called the spiritualisation of politics in the wake of Gandhian thrust. Panditji candidly underscores this aspect by observing, "the spiritualisation of politics, using the word not in its narrow religious sense, seemed to me a fine idea. *A worthy end should have worthy means leading up to it.* That seems not only a good ethical doctrine but sound, practical politics, for the means that are not good often defeat the end in view and raise new problems and difficulties. And then it seemed so unbecoming, so degrading to the self-respect of an individual or a nation to submit to such means, to go through the mire. How can one escape being sullied by it? How can we march ahead swiftly and with dignity if we stoop or crawl?"<sup>39</sup>

Dynamics of his socialism came to be suffused with the considerations of rationalism and humanism. Throughout his thinking the current of basic human sympathy and basic human values seem to inter-mingle giving his philosophy a new, bright and original form and a sort of new vitality and vigour. In short, peace and non-violence was preferred to strife and violence; the Society had to be re-structured even by state intervention, by modality of setting up system of initiating a public sector and further trying to lessen the gap between classes of poor and rich. Spheres of equality providing better opportunity was to be widened, to make real qualitative difference in the life of the people. Cooperatism and collectivism in economic activity of the nation

---

39. *An Autobiography*, op. cit., p. 73.

were to be ushered providing essential super structure while the state mechanism continues to build necessary infrastructure for its success.

It is here that political philosophy of Panditji had its distinctive attire and a very different definitive canvas. Sometimes theorists think that this is watering down the very essence of socialism and tending to usher liberalism. Such a view overlooks the unique personality of the man behind his philosophy, and the problems that he chose to settle. In his thinking and in his action, Panditji was a democrat. Socialism was an endeared end to him. But, he was not willing to surrender the basic humanistic values for reaching there. He was the greatest proponent and upholder of basic humanity. A moving current of a serene, sincere spirituality in his thought is ever present. His urge was to do good, and live for good. With that he continued to dominate and shape the thinking Indian. As one ponders over his innate outpourings, whether about nationalism or internationalism, about religion or science, about feudalism or democracy, about past or present, his personal musings continue to brighten many a darker and saddest corner of the human world with ray of hope.

It is of interest in the age of "irreversible *perestroika*" that has in effect softened hardened attitudes of socialistic philosophy and opened new thinking vistas for national introspection and societal reforms in countries which had been the cradle of socialistic upheavals, to perceive the unfailing wisdom and noble reach of Panditji's ever encompassing compassionate philosophy. His perceptions three decades ago are now being accepted so as to restructure the state and society based on humane consideration. The American Policy Planner Mr. Fukuyama has offered an interesting comment on this :

"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the cold war or the passing of a particular period of post war history, but the end of history as such, i.e. *the end point of all the mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government*".<sup>40</sup> There is demand for "more democracy with more socialism". Panditji as he lived and thought had unique conceptual vision of socialism as he fused it and interweaving the same with

---

40. Quoted by "Time", Sept., 1989, p. 43.



the principles of democracy, rationalism and humanism, he offered a synthesis constructing a viable vigorous political philosophy, original in form and essence.

The everwidening, scintillating horizons of the political philosophy of Panditji thus in various ways and in various phases aims at restructuring of human society based on justice. Noble at heart and mind he was a proud patriot. He sought to awaken the soul of the mother country as to meet the new challenges of the times. He was, thus, the seer and true son and the product of Indian history. He engineered to set free the historical forces in motion by opting for socialistic pattern along with moral ordering of political people. Eventually, on August 14, 1947, while unfurling the flag of freedom, he reminded himself and the nation of "tryst with destiny" and calling upon everyone to redeem that pledge not fully or in full measure, but very substantially. "At the stroke of midnight, while the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom".

Panditji cannot but be described as a politician and philosophical thinker of a very high order. He has left an immutable mark on the moving sands of history. Dr. H. John Taylor assessed him as "a man with deep philosophical mind, a man of complete integrity". To a philosopher of his kind time dimension does not touch. He remains ageless. There is a serene permanence about it all. Ever fresh glow and radiance of its own. Best tribute comes in the words of Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore who observed about Panditji that "there runs a deep current of humanity which over passes the tangles of facts and leads us to the person who is greater than his deeds and truer than his surrounding".

Dr. A.D. Litman, noted philosopher of Soviet Russia has summed up by observing that Nehru was "a great thinker, humanist and far-sighted statesman".<sup>41</sup>

More apt would be to say with late Smt. Indira Gandhi that "he was a luminous man!" Ever fascinating and great, radiating the lustre of human dynamism he rules primarily as the philosopher in politics.

---

41. *Soviet Review*, August, 1989, p. 12.

*Mohammad Yunus*

## Travelling with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

---

The first time I travelled with Jawaharlalji was when he leapt into my blue M.G. to race ahead of the cavalcade with Badshah Khan in the car just behind us. It was the year 1938. The location was the Tribal Belt between Peshawar and Kohat—dry, rocky and dusty. He was on his first ever visit to the Frontier, and was sitting with Badshah Khan in an open car, while I had been deputed to drive ahead to warn the Khudai Khidmatgar volunteers to get up and line up the route. At times the distance between us was very short. And so, when he was being shown a gun factory on the way, he came up to me and said, '*Yeh kia mazak hai keh aap to apni racing car main aage nikal jate hain, aur hum sab ko khak khani parti hai. Main ab aap ke sath jaonga.*' 'What kind of joke is this? You dash off in your racing car and we are left behind to swallow the dust. I am going to sit with you now.' Badshah Khan was rightly annoyed over this recklessness in a terrorist infested area, and scolded me for it. I could see Jawaharlalji, in a mischievously boyish manner, watching me bear the brunt of his prank. Later he told Badshah Khan that he was to blame for what had happened, not I.

He was a wonderful companion, and put one very much at ease. He took care of those accompanying him and hated it if too much fuss was made over him. My long association with him was one of the most precious things of my life. I was fortunate to have lived and worked closely with him. He was also gracious enough to never make me feel too young, too inexperienced, or too presumptuous of his time, even though I was twenty-six

years his junior—he was born in November 1889 and I in June 1916. I remember thanking him for his prolonged hospitality during the three years I stayed under his roof and benefited from his supervision. He was good enough to thank me instead for my companionship! He said, '*Bahut log ate hain aur chale jate hain. Kabhi Gandhiji kisi ko bhej dete hain, aur kabhi koyi aur. Woh rishte aksar toot jate hain. Magar aapne aakar iss ghar main har kisi ke dil main ek khas jage paida kar lee hai. Maine bhi aapse bahut kuch sikha aur aap ki batain achhi lagne lagi hain. Ab aap iss ghar ko apna hi ghar samjhen.*' 'Many people come and go. Sometimes Gandhiji sends someone, and sometimes somebody else. But these relationships often break up. You have established a special rapport with everyone in our household. I have learnt a great deal from you and I have started appreciating what you have to say. Henceforth you must always treat this as your home.'\*

Whenever I think of Jawaharlalji, and that is very often, I have been able to glimpse a new aspect of his personality; some rich and varied fact that revealed the man. He had once asked me in pre-partition days, to write a book about the North West Frontier Province and counter the slanderous accounts appearing in the press about kidnappings then going on in the Frontier. His advice and constant encouragement drove me to write a history of the Pathans. This included chapters on Tribal Affairs, and the life and movement of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. I called it 'Frontier Speaks', but Jawaharlalji would intervene and say, 'It doesn't speak. It shouts and shrieks, and kicks adversaries in the face.' The book was banned by the British in 1942. Jawaharlalji had written its Foreward, and later said that though he had written so many books, the British took no notice of any of them. 'But you write one, and they ban it.' Such was his charm, sense of humour, and the art of encouragement. During my apprenticeship with him I found that he would place an apparently small and trivial issue in the larger context of life in such a way

---

\*A friend recently drew my attention to what he had said about me to his daughter in a letter sent from Ahmednagar Fort on 26th March, 1943. 'You will be sorry to learn that Yunus is very ill and has grown thinner than he was. It is T.B. So Betty writes. He is at present in detention in Abbottabad. I am worried about him. He is one of the most likeable persons I have come across.' *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. XIII.

that it became a lesson of history. There is no sermonising. No guidelines, and no coercion.

My reminiscences of him are spread over a long and eventful period. I had countless occasions to disagree with him, but it was always without fear. He took my criticism with sporting humour, but serious concern, and often took pains to explain why he had to act differently. It was at times like this that I admired his capacity for work, and his zest for life. He was a disciplined person and conducted himself most admirably and effectively in whatever he did.

Whatever little I have been able to achieve, has been entirely due to the love, affection and meaningful guidance I received from Jawaharlalji. In this connection, I recall the text of a telegram I received from an elder sister after his death. 'Alas, you have lost a fatherly friend.' I had never heard of such an expression before, but I suddenly realised that these two simple words — 'Fatherly and friend' expressed our exact relationship and explained the sorrow which enveloped my heart.

Travelling with Jawaharlalji in the early years of struggle and independence was not what it is today. One had to use any form of transport; from a tonga and bullock cart to plane, or on foot in the beautiful valleys of Kashmir or in Kulu. In such a case, politics took a back seat. What did emerge invariably was the sheer humanity of the man. A journey by train was delightful; not so eventful in the Second Class, but a trip in Inter and Third Class always produced a lot of fun. This journey began in 1936 and ended with his death in May 1964. I kept seeing a new facet of an extra-ordinarily agile person performing his duties so diligently. He invariably paid greater attention to his duties, rather than claim his rights or privileges. This account should establish my contention that we in India were fortunate to have had a man like him to lead us during the formative years of our independence.

After a very exciting Congress session at Ramgarh and having survived the impact of the heavy downpour, Jawaharlalji left for Allahabad by train. We got off at Prayag Railway Station, which comes just before reaching Allahabad. As we got into the car, he looked a bit worried and said, 'Sardar Vallabhbhai's train to Bombay leaves after several hours. What will he do at the station? You better go and fetch him.' So after dropping him at Anand

Bhavan, I drove to the railway station, where I found the Sardar and his daughter, Maniben going towards a Refreshment Room. He was surprised to see me and his concern became even more pronounced when I told him that Jawaharlalji wanted him to go home with me. He kept on asking whether a message had come from Bapu. We soon reached Anand Bhavan and found Jawaharlalji waiting for us in the porch. The Sardar and his daughter were given separate rooms to wash in and then we had breakfast together. Afterwards he joined me to see off the Sardar.

While returning from the station, I told him that the Sardar was quite perplexed about the invitation to go to Anand Bhavan. On hearing this, he said, 'This is the first time that the Sardar has come to Anand Bhavan without a Working Committee Meeting taking place there.' My later association with the top Congress Leadership revealed that most of them had very little social contact with one another, even though they had suffered so much and for so long for the attainment of a common ideal.

On another occasion, a fat fellow in the railway compartment was snoring louder than the engine. Jawaharlalji was naturally disturbed and told me in a soft tone, 'If his nose is pinched, he will stop snoring.' I sprang up from my seat and pinched his nose so hard that he jumped up and started shouting *Takkar lag gai. Takkar lag gai*. I looked out of the window to calm him down and we were greatly relieved when he got off at the next station.

Jawaharlalji was once going by train from Allahabad to Kanpur. As he could not sleep with the lights on, and since he knew that the Third and Inter Class compartments had no switches, he used to carry small black Khadi bags to cover the ceiling lights. I recall how this practice was responsible for my getting VIP treatment during a train journey. I too had begun carrying such bags, and during a trip, a fellow passenger pronounced triumphantly, '*Yeh naujawan Panditji ka sathi lagta hai. Unhin ke tarah batiyon ko dhak raha hai.*' 'This young man seems to be a follower of Panditji. Like him, he too is covering the lights.' On my return to Allahabad, I narrated the incident at Anand Bhavan, and suggested that the covers be called 'Jawahar switch'!

On arrival at Kanpur, a large crowd was there to welcome Jawaharlalji. As they could not see him properly, he opened the compartment door and, standing astride the window and the door and holding the ceiling with both his hands, improvised a

stage for himself. Just then a boy came forward with his autograph book, and wanted him to sign it! Jawaharlalji was furious to begin with, but soon regained composure and said, '*Kya mouh se likhoon?*' 'Do you want me to write with my mouth?' This made him laugh, and the crowd burst out laughing as well.

Jawaharlalji visited Peshawar in May, 1940, where he stayed in our family home.\* There was excitement all around and all manner of people came to see him, apart from a few army officers and a large number of Congress workers, who were ever ready at the beck and call of Badshah Khan. Sheikh Abdullah had sent two cars to take the party to Kashmir, but I drove Jawaharlalji and Badshah Khan in my Wolsely 25. It was a spacious car and ideally suited for a long drive. At Attock, we stopped to see a colleague whose house was situated on the bank of the river Indus. While we were waiting for lunch to be served, the host pointed out the spot where Alexander the Great had built a bridge at the time of his invasion of India. This excited Jawaharlalji, and he decided to go for a swim. The water was flowing swiftly and the rocks had naturally turned slippery with the algae. Seeing him slip, Badshah Khan got apprehensive, and kept calling him to stop. From there we proceeded to Abbottabad for the night. I left my car with a friend, and got into the transport sent from Kashmir. Large crowds greeted us all along the route. It was Jawaharlalji's first entry into his ancestral province after achieving national stature. We reached Srinagar in the evening, were given a big reception and taken out in a boat procession on the Jhelum river to a point near Amira Kadal. From there we motored to Chaman Hazuri, where a massive crowd was present to hear the

---

\*He wrote a letter about this visit to Indiraji, which is reproduced in Volume XI of his *Selected Works*. He said, 'I spent two days in Peshawar. I was the guest of my young friend about whom I wrote to you once—Mohammad Yunus, who stayed with us in Allahabad. I told you that he had forty-two brothers and sisters. There were eight mothers. Yunus was youngest of the family, and he was born when his father was ninety years old. The old man was hale and hearty to the end and died partly through an accident when he was ninety nine. The family mansion was in the heart of the city of Peshawar, a big house of the old style, as solid as a fortress. The mother tongue of the family was Pushto in a way and conversation was carried out alternately in Pushto, Persian, Hindustani and sometimes in English.'

national heroes. This was followed by a sumptuous dinner hosted by the Kashmiri Pandits. After going through a strenuous and hectic day, we reached our abode at midnight. Badshah Khan was very tired and lay down to sleep. But he found Jawaharlalji going through some papers and asking me to find out from Sheikh Sahib whether there was anything else to do. Badshah Khan heard this, rose agitatedly and said, 'Jawahar, *Subah chaar baje se ab raat ke barah baje tak chakar mein pare huey ho. Ab aur kya karna chahte ho. bahar ja kar nacho.*' 'We have been on the move since four in the morning and it's midnight now. What do you want to do now? Go out and dance.' He sought permission most submissively to go through some papers, and promised to take rest after that.

During the first trip to Kashmir in 1940, Jawaharlalji, Badshah Khan, Sheikh Abdullah and few of us had occasion to go out in *Shikaras* on the Dal Lake to enjoy the cool breeze and sip Kashmiri *Qahwa* served from decorated *Samovars* and eat delicious *Kulchas*, *bakerkhanis* and *Kababs* served after brief intervals. Jawaharlalji was particularly struck by the local folk music being played in another *Shikara* accompanying us with additional food and beverages.

No one in the party knew that Sheikh Sahib had a melodious voice. I was aware of it, and requested him to recite a few verses from the Quran. He did so after a little hesitation. Later he was persuaded to sing. He thrilled us first with a few lines from Iqbal's *Himala* and *Naya Shivala*. The atmosphere thus created prompted Jawaharlalji to tell us about similar cruises and excursions he had undertaken during his student days in England. Badshah Khan also spoke of the beauty spots in Swat State, and of his love of going for shoot with his sons. He also made everybody laugh when he referred to their grouse against him that he would shoo off the birds with his grey khadi sheet. He insisted that the joy of a shoot was in spotting the birds and not in killing them.

After the Congress Working Committee Meeting held at Bardoli in December, 1941, the members left for their destinations on the last day of the year. Jawaharlalji, Govind Ballabh Pant, Dr. Khan Sahib, Indiraji, Mr. & Mrs. Asaf Ali and I left by car for Surat, from where we had to catch the Frontier Mail at around 2 A.M. While loitering at the station, Jawaharlalji suddenly thought of New Year's Eve. Something had to be done. I got hold of a tea

vendor to set up a table in a quiet corner around midnight. As we left the Dining Room, we saw that the wretched tea vendor had laid the table near the toilet—*Mardana and Zanana!* Asaf Bhai's discomfort was particularly marked, but I reminded him of Ghalib's couplet that recommended merry making beside the shade of a mosque. And so if the lovers of the country had a new site for a *Maikhana*, he too should not resent celebrating New Year's Eve in this unusual way.

A journey from Allahabad to Delhi during the war years has to be narrated in full to make it a bit informative. World War II had just begun. Sir Stafford Cripps had earlier arrived in his private capacity and stayed at Anand Bhawan. Acharya Narendra Dev, Jaiprakash Narain, Sri Prakasha, and a few other Congress leaders were invited to meet him. I was staying there as well, and used to be privy to the discussions. I was, therefore, surprised to hear Sir Cripps' views on various subjects. His assessments seemed thoroughly odd, and I made no bones about telling my illustrious host, '*Mujhe to yeh bilkul pagal lagta hai*'. 'He sounds like a fool to me'. My comment was not appreciated by Jawaharlalji, who smiled and let it go at that.

Two years later the same Cripps came as head of a Cabinet Mission, with a mandate to resolve India's problem. Indiraji had just been married and Jawaharlalji left for Delhi the next day. I accompanied him, and was woken up several times by the milling crowds at different stations. Some of the guests, who had attended the marriage, were travelling in the same train; though in different compartments. They all descended on us at Ghaziabad, where the train was held up for over two hours. Ifti's laughter used to cause lot of amusement, and it did so much more on this occasion.

The Delhi Talks dragged on, because Cripps kept shifting his ground, and eventually they broke off most ignominiously. At the end Jawaharlalji held a Press Conference. Desh Bandhu Gupta had installed a *Shamiana* in his garden for this purpose. Delhi had never seen a press conference of such dimensions—attended by nearly five hundred journalists; both Indian and foreign. In addition to political questions, an English Correspondent asked Jawaharlalji's opinion about Cripps, and 'He is a muddle-headed politician' was the answer. On our way back from the conference, I reminded him of our conversation two years ago, and asked, 'What was the difference between a muddle-headed politician and a fool'? He



recalled the sequence, laughed heartily, and said, '*Aap Ke Kya Kehne. Aap to aadmi ko jaldi parakh lete hain.*' 'There is no gainsaying you. You are a better judge of men'. He later related this incident to Gandhiji, who patted me so hard on the back that I was rattled to the bone. He then asked me, 'Why did you not tell me all this' as if he would have changed his policies and strategies. I then discovered that Bapu's reaction to such incidents always startled those around him.

Let me give you another peep into those Talks. The Cripps negotiations had dragged on indecisively and at times irritatingly. Everyone had been curious about the outcome. One day when we were returning from one of those long drawn out sessions, Jawaharlalji thought that I too must be bubbling with questions. At that moment he was anxious to unburden himself, and so burst out impatiently, 'Ask me something?' I hesitated. He shook me from the shoulders and repeated, 'Why don't you ask?' I shrugged and said, 'I don't need to. I will read about it in the newspapers tomorrow. If I ask you something now and there is a leak in the press tomorrow, you will accuse me to have disclosed it.' He smiled, and we motored to meet Gandhiji, where he related this incident in detail. Bapu was very pleased and complimented me on the sense of discipline I had learnt from Badshah Khan.

The riots that took place in India at the time of partition were most distressing and humiliating. Its memory still casts dismay. One day a Congress worker from Sonapat came to inform Jawaharlalji that several thousand armed men, with spears, knives and even a few guns, were on their way to attack a camp near a town where the Muslim refugees destined for Pakistan were being collected. Jawaharlalji's fearlessness and courage used to sparkle at such moments. He hurriedly got into his car and reached the site. The rioters quickly spotted him, encircled his vehicle, and began shouting '*Inquilab zindabad* and *Jawaharlal Nehru ki jai*'. In order to make himself visible, he climbed to the top of his car and began to address them. It was an unforgettable scene. There he was face to face with the crowd that had just come after loot, arson and killings; their weapons tipped with blood and their mood set to indulge in more bloodshed against those trapped in the camp. He reminded them of the freedom struggle, and how young men and women had raised these very slogans to

oppose the British. 'Today I hear the same slogans from those who want to kill their countrymen'. This sentence of his had a magical effect. The next moment there were cries of Hindu-Muslim unity and expressions of remorse for their ghastly deed.

On his return to Delhi Jawaharlalji went straight to Gandhiji and narrated the whole incident to him. Later he had to broadcast a speech from the All India Radio. This was exactly what he had said to the rioters at Sonapat, and what he had told Babu. In his speech he appealed to shed hatred and to work for unity. Instead of appreciating his courage and honesty, the media in Pakistan used that text to malign India in the United Nations. It was stated that Muslims were not safe in India, and the proof, they said, was given by Jawaharlal Nehru himself. That accusation did not bother this noble son of India, who continued to proclaim, 'I will not be the Prime Minister of a Hindu India. I want to serve all those who were born and brought up here, and wish to stay here. They should be allowed to live with peace and dignity. I want to live and die for that kind of India.'

The same courage and concern was displayed by him a few days earlier. Dr. Zakir Husain had called me frantically around 11 P.M. He described how the crowds had surrounded Jamia, and threatened the very lives of those trapped inside. Seeing the hopelessness of the situation, he said *Khuda Hafiz* in a sad voice. I put the phone down and ran up to his study. He was working. I told him what Zakir Sahib had said. We immediately drove off to Jamia Millia Islamia and found Dr. Zakir and his colleagues huddled in a state of helpless despair, while a violent mob raised havoc outside. Upon seeing the Prime Minister enter the hall at midnight, someone in a trembling voice said, '*Aap ne shan se zinda rehene ka sabak bhi dia, aur aadhi raat men aakar izzat se marna bhi sikha dia. Ab hemen koi dar nehin raha*'. 'You taught us how to live a dignified life, and by this fearless act of coming here at the dead of night you have taught us how to die with dignity. We are no longer afraid.'

In the meanwhile, word had reached Sardar Patel. He found that in view of the utter lawlessness around Delhi, there was no police force to be sent to Jamia. So he called up Mountbatten, who got his bodyguard soldiers to rush towards Jamia—with himself at their head. He saw Jawaharlalji surrounded by a large crowd, and asked his men to lift up their guns to give protection.

But he soon found that he was addressing them from the top of his car admonishing them for indulging in such madness.

After his release from Ahmednagar Fort during the 'Quit India' movement, Jawaharlalji paid his second visit to Kashmir. Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Rajiv were already camping there with me. He joined us and we spent a few peaceful days in those beautiful surroundings. Badshah Khan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were also there for part of the time.

One day we were returning from Gulmarg on horse back, and were late to reach Tangmarg. Jawaharlalji was getting restless and enquired why we were so late. I told him that Ifti, namely, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, had a fall and was hurt in the head. This naturally caused a lot of concern, but he made everyone laugh by saying, '*Wohi bechare ka weak spot hai, aur wohin choten lagati hein.*' 'That is his weak spot, and he gets hurt only there.'

During Sheikh Abdullah's trial in 1946, he paid his third visit to Kashmir and I was called to accompany him from Rawalpindi onwards. We were arrested and sent back to Delhi after three days' detention at Uri. He returned to Srinagar a month later. During this visit he was invited to tea by his brother-in-law, C.B. Kaul, who was Manager of the Imperial Bank at Srinagar. Ramchandra Kak, the Maharaja's Chief Minister, was busy making mischief. We found that the petrol tank of an old rickety car provided by the National Conference and parked near our houseboat, had its fuel drained out. So in order to reach in time, we had to look for an alternate transport. Shah Nawaz and I located a *Tonga* carrying several pitchers of milk to the city. Jawaharlalji sat in front with the tongawala, and Shah Nawaz and I occupied the back seat. It was comical sight, but showed the man's determination to fulfil his mission. While we were on our way, we saw Mr. Brij Lal Nehru and his wife, driving in their huge limousin No. J&K 1936. They gave us a lift, as they too were going to the same party. Nehru then started his sermon on what Jawaharlal should do and began to berate him for not arranging his plans properly. This was too much for Jawaharlalji. He flared up, gave a bit of his mind to a cousin older than himself, and left him in jitters. On reaching the venue, we enjoyed our cup of tea, but good old Biju Bhai, as I called him, and his wife, sat in a corner without uttering a word.

In January 1949, he paid a brief visit to Lucknow. The then

newly arrived Egyptian Ambassador, Ismail Kamil Bey, and I accompanied him and stayed at Raj Bhavan with the then Governor, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Trying to be a good hostess, Mrs. Naidu told the Ambassador that in order to respect the sentiments of his guests, she abstained from serving ham or beef. A startled Ambassador retorted, 'Then what do you give for breakfast?' Jawaharlalji was not only amused, but began taking an interest in the Egyptian envoy, who in turn regaled us with the large fund of anecdotes, and his own experiences as King Farooq's emissary to many lands.

In August 1949, Jawaharlalji visited Kashmir for some urgent consultations with the local leaders. These visits became quite frequent in subsequent years; though a break occurred after 1953. The British High Commissioner, Sir Archibald Naye, who was Governor of Madras in pre-partition India, and his wife, the Secretary General, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Jawaharlalji's personal staff and I flew in a Dakota that was not pressurised. On approaching the Banihal Pass, Jawaharlalji began telling his guests to look out at the 'magnificent view'. Sir Girja was feeling uncomfortable, and was in no mood to derive any pleasure from that exercise. He later told me quietly, '*Bhaiya, Prime Minister Sahib to bare zabardast aadmi hain. Hamein jan ki pari hai aur yeh keh rahe hein ke Banihal dekho. Jis ne dekhna hai woh dekhe. Mein to sone laga hoon.*' 'The Prime Minister is formidable. I am worried about my life and he wants me to see Banihal. Whosoever wishes to do so is welcome. I am going to sleep.'

In September 1956, Jawaharlalji paid a visit to Saudi Arabia. This was after the Suez Crisis, when India's prestige in the Arab world was at its peak. He was received with great affection and large crowds lined up the route and shouted '*Rasul us Salam*', which meant welcome to the Messenger of Peace. This appellation caused dismay to the diehard fundamentalists in Pakistan, because in Urdu, *Rasul* is only the Prophet Mohammad. They were annoyed with the Saudis for giving the epithet to a non-Muslim. The *Dawn* of Karachi had come out with a lead story under the Caption 'Alas Saud'. Some Arab Dignitaries made fun of this attitude, and resented the Pakistanis teaching them Arabic. In Arabic *Rasul* means a messenger.

The two days spent in Saudi Arabia were quite a treat. The King gave a banquet in a glittering hall, while Amir Faisal, who

was then the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, entertained in his private residence, which was much smaller than the King's Palace. At the time of departure, came the gifts; Arab robes and Swiss watches for all of us, and a green Cadillac for the Prime Minister. He did not fancy it much, and said, 'I don't like to go back with this limousin.' I immediately retorted: '*Agar motor na dein to phir kya dein. Inke pass to tel hai ya phir ret.*' 'If they don't give you a car, then what else. They only have barrels of oil or bags full of sand!' Jawaharlalji saw the point, laughed heartily, and asked me to go and take delivery of the keys from the Saudi Minister-in-Waiting—Ali Mohammad Raza. The car is still going strong in the Protocol Division of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Travelling with Jawaharlalji not only enabled me to know him as a warm human being but, for a youngster like me at the time it opened up a whole new world of political experience, intellectual curiosity and a deep concern for the condition of man.

*Subhash C. Kashyap*

## The Golden Age of Parliamentary Democracy

*Parliament of India at work  
From the commencement of the Constitution to  
the end of the Nehru Era\**

---

Before Independence, there was little identity of interest between the representatives of the people in the old Central Legislative Assembly and the Government of the day. The two were in hostile camps, not in the sense that different political parties are, but in the sense that while the people's representatives stood for the national interest in its different aspects, the Government did not. It was a case of people's representatives trying to mould the destiny of the nation but could not, and the rulers of the land who could mould the national destiny but would not. After Independence, things naturally underwent a metamorphosis. Parliament became the principal forum in which national problems were thrashed out in the full gaze of the public and where different political parties in opposition conducted their trials of strength with the party in power in their attempts to fulfil their election promises. Parliament was now a body of earnest people with a full sense of their responsibility and the power to do and undo things. It truly represented the nation and the hiatus that

---

\* Reproduced from the author's forthcoming book *Political System and Institution Building under Jawaharlal Nehru*.

existed between the Government and the people's representatives before Independence was no longer there.<sup>1</sup>

The transitional period between August 1947 and March 1952 was an important one as it bridged a gap between the old Legislative Assembly and the new Parliament. It helped the new Ministers and senior officers in the administration to familiarise themselves with the working of the new Constitution. At the same time, the Members of Parliament learned to conform to parliamentary traditions and to suitably adapt them to the needs of independent India and the work of the Parliament of India. It was a period during which progress was made both in regard to elaboration of rules of procedure and the setting up of various committees partly to regulate the work of the House and partly to regulate its relationship with the executive.<sup>2</sup>

## Elections

By the time the first General Elections were held under the new Constitution in 1952, Parliamentary democracy had taken deep roots. This election itself was something unique in parliamentary history all over the world. In spite of the fact that millions of people all over the country — majority of them poor and illiterate — were exercising their franchise for the first time, the system was able to ensure free and fair elections. The conduct of elections won all-round admiration. This was repeated in the second and third general elections, held in 1957 and 1962, respectively. Expression of the free will of the people was the hall-mark of these elections. Even though the size of the electorate grew with successive general elections, it was to the credit of the system working under Nehru that there was minimum room for complaint against the election process and machinery. The Indian National Congress, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, was returned to power in all the three general elections with comfortable majorities in the Lok Sabha.

- 
1. Satyanarayan Sinha, 'Organising the Business of Parliament', in *Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume*, Lok Sabha Secretariat (New Delhi, 1954), p. 27.
  2. T.T. Krishnamachari, 'Parliamentary Life during 1929-54' *Ibid*, p. 23.

## **Building the Institution of Parliament**

Pandit Nehru was the prime architect of India's political institutions. His contribution to the evolution of parliamentary democracy in the country was unique. It was he who built, brick by brick, the infrastructure and edifice of parliamentary institutions in India. The years that followed the commencement of the Constitution constituted a period of great stress and strain for the nation and for the world at large. That India's representative institutions endured was a great tribute to Nehru's abiding faith in and respect for the parliamentary system. The Union Parliament itself under Nehru's leadership performed a tremendous conflict resolution and national integrational role during the formative years (1950-1964). As "the grand inquest of the nation", it came to be relied upon as a forum for grievance ventilation and redressal and for resolving the multifarious difficulties and problems of the people.

As the first Prime Minister of India who was at the helm of affairs for the most crucial fourteen years of the new Republic, it was Jawaharlal Nehru who worked the constitutional mandate of establishing a parliamentary system guaranteeing social, economic and political justice; liberty, equality, dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation. And, the way he worked it, he gave shape, meaning and content to the provisions of the Constitution.

As the Leader of the House — Provisional Parliament (1950-1952), First Lok Sabha (1952-1957), Second Lok Sabha (1957-1962) and Third Lok Sabha (1962-1964) — Nehru played the most outstanding role in establishing healthy practices and precedents. Free and fair elections to Parliament based on universal adult franchise for Nehru the most sacred festival of democracy and an article of faith. He showed tremendous respect to the institution of Parliament and to parliamentary practices and procedures. This was evident all through his conduct inside and outside the Houses of Parliament. His relations with the Presiding Officers and the members of Parliament were most cordial and admirable. Letters of individual members of Parliament were almost invariably replied to by him personally and most promptly.

Nehru had the fullest faith in Parliament as the Supreme representative institution of the people. He believed in the primacy



of Parliament and in its supremacy within the field assigned to it by the Constitution. In the matter of the role of the judiciary and extent of judicial review Nehru took a very firm stand and said that the courts could not become a third legislative chamber; their role was to interpret the laws made by Parliament and not to themselves lay down the law.

It was through his conscious efforts that Parliament secured a pre-eminent position in the country's polity. The effectiveness of institution of Parliament was convincingly vindicated on several occasions.<sup>3</sup>

### **Dignity and Decorum in the House**

Nehru was meticulous in showing courtesy to Parliament; the very manner of his entry into the House, the graceful bow to the Chair each time he took his seat or left the House, his strict observance of parliamentary etiquette in the best sense of the term, and his readiness to answer even irritating interruptions were exemplary. As Shri R. Venkataraman, the President of India says, "it was his innate gentleness and his gentlemanliness that made Nehru an ornament to Parliament"<sup>4</sup>. He took keen interest in the Question Hour and seldom missed it. He was present during most of the debates on major issues and listened to the members with attention. Nehru answered questions with dignity and dexterity, gracefully and effectively. Mrs. Violet Alva once observed that Nehru spoke "with passion but not with malice". Sometimes he denounced wrongs "with the spirit of a rebel but he left no wounds behind". He "could intervene and answer any intricate point and wind up the critical stage of any debate".

In respect of maintenance of decorum and orderly behaviour in the House, Nehru expected members to behave and appealed to them to do nothing which would lower the dignity of the House. There were occasions of disorderly conduct but he met them with firmness. He even went to the extent of getting the members of his own party expelled from the membership of the

---

3. Subhash C. Kashyap (ed.) *Nehru and Parliament*, Lok Sabha Secretariat (New Delhi, 1986), Introduction.

4. R. Venkataraman in Kashyap (ed.) *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Lok Sabha if found guilty of conduct unbecoming of a member of Parliament.

When in 1951 a Member of Parliament (M.G. Mudgal) tried to use his membership position for doing propaganda on behalf of the Bombay Bullion Association for a consideration, Nehru himself took the initiative in Parliament by moving for an enquiry by a parliamentary committee against the Member even though he belonged to Nehru's own party—the Indian National Congress. Mudgal's conduct was adjudged to be unbecoming of a Member of Parliament and he had to go.<sup>5</sup>

Nehru reacted more strongly on a subsequent occasion in Lok Sabha about 13 years later when some members indulged in disorderly conduct while the President was addressing both the Houses assembled together on 18 February, 1963. The Committee set up to go into the conduct of these members, had recommended that they should be reprimanded. Replying to the discussion on the Committee's Report, Nehru said:

"The sole question before us is—it is a highly important one and vital one what rules and conventions we should establish for the carrying on of the work of this Parliament with dignity and effectiveness..... It was for the first time that it happened, and if that was allowed to continue without any strong expression of opinion of this House or Parliament, it would have been a bad day for our democratic institutions and Parliament especially. This Parliament is supposed not only to act correctly but lay down certain principles and conventions of decorous behaviour. . . .

"I would submit to you, Sir, and to the House, that the least we can do is to accept this and thereby give an indication to this House, to the country and to other Assemblies in India that we shall adhere strongly to the behaviour that is expected of such a high Assembly as Parliament and other representative bodies in India. We have to set an example to that, and if we are weakened in this it will be a bad day for Parliament and for our future work. I submit therefore that the resolution moved by the Deputy Speaker should be accepted by us without much argument".<sup>6</sup>

- 
5. S.L. Shakhder, *Glimpses of the Working of Parliament*, (New Delhi, 1977), Chapter 7, 'The Conduct of a Member of Parliament: The Mudgal Case', pp. 111-136.
  6. *L.S. Deb.*, Vol. XV, 19 March, 1963, pp. 4770-71.

**Parliamentary Initiatives and Impact**

One of the occasions and perhaps the most memorable when Parliament asserted itself arose in 1955-56, when the problem of reorganizing the States was taken up in the light of the Report of the States Reorganization Commission. The marathon debate that took place on the Commission's Report in 1956 was sufficient proof to show that Parliament was no "rubber stamp" of either the Executive or the party in power. In fact, the final decision to create a bilingual Bombay State, an altogether new proposal, was the product of spontaneous parliamentary initiative. Also, there were other allied decisions which were equally important and emerged from parliamentary debates on the subject of the States Reorganization. Abolition of disparity in the salaries of Judges of High Courts of Part A and Part B States, discontinuance of grouping of States into A, B & C categories, creation of the office of Linguistic Commission and creation of Legislative Council for the State of Madhya Pradesh were some of the other instances of decisions which could be attributed to initiatives from Parliament.<sup>7</sup>

In yet another instance, in keeping with the highest traditions of ministerial responsibility in parliamentary government, the Union Minister of Railways (Lal Bahadur Shastri) owned constructive responsibility for a serious railway accident and resigned.<sup>8</sup>

In an impressive show of parliamentary power, an I.C.S. Secretary (H.M. Patel) and a powerful Finance Minister (T.T. Krishnamachari) had to quit their posts in the Mundhra case involving questions regarding investments of L.I.C. funds etc. The matter was raised in the Lok Sabha and followed up by Feroze Gandhi, a distinguished parliamentarian.<sup>9</sup>

In the Berubari case the Government had decided to cede certain parts of the territory of the Union to Pakistan under an agreement. Parliamentary pressure compelled the Government to refer the matter to the Supreme Court and to bring forward a Constitutional Amendment before Parliament. The Supreme

---

7. Shakdher, *op. cit.* pp. 214-25; *L.S. Deb.*, 6 August, 1956, c.2333; 9 August 1956, cc.2574 and 2593-94; 7 August, 1956, cc. 2474-75.

8. *L.S. Deb.*, 26 November, 1956, cc.993-97.

9. *Ibid.*, 4 September, 1957, S.Q. 1476; 18 February, 1958, c.1282.

Court opinion established the principle that no part of the territory of the Union of India could be ceded by the Government without parliamentary approval and without the Parliament amending the Constitution.<sup>10</sup>

When in the midst of some controversy and reported differences, an army General (Chief of Army Staff, General Thimayya) submitted his resignation, Prime Minister Nehru firmly and categorically declared in the Lok Sabha that in India "civil authority is, and must, remain supreme". These were significant and memorable words particularly in the context of what had happened to democracies in some of the neighbouring countries.<sup>11</sup>

In the 1962 debacle following the Chinese aggression, the Defence Minister (V.K. Krishna Menon) had to resign as a result of *parliamentary pressure*. It showed at once the power of Parliament on the one hand and the magnanimity and vision of Nehru and his deep commitment to the highest norms of parliamentary democracy on the other. When he found that the majority opinion in the Congress party and in Parliament was against his own personal predilections he readily, willingly and gracefully bowed to it.<sup>12</sup>

The Compulsory Deposit Scheme which came into force on 22 May 1963 evoked strong opposition from the people and Parliament. It was virtually withdrawn even before the year was out.

What came to be known as the Serajuddin affair resulted in the Minister of Mines and Oil (K.D. Malaviya) having had to resign after admitting receipt of money from Serajuddin for political purposes and after being subject to an enquiry by a Supreme Court Judge.<sup>13</sup>

The reported VOA deal between India and U.S.A. generated considerable heat and opposition in Parliament and ultimately Government had to rescind the agreement.<sup>14</sup>

A Constitution Amendment Bill introduced on 24 April 1964 and seeking to indemnify certain actions of officers during the

---

10. *Ibid.*, 12 September, 1958, cc.6200-09. Berubari Transfer Bill and the Constitution (Ninth Amendment) Bill were introduced in Lok Sabha on 16 December, 1960.

11. *Ibid.*, 2 September, 1959, c.5857.

12. *Ibid.*, 11 November, 1962.

13. *Ibid.*, 17 August, 1963, cc.954-57.

14. *Ibid.*, 18 November, 1963, cc.8-17.

Emergency was withdrawn by the Government in view of strong reaction against it in Lok Sabha.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, on several occasions, Parliament chose to assert itself, especially on issues of national importance.

### **Accommodating the Opposition and Accepting Criticism**

Nehru was always more than willing to accommodate the views of the Opposition in the greater interests of the nation. He listened to the view-point of the Opposition very carefully. It was, he said, fully democratic that the Opposition should criticise the Government's policies, only it would be more helpful if they offered constructive criticism. Even though the Opposition was weak in numbers, Nehru accorded it considerable importance and held the view that "it would not be right for us to appear to be vindictive."<sup>16</sup> He met the Opposition leaders occasionally to exchange ideas on crucial issues. He would make it a point to compliment those who made fine speeches and raised important issues. Also, he would talk to them. His personal relationship with many Opposition members was most cordial and friendly. Glowing tributes have been paid to him for his unfailing courtesy and consideration shown to Opposition members of Parliament. Nehru felt responsible not only to the members of his own party but also to those of the Opposition and in fact to the whole nation. He was conscious of the fact that he was the Prime Minister of the entire country and the leader of the whole House and not merely the leader of the majority party in Parliament.

Under Nehru's stewardship, the rights and privileges of members were duly safe-guarded, and the dignity and prestige of the House maintained. He asserted, "I am jealous of the powers of this House and I should not like anyone to limit those powers".

Once when some members from the Opposition felt that certain remarks made by the then Special Assistant of Nehru (M.O. Mathai) were a contempt of House and brought a privilege motion, Nehru requested the Speaker to refer the matter to the Committee of Privileges. He said :

"When a considerable section of the House was feeling that something should be done, it is hardly a matter for a majority

15. *Ibid.*, 29 April, 1959, cc.13766-80 and 24 April, 1964, cc. 12501-24.

16. *Ibid.*, 2 May, 1963, c.13408.

to over-ride those wishes. . . . suggestion to drop this matter would, I think, not be a right one because it almost appears that an attempt was made somehow to hush matters or hide matters. It is not a good thing for such an impression to be created".<sup>17</sup>

Nehru appreciated informed criticism from all quarters and did not hesitate to accept and appreciate valid points.

On one occasion during the discussion on President's Address, an Opposition leader, Asoka Mehta, described the President's Address as odourless, colourless and generally inane and blamed the Government for it. While replying to the debate, Nehru dealt with that point first and said:

"Now Sir, first of all I should like to refer to a criticism which has been made strongly and forcefully by Shri Asoka Mehta about the President's Address being odourless, colourless and generally inane. As members of the Government, who are responsible for the President's Address that criticism applies to us certainly. I am prepared to say that criticism is partly justified".<sup>18</sup>

Nehru would often begin by welcoming "well-deserved criticisms" in Parliament saying that his government could benefit by them. At the same time, he would disarm his critics by observing that beyond that criticism there was a vast amount of agreement on fundamentals, and then he would set out to analyse the areas of agreement. Nehru might have sometimes appeared "impatient and intolerant of criticism, obstruction and indecision, so characteristic of democratic assemblies", but, in fact, he was at great pains to appreciate criticism. He was so introspective as to go out of the way to see the other man's point of view. He "tried his best to pick out points from the criticism of the opponents of his stand, and was patient enough to try to rebuild and reshape his own plans and ideas."<sup>19</sup> He thus encouraged healthy debates and ultimately adopted valuable suggestions put forward by the Opposition members. By paying due respect to the views of the Opposition parties and those of the people at large expressed through the Press, Nehru nurtured the great traditions of parliamentary democracy in its infancy in India. In the process, he also set exemplary standards in parliamentary life.

17. *Ibid.*, Vol., XXV, 1959, p.169.

18. *Ibid.*, Vol. L, 23 February, 1961, p. 1677.

19. Uma Shankar Dixit in Kashyap (ed.) *op. cit.*, p. 127.

Within the Congress party, also, Nehru permitted debates and discussions, inviting different shades of opinion on various matters. Thus, Congress was flexible enough to accommodate different points of view. It offered enough scope for every opinion and criticism to develop and held frequent discussions or consultations, the gists of which were often given out in the press for public information and discussion. This characteristic of the functioning of the party enabled it to hold its position in the House. The discussions and developments in the ruling party meetings themselves greatly influenced the government in shaping its policies and in responding to public opinion. The impact of the Party on the administration was perhaps as important as that of Parliament. Though the administration was not directly accountable to the party in power, indirectly the criticism it suffered at the hands of the party leaders found expression on the floor of the House and got channellized through different parliamentary procedural devices under which the administration could be called to account.<sup>20</sup>

Nehru's parliamentary style was distinctly his own. His reasoning was impeccable and his brilliant repartees, wit and humour thrilled the House. He spoke in chaste English or Hindi. The occasion very definitely determined the language he used. His Hindi or Hindustani particularly was something typically his own. A special kind of articulation, often it was like a teacher trying to hammer or explain a point with great dexterity of purpose.

### **Position of Speaker**

Nehru laid down some conventions of lasting value by up-holding the Speaker's position in the House. The Speaker, Nehru believed, held a pivotal position in the House and was a true symbol of the dignity and independence of the House. He was expected to be the guardian of the rights and privileges of the members. Speaking on the occasion of the unveiling of the portrait of late Vithalbhai Patel, he said :

"Now, Sir, specially on behalf of the Government, may I say that we would like the distinguished occupant of this Chair

---

20. Shakhder, *op.cit.*, p.198.

now and always to guard the freedom and liberties of the House from every possible danger, even from the danger of executive intrusion. There is always that danger even from a National Government that it may choose to ride roughshod over others, there is always a danger from a majority that it may choose to ride roughshod over the opinions of a minority, and it is there that the Speaker comes in to protect each single Member, or each single group from any such unjust activity by a dominant group or a dominant government. . . . the position of the Speaker is not an individual's position or an honour done to an individual. The Speaker represents the House. He represents the dignity of the House, the freedom of the House and because the House represents the nation, in a particular way, the Speaker becomes the symbol of the nation's freedom and liberty. Therefore, it is right that that should be an honoured position, a free position and should be occupied always by men of outstanding ability and impartiality".<sup>21</sup>

Once when Speaker Mavalankar wanted to see Prime Minister in his office, Nehru emphatically pointed out that it was he who would go to the Speaker's Chamber and not the other way round. The incident speaks volumes of Nehru's greatness, humility, adherence to parliamentary conventions and respect for parliamentary institutions. Shri S.L. Shakhder, the former Secretary General of Lok Sabha, who along with Shri M.N. Kaul had watched closely Panditji functioning in Parliament and can be taken as an authority on Nehru's relationship with the democratic institution, reveals the delicate balance of the intimate relationship between the incumbents of the two vital parliamentary institutions, viz., the Prime Minister and the Speaker in the formative years of the country after Independence. In Shri Shakhder's words:

"Preserving the dignity of the House and enhancing its authority was the wont of Prime Minister Nehru. He showed it in little actions that form today permanent precedents for others to follow and thereby strengthen the foundation of an eternal system. He was fully conscious that the Speaker, being the spokesman of the House, should be as respected as the House itself. So it was that, whenever he had to discuss anything

---

21. Shakhder, *op.cit.*, pp.37-38.



with Speaker, he would come to his Chamber after making an appointment, and also, when the Speaker expressed a desire to see him, Nehru would come to his Chamber. I know that even when parliamentary delegations led by Speaker had to visit countries abroad, he would come to the Speaker's Chamber and address them there. By so doing, he not only respected and enhanced the position of the Speaker, but also enhanced his own dignity and authority. Lesser men felt humbled".<sup>22</sup>

Nehru appreciated first and foremost the qualities of fairness and impartiality in the Speaker. He observed : "The Speaker has to abstain from active participation in all controversial topics in politics. The essence of the matter is that a Speaker has to place himself in the position of a judge. He is not to become a partisan so as to avoid unconscious bias for or against a particular view and thus inspire confidence in all sections of the House about his integrity and impartiality."<sup>23</sup>

Nehru never wanted the Speaker to toe the ruling party line or to show any favours to the ruling party while giving his rulings in the House. He supported the Speaker fully in any matter concerning the rules and procedures. In one of his admirable addresses to the House when the office of the Presiding Officer was under attack, Nehru said :

"We are concerned with our honour, we are concerned with the honour of the person who holds up the dignity and prestige of the Parliament. I do not say that it is not possible at all to raise a motion against the Speaker. Of course, the Constitution has provided it. The point is not the legal right but the propriety, the desirability of doing it".

### **Healthy Parliamentary Traditions**

Thus, Nehru led the way in emphasising the need to preserve the dignity of the House. Nehru's approach and attitude to Parliament were largely responsible for the growth of healthy parliamentary traditions in the first decade and a half of Parliament in independent

22. Shakhder in Kasnyap (ed.), *op. cit.* pp.163-64.

23. Cited by G.S. Pathak in S.S. Bhalerao (ed.) *The Second Chamber*, (New Delhi, 1977), p. 168.

India (1950-1964). In the words of Dr. S. Gopal, the biographer of Nehru :

“Building on the familiarization with politics brought about by the national movement, Nehru defied conventional wisdom and introduced adult suffrage. Much as he disliked the sordid rivalry implicit in elections to legislative assemblies, Nehru gave life and zest to the campaigns; and, between elections, he nurtured the prestige and vitality of Parliament. He took seriously his duties as leader of the Lok Sabha and of the Congress Party in Parliament, sat regularly through the question hour and all important debates, treated the presiding officers of the two Houses with extreme deference, sustained the excitement of debate with a skilful use of irony and repartee, and built up parliamentary activity as an important sector in the public life of the country. The tone of his own speeches in Parliament was very different from that which he adopted while addressing public meetings. There was no suggestion of loose-lipped demagoguery. He still sometimes rambled, but sought to argue rather than teach, to deal with the points raised by critics, to associate the highest legislature in the country with deliberation on policy and to destroy any tendency to reduce it, in Max Weber’s phrase, to ‘routinized impotence’. By transferring some of his personal command to the institution of Parliament, he helped the parliamentary system take root”.<sup>24</sup>

As a true democrat Nehru promoted frank discussions on subjects of importance in the Houses of Parliament. Nehru did not much relish the excuse of public interest to deny information to Parliament and sometimes intervened to give the information which the concerned Minister may have denied on such grounds. He was willing to share a great deal of information with Parliament even in matters like national defence. He was most anxious to involve Parliament in the evolution, determination and evaluation of national policies. The Science Policy and Industrial Policy resolutions are important examples. He made efforts in the direction of making Parliament appreciate the need for a scientific approach and inculcating among the people a scientific temper. As the Foreign Minister, he made it a point to have discussions on the international situation and for the purpose he would often himself move in the House that the international situation be taken into

---

24. S. Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru — A Biography* (New Delhi, 1979), Vol. II, p. 304.

consideration. The result was that debates in the Indian Parliament attracted wide attention not only in India but in the wide world outside. Foreign affairs debates were eagerly looked forward to. The Visitors' Galleries and Diplomatic Galleries were fully packed during all such debates. There were some momentous occasions like the debate on the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Often, the debates helped to ease tense situations, resolve conflicts and highlight India's impact and contributions in the process. Nehru always emphasized the desirability of Ministers welcoming probing parliamentary questions and educative debates. For, he treated Parliament as a "comrade" and as a "necessary aid to Ministers".<sup>25</sup> This ability to accept others' viewpoint and extract out of them the best elements, to be used for the good of the society was one of the most remarkable traits of Jawaharlal Nehru's personality. It is worth recalling how once when Shrimati Rukumani Arundale's Private Member's Bill on Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was under consideration, Nehru walked into Parliament and declared that the Government was committed to the principles of the Bill and would bring forward its own legislation on the subject.

It was through such firm stands and a spirit of accommodating legitimate suggestions that Nehru laid the foundations of the Parliament of the largest democracy on earth and made it a potent instrument of nation-building, social engineering, economic reconstruction and national integration.

Thus, before the Nehru Era in the history of India came to an abrupt end in May 1964, firm foundations of Parliamentary Government had been laid. The Parliament of independent India—of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India—had been in existence for nearly 14 long years. During this period, the nation was able to actually work the system of representative parliamentary democracy and to adapt it, where necessary, to India's own ethos, needs and aspirations. The country was fortunate in having at the helm of affairs a galaxy of highly distinguished and competent men headed by the great stalwart of the freedom struggle, Pandit Nehru himself. They proved to be as good nation-builders and administrators as they had been patriots and freedom fighters. Also, the existence of a well-organised and reasonably disciplined political party—the Indian National Congress—with its firm faith in representative institutions proved a great boon in the task of

25. N.G. Ranga in Kashyap (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.135.

institution building, developing healthy traditions, ensuring effective functioning of Parliament and State Legislatures and of the Congress Ministries at the Union and State levels etc.

### **Procedural Devices and Innovations**

The procedural devices available to the members to bring up matters of urgent public importance for discussion in the House were very few before Independence. They had mostly to remain content with the procedure of adjournment motion, which did not have the connotation of a censure motion, because the Government in those days was not responsible to the House. As a result, in the Central Assembly, the practice developed that virtually all matters of importance were brought up for discussion on adjournment motions. In fact the President of the Central Assembly had to invariably allow discussions by means of adjournment motions. The practice was so deep-rooted that when the Executive became fully responsible to Parliament, the members did not even realize the change that had taken place and that it was no longer appropriate to bring all matters for discussion on adjournment motions. It goes largely to the wisdom and farsightedness of the Prime Minister Nehru and Mr. Speaker Mavalankar and successive Speakers in Lok Sabha that they worked zealously for widening the opportunities so that the members could bring up important matters for discussion in other ways as well.

The first liberalization was in introducing half-an-hour discussions. It soon became a frequently resorted device for discussing matters of adequate public importance which might have been the subject matter of a recent question, oral or written. Then came into being the rules relating to short duration discussions. Under these rules, a matter of urgent public importance could be discussed for a duration not exceeding two and a half hours if the Speaker admitted the notice on grounds of urgency and importance and the Government agreed to find time. In a sense, it served the same purpose as an adjournment motion. But it was different in some ways. No motion invoking a decision of the House was drawn up and there was no decision of the House thereon. If it was admitted, the subject was just put down for discussion and the members placed before the House their points of view and

the Government made a reply. There was no definite decision of the House recorded. This device had certainly been found useful by the members because, on the one hand, it served the purpose of an adjournment motion, and on the other hand, it did not involve any censure of the Government.

In spite of these devices, the members had a feeling that there were some matters of great urgency which could not be brought before the House in time and they had to resort to adjournment motions. The matter was, therefore, considered at length by the Rules Committee and the result was the Calling Attention procedure, a highly popular and potent weapon in the hands of members to draw the attention of the Government to sudden developments of urgent public importance and to elicit the Government's stand thereon. If the notice was admitted by the Speaker, the Government had to give an answer immediately or at the most it could ask for time to make a statement. This device had proved to be of immense help in the smooth functioning of legislatures. As a matter of fact, members who wanted a ready answer to an urgent matter just needed to give a calling attention notice and they needed to use the device of adjournment motion only when something went radically wrong which required an indirect censure of the Government. In extreme cases, the Members could also resort to a straight no-confidence motion which, if carried, could throw the Government out. These procedural devices, in fact, were deliberately introduced as part of the aim that the private members should not feel handicapped for lack of adequate procedural means to bring urgent public issues before the legislature.

It was commonly believed that the Private Members' Bills had no chance of becoming laws. This was, however, contrary to facts. In fact, there were many initiatives taken by private members leading to parliamentary enactments in our legislative history during the period 1950-1964. Some of the important ones were the Muslim Wakfs Bill, 1952, the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1953, the Parliamentary Proceedings (Protection of Publication) Bill, 1958 introduced by Shri Feroze Gandhi in the Lok Sabha, the Hindu Marriage Amendment Bill, 1963 and the Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1964. One came across instances when Nehru came forward and assured the House to bring suitable government measures

on matters initiated by the Private Members. The Dowry Prohibition Bill, 1952, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill, 1953 etc. were some of the examples.

There was another widely-held belief that the parliamentary procedure adopted by us was just a replica of the British procedure. This was far from the truth. If we closely examined our procedure, we cannot but come to the conclusion that in many respects we departed from the practice in the House of Commons. There were many differences with the Westminster insofar as the details of the procedure were concerned. At no time was the British system as such followed in India—neither during the period of the British rule nor, even though for different reasons, after Independence. The Indian Parliament, it has been said, was a legislature with a tradition of its own even at its birth. Parliamentary institutions and procedures had an organic growth on the Indian soil itself. With the changing times, we kept experimenting and even adopting new ideas. During the period 1950-1964 particularly, several departures were made from the British parliamentary practice and many new initiatives were taken suiting the genius and requirements of free India. Leaving aside the major departures from the British practice, our procedure threw up a number of new concepts. Our legislatures can claim credit for pioneering work at least in two important directions:

(a) Conduct of business according to a precise time-table, and (b) the follow-up of the directions given by the House and ensuring that the various assurances, promises and undertakings given on the floor of the House are actually carried out. The first one has become possible because of the Business Advisory Committee of the House which was first constituted as early as on 14 July, 1952. Its function is to allocate time to various Bills and other measures which the Government brings before the House from time to time. If there is no unanimity on the time-table for a particular measure, the Committee generally agrees upon the minimum acceptable to everybody and authorises the Speaker to increase the time provided, after considering the trend of discussions in the House, if he feels that more time should be provided for a particular business. Before the advent of this Committee, the Speaker was called upon to determine in each case when a debate should end. Under the new procedure, it is the House which decides the length of a debate. Since the setting

up of Business Advisory Committee, the procedure for closure of debate has never been used. This, no doubt, spares the Speaker from much blame and also helps the Government to plan in advance the disposal of its business. Since this Committee meets virtually every week during the Session, it has become a most useful sounding board available to the Speaker to know the feelings of Members, especially the back-benchers. The Speaker is thus able to put this knowledge to good use in the selection of subjects in which he has full discretion, and the Members may have a feeling that the Chair is alive to issues of public importance and responsive to the Members' suggestions.

Like the Business Advisory Committee, the 'Committee on Government Assurances is essentially an Indian innovation. This Committee, first constituted in December, 1953, keeps a watch on whether the assurances, promises and undertakings given by the Ministers on the floor of the House have been carried out in reasonable time and the manner in which the House had desired them to be carried out. This institutional arrangement in our legislative set-up has instilled a sense of confidence amongst the members that the Government cannot remain silent on a commitment or promise made by a Minister in the House.

The practices and procedures in our legislature were never static. They evolved with the compulsions of the developing situations through a conscious and continuous search for more adequate methods of work for the fulfilment of its growing tasks. While our practices and procedures all along remained anchored in the universal fundamentals of parliamentary procedures, we never shied away from making adjustments and innovations to suit the emerging needs.

### **Success and Achievements of Parliament**

Practice and procedure apart, legislators in a parliamentary system had to realise their responsibilities to the people who were their ultimate masters. They had to understand the myriad problems faced by the common man. It must be said to the credit of Prime Minister Nehru that during the first decade and a half, Indian Parliament fully realized the great responsibility thrust upon it by the electorate. In consonance with the Directive Principles of State Policy as laid down in the Constitution, Parliament kept

before itself the objectives of a welfare state and socialistic pattern of society for the country. It proceeded about realising the task of raising the standard of living of the people and reducing the economic inequalities by authorising the government to have greater participation in productive enterprises and by adopting fiscal measures seeking to bring about in stages greater economic equality.<sup>26</sup>

As the supreme law making body Parliament proved to be a great catalytic agent and an effective instrument for social engineering, progress and planned economic growth. This was exemplified by the quantum of social legislation it enacted and the steps it took to activate social change in various spheres during the period (1950-1964). Parliament throughout remained in the forefront of social reforms. A large number of social reform measures were passed and given effect to since the commencement of the Constitution. There were, for example, laws providing special consideration, guarantees and benefits to backward, down-trodden or traditionally ill-treated sections of society—the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes, backward classes, women, children, labour etc.—in the form of reservations, social security, removal of disabilities, minimum wages, nationalization of certain key industries, old-age pensions, land reforms, housing and the like.<sup>27</sup>

### Suitability of the System

India's successful experiment in parliamentary democracy proved that the system was the most ideally suited to a highly pluralistic society with a widely heterogeneous population and many diverse pulls and pressures. It disproved all assertion that parliamentary Government was suited only to situations of relatively homogeneous populations as in England.<sup>28</sup> Parliament provided

---

26. *First Parliament, 1952-57: A Souvenir*, Lok Sabha Secretariat, p.109; Jiwan Mehta, 'Parliament and Social Change' in S.L. Shakhder (ed.) *The Constitution and the Parliament in India: The 25 years of the Republic* (New Delhi, 1976), p. 250.

27. Subhash C. Kashyap, *Human Rights and Parliament* (New Delhi, 1978), Chapter 9 'Parliament and Socio-economic Legislation', pp. 124-33.

28. Subhash C. Kashyap, Committees in the Indian Lok Sabha in John D. Lees and Malcolm Shaw (ed.), *Committees in Legislatures* (Duke, 1979), p. 288.



adequate opportunities for equal participation and self expression to various elements. It brought together the different competing forces and interests in the polity for a face to face dialogue and evolving of a national consensus. It was in Parliament that time and again national urges got crystallized and administrative policies got refined to emerge as socially relevant measures. Parliament thus proved to be the sheet anchor of the entire political structure in our polity. It can be said without hesitation that among the great national achievements of Nehru in the early years of the Republic was the building up of firm foundation of representative, responsible parliamentary government. No other system could have better preserved the unity and integrity of the nation. The batterings that the system received continuously in the following years from various forces, internal and external, from individuals and groups were withstood firmly because of the inner strength built painstakingly into the democratic system by the founding fathers. Doubting Thomases had wondered whether a country like India with its size of population, levels of poverty, fatalism, illiteracy and caste-ridden society would ever be able to work the democratic parliamentary institutions. They were all proved wrong and sadly mistaken. India had taken to parliamentary Government naturally—as duck takes to water. The system in Indian hands had worked remarkably well and stood the test of time. India's achievement was particularly striking in the context of the fact that not many countries around had been successful in preserving parliamentary government and representative institution. Parliamentary Government however, was in its very nature constantly evolving. It had to keep adjusting to changing societal needs. As Nehru used to say, world around was changing fast, events were moving at hurricane speed. Business of Government was each day becoming more and more complex and all embracing. In such a situation parliamentary Government, legislative institutions and procedures could not afford to remain bound merely to past precedents, traditions and conventions.

The system of parliamentary democracy was adopted by India by deliberate choice not only because the democratic process was suited to the genius of the people, “not only because, to some extent we had always thought on those lines previously,

but because we thought it was in keeping with our own old traditions also". Again, in Nehru's own words, we accepted the democratic process:

"...because we think that in the final analysis it promoted the growth of human beings and of society; because, as we have said in our Constitution, we attach great value to individual freedom; because we want the creative and the adventurous spirit of man to grow".<sup>29</sup>

Speaking at an All India Seminar on Parliamentary Democracy on 25 February 1956, Nehru had said:

"We believe in democracy. Speaking for myself, I believe in it, first of all, because I think it is the right means to achieve ends and because it is a peaceful method. Secondly, because it removes the pressures which other forms of Government may impose on the individual. It transforms the discipline which is imposed by authority largely to self-discipline. Self-discipline means that even people who do not agree—the minority—accept solutions because it is better to accept them and then change them, if necessary, by peaceful methods. Therefore, democracy means to me an attempt at the solution of problems by peaceful methods. If it is not peaceful, then to my mind, it is not democracy. If I may further elaborate the second reason, democracy gives the individual an opportunity to develop. Such opportunity does not mean anarchy, where every individual does what he likes. A social organization must have some discipline to hold it together. This can either be imposed from outside or be in the nature of self-discipline. Imposition from outside may take the form of one country governing another or of an autocratic or authoritarian form of government. In a proper democracy, discipline is self-imposed. There is no democracy if there is no discipline".<sup>30</sup>

- 
29. From Nehru's valedictory references at the conclusion of the term of the First Lok Sabha (1952-57), *L.S. Deb.*, Vol. I, Pt. II, 28 March, 1957, cc. 120-94 and speech at the All India Congress Committee, Indore, 4 January, 1957, both cited in Subhash C. Kashyap, *Jawaharlal Nehru and the Constitution* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 374 and 378.
30. Kashyap, *ibid.*, p. 376.

Nehru believed that the parliamentary form of Government was more likely to bridge the "hiatus between desires and their fulfilment" than the other forms which lead to "some measure of authoritarianism". The Parliamentary system with all its failings, had "the virtue that it can fit in with the changing pattern of life".<sup>31</sup>

### Parliamentary Reforms

Conscious of the problems faced by parliaments everywhere, Nehru had recommended certain parliamentary reforms. Parliament for Nehru, was relevant only as a dynamic institution ever adjusting its functions and procedures to the changing needs of the times. In Nehru's words: "In a period of dynamic change, the institution of Parliament has to function with speed".<sup>32</sup> Also, if democracy and freedom are to endure and representative institutions made impregnable, it is essential to restore to Parliament and its members their traditional esteem and honour in the affections of the people. As Shrimati Gandhi once said:

"For the parliamentary system to function efficiently, it is essential to improve the quality of political life as a whole and to keep it at a high level. If it is allowed to deteriorate, then people's faith in democratic institutions itself will suffer".<sup>33</sup>

It is a tribute to the foresight and sage prudence of Nehru that as early as in the fifties he stressed the desirability of considering the establishment of a system of large subject-based or Ministry/Department oriented parliamentary committees to deal with legislation in depth—something which is now being talked about a great deal in the context of making Parliament more relevant and its functioning more effective.<sup>34</sup> He was candid enough to admit that the "problems of government have grown so enormously

---

31. Nehru inaugurating a Seminar on Parliamentary Democracy on 6 December 1957, *Ibid.*, pp. 382-83.

32. *Ibid.*, p.381.

33. For the first time, three subject or Ministry/Department based Parliamentary committees on (i) Science and Technology, (ii) Agriculture, and (iii) Environment and Forests have been set up only this year (1989).

34. 27 February, 1981.

that sometimes one begins to doubt whether normal parliamentary procedures are adequate to deal with them”.

Parliamentary democracy, he felt was inevitably going in the direction of economic democracy and whatever forms it might take, “only in the measure that it solves the economic problems does it succeed even in the political field. If the economic problems are not solved then the political structure tends to weaken and crack up”.

The healthy efforts made during the stewardship of Nehru had shown the way. In fact, in many ways while Nehru was at the helm of affairs (1950-1964), Parliamentary Democracy and the institution of Parliament in India could be said to have enjoyed their Golden Age. But, that was not the journey’s end. Also, while political institutions were important, they got their real meaning and content by the manner in which they were worked. They needed some individuals to work them successfully. If those who from generation to generation were called upon to work them were men and women of competence and character, the institutions would remain safe and keep growing from strength to strength. If not, nothing could save their decay.

“All our institutions, including the parliamentary institutions, are ultimately the projections of a people’s character, thinking and aims. They are strong and lasting in the measure that they are in accordance with the people’s character and thinking. Otherwise, they tend to break up”.<sup>35</sup>

### **Nehru’s Legacy**

The driving force behind Nehru’s contributions towards the building up of a parliamentary system was a profound democratic spirit, which found expression not only in the setting up of parliamentary institutions but also in providing the right atmosphere for the flourishing of such institutions. Once, when he was asked as to what his legacy to India would be, Nehru replied : ‘Hopefully, it is four hundred million people capable of

---

35. Nehru speaking at a Seminar on Parliamentary Democracy on 25 February, 1956, cited in Kashyap, *Nehru and the Constitution*, op. cit., pp. 377-78.

governing themselves'. The parliamentary system and its institutions that we have today evolving through the changing times are indeed an integral part of this great legacy left behind by Nehru.

Looking back, we are today even more inspired by the great democratic ideals which Nehru stood and strove for. The Parliament and its healthy conventions and traditions, evolved during his life-time, and which have become essential and permanent features of our democratic polity, owe greatly to the persistent efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru to make parliamentary democracy strong and resilient for ever in our country. Nehru's vision of developing Parliament as a symbol of the nation's will has become a reality. We all know how meticulous Nehru himself was in the observance of these norms and conventions and that too, to the last breath of his life. As his biographer Dr. Sarvepalli Gopal recounts :

"Even during his last months, though patently stricken, he missed no session and in order, as he said, to preserve the decorum of the House, struggled to his feet every time he had to answer a question or make an intervention despite repeated suggestions from the Speaker and every section of the House that he speak sitting".

What is it if not the surge of a democratic spirit stretching beyond all physical limitations? When the very architect of our democracy so meticulously observes the expected norms and values, that itself becomes an education for the people and their representatives. No wonder, when we think of dignity and decorum in the House, as a natural corollary, Nehru comes to our mind. And, no doubt succeeding generations will salute this man as the father of parliamentary democracy in India as of so much else.<sup>36</sup>

---

36. Kashyap (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 17.

*B.N. Pande*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru : Some Reminiscences**

---

In 1923 I was serving a term of imprisonment in the Ajani Central Prison, Nagpur. Amongst the fellow prisoners were Vinoba Bhave, Abid Ali, Satyadev Vidyalkar and medical men like Dr. Ghia, Dr. Desai and Dr. Hardikar. Many of us were given work of making quinine tablets in the quinine factory located in the prison. As was to be expected, we were constantly engaged in discussing politics. Hardikar had only one topic to discuss; how to organise and train satyagrahis into a disciplined force of the Congress? He felt that volunteers were enrolled at every Congress session, huge sums were spent on their uniforms and a short training course was given to them, but after the session they disappeared into thin air. Why should not a permanent organisation be created?

The discussions in the quinine factory took concrete shape in the idea of a Seva Dal. Hardikar was assigned the task of drafting a constitution for it and of convening a conference at the time of the next Congress session. The first conference of the Seva Dal was held at Kakinada in December 1923 under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. It was there that I came into personal contact with him for the first time.

The Kakinada Congress appointed a volunteer board. The Hindustani Seva Dal took firm roots in course of time. It became a common sight to see the uniformed volunteers of the Dal efficiently managing Congress functions, regulating traffic, and maintaining order in the million-strong crowds at Congress Nagars. The presence of trained volunteers added dignity to functions like flag-hoisting and presentation of a guard of honour to Congress

presidents. Jawaharlal Nehru gave the Seva Dal so much prestige that even Subhas Chandra Bose captained the Congress volunteers at the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928.

When the Congress decided to launch the Salt Satyagraha in 1930, people enrolled themselves as volunteers in large numbers. In February of that year a volunteers' training camp was opened at Allahabad. Although Jawaharlal Nehru was the president of the Congress, he donned the volunteer uniform and joined the daily drill and parade. By personal example he demolished the barrier between leaders and volunteers. Sri Prakasa, S.K.D. Paliwal, Sampurnanand and other U.P. leaders also took part in the parade.

During parades and camp fires Jawaharlal Nehru obeyed the orders of the captain. I remember that at one of the camp-fires the captain asked him to sing a song. We all knew that music was not one of Jawaharlal Nehru's strong points. But he tried his best to exhibit his talents. This spirit of equality inspired the volunteers to face lathis and bullets.

When requested to address the trainees at the valedictory ceremony, Jawaharlal Nehru's memorable words were: "So long a leader considers himself a volunteer he will inspire the masses to undergo any amount of sacrifice. The moment he loses the volunteer's spirit he ceases to be a worker and the moment he ceases to be a worker he ceases to be a leader."

## 2

*Travels Among the Kisans:* In the first phase of the Non-Co-operation Movement, the Congress Working Committee directed all provincial Congress committees to prepare one of their tehsils for mass civil disobedience. Gujarat chose Bardoli and the U.P. Congress chose Handia.

Early in 1928 the Allahabad District Congress Committee drew up a programme of mass contact in Handia as preparation for launching a mass no-rent satyagraha. The programme comprised establishment of Khadi production centres, eradication of untouchability, intensification of work for Hindu-Muslim unity, tightening the campaign against drink evil, complete boycott of foreign cloth, enrolment of volunteers, and securing of a pledge from the Kisans that in the event of satyagraha they would be prepared even to lose their lands.

Jawaharlal Nehru and Purushottam Das Tandon used to join the campaign in the afternoon, address village meetings, contact people, and return to Allahabad in the evening. After some weeks Jawaharlal Nehru decided to undertake a walking tour in the tehsil. The workers were electrified. The villagers were informed that he would spend a whole week in the tehsil covering it from one end to the other on foot. Years earlier he had done so in the Pratapgarh and Rai Bareilly districts.

Jawaharlal Nehru arrived at Handia by train and immediately started on foot for Rishipur. Thousands of people, including a large number of school children, followed him. He stopped and talked to the peasants at work in the fields. He examined the tools they were using. He enquired about manure and the crop yield, about their indebtedness and the attitude of the zamindars, and about their health and their habits. The peasants gladly answered his questions. Never before had anyone inquired about their conditions with such sympathy. At many places people broke down when describing their miseries. He would cheer them up.

In the afternoon a meeting was held at a centrally located village when Jawaharlal Nehru spoke to them in a group, analysed the cause of their miseries, and delivered to them Gandhiji's message of self-reliance through Khadi and the eradication of the twin evils of drink and untouchability. Then he talked to them of the impending no-rent satyagraha and the sacrifice it involved. He warned them of the brutal repression that they would have to face.

We had made arrangements for a tent to be pitched for his night's rest. He had his morning tea and breakfast in the tent and as soon as he was ready to move, the volunteers would pack the tent and pitch it up at the next place of halt for the night.

He had at first thought that during his tour he would live as the peasants lived, answering the call of nature in the field, having his bath at the village well, and sleeping under mango trees. But this experiment lasted only for a day. Hundreds of people would surround his tent from the early hours and not leave him even for a minute. Hundreds of village young men vied with one another in drawing pails of water from the village well to give him a bath. This exuberance made him alter his arrangements. From the third day he decided to use a smaller tent for toilet and bath.



Jawaharlal Nehru carried with him some tea and snacks for his lunch, which he called 'tunch'. Dinner was had with one of the villagers, preferably a kisan. With each passing day the dinner became more elaborate. At one of the halting places there were as many as thirty-six dishes. He was angry and sad: angry with us for failing to check the lavishness, and sad because of the false sense of hospitality prevalent in our poverty-stricken villages. From that day he decided to take only boiled potatoes and unbuttered chapatis for dinner and only parched gram and boiled sweet potatoes or carrots for breakfast.

The *pad yatra* covered most of Handia tehsil and part of Phulpur and Soram tehsils. It created a deep impression on the peasants. The results were witnessed in 1932 when a call was given to withhold rent. Thousands of peasants were deprived of their land. An army regiment with machine-guns marched through Soram, Phulpur and Handia to frighten the peasants to pay rent but it had no effect. The vanguard of the army was composed of British soldiers, who threatened the village population pointing machine-guns at them, but the rear was composed of Indian soldiers of the Jat regiment who assured the peasants that this *tamasha* was only to frighten them. In fact the jawans told the villagers that they had sympathy with them and that they had come from the peasantry themselves.

*No-Rent Satyagraha*: Mahatma Gandhi was scheduled to land in Bombay on 28 December 1931 after attending the Round Table Conference. Jawaharlal Nehru was the general secretary of the Congress. He was scheduled to leave Allahabad for Bombay, accompanied by T.A.K. Shervani, who was president of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, and who was to report to the Working Committee the alarming agrarian situation that had developed in U.P. Purushottam Das Tandon had already been arrested and jailed.

On 14 December 1931, the U.P. Government issued an ordinance assuming wide powers for repression and suppression. Under it the district magistrate of Allahabad served a notice on both Jawaharlal Nehru and Shervani not to leave Allahabad for a period of one month. Both of them defied the order and boarded the Calcutta-Bombay Mail on 24 December. The train had hardly covered a distance of seven miles when it was stopped at Iradatganj and both the leaders were arrested. Jawaharlal was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment on 26 December.

In December 1933 Jawaharlal Nehru invited prominent Congress workers of Allahabad city and district for discussions. The Congress was still an unlawful organisation. He wanted us to select a few tehsils of the district for fifteen days' intensive tour to deliver to the peasants the message of the Congress. But his condition was that we should not carry a single paisa with us. The villagers should offer food, but if they did not, then we had to go hungry. If they offered shelter for the night, well, otherwise we were to sleep under trees. He also advised us to walk on foot from village to village not using any conveyance.

Only three of us from the city offered our services—Lal Bahadur, Feroze Gandhi and myself. Three of the district Congress workers from Handia, Phulpur, and Karchhana also offered their services. They were Shrinath, Sadanand and Sheo Sewak. Lal Bahadur was allotted Handia tehsil, Feroze the Karchhana tehsil and myself the Phulpur tehsil.

We started on our journey after receiving a thorough briefing from Jawaharlal Nehru. We carried a blanket on our shoulder and a change of clothes and toilet things in a knapsack. We were sure that our tour programme would be cut short by our arrest. But to our surprise each of us was able to complete his itinerary.

The peasants were very busy irrigating the rabi crop. So we had to meet them on their fields. As soon as they saw the Tricolour they would rush towards us. We found them neither demoralized nor despondent in spite of the hardships they had suffered during the no-rent campaign in 1932. We programmed our night halts in thickly populated villages so that largely attended public meetings might be held in the evening. Men, women and children would gather at these meetings to hear our speeches. After the meeting there were many invitations for dinner and shelter for the night. We preferred to spend the night with peasants who had suffered in the no-rent campaign.

The orthodox sections of the village were critical of Gandhiji's Harijan movement. They charged that Congress was out to destroy the Varnashrama, the age-old Hindu social order. But when we explained to them the significance of the Harijan movement, the majority of them would agree with our viewpoint.

Jawaharlal Nehru was happy and satisfied when we presented

ourselves before him after completing our fifteen-day assignment. For nearly two hours he questioned all three of us in detail on all aspects of village life and the after-effects of the no-rent satyagraha.

Then came Independence Day, 26 January, 1934. We discussed the programme with Jawaharlal Nehru. He instructed me to announce a meeting by printed notices and leaflets on behalf of the City Congress Committee. It was settled that I should read the pledge and after that he would deliver the speech. He also told me to come prepared for arrest.

Jawaharlal Nehru was addressing a public meeting in Allahabad after more than two years. The Mohammad Ali Park was full to capacity. A large police force with a police van was also there. I read the pledge which the audience repeated. Then Jawaharlal Nehru delivered a speech, which lasted for an hour and a half. He reminded the people of their pledge to achieve complete independence. He said that Swaraj would be the Swaraj of the poor and the downtrodden. This could be possible only through socialism.

Everybody thought that after the meeting we would be arrested. But as soon as the meeting was over, the police force vanished with its van.

Before the next programme could be chalked out, Bihar was engulfed in a terrible earthquake. Congressmen all over the country concentrated their efforts on collecting money and material to meet the calamity. Jawaharlal Nehru toured affected areas. When he returned to Allahabad in the second week of February, he was arrested on a Calcutta warrant. He was taken there and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. When I approached him for a message at the time of his departure from Allahabad, he said, "There are enough people for relief work. Let some of you carry on the fight for freedom."

4

Jawaharlal Nehru visited Europe in 1938. On his return to Allahabad some of us called on him. A few minutes later, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and Lal Bahadur Shastri came in. Jawaharlal Nehru said: "Hullo, Dr. Dollfuss!" Rafi Saheb was puzzled. He thought he had been addressed with a new epithet and enquired: "Why has this new title been conferred on me?"

Jawaharlal Nehru said: "No, not on you Rafi, but on Lal Bahadur".

Rafi Saheb did not know who Dr. Dollfuss was. Some of us had heard his name but did not know that Dr. Dollfuss was the same height as Lal Bahadur until Jawaharlal Nehru told us all about Dr. Dollfuss. Rafi Saheb then said: "So you have chosen Lal Bahadur for the foreign portfolio in your Swarajya cabinet?"

"Do not lose heart, Rafi. You will be the Home Minister in the Swarajya cabinet provided Pantji spares you," Jawaharlal Nehru said. Rafi Saheb was then home minister in Pandit Pant's cabinet.

5

Anand Bhawan used to receive a heavy mail of which a substantial part was in Hindi. Jawaharlal Nehru asked me to clear the Hindi letters. It was May-June 1938. The day temperature ranged between 115° and 118° F. When I reached Anand Bhawan at about 2 p.m. Jawaharlal Nehru was in his library on the upper floor. His table was near the western door. The door was open. A hot wind was blowing all over him. But he sat working undisturbed. I read out the important Hindi letters and he indicated to me the gist of the answers and asked me to write them down. I finished my job in about two hours. I followed this routine for nearly a week until he left on tour. One day I asked him: "Panditji, you sit near open door for hours together facing hot wind. Will this not affect your health?"

He said: "The seasons are gifts of Nature and men should share them alike."

6

*Azad Hind Volunteer Corps: 1945.* Most of us had been released from detention. The Congress was still an unlawful body. So was the Seva Dal. Inspired by the exploits of the Azad Hind Fauz, we started an independent volunteer organisation under the name of Azad Hind Volunteer Corps. We engaged two INA officers to train the volunteers in three groups: the Nehru Brigade, the Subhas Brigade and the Rani Jhansi Brigade. More than a thousand volunteers including two hundred and fifty women enrolled

themselves. They had to sign a pledge. Most of the volunteers preferred to sign the pledge with their own blood.

The AICC had at the time its session in Calcutta. The newspapers prominently reported the blood-signing ceremony.

When Jawaharlal Nehru returned to Allahabad he sent for me and asked: "What was all this signing with blood? Do you or do you not realise that whatever you do at Allahabad will be linked with me? I thought you had grown up but you still seem to be immature."

I pleaded: "Panditji, during the Quit India Movement the Congressmen acted like an unorganized mass. We have yet to attain freedom. We have yet to fight a final struggle. Is it not necessary that we should train our volunteers in such a way that they may be prepared for the supreme sacrifice in a disciplined manner?"

For nearly an hour he analysed the post-war position and said: "Britain will be happy to quit India. There will be no need for another Quit India movement."

"In that case there is no need to organize a trained volunteer corps?" I enquired.

"No, the need will be there, but for a different purpose, for facing the communal conflagration."

7

With the end of the War there was an upsurge in the trade union movement. The Communist Party of India had kept itself aloof from the Quit India movement. Naturally it lost its prestige with the working class, who looked towards the Congress. As president of the City Congress I lent my full support to the trade union movement.

The two ordnance establishments in Allahabad employed more than thirty thousand workers. A sixth of them belonged to the minority community, and the Muslim League began to fish in troubled waters. The League made common cause with the Communist Party. The Revolutionary Socialist Party of India also had some following in these defence establishments. The R.S.S. also claimed some followers.

At the call of the Muslim League, Calcutta had already experienced a blood-bath. The president of the City Muslim

League was also the president of the Muslim Defence Workers' Union. His bitter speeches poisoned the atmosphere amongst the workers and soon there was a communal riot in Chheoki ordnance depot. The police had to open fire killing four.

Jawaharlal Nehru had just returned to Allahabad. He sent me a note on 18 July, 1946:

My Dear Bishambharnath,

I have long wanted to talk to you about various developments in Allahabad, but I have been away and have had no time. The stabbing outrages day before yesterday among the C.O.D. workers naturally upset me and I wondered how far the policy we have been following here has been correct: I am referring particularly to labour policy. Naturally we must sympathize with labour, organize it and strengthen it. It seems to me, however, that we are merely throwing ourselves into every kind of dispute without inquiry or consideration and cooperation with very dubious persons. I am told that there is some kind of a labour joint front here. What this is I do not know. But so far as I know, there has been no such direction from the Provincial Congress Committee. In fact we have discussed this matter in the P.C.C. Council on several occasions and the decided opinion was that Congress workers should not ally themselves with other groups who are politically opposed to the Congress. In a moment of crisis and trouble one may work together, but generally speaking it is better for Congress workers to stick to their own platform. Otherwise people opposed to the Congress take advantage of a joint platform and give expression to views which the Congress does not favour. This applies specially to the Communists. Some of the Communists individually are earnest people, but they have followed and are still following a policy which is harmful to Congress, and it is not right for us to have joint platforms with them in regard to any public matter. That would apply too, I think, to the R.S.P.I. who are continually talking in terms of violence. It must be definitely understood that the Congress has not changed its policy in regard to non-violence and peaceful methods. Apart from that policy, recent events leading to the C.O.D. troubles and riots and stabbing show us how dangerous

it is to dabble in any incitement to violence.

The postmen's strike has on the whole been a peaceful one, but occasionally it hovers on the verge of some kind of conflict. If the strike is to succeed it must be entirely peaceful with no compulsion at all.

We must remember that there is a Congress Government functioning in the Province and we have to make its path easy. When it errs or when its subordinates err, we can go to it and try to get the matter straightened. We cannot play into the hands of people who are out to discredit the Government by all means.

Dealings with the police are likely to be ticklish because the police is used to old ways. Nevertheless the police has to function in accordance with Government's policy; and it does no good to go about attacking and running down the police as a force especially in times of communal or other tension in the city. Where the police misbehave it is up to us to draw the attention of the Government to it.

I should like you to explain all this to your prominent colleagues and workers.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

We discussed the letter at an urgent meeting of the executive of the City Congress Committee. When I called on Jawaharlal Nehru, he asked me to prepare a complete list of trade unions in Allahabad with the number of workers and the number of unions in each establishment, the names of the political parties controlling such unions, the list of office-bearers, etc. I prepared a chart within three days and laid it before him. He made detailed queries. The postal strike was then going on. He wanted to see for himself the way the picketing was being resorted to at Allahabad. I accompanied him to the GPO and the RMS offices. He met the workers and made enquiries about their service conditions and advised them to remain peaceful. The workers were overjoyed.

When we returned to Anand Bhawan he gave me detailed instructions as to what we should do and not to do in conducting the trade union movement.

*Tandon and Nehru:* Purushottam Das Tandon and Jawaharlal Nehru were lifelong colleagues in the struggle for freedom. Both were born and brought up in the same city. Both practised law in the same High Court. In spite of differences, they had genuine affection for each other, While Tandon's first love was Hindi, Nehru's first love was socialism. Both were great lovers of Indian culture. But while Tandon believed in unalloyed Hindu culture, Nehru believed in synthesis of cultures. Tandon inherited the orthodox traditions of his political guru, Madan Mohan Malaviya; Jawaharlal Nehru inherited the liberal traditions of his father. Dieting was a fad with Tandon, Nehru had no fads although he preferred a simple diet. Tandon was a scholar of Urdu and Persian; Nehru knew little Urdu but whatever he knew he made full use of. Both loved Sanskrit and believed that Sanskrit opened the gate to wisdom. While Nehru made immense use of Sanskrit literature in his writings and liked its ceremonial use, Tandon insisted that in ceremonials Sanskrit should be replaced by Hindi. At the weddings of his sons and daughters, he used Hindi versions of the Sanskrit mantras. Tandon became the rallying centre of conservative forces, Nehru was a symbol of rational and progressive thought. But we Congressmen of Allahabad had intense respect for both the leaders.

In 1924-25 Tandon was president of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee and Gandhiji was the Congress President. Tandon felt unhappy with Gandhiji as he addressed all important letters not to him but to Jawaharlal Nehru. He offered to resign if Gandhiji had no faith in him. Gandhiji explained that Motilal and Jawaharlal were both members of the Working Committee and he was bound to consult them on national issues. But Tandon was not satisfied.

After 1925 Tandon came under the influence of Lala Lajpat Rai. On the death of Lajpat Rai, he became president of the Servants of the People Society. The Servants of the People Society had a good band of workers as life-members. Lal Bahadur was one of them. Tandon posted him at Allahabad to work amongst the peasants. Lal Bahadur had a high regard for Tandon but when he came in contact with Jawaharlal Nehru he developed an equally great respect for him. Later he became something of a bridge between Tandon and Nehru and used all his humility to



tone down the differences between the two.

After 1947 the old guard of the Congress wished to challenge the leadership of Nehru. But the problem was that unless he was challenged in Uttar Pradesh the opposition could not achieve any substantial results. With Sardar Patel's support Tandon was elected President of the Nasik Congress.

Lal Bahadur and I had been colleagues since he came to Allahabad in 1929. For many years we were next-door neighbours. We were frightened at the new developments, as we were convinced that this new alliance would prove fatal to Uttar Pradesh. Lal Bahadur had his own methods of dealing with Tandon. At our initiative Sri Prakasa and Bal Krishna Sharma entreated Tandon to refrain from adopting a collision course.

But the clash could not be averted. The issue of supreme leadership was finally decided at Nasik. The session proved the Waterloo of the conservative forces. Jawaharlal Nehru emerged as the unchallengeable leader. Tandon resigned from the presidentship of the Congress. Uttar Pradesh was saved from a painful internecine conflict.

Lal Bahadur became Jawaharlal Nehru's most trusted lieutenant. He was Home Minister in U.P. and he was drafted into the Union Cabinet.

Tandon temporarily retired from politics. But Lal Bahadur persuaded him to stand for the Lok Sabha seat which had been vacated by Sri Prakasa on his appointment as Governor of Madras. Once again Lal Bahadur acted as a bridge between Tandon and Jawaharlal Nehru.

*His Home Town:* I was Mayor of Allahabad when Jawaharlal Nehru visited his home-town in 1960. He had been chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Board thirty-five years earlier and had taken keen interest in the planning and development of Allahabad City. He left important notes on civic administration in the municipal files. I went through them carefully. One of his notes said:

"The true civic ideal aims at common possession and common enjoyment of municipal amenities, and these amenities go on increasing till they comprise almost everything that a citizen requires. Roads, bridges, lighting, water supply, sanitation, hospitals

and medical relief, education, parks and recreation grounds, games, proper housing, museums, art galleries, theatres, music are some of the activities that a modern municipality should be interested in, and some of the amenities which it should provide free of cost to all its citizens..."

A few weeks earlier I had informed him that the Allahabad Municipal Board had been raised to the status of a municipal corporation and that I had been elected its mayor. He wrote to me:

My dear Bishambharnath,

My congratulations to you and other newly elected members of the Allahabad Municipal Corporation.

I have been deeply interested in corporations and municipalities and the like ever since the days, long ago, when I was myself connected with the Allahabad Municipality. Somehow, these bodies seem to bring one into more intimate touch with the life of the people than other kinds of work, say, for instance, work on Legislative or such-like bodies which pass laws and otherwise are in charge of the affairs of the State and the country. When you go to Delhi you get farther away from the common man, sitting as it were on some legislative mountain-top from where you may occasionally have a telescopic view. On the contrary the city fathers do come into intimate touch with the people of the city and their problems. And nothing is more interesting and fascinating than dealing directly with this human problem and the problems of a great city. In a sense, I rather envy such people at times.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

It was Jawaharlal Nehru's practice to visit his Lok Sabha constituency two or three times a year. During his 1960 visit, he stayed for two days, and addressed several meetings in his constituency. He also addressed a public meeting in the city. I informed him of Tandon's serious illness. Jawaharlal Nehru decided to call on him in the afternoon and asked me to accompany him. On our way he enquired about the slum clearance, housing and other development activities of the corporation. When we were

passing through the newly developed narrow streets he severely criticized our town planners:

"These people have no imagination. They look only five or ten years ahead while they should look at least a hundred years ahead. When were these roads planned?"

"Just after the Second World War."

"They are hardly 40 feet wide."

"The side-streets are 40 ft. wide and the main roads are 60 feet wide," I said.

"This will create traffic problems," said Panditji and added: "When Russian town-planners planned 300 ft. wide roads for Moscow after the War, the British and French town-planners scoffed at them. But ten years later, while the streets of London and Paris were jammed, Moscow has no problems. If you ever visit Moscow you will see it for yourself."

He said that when he was municipal chairman he had commissioned the services of H.V. Lanchester, the famous town planner, to make a survey of Allahabad and suggest a broad outline for the planning of the city. Lanchester made many important suggestions, but the town planners had not made use of them.

I said: "Panditji, we do not have imposing buildings in Allahabad. That is why Allahabad remains unimpressive as a city. Can't some of the Central Government offices be located here?"

He replied: "Some people consider that if a city is to be beautified, big buildings should be put up. Beautifying a city is important but beautifying does not mean putting impressive structures."

After a pause he added: "Are you not satisfied with the beautiful confluence of two great rivers like Ganga and Yamuna at Allahabad?"

The conversation came to an end as we reached Tandon's residence. Jawaharlal Nehru was shocked when he saw Tandon in his broken health. But Tandon's face was lit up with a smile when he saw his old comrade in arms.

*Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit*

## A Sister Remembers

---

It is not easy to write about a person one loves, and I loved my brother dearly. In his case, apart from being my brother and having deep love for him, it was my admiration for his many-sided personality and his talents. He went to Harrow when I was only five years old and my early years were spent in Anand Bhavan. My only contact with him were his postcards and the new books he sent to me regularly. A brother in India is a special person in any family and when that brother is so much older, there were 10 years between us, there is a special devotion mixed with love.

The family usually went to the hills for the summer, this time it was about 1916 we went to Mussoorie. We had a large house called Lyndale with shooting possibilities which made it attractive for my father who was fond of *shikar* and a good shot. As usual, he had a large party of friends and relatives with him who were all interested in the shooting. He expected *Bhai* to participate also but *Bhai* was not at all interested in killing animals or birds. The very first day he went with a group, which I was allowed to accompany, we saw a doe that someone had shot. The poor creature was dying and looked at us as if for help with her beautiful eyes. I was in tears, but to my surprise I saw *Bhai* in nearly the same condition. He never went out for *shikar* again in spite of many cynical remarks by my father and many of the men in the party. From then on *Bhai* did not accompany the *shikar* parties.

One thing *Bhai* enjoyed very much was riding. He had a splendid seat on a horse and rode effortlessly. I had been taught

riding very early and also took part in all the local sport events of which there were many during the winter in Allahabad. *Bhai* and I went for long rides every morning and enjoyed ourselves. During the rides he used to talk to me about all sorts of things concerning nature and history which my teachers had not bothered about! It was great fun for me and I learnt a great deal. *Bhai* was also a very good swimmer and loved swimming but in this he failed with me. In spite of all his efforts I never learnt to swim as I have been rather afraid of the water. I think one reason for this may have been the large and rather dark swimming pool in Anand Bhavan. Though there were plenty of lights I always think of the swimming pool as a dark place. Many years later when my children were old enough to learn, *Bhai* took hold of my eldest child, just three years old, and threw her into the middle of the pool and dived after her, while I sat at the edge and screamed because I was certain the child would be drowned! The little girl was, however, made of stern stuff, she flapped about in the water for a little while and then, to my surprise, reached the other end of the pool. She soon became a fine swimmer!

When in the hills I went for long walks with *Bhai* and these too were in a way lessons, much more interesting than what my teachers taught me. To this day I remember more clearly what I learnt from him than from my governesses or professors. He was very keen that I should go to college abroad but could not persuade my father as all the male cousins who had gone there were already home and according to my father there would be no one to look after me ! This theory always irritated me very much because the daughters of some of my father's closest friends were studying abroad and they came from orthodox homes. The teacher who taught me English was Professor Jennings from the Allahabad University, both he and his wife were interested in me and loved me like their own child. She had been at Sommerville College, Oxford and was keen to send me there but alas nothing happened and I never went abroad for my education.

During the winter evenings *Bhai* and I used to read together. Dickens, Thackeray, Jane Austen and many others. Sometimes, we also read the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. When this happened we read alternately taking different parts and enjoyed it very much indeed. We also read a good bit of poetry and he used to

make me memorise parts of the poems he liked. My Hindi master was a nephew of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and he loved the Tulsidas Ramayana which he made me read. I had to memorise so many parts of this book that in adult life when I was already in the midst of the freedom struggle I was always able to give *Bhai* appropriate quotes for his speeches. This he much appreciated. He was not the kind who praised unless real praise was due. So when there was a word of praise for anyone, including myself, one knew one had earned it.

From the coming of Mahatma Gandhi in our lives I had become a Congress volunteer and worked in the villages. I had never seen a village before, nor the distress and poverty I had now come in touch with. *Bhai* was in the thick of *satyagraha* which followed the ugly events of Jallianwala Bagh and sometimes I used to go into the villages where *Bhai* was speaking. He could not speak the *dehati* language, but in simple Hindi he used to repeat himself until the villager understood what he was saying. This was the time of the *khadi* movement and Gandhiji was touring India and collecting money for those members of the Satyagraha Sabha who would be arrested and sent to jail. He also came to Allahabad and naturally stayed at Anand Bhavan. My mother was in a quandary, with little or no time at our disposal we had to convert a room for him of the kind he would live in. It all went well. The room was fixed with a *khadi dastarkhan* on the floor but the problem of the servants, liveries remained. It was arranged that my mother and sister-in-law, (Kamla bhabhi) would look after him and the people with him could be looked after by the servants. But *Bhai* was worried. By this time he had come to know Gandhiji's likes and dislikes and he knew that he would spot the liveried servants even if they were not in his room. Nothing more could be done at that time. The visit passed quietly. Gandhiji collected quite a lot of money at a public meeting and left for other parts of India. But Anand Bhavan was never the same again. It was as if a hurricane had swept through it.

The Jallianwala Bagh incident had left a deep scar on Indian hearts and all our families were affected. *Khadi* became the order of the day. My brother also took to a very simple life and food. Gone were the European dishes which we used to eat. Instead *Bhai* had a bowl of milk and bread for his supper making it

difficult for our father who was a gourmet to enjoy his food. Then came the elections for the Legislative Assembly. I was one of those chosen to stand for election. The Congress swept the country and there were Congress governments in eight provinces. In the U.P., Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant became the Chief Minister. One day I had a telegram from him saying "Would like you to join my Cabinet with Rafi, Katju, etc." I was surprised as I looked upon myself much below a minister, being very conscious of my lack of formal education. I went to my brother and showed him the telegram and cried! He told me this was a wonderful opportunity and, as at that time, there were not many women in the north in political life, it would be a good thing. I remember once saying to *Bhai* that I hoped I would not let the family down. He laughed and said that probably the fact that I did not have a formal education would make me a better minister!

Both *Bhai* and my husband followed my parliamentary career closely and critically and it did me a lot of good.

The years passed with frequent visits to jail. On my first visit my brother wrote to me saying that I must treat jail as my university and learn about the problems of human beings. This encouraged me greatly and I was able to take the discomforts of jail in my stride and develop in many ways. I had three jail terms which, compared to my brother's 14 were nothing at all. But I am sure I came out of jail a more rounded personality and better able to work in the villages than before. In my second term I opted to look after the children of criminals and organised a little school for them which I whitewashed and cleaned myself and then taught in. Much later I was sent by the then Viceroy Lord Wavell and Gandhiji to the United Nations to oppose the discrimination of people of Asian origin in South Africa. My brother supported me fully, my husband had unfortunately died earlier with pleurisy which could not be properly treated in prison. The man I had to oppose in the United Nations was the great General Smutts but I was supported by a group of delegates who were all highly talented men in their respective fields, hand-picked by the Prime Minister who was my brother. Among the delegates was our present President and all were a great help to me. Nobody treated me as below them. I was their equal in every respect.

My brother had great respect for Parliament and the Opposition. He argued with members and disagreed with them on many occasions but there was always respect for them. My readers may be interested in a little incident which took place in Parliament when I was also there. A member of the Opposition who disliked the Nehrus and especially my brother said in his speech, "I am tired of hearing about the aristocracy of Jawaharlal, I happened to know that his grandfather was a peon in the court of Bahadurshah."

There were loud cries from the Congress benches and my brother who was in his seat as usual got up and raised his hand for silence. He was wearing his immaculate white achkan and Gandhi cap and the usual red rose in his button-hole and he said, "I am grateful to the honourable member for confirming what I have been trying to prove since I became Prime Minister, that I am a man of the people!" There was much clapping from all sides and the unfortunate incident died down. He had a fine sense of humour which often stood him in good stead in his political life. There was a deep humility about *Bhai*. It is true he lost his temper quickly but it went as quickly as it came and he always found some way in which to apologise to those against whom the temper had risen. Once he had a heated argument, which might have been quite ugly, with Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru who was an expert on armaments. When they were leaving Parliament, it so happened that Pandit Hirday Nath and my brother were waiting for their cars in the porch and *Bhai* put his hands around Pandit Hirday Nath's shoulder and invited him to go with him in his car.

He was very fond of occasional fun and on birthdays he would quite often dress up in one of the robes or the dresses and hats which he had received from other States or Countries. We had in the family a 'birthday week': my brother on 14th November, our great friend Padmaja Naidu, daughter of Sarojini Naidu on 17th November and Indira on 19th November.

*Bhai* has had many tributes from many countries. One of the fines, in my view, was when he went to London during the time of the Interim Government in India and met Winston Churchill. When they were saying good-bye Churchill said, "Nehru, you have conquered man's two great enemies—Hate and fear".



It has been my good fortune to meet many 'Great Men' in my time. Where there is real greatness there is always something stirring conveyed to one. In *Bhai's* case there was a very special thing. He was a man who always had dreams and ideals, but unlike, some, he was not content to live with them—they had to be translated into action. When we were quite young he often asked me questions through quotations of poems—a favourite one was

"If there were dreams to sell  
What would you buy"

When people referred to his sacrifices he invariably lost his temper. His favourite rejoinder was that it was no sacrifice to do in what one believed in and give up what one did not want. He was in every sense a whole man.

*Raj Bahadur*

## **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru : “Modern India his Greatest Monument”**

---

Jawaharlal Nehru is counted today amongst the greatest and the most outstanding world figures of this century. Next only to Mahatma Gandhi, he is perhaps the tallest amongst the statesmen of the world, and the brightest and the most shining star in the galaxy of world leaders, who have moulded and shaped the destinies of mankind in this century. By sheer dint of his personality and character and by virtue of the prominent role that he played in world affairs during this period, he has carved out a unique and a safe niche for himself in world history of this period.

One can thus easily imagine that in the ages to come, even after a thousand or two thousand years hence, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru would be the two names that would still be remembered by future generations, with great reverence and pride, as the two greatest men of this age, just as today we remember the names of Gautam Buddha, Emperor Vikramaditya or Emperor Ashok, with awe and admiration.

The second President of our Republic, the great philosopher-statesman, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, once said about Jawaharlal Nehru, “No homage is necessary for him. Modern India is the greatest monument which he has built for himself”. And truly Jawaharlalji has adorned and embellished this great and splendid edifice of “Modern India” with numerous fascinating facets and beauteous additions and accretions of perennial utilitarian value and validity.

On the national plane he ushered in an era of planning and planned economy for a self-reliant India, and for the emancipation and upliftment of the toiling dumb millions, the down-trodden, the deprived, the lowly and the lost from the abysmal depths of their abject poverty and exploitation to at least a minimum social level of basic human dignity and subsistence. He held that "without planning there would be anarchy in our economic development".

Nehru focussed the attention and energies of the nation on the supreme decisive and indispensable role of science and technology in national reconstruction and advancement. He said, "It is now patent that without science and technology we cannot progress", and that "modern life is an offspring of science and technology".

Pandit Nehru provided the much needed impetus to the public sector with a view to lead it to the commanding heights of our economy. He waged an incessant war on the dead-wood of traditions and superstitions on the one hand, and narrow sectarianism, communalism, and casteism on the other; and installed secularism as a basic and cardinal article of faith and policy for the country.

Democracy and socialism were the very breath of life for Nehru and he espoused these as the two fundamental articles of his faith and mission in life. Yet though a professed socialist he was more pronouncedly guided by ideals of democratic freedoms and equal economic opportunities for all. Thus he was not wedded to any particular "ism" as such. He believed "in some of the fundamental principles of scientific socialism, yet he was not prepared to swear by everything taught by Marx and Lenin".

On the international plane he emerged and remained an inveterate fighter and crusader against Imperialism and colonialism all his life. He was one of the foremost champions for all those nations that were struggling for their freedom against racist and colonial regimes.

After a sustained and objective analysis and assessment of the geopolitical conditions facing the newly independent countries and the game of power politics and cold war being played by the major or super powers he came to the conclusions that the newly free and independent countries of the world can safeguard and preserve the purity and unadulterated character of their freedom and independence by refraining from joining or aligning with

any of the power blocs of major world powers. He evolved and promoted the concept of peaceful co-existence and settlement of all international disputes. He raised his voice emphatically against the tendency of great countries "to interfere with others, to bring pressure to bear upon them and to want others to line up with them . . . ." He stressed that "non-interference of any kind—political, economic or ideological—was an important factor in the world situation today." And thus he became the originator and author of the philosophy of "Panchsheel" and "non-alignment". Once he put the question to himself "what does joining a bloc mean? After all it can mean only one thing; give up your view about a particular question, adopt the other party's views on that question in order to please and gain its favour . . . and thus we go with that bloc of countries". He concluded that is not a question of balancing ourselves between groups or blocs of nations which have arisen. That kind of sitting on the fence or balancing has not occurred to us at all. We are adopting a positive policy, which we think is right. This is how he formulated not only the foreign policy of India but the whole philosophy of "Panchsheel", peaceful co-existence and "non-alignment" which dominate the world situation today.

He found Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia as his closest allies and co-authors in the adoption and furtherance of the philosophy of non-alignment. This was yet another historic achievement in his life and a feather in the cap of "Modern India" that he built as his greatest monument.

So far as a tribute to him is concerned, the one given to him by the father of the nation shall always remain unexcelled. This is what Gandhiji said about him, "He is pure as the crystal. He is truthful beyond suspicion. He is a knight *sans peur, sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands". And the nation remained safe in his hands.

V.K.R.V. Rao

## Jawaharlal Nehru and Developmental Planning

---

Nehru's vision and activity covered practically all aspects of Indian life and has left for the nation his unfulfilled legacy for his successors to pursue. I propose to write a brief note on one important aspect of his life and contribution, and legacy, and this refers to the work that he did for planning and bringing in economic endeavours and achievements as the most important objective of independent and democratic India.

Nehru's first hand acquaintance with Indian economic conditions came after his return from England. He undertook a tour of his native province and was appalled to find the conditions of poverty and dependence among the vast masses of his fellow countrymen in his native province. He also found out by personal knowledge that conditions of poverty and unemployment were common to the bulk of the Indian population, and that political freedom had no meaning unless it was used for solving the problems of production, poverty alleviation and unemployment. He was the first great Congressman to stress with increasing emphasis the need for social and economic objectives to be associated with political freedom. At his instance, the All India Congress Committee passed a resolution in 1929 emphasising the need for making revolutionary changes in the economic and social structure and removing inequality in order to remove the poverty and misery of the Indian people. It was followed up in 1931 by the Karachi Session of the Congress on Fundamental Rights, which *inter alia* affirmed that "the State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of transport". He was

convinced from the very start that problems of Indian poverty could not be solved except by massive increase in production and he knew this could be done only with the application of science to industry and through large-scale industrialisation.

Nehru's emphasis on alleviation of poverty and attainment of full employment for its people was also emphasised by him in terms of his commitment to socialist principles. In his presidential address to the Lucknow Session of the Congress in 1936, he said: "I am convinced the only key to the solution of the world's problems and India's problems lies in socialism, and when I use this word, I do so not in a vague or humanist way, but in the scientific and economic sense. I see no way of ending poverty, mass unemployment, degradation and subjection of the Indian people except through socialism". He expressed his admiration for the socialist experiment in the Soviet Union though he was averse to the use of violence and the limitations on individual freedoms both of which were part of the socialist scenario in the Soviet Union.

Nehru's interest in economic planning was fully recognised by his Party and the Congress set up a National Planning Committee on the initiative of the then Congress President, Subhash Chandra Bose and Nehru was appointed as its Chairman. In spite of the heavy and crowded political life in the late 30s and early 40s, in which Nehru played a cardinal role, he took very seriously the task as Chairman of the National Committee on Planning, giving it a great deal of time and attention.

A letter\* written by him to me in July 1940 is amply illustrative of the systematic and hard work that he put in as Chairman of the National Committee on Planning, reveals not only his interest in thoroughness but also in getting all possible varieties of views on the subject of planning. It also shows his non-doctrinaire approach. He had appointed a number of sub-committees, and apart from considering reports of the sub-committees, the National Committee itself many times sat down considering views on various aspects of economic development in the country and to the extent to which this could form the subject of economic planning. Nehru's thoroughness in preparing the first draft of

---

\*A copy of this letter has been published in Vol. 11 (page 306) of *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (Ed. S. Gopal), and is reproduced as appendix to this volume.

the national plan for economic development is very clearly illustrated in the letter mentioned above.

Nehru showed his further interest in planning when he became the Vice Chairman of the Interim Government by setting up an Advisory Planning Board to advise on the machinery of planning that should be set up for economic development. Economic Programmes Committee of the Congress, which worked from 1947-48 under the Chairmanship of Nehru, made a strong recommendation in favour of setting up a permanent Planning Commission. In January 1950, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution recommending setting up of a Planning Commission and in March 1950, the Government announced the appointment of the Planning Commission and appointing Nehru as its first Chairman. Thus, beginning from a bare idea through its formulation and implementation by the Govt. of India, after independence, Nehru was behind the introduction of planning for Indian economic development.

Social and economic objectives which the country's freedom fighters embodied as part of the Indian Constitution was passed by the Indian Constituent Assembly, and were contained in the Chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Nehru linked up the economic objectives included in the Constitution by the implementation of its objectives through Planning, thus giving planning not only economic objectives, but also social and political objectives. These objectives found expression in the terms of reference set out for the Planning Commission, which I quote:

"The Constitution of India has guaranteed certain Fundamental Rights to the citizens of India and enunciated certain Directive Principles of State Policy, in particular that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of national life, and shall direct its policy towards securing among other things:—

- (a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;
- (b) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and

- (c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

Having regard to these rights and in furtherance of these principles as well as of the declared objectives of the Government to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people by efficient exploitation of the resources of the country, increasing production, and offering opportunities to all for employment in the service of the community”.

The Planning Commission submitted its draft outline of the plan for the period of five years from April 1951 to March 1956. The plan included a number of development projects which had been already taken in hand as well as others which had not yet been begun. The draft outline was addressed to the country by Nehru for discussion and comment in the following words:—

“Planning in a democratic State is a social process in which in some part, every citizen should have the opportunity to participate. To see the patterns of future development is a task of such magnitude and significance that it should embody the impact of public opinion and the needs of the community. We have, therefore, felt it necessary, before presenting our proposals in complete detail, to offer a Draft Outline of the Plan. The draft is intended to be a document for the widest possible public discussion. We hope to have further consultations with the Central Ministers, State Governments and our own Advisory Board and Panels, and also to obtain the views of Members of Parliament before we finalise the Plan”.

The draft outline was discussed in great detail by the Central and State Governments and in Parliament and most of the Legislatures in the States. A large number of organisations representing industry, commerce, labour, farmers and other interests expressed their views. At the request of the Planning Commission, many educational institutions set up seminars of teachers and students to study the plan and send their comments to the Commission. Many district boards and municipal committees also commented on the Plan. The draft outline also became a subject of extensive comment in the daily press and in periodicals. A considerable volume of literature in the form of books and



pamphlets prepared by independent writers have also become available. The discussion which took place has covered every aspect of the draft outline and subjected it to the fullest possible examination. As a result the draft plan was considerably revised, not only taking the draft outlay to a higher figure, but also increasing the percentage of the total outlay on agriculture, irrigation and power and reducing that of industry. Thus the draft outline was modest in its scope including projects already under implementation. The first plan was quite successful and gave a great boost to the role of planning in economic development.

The real thinking on the plan including the ideological ballast was the subject of the second plan which gave more importance to industry, was really the contribution of the Chairman of the Planning Commission, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who saw in industrialisation the speediest way for accelerating economic development and give the country self-reliance and self-acceleration not only in the industrialisation process but also in the infrastructure projects. Thus, Nehru's emphasis on industrialisation was outlined in his address to the Conference of the All India Manufacturers' Organisation in April 1956 in the following words:

"If we really wish to industrialise, we must start from the heavy, basic, mother industries. There is no other way. We must start with the production of iron and steel on a large scale. We must start with the production of the machine which makes the machine. So long as you have not got these basic things, you are dependent on others and can never really grow rapidly enough. Once you have got these basic things, you grow as rapidly as you like. It depends upon your own energy, you are not bound down by any external factor; you start a process of self-growth". Nehru was severely criticised for this by the representatives of the Private Sector in India, the added emphasis on heavy industries being called communistic and not in line with democratic planning. But the bulk of the party supported Nehru as also did the Parliament and public opinion in the country. Thus the Second Plan placed a heavy accent on industrialisation, the public sector in industry, and heavy industries in public sector. The private sector was not left out; in fact it was entrusted with the task of machine building for consumer industries and for manufacture of basic goods such as cement, chemicals and steel also in terms of expansion of existing units. Along with the Second Five Year Plan, Nehru also

brought in the concept of long-term planning, or perspective planning required for the success of five year plans. Thus, the Five-Year Plan should be a broad framework, subject to suitable changes not only in keeping with our resources, but also of the ultimate long range picture of economic development. Nehru had no doubt in his mind about the fifteen-year objective of the plan, which was the removal of poverty and the ensuring of minimum levels of living for the vast masses who were groaning under sub-standard levels of living. Providing full employment was the major instrument for effecting this change. While Nehru was aware that industrialisation and new technology would mean foreign aid and he was prepared to go in for it but not for an indefinite period. On the contrary, he wanted the pattern of economic development to be such that dependence on foreign sources of economic development was terminated as early as possible. He wanted the economy to become self-reliant and develop within itself the seeds of self-acceleration. Hence his emphasis on heavy industries, on iron and steel, on coal and oil, on chemical industries and on technical education. Nehru kept on returning to the subject in his public education programme on Indian planning, of the link that existed between industrialisation, heavy industries and self-reliance and self-growth. His emphasis on basic industries was based on his desire to make the country independent in its economic growth and rely on Indian resources to make for further growth, rather than by depending on foreign help for the purpose. Thus, he told the Lok Sabha when he initiated discussion on the Draft Outline of the Third Five-Year Plan: "Unless we start from the base, we cannot build the third or fourth storey. We can advance in minor sectors of the economy but if we do not build the basic structure, it will not make any difference to the hundreds of millions of our people. The strategy governing planning in India is to industrialise, and that means the basic industries being given the first place".

The country owes to Jawaharlal Nehru the progress that it has made towards self-reliance and self-growth in industry and in the activities associated with industry like power, fuel, transport and technical skills. Nehru has been heavily criticised for paying insufficient attention to consumer goods industries and agriculture. While Nehru was laying stress on industrial production, he also stressed the importance of irrigation, fertiliser and power for

stepping up agricultural production and the first 10 years of our planning produced a higher rate of growth in agriculture as compared to later periods, when the green revolution resulted in higher rate of agricultural growth. Nehru publicly stated that it was necessary to balance our industries with the production of such other goods as can be consumed, and said we must have village industries, and home industries on a wider scale not only producing consumption goods but also adding to the employment opportunities which could not be done by heavy industries. Nehru has in fact carried on a propaganda for increasing food production even as he was stressing the importance of industrialisation and economic development.

While he was consistently reiterating his emphasis on production for the solution of India's economic problems, he was also deeply conscious of the importance of distribution and the larger social objectives that lay behind all his enthusiasm for planning. He wanted equality of opportunity and he wanted a substantial reduction in inequalities of income and wealth. Extension of the public sector, fiscal and other controls on large incomes, and vast extension of social services, these were part of the strategy he advocated for achieving the social objectives behind planning. At the same time, he did not want to use force or follow a doctrinaire approach in the achievement of these objectives. He believed in the capacity of India to win over the people using the pressure of democracy and also by a friendly, cooperative approach rather than an approach of struggle and elimination for bringing about social and economic change.

Nehru gave the ideological basis for planned economic development which he placed before the country, by talking of the need for a socialist society as the ideological objective of Indian economic planning. Even before he became the Prime Minister, he proclaimed his belief in socialism in its scientific sense at the 1936 Lucknow session of the Congress Party. Subsequently also he kept on talking of socialism, but stated that it was his personal view. He did not force it on the party because he did not want any division in the ranks of the composite group of people which constituted the party, but he gave his moral support to those who were prominent in the Congress Party advocating socialism as the objective behind India's political freedom. After he became Prime Minister, he was still not prepared

to use force for achieving full-fledged socialist society, involving nationalisation of our industries and agriculture. He talked of socialist planning in the limited sense of establishing industries in the public sector, increasing employment and increasing production for poverty alleviation, and emphasising the importance of equality and equal opportunities for all sections of the people, in the employment and production projects of the plan. The ideological force behind Planning was also concretised by the resolution passed by Parliament in 1954, making a socialist pattern of society as the objective of social and economic development. This concept of socialist pattern of society included both the values of socialism and democracy and envisaged planned development for the achievement of this objective. The earliest and clearest enunciation of the link between socialist society and Indian planning was given in the first chapter of the 3rd plan report which was personally drafted by Nehru, which set at rest some public doubts about the plan not having objectives of socialist development. Talking about the Socialist Pattern of Society in the Second Plan, he summed up the position as under:

“Essentially this means that the basic criterion for determining lines of advance must not be private profit, but social gain, and that the pattern of development and the structure of socio-economic relations should be so planned that they result not only in appreciable increase in national income and employment but also in greater equality in incomes and wealth. Major decisions regarding production, distribution, consumption and investment—and in fact all significant socio-economic relationships—must be made by agencies informed by social purpose. The benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society, and there should be progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power. The problem is to create a milieu in which the small man who has so far had little opportunity of perceiving and participating in the immense possibilities of growth through organised effort is enabled to put in his best in the interests of a higher standard of life for himself and increased prosperity for the country. In the process, he rises in economic and social status”.

“The socialist pattern of society is not to be regarded as some fixed or rigid pattern. It is not rooted in any doctrine or

dogma. Each country has to develop according to its own genius and tradition. Economic and social policy has to be shaped from time to time in the light of historical circumstances. It is neither necessary nor desirable that the economy should become a monolithic type of organisation offering little play for experimentation either as to forms or as to modes of functioning. Nor should expansion of the public sector mean centralisation of decision-making and of exercise of authority. In fact, the aim should be to secure an appropriate devolution of functions and to ensure to public enterprises the fullest freedom to operate within a framework of broad directives or rules of the game ... The accent of the socialist pattern of society is on the attainment of positive goals, the raising of living standards, the enlargement of opportunities for all, the promotion of enterprise among the disadvantaged classes and the creation of a sense of partnership among all sections of the community. These positive goals provide the criteria for basic decisions. The Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution have indicated the approach in broad terms: Socialist pattern of society is a more concretised expression of this approach. Economic policy and institutional changes have to be planned in a manner that would secure economic advance along democratic and egalitarian lines. Democracy, it has been said, is a way of life rather than a particular set of institutional arrangements. The same could well be said of the socialist pattern”.

It was the essential ideology behind all socialism rather than the methodology favoured by scientific socialism that Nehru accepted, popularised and attempted to implement in this country. He wanted the Congress Party to become a Socialist party; and success attended his efforts a few months before his death when at the Bhubaneswar Session of the Indian National Congress, the Constitution of the Congress was amended to make democratic socialism by peaceful methods the objective of the Congress Party. Article I of the Congress Constitution as amended at the Bhubaneswar Session in December 1963 reads as under:

“The objective of the Indian National Congress is the well-being and advancement of the people of India and the establishment in India, by peaceful and constitutional means,

of a Socialist State based on Parliamentary Democracy, in which there is equality of opportunity and of political, economic and social rights and which aims at world peace and fellowship”.

While Nehru placed before the country the ideals of a socialist society, he also believed in the human approach and in the infinite potentiality of the human being which could not be harnessed by regimentation and use of force such as was normally referred to as part of the ideology of socialism. He believed in people's participation in the task of planning and giving them the necessary motivation to build up the country's resources for their utilisation through planning as a major instrument for economic development.

So Nehru went on with his interest continuously concentrated on planning, formulating five-year plans as Chairman of the Planning Commission, trying to get them implemented as head of the Government, and popularising them with the people and seeking their cooperation in the development process by explanation and exhortations. No wonder then that he is called the architect of economic planning in India.

There is no doubt however that the country has reached a considerable measure of economic development as a result of planning. The pace of growth, however, was not adequate for fulfilling the objectives that lay behind his planning. Added to this was the continually increasing share that the better-off took from the national product and the growing burden of inflation and rising prices resulting from deficit financing and heavy inputs of commodity taxation. The common man for whose betterment Nehru longed and for solving whose problem he had brought planning into the Indian economy, did not get any significant benefit as a result of the Five-Year Plans. Decades of planning that continued after the death of Nehru did not succeed in eliminating unemployment or overcome the problem of underdeveloped regions of the country in terms of its productivity and contribution either to industry or agriculture or both. Similarly, the citadels of private economic power, which was diminishing, are now growing leading to glaring inequalities of income and wealth that constitute such a conspicuous feature of our economic system. Nor have we succeeded in dealing with any adequacy the problems of the backward regions and the backward classes

or the sub-standard living of the vast numbers of our people, rural and urban proletariat.

Jawaharlal Nehru kept on his table extracts from Robert Frost's poem, which was most relevant to the task of economic planning, which I quote:

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep  
But I have promises to keep  
And miles to go before I sleep  
And miles to go before I sleep".

Nehru did go a very long way though the road was getting longer and longer with every act of implementation of plan projects for economic development, and Nehru's legacy appears to be this in regard to his contribution to economic development. Thus, we had after the death of Nehru, the 4th Five-Year Plan, a plan holiday of 3 years, the 5th Five Year Plan, the 6th and 7th Five Year Plans, and now we are on the verge of finalising the draft of the 8th plan. It goes to Nehru's credit not only making planning the major instrument for economic development, but also laying down social objectives which still require to be given effect to in Indian planning. Nehru was instrumental in making economic and social objectives integral parts of the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. The Constitution (42nd Amendment) Bill of 1976 which was piloted and passed during Smt. Indira Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister, added the word "Socialist" in the Preamble to the Constitution, which now reads 'Sovereign, Socialist, Secular Democratic Republic', in place of the old 'Sovereign Democratic Republic'.

I would like to conclude this article by quoting from my book on 'Nehru Legacy' which was published in 1971.

"There is no doubt that Nehru's influence will extend far beyond his times and leave a lasting impact on our future generations. While not a professedly religious man like his master Gandhi, he was nevertheless essentially a Gandhian in his passion for peace, his belief in dialogue and persuasion, his absence of personal rancour or bitterness, his regard for human dignity, and his fundamental belief in the non-violent approach to all conflicts. At the same time, he was an embodiment of the modern spirit, with faith in reason and belief in science and the full confidence that the environment

could be conquered and society reconstituted with the help of science and technology. This combination of the spiritual with the scientific, the old with the new, the inherited with the acquired, it is this unity in duality, of science and spirituality, that is likely to make the most lasting impact on the future generations of his fellow countrymen.

Unwilling to hurt or wound, with no sense of self or personal aggrandisement, he made of his life a trust for the nation and indeed for all who were poor or lowly or disinherited wherever they were found. He believed in service and gloried in its achievements, but science and technology were only handmaidens. His mistress was the people; and their service was his worship. And now his ashes have mingled with the soil, the waters and the air of the land he loved and worked for. But left behind is the Nehru Legacy; and it is for us who remain to strive to secure its fulfilment.



*E.M.S. Namboodiripad*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru as I Knew Him**

---

The editor of this publication has included me among those who "had been associated" with Jawaharlal Nehru. Let me make it clear that this is not a fact. The only occasion when I was "associated" with him was during the 28 months when I was the Chief Minister of Kerala which was dismissed by the Nehru Government. Neither before nor after that event was I associated with him the way in which I am supposed to have done.

This is not to say that I have not been closely following the evolution of Nehru from a young radical—the "idol of youth" in the latter half of the 1920s—to the first Prime Minister of Independent India. As early as in 1931, I wrote a short biography of Nehru in my own language (Malayalam)—the first of my published writings. Recently on the occasion of his centenary, I wrote in English a book under the title "Nehru: Ideology and Practice"—a critical appreciation of the positive and negative features of Nehru's life and work.

Fifty-eight years ago when I wrote my first short booklet on Nehru, I was an ardent admirer of Nehru the man and his ideology. I had been slowly moving from the Gandhian to the Leftist outlook. I found in Nehru the new leader whom we of the younger generation of those years had to follow.

Within half a decade after my first book came out, a new chapter opened in the life of Nehru and the history of the Left Movement in the country. I am referring to the dynamic leadership provided by Nehru in his presidential address at the 1936 (Lucknow) Session of the Congress. Unity of all anti-imperialist forces, with a programme oriented towards the left—this was the lead which Nehru gave the Congress. The programme included the

transformation of the Indian National Congress from an amorphous political body into a radical mass organisation to which are collectively affiliated the fighting organisations of the working class and peasantry.

I then respected Nehru as an effective leader who fought for unity of the world progressive forces against fascism and of the anti-imperialist forces in India. He was known as a "fellow traveller" of the World Communist Movement, sympathetic to the two major left forces in the country—the Communist Party of India and the Congress Socialist Party. I happened to be one of the four all-India Joint Secretaries of the Congress Socialist Party and had just joined the Communist Party of India as an unexposed member. As for Nehru, he was the leader of a force allied to the Left Movement of which I was an active member.

That however, was a short period. Within three years Nehru ceased to be a "fellow traveller" of the Communist movement. Torn between his convictions as a "fellow traveller" of the Communist Movement and loyalty to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, he vacillated for a time and in the end opted for the camp of which Gandhi was the leader. On occasions like the Quit India Movement of 1942 as well as the subsequent political struggles (including the electoral struggles of 1946, 1952, 1957, 1962), we Communists found ourselves in opposition to Nehru. The action taken against the Kerala Government in 1959 and the hysterical campaign against the Communist Party in 1959-62 showed that the "fellow traveller" of the Communist Party had transformed himself into the general officer commanding the anti-Communist army in the country.

How did this transformation take place? This is the question which I have tried to answer in my recent book. The gist of my assessment is that Nehru was the typical representative of the Indian bourgeoisie which has two faces,—one directed against imperialism and the other against Communism. A radical leader belonging to the bourgeoisie, he could not intellectually understand and appreciate the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi; but, as the political leader of the class, he had to follow the most acute leader under whose leadership the class was fighting for freedom.

As a radical leader of the class again, he had his sympathy for the labour and socialist movements in the world as well as for the new socialist system that was developing in Soviet Russia.

But he was no follower of scientific socialism as expounded by Marx, Engels and Lenin. He on the other hand, followed the line of rightwing social democracy; anti-Communism was thus inherent in his mental outlook. This was enormously strengthened by the continuous conflict between India's independent revolutionary party of the working class and the party of the bourgeoisie through which alone, he thought, India could win freedom.

These complexities and contradictions in his personal intellectual make-up were dormant in the early years when the Communist Party was in its infancy and when Nehru dominated India's left politics. However, since the reorganisation and consolidation of the Communist Movement in the mid-thirties, the CPI increasingly asserted itself and challenged the unquestioned leadership of the Indian bourgeoisie and its political party. This was seen first at the time of the Quit India struggle, again in the emergence of the Communist Government in Kerala and finally in the conflicting appreciations of the confrontation with China. On every one of these questions, the Communist Party and I personally had to come into conflict with Nehru.

As the typically left leader of the Indian bourgeoisie, Nehru had the misfortune of being born and having emerged as a national leader, at a stage in human history when the bourgeois social system had entered a phase of intense internal crisis. Humanity in fact had started its transition from capitalism to socialism which was having its repercussions in India as well. Nehru could not associate himself with the new anti-capitalist forces, in fact, ranged himself against them in India, even though, to a limited extent he was cooperating with anti-capitalist forces in the world. From this arises what I have called in my book "the love-hate relationship" between Nehru and Indian Communists.

V.R. Krishna Iyer

## Jawaharlal : A Legacy of Humanism\*

---

*How amazing is this spirit of man! In spite of innumerable failings, man, throughout the ages, has sacrificed his life and all he held dear for an ideal, for truth, for faith, for country and honour. That ideal may change, but that capacity for self-sacrifice continues; and, because of that, much may be forgiven to man, and it is impossible to lose hope for him. In the midst of disaster he has not lost his dignity or his faith in the values he cherished. Plaything of nature's mighty forces, less than the speck of dust in this vast Universe, he has hurled defiance at the elemental powers, and with his mind, cradle of revolution, sought to master them. Whatever gods there be, there is something god-like in man, as there is also something of the devil in him.*

*The future is dark, uncertain. But we can see part of the way leading to it, and can tread it with firm steps remembering that nothing that can happen is likely to overcome the spirit of man which has survived so many perils."*

—Nehru

A hundred years ago was born Jawaharlal, whom nature and culture fashioned together into that finest humanist the nations all over now remember as the builder of brave new Bharat and moulder of the modern world order, whom history commissioned to conscientise the international community about the struggle for people's liberation, the battle against imperialism and fascism and the urgency of creating a cosmos without chaos along lines of peaceful coexistence and universally shared progressive development.

---

\* Reproduced from the author's article in *The Patriot*, New Delhi, 3 September, 1989

The supreme secret of Jawaharlal Nehru was that every cell of his soul was humanism writ large, every breath of his being was fragrant with the passion for human deliverance in every dimension and every moment of his life was charged with a compassionate concern for the fulfilment of humanity's tryst with destiny.

He was, in short, the sublime epitome of the Manifesto of Man. This warm and loving human being, Jawaharlal Nehru, had his great expectations and dismal disillusionments but never lost faith in the future of spaceship Earth and its dear inhabitants.

He had his measure of conflicts, internal and external, domestic, national and global, with ideals and realities estranged from each other, and best described by the lines he quoted in his *Autobiography*: "Wandering between two worlds, one dead, /The other powerless to be born, With nowhere yet to rest my head, /Like these, on earth I wait forlorn".

A profound personhood where that vedantic synthesis of the materialist and spiritualist hemispheres of Reality found proud expression now speaks to us from the far distance beyond death. "Meet we shall, and part, and meet again, /Where dead men meet on lips of living men". (Samuel Butler, *Life After Death*)

Jawaharlal was a cosmic person but his deepest roots were Indian. So he wrote in his testament: "I am proud of that great inheritance that has been, and is ours, and am conscious that I too, like all of us, am a link in the unbroken chain which goes back to the dawn of history in the immemorial past of India."

These prefatory words done, let us begin from the very beginning. Jawaharlal Nehru was born as the only son of Motilal, a prince among lawyers and a lawyer of the princes. Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, bred in aristocratic abundance, educated in the best school in England, called to the English Bar, young Nehru could have had a legal career with a big head start. But this was not to be, even as for Marx, who too was son of lawyers and himself did legal studies but found the Bar not his cup of tea.

Jawahar was too sensitive to stand human suffering and subjection; he was too bold to accept human indignity lying down; he was too radical to regard British imperialism as impregnable; he was too consumed by human justice to be a law court artist. Nay, more; he was too proud and patriotic not to

brave the British and break India's colonial bondage. He was too militant to succumb to fatalism, too sublimely selfless to focus on his personal future. Being of heroic mould his body and mind would not surrender to lathi blows and prison servitude, and so, he swung into action for those goals and ideals which he cherished and chased with an indomitable will.

This marvel of a man, Jawaharlal Nehru, belonged to the East and the West, was educated in Britain but hated British imperialism, was Gandhian in his human essence, socialist in his conviction, revolutionary in his thinking but Hamletian in his action, spiritual in his perceptions and materialist in his meliorist concern for the exploited and inhibited. He was aristocratic in his upbringing, yet egalitarian in his world-view, child of the Himalayas and the Ganga but builder of macro-projects for Indian development with tools of science and technology.

Deeply rooted in the vedic heritage yet leaping towards the atomic age, he blossomed as the finest synthesis of the ancient and modern, with a sense of history and its future shock and a feel of the human destiny which is the birth right of our species. Many contradictions dwelt within his spacious personality but the most precious thing about him was his crimson humanism, like the fresh, fragrant rose which he always wore, like the dancing, singing, frisking, playsome children he so deeply loved.

'Do I contradict myself,' asked Walt Whitman. 'Very well, I contradict myself. I am large; I contain the multitudes'. Nehru belonged to this rare brood.

The centre of gravity of his soul was humanity and his spiritual ballast was the dignity and divinity of the human personality. Society in locomotion spiralling towards a free social order was his vision of the world process. His dialectical sense grasped the core of the cosmic malady—the violation of human rights, the violence and war, the tension and colonial appetite which marred the march of civilization towards a haven of peace and plenty.

For him Development meant not development of things but of Man. Not mere 'growth' which may mean a super-prosperous few and the masses in penury but 'growth' with justice which would assure a broad development of the economy with distributive justice raising the lot of the littlest Indian—that was his vision and passion.

In short, he was a socialist committed to a peaceful

transformation. He was the uncanny harbinger and Gandhian messenger of a non-violent world order.

Is Gorbachev his spiritual successor, even as he himself was a curious heir of the Mahatma? Succession and inheritance to the cultural estate do not follow biological lineage, and quantum-jumps across geography and generation can happen in spiritual genetics.

The chemistry of Panditji's personality was compounded of the liberal values and socialist perspectives of Fabian England, of Gandhiji's identification with the indigent Indian masses, his diamond-hard creed of *ahimsa* and his 'small is beautiful' philosophy and of Lord Buddha's oceanic compassion for all Creation and epic attack on priest-craft, rituals and animal sacrifice. Once we behold this humane dimension, planetary patriotism and cosmic perceptions of Panditji everything about him reveals itself in its utter transparency and spiritual profundity.

What was he, in his multifaceted manhood? He was higher humanism in action. His restless soul wanted an end to human bondage, not merely in political terms but also in social and economic life. His commitment to human deliverance catalysed his national struggle. And his patriotism knew no political frontiers.

For him Indian Independence was an integral part of the global battle against imperialism. Imperial enslavement, colonial exploitation, capitalist injustice and fascist terror are degrees of inhumanity with darker hues. Nehru, every inch of him, was a passionate challenge to these fiendish forces.

Jawaharlal, with ideological depth, represented Gandhiji's thought: "My nationalism is intense internationalism. I am sick of the strife between nations or religions".

This holistic humanism drove him to a struggle beyond winning mere political sovereignty for India. While political freedom and national sovereignty are vital, this freedom becomes meaningful only if the right to life is sustained by economic and social justice. This integral *yoga* of political, social and economic justice and individual dignity constitutes the fundamental kernel of human rights.

His role in the struggle for Indian Independence and against foreign exploitation was charged with this profound ideology. So he was the President of the Civil Liberties Union and campaigner for militant socialism. He was against giant multi-nationals which are economic empires. He fought fascism and refused to meet

Mussolini at a time when he was a brave young anti-fascist and the Duce was the dictator of Italy!

He was against communalism because this killer disease promoted bleeding hatred in savage mutuality. Courage was needed to attack the Khadi-clad diehards with communal blood in their Congress bosoms. And yet, Nehru, in his historic presidential address in 1936 in Lucknow burst out.

“I am convinced”, he said, “that the only right way of looking at our own problems is to see them in their proper place in a world setting. I am convinced that there is intimate connection between world events, and our national problem is but a part of the world problem of capitalist imperialism. To look at each event apart from the others and without understanding the connection between them must lead us to the formation of erratic and erroneous views. Look at the vast panorama of world change today, where mighty forces are at grips with each other and dreadful war darkens the horizon. Subject peoples struggling for freedom and imperialism crushing them down; exploited classes facing their exploiters and seeking freedom and equality. Italian imperialism bombing and killing the brave Ethiopians; Japanese imperialism continuing its aggression in north China and Mongolia; British imperialism piously objecting to other countries misbehaving, yet carrying on in much the same way in India and the Frontier; and behind it all a decaying economic order which intensifies all these conflicts. Can we not see an organic connection in all these various phenomena? Let us try to develop the historic sense so that we can view current events in proper perspective and understand their real significance. Only then can we appreciate the march of history and keep step with it”.



*Hiren Mukherjee*

## The Great Parliamentarian\*

Life has a certain resilience, which is why no one is missed for very long—not even the likes of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. This thought comes to mind as the birth centenary of Jawaharlal Nehru comes round—Jawaharlal, who can be called one of the makers of our India and who had proved himself to be a global personality “the sculptor of the ethics of our part of the world” as the delegate from Morocco described him when the United Nations condoled his death in May 1964. It is no surprise then that apart from some officially sponsored noises about the centenary, the emotions of our people still seem tepid over the event.

Didn't the 40th anniversary of Indian independence pass by as just another event, for “the glow of freedom” about which Jawaharlal spoke ardently in 1945-46 has remained mostly “unlit” since the transfer of power to partitioned India? Even so, one should remember Jawaharlal and his times for even the snooty cynics cannot disregard Kierkegaard's dictum: “Life can only be understood backwards, but it can only be lived forwards”.

For quite some time it has been something of a “national pastime” to run down Jawaharlal, but awaiting, as one must, the long-range judgment of history, it is permissible, at least for those who have seen him plain and known him at close quarters, to recall with pride that in spite of many failings there was in our political life a certain freedom from “triviality”—a quality conspicuously absent now. It sounds strange in the idiom of today's public life to quote Jawaharlal's words in the Provisional

---

\* Reproduced from the author's article in *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 14 November, 1988.

Parliament, when beset by searing problems in the wake of Partition, he said: "I have often wondered why the people of India put up with people like me after all that has happened during the last few months. I am not quite sure that if I had not been in the government, I would put up with my government!"

A few years later (April 1952), reminded of the failure of his promise to end all food imports, he said frankly: "I regret that my words have been falsified and I feel thoroughly ashamed that what was almost a pledge to the country has been broken". These are words that seem to come from another era. But perhaps one should not be surprised. Didn't Jawaharlal's two grandsons, flown in from Britain to their grandfather's funeral, tell the Press bluntly then that their famed ancestor had had no impact on their minds?

His work in Parliament was only a small part of what Jawaharlal did, in various ways, for his country. In spite of a total lack of legislative experience he took things in his stride when, as vice-president of the Viceroy's Executive Council, he became virtually the top man in the administration and then automatically became Prime Minister on "transfer of power", continuing in that role 'unto the last' (May 1964). One might even suspect a certain allergy on his part—didn't he keep off pre-independence legislatures when C.R. Das and his own father Motilal launched the Swarajya Party, and didn't he, as Congress President (1936) at Lucknow and Faizpur, oppose 'office acceptance' strenuously?

How his mind worked once, can be seen from what he said at Faizpur: "I have seen again the throbbing agony of India's masses, the call of their eyes for relief from the terrible burdens they carry. That is our problem; all others are secondary". Intellectually influenced by Marxism and emotionally drawn towards revolution, he could write in his *Autobiography* (1936) about the impossibility of "going over an abyss in two jumps", the impossibility, that is to say, of a gradual evolution (just as Subhas Chandra Bose, whose name comes to mind inexorably with Jawaharlal's, used to speak in 1938-39 about our people needing "a forced march", towards a good society), and the irrelevance of 'liberals' whom he castigated in *The Discovery of India* (1945) as men "for whom the Bastille has not fallen".

He never could—nor could more avowed socialists and communists—work out the incline from abstractions to realities. He did not even have to chafe within himself overmuch, for he

had to acquiesce in many things, including Partition, and with all his distaste for the 'status quo', he was not unattracted by the not particularly gilded lollipops of the parliamentary confectionery with which the British has long planned to lure, as they did, the entire spectrum of our politics, thereby ensuring a long life of the exploitative society.

Thus it came about that to Jawaharlal, India's "Middle Way" came to be the parliamentary system with some little adaptation to Indian conditions. When in 1959, the noted US columnist, Walter Lippmann no foam-at-the-mouth radical, wrote of what he called "the revolutionary objectives of the Third Five Year Plan" that "it would require the organised pressures of a popular movement under government leadership so dynamic and so purposeful that it can inspire people to do voluntarily the kinds of things that in Communist China are done by compulsion", Jawaharlal sought to answer seriously. In a Press statement he said there was much point in Lippmann's view and that the administrative apparatus, inherited from the British, could be made quick-moving by improvements in the parliamentary structure. Not only Jawaharlal, but all the rest of us, Left, Right and Centre and who have you, must bear responsibility for the sorry fact that the essential parliamentary reforms, let alone basic change in its functioning, have not taken place yet—which indeed explains the lousy look of India's Parliament today.

No wonder then that even friendly observers of the Indian scene like Gunnar Myrdal have been constrained to stigmatise this country as "a soft state", unable even to ship up the essential minimum of concerted determination to forge quickly ahead. One feels a certain pathos about Jawaharlal's expectations, which he formulated in Parliament and before the country, such as Community Development and National Extension blocks wherein he visualised socio-economic transformation. It should be no surprise that towards the end of his days he seemed seized with a sense of "hurry", and in introspective moments thought sadly of having "promises to keep" and "miles to go" still.

Jawaharlal, however, had taken to Parliament, not exactly as to the manner born but with a natural talent for civilised, often thoughtful, discourse that few could match. By no means an orator like his colleague Moulana Azad, he made at least a few historic speeches, his "Tryst with Destiny" address on the night of August 14-15, 1947, deserving a place in any anthology of

parliamentary eloquence. By no means a debater who could score quick and witty points, like Govind Ballabh Pant on his own side and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and a few others also in the opposition, he would command constant respect not only because of his long, high standing in national life but because of a truly sensitive respect for a system where, normally, issues could be settled in spite of contentious, even contradictory, points of view. One could see that he had never bothered to master the Rules of Procedure (some who did, like the late Hari Vishnu Kamath or the happily living Madhu Limaye, sometimes made a fetish of them), but he had a commonsense grip on the whole thing.

It appears that C. Rajagopalachari once said that Jawaharlal had been "the most civilised of us all". There is much point in this observation, and Speakers of Lok Sabha like G.V. Mavalankar (not the type, now familiar, that aches to leap from the highest parliamentary perch to a ministerial box!) have gone out of their way to compliment Jawaharlal on his profound respect for Parliament and a deep sense of its dignity as the repository of the people's will.

The First Parliament (1952-57) of independent India saw Jawaharlal at his best in a Parliament that was also at its best. Hot because at that time Anthony Eden, then Prime Minister of Britain, who broke journey here travelling home while from Australia, said publicly that as a parliamentarian he was more at home in Delhi than in Canberra. This was nothing to gloat over, but it is not bad that belying the prognostications of A.F. Pollard to whom "the Hindu and the Hottentot" were congenital strangers to Parliament, and the boasts of Hailsham, following Winston Churchill, that God had whispered all parliamentary knowledge to "His own Englishmen", our variegated country has shown clearly enough that, if we make up our minds we can play ball with Parliament as well as the British or whoever else. This is only a small sop to our self-respect which, if Parliament dwindles as one fears it has, will also diminish.

Communists were the leading opposition group in the First, Second and Third Parliaments till as long as Jawaharlal lived, and it is pleasant to recall the easy dignity and friendliness, *never* condescension, with which he treated communists and others in the opposition benches. In the very first debate (May 1952) over the President's address, the contending lines were clearly drawn.

When the communist spokesman described the address as “a declaration of war on the Indian people”, Jawaharlal’s retort was that “in that case there was war between *them* and *us*.”

When in another communist speech he was taunted as “having lost his place in history for the sake of a tinsel portfolio”, Jawaharlal beautifully replied that he cared not for a place in history but was content with a place in the affections of his people. Despite the tensions and crises on the floor of the House, the acrimonious exchanges and occasional walk-outs, there was altogether an atmosphere of national amity. Which is why the First Parliament could see the formulation of the Second Five Year Plan (the only basic one so far), the passage of legislation on Hindu women’s rights (marriage and succession, etc.), the adoption of the decimal system of coinage and metric weights and measures, and to stress the most important items, the proclamation of *Panch Sheel* and the convocation of the Bandung Conference (1955) where Nasser and Soekarno and even Chou-En-lai hailed Jawaharlal as their elder brother. Bandung took place ten years after Hiroshima and it was as if, with India largely in the lead, there went out a call to western neo-imperialism that it must “quit Asia”. Apart from the days of the freedom struggle itself it was Jawaharlal’s finest hour. And that was possible largely because Parliament had functioned in a manner that did honour to our people.

Jawaharlal was a large enough person not to mind stinging criticism, if only it was basically civilised. How one delights having pulled his leg with such asides as that he was regaling the House with “an orchestration of platitudes”, that he was “a minor poet who has missed his vocation”, “a specialist in omniscience”. Once, when perturbed by loud-lunged acerbity he suggested “naming” of a whole batch of members, he was told he “did not deserve to be Leader of the House”, an observation later deleted by the Speaker (though the then evening edition of *Hindustan Times* carried it!), which upset Satyanarayan Sinha, then Parliamentary Minister, but not Jawaharlal himself. He would be told, often enough, how being what he was he could be in the Congress party, how he “kept the company he did”. He never resented such things over much but he took pains otherwise to explain that he had made his choice long ago and that he did not like a *sampradaya* of his own. Once he even confided that he had much respect and affection for the likes Jayaprakash Narayan who, however, was “entirely opposed to my domestic and foreign

policies" (letter dated June 9, 1957).

There fell a blot at his parliamentary escutcheon when in 1959 a deliberately designed assault brought down the first elected Communist government anywhere in history, that in Kerala. Jawaharlal was perhaps a little shamefaced about it, but he did not desist from lending full support to Govind Ballabh Pant, Home Minister, more adept than he in parliamentary ways and with broad enough shoulders to brave the brickbats. Jawaharlal, however, was the *complete* Congress leader, reaping the fruits of the operation. As he was told in Parliament, he made one think of Maria Theresa of Austria who "wept" over the partition of Poland (1772-75) by Prussia, Austria and Russia together, but "took her share" of the loot alright.

With his personality and his parliamentary manners which were impeccable and of course with his intellectual endowment, his domination of the parliamentary scene was well deserved, but in the late 50s his grip loosened and his authority began to pale as his dreams of Indo-China amity faded and in the opposition inside Parliament there emerged elements that coalesced only to bring down his image. His old colleague in the Congress leadership, J.B. Kripalani, his brilliance soured often into acerbity, never lost a certain intellectual quality in his attack, but there were others, rumbustious in every sense who had a *Delenda est Carthago* ("Carthage must be destroyed") approach towards him personally as well as politically.

He never quite admitted that he could no longer run Parliament and the country the way he wanted to, but the years of unresting toil ('*Aram haram hai*' his motto) had taken their toll, and in early 1964, agonised by signs of communal discord, his heart began to give way. Bravely, he fought on—"I am unspeakably healthy" had been his boast—but of course, naturally, he failed. In late May 1964 a stunned Parliament learnt of his passing away and the peoples' grief was such that it seemed as if the sun never shone on that unclouded day.

*"Death will come when it will come": Only it is a pity, as he said himself, that he was not to be "there to see and share the new dimensions introduced by the stupendous recent advances in science and technology". How one wishes his successors in power had even a tithe of his sensitivity!*

*Dr. Rafiq Zakaria*

## **Some Recollections**

---

On May 27, 1964 we were in the midst of a heated discussion in a meeting of the State Cabinet on the sixth floor of the Sachivalaya or Secretariat Building in Bombay; the late Mr. V.P. Naik was in the Chair. Suddenly the Personal Assistant to the Chief Minister rushed into the Cabinet room and handed over a slip of paper to Mr. Naik. He just glanced at it and burst into tears. We wondered whether some close relative had died; Mr. Naik, always sober and sedate, composed himself and announced that Panditji had passed away.

The shock was too great for all of us; none of us had an inkling of such a calamity. We literally felt orphaned. Nehru had been so much a part of us that none could imagine life without him. What after Nehru?—was not a mere academic question; it was pregnant with frightful consequences. Most Indians shuddered to even contemplate an India without Nehru.

My recollection of Nehru goes back to my school days in the late thirties; those were the days of constitutional fights against the British and political tensions between the Hindus and the Muslims. Even a school boy could not escape their impact. I used to be an avid reader of newspapers, I enjoyed politics. The more I read about it the more I was attracted to Nehru, his buoyancy, his youthful vigour but above all his fighting spirit. He managed by his words and deeds to sweep me off my feet; as he did most others of my generation.

In April 1936 his autobiography was published; it created a sensation in political circles. My English teacher spoke highly of its literary value; I bought a copy and read it from cover to cover. It was an arduous task but I managed to accomplish it with the help of a dictionary. Throughout the English-speaking world the

book was hailed as a literary masterpiece. It proved to be a big generator of goodwill abroad for the cause of Indian nationalism. For Indians of my generation it became a Bible; we read it again and again.

There was something so moving about the narration of the story of our hopes and aspirations in its pages that no Indian who read it could escape its magical effect. There was something so regal about the personality of the author who emerged out of its pages with such power and grace that the spell it cast was overwhelming. It drew the readers to the author as a duck to the water.

In early 1937 I had a glimpse of Nehru in person. The occasion was a public meeting, organised by the Poona Congress Committee, in support of the Congress candidates to the Bombay Legislative Assembly. Nehru was scheduled to address it at about 10 p.m. but he came at 2 a.m. For all those hours thousands like me waited anxiously for his arrival, unmindful of the inconvenience that nightly wait and squatting on the ground had caused. And when at last he came, all of us felt as though an electric current passed through us.

A year later, I had a much closer view of Nehru; as an office-bearer of Ismail College Union, Bombay, I had invited him to deliver its inaugural address. After the talk which despite being rambling, was for us an essay in enlightenment, Nehru had tea with some of us. I sat at the table near him and found him more charming than I had expected. He was warm, affectionate, human and full of life—a little aloof, without being unfriendly. I must admit that on meeting Nehru face to face for the first time I experienced a strange sense of fulfilment; he was more than what I had expected. A hero who looked a hero and behaved as one.

I also saw him socially sometimes, whenever he came to Bombay. On one occasion I met him at the residence of the late Mr. M.C. Chagla, who used to lead nationalist Muslims. It was sometime in 1941, after I was elected General Secretary of the Government Law College Union, I invited Nehru to address us. He was not sure of his programme. He, however, asked me to organise a memorial meeting for Tagore, who had passed away some months ago. He promised to participate, but could not. He was keen that the younger generation should keep abreast of the poet's teachings. He told me, "Tagore is the best link we had between our past and present". Our Union organised the meeting;



it was a great success. I wrote to Gandhiji for a message; he sent it, it was couched in his characteristic style; it said:

Sevagram,  
WARDHA,  
24.11.1941.

Dear Zakaria,  
May your function be crowned with success and may you collect a fat sum for the memorial.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi.

Nehru was equally fond of Iqbal and enjoyed his poetry; on one occasion I enquired of him as to why he was not as critical of the poet as he was of Jinnah. "Was he not as communal in his outlook as Jinnah", I asked. "Not at all", he replied, "Iqbal's opposition to nationalism is due to his anti-materialism; his love for Islam is due to his spiritual attachment to his religion. Jinnah is neither anti-materialistic nor spiritual in his thinking. He is a lawyer, fighting a case; there is no involvement or conviction in any of the values on his part as was the case with Iqbal. Of course I disagree with Iqbal on these matters; but I respect his views. He was a romatist, a dreamer, often out of touch with reality—but he possessed a rare creative mind. He transported one to a world which was so different from the one in which one lived. It was nevertheless an exhilarating experience".

Later in 1946 when Nehru's book: *The Discovery of India*, was published, I found a confirmation in its pages of what he had told me. He wrote:

"A few months before his death, as he (Iqbal) lay on his sick bed, he sent for me and I gladly obeyed the summons. As I talked to him about many things I felt that how much we had in common, in spite of differences, and how easy it would be to get on with him. He was in reminiscent mood and wandered from one subject to another, and I listened to him, talking very little myself. I admired him and his poetry, and it pleased me greatly to feel that he liked me and had a good opinion of me. A little before I left him he said to me: 'What is there in common between Jinnah and you? He is a politician, you are a patriot'."

Thereafter, I saw Nehru at the historic A.I.C.C. session in August, 1942; he was full of anger—anger against the British exploitation of the communal situation, anger against the dog-in-the-manger policy of the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats, anger against the ostrich-like behaviour of Linlithgow and his overlords in London. He revolted against the cussedness of the powers-that-were and cried out for India's freedom, so that he might be able to help actively the Allied cause. I was closely associated in those days with the All-India Students' Congress; we were inspired by Gandhiji's call for direct action: "Do or Die"; and Nehru's exhortation to mobilise the people against the British. We organised a *hartal* in our college and many of us were arrested and kept for some time in police custody; underground activities continued and some of us helped these in our own small way.

In June, 1944, in the thick of the last World War, I left for London for higher studies. It was the time of the V-I and V-II bombs; the second front had just opened, kindling a ray of hope for the victory of the Allies. Soon after my arrival in the United Kingdom, I met Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, who, almost singlehandedly, was carrying on in the heart of the British empire the struggle for India's freedom. Through his India League I kept myself abreast of developments at home. I also joined its ranks and participated in its activities. I used to be one of the main speakers on its platform, representing the nationalist Muslim point of view. What troubled us most during those days was the continued detention of our national leaders, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru. I was elected President of the London Majlis and Chairman of the Federation of Indian Students' Societies in Great Britain and Europe and organised meetings for Nehru's release. Also we mobilised British public opinion in support of our move. One of the persons to whom I wrote in this connection was the great novelist, historian and thinker—H.G. Wells. He promptly replied as below:

13, Hanover Terrace, Regent Park N.W.1,  
Telephone, PADDINGTON 6204,  
Saturday, Feb. 17, 1945.

Dear Mr. Zakaria,

I agree, Pandit Nehru ought to be released forthwith and freed to speak his mind against all the out of date nonsense of

Imperialism. I hope he will speak with equal force against out-of-date nationalism, for now the world is one and all war is civil war.

Sincerely Yours,  
H.G.

After the war, came the Labour victory in Britain. A little earlier the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, had tried to bring the Congress and the League together, but he failed to break the deadlock. Many of us in London, especially in the youth movement were disturbed; we tried to enlist as much support from the leaders of British public opinion to our cause as possible. I wrote to several of them in this connection. Of them was the famous playwright and thinker, George Bernard Shaw. In reply he wrote:

Ayot Saint Lawrence,  
WELWYN  
HERTS, 2.4.1945.

Dear Mr. Zakaria,

I have no special knowledge of India that would qualify me to answer your questions.

India's problems must be solved by Indians. My views are not of the least interest or authority except when they are not specifically Indian, but what you call fundamental. They are expressed in my published work. India needs an up-to-date Constitution, a draft by General Wavell may give them some useful hints, and may even become law *faute de mieux* because "Nature abhors a vacuum".

G.B.S.

Soon thereafter the new Labour Government, headed by Clement Attlee, despatched a high-powered Cabinet Mission to India. The constitutional plan it produced gave rise to a heated controversy between the Congress and the League leaders, more specifically in regard to the clause enabling provinces to opt out of the Federation. To put their respective cases before the British Government, the Congress sent Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh to London. They came in the same plane which carried the

Muslim League delegation consisting of Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, was also with them. It was at that time that I came into closer, more personal contact with Jawaharlal.

As President of the London Majlis I led a delegation to him during his London visit and though Nehru was extremely busy, he gave us more than an hour. I spoke to him of the pain and anguish that the Indian students felt at the talk of Partition, and their fear of its consequences. He analysed first the whole political situation to us and then assured us that the Congress would never agree to any kind of Partition. He stated that we would rather go on fighting for our freedom with the British for many more years than submit to such a solution. We were more than satisfied.

His subsequent agreement, therefore, came as a shock to many of us in London. I still believe it was more the compulsion of events and the pressure of circumstances which made him succumb to it than any change in his outlook or conviction. In fact, like Gandhiji, I do not think he forgave himself for having given in to a scheme which, instead of solving the communal problem, only aggravated it. In fact, in less than a year after India was divided, he wrote to the Nawab of Bhopal in a letter dated 9 July 1948:

"Partition came and we accepted it because we thought that perhaps that way, however painful it was, we might have some peace to work along our own lines. Perhaps we acted wrongly. It is difficult to judge now. And yet, the consequences of that Partition have been so terrible that one is inclined to think that anything else would have been preferable. That Partition has come, and it brought in its train other vast changes. There can be no going back now to India as it was before the Partition. Organic changes have taken place in India which prevent that going back.

"Nevertheless, all my sense of history rebels against this unnatural state of affairs that has been created in India and Pakistan. I cannot see it continuing for long as it is. Something that was inherently wrong and unnatural was done and it brought disastrous consequences in its train. There is no settling down to it and conflicts continue. Perhaps these conflicts are due to the folly or littleness of those in authority in India or Pakistan. I feel, however, that it is something deeper than that and not all the wisdom of statesmen could end these conflicts in the present

context because they are inherent in the situation. Ultimately I have no doubt that India and Pakistan will come close together and it may be that there is some kind of federal link between them or at any rate certain common subjects. There is no other way to peace. The alternative is an ever-deteriorating situation and incessant conflict”.

I was shown this letter by the Nawab Saheb, when I acted as his Legal Advisor after my return from London in 1950.

A prophet of secularism, Nehru never wavered, despite the Partition, in his opposition, to the two-nation theory. He stood firmly against the forces of communal reaction in India, despite the fact that the creation of Pakistan had made his task more difficult. He remained as steadfast as ever in his determination to preserve India as a secular state and to see that the Muslims, who remained in India, did not suffer. He said :

“I have little doubt that the Muslims in India have undergone a big sea change as soon as the Partition came and after they have seen the consequences of this Partition, I feel that this process will continue and I want to encourage it”. He might not have succeeded in giving the Muslims a sense of belonging—in fact his daughter proved far more effective in this but the will on his part was never lacking. He wanted to integrate them in the mainstream without making them lose their identity.

In 1954, when Pakistan was trying to paint India in the countries of the Arab world as an enemy of Islam, some of us in Bombay thought of forming an Indo-Arab Society to counteract this pernicious propaganda more positively. I was privileged to be given the lead in this matter. The Society was to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the Indians and the Arabs. Nehru was approached to inaugurate it and he promptly agreed. He had a soft corner for the Arabs and had often sympathised with their struggle for liberation from foreign yoke. He had many friends among the Arab leaders. He, therefore, welcomed the formation of this Society.

On the spacious lawns of the Turf Club in Bombay, the inaugural function of the Indo-Arab Society was held. A distinguished gathering, including representatives of the Arab world, was present. Nehru spoke extempore, but his analysis of the Indo-Arab relationship was vivid, deep-rooted and thought-provoking. It was a pleasure to hear him to recapitulate the past and visualise the future of this relationship, full of hope and

promise! Nehru was a magician with words and his words went to our hearts.

Nasser had just then come to power and Nehru was anxious to extend his hand of friendship to the young revolutionary. As time passed, the two became the best of friends, and, as Nasser later publicly admitted, his visit to India on the eve of the Bandung Conference in 1954, proved a turning point in his political education. Moreover, in the Arab reawakening that took place after the last World War, two aspects assumed special significance; secularism, internally, and non-alignment, externally. In projecting both these approaches in the Third World, Nehru played a decisive role; it was because of this inter-action between the two leaders that Pakistan failed to take the newly liberated countries of the Arab world into its Islamic orbit. Nehru influenced Nasser greatly in this respect; he admitted this to me when I visited Egypt in 1956 as his guest.

As the years rolled on, I came more and more in contact with Nehru; whenever I asked for an appointment, he never declined. In April 1959, an idea came to me to do a book on Nehru. In November he would be seventy and I thought the occasion called for an assessment of his life, his ideals and his work. But what sort of book should it be? Two excellent biographies had recently appeared, one by Michael Brecher, the other by Frank Moraes. There were also some other studies dealing with different facets and aspects of his personality. I, therefore, decided to bring out a more comprehensive work, which would be a combination of a biography and an appraisal of Nehru by different political leaders and thinkers. As I was a regular columnist for *The Times of India* in those days I put forward the project to its management. Mr. Shanti Prasad Jain was the Chairman. He approved it and so I began my work on *A Study of Nehru*, which proved to be an exhilarating experience.

More than a hundred persons in different walks of life, both in India and abroad, who had known Nehru either personally or politically, or had been connected with him in some field or other, were approached by me. Though the time at our disposal was extremely limited, the response was most encouraging. Leaders like Nasser and Tito, despite all their preoccupations with the affairs of their States, agreed to contribute. So did Sukarno of Indonesia, though at the last moment, as his Foreign Minister explained, he could not do so because of "an acute internal

crisis" that developed in Indonesia.

Nasser described Nehru as "the finest example of mutual interpretation that I have seen" and added, "they say a real artist never gets lost in his thought. As a matter of fact, Nehru is as much capable of action, of fighting for his thoughts and ideals, as he is in expressing them". To Nasser and his people the stand that Nehru took on the British-French-Israeli aggression of Egypt in 1956 gave courage and "stirred us to fight back".

In his article, Tito admitted that Nehru's written works, even before he had any personal contact with him, had influenced him greatly. After 1954, they met often. Tito reminisced, "Whenever I met Nehru, I was strongly impressed by the strength of his character, the vivacity of his spirit, his great energy, his insight into approaching problems, his attractive manner and directedness in personal contacts. I saw in him a brave man who boldly faces the realities of life and is not daunted by difficulties, a man who does not indulge in illusions or has a dogmatic approach to problems, but is ready boldly, realistically, to tackle and overcome difficulties. I was also greatly impressed by his love of nature, his humanism and his devotion to his family".

The late Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka found Nehru utterly dependable. He narrated an interesting incident which took place during one of Jawaharlal's visits to Sri Lanka. The two leaders were lunching at an outstation town, Kurunegale, where "an admiring crowd was peeping through the doors and windows as we lunched". Nehru turned to Mr. Bandaranaike and said: "I can do many things in public, but I just cannot eat in public". Mr. Bandaranaike thought to himself: "There spoke the sensitive aristocrat".

To Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Nehru was, "all that I had imagined he would be and more". He met Nehru for the first time at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London:

"At each meeting my admiration for Nehru increased. Some days he barely uttered a word, but with a mere gesture, a nod of his head, or by some sign, he indicated his understanding of, or agreement with, the matter under discussion. When he spoke, it was always worth listening to whether you agreed with what he said or not. What he had to say was said with the minimum of words and in the minimum of time and he expressed his views clearly and firmly. It was, I felt, the mark of a wise man".

Of the Big Three, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Macmillan, at first gave us some hope; but finally declined. This is how his High Commissioner in New Delhi explained the position:

"The reason is, as you have no doubt assumed, that your approach has had to be considered personally by Mr. Macmillan in the light of his own very close relations with Mr. Nehru. You may now have received, through your London representative, the reply Mr. Macmillan has made that it seems likely that he will wish to mark this notable occasion by sending a personal message to Mr. Nehru rather than by any other method".

How typically British!

The Soviet Ambassador was hopeful of Mr. Khrushchev's article; but somehow it did not come; instead I received a very perceptive piece from the noted Soviet intellectual, Ilya Ehrenburg; that fine Soviet writer commented on "the occasional bitterness of Nehru's words and the sadness of his smile", and compared it to the hero in Chekhov's *Tedious Story*.

Mr. Eisenhower, the U.S. President, said that he liked Nehru but could not write about him; however, there were many other Americans who sent us their contributions. Mr. Adlai Stevenson wrote a short piece; it was a poem in appreciation. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was also brief, but her tribute to the Indian leader came from the heart. In her book, *On My Own*, she wrote about the lunch she had given to Nehru at her Hyde Park residence, when a number of her grandchildren and their friends were there: "A striking figure in his long, dark coat and with trousers bound tightly at the ankles, the Prime Minister seemed delighted to see the young people and after luncheon sat cross-legged in the middle of the living room floor to talk to them for a long time. He appeared to be just as interested in asking them questions as they were in hearing his views and it was the afternoon I will long remember".

Mr. Justice William Douglass of the U.S. Supreme Court found Nehru to be in line with Manu, a comparison which tickled Nehru when I present him with a copy of *A Study of Nehru* on his seventieth birthday. He remarked that he had never suspected that he had anything in common with that great law-giver; I don't think he particularly liked Manu.

Mr. Attlee was prompt in sending me his article. In a covering letter he said, "If you think I ought to have inserted 'Mr.' then insert it, but it always seems a bit out of place in writing of a



world figure". I valued Attlee's suggestion and followed it in *A Study of Nehru*, where Nehru appears without any prefix or suffix.

Sir Winston Churchill was, during the days of our freedom struggle, a bitter critic of Nehru. They met for the first time in 1950 and had a heart-to-heart talk. In a reminiscent mood, Churchill inquired of Nehru how long he had suffered in British prisons. "For about ten years off and on", Nehru replied. Churchill said, "It should make you very bitter against us. You must hate us in your heart".

"Not at all", Nehru replied, "We worked under a leader who taught us two things, never be afraid of anyone and never hate anyone. As we were then not afraid of you, we do not hate you now".

Having known of this pleasant encounter with Sir Winston, I was encouraged to approach him for an article for *A Study of Nehru*. His Private Secretary replied,

"Sir Winston Churchill has asked me to thank you for your letter. He is indeed sorry that he cannot do as you ask as he has now ceased his literary activities. He is nevertheless much obliged to you for your thought in writing to him".

Did Churchill deliberately avoid sending a contribution or was his excuse genuine? Their relationship, ever since the two came into close contact in the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences, had considerably improved. Nehru always thought of Churchill as "a big man", despite the latter's antipathy to India's freedom struggle; but Churchill had earlier spoken of Nehru and the other Congress leaders as "men of straw". He realised, as time passed, how wrong he was. In a recent article in the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, my friend Mr. K. Natwar Singh, now India's Minister of State for External Affairs, has quoted from a letter Churchill wrote to Nehru on February 21, 1955:

'I am so obliged to you for sending me the fascinating book of paintings taken from the Ajanta Caves. The reproduction is beautifully executed and I am indeed happy to possess such a wonderful book. It also gives me great pleasure that it should have come from you, and that our personal relations, after all that has happened, are so agreeable. I hope you will think of the phrase, *The Light of Asia*. It seems to me that you might be able to do what no other human being could in giving India the lead, at least in the realm of thought, throughout Asia, with the freedom

and dignity of the individual as the ideal."

The same happened with Lord Montgomery. In his reply to me he was almost brusque:

"I regret I cannot do as you ask. I never write tribute to living persons".

However, in less than two years, in his book, *The Path to Leadership*, Monty devoted a whole chapter to Nehru and paid him the handsomest of tributes, comparing him to Lincoln and saying "If ever a man had the hallmark of greatness it is Nehru".

Similarly Lady Astor, that remarkable character in British politics—American by birth and British by marriage—who had succeeded in humouring both Stalin and Churchill, wrote,

"I am afraid I am no writer, so I do not feel I can possibly do an article for your volume on Mr. Nehru. I only wish I could. I wanted to see India some day. I have the warmest desire. Gandhi was my favourite".

Mr. S.K. Patil, the "boss" of the Bombay Congress and a leading lieutenant of Sardar Patel, agreed at first to send his contribution but later backed out. In a letter to me, he said, "A few friends of mine whom I have consulted are of the view that in actual presentation, my article is bound to be somewhat critical of some of the policies. In the present circumstances it is not proper that I should create any controversy. After due deliberation I have been advised that I should give up the idea of writing on him while I am his Cabinet colleague". Here is an instance of Nehru's spirit of accommodation; even his critics stayed merrily in his Cabinet.

I could never understand why Dr. Zakir Hussain who became during his daughter's prime ministership, the President of India, declined to write; he said he could not contribute anything "worthy of the occasion".

The eminent scientist, J.B.S. Haldane, was furious with our representative, when he approached him for an article. He wrote: "I regret that I must protest against the conduct of your representative at Delhi. He attended a lecture of mine in the university and then asked me about an article on Nehru, when others were attempting to discuss the subject-matter of the lecture. I find such interference by pressmen in university teaching intolerable and I must ask for an apology before I consider proceeding with the article." I apologised but still, eccentric that he was, Haldane refused to oblige us.

Of the members of the Nehru family, his daughter, Indira Gandhi, could not be persuaded to give us an article; she refused point blank. Her husband, the late Feroze Gandhi, at first agreed but later decided against it, because, as he told me, "it might be embarrassing to both me and you". "Why me," I asked. He said, "Because I may say some unpleasant things". Vijayalakshmi Pandit was most helpful. So also was her talented daughter, Nayantara Sahgal, who gave us a beautiful piece on "Life with Uncle". The other sister Krishna Hutheesing wrote a rather controversial article which received special notice in the columns of the American magazine *Time*, when it reviewed the book. Another person, almost a member of the Nehru family, whom I approached was Padmaja Naidu, the Governor of West Bengal; she refused and wrote:

"I regret that I cannot reconsider my decision, but I do not think it matters very much as you will find that many people are only too eager to write about him".

Of all the contributions by Indian leaders, Lal Bahadur Shastri's was in a class by itself. He wrote on an election episode. Since its publication in *A Study of Nehru*, this piece has been reproduced in several Indian and foreign journals. It was not only moving but precise and balanced. But while sending it, Mr. Shastri wrote to me:

"I do not know whether this account of certain amusing incidents will fulfil your requirements. In case you don't find it suitable for your publication, it may please be returned to me". What humility and that too from a man who succeeded Nehru as Prime Minister of India!

I had also written to Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, better known as Rajaji, for a contribution; he declined saying that he was opposed to Nehru's policies—in fact he had by then decided to form his own Swatantra Party, which later spearheaded the rightist forces in Indian politics.

But in his characteristic way Rajaji said that he would not like to go on permanent record against Nehru as he was too fond of him.

Later, on Nehru's death Rajaji confirmed this, when he wrote in his weekly organ, *Swarajya* (June 6, 1964):

"Eleven years younger than me, eleven times more important, eleven hundred times more beloved of the nation....I have been fighting Shri Nehru all these ten years over what I consider faults

in public politics. But I knew all along that he alone could get them corrected ... He is gone leaving me weaker than before in my fight”.

Editing *A Study of Nehru* was a strenuous task. There were articles which had to be rewritten, others to be recast to fit into different sections, and still others which had to be drastically curtailed. There were contributors like Lord Boyd Orr, a great English reformer of modern times, who wrote to me that, “You may please correct any errors due to my writing or anything wrong with the article”. But some, like Dr. Charles Malik, then Foreign Minister of Lebanon and former President of the United Nations, strictly warned me in the covering letter, “Kindly make no changes in the text without a written previous approval by me”. There was no time for getting previous approval and therefore some liberty had necessarily to be taken. This angered a few, in particular Mr. Sri Prakasa, the then Governor of Maharashtra. He described my action as an “act of vandalism”; the veteran Communist Leader, Mr. S.A. Dange, was also furious with me. I had to trim his piece. But by and large the contributors appreciated my corrections and some even thanked me. All in all, the result was rewarding.

My own contribution was 76 page biographical essay on Nehru. To compress such a vast subject in so short a space was not easy. I was, however, more than satisfied when the *Times Literary Supplement* of London made a special mention of it and commended it as “a model of clarity and percipience, unmatched by flattery”, and suggested that “it deserves to be reprinted separately”. The significant phrase was “unmatched by flattery”; it was the same approach I brought to bear on the compilation and editing of this book. Some of Nehru’s admirers did not like the critical part; one of them was his daughter Indira Gandhi. During those days she was extremely sensitive to any criticism of her father. She told me bluntly:

“What a felicitation volume!”

“But it is not a felicitation volume”, I replied: “It is a many-sided assessment of your father, from which he emerges as one of the greatest men of our times.”

She took exception to some of the articles, especially those by Asoka Mehta and S.A. Dange, who later became her close confidants; she found Dr. Khare’s contribution vulgar.

Mrs. Gandhi's reaction was not fully justified; three-fourth of the book was full of praise, only one-fourth was critical. Most of the reviewers commended my effort. At home, Frank Moraes, the doyen of Indian editors, praised the book as "an intelligent attempt to assess the man, his character and career"; while abroad the *Economist*, London, in a full-page review, applauded its "balance" and the *New York Times* wrote that the critical contributions gave the volume, "certain objectivity and authenticity".

Nehru was not bothered about the critical part; he took it in his stride. He told me that "Indu is rather touchy about any criticism of me, but your book is not bad". He also bore me no grudge; under him I rose from one higher position to another in the Congress governmental set-up and enjoyed his confidence until the last. So did I of Mrs. Gandhi, after she realised that I meant well.

My last glimpse of Nehru was at the A.I.C.C. meeting held at Sanmukhananda Hall in Bombay ten days before he died. Kashmir was the main topic of deliberations. Sheikh Abdullah had just then been released and Pakistan did not seem to be in a mood to allow things to go smoothly. As a member, I spoke at the meeting and recited a poem, which moved many in the audience emotionally. Nehru summoned me to the dais and congratulated me. Lal Bahadur Shastri, whom Nehru had brought back into the Cabinet as Minister without portfolio, after he was "Kamrajed" or "axed" sat next to him. As I was leaving the dais, Shastri asked me for the poem.

"It is written in Urdu, Sir", I said.

"What do you mean? I can read Urdu better than you. Don't forget I am a Kayasth".

I humbly gave him the piece of paper, which paid me handsome dividends when Shastri on becoming the Prime Minister after Nehru's death, sent me as India's representative to the United Nations in the wake of Indo-Pakistani war in 1965.

One of the reasons for Ayub's unprovoked attack was Nehru's death. Pakistan, like many other countries, felt, that India would not be able to withstand the calamity; but as Iqbal has said:

There is something in us—Indians; we will certainly not be dying.

For centuries the world against us has been conspiring.



Portrait of Nehru



Young Nehru with his mother Swarup Rani and father Motilal Nehru.

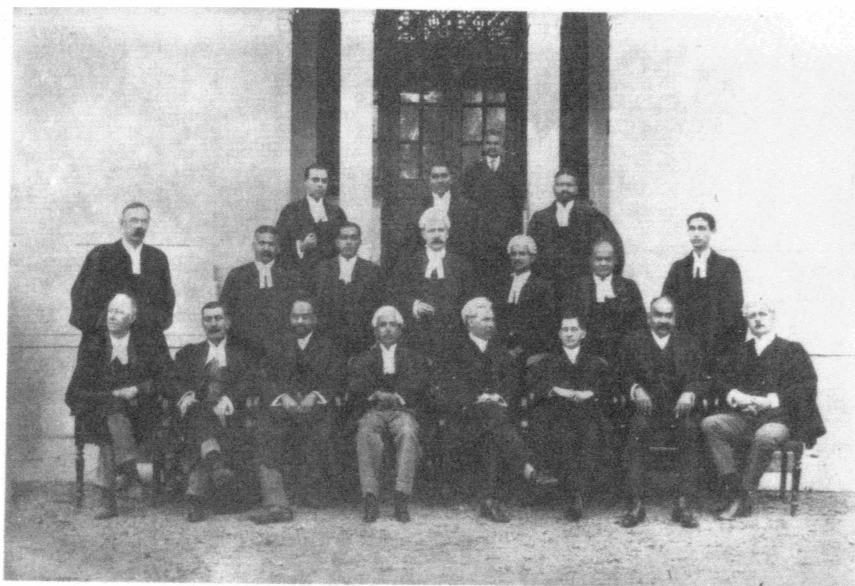


Nehru in graduates gown at Cambridge after completing his Tripos in 1910.

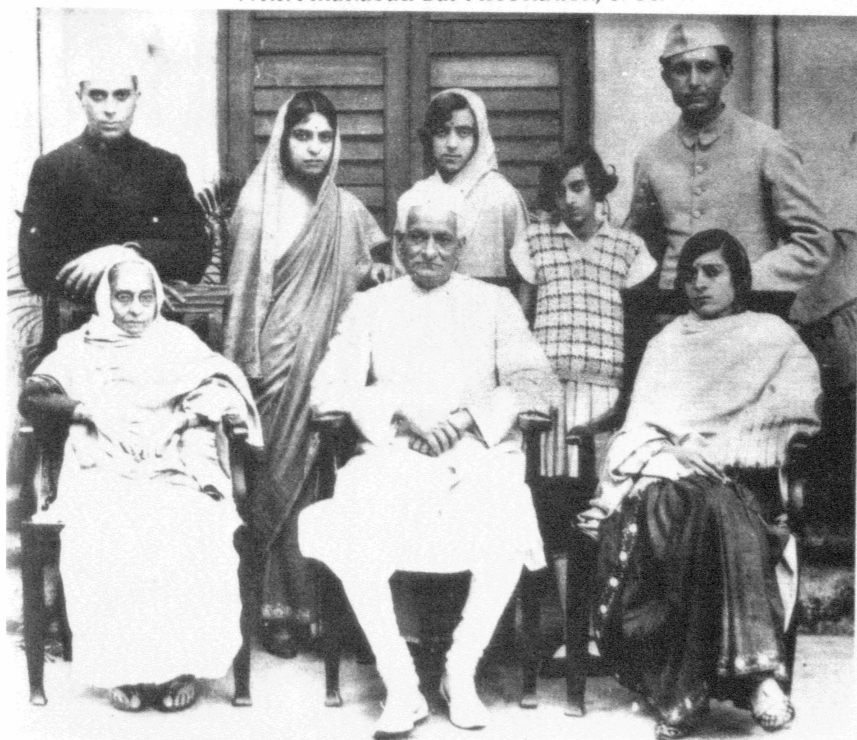




With Kamla after marriage, 1916.



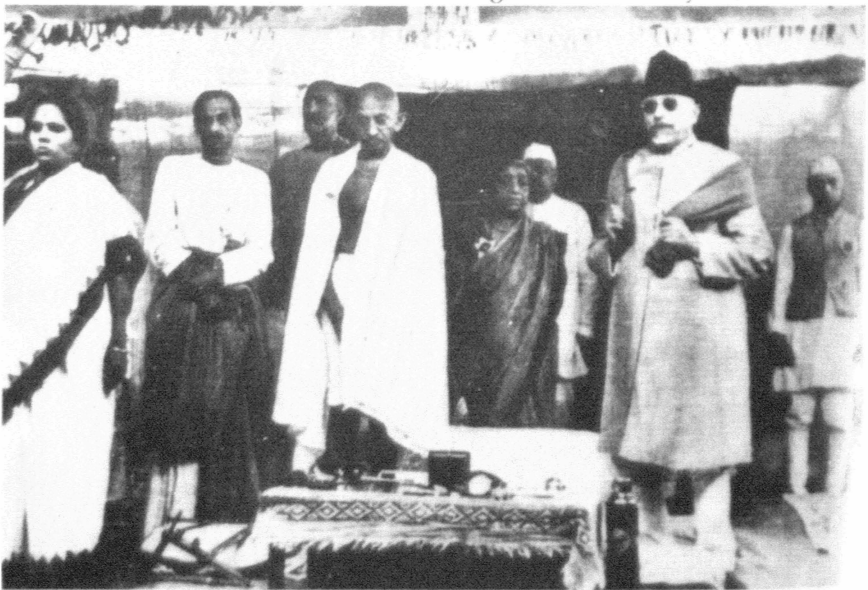
With Allahabad Bar Association, 1914.



With Family at Anand Bhawan, 1925. *Standing L to R* : Jawaharlal Nehru, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Krishna Nehru, Indira Nehru, Ranjit Pandit. *Sitting L to R* : Swarup Rani, Motilal Nehru and Kamla Nehru.



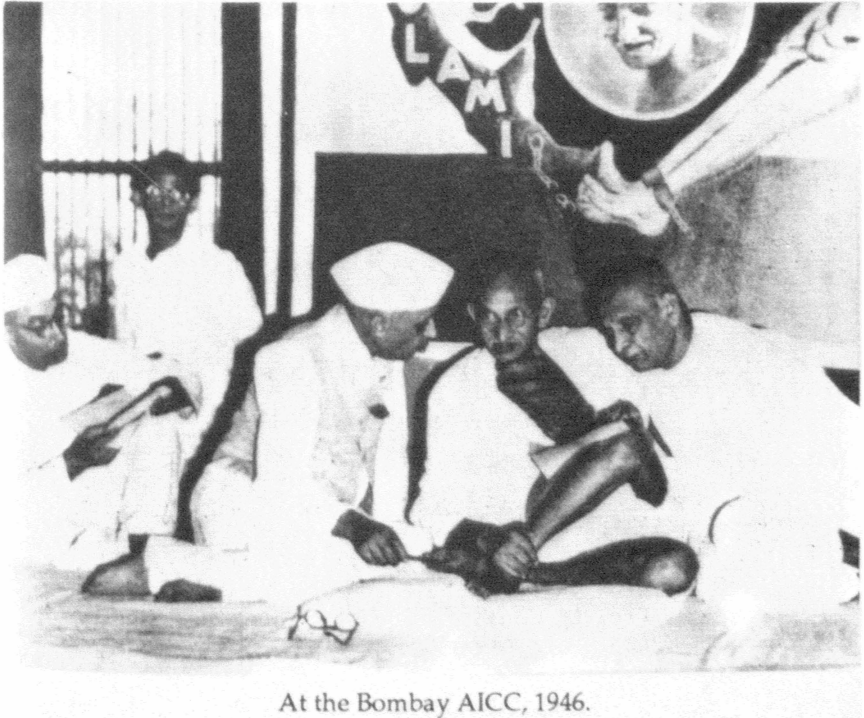
With Kamla Nehru and Indira during their visit to Ceylon, 1931.



At the AICC Wardha Session 1942. Also seen are Acharya Kripalani, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mahatma Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.



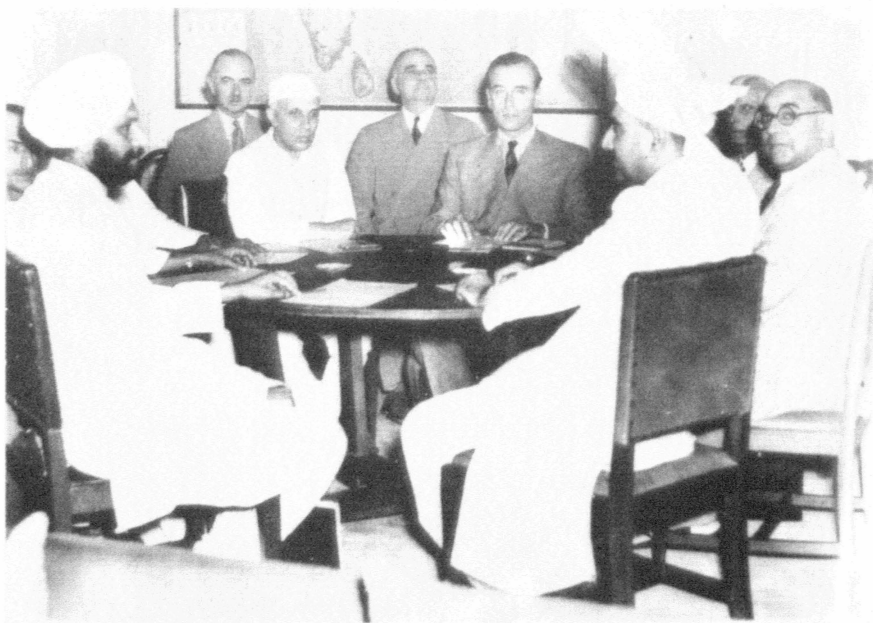
With Mahatma Gandhi and Acharya Kripalani at the Quit India Meeting, 1942.



At the Bombay AICC, 1946.



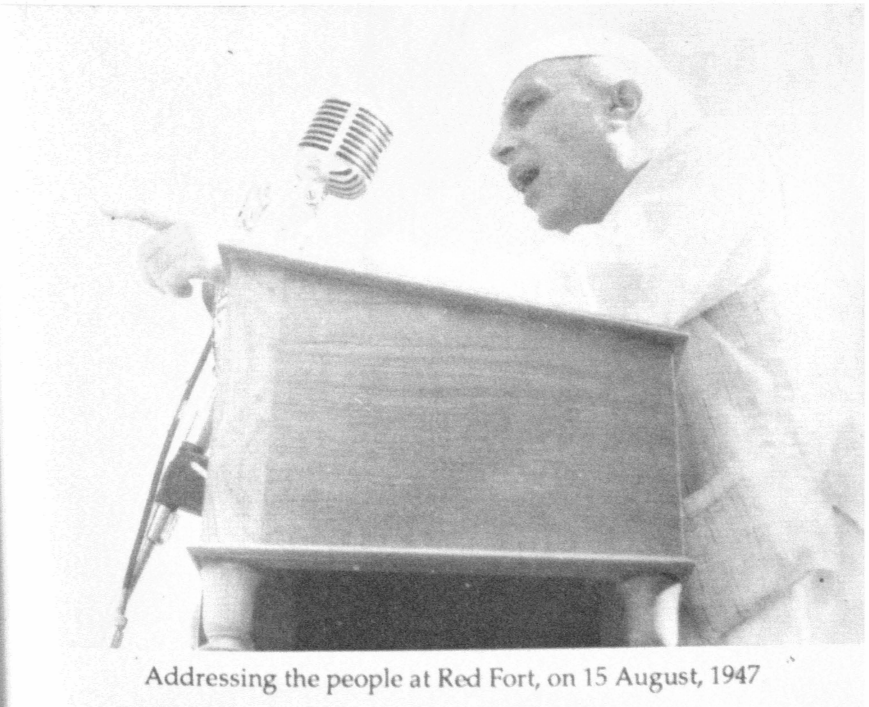
With Gandhiji, consoling the riot victims in 1947.



At a meeting of Congress and the Muslim League Leaders with the Viceroy Lord Mountbatten on 2 June 1947 at which Transfer of Power and Partition were agreed to. Also seen are *L to R* : Baldev Singh : Acharya Kripalani, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar.

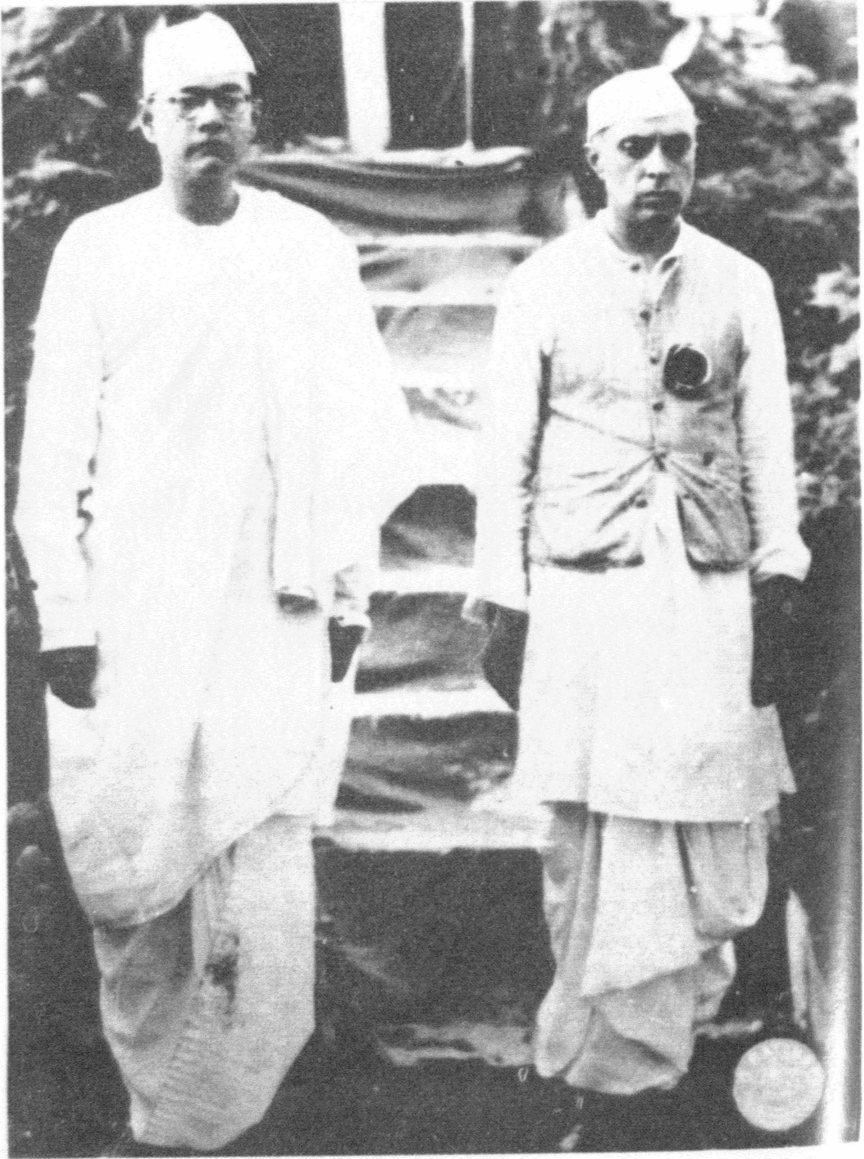


Being administered the oath of Office as the first Prime Minister of Independent India on 15 August, 1947 by Lord Mountbatten.



Addressing the people at Red Fort, on 15 August, 1947



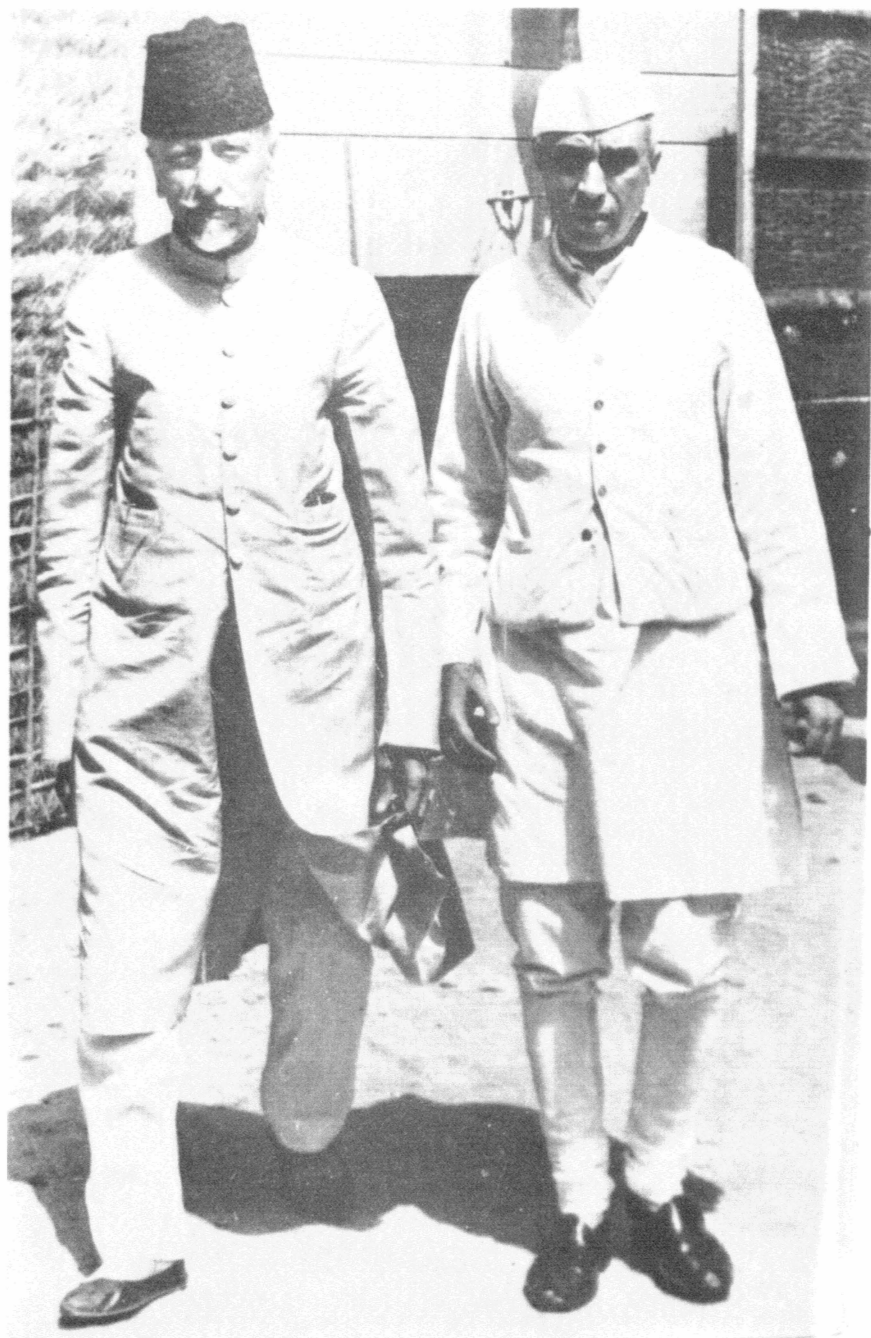


With Subhash Chandra Bose



With Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

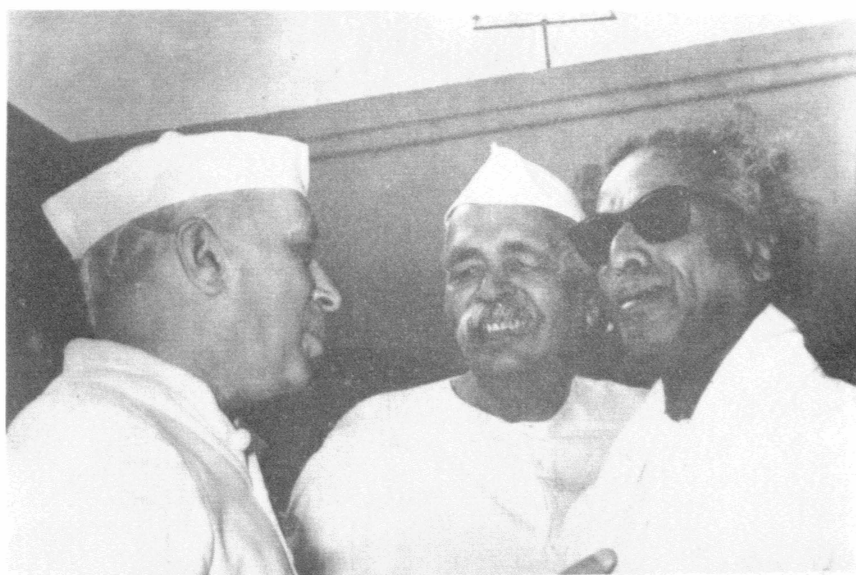




With Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.



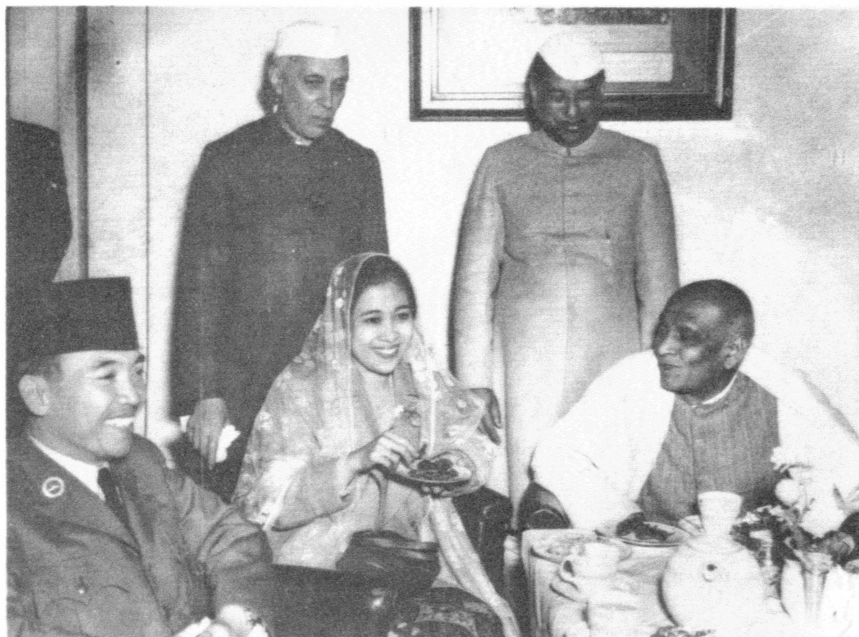
With Shri G.V. Mavalankar.



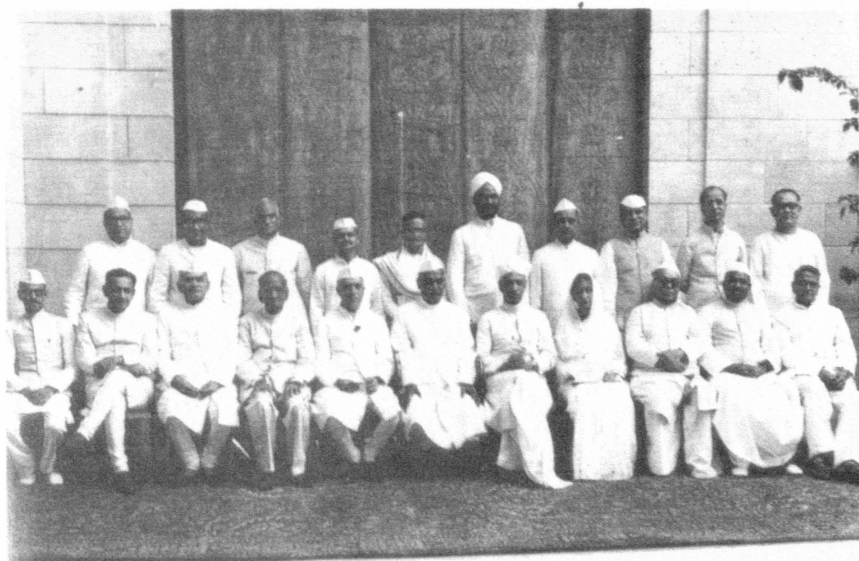
With V.K. Krishna Menon and G.B. Pant.



With Govind Vallabh Pant.



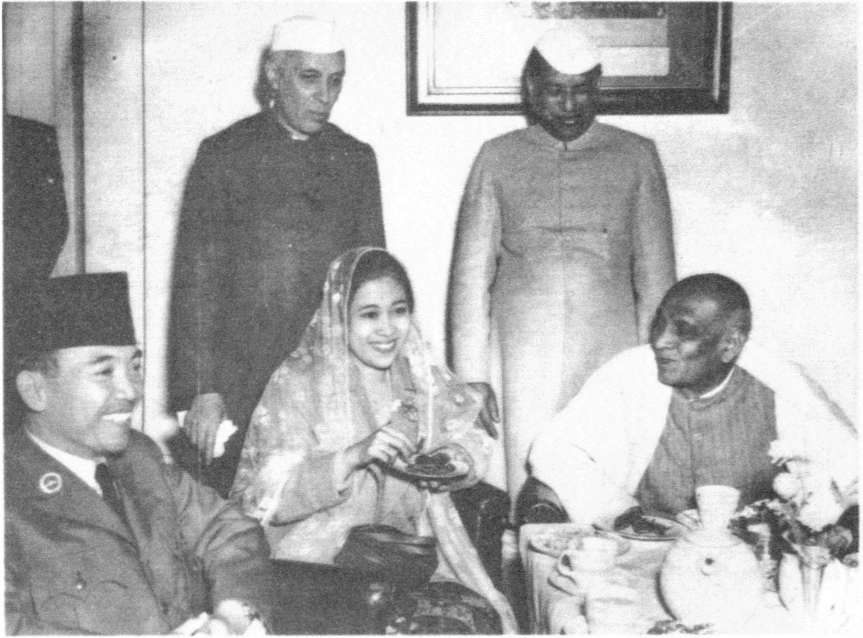
Nehru with President Soukarno of Indonesia and his wife. Also seen are Satya Narayan Sinha and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. (25.1.1950)



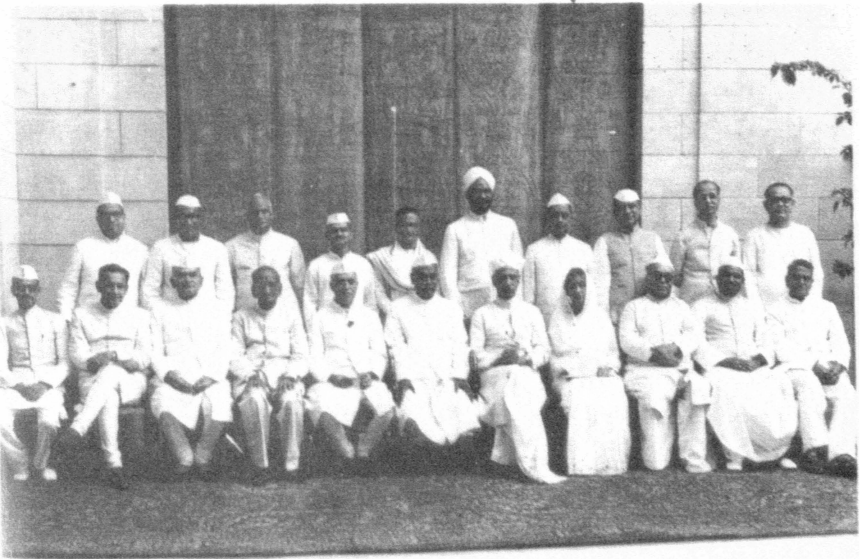
Nehru and his Cabinet, 1952.



With Govind Vallabh Pant.

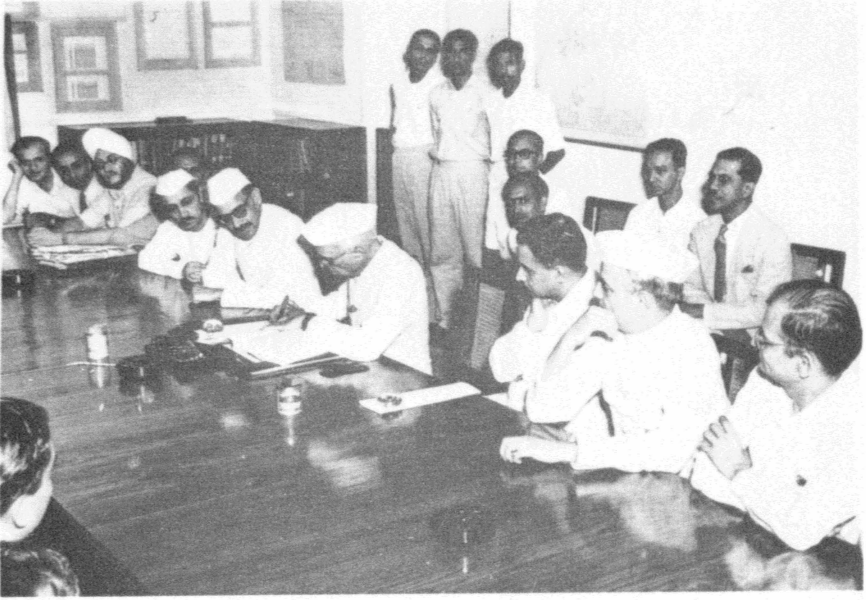


Nehru with President Soukarno of Indonesia and his wife. Also seen are Satya Narayan Sinha and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. (25.1.1950)



Nehru and his Cabinet, 1952.





Signing the Planning Commission Report.



Addressing the Yugoslav Parliament. The First foreign personality to address it. 22, July 1955.



With Dalai Lama in the Parliament House on 28.11.56.



Taking the oath of Office for the last time. (10.4.62)

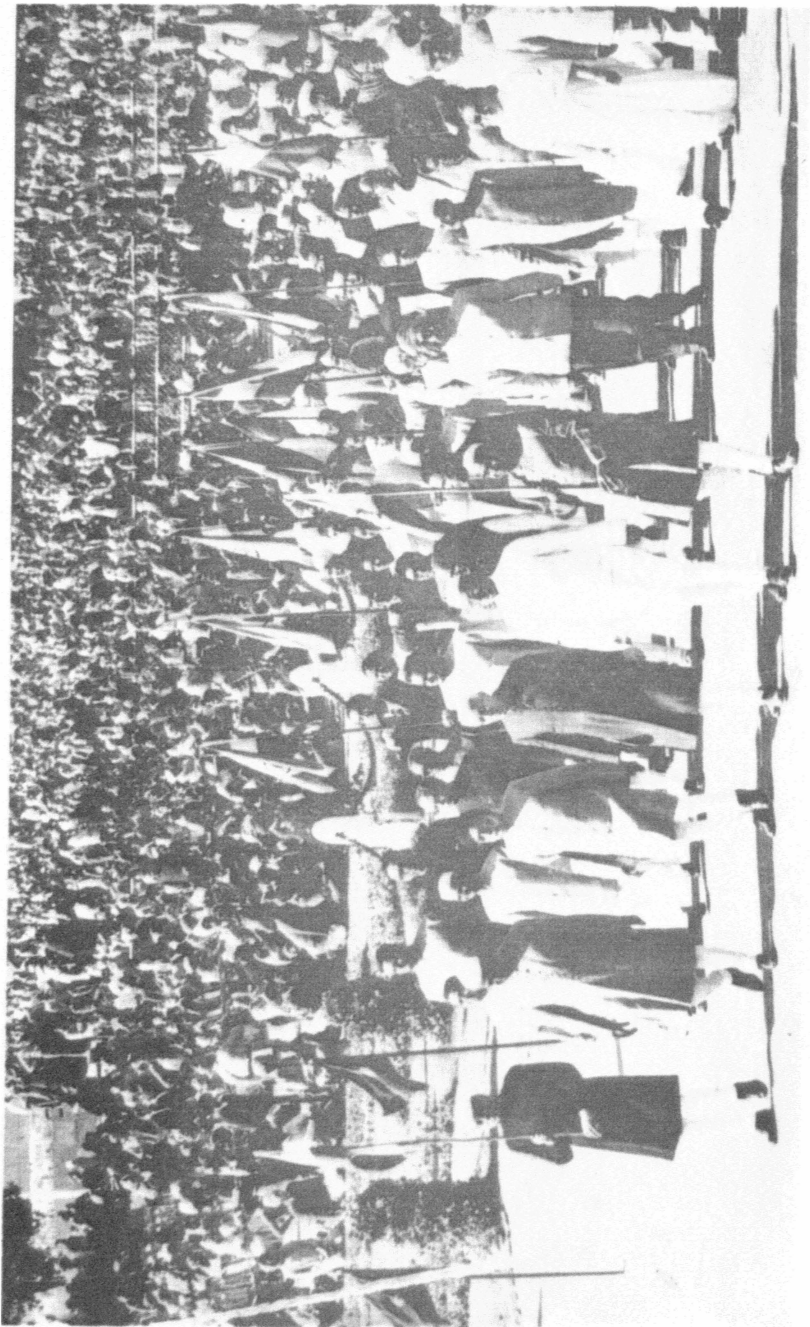




With his daughter Indira and grandsons Sanjay and Rajiv watching the naval exercises of the Indian Cruisers.



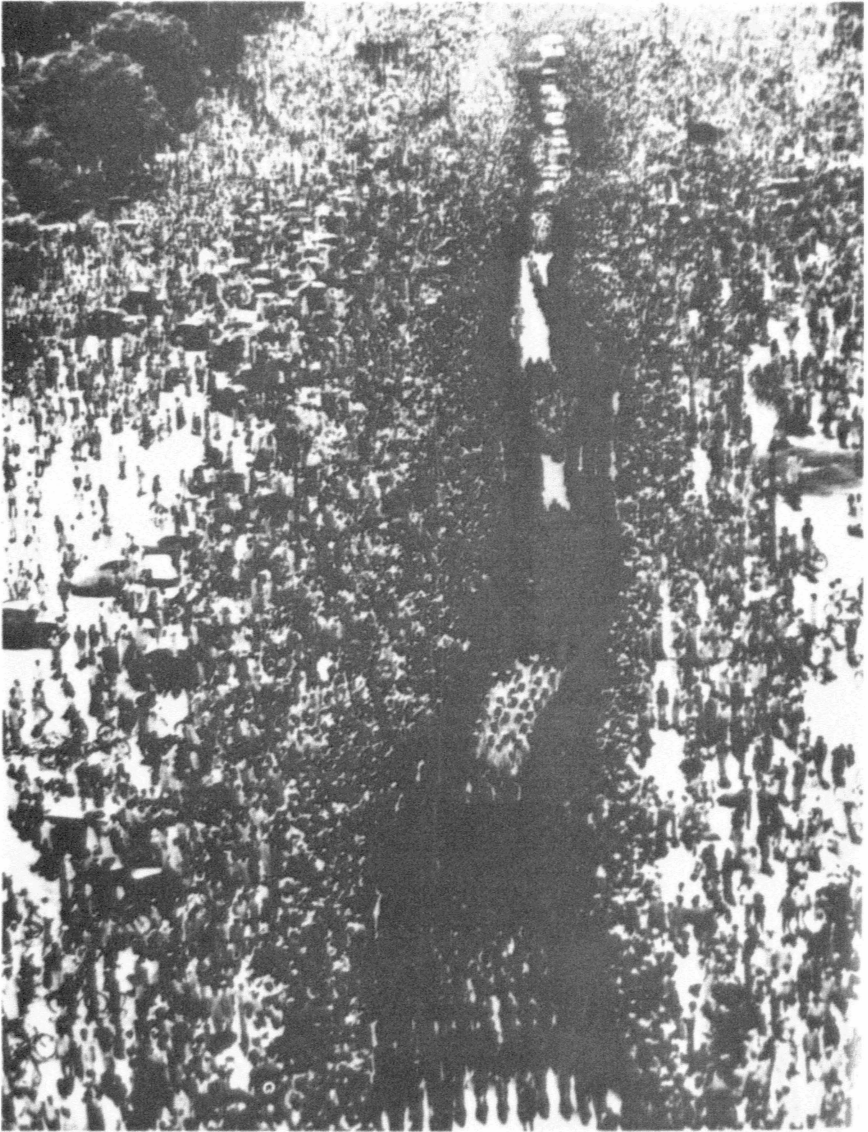
With Mrs. Gandhi, calling on President Radhakrishnan on the latter's birthday (5.9.62)



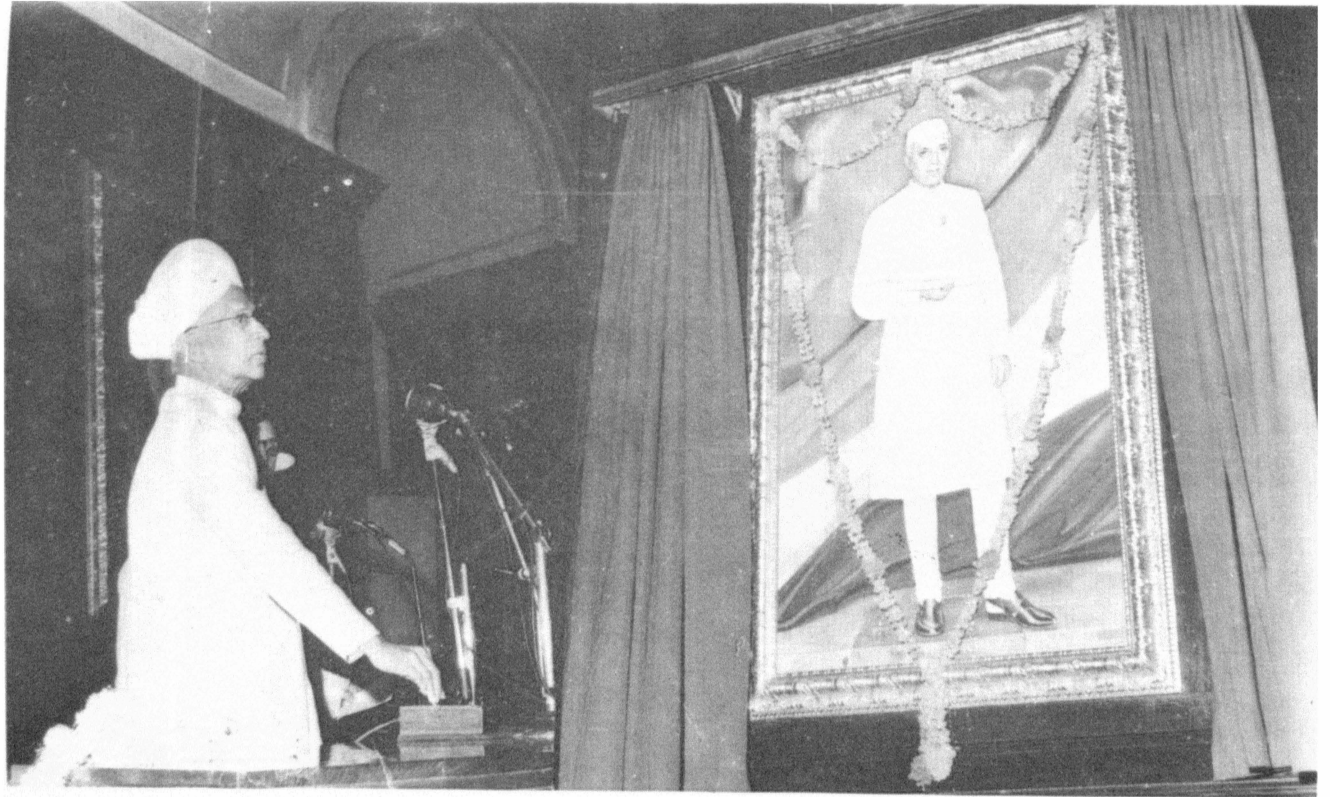
Nehru leading the Republic Day march past of leaders at Vijay Chowk on  
26.1.1963.



Speaking on the occasion of the unveiling of the portrait of Dr. Rajendra Prasad on 5 May, 1964.



The nation bids farewell : The last journey.



President Dr. Radhakrishnan unveiling the Portrait of Jawaharlal Nehru in the Central Hall of Parliament House on 5 May, 1966.

*Smt. Renuka Ray*

## **Pandit Nehru and Democratic Values**

---

Born in an age when India was gifted with a number of remarkable leaders, Jawaharlal Nehru was indeed one of the most remarkable. He was a visionary and an idealist but he was also a man of practical wisdom which showed up when he became the Prime Minister of a country which has long been steeped in bondage and sycophancy under foreign rulers. It was the arrival of Gandhiji that brought that change of approach and outlook among people of all classes and occupations by which eventually it was possible to bring about freedom through the path of non-violence and non-cooperation.

In 1920 when I left my college to join Gandhiji, when I first met Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, I was struck by the fact that he was a man of such high ideals and yet could understand the need of having a practical approach. We have all spoken and written a great deal about Pandit Nehru and Parliament and the fact that the Parliamentary democracy in India was practically built by him. I wonder if we have given the same amount of thought to the fact that the ordinary people of India even in remote villages were imbued with a sense of the priceless value of the right to vote which would be their heritage once the country was free.

Following in the footsteps of those who had worked for the Swadeshi Movement in the early days in Bengal—Deshbandhu C.R. Das and others had gone among the ordinary people and explained to them that the demand for freedom must be based on the right to vote and participate in a democratic set up, and



it was Pandit Nehru who along with C.R. Das, Sardar Patel, Rajaji and others went around all the villages of the country long before independence explaining to the people—that once they were free, they would be active participants in building their country since they would be exercising their right to vote and choose their own representatives when the country was free. When after independence we had the first general elections of India on the basis of adult suffrage, it surprised and astounded not only ourselves, but other countries of the world, how in villages and towns throughout the country, the people of India, men and women alike, came long distances to cast their votes. They were imbued with the sense that they had at least become participants in building a free and independent India and the right to vote was a priceless treasure.

Even in that first general election based on adult suffrage, 60% of India's women illiterate as many of them still were came forward in large numbers, particularly in the villages, to cast their votes. It was in deep contrast to what had happened in U.K. at the time when the right to vote—won by the suffragists who even had suffered imprisonment in their struggle for the right to vote for women—was treated with such apathy by the majority of the women there, despite their background of all-round literacy and education. I was then a student at the London School of Economics in 1922, when some of my Professors and Lecturers were candidates from the Labour Party and I was one of the students who canvassed for them amongst women. As we went from door to door in London, we found that the women were indifferent and said that they had no time to cast their votes—some did so not only because we entreated them, but also agreed to do baby sitting for them. When I saw the women in rural India during the first general elections in 1952, I was amazed at their response particularly in the rural areas. Some men voters, I may also mention here, came to me at that time and indignantly said do you know that one of the candidates has offered money for our vote? Our vote is a priceless treasure as Mahatma Gandhi, Deshbandhu, C.R. Das, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others had told us, and do these candidates expect that we will barter it away for money? This was the approach that our leaders, amongst whom Pandit Nehru played a major role had instilled in the people when freedom came.



It is necessary for us to realise now how much depends on the conduct of the representatives of the people, in the legislatures, in Parliament and in all representative bodies. Pandit Nehru was particularly anxious to follow the Parliamentary democracy based on the British model but he realised that if they were to do so in a proper spirit it required at least a two-party system. India had won its freedom through the Congress movement which then represented the national outlook of its people. The platform through which freedom had come would be the best venue through which the country should be developed. That was the feeling of those who ushered in freedom for at least two decades or more when the Gandhian spirit and approach still lasted.

Despite the fact that there was one party which mainly counted, we were still able to go ahead with Parliamentary democracy. This was because Pandit Nehru realised the need for opposition parties and during his life time he did try to help the growth of an effective opposition in Parliament. His attitude towards those who opposed him from the opposite benches was completely free of rancour, and he always wanted that they should come forward and be given an opportunity to display their talents. When I was a Member of the Congress Party executive, I remember that some Members protested against the behaviour of opposition Members like Kamath, or opponents of the type of Ram Manohar Lohia to Panditji—but he said that he was against any action being taken on petty matters by our party which was in such a huge majority. He always treated the opposition with even more courtesy, though he was always courteous to all. Although he was an impatient man and often displayed his temper yet he was always on the guard lest he became an autocrat. It was because of this tendency on his part and the need to guard against his potential tendency of being autocratic, that he often gave into what he considered to be the majority view in the party.

Many have wondered how we followed foreign policy according to Nehru's own views so that he was able to lay down the basis of the policy of non-alignment and the need for a new world order—although he was born in an era when country had not yet become free from colonial rule and intense nationalism prevented and enveloped us. In fact, he was an internationalist who believed in one world and his contribution towards this end has been remarkable. But on the home front because of his constant

vigilance that he should not become an autocrat he often refrained from carrying out policies in which he and the forward looking members of his party believed. There were many occasions when this happened. A few vociferous Members were able to convince him that he was outstripping even his party colleagues in his socialist approach and there were some occasions particularly in party meetings when he retracted from implementing his own real point of view as well as that of many of his colleagues—even when the majority in the party would have supported his stand. It was this factor that slowed down the pace of socialisation to some extent.

To give an example when in the Chapter on Fundamental Rights 'Clause 31' was included Panditji strongly objected to its inclusion in the Party meeting. It was pointed out that this would mean that the Property rights were not only included as Fundamental Rights but were doubly entrenched. It meant that the Property taken over by the State for a national purpose had to be compensated for according to the market value and the power of Parliament to decide on compensation to be paid for the property taken over for a national purpose was taken away. It was the courts of law which would be the final authority. This would naturally tell on the compensation to be paid after Zamindari Abolition in States where it had not yet taken place. Almost overnight Panditji changed his decision partly because some lawyers misbriefed him that such a situation would not arise when market value had to be paid for property taken for national purposes under this clause—and also because he found that many of his erstwhile colleagues were against the measure. He changed his stand but nevertheless Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant who was then the Chief Minister of U.P. and a member of the Constituent Assembly, had a clause inserted by which the U.P. and Bihar Zamindari Abolition Act could not be touched by this clause. Many of us were indignant and of course, as was usual with Panditji and the regime of those days, we were allowed to bring out a Resolution, not only in the party but in Constituent Assembly itself against the insertion of this clause, but as Panditji was no longer siding with us, we lost the vote. It is true that during Panditji's life time this clause did not prove an obstacle but the Sajjan Singh's case came after his death and proved our apprehensions to be correct. Anyway that clause has now been completely dropped during Indira Gandhi's time and so it is a

past event. There were other matters on which Panditji was prevented from acting on outstanding issues on the economic front. For instance, he was prevented from taking action due to his hesitations on the nationalisation of Banks which again is a measure which came later in Indira Gandhi's time. Even today India is not a "cooperative Commonwealth" as Panditji had desired because he was always afraid that he might be acting as a dictator, if he insisted on his own point of view. Although the majority of the Congress party would have backed him in those days on such issues nevertheless due to the vociferous members who opposed it, he was often led to feel that he might really not get the majority on his side.

When we recall the past we must agree that during the two and a half decades when Panditji was at the helm of affairs in India, remarkable progress was made in all the spheres. If this had been kept up at the same pace in the intervening years, we would have achieved a rapid development in India.

The achievements after partition of the country cannot be decried. We have had to grapple with almost insurmountable problems. The tremendous problem of refugees which was almost a one-way traffic in the Eastern region after the partition of India, had to be dealt with at the same time when we were immersed with the problems of building from scratch a country which had been deliberately left underdeveloped during the long years of foreign rule. In spite of it having been said many times earlier, we must remember that a country which used to import even pins and needles is now well on the way of acquiring the latest technological developments on par with other powers. I wonder how many of the present generation are aware that the thumbs of a large number of the weavers of Dhaka in undivided Bengal were cut off because in spite of the cheapness of the mass produced factory textile goods imported to India from Lancashire in England, the Dhakai muslins were competing not only due to the superb skill in quality but also cost-wise with the factory produced English Textiles. Deliberate misdeeds and cruelties of this kind by our foreign rulers may be forgotten today by many of the younger generation but they did take place at that time and a country which used to export skilled goods ever since ancient times was thus reduced to absolute penury. The land deals of that time by the British rulers was another source through which the country was impoverished by the foreign rulers with the help of their

agents. Even today we have not been able wholly to emerge from the situation. Our people are still sunk in poverty and illiteracy in many areas of the country.

Let us turn to Panditji's attitude towards the introduction of Panchayati Raj when it was discussed in the Constituent Assembly. In those days first we all felt that direct elections at the Panchayat level should be held so that the words enshrined in the Constitution "We the *people of India* having resolved to Constitute India into a Sovereign, Democratic Republic\* etc., . . . ." should become true. We felt that this would fulfil Gandhiji's desire. However, Dr. Ambedkar's strong condemnation of Panchayats, as the majority of them turned out to be in British times, did not appeal to the downtrodden and Scheduled Castes and women as also to all those who wanted that justice should be done. It was correct to say that Panchayats were being ruled to a large extent by those very persons like moneylenders, orthodox persons etc. who were carrying to extreme the laws as laid down by Manu and customs detrimental to women and others who may be called the "underdogs" of society were being exploited by them. We realised then that the Panchayats would have to undergo a great change before the ordinary average citizen could obtain power themselves. While the decision to bring in Panchayati Raj and give a direct vote to the ordinary citizen is a welcome feature, we have to remember that only if the Panchayat is in the hands of the people and not in the hands of their direct exploiters, will it have any real meaning. This is exactly how Panditji looked at this matter. That is why the mention of Panchayati Raj as included under the Constitution was so limited and guarded. It is completed wrong to suggest as some of his detractors have said about Panditji that he wanted to ignore Gandhiji's views. He had thought at that time as did many of us that gradually we would be in a position to wrest power from the exploiters of the people at the grass roots level and then be able to bring in Panchayati Raj as visualised by Gandhiji. In 40 years we have not been able to do so. My own experience in West Bengal and neighbouring States has been that even when we made attempts to train the grass roots workers—that is the Panchayat level workers—it was usually the exploiters of the people amongst the rich in rural India who came forward

---

\*Later amended to "Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic" by the Constitution (Forty-Second) Amendment Act, 1976.

to join these training classes and so doubly entrench themselves. We have to guard against this tendency even now. So the real issue which is important is not whether it is the Centre or the State which has the real jurisdiction in this field which seems to be the issue as per the present line of thinking between those who oppose, or those who support the Panchayati Raj. I am definitely of the opinion that we should all support, effective Panchayati Raj as a means through which the people of India are able to take their own decisions at the grass roots level. However, this can only be done when we have been able to clear the decks and get rid of the exploiters amongst the rural rich who cling to power directly and indirectly. This would be the desire of Jawaharlal Nehru.

In this centenary year of Nehru, it is surely possible for us to go ahead and bring about the vital changes in the country through which the people of India will be able to exercise their votes through direct elections in a really effective manner. This entails the weeding out of the almost entrenched exploiters at the village level and recasting the outlook and approach of the people towards those objectives which Jawaharlal Nehru and so many leaders had set themselves to achieve, once the country was free and independent. Instead of the very unseemly conduct which is taking place of late in our legislatures and Parliament, we have to restore the democratic norms and approach that our leaders placed before us and which inspired the people before independence. At that time the then Speaker of the Central Assembly Vithalbhai Patel and later G.V. Mavalankar set the standards for our Parliamentary Procedures at such a high level that the democratic structure in India was considered to be one of the most promising. Let us hope that it will be possible for us to restore those values so that the vision of those who fought for freedom can be realised.

*Aruna Asaf Ali*

## Jawaharlal Nehru as Seen by Foreign Friends\*

---

Like Gandhiji, Jawaharlal won many foreign supporters for the cause of Indian freedom. The Mahatma's appeal was primarily ethical and attracted persons of varied background like the Rev. C.F. Andrews; Madeleine Slade (Mirabehn), daughter of a British admiral; Horace Alexander of the Society of Friends (popularly known as Quakers) and Agatha Harrison, and Muriel Lester, the hostess of Gandhiji in the East End working class area of London during his visit for the Round Table Conference in 1931.

Jawaharlal's appeal, on the other hand, was to be liberal-minded and anti-imperialist intelligentsia, many of them inclined towards socialism. Typical of these was Fenner Brockway, the radical socialist who formed the Independent Labour Party as an alternative both to the dogmatism of the Communist Party of Britain and the weak-kneed and compromising attitude of the Labour Party's moderate leadership. On 3 September 1933 he wrote to Jawaharlal: "I have just heard that you are out of prison. I want to write at once to welcome you to 'freedom'. . . . There is one matter upon which you can definitely help me. European events—especially Germany—have shown the failure equally of Social Democratic policy and Communist Party tactics. We are trying to gather a careful review from all countries showing objectively the failure both of the moderate Labour policy and of the Communist tactic.

---

\* Reproduced from the author's book *Private Face of a Public Person—A Story of Jawaharlal Nehru* Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 67-79.

"India, I think, illustrates this—on the one hand, the foolish trade union policy of the Communists and their anti-Congress activities; on the other hand, the weakness and compromise of the moderate labour politicians.

"Could you possibly let me have an objective analysis . . . . We are hoping to publish a big work covering all countries".

Fenner Brockway was delighted by Jawaharlal's presidential address at the Lucknow Congress of April 1936 with its ringing message of socialism and informed him: "We have got 250 copies of your speech for sale in our Socialist Bookshop". Writing in the *New Leader*, weekly journal of the Independent Labour Party, Brockway referred to the favourable reviews of Jawaharlal's autobiography that had appeared in a wide cross-section of the British Press. While the Indian leader was admired in a period of calm Brockway wondered: "What will the Liberals say when Jawaharlal heads a formidable revolt in India? What will the next Labour Government do if that revolt happens to occur during its period of office? What will the Communists say if Jawaharlal leads a revolutionary resistance in India to a League<sup>1</sup> war in which Russia and Britain are temporary allies?" And after a meeting with Jawaharlal in England, he wrote (30 June 1938): "It was very good to see you again. I always feel with you an instant understanding and an unusual sense of friendship and I hope it is the same with you".

Jawaharlal was much more easily understood than Gandhiji was by the average man or woman in the West, since his was an idiom of thought with which they were familiar. Charles Andrews writes to Jawaharlal (6 November 1935): "As I think I told you when we met in Poona, you are the only one outstanding person who seems instinctively to know what the West can understand and follow easily. Bapu's writings had to be condensed and explained over and over again; and it was only, in the original instance, a genius of the first order such as Romain Rolland who could make him really intelligible. After that was done, it was easy for me to go further. But Bapu is always difficult: Even Gurudev (Tagore) is very difficult when he gets away from

---

1. The League of Nations, formed in 1920 after World War I and replaced by the United Nations following World War II.

poetry to prose. There is a 'History of the Congress' being written at the present time by Dr. Sitaramayya for the Jubilee year but it is quite impossible for English readers! He assumes too much original knowledge of Indian terms and is too prolix".<sup>2</sup>

The women among the admirers and friends of Jawaharlal, abroad and within India exemplified the remarkable awakening among women which was witnessed in many parts of the world in the first half of the twentieth century.

Illustrative of the wide intellectual response evoked by Jawaharlal is an unknown newspaper reader's warm letter of thanks for a communication from Jawaharlal published in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, critical at once of the British government's imperialist policy in India and its appeasement of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Writing to Jawaharlal from Scotland on 19 September 1938, Christine H. Sturgeon says: "That letter expressed, with so much dignity and frankness, just what many of us are feeling during these tragic days and I hope that you will receive more letters—such as this one of mine—from people who, like myself, have been shocked, hurt and disillusioned by the lack of ethics shown by our present Government.

"We are not the Important People but we are, I believe, in the majority in this country—simple, peace-loving and fundamentally decent human beings who lack the organisation which would make our voices heard. Some day, perhaps, we may be deeply enough stirred collectively to make our will felt . . . . Again, thank you, and may your work for a free India and a democratic world prosper in every way".<sup>3</sup>

When Jawaharlal's autobiography was brought out in England in 1936, his friend Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., wrote to him (22 March 1936) to say that his publishers were worried whether the book might be banned in India: "Perhaps they (the Government) may think that your criticism of Gandhiji may help to cause dissensions in Congress. There is no accounting for the official mind of my countrymen. Something seems to happen even to the sensible ones when your country gets them.

"If, however, they do ban it in India, it will make the most magnificent advertisement for it in England and U.S.A. We will make a grand fuss in the House of Commons and focus public

2. *Jawaharlal Nehru, A Bunch of Old Letters*, (Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1960). p. 124.

3. *Ibid*, pp. 290-1.



attention on it. And actually we need such a book more in England. The ignorance of even good 'lefts' on India is abysmal . . . .

"All my memories of Kamla were so vivid, and reading about her in your book brought back to me all her kindness in the midst of her pain and sorrow, when we were in India. I suppose it is too much to hope that those who kept you from her in the last year will feel properly ashamed of themselves . . . . I need not say that if anything occurs to you in which I, or those I can influence, can help in any way, you have only to send word".<sup>4</sup>

Jawaharlal's visit to China, in August 1939, helped to win for the Indian nationalist cause the sympathetic understanding of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his wife, the former Mayling Soong. Unlike her husband, Madame Chiang Kai-shek was educated in English which she spoke and wrote fluently. Thus came to be established a warm friendship and mutual understanding.

When Jawaharlal was to return, Madame Chiang gave him, as he tells his daughter, "some lovely Chinese men's gowns. Some are in silk, others in very fine linen". Madame Chiang wrote to him (10 September 1940) after reading the autobiography: "I have been ill the past three weeks with influenza. One of the things which has made my enforced stay in bed tolerable is the reading of your biography . . . . now I really feel that I know you because I have had the opportunity to listen quietly and thoughtfully to the promptings of your heart throughout your heroic struggle for the liberation of your country.

"It is a great document—your book—for it is the record of a pilgrimage of a human soul lifted above the turmoil of daily strife into a realm of an intellectual and emotional world unspoiled by sentimentality but so humanly moving that it well deserves to be ranked amongst the great documents of all ages". And in 1941, while in Gorakhpur Prison, Jawaharlal receives from Madame Chiang Kai-shek, as he says in a letter of 16 November to Rajan, wife of R.K. Nehru, "a pot of very delicious marmalade which she had made herself. She said in a letter that this marmalade was symbolic of life with both its sweetness and bitterness—and without the bitterness would not life be a dull and sloppy affair? It was a pleasant phantasy and held a lot of truth in it as she surely ought to know after all the terrible experiences the people of China have gone through".

4. *Ibid*, pp. 170-1.

The Generalissimo, prompted by his wife, made well-meant but futile efforts to persuade the British directly as well as through President Roosevelt, to transfer the substance of power so as to secure the enthusiastic participation of a virtually free India in the war against the Axis Powers. A passage from Madame Chiang's letter of 13 March 1942 (*A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 467-8) soon after returning from a visit to India with her husband, sounds tragically ironic in the light of subsequent developments: "The Generalissimo has been telegraphing Roosevelt on Indian conditions. Our latest news from him is this: Roosevelt wired that at the Peace Conference the representative from India should be chosen by *Congress*, and represent real national India. He thinks that a solution of the Indian problem might be found in dividing India into two, namely, Moslem and Hindu. Both the Generalissimo and I wired to my brother T.V.<sup>5</sup> that the second premise is entirely wrong, and should not be considered for one single second. India is as indivisible as China. The fact that there are religious differences amongst her people does not mean that politically they cannot agree if given the opportunity to settle their diversity of views uninterfered with and unabettted by a third party . . . .

To my friend the Vagabond—I am!

Vale,

M.S.C."<sup>6</sup>

Madame Chiang visited India with her husband in the summer of 1942. Not knowing the closeness of the bond between her and Jawaharlal, some of us whom he had asked to assemble gift items for the lady from China were amused by the fastidiousness with which he rejected some items and selected others out of the heap of Banaras brocades, South Indian silks and handicraft items.

Though Jawaharlal never visited the United States of America before India's independence (the first visit was in October 1949), he had several American friends who had met him in India or in England, and a very large number of admirers who knew him only from his books and from newspaper articles by or about him.

---

5. T. V. Soong, China's Ambassador in Washington.

6. Mayling Soong Chiang.

Among the Americans who met Jawaharlal in London and became good friends were Paul Robeson, the great Negro singer who espoused the cause of his oppressed people and of socialism and the Soviet Union, and his wife Eslanda. Robeson helped the India League financially and sang at meetings addressed by Jawaharlal in London in 1936 and 1938. After a lunch meeting on the latter visit, Mrs. Robeson wrote to Jawaharlal: "I am afraid Paul and I are fans of yours, and were thrilled with the gracious couple of hours all to ourselves! To be able to talk, freely, with someone who has the same interests we have, and who understands our peculiar problems and background, is more than a treat.

"I am sending you now the summary of the National Negro Congress proceedings, as I promised. I am also sending you my own modest effort, which was written more than eight years ago. It is a bit naive, now that I have grown up, but it still of the background of the Negro in America. I made it a personal story deliberately, because I felt the public would not be interested in the Negro background otherwise. I was marvellously rewarded, because they did, and still do, buy it and read it, and unconsciously get some of the facts."

In response to a subsequent letter from her while Jawaharlal was in prison at Dehra Dun, offering to send him American books of his choice, he asks his sister Krishna on 23 January 1941 (the number of letters he himself could write being strictly rationed): "Write to Essie Robeson and tell her I was delighted to receive her letter. She wants me to give her titles of books to send me from America. That is not an easy job for me as I have not got American lists here. But as she describes herself as an essentially practical woman, and is full of ingenuity, she might herself make out what would interest me. The mere fact that the choice is hers will interest me."

A shocking disappointment for Jawaharlal during his visit to the U.S.A. in 1949 was Paul Robeson's refusal to meet him. Arising from the arrest of some Communists in Bengal for engaging in violent activities, Robeson had been led to believe that the Nehru Government was suppressing the Communist Party countrywide. This misunderstanding did not stand in the way of Jawaharlal writing an 'Open Letter' in 1958 in support of the restoration of Paul Robeson's U.S. passport. Marie Seton comments

---

7. Jawaharlal Nehru *op. cit.*, p. 284.

in her book, *Panditji*.<sup>8</sup> “Since all other efforts to induce the State Department to return Robeson’s passport had failed for over six years, presumably Jawaharlal Nehru’s Open Letter convinced the State Department that withholding the passport was to the detriment of the U.S. authorities, rather than to Robeson”. There was a happy reunion at London in May 1960 between the great singer and the great statesman.

The letters received by Jawaharlal from his American journalist friend Frances Gunther, sparkingly bright and loving, make delightful reading. Before leaving India after her visit in 1938 with her husband John,<sup>9</sup> she writes a long letter from Calcutta on 13 February, 1938 summing up her conversations with various people and offering suggestions: “One (British) general told us: ‘We’ve lost India. We’re just dragging on. We lost India at Amritsar’ . . . . Further south Japan marches, harder you can press your demands. . . . when Japs get to Singapore, you might become a trifle rude—if you could become rude.”

On the need for a strong image of unity between Jawaharlal and Gandhiji, Frances writes: “This must be especially underlined for public consumption. You must stand together in public like Siamese twins. Nothing encourages the British so much as the thought of a split between you and G. . . . Gandhi is practically considered the King-Emperor’s Personal Representative in Congress—the Great Old Man of British Politics simply adored by the mighty—wouldn’t be surprised if they offered to bury him in Westminster. So they must consider him rather harmless, claws clipped & teeth pulled by this time (though of course always with the uneasy feeling that he may still pull a fast trick on them when they least expect it). You, on the other hand, are considered so dangerous that if the British Empire ever falls, it will all be laid to you . . . . Wherever we went, interest—and fear—centred on you—your thoughts, your plans, your projects, your influence. The very first thing the V. (Viceroy)<sup>10</sup> said to me as I sat down to lunch (this was shortly after Peshawar), (on his left), was, ‘Oh, we know all about your trip to Kohat with the

---

8. Marie Seton, *Panditji : A Portrait of Jawaharlal Nehru*. (London).

9. The visit of Frances and John Gunther (they were married in 1927 and divorced in 1944) was preparatory to the writing of Gunther’s *Inside Asia*, published in 1939. Frances accompanied Jawaharlal on his tour of the North-West Frontier Province in January 1938.

10. Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India from 1936 to 1943.

young man!' He asked so many questions about you so keenly that finally I said, 'Why don't you meet him & see for yourself?' He said, confidentially, that he had tried to meet you while in Calcutta at Xmas, but it had not gone through. . . . The V (Viceroy) said you were very brilliant, etc. but Gandhi was a great man. I said Gandhi had brought the Indians up from the 10th to 19th century & that was a swell job, but you were trying to carry them from the 19th to the 20th & that was much harder—and a much longer distance in real time. He wanted to know how far you would go & how far the people would follow you. His general feeling was Nehru has the brains but Gandhi has the people; if they can be separated, we are safe.

"That's why, since so many of them think that, it seems imperative for you & Gandhi to do the Siamese twins act, no matter what; also for you to succeed to Gandhiji's place in the affections of the people after his death. If he does not outlive you. Congress, the youth movement & all the rest of us—I shouldn't be surprised, the way he lets himself be taken care of & pampered & loved by men & women." Gandhiji himself used to say that he was going to live for 125 years. I remember asking him during one of the walks on which he would converse with visitors to his Ashram, why that long and no more. He said that his mission would require that length of time for its completion.

From the U.S.A. Frances Gunther writes (17 June 1942) about her son Johnny who has grown up to be twelve-and-a-half: "One's children are fascinating, aren't they? . . . & they grow under one's own eyes, one's own private miracle . . . . Nor shall I forget the day he came home from school & his first formal lesson in astronomy & said, 'Mutti, would you like me to explain the universe to you?' I gasped, swallowed, and said mildly, 'Yes, darling do?'"

On 1 August 1942: "I wanted to send Indira a little wedding present with some assurance of its actual arrival in this century—American or otherwise—so I took the precaution of engaging the assistance of the state department who were most amiable about the matter. Let me know when it arrives and if Indira and her husband like it—it must be great fun having a son-in-law—don't you feel patriarchal in a big way? I can hardly wait to have a daughter-in-law myself. Johnny who will be thirteen this fall, is now beginning to shout, instead of Hey Mutti watch me! rather. Hey Emily! or Hey Pamela watch me! This evokes in me, besides

the first little pang of maternal jealousy, a large measure of relief and satisfaction—all is progressing well.”

How Frances valued Jawaharlal’s letters! She writes (19 September 1943): “Now the sun is up, comradely and warm, but before dawn today when it was still dark . . . . I had to turn on my bed light, and I took out your letters that lie in my bed table drawer—the real letters in your own hand. I have made typed copies of your letters that I keep for everyday reading—and the real letters lie in a large white envelope for special, state or desperate occasions like dark blue dawns this dawn. I took them and read them—You’d think I’d know them by heart by this time—I do not know them in my heart, but my slow mind needs them again and again. I can’t tell you what they do with me. They warm me like the sun. They dispel the wickedness and the weariness in me. They warm me and make me strong. I touch them with my hand, and I feel the touch of your hand, warm and strong and comradely, like the sun.”

The war over, and also Jawaharlal’s last and longest detention in jail. Frances writes (4 July, 1945): “How good it is to be able to write to you again! It seems a special dispensation now. Wars make one grateful for the things one had always taken for granted before—like food & clothes & a roof & a fire—and letters to & from Jawahar. I wrote you the typed notes from New Haven signed Chand<sup>11</sup> and tried to be properly *niecian* (is that the other side of *avuncular*?) instead of my usual mordant self—I couldn’t tell from your replies that you knew—did you?<sup>12</sup>

“Where to begin? It’s aeons . . . . How to measure time—one’s growth in time—the long periods when time stands dead still not in the calendar but in the reality of one’s own experience & sense of life—and then its sudden, swift surges forward. I don’t like wars because they make time die, as well as people & cities—I like to write to you because it makes time come alive again . . . .”

---

11. Chandralekha Pandit, Jawaharlal’s niece.

12. Jawaharlal did know. He says in reply (5 September 1945): “It is good to see your handwriting again, and to feel—for your writing makes me feel that way—that you are right near me and having a talk. I got your other notes and of course I know who they were from and I replied accordingly. You should have given me enough credit for that. But those typewritten cards or sheets were necessarily constrained and cramped your style. This is better.”

Then, on 4 March 1946, Frances writes to Jawaharlal about an adaptation of Sophocles' *Antigone* that she had watched in a New York theatre: "I wished, as I always do in great moments, that you were there with me." She informs him that when the Indian naval ratings struck, "the story made page one in big headlines & stayed there—until Gandhi came to Bombay and cautioned against violence—when the story went back to page 17. The 'mutiny' evoked surprisingly sympathetic pro-India editorials—even in the *Times* . . .

"Did you get a great kick out of the Radar to the Moon story? Of course, as you would know, I did! I heard it over my radio in bed very early that morning, & how I wanted to wake you up & tell you about it! Confidentially, I did: I leaned over 180 degree & whispered, 'Wake up, Jawahar, we've just sent a radar message to the moon!' 'What?', you said sleepily . . . 'Listen,' I said, 'we've sent radar to the moon & it comes back in exactly 2.4 seconds every time—& very soon we'll be able to go too. Let's go visit the moon, shall we?' 'Of course, my dear, by all means,' you yawn agreeably and stretch, 'right after breakfast.'

"The technical and scientific discoveries & inventions come down so thick & fast they leave one gasping. And still the dull old wrangles about boundary lines & the life-lines of empire & all the other gag lines go on & on in the same old ways—or seem to. Well, if we want 'em different, it's up to us to quit yappin', and make 'em different."

Even some in America who had not met Jawaharlal responded with great enthusiasm to a man whom they could only visualise through his writing. One such was Jean Frost of New York who, on reading *Toward Freedom*, felt "ashamed of myself. I have wasted so much time in the past wallowing around in a personal slough of despond . . . I simply detached myself from human beings and then wondered what depressed me." She goes on to say in her letter (15 April 1941): "You have given me a great deal to think about. . . . I want to do my share towards making the world a decent place to live. 'Thank you', this creature cries from the wilderness upon seeing a life in the distance, in the darkness, but steady, very steady, and impervious to wind or rain or the hypocrisy of mankind. Perhaps flowery, and none too expressive, but I mean it anyway from the bottom of my heart (From the top middle, and side portions of my heart also.)"

Another reader, equally grateful for coming across the book, was Irma Myers Arthur of Vallejo, California. She was so deeply moved that she addressed a series of thoughtful and affectionate letters to Jawaharlal from January to November 1944 though she knew him as she puts it, only as 'a person in a book'. Jawaharlal was at that time in Ahmadnagar Fort jail. The letters from Irma Arthur were withheld by the British authorities of the Home Department in Delhi. Curiously, even after independence they do not seem to have been brought to the attention of Jawaharlal, who would surely have responded warmly had he seen them. Some excerpts from the letters are given below:

"In personal introduction let me only say that I am an American (descended from the British Isles), housewife, and mother whose deepest concern is for the future welfare of all children. If it were not for all those children who must carry our lives, (and our mistakes) on through their own—much that you and many others have suffered in this age-old struggle for freedom from enslavement to fellow beings would hardly seem worthwhile . . . .

"I read and re-read your book, *Toward Freedom*, and I wonder—is there really another human being on this planet who sees life from the same sensitive focus point as I do? And if so why must the width of a planet be between us? . . . .

"We have socialists in America, even a tentative political party, but somehow they lack pride in their convictions. Almost, they apologize. It is because you do have that pride in what is right and decent, and scientific, that I glory . . . .

"If, when you can, you should ever want to answer my letters, please be assured that I consider private correspondence very private—even from celebrities. You must tire of living always in a goldfish bowl. And now, I enclose this casual snapshot of myself, taken by my daughter at Golden Gate Park, feeling that after the sixth letter, I should identify myself. The 'feather' in my turban is a tree in the background. It gives me a frivolous air which I do not feel . . . .

"You see, we have our Sacred Cow too. And such a pretty name they give it: Free Enterprise, and even if millions of our children must be destroyed by intellectual, emotional and physical malnutrition. It must not be disturbed! Why isn't the East big enough and wise enough to give social science to the world as the West has given physical science? . . . .



"How I wish I could take a trip to Russia to study their method of combining social science with physical science . . . . Russia, too, seems to be the only nation, not afraid of the war's end. They alone will be ready to give full employment to their people . . . . I too am a strange combination of individualist and believer in common ownership, which isn't as strange as it seems. For it is to preserve the former that I seek the latter.

"And now rather tardily I suppose, I must pay my respects to Convention and Courtesy. I am a married woman writing letter after letter to a very attractive man, and I could be accused of wooing you. So let me hasten to explain that I write you with my husband's full approval. Perhaps our marriage relationship is itself an illustration of much that I have been discussing. He is definitely the physical scientist, and I am as definitely the social scientist, yet each of us where he cannot help, also tries not to interfere. He likes to find out about mechanical laws, especially steam power, and I like to find out about human laws, and we long ago stopped trying to make each other over, as husbands and wives have a way of doing. We then learned to appreciate and to respect our different aptitudes . . . .

"I have just subscribed to the *Asia* magazine here, in the hope of getting news of your release from imprisonment. The whole world will seem safer when you are out in it again . . . .

"Today a pure white gladiolus bloomed in my garden; I wish I could transport it to you. Tending flowers is my solace. They respond so rapturously to the conditions for growth. . . .

"You have known *Life* six years longer than have I, tell me, has she told you if there is reality anywhere—and if so, where?"

Irma Arthur concludes the series of letters with one wishing Jawaharlal on 14 November 1944 many happier returns of that day. "I wish," she says, "I knew how to tell you how much I treasure the two rare qualities which you possess: your ability to see clearly and your courage to tell what you see. And perhaps I can appreciate to some extent the price you have had to pay in years of lonely imprisonment—and it must have seemed almost unbearable at times. Yet I wonder if we are not each of us imprisoned: imprisoned by self-made barriers isolating us from true fellowship with humankind. Barriers between individuals, between man and woman, between occupations, nations, races. Barriers which competitively proclaim 'I am better than you' and

which shut us within walls of suspicious aloofness . . . . So, with all my heart I thank you for having had a Birthday.”

Irma Arthur as she says in one of her letters, was self-educated after high school. Equally enthusiastic is a tribute to Jawaharlal from a Master of Arts at Magdalen, Oxford, by name Guest Levo. He wrote to Jawaharlal (29 September 1940) referring evidently to the autobiography: “In the course of a life considerably longer than yours I have naturally read a good many books in several languages. None has aroused in my mind a stronger sense of personal respect for the author. If you will forgive me, I will change the tense of words which I have not seen for about forty years—and I hope I have got them right—and say with Shakespeare:

*‘His life is noble, and the elements  
so mixed in him that Nature may stand up  
And say to all the world: ‘This is a man’.*”<sup>13</sup>

These letters from far parts of the world, from persons with different backgrounds of civilisation and culture, all responding so warmly to Jawaharlal Nehru testify to the elements of universality in the values he embodied.

---

13. Jawaharlal Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 441.

The lines are adapted from Antony's tribute to Shakespeare's Julius Caesar.

*‘His life was gentle, and the elements  
so mix'd in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, “This was a man.”’*

*G. Parthasarathi*

## **Democracy, Socialism, National Integration and Peace**

---

I have had the privilege of working for Jawaharlal Nehru for many years. His thoughts and deeds have deeply influenced me and conditioned my approach to national and international problems. Every meeting with him was an unforgettable experience. He had the rare capacity to lift the consideration of every problem to a higher level and put it in its historical perspective. He welcomed an argument with his young officers and expected them to express their views freely. One always came back enriched after a discussion with him. The consideration and affection that he showed me and his encouragement remain an abiding memory.

It is more than 25 years since Jawaharlal left us, but the passage of time has not dimmed his lustre as a heroic figure in the national movement the architect of modern India and a world statesman. He remains more than an outstanding personality of his age, a vision, captured for all times in his own words, which still retain their original beauty and strength. To those of us, who had the privilege to know him in person and to absorb something of his philosophy of life, his approach to the problems facing both the individual and the society in this complicated age, it is always a new and necessary experience to return to his precept and practice. He would always remain a polestar, a guiding light for us.

In fact his thoughts, even many of his detailed prescriptions for ailments of society continue to be relevant in our time. His need to see the present, through the prism of the past, and with the urgency of the challenges of the future always at the back of

his mind makes him meaningfully contemporary in an environment where exponential growth of technology has transformed the intellectual, and also, some of us are only now beginning to realise. The physical landscape around us. It is, however, important that we engage ourselves seriously in analysing his message, thus revitalising it and giving it a new thrust; it is also the only way the splendid institutions, which he cherished and nurtured in their infancy, can be reconstructed, refurbished and rejuvenated, to meet the demands of our time. Each generation has to rediscover history, culture and the accumulated wisdom of mankind for itself. Each active rediscovery is also an act of creative invention. Jefferson, whom Nehru admired, said in a notable passage that one generation is much different from another as one nation is from another. The new generation, therefore, has to go through the arduous process of finding suitable solutions for the discontents of its time. Today in India Gandhi and Nehru are not mere words, labels, useful escape routes from the dilemmas of intellectual and moral self-questioning. It is the measure of the greatness of these men that in trying to understand the new problems which confront us, problems which are the necessary results of the solutions of earlier difficulties, we find it profitable to go back to these two men who helped to shape our way of living and thinking.

It is, therefore, only in the fitness of things that in this centennial year of Jawaharlal Nehru we attempt to recapture the ideas and themes which were very dear to him and which disturbed him, so to speak throughout his life, both during the days of the national struggle and the later years of power. It was one of his characteristic qualities that Jawaharlal Nehru never permitted "the brief spell of authority" to cloud his anxious search for a clear answer to the problems of social and political organisation in a transitional period when the old order was perforce giving place to the new. The topics of national integration, secularism, socialism and peace dominated his vision of the future society not only in India, but also the whole world, both the affluent and the deprived parts of this organic, indivisible, civilisation of ours on this little planet. Nehru was not only a bridge between India and the world because of his comprehension of the significance of the world-wide struggle for peace and a New World Order, but within India he was a bridge between nationalism and socialism.

Here it is important to remember one dominant fact. All these ideals have no meaning, Nehru felt, if they were not achieved through democratic means. Without democracy all the details of national reconstruction are fated to be distorted. There were other things which occupied his attention all the time, themes like the need for a humanistic approach to all men and all things, a genuinely scientific temper, a fastidious demand for a true quality of life in our villages and cities, and attitude of tolerance which carefully avoids indifference or smug paternalism and, also in a very special individual manner, a receptiveness to all human experience. All these and many other attractive facets of Nehru's unique personality should occupy our attention because of their intrinsic importance and because an indifference to them might mean disaster for our way of life in this country and age.

First, national integration. Nehru's life was a ceaseless quest for the true identity which is India. The DISCOVERY OF INDIA is not only a literary master-piece. It is an inevitable record of one man's discovery of himself, the refinement of his knowledge and the reconciliation of apparent contradictions in the large turbulent exciting society which is India. The enormous regional variety represented by different languages and the several geographically coherent regions, lead inevitably to divergent local interests. The transfer of power to the people leads immediately to an improvement in the lot of most people, but it also leads competitiveness among regions without giving due consideration to over-riding national interests. This is a problem for all types of political organisations; this is something we have to learn to live with. Democracy gives ample scope to such possibly fissiparous tendencies. Nehru was conscious, more than anyone else, of this problem and spent a great deal of his time in educating both the people and, also the political activists, in the country on the need to avoid the twin dangers of anarchy and imposition of policies without consent.

A vast and diverse society like ours needed a strong centralised effective authority; democracy would not be assured unless there was adequate devolution of power ensuring a certain autonomy in decision-making to the lowliest and smallest branches of the huge political system. This is the permanent paradox of the Indian situation. In an interesting passage, Nehru said: "How.

then, to have centralisation and decentralisation both is the problem of the age. In India, during the last generation or two, we have been powerfully impressed by Gandhiji—the ideas of decentralisation, apart from other things. We are all impressed by that. We talk about that spinning wheel and the like and economists and the rest will rather laugh at this idea, not realising the true significance of what I think Gandhiji meant. I do not think anyone of us is. I do not think Gandhiji was, against the essential features of the modern age. He did not want the country to be without electricity, electric power, railways, aeroplanes, etc. Nevertheless, seeing the dangers of too much concentration of power, he wanted to decentralise whether it was political power or economic power or money power : whatever it was, he did not like that concentration at all. So, he wanted to decentralise and inevitably. He laid so much stress upon it to impress people, so much stress which perhaps logically was not justified”.

This is as good an example as any of Nehru’s ability to understand and interpret Mahatma Gandhi with fidelity and understanding. It is also an example of his own consciousness of the dilemmas involved in national integration in a large country. On an other occasion, he said: “Thousands of years of history have conditioned our people and made our country what it is—an abiding unity and, at the same time, great diversity people of many religions live in this country, many great languages flourish among our people. And yet, in spite of this variety, there has been a deeper unity which has held us together. Each one of us must realise that the only future for India and her people is one of tolerance and cooperation which have been the basis of our culture from ages past”.

Today, the very growth of literacy, newly acquired skills and the hunger for new opportunities by whole layers of population which had throughout the centuries been inert and non-participating groups, has led to new demands and parochial loyalties. This is a phenomenon which is directly related to the communications explosion of the 20th century and a related eagerness for development. No country is too large, no State too small to be totally free of these problems. When we face them today, we are, therefore, undergoing what is after all a near-universal experience. The only viable approach to this problem is the one favoured by Nehru. There is no substitute for sensitivity, an awareness of the

problem and "a conscious effort on the part of all of us for the emotional integration of all our people. I want this translated", Nehru said, "in the day-to-day activities of ours, official or non-official, so that we may build the India of our dreams".

The two immediate problems of our society today continue to be what they were in Nehru's time, the challenges of exaggerated regional loyalties and the dangers from religious or communal disharmony. Throughout his whole political career, Nehru was an ardent crusader for secular values, which meant to him in the final analysis the only sure foundation for the unity of India. He once said, "We have laid down in our Constitution that India is a secular state. That does not mean irreligion. It means equal respect for all faiths and equal opportunities for those who profess any faith". In the new changing context of Indian politics, regional loyalties are perhaps the much greater problem. On this also Nehru had something very relevant to say: "So far as I am concerned, and I hope so far as you are concerned, there is no division between north and south and east and west of India. There is only one India of which all of us, you and I, are inheritors. It belongs to all of us".

The India which he discovered during his long participation in the struggle for freedom was a united and emotionally integrated India. The tragedy of partition was a traumatic shock; but it was a price which had been accepted as the least unpleasant of several alternatives and during his years of Prime Ministership, he went on repeating the need for unity; the other paths led to slow disintegration and ultimate decay. This was something which India had suffered several times during her long history and it was the duty of our generation, he felt, to prevent the repetition of that experience. It was necessary to build upon common elements, consciously discourage separatist ideas, and work for a fully integrated nation willing and able to take part in the councils of the world in an effective manner. This is what he meant when he said: "While, on the one hand, we, the people of India, are bound together by strong bonds of culture, common objectives, friendship, affection, on the other, unfortunately there are inherent in India separatist and disruptive tendencies, which raise their head whenever some new question arises. We have seen how, repeatedly, in spite of our many virtues and our great abilities, we have fallen in the race of the nations, and because of this lack of unity

amongst us the entire community of India has been separated into castes and creeds which do not pull together. Therefore, I lay stress everywhere on the unity of India and on our need to fight communalism, provincialism, separatism and casteism”.

Towards the very end of his life in March 1964, Nehru returned to the theme of secularism, this time in a hopeful forward-looking fashion: “Even since the distant past, it has been India’s proud privilege for her people to live in harmony with each other. That has been the basis of India’s culture. . . . We have, therefore, a precious heritage to keep up and we cannot allow ourselves to act contrary to it. . . . We must always remember that every Indian to whatever religion he might belong, is a brother and must be treated as such”.

A nationally integrated and fully secular India would still be incomplete without a genuine socialistic programme. To Nehru, democracy, socialism and peace were inseparable; each required and strengthened the other. True socialism meant a richer democracy not the denial of the democratic values. A democratic and socialist India would be able to pay a meaningful role in the search for peace in a very dangerous world.

This was not anything surprising. Long before independence was achieved, Nehru realised that the struggle for India’s freedom was also a struggle for democracy. His interest in the Civil Liberties Union shows this. During the Thirties, it was Nehru’s belief in democracy as an absolute value that made him critical of fascism and dictatorship. He insisted that a democratic system should be enshrined in the new Constitution. It was no coincidence, no mere rhetorical gesture that universal suffrage, which was a very recent phenomenon even in the West, was accepted in one step by India. Nehru was conscious of the need for emphasising the fundamental rights of the individual, the independence of the judiciary and the functioning of a truly free press.

Nehru was also aware of the need for a supportive attitude by the Central Government to democracy at the local levels. This was the philosophy behind the Community Development Programme, the National Extension Service and the Panchayati Raj idea. While these ambitious attempts at effective democracy at the lower levels have to be more vigorously pursued; the parliamentary system in the Centre and in the States is more securely established. Nehru showed great respect for parliamentary



institutions and set up traditions in their functioning which strengthened them.

Genuine political rights, Nehru realised, have to be based on economic development. There was need to transform the old society and economy which had outlived their day and build a new society in which there is a fair distribution of political and economic power. He believed that there was no alternative to socialism for a country like India. Her people were too poor for her rulers to afford the luxury of capitalism. More than a decade before independence, he defined his own political philosophy as that of socialism: "Scientific socialism itself teaches us not to follow slavishly any dogma or any other country's example, which may have resulted from entirely different circumstances. Armed with a philosophy which reveals the inner working of history and human relations, and with the scientific outlook to guide him, the socialist tries to solve the problems of each country in relation to its varied background and stage of economic development, and also in relation to the world. It is a hard task. But then there is no easy way".

Nehru's constant effort was to reach a national consensus. He educated the people to think in forward looking terms in building a new society and inculcated democratic and socialist values. He attached great importance to the individual in the social process, giving him the fullest opportunity to develop "provided the individual is not a selected group but comprises, the whole community". In language reminiscent of Gandhiji, he said, "The law of life should not be competition or acquisitiveness but cooperation, the good of each contributing to the good of all".

Like Gandhiji, Nehru believed in a humane and equitable social order. The supreme objective was to achieve higher standards of living for the common man. Long before 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru had set up the National Planning Committee of the Congress to draft blueprints in a pragmatic way without undue emphasis on doctrine. Socialism to him was not a dogma but a set of principles to be adapted to the Indian context. From the very beginning, he realised that production was the first priority; for fair distribution you must have enough to distribute. It was due to the need to increase production through contemporary methods and the use of modern technology that he placed so much emphasis

on modern science and technology. In doing so, he went against received wisdom in many affluent countries; the developing nations were supposed to give exclusive importance to agriculture. Today, we are benefiting from his clear sense of priorities. Heavy industry has given India a technological base. Agriculture had also to be modernised through mechanisation for which the creation of a heavy industrial base is an inevitable precondition. Only thus could rapid agricultural growth be ensured.

To Nehru, democracy and socialism had to go together; they did not in a properly planned system neutralise each other, but provided mutually reinforcing elements. He fully realised that his method took longer than adopting short-cuts to socialism by imposition, but on the other hand the results would be more enduring. This sensitiveness to democracy was in his mind intertwined with Gandhiji's insistence on the precedence of means over ends. He said that we would have to understand "that our background is in many ways peculiar, particularly the Gandhian background". He added, "In India, an appeal to violence is particularly dangerous because of its inherent disruptive character. The basic thing, I believe, is that wrong means will not lead to right results and that is no longer merely an ethical doctrine, but a practical proposition". This is the reason why Nehru stressed the need to bring about social transformation by consent.

Nehru's belief in socialism and democracy was integrally related to his awareness of the need for a peaceful international environment. No progress is possible for any country, least of all a poor country with a multitude of inherited problems like India, without genuine peace and peaceful co-existence in which international cooperation is the basic reality of life. The atmosphere of war and conflict would inhibit national growth. Nehru realised that India could not opt out of the world. She could, however, adopt independent attitudes and defend her self-reliance while working for peace. This is the essence of non-alignment.

In the field of foreign policy in the adjustment of independent India's relations with the external world in a very difficult time of transition and radical change, Jawaharlal Nehru played a creative role. He was both in the guiding philosophy and also in the minutest details of the implementation of that philosophy, the maker of the country's foreign policy. He saw in India's independence nothing less than the promise of liberation for all

enslaved peoples everywhere. He knew that a newly independent country like India had to rise to the challenges of the nuclear age and play a courageous role in reducing tension between powerful adversaries. He did everything possible to increase the area of cooperation and to eliminate the causes of friction and conflict. Even this does not give full credit to the measure of his achievement. He was all the time conscious of the need for change, peaceful change, but rapid change, in the absence of which peace would be disturbed and conflict and war destroy the fruits of peace. There was also, in his mind, an organic link between the aims of bringing about a "Good society" at home and international peace and cooperation throughout the world.

I hope I have succeeded in communicating something of the passion with which Jawaharlal Nehru pursued the goal of national integration through the instruments of secularism, democracy and a socialist programme. He had an unquenchable pride in India, its heritage and its capability and responsibility to play a major role in world affairs. He saw the past and the future of India with the trained eyes of a historian. He had a genuine capacity for enthusiasm but no illusions which are mostly the result of ignorance. He once judged revolutions in a detached and objective spirit. "Oddly enough, sometimes the person who considers himself most revolutionary is often very conservative also in the sense of holding on to something regardless of changing conditions. I look back to the French Revolution 160 or 170 years ago. The French Revolution came with a mighty bang, frightened Europe and created innumerable waves of thought, which affected Europe for almost the next hundred years. Yet, the French Revolution, actually when it happened, if I may say so, was rather out of date in the sense that something bigger was happening behind it—the industrial revolution. The leaders of the French Revolution were hardly conscious of the industrial revolution that was beginning".

This capacity for acute observation, this ability to analyse in cool detachment one's own immediate environment—these are some of the qualities which Nehru's younger contemporaries learnt over the years to appreciate in this fascinating man. The French Revolution, the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the major wave of decolonisation of the Forties and the Fifties, all were seen by him as parts of mankind's quest for security and fulfilment.

In this contradictory process of global change, regional stagnation and individual alienation, it was necessary for the leaders of society to detach themselves from immediate prejudices and work out a sane philosophy not only for one country but for all mankind. This was perhaps one reason why Panditji was so much disturbed and bothered by the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe which could spell the final doom for mankind. Many of the dangers which he recognised are still there and there is really no other way to face them except by adopting his specific method of logic, detachment and of persuasive human sympathy. In the final analysis, it is not so much the details of his policy as his truly unique humanistic vision which will continue to inspire us for long years to come.

*Bimal Prasad*

## Jawaharlal Nehru and the Foundations of Indian Foreign Policy

---

Jawaharlal Nehru did not encourage people to think that India's foreign policy, as enunciated and implemented by him as India's Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs during its formative phase (1947-64) was his handi-work. Replying to a debate on foreign affairs in the Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha) in 1958, he remarked:

It is completely incorrect to call our policy 'Nehru' policy. It is incorrect because all that I have done is to give voice to that policy. I have not originated it. It is a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind during our struggle for freedom, and inherent in the circumstances of the world today. I come in by the mere accidental fact that during these few years I have represented that policy as Foreign Minister. I am quite convinced that whoever might have been in charge of the foreign affairs of India and whatever party might have been in power in India, they could not have deviated very much from this policy.

There is considerable substance in the view expressed above. There can be no doubt, however, that the credit for laying down the foundations of India's foreign policy belongs very much to

Nehru. It is he who interpreted India's age-old traditions as well as recent thinking on matters related to foreign policy in the context of India's requirements as a newly emergent independent country in a world increasingly riven by divisions and tensions. The main principles of the foreign policy enunciated by him were based on this interpretation. It speaks volumes of Nehru's understanding of the forces of history as well as his sagacity as a statesman that in spite of many changes in details here and there those principles still continue to guide India's foreign policy today, a quarter of or century after his passing away.

The most important single factor which shaped Nehru's foreign policy as Prime Minister was the evolution of the Indian outlook on world affairs during the struggle for independence. The most important elements of that outlook were a determination to keep India away from the rivalries and conflicts of the great powers and to pursue an independent path in world affairs, based on the championship of freedom and peace. Such ideas had been developed most prominently and consistently by the Indian National Congress, which showed interest in foreign affairs right from its birth in 1885. This interest, naturally limited in the beginning, acquired wider dimensions with the broadening of the general political outlook of the Congress. Beginning with 1927, when Jawaharlal Nehru played a leading role in the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities at Brussels and thereby emerged as India's spokesman at the international stage, there was hardly an event of international significance which went unnoticed by the Congress and hardly a problem for which it did not offer a solution. And almost all the Congress resolutions on those events and problems were drafted by none other than Nehru, whose interest in world affairs never slackened. It was only natural, therefore, that when he became India's Prime Minister he should have been guided by the trend of thinking developed during the period of the struggle for freedom.

Indeed Nehru's foreign policy cannot be properly understood without setting it against its historical background. It must be stressed, however, that while deriving inspiration and sustenance from the past, Nehru was not its prisoner and had no difficulty in charting out a new path where this appeared necessary. Indeed as a master craftsman he adapted the traditions built up by the nationalist movement to the needs of a new nation and the vision

of a new world based on peace and cooperation and thus evolved a foreign policy which not only served the needs and interests of his own country but was found broadly acceptable by almost all the countries which emerged into freedom after the second world war. This lent a unique strength to India's foreign policy during much of the Nehru Era.

What were the main foundations of India's foreign policy as laid down by Nehru? In the first place, he firmly believed that India must follow its own course in world affairs and not allow itself to be used by any other country, however, big or powerful that country might be. Nehru gave expression to this view again and again, both before and after the achievement of independence. One of the most memorable occasions for it was provided by the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in March-April 1947. Nehru voiced the innermost feelings of almost all the delegates assembled there when during the course of his inaugural address he declared:

Far too long have we of Asia been petitioners in Western courts and chancelleries. That story must now belong to the past. We propose to stand on our own legs and to cooperate with all others who are prepared to cooperate with us. We do not intend to be the playthings of others.

The policy of non-alignment was the natural outgrowth of such thinking. For it meant, first and foremost, a declaration of independence in international affairs and a determination to follow one's own path, without being a hanger-on of any great power. It is this which made non-alignment so attractive to one nation after another as it emerged into freedom in course of the decolonisation process set in motion by the achievement of Indian independence.

The other major foundation of non-alignment lay in Nehru's conviction that the division of the world into two warring camps was a sure way to ensure the outbreak of a major world war. This comes out clearly from what he said in the course of his broadcast as Vice-President of the Interim Government on September 7, 1946: "We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to

disaster on an even vaster scale." Replying to the debate on the Objectives Resolution in the Constituent Assembly on 22 January 1947 he remarked:

We wish for peace. We do not want to fight any nation if we can help it. The only possible real objective that we, in common with other nations, can have is the objective of cooperating in building up some kind of world structure, call it One World, call it what you like.... Now, if we think of that structure and our cooperation with other countries in achieving it, where does the question come of our being tied up with this group of nations or that group? Indeed, the more groups and blocs are formed, the weaker will that great structure become.

Thus the policy of non-alignment, as enunciated by Nehru, embodied the heritage of the long Indian struggle for freedom and was not something contrived in haste on the morrow of independence because of India's military weakness or its being new in the field of diplomacy. Indeed it symbolised the deepest urges and aspirations of the new nation and was expected to provide fulfilment to its feeling of independent nationhood. Besides, while Nehru wanted to keep aloof from the cold war, for him non-alignment did not imply any indifference to the happenings in the world around him. On the contrary, he was very eager to see India playing its due role in the settlement of world problems. He laid so much emphasis upon non-alignment primarily because joining any bloc would have meant the curtailment of India's capacity to work effectively for the causes it held dear at the world stage. Thus non-alignment was not meant to be a pretext for indifference or inaction, but just the opposite.

Striving for world peace was certainly the most characteristic feature of non-alignment as conceived of by Nehru. Having worked under Gandhi, who never tired of emphasising that free India would have a mission in the world, the mission of fostering peace and brotherhood among nations, Nehru, his most beloved disciple as well as political heir, treated every major international crisis as a call to action. He explained his thinking to the delegates assembled at Belgrade for the first conference of non-aligned states in 1961:



Non-alignment has a negative meaning, but if you give it a positive connotation it means nations which object to this lining up for war purposes—military blocs, military alliances and the like. Therefore, we keep away from this and we want to throw our weight, such as it is, in favour of peace. In effect, therefore, when there is a crisis involving the possibility of war, the very fact that we are unaligned should stir us to action, should stir us to thought, should stir us to feel that now more than ever it is upto us to do whatever we can to prevent such a calamity coming down upon us.

The intense desire to work for peace among nations was accompanied by a similar desire to work for the freedom of those Asian and African countries which continued to remain under foreign rule when India became free. This also came as a legacy from the days of the freedom struggle, which created a strong bond with China and other Asian and African countries. Itself engaged in the struggle for freedom the Indian Nation! Congress felt increasingly drawn towards other Asian and African countries, most of whom lay under European domination in some form or other. This was naturally accompanied by a desire for close association with them. Over the years a feeling grew that the Indian struggle was part of a world-wide struggle for freedom and that it was the duty of the Indian people to contribute their mite also to that wider struggle. Indeed, the bond with Asian and African countries led to the creation of an almost missionary zeal to work for the freedom and unity of those countries, particularly in Asia, and this vied with the similar zeal to work for peace and goodwill among all nations. This foundation of India's foreign policy comes out clearly in the following extract from Nehru's broadcast on September 7, 1946, as Vice-President of the Interim Government:

We are of Asia and the peoples of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of Western, Southern and South-East Asia. In the past her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many

ways. Those contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see a closer union between India and South East Asia on the one side, and Afghanistan, Iran and the Arab world on the other. To the furtherance of that close association of free countries we must devote ourselves.

The preoccupation with Asian freedom and unity was partly responsible for the growth of a strong feeling of friendship for the Soviet Union. The belief, fostered by the example of the imperialist powers of Western Europe as well as by Lenin's famous thesis on this subject, namely, that imperialism was a product of capitalism at once created a fascination for the Soviet Union as a land free from capitalism and, therefore, likely to remain free from imperialism. The continuing opposition of the Western powers to the Soviet regime only tended to bring it into greater limelight as an anti-imperialist power. Besides, the Soviet Union was a powerful neighbour which could, if well disposed, be helpful to India in many ways. Above all, the socialist system which it was trying to build had an attraction of its own and it was felt that the experience gained by the Soviet Union in this field could be useful to India also. This feeling came out clearly in Nehru's presidential address to the annual Congress session held in April 1936. Asserting that socialism represented a new civilisation he observed:

Some glimpse we can have of this new civilisation in the territories of the USSR. Much has happened there which has pained me greatly and with which I disagree, but I look upon that great and fascinating unfolding of a new order and a new civilisation as the most promising feature of a dismal age. If the future is full of hope it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done, and I am convinced that if some world catastrophe does not intervene, this new civilisation will spread to other lands and put an end to the wars and conflicts on which capitalism feeds.

The feeling of friendship for the Soviet Union was further strengthened by growing doubt about the willingness of the United States to support Asian and African nationalism at the

cost of the vital interests of its close allies. Nehru had become most poignantly aware of this at the time of the 'Quit India' movement in 1942, when repeated appeals to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, long since hailed in India for his idealism, failed to draw even a word of moral support, to say nothing of effective pressure on the British Government which was the object of these appeals. The continued silence of the United States on the Indian question in contrast to the open support of independence by the Soviet Union at the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations in April 1945, did not improve the position of the United States in Indian eyes.

Yet there never developed in Nehru's mind any feeling of hostility towards the United States. Indeed the one foundation which his foreign policy never had was the feeling of hostility towards any nation. In this he truly represented the Indian revolution, which did not leave behind any legacy of hostility against any nation. While organising the struggle for freedom the leaders of the Congress did not base their campaign on any antipathy against other nations. On the contrary, they were great believers in the doctrine of universal brotherhood. This was specially true of Gandhi, who looked upon India's independence not as an end in itself, but as providing an opportunity for the service of the entire human family without any distinction between its various parts. That he succeeded to a remarkable degree was vividly illustrated by the complete absence in India of any rancour against the British in spite of the long struggle for freedom against their rule. So far as the ideal of human unity was concerned Gandhi got a true disciple in Nehru. In the beginning, though following the same ideal, Nehru did not speak the same language as Gandhi, but this difference was later narrowed down if not completely obliterated. While making public his nomination of Nehru as his political heir Gandhi prophesied in 1942, that after he was gone, Nehru would adopt his language. Actually, Nehru, as a perusal of his speeches from 1945 onwards will clearly show, began doing so while Gandhi was still alive.

From what has been said above it should not be concluded that while formulating India's foreign policy Nehru was concerned only with the championship of peace and freedom at the world stage. On the contrary, he paid due regard to India's own national interests and worked for them before taking up anything else. In

a speech before the Indian Constituent Assembly (Legislative) on December 4, 1947, he observed:

Whatever policy we may lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. We may talk about international goodwill and mean what we say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country.

Therefore, whether a country is imperialistic or socialist or communist, its foreign minister thinks primarily of the interests of that country.

This does not mean that Nehru was advocating an approach to foreign policy based on a narrow concept of self-interest. What he was really trying to stress was that a foreign policy based on the pursuit of peace should be considered to be in the interest of every nation and not taken as tantamount to a disregard of national interests. As he went on to explain:

But there is a difference, of course. Some people may think of the interests of their country, regardless of other consequences, or take a short-distance view. Others may think that in the long-term policy the interest of another country is as important to them as that of their own country. The interest of peace is more important, because if war comes everyone suffers, so that in the long-distance view, self-interest may itself demand a policy of cooperation with other nations, goodwill for other nations, as indeed it does demand.... Therefore, we propose to look after India's interests in the context of world cooperation and world peace, in so far as world peace can be preserved.

This is not the place to go into a detailed examination of the

working of Nehru's foreign policy. This much, however, can be safely asserted that broadly Nehru lived up to his declaration and did indeed "look after India's interests in the context of world cooperation and world peace." Though leading a militarily weak and economically backward country, through his bold and imaginative diplomacy, he made a significant contribution to the causes of freedom and peace in such places as Indonesia, Korea, Indo-China, Suez and Congo; and at the same time secured for India a position in the highest councils of nations, endowing its voice with a hallow and prestige rarely matched in the history of diplomacy. All this made Nehru's the authentic voice of the third world and his prestige went on soaring in the councils of nations as the world passed from one international crisis to another and found increasing use for the healing touch provided by the diplomacy of non-alignment.

The emergence of a strong and united China under communist leadership did pose a challenge to India's preeminent position in the third world. For many years, however, China remained tied to the Soviet Union in what then appeared to be an indissoluble bond between two major communist countries while most of the newly freed Asian and African countries continued to remain non-aligned. The emergence of a strong and united China, therefore, did not adversely affect India's position at the world stage as the leading non-aligned country. On the contrary that very emergence provided further opportunities to India to show the efficacy of the diplomacy of non-alignment in bringing a healing touch to a troubled world frequently surging towards a major catastrophe. This also enabled India to build a bridge with China and strengthen its relations with the Soviet Union. In the process it incurred the displeasure of the United States, which manifested itself in the latter's military alliance with Pakistan with a view to enabling it to establish military parity with India and thereby sustaining what began to be called the balance of power in South Asia. This proved a serious check to Indian diplomacy in South and South-East Asia, but failed to pose a serious threat to its security, thanks largely to its growing ties with the Soviet Union and its ability to maintain a certain level of military power, capable of meeting any threat from Pakistan.

The deterioration of its relations with China in the late fifties posed a more serious challenge to India, for which it was not

adequately prepared, and the debacle suffered by India at China's hands in 1962 gave a shattering blow to Nehru's international prestige. His foreign policy appeared to have lost its credibility not merely in the eyes of the outside world, but also among the Indian people themselves. What had in fact been proved wrong was not his foreign policy as such, but only his assumption that in spite of growing differences regarding India's border alignments with China and the menacing nearness of the checkpoints of the two countries, the latter would not mount any major attack on India. It also became clear that there was need to pay much greater attention to military preparedness than had been done till then. Nehru was, however, able to draw considerable solace from the fact that at that moment of crisis not only had Britain and the United States adopted a sympathetic attitude towards India, rushed valuable military supplies and promised military assistance in the future, but even the Soviet Union, in spite of the bond of communism which still united her with China, had adopted a somewhat similar attitude and honoured all its military as well as economic commitments to India.

As for China itself, the policy of friendship towards it which India under Nehru pursued was the only valid policy at that time and continues to remain so even today. The Chinese aggression in 1962 did not also lead to any basic change in Indian foreign policy in general. Indeed, in spite of some initial setback, India was able to face that aggression and its sequel without any fundamental break with the past so far as that policy was concerned. And after years of hostility and mistrust India and China are now again seeking to establish normal, good neighbourly relations between themselves. This is one of the best illustrations of the soundness of the foundations of Indian foreign policy laid down during the Nehru Era.

*V.P. Dutt*

## Jawaharlal Nehru and Social Change in India

---

Jawaharlal Nehru had a complex approach towards social change in India. He had no use for totems and ritual, for the system that produced kings and divine rights or for the system that produced kings of industry with exploitative, acquisitive characteristics. Yet he came to realise that only patient and extended education would succeed and that gradualist measures alone would work in a democratic society in which consensus was more important than conflict.

He was a child of rationalism, liberalism, scientific training, with the upbringing characteristic of an industrial civilisation trying to bring about revolutionary change in a society burdened by custom tradition and stagnation.

He was an iconoclast working among essentially religious minded colleagues and followers. He was above racial, communal, group and regional prejudices. Jawaharlal was not static, nor even necessarily consistent. He developed, grew, changed. He had seen the world spin and whirl furiously in the last half a century. Sometimes maturity, sometimes disillusionment with what was happening in the world around, subsequently the weight of administration affected his thinking and mode of operation. But he was deeply committed to social change, socio-economic transformation, science and rationalism, even though his ideas about methods to be used and the pace possible changed—and sometimes radically sometimes in material ways but never to an extent that he would discard his basic thinking.

We must start by acknowledging and dealing with a person first of all modern in his outlook, not in the sense of superficial

Westernisation, which he disliked, but in his approach towards society and its problems. In this regard it put him in a class separate from most of his colleagues in the leadership of the nationalist movement in India. Even with Gandhiji his differences were certainly that of a mind nurtured in the modern, scientific spirit as opposed to the other who gave the impression of harking back to ancient traditions and eyed with distrust and suspicion modern industry and scientific progress.

Jawaharlal had no use for either magic or religion. He did not believe in salvation of the individual, nor did he share the traditional view of sin. He took issue with Gandhiji's earlier view that India's salvation consisted in unlearning all that she had learnt during the last 50 years, and that the railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors and such like, will all have to go, with every one taking to the simple peasant life which alone gave true happiness. Jawaharlal objected to it because he disliked the implication behind this philosophy: love and praise of poverty and suffering and the ascetic life. Gandhiji was opposed to the multiplication of wants and higher standard of living, and advocated, instead, a deliberate and voluntary restrictions of wants, which promoted real happiness and contentment and increased man's capacity for service.

Jawaharlal disliked this praise of poverty and suffering. He wanted poverty and suffering to be abolished. Nor did Jawaharlal appreciate the ascetic life as a social ideal, although, I would like to underline, Jawaharlal appreciated simplicity, equality, self-control, but not the mortification of the flesh. Jawaharlal also took strong exception to the idealisation of the simple peasant life. Indeed, he had a horror of it and he wanted to drag the peasantry out of its clutches to strive for the spread of urban cultural facilities to rural areas.

Jawaharlal acknowledged that Gandhiji objected to many of the modern things because of the prevalence of violence in modern societies and because of his concern with the question of means, and later in life Jawaharlal himself showed increasing concern with the problem both of means and of violence but he believed that the evil did not lie with modern industry and science, but with the system as witnessed in the west. It was the system which had to be changed, not the abandonment of modern ideas and modern outlook.



Jawaharlal did not believe that merely by improving the individuals, morally and spiritually, could be achieved a transformation of the external environment. As he put it:

“notions may differ about the reality of the wickedness of these indulgences, but can there be any doubt that even from the individual point of view, and much more so from the social, these personal feelings are less harmful than covetousness, selfishness, acquisitiveness, the fierce conflict of individuals for personal gain, the struggle of classes, the inhuman suppression of one group by another, the terrible wars between nations? . . . but are they not inherent in the acquisitive society of today with its law that the strong must prey on the weak . . . the profit motive in it inevitably leads to conflict. The whole system protects and gives every scope to man’s predatory instincts; it encourages some finer instincts, but much more the baser instincts of man. Success means knocking down of others and mounting on their vanquished slaves.”<sup>1</sup>

The modern and scientific outlook of Jawaharlal as well as his study of history made him well aware that there could be no return to a situation of autarchie, self-contained villages living in bliss and peace. Even if it were possible to establish such villages, the world would not leave them alone.

Inevitable, therefore, the solution to the problems of modern society, violence, aggressiveness, exploitation, poverty, conflict and even war had to be sought in a fundamental change in the system, in society’s structure and in institutional transformation. This led Jawaharlal on to his conversion to “the only possible solution—the establishment of socialist order, first within national boundaries and eventually in the world as a whole with a controlled production and distribution of wealth for the public good.”<sup>2</sup> It appeared absurd to him to consider national, international, economic and social problems in terms of isolated individuals. “I would say that my quarrel is with a system and not with individuals. A system is certainly embodied to a great extent in individuals and groups and thus individuals and groups have to be converted or combated but if a system had ceased to be of value, it has to

- 
1. Jawaharlal Nehru : *Towards Freedom*, John Day Co. New York, 1941, pp. 314-26.
  2. *Ibid.*

go and the classes of groups that cling to it will also have to undergo a transformation. That process of change should involve as little suffering as possible but unhappily suffering and dislocation are inevitable . . . .”<sup>3</sup>

No one would question the many sided contributions that Nehru made to the struggle for freedom of India. He carried the message of freedom to the people and along with Gandhiji aroused them, awakened them, mobilised them and brought them into action in their hundreds of thousands. One important aspect of his contribution, however, was his struggle to infuse an economic content into the nationalist movement. Nehru saw the emergent necessity of bringing the masses of people into the national movement. The national movement without an economic content would be partial, narrow, and limited. It would also not be able to fully arouse the people and involve them in the struggle. By giving an economic direction to the national movement, Jawaharlal was hoping to carry the struggle of Indian society forward to further and broader objectives for the solution of India’s problems.

The struggle for independence could only be the first step, it was an essential first step, but there was other steps to follow. Very sharply did Jawaharlal put the question “Whose freedom are we particularly striving for, for nationalism covers many sins and includes many conflicting elements? There is feudal India of the princes, the India of the big zamindars, of small zamindars, of the professional classes, of the agriculturists, of the industrialists, of the bankers, of the lower middle class, of the workers. There are the interests of foreign capital and those of home capital, of foreign services and home services. The nationalist answer is to prefer home interests to foreign interests. But beyond that it did not go. It tries to avoid disturbing the class division or the social *status quo*. It imagines that the various interests will somehow be accommodated, when the country is free. Being essentially a middle class movement, nationalism works generally in the interests of that class. It is obvious that there are serious conflicts between various interests in the country and every law, every policy, which is good for one interest may be harmful to another.”<sup>4</sup>

Jawaharlal dismissed the view that all the interests in the

3. *Ibid.*

4. Jawaharlal Nehru ; *India and the World*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1936, pp. 39-63.

nation could be harmonised without injury to any, and at every step some interests had to be sacrificed for others. Nationalism only made people realise the inherent conflict between the national interests, those of the country, and the foreigner, but nationalism by itself did not make the people realise the equally inherent and fundamental conflict between economic interests within the country. Indeed nationalism often tried to sweep these conflicts under the rug. But Jawaharlal linked this to an "ostrich-like policy of refusing to see a conflict and a disorder which not only existed but were eating into society's vitals, and to blind oneself to reality."

The form of Government to Jawaharlal was after all a means to an end. Even freedom was a means, the end being human well-being, human growth, the ending of poverty and disease and suffering and opportunity for everyone to live the "good life", physically and mentally.

Capitalism had solved the problem of production, but it was helpless in the face of the allied problem of distribution. Capitalism was incapable of solving this problem; it only made the world top-heavy and unbalanced. In order to find a solution for distributing wealth and purchasing power evenly and in order to bring an end to the basic inequalities of the capitalist system, capitalism needs to be replaced by a more scientific system.

Therefore, Jawaharlal reminded his countrymen even in the midst of the movement of freedom, "Gradually the nationalist struggle for political freedom is becoming a social struggle also for economic freedom. Independence and socialist state became the objectives, with varying degrees of stress being laid on the two aspects of the problem . . . . India's immediate goal can, therefore, only be considered in terms of the ending of the exploitation of her people. Politically, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection which means imperialist domination; economically and socially it must mean the ending of all special class privileges and vested interests."<sup>5</sup>

Jawaharlal realised during this period of the struggle that it might not be possible for the Indian National Congress as it was constituted to adopt the full programme that he advocated, but his persistent endeavour was to keep turning the Congress towards that direction and to make it gradually accept his philosophy. He knew he could not altogether force it on the Congress, the Congress

---

5. *Ibid.*

being a united front of various groups and classes and his leading colleagues being of different views, but he continued to take the Congress, gradually towards his point of view, even if many people accepted his ideas formally and not in reality. He played a great role in bringing the workers, peasants and particularly intellectuals into the national movement and thus broadening its base. He had pointed out that the measure of strength of the national movement would be the measure of the adherence of the workers and peasants to it. This adherence could be gained only by espousing their cause.

He rejected the view that the Congress could only hold the balance between these various classes and groups, for the balance had already been terribly weighed on one side—the side of the possessing classes. He disliked paternalism in industry which he regarded as a form of charity. He viewed the trusteeship theory as equally barren, for trusteeship could not be of an individual but that of the nation. Any good movement for liberation, Nehru said, must be a mass movement and he was indefatigable in his attempts to arouse the masses and throw them into the national movement.

It is a truism that Jawaharlal believed in socialism. From the early twenties, Jawaharlal became a convert to socialism and a socialist order of society. This belief in socialism continued throughout his life even though he modified some of his views, especially the question of means and the pace. In 1929, in his Presidential Address at the historic Lahore Congress, Jawaharlal proclaimed, "I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in kings and princes or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of man than even the kings of old and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy. I recognise, however, that it cannot be possible for a body constituted as is the National Congress and in the present circumstances of the country to adopt a fully socialist programme but we must realise that the philosophy of socialism had gradually permeated the entire structure of the society in the world over and almost . . . the only point in dispute is the pace and the methods of advance to its full realisation. India will have to go that way too if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality though she may evolve her methods and may

adopt the ideal to the genius of her race.”<sup>6</sup>

For Jawaharlal, socialism did not mean all things to all men. It was not something vague and nebulous, Socialism meant scientific socialism and society's control over the means of production and the instruments of distribution. He ridiculed all those theories of socialism which in effect would continue the domination of the few.

Industry's function in the present set-up, Jawaharlal said in 1929, was to produce millionaires: “Our economy must, therefore, be based on an human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers, then the industry must close down. If the workers on the land have not enough to eat then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort and human hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit.”

The only key to the solution of either problems of the world or the problems of India was the adoption of socialism. He objected to “muddled humanitarianism” being paraded under the flag of socialism. The final aim must be classless society with equal economic justice and opportunity for all, a society organised on a planned basis for the raising of mankind to higher material and cultural levels, to a cultivation of spiritual values, of co-operation, unselfishness, the spirit of service, the desire to do right, goodwill and love, ultimately a world order.<sup>7</sup>

This conviction in socialism did not change. Nehru did not waver in his belief that only socialism could end poverty and usher in a just society. In 1957, speaking at the session of the All India Congress Committee, Jawaharlal said that “the whole of the capitalist structure is based on some kind of an acquisitive society. It may be that to some extent, the tendency to acquisitiveness is inherent in us. A socialistic society must try to get rid of this tendency to acquisitiveness and replace it by co-operation.”<sup>8</sup>

6. A.M. Zaidi : *Congress Presidential Addresses*, Vol. IV, 1925-39, Indian Institute of Applied Political Research, New Delhi, 1988. Presidential address at Forty-fourth session of the Indian National Congress, Lahore , December 29, 1929.
7. Jawaharlal Nehru : *An Autobiography*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 551-2.
8. A.M. Zaidi, *op. cit.*, Vol. V. Presidential Address at the Sixty-second Session of the Indian National Congress, Indore, January 4, 1957.

Jawaharlal said to Tibor Mende that he believed more and more in socialism, "more and more even in some aspects of communism; not the action but the theory part of it, a communist society somewhere in the future." Jawaharlal, of course, gradually came to pin his faith in peaceful methods and in his later phases, rejected the degree of coercion and suffering in the method used by communist societies but the goal of socialism must be steadfastly pursued.<sup>9</sup>

Nehru believed in modern ideas and institutions. Yet he was not just a votary of Western values, nor did he turn his back on India's historical and cultural legacy. His approach was not that of a superficial moderniser. He not only had no contempt for the past, but in fact he marvelled at the rich cultural heritage of India. We all know that during the thirties and forties Nehru avidly read not only world but Indian history and delved deep into India's past. All this made him conscious and proud of India's past glory and achievements. Change without cutting off ourselves from the past was his view and outlook.

He wanted progress, but also progress in the Indian context. As he put it himself, "National progress can . . . neither lie in a repetition of the past nor in its denial. New patterns must inevitably be adopted but they must be integrated with the old. Indian history is a striking record of changes introduced in this way, the continuous adaptation of old ideas to a changing environment, of old patterns to new. Because of this, there is no sense of cultural break in it, and there is that continuity in respect of repeated change from the far distant days of Mohenjodaro to our own age . . . so while forms have been retained, the inner content continued to change."<sup>10</sup>

As Jawaharlal delved into Indian history, he developed such a high regard for the past pattern and development of Indian history that he even came to believe that there need be no conflict between the modern ideas of science and religion in India. "In India, because of the recongised freedom of mind, howsoever limited in practice, new ideas are not shut out . . . the essential

---

9. Tibor Mende, *Conversations with Mr. Nehru*, London, 1956, pp. 31-32.

10. Jawaharlal Nehru : *Discovery of India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1969, pp. 517-23.

ideals of Indian culture are broad-based and can be adapted to almost any environment. The bitter conflict between science and religion which shook up Europe in the Nineteenth century would have no reality in India, nor would change based on the applications of science bring any conflict with those ideals. Undoubtedly such changes would stir up as they are stirring up the mind of India, but instead of combating them or rejecting them, it would rationalise them from its own ideological point of view and fit them into its mental framework. It is probable that in this process many vital changes may be introduced in the old outlook, but they will not be super-imposed from outside and will seem rather to grow naturally from the cultural background of the people.<sup>10a</sup>

Jawaharlal felt that the conflict will be there with the super structure that had grown up around the basic ideals and which stifled India today. That super structure will inevitably have to go because much of it was bad in itself, and was contrary to the spirit of the age. Those who sought to retain it did an ill service to the basic ideals of Indian culture for they mixed up the good and the bad and thus endangered the former. It was, of course, no easy matter to separate the two or to draw a hard and fast line between them. But it was not necessary to draw any such theoretical and logical line. The logic of changing life and the march of events would gradually draw that line for us.<sup>11</sup>

No doubt, Jawaharlal did not want a mere imitation of Western ideas. On the other hand, he pleaded for a new synthesis. He believed that in the past, India's approach to knowledge was a synthetic one, but was limited to India. That limitation continued and the approach gave place gradually to a more analytical one. He now pleaded for a greater stress on the synthetic aspect and for making the whole world our field of study. "Perhaps more synthesis and a little humility towards the wisdom of the past, which after all is the accumulated experience of the human race, would help us to gain a new perspective and greater harmony. This is specially needed by those people who live a fevered life in the present only and have almost forgotten the past. But for countries like India a different emphasis is necessary, for we have too much of the past about us and have ignored the present. We have to get rid of that narrowing religious outlook, that

10a. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

obsession with the super-natural and metaphysical speculations, that loosening of the mind's discipline in religious, ceremonial and mystical emotionalism which came in the way of understanding ourselves and the world", Jawaharlal said in the *Discovery of India*.<sup>12</sup>

Nehru desired a synthesis of the past and the present which would continue the march forward and simultaneously end centuries of darkness and ignorance. Nehru was a unique combination of this modernity and the past. Yet, all said and done, Jawaharlal had a strong conviction in science and scientific methods and was anxious to bring the fruits of modern science and technology to India. He had absolutely no doubt at any time in his life that only through the adoption of modern science and the spread of the scientific temper could India end her backwardness and shed her poverty. For this modern large-scale industry was equally indispensable.

He was not unaware of the problems that large-scale industry had thrown up but he contended that the fault was not that of the phenomenon but that of the system. Violence and monopoly and concentration of wealth in a few hands was produced by the present economic structure. It was not large-scale industry as such which brought injustice and violence but the misuse of large-scale industry by private capitalists and financiers. He acknowledged that the big machines multiplied the power of man exceedingly both for construction and destruction, both for good and for evil. But it was possible to eliminate the evil use and violence of the big machines by changing the economic structure of capitalism. "It is essentially private ownership and the acquisitive form of society that encourage a competitive violence. Under the socialist society this evil should go, at the same time leaving us the good which the big machines has brought," he said in 1939.<sup>13</sup>

It is well known now that this was a major area of difference between him and Gandhiji. Jawaharlal believed that modern industry, science and technology must be vigorously incorporated in its body economic for any meaningful transformation of society and lasting change. This had no relationship with the question of

---

12. *Ibid.*

13. Letter to Krishna Kripalani, September 29, 1939, in *Jawaharlal Nehru; A Bunch of Old Letters*, Asia Publishing House, 1960, p. 382.



truth versus untruth or non-violence versus violence. The real question was the kind of society that we wanted to establish. As he put it, "I do not understand that a village should necessarily embody truth and non-violence." The village people, Jawaharlal, the intellectual felt, were backward intellectually and culturally and no progress could be made from a backward environment. Moreover, if the objectives were sufficiency of food, clothing, housing, education, sanitation, etc. which should be available for everyone, they could only be obtained through modern means of transport, modern developments and modern industry.

Jawaharlal was in favour of decentralisation of industries, but there could be no running away from heavy industries. "I do not think it is possible for India to be really independent unless she is a technically advanced country. I am not thinking for the moment in terms of just armies but rather of scientific growth. In the present context of the world, we cannot advance culturally without a strong background of scientific research in other departments." Jawaharlal said this as late as 1945 in a letter to Gandhiji. He added that it was many years ago since he had read *Hind Swaraj* and that he had only a vague picture in his mind, but even when he read it 20 or more years ago, it seemed to him completely unreal.<sup>14</sup>

It appeared obvious to Jawaharlal that India must lessen her religiosity and turn to science and that she must get rid of the exclusiveness in thought and social habit which had virtually imprisoned her and which prevented her growth. Caste was the symbol and embodiment of this exclusiveness among the Hindus, in Jawaharlal's view. Caste had in the past not only led to the suppression of certain groups but to a separation of theoretical and scholastic learning from craftsmanship and a divorce of philosophy from actual life and its problems. The spirit of the age demanded equality and equality required an economic system which fitted in with it and encouraged it.<sup>15</sup>

Nehru had little doubt that introduction of science and modern technology will itself bring about tremendous change and act as a catalyst. It can be said that Jawaharlal was trying to bring about social change and socio-economic transformation through the

---

14. Dorothy, Norman (ed) *Nehru—The First Sixty Years*, Volume II, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965, pp. 179-80.

15. *The Discovery of India*, op cit., pp. 517-23.

instruments of a new economic system and modern technology. Even social problems, he found fault with and which were embedded in Indian conservatism, the problem of suppression of certain communities, like the Harijans for instance, were in the final analysis problems of economic exploitation: their roots lay in the economic system. You change the system and you deal a body blow to these inequalities and social malpractices. The Harijans were essentially landless labourers, you change the land relationship and you would have struck a vital blow at untouchability, Jawaharlal maintained. You also introduce modern industries and untouchability disappears from the areas touched by modern industries. You cannot practise untouchability in a factory or while sitting in a train.

Nehru had no illusion about the deeply conservative nature of the present society in India. "All countries", he remarked, "are normally conservatives. But I imagine that our country is more than normally conservative. I find a curious hiatus in people's thinking. I find it even in the thinking of scientists who praise science and practise it in the laboratory but discard the ways of science, its methods of approach and the spirit of science in everything else they do in life. They become completely unscientific. If we approach science in the proper way, it does seem good and there is no doubt that it will always do some good. It teaches us new ways of doing things. Perhaps it improves our conditions of industrial life but the basic thing that science should do is to teach us to think straight, to act straight and not to be afraid of discarding anything or of accepting anything, provided there are sufficient reasons for doing so. I should like our country to understand and appreciate that idea all the more, because in the realm of thought our country in the past has, in a sense, been singularly free and it has not hesitated to look down the deep well of truth whatever it might contain. Nevertheless instead of such a free mind, our country encumbered itself to such an extent in matters of social practice that its growth was hindered and is hindered in a hundred ways even today. Our customs are just ways of looking at little things that govern our lives and have no significant meaning. Even then, these customs come in our way . . . if we look at science in the real way and if we think of these research institutes and laboratories in a fundamental sense, then there are something more than just little ways of improving

things and of finding out how this or that should be done. Of course, we have to do that too. But these institutes must gradually affect our minds, not only the minds of the young men and young women who would work here, but also the minds of others, more specially the minds of the rising generation, so that the nation may imbibe the spirit of science and be prepared to accept the new truth, even though it has to discard something of the old."<sup>16</sup>

Jawaharlal was thrilled by the adventure of science and the leaps and bounds with which it was advancing. He was even more impressed by, and this was what he wanted Indians to imbibe, the spirit with which scientific work was infused. The spirit of inquiry, the spirit of questioning, the spirit of scepticism, the temper of science as he called it, which was the real cause and source of great discoveries and of scientific progress.

No doubt the applications of science were inevitable and unavoidable for all countries and peoples today, but Jawaharlal emphasised that something more than its application was necessary. "It is the scientific approach, the adventurous and yet critical temper of science, the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial, the capacity to change previous conclusions in the face of new evidence, reliance on observed facts and not on pre-conceived theories, the hard discipline of the mind—all this is necessary not merely for the application of science, but for life itself and the solution of its many problems . . . The scientific approach and temper are or should be a way of life, a process of thinking, a method of acting and associating with our fellowmen . . . The scientific temper points out the way along which man should travel. This is the temper of a free man. We live in a scientific age, so we are told, but there is little evidence of this temper in the people anywhere or even in their leaders."<sup>17</sup>

Jawaharlal said that politics led him to economics and this led him inevitably to science itself. "It was science alone that could solve these problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation

16. Speech at the Fuel Research Institute, Dig Wadih, April 22, 1950, in *Jawaharlal Nehru Speeches 1949-53*, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1985, pp. 363-66.

17. *The Discovery of India*, op. cit., pp. 520-6.

and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people.” Jawaharlal said talking about his own development and growth.<sup>18</sup>

Yet, Nehru the thinker, was not satisfied with science alone. He was aware of the spiritual vacuum—as distinct from religion—which often came in the wake of a sheer material existence. He also noticed that too much stress on technology often brought about a certain lopsided growth of human beings in industrially and technologically advanced countries. It had sometimes led to too great a power being placed in the hands of human beings without the corresponding moral capacity to use it rightly. Although he was a great believer in science and the scientific approach, Jawaharlal remarked that the sheer advances of science had often made people unscientific; “science has become so vast and all pervading that scientists were unable to grasp things in their entirety and had become narrower and narrower in each individual subject. Humanity had every reason to be proud of the growth and application of science, but the mind must not deteriorate, Jawaharlal warned. Ultimately the mind should dominate. A major concern of Jawaharlal was this mental and spiritual vacuum which he believed could be filled only if, while applying science and using scientific developments and technology to the full, we kept the higher purposes of life in mind and prevented any moral degradation or deterioration.

It was inevitable that Nehru would be concerned all his life with the question of violence and with means and ends. He unequivocally stood for social change, but all the time he wrestled with the problems of the means to be adopted and with the place of violence in bringing about social change.

In the first phase of his political life and activity Nehru was less bothered about the use of violence and the problem of means. Maybe that Nehru had less experience of life. Maybe he was more of a pure revolutionary earlier. Maybe the cynical happenings in the world as he saw them in three decades made some reappraisal necessary. Maybe also the weight of administration and the attendant problems coloured his subsequent outlook. Maybe—and that perhaps may be nearer the truth—all these factors

---

18. Jawaharlal Nehru: *The Unity of India*, Lindsay Drummond, London, 1941, p. 176.

combined to demarcate his earlier phase from the later phase in certain respects.

In the earlier phase of his political activities Jawaharlal was much more impatient with the injustice and exploitation that he found, the inequities of the capitalist system and he was much more concerned with the need for rapid and radical change. He believed strongly during that phase, as he said in his Autobiography, that violence was in fact practised more by the exploiting class. If there was one thing that history had shown, it was that economic interests shaped the political views of groups and classes: Neither reasons nor moral considerations overrode those interests. Individuals might be converted in rare cases, but any attempt to convert a governing and privileged class into forsaking power and giving up its unjust privileges had always failed in the past and was not going to succeed in future either. To think of conversion of a class for the removal of conflict by rational arguments was to delude oneself, the same kind of illusion as to imagine that a dominant imperialist power would give up its domination over a country unless effective pressure, amounting to coercion was exercised.

A certain measure of coercion Nehru accepted as necessary to bring about changes in this phase of his thinking. He agreed that, in theory, it was possible to bring about a great political change by a non-violent technique, and that it should equally be possible to effect a radical social change by this method. If a non-violent method could be used against a foreign ruler, *prima facie* it should be easier to use it within a country against indigenous selfish interests. He believed that India took to the non-violent methods because it promised to take the people to the goal of independence, in the most desirable and effective way. The goal was, however, apart from non-violence. Non-violence itself could not become the goal. Certainly no one could say that freedom or independence must be aimed at only if attainable by non-violent methods. He was annoyed at the manner in which non-violence was being turned into an inflexible dogma, "losing its spiritual appeal to the intellect and taking its place in the pigeon-holes of faith and religion."

Nehru did not, even in this phase, applaud violence or raise it to the pedestal of a theory. Violence, in his view, was undoubtedly bad and brought an unending trail of evil consequences with it.

Worse than violence, as he put it, "are the motive of hatred, cruelty, revenge and punishment, which very often accompany violence."<sup>19</sup>

But at the same time Nehru felt that some form of coercion was inevitable, for people who held power and privilege would not give them up till they were forced to do so or till conditions were created which may do more harm to them to keep these privileges than to give them up. "The present conflicts in society, national as well as class conflicts, can never be resolved except by coercion . . . nor is it right for us to cover up these basic conflicts and try to make out that they did not exist. This is not only a suppression of the truth, but directly leads to bolstering up of the existing order by misleading people as to the true fact and giving the ruling class the moral basis which they are always seeking in order to justify their special privileges."

Jawaharlal acknowledged that in considering a method for changing the existing order, the costs thereof in moral as well as spiritual terms must be weighed. It must be seen how and whether it helped ultimately in the development of human happiness and human progress, materially and spiritually. But it must also be borne in mind that the cost of not changing the existing order, of carrying on as it was, was terrible too, with its frustration, distortion, starvation and misery and spiritual degradation. The privileged classes would not hesitate to use violence to maintain their favoured position. A clash of interests was inevitable and each one would have to choose his own side.<sup>20</sup>

But as his thinking developed and as his experience matured, Nehru came to abhor violence more and more. He came much nearer Gandhi over the years not in regard to industrialisation and socialism but in regard to violence and means and ends. Indeed peace and Nehru became almost synonymous. Nehru came to believe equally passionately in a peaceful and friendly approach—the civilised approach as he often called it—for the solution of society's problems. The goal remained but the means must be peaceful and good.

Nehru was never even earlier enamoured of violence as such. Individual violence he never approved of and regarded it as futile. He acknowledged that organised violence in history

19. *An Autobiography*, op. cit., pp. 588-93.

20. *Ibid.*

had brought about many changes, but he came to the view that violence created too much bitterness and needless anger and fear. This abhorrence of violence increased sharply with years. Only the peaceful approach, he was convinced, should be adopted. Equally Nehru was irrevocably committed and dedicated to democracy. He disliked the excess of violence and denial of individual freedom in communist countries. Although he did not wish to advise them as to what they should do, for himself he was clear that only democratic methods should be used and that democratic functioning should be established and strengthened in India.

He set about to carve out for independent India a new path, a new way of development—socio-economic transformation through peaceful means. He knew this would take a longer time, but he justified it by pointing out that it involved less cost in human terms and preserved democratic freedom of the individual. I believe that the greatest contribution that India under Nehru's guidance and leadership has made is the attempt at this experiment of peaceful change. Whether it would succeed or not is too early to say, but the effort itself is quite unique in history. If it succeeds, it would blaze a new trail in the entire world.

Nehru is the father and founder of planning in India. Planned development in a parliamentary democratic system is a remarkable phenomenon in history. New policies and new patterns had to be evolved for democratic planning to suit this new kind of approach. Even India's foreign policy developed uniquely because of this new pattern of internal development.

Nehru explained the implications of this different approach to Tibor Mende in *The Conversations*, published in 1956. He said that he did not accept the ideological background of communist Russia. But in the economic and other spheres the background of the United States of America also did not fit in with India's view-point and with her new approach. Jawaharlal agreed that politically speaking India was a parliamentary democracy, nearer to the Western view-point, for India believed in civil liberties, in freedom of expression, and so on and so forth, but "we want to progress rapidly and we want to remove the disparities which exist in our country . . . now in our opinion, these disparities are likely to increase by, what may be called, the capitalists approach . . . therefore, we are driven to what might be called a socialist

approach . . . we try to plan accordingly and this fits in with our previous thinking, a thinking that was shaped long before the conflict between Western powers and the Soviet Union . . . arose. Through our national struggle already, we have been thinking along a peaceful approach."

Nehru said that he did not deny the class conflict but believed that the class conflicts need not be solved by aggravating class conflicts and by fighting over them. They could be resolved through democratic public pressure and a friendly approach. This was different from the communist view-point but it was also different from the American view-point. As Jawaharlal put it, "broadly speaking, the way we look at our own problems. . . it does not fit in with the growth of private enterprise in a big way. In a small way, yes, of course." There was a large area of private enterprise in agriculture, light and small industry but the basic industries could not be in the hands of private monopolies because that would come in the way of both equalisation and of general all-round progress. There must be no concentration of power, political or economic. Nehru thought essentially in terms of state ownership of heavy industries and a co-operative system for large areas of private industry.

In a revealing statement about his own thinking, Jawaharlal said to Tibor Mende that the communist ideology of society should not be mixed up with the communist party. "The two things are quite different. He had no objection to the socialist ideal at all. He had no ideological aversion to the communist ideal of society, but this should not be mixed up with dictatorship. I do not like dictatorship. I do not like authoritarian regimes." Nor did he like the techniques adopted by the Communist party, Jawaharlal said that that essentially meant he would not like to have it in India, "but who am I to say what—in a particular set of circumstances—another country does? I am not competent and, anyhow, I cannot interfere."<sup>21</sup>

Nehru subscribed to democracy and socialism and planning within a democratic framework, but never abandoned his belief in the goal of establishing a socialist society, in the goal of taking India towards economic democracy. He warned that political democracy would not be able to justify itself unless it ultimately succeeded in delivering the goods; otherwise it would have to yield to some other kind of economic or social structure which

21. Tibor Mende: *op cit.*, pp. 97-8.



we might or might not like. He reminded the people that mere talk of political democracy had lost its particular significance which it had in the 19th century. "If it is to have any meaning, political democracy must gradually or, if you like, rapidly lead to economic democracy. If there is economic inequality in the country, all the political democracy and all the adult suffrage in the world cannot bring about real democracy. Therefore, your objective must be to put an end to all differences between class and class, to bring about more equality and a more unitary society—in other words, to strive for economic democracy. We have to think in terms of ultimately developing into a classless society."<sup>22</sup>

---

22. Speech in Parliament, December 15, 1952.

*Prof. D.D. Malhotra*

## **Jawaharlal Nehru : His Vision on Science and Technology and Public Administration**

---

For well over fifty years, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru shaped and moulded India's thought and action and captivated the intellect and mind of many, inside and outside the country. Social and economic strategies of development articulated by each one of them though differed substantially, and yet, they worked together because they shared a vision in the freedom of their country. It is the vision of Pandit Nehru which has however, shaped, after Independence the destiny of the country more than of anyone else. In 'The Discovery of India', Pandit Nehru reveals the roots of his vision. He says:

I came to her (India) from West. . . . I was eager and anxious to change her outlook and appearance and give her the garb of modernity.

Here one finds not only a vision but also a sense of determination, a motive force to direct oneself and others towards actions for transforming a vision to a reality.

Much before independence of the country, he stated that political freedom was not enough. A socialist society must be created and there is no other alternative for the future of India but to become modern, scientific and industrialised. Modernisation meant to him, the development of science and technology, of scientific temper in the society, of industrialisation and of democratic political institutions for governance of the country. He saw in

each of these components definite means of eradicating poverty, starvation, ignorance and superstition.

### **Nehru's Vision on Science and Technology**

The roots of a vision on science and technology grew out of fascinating experiences Pandit Nehru had during his childhood. At the age of eleven, he set up a little laboratory where he spent long hours in carrying out experiments in elementary physics and chemistry. Later, he went to Cambridge which then excelled in the teaching of natural sciences. He chose to study natural science at Trinity College. He often recalled his visits to Cavendish Laboratory where leading British scientists worked. Even though he later abandoned the study of science in favour of law and joined the Inner Temple, science kept on inspiring him. Series of letters to his daughter during 1933 entitled 'Darwin and the Triumph of Science' (February 3, 1933), 'Science Goes Ahead' (July 13, 1933) and the 'Good and Bad Application of Science' (July 14, 1933) and his letter to Aldous Huxley (of September 1, 1933) reveal his early vision of the importance of science in the development of individual and its role in social and economic development. He wrote on July 12, 1934 to his daughter that "No person can call himself educated today unless he or she knows something of science and economics and technology". He firmly believed that "we cannot progress nationally or individually unless we profit by the lessons of science. . . ." He stated that "it was science alone that could solve these problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening customs and traditions, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people".<sup>1</sup>

In its wider connotation, science represented to Pandit Nehru a "certain way of approaching problems, a certain way of seeking the truth. It is a certain empirical way whereby we get prepared to reject anything if we cannot establish or prove it". He further elaborated that "science means an approach to all of life's problems.

1 Message sent on the occasion of Silver Jubilee session of the Indian Science Congress held at Calcutta, January 3, 1938. See Baldev Singh (ed.), 'Jawaharlal Nehru on Science and Society: A collection of his writing and speeches', New Delhi, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 1988.

You cannot apply science in your industries keeping other departments of your life free from it". While science changes with each new discovery, and therefore, there is nothing final about it, he maintained that "the scientific method does not change, and it is to that we must adhere in one's thought and activities, in research, in social life, in political and economic life". His vision was to develop in the Indian society a scientific temper which sought "the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial, the capacity to change previous conclusions in the face of new evidence, the reliance on observed facts and not on pre-conceived theory, the hard discipline of mind—all this is necessary for the application of science but for life itself, and the solution of its many problems".

He found considerable scope for application of scientific method to politics when he observed:

Our politics must either be that of magic or of science. The former of course requires no argument or logic; the latter is in theory at least entirely based on clarity of thought and reasoning and has no room for vague idealistic or religious or sentimental processes which confuse and befog the mind. (JLN, Vol. 6, p. 3).

He believed that "socialism was based on science and logic" and he said that its scientific approach "helps me in understanding the problems of history and history itself".

After Pandit Nehru resumed presidentship of the Congress in 1937, he started developing close contacts with scientists and scientific organisations in India. In his message titled 'Science and Planning' sent on the occasion of Silver Jubilee of the Indian Science Congress at Calcutta in January 1938, he observed that "Even more than the present, the future belongs to science and to those who make friends with science and seek its help for the advancement of humanity". He made his firm commitment to develop 'a state organisation of research' and declared that "we have to build India on a scientific foundation", because "any country which is traditionally-minded in regard to various matters, including administration is doomed in a rapidly changing world".

In October 1938, he became the Chairman of the National Planning Committee. By that time, a group of Indian scientists in Calcutta, under the leadership of Dr. Meghnad Saha were

formulating plans for the application of science and technology for national development. They found in Pandit Nehru a firm believer in the development of basic and heavy industries on a large scale and ready to promote and use science and technology. Pandit Nehru associated Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis and a number of other scientists in the work of the National Planning Committee (NPC). His contact and interaction with some of the most eminent scientists in the country and with the technical officers of Central and State Governments during his two years' chairmanship of the NPC laid the foundation for developing a perspective for scientific research in India and its application to the development of the country.

He subsequently saw the destructive power of science when on August 6, 1945, the first atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. His reaction was: "If the atomic energy behind the atom bomb is utilised for constructive power, it will very much develop the entire structure of the world". He visualised that "the world is bound to change within the coming few years and I hope that atomic energy will be used in constructive power to uplift mankind". In response to a question at his press conference at Delhi on August 25, 1945, whether the future Government of India would have atomic bomb in the country, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

So long as the world is constituted as it is, every country will have to devise and use the latest scientific method for its protection. I have no doubt India will develop its scientific researches and hope Indian scientists will use the atomic force for constructive purposes. But if India is threatened, it will inevitably try to defend itself by all means at its disposal. I hope India, in common with other countries will prevent atomic bombs being used.

On resumption of the work of the NPC after the World War II, he promoted further close interaction between planning and application of science and technology. He grasped the problems of scientific research in India with deep insight. He observed in his message of November 21, 1945 to the Royal Institute of Science, Bombay that "I am convinced that of all the big problems that face India today nothing is more important than the development of scientific research both, pure and applied ..." and he pledged

his support to the institutions engaged in scientific research. He saw in the development of heavy industries a key to the removal of poverty and to the raising of the standards of life and he visualised that the scientific research would hasten the progress. He wanted Indian "scientists should be the foremost in the world".

While laying the foundation-stone of the National Physical Laboratory at New Delhi on January 4, 1947 he said:

I hope that the National Physical Laboratory which will soon begin functioning here will be followed by numerous other research institutes and laboratories, and a stream of earnest young men and women will go through it and come out to serve the country and the world. During the last few months I have been watching and reading about these schemes of various types of laboratories being set up in different parts of India and I have also to some extent scrutinised other vast schemes—river valley schemes, projects, barrages, dams etc. some of them bigger in scope than the Tennessee Valley Scheme—and my mind has been fired by the picture that I saw emerging out of these great schemes. In the turmoil of the present what seemed to me for more important and essential was laying the foundations of these great development of India.

It is to fulfil this vision that he set up a Scientific Manpower Committee in April 1947 to advise on the best method of utilisation and augmenting the scientific manpower resources of the country. On the recommendation of the Committee a roster of scientific talent was prepared. A portfolio of scientific research was created in the new Cabinet formed in August 1947, and Pandit Nehru, as Prime Minister, placed scientific research under his personal charge. Immediately thereafter, on August 23, 1947, he held a high level meeting attended by several ministers, secretaries, the Director of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research to discuss the future set-up of scientific research in India. He categorically stated in the meeting that "I am interested in scientific research and wish to be closely associated with it and help in its promotion".

It is this association during next seventeen years as Prime Minister of the country that gave Pandit Nehru the opportunities to transform his vision into reality, and each step he took opened up new vistas of science and technology in India. Introducing

Atomic Energy Bill in the Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative) on April 6, 1948, he urged the House to consider that:

If we are to remain abreast in the world as a nation which keeps ahead of things, we must develop this atomic energy quite apart from war—indeed. I think we must develop it for the purpose of using it for peaceful purposes ... for the development of human life and happiness and not one of war and hatred.

After the passage of the Atomic Energy Act, the Atomic Energy Commission was set up under the Chairmanship of Dr. Homi J. Bhabha to control and develop atomic energy and material used in it. In his speech on the opening of Atomic Energy Establishment at Trombay, Bombay on January 20, 1957, he complemented young scientists who were working in the establishment for their good work and said “the future becomes much more assured not because of these buildings we put up of cement and steel but because of human material that one sees doing this work”.

A chain of eleven laboratories were planned before Independence. Under his leadership, the progress of setting them up and expansion picked up momentum. He saw a distinct and practical advantage of the development of research laboratories for keeping pace with the developments in the world and also for “the development of temper of science in our departments of life”. In his address on the occasion of the opening of the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, on January 3, 1950, he visualised that “these laboratories would help ... in opening the doors to large number of young men and women and give them opportunities to do work for the country in the cause of science and in application of science for public good”.

He was aware of the fact that the specialised research institutes and laboratories are not by themselves sufficient to spread the science, scientific research and its application. The role of universities in the spread of scientific education was considered as important but he envisaged that they should not be loaded with the task of specialised research. In his inaugural speech at the Scientists' Conference on the Development of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes at New Delhi on November 26, 1954, he observed:

But if our universities start, if I may say so, specialising too much in one thing, going too far ahead, it is possible that they will become lopsided. Therefore, it is far more important that the universities should give a general education in the whole scientific field, rather than by itself do the work which national laboratory does.

Separating research from teaching in the universities was also intended to give greater orientation to the research institutes to deal with the practical needs of industry and society. Utilitarian emphasis on the scientific research institutes would enable the country to develop appropriate technology apart from indigenising the technological development elsewhere.

On March 13, 1958, he read out in Lok Sabha the Government of India Scientific Policy Resolution No. 131/CF/57 dated the 4th March, 1958. The Resolution emphasised that:

The wealth and prosperity of a nation depend on the effective utilisation of its human and material resources through industrialisation. The use of human material for industrialisation demands its education in science and training in technical skills. Industry opens up possibilities of great fulfilment for the individual. India's enormous resources of manpower can only become an asset in the modern world when trained and educated.

The aims of the Scientific Policy were defined as:

- (i) to foster, promote and sustain, by all appropriate means, the cultivation of science, and scientific research in all its aspects—pure, applied and educational;
- (ii) to ensure adequate supply, within the country, of research scientists of the highest quality, and to recognise their work as an important component of the strength of the nation;
- (iii) to encourage and initiate, with all possible speed, programmes for the training of scientific and technical personnel, on a scale adequate to fulfil the country's needs in science and education, agriculture and industry, and defence;
- (iv) to ensure that the creative talent of men and women is encouraged and finds full scope in scientific activity;
- (v) to encourage individual initiative for the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, and for the discovery of



new knowledge, in an atmosphere of academic freedom;  
and

- (vi) in general, to secure for the people of the country all the benefit that can accrue from the acquisition and application of scientific knowledge.

The Resolution reveals the breadth and the depth of his vision on science and technology. He visualised India to be on the forefront in scientific research and as an industrialised nation by developing and utilising the vast reservoir of talent and material. Expansion of scientific research institutes and laboratories and technical education was given priority by him. Industrialisation, with emphasis on heavy and basic industries using the latest development in science and technology, threw open a vast range of opportunities for application of scientific research and for employment of technical manpower. Higher technical education rapidly expanded under his leadership and country witnessed the growth of engineering colleges, institutes of technology, medical colleges, agriculture science universities etc. A strong foundation and an infrastructure for a scientific and industrial society in India was built by him.

He was conscious of the need for social control over the scientific and technological progress. He observed that unless this progress "is balanced by some kind of moral standards and ethical values, it is likely to lead to destruction", and "too much of stress on technology and other branches—specialised branches of physical sciences—has led to certain lopsided growth of human beings in industrially and technically advanced countries. It had led to too great a power being placed in the hand of human beings without corresponding moral capacity to use it rightly".

He wanted a marriage between science and industry in India. At the same time he noticed the tendency amongst scientists to remain confined to experimentation. He observed that "there is a tendency, I find for them, to do wonderful experiment and it remains an experiment after that. The next stage somehow does not come". For a practical application of scientific research he stressed that "there should be association of thought with action".

He was conscious of the criticism that despite the tremendous growth of scientific and technical institutions of higher learning producing highly qualified manpower, there has not been the spread of mass education and scientific temper. He said that

despite all the progress, "I do not suppose it will be true to say that the background of general thinking in India is governed by the scientific approach. Nor can it be done by some mandate of the Government. That has to come out of the educational process and by the industrial and technological changes that are coming about in the country". And yet, if India today is the third country in the World after USA and USSR in having the largest scientific and technical manpower pool and is emerging as an industrialised nation, it is entirely due to the vision of a leader who built, step by step, a structure to fulfil it. No leader of any nation—developed or developing—in power or outside it, has promoted science and scientific research and industrialisation with such a vision and vigour as Pandit Nehru did in India.

### **Development Perspective of Science and Technology Vision**

It was Pandit Nehru's vision of science and technology which influenced his development approach and strategy. He was a socialist because he felt that "socialism is a scientific approach to the World's problem". He was in favour of planning because "planning is the scientific method; it is science in action". He was deeply impressed by the economic progress Russia had made through planning and through large scale industrialisation and development and application of science and technology. He visualised that in India too industrialisation, planning and socialism will accelerate the advancement of scientific research and its application in dealing with the problems of poverty, ignorance and superstition. He was a democrat because the scientific temper permits oneself to be persuaded by logical reasoning and empirical approach and for this, it is necessary to have individual freedom to express oneself. He launched an entirely new experiment of achieving a socialist society through democracy as he visualised that only political democracy, can permit social and economic democracy—the main aim of socialism. It is in this vision of science and scientific approach that one finds in him a system's approach to social, economic and political development of the country.

Pandit Nehru drafted the Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy at the Karachi Congress in 1931. The Resolution adopted was the first step towards the socialist goal

by advocacy of nationalisation of key industries, state ownership of mineral resources, railways, shipping, etc. and for providing a living wage and other amenities for the masses. Pandit Nehru firmly believed that industrialisation and socialism would effectively deal with the problem of economic backwardness of the country and would transform the society. He differed with Gandhiji and with others in the pursuit of his conviction. Gandhiji wanted Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to recognise that:

...if India is to attain true freedom and through India the world also, ... people will have to live in villages, not in towns, in huts, not in palaces. Crores of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to violence and untruth ... without Truth and Non-violence there can be nothing but destruction of humanity. We can realise Truth and Non-violence only in the simplicity of village life ...

The 'essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs and become self-sufficient. If he does not have this control, he cannot save himself.

However, Nehru's perception of the problems and the vision of its solution were different. To him:

A village normally speaking, is backward intellectually and culturally and no progress can be made from a backward environment. Narrow minded people are much more likely to be untruthful and violent. We have to put down certain objectives like sufficiency of food, clothing, housing, education, sanitation, etc. which should be the minimum requirements for the country for everyone. It is these objectives in view that we must find out specially how to attain them speedily. There is no question of palaces for millions of people. But there seems to be no reason why millions should not have comfortable upto-date homes, where they can lead a cultured existence.

Nehru believed that for fulfilling these requirements, development of heavy industries and application of science and technology are inevitable and questioned "How far that will fit in with a purely village society". In his letter to Aldous Huxley on September 1, 1933, Pandit Nehru wrote that Gandhiji is

essentially 'a man of religion' and that "Mr. Gandhi's personal philosophy, and those who look upon him more or less as a religious or moral leader, presumably accept it to a greater or lesser extent. Mr. Gandhi no doubt realizes that his strict personal code cannot be followed by more than a handful of people, but he hopes that this handful will set an example which will result in toning up the lives of large number of others". A critical analysis of this approach is further provided in his address at the cultural conference organised by the students of Scottish Church College, Calcutta on January 3, 1939. He stated:

Ordinarily, the religious approach in the past has been the way of individual development. It tries to improve the individual hoping that improvement of the individual will affect the social group.

Nevertheless, the modern method lays stress on improving the environment so that a person living in a particular environment may grow to his fullest capacity. Both these methods have not been, however, contemporary. Perhaps the stress laid in the improvement of a particular environment is more important today because if the environment is bad you cannot make much progress. We have to think in terms of social culture and what kind of environment it develops. What is the good, for instance, of your trying to cultivate unselfishness and noble qualities when the social structure that surrounds you is based on selfishness and produces bad influence on life?

These views of India's two most outstanding leaders who were so different from each other but together who shaped the destiny of the nation, have been given to reveal alternative approaches and visions on India's development perspectives. Gandhiji focussed on man for system's development whereas Pandit Nehru focussed on the system for individual's development. Gandhiji was not against science, technology or industrialisation; but his vision was to keep them within the range of a way of life and nourish it. Nehru's vision was that of extensive application of science and technology and industrialisation for better living of the masses and for their liberation from the clutches of poverty, ignorance and superstition. His vision was to create an environment

which can induce the individual to develop his or her maximum talent and potential.

### **Vision on Public Administration**

With a vision on science and technology and the development perspectives based on it, did Pandit Nehru visualise the change in the public administration in India? In what way his commitment to democratic political system with the adoption of parliamentary form of government influenced the change, or lack of it, in the administrative system after the Independence? What was his response to the vast expansion of scientific and technical organisations and manpower and the emergence of state-owned industrial enterprises? From the limited functions of maintenance of law and order and revenue collection, the state had assumed the role of not only the protector and regulator but also of motivator of change, educator, producer and distributor of goods and services in its pursuit of development goals. Did this change require restructuring of the public administration? What was Pandit Nehru's vision on the concept, role, structure and operation of public administration in India?

It is generally contended that the nature and severity of problems—national and international immediately after independence which Pandit Nehru had to deal with on priority basis were such that public administration did not attract much of his attention. Yet, he took keen interest in not only setting up the Indian Institute of Public Administration, but also in coming over every year to deliver his Presidential address to the General Body of the Institute. There are speeches which basically reveal his perception of the problems of public administration in India and the measures required to deal with them.

There are two ways to see his vision on public administration in India. One, what he did to the administrative system as it had existed before independence and continued thereafter. The other approach is to look for his vision in the system's perspective and see how its orientation and functioning was sought to be changed. In this context, one can see that Pandit Nehru concentrated on those aspects of governance of the country which decisively determine the effectiveness of the administrative system. If the goals are clearly defined, if policies are well articulated, if political institutions are effective in providing good leadership and in

inculcating social and political behaviour congruent with the requirements of their effective functioning, the administrative system is bound to respond to the demands placed on it. If it does not, it could be either due to the above inputs being defective or absent, or on account of the structural limitations on the capacity of the administrative system. He defined social and economic objectives to give coherent policies, he adopted planning for their formulation and he experimented with alternative structures for their implementation. He expanded the scope of public administration in India. Thus, both micro and macro approaches are necessary to comprehend Pandit Nehru's vision of public administration in India.

*(a) A System's Perspective*

In the system's perspective, the traditional administrative machinery could be treated as a sub-system of an overall system of governance of the country. Alternative sub-systems established for carrying out new tasks could be considered as a part of a vision beyond the confines of the traditional administrative system. If the effective functioning of the administrative system is critically dependent upon the working of other institutions having functional linkages with it, development of such other institutions becomes a precondition; and only a man of deep fore-sight and broad vision can work for developing and strengthening them. In this wider context of public administration, Pandit Nehru emerges as a pioneer in institution building.

In a parliamentary form of government, the effective functioning of the Parliament and its various wings including its Committees has a very close bearing on the working of the administrative system. How Pandit Nehru as a parliamentarian and as the Prime Minister for seventeen years nourished and strengthened it is fairly well documented. His conduct was exemplary and the examples he set as a parliamentary leader became a model of desirable behaviour for the institutionalisation of the Parliament at a time when most of the elected members were not familiar with the requirements of the new structure of governance of the country.

He established scientific and research organisations outside the fold of the administrative system. Similarly, public sector enterprises emerged and expanded rapidly in the field of industrial

production. New forms of organisation evolved for undertaking multipurpose development projects. Even the field administration saw the emergence of alternative structures for development. Area development authorities, urban development authorities and special purpose bodies were established with the intention of intensive utilisation of special expertise needed for the development work. By granting autonomy to these organisations, he intended to protect them from the baneful influence of bureaucratic functioning evident in the traditional administrative system, and to give them the flexibility to respond to the different conditions in which they operate and the demands placed on them by the government and society. It also created a dispersal of power within the machinery of government and society. While presenting the Indian Statistical Institute Bill before Lok Sabha on December 14, 1959, he strongly supported the need for autonomy of the Institute and he said:

We have been progressively coming to the conclusion that too much centralisation of our activities is not a good thing.

You cannot have creative impulses dealt with routine methods. That is why wherever science has grown very considerably ... they give widest latitude to the scientific apparatus.

These institutions do not have to come for sanction to people who usually have no ghost of an idea of science or that special thing. What happens in the government apparatus normally, is that it is looked at, very competently looked at, but not looked at from the particular scientific or like point of view.

He further added that as the State-owned enterprises grow, it becomes difficult for them to operate if there is a constant reference to the government. It is, therefore, necessary for them to have flexibility and non-interference in their work. He visualised no conflict between the needs of autonomy and public accountability; it was a matter of devising suitable methods and procedures and of appropriate attitudes of the government officials.

In his vision of the Planning Commission, one can see a new institutional framework for policy formulation. Traditionally, the Secretariat had performed the role of policy making. Its staffing pattern, for this purpose, was based on the concept of a 'generalist'

administrator with necessary field experience as a pre-requisite. The structure of the Planning Commission, the process of planning and the five year plans as the framework of policies of government, reduced the Secretariat's role to operational and implementation policy issues. The conceptual and allocational aspects of policies increasingly were guided by the five year plans prepared in the Planning Commission with close and active participation of a large number of government, non-government officials and experts in the task forces and study groups and also working as specialists within the Planning Commission.

At the micro-level, Pandit Nehru's vision of the administrative system as inherited from the British seems to focus on the attitude and behavioural profile for the development administrators. In the middle-range, i.e. between micro and macro levels, he visualised Panchayati Raj and community development as vehicles of development, strengthening of democracy at the grass-root level, and as necessary for public cooperation in the development effort. His views on some of the very crucial issues facing the administrative system are more symptomatic than diagnostic. Consequently, it is difficult to say whether they represent a vision; but nevertheless they are very important and significant as they do reveal his choice of continuing with the administrative system left by the British in the country at the time of the Independence.

*(b) The Perspective of the Administrative System*

India's struggle for freedom picked up at a time when rule of law had been fairly well established despite a few abbreviations here and there. Codification of laws, administrative apparatus to enforce them and judicial machinery for adjudication had more or less impersonalised the governance of the country. A governance by laws could not escape from evolving an administrative system displaying characteristics of Weberian model of bureaucracy. In fact, the period during 1858-1919 is described as the 'bureaucratic state' or 'bureaucratic despotism'. Prof. B.B. Mishra observes that "This law-based absolutism in India conduced to the progress of modern science and literature".

It is the rule of law in India which provided a more enduring and strong base for the unity of the country. It had an enormous



impact on the liberation of intellect and mind from the strangulating hold of personal rule and social traditions which legitimised it. It promoted democratic and secular consciousness. It is not surprising therefore that many of the leaders of freedom movement were men who had close interaction with rule of law. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was one of them.

Whether Pandit Nehru had visualised any other system of administration for the governance of the country is not known. But before independence, he expressed resentment against the prevalence of the spirit of ICS in Indian administration. He categorically stated: 'It seems to me quite essential that the ICS and similar services must disappear completely as such before we can start real work on a new order'. Would there be a change in the administrative structure of the country and the civil service staffing pattern or did it mean that the change in services would reflect Indianisation? These issues were not discussed even when socio-economic ideology of development was being articulated to broaden the objectives of freedom movement. It was becoming quite clear that after the Independence, India would go in for planned development to achieve 'socialistic' objectives in a democratic political system; yet the suitability of the administrative system as machinery of government was rarely questioned to explore alternatives. The reactions of leaders were confined to the style and not to the substantive aspects of the administrative system in the country.

During the experience as the first Prime Minister in the Interim Government (1945-47) Pandit Nehru observed:

The (Civil) services were fossilised in their mental outlook; they were wedded to bygone and absolute methods and refused to move with times. It remains to be seen how long we can function in these circumstances. The experience of the past three or four months has shown us that the conduct and attitude of officers have not changed.

After independence, the administrative system of the colonial era was not only retained, but also given constitutional protection. The Indian Constitution is perhaps unique in having an entire chapter devoted to institutionalisation of the All India and Central Services on the same pattern as they had existed as the backbone of the colonial administrative system. It has often been questioned

as to why Pandit Nehru, who remained Prime Minister of the country till his death on May 27, 1964, did not overhaul the administrative system? Various explanations have been offered. The national leaders and the government were too engrossed with the massive problems arising out of the partition and the external threat in Kashmir. The top priority was to be given to the consolidation of the Union and maintenance of law and order. These problems required stability—both political and administrative and the steel-frame of India dealt with the crises quite effectively. National leaders being too well groomed in the British traditions and having adopted Westminster model of parliamentary democracy with cabinet form of government, could not have created uncertainty and instability in the institutional balance by revamping a well-established administrative system based on rule of law, even though it was restricted in its approach and functions. It does not, however, mean that Pandit Nehru was happy and satisfied with its working. All these factors might have influenced Pandit Nehru's choice in favour of continuing with the inherited administrative system. In fact, he seems to have resisted, at times, any change in it. Yet, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the way it worked.

The problems of the administrative system on which Pandit Nehru expressed himself quite frequently are primarily those which arose from (a) expansion and orientation of the traditional administrative machinery (b) 'generalist' versus 'specialist' controversy, (c) the concept of civil service neutrality and the role of civil servant in the development process, and (d) centralisation versus decentralisation including the Panchayati Raj and Community Development and the relationship of officials with the public.

With the broadening of the role of the State, it was inevitable that the administrative system would expand. Socialistic policies further added to the rapid expansion of the bureaucracy. Pandit Nehru was conscious of it. He said, "The growth of socialism is the growth of bureaucracy". His response to the criticism of the expansion was that "It is odd that people who shout most loudly against bureaucracy are the people who want more of it. That is what is involved in the growth of socialist avenue of work". At the same time he was himself extremely unhappy about the expansion. In his inaugural address at the Twenty-fourth Annual

Meeting of Central Board of Irrigation and Power at New Delhi on October 26, 1953, he observed:

I see a strange mal-development in the country .... (T)he way the government organisations and departments multiply as also the staff engaged by them, leads nowhere but to waste. Then arises the problem of coordination between them who have grown so big, for, each is an independent unit. A coordinating agency is created and as usual, its size also goes on increasing. Then again arises the problem of how to coordinate the activities of the coordinating agencies. All this is at once baffling and confusing. I am astonished to see all this and in my opinion, this should be stopped ... Such mal-development in our organisations is dangerous to our country.

A certain degree of expansion of the administrative machinery after independence was inevitable. But the question has often been asked: How much of the expansion has taken place because of those components of the development role for which it had not been designed in a democratic system of governance? For instance, if political parties and other non-governmental organisations are used more effectively to perform the functions of educating (social and political), mobilising and organising them in favour of behavioural transformation and around development programmes, and of articulation, aggregation and communication of interests, the administrative system would be less involved in social and political issues and conflicts. On the other hand, without the effectiveness of these organisations, the politicians in a democratic system would have the propensity to promise more than the administrative system can deliver and thus give a demaging blow to its image and create widespread public doubts about its credibility. Moreover, there would, in the absence of strong political party organisation, be a tendency to use the administrative system as a conveyor belt for political penetration for mobilisation, organisation and for creating the conditions of acceptability of the political authority. Consequently, the size, functions and powers of bureaucracy would increase manifold. Socialism is a political ideology, and it requires in a democracy, a political organisation to propagate it and articulate a value system within the society to produce a behaviour pattern in its favour. Can it be secured by the authority of state exercised through its administrative

system? Pandit Nehru in his Second Annual General Body Meeting of the Indian Institute of Public Administration held on April 7, 1956 said:

We have the objective of socialism or the socialist pattern. Now, every machine that you make is meant to turn out something you want. If we want socialism, then the administrative machinery that we have must gradually turn out socialism. If it is turning out something else, then, it does not fit in with the objective we have and there is a constant conflict between these two.

He was referring here not to the individual but to the pattern of recruitment, promotion etc. But he emphasised in his Third Annual General Body Meeting of the Institute on April 6, 1957 that:

It becomes all the more important that the administrator has his hands on the problem of the people all the time, and the people feel that this man is one of them, that he is reflecting their wishes, and will always reflect their wishes.

He visualised an overlapping role of the elected representatives and politicians and the officials when he stressed that in the 'growth of socialistic avenues of work', the administrator's work would

... involve close contact and touch with people and winning over the people to his side. It involves, in fact, the approach of a politician, of a good politician, of an effective politician—not in the sense of the politician's approach when he tries to get votes, but the normal approach of a politician when he wants to win over the people to his side to do something with their help.

It is quite apparent that in the developmental process the role of the administrator was being conceived in much wider context and often, it involved, even if not envisaged, a competition with the role of a politician. This political role led to the re-examination of the concept of civil service neutrality. In his Presidential Address to the Fourth Annual General Body Meeting of the Institute held on April 5, 1958, he stated that "Civil Service neutrality is a fiction which I have often wondered at". During British times, he

maintained that the concept of:

Neutrality meant keeping within the strict lines of that pattern of Government—going outside it was tantamount to lack of neutrality. Neutrality thus, in fact, meant extreme partisanship, not at all neutrality. If a person raised his voice against the established pattern, he was supposed to be an anarchist. That he had to function within a prescribed framework is understandable, but why call it neutrality?

He maintained that “the person who is to be completely neutral is a head clerk and no more”. He contended that “the whole conception of the public servant in India has in the past been rather a static conception”. “Doing one’s job as efficiently and adequately as possible, and impartially, was the conception in British time”, and that “the idea of a public servant sitting in a world apart and doling out impartial justice is completely out of place in a democratic society, and much more so in a dynamic democratic society ...”

He was essentially visualising in the administrative system a change in the attitudinal and behavioural profile of the officials for a multi-dimensional role—parts of which either ran into conflict or in competition with the functionaries of other organisations in society. He did not affect any structural change even though he was, at times, not happy with it.

In his speech at the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad on October 23, 1958, he resented the class system in the administration. He said:

I do not like this business of Class I Officer, Class II, Class III and Class IV. I can understand a person abler, more competent, occupying a more responsible position. But let him not think that he belongs to a superior class.

He often resented the rigidity of the administrative system caused by its rule-orientation. He found these rules out-dated and complex, responsible for delays and thus a source of corruption. He wondered how “the Government of India had continued to exist so long with these rules. It should have collapsed under them”. Yet, a society in which objectivity and impartiality have not become the values of social conduct, the formal organisations

i.e. bureaucracy seek to inculcate them through rule; and therefore, rule orientation becomes excessive. A man of scientific temper like Pandit Nehru would have found these rules irritating. Not till the scientific temper creates in the society the basis of trust and confidence in the objectivity and impartiality of others, would dependence on rules decline.

With the vast growth of scientific and technical manpower in government service, he came under pressure to affect changes in the administrative system based on the concept of 'generalist at the top, specialist at the tap'. He had high respect for scientists and technical experts. He observed that:

The Scientists' outlook is normally a dynamic outlook; a technician's is normally dynamic; the administrator's is normally static. It is very difficult for him to get out of that and therefore, an administrator is often left behind by changes, technological changes and social changes that are taking place.

He stated in his speech delivered at the Central Laboratories for Scientific and Industrial Research, Hyderabad, on January 2, 1954 that:

Scientists and engineers are far more important than administrators. The administrator has no doubt his place but that is secondary to scientist and engineer.

When it was pointed out to him that engineers were not being appointed as Secretaries to Government, he admitted that "our services are steeped in a system of gradation or caste system which is probably the legacy of the British rule", as "the old system of classification was the very basis of administration". He said that "such pattern is totally out of place in the present set-up and conditions". However, he was not in favour of affecting any change as he felt that "Enough number of persons who can use their pen well in the office are available in India, but the number of good engineers is inadequate". Moreover, he contended that:

It is possible that a renowned first class engineer might be much more needed by us than any of our Secretaries. Secretaries are available in abundance but engineers are few. These can also be the case that though the engineer is working in his

own sphere, yet in official status, Secretary is in a way superior. This is just a gradation; for whereas engineers have a reputation all over the world, the Secretaries are not known by any one outside Delhi. What I am driving at is that this is a wrong way of assessing a man's worth, simply by the salary drawn by him or the designation attached to his post?

His reasons were not confined entirely to the shortage of the technical manpower. He found that excessive specialisation does not produce a wider outlook. In his speech at the Administrative Staff College on October 23, 1958 he observed:

We produce highly competent individuals in specialised fields. But there is a tendency for those highly competent individuals to know nothing about other fields or not enough. But too much specialisation and not enough of a wider outlook, is apt not only to limit the individual but limit his work.

In his address at the anniversary meeting of the National Institute of Science in India, New Delhi on January 20, 1959 he referred to Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis's observation that "Scientists should be on top and not at the bottom", Pandit Nehru said that "scientists were actually taking command of military equipment, but humanity was not deriving any benefit from this".

It is thus apparent that Pandit Nehru did not visualise any change in the administrative system. However, he laid considerable emphasis on the change of the attitude of officials and stressed on them to develop an approach and style for seeking active public cooperation. The administrator should be courteous not only to the people but to their thinking. He stressed that his real success in his job depends on the extent to which he can evoke public cooperation.

On the issue of centralisation versus decentralisation, he observed the necessity for both, even though there are contradictions. In his inaugural address at the Twenty Third Annual Meeting of the Central Board of Irrigation and Power at New Delhi on November 17, 1952 he pointed out that:

Now centralisation is important in the modern world; it is inevitable whether it is Government, whether it is anything else. It may give you better result, it may produce better

efficiency and all the rest of it, although a stage arrives in the process of centralisation when perhaps efficiency does not grow, it lessons ... Undoubtedly, the greater the centralisation, the less the individual freedom, although some better results might be obtained.

He visualised, therefore, a balance between the needs of centralisation and of freedom to be arrived at through, not on ideological but a practical and analytical approach. In Panchayati Raj he saw decentralisation necessary for a healthy base of democracy. He observed that "If the base is unsound, then we are not cent percent stable democratically ..." He further stated in his Presidential Address on the Third Annual General Body Meeting of the Institute held on April 6, 1957 that:

It is true, I think, that our experience of panchayats has been distressing. But real democracy cannot be at the top; it can be only at the base.

He visualised the implication of Panchayati Raj for the administrative system. It would, he contended, bring "all kinds of changes in the relationship between the administrative apparatus and the people". He further observed that:

After all, it should be one of the principal functions of public administration, in its broader context to direct democracy into right channels.

For this purpose, he emphasised that all depends upon the manner of functioning of the administration in which the conduct of the administrator is very important. The administrator must give the impression that:

He is functioning in accordance with the public will, always thinking of public grievances, trying to remedy them, consulting them and so on ...

Further, he stressed that the panchayats:

... should not be officialised. The official element should be rather distinctly advisory—of course helpfully advisory—but not at all in the sense of bossing over, interfering and not allow, if I may say so the members of the panchayats to make a number of mistakes. Let us accept that a mistake is often



better than the helpless and powerlessness which comes from somebody sitting on top and carrying on the business of the panchayats. They will never grow by that.

It is, therefore, apparent that Pandit Nehru's main thrust was to seek behavioural and attitudinal change of officials within the administrative system. These attitudes may refer to work, methods and procedures, rules or they may refer to the system of classification of services or staffing pattern or they may be towards citizen of a democracy or towards dealing with specialised scientific and technical organisations or public enterprises. He sought a behavioural transformation without altering the structure, and perhaps he visualised that the stage in the history of India's development has not yet come to alter the very basic concept and structure of the administrative system in India. Nevertheless, he expanded the scope of public administration at the system's level. He created new forms of organisation and built institutions for scientific work and development functions.

## APPENDIX

---

Letter dated 10th July 1940 from Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, addressed to Dr. VKRV Rao.

Allahabad  
July 10, 1940

My dear Rao,

You will remember the talk we had in Srinagar. You were good enough to tell me that you had some little time at your disposal now and could help me in our Planning Committee work. I am now going to take advantage of your offer.

You must have received the two little books—red book 1 and book 2, issued by the NPC. The books give the resolutions so far passed by the NPC as well as other relevant matters. A third little book, red book 3, is being issued shortly giving our recent resolutions. So far we have considered in a way the interim or final reports of about 20 sub-committees and passed resolutions on them. Seven or eight sub-committees still remain to be dealt with. Out of these two or three are unimportant or at any rate have no particular bearing on the larger issues. The resolutions we have passed so far give a fairly good indication of the way we are working and of the kind of picture we have in our minds. This picture is in outline only and parts of it are necessarily blurred. In regard to some important matters of policy, we have been deliberately somewhat vague or non-committal.

In the ordinary course we should complete the consideration of the remaining sub-committees reports, and then go on to consider our own draft report. This draft will have to be based on the resolutions passed by us on all the sub-committees' reports as well as such independent resolutions that we passed. It was thought desirable for us to lay down certain general principles which should govern our draft.

It is proposed to hold our next session in the last week of August. Ordinarily we will have to continue with the sub-

committees' reports then. To some extent we will of course do so. But I am anxious that the writing of the draft should not be delayed and that the next session should lay down these general principles. Even if some sub-committees' report stands over, the drafting can begin as this is likely to take a good deal of time. But this cannot even begin unless these general principles are decided upon. Some of these, as I have stated above, have been decided upon. But others remain. Therefore, it is my intention to ask the NPC to consider these general principles at their next meeting and then to appoint a small sub-committee, probably consisting of three persons—The General Secretary, the Chairman and one other member—to prepare the draft.

I should like you to go through the resolutions in the three red books and keeping them in view, note down what further general decisions we should take which would enable us to proceed with the draft. That is to say, I should like you to put down such further questions on policy and principle as we should decide at our next stage. In putting down these questions, please indicate what in your opinion the decisions should be.

I should also like you to write a brief note on the general picture of national planning in India which you would recommend.

You are no doubt aware of the conditions under which we have been working. We are a mixed body representing a variety of opinions, often hostile to each other. It has been no easy matter to arrive at any conclusion sometimes. On the whole I think we have succeeded remarkably and done a useful job of work. There are many contradictions in what we have done, much overlapping, but still the general draft is fairly clear and is in the right direction. These decisions do not represent wholly what I would like them to be, nor do they represent anyone else's viewpoint completely. What I am anxious about is that we should collect all information through the sub-committees and a number of informed reports on various sub-committees. Then to put forward our own report trying to collate these and draw up a single picture. I do not mind at all if there are minutes of dissent and the like.

We shall at least have done something which will help the public as well as those in authority to consider these many problems together in an organic way. We would have laid the foundations of future planning and the next step will be easier and swifter whenever the time comes for it. I hope therefore that you will be

able to draw up a list of general principles as well as specific matters which should be decided by us at the next stage, and also write a note on planned economy as a whole as it should be. I should like to have this by the middle of next month.

I do not know how the Cottage Industries Sub-Committee is carrying on. I hope that this question will be dealt with not in the region of pure theory but of practice, taking into consideration the strong sentiments in favour of cottage industries in India. It seems to me that most of the argument centres round fine points of theory of philosophical approach. In actual practice the points of difference are narrowed down. I see no harm in these points of difference being dealt with in separate notes, though of course every attempt should be made to arrive at a common understanding in regard to most matters.

Yours sincerely  
Sd/-  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

## INDEX

## A

Abstinence, 4, 188, 207  
 Aberrations, 59, 103, 151, 180, 247  
*About us/to us* 10, 119  
 Abdul Gaffar Khan, 9, 58, 101, 183, 197, 210  
 Achievements, 47, 109, 215, 287  
 Adoration, flowers of, 1  
 Advances, 47, 144, 201  
 Adult Suffrage, 29, 93, 126, 211, 285  
 Administration, 43, 217, 251, 283, 292, 295  
 Agriculture, 5, 93, 118, 195, 217, 256  
*Agni*, 92  
 Aggressiveness, 255  
 Aggression, (Chinese: 1962), 17  
 Aggression tribal, 64  
 Ambedkar, B.R. 47  
 Africa, 15  
 Aquisitiveness, 255  
 Aquisitiveness society, 255  
 Amalgam, 60  
 Anand Bhawan, 33, 44, 49  
 Alliance, Military, 66  
 All India Services, 93  
*An Autobiography*, 39, 40, 43, 78, 100, 177, 210, 265  
 Annihilation, 54  
 Antiquity, 66  
 Approach-integrated, 29  
 Anti-democratic, 85  
 Armament, 56, 178, 210, 283  
 Architect 11  
 Atomic Energy, 8  
 Attlee, Clement, 13  
 Ashok Mehta, 60  
 Assistance, economic, 54

Asian Relations Conference, 60, 68  
 Ashoka, the Great, 77  
 Autocracy, 22  
 Authoritarian, 6  
 Avadi Session (1955), 8, 21, 45, 103, 210  
 Ayyanger Gopala Swami, 87

## B

Balance, Military, 54  
 Balduin, Reger, 6  
 Battle of Power, 60  
 Bandung Conference, 69  
 Barriers 27  
 Barriers Professional, 27, 39  
 Barriers Caste, 27, 39  
 Barriers Religious 27, 39  
 Belgrade Conference (1961), 54  
*Bharat Mata*, 95  
 Bilateral issues, 16  
 Big business, 25  
 Block, military, 53, 54, 55, 69  
 Bose, Subhas Chandra, 13, 58  
 Bondage, Political, 63  
 British Connection, 257  
 British Crown, 14  
 British Empire, 15  
 British Rule, 2, 178, 211, 292  
 British Raj, 2  
 British Times, 290  
 Brockway Fenner, 6  
 Budget, Annual, 48  
 Burma, 13  
 Bureaucracy, 50

C

Cabinet, 10  
 Cabinet State, 10  
 Cabinet Central, 84  
 Caesar, 87  
 Capacity, installed, 47  
 Capacity over kill, 54  
 Capital, 4  
 Capital Trade, 4  
 Capitalism 4, 50, 62, 101, 256, 257  
 Capitalism rural, 4  
 Calamities, natural, 49  
 Calcutta Session (1928), 13, 51  
 Caste System 292, 287, 293  
 Casteism, 27, 79  
 Cause, 3  
 Champaran, 3  
 Change-social 29, 77, 111, 103, 204, 253  
 Chastisement, 4  
*Chicago Daily Tribon*, 41  
 China, (Peoples Republic), 16, 66  
 China Peoples invasion, 88  
 Codification, 286  
 Communalism 27, 76, 84, 85, 101  
 Commission, Planning, 7  
 Committee, Steering, 90  
 Commitment, 11  
 Community, international, 68, 111, 219, 286  
 Commonwealth of Nations 5, 12, 13, 18, 86, 151  
 Commonwealth Heads of Govt. Meeting  
 (CHOGM) (1983) 5-17  
 Communism, 17, 101  
 Communist Party, 17  
 Company Estate, 57  
 Colonialism, 12, 13, 15, 53  
 Colonial oppression, 6  
 Consensus, 5, 52, 55, 99, 117, 195, 211, 250  
 Countrymen, 47

Constitution, 24, 30, 34, 35, 61, 78, 79, 80, 47  
 Constitution Schedule of, 80  
 Consensus, 41  
 Content, economic, 256  
 Conflict, 3, 110, 178, 215, 255  
 Conflict Class, 3  
 Congress, Indian National, 6, 85  
 Congressmen, 46  
 Constituent Assembly, 14, 27, 34, 38, 53, 20  
 Co-operation  
 Co-operation Services, 22  
 Culture, 58  
 Cultural identity, 80  
 Current affairs, 101

D

Debt, 4  
 Decrees, 46  
 De-colonisation, 53, 56  
 Decentralisation, 293, 294  
 Dedication, 28  
 Defence, national, 7  
 Degradation, 22  
 Deliverance, 51  
 Democracy, 7, 87, 93  
 Democracy Economic 6, 8, 36  
 Democracy Socialistic, 68, 117, 193, 250  
 Deshmukh, CD, 87  
 Deterrent, nuclear, 54  
 Development, economic, 29, 50, 54, 113, 179, 294  
 Dignity of Individual, 52  
 Dignity of Moral, 82  
 Disarmament, 853  
 Directive Principles of State Policy, 8  
 Diplomacy, 68  
 Discipline, 33, 35, 83

Discipline, Self, 33  
 Distortions, 59  
 Disparities, economic, 28, 29, 30  
 Disraeli, 57  
 Disease, 57  
 Diversities, 26, 27  
 Distribution, equitable, 39, 47, 257  
 Divine rights 250  
 Discovery of India, 26, 39, 74  
 Doctrine, economic, 23  
 Dogmatism, 40  
 Dominion, 14, 57  
 Domination, European, 62  
 Down-trodden, 28, 29

## E

Economics, 3  
 Economics School of, London, 2  
 Economy, mixed, 8, 50  
 Economy, Parallel, 48  
 Economy, Socialistic, 45  
 Economy, State Controlled, 23  
 Economic democracy, 6, 29  
 Economic disparities, 28, 30  
 Economic dissipation, 30  
 Economic doctrine, 22, 25  
 Economic growth, 29  
 Economic inequality, 129  
 Economic revolution, 5  
 Economic regeneration, 7  
 Economic subjection, 100  
 Economic transformation-250  
 Egocentricity, 69  
 Egalitarianism 23,  
 Egalitarianism movement, 53  
 Egalitarianism order, 56  
 England, 2  
 Equality, social, 71, 251  
 Era, Nehru, 10  
 Era, Churchill-Stalin-Roosevelt, 41  
 Expansionism, 66  
 Exploitation, 4, 9, 38, 53, 62, 78, 156,  
 219, 256

Expectancy, life, 47  
 Expression, frank, 55  
 External interference, 63  
 Event, world, 3  
 Evolution, 2

## F

Fabian Socialism, 2  
 Facilities (Medical), 47  
 Fascism 7, 13  
 Farms, model state, 5  
*Father's Letters to his Daughter*, 74  
 Feudal past, 65  
 Federalism, 9  
 Fermentation, 22  
 Fertilisers, 47, 49  
 Fissures, 30  
 Fire-brand, 83  
 Flowers, of adoration, 1  
 Forgiveness, 4  
 Foreign Relations, 63, 66, 256  
 Foreign Policy, (India's), 12, 15, 40,  
 60, 61, 62, 70, 71, 111, 178, 214,  
 278  
 Foreign Affairs, 88  
 Foreign Rule, 101  
 Forum, North-South, 55  
 Freedom fighters, 85  
 Freedom individual, 74  
 Freedom movement, 74  
 Freedom struggle, 12, 13, 28, 95, 97  
 Fundamentalism, 27  
 Fundamental change, 101, 255  
 Fundamental Rights, 24

## G

Gandhi, Mohandas, Karam Chand,  
 37, 52, 58, 59, 60, 70, 94  
 Gandhi Indira, 17  
 Gandhisim, 97  
 General Elections (1962), 59  
 Generalists, 284, 292, 296

Gopalan, A.K., 17  
 Glimpses of World History, 43, 74  
 Government, Interim, 53  
 Growth, 35  
 Growth economic, 45  
 Growth industrial, 54  
 Growth political, 55  
 Gupta, Bhupesh, 17  
 Gurupad Swammy, M.S., 17  
 Gurudwara Polls, 85

H

Hard decisions, 89  
 Harold Laski, 23  
 Heritage, 52, 94  
 Heavy industry, 59  
 Hindu Code Bill, 30  
 Hindi, 80, 91  
 Himalayan territories, 67  
 Hitler, A  
 Home Rule, 3  
 Home Rule League, 3  
 Humanism, 12, 14, 95  
 Human rights, 52  
 Humility, 82

I

Incident, border, 67  
 Idealist, 41, 82, 88, 89, 94  
 Idealist practical, 15, 69  
 Independence, 12, 13, 16, 28, 30, 35, 37, 47, 50, 77  
 India, Modern, 2  
 India, Medieval, 11  
 India, Peasant, 3  
 Indian National Congress, 12, 13, 62, 79, 94, 11, 170, 257  
 Indira Gandhi, 25  
 Industry, kings of, 20, 63, 109, 178, 215, 250  
 Industry, modern, 113, 197, 251  
 Industrialists, 7, 63, 65

Industrial community, 101  
 Industrial monopoly, 8  
 Inequality, 20, 25  
 Illiteracy, 57  
 Imperialism, 6, 13, 61, 100, 101, 178, 257  
 Imperialism European, 63  
 Infrastructure, 59  
 Inner-self, 78  
 Integration, 27, 40  
 Integration emotional, 28, 40  
 Integration natural, 28, 40, 79, 80, 81  
 Integration political, 28, 40  
 Intervention, armed, 67  
 Interests, vested, 22  
 Interruptions, 36  
 Instints-finer, 255  
 International Cooperation, 54  
 International Politics, 70  
 International Relations, 45, 60

J

Jai Prakash Narain, 16  
 Jaipur Session (1948), 14  
 Jan-Gana-Mana, 90  
 Jewel of India, 2  
 John Mathai, 87  
 Judicial Machinery, 286  
 Justice, economic, 38, 54  
 Justice, legal, 37, 38  
 Justice, political, 37, 38, 100  
 Justice, social, 29, 37, 38

K

Kamraj plan-59  
 Kasauti (Yard stick), 22  
 Kashmir problem, 64, 74  
 Kennedy, 17  
 Korea, 16  
 Krishna Menon, V.K. 84,  
 Kripalani, J.B., 16, 58



## L

Land Lords, 14  
 Land Ceiling, 8  
 Lansburg, George, 6  
 Lasting peace, 71  
 Laski, Harold, 2, 3  
 Law, rule of, 2  
 Leadership, competing, 58  
 Lenin, 70  
 Level, grass-root, 43  
 Liberalism, 210, 227, 250  
 Linguistic Chauvinism, 81  
 Link Language English, 80, 92, 93  
 Left wing, 5  
 Load Star, 1  
 Lok Sabha, 90  
 London, School of Economics, 2  
 Lord Buddha, 74

## M

Macmillan, 17  
 Mahatma Gandhi, M.K., 37, 52, 58, 59, 60, 70, 94  
 Mahalanobis, P.C., 7, 48, 293  
 Mainstream, national, 79  
 Majoritism, 28  
 Male-dominated society, 87  
 Marxism, 2, 101  
 Marxist thought, 2  
 Master Tara Singh, 85, 86  
 Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, 9  
 Mau Mau Movement  
*Messiah*, 7, 26  
 Means and ends, 7  
 Middle men, 4  
 Middle path, 7, 11, 30, 34  
 Minoritism, 28  
 Misery, 95  
 Mixed Economy, 8  
 Modernism, Western, 29, 87  
 Model State Farms, 6  
 Monograph, 94

Money, unaccounted, 48  
 Monopoly-industrial, 8  
 Monopoly, private, 60  
 Morarji Desai, 90  
 Moscow, 5  
 Mother India, 89  
 Movement, Non-Co-operation, 4  
 Movement, Nationalist, 251, 256  
 Movement, Middle Class, 250  
 Mukherjee, Shyama Prasad, 16  
 Muslim League, 23

## N

Nasser President, 52  
 Nationalism, 258  
 National Archives, 77  
 National Archives Anthem, 90  
 National Consciousness, 24  
 National Defence, 7  
 National Development Council (NDC), 9, 21  
 National Liberation, 23, 62, 63  
 National Planning Committee, 6 (NPC)  
 National Unity, 76  
 Nationalisation, 46  
 National integration, 80,81  
 Negotiations, 52  
 Nehru, Era, 10  
 Nehru Motilal, 3  
 Nehruvian line, 25  
 Neutrality, positive, 55  
*New York Times*, 41  
 Non-alignment, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 60, 74, 82  
 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), 17, 54, 67, 68, 69  
 Non-attachment, 33  
 Non-Co-operation Movement, 4  
 Non-Violence, 4, 33, 38, 58  
 Non-Violent revolution, 5

Non-Violent movement, 52, 70  
Nuclear Club, 92  
Nutrition, 47

O

Objective, social, 50  
Obscuratism, 81  
October Revolution, 70  
Official Languages Bill, 91  
Opinions, 110, 258, 297  
Opposition, 35, 87  
Oppression, Colonial, 6, 39, 54, 55,  
58, 62  
Outlook-national, 85  
Outlook modern, 251  
Outlook scientific, 80  
Orientation, 292, 293  
Overwhelmed, 1

P

Pakistan, 16, 68, 69, 74, 84, 86, 87  
Panchayat Raj, 42, 43, 117, 193, 295  
*Panch-Sheel* (Non-Alignment), 42,  
53, 67, 68, 74  
Path, middle, 6  
Partition, 4, 35, 37, 84  
Parliament (Indian), 7, 10, 16, 17,  
21, 23, 34, 35, 47, 50, 54, 61, 62, 66,  
69, 79, 86, 91  
Parliament (British), 13  
Parliamentary democracy, 103, 14,  
148  
Parliamentary supremacy, 34  
Participative democracy, 62  
Parochialism, 40, 80  
Pauperisation, 37  
Peace, durable, 63, 70  
Peasant India, 3, 106, 177, 201, 251  
People-tribal, 9  
Perspective, 48, 66, 76, 78, 220, 279,  
286  
*Pictiletha*, 6

Pollet, Hary, 6  
Political Culture, 24  
Political revolution, 5  
Popularity, 43  
Population, 50, 59  
Poverty, 7, 30, 34, 57, 95, 117, 251,  
255  
Planning, 6, 34, 47, 48, 54  
Planning Commission, 7, 29, 48,  
113, 179, 258, 286, 296  
Pragmatism, 94  
Pratapgarh, 3  
*Pravada*, 5  
Praja Socialist Party, 17, 60  
Production-means of, 22  
Provincialis, 27  
Public administration, 295  
Public control, 22  
Public Co-operation, 243  
Public enterprises, 295  
Public good 255  
Public opinion, 17, 294  
Public ownership, 22  
Public Sector, 8, 50, 59  
Public Servant, 291, 296  
Public will, 294  
*Pundits*, 25

R

Racialism, 13, 15, 53  
Radhakrishnan, S.V., 87  
Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, 9  
Raja Ji, 58  
Rajendra Prasad, 58  
Ram Manohar Lohia, 47  
Rationalism, 81, 107, 183, 191, 216,  
250  
Realist, 94  
Re-armament, 55  
Red-Book, 296  
Reconstruction, social, 63  
Refugee Problem, 35  
Regementation, 100

Regeneration, economic, 7  
 Religion, 11, 58, 76, 179, 205, 251  
 Rights, human, 52  
 Relations-international, 41  
 Religion, organised, 39, 90  
*Rituraj*, 75  
 Repression, 70  
 Republic Day Celebrations, 9  
 Republic, democratic, sovereign, 42, 95  
 Resources, 8  
 Revolution, industrial, 5  
 Revolution Bolshevik, 62  
 Revolution economic, 5, 900  
 Revolution non-violent, 5  
 Revolution proletarian, 23  
 Revolution political, 5  
 Reformation, 94  
 Resurgence, 94, 95  
 Rolling plan, 48  
 Round Table Conference (1937), 13  
 Rule, British, 2  
 Rule, colonial, 58  
 Rule, Home, 3  
 Rule, Law, 2  
 Russian Revolution, 3

## S

Saga, 2  
 Sage of Sabarmati, 33  
 Sardar Patel, 58, 59  
*Satya Graha*, 4  
 Scientific Policy Resolution, 80  
 Sector, core, 49, 50  
 Sector key, 49  
 Security, 2  
 Secularism, 26, 40, 64, 82, 93  
 Secular State, 9, 27, 28  
 Self-contained 258  
 Self-lessness, 84  
 Sheikh Abdulla, 9, 86  
 Skill, diplomatic, 41  
 Soekarno, 52

Situation, Indian, 3  
 Smuts, Field Marshal, 91  
 Socialism, 6, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28, 45, 50, 82, 95, 98, 100, 102  
 Socialism, democratic, 11, 22, 23, 60  
 Socialism Fabian, 2  
 Socialism scientific, 29, 100  
 Socialist pattern of society, 21, 45  
 Social ethos, 24  
 Social life, 30  
 Social structure, 22, 95  
 Socio-economic system, 59, 95, 97  
 Society, classless, 23  
 Society equalitarian, 29  
 Society socialistic, 45  
 South Africa, 15, 17, 18  
 Soviet Union, 62, 69, 70, 88, 99 (USSR)  
 State intervention, 97  
 State modern, 10, 59  
 State non-Hindi speaking, 9  
 State socialistic, 29  
 State trading, 8  
 State welfare, 8, 45, 46  
 Star, load, 1  
 Standard of living, 6, 47  
 Standard, moral, 46  
 Statesmanship, 17  
 Sterling Balances, 15  
 Special Marriages Bill, 10  
 Speaker 104, (1954)  
 Subjugation, 22  
 Suez, 17  
 Supreme Court-92  
 Super Powers, 82, 155  
 Superstition, 39, 78, 79  
 Suppression, 100, 256  
*Swaraj*, 21

## T

Tagore, Rabindra Nath, 59, 75  
 Tara Chand, Dr., 87  
 Task force, 286  
 Taxation, 47, 48

Temper, short, 88  
 Testament, 1  
 The Leader, 3  
 The Raj, 2  
*The Unity of India*, 43  
 Third World, 62, 63, 68, 87  
 Thought, Marxist, 2  
 Tipu Sultan, 77  
 Tito Marshal, 52  
 Tolerance, 42, 76, 77  
 Toller, Ernst, 6  
 Torch-bearer, 24  
 Touch-stone, 22  
 Trade Capital, 21  
 Trading, State, 8  
 Traditions, 23, 42, 251  
 Traditionalism, 28  
 Transfer, technology, 54  
 Transformation-revolutionary, 63,  
 110, 198, 210, 252, 255, 256  
 Tribal People, 9  
 Tribes, Scheduled, 79  
 Troubled Water, 57  
 Truth, 50  
 Tryst with destiny, 7, 95  
 Twenty First Century, 25

U

Under privileged, 9  
 Unemployment, 7, 22, 47  
 United Nations, 69, 87, 90  
 Unity, emotional, 27  
 United State of America (USA), 65,  
 66, 69, 88  
 Unlettered, 45  
 Upliftment, 29  
 Untouchability, 79  
 Urban Cultural traditions, 251

V

*Vandemataram*, 90  
 Vanquished Slaves, 256

Vested interests, 24, 39, 78, 99, 100,  
 171, 257  
 Vijaya Laxmi Pandit, 34, 90  
 Violence, 103, 198, 256  
 Violence, non, 4  
 Visionary, 41, 44, 60

W

War, cold, 53  
 Welfare State, 8, 30, 45, 46  
 West, 92  
 Westernisation, 251  
 Western, Modernism, 29  
 Western Powers, 42  
 Wife men's presence, 15  
 Wilkinen, Ella, 6  
 World affairs, 68  
 World Arab, 87  
 World Community, 54, 61, 62, 63,  
 65, 71  
 World events, 3  
 World history, 68  
 World language, 92  
 World order, 74  
 World opinion, 88  
 World peace, 14, 17  
 World politics, 65, 68, 74  
 World stage, 68

Y

Yoke, 12  
*Yuga Dharma*, 25  
*Yuga Purusha*, 26

Z

Zakir Hussain-9, 85, 88  
 Zamindars, 256

**SOME RECENT/FORTHCOMING TITLES  
FROM THE  
LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**

*Edited by*  
Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap

**PARLIAMENTS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, 1989:** Covering Parliaments of all Commonwealth countries and profiles of their organisation and functioning; also broad analytical view of special features of different Parliaments. (Rs. 250/-)

**DADA SAHEB MAVALANKAR : FATHER OF LOK SABHA:** Covers the illustrious career of one of the prime architects of India's parliamentary democracy, Dada Saheb Mavalankar, the first Speaker of Lok Sabha; carries contributions from renowned dignitaries. (Rs. 200/-)

**KAUL, SHAKDHER AND KASHYAP'S PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT :** The most authentic and authoritative treatise on parliamentary practice and procedure in India. (4th ed. under print)

**FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA : A DOCUMENTARY STUDY :** In three volumes containing texts and documents for the period 1947-88. (under print)

**NATIONAL POLICY STUDIES :** National policies and programmes in various fields analysed. Subjects covered include industry, agriculture, health, education, science and technology etc. (under print).

**POLITICAL EVENTS ANNUAL :** An annotated chronology of important national and international events of the year 1988 as contemporaneously reported in the Press and other news media (under print).

**MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD :** Explores the illustrious career and achievements of one of the chief architects of India's freedom and democracy, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; carries contributions from renowned dignitaries (under print).

**PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS  
ON SALE**

1. Parliamentary Privileges—Digest of Cases 1950-85	350.00
2. Nehru and Parliament	150.00
3. Parliaments of the Commonwealth (1989)	250.00
4. Constitution Amendment in India	125.00
5. Glossary of Idioms	80.00
6. National Electronics Policy	20.00
7. Namibian Question	20.00
8. Tourism Policy of Government of India	12.00
9. President's Rule in the States and Union Territories	50.00
10. Foreign Policy of India	20.00
11. Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace	15.00
12. Council of Ministers, 1947-87 (including Supplement)	18.00
13. Disarmament and Development	20.00
14. Constituent Assembly Debates (6 Volumes)	475.00
	(Postage Extra)
15. Eighth Lok Sabha—Who's Who	65.00
16. The Drug Menace	70.00
17. South Africa and Apartheid	20.00
18. Parliamentary Committees	50.00
19. SAARC	40.00
20. Dada Saheb Mavalankar: Father of Lok Sabha	200.00
21. Presidential Election: Law, Practice and Procedure	50.00
22. Political Events Annual 1987	200.00
23. Political Events Annual 1988	325.00
24. National Health Policy	15.00
25. National Industrial Policy	15.00
26. National Nuclear Energy Programme	10.00