GANDHI AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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PREFACE

Mahatma Gandhi is no longer among us in flesh and
blood. However, the vast corpus of his ideas and the story
of his experiments with truth is a part of our heritage.
A man of deep convictions or a strong personality himself,
he evokes strong likes and dislikes. But whether one likes
him or not, there is no gainsaying the fact that he (Gandhi)
had veritably foreseen the predicament that confronts man-
kind today - the predicament or as the Brandt report title
puts it, the "issues" of man's very survival. The dominant
issue today is conflict - visible and latent - and the in-
adequacy of present day techniques to resolve or eliminate
them. It is in this context that we propose to examine the
ideas and techniques of Gandhi in the present work - with
special reference to the more recent or current manifesta-
tions of international conflict. In doing so I have made
the fullest possible use of both primary and secondary
sources, subject to the constraints of time and scale.

It is my pleasant duty to record my indebtedness to
persons whose help and support enabled me to complete this
work.

I am immensely indebted to my teacher and guide
Dr. S.C. Gangal who has been a continuous source of help,
encouragement and stimulation for me throughout the dura-
tion of this work. Dr. Gangal took a personal interest in
the work from its inception. It has gained greatly from

his comments and suggestions. And I am deeply touched by the kindness and generosity he showed me.

A substantial 'tidying up' operation on the first draft was performed by my friend Joydeep Nayak and it is a pleasure to acknowledge my thanks to him.

I am also thankful to my friends Philip, Ashok, Arun, Gagan, Dambaru, Rupa, Medhu and many others for the encouragement they have given me during the course of this work.

The dissertation has been typed with great diligence and devotion by Mr. Yashwant and so my thanks to him.

Needless to say, none of the persons whose help and encouragement I have received and recorded are at all responsible for the errors and omissions that may still remain in this work. That responsibility is entirely mine.

New Delhi

(Biraja Shankar Rath)

Dated:

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION :

INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT FORMATION AND CON-
TEMPORARY MODELS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

It appears that twofold consequences have followed the evolution of social structures and cultures. On the one hand, due to a vast change in the technology, communication and acceleration in the scientific means of exchange of ideas and informations, the localised and parochial nature of groups and nations has begun to break down in favour of a universal idiom of thought and culture values. A pattern of internationalism in the social structure is evolving. On the other hand, the very same technology has also been progressively increasing the chasm in the balance of power and the potentialities of war and conflict.

It is a fact that in the process of social evolution the very nature of war and peace has undergone a metamorphosis. We have come a long way from the days when men lived in small tribal enclaves, in-ward drawn and fearful of outsiders. We have also moved far away from the time when civil wars within societies were the order of the day, although we still have civil wars in Pakistan, Lebanon and elsewhere. A kind of civil war has been going on for years now in South Africa between the Black and the White races, though this is more a reflection of world-wide conflict than a mere localised one. There still are some tribal enclaves in some parts of the world. But they are a passing phenomenon, largely in the nature of

local abberations and may soon cease to be.

The major conflicts that face us today are not between neighbouring tribes or between settlers and migrants nor between caste or language groups or religious groups within the nation state. The larger conflicts now are among nations with global implications or ramifications. The armed rivalry between two countries is no longer the concern of the belligerents alone, since often they tend to upset the global balance and harmony. Any international conflict, therefore, anywhere in the world leads to become a threat to all mankind.

"Social evolution has, thus, brought in its wake these two mutually contradicting phenomena - a universalized consensus on the one hand and mechanism of global war on the other." [1]   Whereas the former opens up the possibilities of limitless progress for man, the latter threatens his very survival. The majority of the contemporary world, therefore, has to reconcile these two contradictory forces by developing suitable mechanisms and techniques for the growth of universal consensus

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1   T.K. Unnithan and Yogendra Singh, <u>Sociology of Non-violence and Peace : Some Behavioural and Attitudinal Dimensions</u> (New Delhi, 1969), p.3.

and abolition of war. While statesmen and scholars are divided in their views about the theories and operational mechanisms for an eventual reconciliation between these two forces, it goes without saying that all the conventional military or diplomatic techniques of international conflict resolution failed, as it were, to deliver the goods. But before we go into a discussion on this, it would be necessary to have a look at international conflict formation - its nature, sources and implications.

International Conflict Formation

There has not been a day of peace since the end of World War II. Depending on the way of counting between 120 and 200 major wars have been fought since 1945. At least 250 'coups d'etat' and 'revolutions' have taken place and on a sober guess about 30-40 million people have been killed during these wars, revolutions, interventions, uprisings, civil wars and acts of political terrorism. [2]

But, in the present day world, international conflict is not confined to armed aggressions or clashes alone. There are different forms or levels of which

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[2]   Hylke Tromp, "The State of War", Gandhi Marg (New Delhi), vol.5, no.5, August 1983, p.259.

international conflict manifests itself. The most fami-
liar or pervasive manifestations of current international
conflicts are three : East-West conflict, North-South
conflict and conflict within the East block, the West
block and the Third World.

The East-West Conflict

The East-West conflict was initially perceived in
terms of an ideological struggle between different ways
of life and systems of belief. Essentially, however, it
was a struggle for power between the rival blocks of
countries. A very large part of human energy and world
resources have been devoted to meet the perceived needs
of this East-West conflict which is, by no means, yet over
and which, in no small way, accounts for the terrible
arms race that enveloped the world and still persists.
As this race developed the crisis facing the human race
began to be perceived in another way - namely, the threat
of a nuclear war which will put an end to all life. Some
of the most sensible critics during the fifties and the
sixties (Einstein, Russel, Huxley, Toynbee) seemed to
be possessed by this single dimension of international
conflict.

The end of the sixties saw the gradual erosion of
the cold war and it appeared that mankind might be able
to avoid the catastrophe of total destruction, thanks

both to the complicated mechanism of balance of power
between the two super powers and to "a general process
of immunization that takes place when the predicted
disaster somehow does not come along."[3] By this time
attention came to be focussed on something more imme-
diate and very pressing, namely, the great economic
schism that was dividing the world into extremes of
affluence and deprivation. On the one hand there is
concentration of over-abundance and over-production and
over-consumption and on the other the concentration of
poverty and scarcity and unemployment and deprivation.
This, therefore, added a new dimension to the interna-
tional conflict, the so-called North-South conflict.

North-South Conflict

The North-South divergence or confrontation is
quite different from the East-West conflict. "Here the
contradiction and conflict is between the sources and
resources i.e., between the power of capital and tech-
nology and helplessness of raw materials and under-rated
labour."[4] The North consisting, primarily, of a few

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3   Rajni Kothari, "Changing Nature of Human Conflict
     in our Times", Australian Outlook (Sydney, Australia),
     vol.28, no.3, December 1974, pp.224-25.

4   Amalendu Guha, "Elements in Conflict Formation",
     Gandhi Marg, vol.1, no.3, July 1979, p.137.

Euro-American states have acquired a vast amount of
military and economic power as a result of the accumula-
tions of the past and present labour both inside the
countries concerned and their former colonies or depen-
dencies in the poor South. The South consisting of a
great majority of states in Asia, Africa and Latin
America (AALA countries)[5] - were the victims of histo-
rical imperialism. Though nominally free at present,
these countries are too weak, militarily and economically,
to resist the relentless neo-colonial exploitation by
the North. This awareness of continued exploitation
became particularly pronounced in the South in the late
sixties when the 'dependency' theory was expounded by the
Latin American scholars,[6] and since then the AALA countries

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5   This term has been coined by Dr. S.C. Gangal who
     prefers it to the term 'Third World' since he feels
     that "everywhere there is a growing reluctance or
     even abhorrence to the 'third' lebel, for it is
     widely associated with worthlessness or inferiority".
     He discards the term Third World from the point of
     view of the 'larger problem of identity' also. He
     prefers the term AALA for "aala means superior or
     first in Arabic-Persian languages.... Indeed from
     the historical angle, too, some of the so called
     third world nations would seem to belong to the first
     world, for they (like India, China or Egypt) saw the
     dawn of civilisation much earlier than the West". For
     a discussion, see his article, "The Third World and
     the Gandhian Alternative", Gandhi Marg, vol.1, no.9,
     December 1979, pp.575-582.

6   Notable among the Latin American dependency theorists
     are Raul Prebisch, Celso Furtado, Andre Gunder Frank,
     etc. Later on Swedish scholar like Gunnar Myrdal and
     African scholar like Samir Amin also developed the
     dependency theory.

are clamouring for what is being called a 'New Inter-
national Economic Order', though without any demonstra-
ble success. This has given rise to the so called
North-South conflict which is "not only a fundamental
structural characteristic of the contemporary inter-
national system, but also, from the long term point of
view, the most important cause of its instability."[7]

Conflict Within the Western Countries

The conflict in the Western block exists among
(i) industrial super nations or economic giants like the
United States and Japan, (ii) industrially developed
countries and the EEC (European Economic Community)
nations, and (iii) between countries of the EEC like
West Germany vs. France or England vs. rest of EEC, etc.
The cause of intra-capitalist rivalries or conflicts
include, among others, the quest for markets and raw
materials and the will to greater power or influence
within the group. Here it is an uncanny or apparent
peace that obtains among them often described as

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7   J. Bandyopadhyaya, North Over South : A Non-
     Western Perspective of International Relations
     (New Delhi, 1982), p.3.

reluctant peace[8] or 'structural peace'.[9]

Conflict Within the Eastern Countries

At this intra-socialism level conflict can be found at the following two sub-levels: (i) supernations : Soviet Russia vs. China, and (ii) intra CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) conflicts like Rumania vs. the rest. Here also the cause varies from rivalry for leadership over the international communist movement in the first

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8   A situation of reluctant or uneasy peace obtains among the EEC members. This peace is primarily motivated by the fact that an open conflict which might lead to the disintegration of the community is not in the interest of even the disgruntled members. They have, therefore, to accept the peace formula, however reluctantly, worked out by the community.

9   Like structural violence we can also see structural peace when it is reached through adjustment of interest, compromise, concession, etc. The scope of conflict in the future remains hidden or disguised at all levels of structural peace. A situation of structural peace obtains in the conflict of Italy vs. the rest of EEC. Italy has been sought to be calmed by the grant of huge loans to it by West Germany.

For a discussion on this, see Amalendu Guha, "Concept of Conflict and Peace : Class Versus Structural School", Gandhi Marg, vol.2, no.2, May 1980, pp.61-73.

case to collective and integrated development vs. national
identity and self-reliant and self-sufficient development
in the second case. The peace obtaining in the first case
is a status quo peace of divided camps which is in fact
no peace and in the second case it is an apparent peace
with latent or underlying conflict.[10]

South-South Conflict

At the South-South level, the actors in the conflict
situation are more numerous. The causes are also many
and of different nature. They include territorial disputes,
tribal and religious disputes, disputes owing to class
and structural exploitation, ambition of the elite, extreme
nationalism, dictatorship, etc. The peace obtained here
is temporary or more apparent than real. In many cases
these conflict situations are escalating into shooting
wars like that between India and Pakistan, Iran and Iraq,
Kenya and Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia, Kampuchea and ·
Vietnam, etc.

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10   'Peace with latent conflict' is a kind of imposed
        peace from above pressed by either a non-actor or
        an indirect actor on the two or more direct actors
        in the conflict. Only the decision-makers of the
        actor nations and non-actor nation or nations
        enjoy participatory functions while the masses are
        made obliged to accept the decisions. The conflict,
        here, is latent and might at any time lead to explo-
        sion. A situation of peace with latent conflict
        obtains among COMECON nations with the Soviet Union
        imposing peace on others. See Ibid., p.68.

It is thus clear from the above discussion that at
all levels the world is in the grip of either real or
latent conflict. Moreover, the industrialized countries
of the North are confronted with the crisis of over-
armament, over-development, pollution of environment,
depletion of resources and a feeling of alienation. The
military-industrial-bureaucratic complex of the communist
world has kept the man under the watchful eye of the
state. As the recent happenings in Poland testify the
socialist and proletariat governments in the communist
countries are as alienated from the proletariat, if not
more, as any bourgeois government. The South suffers from
poverty, hunger, destitution, neo-colonial exploitation
and dependent development. "The world as a whole is
straddled with over-militarization, inequitious distri-
bution of power and resources and unequal development,
abundance and effluence of the few against the depriva-
tion and marginalization of many. The world, as it is
constituted today, is based upon dominance, violence and
exploitation."[11]

Is there a way out from this state of pervasive
conflict situation? There are many formula theories and

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11   D.N. Pathak, "Gandhi's World-View : Intimations
      of a Peaceful World Society", Gandhi Marg, vol.4,
      no.1, February 1983, p.919.

techniques of resolving international tensions and con-
flicts. These theories have gained wide recognition and
efforts have been made to put them into practice and still,
international conflicts have increased both in number and
dimension. This shows that they have failed to measure
up to the challenge. Still, some of the better known or
more popular among these theories deserve a fuller dis-
cussion chiefly in order to pinpoint their weaknesses or
to learn from them. Below we shall discuss some models
of international conflict resolution which have gained
popularity over the years.

The 'Balance of Power' Model:

Though the 'balance of power model' is a ninteenth
century conception[12] it came to be more vigorously pursued
only after the Second World War. With the advent and
proliferation of nuclear weapons, the emergence of new
centres of power and the rise of the newly independent
countries as a third force, there arose the need for a
new balance. The international actors that had to be
included in the emerging balance were powers like the
states of Western Europe, Japan and China. This model,
while allowing conflicts and rivalries in the rest of the

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12   This model draws heavily from the 19th century
      concepts like the 'Holy Alliance', the 'Concert
      of Europe', etc.

world and at times encouraging them, seeks to localise
them so that the balance, security and prosperity of
the balancing actors are not threatened. Thus a world-
wide conflagration is avoided and a measure of peace and
order are secured.

This model is, what may be called, "the view from
the top" since it provides for an "equilibrium where the
dominant powers set the pace and others adjust to it
according to their own various images and interest per-
ceptions."[13] On the political front the operational
mechanisms that this model resorts to are nuclear deterr-
ence, disarmament and arms control, international orga-
nisations like the United Nations, etc.

The model is not just limited to the management
of world politics. It has an economic and technological
content too and claims to provide an answer to the North-
South conflict. This is based on the model of industrial-
ization through capital intensive economic development
and transfer of modern technology from developed to deve-
loping countries, with necessary aid, technical assistance
and knowhow. The assumption is that the path to salvation
is the path shown by the industrialized world. On the
economic front, therefore, the operational mechanisms of

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13   Rajni Kothari, "Choices Facing a Divided World",
    Australian Outlook, vol.28, no.3, December 1974,
    pp. 232 and 234.

the model consist of foreign aid, transfer of technology
and a high-technology development.

The balance of power model or the 'Kissinger model'[14]
as it is sometimes called, enjoys more backing from the
Western powers in general and the United States in parti-
cular. The Soviet Union, while in practice it collabo-
rates with the United States for certain purposes, still,
in its rhetoric proclaims the vision of struggle between
capitalism and socialism, and it is hostile, not only in
theory but also in practice to a system of great power
collaboration that includes China. China, while dis-
avowing entirely the role of a great power projecting
itself as the champion of the Third World nations in
their struggle against 'super-power hegemonism'; has
accepted the model for 'tactical' reasons.

The model is also beginning to be accepted by most
of the Third World elites, mostly as a 'fait accompli',
but also perceived by some as providing real opportuni-
ties. The attraction of this model for these elites is
three-fold. First, as the Third World is divided against
itself with a large number of countries having hostile

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14   To call this model as 'Kissinger Model' is a
        misnomer. This model is by no means limited to a
        single individual's thinking and genius, since we
        have already shown (n.12) that its roots lie in
        the 19th century concepts.

relations with each other, they find in this model ways
of scoring points against each other. Secondly, as most
of these countries are extremely poor and have not been
able to evolve a self-reliant model of development, they
find in this model ways for securing financial aid and
technology from abroad. Thirdly, most of these Third
World 'elites' also aspire for their countries to become
politically powerful and in the course of time mature to
a place of emerging structure of world power. This model,
which has a basic feature of co-opting into the existing
system, the emerging sources of power (as the original
bi-polar model later on came to include Japan, China and
some West European countries) ensures these aspirant
countries, theoretically at least, some dominant position
in the international power structure as and when they
graduate to the status of world powers.

Despite this wide acceptance of the model, it has not
proved itself as a satisfactory model for international
conflict resolution. This is because the model is theo-
retically unsound and undesirable and practically un-
workable.

The theoretical weakness of the model is evident
from its assumption that when the great powers are not
fighting each other directly what prevails is a state of

peace which should be preserved. Thus, the structure
of peace which the model aims at, is that among great
powers, rather than peace of the world at large. Secondly,
what the model, in its best workable form, seeks to per-
form is one of conflict management rather than of conflict
resolution. Instead of eradicating the major divisions
in the world it only seeks to freeze and quarantine them.
"Holding things together through a concord of the strong
while perpetuating the basic ills and inequities that
divide the world, is too cynical an approach to human
problems and, in fact, will deepen the crisis that faces
us. It may produce somekind of a patch-work for sometime,
but will, in the end, only produce an explosion."[15]

The model's theoretical weakness at the economic
level is also evident. It promises to pay attention to
the goal of economic justice, although this is to be
pursued through measures of international development
assistance within the existing framework of power and
scarcely touches the goals of economic justice at the
human or cosmopolitan level. The attention it pays to
human environment is rather casual or occasional.

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15   Kothari, n.13, p.235.

The model is unworkable because it is inherently unstable. The conflict of interests within the proposed system of five major powers has confined it to the level of conception alone without any possibility of coming into operation in the near future. Any model which is built after the 19th century European model of the Holy Alliance, is bound to fail in the present day. This is because "the effective world of power is no longer limited to Europe, the Soviet Union is no longer like the Czarist operation needing protection against social democratic and national movements, China is quite a different force from what Prussia was in the Metternichian era, Japan is even, as a country and as an economy, not yet a very stable entity (despite its industrial might) and European unity is still more a dream than a reality and has, of late, even in its attenuated form, been showing signs of strain and probable break-down."[16]

The model is also undesirable since it tends to ignore all the Third World countries and most of the middle-rangers like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries and others like Romania and Yugoslavia. The exclusion of the Third World countries is the weakest part of the model. These countries represent

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16   Ibid., p.234.

a majority of the world's population and are the pre-
dominant element in the world society. Their level of
consciousness is also growing and they are no longer
willing to play the Big Powers' power game. Hedley Bull
who is otherwise convinced of the efficacy of the model,
takes note of this point.

> "No consensus is possible today", he writes, "that
> does not take into account the demands of Asian,
> African and Latin American countries and peoples,
> for just change in respect of the elimination of
> colonialism and white supremacist governments,
> the redistribution of wealth and resources and
> the ending of the relationship of dependence or
> subordination in which most of them stand to the
> rich countries."[17]

Apart from this general inadequacy of the model,
its operational mechanisms, both at the political and
economic fronts, have contributed very little or nothing
to world peace. At the political level nuclear deterrence
has brought about a modicum of peace which has proved very

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17   Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society : A Study of
      Order in World Politics (London, 1977), p.300.

costly and, at times, dangerous.[18] So far as disarmament and arms control are concerned they have only led to chaotic and emotional discussions and these negotiations and agreements, since 1945, have not stopped the arms race, have not even slowed it down. The international agencies like the United Nations, the International Court of Justice and World Bank, etc., which were set up to create a better and peaceful world, are operating with serious built-in handicaps, emanating from their structural tilt in favour of the great powers. The so called consensus is nothing but the lowest common denominator of conflicting powers and interests and their claim to hold the world from being torn apart is an attempt to legitimise the existing system. The so called 'detente' between the super powers is so fragile and spurious that even a single incident such as the recent Korean Air Liner incident has brought about the fear of revival of the cold war.

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18   The advocates of nuclear deterrence claim that this mechanism is instrumental in avoiding a nuclear war. To some extent this is true. But, peace at what cost? Since we know that nuclear weapons technology has proliferated both vertically and horizontally, such a situation demands that equilibrium of deterrence can be reached at a very high level only and must be shifted even higher when the technology advances. This amounts to a collossal cost. The peace ensured by nuclear deterrence is dangerous too, since war can start as a result of the failure of the computer and there has been instances when it had almost occurred.

So far as the mechanisms at the economic front are
concerned they have been introduced and perpetuated with
a view to continuing the great powers' dominance. Econo-
mic aid has served as a political and strategic instru-
ment to make the recipient countries subservient to the
donor countries.[19] The transfer of technology from the
developed to the developing countries "is really designed
to keep rich elites in the poor countries in power; the
object is not to bring about any solution to the problem
of poverty.... Indeed there can be no solution through
technology unless the social role of technology and the
pre-conditions of an autonomous and self-reliant model of
economic growth are satisfied."[20]

Another mechanism which the model under discussion
gives much stress upon is the operation of interdependence.
It is being suggested that the nuclear weapons have made
the world more interdependent. The proposed New Interna-
tional Economic Order is based on the assumption of inter-
dependence. J.K. Galbraith even goes to the extent of

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19   Some have argued that aid is no more than a new
      form of colonialism and designed to benefit the
      donor rather than the recipient nations. For an
      example of this position, see A.G. Frank, "The
      Development of Underdevelopment", Monthly Review,
      (New York), xviii, 4 September 1967, pp.17-31.

20   J.D. Sethi, Gandhi Today (New Delhi, 1978),
      p.110.

suggesting that the multinational corporations also serve the cause of interdependence.[21] But experience shows that interdependence in the present unequal structure has strengthened the ties of dependency which has led to the 'development of underdevelopment' in the poor countries.[22]

For the above reasons the 'balance of power model' as a model for international conflict resolution may, safely, be rejected.
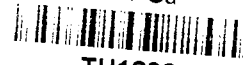
The Global Centralism Model

A deviation from the 'balance of power model' is to be found in the Global Centralism Model.[23] Like the previous model, this model also originates from the Western world, but expounded by the radical or dissenting intellectuals. They seek to form a centralised direction that reflects not simply the common interest of the great powers, but a sense of overriding common interests of all mankind - which, they recognise, does not exist, but hope to create.

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21   J.D. Sethi, "Gandhian Approach to a New World Order : Human Predicament in the Nuclear Era", in K.P. Misra and S.C. Gangal, eds., Gandhi and the Contemporary World : Studies in Peace and War' (Delhi, 1981), p.124.

22   Frank, n.19, pp.17-31.

23   The principal exponent of this model is Richard Falk. See his book, This Endangered Planet : Prospects and Proposals for Human Survival (New York, 1971).

Unlike the model of great powers concert, the global
centralist position recognises that a consensus confined
to the great powers is insufficient and seeks to accommo-
date the demands of the 'have-not' countries for radical
change.

The operational mechanism of this model is to
build up a political structure whose elements are a
strengthening of existing central institutions such as
the United Nations, the International Court of Justice
and other specialized agencies of the United Nations.
They believe that the present role of these bodies should
be greatly expanded. What the advocates of this model
have, ultimately, in mind, is the formation of some kind
of a world state or world government.[24]

This model can be criticised at many points. But
mainly there are two criticisms. First, while the distri-
bution of wealth, resources and power in international
society remains as unequal as it is at present, the pros-
pects of movements towards a more centralized global poli-
tical structure, based upon a process of consensus, appear
slight. It may be argued that if such a movement even-
tually takes place, this must first be brought about
by a redistribution of wealth, amenities of life and power,
in favour of the states and peoples of the Third World.

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24   Gandhi's views on world state or world government
      have been discussed in the third chapter of this
      study.

Secondly, this model assumes that world government
would provide an effective check on a reckless use of
force by individual states in which lies the real source
of danger to the mankind. .This danger, they think, can
be removed by divesting the national societies of the
power to use force and vesting the same in a world body
which would then resolve all international conflicts.
The advocates of this model are not inclined to believe
that it is not the clash between individual forces, but
the very existence and use of such force that creates a
danger to the mankind. Force, wherever it exists, has
a tendency "to grow beyond its limit and destroy the
very agent who hopes to wield it for its own protection.
Creation of force leads to further creation of it....
Society, as a whole, no longer remains the producer and
controller of force, but becomes a tool, a machine for
producing it.... As force grows to enormous size it
becomes a threat not only to what is incompatible with
its own function, but to the very society which sustains
it."[25] Empires have, almost as a rule, toppled down .

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25   A.S. Deshpande, "Gandhian Social Philosophy",
      Gandhi Marg, vol.13, no.4, October 1969 and
      January 1970, p.27.

under the weight of their own force.[26] At present, force -
political and military, has become a deadly anachronism
and human society can survive not by transferring it from
the national societies to a supra-national society, but
by completely eliminating it, in all its present form,
from human life.

The Marxist Or the World Revolutionary Model

There is a contrary model to the above two models
which has often been proposed as a means to end conflict
and exploitation in the world. This is proposed by the
Marxists who believe that conflicts and contradictions
come out of the differences in class and social interests
and they get consolidated through ideology and action.
The conflicts and contradictions of class interests cannot
be solved in a negotiated or non-violent way, or under the
conditions of peaceful co-existence between and among

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26   For example K.J. Charles writes: "The civiliza-
      tions of the past were seldom overthrown; they
      fell. Looking at these civilizations with the
      benefit of hindsight, it is easy to see that
      internal forces were inexorably driving them to
      their doom : yet they went about their business
      largely unaware of the crisis that was upon them."
      See his book, Total Development : Essays Towards
      An Integration of Marxian and Gandhian Perspectives
      (New Delhi, 1983), p.91.

classes.[27] Hence the means for solution towards attaining classlessness or equality is revolutionary violence. This model owes its intellectual origin to Marx and Engels who held that universal proletarian revolution would lead, ultimately, to the disappearance of the state and hence of the state system. But the various contemporary Marxist and neo-Marxist prescriptions for revolution are essentially directed towards the revolt of oppressed classes, so as to achieve justice within states and the revolt of oppressed nations so as to achieve justice among them. Demand for the abolition of state itself, or of the nation, do not figure in these 'prescriptions, except as speculation about the remote future.[28]

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27   'On one or two occasions Marx had alluded to the possibility of revolution through non-violent means, most notably when he allowed in a speech in Amsterdom in 1872 that in England and America and possibly in Holland as well, the workers might conceivably attain their revolutionary aim by peaceful means.' Quoted in Karl Kautsky, The Dictatorship of the Proletariat (Ann Arbor, 1964), p.10.

28   The neocommunist revisionism is evident from Khrushchev's words: "One cannot mechanically repeat now what Vladimir Ilyich Lenin said many decades ago regarding imperialism, or continue asserting that imperialist wars are inevitable until socialism triumphs throughout the world. We live in a time when we have neither Marx nor Engels nor Lenin with us. If we act like children who study the alphabet by compiling words from letters, we shall not go very far." Speech to the Third Congress of the Rumanian Workers' Party, June 22, 1960. Quoted by Robert C. Tucker, The Marxian Revolutionary Idea (London, 1970), p.177.

Theoretically, at least, the model is very attractice. A peaceful international order presupposes a strong consensus within the society of states, which the balance of power model, not even theoretically, would seek to achieve. This consensus can only be achieved with a radical redistribution of resources and power in favour of the weak and the poor states of the Third World. The revolutionary model provides one possible route towards such a redistribution.

Despite being based on a powerful theory, the Marxist model is out-moded since it fails to take into account many new factors. First, the very assumption of the identity of interests among all sections of the proletariat of the world has been proved false. In fact there is no such thing as world proletariat. "Indeed among the divisions that beset the present world one of the most intransigent is the division between the proletariats of some countries and the proletariats of the others - with the fruits of industrialization and colonialism going to some of them at the expense of the others."[29] Secondly, proletariat revolution, however desirable it may be, does not remove the system of states in which independent political communities dispose off power and pursue objectives that come into conflict, resulting in international

29 Kothari, n.13, p.235.

tension. Thirdly, the model of world revolution shares
with the model of world capitalism the latter's basic
techno-economic framework of industrialization and eco-
nomic expansion. Fourthly, the model has failed to take
into consideration the nationalist revolutions which
are still very strong in many parts of the world and
which run counter to the class-based movements.[30] Finally,
the left-oriented intellectual movements which are
supposed to inspire the world proletariat revolution have
become sterile and ridden with serious conflicts.

For all the above reasons, this model also can be
safely rejected as providing for a viable mechanism for
international conflict resolution. Even the very citadels
of the world revolution - the Soviet Union and China -
seem to have lost faith in the doctrine despite the rhe-
torics maintained at the official levels. This is evident
from the fact that not only are these countries at logger-
heads with each other, they appear to treat the Third
World countries with same mixture of indifference and

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30   An example may be found in India itself. The
strong nationalist movement under the leadership
of Gandhi had no characteristic of a Marxist
revolution. In fact Marxists, both inside and
outside India, had branded the struggle for
independence as 'reactionary' movement and Gandhi
and Nehru as 'agents of imperialism.'

manipulation as is the case with main capitalist powers.
Thus the Marxist model's operational aspect is seriously
handicapped and hence it cannot provide a satisfactory
way out of the present predicament.

The Structuralist Model

The structuralist school is supposed to be consis-
ted of a dissenting section among the Marxists. At the
theoretical level, at least, this is true.[31] But the
operational mechanism which the structuralists provide
is very much non-Marxian and can be said to be Gandhian.
Unlike the Marxists who believe that conflicts arise
from class contradistinctions, the structuralists hold
that conflicts and contradictions are born from the
structural violence affected by the social elite or the
social top-dogs on the rest of the social strata or social
under-dogs. They believe that the elite, the decision
maker for the entire society, has excessively centralized
the decision-making and operational functions of the

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31   At the theoretical level the structuralist model
shares much with Marxist model. For example
Guha writes, "Class interest concept is a broad
concept, while the starta interest concept is
more particular and limited, whose origin lies in
the very class concept. If we consider the class
concept as the macro concept, the state or struc-
tural concept is micro concept. The main actors
of conflicts and contradictions under the class
concept are 'Haves' or the dominant classes and
'Have-nots' or the proletariat, those under the
structural concept are 'More-Haves' and the 'Less-
Haves'.

See Amalendu Guha, n.9, p.63.

society in its own interests of power and privilege. That is why the structurally dominated or oppressed strata should struggle for decentralization of the participation and implementation action.

While the Marxists believe that the only way out of the present conflicts and contradictions is revolutionary violence, the exponents of the structural school opt for non-violent or negotiated means as the way or solution to reach the goal of social peace. Gandhi, till today, remains the foremost exponent of a non-violent way to world peace. It is not widely known that the Gandhian mechanisms for international conflict resolution are footed in a sound theory and even though it has not been tried, it has, given a chance, lot of scope to be successful in practice also. In the subsequent chapters our effort shall be to study the Gandhian methods of international conflict resolution both from the theoretical as well as practical angles.

CHAPTER II

GANDHI'S IDEAS ON CONFLICT

Conflict has never been long absent in the history of human race. The old Sanskrit dictum that 'life feeds itself upon life' is among the earlier attestations of the fact. The same idea, also, is implied in Heraclitus's famous aphorism: "War (or conflict) is the father of all things."[1]

The theory of conflict underwent significant modulation in the ninteenth century, first under the influence of Charles Darwin and later, of Herbert Spencer. The biological formula of Darwin sought to impart a halo of scientific finality to the conditioning character of the 'struggle for existence' in the evolution of the species. He perceived that the struggle for existence among species operated as a mode of 'Natural Selection' by which the undesirable was eliminated and the more fit sustained.[2] The underlying principle here, as in the case of the later sociological interpretations of Darwin's theory, is the basic notion that as there are contending elements in nature, so there

1   Quoted by Krishanlal Shridharani in War Without Violence : A Study of Gandhi's Method and its Accomplishments (London, 1939), p.218.

2   "This preservation of favourable variations and the rejection of injurious variations, I call Natural Selection." Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection Or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life (England, 1968), p.31.

are conflicting ideas and interests among men. To
Darwin, therefore, struggle is the fundamental law of
the universe, the implication being that conflict is a
constant phenomenon and the cause of evolution.

Darwin uses the term struggle for existence in a
'large and metaphorical sense.'[3] The whole stress of
his thesis is on the process of struggle and he has
completely ignored the unifying element of co-operation
as a factor in the evolution of the species.

The Darwinan system led to, what is its natural,
though not entirely legitimate result, i.e., the mili-
tarist interpretation of the theory. Some of the follow-
ers of Darwin, notably Karl Pearson, see, "selection as
something which renders the inexorable law of heredity a
source of progress which produces the good through
suffering, an infinitely greater good which far out-
balances the obvious pain and evil."[4] The evident sugges-
tion in this line of thinking is that we should regard
all scientific and humanitarian efforts to mitigate
social conflict as not only uncalled for, but even harmful.

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3   "I should premise that I use the term struggle for
existence in a large and metaphorical sense,
including dependence of one being on another and
including (which is more important) not only the
life of the individual, but success in living
progeny." Ibid., p.116.

4   Karl Pearson in Thomas Nixton Carver, ed.,
Sociology and Social Progress (New York, 1905),
p.395.

It is an exhortation to us that "if we once realize
that this law of inheritance is as inevitable as the
law of gravitation, we shall cease to struggle against
it."[5] According to Pearson the ideal attitude is to
let nature take its course.

Gandhi, while admitting that there are 'repulsions
enough in Nature', differs radically from the Darwinian
sociologists when it comes to his explanation of con-
flict in the physical as well as in the human world. He
stands in sharp contrast with those who regard struggle
as the fundamental law of creation. To him, struggle is
neither a ceaseless process of evolution, nor a uni-
versal phenomenon. Conflicts which cause struggle, are
but unfortunate moments in the history of the human race.
As such they are relatively unimportant in the course of
the life of human society. "Though there are repulsions
enough in Nature", Gandhi writes, "she lives by attrac-
tion. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does
not live by destruction. Self-love compels regards for
others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard
among individuals composing them. Some day we must extend
the national law to the universe, even as we have extended

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5   Ibid., p.393.

family laws to form nations - a larger family."[6]
Gandhi, here, clearly perceives a fundamental unity
in the universe and society which sustains order and
life.[7] Thus, conflicts are neither inevitable, nor
irreparable. They are only temporary irregularities
in the order of things or brief squalls in the even
flow of life.

Thus departing from the Darwinian interpreta-
tion of conflict Gandhi seems to have come quite close
to the Hegelian position that "every relation be viewed
from two opposite aspects i.e., from the point of view
of two terms it relates. Each term regards the rela-
tion as internal to itself and the other term as exter-
nal to itself. An antinomy results which can be solved
only by reinterpreting the situation and by looking at
both terms and their relation from the point of view of
a wider relation.... But one antinomy is solved in
order to make way for another. Opposition breaks out

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6   M.K. Gandhi, Young India, 2 March 1928. Quoted
     by Shridharni, nd, Ch.II, p.219.

7   Prince Kroptokin, the Russian biologist, was led
     to similar conclusions from his observations of
     insects and animal life in the jungles of central
     Asia. His doctrine of 'mutual aid' which is
     based on compilation of evidences from the same
     field of investigation as that of Darwin, is in
     harmony with Gandhi's perception of the fundamen-
     tal unity of all existence.

between the terms on a higher level."[8]

Hegel, however, made his interpretation and left the rest, as it were, to the inexorable march of history and the last analysis, to the formulation of historicists. The Gandhian philosophy, accepting the dynamics of dialectical situation and taking man as the measure of reason, centres upon a technique whereby one or both sides of a conflict can resolve the antinomy into a reinterpretation.

The dialectics of both Hegel and Marx miss the heart of the problem of social and political conflict. "Hegel discovered reason in things themselves, equated real with rational and understood the progress of history in terms of the dialectics as a method of logic."[9] Marx, while striving for an empirical approach allowed the dogma of the class struggle and the absolutism of his philosophy of history to strangle the development of dialectics at a level where it could enter into a technique of action. In contrast, the dialectical approach of Gandhian philosophy of conflict provides dynamic control in the field of action through the fashioning

8   Sidney Hook, From Hegel to Marx : Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx (London, 1936), p.67.

9   Joan V. Bondurant, Conquest of Violence : The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict (London, 1958), pp.198-99.

of a technique for the 'creative resolution of conflict.'[10]

How does this creative resolution of conflict come about? Here the Gandhian attitude towards a conflict situation provides the answer. The conflict is not regarded by Gandhi as an antagonistic relation between two human beings of two classes in which the important thing is to weaken the opponent but rather it is regarded as a situation in which the system binds the parties together. Gandhi views conflict as actually an invitation to social and constructive intercourse rather than an invitation to mutual elimination. Naturally his invitation to intercourse is, at the same time, an invitation to change the system. Gandhi, thus, was of the opinion that a conflict should not be a signal for rage and anger, for aggressive words and aggressive action.

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10   Ibid., p.199. The term 'creative resolution of conflict' implies that in Gandhian terms peace is a positive concept and not the stand and Western negative concept construed in Galtung's definition of 'resolution of conflict' as 'absence of conflict' (Johan Galtung,"Pacifism from a Sociological Point of View", The Journal of Conflict Resolution, no.3, 1959, p.67). Conflict resolution to Gandhi meant not the elimination of mal-adjustment, rather the progress towards more meaningful adjustment. Conflict resolution, according to Gandhi, is achieved only when violent relationship is transformed into non-violent relationship where the energies of the opponents are utilised in a higher integration or sublimation.

"To him a conflict was a challenge, a challenge that here was something to be done. While at the same time it offered possibilities of contact with a human being with whom you stand in an interesting and significant relation."[11] This calls, more than ever, for an increase in the personal contact with the opposite party.

The fundamental Gandhian idea is that one should be aggressive not against the opponent but against the condition. The opposition should not be directed against the antagonism, not against the antagonist. Gandhi expressed his fundamental attitude to an opponent in an open letter to the British written during his campaign for civil disobedience in July 1921. He wrote, "Some of my Indian friends charge me with camouflage when I say that I do not hate Englishmen, while we may hate the system they have established. I am trying to show that one may detest the wickedness of a brother without hating him.... I claim to be a fairly accurate student of human nature and a vivisector of my own failing. I have discovered that man is superior to the system he propounds. And so I feel that you, as an individual,

11   Johan Galtung,"Gandhi's Views on the Political
        and Ethical Precondition of a Non-Violent Fighter",
        in Pran Chopra, ed., The Sage in Revolt : A
        Remembrance (New Delhi, 1972), p.203.

are infinitely better than the system you have evolved
as a corporation.... Here, in India, you belong to a
system that is vile beyond description. It is possible,
therefore, for me to condemn the system in the strong-
est terms without considering you to be bad and without
imputing bad motives to every Englishman. You are as
much slaves of the system, as we are.[12]

After the above discussion concerning Gandhian
ideas towards conflict in general we must try to con-
centrate on his views on international conflict, both
political and economic, obtaining at different levels of
international relations. Though Gandhi was preoccupied
with India's struggle for independence and, therefore,
hardly had time to reflect on the problem of interna-
tional tension so as to evolve a systematic theory;
still his ideas on the problem are coherent, though
scattered and when carefully analyzed they provide a
useful insight into the problem of international conflict.

So far as political tensions among nations are
concerned there are, broadly, three basic 'images' or
levels of analysis to find out causes of tensions. These

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12   Quoted by Theodor Ebert, "The Meaning of Non-
        Violent Resistance", Gandhi Marg, vol.11, no.2,
        April 1967, p.103.

three 'images' are: man, the state and the international system.[13] We shall discuss them one by one and then contrast them with Gandhian views on the same.

The first level of thinking holds that international tensions are a result of man's evil nature and violent behaviour. Man is, by nature, greedy, corrupt, power seeking and irrational; therefore, he himself is the root of war and disorder. It is man who fashions society and fosters war by his own brutal behaviour.

Among such first level philosophers are 'optimists' who believe that while man is, in fact, the source of war; it is perfectly possible to reform man through education, understanding and enlightenment and thereby alter the pattern of conflict. 'Man made over' is a perfectly realistic and logical prospect and is the fundamentally positive view of the two late Western scholars, Harold Lasswell and Margaret Mead as well as Ruth Benedict, James G. Miller, Clyde Kluckhohn, Gordon Allport and Otto Klineberg.

The 'optimists' are countered by 'pessimist' thinkers like Augustine, Spinoza, Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Neibuhr who believe that human nature mitigates against

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13   For a more comprehensive discussion on these three 'images' see, Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State and War : A Theoretical Essay (New York, 1954).

the possibility of a world order and that man's base
nature cannot be altered and can only be controlled.
Reinhold Neibuhr, operating from the first level pessi-
mistic image, maintained that Gandhi's significance was
restricted to his own times and Indian culture.[14]

There are others, operating from the second level,
who hold that state is the cause of all international
unrests. Man is neither good nor bad as such, it is
rather the state, as Rousseau thought, that degrades
man and causes all mischiefs and disarries. War does
not begin, primarily in the unconscious corner of man's
mind, but in the nature of state controlling man's fate.
Among these second level thinkers, there are the so called
liberals who hold that open and liberal democratic states
are peace inducing; and totalitarian, autocratic and
monarchical states are war-mongers. The liberal demo-
cratic view of Bentham, J.S. Mill, Kant and Woodrow
Wilson has a political basis and focuses, primarily, on
the internal political structure of a society which, they
believe, determines the society's external behaviour and

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14   Richard Smith Beal, "Faint Light on an Uncertain
      Prospect : Gandhian Insight on World Order",
      Gandhi Marg, vol.1, no.4, July 1979, p.205.

its attitude towards peace and war.[15]

The socialists, on the other hand, operating from the same second level thinking, hold that economic structure of a society determines its attitude towards war and conflict. If the world is to be free from war, it must rid itself of capitalism which, they allege, causes tensions in the world. War, according to them, is a question of who owns and controls the means of production. War is but the external manifestation of the internal class struggle. Capitalism and imperialism are the

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15   The view, that a dictatorial or totalitarian regime
      is instinctively more prone to wage a war, has been
      very strongly expressed by George F. Kennan, the
      profounder of the post-Second World War American
      foreign policy of 'containment.' In his long
      telegram of February 22, 1946 from Moscow, he wrote,
      "... for Russian rulers have invariably sensed
      that their rule was relatively archaic in form,
      fragile and artificial in its psychological foun-
      dation, unable to stand comparison or contact with
      political systems of Western countries. For this
      reason, they have always feared foreign penetration,
      feared direct contact between Western world and
      their own.... And they have learned to seek
      security only in patient but deadly struggle for
      total destruction of rival power, never in compacts
      or compromises with it." Cited in Thomas H.
      Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., Containment:
      Documents on American Policy and Strategy 1945-
      1950 (New York, 1978), pp.53-54.

principal source of conflict in the world and the law
of increasing misery will continue to operate until the
proletariat wins out in the class struggle and socialist
states are established all over.[16]

There are significant variations in both the
liberal and socialist themes. Nevertheless, the basic
idea is that if all states could be transformed into
liberal democracies, justice and world order would pre-
vail. This is the liberal political position in contrast
to the socialist economic position that if all states
were economically socialists, peace would reign supreme
in the world.

The absence of peace and world order, according to
the third 'image' is due to the fact that the interna-
tional system is a primitive, decentralized, chaotic and

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16   Lenin, for example, writes at different places,
       "This undoubted fact clearly shows us how even
       such a "simple" and clear question as the question
       of war and peace, cannot be correctly put if we
       leave out of account class antagonism in modern
       society.....(p.31) War is the continuation, by
       forcible means, of politics pursued by the ruling
       class of the belligerent powers long before the
       outbreak of war.... (p.29) Modern war is born
       of imperialism.... (p.24) The proletariat fights
       and will always fight unswervingly against war,
       not forgetting, however, for a minute that the
       elimination of wars is possible only alongside
       the complete elimination of the division of so-
       ciety into classes.... (pp.31-32) At the present
       stage of the world war there is no way out of it
       except by the victory of socialism." (p.25)

       Quoted from Lenin On War and Peace (Peking, 1960).

anarchical assemblage of several entities. The international system does not have a custodian of peace and stability. Every state is free to determine and pursue its own self-interests as also to judge the merit of its own national causes in a system where the individual entities are unobliged to consider the interest of the whole theme, there is bound to be anarchy. Human nature and internal structure of the state, according to this level of thinking, is of secondary importance to the anarchical conditions obtaining in the society of states.[17]

Gandhi does not fit neatly into any of these three 'images' of war and peace. As a matter of fact he defies simple classification of any kind.[18] Gandhi addressed

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17   "A chief intellectual support for the third 'image' is, what can be called, the 'domestic analogy', the argument from the experience of individual men in domestic society to the experience of states, according to which states like individuals are capable of orderly social life only if, as in Hobbes's phrase, they stand in awe of a common power. In the case of Hobbes himself and his successors the domestic analogy takes the form simply of the assertion that states or sovereign princes like individual men who live without government are in a state of nature which is a state of war." See Hedley Bull, n.17, Ch.I, p.46.

18   Richard S. Beal gives several examples to prove that Gandhi 'is difficult to categorize because there was nothing set about him'. To note some of them: He was a Hindu, but refused to acknowledge any dependence on Hindu primacy. He believed in non-violence, but he was not a conventional pacifist. He was a nationalist, but hardly a model for the Third World. He believed in human development, but concentrically not linearly. See Richard Beal, n.14, Ch.II, p.206.

himself to all the three 'images' at one time or other.
But the Gandhian concept, taken as a whole, transcends
all the three above images. According to Gandhi the
problem of world order should be considered within an
entire philosophy of life. War and peace are not iso-
lated problems that can be resolved incrementally or
through some piecemeal strategy. Gandhian starting point
with regard to peace and war, as to all other problems
is the individual. Gandhi believed that any philosophy
of life, in order to have any meaning at all, must
commence with man as the being to which all truth is
related. A study of war should also commence with
individual on the focus "for, unless the individual wields
the weapon of destruction, there can be no war."[19]

International conflict, according to Gandhi, has
its root in the human life which are often divided into
watertight compartments, religious, moral, social, eco-
nomic, political, individual and collective. From these
different levels we have devised different set of moral
values. Often these values conflict with one another.
However, life refuses to be compartmentalized.[20] The evil,

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19   S.C. Gangal, The Gandhian Way to World Peace (Bombay,
      1960), p.12.

20   Gandhi writes, "The whole gamut of man's activities
      today constitute an indivisible whole. You cannot
      divide life social, economic, political and purely
      religious into watertight compartments." Quoted by
      J.B. Kripalani, "Gandhi and the Future of World Peace"
      in G. Ramachandran and T.K. Mahadevan, eds., Quest
      for Gandhi (New Delhi, 1970), p.240.

man does in one field of human activity, has its effect
on the entire gamut of his activity.

The contradicting values that we have prescribed
for ourselves to be followed at different levels of ac-
tivity; are very evident. In social life we honour the
man who is truthful, non-interfering, modest and affec-
tionate. We honour greatly the man who, at his personal
inconvenience, serves his neighbour. In the political
and specially in the international field we expect the
nations and its agents to be selfish, proud, overbearing,
cruel and aggressive. As a matter of fact a nation
sacrificing its real and fancied interests will not only
be considered foolish but also morally deprived. In this
field, truth, justice, fairplay and fellow-feeling are
at a discount. While in social life we denounce hate
and violence, the successful use of it in the interna-
tional field is not only condemned but also upheld.
While an individual murderer pays with his life for the
crime, a politician or an army general responsible for
arson, loot and mass murder, gets the honour of the
patriot and of the hero. War unleashes the lowest and
the basest of the human passions; but it does this under
the guise of bravery, self-sacrifice, patriotism and

even altruism.[21] The individual citizen is, thus, un-
suspectingly betrayed into antisocial and murderous
conduct of which he would be ashamed in his individual
and social life.

Because of these contradictions of moral values
in human life, according to Gandhi, violence permeates
all levels of human life, the individual, the family,
the village, the society and the state and the national
and international. War is, thus, a direct result of
this violence and it follows, therefore, that a state of
non-violence is a state of peace.

Here, it is necessary that we should be clear about
what Gandhi considers as violent since we shall be using
the term so often in subsequent chapters. Often it is
rather difficult to find out what Gandhi precisely means
by violence. The word violence or himsa is used by Gandhi
in several different senses. Sometimes he uses it in the
usual everyday language -- that is to denote the wilful use
of power in order to change an actor's (person's or group's)

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21   According to Gandhi there are situations in which
      violent resistance, when offered on behalf of a
      just cause, would seem to be instrumental to the
      development of certain highly moral qualities, such
      as courage, self-sacrifice, endurance, discipline,
      etc. Nevertheless as violence has been steadily
      growing in destructive power so it has also been
      steadily growing in intensity. If we continue to
      use it, its end is bound to be "the moral ruin and
      reduction of the human beings to robots." Gandhi in
      Harijan, 26th July 1942. Now in Non-Violence in
      Peace and War, vol.II (hereafter referred as NVPW II)
      (Ahmadabad, 1949), p.410.

behaviour in such a way that the actor in question is physically or psychologically hurt. At other times he seems to use the same word in such a broad sense that it becomes synonymous with moral evil in general.[22] But for our purpose, in the international context, Gandhi regards that behaviour as violent which helps in creating and/or perpetuating the iniquitious structure of world and the exploitation of man by man. A structuralist as he was, he seems to hold that war and militarism spring from the structural deficiencies and exploitation.

There is yet another aspect of international conflict, the conflict between the developed and the developing countries, the North-South conflict as it has come to be recently called, on which Gandhi had clear views. It must be noted here that this conflict got international recognition only in the late sixties. But Gandhi,

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22   It is interesting to note of what Gandhi regarded as violence. Violence is not only killing. "Under violence I include corruption, falsehood, hypocrisy, deceit and the like." Violence, to Gandhi, is also to exploit men and animals, to provoke violence, not to intervene, when possible, in a violent conflict with the purpose of reducing violence. Sabotage, certain types of strike, the destruction of property, certain types of fast or like that "threatened or practised in order to change man's belief", are all forms of violence. Violence is also "to remain passive or in silence when your enemy is being done to death." Violence, for Gandhi, is by no means confined to overt behaviour, but can also be a state of mind like cowardice or hatred. See Giuliano Pontara, "The Rejection of Violence in Gandhian Ethics of Conflict Resolution", Journal of Peace Research (Oslo), vol.2, 1965, p.212.

while writing much before that could foresee this crisis situation which was to become, in the later years, the major bone of contention in the international relation.

Without using today's parlance like centre and periphery and the nexus between the elites of the centre and the periphery, Gandhi spelt out in clear terms how the dominant power penetrated the industrial, economic and cultural life of the dependent society thereby imposing its economic and cultural imperialism.[23] The mechanism of this exploitation, Gandhi foresaw quite rightly, would be the transfer of high cost western technology ill-suited to the local conditions of the developing countries. Technology, according to Gandhi, is not neutral by nature and carries within itself a whole cosmology, a message, a code and a structure. To use Johan Galtung's phrase, "Transfer of Western technology is a structural, cultural invasion".[24] Introduction of western technology is a trojan horse bringing along with itself the concomitants of centrality, verticality, exploitative matrix of man-over-man and man-over-nature relationships.

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23   Gandhi writes, "The British have exploited India through its cities, the latter had exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built". M.K. Gandhi, To the Students, p.27. Quoted by D.N. Pathak, n.11, Ch.I, p.924.

24   Quoted by Pathak, ibid., p.923.

This realization about western technology as an instrument of dependency relationship has come about only recently, whereas Gandhi had warned us precisely on the same lines decades before.

Gandhi's entire approach to development is in tune with his integrated world view of man, his own self, man-nature and man-society relationships. Development, to him, meant constructive programme i.e., the way by which society has to be reformed and made fit for swaraj or self-rule. The two key concepts in the Gandhian approach to development are swaraj and swadeshi. Swaraj stands for the moral autonomy of the individual as also the political, economic and moral autonomy of nations. Swadeshi stands for the self-reliance of the basic units of society where, upto a point, production is for use and not for exchange. It means non-exploitative relationships between and among nations, avoidance of dependence and elimination of disparities between the rich and the poor. For Gandhi, swaraj is the end and swadeshi, its only legitimate means. In his quest for swaraj through swadeshi Gandhi not only showed his deep understanding of the subtle ways of exploitation at every level of society including the exploitation of the colonial and neo-colonial societies; but also displayed a keen interest into the far-reaching effects of industrialization based upon western technology, especially upon the developing world.

Thus, we see that Gandhian view sharply departs
from the modernist view over the chain causation between
science and technology on the one hand and development
on the other. To Gandhi, it was development, its pattern
and structure that should and must engender technological
development. The modernist view which lies behind the
whole scheme of technology transfer, is that backwardness
of the developing countries can be removed by planting
western 'developed' technologies in the 'developing' world.
Till recently the modernist view reigned without any subs-
tantial opposition. This has resulted in the end of the
very process of development in the developing countries
because of the fact that the import of technologies has
set a pattern of development which has created more problems
than it has solved.

Gandhi believed that it was the pattern and struc-
ture of development which should determine and produce
appropriate technologies. That is why he was opposed to
the indiscriminate use of machines and was afraid of the
distortion of the very process of development. Gandhi's
fears have proved to be only too real.[25] Gandhi may have

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25   It is significant that the Economics, a biannual
      journal of German contribution to economic science,
      has openly recognised that the Western model of
      growth as implemented in many countries in the
      Third World "with their doctrine of forced indus-
      trialization and neglect of domestic agriculture
      and small scale industry" have led to grave conse-
      quences. The developing nations are realizing

appeared to be a little too insistent that the right
causation must be accepted – the causation from develop-
ment to technology and not the other way round. But he
has been vindicated.

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footnote 25 from previous page continued...

through practical experience that a much better
method would be to build up "a system of social
market economy patiently from below" through
"decentralised decision making." Cited by Shriman
Narayan, Towards the Gandhian Plan (New Delhi, 1978),
pp.29-30. See, also, Jan Tinbergen (co-ordinator),
Reshaping the International Order (A Report to the
Club of Rome) (London, 1977).

CHAPTER III

GANDHI AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Gandhi had spent the larger part of his life in leading India's struggle for freedom and in attending to diverse socio-economic problems at home. This preoccupation of Gandhi 'was not a matter of choice or preference' but was 'logical and inevitable.'[1] At the first sight, therefore, one wonders whether Gandhi was able to spare time and attention to the larger problems of international conflict or war and peace. But Gandhi did attend to these problems and this he could do despite his preoccupations elsewhere, primarily because his approach towards all problems, whether individual, national or international is, as it were, integral - he views human problems at various levels in an integral or interrelated framework. His entire philosophy forms a coherent whole and is based on a single value system comprising of truth and nonviolence. So he did not have to treat international problems in isolation from problems at national or individual level. So far as international conflict is concerned Gandhi provides a coherent and workable mechanism for its resolution, though, unfortunately, it has not received the attention it deserves.

Gandhi's Views on Conventional Methods of International Conflict Resolution

Before we proceed to discuss Gandhian techniques of international conflict resolution it is pertinent to have a

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1   S.C. Gangal, "Gandhi and World Order" in K.P. Misra and S.C. Gangal, eds., n.21, Ch.I, p.160.

brief look at what Gandhi thought of various conventional devices to bring or maintain international peace. In this area he considered the pacific settlement of disputes, world government, international organisation, disarmament and a world police force each of which we shall take up separately.

Of many ways of pacific settlement arbitration seems to be Gandhi's preferred method, meaning any informal effort by a third party to mediate, conciliate or use good offices. Gandhi wrote in 1924, "It is for the thoughtful few to make quarrels impossible by making arbitration popular and obligatory."[2] Before the Second World War was declared Gandhi had appreciated the attempt of President Roosevelt in April 1939 to settle differences between the West European democracies and Germany. He wrote, "How I wish that Herr Hitler would respond to the appeal of the President of the United States and allow his claims to be investigated by arbitrators in whose choice he will have as effective a voice as the disputants."[3] He supported the arbitration of debt question between free India and

2 Document No.222 in A. Appadorai, Documents on Political Thought in Modern India, vol.1, p.381. Cited by A. Appadorai, "Gandhi and the Settlement of Disputes" in Misra and Gangal, eds., n.21, Ch.I, p.62.

3 Ibid., p.62.

the United Kingdom[4] and what is more important, he agreed to the use of an arbitrator in Kashmir question.[5]

From the small and scattered evidence available on what Gandhi thought of the legalistic methods of pacific settlement, there is reason to believe that his opinion was not quite favourable. Though a barrister himself by training he did not have a high opinion of the legal profession as it operates. In Gandhi's view International Law, like the international system generally was heavily tilted towards the Western countries - a trend which, unfortunately, has not been adequately set right even now. Thus, Gandhi was not well disposed towards International Law as an agent for the settlement of international dispute.

Gandhi's first approval of the concept of world government came sometime between 1938 and 1942. It was a new idea to him, he admitted, but he approved of it. Subsequently various Congress Party resolutions suggesting a federal world state based on self-determination of

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4   Harijan, 14 April 1946. Quoted by Paul F. Power, Gandhi On World Affairs (Washington D.C., non dated), p.52.

5   Delhi Diary (Prayer Speeches from 10-9-1947 to 30-1-1948) (Ahmedabad, 1948), p.163.

all peoples and economic justice, had Gandhi's endorsement.[6]

Gandhi's endorsement of the idea of a world government did not, of course, automatically lead him to support the practical efforts by others to establish an immediate world organisation. The critical attitude of Tolstoy towards international peace efforts, particularly the London Peace Congress of 1890, might have influenced Gandhi. While visiting the League of Nations headquarters at Geneva in 1931, Gandhi criticised the Organisation for the lack of an effective peace and suggested that it might benefit from his idea of international conflict resolution.[7] His support towards the establishment of the United Nations was marked by caution and reservations. He said, "I very much fear that behind the structure of world security sought to be raised lurk and mistrust and fear which breed war."[8] In case of Kashmir dispute Gandhi had opposed the referral of the issue to the United Nations and even after it was referred Gandhi suggested that India withdraw its complaint from the world body and start bilateral negotiations with Pakistan.

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6   Gandhi wrote to Maurice Frydman in July 1942, "I told you that I was at one with you and that I was trying to take the Congress and everybody towards world federation." Gandhian Outlook and Techniques (Government of India Publication), p.274, cited by S.C.Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, p.113.

7   P. Brijanath Sharga, Gandhi-I (Lucknow, 1932), pp.389-90.

8   Press Release issued by Gandhi on 19 April 1945. Cited by Power, n.4, Ch.III, p.55.

Gandhi's views on disarmament are widely known.
He held that disarmament can or should be introduced by
one or several states. He doubted that great powers
would actually introduce disarmament and therefore he put
his faith in India to adopt complete and unilateral dis-
armament, whatever the risk. "And if nations do not
renounce weapons completely, he argued, they will deterio-
rate into intellectual and spiritual decadence and mili-
tarism and dictatorship."[9]

As regards international police force, Gandhi denied
as late as 1938 that it would be an advance over historical
warfare. During the Second World War, however, his views
evolved to approve, with reservation, an international police
force. He was of the opinion that if an objective body
could be found he would welcome it as a basis for a world
police force.[10] It is clear, however, that his qualified
support for an international police force cannot be reason-
ably construed to mean that he would approve the policing
of the world by any single nation or through collective

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9   Paul Power, n.4, Ch.III, p.56.

10   Gandhi writes, "... there might be a world police
    force to keep order in the absence of universal
    belief in non-violence." Gandhian Outlook and
    Techniques, p.74. Cited by S.C. Gangal, n.19,
    Ch.II, p.114.

security arrangements like the NATO, Warsaw Pact or the SEATO.[11]

From the above discussion it is clear that Gandhi had addressed himself to the conventional mechanisms of conflict resolution. But this did not prevent him from working out a comprehensive mechanism based on his world view. He partially supported the conventional methods because he believed that his own method was not fully evolved and that it would need a great deal of preparatory work to put it into practice. Nevertheless it followed that for him the conventional methods/techniques had merely temporary value and could serve only in the short run or a transitional period.

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[11]   Gandhi did not believe that any country would guarantee the freedom of another country from the aggression of a third country. He would very much like the nations to fight their own battles if they had to. His view was typically expressed in case of Czechoslovakia when she was seeking guarantee from Britain and France in the face of the threat from Hitler. He wrote, "If I were a Czech, therefore, I would free these two nations (Britain and France) from the obligation to defend my country. And yet I must live. I would not be a vassal to any nation or body. I must have absolute independence or perish." Harijan, 15 October 1938, now in Non-Violence in Peace and War I (hereafter referred as NVPW I) (Ahmedabad, 1948), p.209.

Gandhian Techniques for International Conflict Resolution

The two key concepts in the Gandhian methods of conflict resolution are 'truth' and 'non-violence'. These two concepts cannot be explained separately because they are intertwined and one can be understood only with reference to the other. "Gandhi's truth is not only an object of the intellect, nor only an object of knowledge; it is something which, in addition, activates the will and relates the individual to other individuals in a meaningful relationship of duty, obligation and well-being. Gandhi's truth is known in action."[12]

Non-violence, as a concept, is as old as hills. But in traditional ethics the use of non-violence had been largely confined to interpersonal relations or behaviour. Gandhi's contribution consists in his extension of this traditional ethics of non-violence to cover, also, the relations among groups and nations and in showing the practical efficacy in the field of political action.

Gandhi's rejection of violence in solving group conflicts are based on sound principles and on his perception of truth. Gandhi thinks that absolute truth is unrealizable; what man can hope to realize is relative

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12   Anthony Parel, "Gandhian Satyagraha and Mechiavellian Virtue" in Paul F. Power, ed., The Meanings of Gandhi (Hawaii, 1971), p.192.

[13]
truth. A conflict, in Gandhi's view, is regarded as the confrontation not simply of two parties, but between two sets of relative truths. And, therefore, no party has a right to employ violence to achieve its goal which is, at most, a relative truth, certainly not absolute truth. Conflict resolution to Gandhi means realization of higher truth which can only be achieved by the synthesis of the two relative truths which, again, must necessarily be achieved through peaceful negotiation.

To such a view it may be objected that it is totally unrealistic since many parties do not represent any fraction of truth and are as such given to avarice, that they deserve nothing less than total destruction. Nazi Germany is pointed to as an example. But Gandhi has several answers to such an objection. First, there are very few who are really indifferent to consideration of justice or human need. This view is in keeping with Gandhi's belief in the essential

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13   The Polish author Milosz while introducing his book
      The Captive Mind with a quotation from an old Jew
      of Galicia, corroborates this Gandhian view: "When
      some one is honestly fiftyfive per cent right that is
      very good and there is no use wrangling and if some
      one is sixty per cent right, it is wonderful, it is
      great luck and let him thank God. But what is to be
      said about seventyfive per cent right? Wise people
      say this is suspicious. Well, and what about hundred
      per cent right? Whoever says he is hundred per cent
      right is a fanatic, a thug and the worst kind of
      rascal." Quoted by Horace Alexander, "The Power
      Struggle and Human Community", Gandhi Marg, vol.10,
      no.3, July 1966, p.174.

goodness of human nature. Secondly, even when an opponent's aims do not represent a fraction of truth considered in themselves, they still point towards a suppressed portion of the truth, namely, the human needs with which they are usually connected. Excessive group demands may point to genuine communal or individual needs which cannot be and should not be totally destroyed if a meaningful resolution of conflict is sought to be achieved.

Non-violence assures a gradual increase in the hold of truth by the contending parties through a cooperative enquiry into the human needs. It also attaches more importance to a co-operative pursuit of truth.

Gandhi rejects violence on a second ground that it is not conducive to the definite solution of conflict, that instead of securing peace it increases conflicts and violence in an endless circle.[14] Violence begets violence and it results in "deeper hatred, counter hatred and vengeance...."[15] Gandhi believes that history gives

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14   Kenneth Boulding agrees with this view: "Violence in itself, because it cannot perform the reconciling and compromising function, leads to the suppression rather than the resolution of the conflict; it drives conflict underground, but does little to eliminate it." K. Boulding, Conflict and Defence : A General Theory (New York, 1962), p.304.

15   Gandhi in Harijan, 24 February 1946. Now in NVPW II, n.21, Ch.II, p.29.

evidence for this assertion. In contradiction with his view of history as progressive emancipation of violence,[16] Gandhi here views history as witness to the progressive growth of violence, from the age of bow when violence had its ethical code and caused comparatively little injury to persons and things to the age of atom bomb in which every ethical principle is obliterated and the whole mankind is threatened by annihilation. Probably, the letter view was taken by him as a result of the contemporary phenomena of mass destruction caused by nuclear weapons which horrified him.

So far as the rejection of violence is concerned Gandhi has been charged with double standard because of his participation in Both War, the First World War and the Zulu Rebellion of Natal in 1906. Even though his participation was indirect in the form of red cross service, Gandhi admits that weighed only in the scales of ahimsa his was an act of violence and he was guilty of the

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16   Gandhi writes, "If we turn our eyes from the time
      of which history has any record down to our time
      we shall find that man has been steadily progress-
      ing towards ahimsa .... If we believe that mankind
      has steadily progressed towards ahimsa, it follows
      that it has to progress towards it still further.
      Nothing in this world is static, everything is
      Kinetic." Harijan, 11 August 1940, NVPW I, n.11,
      Ch.III, pp.310-311.

crime of war. But his defence is that "in the circum-
stance in which I found myself, I was bound to adopt the
course I did."[17]

Life, according to Gandhi, is governed by a multi-
tude of forces. The course of man's action, therefore,
is difficult to be determined by one general principle.
He defends himself by saying that, "But so long as I lived
under a system of government based on force and volun-
tarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it
created for me I was bound to help that government to
extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war, unless
I non-cooperated with that government and renounced, to
the utmost of my capacity, the privileges it offered me."[18]

Gandhi was true to his words when he refused to help
Britain's war cause in the Second World War, because he
felt that his position regarding the British Government
in India was totally different from the one vis-a-vis the
Government of South Africa during the period when he was
there and, therefore, he should not voluntarily partici-
pate in its war and he should risk imprisonment and even
gallows, if he was forced to take up arms or otherwise
take part in the Government's military operations.

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17   Young India, 13 September 1928. Now in NVPW I,
      n.11, Ch.III, p.101.

18   Ibid., pp.101-102.

The individualist in Gandhi also led him to a contro-
versy on this score when he said in 1928, "If there was a
national Government, whilst I should not take any direct
part in any war, I can conceive occasions when it would be
my duty to vote for the military training of those who
wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not
believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not
possible to make a person or a society non-violent by
compulsion."[19] The critics read in this statement as
Gandhi condoning violence. An individualist as he was,
Gandhi had high respect for individual convictions.
Accordingly he believed that individuals who do not believe
in violence must not forcefully deprive those who do
believe in violence and in the means of exercising it.
The latter must be given the opportunity to train them-
selves for violence, but should continuously be the object
of persuasion by those who want never to use it.

The mechanism which the Gandhian way of conflict
resolution resorts to is 'Satyagraha'. The term satyagraha
has been discussed at length by many scholars and so there
is hardly any need to elaborate upon what it means. Suffice
to say that in Gandhian thinking conflict resolution means

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19   Gandhi, Young India, 13 September 1928.
        Now in NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, pp.102-103.

grasping satye or truth. The modus operandi of satyagraha allows for several stages of winning over an opponent. The first stage is characterized by persuasion through reason or negotiation. The subsequent stages enter the realm of persuasion through self-suffering wherein the satyagrahi attempts to dramatize the issues at stake and to get through the opponent's unprejuidiced judgement so that he may willingly come again on to a level where he may be persuaded through rational argument. Finally, if persuasion by reason or self-suffering does not succeed the satyagrahi may resort to non-violent direct action. These three stages are in that order and we intend to take them up for discussion one after another.

'Persuasion Through Reason' or Negotiation

Before a satyagrahi enters into negotiation with his opponent he must analyse and reflect upon the character of the total conflict situation which would involve accumulation and analysis of factual information concerning the conflict. Whatever the subject of a specific conflict, understanding of the nature of conflict in general and of the objectives to be attained in the given conflict situation in particular, is essential.

After the accumulation of facts and information about the conflict a second step for him is to choose his immediate objectives which should be chosen with an eye on fruitful negotiation. For this it is essential that these

objectives must be determinate. There are two main reasons for insisting on this characteristic. The first is that the satyagrahi is committed to open dealing and demands are seldom couched in vague terms. The second is that clear objectives tend to reassure one's opponent and hence to reduce his resistance.[20]

Even though the immediate objectives are to be stated in clear terms, the satyagrahi should not start from the assumption that these must be accepted by his opponent in toto. He, therefore, while doing all he can to persuade the opponent of the correctness of his own position, allows the opponent every opportunity and indeed allows him to demonstrate the correctness of his position. He is, at all times, prepared to depart from his own position and to embrace the opponent's position, should he be persuaded by the opponent of his error. This may be achieved totally or partially surrendering the whole or a part of his original position, if he is convinced that the resulting synthesis would increase his hold upon truth. It follows that the satyagrahi does not aim at the imposition

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20   The importance of the latter consideration is
        underlined by the German reaction to the Allied
        insistence on unconditional surrender in the
        Second World War. To insist on unconditional
        surrender is to stiffen one's opponent's resistance
        partly because it humiliates him and partly because
        it adds to the anxiety that must accompany defeat.

of a settlement upon his opponent, for, the power to impose a settlement does not justify his objectives. As Gandhi said to the Japanese in 1942, "..... even if you win, it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater."[21]

Recognising the necessity of a synthesis in a conflict situation Joan Bondurant writes, "The satyagrahi must recognise that elementary to his technique is the first step of a full realization that his immediate goal is not the triumph of his substantial side in the struggle – but rather the synthesis of the two opposing claims."[22] But, this point seems to weaken the author's analysis of satyagraha. The use of 'claim' here is out of keeping with the earlier analysis of the value of satyagraha in conflict situation in which there is no ethical middle ground between the goals of the respective groups. Are we now to suppose that the use of satyagraha by the South African opponents of colour oppression will produce a synthesis between apartheid and equality? The author states the satyagrahi's aim more correctly when she writes, "..... he (the satyagrahi) seeks a victory not over the opponent but over the situation in the best (in the sense of total human needs of the situation) synthesis possible."[23]

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21   NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, p.409.

22   Bondurant, n.9, Ch.II, p.196.

23   Ibid., p.196.

Thus, the satyagrahi's openness, his readiness to consider his opponent's case and the emphasis upon the 'facts' which is implicit in his attachment to the Gandhian conception of truth, all serve to make it difficult for his opponent to view the conflict as a naked confrontation of wills and objectives. Although the satyagrahi is unwielding in his determination to resist injustice he can be said to be reality oriented; and such an orientation tends to discourage the stubbornness caprice and prejudice which often stand in the way of an enduring settlement of differences.

The agreement that results from the Gandhian type of negotiation, can be called synthesis, but not compromise. A satyagrahi may surrender his position so far as non-essentials are concerned. But in the sector of essentials or basic values there can be no adjustment. The satyagrahi may yield to persuasion when he is convinced that the opponent's position is true or more nearly true. When the persuasion has been affected what was once the opponent's position, is now the position of both antagonist and protagonist. There is no sacrificing of position, no concession to the opponent with the idea of buying him over. There is no victory in the sense of triumph of one party over the other. Yet, there is no compromise in the sense

in which each side would concede part of his previous position solely to effect a settlement. "There is no lowering of demands but an aiming at higher level of adjustment which creates a new, mutually satisfactory resolution."[24]

Persuasion Through Self-Suffering

Despite all sincere efforts by the satyagrahi, if the negotiation ends in deadlock, the satyagrahi undergoes self-suffering to persuade the opponent resume negotiations where it is possible to come to a settlement through reasonable understanding. Gandhi writes, "I have found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age-long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding."[25] Bondurant calls this mechanism of self-suffering as 'shock therapy'[26] upon the opponent and Jacques Maritain writes, "Gandhi's real genius lies in the systematic organisation of patience and voluntary

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24   Ibid., p.197.

25   Young India, 19 March 1925. Now in M.K. Gandhi, Sarvodaya (The Welfare of All) (Ahemadabad, 1954), p.84.

26   Bondurant, n.9, Ch.II, p.229.
      Bondurant writes, "Suffering operates in the satyagraha strategy as a tactic for cutting through the rational defences which the opponents may have built in opposing the initial efforts of rational persuasion through clear statement and arguments of the satyagrahi position. The process may be referred to as catharis.", p.228.

suffering as a special method or technique of political activity."[27]

The idea behind self-suffering is that to sacrifice in one's own being is to cooperate with truth and to co-operate is to endure sacrifice including loss of life, if necessary, to uphold truth. This view of suffering is essentially a religious view. It is religion which sees a positive value in suffering in terms of atonement, purification and effective communication. Gandhi transferred this religious means of spiritual effectiveness to the arena of politics.

One should observe here that in the usual mode of violent conflict preparation for sacrifice is also implied. That the immediate objective of violent action is to inflict rather than to endure suffering does not detract from the preparation and indeed the realistic expectation of suffering. Moreover, the loss of life and injuries sustained by satyagrahis in conducting non-violent action campaigns is likely to be less than those sustained in violent combat.

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27   J. Maritain, <u>Man and the State</u> (Chicago, 1951), p.70.

Non-Violent Direct Action[28]

If persuasion by reason or suffering does not succeed
the satyagrahi may resort to non-violent direct action cha-
racterized by such tools as non-cooperation or civil dis-
obedience. The practical application of all the three above
stages of action we shall be discussing subsequently.

Gandhi was thoroughly convinced of the practical
application of his technique in the international field.
He was of the opinion that his non-violent technique was
applicable to every sphere of life and to a variety of
situations. In his own words, "One cannot be non-violent
in one's own circle and violent outside it... the law must
apply to nations as to individuals."[29] Gandhi was quite
right in his assertion. We also see that the three stages

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28   Instead of 'non-violent direct action', Clarence
       Case would call it 'non-violent coercion'. He
       denies a contradiction in term of non-violent
       coercion and he comments that the combination of
       non-violence and coercion "is not the outcome of a
       pre-conceived notion but represents a working arrange-
       ment..." Clarence Marsh Case, Non-violent Coercion :
       A Study in Methods of Social Pressure (London, 1923),
       p.3.

       While agreeing with Case that there is no contradic-
       tion in term involved, one may point out that Gandhi
       himself, given his predilections as they are, would
       not have liked the term 'coercion' very much. So,
       one feels that the term 'direct action' is more in
       keeping with Gandhian vocabulary.

29   NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, p.187.

of satyagraha described above are well-equipped to deal
with the three stages of any war or aggression which
accounts for the bulk of international conflict today.
These three stages of war are periods before the invasion,
at the time of attack and during the period of occupation.
Since they are of immense relevance to this paper, we
shall take up the three stages separately for discussion.

The plan of action before the invasion would involve
carrying out negotiations with the opponent in a spirit
of goodwill and friendliness so as to remove his genuine
grievances, if any. Negotiations must be started if only
one genuinely believes in non-violence, but not from the
feeling of fear or cowardice. Gandhi considers cowardice
as the greatest of evils and given a choice, he would
prefer violence to cowardice.[30] Gandhi propounded this
aspect of his technique during his extensive tour of the
North-West Frontier Province of India in 1938 on the con-
text of frequent tribal raids in that area. He said, "If
I had my way, I would go and mix with the tribes and argue

cowardice

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30   Consider the following statements of Gandhi in this
        context. "Cowardice is violence double distilled"
        (NVPW II, p.119). "Non-violence is not a cover for
        cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave.
        Exercise of non-violence requires far greater bravery
        than that of swordsmanship." (NVPW I, p.59). There
        are some who sought to justify their passivity in
        times of crisis by pleading they are being non-violent.
        Gandhi writes, "We have always proclaimed from the
        housetops that non-violence is the way of the brave,
        but there are some amongst us who have brought ahimsa
        into disrepute by using it as a weapon of the weak".
        (NVPW II, p.57).

it out with them and I am sure they won't be impervious to the argument of love and reason."[31]   After a study of the situation Gandhi came to the conclusion that the raiders' motive was chiefly economic, i.e., the satisfaction of primary needs.   But, the solution, according to him, did not lie in offering them money,[32] but in teaching them lessons of self-help and industry.

This technique may be objected to on the ground that it is impracticable or even romantic.   But it is hardly so. Gandhi rightly believed that aggression takes place from some motive or other.   Supposing the motive is economic (as was in the case of the Frontier raiders) the aggressors might be taught the lessons of self-help to improve their economic position so that they might give up their design. "This might appear to be a little naive.   But it is probably a suggestion for the extension of the neighbourly principle of live and let live to the field of international relations..... This happens even today when one country helps another with food, money and ideas and knowledge and offers aids without strings."[33]

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31   Pyrelal, A Pilgrimage for Peace, p.312. Cited by S.C. Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, p.59.

32   Gandhi wrote, "To seek safety by offering blackmail or ransom to the raiders would be a direct invitation to them to repeat their depredation and would be demoralizing alike to the giver and the tribesmen". Ibid., p.59.

33   Ibid., pp.61-62.

Gandhi did not have much occasion to test out his technique in the international field. But on numerous occasions he has demonstrated its efficacy in the international field. Hence it may be assumed that, properly applied, his technique would also work satisfactorily in the international arena also.

The second stage of satyagraha, namely, non-violent resistance through self-suffering is applicable at the time of attack after the negotiations have failed. Gandhi drew a fairly detailed plan of resistance against aggression at the time of the Japanese attack on Burma and parts of India during World War II. He advised to the people of that area prone to Japanese attack, "One thing they should never do - to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That would be a cowardly act and unworthy of freedom loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. The attitude, therefore, must always be resistance to the Japanese."[34] His intention behind this plan of action was clear. "The underlying belief in such non-violent resistance is that the aggressor will, in time, be mentally and even physically tired of killing non-violent

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34 Bapu's Letters to Mira (Ahmedabad, 1949), pp.360-61.

resisters. He will begin to search what this new force
is which refuses cooperation without seeking to hurt and
will probably desist from further slaughter."[35]

There are broadly two criticisms levelled against
this technique. First, critics point out that the non-
violence of the Jews in Germany could hardly save them
from Hitler's persecution. To this Gandhi's answer is
that what the Jews offered was passive resistance rather
than non-violent resistance. Theirs was a case of non-
violence of the helpless and of the weak. They were
violent at heart and non-violent out of necessity and
in appearance only. Gandhi's non-violence is the non-
violence of the brave and strong. The failure of the
Jews was, therefore, not the failure of Gandhi's tech-
nique. He, therefore, appealed to the Jews that if they
"instead of being helplessly and of necessity non-violent,
adopt active non-violence i.e., fellow-feeling for the
gentle Germans deliberately.... this supreme act of
theirs will be their greatest contribution and war will
be a thing of the past."[36] Gandhi's assumption here is
that even hardened dictators like Hitler are not beyond
redemption and human nature, in its essence, being one,
does respond to the advances of love.

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35   Gandhi, For Pacifists (Ahmedabad, 1949), p.41.

36   Ibid., p.79.

The second criticism is that the success of the technique is conditioned by the fact that there should be personal contact with the aggressor so that self-suffering by the non-violent resister can move his natural feelings of love and altruism. It follows, therefore, the critics argue, that it can be hardly of any avail against aerial warfare since there are no personal contacts. But Gandhi did believe that pure ahimsa or suffering undergone without malice is self-propagating and that even the distant invisible invader is sure to be melted by it. He wrote, "... behind the death-dealing bomb there is the human hand that releases it and behind that, still, is the human heart that gets the hand in motion."[37] Gandhi was also of the opinion that his technique would work even against the atom bomb.

But Gandhi was not blind to human imperfections. He knew it perfectly well that his technique called for thorough training on the part of the resisters and, given the condition as it was, very few people were really equipped to put his technique into practice. Gandhi, therefore, would suggest to those who did not believe in non-violence, to fight violently out of a sense of duty rather than

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37   Ibid., p.64.

surrender in a cowardly manner. On this consideration
he had a word of praise for the Czechs' and Poles'
resistance against German invaders. He characterized
the resistance of the Poles as 'almost non-violent' and
this was a new expression that he was using for the first
time. He explained the expression thus, "For the Poles
to stand valiantly against the German hordes vastly
superior in numbers, military equipment and strength,
was almost non-violence. I should not mind repeating
that statement over and over again. You must give its
full value to the word 'almost'.... The Poles were un-
prepared for the way the enemy swooped down upon them."[38]
On this consideration, also, Gandhi had endorsed the use
of force by the Government of India in Kashmir in 1947
against Pakistani invasion. His view on these two ins-
tances is quite clear. If the cause is just and the
nation is not prepared for non-violent resistance, it is
right to use violence rather than meekly cow down before
the enemy. But even in violent warfare Gandhi was against
the policy of scorched earth, sabotage, secrecy under
certain circumstances. According to him the policy of
destroying property and crops and poisoning wells indicates
lack of bravery. Sabotage and secrecy lead to demoralization.
Thus in 1942 he advised the Government of India, who were

38   Ibid., p.45.

engaged in a violent war with Japan not to resort to a
policy of scorched earth. He said, "The Government of
India will considerably ease the situation and allay
anxiety by declaring in unequivocal terms that they will
not apply, if the occasion ever arise, the scorched earth
policy to India, especial regard being had to her peculiar
position."[39]

The third stage of satyagraha, namely, non-violent
direct action is applicable to the period when resistance
through self-suffering has failed and occupation has been
affected by the invaders. This form of action will involve
non-violent non-cooperation with the aggressor. In May
1942, at the time of anticipated Japanese attack Gandhi
wrote to Mirabehn, "Remember that our attitude is that
of complete non-cooperation with the Japanese army, there-
fore, we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit
by any dealings with them. Therefore, we cannot sell
anything to them.... the question of having any dealings
with Japanese does not and should not arise.... They will
handle nothing from Japanese hands."[40] His advice to
Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), when it was invaded by Italy,
was also in the same line.[41]

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39   NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, p.389.

40   Gandhi, n.34, Ch.III, pp.66-67.

41   Gandhi wrote, "Italian occupation in that case would
      mean that of the land without its people. That
      however is not Italy's exact object. She seeks
      submission of the people of that beautiful land."
      Gandhi, n.35, Ch.III, p.62.

Gandhi could speak with some authority on this point because he had ample experience of the efficacy of non-violent non-cooperation with the Britishers "who were almost like an army of occupation"[42] in India. In 1940 he wrote, "Non-violent non-cooperation, however imperfect it has redeemed India at least somewhat from the slavery under which she was groaning. It has raised India from the slough of despondancy and has brought her prestige which nothing else could have, I make bold to say that if the non-violence offered had not been adulterated, its effect would have been still more visible."[43]

The fundamental belief that Gandhi had is that if the whole conquered nation-men, women and children refuse to cooperate, in any way whatever, with the invading forces, the latter are bound to withdraw, sooner or later, in sheer disgust. But this belief apparently seems to be a weak point. The question is, can a whole nation-men, women and children-be made to non-cooperate with the aggressor? Since this presumes rational behaviour on the part of every individual in a country this may as well be dubbed as, as Gangal says, 'rationalist fallacy'. But he goes on to point out that this is no fallacy at all since here "the assumption is that the view of the leaders will

42   Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, p.68.

43   NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, p.358.

be intelligent and well-thought out. And the masses
will follow them as always, whether rationally or emo-
tionally. This is what happens in other spheres, includ-
ing science and philosophy."[44]

Gandhian techniques may appear to some as a fig-
ment of wild imagination of a pacifist. And, therefore,
some try to discard it as having no practical value at
all. It is, therefore, significant to note what George
F. Kennan, noted American diplomat and statesman (and by
no means a pacifist), said in December 1957 in the course
of his B.B.C. Reith Lectures. Without specifically referr-
ing to Gandhi, Kennan was, in fact, endorsing the Gandhian
technique for resisting aggression in the face of an atomic
attack and described it as the only possible defence against
nuclear warfare./ Kennan spoke of a core of civil resis-
tance movement on the territory over-run by the invader,
so as to create a situation in which the threatened country
would be able to say: "You may be able to over-run us if
you are unwise enough to attempt it, but you will have
small profit from it; not a single person... likely to
perform your political business will become available
to you; you will find here no adequate nucleus of puppet

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44   Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, p.69.

regime.... Your stay among us will not be a happy one...
and it will be without favourable long-term political
prospects."[45]

Two Requirements of Satyagraha

Here it is necessary to point out two very relevant
requirements that a satyagrahi nation in combat should
fulfil while carrying on satyagraha at various stages
discussed above. A first requirement is that a non-violent
nation while dealing with the opponent government should
constantly keep in touch with the people of that country.
Because a careful investigation into the cause of any war
would reveal that it was first started by a very few ambi-
tious, powerful and evil-minded individuals, on one or both
the sides. Yet, by reasons of perverse propaganda the
whole community is trained to bitterly hate another. Thus
when two governments declare hostilities they do so on the
conviction that either their respective people would stand
with them and would willingly support them or could be
compelled to fight for them. In the Second World War the
British Government declared war with Germany on the first
conviction and the colonial government in India did so on
the second conviction.

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45   Quoted by Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, pp.151-52. Compare
        Kennan's statement with that of Gandhi (n.40) stated
        in this chapter.

Gandhi, therefore, suggests that the satyagrahi country should always remain in contact with the people of the opponent country, informing them of its goodwill and friendliness towards them. They must be informed of the real attitude of their own government and of the non-violent country to the war. The people should learn that the war would bring miseries for both the peoples and hence they should desist from supporting the government's war cause.

From the strategic point of view this has proved very effective. During India's freedom struggle support for the Indians within Great Britain was not the result of special qualities in the British, but because of the Indian reliance on non-violent technique. This made it easier for a wide cross-section of the people in Britain to support the Indian cause, for they did not then appear unpatriotic. This too, incidentally happened in case of Vietnam war when domestic protests built up against America's participation.

A second necessary requirement for a satyagrahi country is the need for constant self-examination. Some may have to combat personal failings which are lessening their effectiveness as satyagrahi. Efforts may be needed to raise the public morale in some parts of the country. One may have to check the impatience of certain groups

which, left to themselves, might be tempted into violence. Certain classes or conflicting elements within the nation may have to be reconciled especially if their differences might be exploited by one's opponents or are threatening to undermine public discipline.

It should be noted that such efforts to root out weaknesses and sources of danger are always necessary whether one's methods of action are violent or non-violent. But they are particularly vital in case of non-violence because a community which is resisting injustice by non-violence cannot protect itself from the fragility of its weakest links as easily as one that is engaged in warfare. "A nation at war can imprison the traitors and give employment in farms and factories to those who lack a sufficient taste for soldiering. The non-violent community cannot have recourse to such simple measures."[46]

Limitations of Non-Violent Resistance

Gandhi notes several conditions which must be present when non-violent action is undertaken. They are, broadly speaking, the environmental conditions, the preparation and attitude of the satyagrahi and the methods of the satyagrahi.

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46   H.J.N. Horsburgh, Non-Violence and Aggression :
A Study of Gandhi's Moral Equivalent of War
(London, 1968), p.77.

A first among the environmental conditions is that
when the adversary is in a disadvantageous position due
to factors irrelevant to the struggle, this weakness
should not be exploited by the non-violent fighter.[47]
Secondly, non-violent resistance is also impracticable
if the type of change that it might lead to is considered
to be less beneficial than the existing one. Thirdly,
non-violent resistance is also precluded unless it is
undertaken as a response to an instance of violence.[48]
The 'lack of true and substantial issue' is another environ-
mental condition which, Gandhi felt, precluded the use of
non-violence.

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[47]   When World War II broke out pressure was brought
        upon Gandhi to intensify the fight against the
        British. He declined to take up mass civil dis-
        obedience during the war. Gandhi said, "There is
        neither warrant nor atmosphere for mass action.
        That would be naked embarrassment and a betrayal of
        non-violence.... By causing embarrassment at this
        stage, the authorities must resent it bitterly and
        are likely to act madly. It is worse than suicide
        to resort to violence, that is embarrassment under
        the cover of non-violence". Quoted by Arne Naess,
        "A. Systematization of Gandhian Ethics of Conflict
        Resolution", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.II,
        1958-59, p.149.

[48]   Gandhi wrote, "It should also be remembered that
        non-violence comes into play only when it comes
        into contact with violence. One who refrains from
        violence when there is no occasion for its exercise
        is simple unviolent and has no credit for his
        inaction". *NVPW I*, n.11, Ch.III, pp.99-100.

As for the preparedness or attitude of the satyagrahi, non-violent action may not be undertaken under the following conditions: First, non-violent struggle cannot exist if the situation is one where only available alternatives are violence and cowardice.[49] Secondly, the lack of self-respect, a tendency to act from expediency rather than from principle shall render non-violence impracticable.[50] Thirdly, a satyagrahi should be honest with himself and other s and one who restrains his anger "having retaliation in his breast"[51] and adopts a policy of passivity which does not reflect his true feelings, is not be described as non-violent. Finally, a non-violent resister must be capable to act violently. Gandhi wrote, "Man for man, the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will of the non-violent person to inflict violence."[52]

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49   Gandhi wrote, "Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence". Ibid., p.82.

50   Gandhi wrote, "I can only congratulate those who are spat upon or are assaulted or had night-soil thrown upon them. No injury has happened to them if they had the courage to suffer the insult without even mental retaliation. But it was wholly wrong on their part to suffer it if they felt irritated, but refrained out of expedience from retaliating. A sense of self-respect disdains all expedience". Ibid., p.82.

51   Gandhi quoted by Karl Potter, "Explorations in Gandhi's Theory of Non-Violence" in Paul Power, ed., n.12, Ch.III, p.99.

52   Ibid., p.101. Gandhi also writes, "Non-violence, therefore, presupposes the ability to strike", NVPW I, n.11, Ch.III, p.82.

Last but not the least, there are conditions in the methods of the satyagrahi that will preclude non-violence. First, the method should not involve secrecy.[53] Gandhi has laid down the condition possibly on the presumption that given the protection of secrecy, a method may easily become the object of dogmatism and be espoused in such a way as to disallow criticism and self-correction. Secondly, where the method chosen precludes the resister's learning to change his attitude, the aims of non-violent resistance cannot be achieved. Finally, where the method involves more violence or produces more injustice than is required or already exists; it is not, properly called, non-violent.[54]

International Economic Conflict

So far as international economic conflict is concerned, Gandhi believed that these can, "in the last resort, be best resolved by removing the cause of such conflicts. These conflicts arise from centralised production, mal-distribution of wealth and the greed and selfishness of the individual members (nations in the international context) of the society."[55] To remove all these maladies Gandhi

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53   Gandhi wrote, ".... I stand for unadulterated non-violent action and open means. I abhor secrecy." *Harijan*, 10 March 1946. Now in *NVPW II*, n.21, Ch.II, p.57.

54   Karl Potter, n.51, Ch.III, p.104.

55   Gangal, n.19 Ch.II, p.127.

wanted the transformation of society with the centre of
gravity shifting to the villages, at least until such
times as everyone was employed, had enough to meet his
elementary needs and, to some extent, was self-reliant,
both individually and collectively. The Gandhian concept
of village as the basic unit of society is not to be
confused with cluster of mud houses, the drainless lanes,
stinking streets and naked impoverished children. Indeed
he insisted upon the village as a unit to remove all these
disabilities.... A village is a collectivity based on
certain individual and collective functions with norms
and values cherished by the people in an environment
which is congenial and run by Gandhian laws."[56]

Gandhi, in his quest for a local self-reliant economy
had taken up the 'basic needs approach'. He wanted that
the basic needs of all the people were fully met. He
rejected all those economic systems that deprived masses
of their basic needs. He did so along with the socialists
and talked approvingly of the communist countries in so
far as they attempted to provide the basic needs of the
people. But, beyond this, his views totally conflicted
with those of the communists on almost every other aspect.

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56   Sethi, n.20, Ch.I, p.90.

The key concepts in the Gandhian economic ideas are non-possession, non-stealing, bread-labour, swaraj and swadeshi. Without going into a definition of each of these we shall point out the main outlines of the Gandhian economy.

First, an individual, a la'consumer will reduce his wants to such a level where the utility function will depend upon the commodities that are or can be produced locally. In other words, the consumer will prefer the commodities produced in the immediate neighbourhood[57] except when either the immediate neighbour does not produce these goods or refuses to improve the efficiency of production.

Secondly, the consumer will cooperate with the producer neighbour in improving the efficiency of the production[58]. In this way the consumer and the producer do not generate an antagonistic relationship: such as in the dictum that the consumer is sovereign and the producer, the willing slave. On the contrary, the consumer and the producer are jointly involved in a cooperative effort.

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57   Gandhi wrote, "I must not serve the distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest." _Socialism of My Conception_ (Bombay, 1957), p.71.

58   Gandhi wrote, "I should use things that are produced by my immediate neighbour and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting." Ibid., p.67.

Thirdly, the production process would depend on indigenous technology, even though modest, rather than importing complex giant technology ill-suited to the local conditions. As he admonished, "What did India do before these articles were introduced? Precisely, the same should be done today. As long as we cannot make pins without machinery so long will we do without them. The tinsel splendour of glassware we will have nothing to do with and we will make wicks as of old and with home-grown cotton and use handmade earthen saucers for lamps."[59]

Fourthly, labour, in the Gandhian economy is, what he called, bread-labour by performing which man can satisfy his basic needs. Gandhi did not accept labour-power as a commodity and hence its substitution by other non-human factors cannot be considered as a pure phenomenon of the market. Gandhian definition of labour, with its ethical and spiritual overtone, conflicts with both the capitalist and Marxist definitions.

Gandhi's insistence on the consumption of locally produced goods might lead to some misunderstanding of his position. First, he may be misrepresented as a votary of the 'buy Indian' concept. In the 'buy Indian' concept the idea is that the consumer should switch to the production within India which is different from the production by the

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59   Hind Swaraj, p.68. Quoted by Pathak, n.11, Ch.I, p.924.

immediate neighbour. The buy Indian idea pits the
Indian manufacturer against the foreign producer. In
other words, it involves the concept of narrow patriotism
and generates a competitive struggle between the national
and international producer, which is just the opposite
of what Gandhi wanted.

A second confusion might be between Gandhian self-
reliant economy and the Import Substitution Industriali-
zation (ISI) pattern of development that was followed by
many newly-independent countries, including India. In
the ISI strategy the country attempts to produce goods
that it imports. It is based on the proposition that
the utility function of the consumers is based on commo-
dities produced in foreign countries for which imports
are obtained. Gandhian economy aims at changing these
utility functions whereas ISI works towards the satis-
faction and further accentuation of such utility func-
tions.

Gandhian economic ideas may also be misunderstood
so as to support the concept of autarky. Autarky is a
state where the country produces everything, it wants,
within its borders and snaps all trade links with the
outside world. It differs from the Gandhian ideas in
that it posits no relationship between the consumer and

the producer whereas the latter advocates a cooperative relationship between the two.

The village-based economy of Gandhi has strategic relevance also. As he himself writes, "Rurally organised India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanised India, well-equipped with military, naval and air forces. It would take quite a long time to blast out a whole sub-continent village by village and hamlet by hamlet. Even if Hitler were so minded he could not devastate even hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process."[60]

Thus, by providing for a well-knit self-reliant economy Gandhi seeks to remove the perennial cause of dependency relationship. The dependency theorists, also, have found out the cause of the so-called North-South conflict, but they have failed to provide a workable way out, which Gandhi so satisfactorily does. But, it should be noted that while advocating a self-reliant economy, Gandhi was not indifferent to the advantages and inevitability of interdependence in thought and ideas. He wrote, "I do not want my house to be walled in all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But, I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a begger or a slave."[61]

60   Quoted by Pathak, ibid., p.921.
61   Quoted by Pathak, ibid., p.926.

CHAPTER   IV

CONCLUSION :

GANDHIAN TECHNIQUE IN THE PRESENT AGE

Gandhi's method of resolving international conflict through non-violent means is sometimes dismissed as un-realistic and impracticable. This criticism can take two different interpretations. First, non-violence cannot function as an effective substitute for armed force. Secondly, whether it can be effective or not, it is certain that it would not be tried, for, there is no prospect for inducing any government to rely upon non-violent methods against armed aggression. Let us examine both these and other levels of criticism.

A familiar argument is psychological. The assumption is that the impressions about violence occupy a more pro-minent place in the social psychology of human beings not because the tendency to violence in man is stronger in comparison to that for peace, but because violence has a stronger demonstration effect, as it were, than love for peace itself. Consequently, it is argued that it is the Hitlers and not the Gandhis who understand this social psychology and, therefore, can act effectively.

To this prominent sociologists have found out that "/L/ooking deeply into the basic process of human society and the structure of the motivation of man, it would be evident that peace and harmony as tendencies have more per-vasive, stable and universal foundation in the social psy-chology of man and operate as prerequisites of any process of institutionalization of the structure of society."[1]

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1   T.K. Unnithan and Yogendra Singh, n.1, Ch.I, p.1.

In this light it can now be safely argued that it
is the Gandhis and not the Hitlers who have better grasp
of reality. Given the same energy and earnestness the
devotee of non-violence has certain advantages over the
propagandist of violence. For, violence has to depend
upon outside material resources and a complicated orga-
nisation, while non-violence little depends upon all these.
It rests upon its spirit of love, service and self-suffering.

A second scepticism about the international appli-
cability of non-violence is represented in the argument
that non-violence was simply a characteristic of the
Indians who were presumed to be, for reasons of culture
and religion, incapable of violence. But such an argument
holds little ground. The fact that Gandhi lived to see
thousands of Hindus and Muslims butcher one another in cold
blood following the partition of India, the fact that
Gandhi himself met violent death at the hands of an assa-
ssin and the fact that India, even today, is riven with
conflict and violence prove, if anything, that non-violence
is not necessarily typical to Indian culture.

There is nothing typical in Indian religions, also,
to induce non-violence. In a letter to C.F. Andrews, Gandhi
denied that non-violence has been given great importance in
Hinduism. On the contrary, he said that he saw "no sign of
it even in the Mahabharata or the Ramayana.... the incar-
nations are described as certainly blood-thirsty, revengeful,

and merciless to the enemy. The battles are described
with no less zest than now and the warriors are equipped
with the weapons of destruction such as could be concei-
ved by human imagination."[2]

The view that this technique can only be used in
the peculiar Indian circumstances has no basis. In fact,
it was argued long ago by an Indian sociologist that the
West was more suitable than India for the technique. He
wrote, "My contact with the Western world has led me to
think that, contrary to popular belief, satyagraha, once
consciously and deliberately adopted, has more fertile
fields in which to grow and flourish in the West than in
the Orient. Like war, satyagraha demands public spirit,
self-sacrifice, organisation, endurance and discipline for
its successful operation; and I have found these qualities
displayed in Western communities more than my own. Perhaps
the best craftsman in the art of violence may still be
most effective wielders of non-violent direct action."[3]

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2   Gandhi's letter to C.F. Andrews, cited by Amrut
         W. Nakhre,"A New Focus on Non-Violent Conflict
         Resolution", International Peace Research News
         Letter (Gronigen,), vol.XXI, no.2, 1983, p.21.

3   Krishanlal Shridharani, n.1, Ch.II, p.19. Compare
         the last sentence of the statement with Gandhi's,
         "Translation of Swordsmanship to Non-Violence is
         Possible and, at times, even an easy stage",
         Young India, 12 August 1926, now in NVPW I, n.11,
         Ch.III, p.60.

A third objection to non-violent technique springs from the argument that it can be effective only in the struggle against a regime which feels itself bound to observe certain ethical rules and norms of justice. Spoken in simpler terms, it means that this technique may be effective against democracies like Britain, but it is bound to fail when faced with a dictatorial or totalitarian regime.

Gandhi himself had not set any such limit. He believed that satyagraha would, if properly applied, always meet with a high degree of success. He appears too, to have believed that it could have been used in such concrete cases as the opposition of the Jews in Germany to the Nazis. "It can, of course, be agreed that had the Jews offered satyagraha against the Nazi regime their losses could scarcely have been greater. They could have, moreover, mobilized world opinion behind them much more rapidly than they did."[4]

That, non-violent technique may effectively be used against totalitarian regimes, is proved by historical evidences. The American sociologist, Gene Sharp investigated 84 campaigns in which one party remained wholly or

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4   Bondurant, n.9, Ch.II, p.226.

partially non-violent; 48 of them took place in the West
(including Russia), 24 in the East, 9 in Africa and 3 were
of an international character. About 40 per cent concerned
democratic governments and 60 per cent dictatorships (in-
cluding the totalitarian regimes). In only 9 out of 84
were the leaders and participants pacifists.[5]

Fourthly, Horsburgh points to some seemingly unsur-
mountable difficulties that a non-violent country is likely
to face in the course of non-violent resistance. A first
of these is, what he calls "the problem of latent violence".[6]
He believes that in any society, however well-knit, there
is always a group which is a convinced believer in the su-
perior merit of armed resistance. There is also a group,
more numerous, whose belief in non-violence always rests on
quick results in the absence of which it might turn to
violence. The aggressor, in this situation, shall try to
rouse the latent violence in these two groups either by
supplying them with arms or by engaging agents provocateurs
to engineer outbreaks of violence. Horsburgh thinks that
Gandhi's method of calling temporary halt to struggle shall
not work here because a halt would give the aggressor the

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5   Gene Sharp, "Technique of Non-Violent Action" in
     Adam Robers, ed., The Strategy of Civilian Defence :
     Non-Violent Resistance to Aggression (London, 1967),
     pp.98-104.

6   Horsburgh, n.46, Ch.III, p.175.

opportunity to impose its new order and when the struggle
is resumed it shall have to be started from the beginning.

But the latent violence can be checked by what he
calls 'the cellular structure of the resistance movement
by which he means a structure where the leaders of the
local units have been chosen with sufficient care and skill.
These leaders must be able to pinpoint the relatively vio-
lent and indisciplined members of the local units "making
sure that they are kept busy but that they are discouraged
from taking a prominent part in resistance."[7] In this way
the latent violence in these people can be curbed. But
this is easier said than done. We know that Gandhi had
found this problem of latent violence a major obstacle in
his struggle.

latent
violence

A second problem that Horsburgh points to is the
problem of corruption which he considers as a 'stiffer
hurdle' than the problem of latent violence. As the assump-
tion of a society being wholly incorruptible is highly
idealistic, the problem of corruption is a realistic problem
that any society going for non-violent resistance must face.
Corruption in the society shall enable the enemy to recruit
sufficient agents from within the society and thereby con-
siderably weakening the struggle. But Horsburgh believes

7   Ibid., p.179.

that "the only community that can hope to master this
danger is one which has a sizeable core of people who
are attached to satyagraha on grounds of principle and
which is pervaded with an athletic and perhaps even an
ascetic spirit.... To achieve this end the satyagrahi
leaders will require to display a very subtle skill :
that which is needed to build up the strength of indi-
viduals and groups without over-stepping their powers
of endurance."[8]

/corruption

A third problem that Horsburgh sees is the problem
of new methods of breaking resistance. One of these
methods may be the brain-washing of leaders who could be
induced to disavow their satyagrahi principles and to
call upon their followers not to offer further resistance
to the aggressor's forces. Another of these methods is
the use of teargas or non-lethal nerve gases which is
supposed "to paralyse the will to fight and quench the
valour of the fiercest attacker."[9] So these gases could
be used to break-up demonstrations and other public appeals.
But Horsburgh believes that this method would not be very
effective against non-violent resisters because (1) it

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8   Ibid., pp.181-82.

9   Basil Liddell Hart, "Deterrent or Defense",
        quoted by Horsburgh, pp.87-88.

has only a short term disablement effect, and (ii) it *New Methods of Breaking Resistance*
would affect only a small part of the population at a
time.

This raises the question whether the use of atom
bomb which can, at a stroke destroy a vast bulk of pro-
perty and population may lead to a collapse of the non-
violent struggle. This problem was put to Gandhi by an *Atom Bomb*
American journalist (Margaret Bourke White) on 30 January
1948 - the last day of Gandhi's earthly life. Gandhi
replied, "I will not go underground. I will not go into
shelter. I will come out in the open and let the pilot
see I have not a piece of evil against him. The pilot will
not see our faces from his great height, I know. But that
longing in our hearts - that he will not come to harm -
would reach up to him and his eyes would be opened.... If
those thousands who were done to death in Hiroshima, if
they had died with that prayerful action ... died openly
with that prayer in their hearts - their sacrifice would
not have gone in vain and the war would not have ended so
disgracefully as it had."[10]

Thus, the problems those have been pointed out are
formidable but not, as have been shown, overwhelming.

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10   Quoted by Gangal, n.19, Ch.II, pp.63-64.

There is no reason, therefore, why one should be sceptical about the effectiveness of satyagraha when faced with such problems. A resolute and really disciplined non-violent community can hope to emerge successfully from even a protracted struggle against a ruthless and resourceful opponent.

A fourth objection and a very important one is that even if non-violent techniques would work, it shall not be tried by the governments because, for its effectiveness, the technique presupposes certain principles having stringent implications, conformity with which is bound to be very difficult. "There appears to be at least three such conditions : a community must have made very substantial progress towards the realization of social justice; it must also have achieved an extremely high level of social discipline; and the social discipline to which it has attained must not depend, in any large measure, upon the use of traditional methods of law enforcement."[11] In a word it can be said that the technique of satyagraha presupposes the condition of survodaya or the non-violent society.

It may be true that there is a connection between social structure and techniques of resolving conflicts; an ideal decentralized society would be very conducive for a

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11   Horsburgh, n.46, Ch.III, p.124.

non-violent conflict resolution technique. But this does
not necessarily mean that such a society must be estab-
lished before such techniques can be put to practice. There
are mainly two reasons for holding this opinion.

First, this exactly was Gandhi's position. While
he sought through the constructive programme to build up
the non-violent social order, he forged the non-violent
means for freeing India from the British occupation without
waiting for the social order of his dreams to materialize.
Similarly, when he held that India must adopt non-violent
defence policy after independence, he did not have any
illusion about the just society being achieved immediately
after swaraj.

Secondly, while one is waiting for the just society
to come to be able to put the non-violent techniques into
practice, that society may never come at all. The require-
ments of a violent technique that the country is now pur-
suing shall work against the effort to achieve a non-violent
society. On the other hand, the adoption of non-violent
techniques now will help improve the social order partly
because of the absence of negative military requirements
and partly because of "the importance of improving the
society to make it more worthy of defence in the eyes of

military burden
constructive prog

men and women who will have to <u>carry out resistance</u>."[12]

But there is no denying the fact that in the absence of non-violent social order these techniques shall not be as effective as visualised. As Horsburgh writes, "... it will not be free to prepare for non-violent defence with its weapons still in its hands any more than a reformed burglar is at liberty to support himself on the proceeds of crime while he is training to make an honest living."[13] This is a serious dilemma and he admits that "there is no complete answer."[14] This, however, does not give the critics an excuse to reject the techniques in-toto which, they hold, shall never be tried. An ideal solution to the problem may be that once a country has made a firm decision to rely upon Gandhian techniques of conflict resolution, this decision must give tremendous urgency to the changes which are needed to make the techniques effective, and hence, it would be possible to satisfy the minimum requirements of effective non-violent techniques in a comparatively short period of time.

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12   Gene Sharp, <u>Gandhi as Political Strategist : With Essays on Ethics and Politics</u> (Boston, 1979), p.162.

13   Horsburgh, n.46, Ch.III, p.128.

14   Ibid., p.128.

free India failure

Another criticism of non-violence arises from free India's failure. When the Indian Government and people responded to the Pakistani and Chinese invasions by military force and put their reliance upon arms to meet foreign threat, it evoked two types of response both from outside and inside India. The pacifists thought that India had, somehow, let them down, that she had failed to live up to the non-violent alternative presented by Gandhi. The critics of non-violence, on the other hand, saw in it a reinforcement of their belief that no government would ever try the Gandhian technique. We shall, however, try to show that both the pacifists and the critics were wrong.

The adoption by the Indian National Congress of non-violent struggle under Gandhi to deal with British imperialism was not a doctrinal or moral act. It was a political act in response to political programme of action proposed to deal with a particular kind of situation and crisis. The Indian nationalists had adopted non-violent course of action because they could be brought to see by Gandhi that non-violence was a practical way of acting which would enable them to achieve their goals. When that struggle was won, however, Indians did not, automatically, continue their adherence to non-violent means. This was a natural and predictable consequence.

conflict resolution

Faced with what they believed to be unjustified
military invasions, the Indians, in the absence of a sys-
tematically developed non-violent programme of action,
turned to the only means they believed to be effective in
this situation - that is the military option. This was
not surprising. This meant that in a crisis India would
fight, to the maximum of her capacity, in the same way as
she or other countries have fought before - just as without
Gandhi's earlier practical programme India's freedom struggle
would have been a bloody one. The Sepoy Mutiny (1857-1859)
and occasional terrorist and revolutionary activities
during the freedom struggle bear it out.

Relevance of Gandhi's Economic Ideas

One of the main reasons that Gandhi's economic theory
has not been accepted is that its altruism ran counter to
the two main economic systems of the twentieth century, one
of them being competitive and the other being violent. In
each, the ends justify the means. Gandhi's village economy
has either been condemned as revisionist or ridiculed as
utopian.

But as a result of experience disillusionment is
growing with the conventional economic systems or theories.[15]

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15   "First, the Chinese have shown that developing
      countries with high density of population cannot
      afford to follow either the Soviet or the Western
      model of shift of population through industriali-
      zation. Second the economic stagnation of India

In the past economic development was seen as a means to maximize the rate of growth of GNP per capita. In the current literature, however, increasing emphasis is given to the objectives of development cast in human terms.[16] One of the most important elements in such a strategy of development is the capacity of an individual to solve his or her own problem of human development. A meaningful strategy is the strategy of self-reliance and conservation of resources and environment, an idea so much emphasized by Gandhi.

Some Concluding Remarks

Whether conflicts in human society including international conflicts should be settled by means of violence or non-violence is not a sectarian question, but one that

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footnote 15 continued from previous page..

in the past decades has brought the economy to the point where further progress depends upon putting maximum inputs in agriculture and in organising non-agricultural employment in rural areas. Thus the village becomes the focal point." See J.D. Sethi, n.20, Ch.I, p.88.

16   "The International Labour Organisation (ILO) in its basic needs strategy concentrates on a large group of poor people. The World Bank is placing an added emphasis on redistribution." Romesh Diwan, "Towards an Economics of Human Development and the Gandhian Concept of Swadeshi," Gandhi Marg, vol.3, no.1, April 1981, p.9.

modern weapons of warfare have made relevant to the very survival of the human race. It is reasonable to conclude that this situation is not different from the situation which Gandhi himself confronted. His response was that the dangers of military policy must be constantly pointed out and the main task lay in the formulation and development of an alternative non-violent defence policy. The response was, therefore, neither acceptance of military defence nor simply conscientious objection. It was the formulation and development of an alternative course of action which would make it possible for the people to choose between military and non-violent defence policies.

Non-violent action in the resolution of conflict in both political and social arena has a long history. In spite of Gandhi's development of satyagraha - the most systematic, developed mode of non-violent action - and its dramatic use in India; astonishingly little attention has been paid to the process involved in the working of satyagraha. Most of the writers on satyagraha have operated on two levels. They have either concerned themselves with a philosophical elaboration of the meaning of satyagraha or have sought to analyze it purely in terms of its chief architect, Mahatma Gandhi. The result has been cynicism and pessimism about the efficacy of satyagraha. This, therefore, calls for a thorough self-criticism.

Gandhi himself never had any illusion that what he had worked out was a detailed and comprehensive technique which could be applicable to all situations of conflict.[17] But he did believe that non-violence was the best way of resolving all conflicts. But this generalisation devoid of any detailed course of action could not convince many and thus, we find, his political colleagues going their own way and rejecting his recommendations.

Gandhi's assumption that people, having once seen and experienced the practicality of the non-violent techniques in one situation, would easily accept the universality of the ethic and the political technique was demonstrated not to be correct. This does not mean, however, that his development of the technique was of no help in the wider efforts to eliminate political violence. This simply means that the carry over of the technique from one situation to another is not automatic and that specific policies and courses of action must be worked out which are not only practicable but also seen to be practicable

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17   Gandhi wrote on 11 January 1948, ".... the technique of unconquerable non-violence of the strong has not been at all fully discovered yet." Harijan, 11 January 1948. Now in NVPW II, n.21, Ch.II, p.328.

for a whole variety of situations where reliance is now
placed on violence as the ultimate sanction. This is,
of course, a very difficult task. Gandhi can, by no means,
be regarded as a failure just because he was able to take
this development only to a certain point during his life-
time.

The mantle, therefore, falls on the Gandhian scho-
lars, activists and statesmen to evolve the technique in
practical terms, for, it is because of the lack of con-
fidence in the practicality of non-violence that confidence,
in turn, shifted to or continues to lie with violent course
of action either of military action in war or of strong
military preparations as a deterrent. In doing so the
scholars are bound to draw inspiration from Gandhi and
follow his guidelines. But, the assumption must always be
that Gandhi was a human being prone to error and that it
was quite natural that he could not have visualised a
number of subsequent developments giving rise to situations
to deal with which one cannot rely on Gandhi for guide-
lines.

This, however, is not to under-rate the signifi-
cance of Gandhi today, for, his contemporary significance
does not stand or fall with reference to any special tech-
nique. Beneath his techniques we can find important prin-
ciples governing conduct in group struggle and otherwise

in social life. It is these principles, ultimately, that are of great importance to us, rather than any special technique to deal with a variety of situations.

That the non-violent technique for solving international conflict has not been evolved fully and that this technique has not been applied to the extent that it should have been; need not cause despair to its enthusiasts or encourage its critics. After all, non-violence is a developing science and art of life, based on an earnest effort to perceive the truth, speak it out and establish it. At the same time, non-violent resistance is also a technique of controlling and fighting evil and injustice. It must be understood that there is no finality about either of these two things. So the quest must continue with an open mind.

We are fortunate that we are now in a position to learn from the experience of a man who had great faith in the principles of truth and non-violence and truth through non-violence, and who has positively added some dimensions to the teaching and practice of these principles. But before man can reach a stage where he can completely renounce the path of violence and war he may have to evolve these principles further and be able to organise non-violence in strength and depth equal to that of violence which seems to be uppermost today.

It has taken thousands of years for man to perfect the instruments, the techniques, the systems and the organisation of violent military science. He has carried out many experiments in this regard. Resources, both in material and human terms, have been utilised in abundance and human energy, too, has been organised on a vast scale to develop this science of destruction called war. A few decades or even a century is surely not something too much to spend to organise non-violence and to develop techniques to match violent techniques. It is fortunate that very good minds have now realised that the survival of mankind and civilisation depends on banishing war itself and with it all its destructive paraphernalia. The day may not be distant when humanity will awaken to the necessity of sanity and decide upon resolving its conflicts on all levels on the basis of mutual adjustments without destruction of man or material.

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