

《論 説》

## **Growth of Indian Nationalism and Germination of Left Wings within the National Congress of India**

Rekha Rani Sarma Puzari\* and Kazumi Mazane

The battle of Plassey (1757 AD) marked the beginning of the British rule in India. By defeating Siraj-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal, the British East India Company laid the foundation of the British rule in India and ruled over it for nearly 200 years. Before the coming of the British, India was not a single country. The subcontinent was divided into many different kingdoms under separate rulers. But the vast portion of the country was ruled by the Mughals. That is why Sir John Strachey, one of the ablest British administrators of India in the nineteenth century made his judgment :

This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India—that there is not, and never was an India, or even any country of India, possessing, according to European ideas, any sort of unity, physical, political, social or religious... . That (original from the book-author) men of the Punjab, Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Madras, should ever feel they belong to one great nation, is impossible.<sup>1</sup>

It was in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the British first got the right to trade inside India from the Mughal emperor. But as the Mughal empire became weak in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Company used its economic and political power to acquire monopolistic control over Indian trade and production. As a result India was transformed into a classic colony by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The most important point is that the Indian economy and social development came completely under British control. Britain became a leading developed capitalist country of the world with Indian economy while India was becoming the leading backward colonial country of the world losing its economic development on the hands of the British. The agriculture and industrial development of India remained crippled. Thus the British rule in India contributed greatly to the rise of a powerful anti-imperialist movement and for unification of the Indian people into a nation.

Along with the British rule came to India the modern ideas as democracy, sovereignty of the people, nationalism and humanism from the west. Education on modern line was introduced. It helped in the growth of nationalism among the newly educated Indians. They started to use their recently acquired modern knowledge to

---

\* On leave from Devicharan Baruah Girls' College, Jorhat 785001, Assam, India.

1 Embree, A. T., *India's Search for National Identity*, Chanakya Publication Delhi, 1980, p 17.

analyze and criticize the imperialistic and exploitative attitude of the British rule and to organize an anti-imperialist political movement. British rule indirectly bounded the Indian people together as one nation against their common enemy – the British and led to the emergence of a common national outlook.

The Indian people did not remain as a silent spectator of the imperialist activities of the British. They tried to resist it from its inception. The first resistance of its kind came in the form of a revolt in 1857. Though the revolt began as a mutiny of the sepoy, or the Indian soldiers of the East India Company's army, it assumed a national character later on. Millions of peasants, artisans and soldiers participated here to fight against the foreign government. The annexation policy followed by the British in India discontented the native rulers like Nana Saheb, Lakshmibai –the Rani of Jhansi and Bahadur Shah who joined the mutiny of the sepoy. No doubt the British crushed down the revolt with an iron hand, but it was the first great struggle of the people of India for gaining freedom from British imperialism.

The failure of the revolt of 1857 revealed it clearly that the traditional political resistance to British rule under the leadership of princes and land-lords could no longer succeed. The urgency to establish some political associations with national character was felt by the politically conscious Indians. As a result many political associations were formed in India of which the Indian National Congress was the most notable one.

The Indian National Congress was established in 1885 with the help of A. O. Hume, an English gentleman and a retired civil servant together with the nationalist political workers from different parts of the country. The main purpose of Hume in forming this organization was to provide a 'safety valve' or a safe outlet to the growing discontentment among the educated Indians. On the other hand the nationalist leaders took the cooperation of Hume to avoid government suspensions and hostilities on the way of forming the National Congress. That is why it was told that if Hume wanted to use Congress as a 'safety valve', the early Congress leaders hoped to use him as a 'lightening conductor'.<sup>2</sup> Gopal Krishna Gokhale, one of the notable Indian Nationalist remarked in 1913 that–

No Indian could have started the Indian National Congress... . If an Indian had... come forward to start such a movement, embracing all India, the officials would not have allowed it to come into existence. If the founder of the Congress had not been a great Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that the authorities would have at once found some way or the other of suppressing the movement.<sup>3</sup>

From its inception the National Congress provided a common forum for the meetings of people from all parts of the country and the formulation of a common program of activity for freedom struggle. From this platform the early nationalists raised their protest against economic exploitation, criticized the official economic policies

---

2 Chandra, B., Tripathi, A., Barun, D. E., *Freedom Struggle*, National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, 1972, p 57.

3 *ibid*,

of the British, carried agitation for the reduction of the heavy land revenue and tried to popularize the idea of *Swadeshi* (national) among the Indians as a means of promoting Indian industries.

The Indian Nationalism got its maturity at the wartime of 1914. During the war years, to win popular support, Great Britain, United States, France, Italy and Japan all were in favour of democracy and pledged themselves to stand by the right of self determination of all countries and people. But after the war all of them remained silent about their pledge. Moreover the so-called peace treaty of 1919 was actually appeared to be a revengeful one. Allowing the Greeks and the Italians to land in Turkey, the allied power seemed to threaten the security of the Ottoman empire and the Caliphate of Turkey which shocked the Indian people. As a result the 'Khilafat Movement' started. India extended her support to the 'Khilafat Movement' with a new anti-British sentiment. The great Indian leader Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly referred to as 'Gandhiji' or 'Mahatma Gandhi' planned to use this anti-British sentiment coupled with the sentiments arose from the tragedy of Jalliwannallah in 1919 as an instrument to bring Hindu-Muslim unity and to initiate a program of non-cooperation in the form of '*Satyagraha*' (non-violence and truthfulness) as a way of gaining freedom. Accordingly he extended his support to the Khilafat Committee formed in 1919 to protest dismemberment of Turkey and worked closely with the leaders of the movement in India. As a result the Khilafat Committee agreed to Gandhiji's proposal to initiate a program of non-cooperation.

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1920, the non-cooperation program was launched under the leadership of Gandhiji. The steps to be followed were suggested by Gandhiji in the following way to make the movement successful.

1. surrender of titles and all honorary offices under the government.
2. withdrawal of children from schools and colleges.
3. boycott of law courts by lawyers and litigants.
4. refusal of candidates to stand for election in the new legislative councils and of voters to vote.
5. boycott of foreign goods.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time he emphasized the revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity to face the alien government with a united stand. Muslim leaders like Abdul Gafoor called upon their co-religionists to refrain from the killing of cows, with the intention of not hurting the Hindu sentiments.<sup>5</sup>

In response to Gandhiji's call for non-cooperation the lawyers boycotted their courts. Teachers resigned in large numbers and students left the schools and colleges. National schools and colleges like the Jamia Millia Islamia and Kashi, Bihar and Gujarat Vidyapeeths were established. People like Narendra Dev, Rajendra Prasad, Zakir Hussain and Subhas Chandra Bose taught in such national colleges.<sup>6</sup> Complete boycott of foreign cloths was observed. It was done through picketing and public bon fire of foreign cloths. Students organized

---

4 Embree, A.T., op.cit., p 79.

5 Bhuyan, A., (ed), *Nationalist Upsurge in Assam*, Government of Assam, Dispur, Guwahati, 2000, p 152.

6 Chandra, B., Tripathi, A., Barun, D. E., op. cit., p 135.

themselves as national volunteers. They engaged themselves to collect donations, run arbitration courts and picket in shops selling foreign goods. Women joined the struggle in large numbers leaving their kitchen aside. Non-payment of taxes was also followed. Gandhiji and his followers moved in each and every corner of the country holding meetings, delivering speeches with key provincial leaders to explain the meaning of non-cooperation. Jawaharlal Nehru left a good expression about what the movement meant, especially to the young intellectuals.

Many of us who worked for the congress programme lived in a kind of intoxication during the year 1921. We were full of excitement and optimism and a buoyant enthusiasm... We worked hard, harder than we had ever done before, for we knew that the conflict with the government would come soon... We had a sense of freedom and pride in that freedom. The old feeling of oppression and frustration was completely gone. There was no more whispering, no roundabout legal phraseology to avoid getting into trouble with the authorities. We said what we felt and shouted it from the house tops.<sup>7</sup>

The mass awakening in all over India caused real anxiety to the British. The government took repressive measures to curb the movement. All the Congress and Khilafat organizations were declared unlawful. Public meetings and processions were banned. Police were given power to charge and assault the volunteers indiscriminately. All important leaders except Gandhiji were taken into custody by the end of 1921. In spite of all those police harassment Gandhiji decided to start mass civil disobedience on January 31, 1922. Accordingly each province was given the power to start civil disobedience on certain conditions such as pledge to nonviolence, hand-spinning, Hindu-Muslim unity and the eradication of discrimination against the lowest class- the 'untouchables'. Though the nonviolence was one of the main principle of Gandhiji's mass civil disobedience, a violent incident took place in Chauri Chaura in the united provinces. A group of non-cooperators set fire to a police station on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1922 on the plea that they were harassed by the police. It caused the death of twenty two policemen. Gandhiji was shocked at the news of Chauri Chaura and immediately suspended the civil disobedience movement because the people violated the main principle of '*satyagraha*' -the nonviolence and truthfulness. He opined that

God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura ... . He has warned me... that there is not yet in India that non-violent and truthful atmosphere which alone can justify mass civil disobedience.<sup>8</sup>

The suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement brought all political activities of Indian National Movement to a sudden halt. In the mean time Gandhiji was arrested for writing four inflammatory articles in

---

7 Embree, A. T., *op. cit.*, p 83.

8 *ibid.* p 87.

*Young India*.<sup>9</sup> So he advised the congress workers to engage themselves in the constructive program. Pattabhi Sitaramaya had rightly commented that,

The Congress had fairly early recognised – reorganised indeed so early as in 1920–21 that in fighting the British for power, the Congress had also to take on hand a constructive programme in order to reconquer India from the British who had through a century’s conscious and deliberate striving, effected a moral and spiritual, economic and social conquest as well not merely a political and territorial conquest.<sup>10</sup>

In spite of Gandhiji’s announcement asking the congress workers to engage themselves in the constructive program, a feeling of pessimism began to reign supreme in their minds about the future of the National Movement.

The news of the suspension of the first phase of the Civil Disobedience movement as a sequel to the Chauri Chaura incident horrified many nationalist leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru who were eagerly looking forward to the launching of the Civil Disobedience movement. Chandranath Sarma, one of the leading nationalists from Assam expressed his displeasure in a letter addressed to a party colleague :

The fact that the Congress is not a religious body is known pretty well by Mahatma Gandhi... If this Non-cooperation movement is entirely a religious and spiritual movement, then why did he not say so at the very outset? In fact, in order to purify Indian people and initiate them to the religion of non-violence, there was no need of non-cooperation with the British Government. Nor was there any need of fighting with that government to achieve the sort of independence he now wants to give Indian.<sup>11</sup>

Subhas Chandra Bose called it a ‘national calamity’ while Jawaharlal Nehru mentions in his autobiography his “amazement and consternation” at the decision.<sup>12</sup> The dissatisfied young nationalist began to seek new methods and organizational forms of struggle against the alien rule.

During this period the Indian political movements were almost unaffected by the ideology of socialism. The birth of “scientific socialism” of Karl Marx in the nineteenth century made the socialist movement as one of the most compelling forces in Europe. On three particular aspects Marx expanded his conception of communism.

First, he stressed that communism was a historical phenomenon whose genesis was ‘the entire movement

9 Agarwala, B. R., *Trials of Independence*, N. B. T., India, New Delhi, 1991, p 93–4. also see Sarma Puzari, R. R., The Aftermath of Chauri–Chaura : The constructive Programme and Swarajist Politics in Sibsagar, *Journal of Historical Research*, vol.–VIII, 1998, DU., p 55.

10 Sarma Puzari, R. R., *op. cit.*

11 Bhuyan, A., *op. cit.*, p 158.

12 Chandra, B., Tripathi, A., Barun, D. E., *op. cit.*, p 139.

of history'. At present stage, the essential problem was an economic one— in particular, the abolition of private property and the appropriation of human life is the positive abolition of all alienation, thus the return of man from religion, family, state, etc., to his human, that is, social being.

Second, Marx stressed that everything about man— starting with his language— was social, even man's relationship to nature was included in this social dimension :

... Marx emphasized, thirdly, that the stress on men's social aspects only served to enhance the individuality of communist, unalienated man, whom he described as total or all 'sided'.<sup>13</sup>

The Socialist movement started in India in the late 1920 s and 1930 s and grew up as an integral part of the Indian National Movement contributing to the radicalization of the national movement. Socialist ideas mostly attracted the Indian Youths whose urge came to be symbolized by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose.<sup>14</sup> They sought to offer a serious challenge to the liberal Gandhian policies in the Congress. They were firm in their conviction that the sequence of meetings and processions had become tedious and fruitless to achieve their independence. They regarded Gandhiji's policy of non-violence as impractical in political life. According to them Congress should lay greater emphasis on the problems of the labourer and peasantry. This group was known as leftists who organized the All India League for Independence in November 1928 with Srinivas Iyengar as President, Shiva Prasad Gupta as treasurer and Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru as secretaries.<sup>15</sup> Many branches of the league were formed in Bengal, Bihar, Delhi, Ajmer, Kerala, Central Provinces and United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.<sup>16</sup> Thus several leftist groups came into existence all over the country. Gradually two powerful parties were sprung up from the left – the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Congress Socialist Party (CSP). Having the same objective of complete independence for India both the parties started to work under the banner of the left wing within the National Congress.

In this respect the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1917 was highly noticeable. It was stated in the preamble to the party constitution adopted at the congress at Amritsar in April 1958 that :

The Communist Party of India arose in the course of our liberation struggle as a result of the efforts of Indian revolutionaries, who under the inspiration of the Great October Revolution were seeking new paths for achieving national independence.<sup>17</sup>

To make the party (left wing) organizationally strong, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose started

13 Hobsbawm, E. J., (ed) *The History of Marxism, vol. 1, Marxism in Marx's Day.*, Harvester Press, Brighton, Sussex, 1982, p 39.

14 Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee A., Panikar, K. N., Mahajan, S., *India's struggle for Independence.*, New Delhi, 1989, p 296

15 Sankar, G., *Socialist Trends in Indian National Movement*, Meerut, 1987, p 19.

16 *ibid.*

17 Adhikari, G., (ed) *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India*, vol.1, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1972, p 1.

touring the country and holding meetings attacking imperialism, capitalism and land–lordism and preaching the ideology of socialism. Several youth and student associations were organized all over the country to serve the aims and objectives of the Party. S. A. Dange published a pamphlet in Bombay under the banner of Gandhi and Lenin and started the first Socialist Weekly<sup>18</sup> through which he was able to attract intellectuals and youths the Marxian ideas. Similarly Mazaffar Ahmed brought out *Navayug* in Bengal.<sup>19</sup> He and Phillip Spratt arranged a small instructional class in Bombay to expand the principle of their party to which C. G. Shah delivered a series of lectures on Russian Revolution, Imperialism, the class struggle etc..<sup>20</sup> In the mean time Ghulam Hussain and others published *Inquilab* in Punjab and M. Singaravelu founded the *Labour–Kisan– Gazette* in Madras.<sup>21</sup> Socialist ideas became more popular and these nationalists demanded complete independence and favoured adoption of uncompromising struggle to achieve their aim– particularly after the failure of the Congress to achieve objectives of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The vague Gandhi–Irwin Agreement of 1931 made it clear that the then leadership of Congress was not capable to make the national movement a success. Moreover, Gandhiji’s belief in Constructive Program as the only means of overthrowing the British rule in India was not acceptable to them. Emphasizing on the use of *Khadi* Gandhiji had pointed out that,

*Charkha* and *khadi* are an integral part of our constructive programme for the renunciation of the 700,000 villages of India and for the removal of the grinding poverty of the masses. We shall therefore spin regularly, use for our personal requirements nothing but *khadi* and so far as possible the products of village handicrafts only and endeavour to make others do likewise.<sup>22</sup>

This type of explanation of Gandhian program and policy very much disappointed the left wing who wanted direct action of workers and peasants in the shape of strikes and no–rent campaigns combined with the non–cooperation and civil disobedience. During this period of 1930 s the labour movement gained momentum in the political sphere of India by drawing inspirations from the socialist leaders. In 1928 there were 203 strikes in India involving 505,000 workers. Memberships were seen to increase in the revolutionary Girin Kamgar Unions of the cotton textile industries in Bombay and southern Maharashtra. Union’s pledge to work for revolution had been started by the workers of the Madras, South Indian and Southern Maratha Railways. Communist papers like *Kirti*, *Mazdur*, *Kisan*, *Spark* and *Kranti* won great popularity.<sup>23</sup> In Bengal *Lal Paltan*, the vernacular weekly—an organ of the E. I. Railway Union—had appeared which was communist production.<sup>24</sup>

18 Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikar, K. N., Mahajan, S., *op.cit.* p 297.

19 *ibid.*

20 Roy, S., (ed) *Communism in India, unpublished Documents 1925–1934*, Ganasahitya Prakash, Calcutta, 1972, p 60.

21 Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikar, K. N., Mahajan, S., *op. cit.* p 297

22 *Hindustan Times*, 13 January, 1941, also see Sarma Puzari, R. R., The Aftermath of Chauri–Chaura : The Constructive Programme and Swarajist Politics in Sibsagar, *Journal of Historical Research*, Vol. VIII, 1998, DU, pp 61–62.

23 Chandra, B., Tripathi, A., Barun, D. E., *op. cit.*, p 154.

24 Roy, S., (ed), *op. cit.*, p 30.

This group aimed not for dominion status for the country but for the complete independence. In this respect the role of the Congress session held in 1928 at Madras was noticeable. Because for the first time the resolution taken at the session defined independence as the goal of the Indian people, for the appointment of the representatives of the left wing to the Congress High Command (the Working Committee), and for the appointment of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr Suhuab Qureshi and Subhas Chandra Bose as General Secretaries.<sup>25</sup>

In 1929, the historic Lahore Congress was held under the Presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The resolution for independence was adopted in that session amidst scenes of wild enthusiasm.<sup>26</sup>

At midnight of December 31, as the new year was ushered in Mr. Nehru unfurled the flag of Indian Independence and on 26 January 1930 when the first Independence Day was celebrated throughout India, the pledge to struggle for complete Independence proclaimed it a 'a crime against man and God to submit any longer'.<sup>27</sup>

It created new hopes and aspirations among the Indians who were determined for winning full independence.

Gradually organizations of local Congress Socialist groups were formed all over the country. In 1931, some radical congressmen of Bihar formed a communist party in the state known as *Samyavadi* Party.<sup>28</sup> They also started a Hindi weekly known as *Yuvak* from Patna, the capital city of Bihar. But the party had some limitation for its membership. As it intended to be an organization within the Congress so it was laid down in the constitution of the party that only congressmen could become its members. The Party could not become organizationally strong due to the commencement of the second Civil Disobedience Movement early in 1930. Most of the Party leaders taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement were arrested and sent to jail. P. P. Verma, Abdul Bari, Ganga Prasad Sinha, Ramodar Das, Ambika Kant Singha and Jayaprakash Narayan were the chief founder members of this Bihar Socialist Party.<sup>29</sup> In Benares a socialist group was formed in 1933 with the initiative of Sampurnanand, Tarapada Bhattacharya and Kamalapati Tripathi.<sup>30</sup> In the same year M. R. Manasi, Yusuf Meherally, Achyut Patwardhan, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Purushottom Tricumdas formed the Socialist Group in Bombay.<sup>31</sup> Groups were also formed in Kerala and Delhi under the leadership of E.M.S. Namboodiripad and Faridul Haque Ansari respectively.<sup>32</sup>

---

25 Ayer, S. A., *Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose*, Publication Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1974, p 14.

26 *ibid.*, p 15

27 Sen, S., *Working Class of India*, History of Emergence and Movement, 1830–1970, K. P. Bagchi & Company, Calcutta, 1979, p 236.

28 Deva, A. N., *Socialism and the National Revolution*, Anupama Publications, Delhi, 1987, p 25.

29 Sankar, G., *op. cit.*, pp 43–44.

30 *ibid.*, p 45

31 *ibid.*

In Assam, the easternmost part of the country the idea of socialism peeped in lately. The Assam Branch of the Communist League was formed in 1938 under the leadership of Haren Kalita, Upen Sarma, Haridas Deka, Debendranath Sarma, Gokul Medhi, Taracharan Mazumdar, Debapal Das etc..<sup>33</sup> They formed the Progressive Union, a Marxist study circle at Panbazar, Guwahati. There lessons were given on Marxism and Socialism by Amiya Das Gupta of Barisal.<sup>34</sup>

In 1935, a radical change was noticed when the Communist Party was reorganized under the leadership of P. C. Joshi. The Indian Communists came forward to participate in the activities of the mainstream of the national movement led by the Indian National Congress. They realized that the Congress was the central mass political organization of the Indian people ranged against imperialism. P.C. Joshi wrote in the party weekly *National Front*, in 1939, that ‘the greatest class struggle today is our national struggle’ of which congress was the main organ.<sup>35</sup> It resulted in the build up of powerful peasant movement in Kerala, Andhra, Bengal and Punjab.<sup>36</sup> In 1932 the plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern exhorted the Indian communists :

to strengthen the party politically as well as organizationally, to stage strikes, to give the greatest support to the peasant movement for the non-payment of taxes, rents etc. and to popularize the basic slogans and tasks of the agrarian revolution in India.<sup>37</sup>

From the ideological point of view the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party were nearer to Marxism and Fabian Socialism<sup>#</sup> on one hand and equally influenced by Gandhism on the other hand. On agrarian questions the programs and policies of CSP (Congress Socialist Party) like “abolition of *Zamindari*”, recognition of occupancy rights of tenants in all the landlord-tenants areas were more radical than those of the Congress.<sup>38</sup>

Nehru and Bose both were influenced by contemporary European socialist and Marxist thought and more than any other of the congress leaders, they viewed Indian politics in terms of ideology. But Nehru was a libertarian Marxist and he was always drawn emotionally towards Gandhiji, which Bose never was. Michael Brecher, one of his biographers remarked :

Nehru is a convinced socialist but he is not a communist... He drank deeply of Marxist literature in the thirties but he never became intoxicated.<sup>39</sup>

# Fabian Socialism : Influence on socialism, its main doctrines are (1) social ownership and social management of the means of production (2) egalitarian distribution of out-put. For details see Viet, L. A., *India's Second Revolution 1947-77*.

32 *ibid*.

33 Deka, H., *Jiwan Aru Sangram*, Gauhati, 1992, pp 27-28, also see Bhuyan, A., (ed), *op. cit.*, p 203.

34 *ibid*., p 205.

35 Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikar, K. N., Mahajan, S., *op. cit.* pp 303-304.

36 *ibid*., p 304.

37 Panikar, K. N., (ed), *National and left Movements in India*, vikas Publishing House PVT LTD. New Delhi, 1980, p 90.

38 *ibid*., p 91.

Throughout his life he maintained a half-liberal and half Marxist position. He realized that the practice of socialism in India would have to differ from the pattern elsewhere. He was opposed of any mechanical view of human nature and looked forward to a socialist society, which by removing economic and social inhibitions and obstacles would provide greater scope for individual freedom. In sense he was a radical rather than an ideological mind and to him Socialism was a broad tendency and not a precise body.

As a left-winger of the Congress, Subhas Chandra Bose also demanded complete independence for India. In this connection he moved an amendment to a resolution put by Mahatma Gandhi at the Calcutta Congress of December 1928 for a Dominion status Constitution for India from the British Government. He commented :

I am sorry that I have to rise to move an amendment to a resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi and which has the support of some, if not many, of our older leaders. The fact that I rise today to move the amendment is a clear indication of a cleavage, the fundamental cleavage between the elder school and the new school of thought in the Congress. ... . I have stood up to speak for independence.<sup>40</sup>

Thus in 1928 the Calcutta Congress registered the first major trial of strength between the right and the left wings. Bose was supported by Jawaharlal Nehru. The amendment was lost by 973 votes against 1,350. But Bose felt that the vote was hardly a free one as the followers of Gandhiji thought that if Mahatma defeated, he would retire from the Congress. Therefore many people voted for Mahatma's resolution, and they did not want to see him out of the Congress.<sup>41</sup> No doubt the voting showed that the left wing was strong and influential.

But so far as the ideology of Bose was concerned he looked more radical than Nehru. It was revealed after the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Indian National Congress presided by Bose in 1938 at Haripur in Gujarat. During this time as a Congress President one of his important contributions to India was the formation of a National Planning Committee with Jawaharlal Nehru as Chairman and himself a convener. At the annual session of the Congress met at Tripuri in the Central Province in March 1939 he proposed that immediately Congress should send an ultimatum to the British Government demanding independence within six months and to prepare for a national struggle. But he was opposed by the rightists owing allegiance to Gandhiji as well as by Nehru and was thrown out.<sup>42</sup> Differences between the rightists and him thus became wider and Bose announced his resignation of the office of Congress President. Having two intentions Bose formed the Forward Block in the country in 1939.<sup>43</sup> Firstly he thought that from this platform he could fight well with the Right Wing in the event of future conflict and there by able to win over the entire Congress to his point of view one day. Secondly if he could not succeed to win over the entire Congress to his point of view, he could act on his own in any major crisis. The differences

---

39 Viet, L. A., *India's Second Revolution 1947-77* The Dimentions of Development, Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Ltd., New Delhi, 1978, p 22.

40 Ayer, S. A., *op. cit.*, p 39.

41 *ibid.*, p 15.

42 *ibid.*, p 16.

between the Congress and the Forward Block were so vast that the Congress Working Committee debarred Subhas Bose from holding any position in an elective Congress Committee for three years on the plea that he advised the congress men to protest against two resolutions passed by the All India Congress Committee.<sup>44</sup> Mean- while the Forward Block was able to win popularity in large parts of the country particularly from the youths.

When the Great War broke out in Europe in September 1939, Forward Block started an anti-British and anti-war campaign all over the country. In this regard he took an entirely different view of Gandhiji's non-violence. During this period he escaped from India to Germany to seek the assistance of the Axis Powers in the cause of Indian freedom. On 31 st August 1942, he explained the concept of non-violent guerrilla warfare in a broadcast over *Azad Hind Radio* (Germany). According to him guerrilla warfare had two objectives. First to destroy war related production in India and second to paralyze the British administration in India. People from every section of the community should participate in the struggle. Non-payment of taxes, campaign inside the factories by a 'go slow' to hamper production and carry out sabotage activities.<sup>45</sup> The undertaking of sabotage activities such as burning of government offices, buildings, police station, railway station, destroying of factories working for war purposes was another main objective of his warfare.<sup>46</sup> Thus the concept of non-violence as understood by Bose was different from Gandhian non-violence policy.

The leaders of the CSP were divided into three main ideological streams : the Marxian, the Fabian and Gandhian ideology. The main principles of CSP which were adopted in 1934 at Bombay under the auspices of Acharya Narendra Dev, Jayprakash Narayan and Minoo Masani were also in favour of the National Congress when it contained that :

the primary struggle in India was the national struggle for freedom and that nationalism was a necessary stage on the way to socialism : that socialist must work inside the National Congress because it was the primary body leading the national struggle.<sup>47</sup>

It was revealed in the Presidential speech of Acharya Narendra Deva in the first session of the Socialist Conference in 1934 that

It would be a suicidal policy for us to cut ourselves off from the national movement that the Congress undoubtedly represents. ... he will be a short-sighted and a very narrow socialist who will refuse to take

43 *ibid.*, p 17.

44 *ibid.*

45 Appadorai, A., *Indian Political Thinking in the twentieth Century from Naoroji to Nehru An Introductory Survey*, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, 1979, p 54.

46 *ibid.*

47 Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikar, K.N., Mahajan, S., *op. cit.* p 304.

part in a national struggle simply on the ground that the struggle is being principally conducted by petty bourgeois elements of society although he will make ceaseless efforts to give it a socialist direction. In the peculiar conditions of India, the socialist can very well work within the Congress and combine the national struggle with Socialism.<sup>48</sup>

Hence CSP was fairly well organized in the reality of the Indian situation. It never made any opposition to the existing leadership of the Congress to breaking point. Jayaprakash Narayan, one of the foremost leaders of the CSP explained at a meeting in Madras on 8 th July 1934 the relationship of the Congress Socialists with the Congress in these words :

I will tell you about the relation between our party and the Congress. We call ourselves Congress Socialist Party. That means, of course, that this party is within the Congress and as such accepts the creed of the Congress, the creed being the attainment of complete independence through legitimate and peaceful means. We accept that creed but we define complete independence as socialist state. Being part of the Congress, we are subject to its discipline except when its discipline on the basic question of our programme differs. Then, of course, a different question will arise for us. But in all other matters we are subject to Congress discipline.<sup>49</sup>

Regarding the relationship between Gandhiji and the Socialists during the freedom struggle it can be said that it varied from time to time. We can divide it into three phases : 1934–39 was a period of conflict and confrontation ; 1939–47 was a period of reapproachment and 1947–48 was a period of complete accord on almost all issues. The Socialist leader Masani writes :

In fairness to the “old man” (i. e. Gandhi), it must be said that he never tried to work on us to persuade us to give up our socialist principles. On the contrary it was I, a young crusader who thought I would bring enlightenment to the old man and open his eyes to the superiority of our panaceas and limitations of his.<sup>50</sup>

Thus the nineteenth century witnessed the great national awakening among the Indians. It left a rich legacy of the national movement, which ultimately resulted in the independence of India.

---

48 Deva, A. N., *op. cit.*, pp 4–5.

49 Sankar, G., *op. cit.*, p 60.

50 *ibid.*, p 62.

## **Growth of Indian Nationalism and Germination of Left Wings within the National Congress of India**

Rekha Rani Sarma Puzari and Kazumi Mazane

This paper unfolds the saga of the nationalist upsurge and the germination of the left wings within the National Congress of India during the first Non-Cooperation Movement. As a background to our present study we can say that India was not a single country at the time of entry of the British to India. It was divided into many separate kingdoms and the vast portion of it was ruled by the Mughals. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Mughal emperors the British entered the country and established their trade monopoly and gradually established their rule in India. Riding on the back of the British rule modern ideas peeped into India from the west. It resulted in the growth of nationalist ideas among the newly educated Indians and opened their eyes to the evils of the British rule, which instigated them to fight against the aliens. The first form of this type of resistance was the revolt of 1857. The British suppressed the revolt no doubt but it was the first struggle of the people of India for their independence. The National Congress was established in 1885 which could be termed as the first all India political organization. The tragedy of Jalliwana Bagh and the publication of the Turkish peace terms brought Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi to the Indian political scene. He took the Khilafat issue as an instrument to create an anti-British sentiment among the Indian people and thereby started the first non-cooperation movement in India. Gandhiji gave the call for launching the non-cooperation movement on August 1, 1920 in the form of satyagraha means non-violence and truthfulness. The mass awakening in all over India compelled the British Government to take repressive measures. Though the non-violence was the main principle of Gandhiji's mass civil disobedience movement a violence took place in Chauri-Chaura in the United Province and Gandhiji suspended the movement. It disappointed a young nationalist group including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose who wanted to give the movement a radical colour owing to the influence of scientific socialism of Marx. As a result a new group was formed within the Congress termed as Left Wings. The ideologies of the two groups were different. When the Right Wing of the Congress led by Gandhiji demanded dominion status for the country the Left Wing stood for complete independence. Gradually the Left Wing divided into two groups : Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) with the same objective of complete independence under the banner of the National Congress.