

religion and politics must go hand in hand. He boldly said that unless that was done politics could not become a healthy game. Again we find that he laid emphasis on truth and proper means for achieving right ends. In the words of Lord Boyd Orr, "Truth and truth is attained by contemplation; justice for all men, freedom for all nations to develop their own resources according to their agency; freedom for individuals within nations that is complete freedom, no matter what colour, creed, what religion or political use they have; freedom from disease, hunger and poverty; in a word complete freedom for all so that each individual could attain his highest innate capacity for physical, psychological and cultural well being. And the striking feature of Gandhiji's principle was that these great ideas could only be attained by non-violent measures. That I think, was the most important part of the Gandhian teaching in our deliberations."

His Philosophy of Non-Violence. Gandhiji's another contribution to political thought is his philosophy of non-violence, non-cooperation and *satyagrah*. He felt that with the help of these weapons even the greatest and the most powerful enemy could be defeated without leaving any bitterness behind it. He surprised the world when he said that weapons were not needed for over-throwing an empire but what was needed was a true mind having real faith in God or in other words in becoming a true *satyagrahi*. Gandhiji then also contributed by saying that man was an end in itself and it was only soul for which the state should care. All state activities should move with the sole object of raising moral and economic life of the subjects. One cannot forget Gandhiji's contribution towards political thought when he said that it was difficult to separate a man into his religious and secular aspects. It was rather an impossible task and as such must go side by side complementing rather than contradicting each other.

Tributes to Gandhiji. High tributes have been paid to Gandhiji both by Indian as well as world leaders. Dr. John Haynes went to the extent of saying that Gandhiji was the greatest man in the world after Jesus Christ. Romain Rolland said, "Mahatma Gandhi has raised up three hundred million of his fellow men, shaken the British Empire and inaugurated in human politics, the most powerful movement that the whole world has seen for nearly two thousand years." Sir Stafford Cripps said, "There has been no greater spiritual leader in the world in our own times." Lord Halifax said about Gandhiji, "I suppose there could be few men in all history who by their own personal character and example have been able deeply to influence the thought of their generation." Dr. Radhakrishnan has said about him, "Great teacher appears once in a while. Several centuries may pass by without the advent of such a one. That by which he is known in his life. He first lives

and then tells others how they may live likewise. Such a teacher was Gandhiji." Dr. Rajendra Prasad said about Gandhiji, "Mahatma Gandhi's greatest contribution, however, does not consist in making masses of India politically self-conscious and organising them on a scale they had never before been organized. To my mind his greatest contribution to Indian politics and perhaps to the humanity in the world at large lies in the unique method which he has prescribed and employed for fighting wrong."

Conclusion. We may, however, conclude with Allen that, "it was the merit of Gandhi that, while revealing to his personalities of single human being in an age of organisation and machinery and the masses, he put those powers to the highest use. In him we saw what can be accomplished, not by the self assertive will, but by the will wholly dedicated to God and the good of men. He possessed the only valid coin of authority, not that which should precise others that it may rise but that which lift there to its own level."

We can, therefore, safely conclude that Gandhism is not Communism minus violence but it is something beyond that. Both *prima facie* agree on certain principles but as they proceed the differences also widen up. It is quite evident that they do not agree at all on the means for achieving the ends set forth by them. Gandhian philosophy which is combination of politics with religion has made Gandhiji one of the most important personalities of our modern age.

✓ **Q. 111. Discuss Gandhiji's contribution to modern political philosophy**

Or

Bring out Gandhiji's most outstanding contribution to modern Indian political thought.

Ans. Mahatma Gandhi was one of the most dynamic personalities of our times who moulded the very outlook of the world. His greatness, however, is not for his winning the freedom for India or that he was the pioneer of non-violence and non-cooperation movement but it was something more than that. He contributed both in India and to the cause of world at large. It is his many-sided contribution that gave him the title of Mahatma and on whose death even the U.N.O. lowered its flags.

Contribution to India. Gandhiji's contribution to Indian political thought was, of course, immense. It was through him and through his efforts that the national movement in India changed its very character. He struggled hard in India to see that the two great communities, namely the Hindus and the Muslims, live together like brethren forgetting all their differences. He also struggled to see that all minorities got their due and the majority did not ride rough shod over the minorities. We also find that he took up the cause of down-trodden and hard-pressed and saw that India became a casteless society in which there was no question of high and low. He tried to see that there was dignity of labour for all, and all got equal wages for equal work. He also found that as long as the poor used intoxicating goods, they could not get their due status in the society. This made him plead for total prohibition all over India. Not only this but he preached the use of swadeshi goods to relieve India of economic dependence. Similarly he had a hand on the pulse of the nation and pleaded the system of decentralization and *Panchayati Raj* which alone, in his opinion, could give real democracy to a big country like India. He introduced Wardha Scheme of education which was more utilitarian than the system of education preached by the British government.

Contribution to World Politics. But his contribution is not to India alone. In fact he was for the whole world. He was the person who for the first time believed and preached that

he should not reconcile himself to injustice but should leave the state of such an oppressor. ✓ Gandhi felt that it was not weakness but required great strength. For him it was not an ordinary thing to leave one's ancestral place where one was born, brought up and the land with which he had affection. His associations with his country, relatives and friends will be completely broken and that step required boldness which only a few could take.

Is it Practicable? For quite some time it was considered that Gandhian philosophy and methods of struggle could not be put into actual practice and provided no practical solution against oppression. But as the time has passed these methods have established their effectiveness and we find that through these methods Gandhi was in a position to relieve Indians from their miseries in South Africa and also could win freedom for India from the world mightiest empire. These methods, however, require proper disciplining and training of mind, which if one has, there is no doubt about the justification of these methods for fighting against any oppression. Therefore, to doubt the effectiveness of these methods is not justified at all.

✓ **Q. 110.** It has been said that Gandhism is Communism minus violence. How far do you agree with the statement?

Or

Compare and contrast Gandhism and Communism as regards their ends and methods. Would it be correct to consider Gandhism as Communism minus violence?

Ans. Introduction. Gandhiji came on the political scene in India after his return from South Africa and within no time he caught the imagination of the people. He won freedom for India and was in a position to oblige the mightiest colonial power in the world to leave our land but without any hatred or ill-will. He stood for a stateless and classless society based on the system of decentralization and *Panchayati Raj*. He was basically very close to communist philosophy and thus some of the thinkers have said about him that 'Gandhism is nothing else but communism minus violence.' In the following few paragraphs we shall examine the truth of this statement.

Gandhism and Communism. A close study of Gandhian philosophy is bound to reveal that Gandhism and Communism agree on some basic principles. For example both Gandhiji and Karl Marx wanted to have a classless society in which there would be no distinction between the rich and the poor and everyone would be appreciated by the qualities which he possessed. For them both class consciousness had created rift in the society and resulted in exploitation of the poor by the rich. Similarly, both believed that state was

based on violence and in its present form it had no justification to exist. Both even went to the extent of saying that it was an evil institution and Karl Marx believed that ultimately it was bound to wither away. Not only this, but both had identical views about capital. For them both, capital was a theft and a few people in the society had no right whatsoever to hold the money with them and thus deny their use for collective welfare. For them both, the capital should be used for social welfare and those who possessed money should be obliged to part with that and they should work in the spirit that they were only the trustees of the wealth which belongs to the nation as a whole.

Karl Marx and Gandhiji both had a very soft corner for the down-trodden and the poor. Karl Marx used to say that history of hitherto existing struggle is that of class struggle in which the labourers and the poor are being constantly exploited by the rich who control the means of production. He, therefore, gave the slogan workers of the world unite and it is in that unity alone that the depressed classes will come up and have their rightful place in the society. Similarly, Gandhiji also had a very soft corner for the down-trodden and low castes in the society. According to him the so-called scheduled castes are a part of our society. He lived and worked among them and for them. Through his 'Harijan' he tried to plead their cause vigorously and saw that in all walks of life they were given due representation. Similarly both believed in the concept of social equality meaning thereby that all should be given equal opportunities for getting justice and the doors of judiciary should not be closed on a particular class simply because they could not afford to purchase justice. He thus stood to preach with Marx that there should be political and economic equality.

Difference between Gandhism and Communism. No doubt *prima facie* there is much similarity between Gandhism and communism but there is a vast difference between the two. Gandhiji had deep faith in religion and believed that politics without religion was barren and both should work side by side. It is religion which brings life to politics. He himself used to say that "I am first a religious man then a political man." On the other hand, Marx believed that religion had no place in politics and both should be separated from each other. For him religion was opium for the people and also a method for making the people fatalist. He felt that it was a method through which the capitalists tried to contend the poor and he discarded religion altogether. Similarly we find that Gandhiji had faith in the existence of God, which, he said, was a mysterious force but all-powerful and was guiding our affairs. On the other hand, Marx did not believe at all in the existence of God and for him man was the architect of his own fate and there was no heavenly power to guide the destiny of man.

Ans. Introduction. Gandhiji was one of those political thinkers who believed that self-sacrifice, *satyagrah* or non-cooperation could bow even the mightiest empires in the world. For him to shake the empire and to check violence only a true *satyagrahi* or non-cooperation fighter was the most powerful authority. He believed that violence brings with it hatred and a spirit of taking revenge whereas in non-violence there was no such thing. He suggested that *satyagrah* was as a powerful weapon for fighting against a powerful enemy.

SATYAGRAHA

Satyagrah a Powerful Weapon. According to Gandhian philosophy *satyagrah* was the most powerful weapon for fighting against imperialism or a powerful enemy. By *satyagrah* he meant adhering to truth under all circumstances. A true *satyagrahi* should believe in God and ahimsa. For Gandhiji violence is untruth while non-violence truth. By ahimsa he also meant that no one should be injured and there should be no hatred in thought, speech and action. According to him, a true non-violent fighter hates evil and leaves his opponent because for him it is not the man but the institution which is to be hated. A true non-violent fighter or a *satyagrahi* is bound to leave credit for himself in the minds of the others and leaves nothing bitter behind him. General Smuts, once said to Gandhiji, "I often wish that you took to violence like the English strikers and I think we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness."

Satyagraha Different from Passive Resistance. For Gandhiji it was futile to think that many weapons were needed to win over an enemy. An enemy can only be won by love and affection. In his own words, "My non-violence does not admit running away from danger and leaving dear ones unprotected. Not knowing the stuff of which non-violence is made, many have honestly believed that running away from danger every time was a virtue compared to offering resistance, specially when it was fraught with danger to one's love. As a teacher of non-violence, I must, as far as it is possible for me, guard against such an unmanly belief." For him, Ahimsa had deep bearing not on body but on soul. Not the evil-doer but evil should alone be hated. A *satyagrahi* should have high ideals. He should not confuse *satyagrah* with passive resistance because whereas a passive resistor tries to put his opponents in an embarrassing position, a *satyagrahi* extends affection and love to his opponent to convince him about his demands. A *satyagrahi* can be in various forms namely :

(a) **Non-cooperation.** By non-cooperation Gandhiji meant that those who were doing injustice or oppressing should be non-co-operated. They should not be given any support from any corner and the oppressor should feel himself alone. It is in such a situation alone that an oppressor will be obliged to listen patiently to the demands of the opponent. It requires courage and self-sacrifice because it is a weapon in which a non-cooperator is also required to make sacrifices and if he is not prepared for them, he cannot reach the goal. A non-cooperator should have moral strength to face all odds and should have so much moral strength that the opponent feels convinced about it.

(b) **Civil Resistance.** For Gandhiji another method of fighting against a powerful enemy was that of civil resistance. He was opposed to armed resistance but what he pleaded for was that the people should not obey unjust and anti-social laws. The people should be bold enough to declare their intention to disobey cruel and unjust laws. They should openly defy such orders and should be ready to go behind the bars and suffer such cruelties as the oppressor might inflict upon them but should carry on the struggle till the time the unjust law was abrogated and replaced by a just law.

(c) **Strike.** According to Gandhiji strike was another weapon for fighting against the oppressor. He pleaded that the workers should organise themselves in each industry to fight against the industrialists. He, however, made it clear that such organisations should only aim at getting their rights and equal status and should not have hostility against the capitalists. He favoured the idea of strikes, if these were organised on non-violence. He felt that strike was an effective instrument if it did not aim at destruction and sabotage. The workers must realise that machinery and wealth are national property and owner is only the custodian of national wealth. The destruction of machinery was unhealthy and should not be justified on any grounds.

(d) **Fasting.** Gandhiji felt that the sense of the persons in power can most effectively be touched by fasting but fasting person should be highly elevated while observing this method. Fasting is a success only when the person going on fast is spiritually disciplined and true to his cause. An ordinary person cannot achieve his object but will be a failure. He, therefore, felt that fasting, if taken in its real spirit, is bound to touch the better sense of the opponent.

(e) **Hijrat.** According to Gandhiji if a person cannot tolerate injustice of the oppressor and also feels that he has not the power to become a good *satyagrahi*, for him, the best method was that of *Hijrat* or leaving one's ancestral place. In other words

and thus can contribute in national production. No doubt the rich cannot normally be persuaded to act as trustees of surplus wealth but that is always better than force. Force can be used as the last method but not as the first weapon for achieving the object.

Conclusion. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Gandhian ideas are practicable though it requires patience and practice to follow them in our actual life. Once the basis are allowed and established there will be little difficulty in building the superstructure of a society which will really be casteless and classless.

Q. 108. Discuss Gandhiji's ideas about religion and God.

Ans. Introduction. Gandhiji was one of those political thinkers who believed that religion and politics must go hand in hand. For him, both could not be separated from each other and in healthy politics it was essential that religion must be introduced in it. Similarly he also had faith in the existence of God and for him for a fearless and bold life it was essential that God should be feared. For him, God was truth and love.

Gandhiji on Religion. Gandhiji used to say that religion is as good a part of politics as diplomacy or any other similar institution. For him, those who believed that religion should be separated from politics, were miserably mistaken. He said that most of the politician come forward pleading that they are not religious whereas actually they have faith in some kind of religion. On the other hand, I come forward saying that I have complete faith in religion and I do not conceal my deep faith in that. Religion was essential for promoting morality and he used to say, "Most religious man I have met are politicians in disguise. I however, wear the guise of a politician but I am at heart a religious man." It was wrong to believe that the life of a man can be divided and one aspect separated from the other. In his own words, "The whole gamut of man's activities constitutes an indivisible whole; you cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into water-tight compartments. I do not know religion apart from human activities. It provides a moral basis to all activities which they would otherwise lack reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing." In his opinion without religion politics will be a dirty, under-hand and a shameful game. Religion alone can bring morality in politics. It is though good means that good results can be achieved and religion is a step forward for good means. He said that while achieving ends means should not be ignored.

Concept of Universal Religion. Gandhiji, however, had a different conception about religion. For him, his religion was neither that of the Hindus nor of the Muslims.

which sought truth and pleaded for help to the helpless. It was a religion which was based on social justice and promoted brotherhood, truth and happiness. It should be a religion which should stand for equality of all religions and should be broadbased enough to adjust itself to all good qualities of all religions and thus should not be narrow in outlook but above all narrow conceptions. He said, "Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but it is the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds upon indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is a permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expressions." At another place he himself said, "My religion is based on truth and non-violence is the means of realising Him."

Gandhiji on God. Gandhiji had full faith in the existence of God and pleaded that people should have faith in Him. It is through love for God that people can become fearless and instead of hatred they begin to love mankind. He, however, believed that God was something mysterious. It is something which we can only feel but cannot know. It is conscience, truth and love God and truth are one and the same thing. In his own word, "God is ethics and morality. God is fearless. God is source of life and light and yet he is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the Atheism of the Atheist. He transcends speech and reason. He is a personal God to those who need his touch. He is the purest essence. He simply is to those who have faith." He used to say that those who have faith in God cannot be subjected to any injustice. Faith in God emboldens a man and a true Satyagrahi need not fear anybody on earth. He begins to realise value of brotherhood and love.

Conclusion. We may thus conclude Gandhiji's views about religion and God by saying that he had great love for both these ideas but his views in this regard were broader than what is generally understood by religion or God. For him, Ram and Rahim were two names of the same Creator and both preached love, truth and brotherhood. If both these views are taken in their true sense then alone politics can become a very healthy and interesting game worthy of participation by those who wish to make politics a profession.

Q. 109. Discuss Gandhiji's methods of struggle. How far do you agree with them?

Or

"It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the non-violence is good for individuals it is not for the nation."

pendence and he dominated the whole Indian political life. He was put behind the bars but nothing deterred him from his decided path. In 1931 he went to London as the sole representative of Indian National Congress but he found that the conference was in no mood to give freedom to India. He also found that disruptive elements were knowingly being introduced on the conference table with certain motives to slow the progress of India's winning freedom. In 1942 Gandhiji started his famous Quit India Movement which opened the eyes of the Britishers and made the rulers realize that India was now not going to tolerate any injustice. Gandhiji was the main moving force behind the Congress when subsequent negotiations with the British delegations, including the Cripps Mission Plan, Waveli Plan, Cabinet Mission Plan or the Mountbatten Mission Plan were put forth before India. It was his efforts and under his guidance that Indian National Congress could successfully negotiate with one of the world's greatest imperialist powers.

Gandhiji was, however, much shocked to learn that the Hindus and the Muslims were fighting with each other on political issues. He could easily see that a great sacrifice was required to introduce harmony and end communal fury and hatred between the two communities which the political leaders had implanted in the minds of the people during all these years. The hatred which expressed itself in Noakhali where there was a slaughter of Hindus and events in Bihar where there was some reaction against the Muslims, shocked Gandhiji. He went at both the places and decided to go on fast until the people of both the communities decided to discard communal hatred as a political weapon. Similarly on September 7, 1947 there were riots in Delhi and Gandhiji had to adopt the same method. The response was very encouraging.

Third phase of Mahatma Gandhiji's Life. It is unfortunate that the father of the nation, who so much sacrificed for, guided so ably, the nation could not reap the fruits of independence. He could hardly breathe for a few months in free India when his end came. He started with the very basic assumption that the Hindus and the Muslims must live together as brethren for the prosperity of India. He, therefore, demanded that all mosques which had been converted into temples or where people had begun to reside after migration from Pakistan should be returned to the Muslims. He also pleaded that a sum of Rs. 55 crores, due to Pakistan, should be given to that country. It is unfortunate that some of the orthodox Hindus could not understand the lofty ideal behind Gandhiji's idea and on 30th January, 1948 when he was going to attend a prayer meeting, an orthodox Hindu, Nathu Ram Godsay, shot him dead.

Gandhiji's death shocked many. He was, perhaps, the first

non-official citizen of a country whose death was mourned even by U.N.O. High tributes were paid to him on his death and he is still remembered and will always be remembered for the ideals which he preached. In the words of Naginder Nath Gupta, "There were willing hearts in India waiting for his call and they at once realised the nature of struggle that lay ahead of them. Since then the struggle of national freedom in India has grown ever wider and today it comprehends the entire nation, it has been a glorious record, which is being added day after day, of sacrifice and suffering of women that vied with men in offering themselves as sacrifices at the altar of liberty and that was only due to Mahatma Gandhi." According to Sir Stafford Cripps, "There has been no greater spiritual leader in the world in our own times than Mahatma Gandhi." Acharya Kripalani said about Gandhiji, "Mahatma is more right when he is wrong than we are when we are right." Dr. Rajendra Prasad said, "Mahatma Gandhi's movement operated both horizontally and vertically. He took up causes which were not entirely political but which touched very intimately the life of large masses of people." Dr. Stanley Jones said about Mahatma Gandhiji, "He is stronger in death than he was in life. Millions around in the world are now interested in the Mahatma and his ideas—millions who would have only given him a passing glance had he not died for his ideals—martyr for the things for which he lived." Leon Blum, a French socialist, wrote about him, "I never saw Gandhi, I do not know his language, I never set foot in his country and yet I feel the same sorrow as if I had lost some one near and dear. The whole world has been plunged into mourning by the death of this extraordinary man." According to Lord Halifax, "I suppose there could be few men in all history who by their personal character and examples have so deeply influenced the thought of their generation."

Is There Gandhism? Before we actually discuss the basic principles of Gandhian philosophy it is interesting to discuss whether there is any separate 'ism' as Gandhism. Normally by an 'ism' we understand a set philosophy given and preached through a set of literature readily available to the masses. We also believe that these basic ideas have been brought close together and adjusted in such a fashion that these do not contradict each other. If this is the sole test of a separate 'ism', perhaps few might like to say that Gandhism does not exist at all. The critics will try to plead that Gandhiji could not give any set of formulae to his followers. In fact, for Gandhiji theory must follow action. In many of his movements the course of action was not always predetermined. In fact, in Gandhism one is bound to find that it was an experiment which was being carried out constantly and as such his whole philosophy was on an experimental basis. Not only this, but like an 'ism' Gandhian philosophy cannot be fully appreciated on the basis of theory but one is obliged to have practical knowledge of the Gandhian way of life. Not only this

but like a philosopher Gandhiji did not coin or originate new ideas. Even Gandhiji himself used to say that "I am not giving any new 'ism'." In his own words, "There is no such thing as Gandhism and I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems. The things I have formed and conclusions I have arrived at, are not final. I may change them homely. I have nothing to teach to the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could do. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors; well, of my philosophy, if it might be called by that pretentious name is done in what I have said, you will not call it Gandhism; there is no ism about it"

But all that does not appear to be very convincing to say that Gandhism was not an 'ism' at all. Subsequent study will reveal that Gandhiji had certain basic principles of his philosophy which had no contradictions but were consistent. The ideas of non-co-operation and non-violence were coined by him. Similarly he gave a new technique of fighting against the powerful nations. It was his basic idea which was given for the first time that a true and non-violent individual has nothing to fear even from a mighty empire based on violence, force and having all government authority under its control. He tried to see that these basic principles were consistently followed. His philosophy has come to stay and is being preached and made available to the modern generation in a very systematic form. It shall, therefore, be much safe to say that there is a separate Gandhism. If Gandhiji himself said that there was no separate Gandhism that was only due to his greatness.

Sources of Gandhian Philosophy Gandhiji came on the scene of India and soon caught the imagination of the masses. His philosophy was very simple. He drew his philosophy from different sources. For Gandhiji most important source of inspiration was Bhagwat Gita. He found solution to every problem in Gita. He learnt from Gita that one should act for getting the results. Gita in actual life, thus made him a man of action. From Gita he also picked up the philosophy of self-control, which he followed throughout his life. Again it was Gita that gave him the philosophy that truth was infallible and gives everyone courage and strength, even against the most powerful enemy. It is truth which gives man even mindedness and a balanced thinking and relieves from worries and pressures of life. It makes life ideal and happy.

From Buddhism and Jainism, Gandhiji picked up the philosophy of non-violence.

He was also influenced by Rukin's 'Upto this Last.' It was from here that he learnt that only such economy was good which

cause. His death was lamented all over the world and glowing tributes were paid to him after he was no more to guide India in her future development.

First Phase of Gandhiji's Life. On his return from England Mahatma Gandhi started his practice at Rajkot but subsequently he shifted to Bombay. It appears that Nature had destined him for a very noble cause and soon an opportunity came when for a professional work he had to go to South Africa on behalf a Muslim firm. Though he had no intention of stay there and had planned to come back soon after his business commitment was over yet due to the pitiable conditions of Indians of all communities there, he had to prolong his stay even after he had finished his commitment there. He saw with great dis-satisfaction the discriminatory treatment being meted out to Indians. He decided to struggle for legal equality for his countrymen. But before he could give a call to his people he himself practised the method of Satyagraha, inner purification and self-discipline. He had to labour hard for successfully implementing this new weapon on a foreign soil but credit goes to him for successfully practising them in his future struggle. He called upon the Indians there to disobey all discriminatory laws. He asked the people to disregard Asiatic Registration Act which required all Asiatics to give their thumb impression and to register themselves. He even led a deputation to England but found that only Satyagraha could solve the problem. Thousands were sent to jails and Gandhiji was the leader of all this movement. Ultimately his determination won and justice prevailed over injustice. All discriminatory laws were repealed and Gandhiji was successful in his noble mission.

Second Phase of Gandhiji's Life. In 1914 Gandhiji returned to India with all honour that he had won during his 20 years stay in South-Africa and decided to guide Indian political life. It goes to his wisdom that he did not immediately plunge into Indian politics and was rightly advised to listen more and speak less. After fully assessing the situation in India he decided to enter Indian politics. First of all he was a very strong supporter of the British sense of justice and said, "I discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love and one of those ideals is that every subject of this British Empire has the freest scope for his energies and honour and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. And I have found that it is possible for him to be governed least under the British Empire. He even supported the cause of Indians contributing their maximum in men, money and material in British army in the First World War. He, however, justified his action that an enemy in danger and difficulty should not be embarrassed in any way. He had so much love for British sense of justice that in their support in the First World War he organised an ambulance corps in London. In 1918 he wrote to the Viceroy,

"If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all Congress resolutions and not whisper Home Rule or responsible Government during the pendency of the War. I would make India hand over all her able bodied sons as a sacrifice to the empire at this critical moment; and I know that India by this very act, would become the most favoured partner and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past."

It was, however, in 1920 that his confidence in British sense of justice was rudely shaken and he became a non-co-operator. After the close of the war when India was expecting better treatment and greater share in the running of the administration, the country was given the Rowlatt Act followed by a massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and the constitutionally fighting country was given the most unsatisfactory reforms known as Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. Above all, the Muslims of India had also been betrayed and the integrity of Khilafat in Europe was not maintained. He himself has written that, "Events that have happened during the past month have confirmed me in the opinion that the imperial Government have acted in the khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral and unjust manner, and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a Government. Your Excellency's light hearted treatment of official crime, your exhortation of Sir Michael O. Dwyer, Mr. Montague's despatch and above all the shameful ignorance of Punjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of the Indians betrayed by the House of Lords, have filled my greatest misgivings regarding the future of the empire, have estranged me completely from the present Government and have disabled me from rendering, as I have hitherto whole heartedly rendered, my total co-operation."

After having completely lost his faith in British impartiality Gandhiji entered Indian politics with his full vigour and strength. He was determined to win India's freedom through his weapon of non-violence and passive resistance which he had successfully practised in South Africa. He also felt that Hindu-Muslim unity was most essential for Indian freedom and decided to struggle for it as well. In 1924 a special meeting of the Congress was organised in which Gandhiji said, "Non-violence is the first article of my faith and it is the last article of my faith but I had to make my choice; I had either to submit to a system which I considered has done irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips." Gandhiji, however, had to give up his experiment when Chauri Chaura incident took place in U.P. where a few constables were burnt alive and this shocked his faith in the people. In this way, Gandhiji's first attempt to lead the nation to freedom through non-violence was not a success to the expected extent.

Gradually Gandhiji took the country with him towards inde-

Gandhism political philosophy has ushered in a new era in the history of political thought. It made the world believe that even the greatest political problems could be solved only by personal sacrifices and making the opponent realise the excesses and mistakes committed by him. Under it personal sacrifice in the right direction was far more effective a weapon than any other method for fighting against the opponent. For Gandhiji, non-violence or ahimsa was the most suitable reply for violence and force. For him, non-violence was a creed as well a faith. Gandhiji wanted to establish an ideal society in which Panchayati Raj based on real democratic principles will flourish. He felt that democracy could not come from above but must start from down below and go upward. In Gandhism religion has a definite place and Gandhiji did not wish to separate religion from politics. In his own words, *"It is the permanent element and human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul beyond restless until it has found itself, known its maker and appreciated the true correspondence between maker and himself."*

In his economic ideals he was a socialist but of a different nature. He did not believe that force should be used to snatch superfluous wealth from the rich for distribution among the poor but he appealed to the capitalists that they themselves should give their wealth to the community and the poor so that it could be put to proper use. He followed the ideals of persuading the enemy rather than hating them. For him it was not the man but the institution which was bad and as such the former and not the latter should be hated. Gandhism believes in the use of pure *Swadeshi* rather than *Videshi*. He believed in the policy of non-cooperation, civil resistance, strikes, going on fast and even migrating to another country as weapons against the opponent for obliging him to accept the legitimate demands of the oppressed.

Gandhism is not communism minus violence as some of the thinkers make us believe. Both, of course, believe in a classless society and also believe that capital is a theft but they do not go

beyond that. The Marxists believe in the use of force whereas in Gandhism force has no place. Similarly in Marxism end justifies the means whereas Gandhism believes that right means should be used to get lasting ends.

Q 106. Discuss the life career of Mahatma Gandhi. In your opinion is there anything as Gandhism?

Ans. Gandhiji's life Career. Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi was born on 2nd October 1869 at Porebunder in Kathiawar. His father was Dewan of the State and mother, a devoted religious lady. He was married at the early age of 12. He was a shy and mediocre student but very obedient and punctual. He could impress his teachers by his shyness and obedience. It was at the age of 19 that he was sent to England with a vow neither to touch wine nor woman nor eat meat there. It was, of course, a very difficult promise to fulfil but most honestly he kept the promise. During his stay there he, first of all, tried to lead a western life but soon found that it was a difficult task not suited to his temperament and, therefore, decided to remain an Indian gentleman. Under the influence of his religious mother he spent quite a lot of his time in studying Bhagwat Gita and many other religious books. Gandhiji's life career can broadly be divided into three stages namely :

1. Before his return to India from South Africa ;
2. From 1921 to 1947 ; and
3. From 15th August, 1947 to 30th January, 1948.

During the first period of his career he practised the ideals which he wished to follow in his subsequent life. Till then he was not quite well-known to Indian multitudes. He had then not come to the fore-front to mould the thought and imagination of the people. During the second period of his life career he put into actual practice what he had so far been practising. By this time due to his work in South Africa he had earned great reputation and Indian masses were most willing to extend their hand of co-operation to him. It was during this period that he dominated the whole political life of India. It was his one-man guidance which was most valuable and most willingly responded to by the multitudes in India. It was also during this period that he successfully guided India to the path of freedom and achieved that with minimum of bloodshed. He forced one of the most powerful colonial and imperial powers in the world to leave the soil of India with no ill-will or bitter feelings. During the third phase of his life Mahatma Gandhi struggled to end that hatred which the partition of the country had brought with it between the two major Indian communities, namely the Hindus and the Muslims. As usual he preached the noble cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and was assassinated while fighting for this ideal