

THE INFLUENCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI'S SATYAGRAHA

ON MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.

by

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To my Parents

Mr & Mrs J.R. Singh

(Ladysmith, Natal)



Mahatma Gandhi has become the spokesman for the conscience of all mankind. He was a man who made humility and simple truth more powerful than empires.

(Gen. George C. Marshall - The American Secretary of State. - Attenborough's Film 'Gandhi' - Comments by Statesmen)

DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

.....
K. Singh
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

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CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	(i)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(ii)
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.1 THE OBJECT OF STUDY : THE INFLUENCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI'S SATYAGRAHA ON MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.	1
1.2 AIMS OF STUDY	6
1.3 METHODOLOGY	6
 CHAPTER TWO: RELIGION AND NON-VIOLENCE	 10
2.1 AHIMSA IN HINDUISM	10
2.1.1 Introduction	10
2.1.2 Ahimsa in the Vedas	12
2.1.3 Ahimsa in the Upanishads	14
2.1.4 Ahimsa in the Ramayana	16
2.1.5 Ahimsa in the Mahabharata	17
2.1.6 Ahimsa in the Bhagavad Gita	18
2.2 BIBLICAL TEACHINGS ON NON-VIOLENCE	21
2.2.1 The Biblical concept of Shalom or Peace	21
2.2.1.1 Definition of Peace	22
2.2.2 Old Testament Teachings on Peace	25
2.2.3 Jesus's teachings on Peace	28
2.3 CHRISTIAN PACIFISM	34
2.4 THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON GANDHI	41

CHAPTER THREE:	GANDHI AND SATYAGRAHA	54
3.1	A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY	54
3.2	SOURCES	55
3.2.1	The Influence of the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> on Gandhi	56
3.2.2	The Influence of Christianity on <i>Mahatma</i> Gandhi	57
3.2.3	<i>Mahatma</i> Gandhi's Indebtedness to Tolstoy	58
3.2.4	Ruskin's Influence on Gandhi	58
3.3	SATYA (TRUTH)	60
3.3.1	<i>Ahimsa</i>	61
3.3.2	<i>Satya</i> And <i>Ahimsa</i>	63
3.4	THE PHILOSOPHY OF SATYAGRAHA	67
3.4.1	The Code for Volunteers	72
3.5	SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA	73
3.5.1	The Advent of <i>Satyagraha</i>	76
3.6	CONCLUSION	84
3.7	CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN INDIA	88
3.7.1	Gandhi in London	88
3.7.2	Gandhi Back Home in India	89
3.8	CHAMPARAN	90
3.8.1	The Ahmedabad Labour <i>Satyagraha</i>	93
3.8.2	Analysis of Ahmedabad <i>Satyagraha</i>	95
3.8.3	<i>Kheda Satyagraha</i>	96
3.8.4	Analysis of <i>Kheda Satyagraha</i>	97
3.9	INVITATION FROM THE VICEROY	98
3.10	NATIONWIDE SATYAGRAHA AGAINST THE ROWLATT BILLS	99
3.10.1	<i>Hartal</i> (Non-cooperation)	101
3.10.1.1	Contravention of Selected Laws	101
3.10.2	Analysis	103

3.11	NON-COOPERATION	104
3.12	BARDOLI <i>SATYAGRAHA</i>	106
3.13	THE SALT <i>SATYAGRAHA</i>	107
3.14	ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE	108
3.15	JINNAH VERSUS GANDHI	110
3.16	CONCLUSION	112

CHAPTER FOUR: CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 116

4.1	INTRODUCTION	116
4.2	KING'S THEOLOGICAL THINKING	117
4.3	NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION	120
4.4	THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT	121
4.5	MARCH ON WASHINGTON	134
4.6	SELMA TO MONTGOMERY	138
4.7	CONCLUSION	143
4.7.1	Impact of the Civil Rights Movement	143

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION 146

5.1	GANDHI'S IMPACT ON THE UNITED STATES PEACE MOVEMENT	146
5.2	GANDHI'S INFLUENCE ON KING	150
5.3	ASSESSMENT	164

SUMMARY 167

BIBLIOGRAPHY 169

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Generations to come, will scarce believe, that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.

(Einstein - Attenborough's Film 'GANDHI' - Comments by Statesmen).

1.1 THE OBJECT OF STUDY : THE INFLUENCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI'S SATYAGRAHA ON MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.

Mahatma Gandhi, leader of his people, a man of divine fire whom Einstein had lauded so highly has been the subject of books, articles and speeches not only in India, the land of his birth, but also in Europe, America and South Africa.

The moment the mighty figure of Gandhi rises before us, the question presents itself: What is his relevance today and for the future? What inspiration can we draw from his life? What light can his thought and wisdom shed on our problems? How did his way of life affect our course of action in private and public affairs? That fact that Gandhi is relevant today and for centuries to come is not in doubt at all.

The words which Jawaharlal Nehru uttered almost immediately after Gandhi's sudden demise from this world are found to be prophetic. He said, "The light is gone and yet it will shine for a thousand years" (Ramachandran and Mahadevan 1967:IX).

The writer chose this topic because it is pertinent to South Africa today. The writer's interest grew further when it was learnt that Gandhi's *Satyagraha* had an influence on Martin Luther King, Jr. who called it Non-violent Direct Action. Racial discrimination in South Africa is still thriving. President De Klerk and the Nationalist Party believe they have removed "hurtful discrimination", but the truth is all apartheid, grand or petty, is hurtful and needs to go.

Gandhi came to South Africa in 1893 and was engaged in a heroic struggle against the unjust laws. He insisted on the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means. "He declared that war and violence never solve any problems. They create new ones and sow the seed for future wars and the continuance of hatred" (Diwakar 1967:XV).

Twenty-five years ago, racism was alive and well in America, and even today it still rears its ugly head far too often. In the 1950s Black people in that country were fighting for more or less the same things

that we are fighting for today in South Africa: equal use of public amenities, equal use of government programmes, the right for equal employment opportunities, and most important the right to vote.

Some of the clashes witnessed in the American South between police and Black protesters are very similar to those we have witnessed in Black townships here in South Africa.

Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., the Nobel Prize winner of the United States of America, went to India in 1959. After a month's sojourn in the land of Gandhi, on the eve of his departure, he was asked a cynical question at a press conference in Delhi. "Where is Gandhi today?" he was asked: "We see him nowhere." King's reply was that Gandhi was inevitable. If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. He lived, thought and acted, inspired by the vision of humanity evolving towards a world of peace and harmony. We may ignore him only at our own risk (Ramachandran and Mahadevan 1967:IX).

The inspiration provided by Mahatma Gandhi has most certainly led to a re-interpretation of the technique of non-violent resistance in the West: a re-interpretation and questioning of the nature of pacifism and non-violent resistance. The most notable

example of the use of Gandhian technique in the West is that of Martin Luther King Jr. in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States of America during the 1950's and 1960's.

King deliberately adopted Gandhian techniques in the struggle for Civil Rights and was committed to a philosophy of non-violence. He definitely learned much more of the actual tactics employed by Gandhi in the Civil Disobedience Movement in India. It was no wonder that King always held Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and the Indian example of *Satyagraha* in very high esteem. But above all, King was a Christian who accepted the validity of the Gandhian technique of non-violent resistance and who wedded *Satyagraha* to the Christian concept of *Agape* (sacrificing love - giving love). King took Gandhianism out of its Indian context and applied it to the American situation. For both, non-violent resistance was a positive concept and offered a method of pursuing revolution by peaceful means.

According to Bishop:

They have given the world remarkable demonstrations of a technique for loving, a technique that resolutely seeks justice and a technique which blends in an unusually effective way moral and spiritual insights from East and West (Bishop 1981:158).

It is clear that Gandhi's life, thought, teaching and acting are ever relevant for all aspirants of the ethical and spiritual life. His principles and technique of *Satyagraha* are highly efficacious instruments of peaceful economic, social and political change whenever it is required. His gospel of peaceful means for resolving all conflicts is the only way to escape the disaster of nuclear war. In its totality, Gandhi's teaching is a highly inspiring one and serves as a signpost to humanity marching towards a better, happier and more harmonious world.

In these trying times man would do well to heed the teachings and examples of Gandhi and the adaptation of his work by King. To all those who have not lost hope, the possibilities of non-violent protest still wield great potential.

One has to admit that it is becoming increasingly difficult to have hope for a brighter future in South Africa. Yet throwing in the towel is a harder option to contemplate. There are a lot of lessons to learn from both Gandhi's and King's lives and writings, for hope and determination rate high among them. One of their abilities was to have hope for a bright tomorrow.

The writer in this dissertation attempts to draw parallels between the Black American struggle and the

struggle that took place in India and in South Africa where *Satyagraha* was born.

The writer singled out two men who had the dauntless spirit and the ability to act fearlessly in the face of brutal bigotry.

1.2 AIMS OF STUDY

This dissertation is being written with the following aims in view:

The hypothesis is that the *Satyagraha* practised by Gandhi had a strong influence on Martin Luther King Jr. who called it Non-violent Direct Action. The aim is to test this hypothesis, i.e., to establish the influence that Gandhi had on King.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The basic theoretical framework employed in this dissertation is as follows:

1.3.1

The hermeneutical approach was used. The research was mainly in the field of comparative historical

method. The comparative historical method is different from purely historical methods because it is cross-cultural. The historical comparative method does not concern itself with whether a certain faith is true or false. Its aim is to be as objective as possible about the nature and power of religion. This method suggests that religions occur independently and may be used to explain historical developments and connection. Early investigators found similarities in the *Gita* and *New Testament* which led them to suppose that a single influence informed both (Eliade 571:573).

1.3.2

The research comprised a study of the relevant literature. The primary and secondary sources on both Gandhi and King were studied.

1.3.3

A study was undertaken of the evolution, philosophy and techniques of *Satyagraha*. Secondly, a study was made of the difficulties faced by Indians, in South Africa in their struggle against racial discrimination and in India in their struggle against Colonialism. The focus of interest will be two-fold:

Firstly, how Gandhi emerged as a mass movement leader. Secondly, the exercise of his leadership in maintaining the movement as an on-going concern.

Here we account the unfolding of situations or issues on how Gandhi marshalled his leadership skills to meet them. The writer found not only the absence of the use of physical force or coercion on the part of the Indians, but also their total restraint on character assassination or smear campaign. The writer learnt that the civil rights goals were attained but after a relatively long time.

1.3.4

Further to my research the advent of Gandhi and the Indian Civil Rights Movement sheds some light on the validity of the technique of non-violent action in the United States of America under the able guidance of Martin Luther King. The writer established that Gandhi and King were fighting for the same cause. The writer assessed that the struggle facing the two communities, i.e., Indians in India and the Negroes in America were both denied freedom. In the case of India, colonial power had enslaved them in their own country, denying them their basic human rights, whilst in America the Negroes suffered discrimination, i.e.,

in job opportunities, education, public amenities and most importantly, denied the right to vote.

1.3.5

Finally, the adoption of *Satyagraha* by King who called it Non-violent Direct Action in the Civil Rights Movement in America is discussed and analysed. The success of the campaigns in America bring to the fore the influence of Gandhi's *Satyagraha* on Martin Luther King.

CHAPTER TWO

RELIGION AND NON-VIOLENCE

2.1 AHIMSA IN HINDUISM

2.1.1 Introduction

The creed of *Ahimsa* is based on "mentally not injuring anyone". The teachers of Hinduism commended this eternal value of life, *Ahimsa*, to be lived at the mental level. It is therefore to be understood as a mental attitude to our relationship with others in life (Chinmayananda, 1977:29-31).

Ahimsa is a Sanskrit word and commonly translated by Westerners as non-violence. Historically we find that man has been marching from violence (*Himsa*) towards the goal of non-violence (*Ahimsa*). The primitive man was a cannibal. From cannibalism he moved onward and lived on hunting. Hunting was followed by agriculture. His dependence on agriculture made him settle in one place, thus giving up his nomadic life. This historical human evolution proves that man is on his march to reach the destination of *Ahimsa*. His instinct of violence is vanishing with his progress in developing the non-violent attitude to life.

According to Hinduism *Ahimsa* means not hurting nor injuring others in thought, word or deed. In other words it is of three types:

Manasika, i.e. *ahimsa* in thought.

Vacika, i.e. *ahimsa* in word and

Kayika, i.e. *ahimsa* in deed.

The subtle beginning of any action, good or bad, is the mind. Speech is the outer manifestation. The action is complete when practised outwardly. A true *ahimsaka* (one who practises *ahimsa*) practises this virtue in thought, word and deed (Walli 1974:15).

Ahimsa in thought means not to think ill of others. *Ahimsa* in words means to refrain from uttering words that will cause pain to others. Non-violence in word requires control of the tongue preceded by control of thought. *Ahimsa* in deed means not to inflict physical injury to others. As stated above, true *Ahimsa* must be practised in thought, word and deed. He who commits *Himsa* (violence) in mind is as much a *Himsaka* as he who commits it in deed. Therefore the practice of *Ahimsa* in thought, word and deed should be man's aim (Walli 1974:15-16). This concept of *Ahimsa* is evident in the *Shastras* (religious scriptures) from the Vedic Age (2500 B.C.) to modern times where we have the example of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who sacrificed his life for the sake of truth and non-violence.

2.1.2 *Ahimsa in the Vedas*

The *Vedic Aryans* were worshippers of the powers of nature. They looked upon the different aspects of natural phenomena as many deities and propitiated them for strength and goodwill, wealth and protection, not only for themselves but for others as well. They aspired to be good, do good and to listen to only what was good. The Vedic people were very united and accomplished whatever they wanted, together (Walli 1974:34-36).

According to the *Yajur Veda* (1,5) the Vedic Indians kept the vow of righteousness and prayed to *Agni* (fire) to give them strength to be successful in their efforts. While praying to the gods they used to say (*Yajur Veda* 1,5).

I shall keep the vow of righteousness
Bless me with strength therefore
May success attend to me. I enter
from untruth to truth. I abandon
untruth and accept truth.

It is therefore evident that the *Vedic* Indians were inclined to resort to vows. They prayed to the gods to keep them on the path of righteousness and honesty. According to the *Yajur Veda* (4,27) they were in search of good friends and prayed to be bestowed with good friendship. The *Vedic* people made an earnest request to the gods to lead them to riches through righteous

paths and remove every sin that made them wander and stray. Apart from the desires for riches, domestic welfare, cattle, sons, etc., they also aspired for wisdom and prayed to *Agni*, *Prajapati* and *Varuna* for peace within, without, in the sky, air, earth, plants, trees and all God's universe. They wanted that strength that would make all creatures regard them as their friends. This prayer for friendship shows the inner thirst for friendship, mutual trust, co-operation and help to all that inhabits this universe. Again according to the *Yajur Veda* (36,1), the *Vedic* people had faith in pioussness prayed to *Brihaspati* to amend the deep-rooted defects of eye, mind or heart.

The *Vedic* Indians prayed for strength, energy, splendour, righteous indignance and light. Such sincere and zealous worshippers, who prayed for these very treasures that are embodied by Almighty were devotees of *Ahimsa*, for lustre, energy, strength and light cling and decorate only that fortunate one who is the embodiment of selfless love, goodwill, help, sympathy and happiness to see others happy (Walli 1974:36-37).

According to the *Rig Veda* (10, 151-2) prayers are offered for the welfare of those charity-minded people who are desirous of giving. To give charity is to help the needy. Only one who believes in goodness and has

feelings for others can part with the things he owns.

In the *Rig Veda* (10, 164-5) it is stated that the *Vedic* Indians had a deep desire to rid themselves of ill or evil-thoughts. They had great faith in truthful speech and prayed earnestly for it. This devotion to truth showed regard for morality. Truth helps in practising *Ahimsa*.

2.1.3 *Ahimsa* in the *Upanishads*

According to the following verse in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (3,2,13) one becomes good by good action and bad by bad action:

'Yajnavalkya,' said he, 'when the speech (voice) of this dead person enters into fire, the breath into air, the eyes into the sun, the mind into the moon, hearing into the quarters, the self into the ether, the hairs of the body into the herbs, the hairs of the head into the trees, and the blood and the semen are deposited into the water, what then becomes of this person?'

'Artabhaga,' my dear, take my hand. 'We two alone shall know of this, this is not for us two (to speak of) in public.' The two went away and deliberated. What they said was *karman* and what they praised was *karman*. Verily one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action. Therefore, Artabhaga of the line of Jaratkaru kept silent.

As one thinks and acts, so does one become. The doer of good deeds becomes good and the doer of bad deeds becomes bad. Virtue makes one virtuous and wickedness

makes one wicked. Others, however, say that man consists of desires. As is his desire, so is his will and the deed he does. He attains whatever deed he does. This is also very clearly illustrated in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (4,4,5):

The self is, indeed, Brahman, consisting of (or identified with) the understanding mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, air, ether, light and no light, desire and absence of desire, anger and absence of anger, righteousness and absence of righteousness and all things. This is what is meant by saying (it) consists of this (what) is perceived, consists of that (what is inferred).

According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does one become. The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action. Others however, say that a person consists of desires as is his desire so is his will; as is his will, so is the deed he does, whatever deed he does, that he attains.

Thus the people of the *Upanishadic* Age had knowledge of goodness, virtue and vice. They believed in the reward of good deeds.

In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* (,11) the teacher exhorts the students to follow truth, virtue, welfare, prosperity, to revere parents, teachers and guests as God, to practise blameless deeds. Students, when in doubt are asked to follow the footsteps of *Brahmanas* who are competent to judge, devoted to good deeds, not led by others, not harsh and are lovers of virtue (Radhakrishnan 1974:537).

According to Radhakrishnan (1974:537-538), the *Brahmanas* have a spontaneity of consciousness which is expressed in love for all beings. Their tenderness of sentiment and enlightened conscience should be the standard for all.

The above statement brings out the concept of *Ahimsa*, in the form of love for all beings, which is said to be the fountain of all teaching and the doctrine of the *Vedas*.

The aim of life according to the *Upanishads* is to realise the Self. Austerity plays an important part in attaining self-realization. It helps us cleanse ourselves of all that is impure, sinful and imperfect.

Thus all virtues come under one word, i.e., "austerity". *Ahimsa* is undoubtedly included among those virtues but is the leading principle. As mentioned before, positive *Ahimsa* means to love others, to help the needy (Walli 1974:40).

2.1.4 *Ahimsa* in the *Ramayana*

The practice of *Ahimsa* is depicted in several instances in the *Ramayana*. A few instances will be explained below. Lord *Rama* who was an incarnation of *Ahimsa* and

compassion did not hesitate to resort to violence, to protect the ascetics of *Dandaka* forest. In fact he as a *Kshatriya* (warrior class) thought it his duty to protect the *Brahmanas* and propagate sainthood (Chidbhavananda 1974:17-21).

Rama's attitude towards *Kaikeyi* may be termed a type of *Ahimsa*. In the *Aranyakanda* of the *Ramayana*, *Lakshmana* complained about *Kaikeyi's* defiant attitude. On hearing this, non-violent *Rama* who believed in returning good for evil and saw good in humanity, replied to *Lakshmana* that he should never have such negative thoughts towards their mother (Chidbhavananda 1974:53-58).

The above instance cannotes belief of *Rama* in the creed of "forgive and forget". This is the foundation of *Ahimsa*. Being born in the *Kshatriya* caste, *Rama* slayed those only who deserved to be slain in the interests of the *Brahmanas*, saints and ascetics and never got enraged with those that ought not to be slain.

2.1.5 *Ahimsa* in the *Mahabharata*

The *Mahabharata* like the *Ramayana* is an epic describing the war between the *Kauravas* and the *Pandavas*. This

war appears to be the war between the forces of *Himsa* and *Ahimsa*. The fall of the *Kauravas* is a warning to him who is bent upon attaining sovereignty with the weapon of *Himsa* (violence) and callousness. The triumph of the *Pandavas* is a triumph of righteousness that culminates in *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and forgiveness.

Forgiveness means not to retaliate and that is what *Ahimsa* aims at. Forgiveness is said to be the ornament of the strong as well as the weak man. It can subdue everything in this world. It can attain everything. He who has the weapon of peace in his hand cannot be harmed by the wicked. Just as fire, falling on the ground, devoid of any peice of straw, is extinguished by itself. Similarly, a person of violence, if he is treated with non-violence, cannot but control his violence in the long run. *Ahimsa* is the cause of happiness, just as knowledge is the deepest satisfaction.

2.1.6 *Ahimsa* in the *Bhagavad Gita*

The *Gita* is regarded as the cream of the *Upanishads* and all the scriptures. Whether the *Gita* teaches *Himsa* or *Ahimsa* seems to be a controversial question according to some people. In the first chapter, *Arjuna* is found

laying down his weapons, under the influence of attachment and prefers defeat at the hands of the *Kauravas*. He foresees disaster and becomes afraid of the sin of *Himsa* (violence). *Arjuna* then appeals to *Sri Krishna* to explain to him what is best for him to do. In the following verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* (2,19) *Lord Krishna* explains to him that nobody kills or is killed.

He who takes the Self to be the slayer and he
who thinks He is slain neither of them knows;
He slays not nor is He slain.

Sri Krishna goes on to explain to him that the soul is immortal and that the body must perish. There in the following verse of the *Bhagavad Gita* (2,18), he persuades him (*Arjuna*) to fight the battle and not shun his duty.

These bodies of the embodied self which is
indestructible, eternal and immeasurable, are
said to have an end. Therefore, fight, O
Arjuna.

These words of *Sri Krishna* do not teach war and *Himsa*, but only intend to remove *Arjuna's* infatuation. *Arjuna* in reality did not refuse to fight in the spirit of *Ahimsa*. He hesitated to fight against his own kith and kin. *Lord Krishna*, knowing *Arjuna's* innermost thoughts, advised him with the intention of removing his attachment and not to teach *Himsa* to him (Shastri 1985:38-39). Control of anger, attachment, other types of qualities and attainment of a stage beyond the three

gunas (qualities: *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) are not associated with *Himsa* but with *Ahimsa*. Thus the *Gita* shows us the way to destroy desire, attain steadiness, detachment and self-control. It teaches to perform actions with no attachment for its fruits as illustrated in the following verse of the *Bhagavad Gita* (2,49):

Far lower than the yoga of wisdom is action
O, Arjuna. Seek thou refuge in wisdom;
wretched are they whose motive is the fruit.

Ahimsa with other virtues has been regarded as the characteristics of *Sattvic* men. Thus it is found, that the *Gita* emphasises the virtues that are aids to *Ahimsa*. Hence the *Gita* teaches *Ahimsa* and not *Himsa*.

Vedic rites are twofold, viz., *Pravritti* and *Nivritti*. *Pravritti* is worked out by the worship of the sacred fire and *Nivritti* is the extinction of desire preceded by *Jnana* (knowledge). *Pravritti* is what destroys desires and *Nivritti* withdraws the mind from the worldly objects. *Ahimsa* is a help in both ways. The practice of *Ahimsa* destroys desires as well as helps in withdrawing the mind from worldly objects (Nirvedananda 1957:47-63).

2.2 BIBLICAL TEACHINGS ON NON-VIOLENCE

2.2.1 The Biblical concept of *Shalom* or Peace

Peace is the most inclusive of Christian virtues and a Christian ethic for our time may profitably devote much more attention than has been given in the past to the exploration of this great biblical idea of peace and the way to its realization (Macquarrie, 1970:66).

One good reason for giving peace a paramount place among the Christian virtues is the indisputable fact that in the contemporary world the lives of all people are bound together in an interdependence, closer and more evident than has ever been known before. The corporate nature of human existence is daily being impressed upon us. No individual, no group, no nation can contract out of the human family or isolate itself from the rest. It follows, then, that our ethical thinking must be guided by a conception of a virtue that is corporate or even global in its scope, and such a virtue is peace.

Not only Christians and Marxists are concerned about peace. So too are Buddhists and humanists, people of many religions and many ideologies.

Peace is an urgent concern to mankind. Peace, if it is ever to be achieved, must be a co-operative venture cutting across all faiths and ideologies. Indeed, if one thinks of the leading protagonists of peace in recent decades, they represent many forms of belief and unbelief - Mohandas Gandhi, Bertrand Russell, George Bell, Martin Luther King, to mention only a few.

2.2.1.1 Definition of Peace

Let us first consider the Hebrew word, since that is important for the whole biblical tradition. That Hebrew word is *Shalom*, and the basic dictionary meaning is, 'completeness or wholeness' (Eliade 1987:xi, 221).

In a negative sense religions speak of peace as freedom from war and unrest. Peace can also take a positive meaning of well being and fulfillment as goals of religious and social life. In ancient Hebrew thought, peace (*shalom*) was not only the absence of war but well-being, if not prosperity. A famous passage which appears twice in the Bible (Is. 2:2-4, Mi. 4:1-3) describes all nations going to Jerusalem to learn the divine law, "beating their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, abandoning their swords, and learning war no more". Micah adds that every man would sit under his vine and fig tree, an

ideal picture of a small landholder in a tiny state between rival superpowers. In expectation of a better future the ideal Davidic king is called Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:5), and his government is described as having boundless dominion and peace (Eliade 1987:xi,221).

Returning to the biblical notion of peace. Peace is not merely cessation of strife, but a positive quality of individual and social life. As the prophet Jeremiah pointed out, there are times when men say "peace, peace", but in reality "there is no peace" (Jeremiah, 5:14), for peace as wholeness involves not only the cessation of war, but also the absence of injustice and falsehood, and the presence of justice and truth (Craigie 1978:85).

We have seen that peace is, in biblical teaching, both eschatological and primordial. It is eschatological in the sense that its full realization belongs to the end of history. Primordial in the sense that it was man's true potentiality from the beginning of his history. Peace is not simply a condition but a process and a task as man moves from potentiality to realization.

We must, however, try to understand the eschatological vision of the Old Testament prophets in the light of the Kingdom of God taught and inaugurated by Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God was, and is characterised by

both a present and a future reality. In the present (in both Jesus' day and our our time) the kingdom is marked by the work of God, that of restoring mankind to wholeness and completeness; but the future dimension of the kingdom is eschatological, pointing to a time when the work of God would reach completion. Christians must have a concept of peace, applicable to the present, undertaken in the light of the future; and they must have a vision of peace, providing the horizon and the hope of the application of their future (Craigie, 1978:89-90).

There is a difference in expression when one speaks of the "concept" of peace and "vision" of peace. When one speaks of the vision of peace, one has in mind its ideal character, a peace lying in the future; it is the goal of God's work in history, part of salvation. The vision can be perceived but only imperfectly understood. The vision of peace is of great theological significance but of less practical significance to those living in a world perplexed by war and conflict of different types (Craigie 1978:89).

However, stress is laid on the Christian concept of peace. A concept implies recognizable and describable structures, and these do belong to peace as understood by the Christian faith. The double significance of peace as both vision and concept has been well

expressed by Barrett: 'The universal realization of peace is certainly not an immediate possibility. But the relative and proximate increase of peace is in every moment a very realistic possibility' (In Macquarrie 1973:13).

2.2.2 Old Testament Teachings on Peace

Before actually discussing Isaiah's expectation of peace as portrayed in the Old Testament, a little need be said on the prophet himself. Isaiah was regarded as the most distinguished of all prophets, since he prophesied from the mouth of the Almighty. Isaiah exercised his prophetic ministry at a time of unique significance, a time in which it was of utmost importance to realize that salvation could not be obtained by chance but only from God himself.

With specific regard to the eschatological expectation of peace, Isaiah's views are extremely strong and clear cut. This is demonstrated very clearly in (Isaiah 2:4). In this verse Isaiah states that God is now represented as one who in a peaceful manner intervenes in the disputes of nations, and settles them so that the nations change the implements of war into utensils of peace; with the result that the very knowledge of war is lost. The Prophet goes on to say that when

contending nations wish to settle their disputes, they no longer engage in war, but go to God. In this way they are assured of a judgement which is absolutely just. Isaiah therefore prefers a universal peace that is religiously founded. For there can only be true peace when the hearts of men have been regenerated by the spirit of God.

Man purged of all sin seeks peace. This spiritual blessing Isaiah represents by a picture of man ceasing to learn the arts of war and turning rather to those of peace. However, this peace is not one which can be obtained by the means of what is today called pacifism, nor, for that matter, by any human effort. Man unaided cannot establish a condition of peace. Only God can bring peace. The fulfilment of the present prophecy began with the angels, "peace on earth" and more specifically with the first preaching of the gospel.

On the question of war not only will the nations no longer practice war, they will not even know how to practice it; they will not learn war (Isaiah 2.4). This unquestioned peace is most definitely the result of the instruction of the Lord. This brings to mind Calvin's prayer which reads, "Would that Christ reigned entirely in us" for then would peace also have its perfect utterance.

At this point it must be highlighted that war is not condemned in this passage nor is pacifism defended. Scripture makes it clear that even though war is a result of sin, participation in war itself is not necessarily sinful. There is only one way to proceed towards abolition of war, it is not pacifism, but individual learning the law of the Lord (Isaiah 2:3).

Isaiah also speaks extensively on this matter of peace in Isaiah 11:1-10. In Verse 2 Isaiah emphatically declares that only the Messiah is equipped for the tremendous task of bringing peace upon earth. He goes on to state that not by might nor by power, not by human wisdom and means will it ever be achieved. Peace will come only by the one who issues forth from "Jesse's roots" (Isaiah 11:1-2).

From Verses 6-10 Isaiah speaks of the coming peace. The Messiah's kingdom is compared with all earthly kingdoms. His kingdom will be the very opposite of what now is found in human kingdoms. All enmity will disappear, not only from among men, but even from among beasts, and even between men and beasts all will be in harmony. However, the question that arises is how far will the reversal of nature extend? Will it obliterate that most ancient of enmities, the one between the serpent and man? According to Isaiah, so great is the Messiah's power that even this fundamental enmity will

be wiped out. Undoubtedly the fruit of the Messiah's righteous rule is a deep peace, a world revolutionary peace, so that all hostile relations between men and animals are removed.

2.2.3 Jesus's teachings on Peace

The teachings of Jesus as reflected in Matthew 5 is one of the most important in the whole New Testament. In it Jesus speaks with an authority which no other man had ever dreamed of assuming. The authority which Jesus assumed always amazed those who came into contact with him. Apart from this the standard which he put before men was even more amazing.

On the question of violence Jesus stated that it was not only the man who committed murder who was guilty; the man who was angry with his brother was also guilty and liable to judgement (Matt. 5:21-22). Likewise it was not only the man who committed adultery who was guilty; the man who allowed the unclean desire to settle in his heart was also guilty (Matt. 5:27-30). This was something entirely new which men had not fully grasped. Jesus taught that it was not enough not to commit murder; the only thing sufficient was never even to wish to commit murder.

Although we may not have struck a man, who can say that we never wished to strike a man? Jesus taught that thoughts are just as important as deeds or action. It is not enough not to commit a sin; the only thing that is enough is not to wish to commit. As such a man is not judged only by his deeds, but is judged even more by the desires which never emerged in deeds. For Jesus a man is not a good man until he never even desires to do a forbidden thing. This shows that Jesus is intensively concerned with man's inner thoughts.

If this be so then only God can stand in judgement of men. For we see only a man's outward actions; God alone sees the secrets of his heart. Jesus even reacts against anger towards a brother. This kind of anger is forbidden (Matt. 5:22-26). Jesus condemns all selfish anger. He forbids for ever the anger which broods, the anger which will not forget, the anger which refuses to be pacified, the anger which seeks revenge. If we are to obey Christ, all anger must be banished from life, and especially that anger which lingers too long.

In short Jesus states that in the old days men condemned murder and truly murder is for ever wrong. But not only are a man's outward actions under judgment, his inmost thoughts are also under the scrutiny and the judgement of God. Long lasting anger is bad, contemptuous speaking is worse, and the

careless or the malicious talk which destroys a man's good name is worst of all. The man who is the slave of anger, the man who speaks in the accent of contempt, the man who destroys another's good name, may never have committed a murder in action, but he is a murderer at heart.

Jesus also advises men to get trouble sorted out in time, before it piles up still worse trouble for the future (Matt. 5:23-25). When personal relations go wrong, in nine cases out of ten immediate action will mend them, but if that immediate action is not taken, they will continue to deteriorate, and the bitterness will spread in an ever-widening circle.

Matthew (5:38-42) reflects to a great extent the Christian peace ethic. Jesus begins by referring to the oldest law perhaps in the world - an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. The principle is very clear and apparently simple - if a man has inflicted an injury on a person, an equivalent injury shall be inflicted upon him. This law is known as *Lex Talionis* and became part and parcel of the ethic of the Old Testament. Although considered on the surface to be a savage and blood-thirsty law, it is in fact the beginning of mercy.

Its original aim was most definitely the limitation of vengeance. It limited vengeance in that if a man of one tribe injured a man of another tribe, then only the man who committed the injury should be punished and not his entire tribe. Furthermore it never gave a private individual the right to extract vengeance; it was always a law which laid down how a judge in the law court must assess punishment and penalty. Although mentioned in the Old Testament the *Lex Talionis* must not be viewed as the whole of the Old Testament ethics. For there are moments of mercy as reflected in Proverbs 25:21 "Do not say, I will do to him as he has done to me." and "Let him give his cheek to the smiter; he be filled with insults" (Lamentations 3:30).

However, it was Jesus who obliterated the very principle of this law; because retaliation, however controlled and restricted, has no place in the Christian life.

For the Christian, Jesus abolishes the old law of limited vengeance and introduces the new spirit of non-resentment and of non-retaliation. He says that if anyone smites us on the right cheek we must turn to him the other cheek also. Even if a man should direct to you the most deadly and calculated insult, you must on no account retaliate, and you must on no account resent it. At this point it must be emphasized that the true

Christian has learned to resent no insult and to seek retaliation for no slight. Jesus goes on to say that if anyone tries to take away our tunic in a law suit, we must not only let him have that, but must offer him our cloak also (Matt. 5:40).

In short what Jesus is saying therefore is that the Christian will never resent or seek retaliation for any insult, however calculated and however deadly; the Christian will never stand upon his legal rights or on any other rights he may believe himself to possess; but will always be of help.

Taking all this into account Jesus never asked us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44) in the same way as we love our nearest and our dearest. To love our enemies in the same way is neither right nor is it possible. In the case of our dearest love is spontaneous, born out of the heart. But in the case of our enemies love is not only something of the heart, but also something of the will. Therefore, it is via the determination of the mind that we foster this unconquerable goodwill even to those who hurt and injure us.

All Christian discipline and punishment in whatever situation must therefore be aimed, not at vengeance but at cure. Punishment will never be merely retributive, it will always be remedial.

It has become clear that what Jesus taught was pure true Christian love. On asking why man should cultivate this unconquerable benevolence and invincible goodwill, the answer is simple. Man should foster this kind of love for only such love makes a man like God. In order to emphasize this Jesus demonstrates the action of God in the world. Where God makes the sun rise on the good and the evil; he sends his rain on the just and the unjust (Matt. 5:45). The love of God is such that He can never take pleasure in the destruction of any of the creatures whom his hands have made.

Thus it is clearly evident that Jesus was truly the Messiah of a love sublime. And that as such we too must foster this love so that we may become the "sons of our Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:48)." After all man was created to be like God, the idea emanating from Genesis 1:26 which states, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness." The great characteristic of God is love to saint and to sinner alike. No matter what men do to him, God seeks nothing but their highest good.

The man who cares most for men is the most perfect man. Placing this whole idea of love and peace in relation to the entire teaching of the bible, is that we realize our manhood only by becoming Godlike. The only way to attain this pure love and peace is to strive to be like

God. And to be like God one must never cease to care for men, no matter what men do.

2.3 CHRISTIAN PACIFISM

Christian pacifism in history plays a minute but distinctive role. It was evident in some measure in the early church and burst in upon Europe during the 17th Century Reformation. It then played a relative quiet part until the great wars of this century when it took a stand and is today surrounded by controversy.

An examination of Christian pacifism, as represented in the teachings of the Brethren and Quakers finds a common source of inspiration but different emphasis on how it is to be worked out. As a result of different perceptions and loyalties Christian Pacifism has ranged from mild non-violence to a fervent and radical repudiation of war.

In order to provide a moral and theological background to the teachings of the Brethren and Quakers, it is useful to select and categorise five specifically Christian viewpoints. These are borrowed from John Yoder's list (1971) of Varieties of Religious Pacifism.

1. **The Pacifism of Absolute Principle**

Killing is prohibited by God. This is a strong biblical view based on the revelation of the Old Testament scripture, viz., the Commandment 'Thou Shalt not kill'. The Pacifist argument is an appeal to absolute principles (Yoder 1971:28-31).

2. **The Pacifism of Proclamation**

This another revelation view closely allied to Absolute principle. It is the view that the person of Jesus Christ proclaims the Kingdom of God. A new righteousness is possible here and now. It is the ethic of my neighbour's good. Because of God's love for him, says the Pacifist, I cannot hate or hurt him (Yoder 1971:59-61).

3. **The Pacifism of Redemptive Personalism**

This too has a strong biblical base; that man is at the root of all evil. Therefore man must change if the world is to be changed. The pacifist therefore as a redemptive personalist will refuse to co-operate in any form of evil, e.g., war (Yoder 1971:91-92).

4. **The Pacifism of the Messianic Community**

This is John Yoder's distinctive viewpoint. Again it is a revelation view, based not only on revealed scripture, or the words of a prophet but

on obedience to the person of Jesus Christ. It takes up the point of redemptive personalism for the whole Christian community, i.e., it is not just a way of costly obedience for the individual but for the community. It reckons seriously with the hopelessness of the world unlike Utopian Purism, and yet affirms a gospel of hope (Yoder 1971:124-125).

5. The Pacifism of the Virtuous Minority

Once the revelation views have been accepted, they lead naturally to the stance of the virtuous minority. This is the unique view of the regenerate, the 'Believer'. For such a believer, the morality of the New Testament and the early Christians is a minority morality. Their conviction of Pacifism is therefore stronger just because it is in the minority (Yoder 1971:76-80).

Brown (1970:18) pin points the heart of Brethren teaching 'as the way of the cross', i.e., what it means to be faithful to Jesus Christ in an age of change. This, however, is not distinctive to the Brethren. It could be said of any of the Christian Churches today with the concept of messianic community and costly obedience to Jesus Christ. The Brethren do have a heritage as a 'Peace Church' but by all accounts their witness today is weak, well watered down from the

radical peace witness of their forebears, the Anabaptists, of the 16th century. Yesterday's radicalism has become today's respectability. Some members today even repudiate Pacifism.

Historically, like the Quakers, the Brethren emerged as one of the groups from the Pietist movement of the reformation at the end of the 17th century. Weary of reforming the church from within, they formed a new brotherhood characterised by Pietism and separation, non-voting and non-resistance, a classical example of the virtuous minority. Much of this stemmed from their biblicism and naive view of the early church as a model alternative society. It was also a political protest in terms of non-conformity to the main line Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches whose leaders had supported the 30 years war (Brown 1970:21).

The slide from radicalism to compromise has steadily gone on. Early this century the Brethren were voting and making peace resolutions (Brown 1970:37). World War 1914-1918 found many Brethren conscientious objectors. Some were non-combatants and others reformed only to wear uniforms. Many others were confused in their loyalties especially when their Church Leadership was divided on the issue. As a result of this a specific conference was called at Goshen, Indiana on January 1918. The Brethrens' position was defined thus:

1. We believe that war or any participation in war is wrong and entirely incompatible with the spirit, example and teachings of Jesus.
2. That we cannot consciously engage in any activity or perform any function contributing to the destruction of human life (Brown 1970:39-40).

This statement of intent, however, was found treasonable by the U.S. government and under pressure the Brethren's statement was withdrawn. A new patriotism found its place in society and soon infiltrated the church. A survey in 1945 found in fact that more than 80% of Brethren called up, served in the armed force. It was evident that the borders of this minority sect's cultural and religious isolation were crumbling under pressure. The Brethren's distinctive traditional stance on Pacifism has been weakened by scepticism. Reinhold Niebuhr (In Brown 1970:52) in the 50's repudiated pacifism as impractical.

He claimed it was naive in the view of human progress, unrealistic in its doctrine that man is basically good, absurd in its expectations and Utopian in its promises. This is a distortion of Christian Pacifism but the worldly compromise is appealing in the same way that situational ethics makes common sense.

However, the Brethren view today is that the critics are asking the wrong questions. It should not be 'Will Pacifism Work?' but what does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? Pacifism to the Brethren is therefore not a matter primarily of reason or common sense but of conviction (Brown 1970:52).

Like the Brethren the society of Friends or Quakers, as they were quickly nick-named because of their religious fervour, emerged from the Pietist Movement of the Reformation. Their founder, George Fox, a young English tradesman was seized by the Reformation assurance that "God's Holy Spirit was given lovingly to every man to answer to his word in the Bible". Here we have the doctrine of the 'Inner Light' (Nelson 1967:15).

Much of Fox's inspiration came from the teaching of Jesus Christ and especially from the Sermon on the Mount. His position on Pacifism is a classical view of redemptive personalism with absolute principles leading inevitably to the sense of the virtuous minority. For Fox certain principles were fundamental and unchanging, e.g., the spirit of Christ and the occasion of all wars are clear contrary, the one to the other. By the occasion of all wars he means the attitudes which dispose men to war. He was uncompromising in his pacifist stance. 'Friends' associated with war in any way were a contradiction in terms "for our weapons are

spiritual not carnal" (Nuttall 1971:52-53).

Fox reminded his bearers that he was trying to remove from men the lusts and strifes out of which wars come. Few Christian leaders have ever supposed that the cure of war is a promise not to fight. He strove in line with the authentic Christian tradition to get at the root of the matter in the human heart. But he recognized that so long as men go about their affairs in the way common to all generations of men wars will arise. Therefore, he would have called men out of the world, to deny all worldly honours and to stand apart from the common ways (Lee undated:159-160).

Many of the original Quakers had been caught up in the civil war and fought in it and that their new found religious fervour and pacifism was in some measure a reaction to their wartime experience. Subsequent Quaker leaders guided by this inner light continued to pursue gentleness and repudiation of war which they saw as an affront to the dignity of man.

Today that conviction remains. John Yoder (1971), Professor at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary feels that the issue of war and killing is more basic to the heart of the Biblical message than many other ethical and doctrinal issues. Yet, he says, in matters of faith and practice on which Christians differ, it is difficult to

find one in which like killing in warfare, Christians sanction a position which we have reason to believe is immoral (Brown 1970:14).

The faithful in all minority groups under discussion have been consistent in their peace missions inspite of powerful opposition to it.

When such minority groups are under pressure and feel that they are suffering as a result of their obedience to God rather than to man, their convictions are unshakeable. At this point Christian Pacifism is not a point of view but a dedicated way of life.

2.4 THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON GANDHI

It has already been noted that Gandhi's first impressions of Christianity were shaped by the Evangelical style of missionaries of a bygone era in India. During his student days in London, Gandhi studied the New Testament and met a number of people among Quakers and others and made a mental distinction between Christianity, Christians and Christ. The impact of the 'Sermon on the Mount' was to remain with him all his life (Chatterjee 1983:41).

Many transformations took place in his life from boyhood. He had traversed "the Sahara of atheism" and emerged thirsting for religion. He met Madam H.P. Blavatsky and Mrs Annie Besant and read their books on Theosophy but was not converted; he preferred Hinduism. A British Bible salesman persuaded Gandhi to read the Old and New Testaments. Leviticus and numbers bored him and he got no further (until as *Mahatma*, he reveled in the Prophets, Psalms and Ecclesiastes). He found the New Testament more interesting, and the 'Sermon on the Mount' went straight to his heart.

...resist not evil, but whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the left also.... Blessed are the meek.... Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you... agree with thine adversary quickly.... Forgive men their trespasses... lay not up for yourself treasure upon earth... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also... (Matt. 5:7).

These words of Christ delighted the *Mahatma* to be. They reminded him of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the sacred book of the Hindus, which, he admitted to his shame, he had not read until his second year as a Law student in London. It produced a tremendous impact which remained throughout his life.

"When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon," he wrote in his weekly magazine, 'Young India', of August 6, 1925.

I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita* and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow (Fisher, 1954:15).

Although Gandhi identified Christian principles with those of the Hindus, he had some theological difficulties. Gandhi explained that the reason why he would not call himself a Christian was that he could not accept what he rightly considered the immoral doctrine of vicarious atonement.

I do not seek redemption from the consequences of sin rather I seek to be redeemed from sin itself, or rather from the very thought of sin (Tyson 1967:363).

This was Jesus' way of salvation, the way of rebirth by water (total purification) and of the spirit (gnosis, or wisdom) as he explained to Nicodemus (John 3:5) To be "saved" a Christian must follow his celibate exemplar in thought, act and life. He must put on the mind of Christ as Paul described it (Tyson 1967:363).

Redemption for a Christian means being "saved" from sin. According to Hinduism, the idea of redemption is the liberation of the soul from the physical being (*Moksa*) Gandhi could not understand the logic that one man spilled his blood to redeem every human-being from his sins. Hinduism maintains that you have to be liberated, that we are all on separate *karmic* tracks. No man can relieve another of his particular *karmic* defilements.

Next comes the problem about the Divine sonship of Jesus Christ. Gandhi understood and revered Christ as

Catholic and could not reconcile the universal meaning he saw in him with the imperialistic faith he met in Christianity. In rejecting the Milieu-Christianity of the West, he rejected as well the Church and doctrines associated with it. Gandhi did not accept Jesus as the only son of God and that only he who believed in him would have everlasting life. Gandhi strongly believed that all of us are the sons of God, all of us carry the cross and all of us are guilty of sin. "If God could have sons, all of us were his sons" (Douglas 1969:56).

Many parallels too can be drawn. Salvation of a Christian begins with Baptism and the salvation of a Hindu begins when a child is taken at the age of 5 years to a *Gurukula*. The *Guru* initiates the child into Hinduism. They learn to be responsible and live rightly.

The difference lies in the concept of salvation. Salvation from the point of view of a Christian is to be saved from his sins so that he could be pardoned by the Father in Heaven. On the Day of Judgement he will not be thrown into a burning fire and brimstone, rather he will have his place in Heaven. Both meant initiation into a stream of thought. Salvation according to Hinduism is to be liberated from the cycle of births and deaths.

We also find a similarity between Christianity and Hinduism in that Jesus was the 'son of God' and Hinduism speaks of one God in Heaven.

One could not be saved by mere conversion. The basis of both or any religion is Faith.

What Gandhi recognized in Christianity was the development of sectarianism. To him Christ's teachings were universal and applicable to all. He perceived Christ as a true *Satyagrahi* who faced all his problems right up to the time of his crucifixion.

Gandhi made a thorough study of the Bible. He believed implicitly in the Bible but remained a Hindu. To him *Krishna* was Jesus and Jesus was *Krishna*.

"Today suppose I was deprived of the Gita and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the 'Sermon on the Mount' I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the *Gita*." The New Testament gave him comfort and boundless joy, as it came after the repulsion that parts of the Old Testament had given him (Gandhi 1955:24).

Jesus expressed, as no other could, the spirit and will of God.

It is in this sense that I see him and recognize Him as the Son of God. And because

the life of Jesus has the significance and the transcendency to which I have alluded, I believe that He belongs not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world, to all races and people. It matters little under what flag, name or doctrine they may work, profess a faith, or worship a God inherited from their ancestors (Gandhi 1955:24).

Gandhi maintained that the understanding of Christianity 'in its power perspective' would not be possible for him unless he knew his own religion thoroughly. His study of the New Testament and of the *Gita* went on simultaneously, not only in London, but in South Africa and throughout his life. In Gandhi's reading of the Bible when he came to the 'Sermon on the Mount', his reaction was that there was no distinction between Hinduism as represented in the *Bhagavad Gita* and 'this revelation of Christ', concluding that 'both must come from the same source.' He found the message of renunciation and living service in both (Chatterjee 1983:50).

For Gandhi as for Bonhoeffer after him, "Jesus preached not a new religion, but a new life. He called men to repentance" (Douglas 1969:56).

To define the Catholic Christ of Gandhi more precisely, one can say that Gandhi committed himself to Christ morally in the 'Sermon on the Mount' and existentially in the Cross. Concerning the 'Sermon on the Mount', which he felt "was delivered not merely to the peaceful

disciples but to a groaning world," he wrote: "The teaching of the 'Sermon on the Mount', echoed something I had learnt in childhood and something which seemed to be part of my being and which I felt was being acted up to in the daily life around meThis teaching was non-retaliation, or non-resistance to evil" (Douglas 1969:56).

The verses,

But I say unto you, that ye resist no evil:
but whosoever shall smite thee on the right
cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any
man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak
too delighted me beyond measure My young
mind tried to unify the teaching of the *Gita*,
The Light of Asia and the Sermon on the Mount.
That renunciation was the highest form of
religion appealed to me greatly (S.W.M.G. Vol
1:101).

Gandhi followed Christ in identifying genuine faith and discipleship with the taking up of one's personal Cross. In a talk given to a group of Christians on Christmas Day, he said: "We dare not think of birth without death on a cross. Living Christ means a Living Cross, without it life is a living death" (Prabhu 1959:16).

Gandhi's faith in the power of non-violence was therefore profoundly Christocentric with reference to:

(1) The Sermon on the Mount

"If then, I had to face only the Sermon on the

Mount and my own interpretation of it, I should not hesitate to say: "Oh yes, I am a Christian" but I know that, at the present moment, if I said any such thing, I would lay myself open to the gravest misinterpretation" (Hingorani 1963:44).

- (2) The Cross, which he confronted once in a crucifix at the Vatican, and later wrote:

What would not I have given to be able to bow my head before the living image at the Vatican of Christ Crucified! It was not without a wrench that I could tear myself away from that scene of living tragedy. I saw there at once that nations, like individuals, could only be made through the agony of the Cross and in no other way. Joy comes not out of affliction of pain on others, but out of pain voluntary borne by oneself (Gandhi 1955:24).

Though Gandhi could not claim to be a Christian in the sectarian sense, the example of Jesus's suffering was at the essence of his faith in non-violence and ruled all his actions. For him the suffering of Jesus defined the Law of Love and Suffering. It was seen as one in a single flame of life. And it is thus, in terms of suffering servanthood, that Jesus defined his own vocation on earth and the vocation of any man who could travel his way. Faith without crucifixion is meaningless. "Christianity" therefore means nothing, to Christ, "Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

To pass over to the standpoint of the Suffering Servant, one must learn to see with new eyes, one must be struck by the lightning shock of the Cross. It can be suggested that the kind of shock necessary to pass over into the suffering love of Jesus is contained in the following report filed from India by the United Press correspondent Webb Miller on May 21, 1930.

Prayers said as white-clad volunteers knelt in the moonlight and an impassioned speech by the poetess-leader, Mrs. Sarojini Naidoo, opened the mass attack of 2500 independence demonstrators... on the Dharasana salt works. The poetess, wearing a rough, home-spun robe and soft slippers, but no stocking, exhorted her followers to the raid.

"India's prestige is in your hands. You must not use any violence under any circumstances. You will be beaten but you must not resist: you must not even raise a hand to ward off blows."

"Although Gandhiji's body is in prison, his soul goes with you," she cried as she sent the volunteers to the attack... They answered favourably huddled together in the dim light of early morning.

The volunteers in columns, with their leaders advanced towards the salt works. Heaps of glistening salt surrounded by the barbed wire entanglements erected by police were the objective of the brief march. The leaders who had ropes attempted to lasso the posts holding up the barbed wire, intending to uproot them. The police ran up and demanded that they disperse. The volunteers refused and walked forward.

Suddenly, the police rushed up to them and assaulted them. The column went down like ten-pins. In two or three minutes the ground was quilted with bodies. The survivors without breaking ranks silently marched on. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They groaned and sucked in their breaths in sympathetic pain at every blow. A second column was found and they too were

struck down. There were no outcrys only groans after they fell. Several times the leaders nearly lost control of the waiting crowd. They pleaded and exhorted the intensely excited men to remember the instructions of Gandhi. A young university student, one of the Gandhiites ran up to the British Official in charge, Superintendent Robinson, his face contorted by rage, exposed his bare breast and shrieked, "Shoot me, shoot me, kill me it's for my country" (Douglas 1969:66).

The Gandhi followers altered their tactics, marched up in groups of twenty-five and sat on the grounds near the salt pans making no effort to draw nearer. They were asked to disperse under the non-assemblage ordinance. The marchers ignored them and refused to even glance up at the *lathis* brandished threateningly above their heads. They were once again beaten. Group after group walked forward and submitted to being beaten without raising an arm to fend off the blows.

Finally the police became enraged by the non-resistance further kicked the seated men in the abdomen and testicles. Eventually, all this brutality subsided. A few native doctors were gathered by the Gandhi men. Scores of the injured had received no treatment for hours and two had died (Douglas 1969:66-69).

In the afternoon the Officer returned and studied all the papers of the inmates of the camp. Some twenty policemen surrounded them. They were going on with their own work. As it was hot they gave their police

brethren a drink of cold fresh water. In the morning the police helped themselves to fruit from their larder which they had stocked for their wounded.

Gandhi was once again asked if he believed in the verse of the 'Sermon on the Mount'. "If any man would take your coat, let him have your cloak as well," he answered.

Jesus put in a picturesque and telling manner the great doctrine of non-violent cooperation.

Your non-cooperation with your opponent is violent when you give a blow for a blow, and is ineffective in the long run. Your non-cooperation is non-violent when you give your opponent all in the place of just what he needs. You have disarmed him once for all by your apparent cooperation, which in effect is complete non-cooperation (Douglas 1969:70).

Gandhi and his followers disarmed India's oppressors by deliberately offering their bodies and their lives to the British thus resisting them in spirit and in truth. The scene at the Dharasana salt works was repeated in hundreds of similar incidents across India as the people became aware of suffering love embodied in non-violence (Douglas 1969:70).

Jesus Christ has been hailed as the Prince of passive resisters; but I submit that in this case, passive resistance must mean *Satyagraha* (Bolton 1934:116).

India's assumption of power came through blood and crucifixion. The logic of non-violence is the logic of crucifixion and leads man of non-violence into the heart of the suffering Christ. We can understand then why Gandhi looked to Christ as the supreme example of non-violence. His death on the Cross was an example to the world, but that there was some mysterious or miraculous virtue in it, his heart could not accept. "Christ was the Prince of *Satyagraha* because his only weapon was the weapon of Love" (Chatterjee 1983:55-56).

Gandhi sometimes gave discourses on the Bible at his prayer meetings. In November 1926 he ran a series of articles in 'Young India' on the 'Sermon on the Mount', concluding 'Thus Jesus has given a definition of perfect *Dharma* in those verses.'

In a significant statement made towards the end of his life he reported to have said the following:

Jesus Christ might be looked upon as belonging to Christians only, but he did not belong to any community, inasmuch as the lessons that Jesus Christ gave belonged to the whole world (Chatterjee 1983:51-52).

This echoes what he had said to Mrs Polak decades earlier, that to be a good Hindu was to be a good Christian, and that there was no need to become a Christian in order to be a believer in the beauty of

the teachings of Jesus or to try to follow his example (Polak 1931:41).

On Christmas morning a group of Catholics, Protestants, and Gandhi's own Hindu entourage sat on the floor round Gandhi's shawled figure. It was his customary prayer hour. The message was:

When peace shone in individual and collective life then only could we say that Christ is illuminating the life of each man. Christianity had not yet been achieved. When we could love each other completely, and harboured no thought of retribution, only then would our life be Christian (Chatterjee 1983:53).

In 1925 he told the missionaries in Calcutta:

I do not experience spiritual consciousness in my life through that Jesus (the historical Jesus). But if by Jesus you mean the eternal Jesus, if by Jesus you understand the religion of universal love that dwells in the heart, then that Jesus lives in my heart - to the same extent that Krishna lives, that Rama lives. If I did not feel the presence of that living God, at the painful sights I see in the world, I would be a raving maniac and my destination would be the Hooghli (river). As, however, that Indweller shines in the heart, I have not been a pessimist now or ever before (Chatterjee 1983:53).

CHAPTER THREE

GANDHI AND SATYAGRAHA

3.1 A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, later known as the *Mahatma* (great soul), was born in 1869, of a merchant caste, in the present state of Gujarat. His grandfather and father had been prime ministers in several princely Kathiawad states. In 1888, he sailed to England to study for a law degree. He was called to the Bar on 10 June 1891 (Nanda 1958:25).

His mission emerged in the twentieth century. It had far-reaching results, and it still has. This is evidenced at the rapid pace at which colonies are being freed.

Gandhi's biographers have concluded that he was a self-made man. He inherited the firm determination of his father and the religious piety of his mother. But surprisingly he learnt of his famous political doctrine from his wife when he tried to bend her to his will.

Gandhi once remarked,

Her determined resistance to my will on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering, my stupidity involved on the other,

ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity in thinking that I was born to rule over her, and in the end she became my teacher in non-violence (Venkatesananda p.14).

On 11 June 1891 he sailed to India. He tried to practice law but had not yet been "awakened". He felt shy and diffident.

Gandhi left India once again in 1893, as a qualified Barrister-at-Law, for South Africa. It was South Africa that shaped the *Mahatma* and it was in South Africa that he discovered *Satyagraha*, soul force and its ability to triumph over world-force. Whether he was pushed out of a railway compartment at Pietermaritzburg or knocked unconscious by a furious *Pathan* (a North-West Frontier Indian), or almost lynched by a mob... Gandhi did not lose his balance of mind. In a Christ-like spirit he refused to seek redress for personal grievances in a Court of law, refused to have the aggressors prosecuted, but forgave them. Hatred cannot be conquered by hatred, but only by love. The law of love had to be applied at personal, social, religious and political levels (Venkatesananda p.15).

3.2 SOURCES

Gandhi derived his Doctrine of *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* from many sources. It can be traced essentially to the *Gita* ideal of *Karmayogin* and also to Jesus's 'Sermon

on the Mount', and recently to the writings of Ruskin and more especially Tolstoy. But his practical application of it in the social and political spheres were entirely his own (Bishop 1981:39).

3.2.1 The Influence of the *Bhagavad Gita* on Gandhi

For Gandhi, the *Gita* was the most revered scripture. He writes,

The impression has ever since been growing on me with the result that I regard it today as the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth (Karna 1981:43).

For Gandhi, the *Gita* was a book of spiritual reference and he derived the following conclusions: God realisation is possible only through righteous action or non-violence. The devotion to God must accompany living service to humanity. The *Gita* inspires us to do our duties neglecting the suffering and torture that we receive in course of action. Renunciation of reward does not mean that we should ignore the result or remain ignorant of it. Everyone must know the effects of his action, his capacity for doing a particular work and the means that he employs (Karna 1981:44). The *Gita* teaches *Ahimsa* (non-violence). This was discussed in Chapter 2.

3.2.2 The Influence of Christianity on *Mahatma* Gandhi

Gandhi read the Bible, visited churches and participated in their religious performances. His deep interest and passionate devotion to Christianity made him realise its truths.

If any religion other than Hinduism had touched and pervaded the very being of *Mahatma* Gandhi, it was Christianity. 'The Sermon on the Mount' especially created an indellible impression on his mind.

The life and character of Gandhi is similar to that of Jesus Christ. The cross is the symbol of sacrifice and *Satyagraha* is the crown of it. *Satyagraha* is the working principle in spirit. *Satyagraha* is the practical application of the teaching of Christ. When a person is ready to dedicate his life in order to realize fuller and eternal life in the pursuit of eternal values, he follows the precepts of Christ. Both Gandhi and Christ did not only concern themselves with the individual's inward perfection and discipline, they developed social morality, toned up the political atmosphere and spiritualised the laws of the state. Gandhi was not content with the inward morality of men, he engaged his life in bringing out a new social order of brotherhood, love, charity, justice and equality (Karna 1981:45-46). This was discussed in Chapter 2.4.

3.2.3 *Mahatma Gandhi's Indebtedness to Tolstoy*

Gandhi expressed himself as being overwhelmed upon regarding Leo Tolstoy's 'The Kingdom of God Is Within You' and he called himself Tolstoy's humble follower. "Its reading cured me of my scepticism and made me a first believer in *ahimsa*" (Karna 1981:47).

In Tolstoy the spirit of non-violence found another logical expression for he suffered with the suffering poor. "A good deed," he said, "does not consist merely of feeding the hungry with bread, but by loving both the hungry and the satisfied." For it is more important to love than to feed, because one may feed and not love (Nelson 1967:12).

Tolstoy and Gandhi were seekers of Truth. They denounced modern civilization based on force and exploitation. Gandhi excelled Tolstoy in working out the non-violent technique and in devising ways to remove social evils.

3.2.4 *Ruskin's Influence on Gandhi*

The writings of Ruskin especially his book 'Unto the Last' influenced Gandhi so much that he tried to reform his life based on the teachings contained in it. The book brought about an instantaneous transformation in

Gandhi's life. Ruskin gave an organic unity to the long maturing ideals existing in Gandhi's mind.

The teachings of 'Unto the Last' is as follows:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, in as much as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of a labourer, i.e., the life of a tiller of the soil and the handicrafts man is the life worth living.

Ruskin's writings made Gandhi realize the dignity of labour and the ideal that action for the good of all is a most virtuous principle (Karna 1981:48).

We observe that the different scriptures of the major religions of the world influenced Gandhi and moulded his course of conduct. He says,

My young mind tried to unify the teachings of the *Gita*, the Light of Asia and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly (Bishop 1981:39).

The unprecedented and epoch-making technique called *Satyagraha* with which Gandhi won independence for India and undying fame for himself was developed by him in South Africa. It called for winning an opponent over, not vanquishing him. It demanded resistance to injustice, but it forbade violence in thought, word and deed. Gandhi defined the object of *Satyagraha* as always

to convert the opponent by love, if necessary by 'suffering at his hands'. *Ahimsa* (non-violence or love) is the 'other side' of truth. One without the other does not exist (Venkatesananda p.16).

3.3 SATYA (TRUTH)

The word *Satya* (Truth) is derived from *Sat*, which means 'being'. Nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why *Sat* or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth, it will be realized that '*Sat*' or '*Satya*' is the only correct and fully significant name for God (Bodurant 1988:17).

Devotion to Truth is the sole justification for our existence. All our activities should be centred in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. Without Truth it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life (Gandhi 1955:99).

Gandhi declared that morality is the basis of things and Truth is the substance of all morality. *Satya* is the essence of *dharma* (Iyer 1973:150). You feel vitality in you when you have got truth in you.... It is a permanent thing of which you cannot be robbed. You may be sent to the gallows or put to torture; but if you have truth in you, you will experience an inner

joy. It is the ability to determine truth for himself that distinguishes man from the brute. To find truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, to become perfect (Iyer 1973:152).

From beginning to end, *Satya* (Truth) was sacred to Gandhi - the supreme value in ethics, politics and religion, the ultimate source of authority and of appeal. He regarded it as a 'philosopher's stone', the sole talisman available to mortal man. *Satya* has a variety of connotations, of which the most important are: real, sincere, existent, pure, good, effectual, valid. The only means to the realization of truth is *Ahimsa* (S.W.M.G. Vol. 6:123).

3.3.1 *Ahimsa*

It is impossible for us to realize perfect Truth so long as we are imprisoned in this mortal frame. We can only visualize it in our imagination. We cannot, through the instrumentality of this ephemeral body, see Truth which is eternal. This is why in the last resort we must depend on faith. It appears that the impossibility of full realization of Truth in this mortal body led some ancient seeker after Truth to the appreciation of *Ahimsa*. The seeker realized that he who went on destroying others did not make headway while the man who suffered under those who created

difficulties marched ahead and at times even took the others with them. The first act of destruction taught him that the Truth which was the object of his quest was not outside himself but within. Hence the more he took to violence, the more he receded from Truth (Gandhi 1955:102).

Gandhi's programme of non-violent resistance is unprecedented in the history of mankind. The principle itself, 'resist not evil and love your enemies', is nothing new. It is at least as ancient as the teaching of the Jesus of Nazareth in the 'Sermon on the Mount', but for Gandhi it was something that had never been done before. Gandhi's religion, as embodied in his life of non-violence is the religion of Brotherhood, and that Brotherhood extends to the lowest and poorest creation (including the dumb brute and the meanest insect). Non-violence is a vision and a way of life. Its follower should have a moral and religious life. By a moral life is meant a life of concern for all (not, excluding duties towards the self) and by a religious life is meant a living faith in God (Karna 1981:111). A non-violent person may be prepared to court death smilingly if occasions so warrant him (Bose 1948:16). Non-violence purifies its votary. There were two essential elements in *Ahimsa* as Gandhi saw it. *Ahimsa* is intended and expected to convert rather than to coerce the wrong doer, however slightly or slowly, and it is also capable of producing in its user a "second

birth or conversion". Another important ingredient in *Ahimsa*, perhaps the crucial one, is the notion of "self-suffering", a refusal to submit to injustice, and the acceptance of personal discomfort and tirbulations. This idea of *Ahimsa* is not the same as withholding of just claims but it includes the idea of helping the wrong-doer by non-violent resistance to his wrong doing (Iyer 1973:183).

Mahatma Gandhi says:

Non-violence requires mental preparedness and discipline for it. Non-violence of the mere body without the co-operation of the mind is non-violence of the weak or the cowardly and has therefore no potency (Karna 1981:116).

Gandhi was the outstanding person in modern times who worked out the theory and applied it to mass movements in organized co-operate fashion and proved the validity of this by successful campaigns in numerous difficult situations.

3.3.2 *Satya And Ahimsa*

In his own moral and political quest, Gandhi found that *Satya* led him to *Ahimsa* and he also came to believe that they are like two sides of the same coin as the universe is governed by the Law of Truth or Love. "If we have truth in us, it is bound to have its effect,

and truth in love, but without love there can be no truth" (Iyer 1973:226).

Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which is the reverse? Nevertheless, *Ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. If we take care of the means we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When this point is grasped, final victory is beyond question (Bose 1948:14).

To see the universal all pervading spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self purification. God can never be realized by one who is not pure at heart (Bose 1948:18).

Satyagraha is a word coined during the movement of Indian resistance in South Africa to the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance introduced into the Transvaal Legislative Council in 1906. Gandhi explained that he first called the movement "passive resistance" but as the struggle continued he became aware that "some new principle had come into being". He then announced through the pages of his newspaper, 'Indian Opinion', that a prize would be given for the best name invented to designate the movement. One competitor suggested the

word '*Sadagraha*', meaning 'firmness in a good cause.' This word did not connote what Gandhi had wished. Gandhi corrected it to '*Satyagraha*'. Truth (*Satya*) implies love and firmness (*Agraha*) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for meaning force. Gandhi thus began to call the Indian movement '*Satyagraha*', that is to say, the force which is born of Truth and love or non-violence and gave up the use of the phrase 'passive resistance' (Gandhi 1928:109).

Although Gandhi sometimes used *Satyagraha* and passive resistance as synonyms in *Hind Swaraj* and elsewhere, he sharpened the distinction between them in *Satyagraha* in South Africa. There are five differences between passive resistance and *Satyagraha*.

1. Firstly, if we continue to believe ourselves, and let others believe that we are weak and helpless and therefore offer passive resistance, our resistance will never make us strong and we would soon give it up. On the other hand, if we offer *Satyagraha* believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences follow. Fostering the idea of strength we grow stronger and stronger. With the increase in our strength, our *Satyagraha* too becomes more effective and we would never be casting about an opportunity to give it up.

2. Secondly, while there is no scope for love in passive resistance, there is not only no place for hatred in *Satyagraha*, but it is a position breach of its ruling principle.
3. Thirdly, while in passive resistance there is no scope for the use of arms, the two may be used side by side or the former may be looked upon as a preparation for the latter. In *Satyagraha*, physical force is forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances. Brute force is a negation of *Satyagraha* but not necessarily of Passive Resistance.
4. Fourthly, *Satyagraha* may be offered to one's nearest and dearest, whereas passive resistance cannot, unless they have ceased to be dear to us.
5. Fifthly, in passive resistance, there is always present an idea of harassing the other party while in *Satyagraha* there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent (Iyer 1973:273).

In short *Satyagraha*, unlike passive resistance, "postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person." Gandhi did not wish to suggest that these differences are to be seen in every movement which passes by the name passive resistance. He regarded Jesus Christ as the "Prince of Passive

Resistors", as a true *Satyagrahi*. Gandhi declared that *Satyagraha* is a law that all men must accept - acceptance involving no more than a moral preference for non-violence. Gandhi called *Satyagraha* a universal action. At the outset there can be no *Satyagraha* in a just cause, as it is by definition, a commitment to upholding truth. *Satyagraha* could only be legitimate in an unjust cause and further those espousing the cause will be determined and capable of fighting and suffering to the end.

Satyagraha cannot be resorted to for personal gain but only for the good of others. Here we see the synthesis between *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* for, *Satyagraha* like *Ahimsa* by definition, excludes the use of violence in any shape and form, whether in thought, speech and deed. "*Satyagraha* demands absolute non-violence" (Iyer 1973:296).

3.4 THE PHILOSOPHY OF *SATYAGRAHA*

Satyagraha means literally 'clinging to truth', and as Truth for Gandhi was God, *Satyagraha* in the general sense of the word means the way of life of one who holds steadfastly to God and dedicates his life to Him. The true *Satyagrahi* is accordingly a man of God.

Such an individual in this world finds himself up against evil, which he cannot but resist. He comes across injustice, cruelty, exploitation and oppression in human relationships and public affairs. These he has to oppose with all the resources at his command. In his crusade his reliance is on Truth or God; and since the greatest Truth is the unity of all life, Truth can be attained only by loving service of all, i.e., by non-violence. The weapon of the *Satyagrahi* is therefore non-violence. *Satyagraha*, in the narrower sense in which it is ordinarily understood, accordingly means resisting evil through soul-force or non-violence.

For the required soul-force the individual has to discipline himself in self-control, simplicity of life, suffering without fear or hatred, recognition of the unity of all living beings, and whole-hearted and disinterested service of one's neighbours. The vows which Gandhi elaborated for members of his *Satyagraha Ashram* at Sabarmati are of interest from this point of view. They were truth, non-violence, *brahmacharya*, fearlessness, control of the palate, non-possession, non-stealing, bread labour, equality of religions, anti-untouchability and *swadeshi* (love of one's country) (Gandhi 1961:iii).

Satyagraha, in the narrower sense, takes many forms. Primarily, it is a case of appealing to the reason and conscience of the opponent by inviting suffering on

oneself. The motive is to convert the opponent and make him one's willing ally and friend. It is based on the idea that the moral appeal to the heart and conscience is, in the case of human beings, more effective than appeal based on threat of bodily pain or violence. Violence according to Gandhi, does not ever overcome evil; it suppresses it temporarily to rise later with redoubled vigour. Non-violence on the other hand puts an end to evil, for it converts the evil-doer (Venkatarangaiya 1966:10:).

The nonviolence which thus overcomes evil is not the passive resistance of the weak. The non-violence of a *Satyagrahi* is unflinching. It is the non-violence of the brave.

It will lead the *Satyagrahi* to die with a smile on his lips and with no trace of hatred in his heart. It presupposes unswerving devotion to duty (Kumarappa 1961:iv).

Satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation. When it does, it is not non-cooperation with the evil doer but with his evil deed. This is an important distinction. The *Satyagrahi* co-operates with the evil-doer in what is good, for he has no hatred for him. On the contrary, he has nothing but friendship for him. Through cooperating with him in what is not evil, the *Satyagrahi* wins him over from evil (Karna 1981:124).

Satyagraha may at times take the form of fasting. The fast should be promoted by the highest devotion to duty and love for the opponent. It should aim at purifying oneself. It should seek to influence the opponent by converting him not by coercing him to do something against his conviction. Fasting according to Gandhi, should be undertaken only if one is thoroughly convinced of the rightness of one's stand, when all other methods have failed (Kumarappa 1961:iv).

Satyagraha in the political sphere assumes the form of Civil Disobedience. It is mass resistance and opposition, on a non-violent basis, against the evil government when negotiations and constitutional methods have failed. It is called 'Civil' because it is non-violent resistance by people who are ordinary law abiding citizens and also because the laws they decide to disobey are not moral laws, but are harmful to the people.

Complete Civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it (Karna 1981:125).

Gandhi organised such *Satyagraha* for the first time in South Africa against humiliating laws enforced by the South African Government on Indians in this country. He successfully organized peasant *Satyagraha* in Champaran, Kheda and Bardoli in India to remove specific local grievances (Gandhi 1961:iv).

Satyagraha can also be on a nationwide scale to resist an entire government when that government is corrupt and demoralizes the people. It may then take the form of non-cooperation with the government as it did in Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movements of 1920-22, 1930-34 and 1940-44 in India. Non-cooperation may express itself in giving up titles and honours bestowed by the government, resignation from Government service, withdrawal from the police and military, non-payment of taxes, boycott of courts, schools and legislatures, and running parallel institutions to perform these functions. Gandhi, however, was very cautious in regard to some of these forms of non-cooperation, as they were likely to bring down on the people the wrath of an indignant Government, and he did not want the people to suffer more than was necessary from Government repression (Karna 1981:126).

Such Civil Disobedience demands on the part of the people disciplined group action, infinite capacity for suffering without retaliation, and strict obedience to leaders. Gandhi therefore emphasized working of his constructive programme as essential for *Satyagraha*, and not only for this reason, but also because discipline and group action have to be built steadily among the people. They have to be taught for example, cooperation, communal unity, fearlessness, consideration for the social good, self help and resourcefulness and to have physical, mental and moral

strength. In this respect *Satyagraha* or non-violent resistance, as conceived by Gandhi has an important lesson for Pacifists and war resisters of the West.

Western Pacifists proved ineffective because they thought that war could be resisted by mere propaganda, conscientious objection and organizations for settling disputes. Gandhi showed that non-violence to be effective requires constructive effort in every sphere of life - individual, social, economic and political. The practice of non-violence in the political field is not a mere matter of preaching or establishing courts or Leagues of Nations, but involves building up brick by brick, with patience and industry, a new non-violent social and economic order. It depends ultimately on banishing violence from the heart of the individual and making of him a transformed disciplined person (Kumarappa 1961:v).

3.4.1 The Code for Volunteers

The following points were laid down by Gandhi as a code for Volunteers in the 1930 Movement:

1. Harbour no anger but suffer the anger of the opponent. Refuse to return the assaults of the opponent.
2. Do not submit to any order given in anger, even though severe punishment is threatened for disobeying.
3. Refrain from insults and swearing.

4. Protect opponents from insult and attack even at the risk of life.
5. Do not resist arrest nor the attachment of property, unless holding property as a trustee.
6. Refuse to surrender any property held in trust at the risk of life.
7. If taken prisoner, behave in an exemplary manner.
8. As a member of a *Satyagraha* unit, obey the orders of *Satyagraha* leaders, and resign from the unit in the event of serious disagreement.
9. Do not expect guarantees for maintenance of dependents (Bondurant 1988:39).

3.5 SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA

If a single incident had a salutary effect on an individual to change the course of his life, an incident at Pietermaritzburg station had a far-reaching effect in the life of Gandhi. On his journey to Pretoria, by train from Durban to Charlestown, a white passenger objected to Gandhi's presence in a first-class carriage and he was forcibly removed from the train and, together with his luggage, thrown on the platform of Pietermaritzburg. He was exposed to insult and to an exceptionally cold night. There was an almost similar embarrassment on the next stage, a coach journey. Gandhi was refused a first-class rail ticket between Johannesburg and Pretoria. Using his legal knowledge checked the rail regulations applied to Indians, and thus completed the journey first-class (Copley 1987:21). The treatment meted out to Gandhi was

the fate of every Indian living in South Africa. Gandhi spent the entire night in anguish considering whether to proceed to Pretoria for the entrusted work or to return to India. Gandhi took a momentous decision to stay and suffer all the hardships and fight against the deep-rooted disease of racial discrimination in South Africa. After his arrival in Pretoria he addressed a gathering of Indians and reminded them of the disabilities they suffered and urged them to form an association to protect their interests. He offered his services which the Transvaal Indians accepted. His active non-violence began from that date (Jones 1948:110).

It was indeed the White settlers in South Africa who needed labour to develop agriculture and exploit the mineral resources of the country (Pyarelal 1958:15). They found the local African population unreliable to work on farms. The Government of Natal therefore entered into contract with the Government of India for exporting Indian labour to South Africa. The first batch of Indian labourers landed in Natal on 16 November 1860. Under Law 14 of 1859 Indian immigrants could return to India after the expiry of the contract or remain in South Africa. They could renew their contract for a further period of five years or settle as free citizens on land allotted to them by the Government. This was equivalent to the cost of their passage. Many Indians opted for the free grants of

lands and settled in the territory. The Government of Natal had also agreed that after the period of indenture, the Indian labourers would never be subjected to legislative and administrative discrimination.

The contribution of the Indian labour to the development of Natal has been substantiated by Sir J. Halett, an ex-prime minister of Natal, who said in 1903:

The condition of the colony (of Natal) before the importation of Indian Labour was one of gloom, it was one that then and there threatened to extinguish the vitality of the country and it was only by the Government assisting the importation of labour that the country at once began to revive (Gheevala 1970:ix-x).

Europeans soon found Indians formidable rivals both in agriculture and trade. This resulted in the introduction of new legislations such as the disfranchising bill and the bill to impose tax on the indentured Indians.

Gandhi came to South Africa as a legal adviser to an Indian firm on a temporary assignment but he stayed in the country for over two decades. Gandhi had no idea of the previous history of the Indian emigrants. Political events determined the course of Gandhi's work in South Africa. The bill denying Indians a Franchise in the Natal Legislative Assembly was about to go to its

second reading when Gandhi took his decision to campaign for the rights of Indians. The struggle necessarily meant a great deal of suffering and hardship on the part of Indians and ultimately led to the launching of *Satyagraha* (Gandhi 1928:43-44).

Early after his arrival in South Africa Gandhi underwent humiliation that profoundly shaped his attitude to living there. He retained one item of Indian dress by wearing a turban, a common costume among Indians at that time. On one occasion in court the judge asked him to remove his turban and abide by the conventions of dress observed by the European lawyers. Gandhi at first wanted to resist this instruction but he decided to compromise and abide by the judge's request. This it seemed to him, exemplified the value of compromise (Bishop 1981:45).

All my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of *Satyagraha* (S.W.M.G Vol. 1:219).

3.5.1 The Advent of *Satyagraha*

Racial discrimination was practised against Indians - in trains, buses, schools and hotels throughout South Africa. The Indians were not allowed to move from one province to another without a permit. Till 1894 the Indians in Natal were enjoying the Franchise along with

the Europeans. There were 250 Indians against 10 000 Europeans in Natal who enjoyed the right to vote.

Having completed his work in Pretoria, Gandhi returned to Durban to prepare for his departure to India. A farewell party in his honour was held in Sydenham, Durban. While paging through a newspaper at the party, he saw a paragraph under the heading "Indian Franchise". It referred to a Bill before the House of Legislature seeking to deprive Indians of their franchise. Gandhi immediately understood the ominous implications of the Bill and advised the people to resist every effort to disfranchise them. The gathering urged Gandhi to stay and lead the agitation. Gandhi decided to stay in South africa and to oppose and fight the Bill (Gheevala 1970:ix).

The same night Gandhi drew a petition to be presented to the Legislative Council. The petition dated 28 June 1894 was the first ever sent by the Indians to South African Legislature. The work of seeking redress from the anti-Indian legislations in South Africa prolonged the stay of Gandhi in South Africa for over 21 years till 1914 (Virasai 1968:67-70).

Gandhi felt that in the face of continued anti-Indian feeling and legislation, the only way his people could achieve anything was by forming a permanent political body to carry out sustained protest. As a result the

Natal Indian Congress was formed on May 22, 1894 with Gandhi as its first Secretary. Gandhi then settled in Natal (Copley 1987:22).

The Government of Natal then imposed a Residential Tax of £25 on Indians who chose to remain as free labourers in the Colony on the expiry of their indentures. Gandhi organised protest against this tax which was then reduced to £3. The labourer, his wife and all children over the age of 13 had to pay £4 each, every year, just for the right to live in Natal. Many more laws were introduced in Natal Legislature to restrict the rights of Indians to enter trade and settle in Natal. Act 1 of 1897 prohibited immigration into Natal except on certain conditions. All new immigrants had to pass a prescribed dictation test in a European language. Gandhi carried out a vigorous campaign against these Bills (Gheevala 1970:xii).

In June 1903 Gandhi initiated the publication of 'Indian Opinion' for the cause of the Indian community of South Africa. New anti-Indian Laws had been passed or enforced in the colonies of South Africa. Gandhi wrote several articles in 'Indian Opinion' and criticized the Trade Licensing Policy of the South African Colonies.

The Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance (Transvaal) of 1906 proposed further humiliations and restrictions for the

Indian community. Worse still was the surrender and cancellation of all existing permits and registration certificates and fingerprints were taken even from women and children over eight years, as if they had been condemned prisoners (Gandhi 1928:99).

At a mass meeting held at the Empire Theatre in Johannesburg on 11 September 1906, Gandhi explained the Ordinance and by the famous Fourth Resolution, the Indians resolved not to submit to the Ordinance and to suffer all the penalties accruing to such non-submission. The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act was passed by the legislation in March 1907 (Mehta 1976:119-120).

Gandhi wrote to Shri Rashbehari Ghosh, the President of the Indian National Congress about the passive resistance.

We have resolved to suffer all the consequences of a breach of the Law. Many of us have already lost heavily, many more stand to lose everything they possess. Several European wholesale houses have even gone so far as to stop credit unless Indian merchants can produce registration certificates issued under the new law. Many Indians preferred being employed as servants and labourers rather than register themselves (Indian Opinion 9-11-1907).

The Asiatic Registration Act was passed on July 31, 1907. Gandhi led his country men in refusing to register. He was sentenced to two month's imprisonment.

An offer by one of General Smuts' emissary was made to Gandhi in jail with an offer to repeal the act if Indians registered voluntarily. Gandhi accepted this proposal and the Indians were released (Fisher 1954:36).

Gandhi returned to Johannesburg and encountered fierce opposition from Indians who preferred the act revoked first, before the registration. They feared that General Smuts would not adhere. "A *Satyagrahi*," Gandhi replied, "bids good-bye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of his opponent." Gandhi was threatened by a Pathan, Mr Alam, that if he or any one was the first to register he would be killed. The six foot tall Pathan kept to his word. As Gandhi proceeded to the registration office he advanced towards him and struck him heavily on the head. Mr Alam with other Pathans were arrested but Gandhi obtained their release. Gandhi did not want to prosecute them (Fisher 1954:37).

Out of more than 10 000 Transvaal Indians not more than 500 registered themselves under the Black Act. Gandhi courted three months imprisonment for disobeying the order to leave the Colony within the time-limit. Through the mediation of Mr Albert Cartwright, editor of Transvaal Leader, Gandhi met General Smuts. Gandhi agreed for voluntary registration in return for the repeal of the Black Act of 1907. Almost all the Indians in Transvaal registered voluntarily. However, instead

of repealing the Black Act General Smuts introduced a new Bill validating the voluntary registrations. The petition submitted on behalf of Indians to the Parliament declared that if Act 11, 1907, was not repealed by 10 August 1908, the Indians would burn their certificates of registration and suffer the consequences. On 10 August 1908 two hours after the expiry date, thousands of certificates were collected and thrown publicly into the fire (Mehta 1976:121).

Gandhi saw no alternative than to revive the *Satyagraha* for securing the repeal of the Act and the theoretical right of educated Indians to enter the Colony. The mass struggle continued in all its aspects: picketing, trading without licences, refusal to produce registration certificates or giving thumb impressions and crossing the Natal border into forbidden Transvaal. By June 1909 nearly 3000 Indians were sentenced to imprisonment.

On 25 February 1910 Gokhale moved a Resolution in the imperial Legislative Council that the recruitment of indentured labour of Indians for Natal should be stopped. The resolution was passed unanimously. The Government of India announced its decision to prohibit emigration of indentured Indians to Natal from 1 July 1911. In response to the pressing invitation from Gandhi, Gokhale landed at Cape Town on 22 October 1912 to study the problems of Indians in South Africa

personally (Mehta 1976:125-126).

There was further anti-Indian legislation in South Africa. The Union Immigrants Act of 1913 prohibited the free movement of Indians from one province to another within the Union. The Supreme Court decision regarding the Searle decision, which refused to recognize Indian marriages performed in accordance with non-Christian rites or not registered before a marriage officer, was a challenge to the honour of Indian womanhood.

Gandhi planned his campaign. As a first move, a group of Natal "sisters" courted arrest by entering the Transvaal without permission and simultaneously a group of Transvaal sisters would enter Natal. The Natal sisters were imprisoned. Indignation flared and brought new recruits. The Transvaal sisters were not arrested. Obeying previous instructions they proceeded to the Newcastle, Natal coal mines and urged the Indian miners to go on strike. The Government arrested the women, giving each a three month's jail sentence. Believing that the strike would last a long time, Gandhi advised the strikers to leave their compounds, taking blankets and some clothing with them and pitch camp in the open. Gandhi finally decided to march them from Natal into Transvaal and see them safely deposited in jail. He warned the resisters of impending hardship and pleaded with the faint-hearted to go home.

On the morning of November 6, 1913 Gandhi counted his forces, offered prayers and marched in the name of God. Some of the women carried babies on their backs and hips. Most of the people were barefoot but all loyal to the little peace general whose battle orders were: "Do not resist arrest; submit to the police flogging; conduct yourself morally and hygienically" (Fischer 1954:45).

On the first night Gandhi was arrested but released on bail because he was responsible for the marchers. He was further arrested on the second night and taken to court and freed and the fourth night he was arrested and held. The trek to Tolstoy farm continued without him.

The next morning at Balfour, the marchers were herded into waiting trains and transported back to the mines in Natal where they were forced into wire enclosed stockades. More indentured labourers left their work in sympathy with the miners. Women participated and courted imprisonment.

The spontaneous and extensive labour strike which imperilled the working of the mines, and factories proved decisive and the union Government was compelled to relent. The news was telegraphed to India which roared with protest. Gandhi and his associates were released (Gheevala 1970:xiv).

The Solomon Commission was appointed to enquire into the grievances of the Indians and on the recommendations of the report, the Indian Relief Act was enacted which conceded all the demands of the Indians. Gandhi decided to return to India.

Gandhi's achievements in South Africa have been aptly referred to by General Smuts.

It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect. His activities were very trying to me. For him everything went according to plan. For me the defender of law and order, there was the usual trying situation, the odium of carrying out a law which had not strong public support and finally the discomfiture, when the law had to be repealed. For him it was a successful coup (Gheevala 1970:xv).

3.6 CONCLUSION

When we look into the splendid mosaic of Gandhi's thoughts and deeds there is one thing which stands out as unique and puts him in the forefront of the evolution of man in our time. This was a unique discovery he made in a unique laboratory. The laboratory was South Africa and the discovery was *Satyagraha*. It was history which threw Gandhi into the South African laboratory. The situation in South Africa was unprecedented in history. Slavery was prevalent the world over but this was different because it was grounded in a new metaphysics and ethics supported by modern science. Every thought and action was drawn upon

to perpetuate the subjection of the many who were weak to the few that were strong. Any rebellion was made totally impossible. The very thought of rebellion was made treason.

The White minority Government was armed not only with weapons but with perverted laws and philosophy. The slavery itself was held up as part of God's plan for man and the teachings of the New Testament were blackened and poisoned in support of it. The Bible had taught through twenty centuries that God made man in His image, but the White oppressors in South Africa thought that this applied only to the White man and not the Coloured man. The many who were weak had no arms, no organization, no education, no power of any kind. They could work and live only within the unbreakable boundaries of their slavery. Once they accepted their slavery, they were fed, clothed and given shelter, but without any human rights whatsoever, not even for a husband to live with his wife, nor a mother with her children. Any attempt to break away was met with torture and death. It was a terrible prison house within the heart of civilization. History cast Gandhi in such a prison house.

Gandhi was young and inexperienced. He could have turned tail and ran away from this terror. It was at this point that Gandhi revealed the first glimmer of his greatness. He stood firm and looked at the terror

with unflinching eyes. Many ingredients went into the experiment of Gandhi in South Africa. The first was Gandhi's unalterable belief in God. To Gandhi God was truth, justice and love.

Truth and justice were concepts, but love or hate furnished the motivation for action. Hate was acting in South Africa. Could love be made to act effectively in the same area of human life? Gandhi's inner mind said, yes, it can because it must. Otherwise, God would be defeated, i.e., truth and justice would be defeated. That was impossible. This was the logic of Gandhi.

He realised at once that it was his duty to disobey iniquitous laws and make all his people disobey it. He understood why the White minority Government used cruel violence to suppress Coloured people. It was only under suppression that the Coloured people, including Indians, would give un murmuring obedience! The whole aim was to secure obedience through terror. Gandhi's answer was to create fearlessness and inaugurate disobedience. Disobedience became the only duty. Gandhi realised that violence weakened disobedience and still left the initiative in the hands of the tyrant who was the master of the art of violence. Disobedience became more effective when it was non-violent.

At the same time that Gandhi made ready for a protest march, European railway workers went on strike through-

out South Africa threatening the survival of Botha's Government. Gandhi immediately called off his protest march on the ground that a *Satyagrahi* did not take advantage of his adversarie's weakness. Gandhi reports:

One of the secretaries of General Smuts jocularly said: "I do not like your people, and do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay our hands upon you? I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then 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" (Mehta 1976:129).

Satyagraha startled the Whites in South Africa and flashed the message of a new revolution across the world. Thousands of Indians were thrown into prisons, properties were confiscated, crowds were beaten up. Disobedience continued nevertheless. It was a long drawn out struggle which ended in the Smuts-Gandhi agreement.

Deep within Gandhi there stirred the first awareness of a great mission and we witness the rebirth of the man Gandhi into Gandhi the *Mahatma*. *Mahatma* literally means the great soul. This was an apt title which Dr Anni Besant and poet Rabindranath Tagore combined to confer on the transformed man from South Africa (Collins and Lapierre 1982:56).

3.7 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN INDIA

Gandhi rose dramatically to prominence in Indian politics in the aftermath of the 1914-18 War because his idiosyncratic ideology and technique enabled him to perform a crucial all-India function for his compatriots. In 1915 he returned from South Africa, where for two decades he championed the immigrant Indian community in the face of racial discrimination. In the process he became a religious thinker and self taught political leader, who had experties in varieties of civil resistance. At this stage he was scarcely known and viewed with suspicion by many of the Western educated who participated in all Indian politics. His attitude and style presented a formidable challenge to them.

3.7.1 Gandhi in London

Gandhi had arrived in London from South Africa in August 1914, after the outbreak of the First World War. Gandhi felt that the Indians ought to assist Britain. He volunteered to raise an ambulance corps headed by himself. Gandhi's friends protested asking how Gandhi, a man of non-violence, could participate in war? Gandhi answered in effect:

I accept the benefits and protection of the British Empire; I have not tried to destroy it; why should I allow it to be destroyed?" (Fischer 1989:151).

Gandhi contracted pleurisy which was aggravated by fasting and was therefore advised to return to India. He arrived in Bombay with Kasturbai on 9 January 1915. He was forty-five years old (Fischer 1989:158).

3.7.2 Gandhi Back Home in India

Accepting an offer of financial help from some textile merchants in Gujerat, Gandhi founded the *Satyagraha Ashram* near Ahmedabad on the west bank of the Sabarmati River on 25 May 1915. Ahmedabad, one of the most ancient and beautiful cities was the centre of India's textile industry - a place of belching smoke-stacks (Mehta 1976:131).

Gandhi continued to experiment with the ideas he learned in South Africa. He carried out the daily regimen perfected at Phoenix and Tolstoy farms and requested his supporters to accept untouchables as equals. Gandhi adopted a family of untouchables. Some people who had previously welcomed the establishment of the *Ashram* became doubtful about the desirability of Gandhi's influence and presence. The financial sponsors withdrew their support (Bishop 1981:58).

Gandhi decided to move the *Ashram* to a section where only untouchables lived but was pleased when a sponsor accepted that the Gandhian *Ashram* was a place where untouchables would live, draw water from the same wells and eat food from a common kitchen (S.W.M.G Vol. 2:593).

3.8 CHAMPARAN

Between 1917 and 1918 Gandhi entered the political arena and became involved in three local disputes. Firstly, with peasants against landlords in Champaran, Bihar. Secondly, with farmers against revenue officials in Kaira or Kheda, Gujarat, and thirdly with mill workers against their employers in Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujarat. In each case Gandhi chose to deploy his technique of *Satyagraha* and by so doing made his debut as an influential figure on the Indian political stage.

Approximately two years after Gandhi's return to India he attended a session of the Indian National Congress, in Lucknow. The agenda included the agrarian discontent in Champaran. Gandhi did not participate in the debate because he knew little about Champaran. Later, during the proceeding, Gandhi was approached by Rajkumar Shukla, a peasant who pleaded with him to visit Champaran and evaluate the exploitation of the tenant

farmers by English landlords. Gandhi did not know of Champaran which was in the foothills of the Himalayas near Nepal (Fischer 1989:189).

Gandhi responded to the appeal for help from the indigo planters. He learned from the local *Vakils* (lawyers) that most of the arable land in the area was owned by Englishmen but cultivated by Indian tenant farmers. The system demanded that fifteen percent of the land was set aside for growing indigo and the resultant turn over was paid to the landlord as rent. The English landlords had the crop processed into the deep blue dye in local factories. The Germans then discovered an inexpensive method for making synthetic dye. The demand for indigo declined. The landlords exploited the farmers' ignorance and demanded cash for rent. Lawyers were engaged to sue the landlords for a full refund of the cash paid as rent (Mehta 1976:134).

Gandhi made enquiries and collected testimony from the farmers in Champaran. The landlords objected to his presence. English officials served him with a court order to quit the District. Gandhi refused to leave. He was taken to court where he pleaded guilty and made a statement to the magistrate justifying his reasons for being in the area. The case against Gandhi was withdrawn (S.W.M.G. Vol. 2:619).

No emissaries had therefore been sent to Champaran to prepare for Gandhi's arrival. Rajkumar Shukla was not able to reach the thousands of peasants. No political work had been done amongst them. Their knowledge beyond Champaran was unknown. Gandhi was received as though he was an old friend. Gandhi states:

It is no exaggeration, but the eternal truth, to say that in this meeting with the peasants I was face to face with God, Ahimsa and Truth. When I come to examine my title to this realization, I find nothing but my love for the people. And this in turn is nothing but an expression of my unshakable faith in Ahimsa (S.W.M.G. Vol. 2:615-616).

With the assistance of *vakils*, Gandhi then took statements from many of the peasants. He was amazed at their poverty and ignorance. He taught the villagers rudimentary methods of hygiene and sanitation. Schools were established in the area (Bishop 1981:60).

Gandhi was hailed as a 'liberator' because he had imparted to the farmers, for the first time in their long history of exploitation by landlords, some hope of relief. The activity of Gandhi and his helpers led the Lieutenant Governor to set up a committee of inquiry, on which Gandhi agreed to serve.

The committee recommended the ending of the *tinkatia* system, by which three parts of every twenty had to be planted with indigo for the landlords and ordered a refund of part of the profits. The farmers expected him

to demand for a full refund of their cash payments. Gandhi had compromised because he knew that any repayment was an acknowledgement that the landlords had wronged the farmers. He was more keen in the triumph of principle rather than in the rout of an adversary.

Gandhi returned victorious from Champaran, having laid important foundations for his future work in India and having secured a reputation as friend and advocate for the poor and oppressed.

3.8.1 The Ahmedabad Labour *Satyagraha*

In August 1917 plague broke out in Ahmedabad and people fled the country, leaving their dwellings and shops. The mill owners, threatened by rivals in Bombay, payed the poor unskilled mill hands "plague" bonuses. The "plague bonus" in some cases was as high as 70 to 80 per cent of the workers wages. When the mill owners announced their intention of withdrawing the bonus, the mill hands negotiated for a "dearness allowance" to compensate for the sharp rise in prices of most necessities due to the war. When the plague epidemic abated, the mill owners stopped the subsidy and abruptly ended all discussions of the "dearness allowance" (Bondurant 1988:65).

Gandhi was asked by one of the mill owners to intervene. He had many friends amongst the mill owners. He agreed to assist as the spokesman for the mill hands who asked for a fifty percent increase in wages. The mill owners offered twenty percent. Gandhi recommended thirty-five percent as a compromise but the mill owners declined. Upon Gandhi's investigation into details of costs and workers' conditions he concluded that thirty-five percent was a fair demand. He advised the workers to demand no more and no less. When the mill owners rejected this demand, conflict followed. Gandhi led the workers and introduced *Satyagraha* as the technique so that a constructive solution could be reached (Bondurant 1988:136).

Gandhi set out five conditions of a successful strike:

1. never resort to violence;
2. never molest blacklegs;
3. no dependence upon alms;
4. remain firm, however long the strike lasts; and
5. earn money by other honest means.

Daily meetings were held at which Gandhi exhorted the workers. However, after two weeks he detected a weakening of resolve among the workers. Some began to think of settling on the mill owners' terms. Gandhi persuaded them to preserve the atmosphere of moral integrity which he regarded as an important part of

the struggle. He then stumbled upon the idea of a fast until the mill owners accepted binding arbitration or the mill hands quit their job for good.

He saw that fasting could become an important weapon for a *Satyagrahi* provided the method was disinterested and pure and the issue involved so critical that death was preferable to capitulation (Bishop 1981:60-61).

On March 18, the mill owners agreed to arbitration. Gandhi terminated his fast and the mill hands returned to work and received the thirty-five percent increase. The Ahmedabad strike was the first organized effort by workers in India. It was a peaceful struggle (Mehta 1976:137).

3.8.2 Analysis of Ahmedabad *Satyagraha*

A primary characteristic of the Ahmedabad labour *Satyagraha* was the use of the fast as an instrument of non-violent force. Gandhi perceived that his fasting would affect the decision of the mill owners who had a close and cordial relationship with him. He wanted to encourage the determination of the mill hands to keep the no-work pledge by fasting. The Ahmedabad movement does qualify as *Satyagraha* when we examine the steps followed throughout this procedure. The element of self-suffering was present both in the workers'

forfeiture of pay and in the fasting of Gandhi. Work was unfamiliar to them and was considered beneath them.

The propaganda programme was an integral part of this labour *Satyagraha* both in the forms of leaflets issued by *Satyagraha* leaders and the shouting of slogans during processions through the streets of Ahmedabad. Efforts were made to effect a settlement before resorting to direct action. The inner weakness of the labourers was made evident by Gandhi's decision to fast.

The Ahmedabad movement illustrates the role which arbitration may play in the course of *Satyagraha*. The further significance of the Ahmedabad *Satyagraha* was the development of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association which emerged from this and subsequent actions, and so helped launch India's trade-union movement.

3.8.3 *Kheda Satyagraha*

The third major incident of 1917-1918 for Gandhi was the *Kheda Satyagraha*. In 1917 at the time of the Ahmedabad strike-cum-lockout, the peasants in Kheda district claimed that there was immense damage to their crops due to adverse weather conditions. This called for a remission of their annual revenue assessment

whereby they were not required to pay if the harvest fell 25 percent below the yield for a normal year. The local officials disputed the extent of the damage and insisted on payment. In late March 1918 Gandhi's help was sought. He addressed a meeting where he urged them not to pay the assessment and "to fight it out". Many educated men and women in the area relinquished their professions to encourage peasants about the remission of taxes and their fears. This civil disobedience campaign was partly successful. A compromise was arranged. The affluent paid the taxes but not the poor. This was Gandhi's first large scale *Satyagraha* movement in India (Mehta 1976:138).

3.8.4 Analysis of Kheda *Satyagraha*

Gandhi was not happy about the outcome. He felt that he had not gained enough for the peasants nor did he attain the ideals of *Satyagraha*.

...the end was far from making me feel happy, inasmuch as it lacked the grace with which the termination of every *Satyagraha* campaign ought to be accompanied. The Collector carried on as though he had done nothing by way of a settlement. The poor were to be granted suspension, but hardly any got the benefit of it.... The end of a *Satyagraha* campaign can be described as worthy, only when it leaves the *Satyagrahis* stronger and more spirited than they are at the beginning (S.W.M.G. Vol. 2:656).

Gandhi acknowledged that the *Kheda Satyagraha* brought about an awakening among the Gujarati peasants and the beginning of a true political education. The educated took cognisance of the problems faced by the poor.

3.9 INVITATION FORM THE VICEROY

In April 1918, Gandhi received an invitation from the Viceroy to attend a Conference in New Delhi on recruiting Indians for service at the front. About eight hundred thousand Indians were already fighting in the British Army. Gandhi's positive decision to this request was met with disapproval from nationalist leaders like Lokamanya Tilak and Anni Besant. Gandhi felt that Indians, as loyal subjects of the Empire, were duty bound to help Britain in war (Mehta 1976:138-139).

I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment, and I know that India, by this very act, would become the most favoured partner in the Empire, and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past (S.W.M.G. Vol. 2:668).

Gandhi proceeded in the recruiting campaign but he found that the peasants who so recently cheered him now shunned him as a turncoat. They recognized the contradiction between his stated policy of *Ahimsa* and his support of the allied war effort. Gandhi offered an explanation for this by stating that at the time of the

Boer War in South Africa he was convinced that the British Empire provided a framework within which justice could be secured for subject peoples. Gandhi believed that by assisting the Empire in times of need, the people of India could procure their demands for justice (Bishop 1981:62).

Gandhi's early involvement in civil disobedience in India climaxed by the traumatic introduction of the Rowlatt Act in March 1919.

3.10 NATIONWIDE SATYAGRAHA AGAINST THE ROWLATT BILLS

This was the first nationwide *Satyagraha* to be launched in India which took place from 1 March 1919 to 18 April 1919 and lasted for seven weeks. Gandhi who had put his trust in the good intentions of the British, felt betrayed.

To Indians, the Bills were "unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, destructive of the elementary rights of an individual on which the safety of India as a whole and of the State itself is based." The Bills appeared to embody a denial of promises made by British Statesmen during the war and to confirm suspicion that Britain intended to deprive India of progress towards independence. They also represented an "encroachment on the ordinary rights of free citizens,"

including the withdrawal of trial without jury, and right of appeal in cases of sedition, the authorization of trials in camera and admission of evidence not subjected to cross examination, the reserving to the Executive the right to restrict liberty of an individual, and curbs on freedom of speech, press, and assembly. Popular resentment of the Bills was extreme and widespread (Bondurant 1988:75).

Gandhi had an awakening dream that he should call a twenty-four hour *hartal* or strike as a *Satyagraha* protest against the Rowlatt Act. The overall programme of *Satyagraha* is said to have involved "millions" in all parts of India. The *hartal* idea spread throughout India. It united vast multitudes in a common action. It gave the people a sense of power. Gandhi advised his people that the pledge was not trivial. It meant a change of heart. Gandhi declared that:

We may not believe in the teaching of 'tit for tat'; we may not meet hatred with hatred; violence with violence; evil with evil but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil, nothing is impossible (Fischer 1989:226).

Gandhi appealed to the Viceroy (through private and public letters) not to give it his assent. Gandhi warned that should the Bill become law, no other course was open but direct mass action.

3.10.1 *Hartal* (Non-cooperation)

Gandhi called for a day of *Hartal* which was observed in Delhi on 30 March 1919 and in Bombay and other cities on 6 April. The closing of shops took place throughout the country. Processions were taken through the streets of the major cities. There was initial adherence to strict non-violence.

3.10.1.1 Contravention of Selected Laws

The committee decided to disobey only such laws as lent themselves to mass disobedience.

- (a) Preparation of salt - a contravention of the Salt Tax Law.
- (b) Sale of prescribed literature. Prohibited literature was sold in the open. Books selected for circulation were: *Hind Swaraj*, by Gandhi; the Gujarati adaptation of Ruskin's 'Unto the Last', translated by Gandhi. The story of *Satyagrahi*, a paraphrase of the Defence and Death of Socrates. All these titles had to be prescribed by the Government.
- (c) Publication and circulation of an unregistered newspaper. Gandhi called it *Satyagrahi*. This paper

published instructions on behaviour in prison, reaction to fine, attachment of property, and urged no evasion or defence (Bondurant 1988:79-80).

Some prayed and fasted but others took to violence. In response to violation and retaliation by police, officials were attacked, Government buildings burnt, ships and houses were plundered, trains stopped and looted, telephone wires cut. Many people died in rioting. Gandhi was horrified and called an end to the *hartal* but the violence continued. Gandhi was prohibited from entering Punjab. In the city of Amritsa, in Punjab, the scene of the worst violence, an English school teacher was assaulted by a mob. She escaped being killed but a ban on all public meetings and processions was proclaimed by Brigadier General Dyer. On 13 April, some five-thousand of the city's residence, in defiance of the ban, held a meeting at Jallianbagh. General Dyer ordered his men to open fire killing four hundred and wounding twelve hundred. Gandhi blamed himself for this because he instigated the *hartal*. He said that it was a mistake and referred to it as the "Himalayan blunder" (Mehta 1976:140-141).

Gandhi suspended movement and went on penitential fast for three days. He acknowledged the deviation from *Satyagraha* and urged others to fast and to 'confess' their guilt. Gandhi was firmly of the opinion that

those who wanted to lead the people to *Satyagraha* ought to have kept the people within the non-violence expected of them. Gandhi realized that the people were not properly prepared for offering *Satyagraha*. He decided that before he would again lead such a movement it would be necessary to create a band of well tried, pure hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of *Satyagraha*. Gandhi raised a corps of volunteers and educated the public on the meaning and practice of *Satyagraha* (Bondurant 1988:80-82).

3.10.2 Analysis

The Rowlatt *Satyagraha* was, in terms of Gandhian *Satyagraha* a failure. This was attributed to the outbreak of violence. An analysis of the campaign indicates that the steps in a proper *Satyagraha* was present and most of the rules were operative. It was a true Gandhian *Satyagraha*. The immediate objective was the removal of an unjust law. The "Truth" goal of the campaign was the abolishing of laws that violated the individual's civil rights. Plans to act against the Government adhered to non-violent principles. Self-suffering was invited wherever opposition from police were encountered.

Preparation of *Satyagrahis* was undertaken but should have been extended in breadth and intensity. Gandhi's

"Himalayan Miscalculation" as he called it, was due to his failure to anticipate the overwhelming response among the masses. The masses had virtually no indoctrination in the meaning of *Satyagraha*.

Late in 1919, the British proposed to grant Indians, among other things, more positions in the Indian Civil Service and greater participation in the provincial legislative assemblies and ministries. Gandhi refused the offer known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. In fact, Gandhi preferred to undertake a program of "non-co-operation". Not only stay out of the Civil Service but also boycott English, the courts, British-run schools and colleges including British goods. Gandhi said that he had found in non-cooperation yet another powerful weapon for *Satyagrahis*. One that could achieve *Swaraj* (self-rule) for India (Mehta 1976:141).

3.11 NON-COOPERATION

In April 1920, Gandhi accepted Presidency of the All-India Home Rule League. He launched a programme of non-cooperation entirely on his own authority. The non-cooperation programme was made up of the following:

1. Surrender of all titles of honour and honorary offices.
2. Non-participation in Government loans.

3. Suspension of lawyers of practice and settlement of civil disputes by private arbitration.
4. Boycott of Government schools by parents.
5. Boycott of the reformed councils.
6. Non-participation in Government parties, and such other functions.
7. Refusal to accept any civil or military post, in Mesopotamia, or offer as Units for the army especially for services in the Turkish territories now being administered in violation of pledges.
8. Vigorous prosecution of *Swadeshi* inducing the people at the time of this national and religious awakening, to appreciate their primary duty to their country, by being satisfied with its own productions and manufacturers (Bishop 1981:70).

Non-cooperation was attacked by other Nationalists and debated as a creed of "negation, exclusiveness and despair". The British did not take non-cooperation seriously and dispensed of it as being foolish. In January 1922, thirty thousand Congress workers had been put in jail for being in possession of seditious material. Gandhi was arrested on March 10, 1922 for writing seditious articles in *Young India* and was imprisoned for six years. He was transferred to Yeravada Central Jail, in Poona. He served twenty-two months of his sentence because he had to have an operation. His reintroduction of *Satyagraha* was occasioned by events in Bardoli, in Gujerat (Bishop 1981:70-71).

3.12 BARDOLI *SATYAGRAHA*

In 1928 the Government increased the land revenue tax by twenty-eight percent. The peasants asked Gandhi to launch a civil disobedience campaign. Under Gandhi's leadership the peasants refused to pay the additional tax. The Government angered by this, arrested many and confiscated property. The peasants withstood the pressure exerted on them and eventually the Government relaxed. The tax increase was rescinded, the prisoners released and the property restored. The Bardoli campaign, said Gandhi, 'has revived our drooping spirits, it has brought us new hope, it has shown the immense possibilities of non-violence practised not from conviction, but like most virtues, with most of us, a policy' (Brown 1977:32).

At the beginning of 1930 Congress started a campaign for all-out independence thus resolving a lengthy debate to accept dominion status or complete independence. The All-India Congress Committee drew up a civil disobedience programme as the most successful way of achieving their objective. Gandhi was expected to lead the civil disobedience and to find an occasion for this. He found a cause and started a large-scale public demonstration against the Salt Tax (Bondurant 1981:72).

3.13 THE SALT SATYAGRAHA

The Government enjoyed a monopoly on salt mining, levied a sales tax on salt, and stopped Indians from making their own salt or to use contraband salt. For the Indians salt is as essential as air and water. Most of them laboured long hours in the fields, in blistering heat and ate only lentils, bread and salt. Gandhi wrote a letter to the Viceroy explaining the implication of the rude imposition of the Salt Tax levied. Gandhi stated further that the revenue system must be revised to make good its primary concern - the peasants. Gandhi warned that if this issue is not resolved then he would most definitely steer civil disobedience for nothing but organized non-violence can check the organized violence of the British Government (Fischer 1989:334).

Gandhi's letter was delivered to Irwin, the Viceroy of India. Irwin chose not to reply nor was Gandhi arrested. On 12 March 1930, Gandhi and his co-*Satyagrahis* left Ahmedabad for Dandi on the sea coast. They marched for twenty-four days. He urged villagers to remain non-violent. This attracted nationwide attention. The *Satyagrahis* reached Dandi on 5 April 1930. The following morning after prayers, they proceeded to the beach where they made salt from sea water, thus technically breaking the law. Throughout the country shops closed in response to arrests of

Satyagraha leaders (Bondurant 1988:93-94).

Every villager on India's long sea coast waded into the sea with a pan to make salt. The police began mass arrests. Gandhi was arrested and jailed for 2 years. It was reported that the Indians were beaten by constables. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm. The salt *Satyagraha* ended with the breaking of the monsoon.

Another effective part of the campaign against British rule was a boycott of foreign cloth. Gandhi's followers were all encouraged to learn to weave cloth and the weaving of the coarse off-white *khadi* cloth which became a badge of the Gandhian movement. Gandhi felt that in this way his people would achieve self-dependence. This resulted in a drop of India's foreign trade (Meer 1969:54).

3.14 ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

Gandhi was released from prison in 1931, visited London and took part in the Second Round Table Conference. Gandhi's visit created a great stir in England. He met Charlie Chaplin and George Bernard Shaw and held interviews with Journalists from all over the world. In his encounters he often referred to the themes he had introduced in 'Indian Home Rule.' Through much of history, the West had been governed by the laws of

force and violence, imperialism and aggression. The East in contrast had been governed by love and spirituality, by *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* and that he was the Evangelist from the East to the West (Mehta 1976: 150).

At the Conference table, Gandhi argued for Independence which received little attention. The differences between British and Indian Nationalist leaders were exposed and alarmingly the differences between Congress and the Muslim League and the princes. After this period Gandhi was disinterested in the Civil Disobedience Movement and did not involve himself in the Congress politics for the rest of the 1930's.

Gandhi was again implicated in the National Affairs due to the Second World War. He was disappointed with the Congress' attitude which implied violent resistance. He felt that this showed a basic misunderstanding of the ideal of non-violence which he had preached. The day the Second World War started, Great Britain took India into the conflict by proclamation without consultation. India protested loudly against this additional humiliating proof of her impotence. Gandhi started a policy of individual *Satyagraha* to press for a decision for Independence. This was to exert pressure on the Government. Over a period of about a year some 23 000 Congressmen were imprisoned including Jawaharlal Nehru (Bishop 1981:77).

In March 1942 Stafford Cripps visited India to work out an acceptable formula for Independence. He came and failed and left. Gandhi launched another Civil Disobedience Campaign under the slogan "Quit India". Action was his antidote to frustration (Fischer 1954:144). The government responded firmly and all the congress leaders were imprisoned. Gandhi was imprisoned in August 1942 and spent the next 2 years in prison and his main publication '*Harijan*' was banned.

3.15 JINNAH VERSUS GANDHI

The conclusion of the war brought with it the events which led swiftly to Indian Independence but also witnessed the sad end of *Satyagraha* and the death of Gandhi. The Labour Government of Clement Attlee, elected just before the end of the War in 1945, expressed its willingness to negotiate Indian Independence as soon as agreement could be reached with the various parties (chiefly the Congress, the Muslim League and the Princes) who ruled the Princely States. The Muslim Leader Jinnah would accept only the partition of India. "We could settle the Indian problem in ten minutes," he declared in Bombay in December, 1945, "if Mr Gandhi would say, 'I agree that there should be Pakistan.'" "I agree that one-fourth of India, composed of six Provinces - Sind, Baluchistan, the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier Province, Bengal and

Assam - with their present boundaries, constitute the Pakistan State" (Fischer 1954:149).

Gandhi despaired at this policy, and regarded the "vivisection" of India as "blasphemy" for he strove for a Hindu-Muslim unity since 1919. In August 1946, Jinnah initiated a direct-action programme for the creation of Pakistan and a bitter religious war began. The British Government was determined by this time to allow India to govern herself by June 1948 whether or not final agreement on a constitution had been reached. There was bitter conflict between Hindus and Muslims across north India, especially the bordering areas between India and Pakistan (Bishop 1981:78).

Widespread Moslem attacks on Hindus took place in the Noakhali and Tippera rural areas of East Bengal. Gandhi decided to go to the scene of the trouble. Friends tried to dissuade him.

His health was poor. He chose to live amongst the distressed and preach non-violence where the Muslims had killed Hindus, converted Hindus to Islam, ravished Hindu women and burnt homes and temples (Fischer 1959:552-554).

Gandhi, sadly disillusioned over the failure of non-violence, conducted two fasts 'unto death' to restore religious toleration. The first of the fasts made a

great impact and stopped further massacres in Calcutta (Mehta 1977:171). Mehta stated that Gandhi broke each of his fasts only after he received pledges from Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh leaders that they would try to make their people live with each other amicably. The pledges had a miraculous short term effect, but in the end they did not stem the growing violence.

India gained Independence on 15 August 1947, and the nation became a Republic on January 26, 1948. On 30 January 1948 on his way to prayers Gandhi was assassinated by three bullets in his abdomen and chest. The young assassin was a fanatical Hindu named Nathuram Vinayak Godse who had been inflamed by Gandhi's efforts to bring reconciliation between Hindus and Muslims in riot-torn Independent India. With those three bullets came the bitter fruit of the murder of an important political leader. India and the world were saddened (Sharp 1967:137).

3.16 CONCLUSION

Gandhi's leadership of the Civil Disobedience Movement which began in India in 1930 probably marked the peak of his political influence over his countrymen and the British Raj. This, his second continental campaign of non-cooperation with the imperial structure, was the

most serious countrywide agitational challenge in the name of nationalism which the British faced in their Indian Empire. It attracted considerable popular participation and even wider public sympathy in India, and brought the *Mahatma* and his claims to the attention of a world-wide audience. His personal prestige and authority were displayed when, with the Sovereign's representative, he concluded a 'pact'. This temporarily ended Civil Disobedience in 1931. Later in the year as sole spokesman for the Indian National Congress he attended the Round Table Conference in London on India's new federal constitution. He was the leader whose decision reactivated the campaign on his return to India, and whose agreement both Congressmen and Government sought in attempts to procure the end of Civil Disobedience in 1933-1934 (Brown 1977:xiii).

Gandhi brought back with him his new weapon as he returned to India. Later in India, after a process of slow and laborious preparation of himself and the people, he marshalled millions of his countrymen to plunge into three great tides of non-violent revolution. The first was the non-cooperation movement in which he trained India to know that She was in subjection because of Indian cooperation with British rule and the moment that cooperation was withdrawn, British rule would collapse.

The second was the salt *Satyagraha* movement that excited the ridicule of the British masters, but who later realised to their dismay, that they could no longer hold India in subjection against its consent.

The new spirit of resistance and independence among the Indians increased the difficulties and expense of maintaining the British Raj, especially during the major Non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience Campaigns. Even with the economic terms of trade with India, Gandhi's program had a significant impact. This was demonstrated by the boycott during the 1930-31 Civil Disobedience Campaign. This coincided with the world depression. The drop in purchases of British goods by India was not solely the result of that depression but glaringly attributable to the boycott programme.

Finally came the "Quit India" revolution which ended British Rule in India for ever and launched Independence and the Republic. The world was startled when the British departed from India without any rancour left in the minds of either India or England. This appeared more of a reconciliation rather than a parting. India voluntarily chose to remain in the Commonwealth. Since the end of the Second World War several groups practised *Satyagraha* against tyranny and injustice. The Negroes, in the mainstream of their struggle in the United States under Martin Luther King had firmly grasped this new weapon in their hand. India

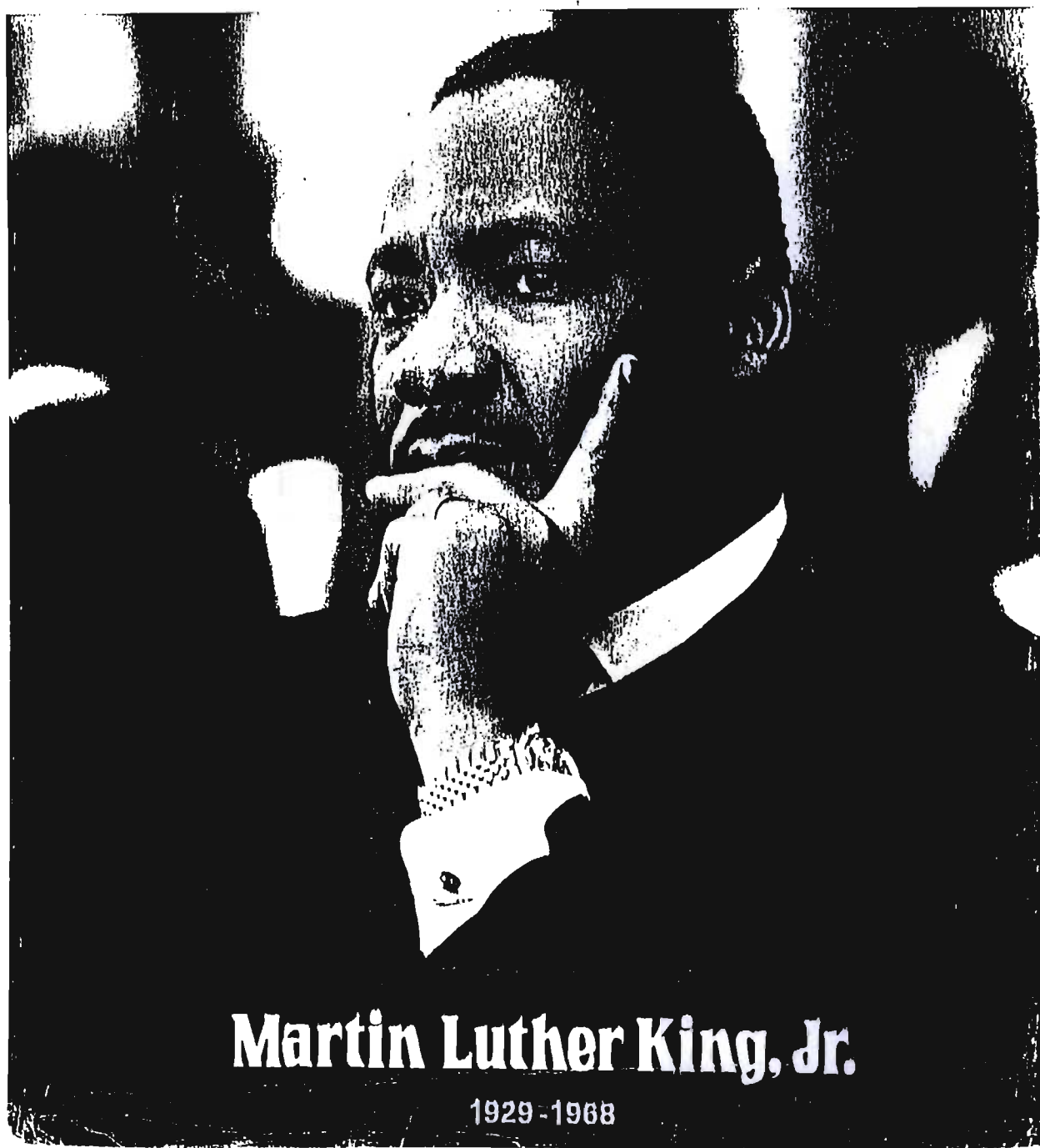
owes a special duty to mankind because it was in India that Gandhi was born, lived worked and gave his life for non-violence.

One of the most important instances of this development was the adoption of non-violent action in the American Negro struggle against racial segregation and discrimination. This was a possibility envisaged by Gandhi, as he revealed in conversations with visiting American Negroes. In 1937, Dr Channing Tobias and Dr Benjamin Mays visited Gandhi and asked for a message to be relayed to the American Negroes and what he thought of the outlook for the future. Gandhi called non-violent action the way "of the strong and wise", and added:

With right which is on their side and the choice of non-violence as their only weapon, if they will make it such, a bright future is assured (Sharp 1967:151).

Earlier, in 1936, Gandhi told Dr and Mrs Howard Thurman that,

It may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world (Sharp 1967:151).



Martin Luther King, Jr.

1929-1968

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character.
(Bishop 1981:115)

CHAPTER FOUR**CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA****4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Born on 15 January 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King Jr. was the second child of Reverend Martin Luther King Sr. and Alberta Williams King. His father was the prestigious Minister of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Georgia where King was raised and therefore cushioned from the harshness and indignities experienced by many Blacks. At an early age he attended Morehouse College. Under the guidance of Benjamin Mays, Professor Kelsey and others, he decided to enter the ministry in his second year. He preached the first sermon in his father's Church and became an assistant minister for the remainder of his studies at Morehouse. Concurrently he completed a Bachelor of Divinity degree at Crozier Theological Seminary, from where he proceeded to the Boston School of Theology to read for the Ph.D. degree (Paris 1978:71).

In June 1953 King married Coretta Scott, who was a student of Music at the New England Conservatory. The following year he entered Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, in Montgomery, Alabama, as a Pastor.

4.2 KING'S THEOLOGICAL THINKING

In all of King's thoughts, speeches and writings the theme of God is most pervasive. Knowledge of God, in King's understanding is received only by knowing Jesus Christ. He maintained that only the divine principle of love can hold the diversity of mankind together in a harmonious community. Throughout his writings he often viewed the method of non-violence as a commensurate with the principle of love. He understood that non-violence, as a vehicle of love, should assume in the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors. The importance of love is made implicitly clear in a passage written after the Montgomery episode (Paris 1978:71-79).

It was the Sermon on the mount, rather than a doctrine of passive resistance, that initially inspired the Negroes of Montgomery to dignified social action. It was Jesus of Nazareth that stirred the Negroes to protest with the creative weapon of love.

As the days unfolded, however, the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi began to exert its influence. I had come to see early that the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of non-violence was one of the most potent weapons available to the Negro in his struggle for freedom. Non-violent resistance had emerged as the technique of the movement, while love stood as the regulating ideal. In other words, Christ furnished the spirit and motivation, while Gandhi furnished the method (King, Jr 1958:66-67).

King admitted that at one stage in his life he was confused about the effectiveness of the love ethic of Jesus in social reform. He thought that it was possible only in interpersonal relationships. After acquainting himself with the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi, he was convinced that it was a powerful and effective force for social change. Community is at the end of love and non-violence facilitates that goal. He affirmed that love was the basic requirement for human existence. By love he meant *Agape*. *Agape* means understanding and redeeming goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative. It is the love of God operating in the human heart (King Jr 1958:86).

Agape expresses the nature of God. It is thoroughly disinterested and is not conditioned by reciprocity. It also does not distinguish between friend and enemy. He spoke unceasingly about Jesus's command to the disciples, in the Sermon on the Mount, to love their enemies. Love of enemies was one of the clearest manifestations of *Agape*, since good returns are not expected. He reminded his followers that *Agape* was for the strong and courageous, not for the weak and cowardly. He felt that only love could achieve a lasting victory over hate and those who follow the love ethic of Jesus must resist evil in a loving way. When love resists evil it does so for the entire community.

While abhorring segregation, we shall love the segregationist. This is the only way to create a beloved community. (King Jr. 1958:66).

Love was the most effective means available to the oppressed in their fight against injustice. King clearly showed the theological doctrine of love as an effective principle of social change (Paris 1978:82-83).

On the occasion of the bombing of his home, he recalled:

At home I addressed the crowd from my porch, where the mark of the bomb was clear. We must not return violence under any condition. I know this is difficult, especially since we have been the victims of no less than ten bombings. But this is the way of Christ; it is the way of the cross. We must somehow believe that unearned suffering is redemptive (Paris 1978:83)

Instead King grasped the idea of non-violent direct action. Direct action referred to a particular belief held by the movement participants and to a whole battery of acts and techniques designed to cause disruption. In Montgomery, Tallahassee and Birmingham, large numbers of blacks believed that they could change their position in society by directly and persistently engaging in aggressive protest activities. The direct action orientation laid heavy stress on the "here and now".

4.3 NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

Non-violent direct action refers to methods of resistance and direct action without physical violence where members of the non-violent group either perform:

1. Acts of Omission - where they refuse to perform acts normally expected by custom.
2. Acts of Commission - where they perform forbidden acts, not expected by custom, and or
3. both (Sharp 1967:26-27).

These methods are "extra-constitutional" and do not rely upon established procedures of the state (whether parliamentary or non-parliamentary) for achieving their objective. Such acts may be directed towards a change or abolition of existing attitudes, values, social patterns, customs and social structures, or even a combination.

In some cases of direct action the primary intent was to change attitudes and values as a preliminary to changing policies. In other cases it was to change policies whether or not the opponents had initially changed their attitudes and values. Still further, in other incidents, the intent was to simultaneously change attitudes and policies where the behaviour of the non-violent group was primarily intervention, usually acts of commission, which can be described as "Non-violent Direct Action" (Sharp 1967:26-27).

The Montgomery boycott was the watershed of the modern Civil Rights Movement for several reasons. Although it was the second mass bus boycott of the modern Civil Rights Movement, among blacks and whites across the United States and the world, Montgomery was considered the first. It earned this recognition because it was launched on a massive scale and exceeded a year in existence.

4.4 THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

The Montgomery bus boycott launched Martin Luther King Jr. on his career as a civil rights leader. Segregation was common place in the South. Blacks and Whites travelled, ate and were educated separately. The Blacks were second-class citizens and the majority were without a vote.

The civil rights protests in the United States did not begin at the Montgomery bus boycott. Prior campaigns had been initiated and protests had progressed to relax segregation. The first major national demonstration was a Journey of Reconciliation triggered by the 1946 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation on interstate travel. This first freedom ride was co-sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.). The following year a group of civil rights activists, blacks and whites together rode Greyhound

and Trailways buses through the Upper South to test the implementation of the decision. The freedom riders experienced little harrassment but faced some arrests. The Journey of Reconciliation gave national publicity to C.O.R.E. and its implementation of non-violent Direct Action to fight racial discrimination (Cooney & Michalowski 1987:153).

On 2 December 1955 Blacks began to resist discrimination after Mrs Rosa Parks, a seamstress had been arrested on her way home on the Montgomery-Alabama City bus. When the bus filled up, the driver ordered Mrs Parks to stand so that a White man could sit down. She refused to move. She was taken to the police station and was booked for violating the city bus ordinance. This event attracted widespread attention (Oates 1982:61).

The next morning after Rosa Parks was released, E.D. Nixon veteran of the Non-Violent Crusade suggested a one-day boycott of city busses to Ralph Abernathy, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Montgomery. King made available the basement of his house for a meeting to discuss the proposal. This boycott was intended for the day of Rosa Parks' trial. The Black taxi companies agreed to commute boycotters for a fee of ten cents which was the normal bus fare. Leaflets bearing details of the boycott were printed.

The early initiatives were taken by E.D. Nixon, of the National Association of Coloured people, and Jo Ann Robinson, of the Women's Political Council. Mrs Robinson drafted a notice to the Black people of Montgomery which read:

Don't ride the bus to work, to town, to school, or any place, Monday, December 5. Another Negro woman has been arrested and put in jail because she refused to give up her bus seat. If you work, take a cab, or share a ride, or walk. Come to a mass meeting, Monday at 7.00 p.m., at the Holt Street Baptist Church for further instruction (Bishop 1981: 97).

An almost complete and immediate response was received. Abernathy suggested the formation of a Montgomery Improvement Association. An intelligent leader, who was also a dynamic speaker was required as President of this Movement. Consequently, Martin Luther King was duly elected. When King drove around in the early hours of Sunday morning he noticed a few Blacks riding buses which were normally packed. The boycott was a success. It continued for several months and the effect of 42 000 black people refusing to ride city buses was felt by the company as well as the city. A lift club was established and maintained over a period of twelve months. The bus company was forced to raise fares and reduce scheduled routes.

Not all Negroes rode vehicles. Some preferred to "demonstrate with their feet" their desire for dignity and justice and therefore, regardless of the weather, they walked to and from work daily. Juliette Morgan a White woman, published a letter in the Montgomery Advertiser which partly read, "The Negroes of Montgomery seem to have taken a lesson from Gandhi and Thoreau." There were parallels between the Montgomery bus boycott and Gandhi's struggle in India. Gandhi's accomplishment of freedom and justice without a legacy of bitterness - was precisely what King desired for Negroes in Montgomery (Oates 1982:73-74).

On 30 January 1948, the date of Gandhi's assassination, King was addressing a mass meeting when he was informed that his house was bombed. His family was unharmed. The crowd raged with vengeance but King simply looked at his angry brothers and sisters and said:

We cannot solve this problem through retaliatory violence.... We must love our white brothers no matter what they do to us. We must make them know that we love them (Oates 1982:86)

Bayard Ruston and Glenn Smiley (the field secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation - F.O.R.) arrived in Montgomery. The F.O.R. workers helped in a programme of mass education. The production of a film on non-violent

techniques was sponsored by the organization. They also offered lectures and demonstrations related to the methods of non-violence. The F.O.R. researched Gandhi's work in India. Maintaining discipline during the non-violent resistance over lengthy periods was difficult. Frustrated supporters could not be suppressed from violent expressions. Notably, the Montgomery bus boycott achieved a high degree of success in maintaining discipline.

On 13 November 1956 the United States Court appointed a special three-judge U.S. District Court to declare unconstitutional local laws requiring segregation in buses in Alabama State.

An appeal to dissolve the lift club was lodged by the White community. The U.S. Supreme Court removed the conditions that made it necessary. Early the next day King, Abernathy, Nixon and Glen Smiley boarded a Montgomery bus for a symbolic desegregated ride. King happily noted that most Whites accepted integrated seating without incident. For King, a momentous battle had been won by the weapons of non-violence and by the determination of the community. Through the Montgomery boycott King tested a method of social and political protest which demonstrated his idea that the ideals of the Sermon on the Mount was translated into effective action (Bishop 1981:101).

King's popularity increased. His picture adorned the cover of the February 1957 issue of Time Magazine. In the same year the Southern Leadership Conference was founded at a meeting in Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. King was elected President. A month later the Conference name was changed to Southern Christian Leadership Conference (S.C.L.C.), and became the main organizational instrument of King's policies as a model for effecting social change (Paris 1978:88).

The S.C.L.C. continued active work for the rights of the Blacks in the Southern States. In September 1957 King published his first book entitled "Stride Towards Freedom". Whilst autographing copies of his book in a bookshop in Harlem, King was stabbed with a letter opener by a woman. She was later judged insane. The perils of such public attention that King received was evidenced by this (King 1964:17).

King's attachment to Gandhian ideals had also become well known and in 1957 he was invited by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to study Gandhianism in India.

At the end of 1959 King announced his intention of resigning from the pastorate of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. In January 1960 he returned to Atlanta (S.C.L.C. headquarters) and became a co-pastor of his father's church, Ebenezer-Baptist. During his

first few months in Atlanta King worked extremely hard to build up the S.C.L.C. It was the inspiration of his personality coupled with his leadership qualities that provided the main impetus for the growth of the organization. However, the Civil Rights Movement was not solely a one-man concern. Many people were involved in their own forms of protest against the disabilities suffered by blacks in the Southern States (Bishop 1981:104-105).

In February 1960, shortly after King's return to Atlanta, two black students in Greensboro, North Carolina, decided to eat at the lunch counter at their local bus terminal. They were refused service because they were Negroes. Word of this incident spread among fellow students who decided on a non-violent protest. Daily they were refused service. Other students also saw this as an immediate and active form of protest. The sit-ins began and spread to other towns in North Carolina, then to Tennessee, and Atlanta (Garrow 1988:127).

In April, S.C.L.C. provided financial support for a Civil Rights Student Conference held at Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina. The two main speakers were Martin Luther King and James Lawson, who was dismissed from Vanderbilt University for participating in a lunch-counter sit-in at Nashville. The

Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (or S.N.C.C.) was initiated at this Conference. At the Raleigh Conference, King emphasized the importance of non-violence.

He reminded student leaders that the struggle was justice versus injustice, not black versus white, and urged them to accept compromise with whites. In particular he stressed "jail not bail" and spoke about his 1958 decision to serve time rather than pay a fine when he was arrested. He told students to insist on integrated lunch counters or totally boycott the store. King's remarks were well received (Garrow 1988:128).

The students who participated in the sit-ins needed discipline and self-control. They were often abused by white customers or bystanders. Many students carried reminders of the ideal of non-violence in printed notices which read:

Remember the teaching of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Remember love and nonviolence (Bishop 1981:106).

King was arrested at a sit-in. Accompanied mainly by students King requested service at a lunch counter at Rich's department store in Atlanta. He was charged for trespassing. Preceding this incident King was charged with a minor infringement in the neighbouring county of

De Kalb. The penalty was a small fine and a suspended twelve month prison sentence. The charge of trespassing provided the opportunity for Judge Mitchell, in De Kalb court, to declare that Dr King had violated the terms of his probation, and to sentence him immediately to four month's hard labour at Reidsville State prison (Lewis 1970:125-129).

The imprisonment caused an upheaval. The matter became a political issue coinciding with the Presidential campaign between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy. Nixon refrained from comment, but John Kennedy telephonically sympathised with Coretta King and expressed support for her husband. Robert Kennedy telephoned Judge Mitchell enquiring why Dr King could not be granted bail (Lewis 1970:128).

An extension of the sit-ins developed in the form of the 'Freedom rides' which brought supporters from the North to join in the Southern struggle. Multi-racial bus rides previously used in civil rights campaigns were met with bitter and violent resistance. The freedom rides were organized by C.O.R.E and King was chairman of the Freedom Ride Co-ordinating Committee. In May 1961 twelve volunteers, black and white, left Washington DC aboard Greyhound and Trailway buses to travel through the Southern States. Their aim was to challenge the segregation of facilities at the waiting-

rooms and lunch counters of bus terminals (Bishop 1981:107).

A mob armed with chains, sticks and iron rods met the Greyhound carrying one group of freedom riders as it arrived at the station of Anniston, Alabama. They attacked the bus, broke windows, slashed tyres and the local police barely intervened. The Attorney-General requested a "cooling-off period" from the freedom rides but King refused and advised a 'temporary lull'. "The law may not be able to make a man love me, but it can keep him from lynching me" (Lewis 1970:133).

Many blacks including King, were arrested during the campaign. King declared his intention of staying in prison for the cause and if convicted he would not pay the fine. A compromise was reached and King left prison. Although demonstrators were released on bail the charges against them were not dropped. The local blacks and S.N.C.C. members were unhappy at the compromise which meant the desegregation of terminal facilities. Buses, parks, libraries and cinemas were still segregated. This was regarded by many as a disaster on King's part. The New York Herald Tribune called Albany "one of the most stunning defeats of his career" (Lewis 1970:151).

The Albany campaign was a bad time for King. It did not achieve its objectives. Rivalry amongst Black Civil Right's leaders prevailed. In March 1963 the S.C.L.C. started a campaign in Birmingham, Alabama. This was aimed at resisting the segregation of eating facilities in town as well as that in shops and businesses. The usual sit-ins were administered inclusive of two new features. One was to cripple business in Birmingham during the Easter period by Blacks boycotting stores that insisted on segregation. The second was the recruitment of 250 volunteers for the training of blacks in the technique of non-violent resistance. Eugene (Bull) Connor, Commissioner of Public Safety in Birmingham, dangerously opposed Negro rights. He would not hesitate to use crude force to suppress the black movement. The Birmingham campaign was coded Letter C (for confrontation). Birmingham officials chose to close the public parks rather than integrate them (Bishop 1981:110-111).

King stirred the black community with these words:

We shall march non-violently, we shall force this nation, this city, this world, to face its own conscience. We will make the God of love in the white man triumphant over the Satan of segregation that is in him (Lewis 1970:180).

Volunteers were asked to sign 'commitment cards' before demonstrating. The cards listed ten commandments,

including meditating daily on the teaching and life of Jesus; reminding demonstrators that the movement sought justice and reconciliation rather than victory and for them to refrain from 'the violence of fist, tongue or heart:

I hereby pledge myself - my person and body - to the non-violent movement. Therefore I will keep the following Ten Commandments.

1. Meditate daily on the teachings and life of Jesus.
2. Remember always that the non-violent movement in Birmingham seeks justice and reconciliation not victory.
3. Walk and talk in the manner of love, for God is love.
4. Pray daily to be used by God in order that all men might be free.
5. Sacrifice personal wishes in order that all men might be free.
6. Observe with both friend and foe the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. Seek to perform regular service for others and for the world.
8. Refrain from the violence of fist, tongue or heart.
9. Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
10. Follow the directions of the movement and of the captain on a demonstration (King Jr. 1964:63-64).

On 12 April 1963 King and his lieutenants called for their own arrest. King was placed in solitary confinement. King wrote a lengthy letter from the Birmingham jail to the Clergymen who opposed his Direct Action Campaigns. They felt that this would lead to violence and civil unrest.

On 20 April he was released from prison and six days later was fined \$50 and five days loss of liberty. The marchers continued. On May 2, 950 children between the ages of six and sixteen were arrested. The following day a raged Bull Connor ordered that police use dogs and night-sticks on demonstrators. Firemen were ordered to turn their hoses on them. Some blacks retaliated and a few youngsters who were not associated with the march, hurled bricks and bottles at the policemen. By 7 May almost 2000 had been arrested.

The amazing aftermath of Birmingham, the sweeping Negro Revolution, revealed worldwide that there were no outsiders in all fifty states of America. When the police dog buried his fangs in the ankle of a small child in Birmingham, he did so in the ankle of every American (King Jr 1964:68).

After much persuasion from the Attorney General and the Federal Authorities, the leaders of Birmingham agreed to release those who had been arrested during the campaign. The desegregation of lunch counters, rest rooms, fitting rooms and drinking fountains was executed in planned stages over ninety days after signing. Also, the upgrading and hiring of Negroes on a non-discriminatory basis throughout the industrial community of Birmingham (King Jr 1964:105-106).

The agreement met all the demands of the S.C.L.C. and marked a notable victory for King.

4.5 MARCH ON WASHINGTON

On 28 August 1963 - the year of the Washington March - King made his famous speech at the Lincoln Memorial. The main aim of this march was to press Congress to pass a comprehensive civil rights law. The Washington March was made up of a cross-section of blacks and whites. Many white church leaders associated themselves with the Civil Rights Movement. An estimated quarter of a million people attended the march of which more than 75 000 were white. Speeches were delivered by major religious, civic and labour organizations. Entertainers contributed with ballads and songs. The highlight of the occasion was a speech by Martin Luther King and throughout there rang the refrain "I have a dream today".

King's words drew like a magnet on the tens of thousands of shattered black aspirations and guilt ridden white desires for fellowship. They longed for this message.

There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our

nation until the bright day of justice emerges
(Lewis 1970:228).

He told them that despite the bitter temporary setbacks and frustrations, he held fast to a profoundly American Dream, of a nation radically changed.

One day, the nation would really practice its creed - that "all men are created equal" that the children of slaves and slave owners would one day live in brotherhood; that one day even the state of Mississippi would become "an oasis of freedom and justice".

He had a dream that, one day, his four little children would be judged not by their colour but by their character (Lewis 1970:221-228).

Less than three months later any hope that King had was dispelled by the assassination of President Kennedy, because he knew then that future prospects for enacting civil rights legislation would be affected. The emphasis therefore swayed to the voter registration. Officials in the South were uncooperative and made it very difficult for blacks to register. In Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, local whites did not allow blacks to register for votes. They employed methods that included economic intimidation and the dismissing of black workers (Bishop 1981:116).

The Whites peacefully enrolled as voters. Selma, Dallas County was the focal point of the black belt in Alabama and an obvious choice to begin a campaign registering black voters. In 1964 at the age of 35, King became the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. King thought that this was an acknowledgement of the justice of the cause of the American Negro in his struggle for Civil Rights. This was not simply a personal award, but one of the most significant international endorsements possible for the civil rights struggle (Garrow 1986:354).

King joined his fellow workers of the S.C.L.C. in Selma, Alabama. The mass march technique to the courthouse was used where Blacks asked to be registered. Jim Clark, the Sheriff opposed the demonstrations and the marchers. On 1 February King and 770 other marchers were arrested. King was released on February 5. His arrest, particularly after just having received the Nobel Peace Prize, made headline news across the world. Selma's white leaders were upset that Clark's temperament had placed their city on the front pages of the nation's newspapers (Garrow 1986:379-380).

On 7 March a group of people marched from Selma to Montgomery to bring their case to the direct notice of Governor George Wallace. The Governor issued an order and forbade the march. At Edmund Pettus Bridge, on the

outskirts of Selma the marchers were attacked with night sticks and tear gas. About 60 people were injured. This received widespread publicity and newspapers entitled it 'Bloody Sunday'. Liberal Americans were deeply upset and angered by violence perpetrated on peaceful demonstrations.

King sent telegrams from Atlanta to prominent clergymen across the nation saying,

In the vicious maltreatment of defenseless citizens of Selma where old women and children were gassed and clubbed at random, we have witnessed the disease of racism which sought to destroy all America (Williams 1987:273).

S.C.L.C.'s vice-President, Hosea Williams made the following statement:

I fought in World War II and I once was captured by the German army, and I want to tell you that the Germans never were as inhuman as the state troopers of Alabama (Lewis 1970:275).

The publicity provoked the participation of priests and rabbis countrywide in a second march. This march was larger than the first. The three-thousand strong inter-racial group of marchers were met by Alabama troopers who baracaded the highway. King's request for time to pray was granted. When they rose from prayer they were ordered to move to the sides of the highway. Suddenly, King asked them to return to the starting point.

Concurrently, Malcolm X a Black Power leader became critical of King's stance on non-violence. He felt that the white leaders were pleased with non-violent black leaders who could control people. He felt that there were other black leaders who did not believe in non-violent measures. On the day of Malcolm X's speech, President Johnson held a press conference to deliver a statement in support of voting rights (Williams 1987:262).

4.6 SELMA TO MONTGOMERY

A large march was set out from Selma to Montgomery. During the march, King delivered a speech and encouraged the people with the promise that the civil rights campaign would not be stopped by any power or opposition. His speech was as follows:

I come to say to you this afternoon, however difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because truth pressed to earth will rise again. How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever. How long, not long because you will reap what you sow. How long, not long because the arm of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice (Lewis 1970:292).

The Selma campaign had been successful. It led to an increase in the number of black voters. The Selma campaign won more support in Congress than did the

Birmingham campaign. Selma was clearly non-violent. The 1965 Act dealt with many of the problems that Negroes experienced in the South. It suspended among other things, literary tests for those registering to vote. Demonstrations continued into 1966 to persuade blacks to register in the South. Some whites retaliated violently because they resented the inclusion of blacks on the voting registers. King was joined by other Black leaders in a march which led 1300 people to the courthouse to register. It was during the 1966 demonstrations that the phrase 'Black Power' was introduced. Stokely Carmichael, a black leader encouraged the use of these words but King was disturbed. Some marchers wore placards which bore the slogan "Move On Over, or We'll move on over you."

I pleaded with the group to abandon the Black Power slogan. It was my contention that a leader has to be concerned about the problem of semantics. Each word, I said, has a denotative meaning... and a connotative meaning.... Black Power carried the wrong connotations (Lewis 1970:325).

King felt that the encouragement of violence or retaliation, as an impractical tactic, would damage their image in the eyes of white America (Bishop 1981: 123).

In 1966 King surveyed the economic condition of the North. He maintained that to secure justice for blacks

it was imperative for them to have equal opportunity in both political and economic terms. King and the S.C.L.C. focused their attention on economic issues. A new campaign called the Operation Breadbasket for better jobs and better economic conditions for the Blacks was launched. Clergymen were responsible for finding out the number of Negroes employed. A rightful portion of jobs was demanded. Many employers willingly co-operated. When they refused a boycott of their business was implemented. This scheme produced impressive results.

Another issue that commanded King's attention was the Vietnam War. From 1966 onwards King realized the interrelatedness of racism and militarism, and believed that civil disobedience might be necessary to oppose war. He felt that America had to realize that international violence was just as immoral for humanity as was racial segregation. King said that he felt it was necessary to oppose the war in Vietnam (Garrow 1988:551).

Many board members did not accept King's reasoning. The S.C.L.C. said that King's comments should be regarded as personal. King complained that America applauded non-violence practised by blacks in America, but also applauded the participation of blacks to be violent in Vietnam. In his speech on the Vietnam War at Riverside

Church, New York he said:

It would be very inconsistent of me to teach and preach non-violence in this situation and then applaud violence when thousands and thousands of people, both adults and children, are being maimed and mutilated and many killed in this war (Lewis 1970:360).

He called for a negotiated end to the war and suggested a five point programme for achieving peace:

1. An end to all bombing, North and South.
2. The declaration of a unilateral cease-fire to prepare a climate for negotiation.
3. A curtailment of military build-ups throughout South East Asia.
4. Realistic acceptance of the National Liberation Front.
5. An establishment of a definite date by which all foreign troops would be withdrawn from Vietnam (Lewis 1970:361).

This stand that King adopted impressed young blacks even those who had reservations about the efficacy of his earlier campaigns of non-violent resistance. He gained the support and approval of young idealists. For them King, above all black leaders, epitomized the struggle for justice. King had addressed himself clearly to the economic problems of blacks and to Vietnam.

King continued his involvement in the day to day problems of blacks in the Southern States. In February 1968 there was a strike by black sanitation workers in

Memphis because there was a difference between the treatment of Black and White sanitation workers. King called for a march on 28 March. Violence erupted among black youths. They broke shop windows and retaliated against the police. King was upset by this violence and suggested a second march in Memphis but this time without violence. A meeting was arranged but the evening before the meeting, King delivered his major speech. That night King spoke of the many threats he received against his life.

Less than twenty-four hours later, King stepped out onto the balcony of the Lorraine Motel and a gun shot rang out. James Earl Ray had assassinated Martin Luther King. He was arrested two months later. To his friends and to people across the world, the death of King at the age of thirty-nine was a great shock and profound loss (Bishop 1981:126-127).

Two months before King was killed, he made a speech at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. He had a premonition of his death and he told his congregation:

Every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral.... I don't want a long funeral.

And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. Tell them not to say that I have three or four hundred awards. I would like someone to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr tried to give his life serving others. I would like somebody

to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr tried to love somebody.

Say that I was a drum major for justice, peace and righteousness.

On April 3, 1968, King spoke at the Masonic Temple. He said:

I would want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go to the mountain top. And I've looked over and I have seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know that we as a people will get to the promised land (Motanyane 1988:39).

The following day King was dead.

4.7 CONCLUSION

4.7.1 Impact of the Civil Rights Movement

The Southern Civil Rights Movement had a profound impact on American Society: Firstly, it significantly altered the tripartite system of domination, largely dismantling those components which severely restricted the personal freedom of blacks and defranchised them in the formal political sense. Secondly, the movement altered and expanded American politics by providing other oppressed groups with organizational and tactical models, allowing them to enter directly into the political arena through the politics of protest.

Prior to the movement the system of segregation forced blacks to live in a separate and limited world characterized by poverty, racial discrimination, powerlessness and symbolic subordination. Nowadays, life in the South is different. Most of the white schools, washrooms, theatres, swimming pools, parks, bus seats and other facilities are either integrated or legislated so by law. Presently, however, races in the South are not totally integrated because economic and residential segregation lead to segregation in other spheres of life which is widespread nationally.

Nevertheless, with the dismantling of many symbols of white supremacy coupled with the formal desegregation of many facilities, Southern blacks now live with dignity in a world with fewer restrictions. Stokely Carmichael assured a youngster, sceptical of the Civil Rights Movement that blacks in Montgomery will not frequent the back of the bus again. The battles of the movement culminating in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, made this significant change possible.

Prior to the movement most Southern blacks were politically disfranchised without a chance of electing officials. Today, Birmingham and Atlanta have black mayors. Most Southern blacks are able to vote and elect a significant number of office-holders. Only time will establish whether these social and political changes

are permanent. Regrettably, the Civil Rights Movement was unable to significantly change the components of economic exploitation of the tripartite system, thereby still limiting the rights won by the Movement. We can conclude that without struggle there are no changes and therefore no progress.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 GANDHI'S IMPACT ON THE UNITED STATES PEACE MOVEMENT

World War I and the spread of marxism after the Bolshivik Revolution of November 5, 1917, posed severe challenge to the peace movement within the United States. However, Gandhi's ideology of *Satyagraha* for social and political change began influencing American thought and mood as early as the 1920s.

The outspoken pacifist minister and social reformer John Haynes Holmes delivered a widely circulated sermon on Gandhi entitled, "The Christ of today" and another in 1922 called "Who is the greatest Man within the World Today?" Unity Magazine, edited by Holmes, also published Gandhi's autobiography.

After an interview with Gandhi in 1926, Rufus Jones noted philosopher and leader of the Quakers, referred to him as "The Greatest person now living on our planet". A number of books dealing with non-violence became available in America in the early 1920s and 1930s. The first book based on Gandhian philosophy and ideology by Romain Rolland was published in 1924.

Several other books were also published in the early 30s. Perhaps, the most influential and widely read book on non-violence was Richard Gregg's - "The Power of Non-violence." Krishnalal Shridharani's "War Without Violence" was also a valuable exposition of the methods of Non-violent Direct Action. The central theme in all these books was Gandhi's ideology of *Satyagraha*.

Muriel Lester, a renowned lecturer in America, delivered a series of lectures on Gandhi's non-violent strategy. Gandhi's stand against British Colonialism was given wide publicity in the United States newspapers by journalists Negley Farson and Web Miller.

A radical group emerged during World War II within the peace movement and existed thereafter. This group applied Gandhi's *Satyagraha* consciously as an organized method of Direct Action in its struggle for social justice. Non-violent methods had become the central strategy in the movement.

In New York City, missionaries Jay Holmes Smith and Ralph Templin who were expelled from India set up a committee on Non-violent Direct Action. Their promotion of the Gandhian strategy influenced, among others, Negro labour leader Phillip Randolph. The leaders of the Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) formed in 1942 committed itself to non-violent methods as its

strategy. The Fellowship of Reconciliation (F.O.R.) under the leadership of Muste, applied the strategy of Non-violent Direct Action in the field of social injustices.

Some of the Indian speakers and writers deeply influenced by Gandhi were Amiya Chakravarty, Eddy Asirvatham, Haridas Muzumdar, J.B. Kripalani, Nirmal Kumar Bose, Bharatan Kumarappa, K.K. Chandy, Richard Keithahn, and Sushila Nayyar and more recently A.K. Mitra and Gurdial Mallik. They were invited by pacifist groups to describe Gandhi's approach.

Louis Fischer, Vincent Sheean, Pearl Buck, Aldous Huxley, Herrymon Maurer, John and Frances Gunther, Edmond Taylor and Chester Bowles were also significant authors on Gandhi.

In 1948 Gandhian ideology was the focal point within American opposition to the peacetime conscription. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin and other colleagues formed the "Committee against Jim Crow within Armed Forces." Their commitment was to urge Negroes to refuse separate military units and to spearhead Civil disobedience against conscription.

In 1949 at the World Pacifist Conference held in India, it was decided that *Satyagraha* units be established in

different countries.

Gandhi's idea of *Satyagraha* influenced several important leaders within the peace movement. The National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (S.A.N.E.) was established. This Committee worked with liberals to moderate non-violent action against nuclear weapons.

King was inspired by speeches on Gandhianism by A.J. Muste and Mordecai Johnson. In Gandhi's ideology he found the instrument for social reform.

In 1958 an article written by Chester Bowles, published in Saturday Evening Post Magazine inspired Negro college students to initiate sit-in movements against injustices. Two Negro students who initiated the sit-in movement (Greensboro, North Carolina, 1960) told the author that a television program on Gandhi impelled them to action. A jail sentence to them was a worthy cause. Out of this approach grew the student Non-violent Coordinating Committee which used non-violence as a strategy in methods of protesting against racial discrimination (Walker 1967:203).

The influence of Gandhian ideas and leadership gave organizational expertise and methodology to the interpretation of unfolding events in America. Interest in Gandhi, his philosophy and methods of non-violence

continued to grow in American Colleges and Universities. Periodical articles on Gandhi's ideology were published, an example of which is the "Journal of Conflict Resolution" published at the University of Michigan. Gandhi's *Satyagraha* has given the opponents of racism a clear role in leadership. It has provided a constructive program of direct action coupled with reasonable and acceptable method and organization. It has impressed not only the exponents of non-violence who reject authoritarianism and racism in America but all over the world today.

5.2 GANDHI'S INFLUENCE ON KING

The inspiration provided by Gandhi led to a re-interpretation of the technique of non-violent resistance in the West. The nature of pacifism and non-violent resistance was reviewed. The most notable example of the use of Gandhian techniques in the West is that of Martin Luther King in the Civil-Rights Movement in the United States of America during the 1950's and 1960's. King adopted Gandhian techniques in the struggle for civil rights for blacks and was committed to a philosophy of non-violence. However, there are also those who admire King and regard his non-violence as a modern example of Christian pacifism.

Dr Mordecai Johnson, President of Howard University, delivered a lecture at Crozer Theological Seminary on Gandhi which inspired King. He was extremely impressed and proclaimed that:

His message was so profound and electrifying that I left the meeting and bought a half-a-dozen books on Gandhi's life and works (Bennett 1964:37).

The reading soon restored his original faith in the power of love. He recognized that when love pervades non-violent methods, far from being a symptom of weakness, is a potent force for social transformation (Bennett 1985:31).

King maintained that he had discovered a profound significance in Gandhi's central concept of "*Satyagraha*" means "Holding onto Truth" and hence "Truth Force". The true *Satyagrahi* dedicates his life to Truth. If one first seeks truth then one will also begin to achieve beauty and goodness. Since Gandhi considered truth to be soul or spirit, he also called *Satyagraha* soul force. Gandhi understood *Ahimsa* to mean a renunciation of the will to kill or damage. He also understood *Ahimsa* to mean rejection of the inner violence of the Spirit.

The relevance of *Satyagraha*, both as a way of life and as a weapon for evolutionary social change, cannot be

doubted as it was used successfully by the Negroes in the United States of America under the able guidance of King. Although there were many frustrations, non-violent direct action helped revive the conscience of the United States, provided power for court decisions and statutes, and built up the courage of Negroes for future action. In terms of immediate results, too, it appeared to be effective.

The Montgomery bus boycott broke down segregation in the buses of the city and King maintained that between 1959 and 1961, lunch counters in more than 150 cities were actually desegregated by "sit-in" direct actionists. Young Americans sat, stood, knelt in restaurants, stores parks and churches in efforts to change the segregated policies practised there. Integrated groups boarded buses and entered terminals on "Freedom Rides" that challenged segregation.

Negro women had been exploited, denied human dignity and were for many years kept in a condition of near servitude. In the fifties of the twentieth century, they decided that they had had enough. They turned to direct non-violent action.

By non-violent direct action they began not merely to undermine the structure of racial injustice but also to develop a sense of self-confidence and dignity. Just as

Gandhi found that the Indian masses had first to eliminate their own slavish attitudes before they could effectively oppose imperialism, King observed that the non-violent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect, it calls up resources of strength and courage which they did not know they had.

The power of non-violence to develop a sense of dignity and self-confidence as well as to accomplish social results was demonstrated in the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott. In the bus boycott thousands of Negroes walked to work, often over long distances, rather than surrender their objective, the desegregation of buses. In sit-ins the Negro and white groups deliberately ordered food in segregated restaurants and, if ill used physically, would refuse to retaliate in kind. Wade-ins involved similar action in segregated swimming pools. As for freedom rides, groups of Negroes and Whites broke down segregation patterns in buses. Street demonstrations, which were usually well disciplined in spite of provocations, sought among other objectives, to affect patterns of employment and secured self respect and equal opportunity laws already on the statute books.

King's techniques in the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's indicate Gandhi's influence in the following ways:

1. An appeal to those outside the struggle, using every means of propaganda to reach those sympathetic to the cause, e.g., Press, broadcasting media, letters, magazines, books. At 35, Gandhi had three publications in the Transvaal, *Indian Opinion*, *Young India* and *Harijan*.
2. The first of King's four books *Stride Towards Freedom the Montgomery Story* was published in 1959. When he was 28, King had the added advantage of Television coverage and was very conscious of the power of the media. His letter from Birmingham jail on 16 April 1960 had a huge appeal. President J.F. Kennedy sympathised with the Southern cause and Robert Kennedy had telephoned Mrs King to express his concern and support.
3. Gandhi appealed from a strong Hindu base with his concept of *Satyagraha* and had a huge Nationalist following. He knew, however, the risk of violence inherent in mass non-violent demonstrations and marches. King likewise stirred the Black community before the Birmingham campaign.

Before we shall march non-violently we shall force this nation, this city, this world to face its own conscience. We will make the God of love in the white man triumphant over the satan of segregation that is in him (Lewis 1970:180).

Volunteers were asked to sign commitment cards before engaging in demonstrations.

At Crozier, King also read Niebuhr, and was challenged by Niebuhr's rejection of pacifism. According to King he believed that Niebuhr misunderstood 'true pacifism' which, King claimed "it is not unrealistic submission to evil power. It is rather a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love" (Bishop 1981:94).

Many scholars are also of the opinion that King had gained much from his visit to India. He definitely learned much more of the actual tactics employed by Gandhi in the civil disobedience movement in India. King was particularly amazed by the results of Gandhi's campaign for independence. He could testify that during his trip to India in 1959, he saw no evidence of hatred that ordinarily follows a violent victory. He saw rather a mutual friendship based on equality between the British and Indians. This victory for love led him to judge Gandhi to be one of the half-a-dozen of the greatest men in the world. King frequently appealed to the fact that Gandhi had used the weapons of truth, non-injury, courage and soul force, and still had been

able to challenge the might of the British Empire to win independence for his people.

Although King had not seen the Gandhian movement in operation only the Gandhian legacy, after his visit to India non-violent resistance was more than an emotionally based intellectual conviction, more than a morally superior practical philosophy. It was a reality in daily operation. It was no wonder that King always held Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and the Indian example of *Satyagraha* in very high esteem.

However, not many people understood the difference between Gandhian non-violence and pacifism. With regard to their ignorance in this matter there are many who regard King as an outstanding example of a Christian pacifist who demonstrated the effectiveness of pacifism. Due to the word 'pacifism' being used somewhat loosely in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States of America, a definition of the term seems to be in order.

A person is a pacifist if they believe such that, if they acted in a way those beliefs require, they would refuse all participation in war (Bishop 1981:130).

With reference to Gandhi he refused to use pacifism as a description of his approach to conflict because he was aware of the negative connotations of the word. He

wished to emphasize the positive aspect of a resistance to evil which was active even though it was non-violent. To this end the term *Satyagraha* was coined in order to convey the impression of a determined struggle for truth and justice.

Dr De Wolf, one of King's early teachers, described him as 'not a thorough going pacifist'. This is also reflected in King's writings. He had a deep and genuine commitment to non-violence on the Gandhian pattern and was opposed to the use of violence in any circumstances in the American civil rights movement. King also considered the use of violence in the civil rights struggle to be tactically unwise. But above all, King was a Christian who accepted the validity of the Gandhian techniques of non-violent resistance, and wedded *Satyagraha* to the Christian concept of *Agape* (sacrificing love - giving love).

It was at Crozier that King began what he described as a 'serious intellectual quest for a method to eliminate social evil'. Obviously King's focal point was the teachings of Christ. But he concluded that the ethics preferred by Christ could only be effective in individual relationships. Then upon hearing Dr Mordecai Johnson's lecture on Gandhi, King through the eyes of a Hindu, saw certain aspects of the Christian faith in a new way. Having re-assessed his interpretation of the

ethic of Jesus, he realized that he was wrong to have regarded the teachings of Jesus as applicable only to individual relationships. What Gandhi had done for his understanding of Jesus, he believed, could be done for others, for he regarded Gandhi as the first person in history to have 'lifted the love ethic of Jesus above the individual level.'

After reading Gandhi, King studied Reinhold Niebuhr, a Christian theologian who also believed in the appropriateness of Gandhian methods to the struggle for racial equality in America. King's understanding of Niebuhr led him to the conclusion that many pacifists had 'an unwarranted optimism concerning man'. This prevented King from joining a pacifist organization. Critically analyzing Niebuhr, King stated that he interpreted pacifism as passive non-resistance to evil, and lacked a true appreciation of the potential of non-violent methods for resisting injustice and oppression (King Jr 1957:93).

For King the Christian concept of *Agape*, a sacrificial, sympathetic, caring love for all people was uppermost. It was *Agape* that moved him to stand up for justice on behalf of the oppressed Negro. At the same time discouraging his hatred for the White who was his adversary in battle.

As King began to wage his civil rights campaign the inspiration of Gandhi began to exert its influence. King claimed that the doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of non-violence was one of the most potent weapons available to the Negro in his struggle for freedom. Christ furnished the spirit and motivation, while Gandhi provided the method.

King also adopted certain concepts from Gandhi without necessarily accepting fully the ideas that lay behind them. One such case was urging his followers to counter physical force with soul force. For Gandhi soul force was an essential ingredient of non-violence. Soul force being related essentially to the idea that spiritual power and moral influence must eventually triumph over physical power. This view being held by Gandhi due to his Hindu background was bound with his ascetic life style. On the other hand, King was entirely different from Gandhi in this respect. He showed no signs of giving up normal physical pleasures in order to be effectively non-violent (Bishop 1981:135).

King's concept of soul force therefore, was not Gandhian. It was simply a way of expressing the need for unarmed people to stand up to the abusive power of a hostile police force and civil authority, with courage and determination. Gandhi regarded political, social and economic power to be corrupting. He

admitted that moral power was the only pure form of power. King identified a legitimate place for the exercise of power and wished to achieve and use power. The aim of the non-violent movement for King was the democratisation of power, but one in which power and morality go together.

The emphasis of King on non-violence was very similar to that of Gandhi. Non-violent resistance was seen to be an active and courageous opposition to injustice. This was determined by not allowing tyranny to go by unchallenged, but which fought for the good of ally and enemy alike. For both, non-violent resistance was a positive concept, and offered a method of pursuing revolution by peaceful means. Non-violence was used tactfully so as not to humiliate the opponent but to win his friendship and understanding. King also maintained that non-violent campaigns directed its attack against the forces of evil rather than against the persons who happen to be doing the evil. King also acknowledged the fact that the non-violent resister knows that in his struggle for justice he has cosmic companionship (Bishop 1981:136).

Thus it can be deduced that Gandhianism provided a method of action which effectively expressed the Christian concept of *Agape* - an understanding of love - which to King was the foundation of Christian moral

practice. He took Gandhianism out of its Indian context and applied it to the American situation. King was concerned to seize and use power, but in its pursuit he was dedicated to non-violence.

King regarded the Montgomery struggle not as racial tension but as a conflict between justice and injustice. Thus he stressed that there would be victory for justice and defeat for injustice. King also shared Gandhi's vision of the value of unearned suffering. He recognized that the willingness to suffer could arouse the conscience of the opponent and drew strength from Gandhi's plea to his followers.

Rivers of blood may have to flow before we
gain our freedom, but it must be our blood
(Oates 1985:75)

During the Montgomery boycott, King warned his followers that their participation might mean jail or even their death and contended:

But if such physical death is the price that
we must pay to free our children from a life
of permanent psychological death then nothing
could be more honourable (Oates 1985:184).

He also identified with Gandhi's insistence that non-violence should include the internal non-violence of the spirit. In 1959 he felt a special need to re-emphasize the necessity for non-violence of the spirit

when he repudiated the attempt of some "hate groups" in the black community to preach a doctrine of Black supremacy. He still challenged his people to meet hate with love and to confront physical force with soul force. Despite the fact that he was aware of the brutality, exploitation and oppression suffered by his people.

Although King agreed with Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, he differed from him in at least three ways.

Firstly, Gandhi acknowledged that he did not find the truth he sought. He had no fixed and final theological or philosophical system apart from his commitment to the principles of non-violence. He was open to revising not only his tactics but his strategies so that he could respond to the actions of his opponents. King arrived at a system of definite philosophical and theological conviction about the nature of God, human nature, the direction of history, the mission of the Christian Church and the role of the State in social reform.

King differed remarkably from Gandhi in the degree of emphasis on the necessity of self help. Gandhi proposed to his *Satyagrahis* a programme of self purification. It included the development of village industries, adult education, and the spinning wheel as a condition for

achieving political independence. In contrast King arrived at the conclusion that the federal government should do more for Blacks. He believed that the government could provide the ultimate solutions in the problem areas of housing, employment, and education. Finally, King also differed from Gandhi in that he did not share Gandhi's conception of the role of ascetism in the practise of non-violence. Gandhi chose the ascetical life because he regarded it as necessary for his own self-purification and adherence to non-violence. To those who have not lost hope the possibilities of non-violent protest still wield great potential. In these trying times man would do well to heed the teaching and example of Mahatma Gandhi and the adaptation of his work by King. According to Bishop:

They have given the world remarkable demonstrations of a technique for loving; a technique which resolutely seeks justice, but also desires only good for those against whom the struggle is carried out and works for the ultimate benefit of friend and foe alike; a technique which speaks in the positive phrases of co-operation rather than the negative tones of confrontation; a technique which demands of its users much courage, tenacity and sensitivity; and a technique which blends in an unusually effective way, moral and spiritual insights from east and west (Bishop: 1981:158).

The central theme in King's doctrine of non-violence reveals why he has been called the *American Gandhi* .

5.3 ASSESSMENT

Whatever the measure of Gandhi's influence on King there are some uncanny resemblances in their biographies, viz.,

1. Both had a strong sense of identity; of pride in their father, their family and their country.
2. Both were born in circumstances of oppression: Gandhi in India, under British rule, King in Atlanta where Negroes were dispossessed.
3. Both had a strong sense of religious conviction believing the sovereignty of God who stands for Truth and Justice.
4. Both felt a sense of being 'second class citizens'.
5. Both had charisma. Gandhi was a persuasive speaker with a simplicity of lifestyle which rang true. King was a gifted dynamic public speaker with qualities of leadership, a modern man speaking for his people.
6. Both were men of conviction and courage and, inspite of opposition from cautious conservatives

and ridicule from radicals, were prepared to go on and were sent to prison on numerous occasions.

7. Both were propelled into work for justice by traumatic experiences. Gandhi at the age of 24, was humiliated in South Africa by being thrown off a train because a White passenger had objected to an Indian travelling first class.

Martin Luther King at 26, was incensed after a young Negro woman in his local area was turned off a bus because she would not give up her seat to a white passenger.

8. Both were in positions of leadership at an early age. Gandhi at the age of 25, was the first secretary of the Natal Indian Congress in 1894. King was president of the Southern Christians Leadership Conference at 28 in 1957.
9. Both were assassinated at the height of their success, Gandhi in 1948, only months after Indian Independence and King in 1968 within one week of the Civil Rights Act.

There is no doubt that Gandhi's work in India for 33 years leading to Independence in 1948 paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.

Gandhi's struggle brought bitter opposition and years of imprisonment which he was prepared to face. In 1930, British opinion was antagonistic towards him and the *Times of India* accused him (at 61 years) of leading India to chaos and anarchy.

By Independence in 1948 the mood had changed and the struggle had already gained momentum in the United States. King found more sympathy internationally than Gandhi and was awarded the Nobel Prize in December 1964 at the age of 35. Gandhi a true man of peace received no such accords in his lifetime.

Both men, however, lived by the courage of their convictions and died knowing that they had achieved God's greatness.

SUMMARY

Chapter One deals with the object and aim of the study, the methodology employed in the research.

Chapter Two discusses the concept of *Ahimsa* in Hinduism. The root of *Ahimsa* has been traced in the various scriptures, namely, the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Further research was made into the Biblical teachings on non-violence. This aspect offers a discussion on the Biblical concept of *Shalom* or Peace, the Old Testament teachings on Peace and Jesus' teaching on Peace. Finally an insight into Christian Pacifism and a study of Christian influence on Gandhi was researched. The chapter brings out Gandhi's search for Truth which he found in these scriptures.

Chapter Three provides a brief biography of Gandhi and the influence that some Western writers had on his teachings. A further discussion is offered on Gandhi's Philosophy of *Satyagraha* and the historical development of *Satyagraha* in South Africa as well as Civil Disobedience in India.

Chapter Four provides a brief biography of King and his theological thinking. It was Gandhi who had a profound effect on King's doctrine of non-violence. This launched the Civil Rights Movement in America against oppression suffered by the Negroes.

Chapter Five illustrates the acknowledgements by writers of Gandhi's victory of *Satyagraha* and their great admiration of his strategy. The chapter concludes with Gandhi's influence on King followed by an assessment.

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