

LALA LAJPAT RAI MEMORIAL LECTURE
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On

GANDHIJI'S THOUGHT AND ITS RELEVANCE
IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

by

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Professor Shirahatti and Friends, :-

It is an honour to be speaking in an Institution hallowed by the memory of a great name like that of Lala Lajpat Rai - the Lion of Punjab. He was a great Freedom fighter and leader, who alongwith Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the Bengal Leader Surendranath Pal were provided a Leadership at a critical juncture in India's Freedom struggle. But Lalaji was more than the Leader of the Freedom struggle. He had given considerable thought to the shape of political and Social India after the attainment of Independence which he has written in his books and articles and which give one a glimpse into the vision that had inspired the Leadership of the Indian Freedom Movement in those years.

As your Principal said, "This is the 125th Year of the Birth Anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, functions are being arranged in different places to celebrate the occasion appropriately". I have taken advantage of the annual Lala Memorial Lecture to speak on **Gandhiji's Thought and its Relevance in the Contemporary World.**

Mahatma Gandhi (without beyond question) was one of the greatest men of our Century. He was and still remains one of the greatest puzzles of the World. The enigma that surrounded his life and work is not diminished even slightly after so many years after his death. On his death, Albert Einstein said "Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a Man as he, in flesh and blood, ever walked upon this Earth". How true! Especially in our Country the Country that gave birth to Gandhiji where his name does not ring in the bell, not only among the Younger generation but even of the older generation who have no business to have forgotten him so quickly!

You know the Cartoon that appeared in the Times of India the day after Attenborough's Gandhi film was released at the Regal Cinema - The cartoon shows Two pot believed baniya business men walking across Regal cinema and one showing the big poster on which Gandhi's picture appears and telling the other "and you know the funny thing is, I am told that this is based on the real story!"

That there was really such a man as Gandhi - how prophetic were the words of Albert Einstein who said "Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a person as he in flesh and blood walked upon this Earth". And it is very true! and as years roll by the world is going to come to realise his importance and its relevance and he is going to see the governance of his Ideas in order to get out of the Mess in which the world finds itself today.

Different people have looked upon Gandhi in very different ways. Einstein praised him. Mountbatten said Gandhi belonged to the same line of Men from Buddha, Christ! other great leaders paying tribute to this Great Man eulogised this man, his greatness and, the services he rendered in a variety this man, his greatness and, the services he rendered in a variety of ways! But there were others who criticised him. Lord Wavell for example - the last Governor, General and Viceroy of India called Mahatma Gandhi "85 percent Gentleman and 15 percent Humbug"! Churchill called him, "a seditious half-naked Fakir". George Orwell, in his Critical Essay has a very critical tribute. He disagreed with many things that Gandhi said and did. But in the end he said, "when he left, what a breath of fresh air he has left behind". Some called Gandhi, a Saint, a Prophet, a Holy man, others called him a Fraud, a Charlatan, a Hypocrite! Even today, people find it easier to rever him than to understand him. And we in India always find it easy to place a man on a high pedestal and then, take our leave of his obligations. We make a God out of a Man or a prophet or a saint out of him, put him on a high pedestal and say, "After all he was a super human". We are ordinary mortals. So how can we follow him! That's being clever, a hypocritical way of doing things. And I don't think Indians lag behind other people or other people of the world. Perhaps other people in the world may find it hard to compete with India so far as hypocrisy between the word and the deed is concerned. One of the many reasons why Gandhi is such a puzzle to the world is that both in thought and in deed he was so different - he was so unconventional from the rest.

He resisted evil without hating the evil doer. He successfully mounted mass movement against injustice and oppression on Mankind's capacity for inflicting suffering on others, although in thick of politics he retained his essentially Sainly qualities and above all, he practiced what he preached. This is why to people who are accustomed to saying one thing and doing the opposite, he remains such a puzzle!

Gandhi is not and was not just a politician but a political and spiritual Leader although he himself said that he was in politics, when critics used to say that Gandhi was a saintly man and why did he have to meddle in politics. His answer was that he was not a Saint meddling in politics but that he was a politician trying to be saintly. And to the end he struggled to keep these essentially human and saintly qualities of his.. For him, there was no distinction between politics and religion. He is quoted as saying, "Those who say that politics and religion are sacred know neither politics nor religion". And he insisted on the mixing on a plane which is quite different from the kind of mixture of religion and politics which some Groups and Parties are attempting in this country. He had his own peculiar view of politics about its true nature and domain and similarly, he spoke of religion in a special sense - quite different from the common sectarian connotation of the word Religion. In the course of a long career in South Africa and India, Gandhiji fashioned tools and techniques of political action which were novel. But they soon acquired high legitimacy and potency because of their organic relationship to the Religion-Moral and cultural *methods of Indian Society. Besides, the Novelty of the Tools and Techniques* Gandhi employed, he also employed an idiom of political communication which was wholly indigenous.

Gandhi as you know was a great mobiliser. Few leaders have mobilised men and women in the manner in which Gandhiji successfully did so the first leader to take politics to the masses in India, was Bal Gangadhar Tilak and as you know he was called a mass leader - "Teli Tamboliyanche Pudhari". But Gandhiji left Tilak far behind in taking politics to the masses. And he involved millions of men and women ordinary men and women of this country and made them do

heroic things which they themselves never thought they were ever capable of doing. A great mobiliser are no parallels in the Indian Freedom Movement of a rival Communicator who surpassed Gandhi in the skills of communication. How Novel! How Imaginative! How unconventional but how effective. And he used various symbols in his communication with ordinary people.

He used some symbols that were religious because they come so naturally to him because of his religion-spiritual and moral tradition; other symbols were secular. Some symbols pertained to the precepts others pertained to the techniques and tools. But in all he made the most effective use of symbols in political communication and became a political communicator par excellence symbols like Swaraj; like Ram-Rajya, Satyagraha which its ingredients of truth and Non-violence, accumulation, and Renunciation. These can be called Hindu religious symbols. Hartal, Fasting, Dharna, other symbols - very effective symbols. These belonged to the techniques. Prayer was another religious symbol put to most effective use. Both in the morning and in the evening; the morning prayer was restricted to the Ashramites, the evening prayer was joined in by 100's and at times, by 1000's of people where, after all religious prayers were recited, Gandhi used the occasion to communicate with his listeners and through his listeners, to the Public and the Governments of the World. And what Gandhi said in an evening prayer, caused the headache of the Prime Minister of England, the next day.

Symbol which is an integral part of religious traditions, not only of Hindus - Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain - take any religion of the World - prayer is an integral part of its tradition. And Gandhi made a very effective use of these. Along with these religious and spiritual symbols, Gandhi also used secular symbols like the foreign goods, burning of foreign cloth and the most effective of the sea-beach of Dandi - what a spectacular and a dramatic use of a symbol! and when Lord Halifax, then Governor General was told by his Secretary that Gandhi was Planning to defy the Salt Laws, by picking up a handful of salt, the Governor General had a hearty laugh and he said,

"Oh! is that so? So Gandhi plans to destroy the British Empire by picking up a pinch of Salt, is it?". Little premonition did the Governor-General have that was going to be... that picking up of a handful of Salt on the Beach of Dandi was going to be the beginning of the end of the Mightiest Empire Mankind has seen in recent times!

You can compare Gandhi's leadership with leadership of other people-whether it is Churchill or Lenin or Abraham Lincoln or Mao-Tse-Tsung or Karl Mark or anybody. And you will not find a comparable Imaginative and creative use of Mao-Tse-Tsung would probably come close behind Gandhi. But the most spectacular use of symbols in political communication is to be found in Gandhi!

He deliberately mixed religion and politics. We often blame the wills of the World to this mixture and we say the domain of politics is separate from the domain of religion. And that is how we define Secularism. Secular politics is that politics which is kept away from religion. Gandhi held the exactly opposite view and insisted on mixing the two. I am saying without the slightest hesitation and I quote Gandhi "And yet in all humility that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means". He also said that his devotion to truth had drawn him into politics and that his power in the political field was derived from his spiritual experiments with himself.

But about politics and religion, about both the terms he had a special meaning and if you don't keep that special meaning in mind, you might misunderstand the entire position about mixing of religion and politics. He said he was concerned with spiritualising politics by spiritualising it by introducing moral and spiritual values and ideals.

As early as 1915, Gandhiji declared his aim to spiritualise politics for working by working for the ideal of subordinating the pursuit of power which is the central driving force of politics to higher moral goals. He strongly denied the autonomy for politics saying that in politics, judgements are made on the basis of the results that a certain action produces. You can tell lies in politics, you can cheat in politics, you

can do almost anything that you want in politics. As long as you achieve the results that you had expected, your actions are defended. Gandhi said "I will not accept this a moral or morally neutral view of politics". Politics is not an end in itself, it is a mean to an end and therefore it must be judged by the moral values which it promotes. And if it obstructs moral values, then that politics needs to be condemned. (just as power creates ...) Just as physical force creates its own power, moral force creates its own power also.

Gandhiji was acutely aware that politics means the confrontation between two forces. Some people have criticised Gandhiji that he had no sense of conception of power. Far from it. Gandhi was acutely conscious of power and he has said it in so many words. For in the letter that he wrote to the Governor General on the eve of starting his, Dandi March, he makes it very clear that the matter resolves itself to countervailing forces. "The British will never quit India even if they are convinced by argument. The matter here will never be resolved by argument but by force, matching the physical force of the Government with the moral force of the people". And therefore, Gandhiji never ran away from conflicts in politics, in fact he ran to the centre of politics and took the brunt of the action till the conflict was resolved. Just as Gandhiji had a special meaning of politics by which he meant, if I were to paraphrase Aldous Huxley, "Goodness Politics".

Gandhiji uses the term "Politics" in a "Pejorative" sense as well as in an "approving" sense. e.g., in one place, Gandhiji said, "Political is like the coils of a serpent". The more one tries to wriggle himself from the coil, the more involved he gets the more tangled he gets. This is the use of the word politics in a pejorative sense - disapproving sense. But politics to Gandhi was also a moral activity motivated by the desire to serve fellow human beings by organising social power in their interests. And it is "goodness" politics as against "power" politics. Similarly, Gandhi had his own view of religion. Gandhiji was not a believer in the conventional sense in so many words he said, "I do not subscribe to the Divinity of the Vedas or to the Divinity of the Quran or the Divinity of the Bible, therefore I do not believe that any

of these books of religion have said the Last word, I believe in all religions to the extent that they are Moral Embodiments of Universal Conduct that men and women must pursue. But all religions are Imperfect all religious are true but at the same time, they are only partially true because Ultimate truth, absolute truth is beyond the Comprehension of Man at any time".

To believe that 5000 years ago the Hindu sages saw the Ultimate Truth cannot be accepted by any reasonable rational human being. So also, the sermon on the mount to be the last or final truth, or Quran or any other outstanding works. Therefore all religions are true but all religions are only partially true and therefore he says that each one must be humble to accept its limitations and have mutual respect for one another. His famous sentence is, "It is a pity that Men know their own religion just enough to hate other religions, not enough to love all other religions". So Gandhiji had, by religion the concept of not of an organised Church, not of organised institutionalised religion. By religion he simply meant moral principles of a universal or cosmic order. And those principles are themselves mutating, those principles themselves are dynamic; they are also changing. But at any given point of time, man has only a partial view of that and he must hold on, he must hold fast to the truth that he sees it; but must at the same time be willing to accept that he may be wrong and accept something else as the truth. So, because Gandhiji had a unique definition of religion as well as a concept of politics and that Gandhiji really tried to mix these two. Therefore on the powers of the state, people must put a moral restraint. That moral restraint must be exercised when occasion comes, through Satyagraha, adherence to truth and adherence to Non-violence, in order to exert the moral influence on the State when the state tries to use its coercive power not for the good of the people but against their interests.

Therefore, Gandhiji gave to the world, not only to India but to the world a weapon, to be used on all occasions when no solution through arguments and reasoning is available.

Gandhiji's No-violent Resistance or Satyagraha as he called it in South Africa, is a Weapon of Universal application. Here is another point on which there is a lot of misunderstanding. Some of the critics of Gandhi have said that Gandhi's Satyagraha was successful because it was practised in India and among the Indians, the Indians being among the worlds most non-violent people. This is another nonsense going around. We have so many untruth which we have accepted without critical examination. Another falsehood is, "Hindu are the most tolerant people in the worlds". Ask the Harijans about their tolerance! Ask women about the tolerance in Hindu Society! One other falsehood going around is that the Hindus are a non-violent people, Indians generally are a non-violent people.

Indian History bears no evidence to this statement at all. If anything, it refuses this statement and points out that Indians are as good or as bad as people in other parts of the world, so far as killing each other is concerned. Another argument in this connection given by the critics is, Gandhi's Satyagraha succeeds because Gandhi's enemy or opponent was the British - the conscience-stricken British and that Gandhi would not have succeeds if he had confronted Hitler or if he had confronted Stalin or some other Dictator.

I am surprised how glibly people swallow arguments of this kind without even looking at History! Take the case of Hitler. Hitler overran all the Scandinavian countries and established his Dictatorial regime in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherland, every where. I am talking about Norway. He installed a Puppet Government under a Traitor by name Twisling. Twisling was the Norwegian Prime Minister but he was actually a Traitor. He was following all the orders from the **Occupying Forces of the Nazis**. They insisted that in all the Schools Nazi principles of civics must be taught, because they wanted to brainwash the children in the schools with Nazi principles of civics. And teachers refused to teach that. Teachers refused to teach the Nazi syllabus because they said it is against our conscience some teachers might say "What is so wrong, we often refuse to teach. That's our common practice these days in fact". Norwegian teachers refused to teach on the moral

principles that syllabus of civics was inhuman; it taught the Superiority of the Aryan Race over the other races and that they would not teach the same.

The Government arrested thousands of teachers; one ship which was meant to carry only 400 passengers, 975 teachers were pushed into it like sardines in a sardine can. And during the Voyage to Finland, nearly 124 of them died. 9000 teachers were arrested and kept in prison, Concentration Camps and yet they refused. Finally after 20 months, the Occupying Government had to withdraw its circular and allow the primary school teachers of Norway to teach the civics that they were teaching. This is Satyagraha against Hitler's power.

I do not have the time but otherwise I could give you a series of Satyagraha practised by the women in East Germany, by the workers in Poland under Lake Wallace, by the University students in Hungary, Budapest and in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Scores of example where Mankind, when it has no option, it refuses to compromise with tyranny and fights. And using the Gandhian technique whether they knew Gandhi's name or not.

Martin Luther King in his autobiography, writes "The intellectual satisfaction which I failed to get from Plato and Hobbs, the emotional satisfaction which I failed to get from Rousseau or Marx or the moral satisfaction which I failed to get even from the Bible, got from Gandhi". Martin Luther King was inspired by Gandhi's principle and he led the Blacks in a Movement for Dignity wherein as he said, "We want to create a world in which man will be respected not because of the Colour of his skin but by the Quality of his Character".

Martin Luther King Jr's words where Man will get dignity and respect not based on the colour of his skin, but on the quality of his character. And he was able to a large extent to confer upon the Blacks in America, a dignity, a self respect a self esteem and recognition by the white majority in Africa that they are Human Beings entitled to respectful and dignified behaviour (treatment).

So Gandhiji does not belong to India only but he belongs to the whole world. In politics, he gave this weapon of Satyagraha, which any group of people tormented under tyranny and oppression can use and have been using. Prof. Gene Sharpe, from North Eastern University who has made a special study of Gandhi, has given 85 cases of Satyagraha practised by men and women around the world, before Gandhi even entered Indian politics. Gandhi was not interested in patenting his discovery of Satyagraha, originality for his ideas. As Gandhiji himself said, "Truth and Ahimsa are as old as the hills themselves. I am only articulating what I have come to regard as an integral part of my cultural and moral tradition. But these are not my ideas, you don't have to acknowledge your debt to me whenever you follow". Very often, people take his name when they are afraid for good reasons Gandhi would never have approved. Those people use Gandhi's name more frequently, who have every intention of not following him. His followers don't need to make a public confession of their allegiance to Gandhi's values and Gandhi's inspiration.

Not only in politics, there is hardly any area of human activity in which Gandhi did not make a seminal contribution. And the world is slowly, waking up to the realisation. India and the world for a major part of his life and even after his Death have forgotten Gandhi, have dismissed him without studying him. Now, the rest of the world, and the Western world more than any other part, is slowly but surely waking up to the possibility that Gandhi after all, may have been right.

They are now beginning to appreciate the importance of things that Gandhi said, fifty and sixty and seventy of corporate dominated for a long time by two rival systems of Corporate Management of Economic affairs one called the Capitalist System is now a thing of the past and so it appears that Capitalism has won the day, well! even if it looks like winning a battle and losing a war! This is because capitalism itself has entered a kind of a blind alley, from which there is no escape! And no one is more actually aware of the problems created by the Capitalist, Materialist Western Civilisation than the thinkers among the Capitalist world themselves.

As early as 1909, in a little but seminal pamphlet called the Hind Swaraj, Gandhiji gave warnings of the kinds of things that are going to happen if the world does not change its ways! People thought Gandhi belonged to the Middle Ages, Gandhi belonged to ancient times according to some, Gandhi belonged to the past.

Now, the world is beginning to realise that probably the very opposite was the case, that Gandhi was ahead of the times and not behind the times. There are at least 6 areas to which I would like to make a reference here, which Gandhi talked about, which the world ignored so far and about which the world is now painfully becoming aware.

The first area Gandhi talked about was a productive relationship with and a rejuvenation of nature. Teaching Man to live in harmony with nature rather than in a never-ending competition with nature in a vainful boast of conquering it, wherever Man has felt boastful enough, vainglorious enough to think that he has conquered Nature, nature gives fitting reply which force Man to be humble! Gandhiji said, "Man and Nature are not poised in a mortal combat with each other, but they are standing together in harmony, in cooperation for bettering the lot of the people". He preached Non-violence towards Earth and towards Nature. How painfully aware we have now become of the degradation of nature and of the environmental degradation! Gandhiji talked about it years ago and as I told you at the very beginning what he preached, he practised!

You know for example, that Gandhi never wasted the envelopes in which he received Letters he used the blank space on the envelope. Why no body knew? People made fun of him oh! he is a National Leader - can not get realms of paper to write letters, why does he have to use the blank space of a postal envelope? Well! to produce envelope, how many trees are felled in the World, from the pulp of which envelopes are made? And if you go on cutting the trees and not replanting them, the world is going to get denuded of all forests, which is going to have disastrous consequences on the Ecological balance precariously maintained in this world. Therefore, Gandhiji talked

about loving trees, planting trees, taking good care of them and not recklessly misusing the product of the trees, namely paper.

He talked about the conservation of the Non-renewable Resources. But Mankind, in its greed and lust and selfishness, has been exploiting these non-renewable resources so foolishly, so short sightedly, that in another 50 or 60 years, most of these non-renewable resources are going to be exhausted. There will be no more copper, no more lead, no more Zinc, no more Iron-ore. What will you produce your Industrial Commodities without all these non-renewable, precious resources. Therefore, Gandhiji talked of a decentralised, low energy using communities that maximise local circulation of goods and services amongst themselves.

Today, the talk is exactly the opposite, everybody is encouraged to enter world competition! Globalisation! Globalisation means a global competition for the quickest destruction of the remaining non-renewable resources of the world. What kind of earth are we leaving for our future generations! So Gandhiji said this mad craving for more and more is a self destroying rush. There ought to be some end when a man will say, "This is enough".

We in colleges of Commerce and Economics, we teach the first principles of Economics - Human needs, human wants are unlimited and recurring. And because they are unlimited and recurring, there is no end to Man's economic pursuit. And, therefore, we have a special definition of Man as an "Economic" man. Gandhiji says No, the economic man must be subject to the moral man and one of the things he must learn is to limit his wants. His famous statement you must be knowing "Nature has given enough for the needs of all but not enough for the greed of a few. Now, the world is realising this. The Industrialised seven, the group of 7 countries meet and discuss on strategies and techniques for conserving the limited resources and putting voluntary limitation on one's wants and a desire for a higher and higher standard of life. Those countries which have got this standard of life, have done so by stealing the resources from the rest of the world.

Today, 10 percent of the industrialised world over which they have no claim whatever. "Is this just" Gandhi asked. And how long can they go on drilling for Oil or coal or manganese from here and the Mexicans or the Latin Americans start drilling from below. Afterall, the Earth's surface is a finite surface and you go on pushing in and the other fellow is pushing from behind one day you will only shake hands and not have any coal or manganese in your hands. And that day is not very far, that day is going to come within 50 or 60 years. I know technologies are being developed for alternatives outcomes of energy, but those are also their limitations, they have their problems, they have costs - a lot of things depend upon that. Therefore, there is no running away from the truth that is starting in your face, namely, the world has only this much to give you. And you have no moral Right to exhaust it all in one Life - your own life. You have no right to leave for your children and grandchildren a Denuded, Deserted Earth.

Therefore, Gandhi said, "Economic must be subject to moral principles, to human values" I call Gandhi an Economics Humanomics. It places moral values above economic values and judges the validity or the invalidity of the economic values in terms of what it does to those moral values and the qualities of life.

Like decentralised low-energy using communities, Gandhi also spoke of Forms of Participatory Political Democracy and Power from below. His concept of Lok-Swaraj or Panchayati Raj; even in those countries which have a formal Democracy as a form of Government, people are seldom free. Rousseau used to say, "The people of England are free on only one day, the Day on which the Representatives are elected." How trace in India! And we are not even free on the day of Election, can anybody with a conscience say that the Voters in Bihar are free? On the day of election not at all, they are scared to Death! They don't know if they will ever succeed in actually casting a vote in favour of the candidate for whom they wanted to vote or whether they will be waylaid on the way, whether they will be murdered on the way or their Ballot paper will be physically snatched away or the whole Ballot box will be stolen, booths captured and what have to

say you! We are not even free on the day of election. At least the people of England, Rousseau thought, were free on one day. And from then on, for the ensuing 5 years, we are slaves of the representatives we have elected in our collective Wisdom which often turns out to be our collective (un) wisdom.

Gandhiji said the Crux of Democracy is not Election. Elections may be necessary but the existence of Elections does not prove the existence of Democracy. Democracy needs Elections but the obverse is not necessarily true, because even Dictators have held elections. More frequent the elections does not mean deeper democracy. The crux of democracy is the nearer the people or is it away from them. If all significant power is in Delhi, or in Washington or in Tokyo or in Beijing, then it is not a democracy. Maximum power must remain with the people and they must have the freedom to organise their own lives as best as they feel like with minimum interference from the Government.

What have we been doing? We have been inviting more and more interference from Government even in fields which traditionally are free Government control. Previously the British Government had control over economics affairs, over political affairs. Gradually in the name of welfare of the people and socialism and other ideologies, the Government has begun to interfere in every area of human life and endeavour.

In education everything is determined by the Government and if it is not doing so, we ourselves go and invite the government 'Lay down our policy - lay down our examination dates, give us our scales, decide our promotion, decide everything'. So also in Culture so that instead of there being culture in politics, there is politics in culture this is a trend that is totally opposed to the Gandhian spirit. And Gandhi knew this. And Gandhi wanted to restructure the system of education right from kindergarten, by Teaching a craft. When the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development sent an invitation to Evan Elich, the great, unconventional revolutionary educationist to

come and advise the Government of India, Elich is reported to have said, "Me! what can I advise to the Government of a country which has Gandhi I thought all worth while things about education were laid by Gandhi", he said.

When John Dewy comparing his own scheme of craft education and Gandhiji's says, "My scheme falls short of the visionary breadth that Gandhiji introduced in his concept of Basic Education". "Do you know anything about Basic Education at all? I am sure you don't. I am sure you have never even felt the urge of knowing anything because dismissing Gandhi as an outdated eccentric quaint personality is a lot easier than taking the trouble to read his ideas.

About Industrial Reform, it is erroneously believed that Gandhi was opposed to Machinery. No, in the beginning may be, in the 20's and 30's may be. But his ideas involved and Gandhi was not opposed to Machinery per se, but only the craze for machinery which results in unemployment in a country which is so over populated as ours.

Now, you know what is the latest world that economists are using? And because the western economists are using it, you have also started parading it - "Sustainable Growth". Sustainable Growth, Gandhiji talked of sustainable growth so that for a long, infinitely long period of time, mankind will be able to enjoy a decent standard of living without having to experience the fact that all resources are exhausted, there is no Capital Formation, the rates of Savings have dropped or there is a large backlog of unemployment and the economy is functioning only marginally. Sustainable growth! because Gandhi was not a professionally trained Economist, he did not use the word "Sustainable growth". But this is exactly what he meant when he gave his ideas on Economics!

And Forms of Ownership Gandhiji equally disliked Capitalism and Communism; he equally disliked private ownership and state ownership and suggested Trusteeship as an alternative form of Ownership of the Means of Production. Do we have a single Industry which is running

on the Trusteeship principal today? No because this government and this country which claims that Gandhi was the Father of the nation, has not even passed a Legislation allowing, trusteeship as a form of industrial organisation. You have principles of joint-stock company, you have laws and regulations for co-operatives, you have laws and regulations for partnership and for individual enterprise but no regulation made by the Parliament of India on Trusteeship as an ownership form of organisation. This is what we have done to Gandhi, in 50 years.

In 1963, a Steel Mill, in England was converted into a Trusteeship. A Steel Mill voluntarily converted into a Trusteeship and all powers of decision-making given to the workers, jointly to decide what should be produced, how much should be produced, how much should be reinvested, how much should be distributed to the workers and how much should be distributed as discounts and bonuses to the proprietor/consumers. 21 percent of industrial production of North West Spain is produced by small and medium sized industries run on Trustship principles. You don't know anything about this, why should you know? The only country worth knowing is the United States and that also, I am sure, you don't know much!

That the whole world is coming alive with a sense of urgency to try and work out some solution to the problems, the prickly problems of the world by looking in the direction of Gandhi. Alvin Toffler, in his book the Third Wave writes a chapter on Gandhi - the Satellite, wanting to use the satellite technology for creating the Village self-sufficiency about which Gandhi talked. Gandhi being 50 years earlier talked of a Group of Villages within a radius of 10,20,50 miles. Alvin Toffler because he knows Space Technology is talking about 100 sq. kms. or 200 sq. kms. or even 500 sq. kms. becoming a self-sufficient group of villages having their own educational system, having their own communication, having their market for exchange of Goods and Services and only that which is absolutely necessary to be imported, will be imported from outside and exported to them in exchange for the import.

The economists have now started talking about this and a genuine spirituality that streets people away from greed, lust, hate, attachment and ego because have brought on Mankind, nothing but misery. The world is experimenting in a variety of ways. Your Principal said that I taught the Life and thought of Gandhi in the United States. I began teaching in 1983 since then, the increase and I get an International class and there is hardly a country in the world from which students do not enroll for my class which began with 40 in 1983 and which has been increasing! The only country from which students are seldom present in my class are Indians, because they don't think they have anything to learn about Gandhi. But each year, 3-4 Pakistani students sit in my class and they are so tremendously interested in wanting to know.

And I start by telling my class that I am there not to praise Gandhi or to condemn him but that I am there together with them to jointly explore the hidden and the revealed meaning of his ideas and thoughts so that they could as a group, find a way out of the impasse in which the World finds itself at the present moment.

And Gandhi is Fresh. Gandhi is fresh because Gandhi never allowed a dogma to be made out of his ideas. You know Dancil Bell, the Professor of Sociology said "all isms have become wasms". All ideologies have become things of the past. The Derbris of Leninism, Marxism are scattered on the plains of the Soviet Union. But Gandhism cannot be destroyed for the simple reason that there is no such thing as Gandhism. Gandhi never gave a scheme of things, a school of thought.

Gandhi is full of contradictions too and he knows it. Gandhi himself said, "I know there are contradictions in what I have said and whenever you come across such contradictions, follow what I said later and forget what I had said earlier", because in order to be true to life, one should not stick to life as unmoving and unchanging. Life is like a river, moving left, right, taking twisted turns going in the forward direction always and I am trying to be true to life; therefore all of live contradictions are also reflected in what I am saying and in what

I have said before. But look at the spirit in which I have said it. And the world is now beginning to take a serious note. There are 12 Universities in the United States, offering Ph.D. programme in Gandhian studies. And here, I am still being blamed for persuading Ushanben to start the Institute of Gandhian Studies at Mani Bahavan and we gave Recognition by the Bombay University I am still being cursed and criticised for it. There are 12 Universities in the United States which have a Programme upto Ph.D. in Gandhian Studies. There must be at least a 100 colleges or universities, where elective subjects of Gandhi-Gandhian politics, Gandhian Economics, Comparative Religion, Truth and Non-violence - what have you! there must be at least a 100 universities in the United States, where in some form or the other, Gandhi's ideas are being studied.

The leading Intellectuals have discussed, have thoroughly studied each one of his major ideas. Look at the Institute of peace studies in Oslo - a great learned Man like Professor Arn Ness was Director of that Institute for many years and they have come out with rich Literature on the problems of a World that is facing the Nuclear Danger. All the peace and Disarmament Movements - the Greens they are all quoting Gandhi. There is hardly any major Movement of a revolutionary potential anywhere in the world those Leaders are not quoting from Gandhi.

Such was a man and we think there was nothing in him to waste our time over. But I know that, India will return to Gandhi, one day and sooner than you think. I say this because my confidence is based on the fact that the West is seriously rediscovering Gandhi and intellectual slaves that we are, what the West thinks today we will start teaching in our Colleges, a decade or two later.

Once I was explaining my enthralling, enthusiastic audience in the American Universities when my esteemed senior leader S. M. Joshi's son asked me, 'how is it that there is so much interest in Gandhi in the West and so little in our Country', and S. M. Joshi said, "But one day, Gandhi will be imported under the Export promotion Scheme",

he said. Under the export promotion scheme you are allowed to export and earn foreign exchange from which the exporter has a certain preference for importing whatever he wants. So Joshi said that today we are importing Jazz, we are importing disco, we are importing all the other things. But after that, we will find time to importing disco, we are importing all the other things. But after that, we will find time to import Gandhi also, he said.

Therefore, a lot of Research needs to be done in Gandhian ideas, whether economic ideas or political ideas or educational ideas. And the scholars and the intellectuals of the West are precisely busy adding new things, without taking away the spirit of Gandhian thought.

I thought I should share with you, my own experiences because for the last 15 years, I have an on going interaction with Western intellectuals. I teach at one University, the word spreads and so many Institutions, Organisations want to call me for a talk on Gandhian ideas and Gandhian Studies - The Asiatic Society, the Rotary Clubs, the Lions Club, the Chamber of Commerce - tell us about Gandhi. That's what they want to know. Naturally, one has to relate Gandhian thought with the Contemporary problems in order to make him meaningful. And, I find that when I try to do so, I strike a very positive chord of response because it rings a bell, it tells them something about their own problems, about their own anxieties, about the mess they have made of their own economy and democracy and of formal forms of power. And want to look beyond in order to give true meaning and richness to human life.

For giving me an opportunity to share these ideas with you, I thank your Principal and the Authorities of the College and the Board for having invited me to deliver the Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Lecture. It was a signal honour for me to have my esteemed friend Ushaben to chair the session. She is gem of a person. We have been together since 1942, working for the same cause and I know how much suffering, self suffering she has voluntarily taken upon herself to promote India's Freedom Struggle and later, to build an India of Gandhiji's dreams!

If she has not had great luck in the second, share her disillusionment because we are all in the same boat who feel that India is forgetting Gandhi, Gandhi is not going to lose anything from that. If is our own country which had the rightful advantage of claiming Gandhiji's Legacy, his rich heritage and taking a march over many other countries have chosen to follow the same routes repeating the same problems and struggling with the same kinds of solution in a blind folded game! It is therefore, a matter of great personal pleasure for me, that she is chairing it and I am sure that she will have something very valuable, very informative, very original to tell you, by way of Presidential or Chairperson's remarks. Thanking you for the patient hearing.

Thanking you.

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