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The Legacy of the Lokamanya

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**THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF
BAL GANGADHAR TILAK**

THEODORE L. SHAY, Ph.D.



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TO MY MOTHER

Preface

LOKAMANYA TILAK, one of India's greatest nationalist leaders, is also one of India's most misunderstood prophets. His life and his work constitute a great heritage, yet the meaning of his message has often been obscured. He has been called a disciple of expedience, meaning he was a political realist, while at the same time his philosophy was based on the highest idealism. He has been called a communalist, while actually he was the one who first taught the need for overcoming communal disagreements in the name of national unity. He has been called a provincialist, while actually he first retaught the meaning of love of country. He has been accused of believing in violence, yet it was he who first urged non-violent political action. He has been called a revolutionary, which is true, provided it is remembered he was a constructive revolutionary, far more interested in building than tearing down. He has been called an extremist, yet he was a moderating force. He has been censured for sacrificing everything for the cause, but he was always the first to sacrifice himself. And he was the first, and only, Lokamanya of India. His message, his political philosophy, must not only be remembered but also clearly understood, in Maharashtra, in India, and also, because it has a world significance, in the world, else we shall be the poorer for not using the legacy he has left behind.

I had made a study of Lokamanya Tilak's political influence and political philosophy in preparing my doctoral dissertation. Even from the limited sources

available in the United States, his wisdom and his pre-eminent stature were apparent. I began to admire and respect this Father of Indian Nationalism from afar ; and when the Knickerbocker Foundation of New York generously awarded me a research fellowship, I came to India to gather new material on Tilak and the independence movement which he led. Fortunately, the year I received my grant coincided with the centenary of the Lokamanya's birth. 1956 was chosen as the year in which his people would pay homage to one of their greatest sons, a year in which to recall not only the greatness of his service and sacrifice to his nation, but also in which to remember his legacy to free India, and perhaps in which to receive guidance and inspiration from his example and his philosophy.

We must admit that, for some, the memory of Tilak's work and his philosophy has become hazy with the passage of years. Many Indians encouraged me, as a non-Indian, and as something of an objective student, not only to gather additional materials on Tilak but also to write an interpretive study of his lasting, present-day importance to India, and perhaps also to the world. When a great man lives and teaches and leads a great nation, it is not enough merely to revere his memory as an historical figure. If he deserved the accolade of greatness, then his message must have a current and continuing importance, an applicability in the world of 1956 as well as 1896 or 1916. Put in another way, a great man leaves a legacy of wisdom and inspiration that transcends his purely historical importance. This I believe is eminently true of Lokamanya Tilak. For India, Tilak is both a great man and an enduring heritage. This I have endeavoured to demonstrate in writing this book.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Knickerbocker Foundation for its generous fellowship that allowed my wife and myself to come to India and undertake this work, and to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr William M. McGovern of Northwestern University, who was my first guide and counsellor and who first interested me in this subject. It is virtually impossible for me to express my most sincere thanks to all those in India who have been of help to me. I would especially like to thank Shri J. S. Tilak and Shri G. V. Ketkar, grandsons of the Lokamanya, and the *Kesari* staff in Poona, for their assistance and encouragement. I am also grateful to Mr Dorab S. Dinshaw, Dr Usha H. Mehta, Shri R. G. Nagraj and Shri B. R. Kembhavi for their invaluable research assistance ; Dr Krishna P. Mukerji, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta Professor of Politics at Bombay University, for his guidance and helpful interest ; Shri B. D. Kher for his assistance in translating Marathi articles ; and to Dr Rustom H. Dastur and Mr and Mrs A. R. D. Wadia for making our stay in Bombay pleasant and productive. I shall never be able to express adequately either my indebtedness or my gratitude to my wife, Shirley, for her constant companionship, her typing and work on the manuscript and the proofs, and her never-failing encouragement ; and to Robin, who couldn't come. Without their help, this book could never have been written.

T. L. S.

Bombay,
April 1956.

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Introduction

THIS BOOK deals with Lokamanya Tilak, with the role he played in developing an Indian philosophy of politics during the early struggle for Indian self-rule, and with the legacy he left to the independence movement and to free India. His legacy is one of his nation's most priceless possessions. Let it be remembered.

The rise of nationalism has been one of the outstanding political phenomena of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From Western and Central Europe to the New World and through the Near and Middle East to Southeast Asia and the Far East, the spirit of nationalism has spread, calling forth hitherto subject and dependent peoples to struggle for their own national self-determination. The idea of nationalism growing out of the French Revolution and historically based on the rise of the European nation-state, has been explained as a purely European concept, and analysis shows that most of the world's nationalist movements have owed their initiative and inspiration to this Western idea. But this is not the case in the movement which Lokamanya Tilak led—in the Indian struggle for self-rule. The Western idea, of course, played a part in the particular form of the nationalist movement in India, but the Indian movement gained its inspiration from the value system of the Indian civilization. This has made the Indian example unique.

Every great civilization is founded upon a value system, a philosophy of life. Because man is something more than an animal, human history is a record of more than merely the struggle for survival. Men have

everywhere searched for a philosophy of life. They have probed the heavens and shattered the atom and prayed for divine guidance in their search for Meaning in the universe, for Reality behind appearance and for Purpose in life. The world's great civilizations which mark the epochs of human progress were founded upon a philosophy of life that explained Reality, that gave Meaning to the life of the individual, and that inspired men to lead a Purposeful life. Integrated with the civilization's philosophy of life was a theory of politics, i.e. a theory of the relation of the individual to the political community and a plan for the 'right ordering' of that community, an explanation of the purpose of common political life integrated with the explanation of the Purpose of life itself. The justification of any particular forms or institutions of political order was their relation to the philosophy of politics, the standard of 'right ordering', and through the philosophy of right ordering to the philosophy of life. In other words, the value system of the civilization was integrated into the political system of the particular political community through the political philosophy. This general proposition is true of all the world's great civilizations and is true also of India's. The Indian civilization had an ancient, well-developed and highly articulate philosophy of life and philosophy of politics.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the beginnings of the modern awakening of India's political consciousness. Because India was ruled by Britain, this awakening was begun in the conflict of values of the two civilizations, the Indian and the Western. Historians tell us that Western civilization, which had once been founded on the value system of Christianity, was by the nineteenth century passing

through a period of moral uncertainty and philosophical disintegration. The loss of faith in Christian values, the questioning of rationalism and the doubts of scepticism, the impact of industrial materialism, the inhumanity of exploitation and imperialism, had all undermined the system of values that once gave moral certainty and ethical integration to Western civilization. The disintegration in the philosophy of life reflected itself in the disintegration of the theory of politics. In Western political philosophy this process dates from the time of Thomas Hobbes who was one of the first to seek to base the political order on the all-powerful state, the Leviathan, because he could no longer find a higher system of values that would give meaning and justification to a philosophy of politics. An authoritarian state system began to vie with a variety of liberal theories that often failed to be based on any permanent value system. By the nineteenth century, Great Britain had put reliance in and found justification for the political order in a theory of politics called utilitarianism. The highest value according to this theory abided in 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number', a doctrine without relationship to any higher philosophy of life, without any universal or absolute guide to the quality or ethics of happiness.

The Indian civilization, as we shall see, was also passing through a period of uncertainty and disintegration. For over a thousand years India had been ruled by alien powers or made the battlefield for internecine wars and invading barbarians who came to plunder and conquer the rich plains of Hindustan. Through this long age of darkness the value system, the philosophy of life of the Indian civilization, had managed to escape extinction ; but in the process it had lost

its dynamic vitality, it had become encrusted with the atrophied forms of religious orthodoxy. The impact of the West in the form of British political domination came as the necessary stimulus to its reawakening. In the nineteenth century, the Indian renaissance began, initially as a reaction to the Western system of values, as a religious and philosophical rediscovery of classical values, as a breaking of the crust of orthodoxy, and finally as a renaissance of Indian political philosophy. It was the reapplication of this Indian philosophy of politics in the Indian independence movement of the twentieth century that made the Indian experience unique among the Western-imitating nationalisms of other peoples.

We are concerned here with the rediscovery and the reapplication of this classical Indian philosophy of politics in modern India. Our concern is not only the historical fact that such a reapplication took place, but also that, first, a new meaning of the relation of the individual to the political community has been established, and second, that this new meaning may serve as the theoretical basis for the ordering of the new Indian Republic. We shall see that the new political philosophy (based on the rediscovered and reapplied classical philosophy) provided the philosophic foundation of the independence movement, that it provided a new interpretation of the relation of the individual to the society and the state, but that it seems not to have been relied upon in the planning and ordering of the new Indian state. The Constitution of the Indian Republic, the legal basis of that state, is a remarkable document in that it is almost entirely un-Indian in its forms and inspiration. The forms of order, i.e. the institutions and laws, the machinery of government

and the repositories of power, are almost entirely Western in origin, being largely inherited from the departed British Raj. These forms of order had to be relied upon in 1947 because of the urgent need to maintain national and regional political stability. Partition had preceded independence, and the circumstances of those tragic days, so well known to all, demanded the preservation of order at all costs. By the Indian Government's expedient use of these inherited forms of order, chaos was averted and the nation born. But when these difficult days were passed and it was time to draft and approve a constitution, seemingly little reference was made either to the classical theory of politics of the Indian civilization or to the reapplication of that theory in the struggle that had just won the independence. Perhaps thinking in terms of political philosophy tends to be foreign to practical men of government, but the process of philosophical justification of the ordering of the state cannot be indefinitely postponed.

Eventually the forms of order of a state must be proven morally compatible with, must be justified in terms of, some political philosophy. In turn, the political philosophy must be justified in terms of the value system of the people as set forth in the traditions of their civilization. Government and political order do not exist outside and apart from the philosophy of life of the civilization. The immediate demands of circumstances may seem self-justifying, pressing needs of day-to-day legislation and administration may be an expedient rationalization for the use of particular forms of order ; but expediency is not a political philosophy. Expediency does not relate to moral purposefulness, it does not integrate the common political life of men

within the Meaning and Purpose of life as defined by the value system of those men. Expediency must eventually result in moral and political chaos.

By the same token, the adoption of alien forms of order, and the philosophy of order implicit within their structure and use, must eventually lead to conflict with the civilization's system of values. Either the total philosophy of life of the alien civilization must be accepted along with the adopted philosophy of politics, or else an internal conflict must develop. This is not an entirely abstract proposition. The history of the 'challenge and response' of civilizations-in-conflict shows that this conflict involves ideas and philosophies more profoundly than armies. A way of life is involved. If expediency must result in moral and political chaos, non-integrated adoption of an alien political philosophy must result in internal conflict and moral disintegration, if not cultural suicide.

At the beginning of the conscious struggle for self-rule, several of India's young leaders discerned this problem. They are known to history as the Nationalists, not alone because they worked for national reawakening, but also because they sought out national values on which to base that reawakening. While some Westernized leaders advocated imitation of the West, and others conceived of the struggle as one of repressed nationalism striving violently to break the bonds of colonial domination, these men recognized that their cause was neither imitative nor expedient but that it rested upon a firm foundation of principle, that it had a moral basis in the value system of the Indian civilization. They turned to their own traditions, both consciously and by instinct, and there found an interpretation of this moral basis. They discerned that self-rule was necessary

for India, not only to gratify a nationalistic urge for self-expression, but primarily because self-rule was an imperative of their civilization's total philosophy of life. Upon the foundation of this philosophy of life they constructed a philosophy of politics for the independence movement, a philosophy that was integrally related to the value system of their civilization. Foremost among these young leaders were Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose, Bepin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, and the first among these was Tilak.

Few nations are fortunate enough to have a statesman and a patriot of the capacities and stature of Lokamanya Tilak. He was educator, scholar, journalist, the Lion of Maharashtra, the leader of the Indian National Congress and, to his enemies, 'the Father of Indian Unrest'. It was he who first rediscovered the moral basis by which to define the direction and the goal of the independence movement, who first devised the basic techniques of struggle against foreign domination, and who, because of his love for and knowledge of India's civilization and its traditions, laid down the broad outlines of a new application of Indian political philosophy.

Tilak and his fellow Nationalists were unwilling to settle for a policy of simple expediency, were incapable of simply imitating the West, were unmoved by unrealistic speculations and theoretical abstractions divorced from a cultural context. Their political philosophy was founded on the example of their tradition and born in the realities of political battle. In his lifetime Tilak fought three great battles.¹ He fought the social reformers who, in their desire to copy everything Western, had no grand vision of self-rule as India's birthright. He fought against the atrophied spirit of orthodoxy that

clung to its decaying forms uninspired by the promise of awakening India. And he fought against the might of the British bureaucracy. His were formidable adversaries. He met each on the battlefield of his times, armed with astute political realism, faith in his heritage and his cause, and with the sure knowledge of the loyalty of his people. From the experiences of these campaigns he demonstrated the applicability and the vitality of Indian political philosophy as a guide to political action in the twentieth century. He showed his nation that it need not settle for expediency, that it need not imitate the West, rather that it must order the Indian political community around the moral principles of the Indian civilization. In the first two battles he was victorious; in the third he inspired those who came after him to victory. For Gandhiji and the Congress he left a philosophy of struggle and a clearly demarked goal; for Free India he left the broad outlines of a new political philosophy integrated with the value system of his people. This is the legacy of the Lokamanya.

Chapter I

INDIAN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

The truth of the matter is that most Americans today exist without purpose and without significance. They have no articulate philosophy; they do not live within any frame of reference.

Karl Menninger

Unlike us, [the ancient Aryans] never dreamed of searching for a knowledge which was anything but spiritual, for a reality which was anything short of the source of eternal life, for a truth which was any less a thing than the inspiration of eternal goodness.

E. J. Urwick

THE FORMS OF ORDER of a political community must ultimately rest on a philosophy of politics which, in turn, rests upon a philosophy of life. Each great civilization has a philosophy of life—an explanation and interpretation of Reality, Meaning and Purpose in life. We are concerned with Lokamanya Tilak and the reinterpretation of the classical political philosophy of India. This requires that we first briefly review the Indian philosophy of life and then outline the main principles of the political philosophy dependent upon that total philosophy.

Between three and five thousand years ago, at the dawn of recorded history, Rishis, teachers, seers and saints lived and taught in the land now called India. They left a record of the most profound knowledge and the highest wisdom in the *Mantras* or hymns of the *Rig Veda*, in the later *Samhitas*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*, in the Histories and Epics, the books of Ethics, Justice and Laws. These documents contain the essence

of Indian philosophy, morality and political theory. From them the religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism gained their inspiration. Upon them the *Bharatdharma*, the way of life of India, was founded. Their teachings reached far beyond the limits of India, influencing China, Japan, and Southeast Asia, Persia and Central Asia, the Near East, Egypt and Greece. Perhaps no more fertile germ of thought has ever been planted than the teachings of these ancient Aryan Rishis. At once the earthly struggles of semi-barbaric peoples were elevated to sublime heights by their vision of transcendental realities. The place of man in the universe was for all times defined, the Nature and Purpose of life perceived, and the spirit of man liberated and given understanding. It is to these teachings and to this wisdom that we must turn in our survey of the Indian philosophy of life and philosophy of politics, for these are the eternal well-springs of the Indian civilization.

The Philosophy of Life

The Vedic Rishis undertook to penetrate into the ultimate secrets of the universe and there to discern its Nature and Purpose. Being realists, they began to study the world as it was perceived, and found, as did the Greeks many hundreds of years later, that the phenomenal world was in a state of continual flux. Nowhere was there stability, everywhere there were birth and death, formation, disintegration and reformation, contradiction, duality and a confusion of change. Did this mean the universe was chaos, a meaningless, purposeless confusion of activity signifying nothing? Was the universe a 'brute collection of facts', a mere materialistic 'accident'? Or was it a cosmos conceived in spiritual

purposefulness, made lawful by some *integrating principle*; an integrating principle that ordered the apparent confusion of change and made the universe meaningful and purposeful for man? Materialistic nihilism was too unsatisfactory a conclusion. To consider all phenomena, including man himself, an 'accident', was to go against human reason and spiritual insight. The imperfect forms, the impermanent, changing, manifest universe could not be the Ultimate Reality and the Truth. Like all great seers of all great civilizations, they found the Perfect, the Formless, the Permanent and Changeless in God—in Brahman, the Real, the True—standing apart and transcendental from the world and yet immanent and a part of the world. Perhaps it was divine revelation (for the *Vedas* are considered revealed) or perhaps it was a great outreaching of the human mind and soul that led them to Brahman, the Real, the True, the Absolute. The great schools of Indian philosophy accepted Brahman as the origin of the universe, that which gave the universe Ultimate Meaning;¹ and the heterodox schools, which followed the Bharatdharma but which declined to rely on revelation, claiming they could not know the Supreme Absolute directly from experience, nevertheless interpreted the universe as spiritually integrated and purposeful.

In what sense is the universe purposeful? Because, the Rishis taught, Brahman is immanent within His creation and because His creation is evolving to Self-consciousness or Self-realization. From lower forms to higher the evolutionary process has inexorably moved to bring about the culmination of this Purpose of creation. Self-conscious man, representing the highest state in the evolutionary process, is potentially capable of knowing Reality, is capable of penetrating the secret of creation

and living in his True Nature. The *Atman*, the soul or divine spark which is Brahman immanent within man, is that True Nature of man which is capable of Self-knowledge, attainment of Realization, reunion with the Absolute, fulfilment. As Brahman is the True Nature of the universe, the Atman is the True Nature of man. Man is not God, but he is *potentially* one-with-God, and he is God-realized if he realizes and *lives* his True Nature. Because creation is purposeful and because man is *potentially* one-with-God, i.e. because Realization is neither denied nor determined, the Purpose of the universe is moral—man is free to realize or remain ignorant of his True Nature, to follow or reject the law of his True Being. This moral Purpose of creation was expressed by the Rishis in the term *Moksha*, fulfilment, release or liberation from apparent nature into Real Nature, beatitude, reabsorption into Reality—Brahman. Contradiction, duality and confusion of change are aspects of the apparent world, and the apparent world is relatively real because, and only because, it is the imperfect reflection of the Perfect; it is meaningful because it is *perfection-oriented imperfection*. Man lives and has his being in the apparent world; man's True Nature is a part of the Real world.

In what sense is the universe integrated? We have seen that the purposefulness of the universe was made meaningful for man by the Vedic Rishis. Yet the apparent world still seemed one of change and confusion. The Aryan sages found a principle of integration of the apparent and the Real that made the universe lawful and ordered in accordance with its Purpose. This integrating principle is the law of *Dharma*. Dharma comes from the verbal root *dhri* meaning 'to hold together, to maintain, to support' [the universe]. Dharma is the

eternal pattern which regulates the movement of the heavenly bodies and orders the energy of the atom; it is the external and internal law of being; it is *sanatana*, eternal, and that which is eternal is also universal. Sanatana Dharma binds together the evolving creation in the moral and lawful cosmic order. Apparent conflict and diversity are harmonized, the relative and the Real are integrated, in this grand scheme of Dharma. Man need not seek divine revelation alone as the means of comprehending Reality, he may realize his True Nature by understanding and living in accordance with the law of his Inner Being, the law that maintains and supports and harmonizes the universe—Dharma. Man need not be caught up in the whirlpools of flux and change, for chaos does not exist in the Real Nature of the universe. Through Dharma, the moral purposefulness of the universe emerges amid apparent chaos, and the relative world of time, space and causation is *integrated* with the Real world of the Absolute and the True. Without Dharma, the universe is crude, material chaos, purposeless and amoral; the relative world and the Real world are forever separated, the perfection-orientation of imperfection is forever lost.

The classical Indian philosophy of the right ordering of man in society and in the state rests upon the foundation of this integrating principle. Dharma is the inner law of being of each individual, it is the law that makes the social order meaningful, just as it is the inner law of being and of meaningfulness in the universe. Creation is evolutionary and dynamic, therefore Dharma is a dynamic law. It strives continually to harmonize the changing panorama of phenomena, not in a static order but in a just and 'continually-becoming' dynamic order. As we shall see, the purposefulness of life demands

that men live in their True Nature by continually striving for realization, by constantly seeking to live the ideal of harmonious justice which is the universal ideal of divine integration and harmony; this purposefulness to be fulfilled in and through the lives of all individuals.

As we have seen, the potential, the constant becoming of the universe, the moral purposefulness of creation and the imperative of each individual living in harmony with Dharma, implies conscious decision-making, free choice. Simple deterministic or mechanistic achievement of realization is not moral, is not purposeful, is not Self-conscious and is not possible. The evolution to realization, the *raison d'être* of life, takes many human lifetimes, many opportunities for decision-making. Since the soul is 'of God' and is indestructible, the Rishis took it for granted that the soul would experience a number of births, would be given and would give itself a number of phenomenal life-situations in which to evolve and attain the Purpose of creation. The Buddhists, inheriting this tradition but being somewhat more pessimistic, preferred to say that the soul was condemned to a number of rebirths until the attainment of Moksha. From either point of view, one brief lifetime on earth appeared totally insufficient in the grand scheme of the Absolute Purpose behind life and the universe.

Creation, birth and rebirth, actually provide the opportunity for action, for decision-making, for attainment. The Rishis called this law of action *Karma*. It comes from the verbal root *kri* meaning 'to do' or 'to make', Karma being, therefore, doing or making, the law of action. Karma is also the law of cause and effect, not predeterminism but lawfulness. 'As ye sow, so shall ye reap' is thus the meaning of Karma. Each act has an effect, action produces reaction, and the actor is the

recipient of the fruits of the action. The individual lives under the imperative to choose to live his True Nature; the individual may, however, disregard this imperative and choose not to live his True Nature, but he may not escape the effects of his action, the results of his choice. In other words, man is *responsible* in a *moral* and *lawful* universe. As Professor K. P. Mukerji has written,

‘ . . . though we may deny our Maker, every such denial, however, involves us in the denial of our own innermost nature or in the denial of the law of our being; and every breach of the law of our being naturally recoils against ourselves for which we have to pay back through our Karma.’²

The diversity of human estates is explained by this law of Karma, for the physical body, character, capacities, interests, temperament, wealth or poverty, station in life—in other words, the total biological-social environment of the individual is determined by the action of the law of Karma. Karma neither rewards nor punishes; Karma is a just and immutable universal law. Past actions necessarily work themselves out in effect. However, though the present is determined by the past, the future is to be determined by the actions of the present—from this moment forward the individual possesses freedom of choice, the power of responsible action. Each man is his own judge, the dispenser of the conditions of his life. Each man may choose to live by his True Nature or to disavow his True Nature, and thereby also to disavow the moral purposefulness of life; but in either case, he alone is responsible. Thus the Rishis taught that the universe is *moral* and man a *responsible* actor. The universe is *lawful*, for by the two great principles of Dharma and Karma chaos is banished from the apparent world,

diversity and confusion are integrated, harmony is established and God's Purpose made manifest. Chaos can only exist when man chooses chaos instead of Reality, when man turns away from his True Nature.

Man and the Cosmic Order

The Rishis explained and ordered the cosmos for man, and in teaching that man may attain Moksha realized that only the most saintly could seek to fulfil this purpose of life through *Yoga*, 'union' with God directly. The Rishis knew that those who can live by the spirit alone are always few, and that the path of the Yogi is the extraordinary way to realization, that it is the dangerous way for the man who is not prepared, and that at times this extraordinary way can be perverted into a negation of life and creation. This danger lay in reasoning that, 'Since the purpose of life is realization, we must turn away from the relative world to contemplate the Real world'. Further, 'Since Karma binds man to birth and rebirth in the relative world, it is better to perform no action whatsoever, to become actionless, passive, renunciatory, and thus, by doing no action, free the soul from the relative world'. But this is a negation of God's creation. True seeking is vitality and awareness and life-affirmation on the highest plane. The great *Sannyasins* followed this extraordinary path of Yoga; but they never ceased performing action. Rather they sought to free themselves from the bonds of Karma by performing 'self-less' and 'desire-less' action, and to attain directly that Self-consciousness which is one-with-Brahman. The true seeker remembered well the advice of the Lord Krishna, where in the *Bhagavad Gita* he warned,

‘ Man winneth not freedom from action by abstaining from activity, nor by mere renunciation does he rise to perfection. Nor can anyone, even for an instant, remain really actionless; for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities born of nature.’³

Thus, if all must act in the world, and if action leads to fulfilment of the Purpose of life, a code of action becomes necessary. This the great Rishis provided in explaining the individual's relation to the world of life and action, and the way of realization without renunciation. They explained that man was both a spiritual and a social creature, that like the rest of creation man was ordered in the cosmic harmony of the universal order, the Sanatana Dharma. The Real Nature of man is the soul, but until the soul becomes Self-conscious, man lives and must act in the relative and imperfect universe, within the dynamic and actionful, potentially chaotic and potentially Real, world of sensation. In man's life-situations there is diversity and inequality (the just effects of the action of Karma), and it is within these life-situations that man is empowered to act and to seek his perfection. In other words, God has provided the created universe, harmonized though diverse, as the arena, the action-environment, in which man must seek Reality. Other-worldliness may appear to be a part of the path of the Sannyasin, but all men, even the Sannyasin, must prepare for and even attain Reality by the discharge of worldly duties in a morally-responsible and detached-minded way. To live purposefully, therefore, each man must live within his own life-situation, live according to the Dharma of his nature in *his own unique relation* to the cosmic order. It is in this way that the life-situation, however lowly, is transformed into the moral harmony of the divine order, for each individual is

consciously integrating his life with the cosmic harmony of Dharma. Herein, the Rishis said, is happiness in the relative world, because by living purposefully the relative world is integrated with the Real. This is the way of life taught by the Rishis, applicable to all men. This is the teaching of the religion of India, of the Bharat-dharma. It is also called the Aryadharma, the way of life of the noble man in harmony with the cosmic order.

The unique relation of the individual to the cosmic order of Sanatana Dharma was called *Swadharma*, self-dharma, or self-duty, by the Rishis. As we have seen, each created thing has a Dharma of its Inner Nature. Thus the Dharma of fire is heat, the Dharma of water is wetness, the Dharma of sugar is sweetness; for individuals in diverse life-situations their self-duties differ, so that the Dharma of the warrior is to fight, the Dharma of the scholar is to know, the Dharma of the poet is to sing.⁴ This is according to the law of Inner Being, True Nature, and by it Dharma integrates and makes meaningful the diversity of creation and life-situations. By each individual's living consciously and responsibly (for he cannot escape responsibility) in the harmony of his Swadharma, or Inner Nature, the moral harmony of the universe is maintained. The *Gita*, the most sacred of texts, teaches the lesson of Swadharma. Man is free, but freedom may lead to either chaos or cosmos, it may be either lawless or lawful. The potential for chaos exists in the universe, but because of Dharma it is made lawful. So also for the individual. Freedom is made beneficial and lawful because the individual can order his life by his Swadharma. Thus it is that the classical ideal was not lawless freedom but rather lawful freedom—self-rule, *Swaraj*. Lawful freedom, *Swaraj*, meant living in accordance with Swadharma.

To explain more fully how individuals are to live their Swadharmanas, the Rishis described the purposes or ends of life of the individual. They recognized that men desired to accumulate wealth and power, and that they would use that wealth and power in the pursuit and fulfilment of the pleasures of life. Instead of denying these earthly desires the realistic Rishis required only that they be pursued *lawfully*, that human effort directed toward the material goods and pleasures of life be regulated by Dharma and that all this effort be ultimately made a means to salvation. Therefore the four goals of life were set as Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma (lawfulness) would be the basis and the regulator of Artha (wealth and power) and of Kama (desire-fulfilment), and they would all lead to the ultimate end of life, Moksha. The spiritual end of life always dominated the worldly ends of life, not in order to deny the worldly ends but rather to give them their fullest possible meaning. All worldly actions were to be governed by the lawful power of Dharma. Herein was equanimity in the world of human affairs. By each individual's ordering of his life in accordance with his Swadharma, the utmost was gained from this relative world while preparing for the Real world. Social good must result from spiritual good. The morally-conscious, lawfully-dedicated individual is the socially-valuable man. Moral action makes harmonious social action. Therefore, action was not to be renounced but the fruits of action were to be dedicated to the spiritual end of life, to God who gave man the power of action. This is the renunciation of the Bharatdharma, the renunciation of selfish, immoral, unreal action. This is the message of the *Bhagavad Gita*—the lesson of Swadharma.

Man and the Social Order

In the books of Ethics and the books of Justice the Rishis developed a theory of the right ordering of man in society and a blueprint of the application of that theory to the society of their time. Perhaps the most important of these writings has come down to us as the *Code of Manu*. The criteria of the right ordering of society were evolved from the philosophy of life, the theory of the nature of the universe and of man in the cosmic order. The Purpose of life is realization; the moral law of the cosmos is Dharma; the fulfilment of the Purpose of life depends upon each individual's following the law of his Inner Nature, his Swadharma.

Communal life is a part of man's life-situation. Cosmic harmony is maintained through the law of Dharma; social harmony is maintained by Swadharma. Social justice exists because, and only because, it is based on divine justice. The just and harmonious society is therefore free, peaceful and cooperative and not antagonistic. Cooperation necessarily follows when each individual has a high sense of social obligation, and social obligation is a part of the Swadharma of each individual. In return, the harmonious communal order assists the individual in following his Swadharma by providing him with a cooperative and harmonious life-situation. In this way, as each individual moves to the fulfilment of the Purpose of life, the society also finds its Purpose and its fulfilment.

The Rishis, having accepted the complex nature of man and perceiving that diversity rather than uniformity is the essence of life-situations, developed a theory of the ordering of social life so as to allow the greatest individual variation. The concept of Swadharma recognized diversity rather than uniformity. But though

Swadharmanas may differ, each is of equal worth and of equal validity. The Purpose of life is realized through the perfection of one's given role within the harmonious social whole. The emphasis is not on social aggrandizement, vertical advancement 'through society', but rather on social cooperation based on the perfection of the duties commensurate with the life-situation of the individual. In other words, the Rishis taught that each individual is to perform the duties of his station in life to the best of his ability and not to aspire to perform the duties of some other station in life. Freedom, peace and cooperation exist in the social order when each individual acts responsibly, governs his actions by love for his fellow man and willingly cooperates in the common duties of his community. And individual happiness is produced when each individual is assured of a responsible place in the community, the respect of his fellows for the responsible performance of his duties, and a cooperative life environment. Each individual is given a sense of belonging in the community, and the social order brings unity out of diversity while allowing for the greatest possible freedom of diversity. Herein was earthly happiness and the fulfilment of the divine Purpose. The *Bhagavad Gita* teaches,

'Better one's own *dharma*, though destitute of merit, than the *dharma* of another, well discharged. Better death in the discharge of one's own *dharma*, the *dharma* of another is fraught with danger.'⁵

How are men to determine their Swadharmanas, their roles in society? How are men to know their social obligations? The theory of and guide to duties is found, according to the Rishis, in the sacred and secular texts,

in tradition, in the conduct of the virtuous and the Self-realized, and in the 'satisfaction of the conscience'. The theory and guidance are always valid though the *forms of social order* used to apply the theory must be relative and flexible to change. The Rishis *applied* their theory of social ordering in the system of *Varnashramadharma*. They began by describing the four stages of life (*Ashramas*), recognizing that each individual plays different roles in the various stages of his life and that these different roles bear duties commensurate with these stages. The first stage is that of the Brahmacharya, the student, whose duty it is to live a celibate life, to serve and honour his parents and his teachers, and to learn the wisdom of the *Vedas*. The second is that of the Grihastha, the householder, whose duty it is to live and act in the world, to produce a family and accumulate wealth, to perform religious duties and generally to support and participate in the affairs of the world. The third is that of the Vanaprastha, the retired householder, who, after seeing his first grandchild, moves on from the duties of the householder in order to do honorary public service, to study the deeper sciences, to teach, and to retire to the forest for peace and meditation. The fourth stage is that of the Sannyasin, the holy ascetic, who abandons worldly concerns and devotes himself to meditation upon the Ultimate Reality. As we can see, three of these four stages deal with man as a member of society and with his social obligations, emphasizing moral conduct in society; the Sannyasin alone renounces social life. The importance of the Ashramic system is indicated by the fact that Manu devoted six of his twelve books of law to the exposition of these rules of life.

Special emphasis was placed on the role of the householder because for society the duties of the householder

were most important and because many individuals never moved into the third and fourth stages. It is further important because the family was recognized as the basic unit of the social order and also the economic and political order of ancient India. It is the householder who must carefully govern his desires and his acquisition of wealth and power by the law of Dharma so as to promote the social good. It is the householder who is most directly responsible for promoting the spiritual Purpose of life while leading an active social life. But all the stages of life are directed toward spiritual purposefulness. The Vice-President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, has said, 'The ashramadharma... attempts to fill the whole of life with the power of spirit'.⁶ The Sannyasin, who renounces social life, is provided in the sacred literature with special duties, the fulfilment of which will assist him in his quest for the Real. But the Rishis required that, except in unusual circumstances, the man who would seek direct realization of Brahman must pass through the first three stages and must fulfil his social obligations.

The Rishis also applied the social philosophy of right ordering in the system of *Varna*. Society was conceived of as a harmonious organism made up of individuals performing their Swadharma in a cooperative effort to so order society as to bring about the fulfilment of the Purpose of creation. The system of Varna, later degraded into the caste system, saw the *application* of this philosophy in the classical society. Varna described the social obligations of the individual depending upon his occupation and position in the social order. There were four great Varnas—the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. Because Karma determined the life-situation of the individual, birth was determined by

past actions, and birth was one of the factors determining Varna. But Karma, not alone the action of past lives but also the actions of this life, determines Varna. Caste may now largely be a matter of heredity, but Varna was never chained to such a sole determinant. Each Varna had specific duties. The duty of the Brahmin was to study and transmit the wisdom of the *Vedas*, to investigate science and philosophy, to advise on matters of Dharma and to perform religious rites for himself and others. It was his duty to live a life devoted to learning, social service, and the advancement of the Purpose of life, to live humbly and in poverty, and to teach and guide the other Varnas. The Kshatriya's duties were to protect the society and the state, to fight, to rule, to wield political power for the good of society and the advancement of the Purpose of life. The Vaishya was to perfect the arts and crafts, to accumulate wealth and goods, to manufacture, to trade, and to follow the vocation of agriculture. The Sudras were to perform the manual and menial functions of society and to serve the other Varnas. The Varna system was in many respects an extension of the family ideal where each had his rightful place and privileges and where the social purpose of all was service to all. The father did not aspire to perform the duties of the mother, the children did not aspire to the duties of their parents; rather each performed his own duties in cooperation with all for the good of family and society. The duties of one were not 'better', more 'meritful', than the duties of another; duties were different. Varna was unity in variety. The duties of the Varnas were complementary not antagonistic, and by their right fulfilment the social order was made harmonious.

The Brahmin held the highest position in the social order *because* he had fewer privileges and greater res-

possibilities than any of the others. His power was that of wisdom. The Kshatriya held political power, but this, as we shall see in the next section, was a limited political power whose only justification was moral social service. The Vaishya held material power. He alone could amass wealth, provided the cooperative society benefited from his use of his power. The Sudras, making up the mass of the people, held the power of the majority; and though their estate was lowly, each was assured that through the correct performance of his duties he would as surely attain to the Purpose of life as any member of any other Varna. The four Varnas did not have conflicting duties or powers and therefore there should be no conflict of purpose or interests. Thus, the ideal of the integrated society was implemented by the Varnashramic system for a given time, place and social *milieu*. As the present rigidified caste system illustrates, any system for implementation must remain flexible, not rigid, if it is to serve its purpose. But it should be remembered that caste, or Varna, is still important in India, and that it continues to fulfil socially-useful purposes. As Sidney Low wrote of Varna,

‘ It provides every man with his place, his career, his occupation, his circle of friends. It makes him at the onset a member of a corporate body, it protects him through life from the canker of social jealousy and unfulfilled aspirations; it ensures him companionship and a sense of community with others in like case with him.’

The fracturing and perversion of the Varnashramic Dharma into the caste system is the result of certain historical circumstances which we shall investigate later. For centuries the system was the repository of customs,

practice, law, religion, morals and the tradition of Swadharma which were transmitted from generation to generation from the time of Manu.

The purpose of the social order was to so order life as to assist man to know and live in his Real Nature, to perform his Swadharma and thereby to protect and promote the Dharma, the moral order, of the universe. But the Rishis realized that neither the individual alone nor society by itself could perform this great task, and so they also developed the philosophy of political order so that by means of the social order and the political order there might be a harmonious, moral and purposeful ordering of man in his political community.

Man and the Political Order

The Indian philosophy of the political order is found chiefly in the books of Justice and Law, the *Puranas* and Epic Histories, the *Arthashastra* and *Nitishastra* literature, dealing with the art or science of politics. The state, or *rashtra*, was a central institution in this literature, and in order to understand its functions it will be necessary to describe the classical theory of the four *yugas* or Ages of Man. The Rishis taught that in the Satya Yuga, or Golden Age, the entire universe was ruled directly by Dharma, each individual living perfectly in accord with his Swadharma and in harmony with the cosmic order. There was no need for either social or political forms of order to protect or promote justice and Dharma. In the Treta Yuga, or Silver Age, inharmonious elements asserted themselves and the power of Dharma to order directly the affairs of men was diminished. Great harmony still existed, but men formed social groups and established the social order so that life-situations might

be protected from chaos and evil and so that the moral order of Dharma might be promoted. In this age the social order was able, alone, to assist men in maintaining the cosmic harmony of creation. In the Dvapara Yuga, the Bronze Age, Dharma operated with only half its original force, and it became necessary for the state to be formed to assist the social order in maintaining the moral order. In the Kali Yuga, the Black Age of Degeneration, when the direct power of Dharma is but one-fourth its original force, the state becomes an absolute necessity. If it were not for the state and the political order, men would live in anarchy and the 'stronger would devour the weak like fishes in the water'.⁸ Without the state the social order would disintegrate, justice, harmony and cooperation would dissolve into factionalism and lawlessness, and individuals would forsake their duties and disavow the Purpose of life itself. Without the political order the cosmic order would be turned into chaos and confusion, and Brahman would be forced to destroy His creation. The purpose of the state, therefore, is to protect and promote Dharma so that the cosmic order may be maintained and the Purpose of life fulfilled. In the Kali Yuga degenerate man must rely on the political order to save morality, and the world is now in the Kali Yuga.⁹

Thus the purpose of the state is the same as the purpose of society, to so order life-situations as to allow the individual to relate himself to the moral cosmic order, to attain realization, to fulfil the Purpose of life. The state exists to protect and promote the Dharma. The ethical basis of the state and of justice is the rule of Dharma—*Dharmarajya*; the criterion of the right ordering of the political community is the ability of the political order to assist individuals in realizing their True Nature,

which is the ultimate Purpose of life. As Professor K. P. Mukerji has written, the Rishis

‘saw clearly that no consistent or valid political theory is possible unless the grounds of political obligation or political authority is ultimately founded on the first cause of the universe or the ultimate reality, because the very conception of consistency, validity, desirability, the just or the moral is ultimately nothing more than the idea of being in accord with the nature and direction of the First Principle or the First Cause viewed as Goodness or God from which our nature is ultimately derived or which is the true or the innate nature of our being.’¹⁰

The classical Indian theory of the right ordering of the political community rested on the assumption of cosmic order and divine Purpose. The political order is valid only to the extent that it relates to that higher order which is Dharma. Put another way, the *raison d'être* of the state is Dharma.

The functions of the state are to protect Dharma and to promote Dharma. The state, in the political philosophy of the Rishis, is given extensive powers in order to fulfil its functions, for in the Kali Yuga it has become necessary to employ the power of government, *danda*, in order to salvage justice from impending chaos. The social order has its social controls which represent considerable power, but in the Age of Debasement the most effective repository of power is the state. The state becomes the preserver of the Light of Dharma in the Age of Darkness. Temporal harmony, cooperation, justice and peace are promoted by the state; freedom from destruction, invasion and internal anarchy are provided by the state; individuals are given the opportunity to live lawfully in accordance with their Swadharms only

within the lawful political order of the state. In return, individuals must support the state with their loyalty, their wealth, and, if necessary, with their lives, for without the political order they would surely perish.

We have seen that though the purpose of the state was moral and related to the Purpose of life, the Rishis did not envisage a theocratic state. Rather, they taught that the state was to be *completely secular*. There are two meanings to the phrase 'secular state'. In the first instance, it may mean that the state makes no special concessions to any sect, religious order or belief system; that it provides equality before the law and in all matters temporal for all faiths; that there is no 'established religion'; and that all beliefs are equally encouraged and equally promoted. The phrase 'secular state' may also mean that the state is secular in the sense that it has nothing whatsoever to do with beliefs, sects or religious morality; that it does not assist man in the fulfilment of any ultimate moral Purpose; that it accepts no moral obligations; that it does not even recognize the existence of purposefulness in the cosmic order. The classical Indian state was secular in the first sense, but never in the second. In ancient India, there was perhaps more religious freedom, more philosophical inquiry, and greater toleration for dissenters' beliefs than anywhere else in the ancient or modern world. The classical ideal was the completely tolerant, secular state. At the same time, the purpose of the state *was* to assist man in the fulfilment of the ultimate moral Purpose of life. The ethical basis of the state was Dharmarajya—the *rule* of Dharma. There was never an established state church under the Bharatdharma; even when certain Buddhist kings used the power of the state to spread their doctrine, the state still protected all other sects. There is no record

of religious wars and persecution. To insure impartiality the king or ruler had a special code of duty called Rajadharma, which was different from the Dharma of any other individual and which set him apart from all sects in the performance of his duties. He and the state were purposefully precluded from sectarian loyalties, but not from moral purposefulness, so that the state might protect and promote *all* Dharmas. The Rishis never taught uniformity. Their ideal for the state as well as the society was unity in diversity, cooperation and harmony.

The theory of the uses of power, again, clearly indicates the realism that guided the logic of the Rishis. The state was given extensive powers, but the use of power was strictly limited. In practice, extensive governmental powers may have been usurped from time to time, but in theory the 'right ordering' depended upon a limited state and a prescribed use of powers. Many different kinds of states were employed by different peoples at various times and under differing circumstances to implement the classical philosophy of political order. The classical state was at times a monarchy, or a monarch governing with the advice of a council and assembly, at times an aristocracy, at times republican¹¹ and at other times an imperial state of great size and power. The employment of these various forms of order depended upon the historical circumstances, and were appropriate to the extent that they met the challenges of existing conditions while fulfilling the obligations of the political philosophy of order. The Rishis did not insist on any special forms for the state, realizing that forms must meet changing circumstances, but rather insisted on *all forms* according with the theory of the purpose of the state, and this theory required each state

to be a limited state. The sovereign was only a 'temporal sovereign' and he was only one of the organic 'limbs' of the state which must work together in harmony to fulfil the functions of the state. The temporal sovereign was limited by his ministers, his council and assembly, by the social order, by the books of Laws, by the traditions and ultimately by the people. Power could not be capriciously used, for state power existed only to promote and protect Dharma, and *any other use of powers was forbidden*. Any abuse of powers was opposed by the entire community, and as the ultimate check the people were empowered to overthrow the unjust ruler. According to the *Anusasanaparvan*, the unjust ruler who abused his powers 'should be slain by his combined subjects like a mad dog afflicted by the rabies'.¹² This did not mean that the state was destroyed but rather that the unjust ruler was removed so that the state could fulfil its function; and the Rishis taught the people that the political order exists only to free men, not to oppress them.¹³

The sovereign was limited, his sovereignty was temporal, and the state could never be more than a relatively adequate approximation to the cosmic order. The actual sovereign, which was above and beyond the state's power, which might not be interfered with, and which ruled over the state, was Dharma, Dharmarajya, the absolute sovereign, the highest law, the moral standard of the actions of the state and the right ordering of the community. The concept of Dharmarajya is perhaps the most important contribution of classical Indian political theory. Positive law was never more than the implementation of the rule of Dharma, state action was never more than the application of the rule of Dharma to temporal affairs, state power could never exceed the limits of the rule of Dharma.¹⁴

Dharmarajya, the rule of Dharma, the principle of the moral cosmic order, was both the ethical basis and the inner law of being of the Indian state. Swaraj, or self-rule, is implicit in Dharmarajya. This relationship must be rather fully analysed. The Rishis conceived of the universe as moral, and of the individual as empowered to make moral decisions. Obviously, if the individual were ruled over by any exterior force, if his actions and choices were determined, he could not make free moral decisions. In other words, in the Indian scheme of cosmic morality the individual was endowed with self-rule, Swaraj, in the sense of being able to exercise his free moral will. The individual was able to make moral choices because he was guided by his Swadharma, the ethical basis and law of his Inner Being, that which related him to the cosmic order and the Purpose of life. Swadharma was the standard by which he could judge the morality of actions. Without Swaraj it is impossible to follow Swadharma, it is impossible to make free moral decisions, it is impossible to fulfil the Purpose of life. Conversely, without Swadharma, Swaraj is meaningless, for though the individual has self-rule, the ability to make free moral decisions, he has no ethical basis, no standard by which to judge the morality of actions, and thus no way in which to fulfil the Purpose of his life. In the same way, the political community must have Swaraj, the ability to govern itself. Without Swaraj it is impossible for the state to follow Dharmarajya, it is impossible to order life in accordance with the moral cosmic order and to fulfil the Purpose of life. Conversely, without the rule of Dharma, Swaraj is meaningless, for though the state has self-rule (is not governed by an alien power or exterior force), it has no ethical basis, no standard by which to judge the morality of actions, and thus no way

in which to play its role in fulfilling the Purpose of creation.

Swaraj is implicit in Dharmarajya: Dharmarajya is implicit in Swaraj. In the Indian theory of the 'right ordering' of the political community, the one may not exist without the other; the Purpose of life may not be fulfilled without both. The Rishis clearly understood this necessary relationship. As early as the *Rig Veda*, we find references to political Swarajya as a necessary condition for men and gods, and in the *Shastras* the essential character of Swarajya is also emphasized. It is the Swaraj state alone that can perform the necessary functions of the state, the protection and the promotion of Dharma.

Dharmarajya in History

The classical Indian political philosophy was the political philosophy of the self-governing states of India. It spread throughout the Indian subcontinent with the advance of Vedic culture, and, with modifications, it was also the theory that underlay the Buddhist and Jain states. We know little of the early Vedic states and self-governing communities. Probably they were based on the family or clan and organized on a semi-military plan. Some were organized as kingdoms, others as republics. The *Puranas* and Epic texts contain many references to various Vedic states, but only glimpses of their actual structure are gained. In the *Ramayana*, the reign of God Rama on earth is held forth as the greatest ideal of the classical state.

Historically, at the time of Alexander the Great's invasion of Northwest India, a number of Indian states, monarchical, aristocratic, republican and confederate, existed in Northern India. The invading Greeks had

great respect for the honour and valour of their Indian foes and for the strength of their nations. The kingdom of Magadha, in the central Gangetic valley near the present state of Bihar, was one of the most powerful Indian states in the middle of the fourth century B.C. The Greeks had heard of its riches but were stopped short of its borders. Magadha had been a centre of learning, culture and religious freedom, but at the time of Alexander's invasion the last of the ruling Nanda kings had disregarded Dharmarajya and become an absolute monarch. As V. A. Smith has written, 'He was a heretic, hostile to the Brahmans and Kshatriyas'.¹⁵ At such a time, a great Brahmin, Kautilya, and a great Kshatriya, Chandragupta Maurya, realized the threat of the Macedonian armies and, rallying the princes of North India, defeated the Greek forces in the Punjab. They then turned against the King of Magadha, and in the name of the Aryadharma 'rescued the scriptures' and deposed the Nandas. This was the founding of the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta became king and Kautilya his prime minister.

The first stage in the restoration of Dharmarajya was completed. When Greek reinforcements arrived in India, Chandragupta again marched to the west and so decisively defeated them that he occupied all their conquered provinces. Chandragupta's empire now consolidated all the lands of Northern India from Bengal through Afghanistan and reached far into the Deccan. J. M. Macphail has acknowledged, 'The building of this great empire in the space of about twenty-four years was one of the greatest political achievements in the history of the world'.¹⁶ Swaraj was re-established, not only in Magadha but in all of Aryanized India.

The administration of the Mauryan Empire was jointly conducted by Kautilya and Chandragupta. The Brahmin minister wrote his famous *Arthashastra*, 'Science of Politics', most probably as a guide to the emperor and to the administration. The efficient management of so vast an empire over three hundred years before the birth of Christ attests the statesmanship of its leaders and the applicability of classical political philosophy in the practical administration of a great imperial state. The hallmark of Kautilya's science of politics was realism. Yet this minister, one of the world's most practical and pragmatic statesmen, fully recognized the purpose of the state, fully accepted the sovereignty of Dharmarajya, and never challenged the philosophic foundations of his empire. Though his concern was with application, with practical politics or Artha, Kautilya was 'a confirmed believer in the moral order of the Universe, in the supremacy of Dharma over Artha and in the state being created by divine ordination to preserve Dharma'.¹⁷ He lived to assist Chandragupta's son, Bindusara, to administer and expand the empire and to establish firmly the first age of imperial glory in India.

Chandragupta's grandson was Asoka, the Hindu monarch who, in the fourteenth year of his reign, became a Buddhist and did much to spread the teachings of Gautama throughout the civilized world. The Mauryan Empire and India flourished under Asoka, the basic administrative system of Kautilya kept the nation strong, and the Buddhist emperor maintained the Dharmarajya. Asoka's heirs were less strong, and, as instability set in, the faltering Mauryan Empire was superseded by the Sungas who again established the Aryadharma. The Sunga Empire was forced to meet increasing waves of

barbarian invaders and slowly the imperial domains were decreased. A period of warfare and instability lasting hundreds of years, seeing the rise and fall of numerous small states, was finally ended in A.D. 320 by the founding of the Gupta Empire and the re-establishment of the Imperial Dharmarajya. The Guptas ruled over a vast and prosperous land, they encouraged art, science and philosophy, and applied the Indian philosophy of the state through imperial forms similar to those of Kautilya.

But the Gupta Empire was constantly defending the land of India from hordes of barbarian invaders who swept down from the mountain passes into the valley of the Indus to plunder and conquer. A state of almost incessant warfare set in, and though time and again the barbarians were defeated and repulsed, the power of the Empire was diminished, the resources and people exhausted. Finally the Empire fell. As Professor Jayaswal has written, 'The period after 700 A.C. was a period of darkness and disruption. Popular institutions decayed and Hindu traditions dwindled'.¹⁸ Various smaller kingdoms rose, held Swaraj, and maintained order under Dharmarajya for periods of years, sometimes centuries, only to fall before new onslaughts of barbarians.

Yet the Bharatdharma remained flexible. The invaders—Huns, Scythians, Samatians, Sakas, Parthians, among others—conquered various areas of India, destroyed Swaraj and established their alien raj. But their children began to learn the values of the Indian civilization, began to be impressed with the culture and traditions of the conquered peoples, and their children's children began to accept and to be accepted within the Sanatana Dharma, the eternal Dharma. This vast, flexible and tolerant philosophy of ancient India was great enough to assimilate the conquerors, to synthesize

the conflicting cultures and to restore the justice and harmony of Dharmarajya. India is unique in the world, not only because her people and their way of life survived scores of barbarian invasions, but also because she civilized the invaders, assimilated their children and retained her identity and her vision of the world and the Purpose of life.

Then came Islam. The faith of the Prophet had inspired a wave of conquests throughout the Near East, in North Africa and Spain, in Persia, Central Asia and India. The armies of Islam brought a 'new vision' of the world and the Purpose of life, a rigorous, monotheistic, proselytizing, militant creed of conquest and conversion. At first they came to India only to raid and plunder, to destroy the cities and temples and places of learning of idolatrous, tolerant, peace-loving, polytheistic India. The Indian people recorded glorious pages of history in the defence of their homeland, but when the chieftains of Islam determined to conquer and rule the rich plains of Hindustan, Muslim armies—Arab, Syrian, Persian, Afghan, Turk and Mogul—finally emerged victorious. The Muslim conquest of India took centuries, but slowly Swaraj in India was destroyed and replaced by the Mogul Raj.

Again the Bharatdharma sought to assimilate the invaders, to create a new synthesis of cultures; but this was impossible. Islam was a closed system. Islam was accepted or rejected (rejected often at the cost of life), but never could it be assimilated or harmonized with the polytheism of India. Islam could not recognize Sanatana Dharma; religious tolerance could not be extended to 'infidels'. To the Muslim there was but one God, His Prophet was Mohamet, and those who did not accept were 'without the fold of believers'.

There was no possibility of synthesis between the classical Bharatdharma and Islam.

The classical right ordering of the political community was replaced by the 'new ordering' of the conquerors. Swaraj was lost; Dharmarajya was destroyed. When the state no longer performed its functions, to protect and promote Dharma, when the state was a Muslim state which would not even recognize Dharma, the only order which might preserve the values of the Bharatdharma was the social order. Classical theory clearly states that in the Kali Yuga, the social order cannot, without the aid of the state, preserve and promote the Dharma, cannot alone protect the cosmic order. But there was no alternative. Under the pressure of alien rule, the social order became self-defensive. In order to protect the Aryadharma, the noble way of life, the social order had to become closed, exclusive, compartmented, for it could not possibly save the Dharma if it remained open, flexible and assimilative.

Gradually the process of self-defence produced atrophy and the Varnashramadharma became the caste system. After hundreds of years of conflict and instability, then hundreds of years of alien domination, with the loss of self-rule and Dharmarajya, the social order's struggle to preserve the values of the Bharatdharma resulted in social disintegration. The life-spirit of the social order gradually became atrophied. Many potential leaders of India found no outlet for their capabilities in the world of action and turned to other-worldliness as the only remaining way in which to fulfil the Purpose of life. The silent, tradition-directed masses of India kept alive in their hearts the values of the Sanatana Dharma, but their voices were not heard. India seemed to enter a great sleep.

Briefly India awoke with the coming of Shivaji Maharaj, the Maratha warrior who drove the Muslim invaders from West and Central India, and who re-established the Dharmarajya under Swaraj in the Maratha Empire of the seventeenth century. Shivaji, as Chandragupta and Kautilya before him, 'rescued the scriptures and the science of weapons and the earth' from the Mogul Raj. A thorough Indian historian, G. S. Sardesai, has written, 'The Hindus could not lead an honourable life [under the Muslim restrictions]. This is what moved Shivaji to righteous indignation. An intense feeling of revolt took possession of his mind. He at once set to work'.¹⁹ Together with his saintly Brahmin adviser, Ramdas, he studied the ancient theory of the state, he inspired his people to regain Swaraj, he built an army of magnificent Maratha warriors, and began the war of liberation against the Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb. His victories brought rejoicing to 'the hearts of Hindus in general and Marathas in particular', for he was 'a new defender to uphold their religion and liberty, which had suffered oppression under Muslim yoke for centuries past'.²⁰ He founded the administration of his empire on the classical political philosophy. As Professor Jayaswal writes, Shivaji and his minister 'looked into past history and drew up a constitution and founded a polity on materials that were easily available to them—the materials which connected them with the past'.²¹

Shivaji re-established Swaraj and the moral purpose of the state. He reordered the political community. The Peshwas, the Chitpavan Brahmin ministers, who ruled and expanded his empire, endeavoured to carry on his tradition. Internecine war and alien oppression gradually weakened the empire. With the coming of a new invader

with superior weapons the empire finally fell. After three destructive wars, in 1818 the British at last ended Indian Swaraj by shattering the Maratha power. With the conquest of Maharashtra, the last free state of Arya-dharma was submerged into the new alien raj—the British Raj. The history of India began a new chapter—a new struggle to ‘better order’ the political community.

NOTES

¹ The Carvaka philosophy or Materialist School of India was debated into oblivion and nowhere exists today. Our only knowledge of its principles comes from the refutations found in the writings of other schools. Materialism could not compete in the market-place of philosophical ideas in ancient India.

² Krishna P. Mukerji, *The State*, p. xiv.

³ *Bhagavad Gita*, iii, 4, 5 (trans. Annie Besant).

⁴ See Harendranath Maitra, *Hinduism: The World-Ideal*, p. 4.

⁵ *Bhagavad Gita*, iii, 35. See also K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, *Some Aspects of the Hindu View of Life according to Dharmasāstra* for a detailed discussion of the determination of duties and the theory of social obligations. This work also contains an excellent discussion of the classical sources of Dharma.

⁶ Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 222. See M. Müller (ed.), *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXV; and G. C. Houghton (trans.), *Manava-Dharmasāstra*, Vol. II, for the primary sources of Varnashramadharma.

⁷ Sidney Low, *Vision of India*, pp. 262-3.

⁸ *Santiparvan*, LXVIII, 6, 8, 10-13.

⁹ But the Rishis held out the highest hope for mankind. The end of the Kali Yuga would bring forth the birth of a new Golden Age, a new perfection in the universe.

¹⁰ K. P. Mukerji, *The State*, p. 343.

¹¹ See K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, for an historical analysis of the types of Indian polities, especially republics, from the earliest Vedic sources until the British Raj.

¹² *Anusasanaparvan*, LXII, 4, 34-6.

¹³ 'The ruler had ordinarily little control over the numerous social, economic and religious concerns of the people, except by way of dispensing justice when disputes were brought before him or his courts. The details of the daily life of the people were looked after by numberless autonomous groups and associations bound by ties of locality, caste, occupation, or religious persuasion.'—K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India from Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar*, p. 156.

¹⁴ Dharmarajya has been compared with the Western concept of natural law, but is a more meaningful and integrated concept as evolved in the Indian theory. See A. S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India*, where he writes, 'Dharma was the sovereign of the sovereign . . .'. See also his *Sources of Hindu Dharma in its Socio-Religious Aspects*.

¹⁵ Vincent A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India*, p. 57.

¹⁶ James M. Macphail, *Asoka*, p. 13.

¹⁷ M. V. Krishna Rao, *Studies in Kautilya*, p. 89. See also R. Shamashastri (trans. and ed.), *Kautilya's Arthashastra* (4th edition).

¹⁸ K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Bk. II, p. 205.

¹⁹ G. S. Sardesai, *New History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 97.

²⁰ *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 215.

²¹ K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 351.

Chapter II

THE BRITISH IMPACT AND THE INDIAN REACTION

Men can know more than their ancestors did if they start with a knowledge of what their ancestors had already learned. They can do advanced experiments if they do not have to learn all over again how to do the elementary ones. That is why a society can be progressive only if it conserves its traditions.

Walter Lippmann

The outward fabric of our world must alter, as do our forms of society; but to demolish all that is old, out of a mere contempt for the past, is to impoverish that human faculty which yearns after continuity and things venerable.

Russell Kirk

THE BRITISH INDIAN EMPIRE was fairly well consolidated over the conquered dominions of India and the quasi-independent states by the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century. After a thousand years, which were characterized by incessant warfare and alien overlordship, the vitality of the Indian civilization and nation lay nearly exhausted. The people lived silently in a tradition-directed world clinging to custom and convention, endeavouring to follow their Swadharms without the protection and assistance of Swaraj in the political community. The atrophied social forms preserved some of the tradition of the classical era, the family was still based on the Vedic ideal, the children still learned the Epics and the history of the Bharatdharma, and the Varnashramic system, though degraded, was still followed. But the philosophy of life of the civilization had become almost lifeless. Without Swaraj the social order alone had

fought the long battle against decay and disintegration and to preserve the Dharma. Somehow something of the spirit, maintained by the traditions, had survived. But orthodoxy encrusted the values of the tradition and there appeared to be no person or power strong enough to revitalize the classical spirit. And the nineteenth century was to be the greatest challenge that spirit had yet to face. The British Raj was to be its most severe testing.

The British, as the Portuguese, Dutch and French before them, had come to India primarily as traders. But the British stayed to rule. The British Raj was founded and expanded, primarily for economic gain, by the East India Company; and the attitude of the British rule has been explained in saying that they 'chose not to interfere with the Indian way of life', and at the same time they made no efforts to assimilate. They brought a new technology, a new system of rule, and a new set of attitudes toward life. They imposed the technology and the rule and, at least in education, their attitudes. Their attitudes, logically, were based in large measure upon their philosophy of life—the value system of nineteenth-century Europe. The British must be given credit for not consciously endeavouring to undermine the value system of the Indian civilization. True, some missionaries and some liberal statesmen hoped to remake India completely, but in large measure the trader-administrators were primarily interested in business. It was their desire to administer effectively their Indian domain that led to the introduction of Western education and thereby to the imposition of Western attitudes. In order to administer their vast new domains, they saw that it would be necessary to educate a generation of Indians who would know English and Western ways of conducting

business, and who could be relied upon to fill the lower- and middle-echelon clerical cum administrative posts. To meet this need the British undertook to draw up the plan of an educational policy for India within twenty years of the fall of Maratha power. This was the beginning of the impact of nineteenth-century Western ideas on the slumbering civilization of India.

Lord Macaulay and British Education

The centre of British power was Calcutta, and it was there that the first plan for education was begun. Christian missionaries had been active in encouraging the Government to adopt a broad Westernizing education policy in the hope of aiding their efforts of conversion. But the Government was undecided as to whether it should support Western or classical education. The leading European Orientalists urged that the Indian civilization and its traditions should be maintained and revitalized through a policy of education that was centred around the study of Indian classics. The advocates of Westernized education argued that not only did the Government need English-speaking civil servants but also, inspired by nineteenth-century ideas of progress and liberalism, that India could never prosper unless it was shown the way of the West and its sons were educated to think and act as Europeans. For some time the Government could not be brought to choose between the Western and the classical systems.

The debate was still going on when in 1835 Thomas Babington Macaulay presented his famous Minute on Education to the Governor-General. In many respects this is a decisive document in the history of modern India. It has been variously called 'England's

gift to Asia ' and ' the ghastly folly of Lord Macaulay
In part, Macaulay wrote,

' The object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India ; and that all the funds appropriated to education would best be employed on English education alone.'

He supported his case with what appeared to be convincing logic and fact. Macaulay believed that if a number of Indian boys were given a Western education they would assimilate Western attitudes and come to think and act as Europeans, and they would then serve as interpreters of their new knowledge to the population at large. He hoped that through this education policy the masses of India would eventually be occidentalized. He was convinced that only through copying the West could India hope to prosper and progress. This logically followed, for Macaulay considered the classical Indian tradition backward and degraded. He hoped to remake India to his own design. His attitude is well demonstrated by his statement to the effect that

' the great majority of the population of India consists of idolaters, blindly attached to doctrines and rites which, considered merely with reference to the temporal interests of mankind, are in the highest degree pernicious. In no part of the world has a religion ever existed more unfavourable to the moral and intellectual health of our race.'¹

These are the frank opinions of a nineteenth-century liberal Englishman, the man who initiated the educational system that wrought a revolution in the rising generation of Indian intellectuals. To his way of

thinking, 'moral and intellectual health' demanded that India's centuries-old civilization must be discarded; the nation must be remade in the image of nineteenth-century Europe. The Government, so long dedicated to the policy that it should not 'interfere', decided that it could 'influence' the Indian way of life, and finally accepted Macaulay's educational proposals.

Many young Indians sought to avail themselves of this new Western education for it would enable them to rise in the British Indian bureaucracy. Macaulay was not mistaken in his judgement of the immediate effect of Western education. Many of the young graduates soon learned to judge the Indian way of life through Western eyes, to assume the standard and values taught in their textbooks. Actually, many came to discard the older Indian value system and to accept the rationalistic, materialistic, utilitarian doctrines of nineteenth-century Europe with enthusiasm. The influence was so profound that, to many, everything Western became progressive and fashionable, while everything Indian and traditional was looked upon as undesirable if not positively loathsome. As Macaulay had predicted, a new generation of Indian intellectuals was arising who thought and acted like Europeans, and many were wont to think of 'the great majority of the population of India' in Macaulay's disparaging terms.

But the new intelligentsia, so soon inspired by their education to avidly imitate the West, found that they had been educated out of one faith yet not accepted into another. They were uprooted, 'deracinated', from their own heritage; everything Indian was made alien by their new Westernized vision of the world. In being educated away from the classical values, they were also educated away from and lost contact with the Indian

people. At the same time they were not accepted as the equals of the British. Many were able to find positions in the lower civil service; they found the gates to the higher echelons closed before them. They dressed and acted and thought like Englishmen—but they were not Englishmen. Over the years, many of them formed a small, dissatisfied, frustrated group, cut loose from their cultural roots and unaccepted by those they most wished to imitate. The seeds of disaffection with themselves, their nation and their 'educators' were being sown.

In their search for roots the new intellectuals sometimes were converted to Christianity, but many could not take so drastic a step. Rather, they became men without a Dharma. They had new, Western values and ideals, but these were alien to India and could not easily be made productive. At the same time, they were the only articulate, highly-educated members of the Indian community, but the people did not listen to what they had to say, to what they had learned in their textbooks and classrooms. Looking around them at the Indian society of their day, at the atrophied caste system, at listless orthodoxy, they began to turn their articulateness to social criticism. There was much to be condemned, reform was necessary. Many became inspired with the ideal of remaking India in their own image, as they had been remade in the image of the West. They had lost their tradition and so had become anti-traditionalists. They no longer understood the values of the Indian civilization, the values that had been so carefully sheltered by the social system through a thousand years of political instability. Social criticism became social reformism. The intellectuals found their place in the leadership of the movement for Western-inspired social reform. The abuses of the social order which orthodoxy

could not bring itself to challenge, and which the British Raj preferred to ignore rather than interfere with, became the reason for existence of the new intelligentsia. They were inspired to pour their new-found values into the cultural forms of the old civilization, for they had a vision of India as an imitation of the West.

The Religious Reaction

Some of the new social reformers wanted to reject the philosophy of life of the Indian civilization, the Bharatdharma, in all its aspects. But others saw that there were some values in the classical way of life and that it was better to endeavour to remake the Bharatdharma by making concessions to Western concepts than to destroy it for a totally Western vision of the world. Of these one of the foremost was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who founded in Calcutta his famous Brahma Samaj. Roy received a Western education and had served in the British Indian administration. Together with a small group of uprooted intellectuals, he began the Brahma Samaj to promote social reform and in the hope of generally reforming Hinduism, avoiding the loss of educated Hindus to either Christianity or atheism. The Samaj opposed idolatry, untouchability, the prohibitions on widow remarriage and most of the restrictions of the caste system, endeavouring to put Hinduism on a competitive basis with Christianity for the allegiance of the intelligentsia. The programme emphasized religious reform through social reform. The group was never large in number; its programme was excessively rationalistic and its philosophy too Western to influence directly the Indian mind. Yet the Brahma Samaj was to give significant impetus both to the social reform movement and to the awakening of India. It was the first organization to rise to the defence

of the Indian civilization under the challenge of the West.

— The spirit of Roy's organization reached Bombay, where the Prarthana Samaj was founded for the same general objectives as the Brahma Samaj. Even greater emphasis was placed on thorough-going social reform. An influential member of this group was Mahadev Govind Ranade, Justice of the Bombay High Court and leader of social reformism in Western India. Ranade received an excellent Western education and had become a civil servant. Around him he gathered an organization dedicated to social and religious iconoclasm. This group wanted to build a humanistic-rationalistic philosophy for nineteenth-century India out of the agnostic materialism and liberal utilitarianism they had learned from their Western education. They profoundly desired to recreate India in the image of the West, for on this course alone did they see India's salvation. Though the leader, Ranade, was a scholar and an historian, he cared little to follow the classical Indian values which had become alien to him, and he was often vehemently anti-traditional in his desire to promote far-reaching reform. He sometimes sought scriptural support for his proposals, interpreting the classics to suit the needs of the reform measure, but he had little abiding faith in the classical doctrines. He was excommunicated from his Brahmin caste and led his followers in publicly flaunting the rules of caste conduct. His biographer has summed up the philosophy of his social reform movement in the following words :

‘ Let the dead past bury its dead, for they cannot be revived with any advantage to anybody. All that can be done is to utilize the materials it affords for reforming them into new organizations. When revival is undesirable

or impossible, reformation is the only alternative which must be adopted.’²

Ranade was the symbol of the sincere, intelligent, Western-educated reformer who would remake India to accord to the values of a discordant and disintegrating alien civilization rather than recreate it in the image of its own philosophy of life and the Bharatdharma.

The religious reaction, embodying both religious and social reform, that sought to purify Hinduism rather than remake it, was the Arya Samaj. The rallying cry of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, its founder, was ‘back to the *Vedas*’. The Samaj was thus revivalistic, intending the *Vedas* to take the scriptural place of the Koran or the Bible for Hinduism. Some of the new intelligentsia had begun to react against Western scepticism and rationalism, and many of these sought to make the Arya Samaj a half-way house in their return to traditional values. The Hinduism it taught was purified and Westernized, and like the other reform movements, the Arya Samaj attacked idolatry, untouchability and the caste system. The Samaj was a considerable force in the religious revival of modern India, and in the response of India to the challenge of Western civilization. It reacted positively to reassert Indian values under the impact of the aggressive iconoclasm of the Westernizing reformers. On the one hand its emphasis on the *Vedas* brought it a considerable popular following, but on the other its own Western-inspired reformism tended to separate it from the majority who still clung to the social and religious order that had preserved the traditional values.

In Calcutta, in 1879, a learned *sadhu*, untutored in Western ways, began to teach a new interpretation of Reality according to the highest traditions of the Indian

religion. He was a worshipper of the Goddess Kali, and his system followed the orthodox Vedanta. This man was Shri Ramakrishna, the greatest saint of modern India; and one of his earliest disciples was a dynamic young Western-educated intellectual who is known to the world as Vivekananda. Ramakrishna taught a Dharma of pure classical revelation; and Vivekananda, who had explored the rationalistic and utilitarian philosophies of the West and found in them no satisfaction, turned to this holy man as his preceptor. Vivekananda led the Ramakrishna Mission movement that in many ways may be called the spiritual reawakening of modern India. The Dharma was envisaged no longer as the passive conveyer of the Indian way of life but rather as a new dynamic force in the world. As one of Ramakrishna's disciples has written, 'Let us suppose, then, that we see Hinduism no longer as the preserver of Hindu custom, but as *the creator of Hindu character*. It is surprising to think how radical a change is entailed in many directions by this conception'.³ The impact of the West was now bringing a firm reaction in terms of India's own value system. Many Westernized intellectuals renewed their faith in the classical values at the feet of this humble seeker. In 1895, Vivekananda attended the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. There he explained the rebirth of the Bharatdharma to the world and, in turn, to those in India who had forgotten or lost these values. His address in Chicago marked the turning-point in the reappraisal of classical religious concepts and foreshadowed the reassertion of classical values in all areas of Indian life.

The Theosophical Society, led in India by a Westerner, Mrs Annie Besant, also made a great contribution to the rediscovery of the value system of the Indian civilization and the dynamic qualities of the awakened

Bharatdharma. In this movement, many dissatisfied intellectuals found a source of great spiritual renewal, an outlet for constructive social reform, and an integrated understanding of the traditions and faith of their ancestors. The Hindu University at Banaras was founded by the Theosophical Society to 're-educate' the new generation of young India, and the movement had vast repercussions throughout the social and political spheres as well as within the realm of ethics and religion.

In these movements the conflict of civilizations and ways of life began. They stimulated the process of re-creation of the classical values, they heralded the Indian renaissance. Macaulay had hoped to occidentalize India, but instead, many educated, Westernized Indians were beginning to rediscover the classical Indian philosophy of life. India began its period of renaissance. But Macaulay's aspirations to remake India were also being fulfilled by those new intellectuals who reacted in a spirit of imitation, emphasizing the social evils of Hinduism and advocating extreme Western-inspired social reform. The nation was in a ferment of religious, cultural and social activity. New directions were being charted. It was from this environment that the early political awakening of India began.

The Moderate Political Beginnings ✓

The interest in social reform naturally led many Westernized intellectuals to an interest in politics. In trying to enact and realize some of their reform schemes, many sought a voice in political affairs, aspiring to bring about moderate political reforms. Thus, the extremists in social reform became the moderates of political reform. This was a logical evolution. As we have seen, from their Western education, from reading Rousseau and the

philosophical radicals, Locke, Milton, Bentham, Mill and Gladstone, they became indoctrinated with a social philosophy which caused them to feel dissatisfaction if not revulsion at the social forms of their own people. This new picture of the world inspired them to become advocates of extreme social reform. At the same time, their political philosophy, derived from these same Western sources, caused them to admire if not idolize all British institutions and to seek to reproduce them in India. However, though they had become uprooted from the civilization, traditions and socio-ethical order of their own people, and though they were educated and remade in the mould of Western values, they were not accepted as Westerners, they did not share in the privileges and administrative opportunities of the British civil servant. Obviously, to many it appeared that the British theory of social and political justice could not be wrong. Therefore the application of that theory by the British Raj in India must be wrong. Those most kindly disposed to the British felt British theory and British Indian practice were at least inconsistent. They decided that they must change the attitude of the British Raj—to make it accord with its own ideal political practice and thereby assist in remaking India and also in gaining for the intellectuals the opportunities and privileges their education had prepared them for. But they were convinced that they had to prove themselves 'worthy' of political reform, they had to demonstrate that their ideals of social and political order were the same as the British, and to do this they would have to be in the forefront of the social reform movement. Some believed they must become extremists in social reform, outdoing Macaulay in remaking India. Thus, their education made them moderates in their demands for political

reform—always along the principles of British political philosophy—and made them extremists in social reform—to remake Indian society in the image of the West, so that it might deserve the benefits of British theory put into practice. It logically followed that social reform *must precede* political reform, to prove India's worthiness for political reforms. But the end result of both kinds of reform was to be a recreated India, recreated in accordance with Western social and political philosophy, remade in the image of the West.

The British had begun to design administrative reforms as early as Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858. In 1861, an element of reform at the lowest levels of local administration was introduced. In 1883, the agitation over the Ilbert Bill interested increasing numbers of the new intellectuals in political reform. Gradually the social reformers saw that effective action required a combination and co-ordination of their social and political programmes. This prepared the groundwork for two Englishmen, Allan Octavian Hume and William Wedderburn, to work with the aid of the most prominent Indian leaders for the formation of an all-India political reform movement. They hoped to organize on a national basis and they believed that the people and the Government would benefit from an exchange of ideas through such an undertaking. They began planning an organization that would foster co-operation between educated Indians and the British Raj; and this new organization became the Indian National Congress.

The Congress was founded by Hume and Wedderburn and a group of Western-educated Indians along the lines they had envisaged, not as a political party but rather as a co-ordinated *movement* designed to promote

the exchange of ideas and co-ordinate activities and to discuss and communicate political resolutions to the Government. The British Raj initially welcomed the formation of the Congress, for they saw in it an aid to the popular administration of the country. In 1885, the first session of the Congress was held in Bombay, attended by seventy-two men, none of whom could be called politicians. Most of these early leaders had been to England, many had been educated there, and nearly all were favourably disposed to a Western view of life and inspired by the political ideals of nineteenth-century British liberalism. They were representative of the uprooted intellectuals and the emerging Indian middle class; in no sense were they representative of the silent, tradition-directed masses of the villages of India. An indication of their deracination was the fact that the membership of the first session of the Congress was limited to individuals who were 'well-acquainted with the English language'. The first speaker on the first resolution in the 1885 session said, in part, that it was 'by a merciful dispensation of Providence' that Britain had 'rescued India from internal anarchy and external aggression' and that the British political order deserved the respect and praise of the Indian people.

The political programme of the early Congresses was not concerned with the rallying of mass public support for India's political cause. Rather, the Congress concentrated on representing the advanced case for reform and equitability in administrative matters to the Viceroy, the British people and Parliament. They believed that political reforms would gradually be bestowed as a gift from the British, when educated Indians were able to demonstrate that India deserved such reforms. Their theory of political action was

limited to constitutional agitation and concentrated on making appeals for the application of nineteenth-century liberal political theories to the administration of the British Indian Empire. Their aim was to remodel the existing administration so as to bring it into harmony not with traditional Indian political ideals but with the Western ideals which they had learned to value in their textbooks. ✓

For all its moderate political ambitions, the Indian National Congress soon became an all-India body of considerable importance. Many grievances were brought to the attention of the British administration, and the beginnings of Indian political action were launched. But the Westernized members of the early Moderate Congress tended to direct their most severe criticism not against the British Raj but against the traditional institutions of the Indian system of social order. They were obsessed with the necessity for remaking the classical pattern of society so that it might more fully accord with the Western ideal of society in which they believed. As a part of their political programme, they endeavoured to induce the British Indian Government to take action through governmental channels to bring about social reform measures which they believed to be necessary in the remaking of India. From the founding of the Congress in 1885 until 1905, the social extremists but political moderates dominated the Congress movement.⁴

But during these first twenty years of the Moderate Congress, an increasing number of young Indians joined the movement. These men had either become dissatisfied and disenchanted with Western rationalism and utilitarianism and returned to some form of the classical value system, or they had never been so com-

pletely persuaded as the older generation of the worth of the Western civilization's philosophy of life. Many of them had a new and different vision of the right ordering of man in society and the state, a vision which was based on the classical Indian theory of right ordering. Believing in political action, they entered the Congress and soon differences of opinion on procedures and objectives began to arise. The newer members were beginning to evolve a new conception of the role of the Indian National Congress in the political future of their nation.

The New Leaders—the Nationalists

A new leadership of the new men of the Congress began to arise. Foremost among these were Lala Lajpat Rai of the Punjab, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose of Bengal, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Maharashtra. They became dissatisfied with the Moderate programme of prayer and petition and began to advocate putting 'more grit in the Congress'. Their group in the Congress began to be called the 'Extremists' by the older Moderate leadership; actually, they were the first Indian Nationalists of the Indian National Congress. Initially, their leadership influenced Congress policy in local matters only, until after the turn of the century. Theirs was the spirit of the Indian independence movement which was typical of the twentieth century, whereas the Moderates were inspired by and acted in terms of the political philosophy of British liberalism of the nineteenth century.

In the Punjab, Lala Lajpat Rai emerged as the spokesman of the new group. He was both a prolific writer and an astute political organizer; he was interested not only in the political reawakening of India but

also in the cultural renaissance of the Bharatdharma. He was a lawyer, reformer and educator, a worker in the Arya Samaj. He spoke a language which the people understood, and the example of his life, moulded by sincerity and dedicated to his cause, not averse to privation and suffering, inspired around him a considerable mass following. Like his fellow Nationalists, he taught a doctrine of self-reliance, action, unity and the new spirit of courage. He was not an imitator but an innovator. He was devoted to his Indian heritage and believed in the possibility of reapplying that heritage in both the cultural and political spheres so as to remake India not in the image of the West but in her own image. He worked for the synthesizing of the best of India's tradition with the best of what she had learned from the West. He stood with Tilak, Pal and Ghose in criticizing the timid, Westernized political programme of the Moderates and in conceiving of a new dynamic platform of Indian political action.

Bepin Chandra Pal was an author and educator in his native province of Bengal. He received an excellent Western education and studied for a time at Oxford. But Pal was not easily captivated by the Western philosophy of scepticism and materialism, and he sought to rediscover the spirit of his own civilization. He became active in the Brahma Samaj and there found some of the classical values he sought. He became a fiery spokesman for a new, nationalist India. Pal was not so much an active politician as he was a theoretician of the new vision of India and a clear-voiced awakener of popular support for the Nationalist cause. He travelled the length and breadth of Bengal, and then all of India, arousing the people to the new spirit of action. Through education and journalism he reached the silent,

tradition-directed masses and became their spokesman. In Calcutta, he founded the famous Nationalist newspaper, Bande Mataram, and his co-editor on that paper was another young Bengal leader, Aurobindo Ghose.

Aurobindo Ghose had received an entirely Western education. His parents had originally hoped that he would enter the Indian Civil Service, but while in school in England, young Aurobindo became devoted to the cause of India's awakening and her new nationalism. Giving up his plans for the I.C.S., he returned to India as an educator and writer. Soon the timidity of the Moderate political programme aroused him and he denounced their placating policies and uninspired leadership. He was unwilling to accept their imitative, Westernized philosophy of life and began to study his own country, its languages, its civilization, traditions and its peoples. He sought roots through understanding the values of India's own philosophy of life. In rediscovering the Bharatdharma, India's own way of life, he found himself; he developed a new vision of re-awakened India. He conceived that the first step in the renaissance of Indian civilization must be political liberation, and he demanded that the Congress follow a dynamic policy that would bring self-rule to India. He foresaw that such a policy could not be based on an alien political philosophy, that it must be based on the traditions of India's own civilization. Because of his traditionalist-orientation, he was one of the first to perceive that the social order, so abhorred in its decayed state by the Moderates, had performed a great service in preserving that tradition. He wrote,

‘ The resistance of the conservative element in Hinduism, tamasic, inert, ignorant, uncreative though it was, saved

the country by preventing an even more rapid and thorough disintegration than actually took place and by giving respite and time for the persistent national self to emerge and find itself.’⁵

Aurobindo became one of the greatest of the new leaders of that ‘persistent national self’. His writings were to set Bengal aflame, for though he led a political movement, he based his life and his philosophy firmly on the classical values which the people had for so long cherished. With his colleague, Bepin Chandra Pal, he would agree that ‘this New Movement is not a mere political movement. It is essentially a spiritual movement’.⁶ Together Ghose and Pal led the reawakening of India in Bengal.¹

The fourth great leader of the new vision and the Nationalist cause was born in Maharashtra in 1856, of the caste of Chitpavan Brahmins who had ruled over Shivaji’s empire—Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Tilak was born thirty-eight years after the final British conquest of Maratha power. He was a scholar, educator, journalist and first among the leaders of the new India. Tilak learned of the values of the Bharatdharma as a child in his home at Ratnagiri. His father was an educator and he carefully tutored the boy in Sanskrit and mathematics; and his mother helped to mould his firm character and to teach him the values of his classical heritage. From both parents he learned a healthy veneration for spiritual values, and he learned that he shared the history of the Marathas, that he was heir to a glorious martial tradition. His religious or spiritual orientation, the product of his family’s devoutness, was apparent in his later writings, as when he wrote, ‘The greatest virtue of Man is to be filled with wonder and

devotion by anything in the animate and inanimate creation that suggests inherent divinity'.⁷ He also made continuous reference to the great Shivaji and the history of his Maratha people, the fiery tradition of their independence, their war against the Mogul Empire to restore Swaraj and to save the Dharma. The Maratha people had not forgotten that they had been free, that Swaraj had been their birthright. From his childhood, he inherited a vision of a new India arising, firmly based on the spirit and traditions of her civilization and her glorious past.

Tilak had an English education in India, but he was far less deracinated than most students of his generation, for he specialized in mathematics and Sanskrit, and, if anything, his education brought him closer to the sources of his heritage. When he studied law, he concentrated on classical Indian law, reading nearly all the great books of law and legal commentaries. His study of Sanskrit was a life-long occupation and he was recognized as one of India's leading Sanskrit scholars. Relying upon his knowledge of this ancient language and his mathematical training, he wrote *Orion, Studies in the Antiquity of the Vedas*, in which he explored the thesis that the *Rig Veda* was composed as early as 4500 B.C., basing his evidence on astronomical calculations from the Sanskrit texts. This work gained him recognition in the Western world for his scholarship in Oriental studies. His second great work was again on the *Vedas*, *The Arctic Home of the Vedas*, in which, relying upon astronomical and geological data, he argued that the Aryans probably originally lived in the far northern reaches of the Asiatic continent. This book is credited as being one of the most original and unusual works in Sanskrit scholarship. The *Vedic Chronology* was a

posthumously published volume of his notes and further researches. His greatest work was the *Gita-Rahasya*, a philosophic inquiry into the secret of the teaching of the *Gita*, the holiest book of the Aryadharma. In this volume he reinterpreted the *Gita* in its classical sense, restoring the proper emphasis to the philosophy of action, the Karma Yoga; and his is considered one of the outstanding studies of the *Gita* in modern Indian literature. The *Gita-Rahasya* assured Tilak's place among the greatest of India's scholars and philosophers. His classical studies enabled him to recapture the spirit of India's classical philosophy of life. In his heart of hearts he always remained a humble student of India's greatness. Even after he had become the foremost political leader of India, he often said that he wished he could devote his life to teaching mathematics and pursuing his scholarly research into the wisdom of India's ancient civilization.⁸

Upon graduation from the university, Tilak and his best friend, G. G. Agarkar, planned their future lives. Though practically all educated youths of their generation went into Government service, they resolved never to become civil servants. Instead, they developed a plan to establish a high school and college to impart inexpensive and healthy education to the young people of Poona. Personal gain never entered their thoughts, and they resolved to dedicate their lives to education and public service. In these ventures they were joined by V. K. Chiplunkar, a young man who shared their ideals, and who, as N. C. Kelkar has written, 'wanted the nation to know itself and its past glories so that it may have . . . confidence in its own strength and capacity to adapt itself wisely and well to the new surroundings without losing its individuality'.⁹ Tilak completely

agreed with this ideal. Others joined these three, and in 1880 they started the New English School. The institution was such an immediate success that they founded the Deccan Education Society in Poona, and the next year started the famous Fergusson College. Simultaneously, they began editing and publishing two newspapers, the *Kesari*, a Marathi-language weekly, and *The Mahratta*, its English-language counterpart. All these young men dedicated themselves, their lives and their fortunes to popular education through their schools and through their newspapers.

Opinion in Poona in the late 1880's was sharply divided on the question of social reform. The leading personality of the day was Mr Justice Ranade. Agarkar found that these men were sincerely working for the alleviation of social evils and soon joined with Ranade and the Westernized social reformers in advocating extreme social reform measures. Chiplunkar, who would have opposed their extremism, unfortunately died while still a young man, and Tilak could not bring himself to agree with his friend Agarkar in the latter's reforming zeal; he could not in good conscience disavow the values he believed existed in India's own way of life. Primarily because of this difference over social reform, the two friends slowly parted. It was finally decided at the end of 1890 that Tilak should purchase the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta* and devote himself to journalism, while Agarkar and the social reformers would have a free hand in the Deccan Education Society. {

As an editor, Tilak was unsurpassed. The *Kesari* and *The Mahratta* under his guidance were always tremendously influential and came to be financially successful. His sincerity and unflinching sense of dedication led him to champion the causes of his people against any

and all who would be unjust, autocratic or opportunistic. As editor of the *Kesari*, Tilak became the awakener of India, the Lion of Maharashtra, the most influential Indian newspaper editor of his day. It was as editor that Tilak began his three great battles—against the Westernizing social reformers, against the inert spirit of orthodoxy and against the British Raj. It was as editor that he became a leader of the new forces in the Indian National Congress and the Indian nation.

The Emerging Philosophy of the New Leaders

Lord Macaulay's Indian intellectuals, the leaders of Westernization in social and political reform, based their programme of social and political action almost entirely on the philosophy of life and action of nineteenth-century Europe. They were truly more the products of Western civilization than Indian. The new leaders of the twentieth century were not satisfied with the Western civilization's system of values, they were not prepared to reject India's own philosophy of life in order to imitate the philosophy of the British. They recognized that the forms of social order in India were in need of drastic reforms, but instead of judging Indian social practices by the standards of the West, they looked for their own standards within their own civilization. Aurobindo Ghose exemplified this new approach in writing,

‘Change of forms there may and will be, but the novel formation must be a new self-expression of self-creation developed from within; it must be characteristic of the spirit and not servilely borrowed from the embodiments of an alien nature.’¹⁰

They knew that there must be change, but also they knew that a philosophy must guide the remaking of

India, and that the crucial question for India's future was whether that guide, that philosophy, would be Western or Indian in inspiration. Tilak wrote, 'It is difficult to see the way in darkness without light or in a thick jungle without a guide'. And he rejected the rationalism and scepticism of Western philosophy in adding, 'Similarly mere common sense without faith in religion is of no avail in searching for the truth'.¹¹ In the era of the religious and philosophical renaissance of the Bharatdharma, the new leaders sought out the guidance of their own philosophy in their own religious principles. Undoubtedly, their initial motive was not to rediscover a theory of social and political action but rather to find a satisfying personal philosophy of life. Individually, in their private lives and unknown to each other, these new leaders sought to rediscover and re-apply the Indian philosophy of life. Their success gave them a basis for developing their theory of political action, obligation and ordering.

Their first task was to look behind the atrophied forms of religious orthodoxy and custom to find the values that had built the Indian civilization. Tilak recognized that

'the edifice of the Hindu religion is not based on fragile ground like custom. Had it been so it would have been levelled to the ground very long ago. It has lasted so long because it is founded on everlasting Truth, and eternal and pure doctrines relating to the Supreme Being.'¹²

This truth the Westernized intellectuals had neglected to discover in their obsession with the remaking of India in their own image, in the philosophy of the West. As far as Tilak was concerned, there must be a return to

faith, to the fulfilment of the divine purpose of the human soul, as India's ancient values had taught. Spiritual good was the basis of social good. Tilak wrote,

'The structure of faith collapses with the collapse of faith in the existence of the soul. The doctrine of soul-less-ness removed the need for Faith. But when Faith thus ceased to be an organic force binding society together, society was bound to be disrupted and individuals living in a community were sure to find their own different paths to happiness. The ties which bind the society in one harmonious organization would be snapped, and no other binding principle would take their place. Moral ties would loosen, and people would fall from good moral standards.'¹³

His personal life was based on this 'structure of faith' and the moral purposefulness provided by this foundation remained with him throughout his life. No creed of soul-less-ness could inspire Tilak or his people; thus the rediscovery of faith as the 'organic binding force' was the first principle in his emerging philosophy.

Those who would depreciate India's religion, as Lord Macaulay had done, had to reckon with the new leaders who, as Aurobindo Ghose wrote, understood that

'philosophy and religion are the soul of Indian culture, inseparable from each other and interpenetrative. The whole objective of Indian philosophy, its entire *raison d'être*, is knowledge of the spirit, the experience of it and the right way to a spiritual existence; its single aim coincides with the highest significance of religion.'¹⁴

From the basis of their spiritual rediscovery the new leaders began to develop a personal philosophy of life firmly based, as Tilak wrote, on the knowledge that 'the individual and the Supreme Soul are one', and that the

'ultimate goal of the soul is liberation'.¹⁵ They explored the wisdom of the Real and the relative worlds, the Meaning of creation and the moral working out of the cosmic evolution toward liberation. From this foundation they understood the Purpose of life, to live in accord with Dharma, the integrating principle of the cosmic order. As Aurobindo Ghose wrote of the Indian philosophy of life, 'The idea of Dharma is, next to the idea of the Infinite, its major chord; Dharma, next to spirit, is its foundation of life'.¹⁶ Once these principles were accepted, Western rationalism and scepticism, materialism and utilitarianism could hold little appeal. It was from this basic understanding that the new leaders began their criticism of the Westernizers who would destroy this wisdom and these values. It taught them to love and respect, not the forms of atrophied orthodoxy, but rather the spirit of the total Indian philosophy, the way of life and wisdom of life of the Indian civilization.

Moreover, India's civilization and her history provided the new insight for the new leaders' theory of social and political action. For them there was no reason for India to feel ashamed of her civilization when compared to the West. Just the contrary, India should feel great pride. Indian values were *different from* but *not inferior to* Western values. The Westernized intellectuals who wanted to change and remake India in an alien faith, who abhorred India's value system, were wrong, for as Tilak reminded them, 'How can a man be proud of the greatness of his own nation if he feels no pride of his own religion?'¹⁷ It was the Bharatdharma that provided an understanding of the moral purposefulness of the universe, which is the necessary basis of a philosophy of life, and it provided them with a guide to concrete action in personal, social and political matters. The

conflict between civilizations was inevitable, and these new leaders were in the forefront of the defence of India's civilization.

Dharma was the integrating principle, and Swadharma the spiritual and social duty of each individual. Here was the guide to social and political action. Projecting these values the new leaders began to build the emerging philosophy of Indian nationalism. They were not captivated by these classical values to the extent that they fell down before the forms of orthodoxy, so that they could not consider moving progressively forward, but they were inspired by this value system because it provided them with an understanding of the role of the individual and the moral purposefulness of the universe. As Ghose wrote, 'Our sense of the greatness of our past must not be made a fatally hypnotizing lure to inertia; it should be rather an inspiration to renewed and greater achievement'.¹⁸ The new leaders began to visualize the full meaning of that 'greater achievement'.

It was with this perspective and this inspiration that Tilak and the Nationalists began their battles for the creation of the new India. Relying on a realistic appraisal of the world as they found it, they set about not to remake India in the image of an alien system of values, but to recreate India on the foundations of her own greatness. From an Indian philosophy of life they began to construct an Indian philosophy of politics that was to become the political theory of the Indian Independence Movement.

NOTES

¹ See Macaulay, *Speeches*, p. 202.

² R. B. G. A. Mankar, *The Late Mr Justice M. G. Ranade*, Vol. I, p. 140.

³ *Select Essays of Sister Nivedita*, pp. 169-70.

⁴ For a brief resumé of the more important resolutions passed at the first twenty sessions of the Indian National Congress, see B. P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, pp. 24-6.

⁵ Aurobindo Ghose, *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, p. 26.

⁶ *Bepin Chandra Pal, His Life and Utterances*, p. 38.

⁷ *Kesari*, 1 June 1897.

⁸ The scope of Tilak's scholarship is indicated by the list of projected works he hoped to write but for which he never found time. They are: *History of Hindu Religion*, *Indian Nationalism*, *Pre-Epic History of India*, *The Shankara Darshana (Indian Monism)*, *Provincial Administration*, *Hindu Law*, *Principles of Infinitesimal Calculus*, *Life of Shivaji*, and *Chaldea and India*.

⁹ N. C. Kelkar, *Pleasures and Privileges of the Pen*, Bk. I, p. 121.

¹⁰ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 8-9.

¹¹ S. V. Bapat (ed.), *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 118.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 346.

¹³ *Kesari*, 19 September 1905.

¹⁴ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 63.

¹⁵ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 334.

¹⁶ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 104.

¹⁷ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 326.

¹⁸ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 39.

Chapter III

THE BEGINNING OF TILAK'S BATTLES

Each People, each Nation, must live upon the lines of its own experience. Nations are no more capable of borrowing experience than individuals are. The histories of other peoples may furnish us with light, but they cannot furnish us with conditions of action. Every Nation must constantly keep in touch with its past.

Woodrow Wilson

We have behind us a tradition in religion and knowledge. Our tradition in religion and knowledge is equal, nay, even superior to those possessed by others. If we gave up these traditions, then we shall be devoid of any ties that will bind our people together. To break the time-honoured traditions is to break the spirit of the people who hold them. We should constantly bear these things in mind.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

TILAK STARTED LIFE with a basic comprehension of the classical values of the Indian civilization. He believed in the Aryadharma. As a child he learned the history of free Maharashtra. He studied India's great classics in Sanskrit. He rediscovered for himself the traditions of India's philosophy and absorbed the scientific and realistic approach to problems that was the methodology of that philosophy. From these beginnings he developed a frame of reference by which to judge the great issues of his day. His was obviously different from the frame of reference of the deracinated, Westernizing social reformers, primarily because Tilak had not been uprooted from his heritage but rather had become devoted to it. When he began his career as an editor, the three great issues of the day were social reform, the awakening of India, and the beginnings of political agitation. To understand his position on these vital questions, we

must continually keep in mind the frame of reference that afforded him his perspective.

Criticism of Westernized Social Reformism

Tilak believed in the Aryadharmā, but he was never a blind follower of orthodoxy. He refused to overlook or to excuse the obvious evils of the atrophied social system which were repellent to the social reformers and instigated them to take action. However, he became the foremost of those in India who opposed the extremist measures of these social reformers. But the very fact that he was educated and that he refrained from joining the reformers indicted him as a defender of orthodoxy in the eyes of the extremists. Abuse was heaped upon him, he was accused of opposing all progress; he was condemned as a reactionary, as the spokesman for backwardness. Nothing could be farther from the truth. He earnestly hoped to see the evils of the Indian social system removed, the entire system reformed, and to this end he brought forward his own concrete proposals for improving social conditions. He was a staunch advocate of progress. At the same time, he relentlessly fought against the grandiose schemes of the Westernizing reformers. Instead of schemes he wanted concrete programmes for the alleviation of real and pressing needs of the people. His reform work was direct, as in the case of the famine relief programme, the textile workers' assistance, the plague prevention work. Tilak was not an armchair reformer, he was a worker with and for the people.

His objection to the social reformism of men like Mr Justice Ranade and his disciple Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Professor Bhandarkar, Byramji Malbari, Agarkar and the others, was twofold. First, without a full appreciation

of the values that had been preserved and transmitted by the social system these men were willing to discard virtually everything, to remake India almost totally in the image of the West, and to base Indian social forms on the values they had learned from their Western education. To Tilak, it was folly, it was criminal, to banish everything created by India's civilization because Indian values and Indian religion did not coincide with the nineteenth-century European notions of materialism, rationalism and utilitarianism. He knew their obsession was contrary to common sense and good practice. He once wrote,

‘ . . . a number of our educated men began to accept uncritically the materialistic doctrines of the Westerners. Thus we have the pathetic situation of the new generation making on their minds a carbon copy of the gross materialism of the West.’¹

And he went on to remind the social reformers that ‘ our present downfall is due not to Hindu religion but to the fact that we have absolutely forsaken religion’.² Second, since the reformers could not inspire mass popular support for their imitative social reform programme, they sought to enforce reform through administrative fiat, to rely upon the coercive power of the state, the alien state of the British Raj, to effect social change. From Tilak's point of view, to remake India in the image of the West would mean to destroy her greatness; and to use the force of an alien raj to impose any kind of reform would be to make that reform itself immoral.

His first battle was directly with the leaders of the social reformers. He realized that they conceived their schemes for reform from the frame of reference of the Western value system. This frame of reference made

them anti-traditionalist and iconoclastic. They were prepared to believe that virtually everything Indian was, by definition, degraded, unprogressive and evil. The cause of this, Tilak believed, was that the Westernized reformers did not understand either the classical ethic or the classical methods of meeting problems, that they operated from a frame of reference which, in effect, produced a blind spot as far as India's way of life was concerned. He wrote,

‘As the works of purely materialistic philosophers on Ethics are principally taught in our colleges the fundamental principles of the Karma-Yoga, mentioned in the Gītā, are not well understood even by learned persons among us, who have had an English education.’³

He objected that those who did not know the old were preparing to construct the radically new. No civilization could withstand such an all-encompassing attack on all its beliefs and way of life. If they were successful in bringing about such reform, Tilak feared that all the classical values would be lost, that the moral stamina of the people would be undermined, and that the national will would be broken. When national awakening was what was needed, he could not tolerate the possibility of (well-meaning) national suicide. Tilak knew that reforms were necessary, but not in such a way as to destroy the civilization which would be reformed. As Aurobindo Ghose warned,

‘Westernized India, a brown ape of Europe, might emerge from the chaos [of conflicting civilizations], keeping some elements only of her ancient thought to modify, but no longer to shape and govern her total existence. Like other countries she would have passed into the mould of occidental modernism; ancient India would have perished.’⁴

Believing as he did, Tilak was inevitably drawn into the controversy over social reform. In 1891, at the time of the Age of Consent Bill, the reformers were insisting that the British Government pass a law raising the age of consent for girls in Hindu marriages. Tilak certainly did not disagree with the objective of this measure, but he took violent exception to the reformers' pleading for the employment of coercion by an autocratic and alien state to enforce the reform measure. Tilak denied that a foreign bureaucracy had a right to sit in legislative judgement on the Indian society, and more particularly, he held that the social reformers were totally misguided in endeavouring to use such measures to bring about morally-defensible reform. If there were political freedom, self-rule, in India, and the people themselves could enact legislation and thereby use the power of the state to promote social reform, then this procedure would be democratic and morally justifiable. He further argued that since the people do not have self-rule, then it is only by education and not coercion that you can hope to have the people accept necessary reform, that this was the only way in the present circumstances to make the reform democratic and moral. Reform, no matter how necessary, must not, in Tilak's eyes, be inspired by a small group of reformers and enforced upon the community by the power of an alien state. Such a procedure was indefensible if the reformers were to make any claims to having morally elevated or reformed the Indian social system. Let there be social reform, he would say, but educate the people to its necessity and have the people initiate it. A minority's desire to imitate an alien social order is not a justification for social action. Tilak's position has been summed up by his colleague, Aurobindo Ghose, when he wrote,

'The nineteenth century in India was imitative, self-forgetful, artificial. It aimed at a successful reproduction of Europe in India, forgetting the deep saying of the Gita, "Better the law of one's own being though it be badly done than an alien *dharma* well-followed; death in one's own *dharma* is better, it is a dangerous thing to follow the law of another's nature." For death in one's own *dharma* brings new birth, success in an alien path means only successful suicide.'⁵

Let India, following her own path, set her own house in order, build upon her own values.

Programme for Social Reform

To have been satisfied with criticism of the Westernized version of social reform without offering a constructive programme of his own would certainly have made Tilak liable to the charge of being negative and disruptive. Tilak was, however, an ardent advocate of social reform. He said, 'I am a liberal Hindu', and in *The Mahratta* he wrote, 'We have always been advocates of reform, reform we say, but not of rebellion or licence'.⁶ For Tilak's reformism was the product of his moral frame of reference, based on the philosophy of life of the Indian civilization, and planned in accord with his own thoroughgoing realism. He would not content himself with analysing the evils of the existing social order, and then dreaming up ideal reforms that were so impractical that they could not be accepted by the people, or that were so alien that they had no relation to the culture of India. The first basis of his programme for reform was that those who believed in reform, those who were educated and posed as the leaders of the community, should be the first to practise the reforms they advocated. In this way he believed the reform

leaders could set an example for all of society, and, to the extent that society followed their example, acceptance of the reforms would be democratic and moral. But before he preached he practised. The Age of Consent Bill had been designed to raise the age of marriage of Hindu girls from ten to twelve years. Tilak fought this Bill with all his editorial might. Yet in his own family he postponed the marriage of his daughters until the limit, sixteen years, sanctioned by the classical books of law. He was loyal both to his convictions about the need for reform and to the classical heritage which was his guide.

He further urged that if legislation was going to be employed to bring about social reform, then it should not be used to enforce reformed practices on the masses who neither understood the reforms nor appreciated their potential benefit. If anything, he advocated that social legislation be passed to bind the educated members of society, especially those who advocated reforms and the use of state power to enforce them, to live up to the reforms they preached. He was himself willing to be bound by such laws, and urged that if other social reformers would join him in this procedure, then the example which they would set would inspire confidence and imitation in the people. He proposed that laws be passed, applying to all educated reformers, to the effect that (1) their daughters should not be married until they reached the age of sixteen (instead of twelve as the reformers had advocated) and that boys should not marry until they were twenty; (2) unless they were prepared to marry widows, men should not marry after they were forty years old; (3) the educated reformers be absolutely prohibited from taking alcohol; (4) the reformers and their families be prohibited from accepting

dowries in marriages; (5) there be no disfigurement of widows; (6) one-tenth of the monthly income of every reformer should be devoted to public purposes. With the exception of the third and sixth suggestions, all of these measures, usually in a less liberal form, had been advocated by the Westernized social reformers, and, moreover, the British Government had been urged to enforce these measures on the public at large. Tilak believed it was much more important for the social reformers to practise what they preached than to lobby for general legislation.

The next thing the reformers could do, Tilak urged, would be to mix with the people and to educate them to the necessity of reforming the decadent aspects of the caste-ridden social order. He argued that the social reformers must not remain aloof from the people in their dignified, intellectual societies but rather mix with the people, speak their language, and through education encourage them to desire social reform. He believed that this procedure would be beneficial not only to society but to the social reformers themselves, for by mixing with the people they might begin to appreciate the values that they seemingly had been educated away from. He wrote,

‘If the educated want to take up the social education factor, they must mix with the common people. Those who want to be the leaders of the people must be in touch with the people to understand what are their needs, how much religious ardour they have got and to what channel their energy should be turned in order to gain national good.’

Reform, to Tilak's mind, must grow from within the people. Since he accepted this proposition as true, then

it logically followed that attempts to coerce the community to accept reform were absurd. Reform would have to be based on the value system of the people and not on the values taught to the Westernized few in an alien system of education. The answer lay, he believed, in popular education which must be initiated with an understanding of the classical values and must proceed to recreate the vitality of those values in the forms of social order. Since the classical values were thoroughly intermixed with popular religion, he believed that '*religious education will first and foremost engage our attention*'.⁸ In this way a new spirit will be born in India. India need not copy from some other civilization when she can rely on the spirit of her past greatness. As D. V. Athalye has written, 'The difference was this, that while Ranade was prepared, if convenient, to coquette with religious sanction to social order, Mr Tilak insisted that there should be no divorce between the two'.⁹ Tilak proceeded to take action in accordance with his conviction.

Because he wanted genuine reform and not simple imitation of Western life and manners, and because he believed that such reform must come from the people and not from a foreign government, Tilak was led to advocate two causes which were to become his life's work. First, he struggled to reawaken India to her past and to base her future greatness on her past glories. Second, knowing full well that real progress can only be made by a self-governing people, knowing that moral progress can only be made through moral and democratic decisions, knowing, therefore, that Swaraj or self-rule was the prerequisite of real social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual progress, Tilak began to think in terms of the restoration of Swaraj. The social

reformers were prepared to criticize almost everything Indian, to imitate the West in the name of improvement, and to rely upon the power of a foreign government to bring about this improvement. They were convinced that only by social reform could they earn political reform; that, therefore, social reform must precede political reform. Tilak argued just the contrary, that political reform must precede social reform, for it is only popular self-government that is moral government, that it is only moral government that can create moral social change; and, therefore, self-rule is necessary, and the first object which must be pursued is the awakening of the people to their heritage of self-rule.

His Battle against the Spirit of Orthodoxy

Tilak was a realist. He perceived more surely the root causes of the social abuses of the Indian society than did his social reform opponents. He recognized that it was not simply the forms and practices of society which had to be changed if meaningful social reforms were to be brought about. He perceived that abusive social practices were the direct outgrowth of the 'spirit of orthodoxy' which filled the forms of social order and inertly resisted change. This spirit had resulted from a thousand years of instability, defeat, foreign overlordship, defensiveness and inflexibility. Effective reform, Tilak believed, must ultimately depend upon a reawakening of the true, vital, life-affirming spirit of the Indian people and civilization. Instead of criticizing social form as the great evil, he began his battle with the atrophied spirit of orthodoxy while still engaged in his battle with the Westernized reformers. He wrote,

'... just as old and orthodox opinions (and their holders the Pandits, etc.) are onesided, so the new English

educated "reformers" are also onesided and dogmatic. The old Sastries and Pandits do not know the new circumstances whereas the newly educated class of reformers are ignorant of the traditions and traditional Philosophy of Hinduism. Therefore a proper knowledge of the old traditions and philosophies must be imparted to the newly educated classes, and the Pandits and Sastries must be given information about the newly changed and changing circumstances.¹⁰

His battle was not characterized by abhorrence for this old spirit because he understood it and the role it had played. The spirit was locked up in forms, rituals, customs that had survived their usefulness. Now the forms had become virtually dead things. The orthodox spirit had served its purpose because it had transmitted classical values to a new generation who could understand them and bring about the necessary rebirth and reapplication of those values.

The degraded aspects of the spirit of orthodoxy were lethargy, indolence, exclusiveness and inaction. They had fed on disunity and divisiveness born of defensiveness and rigidity, and from this had arisen caste-ism in all its worst manifestations, defeatism and fatalism, the loss of the ideal of harmonious social cooperation, of courage and of self-respect—in a word, the dynamics of the classical philosophy of life had been perverted into negation and passivity. This spirit, Tilak believed, was the opponent of India's progress, and it was with this spirit that he did battle. Atrophied orthodoxy had no religious justification. Its spirit was in part the perversion and negation of the world and of the classical concept of the fulfilment of the Purpose of life, the union of man with his creator. Because he was a Sanskrit scholar, learned in the *Vedas*, Tilak was able to teach,

‘ If man seeks unity with the Deity, he must necessarily seek unity with the interests of the world also, and work for it. If he does not, then the unity is not perfect, because there is union between two elements out of the 3 (man and Deity) and the third (the world) is left out. I have thus solved the question for myself and I hold that serving the world, and thus serving His Will, is the surest way of Salvation, and this way can be followed by remaining *in* the world and not going away from it.’¹¹

But learned philosophical disputations were not enough. A nation had to be awakened.

His first task was to reach the people, for he knew that lasting change, that a rebirth of values, required change in the hearts of people and not, as the reformers believed, change in the forms of institutions. As an editor who had always dedicated himself to popular education, he first reached the people. As his chief colleague, N. C. Kelkar, wrote, ‘ Through his paper, the *Kesari*, he exercised an immense influence over the masses, and it is this influence that is mainly responsible for the infusion of a new spirit among the people ’.¹² He was a sincere, forceful speaker, and he taught from both the classroom and the public platform his new message of awakening India. Perhaps the most effective way in which he reached the people was through the employment of national festivals. He was instrumental in popularizing two great festivals, one to Ganapati, the Hindu deity of learning and propitiousness, and a festival to revive the memory and glory of Shivaji, the liberator of Maharashtra, and the restorer of Swaraj through his battle with the Mogul Empire. He especially emphasized the dynamic spirit of Shivaji. He wrote, ‘ It is the *spirit* which actuated Shivaji in his doings that is held forth as the proper ideal to be kept constantly in

view of the rising generation'.¹³ To keep this spirit in constant view, Tilak worked ceaselessly to reach the people and to educate them through the festivals. Throughout Maharashtra, he carried his doctrine, he waged his battle. Education through religion and history, through the association in the popular mind with gods and heroes, through recreating an appreciation of the heritage of the past as a guide to the future—this was the way he conducted his battle. He soon became the first articulate spokesman for the no-longer-silent, tradition-directed masses of India. He became the defender and the awakener of India's philosophy of life.

He taught first the Dharma of action. He reminded the people that India had not become a great nation through negativism and indolence, but rather through a dynamic willingness to meet the problems of the day and to solve them morally. This was the greatest need of the present day. He often said such things as,

'No one can expect the Providence to protect one who sits with folded arms and throws his burden on others. God does not help the indolent. You must be doing all that you can to lift yourself up, and then only you may rely on the Almighty to help you.'¹⁴

He taught that no society can survive, let alone prosper, if its people refuse to assert themselves actively on their own behalf. 'Action alone', he said, 'must be our guiding principle'. He taught the necessity of a vital, energetic, self-reliant approach to life, one that would instil self-respect, for self-respect was the necessary foundation for effective action and for eventual self-rule. To inspire this spirit of activism, Tilak was constantly appealing to the greatness of the religious faith of the people and to the lessons of the history of India. And

he taught that whether one went to the *Vedas* for his guide to conduct or whether one went to the heroes of history, he would find in either case that the first prerequisite was the willingness to work and sacrifice for an ideal. Self-sacrifice would be necessary in India's cause, as he himself had learned. He retaught the great Vedic lesson in writing,

‘ Whatever a man does, must be taken to have been done by him for the purpose of the “ *yajna* ” (sacrifice). . . In as much as the *Vedas* themselves have enjoined the performance of the *yajnas*, any Action done for the purpose of the *yajna* cannot of itself be a source of bondage to man.’¹⁵

By the example of his own life, Tilak proved that courage and self-sacrifice could create a new spirit in his nation.

Along with the Dharma of action he taught the Dharma of unity. The unity of India, the unity of the Indian civilization, is the Bharatdharma, the spiritually-based and spiritually-dedicated way of life. The spirit of orthodoxy had done injustice to that way of life. It had compartmented society, it had placed men in segregated and exclusive caste communities that were inimical to the feeling of common heritage and common cause. The true spirit of the Varnashramadharma was harmony and cooperation and unity, and this spirit Tilak sought to reawaken through religious education. He wrote, ‘ It is possible to unite the followers of Hinduism by the revival and growth of the Hindu religion’, for ‘ the Hindu religion does not lie in caste, eating and drinking ’.¹⁶ He explained his Dharma of unity by relying on classical concepts :

‘The word Dharma means a tie and comes from the root *dhri*, to bear or hold. What is there to hold together? To connect the soul with God, and man with man. Dharma means our duties towards God and duty towards man. Hindu religion as such provides for a moral as well as social tie. This being our definition we must go back to the past and see how it was worked out. During Vedic times India was a self-contained country. It was united as a great nation. That unity has disappeared bringing on us great degradation and it becomes the duty of the leaders to revive that union . . . The gist of Dharma does not lie in rivalry, but it lies in effective union.’¹⁷

Nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of the reassertion of that effective union. He struck hard at the divisiveness of caste in saying, ‘Communal jealousies and caste rivalries are the weak points in our armour, but we must strengthen our position by sinking all differences amongst ourselves’.¹⁸ And while directly doing battle with the divisiveness of Hindu practice, he emphasized that national unity transcended all communities, that the unity of India was greater than the interests of any sects.

The Ganapati and Shivaji festivals served the purpose of bringing people together. People who worship a common deity, people who recognize a common historical tradition will, in his mind, be able to stand together, to overcome the disunity of social form and to work together for the common good. Tilak envisioned a unity of all the people of India, united among themselves and united with their traditions, united to face the future by the common ideals they held. In this way, through common, united effort, social evils could be corrected by the people themselves; and, moreover,

the spirit of national revival, the restoration of national self-respect, essential for gaining self-rule, depended upon the restoration of national unity and mutual respect. His friend, Kelkar, wrote in *The Mahratta*,

‘The rousing of a sense of self-respect in the Indian people, the creation of a hope of a bright future before them, the assertion of their full national rights as a nation, and the infusion of a spirit of proud and even reckless defiance of anything that may stand in the way of all this—that was the main theme of all his idealism and realism.’¹⁹

This was Tilak's reply to the Westernized reformers who would disregard their own civilization in order to ape the West, and who would employ the force of an alien state to bring about social change. This was also Tilak's reply to the dead spirit of orthodoxy which had nearly destroyed the vital spirit, the self-respect and sense of unity, of great common purpose, of the people. In his personal life, in his writings and his philosophy, and in all his message to India, Tilak emphasized this Dharma of action and this Dharma of unity. It is all too easy for us today to minimize the tremendous impact of this seemingly simple teaching. Village India at the end of the nineteenth century slumbered, unremembering the greatness of its past and unaware of the promise of its future. The people were weighted down by negation and passivity, they were disunified by communal rivalries and the compartmentation of caste. The fact that India no longer slumbers disunited and inert is in large measure a testimony to the effectiveness of Tilak's teachings. Tilak and the Nationalist leaders brought about the reawakening of India.

The Beginnings of the Battle with the Bureaucracy

As editor of the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*, Tilak became the acknowledged 'awakener of India'. In this position he also became active in political affairs. After he left the Deccan Education Society in 1889, he joined the Indian National Congress hoping that it would be instrumental in further uniting the nation and in securing political reforms. He held a post in the Congress as early as 1892, as Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Conference. At the same time he actively participated in public affairs, holding public office on several occasions. In 1894, he was elected a Fellow of Bombay University, and next year he held a post in the Poona municipality. For two years he was a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, but he called the completely circumscribed powers and the work of this body a 'huge joke'. He did not seek public office because he desired a political or governmental career but rather because it was one means among several which he chose to utilize to further the causes in which he believed. But he soon realized that holding public office was one of the least effective ways of promoting his ends, and, more important, he soon realized public office under the alien raj was self-defeating. About this time he also began to become disillusioned with the programme and policies of the Moderate-dominated Congress. His fighting spirit was antagonized by the predominant Congress attitude of pleading for reform and passing mild resolutions of protest against the abuses of the administration. The Congress was not coming to grips with the real problems of the people. In 1896, he publicly announced his disagreement with the policies of the Congress in writing,

' For the last twelve years we have been shouting hoarse, desiring that the Government should hear us. But our shouting has no more affected the Government than the sound of a gnat. Our rulers disbelieve our statements or profess to do so. Let us now try to force our grievances into their ears by strong constitutional means. We must give the best political education possible to the ignorant villagers. We must meet them on terms of equality, teach them their rights and show how to fight constitutionally. Then only will the Government realize that to despise the Congress is to despise the Indian Nation. Then only will the efforts of the Congress leaders be crowned with success. Such a work will require a large body of able and singleminded workers, to whom Politics would not mean some holiday recreation but an every-day duty to be performed with strictest regularity and utmost capacity.²⁰

As he had relied on democratic social action through religious education, he now relied on political education to rally the people behind the cause of political reform.

Tilak again practised what he preached. In the Crawford Case he had opposed governmental favouritism in his role as editor. In 1896, a severe famine struck Maharashtra. Tilak early foresaw the imminent danger the famine brought to the peasants. As the leading editor of the province, he called upon the Government to take those measures of relief which were provided for under law in the Famine Relief Code. In accordance with the provisions of this law he urged the Government to omit the collection of land tax during the famine, to permit the free use of jungle land, to pay wages to people doing famine relief work in the villages, and to assist in providing free meals in poor houses. The Government officials hesitated, refused to believe that a major famine was impending and were reluctant

to take his suggestion on any of these measures. Instead, the bureaucrats remonstrated that until the famine was sweeping the land and the people demanded these relief measures, they would not be provided. Naturally, therefore, Tilak began, through the pages of the *Kesari* and through an organization of volunteer famine relief workers, to inform the poverty-stricken peasants of their legal rights. He urged the people to protest against governmental inaction. He sent out volunteers to collect detailed information on the devastation in rural areas which he then forwarded to the Government to support his case. He printed and distributed a leaflet explaining the provisions of the Famine Relief Code to the people and urged them to take their case to the Government. His efforts informed and aroused the people and alienated the bureaucracy. On the heels of the famine Poona was stricken by an epidemic of plague. The city panicked. Tragically, many of the educated, many of the leading social reformers fled the city; Tilak did not. He offered his services to the Government and went through the plague-infested districts of the city with the Government sanitation teams. He opened and managed a hospital for plague victims when Government facilities proved inadequate. He established a free kitchen, and did everything within his power to alleviate the tragic condition of the people. If social reform meant anything, it meant tireless work on behalf of the people in the time of their greatest need. His famine and plague work marked Tilak as the greatest social reformer of them all.

The British official in charge of plague relief was a man named Rand. Rand was undoubtedly a sincere, hard-working Government official, but he was unimaginative, and he appeared to lack the sympathy, warmth

and understanding toward the plague- and panic-stricken people which were so necessary in a position such as his. He freely used soldiers to segregate real and presumed plague victims, to herd them into camps, and, to the best of his ability with the medical science of his day, to contain forcibly the spread of the disease. He paid little regard to personal feelings. Many people objected to his high-handed measures, and Tilak felt that his position required him to protest on behalf of the people about the abuses, real or imaginary, which they felt emanated from Rand's headquarters. As an editor, Tilak was the only spokesman of the people. Years later he was questioned about his role as critic of the Government, and he succinctly explained his attitude toward the duty of editorship in replying, 'We have to criticize the acts of Government; there is no constitutional body to do it, and the Press have to do it. They [the Indian press] have the place of a permanent opposition in India'.²¹ But the British officials resented his outspoken opposition to their procedures. Both his protests and his recommendations went unheeded.

The British bureaucracy and the Anglo-Indian press recognized that Tilak was an emerging leader of the people and of a new spirit in India. Those who lacked foresight began to fear him. When, in the tense atmosphere of famine- and plague-racked Poona, a young man assassinated Rand, many of those who feared him were quick to blame Tilak for the death, going as far as to hint at his complicity in a conspiracy for political assassination. Tilak was, of course, innocent of any knowledge of or collaboration in this crime. He had publicly disagreed with Rand, he had condemned the inhumane aspects of the British anti-plague campaign, but he had never contemplated or encouraged the

assassination of the British official in charge. Tilak, nevertheless, was brought to trial in 1897, not as an accessory to assassination, not as being involved in the plot to commit murder, but rather on the charge of 'sedition'. The court allowed the prosecution to argue that he had written seditious matter and his criminal sedition constituted, in effect, 'disaffection' with the British Raj. 'Disaffection' was demonstrated by the prosecution in showing that Tilak was not positively 'affectionate for' British officialdom. This was one of the most unusual interpretations of 'sedition and disaffection' in the annals of British justice. Nevertheless, Tilak was convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. The British had miscalculated both the effect of this sentence on Tilak and on public opinion. As N. C. Kelkar explained,

'His arrest and prosecution in 1897 was a sensation that nearly pulled the mind of the country by its roots, as political prosecutions were then extremely rare, and Tilak was, in himself, a man big enough to mark an epoch by his personal misfortune.'²²

This was not to be Tilak's last imprisonment. The British Indian Government endeavoured to convict him of perjury in connexion with the well-known Tai Maharaj Case in 1904. They did not succeed as he was acquitted by the High Court. In 1908, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment, again for sedition; but in 1916, he was acquitted of a similar charge. For two decades he was persecuted by the British Indian Government because they saw in him the greatest challenge to their rule over the Indian Empire.

Tilak emerged from prison in 1899 after serving eighteen months of his sentence. His health had been

broken. But he was a national hero. Through his dedication and willing self-sacrifice he had become the first all-India national leader. He had been persecuted for his political opinions, he was now the acknowledged political leader of the nation, and the nation was prepared to heed his opinions. He had begun as an awakener of the people and as a critic of bureaucratic abuses. He emerged from prison with the responsibility of leading the Nationalist cause to political self-determination (*Swatantra*). He was acclaimed the Lokamanya, the honoured and respected of the people.

His knowledge and love of the great classical Indian values had prepared him with a personal philosophy and a frame of reference for his battles with social reformism and with the spirit of orthodoxy. It also provided him with the foundation of his emerging political philosophy. He had fought against injustice, he had argued against the placating policies of the Moderates, and he now began to put forward a positive political programme centred around the concept of Swaraj, self-rule for India. As early as 1895, he had begun to preach the necessity for Swaraj. He came to realize that self-rule must precede meaningful social reform, that the only enduring basis for national unity and national self-respect must be national self-rule. In 1895, he had reminded the people that Shivaji had recreated Swaraj as the necessary foundation of social and political freedom and progress and morality. His historical and philosophic frame of reference is clearly set out in his writing,

‘ One who is a wee bit introduced to history knows what is Swarajya (people’s own government) and Swadharma (people’s own religion), knows the extraordinary qualities that are needed for the founder to establish Swarajya

and Swadharma when both of them are in a state of ruin for hundreds of years, knows the valour, courage, guts and brains of Shivaji Maharaj by the dint of which he saved the whole nation from bitter ruin.'²³

The Westernized reformers, in their desire to better the conditions of life in India, had failed to comprehend this great truth which Tilak had learned from India's past. They saw only reform while Tilak knew that 'we want freedom. We must have in our hands the right of carrying on our affairs. If you do not get these things, no reform would be fruitful for you. That is the root of all reforms'.²⁴ To Tilak, Swaraj was a philosophic and historical necessity. To gain Swaraj he knew he must battle against the might of the British bureaucracy. He now firmly understood the lesson of the Indian tradition that without Swaraj there can be no Dharmarajya, that without Dharmarajya there can be harmony neither in the state nor the society and the individual cannot fulfil the Purpose of life. Swaraj—self-rule—became the objective of Tilak's political battle. As Shivaji before him, he set about to 'establish Swaraj and Swadharma when both of them are in a state of ruin'.

His insistence on Swaraj was completely consistent with his personal, social and political philosophy. He approached all issues as a realist. He had the example of his own Maharashtrian history and the categorical imperative of his nation's philosophy. As Aurobindo Ghose has written,

'To found the greatness of the future on the greatness of the past, to infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour and spirituality, are the indispensable conditions for a great and powerful political awakening in India.

Others, writers, thinkers, spiritual leaders, had seen this truth. Mr Tilak was the first to bring it into the actual field of practical politics.²⁵

Unlike the Westernized social reformers and the political Moderates, the leaders of nineteenth-century India, Tilak was a leader of the twentieth century. He advocated an integrated programme based on an integrated political philosophy, and by teaching the Dharmas of action and unity, he foresaw the reawakening of an integrated, self-governing nation.

NOTES

¹ *Kesari*, 19 September 1905.

² *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 111.

³ Tilak, *Gita-Rahasya*, Vol. I, p. 93.

⁴ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 22-3.

⁵ A. Ghose, *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, p. 25.

⁶ *The Mahratta*, 20 September 1896.

⁷ *Kesari*, 8 September 1896.

⁸ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 73. As we have seen, the Aryadharm was not, to Tilak, merely superstitious idol worship and inflexible rules of marriage, interdining and occupation. It was one of the world's greatest bodies of knowledge and philosophy; it was a way of life that integrated men into the social, political and cosmic order. Though in some aspects the Aryadharm of the nineteenth century was degraded, it remained the most meaningful interpretation of life for the Indian people. The awakening of the people, he believed, must be brought about through and based upon their ancient faith. The reformers saw this faith as a hindrance; Tilak knew it was India's greatest strength. As Tilak's colleague, G. S. Khaparde, wrote, 'As a Social Reformer he is the first and about the only one who recognized the elements of immortality in the system of Hindu society and strove hard to preserve them by repelling the attacks made by all ignorant and over-enthusiastic so-called reformers.'—*The Mahratta*, 8 August 1920.

⁹ D. V. Athalye, *The Life of Lokamanya Tilak*, p. 54.

¹⁰ *Kesari*, 21 January 1904.

- ¹¹ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 263.
- ¹² N. C. Kelkar, *Landmarks in Lokamanya's Life*, p. 10.
- ¹³ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 49.
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 277.
- ¹⁵ Tilak, *Gita-Rahasya*, Vol. I, p. 72.
- ¹⁶ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 342.
- ¹⁷ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, pp. 13-14.
- ¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 353.
- ¹⁹ *The Mahratta*, 8 August 1920.
- ²⁰ *Kesari*, 12 January 1896.
- ²¹ *Tilak v. Chirol*, Vol. I, p. 304.
- ²² N. C. Kelkar, *Landmarks in Lokamanya's Life*, p. vi.
- ²³ *Kesari*, 2 July 1895.
- ²⁴ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 165.
- ²⁵ A. Ghose, in Introductory Appreciation to *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 7.

Chapter IV

THE PROGRAMME OF THE NATIONALISTS

The moderate reforms proposed by the Congress will tend to make the people of India more prosperous and more contented.

Sir William Wedderburn

We of the new school would not pitch our ideal one inch lower than absolute Swaraj.

Sri Aurobindo Ghose

POLITICALLY, the twentieth century seemed to begin calmly enough for the British Raj. Virtually all political activity was centred in the Indian National Congress, and the Congress was firmly controlled by the Moderates. The leading Moderates, such men as Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, retained their deep conviction of British justice and based their hopes for political reform on their ability to persuade their British rulers to reform the British Raj. They firmly believed in the political theories of nineteenth-century British liberalism, and their programme was chiefly concerned with the presentation of their case to the British Government with the expectation that the British Indian administration would be reformed to bring it into accord with the theories of British liberalism which filled the British textbooks. But no reforms had been forthcoming. The Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon had proved anything but liberal. Whereas once the British administration had at least been willing to listen to the opinions of the Moderates, it now looked upon the Congress as a somewhat antagonistic organization. The pleas and petitions of the Moderates fell on deaf ears.

Among the younger generation, there was a growing dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of the Moderate programme to bring about meaningful political reforms. Moreover, there was a growing conviction that reforms of the British administration in India might not be the really important political objective young India should seek. In Bengal, in the Punjab, and in Maharashtra, the Nationalists had begun to distinguish themselves from the Moderates in the Congress, and they had begun to talk about self-rule for India. More important, perhaps, the people had begun to listen to them. Two events were to take place in 1904 and 1905 that would give impetus to the cause of the Nationalists. First, the young Japanese nation defeated the forces of Imperial Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. As though it were a common signal, nationalist movements sprang to life in many colonial and semi-dependent areas in Asia. Historians date the so-called 'revolt of Asia' from this Japanese victory. The second vital event was directly related to nationalism in India. It was the partitioning of the province of Bengal.

The Partitioning of Bengal

The capital of British India was the great Bengal city of Calcutta. Bengal was one of the first states to be governed by the British, and having become the capital province, it was probably the most politically conscious area of India. Suddenly, the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, proposed that the province of Bengal was too large to be administered with ease and economy. He therefore set about to partition it without regard to the culture, linguistic homogeneity, or feelings of the people. The long-smouldering resentment of the people crystallized around the issue of partition. It was almost universally

unpopular. But protests were of no avail, and on 16 October 1905, Bengal was partitioned. Immediately the issue of Bengal became the focal point of Indian dissatisfaction with the British Indian Government.

The Moderate leaders of the Congress, especially Surendranath Banerjea, were shocked that the British would take so autocratic a step with so little justification. The Nationalists to a man condemned Curzon's action. To them this was the crowning example of what an irresponsible alien government could do regardless of the wishes of the people or the good of the country. Many believed that the real reason for partitioning Bengal was to divide the articulate spokesmen of that advanced province and to weaken the pressure they were able to bring upon the Government. If they were correct that this was the true motive of the Government, then few political manoeuvres in history have been more grossly miscalculated. The partitioning of Bengal became that cause which the young Nationalists all over India had needed to rally their forces and to challenge the administration. The cause inflamed the people. The Moderates' cherished belief in the good faith of British actions was resoundingly disavowed. The partitioning of Bengal was the awakening of modern political India. The Nationalists aroused wide support for their thesis that alien rule would always be arbitrary and autocratic; only self-rule could be just. The days of placation and petition were ended. The Indian Independence Movement was begun. As T. L. Vaswani movingly wrote at a later date,

'For over a generation we were groping in the dark, begging at the bureaucracy's doors, beseeching England to grant us what no nation *can* grant to another, what

every nation must achieve for itself—Swaraj. After a weary wandering for 30 years and more, the truth has dawned upon us! A People must work out its own salvation! That is the meaning of the New Movement, as I understand it. It is a Movement of India's return to Herself, to Her own Culture, Her own Civilization, Her loyalty to the Law of Her own History, Her own Genius, Her own Individuality, the God-given Inspiration of Her own life.'¹

The nation was prepared to follow the lead of those who could provide a more dynamic and more helpful programme than the Moderates had been able to put forward. The Nationalists presented India with such a programme, based on 'the God-given Inspiration of Her own life'.

The Foundations of the Political Programme

The Moderates had based their political programme on the political philosophy of nineteenth-century European liberalism. Long before the partition of Bengal, the new Nationalists recognized that this Moderate programme was ineffective and, perhaps more important, because it was based on foreign ideas of the political order it was alien to the philosophy of life and the spirit of the people of India. They had begun to examine the political problems of their day in the light of 'the God-given Inspiration' of India's civilization. With the urgency of the situation arising out of the partition and the need for an effective programme of political action, they began to present their programme to the nation.

They initiated mass political education in terms understandable to the people. Tilak sounded the keynote in saying, 'To spread our Dharma in our people is one of the aspects of the national form of our religion',

because, in his opinion, ' Politics cannot be separated from religion '.² The reason for political education and political action was not merely the injustice of foreign rule, not merely the arbitrary partitioning of Bengal. Self-rule was a moral necessity, the achievement of self-rule was the Dharma of all self-respecting men. As he later wrote in the *Gita-Rahasya*, ' The Blessed Lord had to show the importance and the necessity of performing at all costs the duties enjoined by one's Dharma while life lasts '.³ And, for Tilak and the Nationalists, ' Swaraj is our Dharma '. In partitioned Bengal, Bipin Chandra Pal reiterated Tilak's conviction: ' There can be no reform, social, economic or political that can be got from outside '.⁴ Political action would alone accomplish the national Dharma. In order that India solve her own destiny, the first essential, as in the case of the awakening of India, was the call for action, for a new spirit of courage and self-sacrifice. Only a pride in history and the values of India's own civilization could inspire men to the task ahead. As Tilak movingly wrote,

' To succeed in any business with full self-control and determination in spite of our valour does not generally happen unless a firm conviction is engendered in our minds that we are doing good work and God is helping us and that the religious instinct and the blessings of saints are at our back.'⁵

How well the Nationalists knew that India's unity was spiritual unity, the divinely-ordered way of life, the Bharatdharma. It was with this firm conviction that the Nationalists set out to arouse the nation to political action for the creation of its own destiny. By their personal example the leaders were able to capture the imagination of the long-silent people. Like the Founding

Fathers of the American Republic, with a deep faith in God they had pledged 'their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honour' to the cause in which they believed.

The sense of united action, the feeling of common cause throughout the land underlying common action, also had to be developed. The Nationalists taught that the partition of Bengal was not just the problem of Bengal, but represented the problem of all India, in all provinces, in all walks of life. Throughout, the Nationalists relied on the classical values of the Bharat-dharma to emphasize the great common bonds that united all India. Tilak wrote, for example, 'One common religion becomes a great means to create mutual affinity and sympathy among people'.⁶ The people came to know that far more than isolated political events stimulated the new movement, that the battle with the bureaucracy involved a way of life. In order to make this way of life most meaningful, the Nationalists symbolized it in the nation and taught the almost forgotten ideal of love of country.

History and tradition, religion and philosophy, action and unity were all made meaningful in the concept of love of country. Tilak wrote, 'God and our country are not different. In short, our country is one form of God'.⁷ The love of nation, like the love of God, had to transcend narrow provincialism, communalism and sectarianism, it had to be the first cause for both action and for unity. While Tilak wrote of God and country, Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab spoke of Dharma and duty growing out of love of country. The *Punjabee* of 27 March 1907 reports the conclusion of the famous speech for which he was subsequently deported :

‘Ye Hindus! Ye Mahomedans! in the name of your Dharma, in the name of your ancestors, be firm in these vows you take. You were once the rulers of this land. All that is vanished. You have now become dumb creatures. Why! Because you have forgotten to preserve the self-respect of your forefathers.’

All Indians, the Nationalists taught, regardless of their religion, province, sect, language, caste or profession must become united around love of country. This sentiment, and the mystic overtones the Nationalists gave it, was perhaps best expressed by the rallying cry of *Bande Mataram*, ‘Bow down to the Mother [India]’. This was the fiery and devotional love of nation that the Nationalists stressed. India, the faithful mother to all her sons—India, which needed the sacrifice of all her sons in her time of trials—became the object of the highest reverence, the image for which her sons would willingly fight and, if need be, die. From Bengal the cry surged across the entire subcontinent—*Bande Mataram*! All the greatness, the wisdom, the heritage and the heroism of India were united in the words of a prayer—*Bande Mataram*. As her sons bowed down, India arose.

The Programme: Boycott, Swadeshi and National Education

With this foundation securely laid, the Nationalists presented the nation with a threefold programme for effective, practical political action. The three principles were boycott, swadeshi and national education. Originally, they were designed for use in Bengal, as the most effective way to bring the British administrators to their senses over the issue of partition. To the Nationalist leaders the issue had all along been bigger than merely the inglorious partitioning, but this was the first cause, the immediate need for direct political action. It was

soon decided, however, that the entire nation could well cooperate with Bengal in following this threefold programme and thus increase tremendously the pressure on the British. And it was further taught that the great wrong, the significant evil, was not alone that an alien raj had partitioned the province of Bengal, but actually that Bengal was only a symbol, that an alien raj ruled autocratically over the whole nation of India, and that it was to alleviate this wrong that the programme was to be employed.

Boycott initially involved the refusal of the people to purchase British-manufactured goods. It was started as a measure designed to bring economic pressure on the British business interests both in India and abroad. If British business could be moved, then business could be counted on to move the British Raj. But soon the boycott movement took on far more significant aspects than merely economic pressure. The Nationalists saw that the whole superstructure of the British Indian administration, that the British system of rule over India, was based upon the willing, or at least unthinking, cooperation of the Indian people. Tilak was one of the first to discern this, and he realized that boycott could be expanded to the point of jeopardizing the foundation of the whole British administrative machinery in India. In a speech at Poona, as early as 1902, he urged,

‘ You must realize that you are a great factor in the power with which the administration in India is conducted. You are yourselves the useful lubricants which enable the gigantic machinery to work so smoothly.

Though down-trodden and neglected, you must be conscious of your power of making the administration impossible if you but choose to make it so. It is you who

manage the railroad and the telegraph, it is you who make settlements and collect revenues, it is in fact you who do everything for the administration though in a subordinate capacity. You must consider whether you cannot turn your hand to better use for your nation than drudging on in this fashion.’⁸

Boycott became a political weapon. Its effective use demanded courage and a large measure of self-sacrifice. Tilak emphasized this in a speech at Calcutta, in saying,

‘If you have not the power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-abstinence in such a way as not to assist this foreign Government to rule over you? This is boycott and this is what is meant when we say, boycott is a political weapon.’⁹

Boycott moved from the economic into the political sphere; it moved from the arena of Bengal to all India. Boycott as an all-India political weapon was the first principle of the programme of the Nationalist leaders. Boycott foreshadowed non-cooperation.

Swadeshi initially began as a primary economic counterpart to the programme of economic boycott. Swadeshi meant self-help, to rely upon Indian-made goods rather than to patronize the retail outlets of the manufactured produce of Birmingham and Manchester. Beginning in Bengal, bonfires of European clothing lit the night sky, and the people turned to local Indian production of swadeshi goods. Swadeshi was the first great impetus to industrial development in India. Local Indian production was given the stimulus for its natural growth. But like boycott, swadeshi soon came to mean a great deal more than simple economic self-sufficiency. If there could be self-help

in the economic sphere, then there most certainly could be self-help in all spheres of life. The Dharma of action had taught self-respect and self-reliance, and swadeshi extended self-reliance to self-help in all things. Swadeshi was a tangible way in which to demonstrate the new spirit the Nationalists had been teaching the people. As Tilak later explained,

‘The object . . . is to bring about the spread of swadeshi (i.e., country-made) things, visible and invisible, to bring about the gradual disappearance of visible foreign things, and to bring about the gradual disappearance of foreign ideas also.’

And he added, ‘Like the bodies our minds also should become swadeshi. . . . Swadeshi thoughts should always reign in our hearts’.¹⁰ Swadeshi was the first assertion of the spirit of independence. It could no longer be popularly argued that India could earn its rights through transmitting resolutions to the Government and requesting reforms. The Nationalists had taught India to become self-reliant, independent in all things, and thereby to earn all those privileges and rights of free men. The swadeshi movement quickly became a movement of national regeneration. Swadeshi was a practical application of love of country. As Tilak said, ‘To recognize the land of the Aryas as mother-earth is the swadeshi movement’.¹¹ It was an economic, political and spiritual weapon. Swadeshi was *Bande Mataram* in action.

The third element in their threefold programme for effective political action was national education. If it was clear to anyone in India, it was clear to the Nationalist leaders that the Western education begun by Lord Macaulay and pursued in all the Government-supported

schools was ruinous to the future health and well-being of the nation. The younger generations were being educated away from not only their families and the great majority of the Indian people but also away from the value system of India's civilization. Government-supported Western education uprooted the youths from their ties to the past and made them Indians-in-name only. The Nationalist leaders had received Western education themselves, but they had fought their own way back to the sense of meaning and value of their traditions. Western liberal arts education especially was not a productive kind of education for young India. Moreover, Western education was available only to the relative few, to those who could afford to go to Western schools; and the great bulk of the people of India were left untouched by any kind of formal education. National education was the Nationalists' answer.

The programme for national education was a logical outgrowth of the boycott and swadeshi movements. The plan involved the establishment of schools throughout the country dedicated to giving young India a truly national educational background. The useful lessons of Western education were not to be ignored but rather supplemented with the lessons of India's own great culture. Mrs Besant and the Theosophists had founded the Hindu University at Banaras to reteach the classical values and to prepare the younger generation for fruitful participation in the affairs of national life. Tilak and the other Nationalists wanted the Congress to support with all its assets the establishment of schools and colleges throughout the country to provide inexpensive and wholesome education emphasizing the new spirit of self-respect and self-reliance which young people could not expect to receive in the Government-supported

institutions. Writing of Tilak's initial resolve to become an educator and his work for the establishment of the Poona School, N. C. Kelkar has commented, 'The idea of national education was implicit in the starting and conducting of this school, though it was not known by that name in those days'.¹² National education became an integral part of the Nationalist programme for the India of the twentieth century.

This threefold programme of boycott, swadeshi and national education was presented to the country by the Nationalist leaders and was also presented to the Indian National Congress for its approval and adoption. The programme began primarily as an economic weapon but quickly its political importance was realized and became predominant. The impetus behind the programme was initially a reaction to the British partitioning of Bengal, but it soon developed an all-India momentum. The first reason for its use was to cause the Government to reunify Bengal, but it soon became a programme for national reawakening and national liberation—Swaraj. Thus, an economic programme became a political programme; a locally-centred agitation became a national issue; the cause of altering a specific British policy evolved into the cause of gaining India's self-determination. The goal of the Nationalists, relying upon this threefold programme of action, became Swaraj.

The Goal : Swaraj

Swaraj became the reason and justification for the entire programme and movement led by the Nationalists. Usually Swaraj is translated to mean 'self-rule' or 'independence' from foreign political domination. Actually, Swaraj, while being literally 'self-rule',

meant far more than Europeans usually associated with the concept. In the context of the Indian independence movement, Swaraj, the goal of all efforts, was a *moral national necessity*. This greater meaning was clearly understood by the Nationalist leaders. As Aurobindo Ghose wrote in his Calcutta paper, *Bande Mataram*,

‘Swadeshi, Boycott, Arbitration, National Education, are all doomed to failure if pursued separately and for their own sake; but as part of a single co-ordinated attempt to attain an organized independence they are the necessity of the present time. They are merely component parts of Swaraj, which is made of all of them put together and harmonized in a single whole.’¹³

To understand this necessity of Swaraj, we must go back to the importance Swaraj played in the political philosophy of the Indian value system. We must remember that Tilak and the Nationalists viewed the political struggles of their day from the frame of reference of these classical values.

In Chapter I we investigated the classical meaning of Swaraj. It referred both to the self-rule of the individual and to the self-rule of the political community. Swaraj was a part of both the philosophy of life and the philosophy of politics. The term is perhaps as old as the Aryan civilization; it is found in the *Rig Veda* and the *Shastras*. As Tilak often reminded the people, ‘The idea of Swaraj is an old one’. For the individual Swaraj meant the exercise of his freedom lawfully. It meant the choice of cosmos over chaos, and the regulation of all actions morally in accordance with the individual’s Swadharma. Unless there was Swaraj, conscious, lawful living of Swadharma, the individual could not live in his True Nature, could not attain and fulfil the Purpose

of life. In like manner, Swaraj was meaningful in the classical philosophy of politics for the political community. Swaraj meant the lawful exercise of the community's freedom. For the community it also meant the choice of cosmos over chaos, and the regulation of all community activities morally in accordance with Dharmarajya, the rule of Dharma. Unless there was Swaraj, the conscious, lawful living under Dharmarajya, the right ordering of the community could never be attained, individual life-situations could not be morally profitable, men could not live in their True Natures, and the Purpose of life and creation could not be fulfilled. The political community existed only to preserve and promote the Dharma, and without Swaraj this was not possible. Swaraj, therefore, in the classical value system was a moral imperative for both the individual and the community. Without Swaraj life was not worthwhile. Because Tilak viewed the world from the perspective of this value system, he insisted that 'our life and our Dharma are in vain in the absence of Swarajya'.¹⁴

The truth of this is apparent when we remember what the loss of Swaraj for a thousand years did to the preservation and harmonization of the Indian social system. The evils of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were largely the result of the weakening of the Indian social order because of its long struggle to preserve the Dharma in the absence of Swaraj. For the Nationalists it was self-evident that the only lasting remedy of social evil was the re-establishment of lawful self-rule, Swaraj. Life could have no moral purposefulness unless there was Swaraj to protect and promote the Dharma. This was the essence of Tilak's argument with the social reformers as to which had precedence

—political reform or social reform. Political reform, defined as Swaraj, was absolutely essential for meaningful social reform.

The restoration of Swaraj was a moral imperative. The laws, the institutions of government, the use of power and the ordering of the political community could only be moral under Dharmarajya and Dharma could only rule if the people had Swaraj. The Nationalists believed that democratic control over government, popular self-rule, was essential for this kind of moral rule. Tilak defined Swaraj in this way in writing, 'People's rule instead of that of bureaucracy is Swarajya'.¹⁵ This was the essence of Tilak's argument with the social reformers when they sought to have the British Government legislate and enforce social reform measures. Tilak held that unless the people supported the reforms, in effect, unless the people exercised self-rule to legislate and enforce the reforms, then the reforms were not only meaningless but also undemocratic and without moral significance. Aurobindo Ghose, in his *Introductory Appreciation to Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, repeated Tilak's thesis: 'Let us first have liberty and the organized control of the life of the nation, afterwards we can see how we can use it in social matters; meanwhile let us move on without noise or strife'.¹⁶ There must be popular control over the power of government, for otherwise there can be no moral use of that power. Swaraj must be democratic.

But social progress was only one aspect of the future greatness of the nation that was dependent upon the achievement of Swaraj. Tilak believed all progress, all hope for national advancement, rested in Swaraj; no issue had precedence over Swaraj. In his public addresses he often said,

‘ If we do not get Swarajya, there will be no industrial progress, if we do not get Swarajya there will be no possibility of having any kind of education useful to the nation, either primary or higher. If we do get Swarajya it is not merely to advance female education or to secure industrial reform or social reform. All these are parts of Swarajya. Power is wanted first.’¹⁷

Swaraj was a moral imperative, for ‘ There is no question which is not dependent upon Swarajya ’. Or, as he continually emphasized, ‘ We demand Swaraj, as it is the foundation and not the height of our future prosperity ’.¹⁸

Swaraj was the goal of the Nationalists because it had a deeper meaning than Western concepts of national independence. Swaraj was a concept integrally related to the values of the Indian civilization. And though Tilak spoke of democratic Swaraj, democracy, too, had a different meaning to the Nationalists than is usually associated with it in the Western philosophy of politics. As Bepin Chandra Pal explained,

‘ The ideal of Swaraj that has revealed itself to us is the ideal of divine democracy. . . . There is a higher message still : men are gods and the equality of Indian democracy is the equality of divine origin, the divine nature, the divine possibilities and the divine destiny of every individual being.’¹⁹

Democratic Swaraj was the opportunity for spiritual Swaraj for all the people. This was a great restatement of the classical philosophy of life, relating that philosophy to the philosophy of politics of the independence movement and to the goal of that movement—Swaraj. Such a goal could not be reconciled with the Moderate aspirations for merely reform of the British system of

administration and the inclusion of more educated Indians in the civil service. Tilak was little interested in securing government posts for deserving Indians, and he repeatedly would say, 'To get posts of big salaries is not the meaning of Swarajya'.²⁰ Swaraj, as Pal explained, was not based on the Western concept of man in the political community. The ends of the Indian state were distinctly different, because they were related to the Indian theory of right ordering. Swaraj meant a total change in political theory. This Tilak clearly stated in unequivocal terms: 'It is true that what we seek may seem like a revolution in the sense that it means a complete change in the "theory" of the Government of India as now put forward by the bureaucracy'.²¹ This *complete change in the theory of the Government*, in the philosophic basis of the state, involved a reapplication of the classical Indian theory of the state, as it would be modified in its forms to meet the changed circumstances of the twentieth century. This *change in the theory* of the Government was obviously far more radical than simply an Indian use of the British forms of the state. It meant a revolutionary recasting of those forms to accord with the Indian civilization's value system; it meant the remaking of the state so that it would fulfil the purposes and become the embodiment of Swaraj as it was in the Indian civilization. Swaraj was the restoration of the political order so that it would accord with the cosmic order, and so that individual lives might be assisted in attaining to the Purpose of life. Tilak always insisted, 'Swaraj is the Foundation'.

From the Nationalists' classical frame of reference, *the restoration of Swaraj under Dharmarajya was the moral imperative*. Only under Dharmarajya could national and individual lives be fulfilled. Aurobindo clearly defined

this as the meaning of the goal in his speech at Jhalakati:

‘What is it that we seek? We seek the fulfilment of our life as a nation. This is what the word “Swaraj”, which is a bugbear and terror to the Europeans, really means. . . . Swaraj is not the colonial form of Government nor any form of Government. It means the fulfilment of our national life. That is what we seek, that is why God has sent us into the world to fulfil Him by fulfilling ourselves in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity. That is why He has sent us to the world and it is this fulfilment that we demand, for this fulfilment is life and to depart from it is to perish.’²²

This is the revolution that is Swaraj; this is the recreation and fulfilment of the Purpose of life.

For India, there could be no such thing as partial Swaraj. Self-rule under Dharmarajya either existed fully or did not exist at all. Partial Swaraj was a contradiction in terms. Only the Westernized few who could not understand this could talk in such contradictory terms, could agree to settle for administrative reforms, could not see that ‘Swaraj is India’s birth-right’. Through Swaraj, the revolutionary change in the theory of Government, and through Swaraj alone, could the destiny of India be fulfilled. This is Tilak’s meaning when he wrote, ‘Swaraj is our Dharma’. Before the people of the nation the Nationalists set this goal. Next they set about to make it a political reality, to implement the programme to bring about the goal.

The Implementation

Tilak has taught that, morally, ‘Swaraj is the natural consequence of diligent performance of duty’.²³ But

to assist this process of moral evolution, the Nationalists devised a three-part campaign, relying upon boycott, swadeshi and national education, to implement Swaraj. Since there was to be democratic Swaraj, since all the people were to share in self-rule, all the people should be brought into the movement for gaining it. The first part of the campaign, therefore, was the enlistment of broad popular support for the national cause. As Tilak had objected that the social reformers sought exclusiveness rather than contact with the people, and that exclusiveness was unproductive, so also did he teach in matters of political education and action. The Nationalists went to the people. They taught the Dharma of action and the Dharma of unity to found their programme on united popular action. In Bengal, Pal emphasized the common goal in saying, 'You and I, the meanest of men, to whatever caste, to whatever community or denomination, the Indian may belong, we all form an organic element of the big *Swa* whose *raj* we desire to set up and attain in this country'.²⁴ Unified popular action, properly led into the proper channels, could bring about Swaraj.

The proper channels of political action were carefully defined by the Nationalists. They urged, in a phrase, non-violent passive resistance. Only by passive resistance, these leaders taught, could the united action of the people prove powerful enough to bring about the non-violent revolution that was Swaraj. Boycott and swadeshi were, in effect, the precursors of the later non-cooperation movement. The passive resistance taught by the Nationalists was the precursor to non-violent civil disobedience. The Nationalists were practical political leaders, political realists. They clearly foresaw that violence would be wasteful, and that it

would ultimately be as ineffectual as the resolutions and petitions that the Moderates prayerfully submitted to the bureaucracy. Tilak laid down this keynote in the Nationalist campaign. 'We say prepare your forces, organize your power, and then go to work so that they cannot refuse you what you demand. . . . We are not armed, and there is no necessity for arms either.' Being a realist, he recognized that 'the military strength of the Government is enormous and a single machine-gun showering hundreds of bullets per minute will quite suffice for our largest public meetings'.²⁵ Action must be direct, but, realistically appraising the power of the Government, he urged that it be passive as well. He continually taught, 'As our fight is going to be constitutional and legal, our death also must, as of necessity, be constitutional and legal. We have not to use any violence'.²⁶

United, popular, non-violent action was the campaign of the Nationalists. To lead this action effectively, the Nationalists planned to rally the people around the national platform of the Indian National Congress. Tilak had long worked in the Congress, often at the most difficult, lowest levels of its organization, to make it an effective national body. He believed in the Congress as the organization of unity and wrote, 'The Indian National Congress is an institution of all communities and creeds and schools of thought in India'.²⁷ The Congress had a great role to play, a great future before it. The Nationalists had been critical of the policies of the Moderates, but they had never left the Congress or disavowed their loyalty to it. Their programme was now to bring about the effective political use of the Congress. It must become a truly Indian National Congress. Aurobindo Ghose explained the attitude of the Nationalists in writing,

‘The Congress movement was for a long time purely occidental in its mind, character and methods, confined to the English-educated few, founded on the political rights and European ideals, but with no roots either in the past of the country or in the inner spirit of the nation. Mr Tilak was the first political leader to break through the routine of its somewhat academical methods, to bridge the gulf between the present and the past and to restore continuity to the political life of the nation. He developed a language and a spirit and he used methods which Indianized the movement and brought into it the masses.’²⁸

For the good of the nation, the Nationalists set about to alter both the objective and the programme of the Congress. It was their hope that the Congress could become the parliament of the Indian people. Tilak boldly challenged the older Moderate leadership in saying, ‘Protests are of no avail. Mere protest, not backed by self-reliance, will not help the people. Days of protests and prayers have gone’.²⁹ The Congress must become the active force in the leadership and organization of a mass popular movement for Swaraj. The Nationalist leaders set about constitutionally to remake the Congress around their programme. The campaign was to last for three crucial years, to end in temporary disillusionment, and to lead to eventual victory.

The Nationalists had developed their programme for the nation. They had stirred the popular imagination and taught the people the necessity for unified action. They had constructed a practical programme for the achievement of their political objective. They had defined for all time the purpose of the Indian movement for self-rule—Swaraj—and they had begun to develop the techniques that would be used in their

united popular movement to realize that goal effectively. The campaign for the effective mobilization of force was to begin at the Congress session at Banaras in 1905

NOTES

- ¹ T. L. Vaswani, *India in Chains*, pp. 56-7.
- ² *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 112.
- ³ Tilak, *Gita-Rahasya*, Vol. I, p. 37.
- ⁴ Bepin Chandra Pal, *His Life and Utterances*, p. 91.
- ⁵ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 121.
- ⁶ *ibid.*, p. 112.
- ⁷ *ibid.*, p. 322.
- ⁸ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 77
- ⁹ *ibid.*, p. 65.
- ¹⁰ Tilak v. Chirol, Vol. I, pp. 376 and 379.
- ¹¹ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 322.
- ¹² N. C. Kelkar, *Life and Times of Lokamanya Tilak*, Vol. I, p. 94.
- ¹³ *Bande Mataram*, 30 June 1907.
- ¹⁴ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 333.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 329.
- ¹⁶ A. Ghose, in Introductory Appreciation to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 15.
- ¹⁷ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 164.
- ¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 187 and 278.
- ¹⁹ Bepin Chandra Pal, *His Life and Utterances*, p. 93.
- ²⁰ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 331.
- ²¹ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 76.
- ²² A. Ghose, *Speeches*, pp. 85-6.
- ²³ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 276.
- ²⁴ Bepin Chandra Pal, *His Life and Utterances*, p. 94.
- ²⁵ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, pp. 64 and 69.
- ²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 229-30.
- ²⁷ *Kesari*, 27 August 1907.
- ²⁸ A. Ghose, in Introductory Appreciation to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 6.
- ²⁹ Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *His Writings and Speeches*, p. 44

Chapter V

THE BATTLE WITH THE BUREAUCRACY

For better, for worse, our destinies are now linked with those of England, and the Congress freely recognizes that whatever advances we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover, can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship before we are enabled to go to the next one; for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

Swaraj is my birthright and I will have it.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

THE NATIONALIST LEADERS, Tilak, Ghose, Pal, Rai, Kelkar, Khaparde, C. Vijayaraghavachari of Madras, all worked in their home provinces to transform the Indian National Congress into the vanguard of the independence movement. The older Moderate leaders, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjea, Pherozeshah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, were, at the beginning of the twentieth century, still firmly wedded to their ideal of social reform, gradual political reform, and the remaking of India largely in the image of the West. They had become discouraged with the lack of British action on their requests for political reform, but their faith in British justice remained high. The new force was to contest with the old not only for the leadership of the Congress but for the future of India.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was, like Tilak, a Chitpavan Brahmin. He had been the disciple of Mr Justice Ranade, and in all respects was the opposite of Tilak when he

viewed the role of the Congress in the building of a new nation. B. P. Sitaramayya, the historian of the Congress, has written a very significant description of the contrast between these two great Maharashtrians :

‘ Gokhale’s plan was to improve the existing constitution ; Tilak’s was to reconstruct it. Gokhale had necessarily to work with the bureaucracy ; Tilak had necessarily to fight it. Gokhale stood for co-operation wherever possible and opposition wherever necessary ; Tilak inclined towards a policy of obstruction. Gokhale’s prime concern was with the administration and its improvement ; Tilak’s supreme consideration was with the Nation and its upbuilding. Gokhale’s ideal was love and sacrifice ; Tilak’s was service and suffering. Gokhale’s methods sought to win the foreigner, Tilak’s to replace him. Gokhale depended upon others’ help, Tilak upon self-help. Gokhale looked to the classes and the intelligentsia, Tilak to the masses and the millions. Gokhale’s arena was the Council Chamber ; Tilak’s forum was the village *mandap*. Gokhale’s medium of expression was English ; Tilak’s was Marathi. Gokhale’s objective was Self-Government for which the people had to fit themselves by answering the tests prescribed by the English ; Tilak’s objective was Swaraj which is the birthright of every Indian and which he shall have without let or hindrance from the foreigner. Gokhale was on a level with his age. Tilak was in advance of his times.’¹

In many ways the future of India depended upon the eventual emergence of the political philosophy of one or the other of these two men. For years their philosophies had caused them to differ. At the Congress session of 1904, this difference remained under the surface ; but in 1905, when the Nationalists presented their programme for adoption by the Congress, this difference in world view came sharply into focus.

The Banaras Session, 1905

Gokhale and Pherozeshah Mehta controlled the Congress committee that planned the 1905 session. They were apprehensive that the Nationalists might overwhelm the Congress with their activistic programme and with their large popular following. And so it was decided that Gokhale himself would preside in the President's Chair at the 1905 meeting. Tilak came to Banaras as the leader of the Nationalist delegations, aided especially by Rai and his two Bengal supporters, Ghose and Pal. The Bengal agitation had been launched and had already produced a new atmosphere in the Indian political scene. Whereas previously the Indian National Congress had never had more than 2,000 members, by 1905 its membership had increased to over 10,000, and additional applications were flooding the Banaras meeting. Tilak's united popular political action had become a reality; but instead of inspiring the Moderate leadership of the Congress to become the leadership of the nation it filled them with misgivings.

Neither Nationalists nor Moderates desired to see an open rupture in the Congress at the Banaras session. The nation was aflame with agitation over the partitioning of Bengal; and however much they might have desired to prevent the Nationalists from bringing forth their programme, the Moderates who presided allowed the Nationalists to present their resolutions. Gokhale endeavoured to highlight a note of compromise in his presidential address. Then Bepin Chandra Pal launched the Nationalist programme by proposing that the Congress support the Bengal boycott and swadeshi movements. The Moderates urged moderation, for whereas Pal wanted boycott to be interpreted in its

broadest sense, as a political weapon, and in its broadest sense for application throughout the nation and not only in Bengal, the Moderates held that the Congress should approve of only 'the boycott of British goods', and did not urge the other provinces to support the movement. This compromise was finally agreed upon. At Banaras, no general reasons were given for the acceptance of boycott; and while the Congress did not urge national application of the boycott agitation, it did not specifically confine its support to agitation in Bengal alone.

After Pal had moved the boycott resolution, Tilak was called upon to move a resolution on poverty. He was greeted by an ovation never before equalled in the history of the Congress. He spoke not only on poverty, but for the first time in a Congress meeting he 'announced to the excited delegates that India must have Swaraj'.² The effect was electrifying, not only at the Congress but throughout India. Tilak, not wanting to force a rupture in the Congress, had decided with his fellow Nationalists not to propose Swaraj as a resolution for Congress acceptance. At the same time he wanted to notify the Congress and the nation that the programme of boycott, swadeshi and national education had Swaraj as its ultimate goal. As Rai noted,

'No formal resolutions were passed, but the better mind of the people present decided to inaugurate an era of self-help and self-reliance based on the active boycott of government service and of the semi-government institutions.'³

In effect, Tilak told the nation that there would be political boycott and political swadeshi for the goal of Swaraj—whether the Moderates agreed or not.

The Banaras session adjourned with an apparent air of compromise and reconciliation. But astute observers of the day recognized that there was an underlying current of nationalism which could not be suppressed and that the battle lines were being drawn. The Nationalists had declared a state of non-violent war with the bureaucracy, and if need be, with those who would support the bureaucracy. Tilak and the Nationalists got much, though not all, that they had sought. They were willing to wait another year to place their entire programme before the Congress and the nation for their acceptance. The leadership of the Moderates now understood that they and the Nationalists disagreed on both means and objectives. The Moderates therefore began to prepare to meet an active Nationalist front at the next session of the Congress in 1906.

The Calcutta Session, 1906

During the year between these two sessions, each group within the Congress prepared its forces. The Nationalists were jubilant that the session was to be held in Calcutta, at that time the capital of the British Indian Empire as well as the capital of partitioned Bengal. The Nationalists decided to put forward Tilak, the Lokamanya, the greatest leader of the people, as their candidate for president of the forthcoming session. The Moderates had only one possible candidate who they hoped would be able to prevent Tilak's presiding at the Calcutta session. That man was Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Congress, and widely accepted as the Grand Old Man of India. The Nationalists could not openly oppose the candidacy of such a venerable leader. The Moderates were successful; Tilak

declined to stand for office and Naoroji was selected president of the session.

But regardless of who occupied the presidential chair, the Nationalists were resolved to bring about a revolution in the Congress. Writing in the *Kesari* on the eve of the session, Tilak set forth the Nationalist programme :

‘ If the Moderates think that we are easily disappointed and lack grim determination they are entirely mistaken. We have lost faith, not in the ultimate result, but in the dilatory activities of the Congress. . . . Not that we have no faith in constitutional agitation. We do not want to overthrow the British Government. But political rights will have to be fought for.’⁴

The Nationalist spirit pervaded the atmosphere of the whole Calcutta session, and the popular strength of the Nationalists was overwhelming. The leaders had decided that this was the time at which to put forward their entire programme and, if it were accepted, to place the Congress in the leadership of the independence movement. The Nationalists first presented resolutions on swadeshi and national education. Both resolutions were passed. Tilak added to the swadeshi resolution the phrase that swadeshi would be followed ‘ even at a sacrifice ’. Then Pal rose to the platform to second the resolution on boycott. This time the Nationalists would not accept a restricted interpretation of boycott as a purely economic device, or a limited acceptance of boycott for use only in Bengal. Pal lucidly explained the Nationalist position when he announced to the assembled delegates,

‘ You will have observed the word “ boycott ” is attached to the word “ movement ”. The word “ boycott ” is left

severely alone, and the only qualification which the authors of this Resolution have attached to the word "boycott" is that it shall move from point to point, move from city to city, move from division to division, move, I hope, you will allow me to add, from Province to Province. . . . You will see that the omission of British goods in relation to boycott was intentional. As a statement of fact it was necessary, because in Bengal we have not only tried to boycott British goods, but also, so far as it may be a convenient phrase, all honorary association with the Government also. That is the meaning of boycott which will move from point to point until God knows where. I originally opposed the introduction of the term "boycott" in our politics and political life, but in the course of a few days we found that, whatever objections might be taken to the word, the thing was exceedingly useful not only economically but politically as well. . . . I ask you in the name of God, in the name of your nation, in the name of the future emancipation and realization of the highest destinies of your people, to lend your support to this movement now, and when you go back to your Province, there, so that, as I have said, this thing may proceed from point to point, from city to city, until the whole of India is ablaze, not with the fire that ruins and kills, but with the fire that brings plenty, patriotism and progress.³⁶

This was boycott in its fullest meaning, and it is obviously the precursor to the non-cooperation movement. The Moderates could not bring themselves to accept all of Pal's implications. They struggled with all their parliamentary powers to modify the boycott resolution, and at last a compromise was effected to the extent that the Congress would approve of boycott as a political weapon throughout India, but not quite to the extreme degree Pal had advocated. In effect, the Congress went

on record that 'the boycott movement was and is legitimate'. Again the Nationalists were victorious in fighting for the nation's political rights.

There was to be a resolution on Swaraj. The Moderates had manoeuvred Dadabhai Naoroji into the presidential chair to contain the Nationalists on this, their most revolutionary proposal. Naoroji had been a constant advocate of the Moderate programme of prayers and petitions to the Government. He had worked for years in London on behalf of the Congress. He had a record of loyalty to the British spirit and of twenty-one years of service to the Moderate cause. If any man in India could stop Tilak in his drive for Swaraj, the Moderates believed it was Dadabhai Naoroji.

Before the Nationalists could present their resolutions, including the revolutionary one on Swaraj, Naoroji delivered his presidential address. He told the assembled delegates of his twenty-one years of work on behalf of the Moderate programme, and then he said he was disillusioned. He was disillusioned with both the Moderate programme and the British spirit in which he had always believed. He went further and proceeded to denounce the British Indian Government 'as a barbarous despotism unworthy of British instincts, principles, and civilization'.⁶ Then with an explosive force hard to imagine today, Naoroji announced to the session, to India and the world that he supported Swaraj as the goal of the Congress! This was the greatest possible victory for Tilak and the Nationalists. 'Tilak's phrase had been adopted, and . . . "self-government" was now put forward as a right.'⁷

In effect, the Congress at Calcutta accepted Swaraj (though not defined as *absolute* self-rule) as the ultimate goal of the national movement. The Congress did not

disallow a continuation of the Moderate programme of prayer and petition for the redress of grievances, but the Congress did give leadership to the nation for the Nationalist programme to fulfil the Nationalist goal of Swaraj. After the Calcutta session, Tilak said, 'Swadeshi, Boycott, and National Education are the three most potent weapons given into our hands by the National Congress, and with these we must establish Swaraj'.⁸

The 1906 session adjourned with the Nationalists victorious. The Moderates were convinced that at the next session of the Congress the Nationalists would endeavour to define more broadly swadeshi as a further Indianization of all things, and boycott as an expanded disassociation with all things British, and Swaraj as self-rule, within or without the framework of the British Empire. The Nationalists became apprehensive that the Moderates would endeavour to retrench, to qualify and modify further the resolutions taken at Calcutta, and to recapture the Congress for the old Moderate programme. From the beginning of 1907 until the Congress session in December, both parties were manoeuvring for positions of strength.

The Session at Surat, 1907 : The Congress Split

Originally, the Congress session of 1907 was to have been held at an appropriate city in the Punjab. Judging from the strength and popular support of the Nationalists in 1906, the Moderate leaders were afraid that the extended Nationalist programme would be passed if the Congress were to be held in Lala Lajpat Rai's province. Rai had aroused tremendous popular support for the Nationalists in the Punjab. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta controlled the Congress committee in charge of planning the 1907 session, and being an astute politician,

he was able to persuade the committee to move the session from the Punjab to the relatively quiet, central Indian city of Nagpur. Nagpur was one of the few cities in which the Nationalists had not begun to develop wide popular support, and the Moderates felt that there they would have a chance perhaps to modify the stand taken in 1906, without incurring popular displeasure during the session. As soon as this shift was planned, the Nationalists, who hoped to elect Tilak as president of the session, began to develop their strength in the Nagpur area. By November, they had been so successful that the 'political backwater' of Nagpur was transformed into a Nationalist stronghold. The Moderate-controlled Reception Committee was greatly alarmed and, casting about for some means to thwart the Nationalists, again changed the location of the session. This change took place in mid-November, only about a month before the session was to convene. The session was moved to Surat in peaceful Gujarat, for Surat was considered an 'entirely safe' Moderate stronghold, one that had the added advantage of being far removed from turbulent Bengal.

In the summer of 1907, the British had arrested Aurobindo Ghose on a charge of sedition. The indictment failed due to the refusal of Bipin Chandra Pal to testify against his colleague. But while Aurobindo was freed for lack of evidence, Pal was imprisoned on a charge of contempt of court; and his strong voice was lost to the Nationalist cause for the 1907 session. Rai was sentenced to transportation in the spring of 1907 for his Nationalist activities, and it appeared for a time that a policy of governmental repression would seriously undermine the Nationalist cause.

The other leaders did not sit back quietly during all of the Moderate parliamentary manoeuvres to change

the locale of the session. The Moderate plan became more and more clear. To the Nationalists everything indicated that they were about to capture the Congress and retreat from the firm stand taken at Calcutta. As Aurobindo Ghose's paper warned,

'... the Bombay Moderates . . . want to wipe away the colour given to the Congress during the last two years and go back to the old and effete programme of prayer and petition. They want to crush the spirit of Nationalism and the desire on the part of Indians to stand independent of foreign help and go back to servility. They want to disregard all sense of self-respect and lick the dust of the foot that kicks. This is what Sir Pherozeshah and his satellites now that they have shifted the scene of the Congress to a sleepy hollow, want to do.'

But the Moderates were not only concerned with holding the session in a safe place, they were firmly resolved to elect a Moderate to the presidency of the session. Pherozeshah Mehta and the Reception Committee selected Babu Rashbehari Ghose. Lala Lajpat Rai had recently returned from exile, and Tilak withdrew as the Nationalist candidate for president in deference to Rai who was the great national hero after his release. The Reception Committee would not agree to accept Rai. The Punjab leader hated dissension and finally felt called upon to ask not to be nominated. Because of all these manipulations, considerable bitterness was being engendered between the two groups. Until the middle of December, the Nationalists were not resolved even to attend the Surat session since they could argue with considerable evidence that it was being rigged against them. But it was finally decided that they must not cause a rupture in the Congress and that they must

attend Surat in an effort to hold the line against reaction. As the *Bande Mataram* reported,

‘When Mr Tilak and Lala Lajpatrai, fresh from exile, were in favour of attending the Surat session, there could be no further question of our course. It has been decided, then, to attend the Surat Congress in what force we can muster at this short notice and do our best to hold the ground we have gained.’¹⁰

The atmosphere of Surat at the convening of the Congress was tense. The first issue after the Chairman of the Reception Committee had welcomed the 1600 delegates was the nomination and election of the president of the session. According to the Moderate plan, Dr Rashbehari Ghose was to be installed as president. While the Nationalists did not object to Dr Ghose on personal grounds, they objected to the principle of undemocratic selection and to what they believed was an obvious sign of the Moderate manoeuvres to undermine the Calcutta resolutions. Lokamanya Tilak, as the leader of the Nationalists, requested permission to speak before Ghose was installed. He sent a note to the chairman and followed it with a reminder that it was his right to address the delegates before the voting. The chairman refused to recognize Tilak’s rights by ignoring his requests to speak. When this became apparent, Tilak began to make his way to the platform. Certain Gujarati Moderate volunteers endeavoured to block his way. He gained the platform and endeavoured to speak, but the Moderates would not permit him to. A newspaper account in the *Calcutta Statesman* then said that while Tilak with arms folded waited to speak, ‘a Gujrati rushed to attack Mr Tilak on the platform’.¹¹ Aurobindo Ghose, in charge of the

Nationalist delegates, saw that Tilak would not be allowed to speak and that he might be done bodily harm, and so he gave the signal to the Nationalist delegates to storm the platform and rescue their leader. Immediately the session exploded into pandemonium. Moderate volunteers fought with Nationalist delegates from Bengal, Maharashtra and the Punjab. The great tent in which the session was held became a confusing battleground. The meeting was suspended.

Immediately the two factions caucused. The Nationalists met 600 strong under the chairmanship of Aurobindo Ghose, while the Moderates gathered to hold a closed conference. Tilak spoke to the Nationalists saying that 'a speedy reunion would be possible', while in the Moderate meeting, Surendranath Banerjea 'declared the Congress was dead'.¹² The Nationalist meeting unreservedly accepted the principles established at the Calcutta session and reaffirmed their belief in Swaraj, swadeshi, boycott and national education. They further nominated a committee headed by Tilak to bring about a reconciliation with the Moderates. In their closed session, the Moderates set about to rewrite the Constitution of the Congress. They included a Creed of the Congress as the Constitution's first article. The Creed stated,

'The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promoting national unity fostering

public spirit and developing and organizing the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.'

Acceptance of this Creed became mandatory for Congress membership. It represented a complete retreat from the stand taken a year earlier. No longer was Swaraj the goal but rather 'a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire. . . by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration. . . .' The Nationalists were shocked. It appeared to them that the entire unfortunate split at Surat had become a premeditated provocation. The *Bande Mataram* commented,

'This last move of the Moderates has completely floored us. Inexplicable are the ways of these Moderates . . . the country knows what importance should be attached to the resolutions passed at such a Conference. But the move has done one good—it has made the Loyalists show their hand, and we know now that boycott, swaraj and national education had no place in the Congress they hoped to hold.'¹³

The Nationalist attempts to bring about a reconciliation were completely thwarted. The Moderates appeared to have achieved their goal in ridding the Congress of the Nationalists and in retreating to their old policy of prayer and petition to the bureaucracy.

The split at Surat created two parties or two organizations in the Indian political scene. The Moderates by their parliamentary manoeuvres had retained control over the Congress. The Nationalists kept the support of the people, and since they alone offered a dynamic programme of political action, the Moderates had won

a hollow victory. Plans were laid in the early part of 1908 for a great new Nationalist party under Tilak's leadership which would be used to organize and lead the people in their struggle for Swaraj. Tilak was still interested in bringing about a reconciliation and a reunification of the Congress, but if this were not possible, the Nationalists were prepared to continue their struggle through a new organization stronger and more dynamic than the Moderate-dominated Congress had ever been.

Repression

Across the nation the effect of the split at Surat was electrifying. The Nationalists began to plan a great national organization dedicated to Swaraj. There were some hot-headed young men, especially in Bengal, who had become so overwrought at the wrongs and grievances for which they believed the Government was responsible that they turned to violent means, and a wave of terror began. In a way this was what the Government needed. The Nationalist movement in the early part of 1908 was not yet nationally organized; the Moderates no longer supported the movement for Swaraj; the terrorists gave the administration an excuse for initiating wide-scale political repression. Within six months of the Surat session, the police moved to arrest Tilak, Ghose and a number of the local Nationalist leaders. This was to be the death blow to the Nationalist cause. As the *Bande Mataram* wrote,

‘The Government have commenced to show their hand. Whatever the future may have in store for us, there can be no manner of doubt any longer regarding the character of the policy that will be adopted by our rulers to meet the present situation. The extermination

of the so-called Extremists seems to be their one objective now. . . . The noted "Extremists" in every part of the country must be laid hold of and put entirely out of the way. There is, thus, a relentless campaign of sedition-hunting simultaneously in all the provinces.'¹⁴

With their leaders imprisoned and their new organization not yet formed, the Nationalist cause was struck a severe blow. The chief target of the wave of repression, of course, was Tilak. And on the 13th of July 1908, at the third Criminal Sessions of the Bombay High Court, the great Tilak trial began.

Tilak was indicted for sedition in his capacity as editor of the *Kesari*. He chose to defend himself. A special jury of seven Europeans and two Parsis was convened, and the British prosecution employed every conceivable device to achieve conviction. Tilak's defence was brilliant; but the verdict was a foregone conclusion. On all charges Tilak was found guilty by a verdict of seven to two.

Tilak was fifty-eight years old at the time he stood trial. To live this long was beyond the expectations of the average Indian. Considering his age, considering that the conviction was not unanimous but rather that the jury had divided, and considering that he was the foremost political figure in the nation, everyone expected that British justice would be reasonable. But in sentencing Tilak, the judge said,

'I have considered whether to sentence you to transportation or imprisonment. Having regard to your age and other circumstances I think it is most desirable in the interest of peace and order, and in the interest of the country which you profess to love, that you should be out of it for sometime. Under Section 124A I am

entitled to pass sentence of transportation for life or any shorter period, and I pass a sentence of three years' transportation under each of the first two charges, the sentences to run consecutively. You will thus have six years' transportation.'¹⁵

Tilak and the nation believed that this six-year sentence was, in effect, a death sentence. Yet, when asked just before sentence was passed if he had anything more to say, he spoke the immortal lines :

'All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the Jury I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher Powers that rule the destiny of things and it may be the will of Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free.'¹⁶

Throughout the repression, the Moderates had remained silent. Immediately the sentence was announced there was a great outburst of popular feeling. Riots swept through Bombay, and demonstrations were held throughout India. The riots were put down, but the aroused nation was at last fully awakened to the impossibility of India's peacefully acquiescing in the perpetual continuation of the autocratic, irresponsible, alien raj. The Nationalists of the *Bande Mataram* wrote,

'They have sentenced Tilak to transportation. They have quelled the riots by shooting down a number of people. Business has been resumed. Quiet and peace have been restored to the City. But have the feelings of the people been restored to their former condition? . . . it has reduced the Government to a state of moral helplessness on the one side, it has also revealed the want of any living hold of the pretentious moderate Bombay

leaders upon the general population of their City on the other. It has burst we think the Mehta-Gokhale bubble completely. The events of the last two weeks in Bombay have completely shown up the claims of the Bombay Moderates to the real leadership of the people . . . Tilak is acknowledged to be even more than a political leader, he is the *guru*, the *idol*, the *fetish* of the Mahratta masses.¹⁷

And Indian opinion was not alone in condemning the severity of Tilak's sentence. The *Manchester Guardian* commented, 'The nature of the sentence passed upon Mr Tilak will be interpreted throughout India as a proof that the Government had resolved by hook or by crook to remove him from their path'. And H. M. Hyndman wrote in *The Times*, London, that if Tilak could be sentenced to six years' transportation for writing the articles he did, 'then we may just as well at once state plainly that no free criticism of our rule is to be permitted in India at all'. H. E. A. Cotton wrote in the *New Age*, 'Prior to his arrest, Mr Tilak was the leader of a party. He is now a national martyr and a popular hero'. Surely even the Moderates could no longer wholeheartedly praise 'British justice'.

Tilak was placed in virtual solitary confinement in a prison cell in faraway Mandalay. From there it was believed he would never live to return. Many thought the Nationalist cause was forever smashed in India. But Tilak survived. His jailers allowed him no news of the outside world, but after many delays, he was allowed to use a part of his classical library; and in his solitary confinement he wrote his great philosophic treatise on the *Gita*—the *Gita-Rahasya*. He lived the life of a true scholar and seeker after knowledge, and the Karma Yoga of his *Gita* became the greatest monument to the

success of his search. He served his full six years with no remission of sentence or lessening of hardship.

In Bengal, Aurobindo Ghose again stood trial with his Nationalist colleagues. He spent a year in prison awaiting trial and there devoted himself to studying the classical literature of the Bharatdharma and to the practice of the Yoga of the *Gita*. It was in prison that Ghose received a great spiritual enlightenment that was to change his life from young leader of the Nationalists to great saint of the nation. In his trial he was defended by his able colleague, Chittaranjan Das. Das presented a brilliant defence and in his summation made an eminently clear statement of the non-violent creed of the Nationalist movement. He explained,

‘ If there is a law which is unjust and offensive against the development of the nation, break that law by all means and take the consequences. He never asked you to apply force in a single utterance of his either in the Press or on the platform. If the Government thought fit to bring in a law which hinders you from attaining that salvation, Aurobindo’s advice is to break that law if necessary in the sense of not obeying it. You owe it to your conscience; you owe it to your God. If the law says you must go to jail, go to jail. That was the cardinal feature of the doctrine of passive resistance which Aurobindo preached.’¹⁸

And Aurobindo was acquitted.

Ghose was the only great national leader who was not now in prison or exile. His speech at Uttarpara attests to the effectiveness of the Government’s policy of repression, for he said,

‘ It is I this time who have spent a year in seclusion, and now that I come out I find all changed. One who

always sat by my side and was associated in my work is a prisoner in Burma ; another is in the north rotting in detention. I looked round when I came out, I looked round for those to whom I had been accustomed to look for counsel and inspiration. I did not find them. There was more than that. When I went to jail the whole country was alive with the cry of *Bande Mataram*, alive with the hope of a nation, the hope of millions of men who had newly risen out of degradation. When I came out of jail I listened for that cry, but there was instead a silence. A hush had fallen on the country and men seemed bewildered ; for instead of God's bright heaven full of the vision of the future that had been before us, there seemed to be overhead a leaden sky from which human thunders and lightnings rained. No man seemed to know which way to move.¹⁹

But Ghose had found another way, the way of the Yogi of classical India, the way of the saint of the *Bharat-dharma*. He had found that a man needs first to know his True Nature which is of God, and that then the Realized man might truly work to change the world for the better. He decided to leave the immediate battlefield with the bureaucracy and to devote himself to the path that led to union with God. And on 4 April 1910, he began his great quest in Pondicherry.

The Nationalists seemed to be repressed successfully, but the Government knew that continued repression might result in revolution ; and so in 1908, the Minto-Morley Reforms were proposed. It was frankly admitted that these reforms were designed to ' rally the Moderates ', and the Nationalists condemned them as being totally inadequate. By the India Act of 1909, these reforms were put into practice. The Moderate-dominated Congress, between 1908 and 1914, eliminated the subject of boycott, kept some encouragement for

economic swadeshi, and reduced all considerations of self-rule to making these Minto-Morley Reforms effective. They knew this was their last chance to mould the political future, but they were completely obsessed with the idea of reconciliation with the British Raj. Pheroze-shah Mehta and Gokhale sincerely tried to make the reforms work, but their programme did not appeal to the nation, especially to the younger generation. As Andrews and Mookerjee have noted,

‘ It can hardly be questioned that the Moderates failed to give to the nation the lead which it so badly needed. The fact was that it did not reflect the national opinion, but represented only a group of older men, desperately sincere and earnest, but too conservative in their views to reflect the rising spirit of the country as a whole.’²⁰

The Moderates had no grand vision of Swaraj as India’s birthright. They sought still to imitate the West, to found the theory of the Indian state on an alien system of political philosophy rather than to found the political order on the wisdom of India’s own heritage. They did not succeed.

Tilak and the War-time Programme

On the night of 17 June 1914, Lokamanya Tilak was brought to Poona from Mandalay and released. He had served his excessive term of imprisonment and exile in full; for six long years he had been completely cut off from the political affairs of the land of his birth. He was old and tired, and yet the Government feared him as no other man in India. The bureaucrats knew that the people had been waiting for his return, ready and anxious to follow his bold lead to the goal which had inspired them—Swaraj. Quickly he appraised the

political situation and found that, first, the Moderate-dominated Congress was ineffective, second, that the Minto-Morley Reforms were inadequate, and third, that the Muslim community was becoming politically conscious. In the months after his release he drew up his basic programme for the new campaign against the bureaucracy. The Nationalist movement had to be revived, and if possible should join forces with the new Muslim political leaders in a united force. The Congress had to be employed to give a lead to the nation, which meant effecting a compromise with the Moderate leaders to permit broadening the membership and the programme of the Congress. The goal remained, in Tilak's programme, the achievement of Swaraj, but new tactics would have to be devised for the changed circumstances.

In August 1914, the World War had begun. Britain was put to the greatest military test of her history. Tilak believed that as far as India was concerned, Britain wanted peace assured internally, cooperation in conducting the war, and assistance from Indian manpower. Since the British had always been fearful of the word Swaraj, feeling that it was seditious and dangerous, Tilak advocated that the Nationalists use the term Home Rule rather than Swaraj as the goal of their movement. Home Rule was a much more familiar term to the British; it sounded more conciliatory. In line with this policy Tilak and his loyal colleagues founded the first Home Rule League and were followed by Mrs Besant, the Theosophist leader, in setting up local Home Rule Leagues throughout India.

Since the British wanted internal peace in India, Tilak gave his personal assurance of his loyalty, and stressed the passive nature of his campaign for Home

Rule. Furthermore, he offered his personal cooperation with the British and advocated that all Indians rally to support the Allied cause. Since the Allies were fighting 'to make the world safe for democracy', he believed they naturally deserved India's complete cooperation. This was especially so since Britain was fighting for a principle and since that principle, democracy in the world, had universal application. If Indian manpower was needed, if Indian troops could share in the fighting for a principle, then certainly, Tilak reasoned, that principle must apply to India. He cabled the Prime Minister that millions of Indian youths would volunteer for service with the British and that the whole nation would participate in the war effort, if Indians were fighting to establish a principle not only abroad but also in their own motherland. A free India, or at least an India promised Home Rule with victory, would have a 'stake in the war' and would fight willingly and well. The British Government did not accept this reasoning.

Home Rule Leagues became the effective organizations for the spreading of the new message of politically-awakened India. Tilak and Mrs Besant and their co-workers toured all of India. To show how closely Home Rule was linked to Swaraj, Tilak repeatedly said,

'I said that it was our "right" to have Home Rule but that is a historical and a European way of putting it; I go further and say that it is our "Dharma"; you cannot separate Home Rule from us, as you cannot separate the quality of heat from fire; both are inseparably bound up.'²¹

And the nation heard and began to take action to achieve the goal of the national struggle. As Mrs Besant movingly wrote,

‘The cry for Home Rule, Swaraj (Self-Rule), ringing from all parts of India, is really a cry for that which is most priceless in a Nation’s life, for the life of its very Soul, for its right to grow, to evolve, on its own National lines.’²²

The years of political inactivity were over. The Home Rule Leagues were more effective in arousing the nation to political activity than the Moderate Congress, yet Tilak and Mrs Besant knew that the Congress was potentially the leading organization in India. Since the 1914 session, Mrs Besant had been working to bring about a reconciliation with the Moderate leaders, to heal the wounds of Surat, and to reunify the Congress. Mehta and Gokhale, fearing that Tilak would lead the Congress again to take the lead in the battle with the bureaucracy, discouraged her. However, in 1915, both these great Moderates died; and at the 1915 session of the Congress, Mrs Besant and her colleagues were able to prepare the way for the Nationalists’ re-entry at the next session.

During the year Tilak had worked closely with Mohamed Ali Jinnah, one of the prominent young Muslim leaders. As a matter of fact, when the Government tried in 1916 again to convict Tilak of preaching seditious doctrines, it was Jinnah who represented him before the court and won his acquittal. Tilak knew that a united India, Hindu and Muslim, could best promote India’s cause, and through his efforts the 1916 Lucknow session of the Congress witnessed the development of a common programme with the Muslim League. Tilak re-entered the Congress amid wild scenes of rejoicing, and brought about the famous Congress-League Scheme, a joint programme of common and co-ordinated effort for the goal of self-rule. The resolution began by stating,

‘ Having regard to the ancient civilization of India, the progress made in education, the public spirit shown, His Majesty, the King-Emperor, should be pleased to issue a proclamation that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer self-government on India at an early date; that as a definite step in that direction, the Congress-League Scheme should be forthwith granted; and that in the reconstruction of the Empire, India should be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions.’

For the first time in the struggle for Indian independence the organized Muslim community worked with the Congress; and the Congress, Moderate and Nationalist, stood again united. After the Lucknow session, one of his cherished hopes having been realized, Tilak said, ‘ The Lucknow Session has become the most important session of the Congress. The President of the Congress said that it was *the* Indian National Congress . . . Hindus and Muslims have been brought together ’.²³

Another event of some importance took place at this time. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who had worked for years to better the conditions of Indians in South Africa, had returned to India in 1915. He had spent over a year becoming familiar with the nation of his birth, and had then gone to Lucknow to attend the Congress. He had called Gokhale his political *guru*, and had associated himself with the Congress Moderates. Tilak recognized his abilities and personally secured for him a place on the All-India Congress Committee, the executive body of the Congress, even though at that time Gandhi was not a Nationalist. This was Gandhi’s first position in the Congress.

During 1917, Tilak and Mrs Besant continued to work for Home Rule, supported now by both the Congress and the Muslim League. Tilak was constantly on the move, carrying his message of freedom to the entire subcontinent. The Government was now faced by a united India, actively dedicated to its goal of Swaraj. For a while the Government could not decide between a policy of repression or concession. Finally, Mrs Besant and some of her co-workers were arrested and imprisoned. At the time, the Secretary of State for India, Mr Montagu, was dispatched to India to investigate the possibilities of a major reform programme. The nation hoped that he would accept Swaraj, even as dominion status, as India's just condition. At the same time, the Congress began new agitation for the release of the imprisoned Home Rule workers. The Government was forced to relent on its ill-begun repression, and after her release, Mrs Besant was elected President of the 1917 Calcutta Session of the Congress. She was not the first European to occupy the Presidential Chair, but she was the first woman to be so honoured. Her presidential address at Calcutta was a monumental presentation of India's case for self-rule. It has become one of the great documents of the independence movement.

Mr Montagu gathered his information for reforms and in 1918, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme was announced. Tilak and the Indian leaders had waited patiently for these reforms, expecting a grant of considerable authority to India in recognition of her great contribution to the war effort, if not in recognition of the moral principles underlying the 'right of national self-determination' for which the Allies had been fighting. They were disappointed. The Montagu-

Chelmsford proposal offered not freedom, self-determination or representative government, but rather 'responsible' government under a system of 'dyarchy', which the Nationalists soon saw to be without precedent, realism or workability. It was not even a close approximation to Swaraj. It was only one more hesitant step in the long, long process toward self-determination.

As in 1909, the Moderates accepted the reforms as a 'substantial instalment' in India's struggle for self-rule. Tilak and the Nationalists recognized that little had been given, and even that grudgingly. They called a special session of the Congress for August 1918, to meet in Bombay, and consider the official reaction of the Congress to the proposed reforms. The Moderates were fearful that the Nationalists would condemn the reforms, and, by refusing to attend the special session, in effect seceded from the Congress. Later they founded the Liberal Federation which remained a small but influential vehicle for Moderate opinion throughout the next thirty years. The Nationalists dominated the Bombay special session and there put the Congress on record as considering the reforms 'inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing'. It was decided to carry the Indian case before the British Parliament where the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme was being considered, and to persuade the people and the Government of Britain that a larger measure of representative government must be granted. Tilak summed up the attitude of the Nationalists in saying,

'This party emphatically asserts the fitness of India for Representative and Responsible Government and claims for the people of India, on the principle of self-determination, the exclusive right of fashioning the form of

government and determining the most appropriate constitution for India.’²⁴

He was urged to be President of the regular session of the Congress for 1918, to be held in Delhi, but was unable to accept. He had decided the chance must be taken, a bold bid must be made, in England.

The Campaign in England

The Government tried every possible way to prevent Tilak's proceeding to England. When he was finally allowed to leave India, he was placed under a strict prohibition against making any public speeches. Even with this demonstration of the bureaucracy's prejudice, Tilak was optimistic; he had faith in India's cause and in British justice. India stood united as never before behind the demand for Swaraj. She had loyally co-operated throughout the war, her troops had fought valiantly on all fronts, she had remained peaceful during those years of war in which violence and revolution could have forcibly expelled the British Raj. He was convinced that the historical moment was right to make a direct appeal to the freedom-loving British people, to strike a blow for Swaraj in the capital of the British Empire.

After reorganizing the London Committee of the Congress, Tilak undertook to present his case before the Parliamentary Committee considering the Montagu-Chelmsford India Bill. Both inside and out of the Parliament, he sought to gather support for India's cause and succeeded in influencing a number of Labour Party members of Parliament. The Labour Party supported the claims for a further extension of reforms and, moreover, placed the local organizations of the party

at the disposal of Tilak and his delegates when they toured the country. Parliament proceeded to pass the India Bill on the lines of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, but Tilak had convinced several leading members of the Labour Party that the claim to Indian self-rule was justified.

Tilak also wanted to represent India at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919. Though India's war effort certainly won her a place at the Peace Conference, the Government would not allow Tilak to travel to Versailles. The only thing he could do was send a long memorandum to the Conference urging that the world's great statesmen assembled there consider freedom for India in their grand scheme for remaking the world. He appealed to the world's statesmen

'to declare that Indians are quite capable of governing themselves, that as a progressive nation, they are entitled to the application of the principle of self-determination and that in the exercise of the principle, they are also entitled to determine the form of Government founded upon accepted democratic lines, which they deem most suitable for self-development according to the genius of the people'.²⁵

At Versailles, the American President, Woodrow Wilson, was emphasizing the right of national self-determination for all peoples, and perhaps, had Tilak been free to attend the Peace Conference and to discuss personally India's case with the American President, Swaraj would have been attained sooner.

Tilak had brought suit in London against Sir Valentine Chirol who, in his book, *Indian Unrest*, had made defamatory comments both about Tilak and about the independence movement in India. Tilak brought a civil

suit against Chirol, claiming that a number of his statements were libellous. This was Tilak's great gamble. If, in 1919, in a British court of justice, Tilak had been legally supported in making the author apologize, then world opinion would have been powerfully mustered on the side of India. The defence lawyers fully understood the implications of this trial, the gamble which Tilak was taking. Chirol's lawyer, Sir Edward Carson, in his summation to the court, said,

' I am bound to put to you the importance of this case from a public point of view. You are really asked, and that is the object of his [Tilak's] coming here, to set him up in India as a man who can continue the course of action which he adopted . . . I need hardly remind you of the far-reaching effects of such a verdict as that on the peace of the Government of India and on the difficulties of the white officials out there who do their duty so well to the country.'²⁶

It is little wonder that Tilak's well-documented case was rejected. British justice was brought face to face with the full realization that, as N. C. Kelkar observed, ' a verdict given in Mr Tilak's favour would be practically a signed warrant for recalling the Government of India from India for ever '.²⁷ The decision of the court was on behalf of the British Indian Raj, and many felt that it was somewhat less than the world had come to expect of British justice. Tilak had lost his great gamble in the Chirol trial, but he had won many supporters to India's cause.

His experience in England had also convinced him of the value of ' foreign propaganda ', of placing India's just case for self-rule before the people of the world. He hoped to see Indian leaders working not only in

London but also in Tokyo, Paris and Rome, and he expressed a desire to go himself to the United States to further the cause of his nation. When he returned to India, he came as the uncrowned king of the nation to which he had dedicated his life.

NOTES

- ¹ B. P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 99.
- ² Will Durant, *The Case for India*, p. 122.
- ³ Lala Lajpat Rai, *Young India*, p. 162.
- ⁴ *Kesari*, 11 December 1906.
- ⁵ *Bepin Chandra Pal, His Life and Utterances*, pp. 179-80-81.
- ⁶ D. Naoroji, as quoted in J. D. Rees, *The Real India*, p. 222.
- ⁷ C. F. Andrews and G. Mookerjee, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*, p. 211.
- ⁸ Tilak, as quoted in D. V. Athalye, *The Life of Lokamanya Tilak*, p. 161.
- ⁹ *Bande Mataram*, 8 December 1907.
- ¹⁰ *Bande Mataram*, 15 December 1907.
- ¹¹ As quoted in *Bande Mataram*, 29 December 1907.
- ¹² *Bande Mataram*, 29 December 1907.
- ¹³ *Bande Mataram*, 29 December 1907.
- ¹⁴ *Bande Mataram*, 12 July 1908.
- ¹⁵ *Tilak Trial*, 1908, p. 19.
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 18.
- ¹⁷ *Bande Mataram*, 9 August 1908.
- ¹⁸ C. R. Das, as quoted in P. C. Ray, *Life and Times of C. R. Das*, pp. 60-1.
- ¹⁹ A. Ghose, *Speeches*, p. 52.
- ²⁰ C. F. Andrews and G. Mookerjee, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*, p. 232.
- ²¹ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 256.
- ²² Annie Besant, *India Bond or Free?*, p. 186.
- ²³ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 228.
- ²⁴ Tilak as quoted in B. P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 194.
- ²⁵ Extract from Tilak's letter to the Versailles Peace Conference, 1919.
- ²⁶ *Tilak v. Chitrol*, Vol. II, p. 853.
- ²⁷ N. C. Kelkar, *Landmarks in Lokamanya's Life*, pp. 201-2.

Chapter VI

TILAK AND GANDHI

No man preached the gospel of the Swaraj with the consistency and the insistence of Lokamanya. His countrymen, therefore, implicitly believed in him. His courage never failed him. His optimism was irrepressible. He had hoped to see Swaraj fully established during his life-time. If he failed, it was not his fault. He certainly brought it nearer by many a year. It is for us who remain behind, to put forth redoubled effort to make it a reality in the shortest possible time.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Doubtless, it is Tilak's mantle that has fallen on Mahatma Gandhi and not that of Gokhale, though the Mahatma regards Gokhale as his political *guru*. For one thing, long before Gandhiji preached his gospel of Non-cooperation, Tilak... had set before the nation the whole programme of Non-cooperation.

D. S. Sarma

IN 1919, the King-Emperor proclaimed the India Act, embodying the Montagu-Chelmsford reform proposals. In part, King George V said,

‘Another epoch has been reached today in the annals of India. I have given my Royal Assent to an Act which will take its place among the great historic measures passed by Parliament of this Realm for the better government of India and the greater contentment of her people.’

Only the Moderates, who now were organized as the Liberal Federation, appeared to be ‘contented’ by the reforms. As in the case of the Minto-Morley Reforms, they announced that they would try their utmost to make the reforms work. The rest of the nation was

disappointed. The Nationalist Congress was on record, by virtue of its resolution of 1918, that it considered the reforms to be 'inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing'. The nation had fought well in the war, had waited long and loyally for some recognition from the British, and now that the reforms had been made law, the people looked for direction and for leadership from Tilak and the Nationalists. The Congress Session of 1919 was to be held in Amritsar, not long before the scene of the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh and the repression of General Dyer's martial law. The situation was tense.

The Amritsar Session, 1919

It was at Amritsar that Gandhiji first emerged as a political leader in the Indian National Congress. He had developed a technique of popular passive resistance in South Africa, which he called *satyagraha*, truth or soul force. In South Africa he had been very successful in alleviating the conditions of Indian settlers and in bringing about reforms on their behalf. He based his programme not on nationalism but on universal humanitarian principles of love, non-violence, harmlessness (*ahimsa*) and human dignity. After his return to India, he continued his 'experiments with truth' at Champaran, Kaira and Ahmedabad, demonstrating the power of *satyagraha* in the land of his birth. He gained a large national following, both because of his work in Africa and because the people saw in him a promise, the promise of a sincere, simple man being able to move the might of the British bureaucracy. He was destined to be a new leader in the Indian struggle for self-rule. He had met the great political leaders of India, Mehta, Tilak and Gokhale, and vividly recorded his impressions of them in writing,

‘ Sir Phirozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalaya, and Lokamanya like the ocean. But Gokhale was like the Ganges. One could have a refreshing bath in the holy river. The Himalaya was unscaleable, and one could not easily launch forth on the sea, but the Ganges invited one to its bosom.’¹

When he returned permanently to India, it was natural that he accepted Gokhale as his political *guru*. As he approached the 1919 session of the Congress, his attitude mirrored the probable attitude Gokhale would have had had he lived and decided to remain in the Congress. He was convinced that trust, moderation and willing cooperation were necessary, even though the 1919 reforms were far short of India’s natural expectations.

Tilak attended the session as leader of the Congress and the Nationalists. He had made a realistic proposal in regard to the reforms, maintaining that they must still be considered inadequate but that they should be accepted with the clear understanding that the Congress would fight for additional reforms and that Swaraj was still the goal. C. R. Das and Pal led the Bengal delegation supporting Tilak and the Maharashtrians. Others rallied around Gandhiji and Pandit Malaviya in a Moderate-like proposal that the reforms be accepted with thanks and that the Congress do everything in its power to make the reforms workable. Many delegates had no specific plan to offer and looked for leadership from either Tilak or Gandhiji. It appeared for a time that a division of the Congress would take place. Gandhiji believed that the only ethical course was either to accept the reforms in good faith or to reject them altogether. Tilak believed the reforms should be conditionally accepted, serving notice that cooperation could only be expected from the Congress to the extent

that the British were willing to cooperate, and firmly emphasizing that it was not reform but self-rule which was the ultimate goal.

A compromise was finally reached. In effect, the Congress agreed to thank the British Government for the reforms but still to serve notice that they were considered defective and that only cooperation from the bureaucracy would bring cooperation from the Congress. No one was completely satisfied, but the session ended with goodwill on all sides.

When the session adjourned, Gandhiji found himself attacked by the Moderates for his agreement to compromise with Tilak. He had believed himself a Moderate, a disciple of Gokhale, and had done his best to advocate cooperation and to uphold a Moderate position and was taken aback at the attacks against him in the Moderate press. Within the year he was to reverse completely the Moderate-like stand he had taken at Amritsar. Instead of being the advocate of wholehearted cooperation with the British, he became the herald of non-cooperation.

1920 : Tilak's Death

The great question of 1920 was whether or not the Congress should present candidates for election to the Legislative Councils provided for in the 1919 reforms. Gandhi's cooperative stand was based on a willingness to contest the elections and to hold office. Two issues in the early part of 1920, however, caused Gandhiji to reverse this position. He had long protested against the Rowlatt Act which was considered unjustified, unduly repressive, and which led to Jallianwala Bagh, and he believed injustice had been compounded by the Government's failure to take firm action against the perpetrators

of the Amritsar tragedy. Secondly, he had identified himself with that section of the Indian Muslim community which was agitating on behalf of the retention of the Khilafat in Turkey, and he came to believe that the British refusal to keep their promise to the Turks to retain the Khilafat was another gross example of British unwillingness to do the right and just thing. In view of these injustices, Gandhiji felt that it was no longer possible for him to offer wholehearted co-operation to the British Raj; and since he had advocated that either the Congress cooperate wholeheartedly or non-cooperate wholeheartedly, he advocated that the nation begin a large-scale non-cooperation movement. This change took place in the spring of 1920, and, of course, meant that Gandhiji now opposed the Congress' presenting candidates for election to the Legislative Councils. He urged that non-cooperation be carried out in all spheres of life.

Tilak agreed, with reservations, that non-cooperation was a desirable programme. Gandhi was anxious to obtain Tilak's support, and he recorded the Lokamanya's attitude in quoting him as saying,

'I like the programme well enough, but I have my doubts as to the country being with us in the self-denying ordinance which Non-cooperation presents to the people. I will do nothing to hinder the progress of the movement. I wish you every success, and if you gain the popular ear you will find in me an enthusiastic supporter.'²

But Tilak disagreed with Gandhi on the question of Council entry. He believed that the more realistic attitude would be to enter the Councils and there work tirelessly for Swaraj, and if the nation followed

non-cooperation, then conduct a non-cooperation campaign both within the Government and outside it. If the people non-cooperated throughout the nation under Congress leadership, and the Congress political party non-cooperated within the Legislative Councils, the British Raj would not only be made aware of the injustice of their actions but would also be made to realize that the 1919 reforms were inadequate. Gandhiji, on the other hand, maintained that a programme of total non-cooperation would make Council entry ethically impossible.

Tilak's thinking at this time is perhaps best illustrated by quoting at some length from the *Manifesto of the Congress Democratic Party* which he proposed to organize to stand for election to the Councils. In part, the *Manifesto* read,

‘The Congress Democratic Party, as the name denotes, is a party animated by feelings of unswerving loyalty to the Congress and faith in Democracy. It believes in the potency of democratic doctrines for the solution of Indian problems and regards the extension of education and political franchise as two of its best weapons. It advocates the removal of all civic, secular or social disabilities based on caste or custom. It believes in religious toleration, the sacredness of one's religion to oneself and the right and duty of the State to protect it against aggression. This party supports the claim of the Mahomedans for the solution of the Khilafat question according to Mahomedan dogmas and beliefs in the tenets of the Koran.

This party believes in the integration or federation of India in the British Commonwealth for the advancement of the cause of humanity and the brotherhood of mankind, but demands autonomy for India and equal status as a sister-state with every other partner in the

British Commonwealth including Great Britain. It insists upon equal citizenship for Indians throughout the Commonwealth and effective retaliation whenever it is denied. It welcomes the League of Nations as an instrument for enforcing the peace of the world, integrity of states, freedom and honour of nations and nationalities and for ending the exploitation of one country by another.

This party emphatically asserts the fitness of India for Representative and Responsible Government and claims for the people of India on the principle of self-determination an exclusive right of fashioning the form of government and determining the most appropriate Constitution for India. It regards the Montagu Reform Act as "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing" and will strive to remedy the defect by introducing with the aid of the members of the Labour party and other sympathisers in the British Parliament, at the earliest opportunity, a New Reform Bill for establishing full responsible government in India including full Military control and full fiscal freedom and an exhaustive declaration of rights with constitutional guarantees. To achieve this object, it contemplates and recommends a resolute and energetic campaign in India and in the countries represented on the League of Nations. In this matter the party's watchword will be "Educate, Agitate and Organize".

This party proposes to work the Montagu Reform Act for all it is worth and for accelerating the grant of full responsible government, and for this purpose it will, without hesitation, offer cooperation or resort to constitutional opposition, whichever may be expedient and best calculated to give effect to the popular will.³

This is an extremely important document for it indicates the principles for which Tilak believed the nation must fight. The last paragraph quoted of the *Manifesto* clearly

shows Tilak's attitude toward the reforms. It was an attitude born of years of political struggle, moulded to the realities of the Indian political scene. It emphasizes the political realism that was a hallmark of Tilak's leadership; yet it is a realism that does not compromise with ethics. We shall see that this apparent difference in attitude between Tilak and Gandhi was resolved in the course of the struggle for self-rule.

The nation was anxious to take action as soon as possible and looked to the Congress for leadership. It was decided that a special session of the Congress would be held in Calcutta in August of 1920, to consider a programme of national non-cooperation.

In Bombay, on the night of the 31st of July 1920, Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak died. On the eve of the momentous Calcutta special session, the old warrior, the greatest Nationalist, the man most 'respected of the people', retired from the battles of his life. He had ardently hoped to live 'five years longer' for he believed he would then see his victory won. Even in his last hours he kept high his ideal of Swaraj as India's birthright. As he lay dying, his last message to the nation to which he had dedicated his life was, 'Unless *swaraj* is achieved, India shall not prosper. It is required for our existence'.⁴

Never before had the nation so mourned the loss of a faithful son. From his ashram in Pondicherry, Aurobindo Ghose, his colleague of old, wrote, 'The creations he left behind him were a new and strong and self-reliant national spirit, the reawakened political mind and life of a people, a will to freedom and action, a great national purpose'.⁵ And among the thousands of messages of deep regret, perhaps the eulogy of S. K. Damle, the editor of *Rajakaran*, should be noted:

‘ . . . it was Lokamanya and Lokamanya alone and none else who taught us how to stand up as a self-respecting Nation and a self-respecting people . . . it was the Lokamanya who boldly raised the clarion cry of Swarajya and like some intrepid and iron-willed Mahratta hero of old struck out a new path.’⁶

In his paper, *Young India*, Gandhiji wrote, in part,

‘ Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is no more . . . No man of our times had the hold on the masses that Mr Tilak had. The devotion that he commanded from thousands of his countrymen was extraordinary. He was unquestionably the idol of his people. His word was law among thousands. A giant among men has fallen. The voice of the lion is hushed.’

And in closing, he said,

‘ For us, he will go down to the generations yet unborn as a Maker of Modern India. They will revere his memory as a man who lived for them and died for them. It is blasphemy to talk of such a man as dead. The permanent essence of him abides with us for ever. Let us erect for the only Lokamanya of India an imperishable monument by weaving into our own lives his bravery, his simplicity, his wonderful industry and his love for his country. May God grant his soul peace.’⁷

Though the two great leaders might have disagreed on the specific tactics to be employed in the coming election, their agreement on broad issues was fundamental. The special session met in Calcutta, but as the historian of the Congress, B. P. Sitaramayya, notes, ‘Tilak’s death resulted in ‘leaving Gandhiji without that towering strength which would have been his had he been by his side’.⁸ And Gandhiji expressed his great sense of loss in his autobiography:

‘ I felt the loss of the late Lokamanya very deeply at the special session. It has been my firm faith to this day, that had the Lokamanya been then alive, he would have given his benedictions to me on that occasion . . . The deep void left by his death weighed heavily upon everybody present at Calcutta. Every one felt the absence of his counsels in that hour of crisis in the nation’s history.’ ⁹

Lala Lajpat Rai, recently returned from his war-time exile in the United States, presided. Gandhiji had gathered considerable support for his non-cooperation movement and presented a resolution embodying his programme to the session. He intended that the movement be based on the moral issues arising out of the British injustice concerning the Khilafat question and the Punjab issue. It must be remembered that Gandhiji’s experience as a popular leader had not until this time been primarily political. Rather, his efforts in South Africa and his early work in India were basically humanitarian. This may account for the rather amazing fact that he did not originally include Swaraj as a reason, let alone as *the* reason, for the initiation of national non-cooperation. Gandhiji advocated his programme because he believed the Khilafat and Punjab issues were *moral* issues upon which the nation should take action. He did not initially accept the idea that British colonial rule in India was itself the *greatest moral issue* of the day. It was left for one of Tilak’s colleagues, Vijayaraghavachari, to remind the young leader that for over twenty years the Nationalists had worked for one great all-encompassing goal—Swaraj. He reminded Gandhiji that *Swaraj was the great moral issue* before India, and urged that Swaraj be incorporated as both the goal of and the motivating reason for the

non-cooperation movement. Gandhiji readily agreed to this. Perhaps it would be well to quote Gandhiji's own account of this incident where, in his autobiography, he wrote,

‘ In my resolution non-cooperation was postulated only with a view to obtaining redress of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. That however did not appeal to Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari. “ If non-cooperation was to be declared, why should it be with reference to particular wrongs? The absence of Swaraj was the biggest wrong that the country was labouring under; it should be directed ”, he argued. Pandit Motilalji also wanted the demand for Swaraj to be included in the resolution. I readily accepted the suggestion, and incorporated the demand for Swaraj in my resolution.’¹⁰

At a fateful moment in history Swaraj was re-emphasized not only as the goal of the independence movement but also as the underlying cause of political action. Moreover, Gandhiji's enthusiasm led him to tell the Calcutta delegates that by the adoption of his non-cooperation resolution Swaraj might be attained within one year. He said on this memorable occasion, ‘ If there is a sufficient response to my scheme, I make bold to reiterate my statement that you can gain Swarajya in the course of a year ’.¹¹ Gandhiji's non-cooperation resolution was passed.

At the regular 1920 session in December, at Nagpur, the non-cooperation resolution was again confirmed. It was decided that the Congress would support total non-cooperation and would not stand for election. Of great importance, the Constitution of the Congress was amended at Nagpur, and a new Creed was written to replace the Moderate Creed of the 1908 Constitution.

The new Creed, which was moved by Gandhiji, stated that 'the object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means'. As D. S. Sarma had written, 'Doubtless, it is Tilak's mantle that had fallen on Mahatma Gandhi'. The Nationalist Congress of Gandhiji was following the programme and the goal of the Nationalist Congress of Tilak. The longer struggle for Swaraj was to be continued under a new leader; it was to be continued against all opposition. The political philosophy and the goal of the Nationalists was to carry on the Indian independence movement to eventual victory under Gandhi.

Tilak and Gandhi : Their Differences

One of the greatest 'ifs' in Indian history has long been the speculation about what would have happened if Tilak had 'lived five years longer'. Some believe Tilak intended to go to the United States, and there construct a strong base for overseas support for Indian freedom, leaving Gandhi solely responsible for the conduct of internal political action. Some have said that two such strong men as Tilak and Gandhi could not have easily cooperated even if they had divided their areas of operations. Others maintained that the two would have made the finest partnership conceivable with both of them working together in India for India's social and economic welfare and political independence. In his biography, *Mahatma Gandhi*, Romain Rolland wrote,

'If Tilak had lived, Gandhi . . . would no doubt have remained religious leader of the movement. How magnificently the people of India could have marched on such a double leadership! They would have been irresistible, for Tilak was a master of action, just as

Gandhi is a master of spiritual power. But fate decided otherwise.'¹²

The 'double leadership' could not be. The important matter for us here is to make a brief analysis of their philosophies to see if any basic differences and any basic agreements can be found between these two great leaders. First let us consider the differences.

The first primary difference related to Tilak's principle of political realism and Gandhiji's insistence on ethical consistency. This difference was most clearly apparent in their disagreement over the issue of Council entry in 1919 and 1920. Tilak had been waging his battle with the bureaucracy for a quarter of a century; Gandhi was newly-emerged as a leader in India, and his background was humanitarian rather than political. Tilak was politically wise, he believed a partial gain should be used to the best political advantage. He believed that the Montagu reforms should be accepted but that the Congress should avowedly fight for more advances. Gandhiji originally urged trust and complete cooperation. They reached a compromise at Amritsar. When non-cooperation became the issue, Tilak agreed with Gandhiji to undertake a national non-cooperation movement, if this step were feasible, but at the same time he urged that it was politically wise to cooperate to the extent of entering the Councils and there to conduct non-cooperation. To the younger man this dual policy or expedient position seemed to lack ethical consistency. For Gandhiji the Congress must either accept the reforms and cooperate, or reject the reforms and non-cooperate, in all aspects. To him it was not ethically sound to follow a middle course of responsive cooperation.

As the history of the independence movement shows, Gandhi as the leader of a political movement came to realize that Council entry was not an ethically unsupportable position, and the Swarajist Party entry into Councils in 1923 and 1924 received his blessings. In later years the Congress proved to be eminently successful in contesting elections. Cooperation, non-cooperation, limited cooperation and responsive co-operation were all necessary as techniques of struggle. The apparent difference between Tilak's political realism and Gandhi's ethical consistency was resolved in the course of the independence struggle.

A second difference between the two leaders can be found in Tilak's conservative political expectations and Gandhiji's initially enthusiastic expectations. Tilak's position was founded on years of political struggle that resulted in an attitude of mature political judgement. Gandhiji was fired with the great expectations he had for the success of his non-cooperation movement. Tilak had always maintained that Swaraj was the goal of the Congress, but he realized that the Government was powerful and resourceful and that Swaraj could only be achieved after careful planning, building, educating and directing of mass popular united action. When at Calcutta in 1920, Gandhiji agreed that Swaraj was both the goal of the Congress and the reason for opposing the Government, his enthusiasm led him to conceive of victory within one year. He realized that it would be necessary to plan carefully the campaign of non-cooperation, to build a disciplined organization of volunteer workers, to educate the people to non-violent non-cooperation, and to direct the nation in the struggle; but he did not initially comprehend the magnitude of the task. The actions of insufficiently trained and

inadequately organized people led to the tragedy of Chauri Chaura, the outbreak of violence, and Gandhiji's decision to terminate the non-cooperation campaign of 1921-2. His cry of 'Swaraj in one year' had captivated the popular imagination; his enthusiasm had been contagious and had inspired the nation to tremendous efforts. But, as the pendulum swings, when the great campaign was called off, when Swaraj was not achieved in one year, discouragement settled upon the land. This failure of Gandhiji's first great effort afforded the Government the opportunity to begin again mass political arrests. Gandhiji was himself arrested and imprisoned for sedition. The movement was forced to retrench, to plan for better organization, to devote attention to the long-term 'constructive programme', to accept new techniques of struggle, and generally to take a longer view of the course that would lead to eventual Swaraj.

The third great difference between the two leaders can be called one of militant realism and realistic means as opposed to idealism and idealistic means. In his own way Tilak was a great idealist, for he led in developing the idealistic philosophy of the independence movement and first conceived of the greatest of all ideals—Swaraj for his nation. At the same time Tilak is characteristically thought of as one of India's greatest political realists in the tradition of India's past. Gandhi, on the other hand, was an idealist, and his idealism was far more influenced by Western philosophical concepts borrowed from men like Tolstoi, Ruskin and Thoreau, and by the Indian heritage of the Jains and the Buddhists, than by the realistic traditions of Indian political history.

To Tilak, Swaraj was a completely self-justifying goal; Swaraj was a moral imperative. He constantly

reminded the nation that 'there is no question which is not dependent upon Swarajya', that 'we demand Swaraj as it is the foundation', and that 'our life and our Dharma are in vain in the absence of Swarajya'.¹³ He fought relentlessly for Swaraj, above and beyond any other objective be it social uplift or administrative reforms. Tilak never neglected the morality of his means, but he was interested as well in the efficacy of his means. Gandhiji appeared to seek not only some other moral justification for the initiation of non-cooperation and mass civil disobedience but also to devote himself to idealistic means, constantly denying the utility of violence, not on grounds of efficacy but on grounds of moral indefensibility. Tilak stoutly maintained that British imperial rule in India was itself immoral and that no other justification was needed to do battle with the bureaucracy. Gandhiji, while fighting for Swaraj as the ultimate goal, nevertheless sought an immediate moral justification for his major campaigns, and continually stressed the moral value of his means. In 1920, it was the issue of the Khilafat and the Punjab atrocities; in 1931, it was the issue of the salt tax that triggered Gandhi's great civil disobedience campaigns. An immediate moral issue seemed necessary to call upon the nation for the sacrifices inherent in mass political action. But Gandhiji never wavered from Swaraj as the ultimate moral reason for political struggle. In 1929, he was instrumental in seeing that the Creed of the Congress was changed to read that '*Purna Swaraj* (Complete Independence)' was the goal of the Congress. Both men based all their actions on love of country, love of God and love of mankind. Self-sacrifice was necessary for victory, but the sacrifice of lives, either Indian or British, was to be avoided. They fought for a revolution

—but a non-violent revolution. In the actual campaigns these men led, the means chosen by each were usually identical. Indeed, Gandhiji stressed *ahimsa*, harmlessness, non-violence, as an ethical creed, as one of the highest human virtues and as a guide to all his peoples' political action, while Tilak stressed passive resistance because it was the realistic method of political action. But the result was that each man led the nation to take non-violent action; the techniques, when the facts are examined, were the same. In their private lives each man lived by a rigorous code of conduct, basing their lives on Truth and dedicating themselves to the fulfilment of God's Purpose through their lives and actions. In this spirit they led India toward Swaraj.

Had Tilak lived differences might have arisen from time to time within specific contexts over the question of tactics; again, such differences might not have arisen at all. This we have no way of knowing. The differences of attitude enumerated here were resolved in the history of events. Far more important than these differences was the great common foundation which united the independence movement under the leadership of both men and which was the political edifice built upon the political philosophy of the independence movement.

Tilak and Gandhi : Their Common Foundation

The great durable principles that provided the common foundation to the lives and works of these two great leaders are far more important than the tactical differences or differences of attitude that might have existed. The first such principle was love of country. Tilak had always been a nationalist first. To him India was the Mother, the past, the present and the promise of the future, the image for which he demanded the

nation's sacrifice and for which he sacrificed himself. Humanitarian principles often motivated Gandhiji's actions, but he recognized that what he did for humanity was of value to the extent that he acted for India, for India was the 'action-environment' in which the universality of his faith and his principles could be demonstrated and proved. Because of this he, too, became a great and devoted son of the Mother. It has been said that Tilak was a national leader and that Gandhi was an international leader; and though each man had a world message, it was for India and for the people of India that both men lived and worked and died, and it was to a universal and eternal philosophy of life that each dedicated himself.

It has been urged by some that the greatest difference between Tilak and Gandhiji lay in their personalities. In effect, this thesis proposes that Tilak was, after all, a Brahmin politician and Gandhiji was a casteless saint. But the difference is far more apparent than real. Each man, because of his love and understanding of India, performed a role in the independence movement that was valid in terms of the roles of leaders in India's history. Tilak was a Brahmin, but this did not make him a slave to orthodox rigidity; rather he fought against atrophied orthodoxy and the divisiveness of caste-ism; he was a scholar devoted to learning, to teaching and to guiding the people, to awakening the spirit of India, to sacrificing himself in the performance of his duties to the highest purpose of life. He lived humbly, he dedicated himself to the cause in which he believed. Gandhiji's role was that of the saintly seeker after Truth, the humble, dedicated man of the people who identified himself with the lowliest, and who sought in the remotest villages of India that Truth which India has always

known. Action for a high purpose, self-sacrifice and dedication, the classical precepts of the noble life, were the guiding principles of each man. Tilak was scholar, teacher and awakener; Gandhiji was seeker, man of the people, inspirer. Tilak was the Lokamanya; Gandhi was the Mahatma. Each fulfilled the obligations of his Swadharma. The lives of each were understandable to the people of India, each communicated directly with the people, *because* each lived a life related to the classical values and seeking the Purpose of life which the people understood. The Moderates were never able to communicate their vision of India's role in the world precisely because their vision was not based on the value system of the people. The vision of Tilak and Gandhi was communicated because it was based on India's own vision.

Tilak and Gandhiji taught the classical message of *perfect yourself, dedicate yourself to the highest aspirations of man, live in Truth, live in your True Nature, strive for the fulfilment of the Purpose of life*. Their political philosophy was founded on this philosophy of life. Self-reliance, courage and willingness to sacrifice motivated each man and was a part of their message to all men. The willingness to act, to meet the challenges of the world and to make of the world a better place in which to live guided each man and was a part of the message of each. They each relied upon the people, their wisdom and their willingness to act, to bring about their common goal. They each sought to unify the people by stressing the common bonds that united rather than the forms, customs, conventions and institutions which separated. And by united popular action based on courage born of self-reliance and dedicated to the common goal, each man taught that Swaraj could be achieved. These were

the elements of the common foundation that united Tilak and Gandhi and the nation.

Tilak's Legacy to the Independence Movement

Tilak left a monumental legacy to the independence movement. Gandhiji and those who came after Tilak could build upon the works and victories which he and the Nationalists had won. In his first two battles Tilak was largely successful. The independence movement, largely through his work, had been victorious over stagnation, the spirit of orthodoxy that was negative, that compartmented rather than unified, and that could not rise to accept the challenges of the twentieth century. Tilak freed the nation from lethargy and stagnation, and in awakening the people inspired them with a promise of awakening India, an India united, strong and capable of action, self-reliant and on the road to victory.

Tilak was also largely victorious in his battle with the Westernizers and the imitators. He taught the people that they need not humbly submit to alien conceptions of either the Purpose of life or the right ordering of life. He reminded the nation of its history and its heritage; and the people learned that by following their own way, by being true to the values of their own civilization, they might better face the challenges of an alien civilization and create for themselves a meaningful life on the foundations of their own philosophy of life. This pride in history and in classical values allowed a self-reliant India to grow strong and to take action to bring about a better way of life in accordance with India's own vision of life and the world. Though he led India in the struggle for its survival, he was never a dogmatist. Though he rejected imitation of the West for the sake

of imitation, he constantly advocated that India learn from the West. Though he was a fearless fighter against the British bureaucracy, he respected Britain for all that was noble, kind and progressive in the British way of life. Though he suffered in the struggle, he suffered willingly and never engendered hatred or a desire for revenge. History must record him as one of the world's most noble men.

Tilak remade the Indian National Congress as the great national organization to lead the people in the united popular action necessary for their own future. He changed the Congress from a debating and petition-presenting society into the vanguard of a vast united nationalist movement. He laid the foundation for the Congress' becoming the greatest and largest voluntary political organization in the history of India. He prepared the way for Gandhiji and Sardar Patel to teach the people the disciplined non-violent way of action which led India to eventual victory.

Tilak and the early Nationalists must also be given credit for leaving a legacy of the techniques of struggle which resulted in the final victory. In South Africa, Gandhiji had experimented with similar techniques, but in India it was the Nationalists who first presented the nation with the programme of action which was the precursor to the non-cooperation movement. The Nationalists also first instructed the nation in non-violent passive resistance as the technique of successful struggle. And this was the precursor to the non-violent civil disobedience of the later independence struggle. Gandhiji re-synthesized this programme and these techniques within the framework of his own ethical system and refined them to meet the specific needs of the later independence movement under specific

conditions. But in large measure, the later Congress must always be indebted to the early Nationalists who first initiated and first applied these weapons in the battle with the British bureaucracy on Indian soil.

Nor was Tilak remiss in drawing up detailed plans for a constructive programme for the nation. In part, he advocated, in his Congress Democratic Party *Manifesto* of 1920, such progressive measures as:

‘Securing for the labouring classes, agricultural and industrial, a fair share of the fruits of labour, a fair minimum wage, reasonable hours of work, decent house accommodation and adjustment of relationship between capital and labour on an equitable basis, and promoting organizations suitable for the purpose . . .

Promotion of Swadeshism and development of Indian Industries by all recognized methods including State subsidies and protective tariff.

Nationalization of railways and regulation of railway tariffs by legislation with a view to assist industrial development and to abolish privileges and favouritism in their working.

Retrenchment first and foremost in every department especially in the Military expenditure, and taxation when imperative or desirable but taxation graduated according to the capacity of the various classes, corporations or individuals so that the burden may be proportionate to the means or wealth of the tax-payer.

Creation of a citizen army, officered by Indians; naval, aerial and military education; Commissions for Indians in all military services without racial discrimination.

Recruitment of all services by open competitive examinations in India.

Promotion of national unity by such means as the establishment of a lingua franca for all India; betterment

of relations between followers of different religions, and especially the strengthening of the Hindu-Moslem Entente.,

Readjustment of provinces on a linguistic basis.

Education through the vernaculars as high as possible.

Free and compulsory education without distinction of sex and special contributions and increased grants-in-aid from state funds to Municipalities and Local Boards to carry out this object immediately.

Restoration of Village Panchayats with administrative and judicial powers.

Abolition of drink.

Extension of the franchise without sex distinction.

Sanitation upon a systematic basis under a minister of health.

Carrying out of departmental reforms already enunciated and approved by popular opinion; e.g. Agricultural development, extension of irrigation, the cooperative movement, Industrial and Technical Education suitable to the needs of the country—organized medical relief and encouragement to indigenous systems of medicine.¹⁴

And of all Tilak's legacies to the independence movement the greatest was his contribution to the political philosophy of that movement. It was Tilak and the Nationalists who first envisaged Swaraj, not inert acceptance of alien domination, not administrative reforms, not evolving colonial government, not an imitation of nineteenth-century utilitarian European political philosophy, not an emerging European-inspired nationalism, but Swaraj in the classical Indian value system as India's birthright. Democratic Swaraj was the foundation of new 'right ordering' of the Indian political community; Swaraj was the fulfilment and the beginning; Swaraj was the embodiment of the

traditional values of the Bharatdharma ; Swaraj was the political ideal that called up the life ideal of the Indian civilization. In the words of Aurobindo Ghose, ' God has sent us into the world to fulfil Him by fulfilling ourselves in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity'.¹⁵ Gandhiji and the independence movement after Tilak were guided by this great philosophy of politics, this conception of the purpose of struggle and the fulfilment of promise. The entire meaning was conveyed by the great Raj which was to belong to all the people of India, the Swa-Raj of an awakened nation. This is why the Indian independence movement was unique when compared with the mundane nationalism that was so typical of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The seizure of power often was alone the motive behind these movements, but India had a higher inspiration : Swaraj was India's goal and Swaraj was the legacy of the Lokamanya.

NOTES

¹ Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. I, pp. 415-16.

² Tilak, as quoted in B. P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 196.

³ As quoted in *All about Lokamanya Tilak*, published by V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu and Sons (Madras, 1922), Appendix D, pp. 625-31.

⁴ Tilak, as quoted in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. I, p. 369.

⁵ *The Mahratta*, 8 August 1920.

⁶ *ibid.*, 8 August 1920.

⁷ M. K. Gandhi, *Young India*, 4 August 1920.

⁸ B. P. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 199.

⁹ M. K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. II, pp. 580-82.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 579-80.

¹¹ M. K. Gandhi, *Swaraj in One Year*, p. 2.

¹² Romain Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 29-30.

¹³ See Chapter IV.

¹⁴ As found in *All about Lokamanya Tilak*, published by V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu and Sons (Madras, 1922), Appendix D, pp. 625-31.

¹⁵ A. Ghose, *Speeches*, pp. 85-6.

Chapter VII

TILAK'S LEGACY TO FREE INDIA

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom.

Jawaharlal Nehru
14 August 1947

Swarajya is not far off; it is near.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

ON THE FIFTEENTH of August 1947, the long battle with the British bureaucracy was brought to a victorious conclusion. Free India was established. The immediate sequence of events that preceded independence is well known. In effect, this victory took the form of a transfer of power from the British Indian Administration to the Congress Party representing the new Indian Nation. The transfer of power meant that India became a sovereign state. A Constituent Assembly had been convened to draft a constitution for the new nation. This constitution was approved on 26 November 1949, and on 26 January 1950 the newly-constituted Republic of India was proclaimed. The Constitution, the legal basis of the Indian Republic, is one of the lengthiest written constitutions in the world and 'to a large extent, it is based on the terminology and even the structure adopted by the Government of India Act, enacted by the British Parliament in 1935'.¹

A transfer of power is a direct political-governmental event which by its nature does not involve consideration of principles of political philosophy. However, the drafting of a constitution must involve consideration of

political philosophy or must at least tacitly be based upon certain principles. It is not the purpose of this book to make a detailed examination of the Constitution of the Indian Republic and its subsequent amendments aside from stating two obvious facts about its theoretical basis. First, there is little apparent reference in the Constitution to the classical Indian theory of political order. Second, there is no explicit statement of the source and justification of individual rights and the purpose and function of the state, aside from the Preamble which states that the Constitution has been drafted by the people of India

‘ to secure to all its citizens :

Justice, social, economic and political ;

Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship ;

Equality of status and of opportunity ; and to promote among them all

Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation.’

Part III of the Constitution has an exhaustive enumeration of citizens’ rights, but nowhere is it made clear from what source these rights came, from what philosophic foundation this edifice of rights arises. It is not necessary that the political philosophy upon which the state is based be explained in the constitution or its preamble, but normally these values, these justifications for the establishment of the state, are somewhere set forth. The Preamble gives the only official recognition of values, and yet these are expressed in terms most commonly found in Western European and American political development. The words ‘ Liberty, Equality, Fraternity ’ were products of the French Revolution ; the terms

'social, economic and political justice' familiarly come from Western European and especially Anglo-Saxon political history; so also the phrase 'dignity of the individual'. It is not that these concepts are alien to the Indian political tradition, but rather that the way in which they are phrased is definitely in the Western European political tradition. Strangely absent from the Preamble is reference to concepts like Swaraj, Dharma-rajya and the integration of the purpose of the state with the Purpose of life. In other words, there is no reflection of Indian precepts or political philosophy in the Indian constitution. An examination of the forms of governmental order and legislative-administrative procedure established in the constitution further illustrates the reliance of its makers on Western political history and practice.

We have set out to examine the reapplication of India's own philosophy of political order in the twentieth century. We have seen how Lokamanya Tilak and his fellow Nationalists made such a reapplication of Indian political theory in the struggle for Swaraj, and how they developed the broad outlines of an Indian political philosophy for Free India. In order to understand this greatest legacy of the Lokamanya, it would be well to survey briefly the major bodies of political philosophy existent in the world today. In this way, the significance and the relevance of Tilak's reapplication of Indian political theory may be most clearly illustrated.

In effect, there are only three major political philosophies in the world today. They are the Western political philosophy, the Marxian-Soviet political philosophy, and the Indian political philosophy which is based on the Sanatana Dharma.

The forms of order, the laws, the institutions, the procedures of government, the repositories of power,

must be flexible enough to meet changing circumstances and must be vital enough to promote continually the purpose of the state as defined in the political philosophy of the political community. In discussing political philosophy we must not be primarily concerned with the forms of order but rather with the justification for the employment of any particular forms of order, and with the purpose which underlies the ordering of the community and which purposefully relates that ordering to the civilization's system of values. A system of values or philosophy of life is considered to be eternally and universally true, applicable to all men in all places in all times. The viability of this philosophy of life is primary to the viability of the philosophy of the political order. The political philosophy must relate the common life and activities of individuals in the political community to the Purpose of life as defined in the philosophy of life of the civilization. If there is no such integrated relationship then, in the words of Dr Karl Menninger, the people 'exist without purpose and without significance. They have no articulate philosophy; they do not live within any frame of reference'.² These general principles hold true for each of the three major political philosophies which we will survey. Each of these political philosophies rests upon some system of values, some philosophy of life that shows men the Purpose of life—both individual and social.

Western Political Philosophy

Western political philosophy was primarily based on the value system of Christianity. The political history of Western civilization until the time of the Reformation was largely concerned with the power relationship between church and state, for the Christian Church

was the special guardian of the civilization's philosophy of life; and the various political communities of Western Europe were so organized as to assist the individuals and the communities to realize the moral imperatives of their system of values. With the coming of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the emergence of modern European nation-states, the integration of Western political philosophy and the system of values of Christendom were drastically altered and in some cases virtually destroyed. The complex of historical events of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought forth a flow of diverse concepts in all realms of human activity. The Reformation led to the freeing of the non-Catholic states of Western Europe (including France) from extra-statal ecclesiastical control.³ National churches emerged more or less under the domination of the state; and with the advances in the natural sciences new interpretations of life and new political philosophies of the role of the individual in the state began to develop.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was one of the most astute political observers of his day. He clearly recognized that if the Christian philosophy of life no longer served as a basis for integrating the philosophy of political order, then some new basis would have to be evolved. Of course, the ancient Vedic Rishis knew well that a political philosophy had to be based on the ultimate basis of life itself, on the first cause, the Real, on the principle which gave Meaning and Purpose to life itself. But Hobbes, in the 'scientific' spirit of his time, was a materialist and an atheist. He rejected any spiritual basis of life, God was removed from his universe and the universe was reduced to matter. He taught that blind, senseless, unconscious matter was its own first cause,

that matter alone was the ultimate reality, that there was no higher principle to give meaning and purpose to life. In his system it logically followed that in an entirely materialistic universe there could be no such thing as divinely-sanctioned morality, no higher ethic of good and evil. He rejected the concept of Dharma, and posited that there was only one natural law governing all men, and that that natural law was the 'law of survival', self-preservation. In other words, in a Godless, materialistic universe the highest duty of each individual was to survive, and he taught that the most efficient way in which the individual could survive would be to surrender himself completely to an all-powerful state—the Leviathan. The Leviathan replaced God in man's allegiance and became its own sufficient justification for its existence. This had to be because for Hobbes the all-powerful state was the most efficient instrument for promoting survival, and survival was man's sole purpose in life. The state became a power unto itself, the author and arbiter of all morality, the ultimate source of law and sanction, the absolute claimant on individual loyalty; the preservation of the state became its own end and the purpose of human endeavour. Thus Hobbes was able to say that the Purpose of life was survival and the function of the state was to use any and all means to promote that survival. In Thomas Hobbes we have one of the early and most articulate spokesmen of the political philosophy that in the twentieth century developed into Nazi-Fascism; in another sense, Hobbes is also the philosophic great-grandparent of materialistic Marxian-Soviet Communism.

Other Western political philosophers, such men as Locke and Montesquieu, were also aware that the Purpose of life as set forth in the value system of

Christianity was undermined. These men, the precursors of modern liberalism, rejected Hobbesian materialism. They did not endeavour to substitute the Leviathan for God but rather attempted to develop a political philosophy which was based on Christian ethics but which allowed each individual to determine the value content of his own philosophy of life without special reference to any church or organized religious creed. These men developed the doctrine of natural law and natural rights (an attempt at basing their political philosophy on a system parallel to the Sanatana Dharma) and held that this natural law was above the state and that the natural rights were beyond the power of the state to interfere with. They experienced considerable difficulty in reconciling the limits of personal freedom with the limits of social authority, yet endeavoured to promote both through a system of checks and balances within the political community so that the function of the state came to be: the maintenance of law and order, the welfare of the majority of the people, and the protection and promotion of the natural rights of individuals under the supra-statal powers of natural law. An excellent example of this liberal political philosophy, as it is based on natural law and natural rights, is found in the American Declaration of Independence, in which, in 1776, Thomas Jefferson refers to the establishment of the United States under 'the laws of Nature and of Nature's God' and to certain truths which were held

'to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.'

Here we have the concept of the right ordering in which the state exists under God and natural law and is limited

in its functions by the 'inalienable rights' of the individual. Within this theoretical framework and under these limitations the authors of the constitution of the United States set forth the functions of the state :

' to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.'

The constitution proceeded to describe the forms of order within its famous limiting system of checks and balances which might best allow the new state to fulfil its duties, limited by the natural rights of each citizen and under the unalterable power of natural law and the divine creator.

Liberal political philosophers of the nineteenth century, a century in which the dogmatic truths of mechanistic natural science were as fully accepted and unchallenged as the revealed truths of early Christendom, chose to reject any faith in natural law or natural rights and also usually to reject even the concept of a divine creator. In this century of scientific humanism, scepticism, positivism, rationalism, materialism, in a social order inspired by the notion that the material environment could be inexhaustibly manipulated so as to promote great material wealth, welfare, progress and happiness, the Purpose of life tended to be itself treated as an abstract question unworthy of scholarly consideration ; and the function of the state, for the liberals of the day, tended to be reduced to the promotion of ' the greatest happiness of the greatest number '. Some states appeared to be ordered so as only to promote efficiency, others to promote expediency for the moment. A conflicting confusion of political ideologies promoted by

political parties replaced any semblance of community of agreement on issues of political philosophy in many Western states. Utilitarianism failed to provide any concrete guides to the quality of happiness, not to mention a moral basis for determining the political question of 'the greatest happiness'. Yet utilitarianism as a philosophy of political order thrived in its era, an era characterized by moral uncertainty and disintegration. The nineteenth-century liberals were largely unable to explain the Real world beyond the temporary, relative, empirical explanations of emerging natural science. Because they limited themselves to such an explanation of the Real world, they found that they were unable to define the Meaning and Purpose of life and that they were unable to delineate values or to relate their political philosophy to a system of values.

The salvation of the political philosophy of the West in the nineteenth century was the fact that tradition itself was sufficiently strong to maintain that there was some value in human dignity, in the freedom of the individual, in democratic control over the decision-making processes of government and in the judicious balancing of individual rights (from whatever source they were derived) and the authority of the state (whatever its ultimate justification for exercising authority might be). The West in the twentieth century has been witnessing a reassertion of divinely-based human values in all spheres of activity. Blind faith in materialistic progress, adherence to dogmatic scepticism, and limited rationalistic positivism, have all proved unsatisfactory. Science has admitted that it is able only to explain a relatively limited spectrum of Reality, and the world's greatest scientists, from Sir James Jeans to Albert Einstein, have indicated that a Real world exists beyond

the capability of the fallible instruments of contemporary science to measure. The entire Western philosophy of life has lost its certainty and is seeking a firmer basis. Sir James Jeans has explained the present state of Western philosophy as follows :

‘ If we must state a conclusion, it would be that many of the former conclusions of nineteenth-century science on philosophical questions are once again in the melting pot. Just because of this, we cannot state any positive conclusions of any kind.’⁴

In Western liberal political philosophy there has been a continuing re-appraisal of the role of the individual in the political community and a re-evaluation of the ethical basis of order in the political community. Such scholars as Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Bishop Fulton Sheen are envisaging a return to the Christian philosophy of life. Walter Lippmann in his recent work, *The Public Philosophy*, has urged a return to the concepts of natural law and natural rights (closely approximating the integrating principle of Dharma). And young scholars such as Russell Kirk are advocating a conservation of traditional values and practices while a firmer philosophy of political obligation is maturing. The West has passed through the valley of doubts and is entering a new era of knowledge and faith. In a word, Western liberal political philosophy is returning to sounder, more spiritual, explanations of the role of man in the universe and in the political community. The basis of political obligation is again being sought in the ultimate basis of life itself, in the principle which gives Meaning and Purpose to human life and to the struggle for survival.

In the West, the alternative to the liberal theory of the state has been seen in the fruition of the Hobbesian

doctrine of the all-powerful state as its own self-sufficient justification. The modern Leviathan has come into existence in the twentieth century in Italian Fascism and German Nazism. These two philosophies of the state which differ little from each other and have remarkable parallels with Marxism developed through the sceptical philosophy of the nineteenth century, and emerged to place the state first and foremost among all the obligations of the individual. In the Nazi-Fascist political philosophy the individual, as a distinct, dignity-possessing, God-related entity, does not exist. The individual owes all obligation to the state, for he has no existence apart from his existence as a member of the state. The state is totally self-justifying and the glory and advancement of the state is alone the purpose of life. The Nazi-Fascist state, according to one of America's leading political philosophers, 'must not only be obeyed but worshipped'.⁵ As Mussolini said, 'All is in the State and for the State; nothing outside the State, nothing against the State'.⁶ The totalitarian Nazi-Fascist state is called totalitarian because *it is a total state*, based on a political philosophy of the total state. The individual has no purpose in life aside from or beyond the state; the individual has no criterion of morality aside from that dictated by the state. It is perhaps because this totalitarian philosophy developed within the body of Western civilization, and because Soviet-Marxism is only an aberrant variation of this totalitarianism in practice, that the remainder of the peoples of Western civilization have set about firmly resolved to re-establish the political philosophy of the state on a basis of spiritual value which the Nazi-Fascists and their ideological predecessor Hobbes refused to accept. Materialistic totalitarians can neither admit nor contend with spiritual values.

Marxian-Soviet Political Philosophy

Marxian-Soviet political philosophy is based on the system of values as devised and described by Marx and Engels and as interpreted and implemented by Lenin and Stalin. This system of values or philosophy of life is almost entirely the child of the nineteenth century. It is at once the outgrowth of that spirit of rationalistic atheism, scientific dogmatism and materialism, social Darwinism and determinist utopianism which characterized the general trend of nineteenth-century philosophic speculation. At the same time, like Nazi-Fascism it is a reaction against the individualistic, liberal, utilitarian, rationalized ethic relied upon in Western Europe to order man in his economic, social and political life. But Marxism is a total reaction, a reaction against Western civilization itself. Because of this Marxism has been interpreted as the world's most thoroughgoing *secular religion*. And though Marxian doctrine has been modified and Russified by its adoption as the *state religion* of the Soviet Union, and by the doctrinaire interpretations of Lenin and Stalin, it remains the philosophic core, the philosophy of life, of the world Communist movement.

The Marxian-Soviet political philosophy is a total and thoroughly integrated explanation of the role of man in the political community. Its prophets, Marx and Engels, were unwilling to allow each individual to make his own analysis and interpretation of reality and life and then to endeavour to construct a homogeneous political philosophy on a literal babel of philosophies of life. They perceived that this was the greatest weakness of nineteenth-century Western liberalism, and therefore set about to explain, as must any philosophy of life, the Real, the True and the Meaningful in order to

demonstrate the Purpose of life and thereby to define man's role in the political community. They began by saying that their analysis would be entirely 'scientific', and Marx took pride in calling his doctrine 'scientific socialism'. The only reality, according to Marx and Engels, is matter. There is no God, either transcendental to the world or immanent within matter; there is no higher reality than matter itself. Moreover, there is not and can be no such thing as the human soul. Matter alone is real, yet this unconscious, inert matter is capable of evolution, capable, according to their system, of producing life; and all matter, including life, necessarily continues to follow a pattern of evolution. This analysis of reality, known in their literature as Dialectic Materialism, is the basis of the entire Marxian-Soviet system of philosophy. Matter, the only reality, necessarily and irrevocably evolves along a knowable, though complicated, pattern of progression, the dialectic system; and all life as well as man and his institutions are necessarily and irrevocably bound to evolve along this determined and determinable pattern of dialectical materialistic progression. Dialectic materialism is alone, according to the prophets of Communism, the true explanation of all existence.

Since there is only one pattern of evolutionary development according to the Marxian-Soviet dogma, this pattern may be comprehended by those individuals who, having absorbed the revelation of Marx and Engels, can plot the future course of the evolutionary process with the aid of the system of 'scientific' socialism. The meaning of life thus can become clear to this advanced, 'scientifically-trained' elite. This new elite in effect becomes the 'priesthood' of the secular religion, and as a 'priesthood' it is the 'vanguard of the world

Communist movement'. This is the Communists' own definition of the Communist Party. In other words, trained Communists alone can understand and interpret the progression of the materialistic dialectic and, so equipped, they alone can define man's materialistic purpose in life and can alone order society so that this purpose is fulfilled. The purpose of life, it logically follows, is to live totally in accordance with the dialectical process of matter, for it is believed this dialectical process is evolving into a perfect world order, an earthly millennium, and will bring an eventual cessation to the entire materialistic process of development. The process is dynamic, but it is not, cannot be, moral. The evolution of matter has no higher purpose than its own unfoldment, no higher realization, for there is no higher reality. The whole process is determined, unconscious and inevitable. This is the philosophy of life (or rather the philosophy of matter, since life is only a manifestation of matter) upon which the Marxian-Soviet political philosophy is based. It follows that in the Communist doctrine there is no value whatsoever in free discussion of political (or any other kind of) issues, in democratic processes of decision-making. And it therefore follows that there is no value in individual freedom. Democracy and freedom, according to their teachings, will undoubtedly commit errors, hindering the evolution of matter. The only way in which errors can be avoided and the purpose of dialectically-evolving matter fulfilled is through total submission of all the people to the dictates of those who can plot the course of evolving matter—the Communist 'priesthood'. The correct system of political order, as strenuously emphasized by Lenin and Stalin, is the complete regimentation of the political community under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', which dictatorship

is securely held in the hands of the 'scientifically-trained' Communist Party 'priesthood'. Eventually, Marx promised, the state will 'wither away' after the millennium is attained, but until such time (and the millennium is placed in the distant future after the entire world has been forced, by violent means, to accept the dogma of Marxian-Soviet philosophy) the Communist Party must rule supreme, for it alone is capable of guiding mankind in the fulfilment of the *purpose of matter*—not of life.

Until the world revolution regiments all mankind under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the world is divided into two necessarily opposed camps, i.e. the 'scientifically-ordered' states of the Communist world and the rest of the world which has refused to accept the real, the true and the meaningful as defined by the prophets of Marxian-Soviet philosophy. The nature of the struggle between these two camps is defined in the classical Marxist system as the class struggle between the 'exploiters' and the 'exploited'. The 'exploited' of the world are supposed to be organized under, and loyal to, the Communist 'priesthood'. The 'exploiters' have been able to organize the nation-states of the non-Communist world in opposition to the inevitable historical process of Communist revolution, and the class struggle must go on not only between the two blocs of nations but also within all the non-Communist nations. Obviously, since the entire Marxian-Soviet system is based on a total and irrevocable 'scientific interpretation' of the evolution of matter, the Communists' only criterion of correct action, morality and justice is the fulfilment of the purpose of the evolution of matter; or, stated in another way, all morality is judged by the standard of the advancement of the Communist cause. Everything that stands against this advancement is evil and must be destroyed. Based

on this philosophic system, the *Communist Manifesto* says, 'The whole history of mankind...has been a history of class struggles, conflicts between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes'.⁷ Since this dogma is accepted by the 'priesthood' as true, Lenin was able to state emphatically,

'We say that our morality is wholly subordinated to the interests of the class-struggle of the proletariat. We deduce our morality from the facts and the needs of the class struggle of the proletariat...That is why we say that a morality taken from outside of human society does not exist for us; it is a fraud. *For us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletarian class struggle.*'⁸

Since the Marxian-Soviet philosophy of life completely and absolutely rejects God, it logically follows that all religious morality, all philosophies of life based on a concept of divine creation, the human soul and the evolution of divine purpose are the hated and feared enemies of the Marxian-Soviet system. Lenin declared war on all religion when he wrote,

'The fight against religion must not be limited nor reduced to abstract ideological preaching. The struggle must be linked up with some concrete practical class movement; its aim must be to eliminate the social roots of religion.'⁹

The individual has no intrinsic value except insofar as he allows his life to be subordinated completely and totally to the class struggle and regimented in the Communist state to serve the purpose of the dialectical advancement of history as defined and guided by the Communist Party. In the non-Communist state, class warfare must be continuous as directed by the party

'priesthood'. Only after Communism is victorious throughout the world and the millennium is attained, can the dictatorship and the state 'wither away', for only then will all men have learned to submit voluntarily to the inevitable dialectical process. This is why Marxian-Soviet philosophy has been called a total philosophy. This is why Marxian-Soviet philosophy has been called the world's most totalitarian secular religion. It is a system that can only succeed when the entire world accepts its basic premisses. As Professor Waldemar Gurian has succinctly explained,

'To comprehend the development, the success and the dangers of the Bolshevist-Communist movement, it must be understood as a social and political secular religion, for it is not exclusively concerned with the conquest of power and the achievement of social and political changes. It demands absolute dominance over every realm of life—spiritual as well as secular. The Soviet regime does not regard itself as one among many possible regimes, but as a regime based upon a specific doctrine which corresponds to a necessary development in history and society.'¹⁰

There is no question of doubt for the confirmed Communist, for the philosophy of Marxian-Sovietism is completely determined and inevitable. As Western liberal political philosophy believes itself to be a world system for the ordering of man in society, as it expressed itself in the First World War as fighting to 'make the world safe for democracy', so also is Marxian-Soviet political philosophy a world system. But whereas Western liberal political philosophy allows for national self-determination and individual national variation and believes that each nation must and will develop its own best system for the right ordering of man in the political community,

Marxian-Soviet political philosophy demands total adherence to its inevitable system of total allegiance from all men. The Sixth World Congress of the Communist International clearly defined the world concepts of Communism in stating,

‘The Communists fight with courage and devotion on all sectors of the international class front, in the firm conviction that the victory of the proletariat is inevitable and cannot be averted. The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their aims can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of the existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.’¹¹

Indian Political Philosophy

Western political philosophy is just emerging from its times of trouble because for several centuries it had lost its integration with the system of values of its own civilization. Marxian-Soviet political philosophy is based on a totally atheist-materialist value system that denies integration with any higher system of morality or values. Modern Indian political philosophy is the world's only other major political philosophy, and to the extent that it was successfully reapplied by Tilak and the Indian Nationalists, it may serve India and the world as a great, meaningful, integrated philosophy of the right ordering of man in the political community. Haphazard policies of expediency cannot be considered durable or valid foundations for a political order. The only alternative to Western and Marxian-Soviet political philosophy is the Indian, and the nation in which it must be tested is India. Indian political philosophy holds such high

promise for India and the world because it is so inseparably based on the eternal philosophy of life of the Indian civilization. If this promise is not fulfilled, the world will be poorer, for out of the conflict of civilizations that brought about the renaissance of Indian culture and the Bharatdharma, a new vision, a useful and valid vision, of man's place in the political community has emerged. The entire struggle for Indian self-rule was based on the conviction that 'Swaraj is the fulfilment of India's national life', through the fulfilment of the divine Purpose of life as found in the Indian civilization's explanations of the Real, the meaningful and the purposeful.

The philosophy of life of the Indian civilization is based on the relation of the apparent world to the Real world, the relation of the apparent nature of man to man's True Nature. The apparent world is Real because, though it is imperfect, it is perfection-oriented imperfection; the apparent nature of man is Real because man may consciously live in his Real or True Nature. Man is free to choose chaos or cosmos, and life is meaningful because the choice of cosmos is his, and through the choice of cosmos, the Purpose of life, the Purpose of the entire creation of the universe, is attained and fulfilled. The True Nature of man is the soul, which is that part of man which is God immanent in his creation, and the choice of cosmos leads man to live in accordance with the divine Purpose, the moral cosmic order of Sanatana Dharma. To fulfil the purpose of life man has only to live his life fully and morally in accordance with his own Swadharma. The community has been ordered, through the two systems of social order and political order, to assist men in this duty, to protect and to promote the harmony of that cosmic order.

The political philosophy of classical India was the plan by which the political community was organized and empowered to act in order for the Purpose of life to be fulfilled through the common life of all the individuals of the community. Clearly the political philosophy set forth the functions of the state, describing in general terms its limitations and powers, and allowing, with the greatest possible realism, for different forms of order to be employed at various times by various peoples to meet the needs of differing circumstances. There was never any doubt that man must live in a political situation, that the state was necessary for the ordering of the life-situations of individuals so that the individuals might fulfil the moral Purpose of life. It was further recognized that the specific application of this philosophy could never be more than an approximation of the ideal, but that the ideal would be a guide and an inspiration for all men.

The purpose and sole justification of the state was Dharma. There was never any other consideration of any other possible purpose for the state. It was to protect and to promote Dharma; it was to exist to assist men in fulfilling the moral Purpose of life. In order to execute its duties with justice, two fundamental limitations were stipulated. The state must be secular, meaning that the state must protect and promote the Dharmas of all members of society without specially assisting or favouring any particular creed, sect or belief. The state existed, therefore, only for a moral purpose, and at the same time had to be non-sectarian in the performance of its duties. The second limitation was that the state itself must be a limited state, that it must not possess absolute powers, that it must have the concentration of powers divided, as it was divided in the social order by the system of Varnas, and that the people must hold ultimate

responsibility. The totalitarian state was an impossibility in the plan of the classical political order. Moreover, in order to protect individuals and to limit state powers, the state existed and performed its functions under the rule of Dharma—Dharmarajya. The state was free to act only so long as all its actions were guided by the rule of Dharma (a system which was far more thoroughgoing than the Western liberal concept of the state existing under the higher sovereignty of natural law and natural rights). The free Indian state, possessing Swaraj, ordering itself under the moral guidance of Dharmarajya, performing its functions of protecting and promoting all Dharmas, would so order the life-situations of the individuals of the political community that each could follow his Swadharma, the community would experience the benefits of peace, justice and harmony, and the moral Purpose of life would be fulfilled.

Tilak and the Nationalist leaders of the Indian National Congress based their political philosophy on this classical Indian philosophy of life and politics. They sought to reapply this classical political philosophy in the struggle for Indian self-rule. Because their struggles rested upon the firm foundations of this belief in the classical theory of political order the Indian nationalist movement was unique in the world. As Bepin Chandra Pal said, 'This New Movement is not a mere political movement. It is essentially a spiritual movement'.¹² Because it was essentially a spiritual movement, because it was not based either on the nineteenth-century Western political philosophy or the Marxian political philosophy, or mere nationalistic expedience, because it was based on the reapplication of the Indian civilization's own contribution to the political wisdom of the world, it was a far grander and greater movement than any

other nationalist movement of the era. Tilak and the Nationalists, Gandhi and the Congress, all relied upon this frame of reference, this broad outline of a new world philosophy of the right ordering of man in his political community.

Tilak was forced to do battle both with the social reformers who wished to remake India in the image of Europe, and with the spirit of orthodoxy that would not awaken, unite and take forward action for India's own renaissance. He had to teach anew the Dharma of action and the Dharma of unity, a new courage and a faith in India's cause, a willingness for self-sacrifice for that cause, and a dedication to responsibility. He had to reteach *Bande Mataram*, love of country, in order to prepare his people for the great struggle against the might of the British bureaucracy, and he had to evolve and develop a new philosophy of political order to guide and inspire his nation in that struggle.

The first prerequisite was to ask each man to look into his own heart, to find there the necessary courage and conviction for the long battle, and to prepare himself morally and spiritually so that he and his cause might be strong, and so that the struggle would bring a moral victory. As Aurobindo Ghose wrote, 'For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner *Swaraj*, before you can win back your outer empire'.¹³ By being thus prepared with inner moral strength, the great victory, which was far more than simply nationalistic self-determinism, might be forged. For this battle, as it was on the field of *Kurukshetra*, 'is a struggle to establish the kingdom of the Dharma, the empire of Truth, Right and Justice'.¹⁴ No lesser ideal could inspire; no lesser inspiration could be the source of strength.

To wage a successful battle with the bureaucracy, the techniques and tactics of battle had to be planned and executed realistically under capable leadership. This the Nationalist leaders set about to do, always emphasizing the need for complete realism in appraising their own and their adversaries' strength. They won over the Congress to lead the struggle, armed with a programme of boycott, swadeshi and national education. Through their teaching and by the example of their willing self-sacrifice to the cause, they won over the great masses of the people in the name of unity and common endeavour. They instilled a spirit of action, and guided the use of that action into non-violent channels of popular civil disobedience. They awoke the nation to its destiny, and India's destiny was Swaraj.

In the classical Indian philosophy of politics, in the frame of reference of Tilak and the Nationalists, in the new political philosophy of the independence movement, Swaraj was an absolute necessity and an absolute goal. Swaraj stood for Tilak's 'revolution in the theory of government'. Swaraj was a moral imperative. There could be no such thing as partial Swaraj. Without full Swaraj the state could not fulfil its necessary functions; without full Swaraj there could be neither peace nor justice nor liberty. Tilak cried out to the nation, as the voice of the new spirit of India, 'Our lives and our *Dharma* are in vain in the absence of Swarajya'.¹⁵ And he nowhere more clearly stated the meaning of Swaraj than when he wrote, 'Liberty is an adjunct of the soul. Where there is liberty there is soul. It is an eternal doctrine and it is not afraid of anyone. Political philosophy must end in this very doctrine'.¹⁶ This is why Swaraj was a moral imperative. Truly, political philosophy must end in this very doctrine.

The Vision of Free India

Beyond the attainment of Swaraj, which was always their goal, the Nationalists saw a higher vision of free India. These were men of foresight. They sought to visualize an emerging India, self-respecting and free, an India leading the world to an even higher destiny. This is why Tilak repeatedly said, 'Swaraj is the foundation and not the heights of our future prosperity'.¹⁷ Free India would fulfil its destiny because they created that foundation.

In the economic sphere, with complete freedom to control trade and manufactures, India could build her own industries and create her own economic life. Western science and technology, industrialization and modernization were all to be studied and applied to the material advancement of India. The nation was great and potentially rich, needing only development by her own people for her own benefit. The boycott of foreign goods, the development of Indian manufactures under the impetus of swadeshi, were the first steps in the economic reawakening of India. The welfare of the peasant and the worker, the merchant and the professional man was all bound together in the welfare of the nation, and national welfare could not be based on class warfare but on the Indian ideal of community cooperation. The spirit of independence, unity and self-help, which were cardinal to the programme of the Nationalists, would lead to the regeneration of India.

In the field of social reform, Tilak urged the removal of all the disabilities that had grown up in the social order during more than a thousand years of warfare and alien rule. Tilak never opposed social reform; he battled against the Westernized social reformers but not against the need for reform. Tilak's plan for reform involved

three necessary steps: popular education for the need for reform so that reform would come from the people and would therefore be moral and democratic; basing the reforms on the Indian civilization's own ideals of cooperative social organization, not on merely the imitated pattern of social organization of some alien culture; and concentration on the political goal for Swaraj was the basis of all meaningful reform, whether social, economic, educational or political. With the attainment of Swaraj the necessary steps for social reform might be taken, supported by education and popular consent, based on the classical values and the ideals of India's own way of life. Tilak was a realist. Meaningful and effective reform was dependent upon self-rule.

Tilak, Ghose, Rai and Pal were all educators. They knew, perhaps better than any other members of their generation, the value of education and the need for the spread of education throughout the land. Education, moreover, must not be confined to the schoolroom, but should be the everyday task of all the people, should be led by the free press of India, and supported and encouraged by all those who had received the benefits of education. They foresaw that national education was needed, the kind of education that would take the best from both the West and from India's own past and re-synthesize these into the intellectual tools for the growth of the people and the nation. After Swaraj, when India could develop her own system of education, the renaissance of India could be brought to its fulfilment.

Tilak and the Nationalists had a vision of India moving forward under the banner of freedom, prepared to meet all the challenges of national life, both internal and external, building a new nation because the people were willing to stand united in all their actions. Spiritual

unity is the fundamental unity of India. In planning the details of his political programme Tilak presented the country with his plan for the constructive programme of the Congress, and his proposals are valid for free India. Many of his proposals have been or are in the process of being carried out. The Nationalist leaders were first and foremost realists, they knew that it was more important to prepare the nation for self-rule, to equip the people with the ability to rule themselves, than to set forth doctrine as to the details of the ordering of the political community. They were convinced that, if in their legacy to free India they provided the nation with the broad outlines of a philosophy of political order, then the people could rely upon that philosophy to guide them in applying it to the specific needs, the detailed legislation, the day-to-day administration of the free state of India. This is why the greatest legacy of the Lokamanya is the political philosophy that he and the Nationalists developed in the course of the long struggle for Swaraj and left as the guide and the inspiration to free India.

Their philosophy of the right order of the political community was a part of the total theory of the right order of man and the universe. Their political philosophy was integrally a part of the philosophy of life of India. As Aurobindo Ghose foresaw the future of his nation,

‘The right order of human life as of the universe is preserved according to the ancient Indian idea by each individual being following faithfully his *svadharma*, the true law and norm of his nature and the nature of his kind and by the group being, the organic collective life, doing likewise.’¹⁸

The duty of the individual came first, then the duty of the society and the state, and the duty of the state was to assist the individual to fulfil his duty and to attain to the moral Purpose of life. Individual well-being was the basis of social and political obligation. The *raison d'être* of the state in the political philosophy of the Nationalists was Dharma. The state existed for a spiritual end, and it was because only the free state could perform its spiritual duties that Swaraj was a moral imperative.

But this does not mean that they had a vision of India as a theocratic state. The Sanatana Dharma was not meant to be rigid, exclusive, dogmatic, but rather eternal and universal, open, tolerant and flexible. In the classical theory of the state the secular state protected and promoted all Dharmas, assisted men on all paths to the attainment of the Purpose of life. Tilak and the Nationalists agreed completely with this meaning of the purpose of the state. Tilak was emphatic on this point. 'The government of a country, where different religions are followed by the people, must render proper assistance and give concessions to the people to follow their respective religions'.¹⁹ The state must build the spirit of tolerance and of unity, must rest upon the common need of all men for the attainment of the common goal. This was a dominant theme in all the Nationalist leaders' statements, and Sister Nivedita beautifully expressed it in writing, '... side by side must work brothers of all shades of opinion, of all forms of energy, for the recreating of the Dharma, for the building anew, in the modern world, of *Maha-Bharata*, Heroic India'.²⁰

Redemption or salvation or liberation or realization or Moksha is the birthright of every Karma-bound soul. Not only must the state never deny this ultimate right,

its very reason for existence is to assist man in this fulfilment. This is why free India was the glorious goal for which so many fought and sacrificed and died. Shortly after his release from prison in the Alipore bomb case, Aurobindo Ghose reminded his nation that 'it is for the Dharma and by the Dharma that India exists. To magnify the religion means to magnify the country'.²¹

The vision of free India was a vision of a new political order, one founded on the values of the Indian civilization. The Nationalists rejected the political philosophy of nineteenth-century Europe. There was never any question that the Nationalists might accept the political philosophy of Marxism. The totalitarian subordination of the individual and the society to the all-powerful state was completely contrary to their ideal. But more important still, the entire philosophy of life of Marxism was abhorrent to the Nationalists, as it is abhorrent to the entire spiritual basis of the Indian civilization. While world Communism was still an infant, Tilak disclaimed it and all such 'secular, materialistic religions' when he said, 'A religion which proclaims the non-existence of God and Soul cannot last long'.²² Yet while it lasts the spiritual future of men is in jeopardy, simply because that spiritual future is denied by world Communism.

There are only three great political philosophies in the world today. Free India has to choose whether or not it will be ordered by the political philosophy that led to the victory of free India, the political philosophy that is an integral part of the Sanatana Dharma. The time of reliance on expediency is fast drawing to a close. It is too impermanent and insufficient for a great nation to use as a guide to the future. The removal of an alien raj is pre-requisite to Swaraj, but Swaraj is more than simply

the transfer of power, the replacement of one bureaucracy by another. Swaraj is a philosophy of politics, based on a way of life. There is no doubt as to which course Tilak and the Nationalists would choose for free India. They made clear their vision and their hopes.

And their vision and their hopes were not restricted to India alone. These men foresaw a great destiny for their nation, a destiny which was not alone political. First they saw free India as a bastion of freedom and justice in the world, as a source of strength, material and moral, in the affairs of the world. Tilak believed that 'from the point of view of the peace of Asia and the World, it is absolutely necessary that India should be self-governed internally and made a bulwark of liberty in the East'.²³ But more than this: Tilak foresaw India's role in the world as a messenger of a world reawakening, or a world rediscovery of spiritual values. He knew and loved the philosophy of life of his civilization; he knew the Sanatana Dharma was not solely India's possession but that it belonged to the world, that it was eternal and that that which is eternal is universal; and he saw in it the answer to the prayers of mankind for guidance, for peace and for justice. Free India was to be *guru* to the world, for he believed the day would come when 'we shall see our preachers preaching the Sanatana Dharma all over the world'.²⁴

After Swaraj, free India, living in peace and advancing to meet her destiny, guided by the eternal and universal philosophy of life, would be the greatest positive force in the world. Aurobindo Ghose summarized this higher destiny of free India when he wrote,

'We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, not to theology or philosophy or

literature or science by themselves, but we include all of these in one entity which we believe to be all important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanatana dharma*, the eternal religion.²⁵

In a world of darkness, confusion and a groping for Reality, Meaning and Purpose, India's destiny is self-evident. This, too, the Nationalist leaders foresaw. This is the greatness of their vision of free India. This is the promise in which they believed. This is the legacy of the Lokamanya.

NOTES

¹ B. N. Banerjee, *New Constitution for India*, p. 66.

² Dr Karl Menninger, as quoted in *Newsweek*, 24 October 1955.

³ See among others Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, and R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.

⁴ Sir James Jeans, *Physics and Philosophy*, p. 219. See also the important work by K. P. Mukerji, *Implications of the Ideology-Concept*.

⁵ William M. McGovern, *From Luther to Hitler*, p. 645.

⁶ B. Mussolini, *Fascism*, p. 12.

⁷ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 6.

⁸ V. Lenin, *Religion*, pp. 47-8. Italics ours.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰ Waldemar Gurian, *Bolshevism, an Introduction to Soviet Communism*, p. 5.

¹¹ *Programme of the Communist International*, p. 85. The denunciation of Stalin during the Twentieth Communist Congress in 1956 did not alter this previously established world goal of world communism.

¹² *Bepin Chandra Pal, His Life and Utterances*, p. 39.

¹³ A. Ghose, *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, p. 9.

¹⁴ A. Ghose, *Essays on the Gita*, Vol. II, p. 262.

- ¹⁵ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 333.
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 333.
- ¹⁷ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 164.
- ¹⁸ A. Ghose, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 386.
- ¹⁹ *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 111.
- ²⁰ *Selected Essays of Sister Nivedita*, p. 152.
- ²¹ A. Ghose, *Speeches*, p. 64.
- ²² *Gleanings from Tilak's Writings and Speeches*, p. 112.
- ²³ Extract from Tilak's letter to the Versailles Peace Conference, 1919.
- ²⁴ *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, His Writings and Speeches*, p. 41.
- ²⁵ A. Ghose, *The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, pp. 2-3.

Biographical Notes

BANERJEA, SURENDRANATH: Born of a Brahmin family in Bengal in 1848; died in 1925. He was one of the great Moderate leaders of the Congress. He was an educator and a journalist, and for years he was the editor and guiding spirit of the famous newspaper *Bengalee*. He entered the Congress in 1886, and devoted his life to that organization until, in 1918, he was instrumental in founding the Liberal Federation. During his life he undertook four different missions to England to work on India's behalf, was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, and served as a Minister under Montagu's government. He twice held the office of President of the Congress, at the Poona session of 1895, and the Ahmedabad session of 1902. Though he was always considered a Moderate, he joined with the Nationalists on the issue of the partitioning of Bengal. His most important literary work was his political autobiography, *A Nation in Making*.

BESANT, [MRS] ANNIE: Born in England in 1847; died in 1933. She was a scholar, having been educated in England, Germany and France, and for a time worked as a journalist and took an interest in Labour politics in Great Britain. Becoming interested in the Theosophical movement, she came to India in 1893, and became a leader of the Theosophical Society, of which she was President from 1907 until her death. In India, she worked for social reform, for education and especially for the reawakening of India to its great cultural heritage. In 1913, she first entered Indian politics and immediately began to work for unity between Muslims and Hindus, Nationalists and Moderates within the Congress. She became famous for her work in the Home Rule Leagues, and at the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1917, she became the first woman to be honoured by the President's Chair. After Tilak's death, she continued her work in all spheres of activity in India, and is especially remembered in India today for the Banaras Hindu University which she helped to found. Her most important political literary work was *India Bond or Free?*

DAS, [DESHBANDHU] CHITTA RANJAN: Born in 1870 in Calcutta of a Hindu family; died in 1925. After graduating from Presidency College, Calcutta, he studied law in England, and returned to India to practise before the Calcutta High Court. He quickly became a leading Indian barrister, and entered the Congress as a delegate to the 1906 Calcutta session. In 1907-8, he won considerable fame in defending two Nationalist leaders—Bepin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghose. He continued to work for the Congress in Bengal, becoming President of the Provincial Conference in 1917, and acting as a member of the unofficial Jallianwala Bagh Inquiry Committee of 1919. As a Nationalist leader, he opposed Gandhiji's non-cooperation programme at the Calcutta special session but accepted it at Nagpur in 1920, and proceeded to lead Bengal in the movement. He was President-elect of the 1921 Ahmedabad Congress, but was at that time imprisoned. He presided at the Gaya session of 1922, and there founded the Swarajist Party. He led that party to its electoral successes and himself became the first elected mayor of Calcutta. His sudden death deprived the Swarajists of their foremost leader. Among his literary works is *India for Indians*.

GANDHI, [MAHATMA] MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND: Born in 1869 of an orthodox Vaisya Hindu family in Gujerat; assassinated in New Delhi in 1948. Little need be said about the life of Gandhiji. He studied in England, became a lawyer, and for years worked in South Africa for the uplift of minority groups. He there developed his philosophy of satyagraha; and after returning to India in 1915, he began to apply his philosophy in political action. He became the acknowledged leader of the Indian independence movement and of the Indian nation. The imprint of Gandhi and his philosophy is one of the enduring factors to emerge from the independence movement. After self-rule was established in 1947, he devoted himself to Harijan uplift, Hindu-Muslim unity and the stabilization of the new Indian Government, though he declined to hold a Government office. Perhaps his most important literary work was his autobiography—*The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.

GHOSE, AUROBINDO: Born in Calcutta in 1872 of a Westernized Hindu family; died in Pondicherry on 5 December 1950. After

receiving an education in England, he returned to India and entered the service of Baroda State as an educator. He soon became interested in the Nationalist cause, and at one time identified himself with the revolutionary wing of the independence movement. After returning to his native Bengal, he rapidly rose to a position of leadership among the Nationalists, and was editor of two fiery Nationalist newspapers—*Bande Mataram* and *Karma Yogin*. After his trial in 1910, he went to the then French settlement of Pondicherry to seek spiritual enlightenment and there spent his life becoming one of India's greatest contemporary philosopher-saints. He retained his active interest in Indian political affairs, but even though requested to return to the political struggle by his friend, C. R. Das, he remained in his ashram at Pondicherry. Perhaps his most important non-religious work was *The Foundations of Indian Culture*.

GOKHALE, GOPAL KRISHNA: Born in 1866 of a Chitpavan Brahmin family in Maharashtra; died in 1915. He was a brilliant student, graduating at 18 and becoming a professor at 20. He joined the Deccan Education Society, and while dedicating twenty years to the service of popular education, he also became a well-known journalist and writer in Poona. His political *guru* was M. G. Ranade, and through Ranade's influence he became interested in and a leader of the Maharashtrian social reform movement. His interests also led him to become active in the Congress; at 25 he was a Secretary of the Provincial Conference, and at 29 he was Secretary of the National Congress. As a Moderate leader, he entered the provincial legislature and made several trips to England to argue India's cause. He was President of the Congress session at Banaras in 1905. Though primarily interested in political reform, he also remained active in social and humanitarian causes and was a founder of the Servants of India Society. He was responsible for encouraging Gandhiji to become active in Indian political affairs.

HUME, ALLAN OCTAVIAN: Born in 1829 in England of Scottish parents; died in 1912. After studying medicine and surgery, he was posted in 1849 to the Bengal Civil Service. He served from that date until 1867 as a District Officer, for the next three years as the Commissioner of Customs and Director-General of Agriculture,

and from 1870-9 as a Secretary to the Government of India. Always devoted to the cause of the Indian people, he began to work in 1883, shortly after his retirement from the Civil Service, to form an all-India body to represent the Indian people on matters of social and political reform. At first he founded the Indian National Union, and in 1885 his desire was fulfilled with the first meeting of the new Indian National Congress, of which he has been called the father. In later life he returned to England, where he took an active interest in political affairs and continually worked on behalf of the Indian people. He was the foremost of the British friends of the new India.

MEHTA, [SIR] PHEROZESHAH: Born in Bombay, of a Parsi family, in 1845; died in Bombay in 1915. He was an excellent student, receiving both B.A. and M.A. degrees from Bombay University. He travelled to England, where he was called to the Bar, and then returned to India, where he developed both a prosperous legal practice and an active interest in the social and political reform movements. He played an active role in the Ilbert Bill agitation and was among the founders of the Indian National Congress in 1885. He was also interested in education and in writing; and being a Moderate leader, he held several Government posts. As leader of the Moderates, along with Gokhale, he was instrumental in determining Moderate policy and in planning Moderate strategy within the Congress. A forceful speaker, writer and politician, he became known as the Lion of Bombay. He served as President of the Congress at the 1890 Calcutta session. After the Congress split at Surat, he devoted his life to proving the workability of the tenets of Moderate policy, especially to perfecting the Minto-Morley reforms.

NAOROJI, DADABHAI: Born of a Parsi family in Bombay in 1825; died in 1917. After receiving a Western education, he became a teacher, journalist and a leading social reformer. In 1855, he went to England, where he spent almost twenty years working on behalf of India. While there, he earned the distinction of becoming an elected member of the British House of Commons. Returning to India, he became a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, and in 1885 was a founding member of the Indian National Congress. He presided over the second session of the Congress held in

Calcutta in 1886, was again President at the Lahore session in 1893, and served yet again at the famous Calcutta session of 1906. It was at this latter session that he advocated Swaraj as India's goal. He was by instinct a Moderate, continually believing in Indian-British collaboration, but his stature was such that he was known by all as the Grand Old Man of India, and as the first among the great leaders of the early independence movement.

NEHRU, [PANDIT] MOTILAL: Born of a Kashmiri Brahmin family in Delhi in 1861; died in 1931. The father of India's present Prime Minister was one of the foremost leaders of the independence movement. He was educated in Allahabad, and after passing his Bar examinations became one of the most prominent lawyers in the United Provinces. His active interest in politics developed after the turn of the century, and he became President of the U.P. Provincial Conference in 1907. Tending to associate himself with the Moderates, he entered the Legislative Council; but during the days of Home Rule agitation he took an active part with the Nationalists. He was President of the Congress at Amritsar in 1919, and again in 1928 at Calcutta. He actively joined Gandhiji in the non-cooperation movement, becoming President of the U.P. Congress Committee. In 1923, he joined C. R. Das in the Swarajist Party. He lived to see his son become a leader of the Congress and preside over the 1929 Lahore session.

PAL, BEPIN CHANDRA: Born of an orthodox Hindu family in Sylhet in Bengal in 1858; died in 1932. He was educated in India, and started life as an educator, librarian and journalist. In later years he travelled to England, where he studied at Oxford. He worked for a time in Bangalore and Calcutta, and became a Sanskrit scholar. After first being interested in the Brahma Samaj, he took an active part in politics and became renowned in Bengal as an orator. He had attended the 1887 session of the Congress at Madras; yet though he was an active Nationalist leader and a theoretician of the independence movement, he never held the presidential chair. As one of Bengal's foremost political spokesmen he wrote for and supported the *Bande Mataram* and was imprisoned in 1907. With Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai, he formed a member of

the triumvirate of Lal, Bal and Pal. Perhaps his most important literary work is *Nationality and Empire*.

PATEL, [SARDAR] VALLABHBHAI: Born in Karamsad in Gujerat of a Hindu family in 1875; died in 1950. He was educated in local schools and became a pleader of considerable fame. At 37, he went to England, where he studied for the Bar and returned immediately to practise law in Ahmedabad. It was not until 1916 that he took an active interest in politics and at that time joined Gandhiji. His great talents for organization, hard work and inspirational leadership were soon recognized, and he led many of the early satyagraha campaigns. He served as chairman of the Ahmedabad Municipality and gained all-India recognition in leading the Bardoli satyagraha. He presided over the Karachi session of 1931, and directed the strategy of the Congress Working Committee during the struggles of the 1930's and 1940's. After independence he became Home Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information & Broadcasting. He was largely responsible for securing the domestic stability of the new nation and for recasting the map of India by integrating the princely states. He is known as the Bismarck of India.

RAI, [LALA] LAJPAT: Born of a Hindu family in the District of Ludhiana in the Punjab in 1865; died in 1928. He studied law at the Punjab University and became interested in the Arya Samaj movement. He was interested in educational reform and helped found two colleges in the Punjab. In politics he became the Nationalist leader of the Northwest. He travelled in the United States in 1905, and again during World War I, to work on India's behalf. He returned to India to preside over the Calcutta special session of 1920. At first he opposed the non-cooperation movement but finally gave it his full support at the Nagpur session of 1920. Remaining active in the Congress, he took an interest in the Hindu Mahasabha and in 1926 became its President. His death was precipitated by a beating he received from the police while leading a political demonstration. With Tilak and Pal, he was a member of the triumvirate of Lal, Bal and Pal. His chief literary works are *Young India* and *The Political Future of India*.

RANADE, [MR JUSTICE] MAHADEV GOVIND: Born of a Chitpavan Brahmin family in the Nasik District of Maharashtra in 1842; died in 1901. He was an excellent student, receiving B.A. and M.A. degrees from Bombay University and then completing his law degree. He became a professor and in this capacity went to Poona, where he became the leader of the Prarthana Samaj and the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. He was among the foremost social reformers and was a leader in endeavouring to rely upon Western standards of social organization for the reconstruction of the Indian social order. He was also an author and historian of first rank, he was interested in economic questions, and as one of the outstanding men of his generation he became a Justice of the Bombay High Court. He actively worked in the Congress and became the political *guru* of Gokhale. In conjunction with the Congress he helped found the Social Conference to promote social as well as political reform.

TILAK, [LOKAMANYA] BAL GANGADHAR: Born in Ratnagiri District of Maharashtra of a Chitpavan Brahmin family on 23 July 1856; died in Bombay on 1 August 1920. He was educated in Poona and Bombay, receiving a degree in law. He returned to Poona, where he was a founder of the Deccan Education Society and Fergusson College. He was a teacher of mathematics, Sanskrit and law, a Sanskrit scholar of eminence and editor of two newspapers—*Kesari* and *The Mahratta*. Being a man of the highest integrity and fearlessness, he challenged the Westernizing social reformers as well as the spirit of inert orthodoxy. In seeking to awaken the people of India, he became the Lion of Maharashtra and the leader of the Nationalists. He challenged the Moderates for control of the Congress and the might of the British Empire with his famous cry, ‘Swaraj is my birthright’. He was the chief architect of the political philosophy of the Indian independence movement, and he was one of the most important leaders of India in many centuries.

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