
UNIT 16 WORLD ORDER

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16.1 INTRODUCTION

The approach of Gandhi to peaceful world order represents the flexible adjustment of his idealism to the demands of nationalism. Gandhi said that the world should be organised to maintain a just peace. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent states. Gandhi believed in a federation of friendly inter-dependent states. Gandhi said that ‘the consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence.’ If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself. Non-violence is the means; the end for every nation is complete

independence. Gandhi worked within the nation-state framework. Not only he struggled for one's nation's independence, his own future vision of the world was one of a system of sovereign nation-states. Immersed in the colonial period, it was quite historically sensible to struggle for the independence of his country and also to have a view that if all nations enjoy political freedom, then there could be a peaceful world.

Aims and Objectives

After reading this Unit, you would be able to understand

- Gandhi's concept of world order
- The role of non-violence as a prerequisite for total development
- The role of satyagraha in the nuclear age

16.2 REQUISITES FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD ORDER

At the time of the United Nations creation, Gandhi specifically told to end colonialism and war, to impose generous peace treaties, to create a world police force, and to establish economic justice and a world federation. Gandhi thought that the first condition of peace is trust in an active, interposing deity, a pre-requisite for the peaceful world, which the Western countries had failed to realise.

16.2.1 Justice and Duty

Within Gandhi's belief in the higher law of dharma, applicable to all states, as well as to men, there are ideas of justice and order comparable to those of the natural law tradition which does so much to encourage positive international law. Man's moral responsibility is Gandhi's avenue for enforcing the higher code in the world, especially since he drew no distinction between inter-personal and inter-state duty. 'I learnt from my illiterate but wise mother', Gandhi said, 'that all right to be deserved and pre-reserved came from duty well done.' Thus, the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world.

16.2.2 Rule of Law

The Rule of law system guarantees that officials cannot act arbitrarily disregarding the laws consented to by the people. The officials in the ideal democracy are accountable to the sovereign public by answering citizen's questions, replying to their mail, following their laws and courts and not resorting to violence, or doing anything that undermines people's liberty, equality, and justice. Unfortunately many democracies allow their military/police forces and secret service to use coercion and force against the public. According to Gandhi, the military should be turned into a peace force (Shanti Sena), policemen should act as social workers, jailors should function like doctors and educators, and jails should be turned into hospitals and schools. Only then can the peace-keeping forces in society become really accountable to the people. By denying any role to violence, Gandhi contributed to enhancing the process of peaceful accountability of the government to the people.

16.2.3 Pluralism and Toleration

Gandhi said that pluralism and toleration are the two sides of the same coin. Commitment to pluralism-toleration is a commitment to rationalism and non-violence. Blind faiths, irrational beliefs, and monistic truths have the tendency to inhibit and discourage rational thinking, to

ban and penalise examination, to disregard or falsify factual evidence, and to banish or punish public discussion.

16.2.4 Democratic World Order

Gandhi believed that a genuine democracy must have a foreign policy that extends to other countries the democratic principles that are cherished and practised at home, even while working to build democracy on the national stage. Builders of democracy may act locally, but they must think globally. Gandhi rejects use of violence against any injustice by denouncing Marxist, fascist and militant nationalist appeals to violence for ending economic injustice.

16.3 A PEACEFUL SOCIAL ORDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Gandhi said that promoting individual activities that contribute to social peace like creating conditions for mutual tolerance of differing ways of thinking and living in a social order is the cornerstone of a peaceful and prosperous society. The spread of health and education is essential for the generation of such a social environment. The mobilisation of individual disposition to be tolerant towards each other and show their good will for the social good thus constitutes a very important element in preserving peace. Closely connected with the above-mentioned trend of the modern state with enlarged conception of peace is the commitment to human rights. Human Rights guarantee the citizens not only protection from the excesses of the state and society but also positive entitlements and facilities for individual growth.

Truth and Non-violence

Gandhi was a pacifist. He found that justice rests with one party to a conflict. Gandhi's pacifism is consistent with his system of belief in which dynamic non-violence is his dialectical method to find the ultimate truth without being the end itself. Gandhi believed that ultimate peace is in a divine plan which has not been fully revealed to men, they have an obligation to apply what they know in order to establish temporal peace.

Peace without War

Nations in East and West had been accustomed to settle their differences by war. Gandhi told India and the rest of the world that one could match one's soul-force against physical force and wear the other down with goodwill. All evil comes from ignorance and all good from faith in equality, the underlying sameness and oneness of things. War consists not in battle only in the act of fighting, but in the will to fight, the attitude of hostility. The so-called peace treaties do not make peace unless they are backed by honest intentions. Violence, as a means to achieve ends, is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because the descending spiral ending is a distraction for all.

Religious Tolerance

Gandhi believed that the essential unity of all religions has been universality of love. It is implied that there is no place for hatred between people professing different faiths. The ultimate aim of all religions is moral order. It aims at peace and tranquility in society. It attempts to uphold human values. Gandhi hoped that the individual being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for province, the province for the nation, and the nation for all.

Solutions to Shortcomings of Democracy

Gandhi offers a two-pronged solution to the shortcomings of modern democracy. At one level, Gandhi emphasises consensus, instead of majority, that is, mere numbers and counting of heads should not guide democracy. At another level, arriving at peaceful persuasion and conversion through rational-humanistic arguments and compromises are the best guarantees of genuine democracy. Besides, Gandhi places a special responsibility on the majority to act as the big brother/sister to win over the minority, the little brother/sister. At yet another level, Gandhi focuses on responsibilities rather than rights. If every citizen is conscious and willing to fulfill his obligations towards others in the society and the world, then the rights of everyone are automatically protected in a meaningful way. The sense of obligation transforms the mental framework from ego and selfishness to one of thoughtfulness, selflessness, and service. The latter qualities humanise democracy and harmonise relations between majority, minority, and the individuals. If people are sovereign and if people select/elect the officials, then these officials should be accountable to the people. If the laws are made by the elected legislatures, then these legislators should be answerable to the electorate for the kind of laws they make. Elections, plebiscites, referenda, parliamentary questions, legislative votes of non-confidence, and press interviews are the means of enforcing parliamentary accountability; terrorism, coup d'état, or civil war cannot be the methods of enforcing such accountability.

League of Fully Independent States

Gandhi believed that there will be an international league only when all the nations, big or small, composing it is fully independent. The nature of that independence will correspond to the extent of non-violence assimilated by the nations concerned. He said that one thing is certain that in a society based on non-violence, the smallest nation will feel as tall as the tallest. Gandhi's 'league' of 'fully independent' states suggests less cohesion and more attention to sovereign equality than the 'federation of friendly interdependent states'.

Universal Membership for All Nations

Gandhi saw a universal membership in any new world organisation. It should not limit to those states that are in the British Commonwealth or those who were victorious in World War II. Gandhi said that the organisation should be an effective force to keep the peace, and recommended that it adopt Satyagraha.

16.4 WAR: THE UNSOLVED PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The major unsolved problem of international relations, Gandhi maintained, is war, that is to say, inter-state aggression. He opposed aggression whether or not it directly uses military force, receives legal recognition from the parties concerned or the international community. His ideas suggest, moreover, that he was not satisfied about men's periodic efforts to analyse the nature and causes of war and to undertake its prevention. Consistently Gandhi believed that the actual process of war is unrighteous because it contradicts ahimsa and the higher law of dharma. Violent revolution of the alienated peasantry was the main reason for the rise of dictatorships in many countries, including Czarist Russia, Nationalist China, feudalist France and Germany, and French-colonial Indochina, Dutch-colonial Indonesia, Spanish-colonial Mexico, Portuguese colonial Angola and Mozambique, and so on. 'The children of violence will commit suicide and perish unless they turn away from violence', he observed in a discussion on war. However, his views differ on whether belligerents can be

just and whether something of value is ever produced from the evil process of war. Some of the diversities on these points are resolved by the tendency of his pacifism to admit limitations, in particular that truth, not peace, is the ultimate good. The demands of his nationalism upon his idealism account for other inconsistencies. For these reasons his opinions about the character of war sometimes differ from those of Western pacifists who hold that in every respect war is the absence of justice.

16.4.1 Causes of War

Gandhi named Western imperialism and fascism as causes of war. He also cited communism as a threat to world peace. His criticism of the three ideologies is qualified by an ability to forgive opponents and his faith in their reformation. Behind these political forces he saw man's economic greed and recourse to violence as deeper sources of aggression. As remedies he called for economic justice, sovereign equality and peaceful co-operation among states as requisites for international harmony. The first solution received support from his economic grievances against Western colonialism and his own philosophy of non-materialism. His insistence upon the equality of all states as a precondition to peace gained strength from his backing of the self-determination of most people, though not Indian Moslems and Zionists. For many reasons he was an advocate of interstate fellowship and good will. The more important of these are his belief in the religious law which imposes a moral obligation on states as well as individuals; his desire to settle disputes at the level of the parties concerned; and his assent to the idea of 'one world' provided that it incorporates his 'truth' and his 'non-violence'.

16.4.2 Disarmament and the World

Gandhi held that disarmament can and should be introduced by one or several states. He doubted that a great power would actually introduce universal disarmament, and he put his faith in India to show the way toward that goal. Still he hoped for some armed state, an apostolate of one, to be a witness for the truth of non-violence and to dare to disarm itself, whatever the risks, and thereby to serve the world.

16.4.3 Industrial Colonial Technological Military Authoritarian Complex

Gandhi believed that colonialism, militarism and wars are the unavoidable essentials of high industrialisation. Further, large scale industrialisation is inconceivable without dehumanised science and technology. The modern industrialised militarised colonial state is impossible without authoritarian big government. Gandhi said that, 'I, therefore, define the highly developed modern state as 'the industrial colonial technological military authoritarian complex.' All the five elements are common to all industrial states irrespective of the ideologies they profess. Ironically enough, every one of them claims to be a democracy – the capitalist democracy, the socialist democracy, the proletarian democracy, the people's democracy, racist/theocratic democracy, and so on. But, every one of them has reduced and harmed the fundamentals of the ideal democracy, both at home and abroad.

16.5 NON-VIOLENCE: PREREQUISITE FOR TOTAL DEVELOPMENT

Gandhi has presented non-violence in a new form and shape before the world. The form of his non-violence is no escape or exile but resistance. He marched forward using non-violence as the best weapon to encounter immorality for morality, inhumanity for humanity

and injustice for justice. His objective was to create a society based on the principle of non-violence, where alone man's freedom would be safe and mankind would be free from repression and tyranny, whereby peaceful social life is ensured. Gandhi wanted non-violence as the spirit of life and to fuse it in all social relations- familial, political, economic and educational. In his view, a person who is non-violent at home, with neighbours or in society but has no sympathy and respect towards others is not truly non-violent. It is with the quality of non-violence that we love those who hate us, not merely loving those who love us. Man as animal is violent but his humaneness is non-violent. The philosophy of Gandhian non-violence is a pre-requisite for the total development, including the personality, of a man. The application of non-violence is also relevant both in private and public spheres of life. In the economic field it means a decentralised village economy, in the political field it means a federation of autonomous village republics and in the international field it means avoidance of the use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

16.5.1 Use of Arms for Justice

As a substitute for national defense forces, he first had critical ideas but eventually expressed affirmative views about an international police agency using weapons to maintain peace and repel aggression. Significantly, late in life he approved its use under unbiased auspices of armed justice in an imperfect world.

16.5.2 No Place for Imperialism

To Gandhi, 'imperialism' meant the overseas control of non-Western areas and people by Western powers. Gandhi considered the violence of Mussolini and Hitler, like all violence, as a transitory phenomenon corrected by non-violent resistance. Gandhi's faith in satyagraha influenced his understanding of Nazism; thus he advised Jews in Germany to use non-violent, direct action against Nazi persecutions in place of the passive resistance which he said they were employing. It is believed that German Jews might have attracted world attention sooner than they did had they been trained in and used Gandhi's satyagraha. Gandhi added that the Nazi empire would fall because it had over expanded and was based on the erroneous ideology of 'ruthless force reduced to an exact science and worked with scientific precision.' The sins of imperialism do not remain confined to foreign lands. They come home to roost when the imperialist soldiers, clergymen, businessmen, bureaucrats, and politicians came home. Brutalised by the very cruelties they inflicted on the weak, the poor and the dehumanised peoples of the colonies, the imperialist brought the wages of sin. Murder, rape, child molestation, drug addiction, imprisonments, political corruption, unscrupulous business practices, racism, bigotry, resource mismanagement, environment degradation, militarism – all practised abroad and all antithetical to democracy – flourish within the imperialist states.

16.5.3 Cruelties of Colonialism

The cruelties of colonialism – military subjugation, economic exploitation, cultural suppression, and political oppression, carried on over hundreds of years – have so poisoned and brutalised two thirds of the world that all hopes and attempts at creating democracy have been dashed to the ground with the rise of fascist, or communist, or militarist regimes in almost all the countries of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

16.5.4 Economic Inequalities and Trusteeship

Gandhi proposes nonviolent moral appeals against feudalism and capitalism. The Gandhian doctrine of Trusteeship is built on the idea that capitalists must be convinced and converted to accepting that they should act, not as the sole and private owners of wealth, but as the

trustees of the people, managing wealth on behalf of the people for the benefit of all. Gandhism prefers cooperative enterprises over private and competitive capitalism.

16.5.5 Globalisation from Below

To create a culture of peace we need “globalisation from below” with a solid recognition that this globalisation is only possible with active participation of all men, women, youth and children from all countries. Peace is not created out of diplomatic activity. It is created out of the everyday skills of peaceful problem solving and conflict resolution in families, neighbourhoods and among different social, cultural, religious and ethnic groups within and between societies.

16.6 ROLE OF SATYAGRAHA IN NUCLEAR AGE

Citizen apathy, the relative uselessness of traditional home guards and militia, the need to build cores of resistance to invaders who cannot possibly be stopped at the border or who invade everywhere by air, these and other critical problems face Western defence officials of atomic and non-atomic powers alike. Gandhi's satyagraha may offer assistance to civil defence in a nuclear age.

16.6.1 Say No to Atom Bombs

Gandhi believed that the atomic bomb has vanished the finest feeling that has sustained mankind for ages. The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms but it resulted for the time being in destroying the soul of Japan. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is yet too early to see. Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner. Gandhi's abhorrence of an atomic war intensified his faith in non-violence. There have been cataclysmic changes in the world. Gandhi asked “do I still adhere to my faith of truth and non-violence? Has not the atomic bomb exploded that faith? Not only has it not done so, but it has clearly demonstrated to me that the twins constitute the mightiest force in the world. Before it, the atom bomb is of no effect. The two opposing forces are wholly different in kind, the one normal and spiritual, the other physical and material.” From Gandhi's viewpoint, states using nuclear weapons can never be ‘just’ and nothing of value results from an atomic war.

16.6.2 World must take Lessons from Indian Culture of Democracy

Gandhian revolution was based on humanism, secularism, and pluralism; the revolution used the methods of rationalism, love and nonviolence, and the instruments of satyagraha; and the revolution involved satyagrahis who vowed not to be prejudiced, not to lift the sword, but to love their enemies, to seek reasonable and peaceful solutions to all conflicts. These values and culture, the methods and instruments, and the attitudes and behaviour continue in independent India. Among more than one hundred countries that struggled for attaining independence after World War II, India is the one country that has developed and sustained democracy, without disintegration, long suspended or abolished legislatures and courts, and banned political parties, and with popular election, and the mass media. The legacies of the non-violent revolution in India have been the following: the establishment of the massive, full-fledged and dynamic democracy, the nonviolent abolition of the world's largest democracy, the non-violent abolition of the largest feudal system through legislation and Bhoodan (land gift movement); the peaceful ending of the long-lasting and well-entrenched “untouchability” of millions; the constitutional integration of some 700 princely states through peaceful diplomacy; the enunciation of the foreign policy of non-alignment and peaceful coexistence that has greatly influenced communist countries; and the successes of the anti-racial movements in the United States and South Africa.

16.7 RESTRUCTURING KNOWLEDGE

The core of Gandhi's proposal for a knowledgeable society was the introduction of productive handicrafts in the school curriculum. The idea was not simply to introduce handicrafts as a compulsory school subject, but to make the learning of a craft the axis of the entire teaching programme. It implied a radical restructuring of the sociology of school knowledge in the society, where productive handicrafts had been associated with the groups.

16.7.1 Protection of Natural Environment

Gandhi said that the state has also the obligation not only to persuade the citizens to act to promote social good but also to undertake positive functions, such as promotion of environmental protection for social health and peace through an ecologically safeguarded environment. In broader sense, peace would include social harmony which involves natural resources. Gandhi believed that natural resources are the primary sources for valuable and useful commodities. They are mainly raw materials and energy resources present in the environment, for example, minerals, forest, animals, water, soil etc. The youth should ensure its proper utilisation and conservation. This would imply rational use of resources and their preservation from reckless exploitation and destruction. He further advocated effective control and management of resources in such a way that they will be useful to man for longer time.

16.7.2 Environment Friendly Industrialisation

The enjoyer of the natural resources by way of limiting the wants or demand should be responsible for his or her fellowmen. This is the simple philosophy with which Gandhi looked at the economic development. He noted with concern that a man should be 'environmental friendly'. If he does not, the environment will create all problems. Toynbee noted once that "if we don't abolish war, war is going to abolish US". Similarly if the industrialisation is not checked up it will spoil the entire life setting very badly which will therefore lead us all to the death knell. It is better to note here the Gandhian quotation on industrialisation. It reads: "My own view is that evils are inherent in industrialization and no amount of socialism can eradicate them." Gandhi was clear in his advocacy that the mechanical or Machine or industrial or artificial life would create problems which would lead the humankind to the point of no return. However, it should be noted here that Gandhi never hated industrial development. But he hated the inhuman face of industrial planning which causes the replacement of human labour with machine.

16.7.3 Solidarity and Stability

Democratic rights and obligations are not a 'one-time' or 'one in a way' provision. Only when liberty, quality, and justice last long do they become effective principles for improving human life in democratic societies. That is, only a stable system without economic inequality, cultural crises, political disunity, and territorial disintegration can enshrine and nurture democracy. Assassinations and assaults, subversion and terrorism, coups and countercoups, and insurrections and revolutions cannot create stability. Violence is the most destabilising force in any society, much more so in a democracy. But autocratic regimes and dictatorial institutions need and thrive on disunity, disintegration, unrest, and militarisation. The best way to achieve and maintain political stability is through people's solidarity or sense of unity. Solidarity has been variously described – fellowship, fraternity, friendship, and love. Political solidarity can be built upon the premises of equality, liberty, socio-economic justice,

psychological satisfaction, and humanism. Stability and solidarity with the society cannot last long in a world being torn apart with instabilities and disunity. Sooner or later, outside forces of disruption, inhumanity, and violence penetrate national boundaries disturbing national stability and solidarity.

16.8 SUMMARY

According to Gandhian principles of equality and liberty, all citizens are capable of thinking and are free to act. Such pluralism is bound to generate conflict situations that have the potential to generate violence. While autocratic regimes thrive on violent clashes, democracy disallows or discourages violent methods of conflict resolution. Legislative reforms, executive intervention, judicial adjudication, and appeal to public opinion are the usual constitutional processes of settling disputes in a democracy. Gandhi's world order was based on mutual interdependence of the nations, adopting non-violence as a tool of establishing a just society, universal solidarity and stability, firm resistance to the forces of imperialism and colonialism, economic justice and a society free from exploitation, and abandoning the developing of nuclear weapons. Gandhi's 'Satyagraha' and his twin principles of truth and non-violence play a much more effective role today for they contribute to establishing a peaceful world order as per his vision.

16.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the views of Gandhi on the world order.
2. What are the requisites for a peaceful world order?
3. Describe the role of pluralism and tolerance in the democratic world order.
4. Examine the Gandhian solutions to shortcomings of democracy.
5. Critically examine Gandhi's views on war.
6. Describe the importance of satyagraha in the nuclear age.

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(Compiled by **Ms.Raunak Ahmad**, Research and Teaching Assistant, School of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi)