

# Evaluation of Nehru's Contribution As Builder of Modern India

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**ABSTRACT:** Jawaharlal Nehru (14 November 1889 – 27 May 1964) was an Indian anti-colonial nationalist, secular humanist, social democrat,<sup>[2]</sup> and author who was a central figure in India during the middle third of the 20th century. Nehru was a principal leader of the Indian nationalist movement in the 1930s and 1940s. Upon India's independence in 1947, he became the first prime minister of India, serving for 16 years. Nehru promoted parliamentary democracy, secularism, and science and technology during the 1950s, powerfully influencing India's arc as a modern nation. In international affairs, he steered India clear of the two blocs of the Cold War. A well-regarded author, his books written in prison, such as *Letters from a Father to His Daughter* (1929), *Glimpses of World History* (1934), *An Autobiography* (1936), and *The Discovery of India* (1946), have been read around the world. The honorific Pandit has been commonly applied before his name.

The son of Motilal Nehru, a prominent lawyer and Indian nationalist, Jawaharlal Nehru was educated in England—at Harrow School and Trinity College, Cambridge, and trained in the law at the Inner Temple. He became a barrister, returned to India, enrolled at the Allahabad High Court and gradually began to take an interest in national politics, which eventually became a full-time occupation. He joined the Indian National Congress, rose to become the leader of a progressive faction during the 1920s, and eventually of the Congress, receiving the support of Mahatma Gandhi who was to designate Nehru as his political heir. As Congress president in 1929, Nehru called for complete independence from the British Raj. Nehru and the Congress dominated Indian politics during the 1930s. Nehru promoted the idea of the secular nation-state in the 1937 Indian provincial elections, allowing the Congress to sweep the elections, and form governments in several provinces. In September 1939, the Congress ministries resigned to protest Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's decision to join the war without consulting them. After the All India Congress Committee's Quit India Resolution of 8 August 1942, senior Congress leaders were imprisoned and for a time the organisation was suppressed. Nehru, who had reluctantly heeded Gandhi's call for immediate independence, and had desired instead to support the Allied war effort during World War II, came out of a lengthy prison term to a much-altered political landscape. The Muslim League, under Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had come to dominate Muslim politics in the interim. In the 1946 provincial elections, Congress won the elections, but the League won all the seats reserved for Muslims, which the British interpreted to be a clear mandate for Pakistan in some form. Nehru became the interim prime minister of India in September 1946, with the League joining his government with some hesitancy in October 1946.

**KEYWORDS:** Jawahar Lal Nehru, Nationalist, Secularism, Congress, Gandhi, Prime Minister, India

## I. INTRODUCTION

Upon India's independence on 15 August 1947, Nehru gave a critically acclaimed speech, "Tryst with Destiny"; he was sworn in as the Dominion of India's prime minister and raised the Indian flag at the Red Fort in Delhi. On 26 January 1950, when India became a republic within the Commonwealth of Nations, Nehru became the Republic of India's first prime minister. He embarked on an ambitious program of economic, social, and political reforms. Nehru promoted a pluralistic multi-party democracy. In foreign affairs, he played a leading role in establishing the Non-Aligned Movement, a group of nations that did not seek membership in the two main ideological blocs of the Cold War.

Under Nehru's leadership, the Congress emerged as a catch-all party, dominating national and state-level politics and winning elections in 1951, 1957 and 1962. He died as a result of a stroke on 27 May 1964. His birthday is celebrated as Children's Day in India. Nehru is often hailed as the 'architect of modern India'.<sup>[3]</sup>

Early life and career (1889–1912)

## International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering, Technology & Management (IJMRSETM)

[A Monthly, Peer Reviewed Online Journal] Impact Factor: 7.580 |

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Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016

### Birth and family background

Jawaharlal Nehru was born on 14 November 1889 in Allahabad, British India. His father, Motilal Nehru, a self-made wealthy barrister of Kashmiri Pandit origin, served twice as president of the Indian National Congress, in 1919-20 and 1928-29.<sup>[4]</sup> His mother, Swarup Rani Thussu, came from a Kashmiri Pandit family settled in Lahore.<sup>[5]</sup> Jawaharlal was the eldest of three children.<sup>[6]</sup> The elder of his two sisters, Vijaya Lakshmi, held political office and became president of the United Nations General Assembly.<sup>[7]</sup> His youngest sister, Krishna Hutheesing, became a noted writer and biographer.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

### Childhood

Nehru grew up in privilege at wealthy homes, including a palatial estate called the Anand Bhavan.<sup>[10]</sup> His father, a leading socialite, enjoyed a luxurious and Westernised lifestyle, which the younger Nehru was encouraged to adopt.<sup>[10][11]</sup> Nehru later described his childhood as "sheltered and uneventful".<sup>[12]</sup> His father had him educated at home by English governesses and private tutors.<sup>[10][13]</sup> Influenced by Irish-French theosophist Ferdinand T. Brooks, Nehru became interested in science, literature, and theosophy.<sup>[14][15]</sup> A family friend, Annie Besant, who had initially recommended Brooks, initiated Nehru into the Theosophical Society when he was thirteen.<sup>[10]</sup> However, he lost interest in theosophy after Brooks departed, and left the society.<sup>[16]</sup> Nehru's theosophical interests included the study of Buddhist and Hindu scriptures.<sup>[17]</sup> He had a Sanskrit tutor, Ganganath Jha, who later became a leading authority on Indian philosophy.<sup>[10]</sup>

Nehru's first language was English, which his father cultivated deliberately as the "language of power" in British India.<sup>[11][18]</sup> At the Anand Bhavan, the neighbours were mostly the families of senior British officials.<sup>[10]</sup> His main contacts with Indian culture came through the household's Indian staff, as well as the women of the family, who were not expected to adopt Western values.<sup>[11]</sup> The Hindustani spoken in Allahabad was his second language.<sup>[18][19]</sup> He remained more proficient in colloquial Hindustani than Modern Standard Hindi.<sup>[18][19]</sup>

Nehru would write in his autobiography about his ambivalent childhood feelings towards British rule.<sup>[20]</sup> He heard his older cousins discuss politics, and resented the discrimination faced by Indians. He recalled sympathising with the Boer republics in their war against the British Empire from 1899 to 1902.<sup>[21]</sup> At the same time, Nehru admired English culture and had positive relations with British figures in his childhood.<sup>[20]</sup> His father was more an observer than a participant in politics at this stage, but sympathised most with the Early Nationalists, who advocated constitutional reform in cooperation with the government.<sup>[22]</sup> His father wanted Nehru to succeed in a British ruled India, and made plans to send him to England for further education.<sup>[23]</sup>

### Youth

Nehru and his family left for England in May 1905 to seek his admission at Harrow, a boarding school in London.<sup>[24]</sup> He was left in London to learn Latin and prepare for the entrance examinations. He began attending in the fall, and wrote to his father that "Harrow agrees with me quite well".<sup>[25]</sup> He was nicknamed "Joe", and did well academically and socially.<sup>[14][26]</sup> His headmaster wrote to his father in March 1906 that Nehru was "...doing remarkably well in every way, being again head of his form, and winning golden opinions from his masters for his industry and ability".<sup>[14]</sup> A school report from October 1906 states: "...Progress good — has brains".<sup>[14]</sup> Nehru's younger contemporary, Harold Alexander, remembered him as an "average popular boy".<sup>[24]</sup> Nehru was a member of the Harrow School Corps, and excelled in cadet activities like shooting and riding.<sup>[27]</sup> He played cricket and football, but he did not have a particular talent for them. His father lamented that his son was "backwards in games".<sup>[26]</sup> Nehru left Harrow for Cambridge in 1907. His housemaster later offered the assessment of Nehru as a "very nice boy, quiet and very refined".<sup>[27]</sup>

Nehru kept himself aware of political developments back home. In late 1905, Lord Curzon had partitioned Bengal on religious lines. Nationalists viewed it as a ploy to divide them, and the partition encouraged the Swadeshi movement.<sup>[24]</sup> Nehru asked his father to mail him Indian newspapers.<sup>[28]</sup> He was indignant reading the press coverage in Britain, and criticised his father's moderate, sometimes apolitical, stance on events.<sup>[29]</sup> Nehru later wrote that he was drawn to nationalist and anti-colonial ideas at Harrow.<sup>[30][31]</sup> He arrived during the Russo-Japanese War, and Japan's victory led to his hopes for "Indian and Asiatic freedom" from European imperial powers.<sup>[21][31]</sup> He was also inspired by Giuseppe Garibaldi after receiving the biography by G. M. Trevelyan as an academic prize.<sup>[32]</sup>

### Graduation

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Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016

Nehru went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in October 1907 and graduated with an honours degree in natural science in 1910.<sup>[33]</sup> At Cambridge, he read widely on politics, economics, history and literature. He traced the beginning of his interest in socialism at Cambridge to the Fabian Society.<sup>[34]</sup> In 1910, Nehru moved to London and started studying law at the Inner Temple Inn. He was called to the Bar in 1912.<sup>[34]</sup>

### Advocate practice

After returning to India in August 1912, Nehru enrolled as an advocate of the Allahabad High Court and practised in his father's chambers.<sup>[35]</sup> However, he did not enjoy the practice of law and found the work intellectually unsatisfying.<sup>[35]</sup> Nationalist politics replaced his legal practice after 1920. He would not work as a barrister again until the INA trials in 1945-46.<sup>[36]</sup>

### Nationalist movement (1912–1939)

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#### Congress and civil rights: 1912–1913

Nehru developed an interest in Indian politics during his time in Britain.<sup>[37]</sup> In December 1912, he attended the annual session of the Congress at Patna.<sup>[38]</sup> The Congress was then a party of moderates and elites, and Nehru described the meeting as "very much an English-knowing upper-class affair".<sup>[39]</sup> He doubted the effectiveness of the Congress, but agreed to collect funds for the Indian civil rights movement led by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa.<sup>[38][40]</sup> He later campaigned against indentured labour and discriminations faced by Indians in the British colonies.<sup>[41]</sup>

#### Moderates and radicals: 1914–1915

When World War I broke out, the Indian princely states and upper middle-class supported the British government.<sup>[42]</sup> However, educated Indians enjoyed seeing their British rulers humbled. Nehru viewed the war with mixed feelings, and sympathised most with France, whose culture he admired.<sup>[42]</sup> He volunteered for St John Ambulance and worked as a provincial secretary in Allahabad.<sup>[38]</sup> He spoke out against the censorship acts passed by the British government in India.<sup>[43]</sup>

Contemporary political discourse was dominated by moderates, such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who favoured greater representation within the British Raj.<sup>[38][40]</sup> They were opposed by radicals, such as Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who stood for self-governance. Motilal Nehru, a prominent moderate leader, acknowledged the limits of constitutionalism, but counselled his son that there was no practical alternative. However, Nehru was dissatisfied with the direction of the nationalist movement. He became involved with radicals proposing Home Rule for Indians.<sup>[44]</sup> Nehru argued against "futile politics of representation" in a system dominated by British interests.<sup>[45]</sup> He favoured non-cooperation with British authorities. He ridiculed the Indian Civil Service, and agreed with a saying that it was "neither Indian, nor civil, nor a service".<sup>[46]</sup> The influence of moderates waned after Gokhale died in 1915.<sup>[38]</sup> Radical leaders proposed action for Home Rule. However, the proposal was rejected because the moderates were reluctant.<sup>[47]</sup>

#### Home rule movement: 1916–1917

Nehru married Kamala Kaul on 8 February 1916.<sup>[48]</sup> Their only daughter, Indira, was born a year later in November 1917. In November 1924, Kamala gave birth to an infant son that did not survive.<sup>[49]</sup>

A Home Rule League was founded in September 1916 under the leadership of Annie Besant to voice a demand for self-governance, and to obtain the status of a Dominion within the British Empire as enjoyed at the time by Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Newfoundland. Tilak had already formed his own Home Rule League in April 1916.<sup>[38]</sup> Nehru joined both leagues, but worked primarily with Besant.<sup>[50]</sup> He became secretary of Besant's Home Rule League and remarked later that "[Besant] had a very powerful influence on me in my childhood ... even later when I entered political life her influence continued".<sup>[50][51]</sup>

In June 1917, the British government arrested and interned Besant. The Congress and other Indian organisations threatened to launch protests if she was not freed. Subsequently, the British government was forced to release Besant and make significant concessions after a period of intense protest.<sup>[52]</sup>

#### Meeting Gandhi: 1916–1919

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Nehru first met Gandhi during the Lucknow session of the Congress in December 1916.<sup>[50]</sup> He was drawn to Gandhi's leadership of the Champaran Satyagraha in 1917, but his father, Motilal, was reluctant to support extra-constitutional agitation. In March 1919, Motilal Nehru invited Gandhi to his home in Allahabad to discuss satyagraha politics.<sup>[53]</sup> Gandhi placated Motilal Nehru and counseled the younger Nehru to avoid direct participation. Nehru subsequently spent time as a political journalist, first writing for *The Leader*, a newspaper controlled by his father, and subsequently for *The Independent*, which his father started after losing control of *The Leader*. Nehru was briefly editor of *The Independent* before handing over to Bipin Chandra Pal.<sup>[54]</sup>

The Jallianwala Bagh killings occurred in Amritsar in April 1919 under the command of British brigadier general Michael O'Dwyer. Motilal Nehru was appointed by the Congress to head a public inquiry, and the younger Nehru was sent to Amritsar to gather information. On his return journey to Delhi by train, Nehru found himself sharing a compartment with O'Dwyer and other British officers. He wrote that "...I was greatly shocked to hear his conversation and to observe his callous manner" regarding the event.<sup>[55]</sup>

Following the killings, both Motilal and Jawaharal Nehru were radicalised, and became closely involved with Gandhi's political agitations. The family soon gave up luxury and Western dress for the khadi and austerity advocated by Gandhi.<sup>[56][57]</sup> Motilal Nehru was elected President at the annual session of the Congress held in Amritsar in December 1919.<sup>[58]</sup>

### Non-co-operation: 1920–1923

Nehru's first major national engagement came at the onset of the Non-cooperation movement in September 1920.<sup>[59]</sup> He played an influential role in directing political activities in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) and organising the peasantry. Nehru was arrested for the first time on 6 December 1921, on charges of anti-governmental activities. He was released a few months later.<sup>[60]</sup> The movement was gaining popularity, but its progress was suddenly halted as a result of the Chauri Chaura incident. On 4 February 1922, the police fired upon a group of protesters. In retaliation, the demonstrators attacked and set fire to a police station, which killed all of its occupants. In response, Gandhi halted political activities on 12 February, believing that his followers were not yet sufficiently trained in his principles of non-violent resistance. Nehru, who was still in prison when Gandhi made this decision, was disappointed, but ultimately agreed with the principle. He wrote to a colleague, "You will be glad to learn that work is flourishing. We are laying sure foundations this time... Rest assured that there will be no relaxation, no lessening in our activities and above all there will be no false compromise with Government."<sup>[61]</sup>

A few months after the movement ended, the British government arrested Gandhi. On 12 May 1922, Nehru was also again arrested by the government on charges of anti-governmental activities. He delivered the following statement:<sup>[62]</sup>

India will be free; of that there is no doubt.... Jail has indeed become a heaven for us, a holy place of pilgrimage since our saintly and beloved leader was sentenced.... I marvel at my good fortune. To serve India in the battle of freedom is honour enough. To serve her under a leader like Mahatma Gandhi is doubly fortunate. But to suffer for the dear country!! What greater good fortune could befall an Indian, unless it be death for the cause or the full realisation of our glorious dream?

Some Congress leaders and other Indian nationalists disagreed with Gandhi's decisions. These dissidents, including Motilal Nehru, contributed to the formation of the Swaraj Party by early 1923.<sup>[63]</sup> The Swaraj Party participated in the 1923 Indian general election under the Government of India Act 1919, which offered limited self-government in a system known as "dyarchy".

### Rising Congress leader: 1923–1926

Nehru's became a national figure by the end of the Non-cooperation movement.<sup>[64]</sup> He was released from jail at the end of January 1923. In May 1923, Nehru became acting General Secretary of the Congress, and was formally confirmed in office at the party's annual session held at Kakinada in December 1923.<sup>[65]</sup> He was elected President of the United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee in October 1923.<sup>[66][67]</sup> In December 1923, Nehru became the President of the Hindustani Seva Dal established under N. S. Hardikar at Kakinada. The organisation aimed to train a disciplined corps as volunteers for the Congress.<sup>[68]</sup> The Dal was initially opposed by some party leaders, who considered it a potential militia-like organisation and thus inconsistent with Gandhian ethos.<sup>[69]</sup> By 1931, the organisation was accepted by other Congress leaders. It was renamed the Seva Dal, and brought under the aegis of the Congress Working

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Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016

Committee to become the party's central volunteer organisation. Each member underwent training in various subjects, including Indian history and labour relations.<sup>[70]</sup>

Mayor of Allahabad: 1923–1925

Although the Congress avoided the main legislative bodies, the party agreed to contest municipal elections. In April 1923, Nehru was elected chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Board as a Congress member. He was selected after the party's first candidate, Purushottam Das Tandon, stood down due to opposition from the city's Muslim councillors.<sup>[71]</sup> Nehru and the committee unanimously opposed a suggestion to ban slaughter of cattle.<sup>[72]</sup> Nehru introduced Muhammad Iqbal's Sare Jahan se Accha to the school curriculum.<sup>[73]</sup> The anniversary of Tilak's death (1 August) and the day of Gandhi's sentencing (18 March) were declared public holidays while Empire Day was omitted.<sup>[72]</sup> Nehru opposed attempts by the municipality to segregate sex workers.<sup>[74]</sup> Nehru declared that they "are only one party to the transaction ... if they were obliged to live only in a remote corner of the city, I would think it is equally reasonable to reserve another part of Allahabad for the men who exploit women and because of whom prostitution flourishes".<sup>[75]</sup> During this period, he also put efforts to improve schooling, sanitation, water supply and roads.<sup>[76]</sup>

While mayor of Allahabad, Nehru visited the princely state of Nabha in September 1923. He was there to observe the popular agitation after the British authorities deposed the Sikh maharaja Ripudaman Singh.<sup>[77]</sup> Nehru was arrested and charged with illegally entering Nabha for taking part in "a criminal conspiracy". He was sentenced to two-and-a-half-years imprisonment, but this sentence was dropped. Nehru's experience in Nabha later influenced his consideration of popular movements in the princely states.<sup>[77]</sup>

Nehru became frustrated with his role as chairman of a municipal body. He resigned in January 1925 and denounced municipal politics, stating "The main interest of Government in municipal administration is that "politics" should be kept out. Any resolution of sympathy with the nationalist movement is frowned upon."<sup>[51][78]</sup>

Europe: 1926–1927

In November 1924, Nehru's wife, Kamala, gave birth to an infant son that did not survive. She soon developed symptoms of tuberculosis. Unhappy with the lack of political progress, Nehru decided to travel to Europe to seek treatment for his wife. On 1 March 1926, the couple and their daughter, Indira, departed for Switzerland. The family remained overseas for the next twenty months. They initially lived in Geneva. Nehru later moved Kamala to a sanatorium at Montana. While based in Switzerland, the family travelled across Europe. Nehru became acquainted with Indian expatriates, and corresponded with European intellectuals and politicians.<sup>[79]</sup> He wrote for the Journal de Genève, and also for the press back in India.<sup>[80]</sup>

In February 1927, Nehru was invited to Brussels to represent the Congress at the newly formed League against Imperialism (LAI). He was made an executive council member.<sup>[81][82]</sup> Increasingly, Nehru saw the struggle for independence from British imperialism as a multinational effort by the various colonies and dominions of the Empire. The LAI was dominated by socialists and communists, but also included other nationalists.<sup>[83]</sup> The meeting had been financed by the government of Mexico and the Kuomintang of China.<sup>[83]</sup> Nehru interacted closely with the Chinese delegation and drafted a joint declaration that stressed a common cause against the British Empire.<sup>[84]</sup>

Nehru accepted an invitation to visit Moscow on the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution.<sup>[85]</sup> He was impressed by its economic and social developments.<sup>[85]</sup> He wrote articles on the Soviet Union in Indian papers, which were compiled in December 1928 under the title Soviet Russia: Some Random Sketches and Impressions.<sup>[86]</sup> However, Nehru remained sceptical of Soviet intentions. In a report to the Congress back in India, Nehru indicated that the "Russians will try to utilize the League to further their own ends".<sup>[87]</sup> After the LAI condemned Gandhi's Delhi Statement, Nehru instructed the Congress to break off correspondence. He was expelled from membership in 1931.<sup>[88][89]</sup>

Independence for India League: 1927–1928

Nehru returned to India in December 1927 and disembarked at Madras to attend the annual Congress party session.<sup>[90]</sup> He drafted a resolution that the Congress should aim for India's complete independence from the British Empire.<sup>[91]</sup> The resolution passed despite Gandhi's criticism, and was supported by a newer generation of Congress leaders who were more receptive to radical solutions.<sup>[92]</sup> Gandhi wrote to Nehru and disapproved of his association with radicals demanding complete independence.<sup>[93]</sup> Nehru replied that present strategies were proving ineffective and



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questioned Gandhi's leadership since the end of the Non-co-operation movement.<sup>[94]</sup> Over the next few months, Nehru and Gandhi would exchange terse letters about India's political future.<sup>[95]</sup>

In 1928, the Simon Commission arrived in India to discuss possible constitutional reforms for self-government. The Congress opposed the commission on the grounds that it did not include Indians. Nehru was opposed to continued aspirations for dominion status. In response to the Simon Commission, the All Parties Conference drafted the Nehru Report, named after Nehru's father, Motilal Nehru, who chaired the drafting committee. Published in August 1928, the report outlined proposals for an Indian constitution under dominion status. In response, Nehru helped form the "Independence for India League", a pressure group within the Congress.<sup>[96][97]</sup> In September 1928, Nehru wrote to a friend "that the Congress contains at least two if not more groups which have nothing in common between them and the sooner they break apart the better".<sup>[98]</sup> Nehru's group included Subhas Chandra Bose. However, Nehru's revolutionary spirit was tempered by his moderation. His father, who had rejoined the Congress and was the President in 1928, also cautioned him that "pure idealism divorced from realities has no place in politics".<sup>[99]</sup> In December 1928, Gandhi and Nehru finally compromised. Gandhi proposed a resolution that called for the British to grant Dominion status to India within two years. If the British failed to meet the deadline, the Congress would call upon all Indians to fight for complete independence. Nehru objected to the time given to the British—he pressed Gandhi to demand immediate actions from the British. Gandhi brokered a further compromise by reducing the time given from two years to one.<sup>[97]</sup>

Congress President: 1929–1930

Declaration of independence: 1929

Despite their disagreements, Gandhi encouraged Nehru to seek the Congress Presidency. Nehru was initially reluctant, and believed that the office would limit his political activity.<sup>[100]</sup> However, Gandhi persisted and eventually Nehru accepted his support. The British rejected demands for Dominion status in 1929.<sup>[97]</sup> Nehru assumed the presidency of the Congress party during the Lahore session on 29 December 1929, and introduced the successful resolution calling for complete independence.<sup>[97][101]</sup> Nehru drafted the Indian Declaration of Independence, which stated:

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities for growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them the people have a further right to alter it or abolish it. The British government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence.<sup>[102]</sup>

At midnight on New Year's Eve 1929, Nehru hoisted the tricolour flag of India upon the banks of the Ravi in Lahore.<sup>[103]</sup> A pledge of independence was read out, which included a readiness to withhold taxes. The massive gathering of the public attending the ceremony was asked if they agreed with it, and the majority of people were witnessed raising their hands in approval. 172 Indian members of central and provincial legislatures resigned in support of the resolution and in accordance with Indian public sentiment. The Congress asked the people of India to observe 26 January as Independence Day.<sup>[104]</sup> Congress volunteers, nationalists, and the public hoisted the flag of India publicly across India. Plans for mass civil disobedience were also underway.<sup>[105]</sup>

After the Lahore session of the Congress in 1929, Nehru gradually emerged as the paramount leader of the Indian independence movement. Gandhi stepped back into a more spiritual role. Although Gandhi did not explicitly designate Nehru as his political heir until 1942, as early as the mid-1930s, the country saw Nehru as the natural successor to Gandhi.<sup>[106]</sup> As Congress President, Nehru drafted a "Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy" resolution for a free India.<sup>[107]</sup> He declared the aims of the Congress were freedom of religion; right to form associations; freedom of expression of thought; equality before the law for every individual without distinction of caste, colour, creed, or religion; protection of regional languages and cultures, safeguarding the interests of the peasants and labour; abolition of untouchability; introduction of the adult franchise; imposition of prohibition, nationalisation of industries; socialism; and the establishment of a secular India.<sup>[108]</sup> The resolution was passed at the Karachi session in March 1931.<sup>[109]</sup>

## II.DISCUSSION

Civil disobedience: 1930–1934

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Salt March: 1930

In early 1930, the Congress began planning civil disobedience to pressure the British authorities.<sup>[110]</sup> While Gandhi was planning a course of action, Nehru led the Congress in celebrating India's first 'independence day' on 26 January 1930 and hoisted the newly adopted tricolor flag.<sup>[111]</sup> Soon afterwards, Gandhi offered an 'Eleven Points' ultimatum to the British government; if the government would accept these points, Gandhi would call off civil disobedience. One of the 'Eleven Points' included the abolition of the British salt tax. Nehru was not enthusiastic about the 'Eleven Points' ultimatum and considered the demands too modest.<sup>[110]</sup> The government rejected the offer and Gandhi pressed ahead with civil disobedience through a satyagraha aimed at the salt tax. Most of the Congress leaders were ambivalent. Nehru wrote that "We were bewildered and could not quite fit in a national struggle with common salt."<sup>[112]</sup> After the protest had gathered steam, Nehru and other leaders realised the power of salt as a symbol. Nehru remarked about the unprecedented popular response, "It seemed as though a spring had been suddenly released".<sup>[113]</sup>

On 12 March, Gandhi set out from his ashram at Sabarmati for the small sea side village of Dandi. Nehru met Gandhi at Jambusar, about halfway between Sabarmati and Dandi.<sup>[114]</sup> After returning to Allahabad, Nehru made a speech to the country's youth:

The pilgrim marches onward. The field of battle lies before you, the flag of India beckons you, and freedom herself awaits your coming. Do you hesitate now, you who were but yesterday so loudly on her side? Will you be mere lookers-on in this glorious struggle and see your best and bravest face the might of a great empire which has crushed your country and her children? Who lives if India dies? Who dies if India lives?<sup>[114]</sup>

Gandhi broke the colonial salt law at Dandi on 6 April. Nehru was arrested on 14 April 1930 while on a train from Allahabad to Raipur. Earlier, after addressing a huge meeting and leading a vast procession, he had ceremoniously manufactured some contraband salt. He was charged with breach of the salt law and sentenced to six months of imprisonment at Central Jail.<sup>[115][116]</sup> Nehru nominated Gandhi to succeed him as the Congress president during his absence in jail, but Gandhi declined, and Nehru nominated his father as his successor.<sup>[117]</sup> With Nehru's arrest, the civil disobedience acquired a new tempo, and arrests, firing on crowds and lathi charges grew to be ordinary occurrences.<sup>[118]</sup>

The breach of the Salt Act soon became just one activity, and civil resistance spread to other fields. This was facilitated by the promulgation of various ordinances by the Viceroy prohibiting a number of activities. As these ordinances and prohibitions grew, the opportunities for breaking them also grew, and civil resistance took the form of doing the very thing that the ordinance was intended to stop.<sup>[119]</sup>

The salt satyagraha ("pressure for reform through passive resistance") succeeded in attracting world attention. Indian, British, and world opinion increasingly recognised the legitimacy of the claims by the Congress party for independence. Nehru considered the salt satyagraha the high-water mark of his association with Gandhi,<sup>[120]</sup> and felt its lasting importance was in changing the attitudes of Indians:<sup>[121]</sup>

Of course these movements exercised tremendous pressure on the British Government and shook the government machinery. But the real importance, to my mind, lay in the effect they had on our own people, and especially the village masses. ... Non-cooperation dragged them out of the mire and gave them self-respect and self-reliance. ... They acted courageously and did not submit so easily to unjust oppression; their outlook widened and they began to think a little in terms of India as a whole. ... It was a remarkable transformation and the Congress, under Gandhi's leadership, must have the credit for it.

Gandhi-Irwin pact and No-Rent: 1931–1932

The first Round Table Conference organised by the British government to discuss India's political future began in London on 12 November 1930. The Congress did not attend, but Nehru and other prisoners were released on 26 January 1931 by orders of Lord Irwin, the viceroy of India.<sup>[122]</sup> On the day of his release, Nehru was informed that his father, Motilal, was seriously ill.<sup>[123]</sup> The family travelled to Lucknow to seek treatment. However, Motilal's health declined and he died in Lucknow on 6 February 1931, with his son and wife present.<sup>[123]</sup> On 5 March 1931, Gandhi signed a pact with Lord Irwin. Gandhi obtained some political concessions and agreed to end the Civil Disobedience Movement. Nehru was disappointed with the terms and critical of the decision to stop.<sup>[124]</sup> Political developments soon turned against the Congress. Lord Irwin left India to be succeeded by Lord Willingdon in April 1931.<sup>[125]</sup> Gandhi and Nehru met Lord Willingdon in Shimla before agreeing to participate in a second Round Table Conference. Nehru came

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away with the impression that the new viceroy shared his perception of the pact as a temporary truce.<sup>[126]</sup> In August 1931, a Conservative dominated National coalition came into power in the United Kingdom.<sup>[127]</sup> Lord Willingdon moved to suppress the Congress.<sup>[128]</sup>

While Gandhi was in London, Nehru was accused of organising a "no-rent" political campaign against the British Raj.<sup>[128][129]</sup> Peasant agitations were occurring in the United Provinces. Tenant farmers were behind on rent, and facing evictions. They turned to the Congress for advice. Non-payment of rent was a possible solution, but this risked giving the government a justification to suppress the Congress.<sup>[130][131]</sup> Nehru brought the matter before British authorities.<sup>[130]</sup> The government made no concessions, and the Congress decided to recommend tenant farmers withhold rent.<sup>[132]</sup> The government introduced ordinances to suppress the "no-rent" agitation. Nehru was served with orders prohibiting him from leaving Allahabad and engaging in political activities.<sup>[131]</sup> On 26 December 1931, Nehru was arrested for violating the order as he prepared to leave for Bombay to meet a returning Gandhi. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment.<sup>[128][131]</sup> The government accused of Nehru of pursuing a "Leninite dictatorship".<sup>[128]</sup> Nehru's arrest was part of a larger measure against Indian nationalism. The Congress was once again declared illegal, and most leading Congress members were in jail by 10 January 1932. Gandhi himself was arrested under a 1827 Bombay ordinance revived by the government. Indian civil disobedience was renewed.<sup>[123]</sup>

Civil disobedience continues: 1933–1934

On 30 August 1933, Nehru was released from prison. He travelled to Pune to meet Gandhi. By this point, Nehru and Gandhi were growing apart. Nehru was vexed by Gandhi's anti-rational mysticism, and prioritisation of social movements over independence since the Communal Award of August 1932.<sup>[133]</sup> Nehru was also concerned by some of Gandhi's lieutenants that he considered reactionaries.<sup>[133]</sup> A diary entry from 18 July 1933 states "I am getting more and more certain there can be no further political co-operation between Bapu and me."<sup>[133]</sup> It was thought that Nehru might break with Gandhi, but the duo reconciled in Pune. Both publicly affirmed their trust in, and loyalty to, each other.<sup>[134]</sup> Nehru resumed his nationalist activities, and the British government moved to detain him once again. On 22 December 1933, the Home Secretary sent a memo to all local governments in India:

The Government of India regard him [Nehru] as by far the most dangerous element at large in India, and their view is that the time has come, in accordance with their general policy of taking steps at an early stage to prevent attempts to work up mass agitation, to take action against him.<sup>[135]</sup>

Government propaganda described Nehru as "the high priest of Communism".<sup>[136]</sup> The authorities remained fearful of his potential to attract followers to a revolutionary agitation. Various speeches made in late 1933 were examined as grounds for prosecution. Nehru's denunciation of the Raj at Calcutta in January 1934 gave the Bengal government the opportunity to charge him with sedition. He was arrested on his return to Allahabad on 12 January and taken back to Calcutta. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment on 16 February.<sup>[135]</sup> In August 1934, Nehru was released for eleven days to attend to his wife's ailing health. He was sent back to prison when her health improved.<sup>[137]</sup> Nehru would end up spending most of the time between December 1931 and September 1935 in prison.<sup>[138]</sup>

Civil disobedience ends: 1934

On 7 April 1934, Gandhi officially called off the Civil Disobedience Movement.<sup>[139]</sup> The movement had been fading since Gandhi became preoccupied with social issues. Nehru felt disappointed and betrayed.<sup>[140]</sup> He wrote "... there is hardly any common ground between me and Bapu and the others who lead the Congress today. Our objectives are different, our ideals are different, and our methods are likely to be different".<sup>[141][142]</sup> The end of the movement was followed by Gandhi's announcement on 17 September 1934 that he was retiring from Congress politics to focus on social issues.<sup>[143]</sup> In the interim, the Swaraj Party had been reformed in May 1934 as a group within the Congress, with the support of Gandhi. The Swarajists aimed to contest the 1934 Indian general election<sup>[144][145]</sup> However, it was soon decided that the Congress itself would enter the elections, rather than the Swaraj Party on its behalf. To this end, a Congress Parliamentary Board was formed.<sup>[146]</sup>

The end of civil disobedience and the embrace of constitutionalism was a bitter blow for Nehru. The business community had been pressuring the Congress to revert to constitutionalism. In April 1934, Gandhi wrote to G. D. Birla that "There will always be a party within the Congress wedded to the idea of council-entry. The reigns of the Congress should be in the hands of that group".<sup>[145]</sup> The business community was determined to secure influence with



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the party and office holders. Nehru became unhappy with the anti-socialist orientation of the Congress leadership.<sup>[141][142]</sup> He wrote:

The Congress had become a caucus where opportunism flourished and the Working Committee's resolution condemning socialism showed such astounding ignorance of even the elements of the subject that it was painful to read it and realize that it might be read outside India. It seemed that the overmastering desire of the Committee was somehow to assure various vested interests even at the risk of talking nonsense.<sup>[136]</sup>

Nehru questioned the sincerity of constitutionalism. He complained that there were constitutionalists who had avoided civil disobedience when politics was unsafe and now sought office.<sup>[145]</sup> Nehru was also greatly concerned at this time by the growth of communalism. He was critical of religious organisations whom he saw as putting their sectarian interests above the national one of independence.<sup>[147]</sup> The competition for office would only widen communal tensions.<sup>[148]</sup>

In response to events, socialists formed the Congress Socialist Party faction within the Congress in May 1934. The group included Jayaprakash Narayan, Narendra Deo, Rammanohar Lohia, Minoo Masani, Yusuf Meherally, Asoka Mehta, and Achyut Patwardhan. This group made no secret that they sought and drew inspiration from Nehru.<sup>[136]</sup> Masani wrote to Nehru in prison:

... the group in its proposed form would carry out the purpose you have in mind.... a programme that would be socialist in action and objective.... The group would do socialist propaganda among rank and file with a view to converting the Congress to an acceptance of socialism.<sup>[149]</sup>

Nehru replied that "I would welcome the formation of a socialist group in the Congress.... I feel the time has come when the country should face the issues and come to grips with real economic problems which ultimately matter."<sup>[149]</sup> However, Nehru declined to join.<sup>[149]</sup> Nehru wrote in 1941 that "its general policy was agreeable to me, but it seemed a curious and mixed assemblage, and, even if I had been completely free, I would not have suddenly joined it."<sup>[150]</sup>

Europe: 1935–1936

Kamala was very ill by 1935. In May, she travelled to Germany to seek further treatment, and was accompanied by her daughter Indira.<sup>[151]</sup> Nehru was released early from prison on compassionate grounds in September 1935, and travelled to Badenweiler to be with his family. While on a visit to England in the fall, Nehru learned that he was Congress president-elect starting in April 1936. He was torn over whether to remain with his family, or accept the presidency. On 31 January, Kamala was moved to a sanatorium near Lausanne to be closer to Indira, who was studying at Bex.<sup>[152]</sup> On 28 February 1936, Kamala died, with Nehru by her side.<sup>[152]</sup> In March 1936, Nehru returned to India, having accepted the presidency. He stopped in Rome on his way back, and was visited by an Italian official bringing condolences from Mussolini. Nehru learned that Mussolini wanted to meet him personally to convey his regards. He wrote to Mussolini, thanking him for his message, but stated that he could not accept his invitation.<sup>[152]</sup>

While in Europe, Nehru travelled to England and France, and met with several intellectuals and politicians.<sup>[152]</sup> A lasting impression was left by Krishna Menon, who would become a close confidant.<sup>[153]</sup> Nehru followed political developments with some interest. He became very concerned with the possibility of another world war. At that time, he emphasised that, in the event of war, India's place was alongside the democracies, though he insisted India could only fight in support of Great Britain and France as a free country.<sup>[154]</sup> Although no longer an official member, Nehru attended League Against Imperialism meetings in London, and connected with old colleagues and new ones.<sup>[89]</sup> Nehru also met with Bose, who was living in exile at Vienna. Bose accepted an advice to return to India, and declared that he would support Nehru for leadership of the national struggle and the Congress. Both agreed that their main tasks were to prevent the Congress from accepting office under the Government of India Act 1935, and broaden the composition of the Congress Working Committee.<sup>[155]</sup>

Nehru's trip to Europe stimulated his interest in Marxism.<sup>[156]</sup> He met British communists Palme Dutt and Benjamin Bradley in Lausanne. The 'Professor', as Nehru was known in Comintern circles, was receptive to debate.<sup>[153]</sup> Time later spent incarcerated enabled him to research Marxism more deeply. Appealed by its ideas but repelled by some of its tactics, he never could bring himself to buy Karl Marx's words as revealed gospel.<sup>[157]</sup> However, from that time on, the benchmark of his economic view remained Marxist, adapted, where necessary, to Indian circumstances. After

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returning to India, Nehru gave a speech to the Congress and referenced the Soviet Union as a model of economic development.<sup>[158]</sup>

Congress President: 1936–1938

Nehru returned to India in March 1936 as Congress president-elect. He had been nominated by Gandhi in 1935, and secured the presidency by a massive majority.<sup>[159]</sup> Gandhi rejoined active politics, starting with the Nehru presidency in April 1936. While Nehru was still in Europe, Gandhi had written and qualified the presidency as the "crown of thorns".<sup>[159]</sup> The Congress Working Committee was dominated by conservative members.<sup>[160]</sup> The Congress left was rising, and Gandhi was worried about a split. Nehru knew that his election would ease the tension with the Congress. However, Nehru warned Gandhi that he was "apt to behave like a bull in a China shop" and that he had "certain qualifications" for accepting the role.<sup>[159][161]</sup>

During the party's annual session at Lucknow in April 1936, Nehru gave his inaugural address and expressed his conviction in socialism. However, Nehru conceded that "Much as I wish for the advancement of socialism in this country, I have no desire to force the issue in the Congress and thereby create difficulties in the way of our struggle for independence".<sup>[138]</sup> The Congress also had to decide whether to contest the 1937 provincial elections to be held under the Government of India Act 1935.<sup>[162][163]</sup> Nehru opposed participation and described the act as a "new charter of bondage" and a "machine with strong brakes but no engine".<sup>[164][165]</sup> He believed that the act was designed to weaken the Congress and obstruct Indian nationalism.<sup>[166]</sup> At the Lucknow session, Nehru warned:

It is always dangerous to assume responsibility without power. It will be far worse with this constitution hedged in with safeguards and reserved powers and mortgaged funds, where we have to follow the rules and regulations of our opponents' making. Imperialism sometimes talks of co-operation, but the kind of co-operation it wants is usually known as surrender, and the ministers who accept office will have to do so at the price of surrender of much that they might have stood for in public.<sup>[166]</sup>

Nehru's address and socialist convictions alarmed the Congress Working Committee.<sup>[160]</sup> The majority of the committee, led by Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari, and Rajendra Prasad, offered resignations. Gandhi had to intervene to secure the withdrawal of resignations by the Working Committee, as well as Nehru's own counter threat resignation.<sup>[138]</sup> While other Congress leaders joined with Nehru in condemning the new constitution, they wished to contest the elections. These leaders resolved to defer the question of office acceptance for a later date.<sup>[166]</sup> Internally, it was recognised that members who disapproved of socialism were the majority in favour of contesting the election.<sup>[138]</sup> Nehru compromised and reluctantly agreed to lead the election campaign as President. While leading the campaign, Nehru sought another term as Congress President and was re-elected at the annual session held at Faizabad in December 1937.<sup>[167]</sup> His re-election was opposed by Patel, who wrote to Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's secretary. Patel communicated "I would break loose and quit if he [Nehru] continues".<sup>[167]</sup> Gandhi once again had to intervene to stop a split in the party.<sup>[167]</sup> Nehru acted for the sake of avoiding a split by moderating his socialism and accepting the elections, but there were clear limitations to his will to compromise.<sup>[138]</sup>

Provincial elections: 1937

The 1937 elections brought the Congress party to power, with increased popularity for Nehru. The Congress contested 1161 of 1585 seats, winning 716. In six of the eleven provinces, the Congress gained a clear majority, while in three others, it was the single largest party.<sup>[168]</sup> However, Nehru was unhappy. The objective of contesting the elections from his perspective, destroying the act, was unlikely to come to pass. The Congress decided to accept office. In this, Nehru was outmaneuvered by Gandhi, who inserted a supplementary passage allowing office acceptance in Nehru's resolution against the act.<sup>[168][169]</sup> Nehru was close to resigning, but feared that doing so would split the party and desisted.<sup>[170]</sup> He did hope the British government would obstruct the Congress from taking office. At first, this proved to be the case. British governors ignored Congress majorities and invited defeated parties to take office.<sup>[171]</sup> However, while Nehru was away in Burma and Malaysia, Rajagopalachari negotiated with colonial authorities in Madras. Rajagopalachari informed Lord Erskine that "there was a real chance to get rid of the Civil Disobedience mentality for good, and that it would be a thousand pities if the chance was missed".<sup>[171]</sup> The British assented and Congress ministries were soon formed.<sup>[172]</sup>

During the election campaign, Nehru declared that the only two forces that mattered in India were the Congress and the British Raj.<sup>[173]</sup> The Muslim League leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah replied that the Muslims constituted a third

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group.<sup>[174]</sup> Nehru argued that the Muslims could not be regarded as a separate nation. He argued the League was representative only of its members, but did not speak for Muslims that were members of the Congress and thus not all Indian Muslims. Nehru emphasised the presence of other Muslim organisations, such as the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, which supported the Congress.<sup>[173]</sup> He contended that the League represented a "small group functioning in the higher regions of the upper middle classes and having no contacts with the Muslim masses and few even with the Muslim lower middle class".<sup>[174]</sup> In Nehru's view, the League was a communal organisation facilitating divide and rule by the British Raj.<sup>[173]</sup>

In the elections, the Congress contested 38 of 482 seats reserved for Muslims, winning 26. Most of these wins came in the North-West Frontier Province, where the Congress leader Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan held sway.<sup>[174]</sup> The League contended all seats reserved for Muslims, but won only 109. The League failed to get a majority in the Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal.<sup>[174]</sup> In Punjab, the Unionist Party, dominated by landlords, won a majority, while in Bengal the single largest parties were the Congress and the peasants Krishak Sramik Party led by A. K. Fazlul Huq.<sup>[174]</sup> Nehru stated that "The Congress is supreme today so far as the masses and the lower middle classes are concerned. Even the Muslim masses look up to it for relief".<sup>[175]</sup> He believed that many Muslims had voted on economic concerns, and that the Congress erred in not contesting more seats reserved for Muslims. Nehru argued that working with the Muslim intelligentsia and masses could secure the gains of the election, and end sectarianism. He inaugurated a mass contact programme to increase contacts with Muslims and enroll more Muslim members.<sup>[175]</sup>

Europe: 1938

Nehru's mother, Swaruprani, died on January 10 1938, with the family present.<sup>[176]</sup> His mother's death affected him. The Congress' embrace of constitutionalism dismayed him. Although Nehru was on the Parliamentary Board to guide and coordinate the Congress ministries, he showed little interest.<sup>[177]</sup> Nehru retreated from Congress politics. A new Congress President had to be found. Patel, Rajagopalachari and Prasad were busy in provincial politics, and unavailable. Gandhi turned to Bose, who had returned to India in 1937.<sup>[178]</sup> At the annual session of the Congress at Haripura in February 1938, Bose was elected Congress President. Nehru was pressed to become General Secretary, but he refused and even contemplated resigning from the Congress Working Committee.<sup>[179]</sup>

In June 1938, Nehru left for Europe. He stopped on the way at Alexandria, where he met Nahas Pasha and Wafd Party officials.<sup>[180]</sup> Nehru arrived in Spain as a guest of the Republican government, and visited troops fighting in the civil war.<sup>[181]</sup> After Spain, Nehru left for England, where his daughter, Indira, was studying at Oxford. In June 1938, Nehru and Indira stayed at the country house of Stafford Cripps in Gloucestershire. He met with the leadership of the Labour party, including Clement Attlee, Harold Laski, Aneurin Bevan, and Cripps himself. Nehru and the Labour party reached an informal concordat on India's constitutional future and future relations with the United Kingdom as a free country.<sup>[182]</sup> Unlike his previous visits, Nehru agreed to meet British government officials. He met the Lords Halifax, Zetland, and Linlithgow. He warned viceroy Linlithgow, then on leave in England, that British rule in India would not survive another ten years.<sup>[183]</sup> Nehru attended various events in England as a political celebrity. He received Jewish delegations, and arranged for the resettlement in India of some refugees from Germany.<sup>[183]</sup> Nehru also took stock of the political situation in Europe. He visited Paris to address an international conference on bombing of civilians in Spain. He was invited to visit Germany by the Nazi government.<sup>[176]</sup> Nehru declined, but did make a private visit to Munich.<sup>[182]</sup> He then went to Prague, where he denounced German foreign policy. In September, Nehru was in Geneva, and planning to travel to the Soviet Union. However, he was unable to secure a visa, and ended up returning to India in November 1938.<sup>[184]</sup>

## III.RESULTS

All-India federation and economy: 1938–1939

Planning Commission: 1938–1939

While abroad, Nehru accepted an offer from Bose to head the newly formed National Planning Commission and shape India's future economic policy.<sup>[185]</sup> The Planning Commission met for the first time in Bombay on December 17 1938.<sup>[185]</sup> Nehru distributed a questionnaire, and constituted thirty sub-committees to make detailed recommendations.<sup>[186]</sup> Work was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II, but twenty-six volumes of sub-committee reports were eventually completed and published after the war.<sup>[187]</sup> Nehru chaired meetings until his arrest by the government in October 1940.<sup>[186]</sup>

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Tripuri crisis: 1939

Upon his return to India, Nehru found Bose in a confrontation with Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee over policy and leadership.<sup>[188][189]</sup> Bose claimed to be leading the Congress left against Gandhi and the "rightists".<sup>[190]</sup> Nehru disagreed and thought Bose was being too simplistic.<sup>[190]</sup> Nehru also disagreed on Bose on other matters. After his return, Nehru proposed a resolution that the Congress should offer employment in India to Jewish refugees who were experts and specialists. Bose successfully opposed the proposal in the Working Committee on the premise that "foreign policy is a realistic affair to be determined largely from the point of view of a nation's self-interest".<sup>[191]</sup> Bose did not wish to weaken relations with Germany. Nehru was also concerned by Bose's methods. He described the Bose presidency as "far more authoritarian than any during the recent history of the Congress".<sup>[192]</sup> He became concerned over Bose's admiration for Mussolini.<sup>[168]</sup> He argued that "radical slogans allied to authoritarianism is a wrong and dangerous trend".<sup>[192]</sup>

Nehru felt that because of the international situation, the Congress needed unity to face coming events.<sup>[193]</sup> He unsuccessfully requested Bose not to seek a second term at the Tripuri session.<sup>[193]</sup> He refused Gandhi's request to stand against Bose in the election.<sup>[189]</sup> Bose was re-elected at Tripuri in March, prevailing over Gandhi's candidate Sitaramayya by 1580 to 1377 votes.<sup>[190]</sup> However, Gandhi's supporters successfully passed a resolution demanding Bose abide by his guidance. Bose's position became untenable, and he resigned on 29 April 1939.<sup>[194]</sup> Nehru disagreed with Gandhi's response to Bose, but nor could he bring himself to openly support Bose. Nehru and Bose subsequently fell out over the events.<sup>[194][195]</sup> Bose failed to secure support from the Congress Socialist Party on the resolution, and claimed Nehru had sided with Gandhi.<sup>[194][196]</sup> Nehru had urged Gandhi to compromise with Bose, but this was unsuccessful.<sup>[194][197]</sup>

All India States Peoples Conference: 1939

The Congress traditionally chose not to intervene in the affairs of the Indian princely states. Left to themselves, local activists organised themselves into praja mandals, and raised demands for constitutional rights. In 1927, these local bodies organised themselves under the All India States Peoples Conference (AISPC).<sup>[198]</sup> One of Nehru's main objections to the Government of India Act 1935 was the proposed "All-India Federation".<sup>[199]</sup> Under the act, the princes would nominate members to an upper and lower house of a federal legislature, while remaining members were popularly elected from direct rule states. The British government gave disproportionate representation to the princely states to counter the power of the Congress in popular assemblies. Nehru objected to the feudal and non-democratic nature of the proposed federation, and urged the Congress to support popular movements in the princely states.<sup>[199]</sup> Although the federation had not materialised due to opposition from the princes, the Raj was in negotiations over its implementation. While President, Nehru endorsed a request from N. S. Hardikar to carry out political activities in Mysore. In October 1937, the Congress Socialist Party, with Nehru's support, successfully passed a resolution in the All-India Congress Committee that the Congress should offer moral and material support to the AISPC.<sup>[200]</sup> However, other Congress leaders were not yet supportive of extending political activities to princely states. Gandhi criticised Nehru publicly for attacking the government of Mysore in 1937.<sup>[199]</sup>

During the Bose presidency, federation became a major political issue, and the party passed more comprehensive resolutions authorising political involvement in the princely states.<sup>[198]</sup> Encouraged by the new Congress policy, many of the princely states witnessed popular agitations in late 1938 and early 1939.<sup>[198]</sup> In February 1939, Nehru accepted the role of President of the AISPC. He gave his inaugural address at Ludhiana on 15 February 1939 and stated:

Year after year this Conference of the people of the Indian States has met in session and discussed the problems of the States. Year after year it has raised its voice in condemnation of the autocracy and misrule, the corruption and the degradation that have prevailed in many of these States. The labours of this Conference, and far so of the National Congress, have borne fruit, and today there is a mighty awakening among the people of the States...At this vital movement, you have summoned me to this Conference, and I have gladly come at your bidding. I come to you not only because I am intensely interested in the freedom of the people of the States, but as the bearer of the goodwill of the rest of India and as a pledge of our solidarity.<sup>[201]</sup>

In his speech, Nehru stressed the movement must follow principles of non-violence.<sup>[201]</sup> However, confronted by repressive state actions, peaceful demonstrations deteriorated into violence, and later into sectarian conflicts in the southern Deccan.<sup>[198]</sup> Congress leaders had to assume personal control of demonstrations to quell the disorder.<sup>[200]</sup> In April 1939, the princely states ended negotiations over the federation, but the popular agitations continued until



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autumn.<sup>[198][202]</sup> AISPC was to play an important role during the political integration of India, helping Indian leaders negotiate with hundreds of princes.<sup>[203]</sup>

### Nationalist movement (1939–1947)

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When World War II began, Viceroy Linlithgow unilaterally declared India a belligerent on the side of Britain, without consulting the elected Indian representatives.<sup>[204]</sup> Nehru hurried back from a visit to China, announcing that, in a conflict between democracy and fascism, "our sympathies must inevitably be on the side of democracy, ... I should like India to play its full part and throw all her resources into the struggle for a new order".<sup>[205]</sup>

After much deliberation, the Congress under Nehru informed the government that it would co-operate with the British but on certain conditions. First, Britain must give an assurance of full independence for India after the war and allow the election of a constituent assembly to frame a new constitution; second, although the Indian armed forces would remain under the British Commander-in-chief, Indians must be included immediately in the central government and given a chance to share power and responsibility.<sup>[206]</sup> When Nehru presented Lord Linlithgow with these demands, he chose to reject them. A deadlock was reached: "The same old game is played again," Nehru wrote bitterly to Gandhi, "the background is the same, the various epithets are the same and the actors are the same and the results must be the same".<sup>[207][208]</sup>

On 23 October 1939, the Congress condemned the Viceroy's attitude and called upon the Congress ministries in the various provinces to resign in protest.<sup>[209]</sup> Before this crucial announcement, Nehru urged Jinnah and the Muslim League to join the protest, but Jinnah declined.<sup>[206][210]</sup>

### Civil disobedience, Lahore Resolution, August Offer: 1940

In March 1940, Muhammad Ali Jinnah passed what came to be known as the Pakistan Resolution, declaring that, "Muslims are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their State." This state was to be known as Pakistan, meaning 'Land of the Pure'.<sup>[211]</sup> Nehru angrily declared that "all the old problems ... pale into insignificance before the latest stand taken by the Muslim League leader in Lahore".<sup>[212]</sup> Linlithgow made Nehru an offer on 8 October 1940, which stated that Dominion status for India was the objective of the British government.<sup>[213]</sup> However, it referred neither to a date nor a method to accomplish this. Only Jinnah received something more precise: "The British would not contemplate transferring power to a Congress-dominated national government, the authority of which was denied by various elements in India's national life".<sup>[214]</sup>

In October 1940, Gandhi and Nehru, abandoning their original stand of supporting Britain, decided to launch a limited civil disobedience campaign in which leading advocates of Indian independence were selected to participate one by one. Nehru was arrested and sentenced to four years imprisonment.<sup>[60]</sup> On 15 January 1941, Gandhi stated:

Some say Jawaharlal and I were estranged. It will require much more than a difference of opinion to estrange us. We had differences from the time we became co-workers and yet I have said for some years and say so now that not Rajaji but Jawaharlal will be my successor.<sup>[215][216]</sup>

After spending a little more than a year in jail, Nehru was released, along with other Congress prisoners, three days before the bombing of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.<sup>[217]</sup>

### Japan attacks India, Cripps' mission, Quit India: 1942

When the Japanese carried their attack through Burma (now Myanmar) to the borders of India in the spring of 1942, the British government, faced with this new military threat, decided to make some overtures to India, as Nehru had originally desired.<sup>[218]</sup> Prime Minister Winston Churchill dispatched Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet who was known to be politically close to Nehru and knew Jinnah, with proposals for a settlement of the constitutional problem.<sup>[219]</sup> As soon as he arrived, he discovered that India was more deeply divided than he had imagined. Nehru, eager for a compromise, was hopeful; Gandhi was not. Jinnah had continued opposing the Congress: "Pakistan is our only demand, and by God, we will have it," he declared in the Muslim League newspaper Dawn.<sup>[220]</sup> Cripps' mission failed as Gandhi would accept nothing less than independence. Relations between Nehru and Gandhi cooled over the latter's refusal to co-operate with Cripps, but the two later reconciled.<sup>[221]</sup>

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[A Monthly, Peer Reviewed Online Journal] Impact Factor: 7.580 |

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Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016

In 1942, Gandhi called on the British to leave India; Nehru, though reluctant to embarrass the allied war effort, had no alternative but to join Gandhi. Following the Quit India resolution passed by the Congress party in Bombay on 8 August 1942, the entire Congress working committee, including Gandhi and Nehru, was arrested and imprisoned.<sup>[222]</sup> Most of the Congress working committee including Nehru, Abdul Kalam Azad, and Sardar Patel were incarcerated at the Ahmednagar Fort<sup>[223]</sup> until 15 June 1945.<sup>[224]</sup>

In prison 1943–1945

During the period when all the Congress leaders were in jail, the Muslim League under Jinnah grew in power.<sup>[225]</sup> In April 1943, the League captured the governments of Bengal and, a month later, that of the North-West Frontier Province. In none of these provinces had the League previously had a majority—only the arrest of Congress members made it possible. With all the Muslim-dominated provinces except Punjab under Jinnah's control, the concept of a separate Muslim State was turning into a reality.<sup>[226]</sup> However, by 1944, Jinnah's power and prestige were waning.<sup>[227]</sup>

A general sympathy towards the jailed Congress leaders was developing among Muslims, and much of the blame for the disastrous Bengal famine of 1943–44 during which two million died had been laid on the shoulders of the province's Muslim League government. The numbers at Jinnah's meetings, once counted in thousands, soon numbered only a few hundred. In despair, Jinnah left the political scene for a stay in Kashmir. His prestige was restored unwittingly by Gandhi, who had been released from prison on medical grounds in May 1944 and had met Jinnah in Bombay in September.<sup>[227]</sup> There, he offered the Muslim leader a plebiscite in the Muslim areas after the war to see whether they wanted to separate from the rest of India. Essentially, it was an acceptance of the principle of Pakistan—but not in so many words. Jinnah demanded that the exact words be used. Gandhi refused and the talks broke down. Jinnah, however, had greatly strengthened his own position and that of the League. The most influential member of the Congress had been seen to negotiate with him on equal terms.<sup>[228]</sup>

Cabinet mission, Interim government 1946–1947

Nehru and his colleagues were released prior to the arrival of the British 1946 Cabinet Mission to India to propose plans for the transfer of power.<sup>[229][230]</sup> The agreed plan in 1946 led to elections to the provincial assemblies. In turn, the members of the assemblies elected members of the Constituent Assembly. Congress won the majority of seats in the assembly and headed the interim government, with Nehru as the prime minister. The Muslim League joined the government later with Liaquat Ali Khan as the Finance member.<sup>[231][232]</sup>

Prime Minister of India (1947–1964)

Nehru served as prime minister for 16 years, initially as the interim prime minister, then from 1947 as the prime minister of the Dominion of India and then from 1950 as the prime minister of the Republic of India.

Republicanism

In July 1946, Nehru pointedly observed that no princely state could prevail militarily against the army of independent India.<sup>[233]</sup> In January 1947, he said that independent India would not accept the divine right of kings.<sup>[234]</sup> In May 1947, he declared that any princely state which refused to join the Constituent Assembly would be treated as an enemy state.<sup>[235]</sup> Vallabhbhai Patel and V. P. Menon were more conciliatory towards the princes, and as the men charged with integrating the states, were successful in the task.<sup>[236]</sup> During the drafting of the Indian constitution, many Indian leaders (except Nehru) were in favour of allowing each princely state or covenanting state to be independent as a federal state along the lines suggested originally by the Government of India Act 1935. But as the drafting of the constitution progressed, and the idea of forming a republic took concrete shape, it was decided that all the princely states/covenanting states would merge with the Indian republic.<sup>[237]</sup>

In 1963, Nehru brought in legislation making it illegal to demand secession and introduced the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution which makes it necessary for those running for office to take an oath that says "I will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India".<sup>[238][239]</sup>

Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, as prime minister, derecognised all the rulers by presidential order in 1969, a decision struck down by the Supreme Court of India. Eventually, her government by the 26th amendment to the constitution was successful in derecognising these former rulers and ending the privy purse paid to them in 1971.<sup>[240]</sup>

Independence, Dominion of India: 1947–1950

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The period before independence in early 1947 was impaired by outbreaks of communal violence and political disorder, and the opposition of the Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who were demanding a separate Muslim state of Pakistan.<sup>[241][242]</sup>

### Independence

He took office as the prime minister of India on 15 August and delivered his inaugural address titled "Tryst with Destiny".

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 very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history when we step out from the old to the new when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.<sup>[243]</sup>

### Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi: 1948

On 30 January 1948, Gandhi was shot while he was walking in the garden of Birla House on his way to address a prayer meeting. The assassin, Nathuram Godse, was a Hindu nationalist with links to the extremist Hindu Mahasabha party, who held Gandhi responsible for weakening India by insisting upon a payment to Pakistan.<sup>[244]</sup> Nehru addressed the nation by radio:

Friends and comrades, the light has gone out of our lives, and there is darkness everywhere, and I do not quite know what to tell you or how to say it. Our beloved leader, Bapu as we called him, the father of the nation, is no more. Perhaps I am wrong to say that; nevertheless, we will not see him again, as we have seen him for these many years, we will not run to him for advice or seek solace from him, and that is a terrible blow, not only for me but for millions and millions in this country.<sup>[245]</sup>

Yasmin Khan argued that Gandhi's death and funeral helped consolidate the authority of the new Indian state under Nehru and Patel. The Congress tightly controlled the epic public displays of grief over a two-week period—the funeral, mortuary rituals and distribution of the martyr's ashes with millions participating in different events.<sup>[246][247]</sup> The goal was to assert the power of the government, legitimise the Congress party's control and suppress all religious paramilitary groups. Nehru and Patel suppressed the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Muslim National Guards, and the Khaksars, with some 200,000 arrests.<sup>[248]</sup> Gandhi's death and funeral linked the distant state with the Indian people and helped them to understand the need to suppress religious parties during the transition to independence for the Indian people.<sup>[249]</sup> In later years, there emerged a revisionist school of history which sought to blame Nehru for the partition of India, mostly referring to his highly centralised policies for an independent India in 1947, which Jinnah opposed in favour of a more decentralised India.<sup>[250][251]</sup>

### Integration of states and Adoption of New Constitution: 1947–1950

The British Indian Empire, which included present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, was divided into two types of territories: the Provinces of British India, which were governed directly by British officials responsible to the Viceroy of India; and princely states, under the rule of local hereditary rulers who recognised British suzerainty in return for local autonomy, in most cases as established by a treaty.<sup>[252]</sup> Between 1947 and about 1950, the territories of the princely states were politically integrated into the Indian Union under Nehru and Sardar Patel. Most were merged into existing provinces; others were organised into new provinces, such as Rajputana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, and Vindhya Pradesh, made up of multiple princely states; a few, including Mysore, Hyderabad, Bhopal and Bilaspur, became separate provinces.<sup>[253]</sup> The Government of India Act 1935 remained the constitutional law of India the pending adoption of a new Constitution.<sup>[254]</sup>

The new Constitution of India, which came into force on 26 January 1950 (Republic Day), made India a sovereign democratic republic. The new republic was declared to be a "Union of States".<sup>[255]</sup>

### Election of 1952

After the adoption of the constitution on 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly continued to act as the interim parliament until new elections. Nehru's interim cabinet consisted of 15 members from diverse communities and parties.<sup>[256]</sup> The first elections to Indian legislative bodies (National parliament and State assemblies ) under the new

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constitution of India were held in 1952.<sup>[257][258]</sup> Various members of the cabinet resigned from their posts and formed their own parties to contest the elections. During that period, the then Congress party president, Purushottam Das Tandon, also resigned from his post because of differences with Nehru and since Nehru's popularity was needed for winning elections. Nehru, while being the prime minister, was elected the president of Congress for 1951 and 1952.<sup>[259][260]</sup> In the election, despite numerous competing parties, the Congress party under Nehru's leadership won a large majority at both state and national levels.<sup>[261]</sup>

Prime Minister: 1952–1957

In December 1953, Nehru appointed the States Reorganisation Commission to prepare for the creation of states on linguistic lines. Headed by Justice Fazal Ali, the commission itself was also known as the Fazal Ali Commission.<sup>[262]</sup> Govind Ballabh Pant, who served as Nehru's home minister from December 1954, oversaw the commission's efforts.<sup>[263]</sup> The commission created a report in 1955 recommending the reorganisation of India's states.<sup>[264]</sup>

Under the Seventh Amendment, the existing distinction between Part A, Part B, Part C, and Part D states was abolished. The distinction between Part A and Part B states was removed, becoming known simply as states'.<sup>[265]</sup> A new type of entity, the union territory, replaced the classification as a Part C or Part D state. Nehru stressed commonality among Indians and promoted pan-Indianism, refusing to reorganise states on either religious or ethnic lines.<sup>[262]</sup>

Subsequent elections: 1957, 1962

In the 1957 elections, under Nehru's leadership, the Indian National Congress easily won a second term in power, taking 371 of the 494 seats. They gained an extra seven seats (the size of the Lok Sabha had been increased by five) and their vote share increased from 45.0% to 47.8%. The INC won nearly five times more votes than the Communist Party, the second-largest party.<sup>[266]</sup>

In 1962, Nehru led the Congress to victory with a diminished majority. The numbers who voted for the Communist and socialist parties grew, although some right-wing groups like Bharatiya Jana Sangh also did well.<sup>[267]</sup>

1961 annexation of Goa

After years of failed negotiations, Nehru authorised the Indian Army to invade Portuguese-controlled Portuguese India (Goa) in 1961, and then he formally annexed it to India. It increased his popularity in India, but he was criticised by the communist opposition in India for the use of military force.<sup>[268]</sup>

Sino-Indian War of 1962

From 1959, in a process that accelerated in 1961, Nehru adopted the "Forward Policy" of setting up military outposts in disputed areas of the Sino-Indian border, including 43 outposts in territory not previously controlled by India.<sup>[269]</sup> China attacked some of these outposts, and the Sino-Indian War began, which India lost. The war ended with China announcing a unilateral ceasefire and with its forces withdrawing to 20 kilometres behind the line of actual control of 1959.<sup>[270]</sup>

The war exposed the unpreparedness of India's military, which could send only 14,000 troops to the war zone in opposition to the much larger Chinese Army, and Nehru was widely criticised for his government's insufficient attention to defence. In response, defence minister V. K. Krishna Menon resigned and Nehru sought US military aid.<sup>[271]</sup> Nehru's improved relations with the US under John F. Kennedy proved useful during the war, as in 1962, the president of Pakistan (then closely aligned with the Americans) Ayub Khan was made to guarantee his neutrality regarding India, threatened by "communist aggression from Red China".<sup>[272]</sup> India's relationship with the Soviet Union, criticised by right-wing groups supporting free-market policies, was also seemingly validated. Nehru would continue to maintain his commitment to the non-aligned movement, despite calls from some to settle down on one permanent ally.<sup>[273]</sup>

The aftermath of the war saw sweeping changes in the Indian military to prepare it for similar conflicts in the future and placed pressure on Nehru, who was seen as responsible for failing to anticipate the Chinese attack on India. Under American advice (by American envoy John Kenneth Galbraith who made and ran American policy on the war as all other top policymakers in the US were absorbed in the coincident Cuban Missile Crisis) Nehru refrained from using the Indian air force to beat back the Chinese advances. The CIA later revealed that, at that time, the Chinese had neither the



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fuel nor runways long enough to use their air force effectively in Tibet. Indians, in general, became highly sceptical of China and its military. Many Indians view the war as a betrayal of India's attempts at establishing a long-standing peace with China and started to question Nehru's usage of the term Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai (Indians and Chinese are brothers). The war also put an end to Nehru's earlier hopes that India and China would form a strong Asian Axis to counteract the increasing influence of the Cold War bloc superpowers.<sup>[274]</sup>

The unpreparedness of the army was blamed on Defence Minister Menon, who "resigned" from his government post to allow for someone who might modernise India's military further. India's policy of weaponisation using indigenous sources and self-sufficiency began in earnest under Nehru, completed by his daughter Indira Gandhi, who later led India to a crushing military victory over rival Pakistan in 1971. Toward the end of the war, India had increased her support for Tibetan refugees and revolutionaries, some of them having settled in India, as they were fighting the same common enemy in the region. Nehru ordered the raising of an elite Indian-trained "Tibetan Armed Force" composed of Tibetan refugees, which served with distinction in future wars against Pakistan in 1965 and 1971.<sup>[275]</sup>

During the conflict, Nehru wrote two urgent letters to US President John F. Kennedy, requesting 12 squadrons of fighter jets and a modern radar system. These jets were seen as necessary to increase Indian air strength so that air-to-air combat could be initiated safely from the Indian perspective (bombing troops was seen as unwise for fear of Chinese retaliatory action). Nehru also asked that these aircraft be manned by American pilots until Indian airmen were trained to replace them. The Kennedy Administration (which was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis during most of the Sino-Indian War) rejected these requests, leading to a cooling of Indo-US relations. According to former Indian diplomat G Parthasarathy, "Only after we got nothing from the US did arms supplies from the Soviet Union to India commence".<sup>[276]</sup> According to Time magazine's 1962 editorial on the war, however, this may not have been the case. The editorial states,

When Washington finally turned its attention to India, it honoured the ambassador's pledge, loaded 60 US planes with \$5,000,000 worth of automatic weapons, heavy mortars, and land mines. Twelve huge C-130 Hercules transports, complete with US crews and maintenance teams, took off for New Delhi to fly Indian troops and equipment to the battle zone. Britain weighed in with Bren and Sten guns and airlifted 150 tons of arms to India. Canada prepared to ship six transport planes. Australia opened Indian credits for \$1,800,000 worth of munitions.<sup>[277]</sup>

### IV.CONCLUSIONS

To date, Nehru is considered the most popular prime minister winning three consecutive elections with around 45% of the vote.<sup>[278]</sup> A Pathé News archive video reporting Nehru's death remarks "Neither on the political stage nor in moral stature was his leadership ever challenged".<sup>[279]</sup> In his book *Verdicts on Nehru*, Ramachandra Guha cited a contemporary account that described what Nehru's 1951–52 Indian general election campaign looked like:

Almost at every place, city, town, village or wayside halt, people had waited overnight to welcome the nation's leader. Schools and shops closed; milkmaids and cowherds had taken a holiday; the kisan and his helpmate took a temporary respite from their dawn-to-dusk programme of hard work in field and home. In Nehru's name, stocks of soda and lemonade sold out; even water became scarce ... Special trains were run from out-of-the-way places to carry people to Nehru's meetings, enthusiasts travelling not only on footboards but also on top of carriages. Scores of people fainted in milling crowds.<sup>[280]</sup>

In the 1950s, Nehru was admired by world leaders such as British prime minister Winston Churchill, and US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. A letter from Eisenhower to Nehru, dated 27 November 1958, read:

Universally you are recognised as one of the most powerful influences for peace and conciliation in the world. I believe that because you are a world leader for peace in your individual capacity, as well as a representative of the largest neutral nation....<sup>[281]</sup>

"This man has overcome two of the greatest failings in human nature; he has neither fear nor hatred."

— Winston Churchill on Nehru [1952]<sup>[282]</sup>

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In 1955, Churchill called Nehru, the light of Asia, and a greater light than Gautama Buddha.<sup>[283]</sup> Nehru is time and again described as a charismatic leader with a rare charm.<sup>[b]</sup>

Nehru as an able statesman has been noted for his openness toward criticism from the opposition.<sup>[289]</sup> Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a prominent leader of the then opposition party Jan Sangh and the 10th Prime Minister of India, once recalled that during a debate in the parliament he commented on Nehru that "Panditji, you have a dual personality. You show characteristics of both Churchill and Chamberlain." Vajpayee said Nehru appreciated his words. Vajpayee added that such kinds of criticisms were only possible in those times.<sup>[290]</sup> At that time, Nehru had predicted that Vajpayee would become Prime Minister of India one day.<sup>[291]</sup> Other admirers of Nehru from opposing parties included George Fernandes who joined the socialist movement subject to the precondition that Nehru would not be replaced.<sup>[292]</sup>

### Vision and governing policies

According to Bhikhu Parekh, Nehru can be regarded as the founder of the modern Indian state. Parekh attributes this to the national philosophy Nehru formulated for India. For him, modernisation was the national philosophy, with seven goals: national unity, parliamentary democracy, industrialisation, socialism, development of the scientific temper, and non-alignment. In Parekh's opinion, the philosophy and the policies that resulted from this benefited a large section of society such as public sector workers, industrial houses, and middle and upper peasantry. However, it failed to benefit the urban and rural poor, the unemployed and the Hindu fundamentalists.<sup>[293]</sup>

After the exit of Subhash Chandra Bose from mainstream Indian politics,<sup>[294]</sup> the power struggle between the socialists and conservatives in the Congress party balanced out. However, the death of Vallabhbhai Patel in 1950 left Nehru as the sole remaining iconic national leader, and soon the situation became such that Nehru could implement many of his basic policies without hindrance.<sup>[295]</sup> Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, was able to fulfil her father's dream through the 42nd amendment (1976) of the Indian constitution by which India officially became "socialist" and "secular", during the state of emergency she imposed.<sup>[296][297]</sup>

Nehru implemented policies based on import substitution industrialisation and advocated a mixed economy where the government-controlled public sector would co-exist with the private sector.<sup>[298]</sup> He believed the establishment of basic and heavy industry was fundamental to the development and modernisation of the Indian economy. The government, therefore, directed investment primarily into key public sector industries—steel, iron, coal, and power—promoting their development with subsidies and protectionist policies.<sup>[299]</sup>

The policy of non-alignment during the Cold War meant that Nehru received financial and technical support from both power blocs in building India's industrial base from scratch.<sup>[300]</sup> Steel mill complexes were built at Bokaro and Rourkela with assistance from the Soviet Union and West Germany. There was substantial industrial development.<sup>[300]</sup> The industry grew 7.0% annually between 1950 and 1965—almost trebling industrial output and making India the world's seventh-largest industrial country.<sup>[300]</sup> Nehru's critics, however, contended that India's import substitution industrialisation, which continued long after the Nehru era, weakened the international competitiveness of its manufacturing industries.<sup>[301]</sup> India's share of world trade fell from 1.4% in 1951–1960 to 0.5% between 1981 and 1990.<sup>[302]</sup> However, India's export performance is argued to have shown actual sustained improvement over the period. The volume of exports grew at an annual rate of 2.9% in 1951–1960 to 7.6% in 1971–1980.<sup>[303]</sup>

GDP and GNP grew 3.9 and 4.0% annually between 1950 and 1951 and 1964–1965.<sup>[304][305]</sup> It was a radical break from the British colonial period,<sup>[306]</sup> but the growth rates were considered anaemic at best compared to other industrial powers in Europe and East Asia.<sup>[302][307]</sup> India lagged behind the miracle economies (Japan, West Germany, France, and Italy).<sup>[308]</sup> State planning, controls, and regulations were argued to have impaired economic growth.<sup>[309]</sup> While India's economy grew faster than both the United Kingdom and the United States, low initial income and rapid population increase meant that growth was inadequate for any sort of catch-up with rich income nations.<sup>[307][308][310]</sup>

### Agriculture policies

Under Nehru's leadership, the government attempted to develop India quickly by embarking on agrarian reform and rapid industrialisation.<sup>[311]</sup> A successful land reform was introduced that abolished giant landholdings, but efforts to redistribute land by placing limits on landownership failed. Attempts to introduce large-scale cooperative farming were

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frustrated by landowning rural elites, who formed the core of the powerful right-wing of the Congress and had considerable political support in opposing Nehru's efforts.<sup>[312]</sup> Agricultural production expanded until the early 1960s, as additional land was brought under cultivation and some irrigation projects began to have an effect. The establishment of agricultural universities, modelled after land-grant colleges in the United States, contributed to the development of the economy.<sup>[313]</sup> These universities worked with high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice, initially developed in Mexico and the Philippines, that in the 1960s began the Green Revolution, an effort to diversify and increase crop production. At the same time, a series of failed monsoons would cause serious food shortages, despite the steady progress and an increase in agricultural production.<sup>[314]</sup>

### Social policies

#### Education

Nehru was a passionate advocate of education for India's children and youth, believing it essential for India's future progress. His government oversaw the establishment of many institutions of higher learning, including the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institutes of Management and the National Institutes of Technology.<sup>[315]</sup> Nehru also outlined a commitment in his five-year plans to guarantee free and compulsory primary education to all of India's children. For this purpose, Nehru oversaw the creation of mass village enrolment programs and the construction of thousands of schools. Nehru also launched initiatives such as the provision of free milk and meals to children to fight malnutrition. Adult education centres and vocational and technical schools were also organised for adults, especially in the rural areas.<sup>[316]</sup>

#### Hindu code bills and marriage laws

Under Nehru, the Indian Parliament enacted many changes to Hindu law through the Hindu code bills to criminalise caste discrimination and increase the legal rights and social freedoms of women.<sup>[317][318]</sup> The Nehru administration saw such codification as necessary to unify the Hindu community, which ideally would be a first step towards unifying the nation.<sup>[319]</sup> They succeeded in passing four Hindu code bills in 1955–56: the Hindu Marriage Act, Hindu Succession Act, Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, and Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act.<sup>[320]</sup> Those who practise Sikhism, Jainism, and Buddhism are categorised as Hindus under the jurisdiction of the Code Bill.<sup>[321]</sup>

Nehru specifically wrote Article 44 of the Indian constitution under the Directive Principles of State Policy which states: "The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India." The article has formed the basis of secularism in India.<sup>[322]</sup> However, Nehru has been criticised for the inconsistent application of the law. Most notably, he allowed Muslims to keep their personal law in matters relating to marriage and inheritance. In the small state of Goa, a civil code based on the old Portuguese Family Laws was allowed to continue, and Nehru prohibited Muslim personal law. This resulted from the annexation of Goa in 1961 by India, when Nehru promised the people that their laws would be left intact. This has led to accusations of selective secularism.<sup>[323][324]</sup>

While Nehru exempted Muslim law from legislation and they remained unreformed, he passed the Special Marriage Act in 1954.<sup>[325]</sup> The idea behind this act was to give everyone in India the ability to marry outside the personal law under a civil marriage. In many respects, the act was almost identical to the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, demonstrating how secularised the law regarding Hindus had become. The Special Marriage Act allowed Muslims to marry under it and keep the protections, generally beneficial to Muslim women, that could not be found in the personal law. Under the act, polygamy was illegal, and inheritance and succession would be governed by the Indian Succession Act, rather than the respective Muslim personal law. Divorce would be governed by secular law, and maintenance of a divorced wife would be along the lines set down in civil law.<sup>[326]</sup>

#### Reservations for socially-oppressed communities

A system of reservations in government services and educational institutions was created to eradicate the social inequalities and disadvantages faced by peoples of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Nehru convincingly succeeded in secularism and religious harmony, increasing the representation of minorities in government.<sup>[327]</sup>

#### Language policy

Nehru was part of a faction of the Congress party that saw the benefit of an unifying local language, namely, Hindi.<sup>[328][329]</sup> However, Nehru himself recognised that "English is undoubtedly today the nearest approach to

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an international language".<sup>[330]</sup> After an exhaustive and divisive debate with the non-Hindi speakers, Hindi was adopted as the official language of India in 1950, with English continuing as an associate official language for 15 years, after which Hindi would become the sole official language. Efforts by the Indian Government to make Hindi the sole official language after 1965 were unacceptable to many non-Hindi Indian states, which wanted the continued use of English. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), a descendant of Dravidar Kazhagam, led the opposition to Hindi.<sup>[331]</sup> To allay their fears, Nehru enacted the Official Languages Act in 1963 to ensure the continuing use of English beyond 1965. The text of the Act did not satisfy the DMK and increased their scepticism that future administrations might not honour his assurances. The Congress Government headed by Indira Gandhi eventually amended the Official Languages Act in 1967 to guarantee the indefinite use of Hindi and English as official languages. This effectively ensured the current "virtual indefinite policy of bilingualism" of the Indian Republic.<sup>[332]</sup>

## Foreign policy

Throughout his long tenure as the prime minister, Nehru also held the portfolio of External Affairs. Usually with the assistance of Krishna Menon, Nehru shaped the new nation's foreign policy. He dealt with five major issues.<sup>[333][334]</sup>

- Partition of India and Relations with Pakistan: One of the major foreign policy issues that India faced after its independence in 1947 was the violent partition of the subcontinent and the emergence of Pakistan as a separate state. India and Pakistan had tense relations due to border disputes, which led to several wars between the two countries, including the first war in 1947–1948 and the second in 1965.<sup>[335]</sup>
- Relations with China: Another major foreign policy challenge for India during this period was its relationship with China, a neighbour to the north. India recognised the People's Republic of China in 1950 and established diplomatic relations with it, but border disputes led to the Sino-Indian War of 1962.<sup>[336]</sup>
- Non-alignment: India also pursued a policy of non-alignment during the Cold War. Nehru played a leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement, which consisted of developing countries that were not aligned with either the Western (pro-American) or Eastern (pro-Russian) blocs.<sup>[337]</sup> Nehru never gave up his grandiose dream of forging some sort of international coalition of non-colonial and the colonised powers. However the world was rapidly bifurcated by the emergence of the Cold War between the West, led by the United States and Britain, and the East, led by the Soviet Union. Nehru decided it was urgent to develop policies regarding the Cold War, as well as relations with Pakistan, Britain, and the Commonwealth. Other plans could wait. Nehru and the Congress looked on the Soviet Union with distrust, reassuring the West that there was not the least chance of India lining up with the Soviet Union in war or peace.<sup>[338]</sup> Nehru intensely disliked the Cold War—the more India got involved, he believed, the worse for his long-term objectives of economic and national development. He took the lead in the non-aligned movement.<sup>[339]</sup>
- Kashmir Conflict: The issue of dividing the largely Muslim state of Kashmir was a major foreign policy challenge for Nehru. India and Pakistan both claimed the entire region and fought several wars over how it was divided. The United Nations tried but failed to find a solution. At the United Nations, the Soviets supported Pakistan on Kashmir and there was a move to demand arbitration or a plebiscite, but India steadfastly repudiated the notions. Nehru insisted that Indian troops would not be withdrawn from Kashmir.<sup>[340]</sup>
- Economic Development: India also faced the challenge of promoting economic development and securing foreign aid and investment to achieve this goal. India sought aid from both Western and Eastern bloc countries, but it was often conditioned on political alignment or other considerations. Nehru wanted India to be self-sufficient.<sup>[341]</sup>

## The Commonwealth

Queen Elizabeth II with Nehru and other Commonwealth leaders, taken at the 1960 Commonwealth Conference, Windsor Castle

After independence, Nehru wanted to maintain good relations with Britain and other British commonwealth countries. As prime minister of the Dominion of India, he signed the 1949 London Declaration, under which India agreed to remain within the Commonwealth of Nations after becoming a republic in January 1950, and to recognise the British



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[A Monthly, Peer Reviewed Online Journal] Impact Factor: 7.580 |

Visit: [www.ijmrsetm.com](http://www.ijmrsetm.com)

Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016

monarch as a "symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth".<sup>[342][343]</sup> The other nations of the Commonwealth recognised India's continuing membership of the association.<sup>[344]</sup>

### Non-aligned movement

On the international scene, Nehru was an opponent of military action and military alliances. He was a strong supporter of the United Nations, except when it tried to resolve the Kashmir question. He pioneered the policy of non-alignment and co-founded the Non-Aligned Movement of nations professing neutrality between the rival blocs of nations led by the US and the USSR.<sup>[345]</sup> Recognising the People's Republic of China soon after its founding (while most of the Western bloc continued relations with Taiwan), Nehru argued for its inclusion in the United Nations and refused to brand the Chinese as the aggressors in their conflict with Korea.<sup>[346]</sup> He sought to establish warm and friendly relations with China in 1950 and hoped to act as an intermediary to bridge the gulf and tensions between the communist states and the Western bloc.<sup>[347]</sup>

Nehru was a key organiser of the Bandung Conference of April 1955, which brought 29 newly independent nations together from Asia and Africa, and was designed to galvanise the nonalignment movement under Nehru's leadership. He envisioned it as his key leadership opportunity on the world stage, where he would bring together emerging nations.<sup>[348]</sup> Instead, the Chinese representative, Zhou Enlai, downplayed revolutionary communism and acknowledged the right of all nations to choose their own economic and political systems, including even capitalism upstaged him. Nehru and his top foreign-policy aide, V.K. Krishna Menon, by contrast, gained an international reputation as rude and undiplomatic. Zhou said privately, "I have never met a more arrogant man than Mr. Nehru." A senior Indian foreign office official characterised Menon as "an outstanding world statesman but the world's worst diplomat," adding that he was often "overbearing, churlish and vindictive".<sup>[349]</sup>

### Defence and nuclear policy

While averse to war, Nehru led the campaigns against Pakistan in Kashmir. He used military force to annex Hyderabad in 1948 and Goa in 1961. While laying the foundation stone of the National Defence Academy in 1949, he stated:

We, who for generations had talked about and attempted in everything a peaceful way and practised non-violence, should now be, in a sense, glorifying our army, navy and air force. It means a lot. Though it is odd, yet it simply reflects the oddness of life. Though life is logical, we have to face all contingencies, and unless we are prepared to face them, we will go under. There was no greater prince of peace and apostle of non-violence than Mahatma Gandhi ... but yet, he said it was better to take the sword than to surrender, fail or run away. We cannot live carefree assuming that we are safe. Human nature is such. We cannot take the risks and risk our hard-won freedom. We have to be prepared with all modern defence methods and a well-equipped army, navy, and air force."<sup>[350][351]</sup>

Nehru entrusted Homi J. Bhabha, a nuclear physicist, with complete authority over all nuclear-related affairs and programs and answerable only to the prime minister.<sup>[352]</sup>

Many hailed Nehru for working to defuse global tensions and the threat of nuclear weapons after the Korean War (1950–1953).<sup>[353]</sup> He commissioned the first study of the effects of nuclear explosions on human health and campaigned ceaselessly for the abolition of what he called "these frightful engines of destruction". He also had pragmatic reasons for promoting de-nuclearization, fearing a nuclear arms race would lead to over-militarisation that would be unaffordable for developing countries such as his own.<sup>[354]</sup>

At Lord Mountbatten's urging, in 1948, Nehru had promised to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir under the auspices of the UN.<sup>[355]</sup> Kashmir was a disputed territory between India and Pakistan, the two have gone to war over it in 1947. However, as Pakistan failed to pull back troops in accordance with the UN resolution, and as Nehru grew increasingly wary of the UN, he declined to hold a plebiscite in 1953. His policies on Kashmir and the integration of the state into India were frequently defended before the United Nations by his aide, V. K. Krishna Menon, who earned a reputation in India for his passionate speeches.<sup>[356]</sup>

In 1953, Nehru orchestrated the ouster and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, the prime minister of Kashmir, whom he had previously supported but was now suspected of harbouring separatist ambitions; Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad replaced him.<sup>[357][358]</sup>

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Menon was instructed to deliver an unprecedented eight-hour speech defending India's stand on Kashmir in 1957; to date, the speech is the longest ever delivered in the United Nations Security Council, covering five hours of the 762nd meeting on 23 January, and two hours and forty-eight minutes on the 24th, reportedly concluding with Menon's collapse on the Security Council floor.<sup>[356]</sup> During the filibuster, Nehru moved swiftly and successfully to consolidate Indian power in Kashmir (then under great unrest). Menon's passionate defence of Indian sovereignty in Kashmir enlarged his base of support in India and led to the Indian press temporarily dubbing him the "Hero of Kashmir". Nehru was then at the peak of his popularity in India; the only (minor) criticism came from the far right.<sup>[359][360]</sup>

In 1954, Nehru signed with China the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, known in India as the Panchsheel (from the Sanskrit words, panch: five, sheel: virtues), a set of principles to govern relations between the two states. Their first formal codification in treaty form was in an agreement between China and India in 1954, which recognised Chinese sovereignty over Tibet.<sup>[361]</sup> They were enunciated in the preamble to the "Agreement (with the exchange of notes) on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India", which was signed at Peking on 29 April 1954. Negotiations took place in Delhi from December 1953 to April 1954 between the Delegation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) Government and the Delegation of the Indian Government on the relations between the two countries regarding the disputed territories of Aksai Chin and South Tibet. By 1957, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai had also persuaded Nehru to accept the Chinese position on Tibet, thus depriving Tibet of a possible ally, and of the possibility of receiving military aid from India.<sup>[362]</sup> The treaty was disregarded in the 1960s, but in the 1970s, the Five Principles again came to be seen as important in China–India relations, and more generally as norms of relations between states. They became widely recognised and accepted throughout the region during the premiership of Indira Gandhi and the three-year rule of the Janata Party (1977–1980).<sup>[363]</sup> Although the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence were the basis of the 1954 Sino-Indian border treaty, in later years, Nehru's foreign policy suffered from increasing Chinese assertiveness over border disputes and his decision to grant asylum to the 14th Dalai Lama.<sup>[364]</sup>

Dag Hammarskjöld, the second secretary-general of the United Nations, said that while Nehru was superior from a moral point of view, Zhou Enlai was more skilled in realpolitik.<sup>[365]</sup>

In 1956, Nehru criticised the joint invasion of the Suez Canal by the British, French, and Israelis. His role, both as Indian prime minister and a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, was significant; he tried to be even-handed between the two sides while vigorously denouncing Anthony Eden and co-sponsors of the invasion. Nehru had a powerful ally in the US President Dwight Eisenhower who, if relatively silent publicly, went to the extent of using America's clout at the International Monetary Fund to make Britain and France back down. During the Suez crisis, Nehru's right-hand man, Menon attempted to persuade a recalcitrant Gamal Nasser to compromise with the West and was instrumental in moving Western powers towards an awareness that Nasser might prove willing to compromise.<sup>[366]</sup>

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### Assassination attempts and security

There were four known assassination attempts on Nehru. The first attempt was made during partition in 1947 while he was visiting the North-West Frontier Province (now in Pakistan) in a car.<sup>[367]</sup> A second was by Baburao Laxman Kochale, a knife-wielding rickshaw-puller, near Nagpur in 1955.<sup>[c]</sup> The third attempt took place in Bombay in 1956,<sup>[372][373]</sup> and the fourth was a failed bombing attempt on train tracks in Maharashtra in 1961.<sup>[374]</sup> Despite threats to his life, Nehru despised having too much security around him and did not like to disrupt traffic because of his movements.<sup>[375]</sup>

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### Death

If any people choose to think of me then I should like them to say, "This was the man who with all his mind and heart loved India and the Indian people. And they in turn were indulgent to him and gave him of their love most abundantly and extravagantly."

– Jawaharlal Nehru, 1954.<sup>[376]</sup>

Nehru's health began declining steadily in 1962. In the spring of 1962, he was affected with a viral infection over which he spent most of April in bed.<sup>[377]</sup> In the next year, through 1963, he spent months recuperating in Kashmir. Some

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writers attribute this dramatic decline to his surprise and chagrin over the Sino-Indian War, which he perceived as a betrayal of trust.<sup>[378]</sup> Upon his return from Dehradun on 26 May 1964, he was feeling quite comfortable and went to bed at about 23:30 as usual. He had a restful night until about 06:30. Soon after he returned from the bathroom, Nehru complained of pain in the back. He spoke to the doctors who attended to him for a brief while, and almost immediately he collapsed. He remained unconscious until he died at 13:44.<sup>[379]</sup> His death was announced in the Lok Sabha at 14:00 local time on 27 May 1964; the cause of death was believed to be a heart attack.<sup>[380]</sup> Draped in the Indian national Tricolour flag, the body of Jawaharlal Nehru was placed for public viewing. "Raghupati Raghava Rajaram" was chanted as the body was placed on the platform. On 28 May, Nehru was cremated in accordance with Hindu rites at the Shantivan on the banks of the Yamuna, witnessed by 1.5 million mourners who had flocked into the streets of Delhi and the cremation grounds.<sup>[381]</sup>

US President Lyndon B. Johnson remarked on his death:-

History has already recorded his monumental contribution to the molding of a strong and independent India. And yet, it is not just as a leader of India that he has served humanity. Perhaps more than any other world leader he has given expression to man's yearning for peace. This is the issue of our age. In his fearless pursuit of a world free from war he has served all humanity.<sup>[382]</sup>

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev remarked:-

He was a passionate fighter for peace in the whole world and an ardent champion of the realization of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states; he was the inspirer of the policy of Non-Alignment promoted by the Indian Government. This reasonable policy won India respect and due to it, India is now occupying a worthy place in the international arena.<sup>[383]</sup>

Nehru's death left India with no clear political heir to his leadership. Lal Bahadur Shastri later succeeded Nehru as the prime minister.<sup>[384]</sup>

The death was announced to the Indian parliament in words similar to Nehru's own at the time of Gandhi's assassination: "The light is out."<sup>[385][386]</sup> India's future prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee famously delivered Nehru an acclaimed eulogy.<sup>[387]</sup> He hailed Nehru as Bharat Mata's "favourite prince" and likened him to the Hindu god Rama.<sup>[388]</sup>

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  - Schenk, Hans (2011). Housing India's Urban Poor 1800–1965: Colonial and Post-colonial Studies. Routledge. ISBN 978-1-00-019185-1. The idea that the state should actively and in a planned and 'rational' and 'modern' manner promote development originated abroad. Inspiration came to some extent from the Soviet Russian planned economic development, and for some, including Nehru, from the—at that time still a bit remote—concept of the West European and largely social-democrat idea of the 'Welfare' state.
  - Winiecki, Jan (2015). Shortcut or Piecemeal: Economic Development Strategies and Structural Change. Central European University Press. p. 41. ISBN 9789633860632. Nehru, a Fabian socialist, or social-democrat in modern parlance, either did not read Mill or disregarded the (minimal) institutional requirements outlined by that classical writer. In Nehru's view, it was the state that should direct the economy from the center, as well as decide about the allocation of scarce resources.
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**Volume 3, Issue 7, July 2016**

socialism. While Jawaharlal Nehru was considered as a social democrat, his colleague in the Constituent Assembly, B. R. Ambedkar, was emphatic about state socialism. It appears that the compromise between these two ideas has been reflected in the Directive Principles of State Policy. The principles of social democracy and/or democratic socialism can be interrogated in the context of the present situation in India.

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