
UNIT 11 JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Structure

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Nehru's Scientific Temper
 - 11.2.1 Science and Religion
 - 11.2.2 Scientific Humanism
- 11.3 Nehru's Theory of Culture
- 11.4 Political Ideas of Nehru
 - 11.4.1 On Nationalism
 - 11.4.2 On Democracy
 - 11.4.3 Individual Freedom and Equality
 - 11.4.4 On Parliamentary Democracy
- 11.5 Nehru on Socialism
- 11.6 Nehru's International Outlook
- 11.7 Summary
- 11.8 Exercises

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru is rightly acclaimed as the maker of modern India. Having faith in the Indian people, he sought to build a democratic polity, an economically modernised nation and a country whose role in the community of nations he perceived clearly. He was both a philosopher as well as a practical political leader. He did learn the western style of living and life, and to that extent he did imbibe in himself the western culture and western democratic thought with a clear tilt towards a near-communist thinking, yet, in his latter years, he acquired, as Michael Brecher said (*Nehru: A Political Biography*), "a deeper appreciation of Indian history and philosophy and enriched the basis for subsequent thought and action." He was influenced by the developments of the 19th and 20th centuries as he found them in the world, but at no point of time, he closed his eyes from the ground realities of the country he belonged. Though he belonged to life of comforts and luxuries, he remained a man of masses.

Jawaharlal Nehru (henceforth, Nehru) was born in 1889. He received education at his home in Allahabad and at Harrow and Cambridge. During his seven years stay in England, he imbibed the traditions of British humanist liberation, subscribing largely to ethos propagated by Mill, Gladstone and Morley. Among those whose ideas influenced Nehru were George Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. He was not a political philosopher like Hobbes, Rousseau, or Marx, but he was certainly a man of ideas as also of action.

Nehru was one of the indomitable fighters of Indian freedom who led the Congress movement

(under Gandhiji's leadership) along with a host of other leaders such as Vallabhai Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Rajendra Prasad, to mention a few. He led the interim government in 1946 and became the first Prime Minister of the independent India and occupied this position till his death in 1964. During the period of national movement, Nehru suffered imprisonment many a times and had presided over the Congress a couple of times. He was the Congress President in 1929 when it adopted the historic resolution of 'Purna Swaraj'.

Nehru authored *Glimpses of World History*, *Autobiography* and *The Discovery of India*.

11.2 NEHRU'S SCIENTIFIC TEMPER

Nehru was basically a scientist in his approach. In fact, he was the first amongst the nationalist leaders who did recognise the importance of science and technology for the modernisation of the Indian society. For a modern educated Indian and this is true as well, Nehru represented the desire to be modern and scientific in one's outlook. To Nehru, Science constituted the very essence of life, without which, he would say, the modern world would have found it difficult to survive. Science, being the dominant factor in modern life, Nehru asserts, must guide the social system and economic structure. Emphasising the achievements of science which include mighty and fundamental changes in numerous fields, what is the most important of all changes is the development of the scientific outlook in man. Together with the scientific method, the new outlook of man alone could offer to mankind hope and expectation of a good life and an ending of the agony of the world, Nehru argued. He was aware of the difficulties inherited "in nurturing science and technology in a society where thought processes were governed by traditional mores." He was never tired of speaking about the scientific temper or fighting irrationality (See R.C. Pillai, *Nehru and His Critics*, p. 29)

Addressing the Indian Science Congress in late thirties, Nehru stated: "Politics led me to economics and this led me inevitably to science, and the scientific approach to all our problems and to life itself. It was science alone that could solve these problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and literacy, of superstition and deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people."

Like his father, Nehru was an agnostic. Nehru had never been able to absorb the religious devoutness of his mother. In spite of his over thirty years' contact with Gandhiji whose prophetic personality impressed everyone, Nehru continued and in fact, remained agnostic. He was not a dogmatic or militant atheist, but he was not a spiritualist either. He writes: "Often, often as I look at this world, I have a sense of mysteries, of unknown depths. What the mysterious is I do not know. I do not call it God because God has come to mean much that I do not believe in ..." But what he could call spiritual, the term that he used often, was nothing but one that we subscribe to 'moral' or 'ethical' and Nehru was, only in that narrow sense, religious; religious in the framework of science. Science was Nehru's mantra: "science as the way of observation and precise knowledge and deliberate reasoning".

11.2.1 Science and Religion

Nehru's scientific temper did not permit him to be dogmatic. He had, therefore, no attraction

for any religion, for he saw nothing more than superstition and dogmatism in the religion, in any religion. Behind every religion, Nehru argued, lay a method of approach which was wholly unscientific. But he did recognise that religion does provide some kind of a satisfaction to the inner needs of human nature and give a set of moral and ethical values of life in general. Religion was acceptable to Nehru only to that limited extent. He was not a religious man, nor would he ever spend time, as a routine, for morning and evening worshipping. Science was much preferable to religion, Nehru used to argue and continued.

As Nehru had scientific temper, it was natural that he would be a secularist. V.P. Varma (*Modern Indian Political Thought*) writes, "But for a person (Jawaharlal Nehru, for example) who is an agnostic, materialist or atheist, it is easy to adopt a secularist attitude." "Jawaharlal was", he continues, "an agnostic and was not emotionally involved in religious disputations."

Secularism is basically the separation of religion from politics. Politics is associated with public activities. Religion is an individual affair, giving everyone the right to practise one's own religion. Referring to the concept of secularism, Nehru says "Some people think that it means something opposed to religion. That obviously is not correct. What it means is that it is a state which honours all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities; that as a state, it does not allow itself to be attached to one faith or religion, which then becomes the state religion." As a part of religious community anyone can share any belief. People observe their religious festivals, rituals and customs. But at the same time, if anybody wants to come out of this belief system, he has a right to do so. If somebody is an atheist, he is free not to have any faith. State is not going to interfere in somebody's belief system.

Nehru did not take religion in a narrow sense: religion does not teach hatred and intolerance; all religions speak the truth; that is the essence of each religion. He was of the view that the religious basis of politics does not help social progress. At the same time, Nehru had respect for Gandhi's view on the role of religion in politics. He was of the opinion that Gandhi had a moral view of politics. For Gandhi, religion can teach the politicians to be moral and ethical; it has a role in a society for teaching moral values and maintaining an ethical order. To that extent, Nehru was one with Gandhi. But at the same time he opposed the view that political parties should be organised on the basis of religion. That created hatred between different religions and hatred breeds violence and intolerance among people. He agreed to the point that religious equality can be the basis of creating a peaceful and harmonious society. Without social peace, no social progress is possible. Changing the religion of a group can create social disharmony; though he theoretically agreed to this point of view, he did not support it politically.

Nehru was a secularist. He disapproved both the Hindu communalism as well as the Muslim communalism. His loyalty to secularism has been a great relief to the minority group in India. His belief in scientific methodology with its stress on rationalism has helped the evolution of his nationalist political ideology.

11.2.2 Scientific Humanism

It is not easy to declare Nehru irreligious; he was, in fact, not opposed to religion. He did recognise that religion 'supplied a deep craving of human beings'. He did admit that religion served a significant human purpose as "the resting ground for 'faith' and 'faith in

progress, in a sense, in ideals, in human goodness and human destiny" (see Nehru, *An Autobiography*). According to Nehru, it was from 'faith' that 'the inner imaginative urges' which distinguished man from other beings, flowed, and it was to these urges that the ends of a life bore reference. Science too, Nehru says, suggested the existence of the inner world of spirit, but the latter was beyond the reach of science, for his understanding of science was that it explained the 'How's' of the existence but left the 'why's' of it alone. Obviously then, man had to turn inwards to his intuition to see the world of spirit. Thus, between science and intuition, the role was clear: science could help refine one's senses; intuition could help understand the spiritual world. The only adequate philosophy of life, 'the integral vision of life', as Nehru called it, was, the one that had the 'temper and approach of science allied to the philosophy and with reverence for all that lies beyond'. "It was", as Nehru had said, "philosophy which explained the matter of existence while science explained the manner of it." (See, Nehru, *The Discovery of India*). So, Nehru concludes: "Lest the approach of life grew lopsided, with either the outerself or the innerself, and not both as combined when as the whole life, reconciling of the scientific with the spirit of philosophy was necessary for 'balancing of an individual's outer and inner life.'" (See M.N. JHA, *Modern Indian Political Thought*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Meerut.) Nehru, thus, adds the environmental dimension to Gandhi's worldview on the one hand, and though he drifts away from Gandhi, he aligns himself with him on the other. Though he got influenced by Marx's scientific approach, he alienated himself from him for his hostility to the spirit of man. To that extent Nehru combines the scientific aspect of the Marx and the spiritualist aspect of Gandhi, especially in his scientific humanism. Scientific humanism forms the basic content of Nehru's view of human relationship.

Nehru's scientific humanism had the combination of scientific dimension as well as the spiritual dimension. Unlike Gandhi's uni-dimensional approach, there is a bi-dimensional approach in Nehru. According to Nehru, "the way to the spiritualisation of human relationships lay through that of the circumstances **envi**roning them". Nehru himself admitted that it was in the interest of man to have faith in the essential spirituality of manhood, but he emphasised that faith was merely the concluding end of the rationalist process. He was of the opinion that man would never have faith in the spirituality of the human being unless circumstances **envi**roning him compelled it. He asserted that the way to the spiritualisation of the social progresses lay through the objectivisation of the spirit of man alone and to the realisation of the social processes lay through the objectivisation of the spirit of man alone, and to the realisation of it.

The key to man's problems lies, as Nehru believed, if people tried to imbibe in themselves the highest ideals, such as humanism and scientific spirit. He did not see any conflict between the two: "there is a growing synthesis between humanism and scientific spirit, resulting in the kind of scientific humanism". He writes: "the modern mind, that is to say, the better type of the modern type, is practical and pragmatic ethical and social, altruistic and humanitarian. It is governed by a practical idealism for social betterment. It has discarded to a large extent the philosophic approach of the ancients, their search for ultimate reality as well as the devotionism and mysticism of the medieval period. Humanity is its god and social service, its religion".

Endowed with a scientific and rational temper, Nehru always looked upon science as an effective means for the liberation of man.

11.3 NEHRU'S THEORY OF CULTURE

As an active politician and an author with sociological realism and political pragmatism, Nehru would hardly subscribe to the concept of culture as an organic unity permeated with some primordial systems. Nehru could never entertain such a perspective of India's structural cultural continuity, but he did appreciate the vicissitudes of India's historical transformations from the days of the ancient Harappan civilisation to the contemporary one. He was not the man who would acknowledge the revelation of God or Dharma in the Indian cultural manifestations. Nehru is a naturalist determinist who upholds physical, geological, zoological, chemical and anthropological data, but sees no spiritual governance of the cosmic process. So with Nehru's historiography, there are no providential dispensation and no emotional attachment to any specific culture.

Though Nehru was a Brahmin, he did not attach any meaning to ritualism; he did admire the Gita gospel of dedicated disinterested altruism, and was never thrilled by the exalted orations of the Visvarupa of the Gita's eleventh chapter. He was more influenced by Russell and Lenin than by the notion of Nirvana. The external materialistic attempts of the Western-Soviet worlds fascinated Nehru more than the Puranic cosmography of the oriental world. That does not mean that Nehru was all Marxist-Leninist. He did know the strength of Marxism – Leninism, but he also knew that it was weak in domains relating to humanist values, when it ignored the positive aspects of capitalistic system, and also when it came to dwell solely on materialistic factors. Nehru was a blend of the two extremes: the external civilisational advancement together with a quest for the realisation of values in all spheres of human activities. Professor Varma holds the view: "Towards the latter part of his life, Jawaharlal would have agreed that materialistic dialectics and class polarity cannot be adequate tools for understanding the widespread ramifications of alienation." "Values", he continues, "in turn, lose their significance if they are solely regarded as class ideological responses."

Nehru's concept of culture was not spiritual, but material; it was not eternal, but humanist; it was, more or less, this worldly, historical and to that extent a blend of secular and temporal, social and economic values. His culture was not dogmatic, fundamentalist, fanatical, narrow, prophetic, angelical, divine and godly. It was one that was an apostle of compassion, altruism, humanism and one which was more close to liberty, equality, fraternity, human rights, and rationalistic. Speaking about the concept of culture, Professor Varma says, "Cultural comprehensiveness requires an emancipated mind liberated from the shackles of dogmatic and revealed theology, the renunciation of unjust demands for the retention of unfounded socio-economic vestiges and the abjuration of all claims to impose one's limited conceptions of ethics, justice and social norms on others professing loyalty to divergent creeds and religious tenets." About Nehru's culture, Professor Varma concluded, "Jawaharlal and some other top spokesmen of Gandhian values found it easy to reconcile democratic liberalism with social toleration and cultural pluralism because they had genuine commitment to the demands of patriotism oriented towards cosmopolitan fulfilment. Jawaharlal was sincere in his advocacy of secularism as a political and cultural value,"

11.4 POLITICAL IDEAS OF NEHRU

11.4.1 On Nationalism

Nehru was a great nationalist, though he had no theory of nationalism. He did believe in the objectivity of the fundamental unity of India nurtured on cultural foundations which was, according to him, “not religious in the narrow sense of the term. He did accept the narrow diversities, but, at the same time, he admired the unity running throughout the Indian history. He was, indeed, inspired by the concept of cultural pluralism and synthesis. To him, nationalism was a noble phase of self-magnification. He writes: "Nationalism is essentially a group memory of past achievements, traditions, and experiences, and nationalism is stronger today than it has ever been Wherever a crisis has arisen, nationalism has emerged again and dominated the scene, and people have sought comfort and strength in their old traditions. One of the remarkable developments of the present age has been the rediscovery of the past and/ or the nation." But nationalism has also solid – social, political and economic – foundations.

By nature, Nehru was a nationalist and was a rebel against authoritarianism. He did not like the politics of talks, of too much submission and appeal to authorities and that was why he always found himself akin to Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He says: "So far as political matters were concerned, I was, if I may say so, an Indian nationalist desiring India's freedom, and rather, inclined, in the context of Indian politics to the more extreme wing of it, as represented then by Mr. Tilak." But he was in the way in agreement with Tilak's, deep religious motivations.

Nehru's nationalism had its clear distinctive features. It was a composite and a living force and as such could make the strongest appeal to the spirit of man. Only such a type of socialism could be a driving force for freedom, and it alone could give a certain degree of unity, vigour and vitality to many people all over the world. But Nehru did not appreciate the narrow and fanatical type of nationalism. R.C. Pillai writes about Nehru's views on narrow nationalism: "Nationalism would be harmful, if it ever made the people conscious of their own superiority. It would be most undesirable if the spirit of nationalism pushed up any people towards aggressive expansionism," Nehru himself says of the Indian nationalism as liberal and tolerant: "Nationalism is essentially an anti-feeling and it feeds and fattens on hatred and anger against other national groups..."

Translated into action, Nehru's nationalism was patriotism and independence of the country. In fact, Nehru's nationalism was a firm commitment to the idea of complete independence of the country. In his sharply worded rejoinder to all those who still advocated dominion states, Nehru most emphatically stated, way back in 1928, “If India has a message to give to the world, it is clear that she can do so more effectively as an independent country than as a member of the British group." And in 1928, he presided over the Lahore Congress session and got the Purna Swaraj resolution passed.

11.4.2 On Democracy

Nehru was a great champion of democracy. Throughout his life, he laid emphasis on the importance of democracy and desired passionately that independent India would go along the full democratic process. He had a great passion for freedom. Grown in the Western democratic

traditions, Nehru absorbed, since childhood, many of the dominant concepts of modern democratic thought. He had read extensively philosophers such as Rousseau, Montesquieu, Mill and made reference of their works in the writings. He conferred and wrote in his *An Autobiography*, "My roots are still perhaps partly in the 19th century and I have been too much influenced by the humanist liberal tradition to get out of it completely".

For Nehru, democracy was an intellectual condition, it was primarily a way of life, based on the hypothesis that the freedom was integral to the being of man. He was also aware that freedom required a set of conditions. He writes: "Self-discipline, tolerance, and a taste of peace – these were the basic conditions for living a life of freedom". He did not subscribe to the view that unrestrained freedom made any sense. He held, M.N. Jha says, "that the state was born to make a reality of the freedom of its citizens, for, it served to counteract the evil influences of the lower instincts of the individual man in the social process." The state, Nehru held, was a spiritual necessity for man to clear the particularistic convictions that the religions promote.

Nehru was a true democrat, for he never doubted the soundness of democracy as a spiritual proposition. In his view, the spiritualisation of a social process was, "synonymous with the maximisation of democracy within it, and the latter called for the objectivisation of not merely the guarantees of rights but also of rights themselves."

Nehru's concept of democracy had specific implications. In the early years of liberation struggle, democracy, for Nehru, meant the ideal of self-rule or responsible government. Later, with the socialist ideas altering his world-view, he came to see democracy as one that emphasised an equality of opportunity to all in the economic and political field and freedom for the individual to grow and develop to the best of his personality.

11.4.3 Individual Freedom and Equality

Nehru was a democrat by nature, temperament and conviction; he held individual freedom and equality as important components of any democratic polity. According to Nehru, the creative spirit of man could grow only in an atmosphere of freedom. To promote and preserve the values of human life, both society and individual must enjoy freedom. The purpose of a democratic society, Nehru held, was essentially to provide necessary conditions of creative development. Why must India accept the democracy process? Nehru gave the following reason.

"It is not enough for us merely to produce the material goods of the world. We do want high standard of living, but not at the cost of man's creative spirit, his creative energy, his spirit of adventure, not at the cost of all fine things of life which have ennobled man throughout the ages. Democracy is not merely a question of elections."

Nehru believed in the primacy and autonomy of the individual; the state had no right to suppress the individual, no development could be attained if man's creative abilities were to remain suppressed. Nehru's concept of individual freedom necessarily implied freedom of speech, and expression, of association, of many other fields of human activities. The general health of a society, Nehru believed, was largely determined by the freedom of its people.

In Nehru's democratic thought, equality constituted an important component of his concept of democracy. "The spirit of the age is in favour of equality ..." Nehru declared. The doctrine of equality, according to Nehru, meant equal opportunities for all; it presupposed a certain faith in and respect for humanity as a whole, and a belief that the progress and well-being of individuals, groups, or races mainly depended upon the enjoyment of equal opportunities by all, with more opportunities to the weaker sections of society.

11.4.4 On Parliamentary Democracy

Indian cultural traditions and historical experience under the British rule helped Nehru to support the parliamentary democracy instead of Presidential system of the USA. Parliamentary democracy is much more flexible to accommodate diverse social groups. No social group is allowed to go out of the system as the system is ready to bear the agitation organised by such a group to a point. Even Nehru did not agree to the demands of such groups but accommodated their demands in a democratic process. Once the system accepts the demands, the agitation fritters away. For instance, the states' reorganisation on the basis of language is a classic case. There was agitation by Telugu people for the separation of Andhra from Madras Presidency; Nehru as the Prime Minister accepted the demand by constituting a Committee of Reorganisation of States on the basis of language with some reservation. This is the spirit of a democratic leader. Very often the leader may not agree to the point theoretically but accepts it as the best policy for creating a healthy system. Once the states are reorganised on the basis of language, the Indian democracy functions as a federation; though in the Constitution it is written as a union of states, in practice it functions as a federation. Federation helps in building an institutional framework for nurturing the cultural identities of a linguistic group. In the Indian Constitution there is a distribution of powers between the centre and the states. Legal and institutional arrangements hold the key to democracy, while linguistic federalism provides the flesh to the skeleton democracy. This political arrangement has been working for fifty years without creating problems of unmanageable magnitude, though there are problems for the Indian Federation from the peripheral states.

Parliamentary democracy supports cabinet form of executive that can accommodate each state and community in it. The formation of Council of Ministers helps to give a place to each group and state. This creates a healthy federation by accommodating and incorporating representatives from different groups. In the Presidential system it is not possible, as the formation of the executive becomes prerogative of the President. Further, there is a chance that the President can turn into an authoritarian personality. This is not possible in the parliamentary system. The Prime Minister is one of the Council of Ministers though he is the leader of the House and leader of the nation. He cannot but be a democrat as he listens to various viewpoints not only from the Ministers as his colleagues, but also from the Chief Ministers. Nehru was always in constant communication with the Chief Ministers; sometimes there was opposition from the Chief Ministers to his viewpoint but he listened to them. In the case of Hindu Code Bill he had a strong difference with the President of India, Rajendra Prasad. But he tried to accommodate Prasad's viewpoint in making the Hindu Code Bill, though he characterised the bill as a conservative one. Nehru opposed the intervention by the President, as unconstitutional, on the grounds that in the Indian democracy, the President is a nominal head. As a Prime Minister, he recognised the President's position and wanted the latter to lead as a friend and guide, and not as a master of the team.

Parliamentary democracy depends on the balancing of institutions. Nehru played a decisive role in bringing a balance between the legislature, executive and judiciary. He had a high regard for the legislature. He made it a point to attend every session of the Lok Sabha. He tried to listen to the opposition with a sharp attention. He saw to it that his cabinet colleagues did some homework before attending the session. He, as a team leader, provided leadership to his team for performing better in Parliament. He cooperated with his colleagues and the opposition leaders for showing to the world that India's nascent democracy functions well. The outside intelligentsia, who did study the functioning of Indian Parliament, gave due recognition to Nehru as a Parliamentarian, who got due cooperation from the opposition and his colleagues. There were many stalwarts on the opposition front, leaders like Lohia, Masani and Kripalani. There were political leaders outside the parliamentary system like JP Narain and Vinoba who recognised the leadership qualities of Nehru. Very often these non-parliamentary leaders, branded as the 'saintly politicians' of this country had a bigger influence in politics than the political parties and Nehru was able to get necessary cooperation from these outstanding leaders as well. He directed the administration to provide all cooperation for making the Bhoodan movement a success.

Parliamentary democracy depends on the periodic election for getting a mandate of the people, wherein a political party puts forth an election manifesto and faces the election which is conducted by the neutral authority, the Election Commission. The Congress, under the leadership Nehru, faced the general election to the Lok Sabha and secured the majority in the Lok Sabha and formed the government at the centre. It is interesting to note that the Congress Party under Nehru's leadership faced the general election successfully till he was alive. He placed an Election manifesto in 1946 general election regarding the abolition of the Zamindari System. The general public gave wide support to him, though the election was held before Independence. His leadership was recognised and got legitimacy among the people of India. In the 1952 general election, the manifesto of the Congress carried the question of the implementation of the programmes of the first five year planned document which contained the state's role in both the rural and industrial economy. The public accepted this overwhelmingly. The Congress Party won each election on the basis of its performance, competing with the opposition political parties like the Socialist, Swatantra and Communists, But Nehru had a high regard for these political leaders and parties. He helped some of the leaders to get elected in the by-election to the Lok Sabha and did not field any candidate against the opposition leaders. He was concerned about the quality of the debates in the parliament which was possible only with the presence of the top leaders on the opposition side, Moreover, participation in electoral politics strengthens the parliamentary democracy. Competitive politics is based on the participation of different political parties with a different ideology. Election becomes the festival for the parliamentary democracy. Nehru used to participate in these festivals with all seriousness. Election studies conducted by the independent academia show that the Congress had got the electoral support from each section of the society, both in terms of caste and class. Electoral politics help in the mobilisation of various social groups into the system whose demands keep increasing the capacity of the political system.

11.5 NEHRU ON SOCIALISM

Nehru's interest in socialism can be traced to his Cambridge days when the Fabianism of George Bernard Shaw and the Webbs attracted him. He was, during those days, attending

the lectures of John Maynard Keynes and Bertrand Russell, which influenced his ideas. The fast changing political, social and economic ideas taking place throughout the world sharpened his socialistic influences. India's millions living in poverty made Nehru a socialist, notwithstanding the Marxist ideology of Marx and Lenin which had its profound impact on him. Socialism, with Nehru, was not merely an economic doctrine; 'it is a vital creed', Nehru spoke at the 1936 Congress session, "which I hold with all my head and heart." He was convinced that there was no other way of ending the appalling mass poverty and sufferings in India except through socialism.

Nehru was of the opinion that no ideology other than socialism could fit in the democratic pattern as that of India. He was convinced that no democracy could succeed without imbibing socialist pattern. The essence of socialism, Nehru used to say, lies in "the control by the state of the means of production", and the idea inspiring socialism was the prevention of the exploitation of the poor by the rich. The socialist way, to Nehru, was that of "the ending of poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection." He laughed off Gandhi's claim to being a socialist and rejected the Marxian thesis of the dictatorship of proletariat. Under India's peculiar conditions, Nehru came to advocate the socialistic, if not socialism, pattern of society.

Nehru's concept of socialism was not the abolition of private property, but the replacement of the present profit system by the higher ideal of cooperative service. His socialism was not the state ownership of the means of production, but was their societal and cooperative ownership. Nehru brought socialism close to democracy.

Nehru's socialism has the distinctive characteristic of progressive industrialisation through which alone the Indian economic problems (poverty, backwardness, low rate of production) could be solved and through which alone the modern India could be built. He strongly believed that in industrialisation, "the only solution for this lay in utilising modern science and technology for accelerating the progress of industrialisation on which depended also the prospects of agricultural development". For industrialisation, Nehru ruled out the capitalistic model and pleaded the socialist model by limiting the same to nationalisation of certain key industries and cooperative approach in agriculture while allowing the private sector to participate in industry and agriculture. That was what one may say the essence of socialistic pattern of society ... the model which was made to work through (i) economic planning; (ii) mixed economy, (iii) five years plans. Nehru knew that the socialistic pattern of society was "not socialism in its pure form but this form would," he was convinced, "lead the country in the direction of socialism."

Nehru's concept of socialism had a vision of future India and of modernising India. He wrote: "For we have to build India on a scientific foundation to develop her industries, to change that feudal character of her land system and bring her agriculture in time with modern methods to develop the social services which she lacks so utterly today." If India has to modernise itself, it must, Nehru said, "lessen her religiosity and turn to science. She must get rid of her exclusiveness in thought and social habit which has become like a prison to her, stunting her spirit and preventing growth."

11.6 NEHRU'S INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Nehru's significant contribution lies in the evolution and growth of an international outlook. Indeed, he was a great nationalist and as such had a vision of independent India's foreign policy which was in tune with India's national interest. Non-alignment as foreign policy was nationalistic in its objectives. India could not have devoted itself to modernisation, nor would it have successfully protected her frontiers, had it aligned with any one of the two military blocs. Her economy, politics, social existence, internal circumstances would have been at risk if India would have chosen the path of joining any bloc of the post-war (1945) days. So, if Nehru sought to build an independent non-aligned foreign policy for India, it made sense and brought to the fore Nehru as a nationalist.

But Nehru was, despite his being a nationalist, a great internationalist. He was the architect of non-alignment as a movement and as a force on the international forum. At heart, Nehru was internationalist, an advocate for the United Nations, a champion of the world. He had a role for India in the community of nations. India, therefore, Nehru argued, "must be prepared to discard her narrow nationalism in favour of world cooperation and real internationalism." He used to insist that the states should maintain a reasonable balance between nationalism and internationalism. Narrow nationalism, according to him, leads to imperialism which he discarded outrightly, to fascism which he denounced at the first opportunity, to exploitation of one state by another which he thought posed a threat to world peace. He would rather visualise the emergence of a world federation, and a world republic, and not an empire for exploitation. Nehru says: "The world has become internationalised, production is international, markets are international and transport is international. No nation is really independent, they are all interdependent."

If romantic loyalties had made Nehru a nationalist, "the rational and pragmatic considerations," Professor Varma says, "for human welfare made him a believer in peaceful coexistence and the ideals of "one world". In an age of nuclear fission, hydrogen fusion and the prospects of neutron bombs and chemical warfares, Nehru could have been an apostle of world peace, a champion of disarmament, and a true believer of the ideals of the United Nations. There is only one alternative to world terrorism, and it is, as Nehru rightly says, world peace.

11.7 SUMMARY

Nehru's contribution to India's freedom struggle and to the making of modern India can hardly be denied. He was one of the important leaders of the Indian National Congress. Though he was a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and also his successor, he had significant differences with him. Nehru was not a religious man while Gandhi was; he never shared Gandhi's views on spiritualisation of politics; he never subscribed to Gandhi's economic ideas of trusteeship. Nehru was agnostic, and hence, in politics, a secularist. He found in science a solution to all problems. All through his life, Nehru advocated a scientific temper and preached scientific humanism.

Nehru was a political realist and had always a pragmatic approach towards all the problems. In his political ideas, Nehru was a nationalist to the point of internationalism, a firm believer in democracy; had a passion for individual freedom and for equality. He advocated

parliamentary democracy and wanted to build a democratic polity. In his economic ideas, Nehru was a socialist of the Fabian brand. He chose a mid-way between capitalism and Marxism. His outstanding contribution in the international field has been his advocacy of a peaceful and secure world.

11.8 EXERCISES

1. Explain Nehru's scientific temper and his concept of scientific humanism.
2. Evaluate Nehru's theory of culture.
3. State briefly the main tenets of Nehru's political ideas.
4. State the evolution of Nehru's concept of socialism. What are the characteristics of his theory of socialism?
5. Explain briefly Nehru's international outlook.