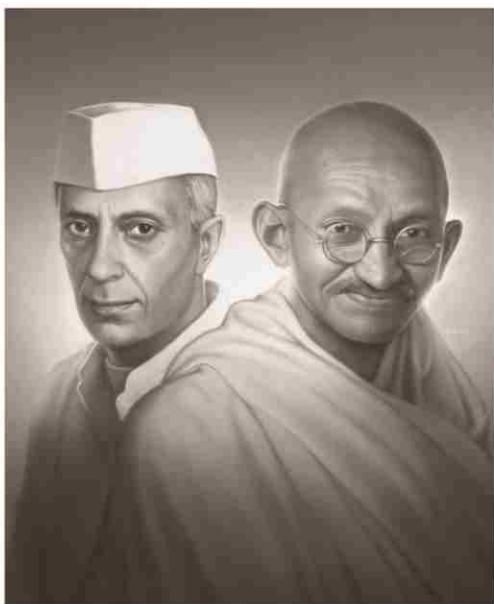


GANDHI: The Politician



**The strategy
was that
with
Gandhi's
blessings,
even a
person who
was not
known in the
country at all
could win
the election
-Osho**

Mahatma Gandhi used to say, "I love all of my disciples equally." Each year there was an election of the Indian National Congress of which he was the uncrowned king, and whomsoever he wanted to be the president was chosen. But one man, Subhas Chandra Bose, who was not a believer in non-violence although he was a member of the Indian National Congress, stood for the presidentship in 1939.

I was very small, but that is the only convention that I have attended -- because it was very close to my home. It was just thirteen miles from Jabalpur where Subhas Chandra presided over the Congress. Without Gandhi's blessings, without even asking him, he stood for that position. Gandhi was very angry. His followers suggested that Jawaharlal Nehru could be used to oppose him, but Gandhi had really a political mind -- perhaps better than Machiavelli.

He said, "That is not a good idea. Jawaharlal is my most precious disciple. If he wins, nothing is gained; people will say he had Gandhi's blessings. But Subhas has also the same charismatic personality, perhaps more charismatic than Jawaharlal, and there is every possibility that Subhas may win. Then it will be a double defeat: the man who has my blessings is defeated, and Jawaharlal's whole future will be dark. That defeat will put him into the back rows."

So Gandhi managed to persuade a man who was not known in the country at all, was not of the calibre of Subhas Chandra or Jawaharlal -- Pattabhi Sitaramayya. Nobody had even heard his name.

The strategy was that with Gandhi's blessings, even a person who was not known in the country at all could win the election. "If he wins, then that will be a great victory. If he loses, we can say that it was clear that he would lose, because Subhas is a world-famous name, and Pattabhi Sitaramayya is not even a provincial name." And Gandhi forgot all about the fact that he loves his disciples equally.

Of course, Subhas was victorious, even with the declaration of Gandhi that "Pattabhi Sitaramayya's defeat will be my defeat." That was blackmail, blackmailing the masses, that "If you vote against Pattabhi Sitaramayya you are voting against me; he is simply my representative." Still Subhas won the elections, became the president. And Gandhi, after Subhas's big victory, did not even congratulate him. He repeated again, a "Pattabhi Sitaramayya's defeat is my defeat." And just to avoid being present in the convention, the annual convention of the congress -- because Subhas would be the president there -- Gandhi pretended to fall sick in Rajkot so that he need not go.

It was so clear, that Subhas resigned from the presidentship. He said, "If this is the way that Mahatma Gandhi behaves -- in whom we all have always had immense trust -- if he cannot come to the convention just because somebody is victorious who had not taken his blessings, then it is not worthwhile. Against him I am not going to remain the president of the Congress." He resigned.

-Osho, From Death to Deathlessness # 15

Read or Listen to
Full Discourse on
www.oshoworld.com