

STRUGGLE FOR INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE AND SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

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ABSTRACT

Subhash Chandra Bose was actively involved in Indian politics during the most of the 1930s. He was twice chosen as the leader of the Indian National Congress, the nation's most significant political movement for independence from the Raj or British authority (1938 and 1939). Bose's reputation is still highly regarded in India, but in the West, he is mainly despised due to his cooperation with the Axis forces during World War II. Bose put forth a lot of effort both before and during World War II to convince the German and Japanese governments to help the liberation of his beloved country from foreign tyranny. Bose led the Indian National Army's men into action against the British during the war's last two years, with significant Japanese support.

Keywords: Political Movement, Foreign Tyranny, BPCC, Leadership Skills.

Introduction

Recognized Leadership

Working with C.R. Das, whom he revered, Bose, an almost obsessive nationalist, initially joined the Indian National Movement in 1921. In 1921 and 1922, he spent six months in prison for his political activity. The All- Bengal Young Men's Conference was planned and led by 25-year-old Bose as soon as he was released. He rose fast in the nationalist ranks as a consequence of his exceptional leadership skills and drive. He soon became the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee's General Secretary (BPCC). Bose assumed control of the second-largest city in the British Empire when, at the age of 27, he was chosen as the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. He was arrested by British forces in late 1924 and imprisoned for three years without charge as a consequence of his strong links to nationalist terrorists. The 31-year-old Bose was elected president of the BPCC in 1928, and at the December Congress party gathering in Calcutta, he gained national attention by trying (failed) to get his provincial committee to endorse an independent motion. By 1930, Bose had developed the general plan of action he thought India ought to adopt in order to cast off the yoke of British imperialism and take its proper position as a leader in Asia. He studied a lot of texts on political philosophy, particularly on fascism, while serving time in Alipore jail in 1930 and in Mandalay prison for a number of years. Bose would continue openly endorsing elements of fascism and expressing his desire for a fusion of that philosophy with socialism until his death 15 years later. His in-depth observations on the subject in his 1935 book "The Indian Struggle 1920-1934" properly reflect the opinions he had throughout the most of his career. Working with C.R. Das, whom he revered, Bose, an almost obsessive nationalist, initially joined the Indian National Movement in 1921. In 1921 and 1922, he spent six months in prison for his political activity. The All- Bengal Young Men's Conference was planned and led by 25-year-old Bose as soon as he was released. He rose fast in the nationalist ranks as a consequence of his exceptional leadership skills and drive. He soon became the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee's General Secretary (BPCC). Bose assumed control of the second-largest city in the British Empire when, at the

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age of 27, he was chosen as the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. He was arrested by British forces in late 1924 and imprisoned for three years without charge as a consequence of his strong links to nationalist terrorists. The 31-year-old Bose was elected president of the BPCC in 1928, and at the December Congress party gathering in Calcutta, he gained national attention by trying (failed) to get his provincial committee to endorse an independent motion. By 1930, Bose had developed the general plan of action he thought India ought to adopt in order to cast off the yoke of British imperialism and take its proper position as a leader in Asia. He studied a lot of texts on political philosophy, particularly on fascism, while serving time in Alipore jail in 1930 and in Mandalay prison for a number of years. Bose would continue openly endorsing elements of fascism and expressing his desire for a fusion of that philosophy with socialism until his death 15 years later. His in-depth observations on the subject in his 1935 book "The Indian Struggle 1920-1934" properly reflect the opinions he had throughout the most of his career.

Program Outlined

India's independence from British control was Bose's top political objective throughout his career. The political organisation he envisioned "would stand for the entire political and economic independence of the Indian people," as he outlined in his most significant essay, the Indian Struggle. He fought for India's freedom all of his life, each in his own unique manner. Bose had a deep affection for his nation and a fierce loathing for the colonial force that governed it: Great Britain. Bose predicted that using force would be unavoidable if the Indian people were to achieve total political and economic emancipation. Even while he periodically asserted his "detest" for violence and denounced discrete acts of terrorism (which he saw as useless and destructive), he never really embraced Gandhi's nonviolent approach. He believed that Gandhi's campaign of civil disobedience was a successful way to stall the government, but that it was insufficient without a movement aiming for a complete revolution and willing to use force if necessary. Bose was able to show his "militarism" in a far bigger manner when, in 1930, he offered to organise a guard of honour for the ceremonial events of the Congress Party meeting in Calcutta. These guards of honour were not unusual, but the one Bose organised and oversaw was unheard of before. The military trained almost 2,000 volunteers, who were then divided into battalions. Bose, who was dressed in full dress uniform, even carried a Field Marshal's baton as he inspected his "troops" while the majority of the group donned uniforms with specially created steel chain epaulettes for the officers.

- **The Indian National Army:** Bose's "military career" reached its pinnacle in Singapore in July 1943. On July 4, Rash Behari Bose gave him the reins of the Indian Independence League at a large gathering there. The next day, Subhash Bose conducted his first review of the 13,000-man Indian National Army (INA) troops. He used George Washington and Giuseppe Garibaldi as examples of leaders who commanded armies that achieved freedom for their respective nations in his talk to the soldiers, which is an excellent representation of his speaking style. He assured the men that this "Free India Army" (Azad Hind Fauj) would not only free India from the British oppression but would also come under his leadership and serve as the country's permanent national army.

Determined Leadership

In "The Indian Struggle," Bose identified a number of military-style, strong-willed leaders who he plainly admired. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and even Sir Stanley Jackson, a former British governor of Bengal, were among them. Gandhi's capacity to "exploit the mass mentality of the masses, just as Lenin did the same thing in Russia, Mussolini in Italy, and Hitler in Germany," was one of many qualities that Bose appreciated in Gandhi. Contrary to common belief, Bose's aggressiveness, ambition, and leadership qualities do not necessarily imply that he was a fascist leader. In this regard, it is important to note that Bose never acted in an undemocratic manner or claimed authority or responsibilities to which he was not legally or traditionally entitled during his many years as the head of numerous councils, committees, and offices, or during his brief (15-month) presidency of the Indian National Congress (February 1938 to May 1939). Bose knew that the British would be forced out of India via military conflict (led by him), and that a social and political uprising would start the minute the Indian populace saw British rule being challenged inside the country itself. He thought that this revolution would abolish the old caste system and the conventional social hierarchy and replace them with a socialist-inspired egalitarian society that was caste and classless. This clarifies what Bose meant when he said that in order to stabilise India, she needed a strong, one-party administration that was "tied together by military discipline" and had dictatorial powers for a while. Bose believed that the only way to prevent the

impending revolution from degenerating into chaos and anarchy was to impose a strong government, severe discipline, and dictatorial authority. He opposed communism (at least as it was implemented in the Soviet Union) primarily due to its internationalism and because he thought that India could not be subjected to the theoretical ideal presented in Marx's works without consent. He was against liberalism and believed that communal aims should be prioritised before personal wants and desires.

- **Mass Mobilization**

Despite this, Bose always supported complete mobilization—the assembling of the nation's resources on a level often associated with military-style action. He declared that all Indians—male and female, urban and rural, wealthy and poor—should actively join in the struggle for freedom after realising that manpower was by far India's greatest resource (and probably the only one accessible to the independence cause). From the beginning of his political career until the year of his death in 1945, he worked to inspire the Indian people and engage them actively in the political battle. It wasn't enough for them to support officials at the provincial or federal levels; they had to fight for their own independence. But in the 1930s, neither India, which was ruled by the British, nor his political position were ever strong enough to demand anything other than labour. Total mobilisation has also never been accomplished (not even by the Nazis) and probably never could be accomplished in times of peace without an oncoming war or revolution in the public's knowledge. Bose, a wise man, undoubtedly understood this. With the establishment of the Azad Hind provincial administration, he was now in a position to directly appeal to the bulk of Indians for complete mobilisation, at least in Southeast Asia, and less directly to those in India itself. He asked that in addition to mass mobilisation, all resources be made accessible for the cause of independence. Naturally, Bose sought the full mobilisation of Indian resources not only in south Asia but globally. He asked for widespread mobilisation to assist his army as well as his innovative new administration, whose different parts needed funding and labour.

- **Women's Equality**

Bose requested complete support from both men and women. Unlike the German and Italian fascists, who prioritised the masculine in practically all social and political contexts. Bose believed that women should be willing to struggle and make sacrifices for the independence of India since they are on an equal footing with men. He waged a campaign in India throughout the 1920s and 1930s to integrate women more completely into society. Following his return to Asia in 1943, he advocated for women to enlist in the Indian National Army, which was at the time a rather radical position. In 1943, a women's regiment was established, eventually consisting of roughly 1,000 women. Its name, "rani of Jhansi Regiment," was chosen correctly. The majority were trained as soldiers, however those less suited for combat responsibilities were hired as nurses and in other support jobs. The Jhansi regiment's women fought with its men when the INA assaulted British troops in east India from Burma in the middle of 1944, suffering similarly severe losses. The ladies were not granted any rights once the army was forced to leave. They travelled more than a thousand kilometres while marching with guys.

- **Commitment to Youth**

Bose was also deeply committed to the youth movement, a devotion that featured prominently in his political ideology. Convinced that young people were by nature idealistic, restless and open to new ideas—such as his own radical and militant outlook—Bose accordingly devoted a great deal of time and effort to the new Youth Leagues that were formed in a number of provinces during the 1920's. Throughout his career he presided over far more youth conferences than any other all-India political figure, and his speeches to younger people he steadfastly urged a spirit of activism that contrasted sharply with the passivism preached by Gandhi and many of the older politicians. One of the most hopeful signs of the time, he claimed at the 1928 Maharashtra Provincial Conference, "is awakening among the youth of the country." Bose believed that India's liberation would be achieved only through the efforts and sacrifices of the militant, revolutionary and politically conscious younger generation.

- **Bose's Unique Political Ideology**

Bose also had a strong attachment to the young movement, which was fundamental in his political philosophy. Bose invested a lot of time and energy into the new Youth Leagues that were established in many provinces throughout the 1920s because he believed that young people were by nature idealistic, restless, and receptive to new ideas—such as his own radical and militant worldview. More youth conferences were presided over by him than by any other Indian politician during his career, and in his lectures to them, he incessantly pushed an activist attitude in opposition to Gandhi's and many other elder politicians' messages of passivism. At the Maharashtra Provincial Conference in 1928, he

said that "the youth of the nation is awakened," which was one of the most encouraging signals of the time. Bose was of the opinion that only the militant, revolutionary, and politically aware younger generation could bring about India's emancipation.

- **Tripuri Session**

An important moment in the history of the Indian National Congress is the Tripuri Congress session of 1939. Subhash Chandra Bose, the newly re-elected president of the Congress, was successfully removed as a result of the coordinated opposition and non-cooperation of the conservative leadership. In the Haripura Session of 1938, Gandhi himself had put up Bose's name for the position of Congress President. After the Tripuri session, Bose began attempting to resolve his dispute with Gandhi, nevertheless. If Bose acted leniently with Gandhi in certain circumstances, it was for tactical rather than weak reasons. Most likely, he had planned to persuade Gandhi of the need and significance of his course of action.

Conclusion

Bose advocated complete freedom for India at the earliest, whereas the Congress Committee wanted it in phases, through a Dominion status. Bose was elected president of the Indian National Congress for two consecutive terms, but had to resign from the post following ideological conflicts with Mahatma Gandhi and after openly attacking the Congress's foreign and internal policies. Bose believed that Mahatma Gandhi's tactics of non-violence would never be sufficient to secure India's independence, and advocated violent resistance. He established a separate political party, the All India Forward Bloc and continued to call for the full and immediate independence of India from British rule. He was imprisoned by British authorities eleven times. His famous motto was "Give me blood and I will give you freedom". His stance did not change with the outbreak of the Second World War, which he saw as an opportunity to take advantage of British weakness. At the outset of the war, he left India, travelling to the Soviet Union, Germany and Japan, seeking an alliance with the aim of attacking the British in India. With Japanese assistance, he reorganized and later led the Indian National Army, formed from Indian prisoners- of-war and plantation workers from British Malaya, Singapore, and other parts of Southeast Asia, against British forces. With Japanese monetary, political, diplomatic and military assistance, he formed the Azad Hind Government in exile, regrouped and led the Indian National Army in battle against the allies at Imphal and in Burma. His political views and the alliances he made with Nazi and other militarist regimes at war with Britain have been the cause of arguments among historians and politicians, with some accusing him of fascist sympathies, while others in India have been more sympathetic towards the inculcation of realpolitik as a manifesto that guided his social and political choices. He is presumed to have died on 18 August 1945 in a plane crash over Taiwan. However, contradictory evidence exists regarding his death in the accident.

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